



## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 -SSA General Meeting
- 2 -SPUG Report
  - Biodiesel
  - Northern Harrier
- 3 -Adopt-A-Highway
  - Vista Point Cleanup
  - Vandalism
- 4 -Holly-leaved Cherries
  - Los Trancos Hike
- 5 - Emergency Preparedness
  - Weasels
  - Fire & Rescue Web
- 6 -Too Hot Too Cold
- 8 - Back-up Generators
- 9 - Leukemia Walk-A-Thon
- 10- Carolyn Standish
  - James Rapley
- 11- Lakeside Concerts
  - Classified Ads
  - Events
  - SSA Calendar
- 12- What is SSA Board Doing?



## SSA General Meeting Guest Speaker – Monique Smith Lee



### ***Bats!***



Friday, October 19  
7:00 pm - Refreshments  
7:30 pm - Featured presentation  
CDF Saratoga Summit Fire Station  
12900 Skyline Blvd.

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

Back by popular demand!

Please join us for a presentation on a topic that is wildly popular and has been requested often since our last bat event in the late 1990s.

Monique Smith Lee ("The Bat Lady") has been rehabilitating bats for the last seven years.

Working with the California Bat Conservation Fund ([www.californiabats.com](http://www.californiabats.com)), she is given the delicate task of caring for injured bats and bat pups. Four years ago Monique became part of CBCF's Education Program team. The team's objective is to dispel widespread misconceptions about bats while working with conservationists to replenish shrinking bat populations.

Monique will do a PowerPoint presentation on bats, followed by showing live bats ("ambassadors").

Bring your family and join us for a lively & informative event!

#### **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. You may need to park along the road so a flashlight is advisable.*



## 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, please contact Ruth Waldhauer at [ruth\\_waldhauer@yahoo.com](mailto:ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com), or 650-948-1466. Information is also available on our website at [www.southskyline.org](http://www.southskyline.org).

Recent SPUG prices are:

July	\$2.05/gallon
August	\$2.05
September	\$1.79

The SPUG price, \$2.05/gallon since last April, fell to \$1.79 in September. The open market price is up to about \$1.00/gallon more than our SPUG price. Fill up now!

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

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

---

## Biodiesel Coming to 4-Corners Soon

By GS Herron

Final preparations, county clearances and site plans for a biodiesel cooperative and filling station are being made to benefit all those folks who live in our area. Similar co-ops have sprung-up in Pacifica, Half Moon Bay, San Mateo, Ben Lomond and other coast side communities to supply this clean burning alternative fuel, produced from domestic, renewable resources. Retailers that supply commercially available biodiesel sold at the pump can be located throughout the SF bay area, Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties by using the National Biodiesel Board website: [www.nbb.org](http://www.nbb.org).

Biodiesel contains no petroleum and can be blended at any level with petroleum diesel to create a biodiesel mixture depending on the engine manufactures' specifications. For most compression-ignition (diesel) engines made prior to 2003, it can be used with little or no blending. However, later model diesels with high pressure injection systems, exhaust particulate filters and catalytic converters designed to scrub CARB-regulated emissions (e.g. nitrogen oxides) may require lower percentage blends. Use of biodiesel in any (petro-diesel) mixture significantly decreases the environmental impact of driving your car ([http://www.nbb.org/pdf\\_files/fuelfactsheets/emissions.pdf](http://www.nbb.org/pdf_files/fuelfactsheets/emissions.pdf)).

How do you mend a broken Jack-o-lantern?  
-- With a pumpkin patch!



Working closely with Bishara Canavati (Bish) at Skywood Trading Post, plans are underway to initially install a 500 gallon tank dedicated to store 99% pure biodiesel derived from vegetable oil. This fuel (B99) will be ASTM certified and coop members can fill their tanks with any percentage biodiesel blend using the existing petroleum diesel pump already onsite. Depending on general interest and rates of use, a larger tank equipped with a more advanced fuel blending pump system may be installed.

More information on how to join our biodiesel coop and start using this environmentally-friendly, renewable fuel will be available at Skywood Trading Post and/or contact [gsherron@earthlink.net](mailto:gsherron@earthlink.net) or call 650-804-1389.

## First Sighting on the Ridge

By Freddy Howell



We have lived on Beatty Ridge in Las Cumbres for 19 years this month. We have seen many different species: some regularly, some occasionally, and some only once. On Wednesday, September 12, 2007, I had an "only once" sighting. I was returning home mid afternoon on my day off when I slammed on the brakes as a female (or maybe a juvenile) Northern Harrier flew across the road in front of me. It turned and flew to the right of the car. "What are you doing here?" I shouted to no one in particular. Northern Harriers, formerly called "Marsh Hawks", are normally found in lower elevation marshy areas like Charleston Slough or Alviso, not at 2,700 feet in oak and madrone woodland.

If you've never seen a Harrier, there is one marking that makes them easy to spot. They have a large, prominent white rump patch. As this bird glided in front of me, the white patch was very visible, which is why I stopped the car to watch it turn. The other nice thing about Harriers is that usually you can tell the difference between male and female. Males are grey and females are brown. However, all bets are off this time of year with all the juveniles in their "eclipse" plumage. Given the fact that this bird was way out of normal range, it probably was a migrating sub-adult who may not have had its bearings. Having said that though, they do like open grasslands, so maybe this bird was headed north to the rolling grassy hills to claim a territory where there wouldn't be as much competition. So keep an eye out for this "only once" bird. It may become a regular somewhere on the ridge.

