



## **MONTAGE NEWS – November 2011**

The Newsletter continues to grow. Pam Price has contributed an article from Neighborhood Watch in this edition. Curt Beyer contributed the article on tree pruning. I also received a request for the articles from homeowner's on the hot water recirculation system and an offer for garage door panels.

You homeowners may also submit article for the Newsletter on items of interest or concern to you.

The perimeter walls and signs have now been repainted with a new color pallet. I hope you all like the new look. Refurbishment of the Gerald Ford entrance is in progress.

You may have noticed the flags and spray paint in the perimeter planters – this begins the first phase of the enhancements. Soon new boulders and rubble will be placed in accordance with those flags and markings. In the December-February time frame the planting will continue around to the Da Vall side.

At the September Board meeting the Board approved new contracts for street sweeping and perimeter landscape maintenance. The Board authorized pumping of the catch basins and dry well (that has been postponed due to a sprinkler line failure on Picasso Ct. – we had the water shut off, but no way to contact the owner other than snail mail. Hope their landscaping doesn't all die before they can arrange to get it fixed. Reminder: it is important that we have an emergency contact or Consent Form for email communications if you are a seasonal owner or will be away for any period of time); they will be pumped as soon as the water level goes down a little again. We have to pay for every gallon of water drained.

At the November Board meeting bids for improvements to the drainage in the detention basin will be considered. Also, the 2012 Budget and update to the Reserve Study will be approved.

## **STREET SWEEPING**

At the September Board meeting Martin Sweeping was awarded the contract for weekly street sweeping in Montage. They started in October and are doing an excellent job.

Due to their schedule they are sweeping the streets on **Fridays**. Please try to keep all vehicles off the streets on the sweeping day so that your gutter will get cleaned. Also, to prevent damage to their sweeper, they drive around any trees overhanging the gutters. Inspect any trees in your front yard to make sure they are trimmed back to behind the curb.

## **GATE CODES**

All homeowners were mailed a notice that the Montage gate codes will be changed with the daylight saving time change on Monday, November 6th. If you did not receive the notice you may request the new codes on the Montage website and they will be emailed to you.

This year I have received many complaints that some homeowners have provided the homeowner gate codes to their gardeners, pool men and other service workers. Not only has this created noise problems for other owners (due to workers starting earlier than 7:00 AM or on Sundays). This is in violation of the CC&Rs and the Community Rules; it also exposes all owners to unnecessary risks. As I have learned by attending Community Associations Institute meetings and Cathedral City HOA Presidents Council meetings – service workers often share gate codes with their staff, family members, friends and gangs to which they may belong. The security compromises of "sharing" the homeowner gate code are real. Once they are out there is no telling how far they will be communicated. When our new gate codes are provided this year, please be responsible for keeping the homeowner's gate code confidential and for use of only homeowners.

Once again - our gate are not security gates, only vanity gates. The bad guy can always find a way

to get in, but you shouldn't make it any easier for them.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**

By Pam Price, Chair of Neighborhood Watch Committee

The National Night Out event on Oct. 04 at Field of Dreams sponsored by Cathedral City Police Department and Target, under a huge tent gave visitors an opportunity to gather information on neighborhood watch issues while having the range of police vehicles on display from the new SWAT van to their (CSI) Crime Scene Investigation van. Our exhibit was at the entrance next to The Cove and was staffed by Wayne and Margot Schweifler, Alexander and Barbara Pierce, Jim Dunn, Hyland Hogan, Gene Urich, myself with my personal "watch" dog, Little One.

Steve Clippinger was our official photographer. A sincere thanks you to all who made a difference. The Schweifler's provided the table and chairs for our exhibit.

I have copies of several important Neighborhood Watch publications such as The Inventory of Household Items, Residential Burglary Safety Tips, a Security Check list and the official Participants Handbook from the National Neighborhood Watch Institute.

Please call or email me, if you would like a complimentary copy of any of the publications. I have on hand for all 14 Pod Captains and our residents.

