

Marquez Knolls

Hotline: 310 454-7678
Editor: Haldis Toppel

Marquez Knolls Property Owners Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 1307, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Quarterly Newsletter

MKPOA

January 2008

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This year has gone by incredibly fast. I say that every year. I can remember starting 4th grade and wondering how I was going to endure the endless months before the start of the next summer vacation. Now that I have lived through the many years of adulthood time seems to be forever accelerating. The term "Stop the World, I want to get off" has taken on a new meaning.

But then I look back to see what we, at the Marquez Knolls Property Owners Association (MKPOA,) have accomplished over the last six months. For starters we won the appellate court decision against our insurance company and we were finally able to pay our attorney, Rosario Perry, his legal fees. It feels good to be back in business. To celebrate, we invited the major donors to the legal funds to dinner as well as those who gave substantial loans without much guarantee to ever be repaid.

And we were not idle at re-establishing policies and procedures to aid those of you with CC&R related view obstruction issues. This process has taken considerably longer than expected due to concerns by Board members, advisors, and legal experts to do things "right." Rosario Perry has again been most helpful in showing us the way. We, at MKPOA, sincerely appreciate the patience of those of you, who have asked us for help in the past few months.

We are proud to announce the unveiling of our new web site at www.MarquezKnolls.com. It is modest and straight forward. It is easy to navigate and to maintain. The web site is a major component of Phase I, the "Information Phase" of the CC&R resolution process approved by the Board just prior to the publication of this newsletter. The CC&R page of the web site contains the complete set of CC&Rs for all developed Lachman Tracts. It also contains an extensive list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to provide information to Marquez Knolls residents to determine if there is or could be a violation of the CC&Rs and how to deal with it.

Phase II will include an informal mediation process to facilitate a resolution or agreement between cooperating parties if requested. MKPOA encourages its members to try to work things out amicably in order to avoid costly formal mediation/arbitration or the very costly litigation.

On behalf of the entire Board I wish you a very prosperous New Year and a sense of being on vacation every day you spend on your lovely Marquez Knolls property.

Haldis Toppel

Dead Pine Trees are a Fire Hazard

by Klaus Radtke

Almost 30 years ago, on October 23, 1978, the Mandeville Canyon wildfire swept into the Marquez Knolls community on a Monday afternoon. Only a few 'high-risk homes and structures burned in the Marquez Knolls area as the fire was quickly contained towards the evening as it ran out of fuel, the Santa Ana winds died down and the Catalina eddy brought cool, moist onshore air.

Looking quickly at the Marquez Knolls neighborhood and keeping the 30th anniversary of the Mandeville Canyon Fire in mind we notice that many of the pine trees that were planted many years ago with perhaps little understanding of fire safety and viewshed protection concerns in mind have grown into mature and hazardous trees. Many have been stressed by last year's record-breaking drought and have become susceptible to bark beetle infestation.

While healthy trees produce plenty of sap to 'pitch' the insects out when they attempt to bore through the bark into the living cambium layer, sap production in stressed trees is greatly reduced and they therefore fall quickly victim to bark beetle attacks.

Such bark beetle attacks can be observed on the tree bark in the form of saw dust at the base of the tiny entrance holes. At this stage trees can still often be saved by deep watering and fertilizing them to increase sap flow and vigor. Insecticide capsule that inject insecticide directly through the bark into the living cambium layer are also helpful and can be bought at local nurseries. This service is also performed by tree specialists and arborists.

Pinhole type tiny holes in the bark without any "frass" or "sawdust" present indicate that a new generation of bark beetles has already emerged from the tree and that the tree is greatly stressed and likely dying. It will soon turn brown and become a fire hazard. At this point it is best to cut it down.

(Editor's Note: Klaus Radtke is a Wildland Resource Scientist and retired MKPOA Board Member residing in Hawaii and currently visiting the Philippines. Please look for his full fire protection advisory article in the next MKPOA newsletter. You can download his many times republished book: "A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management" at:

www.sdfirecovery.net/edu/radtke.html.)