# Skyline Adopt-A-Highway

By Ruth Waldhauer

SSA volunteers clean up litter along the section of Skyline Boulevard that SSA has adopted at San Mateo County mile markers 2 to 4, both northbound and southbound lanes. So far there are 31 names on the Honor Role listing of those who have participated; a few have been out more than once. We love to get new recruits. Please join us.

Skyline Historical Society is joining the Adopt-A-Highway program. Their route will be just north of our SSA sign on Skyline, from San Mateo county mile marker 4 to 6. Hopefully, SHS signs will be in place soon.



On July 7, Ron Marazzo and Ruth Waldhauer did the northbound clean-up sweep. From the photo of Ron (at left) you can see what a windy day that was.

On July 8, Linda Stinchfield and Kim Hamilton did the southbound route.

The volunteers on September 8 were Karyn Hunt and Robert Bradford. They did the sweep in record time, just about one hour!

SSA is responsible for gathering litter every two months. The sweep takes about an hour. A crew of 4 people is ideal, two for each side of the highway. The next scheduled dates are November 3 and January 5. Please volunteer by contacting me at [ruth\\_waldhauer@yahoo.com](mailto:ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com) or 650-948-1466. You will find it very rewarding, fun and perhaps even habit forming.

Skyline is our front yard!!! Let's keep it beautiful.



Robert Bradford & Karyn Hunt



Linda Stinchfield & Kim Hamilton

# Vista Point Clean-up Project

By Ruth Waldhauer

CALTRANS gave its approval for the SSA effort to clean-up the Vista point on Skyline Boulevard below Russian Ridge with the condition that we regularly dispose of the trash collected.

The view from the Vista Point sweeps from Mount Hamilton northward to Mount Diablo, Mount St. Helena, and Mount Tamalpais. One can see San Francisco Bay below with the salt ponds and marshes. On super clear days in winter, there is one point a little north of Mount Hamilton where there is a glimpse of the Sierras. Help SSA keep this amazing spot clear of litter.

Two sturdy trash cans have been installed at the Vista Point, one for trash and one for recyclables. Green Waste, whose territory the Vista Point lies within, would not give SSA the time of day. They flatly said: "No." SSA hired Valley Trash, a local business. They not only travel an extra 8 miles north of their territory to pick-up on Thursdays, but also place new bags inside the cans. SSA volunteers do a 10-15 minute sweep each week to pick up litter left by the careless few who still just throw trash on the ground rather than in the cans. The SSA volunteers list completely fills the calendar through February 2008. Add your name to the future list by contacting Ruth Waldhauer, [ruth\\_waldhauer@yahoo.com](mailto:ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com) or 650-948-1466.

Exploring this project, we were shocked to learn that animal-proof trash bins, such as Parks use, cost \$600 each. The SSA cans were donated by our good neighbor, Bill Sorich, metal artist. While the cans are not the most exquisite examples of Bill's work, they are functional and effective. You can see some nicer examples of Bill's work at [www.billsorich.com](http://www.billsorich.com).



Now for the hard facts. Trash pick-up costs \$10 to \$20/week, or \$520 to \$1040/year. SSA is asking for donations to help cover the costs for this worthy project. Please send a check marked "donation to Vista Point Project" to Bo Gimbal, SSA Treasurer, PO Box 2338, Boulder Creek CA 95006.

## Vandalism

The MROSD Supervising Ranger at the Skyline Field Office urges anyone who suffers damage or vandalism to a car that is parked while they are hiking at any of the local preserves to please file an official report with MROSD and the county sheriff.

San Mateo County Sheriff - 650-363-4915  
Santa Clara County Sheriff - 408-299-3233  
MROSD - 650-949-1848 or 650-691-1200

MROSD rangers have been trying to get a surveillance camera installed at these locations for some time so that they can identify vandals. For this, they need good statistics on how many incidents occur.

## Holly-leaved Cherries Succeed Over Time

By Sarah Schoen

Holly-leaved cherries (*Prunus ilicifolia*) are shrubs with shiny, spiny leaves found here and there throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Woody branches and twigs are gray to reddish brown. Evergreen leaves grow alternate from the stem and are reminiscent of holly. They grow  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 2" long, are darker on top, and irregularly curled. When crushed, they smell like almonds.

Individual white flowers are small, with 5 sepals, 5 petals, and more than 15 stamen. They grow in clusters up to 2" long, blooming from March to June.

The cherries are up to almost 1" in diameter, ripening from green to red or purplish black from September or October. If not eaten right away, they may stay on the plants as late as December. The edible pulp is a thin layer over a large stone. Like their cultivated relatives, the stones release cyanide when broken. Seeds are distributed mainly by birds, which swallow the fruits whole.

Also known as Hollyleaf cherry and Islay, Holly-leaved cherries are found in the coastal mountains of California, from Napa County to Baja, and below 5000 feet. They prefer relatively wetter locations of chaparral and open woodlands. The plants are long lived with life spans of 100 years or more, and shade tolerant. Although the root crowns are well adapted to sprouting after a fire, Holly-leaved cherries generally increase in dominance over time by shading out or out living other plants in the absence of fire. Seedlings sprout best in natural openings with deep leaf litter.

Holly-leaved cherries also provide cover and nesting sites for small birds. They are browsed by deer, primarily in late summer and early fall when more palatable food is not available. They are one of several larval food plants of the pale swallowtail butterfly (*Papilio eurymedon*).

California Indians used Holly-leaved cherries both medicinally and for food. An infusion of bark, roots, and or leaves was used to treat coughs and colds. The fruit pulp was eaten fresh, cooked, or fermented into an alcoholic drink. The kernels inside the stones were dried, leached of cyanide with water, ground, and eaten as a porridge or soup.