Adam Elson, Montage resident and expert locksmith has a list of recommendations for our homeowners:

### **Ten Security Tips**

1. Re-key locks after purchase & secure all doors with dead bolts.
2. Control keys, number, DND, or restricted key way.
3. Secure windows.
4. Secure French doors with pin or screw.
5. Secure sliders with secondary lock.
6. Lock all gates if possible with self locking lock.
7. Get an alarm system connected to pd. Put up signs and stickers.
8. Get a fire proof safe and bolt it down.

9. Blinds or shutters so no one can see in.
10. Get high powered motion sensors lights.

And last but not least get to know your Neighbors.

## **GARAGE DOOR PANELS**

One of our homeowners, Jim Dunn, had to replace his entire garage door. Only one of his aluminum panels was damaged, but replacement panels are no longer made. The door company salvaged the 4 other good panels. He will be storing them in his garage for a period of time (until he needs the space or gets tired of looking at them).

They are available to any homeowner that may need one or more replacement panels on a first come first serve basis. They will save you the cost of a whole new garage door, you just need to have a door company retrieve them from Jim's garage, install them and then paint them. If you do not know Jim, contact me at [td2znot@aol.com](mailto:td2znot@aol.com)

## **HOT WATER SYSTEM**

All the homes in Montage have a hot water re-circulating system installed by the developer (see picture below). The systems do require periodic maintenance. I have found that the most common failure is with the impeller within the pump (on the left of the picture). The replacement of the impeller should cost about \$150, installed (my price may be a little out dated, but it shouldn't be much more – I found one at Ferguson Enterprises on Perez Road). Several homeowners have been talked into replacement of the entire unit at a cost of up to \$900.

Joe Silva, a Montage homeowner, informed me this past month that he had experienced 2 leaks in his "made in China" water supply flex pipes to his water heater and 1 leak in his re-circulating system this year. The copper pipe in the re-circulating system should last 30 years or so, but does deteriorate over time. He is in the process of contacting GHA, the developer, for assistance in the cost of repairs (to plumbing as well as floor coverings and walls).

Please provide feedback if you have had any problems with your hot water re-circulating system. Email me at [td2znot@aol.com](mailto:td2znot@aol.com)



### SPRINKLE OVERSPRAY

There are no storm drains within Montage. All water flows down the gutters to the catch basins at the corner of Van Gogh and Da Vinci, then into the drywell in the detention basin.

The problem is that some of the water is held in the catch basins. It becomes stagnant, breeds mosquitoes and algae that begins to smell bad. The standing water is treated by Coachella Valley Vector Control every other month to minimize the mosquitoes. The catch basins and drywell are pumped about once a year and treated for odor.

The source of the majority of the water is overspray from homeowner's front yard irrigation systems for both lush and desert landscaping.

Please have your gardeners check your irrigation systems for overspray and make appropriate adjustments. This may require adjusting or replacing the sprinkler heads or emitters. Checks should be done on a continuous basis.

### TREE PRUNING

(Tree Pruning by E.F. Gilman & S.J. Lilly, 2008 International Society of Arboriculture) Note: As it is that time of year for all of us to give attention to our trees this information may be of value in knowing what to do.

"Pruning is one of the best things an arborist/gardener can do for a tree but one of the worst things we do to a tree." – Alex Shigo

Pruning is a double-edged sword, either helping or hurting – depending on where, when, how, and why it is applied.

When pruning is properly executed, a variety of benefits are derived. Benefits include reduced risk of branch and stem breakage, better clearance for vehicles and pedestrians, improved health and appearance, enhanced view, and increased flowering. When improperly performed, pruning can harm the tree's health, stability, and appearance. Several consequences occur when pruning is not performed at all (Figure 1). These consequences include development of low limbs; weak codominant stems; defects such as included bark; and accumulation of dead branches. Formation of codominant stems and defects such as included bark can lead to increased risk of breakage.

One of the most common defects in planted trees is formation of large, low limbs. They could overextend and break, or they may droop under their own weight and have to be removed later, leaving a large pruning wound. Removal of large branches and those more than about half the trunk diameter is more likely to initiate decay than removal of smaller branches. Therefore, measures should be taken to minimize occurrence of this defect.