Inside Stories

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EDITOR'S COLUMN

How to Make Friends and Gain Enemies

Your parents probably told you to get along with your neighbors, friends and relatives. If you are a true-blooded Palisadian you consider that a cultural norm. But how do you deal with your neighbor when his beloved pet barks incessantly throughout the night, the one that greets you with a big doggy smile and wagging tail when you meet him in the street? What if the rare tree across the street, planted with great love and nourished with care, is now threatening to grow into your treasured ocean view? You ponder, you fret. The fear of your neighbor's rejection makes you rationalize for a while that you can or should indeed live with the situation.

By the time you are ready to approach your neighbor, you are tense, frustrated and perhaps a bit angry. Cool down, and choose the right place and time for both of you. Let your instincts guide you on the best approach: a call, a letter, or a visit in person. A chance encounter in the street, the supermarket, or the car wash works well. Enter into some small talk, then casually mention the problem and solicit sympathy. Start with a compliment, but you have to mean it, such as: "Fido is really cute. He seems a bit lonesome at night. We can hear him in our bedroom." Or: "Your tree has grown up beautifully. Do you think you can keep it a bit trimmed so it does not grow into our ocean view?" Choose a nice, warm and sunny weekend afternoon, when everybody is at ease. A phone call can work if you don't know the neighbor well and want to introduce yourself. However, don't try to solve the problem over the phone, make an arrangement to meet. The least effective way is a mailed letter, except when your neighbor is a hermit and you can't get a hold of his phone number.

If you fear that any approach will end in a show-down, you are probably right. Before you get into a hostile encounter, ask a third party to speak for you. It is much easier to start on friendly terms than to repair the damage of a rejection. We, at MKPOA, are often getting requests for help after the damage has been done and the doors have literally slammed shut. At that point, chances to gain voluntary cooperation or compliance are slim. If you know that your neighbor is friends with another neighbor, solicit that neighbor's help. If your spouse is more diplomatic than you are or perhaps not as tense about the situation let him/her handle it. You are always welcome to call MKPOA for advice and help if you are running out of viable options. Call the hotline at 310 454-7678 or e-mail to MarquezKnolls@aol.com.

Here are some losers to avoid. If you can think of other "bloopers," we will publish them in the next newsletter.

1. Call your neighbor at dinner time.
2. Tell your neighbor that you will have his dog picked up by animal control.
3. Show up at your neighbor's house at 6 a.m. or 10 p.m.
4. Wave down the car as your neighbor is leaving late for work.
5. Show up with a potted plant or home-baked cookies when you have never met to your neighbor before. That will surely raise suspicion.
6. Initiate contact by sending a letter, threatening your neighbor with a lawsuit.

MKPOA Membership Invitation

All Marquez Knolls homeowners are invited to join or renew their membership in the MKPOA. Dues are \$30 per year from January to December. You may mail your dues in the envelope which is enclosed for those who have not yet joined or renewed for 2008 or you may send a check to MKPOA, P.O. Box 1307, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Contributions or gifts to Marquez Knolls Property Owners Association are not tax deductible as charitable contributions.

In addition to the dues you are also invited to become involved in the association. You can indicate your interest by checking the box on the envelope and you will be contacted or you may call and leave a message on our hotline: 310-454-7678. We also invite you to attend our Annual Meeting on Thursday May 8th to learn more about your association.

Letters to the Editor

MKPOA new Web site:

Terrific idea and very nicely done website. Thank you very much.

Elyse Newton

Hurray for you!!! Good resource data base, Thanks for sharing.

Michael Edlen

MKPOA Community Notices:

Thank you for the information e-mails about the activities in our community!

Ada Taylor

My elderly father lives on Lachman Lane and forwards the weekly crime report to me in New York. He wants to prove that he is safe staying by himself and tells me that a break-in to his car is unlikely since he does not own an I-Pod, a GPS, or a PDA. I sleep assured.

Steve Pratton

Deer Repellent Success

by Haldis Toppel

We have had several reports from neighbors and gardeners of a spray that works successfully in repelling deer and rabbits. It is called "Liquid Fence" and available at the "Outdoor Room" garden center at Sunset near PCH.