## Take a Hike ...



### Los Trancos OSP and San Andreas Fault Trail

By Ruth Waldhauer

A loop trip on Franciscan and Lost Creek trails, with a shorter, 1-2 mile loop along the San Andreas Fault trail is a total of 3 miles. Docent led tours leave from the parking lot on most Sundays, and they are well worth attending. For more information call MROSD at 650-691-1200. Trail maps are available at the parking lot on Page Mill Road, about a mile downhill from Skyline Boulevard or 7 miles south on Page Mill from RT 280.

Start from the parking lot on the San Andreas Fault trail, and then turn left onto the Franciscan Loop Trail. As you cross the meadow on a clear day, you can see straight up the San Andreas Fault Zone to the Crystal Springs Lakes. Your trail soon descends into the woods under massive canyon oaks. In the fall deciduous oaks and big-leaf maples brighten the forest as their leaves turn golden.

Rounding the hill, you cross a bridge over Los Trancos Creek, and then a short climb brings you to an open flat and a trail junction. Here you leave the Franciscan Loop Trail and begin the Lost Creek Loop. Keep to the left and go up a little rise through the woods. At the top of the rise the trail turns down to follow a ridge into the canyon of Los Trancos Creek then the trail, mossy and fern-lined, descends. Wild Currant bushes show their pink blossoms very early in spring; later, Checker Lily, False Solomon's Seal, Star Flower, Trillium and Wood Fern grace the hillside.

As the creek drops into a narrow gorge, the trail veers away, traversing the hillside to follow a minor tributary. In the shade of large bays and oaks our trail climbs to a ridge top. For a short stretch we join the Page Mill Trail on its way to the north meadow, then we turn right (west) on the Lost Creek Loop trail to the flat where it completes its loop. From the flat take the Franciscan Trail. Bear right, following the trail down into a glade of bay trees. As you circle a low hill you pass a scattering of great craggy limestone outcrops and some ancient oaks that probably lost limbs in the 1970s when squatters on "The Land" were evicted. Ascending gradually to more open country, we reach the grasslands near the start of our trip and turn left on the Fault Trail. In a short time you come to a bench dedicated to Flora Hewlett. The 0.6 mile loop of the San Andreas Fault Trail begins here. With the self-guiding brochure in hand, follow the yellow markers and learn about plate movements, sag ponds, benches and scarps.

Rejoin the trail to return to the parking lot. From early spring to summer this upper meadow is a bright exuberance of flowers. By fall the meadow has dried, leaving pale beige, gauzy-textured grasses.

Why are bats like false teeth?  
--- They come out at night.



# Emergency Preparedness Training

By Ken Broome, President,  
South Skyline Emergency Preparedness Organization

The South Skyline Emergency Preparedness Organization (SSEPO) is planning a Citizens Emergency Response Training (CERT) program at the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) Ranger Station on Skyline Blvd., just south of Alpine Road on five Saturday mornings from 9 am to 1 pm, starting October 20.

Trainers qualified in First Aid, Fire Suppression, Search and Rescue, and Emergency Communications will present instructional materials prepared under the authority of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services (OES) will authorize the award of certificates to those who satisfactorily complete the course. Backpacks of protective clothing including goggles, helmets, and reflective high-visibility jackets will be made available to participants under a grant from DHS.

Priority in registration will be given to Neighborhood Coordinators and members of their support teams who should contact our Operations Director, Barclay Slade, at (408)354-7818. The class size will be limited to 40 people.

The aim of SSEPO is to have a fully-trained and operationally-ready group of volunteers prepared to help their neighbors by the end of this year. We hope that Nature will grant us this much time.

## Weasels

By Hans Johsens



Have you ever seen a weasel? I'm not talking about the types that inhabit the used car lots, courtrooms and other less reputable territory down in the flatlands, I'm talking about the small cinnamon-colored long-tailed mammals that inhabit our beloved Skyline wildlands that we call Home.

Several years ago, I was driving down Gist Road way down south off of the "Goat Trail" portion of Skyline where "down" and "up" have no relation to the points on the compass, but are immediately apparent and unmistakable in the slope of the terrain and a compass is of no use at all. I digress. Anyhow, about halfway down Gist Road, I spotted a small slinky long-tailed mammal running down the road and into a culvert. At first I thought it was a squirrel, but I quickly re-evaluated as I got a better look and figured it was a weasel or perhaps a ferret, so I called the Department of Fish and Game to report it (just in case it was a non-native ferret) and I was reassured based on my description that it was indeed a weasel.

Awesome! I have now seen another rarely sighted native wild animal, albeit mainly the hindquarters and only for seconds, but enough to tentatively identify.

Fast forward to Spring 2007, approximately 12:00 noon. I was driving down Skyline (that is in a southerly direction) when I noticed a gate that should be closed in an open state. I turned around to investigate. It turned out that the Open Space District was doing some repairs on the trail, and as it was lunchtime the volunteer trail crew had retired to the shade of the walnut tree in front of the Chestnut Shack. I wandered down the trail (southward that is) and encountered one of the new MROSD Maintenance Technicians at the worksite. We were talking for a few minutes when I noticed a small cinnamon-red long-tailed mammal running down the trail towards us. I interrupted the conversation to exclaim "Is that a weasel?!!!" It stopped about 20 feet away, stood on its hind legs and checked us out for a few seconds and before the Technician could respond the weasel turned and bounded off the trail.

