



## **.. JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2014 ..**

The holidays are all but behind us and many of us will be or are taking down decorations and lights and packing them up until our next winter holidays. Many of us met new neighbors and renewed connections at parties and gatherings throughout the Montage and by doing so have strengthened the interconnections for a safer and more observant neighborhood.

New and updated laws that affect homeowner associations go into effect and that means a few changes in our CC&Rs and a review of related documents. Work has been ongoing in this regard and will be part of the activity of the annual meeting in March.

Now is the time to consider becoming more involved in the governance and operation of your homeowner association. Some of you are board members in other associations and you know how much it means to have homeowners / residents involved in the community. You can contribute to the improvement and enhanced quality of the Montage. The annual meeting will be here all too quickly and even those who are only here on weekends or seasonally can add greatly to the community.

### **TELEPHONE CALLS**

Call to inform someone of gate problems, parking complaints and etc. should be directed to PPM (760-325-9500). Not getting a return call does not mean that action is not being taken. Many things can and are handled quickly or assigned to the appropriate company or individual able to handle the situation.

As board members, we often meet homeowners face-to-face and will listen to their concerns and do what we can to address the comments. Please know that being aware of a troublesome situation does not always meet with an easy nor immediate solution. At times there are extenuating circumstances or special considerations with which to be dealt.

### **CONCERNS VOICED**

Homeowners have made comment on the following:

- **Trash Bins:** Some are being set out on Sunday evenings and then not being taken in after being emptied on Tuesdays. (Talk to a neighbor to set your trash out on Monday night or Tuesday morning and then putting the emptied containers back) We have some neighbors putting them back for absent residents almost weekly just because they need to be cleared off the street.
- **Tree Branches:** Branches touching the roofs are open highways for rodents to gain access to attics and crawl spaces. This time of year when warmth is sought by these creatures they will do their best to gain access.
- **Fruit Trees:** Non-harvested, ripe fruit is an attraction to rodents and a source of problems to you and your neighbors.
- **Trash outside of Bins for pickup:** All the trash to be picked up must be inside the bins. Boxes should be broken down and ideally . . . Tied into bundles. Items set next to the bins or too large for inclusion require special arrangements for pickup and disposal.

## EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

The heightened focus on earthquake preparedness here in the Coachella Valley has seen the Mission Hills Country Club step into a leadership role for our area. They have and will continue to host events aimed at helping residents become more aware of not only the risks for our area but also way in which we can all be prepared. In the most recent meeting on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013, about 100 area residents heard from local experts and resource providers from whom reliable information and guidance toward personal efforts and community efforts at preparedness was presented. It was sobering to realize the extent of work we each may need to consider to secure our family and homes should the predicted major quake hit us.

The information covered included what was needed in a basic kit for survival needs as well as how to store it. Plastic containers of water need to not only be cycled to maintain freshness but most not be stored directly on concrete surfaces as they will absorb chemicals that can be harmful. Folders of information were/are available. Members of the Emergency Preparedness Committee may have extras should one be requested.

One of the speakers shared that experts agree there is a near certainty we will have a 1994 Northridge 6.7 sized earthquake in the Coachella Valley in the next thirty years. Some say that something like an 8.0 quake is a strong possibility. That would mean it would be at least 50 times more powerful than the 1994 shaker.

UCLA researchers found that 55% of those killed or hurt in the Northridge quake were hit by unfastened items.

*(Personal Note: As a number of Montage residents have also done . . . We contracted with the only company in our area that will*

*come to your home or business, discuss what needs to be done to make it safer in a major earthquake and then install the best products available to make one safer. The assessment fee was waved as we attended the preparedness workshop at MHCC. All of our hanging artwork and our cupboards were fitted with secure latches and hangers and we will be doing other tasks we were made aware of in the evaluation. . . If you want to see what was done or get a recommendation . . . Let me know. CB)*

## ARCHITECTURE & LANDSCAPE REPORT By Robert Fouyer, Chair, Architectural & Landscape Committee

The A & L Committee had a busy year in 2013. We had many homeowners submitting variance requests during the year on such things as exterior painting, landscaping changes, solar installations, pool construction, heating and air conditioning installations, construction additions, and satellite dishes (these were probably due to mostly to the NBC Channel 6 with Time Warner). Our Committee tries to handle these requests as quickly as possible, but some delays were due to vacations, either our committee members or with Personalized Property Management (PPM), our property management company. We prefer these requests go directly to PPM, but some have gone directly to me, or one of our Committee members, which is fine because they receive copies.

Our street edge deterioration was minimized this year by a number of homeowners who converted their front landscaping to desert or some who did their side yards to help with sprinkler runoff. Lawn over-watering and our shallow gutter system causes water to overflow on to our streets, and over time this causes the edges of our streets to crumble-in some cases up to 12 inches. The worst cases were repaired prior to our street resurfacing project, but we need to always check our

sprinklers periodically to make sure they are not spraying water into the street. Leaves and debris can also collect in the gutters causing an overflow. Please keep an eye on this and if necessary sweep out the blockage. Our street cleaner company comes on Fridays, but we still have cars parked on the street on this day so the streets and gutter do not get cleaned out. This can cause an overflow problem as well—particularly if it has been a windy day. Please have your guests, housekeeper, etc., park in your driveway on this day at least until after the street has been cleaned.

A few homeowners are leaving their trash cans on the street after collection day. Please arrange to have your neighbor or a friend take in the cans on collection day.