One morning I walked into a sad garden. I had lost my entire planted and potted roses in bloom, the Gerbera Daisies and Cosmos had only their stems sticking in the air, and most of the Impatiens were gone, I spent \$15 and tried the spray. Its active ingredients are putrid eggs solids and garlic – YUCK! My nose got a major shock when I first applied the spray. The garden and I smelled worse than a skunk. But to my surprise, after less than five minutes the smell was no longer noticeable – to humans that is – as promised on the label.

I sprayed week one and week two as instructed. No additional deer feeding happened during this time even though we could hear the critters traversing down the hill at night. I then expected to spray once a month per instructions. That was a mistake. After 10 days I again lost whatever flowers had emerged. Since then I have sprayed diligently every two week or so and have had no more invasions. And what is best of all, we can still watch the natural beauty of the deer feeding on Chaparral down the hill from our garden and across the canyon.

Interview with LAFD Captain James Varney

by Richard Miller

Captain Varney of LA Firestation 23 at Sunset and PCH focused his concerns on the handling of catastrophic events that we recently experienced in the “wind driven” fires in Malibu, and to help us avoid some of the same pitfalls that many of those homeowners experienced.

In the Marquez Knolls area, the most vulnerable homes to fire are those that have wood sidings, wood decks and those close to brush areas. In addition Captain Varney indicates that there are still 5 or 6 homes in Marquez Knolls that continue to have roofs of wood shake or shingle, which if exposed to embers, will respond with explosive energy.

Beginning this coming May the Fire Department will announce a new policy of mandatory home evacuation. In the event of a serious threat of fire in a given area the police will go through the area announcing that all residents immediately evacuate. Captain Varney stressed the fact that homeowners should absolutely pre-determine just what specific valuables are necessary to save, and then store them in an area that is easily available for evacuation. Captain Varney also stresses that during the threat of fire quickly change clothes into something that is protective of arms & legs in order to reduce or prevent the possibility of burns.

Homeowners with pools may have additional fire protection if they have a gas engine pool pump with at least 50 to 100 feet of hose. This will allow additional protection in the face of a loss of water pressure and electricity.

The Fire Captain made us aware of a further step to protect our property by keeping a product called “*Barricade fire gel*” on hand which can protect most homes for under \$400. The homeowner can apply the water/gel coating in front of an approaching wildfire, before retreating to a safe area. When the gel-concentrate is mixed with water at the end of a garden hose, super absorbent polymers trap water molecules and suspend them in millions of tiny “*bubbles.*” Sprayed onto the flammable surfaces of roofs, windows, eaves and walls of a house, vehicles, or propane tanks, a “*wet blanket*” wrap of Barricade can be applied up to 24 hours before an approaching wildfire. Homeowners can evacuate safely, and firefighting resources can be focused on the wildfire rather than on the already protected structures. Barricade can be washed off with plain water after the fire danger has passed. For more information you may visit www.firegel.com.

SAVE THE DATE!

MKPOA Annual Meeting, Thursday, May 8, 6:30-9:00PM
Location: Marquez Charter School

Facts, Food and Fun!

Watch for details in the next newsletter!

THE TURNER REPORT

Consider getting more involved in the greater community of Pacific Palisades? Attend a Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) meeting. You may visit www.PP90272.org for meeting dates and times, agendas and minutes. Take a stand, let your opinion be heard.

PPCC Support of Marquez Knolls Residents

In cooperation with LAPD an electronic speed display sign was installed on Jacon Way for several days. Many residents with children have expressed their concern about drivers who speed on this 25 mph road. Reports state that the traffic slowed down considerably during this time.

PPCC, MKPOA, and Marquez School representatives will be meeting with Marlene Canter to see what solutions are feasible to ease the Elementary School Traffic and Parking Problem.

PPCC supports the opposition of Marquez Knolls residents to the T-Mobile cell tower installation on the DWP water tank site adjacent to residences. DWP and T-Mobile were invited to make a presentation before the Council as the application for a Conditional Use Permit (CPU) is under review. A Zoning Administrator decision is pending.

PPCC Activities of Community Wide Interest

PPCC opposes Photo enforcement of the stop sign in Temescal Park.