I vividly remember the first mountain lion I saw, it was only about 500 yards from where I saw the first weasel mentioned earlier. I have seen quite a few bobcats, (and several more lions) many falcons, some golden eagles, two condors, a single beaver and perhaps a few other rarely seen animals here in our immediate neighborhood, but I have yet to see a single badger. Dangit!

## Fire and Rescue Website

By George Johnson



South Skyline Fire & Rescue, Company 29, has been working on a web site. We have now launched the site at [www.southskylinefire.org](http://www.southskylinefire.org)

We will be continuing to add more information and links including a "how to become a volunteer firefighter" section.

We also welcome suggestions from the community on information to include in the site. Please let me know if you have any questions.



**Burn season for Santa Cruz County begins December 1.**  
Call the Agricultural Burn Status Recording for more info at 1-800-CALBURN.

# MOUNTAIN HOME HANDYMAN

## "AMATEUR TO AMATEUR"

### Too Hot or Too Cold

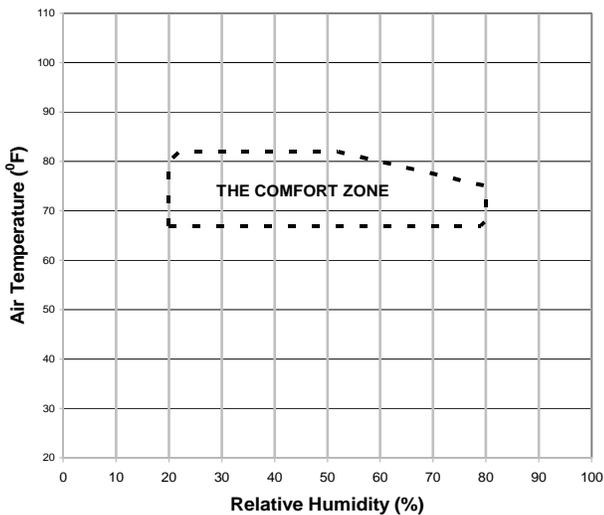
By Larry Watson © 2007

This article describes some "handy" techniques and associated tools for dealing with "too hot" or "too cold" that I have learned while living in the South Skyline area for the last decade. Specially, these techniques address the following:

1. Efficiently maintaining your living space in the comfort zone when it's too hot.
2. Efficiently maintaining your living space in the comfort zone when it's too cold.
3. Forecasting when to protect plants from frost damage.

#### THE COMFORT ZONE

Humans prefer to live in the "comfort zone". Since at least the 1970's, the National Weather Service has used the Bioclimatic Chart as one form of expressing local weather conditions for time periods of days, weeks, or months. The chart axes are air temperature and relative humidity. Historical values observed for a location can be plotted on the chart:



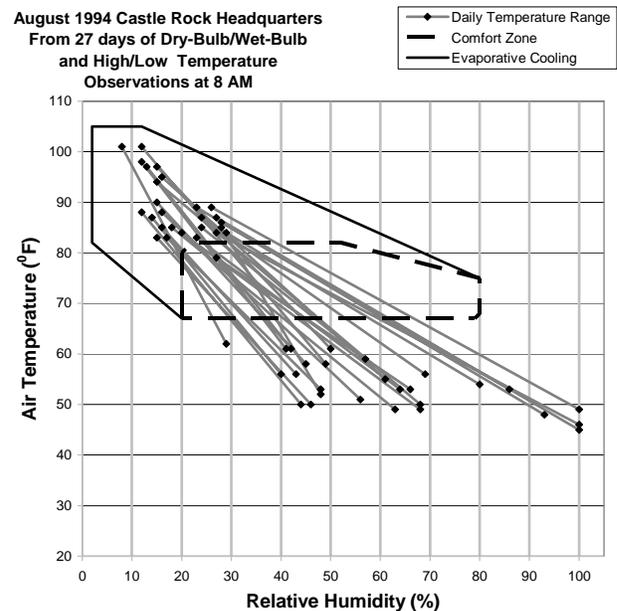
Keeping a house in the comfort can certainly affect the energy bill. In third place behind our mortgages and taxes, electricity is our biggest expense in our all-electric home. We make every effort to minimize this expense by choosing PG&E's E-7 (time of use) tariff. We do have solar-hot water which help keeps our energy cost at around \$2000 per year, but we don't yet have any solar-electric except for the attic fan (\$499 from gaiam.com). Specifics for our home include: elevation 2200 feet, San Lorenzo Valley watershed, south-facing slope, and a good, but imperfect sky dome.

#### TOO HOT

Perhaps a surprise to many, there are numerous hot days each year when most of us mountain types can benefit from evaporative cooling. If you go to any reputable air conditioning company in either San Jose or Santa Cruz, they will most likely tell you that evaporative cooling will not work, and they are correct for those locations. But at bay area elevations above approximately 1500 feet, there is potential for using a lower-

cost evaporative cooling versus traditional air conditioning technology. Living at our altitude, we can be dominated by "marine" or "continental" air just like our valley-residing neighbors, but uniquely, we can also have a third type of air due to downward vertical wind of extremely dry "upper tropospheric" air. The slow downward movement is due to gravity and results in heating due to forced compression. The average vertical wind on level ground is zero, but not so for sloped ground. This provides an opportunity to exploit evaporation cooling

Thanks to Miles Standish and other Castle Rock State Park employees, daily weather records from park headquarters were recorded over a 20-year period. From the most recent August of record (1994), I created this bioclimatic chart for the 27 days of observations in that month:



On the chart from above are two additional details. The solid line indicates the possible extension of the comfort zone by beneficial exploitation of evaporative cooling, as suggested by the book, Sun, Wind & Light... (see references at end). The Castle Rock daily data is represented by lines, each connecting two dots indicating the high/ low temperatures and associated relative humidity for each of the 27 days.