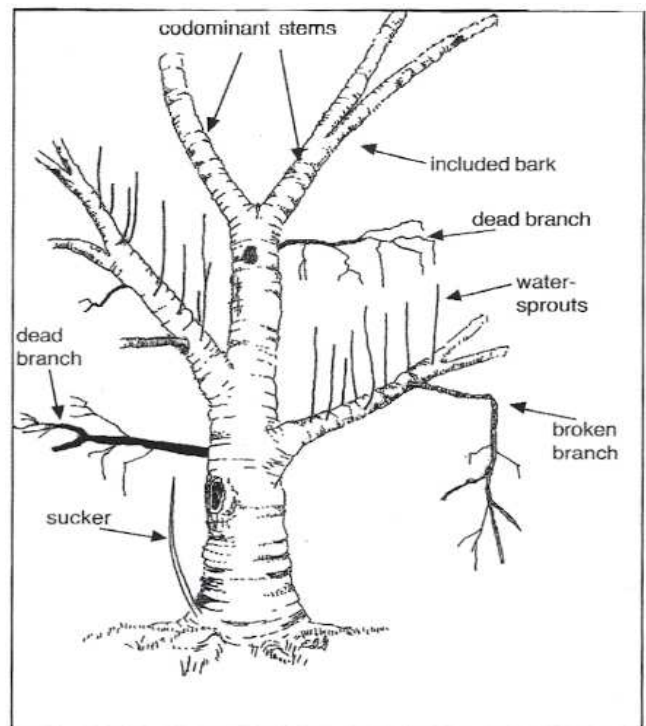


Figure 1. Problems can develop on trees—including codominant stems; included bark; broken and dead branches; suckers and watersprouts; and large, low limbs that require removal.

On mature trees, live branch removal is less desirable than it is on young trees but sometimes it is necessary. However, cleaning the crown by removing dead, diseased, or broken branches is a highly recommended practice on mature trees. Because reduction cuts can initiate problems, perform crown reduction only after other options have been considered.

It is essential first to evaluate the tree and the owner needs to determine which objectives should be accomplished with pruning. Appropriate pruning methods can be chosen to meet these objectives. The arborist/gardener then enters the tree and makes appropriate pruning cuts for the chosen pruning methods. This decision is based on an understanding of branch attachment and tree biology.

### Pruning Objectives

No tree should be pruned without first establishing clearly defined objectives. Seven main objectives are listed below, along with pruning types that help meet those objectives. These objectives serve as examples and can be expanded or shortened to meet site conditions and customer expectations. Removing the correct stems and branches to accomplish specified objectives is as important as making correct pruning cuts. Even with proper pruning cuts, if the wrong branches –

or too many branches – are removed, nothing of merit has been accomplished.

### Objectives List:

- Reduce risk of failure
- Provide clearance
- Reduce shade and wind resistance
- Maintain health
- Influence flower or fruit production
- Improve a view
- Improve aesthetics

### Reduce Risk of Failure

Risk of tree failure can be reduced by establishing a structural pruning program that begins at planting and could carry through the first 25 years or more depending upon the species. This program should be designed to create structurally sound trunk and branch architecture that will sustain the tree for a long period. Some structural pruning can be conducted on older trees as well. Medium-aged and mature trees can be cleaned, thinned, reduced, raised, or restored to manage risk. The choice amount these pruning methods depends upon the tree and the situation.