PPCC opposed the proposal of the car wash and 24hr convenience store at the Shell Station on the corner of Sunset and Via De La Paz. The owner has asked for suggestions on how he can renovate and expand his business and still keep the community happy.

(Janet Turner is a Board member of both MKPOA and the Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC). She represents MKPOA on the Council and provides regular reports on her Council activities. You may contact her at janeturner35@hotmail.com)

**HOW YOU CAN STOP CRIME
IN THE PALISADES**

by Janet Turner

Vice and Narcotics activity in the Pacific Palisades!!! You may find this hard to believe, I know I did. According to Sergeant Crump, LAPD West Los Angeles Vice Unit, violent crime is down but community complaints and vice and narcotics activity remains very present. In January, one person was arrested for prostitution at a neighborhood park, an adult was arrested for buying beer for an underage teen, a teen was arrested for furnishing drugs (Hash) to a group of teenagers, and a young adult was observed in possession of drugs (Hash) while at a popular gas station. The truth is that the use and sales of drugs, and underage alcohol consumption continues to thrive amongst youth in the Pacific Palisades. So much so, that the LAPD West Los Angeles Division has Vice and Narcotic squads working undercover in the Palisades. Beyond being just a reckless teenager making bad decisions, Sergeant Crump says that some adults are contributing to the crimes and the LAPD has been making attempts to arrest those adult offenders. So don't fall for the line, "I'm 18 and they won't sell me beer." The kid that just

asked you to purchase beer could very well be an LAPD undercover agent. In our next newsletter Sergeant Crump will share advice and identify resources within the community that can assist parents and the community in dealing with teen drug and alcohol abuse because the Police alone cannot effectively resolve what appears to be common behavior among some portions of the population in our community.

As for vehicle burglaries which continue to rise, Lead Officer Michael Moore says most of these involve car windows being smashed and MP3 players, GPS systems and other electronic toys being stolen. Moore says this is easy to stop. Hide your electronic gadgets when you leave the car. Put them in the glove box or your trunk. And of course, never leave your purse or wallet where it is visible. These steps may take an extra minute or two, but it is well worth the effort



**MKPOA DIRECTORS
AND OFFICERS***

- *Haldis Toppel, President
310 454-8060
- *Karin Fintzy, Vice Chair,
Corresponding Secretary
310 454-7031
- *Bill Richards, Treasurer
310 454-9761
- *Sylvia Boyd
Recording Secretary
310 454-9556
- Jon Boyd, Advisor ¹
310 454-9556
- Bobbie Farberow
310 454-5511
- Sid Galanty
310 459-1285
- Silgia Grassl
310 454-4438
- Bernie Hathaway
310 454-0250
- Katie Kalvin
310 459-6875
- Howard Robinson
310 454-3434
- Janet Turner,
PPCC Representative
310-573-0382
- Kurt Toppel, Advisor ¹
310 454-8060

1) Non-Voting Members

If you wish to receive the MKPOA agenda and minutes electronically, as well as occasional up to the minute announcements of interest to Marquez Knolls residents, please send an e-mail with the words "MKPOA email" and your name in the subject area to MarquezKnolls@aol.com.

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Marquez Knolls Home Sales 2007 vs. 2006**

| | Number Sold | Median Sales Price | # Active as of Dec. 31st |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2007 | 34 | \$2,050,000 | 12 |
| 2006 | 48 | \$1,893,000 | 10 |
| Number of Sales | | | 29 % lower |
| Median Sale Prices | | | 8 % higher |
| Active Inventory | | | 20 % higher |

* Statistics based upon M.L.S. records

As of Monday, January 1st the lowest-priced available home in Marquez Knolls is a 3-bedroom, 2-bath on Akron being offered at \$1,199,000. The highest-priced property is a 5-bedroom, 3-bath on Chattanooga being offered at \$3,750,000. The lowest sale price so far this year was a 3-bedroom, 1.75-bath on Bienvenida (\$1,075,000). The highest sale so far this year was a 3-bedroom, 3-bath on Las Casas Place (\$4,500,000).

(Michael Edlen has been a resident of Marquez Knolls for 30 years)

Michael Edlen Realty where "Enthusiasm is the Secret of Success" Michael@michaeledlen.com 310 230-7373