The good news is that some portion of every day is in the comfort zone before it usually gets too hot and too dry. The bad news is that most days, we don't get the regular night-time marine air intrusion and accompanying low temperatures that benefits our low-lying neighbors. For only 6 days, the morning lows to the right of the graph would indicate that the weather station was in "marine" air: high humidity and morning temperatures around 50 °F.

We have used our evaporative cooler as needed throughout most months of the year: a few days now and then, or perhaps

(Continued on Page 7)

## Too Hot or Too Cold (Continued from Page 6)

daily for a week. I ordered it from the Sears catalog and it rests on a dolly to move out of the way when not needed. It connects to the house through a panel that fits into the sliding door at the lowest point in the house.



For 12 hours of use on a hot August day, it used approximately 3 kWh of power and 18 gallons of water to maintain house temperatures in the mid-70's. I estimate that is about 1/4th to 1/10th the power required for cooling a couple of rooms with a traditional refrigerated window cooler. When we are not using it, I drain and sun-dry the pads. Besides the maintenance, the other negative is noise: you have to move a lot of air. This cooler, rated at 3000 Cubic Feet per Minute, replaces the air in our house every 10 minutes.

Evaporative cooling would require three tools: the cooler (a few \$100), a box fan (\$40+) of equivalent CFM at the opposite end of the house, and a “dry-bulb”/“wet-bulb” thermometer (about \$25) or digital “sling” psychrometer discussed below. At any time, the output of a cooler will be approximately the “wet-bulb” temperature, enabling you to determine the immediate benefit. A digital “sling” psychrometer, discussed in the third section, can also be used.



### TOO COLD

Besides turning up the thermostat on an electric or fossil-fuel powered heating device, you build a fire, and/or employ passive techniques, as outlined in the previously mentioned book, to keep your house in the comfort zone. We, like many on Skyline, have “wood-to-burn” as a sustainable source of stored solar energy. An entire article could be written on safely and efficiently burning wood in your home. Here, I will just mention five tools that help me with safety and efficiency: silicone oven mitt, contact thermometer, non-contact thermometer, Ecofan, and “vertical” fan.

Silicone oven mitts (\$30) can be purchased at most good kitchen supply stores. Although, a bit bulky and awkward, if handy, one or two can enable you to pick up the burning log that just rolled out of the woodstove or fireplace. Or in a non-emergency situation, deal with other very hot objects.

For my woodstove, I have a magnetically-attached “contact” thermometer that continuously reported the stove surface temperature. Higher temperatures are the cleanest burning and most efficient, but can also be the most dangerous in poorly designed or maintained stove and fireplaces.

The non-contact thermometer (\$130 Fry's) is not only useful for measuring stove temperatures, but also searching for heat leaks from the house, discovering worn electric motor bearing, and providing an alternative to “touching” something to see if it's hot.

The Ecofan (\$150) silently increase the heat from a wood stove up to 30% according to gaia.com, without external power. To reduce the vertical temperature gradient between ceiling and floor, I have small 50w blower at the lowest spot in the house connected to 4” plastic pipe going to the highest point with a short piece of clothes dryer hose. This can reduce the difference between ceiling and floor temperatures from 20 degrees down to 4-5 degrees. Some use a ceiling fan to reduce this temperature difference.



### WILL IT FREEZE TONIGHT?

We have many tropical/sub-tropical container plants on the deck that need to be protected when frost is likely to occur. Covering plants or moving them indoors is enough work that we don't want to do it unless necessary. You can use the same technique that wine-grape or other fruit growers have used for decades – determining the late afternoon “dew-point”. I should mention first that there are two kinds of frost. If freezing air several thousand feet thick is moving into the area from the north you will know to take action from the TV or radio reports. The other possible type of frost is called a radiation frost, which is a very localized phenomenon. Radiation frosts only occur on calm, clear winter nights due to the outward radiation of everything to the black sky. This type of frost is easy to forecast if you have a sufficiently-accurate “sling” psychrometer.

Here's the concept: the temperature will fall after the sun goes down until it reaches the dew point where condensation will occur. The opposite of evaporative cooling, condensation warms the air sufficiently to maintain air temperatures above freezing. The problem with this technique is that the sundown temperatures on frost-possible nights are most likely in the mid to high 30's. When it's a “close call” on forecasting, you will need a very good digital psychrometer (about \$200+) that measures temperature in tenths of degrees. Water containers thoroughly to provide adequate moisture if you decide to chance it.

### REFERENCES

Evaporative coolers:  
<http://www.toolbase.org/Technology-Inventory/HVAC/evaporative-coolers>

Passive space conditioning:  
Sun, Wind & Light: Architectural Design Strategies, 2nd Edition, by G. Z. Brown and Mark DeKay.

Downloadable psychrometric calculator for computing dew points:  
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/elp/wxcalc/wxcalc2go.shtml>

# Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Backup Generators

By Werner Glinka

Many mountain residents know how a generator can make life more comfortable during a long power outage. Having a backup generator to supply electricity during a longer power outage can keep your beer cold and your ice cream from melting. And for those that work from home and need to keep their computers, printers, and telephones online, having backup power is a must.

During a power outage, a properly sized and installed generator can safely power electrical equipment such as refrigerators, lighting, computers, telephones, the TV and other appliances. However, these generators can be complicated and expensive. The key to selecting the right generator is to evaluate what appliances one needs to operate during a power outage. A generator doesn't need to supply power to the whole house during a power outage, a smaller unit can provide power to just the circuits one needs.