We completed our semi-annual walk-thru inspection in early November (usually done in early to mid- October). There were approximately 47 homes that either needed either total exterior painting, or just the gates, shutters and/or garage doors. Others included cases where trees had been removed or blown down but not replaced, thus leaving the flood light shining on nothing. This also included cases where the stumps were never removed after the trees were taken out. Please remember to have your trees trimmed regularly as they do get top heavy, which is an invitation for a tree to blow down on a windy day. We usually send letters out on all these cases, but we did, however, make an effort to either personally contact the homeowners or email. This was not as successful as we would had hoped due to nobody being home (we have many part-time homeowners), vacation rentals, etc, or our e-mails were not answered because of unrecognized e-mails ending up in users spam files. Gratefully some homeowners caught up with their maintenance issues on their own--thus solving the problem in some cases. On the subject of maintenance, the builder-installed wooden gates (mine included) are showing their age and some are

in bad shape and beyond help. Some homeowners need to give thought to replacing them altogether. I know that is on my bucket list to replacing mine. Don't forget if you are replacing to submit a variance request.

Committee Members: Dennis Goodman, Steve Clippinger and Terry Palmer

We are looking for volunteers to serve on our Committee. If you would like to serve or want additional information, please contact Robert Fouyer, 760 324-9608, or email me at [ChateauF@aol.com](mailto:ChateauF@aol.com)

## **POWER SAVINGS AND MORE TO COME By Tom Tousignant**

The Board had LED bulbs installed in the majority of the perimeter light fixtures in December 2012. After a year of usage we are seeing over a 75% drop in electrical usage for lighting. This is somewhat difficult to see because the majority of our power consumption is the fountain pumps.

During October 2012 the pumps at the DaVall entrance were down for the majority of the month, but not both pumps for the entire month. The bill went down from an expected \$450 to \$109, a 75% drop - the majority of the \$109 was just from gates, sprinkler controllers and perimeter lights, only a small portion from the pumps.

To see the effect of the new LED bulbs (installed December 2012) we looked at the annual totals for consumption January thru September. Looks like a savings of about \$1,000 per compatible 9 month period. Extrapolated it will be about \$1,300/year - payback of about 6.5 years neglecting replacement bulbs (the old CFL bulbs have a life of about 8,000 hours, the new LED bulbs life is 50,000 hours, 6x longer).

During 2015 we are scheduled to “refurbish” the entry fountains per the Reserve Study. There is a planned expenditure of \$10,000 for the refurbishment project. Plus a \$14,500 budget for any necessary repairs to the concrete surfaces. The Board would entertain suggestions on possible redesign of the entrances.

## **WE LOST A GOOD FRIEND & NEIGHBOR**

On September 21, 2013, our friend and neighbor Dorothy V. LaPaglia lost her battle with cancer. Dotty, as she was known to her loved ones, was born on August 13, 1940, in New Jersey. She grew up in New York where she worked on Wall Street and in the accounting field. Dotty was a colorful person having many good friends and many good monthly parties. She served on the Montage A & L Committee during her 9 years living in Montage.

Dotty is survived by her son, Michael, his wife, 2 granddaughters, a brother, sister and hundreds of friends. We will miss you Dotty, rest in peace.

## **CHANGES TO THE CC&Rs by Tom Tousignant**

The California legislature has enacted changes to the Davis-Sterling Act that provides the majority of legislation governing Common Interest developments. Primarily these changes are a reorganization of the current legislation to make it easier and more logical to follow. This change is effective January 1, 2014.

The Board must make changes to the references in our CC&Rs to incorporate the new code references. We currently have our lawyers reviewing our CC&Rs. They have recommended making several other changes to remove provisions that were included for the benefit of the developer. Also, the Board

is considering making additional changes to make our CC&Rs more current.

All homeowners will be receiving notice of the proposed changes during February. We will be discussing at the Annual Homeowners meeting on March 22, 2014.

## **ELECTION TO THE HOA BOARD By Tom Tousignant**

You will soon be receiving a notice soliciting candidate statements from homeowners interested in running for seats on the Board of Directors. Three of the current Board member seats are scheduled for election and at least one current Board member will not be seeking re-election.

Please give serious consideration to submitting your candidate statement to participate in governing your HOA.

## **CATHEDRAL CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES CALENDAR**

[www.cathedralcity.gov](http://www.cathedralcity.gov) (under Departments select the Recycling, Trash & Energy page)

To have an R&R Guide and Calendar mailed to your home please contact . . . call 760-770-0369 or email [dpressgrove@cathedralcity.gov](mailto:dpressgrove@cathedralcity.gov)

This publication includes schedules and contact information for local services incl.:

- Bulky/Large Item Pickup Service
- Community Clean-up Program
- Multi-Family Recycling Programs
- Bottles & Cans Recycling
- Electronic & Tire Weekly Recycling
- Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Program
- Shredding Events
- WaterSmart Landscape Grant Program
- Smart Irrigation Controller

- Medication Disposal Program
- Sharps Disposal by Mail
- Refuse & Recycling Guide and 2014 Calendar
- Citrus Prevention Program
- Edison Rebates
- Recycle Used Motor Oil
- And more in both English and Spanish

### **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The next Board meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 9, 2014 at 3:00 PM at the Offices of Personalized Property Management 69850 Adelina Road, Cathedral City.

Check the community message board on the wall at the DaVinci/VanGogh corner or the web site for the agenda. It will be posted at least 4 days before the meeting.

Property Manager - Jennifer Zeivel 760-325-9500;  
jzeivel@ppmlInternet.com

A & L Committee Chair – Robert Fouyer  
chateauf@aol.com

Neighborhood Watch Chair – JoAnn Horwitz  
[JoAnnWLV@aol.com](mailto:JoAnnWLV@aol.com)  
c) 818-370-6589 h) 760-992-5199

Cathedral City Police 760-770-0300  
Police Emergency Only 760-202-2411

Cathedral City Fire 760-770-8200; Emergency 911

Newsletter Input, Comments or Suggestions...  
Bd. President . . . CurtBeyer@gmail.com

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