### Provide Clearance

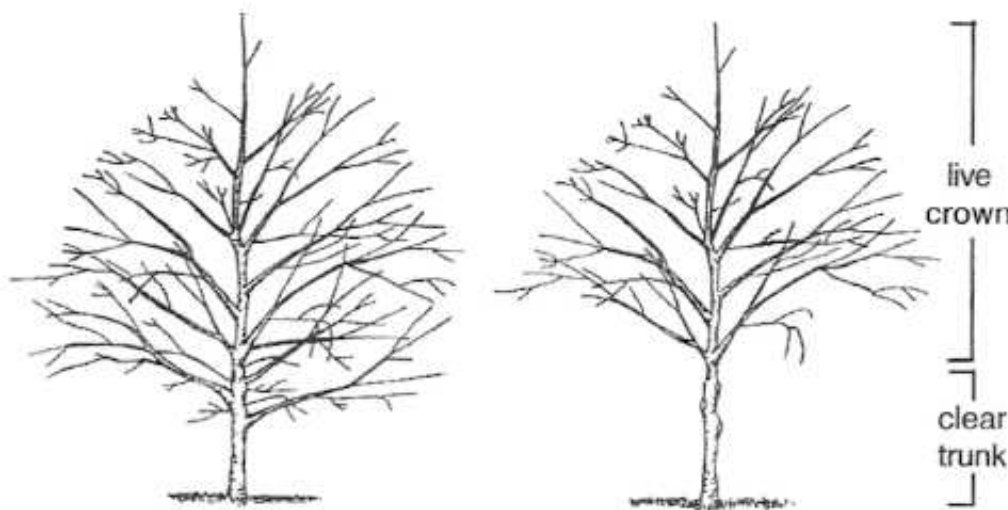
Growth can be directed away from an object such as a home, security light, or power line by reducing or removing limbs on that side of the tree. However, trees often grow back to fill the void created by pruning. Regular pruning is required to maintain artificial clearance. Shortening or removing low branches can raise the crown. Crown reduction or pollarding helps maintain a tree smaller than it would be without pruning. Utility pruning keeps limbs clear of overhead wires and other utility structures.

### Reduce Shade and Wind Resistance

Lawns, ground covers, or shrubs can receive more sunlight when live foliage is removed from the crowns of large overstory trees. *The tree's resistance to wind also can be reduced with pruning.* Structural pruning, thinning, reduction, and pollarding are used to accomplish this objective.

**Before raising**

**After raising**



**Problem:** Many trees develop large low branches when planted in the open. As a result they develop a low spreading crown. Low branches often block visibility of signs, buildings and vehicles and have to be removed.

**Solution:** Remove low branches back to the trunk using an appropriate pruning cut. The ratio of live crown to clear trunk (live crown ratio) should be no less than 50 percent.



### **Maintain Health**

Health can be maintained by cleaning the crown, especially in medium-aged and mature trees. Removing dead, diseased, and rubbing branches in the crowns of young trees also is important.

### **Influence Flower or Fruit Production**

Pruning can influence the number and/or size of flowers or fruit. Fruit size can be increased on certain plants, such as peach, by removing some of the developing fruit or flowers. Flower cluster size can be increased on certain species, such as crapemyrtle, by heading. Fruit production can be eliminated by removing flowers or developing fruit.

### **Improve a View**

A view can be enhanced or created by removing live branches at the edge of the crown, at the top of the tree, or on the lower side of the crown. This pruning can include thinning, reducing, pollarding, and raising.

### **Improved Aesthetics**

A tree can be pruned to improve appearance. Cleaning, reducing, thinning, pollarding, and restoring can be used to meet this objective.

### **Pruning to Raise (Elevate, Lift) (*Important in the Montage along streets*)**

Raising is the selective removal of branches to provide vertical clearance. Drown raising shortens or removes lower branches of a tree to provide clearance for signs, vehicles, pedestrians, and vistas.

Excessive removal of lower limbs can slow development of trunk taper, can cause cracks or decay in the trunk, and concentrates foliage at the top of the tree.

Mature trees could become stressed if large-diameter lower branches are removed. Clearance sometimes can be achieved by shortening some of the low branches rather than removing them to prevent these problems. Live crown ratio should be no less than 50 percent when raising is completed and more is better. Structural pruning should be considered along with raising.

### **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The next Board meeting will be Wednesday November 2, 2011 at 3:00 PM at the offices of Personalized Property Management, 69850 Adelina Road, Cathedral City.

Check the community message board on the wall by the retention basin or the web site for the agenda. It will be posted at least 4 days before the meeting.

**Tom Tousignant**, *President*

### **IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

Keep This Information Handy When You Would Like to Comment or Report an Issue:

Property Manager - Jennifer Zeivel 760-325-9500;

[jzeivel@ppmlInternet.com](mailto:jzeivel@ppmlInternet.com)

President - Tom Tousignant

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A & L Committee Chair - Sandy Nips

[lilsnip@hotmail.com](mailto:lilsnip@hotmail.com)

Neighborhood Watch Chair - Pam Price  
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Cathedral City Fire 760-770-8200; Emergency 911

Newsletter Input, Comments or Suggestions...

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