Generators come in all sizes and they are available as portable or stationary units. However, all generators **MUST** deliver power at the same voltage and frequency of the utility - that is 120/240V and 60Hz in most residential cases. The generator size is typically stated in Watts or Kilowatts (kW).

## Independent Generators

An independent generator operates as an independent, stand-alone unit and *is not connected to the house wiring*. Extension cords are plugged into the generator to deliver power to specific electric appliances. Typical setups range from small, gasoline powered units to large, trailer-mounted, diesel powered generators.

Extension cords are used to distribute the power so it is important to use properly sized and grounded cords. Cords used outdoors should be rated for outdoor usage. If a power cord gets too hot during operation it is too small and must be replaced with a properly sized one.

## Wired-in Generator

A wired-in generator is connected to the building wiring via a transfer switch. The transfer switch safely isolates the generator from the utility power lines. It prevents dangerous back feed of electricity from a backup generator into the power lines, which is a serious hazard to utility workers trying to restore power. The National Electrical Code mandates the use of a transfer switch when connecting a backup generator to existing wiring.

A wired-in generator can be operated with a manual transfer switch or it can transfer power to the backup generator automatically. It can power the whole house or just some important selected circuits.

## Selecting a Generator

If you choose an independent generator, you must connect all appliances you want to use during a power outage with extension cords. And this can get very messy. It will probably be raining and it will be muddy and wet outside when you are starting the generator and connecting the extension cords. In any case **remember to connect a solid ground to the generator frame prior to operating the unit!** The owner's manual will show how.

If you connect the generator to the building wiring you will incur the additional cost of the transfer switch. This is a more expensive solution, however, in case of a power outage the only thing you have to do is turn on the generator and flip the transfer switch.

Most homeowners first think of portable generators rather than stationary generators. To get a generator set up properly, you'll have to choose a suitable location. If you don't have a dedicated enclosure or shed for the generator, you will quite likely be standing in the rain to start the generator and connect the extension cords. Again, this is not something to look forward to during a rainstorm. However, if the portable generator is also used for non-emergency projects, then a portable unit might be an alternative. **And did I already say something about grounding the unit!!!**

A stationary generator is the most convenient solution although more expensive. Stationary generators are usually connected to the building wiring. Again, there are no power cords to plug in, just the generator to start and the transfer switch to operate. In fact, once you have made the choice of installing a stationary generator, the incremental cost of having an automatic transfer switch installed is minor. Such an automatic system does not require you to do anything. The system will detect a power outage and will switch safely over to the backup generator until utility power is restored. Grounding is done when the generator is installed so you don't have to be concerned about it.

## What Fuel Type?

Residential backup generators are typically powered by a combustion engine that is fuelled by gasoline, diesel, propane or natural gas. Factors such as availability, storage and safety should be considered for each fuel type. Generally, smaller units tend to be gasoline powered, while larger units usually run on diesel, propane or natural gas. Here on the mountain, natural gas is not available. In addition, in case of a natural disaster, the natural gas line will probably be turned off making the backup generator useless.

Modern diesels generators are quiet and normally require much less maintenance than comparably sized gasoline units. They also have a longer life expectancy than comparable gasoline units. However, diesel is typically not an option for smaller, portable units.

(Continued on page 9)

## Generators *(continued from page 8)*

Gasoline generators account for most of the backup generator offerings on the market. Available as small as a couple of kW and as big as several hundreds of kW, they require more frequent maintenance than diesels. What they have in common is the challenge of storing the fuel. Do you want to store large amounts of diesel or gasoline on your property, close to your house?

Most of us have a propane tank for our gas appliances. So the question of additional fuel storage is mute. Propane is as efficient as gasoline and it is never stored for too long as we use it daily.

I should also mention that there are generators with Tri-fuel capabilities on the market. There are also conversion kits available that can be installed without removing the gasoline components, which allow you to switch back to gasoline at any time.

### Generator Must-have Options

These features are worth having:

- Electric start — no pulling a starter cord during a downpour
- Portability kit — wheels and handles that allow moving the portable generators
- Low-oil shutdown — protects your generator if oil drops below a safe operating level
- High temperature shutdown — protects your generator from overheating

### How Big Of A Generator Do I Need?

Homeowners can determine their overall emergency power requirements by making a list of all the critical items that they like to power during a power outage. The list must take into account the starting and operating loads of all items. Certain electrical appliances require additional power when turned on. Most of these appliances (power tools, refrigerators, freezers, pumps, etc.) incorporate an electrical motor. To accelerate the motor spindle and the attached load to its nominal speed takes more power than to keep them rotating. These appliances require typical two to four times the operating power for start-up. One should consult with a licensed electrician or engineer for an accurate determination of these power requirements.

Another way to determine the proper generator size is to turn on only appliances that you like to use during a power outage and by measuring the power they draw. This method typically requires an amp meter and access to the inside of the electrical main panel. This can be potentially dangerous and should only be done by a licensed electrician.

Most homeowners will need a 5 to 8 kW generator.

### Operating Noise

Before I wrote this overview I asked some people what their concerns are when using a back-up generator and one of the things mentioned most often was noise.

Generators, especially gasoline-fueled models, make a lot of noise. Often, the cheaper the generator, the louder it will operate. One way to minimize the noise level is to buy a more expensive generator with a water-cooled engine and a good muffler. Another approach is to either locate your generator away from your home or to place the unit in a soundproof shed. Be sure the shed is designed for this purpose and has adequate ventilation.

### Location

Generators should be at least 10 ft from structures having combustible walls and/or other combustible materials and a clearance of 5 ft all around the generator for adequate cooling, maintenance and servicing. The unit should be located in a well-ventilated area, which will allow for removal of deadly exhaust gas. Do not locate the generator where exhaust gas could accumulate and enter a potentially occupied building. Prevailing winds and air currents should be taken into consideration when positioning the generator.

Planning ahead for power outages is a wise strategy because most energy experts predict problems with utility power reliability in the future. Getting a backup generator will transform your next power outage from an unpleasant surprise into a minor inconvenience.

Author: Werner Glinka, of Electroworks. He can be reached at 650 851 5909.

---

## Leukemia Walk-A-Thon

*By Hans Johsens*

**“Trek for Treatments”  
October 21 at Vasona Park  
Los Gatos**

My wife Donna and I have recently become involved in a fundraiser to benefit the Eric Drew Foundation (EDF) [www.drewfoundation.org](http://www.drewfoundation.org).

Eric Drew is a former resident of Las Cumbres, where his parents still reside. He attended Lakeside School over 25 years ago. Eric was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia with the additional complication of testing positive for Philadelphia Chromosome in 2003. The EDF was created to help Eric in his battle with this "terminal" disease. Eric has survived and is doing relatively well today. Since his Leukemia has been put into remission, Eric has devoted himself almost entirely to advocating for other sufferers of serious illnesses as well as the ongoing battle towards finding treatments (and hopefully a cure) for Leukemia.

Another Lakeside alumnus, Dayton Ewing had the idea of holding a "Walk-A-Thon" in order to raise some funds to help Eric in his noble cause. We are currently setting our target for \$50,000 in donations, all of which will go towards the Eric Drew Foundation (minus nominal operating costs). Please feel free to contact me with any questions at [hjsens@earthlink.net](mailto:hjsens@earthlink.net)

---

# In Memory

## Carolyn Marie Standish

To look at her, you wouldn't think that this 62-year-old science teacher was a gambling woman. But this summer, she gambled with her health. Her immune system already weakened by Lymphoma, she pursued a risky adventure—a visit to her daughter in Chile and a decades-old dream to tour Inca ruins and the upper Amazon region of Peru. A day after returning, she developed symptoms of blood poisoning, and died of septic shock on July 30. Her death was sudden for us all.

Carolyn had been pondering retirement. Up until now, Carolyn's professional life was dedicated to education. In 1968 she earned a B.S. in Biology from California State College, Hayward, and then acquired a secondary teaching credential from San Francisco State. Her early teaching career brought her to schools like James Lick Junior High School in San Francisco and, later, Russell Middle School in Milpitas.

When her daughters began their own schooling, Carolyn's teaching experience fueled her interest in Lakeside School District, a small one-school district in the Santa Cruz Mountains. First, she volunteered at the school, leading Girl Scout groups and organizing science laboratory experiments. Then, in 1984, she joined with other concerned parents to pressure the school board to improve the academic programs and bring a more dynamic and challenging science curriculum into the school. On this platform, she was elected to the school board, and served several years. During this period, the school opened a library, developed the Life Lab program (gardening), and initiated participation in the Yosemite Institute science camp and a nautical living history program affiliated with the National Park Service.

After a hiatus spent raising young daughters, Carolyn stepped back into the teaching role in 1995 at Russell Middle School, where she taught her favorite grade and subject: 8<sup>th</sup> grade physical science. We all knew she had an 8<sup>th</sup>-grade sense of humor, and shared her students' interest in everything from saliva to rockets. In 2000, Carolyn was named Russell's Teacher of the Year.

Carolyn loved her students, and loved to explore new and better ways to teach science. She had been contemplating a new career in landscape design—a field in which she could exploit her passion for gardening, style and what she called a “modest talent” for drawing. However, she hadn't decided to retire yet from teaching, and was looking forward to another year at Russell.

She spent her free time reading, gardening, watching old movies, petting cats, going to the ocean and exploring the wonders of the natural world. We loved her sense of humor and pie-making ability.

Carolyn Standish was born to James and Doris Gibson in Watsonville, California, and grew up in Castro Valley. Since 1980 she had lived in Castle Rock State Park with her husband, Miles. She is survived by her husband, Miles; her mother, Doris; her sister, Elaine; and two daughters, Skye and Sierra.

A celebration of Carolyn's life was held at Hakone Gardens on August 15, her 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

~ Sierra Standish



## James D. Rapley

James D. Rapley died on August 31<sup>st</sup> 2007 at the age of 105. He was born in Menlo Park in 1902, and lived a rich, full life on his family ranch on South Skyline in San Mateo County. In January of 2000, a fire completely destroyed his ranch home. He was miraculously able to save his wife, and escape. After the catastrophe, they resided in a retirement home in San Carlos.

Called Jimmy or Jim by his family and friends, he was able to actively work his ranch until his eyesight became a problem in the late 80's. There were cattle and horses, as well as a large assortment of other animals, on more than 300 acres of land that had first belonged to his grandfather. Situated in the Santa Cruz Mountains, the ranch was reached from Skyline Boulevard on the road named for his grandfather, Rapley Ranch Road. It is interesting to note that it was his grandfather who killed the last bear in the area that includes Langley Hill. His family, and the land he loved and lived on, tightly joined him to both the past and the present.

Jimmy understood the mountains. He combined hard work with the ability to enjoy a sunset, help a neighbor, or sing an Irish tune. Jimmy had many friends, and one that he depended upon was Hildegard Jackson. He was her mentor and friend, and she remained loyal to him to the end of his life.

Interested in the lives and activities of all those about him, Jimmy was a born storyteller. He drew on the people he knew who lived on surrounding ranches and towns. With kindly humor and respect, he was able to tell stories about their lives, as well as throw light on their personalities. All who knew him will miss his good humor, and sincere, yet always lively, interpretation of people and events.

~Betsy Clebsch



## Lakeside Concerts in Full Swing

Three more concerts are scheduled at the Lakeside Community Center located at 19621 Black Rd., Los Gatos. This "Into the Woods for Performing Arts" series is a child friendly, tobacco and alcohol free venue. A blue grass ensemble, High Tone Sinners will be playing on October 12, from 7:00 – 9:00. On October 16 enjoy the blues with Blues Cadillac, and on January 5 don't miss the award winning acoustics of Hans York. Tickets are \$15. All profits from these concerts will be used to make theater improvements to the auditorium. Check [www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html](http://www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html) for more info.

## Announcing Mountain Made

A new business in Four Corners on Skyline is part gift shop, part gallery. All art and gifts are handcrafted by local artists, many of them your friends and neighbors. And, they are located right next to Alice's Restaurant. Hours: Thursday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm.



## Classified Ads

### WANTED

**Looking for Logs** - Local woodworker is looking for Big Leaf Maple logs to craft into gorgeous and useful wood products. We will buy logs or trade for "woodenware" made from your own trees. See website for examples, [www.alderwood.com](http://www.alderwood.com) Contact David Yager in La Honda 6507473-0766 or email to [david@alderwood.com](mailto:david@alderwood.com)

### SERVICES

**Alice's Restaurant**  
Four Corners on Skyline  
Locally owned and operated  
(650) 851-0303  
8:30AM-9:00PM daily; 7:00PM (Tuesday)

**ElectroWorks**  
Licensed, bonded & insured electrical contractor right on the mountain. Generator transfer switches, Panel upgrades, Lighting, Spa/Jacuzzi wiring, Troubleshooting and repairs, Remodels... Everything electrical!  
Contact Werner Glinka at 851 5909 or [info@electroworksonline.com](mailto:info@electroworksonline.com).  
References available upon request.

**Georgia's custom-made & colorful** cloth bags, unique totes & more. Visit [www.CoastalSeams.com](http://www.CoastalSeams.com) or phone 650-941-1068

### SERVICES

  
1Mbps 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 Fri., Sat. a Sun. 11:00-4:00. (650) 851-1606

**Wild Bird Center**, 792 Blossom Hill Rd @ Los Gatos Blvd. Complete line of bird feeders, seed, bird baths and optics. Gift items include wind chimes, books, clothing and jewelry. Exciting things for the holidays. 408/358-9453

### 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

### EVENTS

October 12 – **High Tone Sinners** concert at Lakeside Community Center 7:00 – 9:00  
[www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html](http://www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html)

October 13 – **Fall Native Plant Sale** Saturday, October 13, 2007, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Hidden Villa Ranch, CNPS Nursery, 26870 Moody Road Los Altos Hills

October 21 - "**Trek for Treatments**" Walk-A-Thon at Vasona Park in Los Gatos. 8:30 am check-in [www.drewfoundation.org](http://www.drewfoundation.org)

November 16 – **Blues Cadillac** concert at Lakeside Community Center 7:00 – 9:00 pm  
[www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html](http://www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html)

January 5 – **Hans York** concert at Lakeside Community Center 7:00 – 9:00  
[www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html](http://www.lakesidelosgatos.org/concerts.html)

### SSA Calendar

**General Meeting** – October 19, CDF Fire Station

**Business Meetings at 7:15 pm:**

Thurs. October 11

Thurs. November 8

Thurs. December 13

(Call Bill Prince for location and directions)

President Bill Prince 650-917-9279

Editor Patti Begley 408-867-3973

Why did the vampire go to the orthodontist?

-- To improve his bite



## SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION

Box 400, Star Route 2  
La Honda, CA 94020

### What Is Your SSA Board Doing?

- The SSA summer General Meeting and picnic was held on August 5<sup>th</sup> at Dick and Ami Jaqua's ranch. The focus of the meeting was a Renewable Energy Fair. Over 100 attended the picnic.
- The next SSA General Meeting in October will feature a speaker on bats.
- The July Skylines Newsletter was published to the Community and the next newsletter is being developed for distribution in October.
- Traffic Safety and motorcycles remain a continuing saga. A letter is being written to State Senator Joe Simitian requesting that he propose legislation to help curb the motorcycle decibel (db) problem. This could be modeled after the current law in Colorado.
- CALTRANS/Trucks on 84 remain a work in progress. Currently, the response from CALTRANS is disappointing. It only wants to place more signs advising trucks over a certain length not to use the highway—no enforcement, no penalty. The Board is writing a letter to CALTRANS asking that they analyze the 2 curves on Hwy 84 to determine the maximum length a truck can be to negotiate the curves. The Board also has contacted the California Trucker's Association and Woodside to see if they will help to get this problem resolved.

Visitors are welcome at Board meetings.

~Judy Grote

#### **Skylines Is Published Once A Quarter**

*Skylines* invites individuals to submit articles and artwork.

**Skylines Deadline:** The deadline for submitting ads and articles for the next issue is December 17, 2007.

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

**Send all ads and articles to:** Patti Begley c/o 22400 Skyline Blvd #35, La Honda CA 94020, or [SkylinesEditor@earthlink.net](mailto:SkylinesEditor@earthlink.net).  
We reserve the right to edit all submissions. We assume no responsibility for omissions, incorrect information or personal opinions.