



artisan

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2024



Da Vinci



Monet



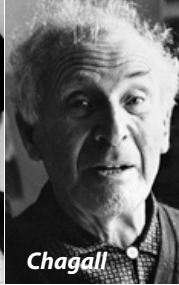
Van Gogh



Matisse



Picasso



Chagall



Dali

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY TONY MICHAELIS, President



2024

HAPPY NEW YEAR

As we begin the New Year, I believe that our Montage community can be thankful for many things. Your Board of Directors will continue to provide property and financial oversight in a reasonable, transparent and responsible manner.

Our two current Board members, Norman Giere and Thomas Harp have been nominated for re-election and no other candidates filed prior to the December 27th deadline. As a result, by rule, they will be elected by acclamation at our Annual Meeting (see our Inspector of Elections article for details).

I believe that we are fortunate to have a strong group of volunteer homeowners on our Board of Directors and Committees which will serve us well in the year ahead.

The Board will be overseeing several projects in 2024 including asphalt resurfacing and the next phase of palm tree replacements. We have updated the gate arm at the Gerald Ford entry which has improved the opening speed and reliability. In addition, we are considering a transponder entry system similar to what is used at Mission Hills Country Club and a perimeter landscape refresh. For more details on this and other HOA related topics please consider attending our January Board meeting and the Annual Homeowner Meeting in March.

Our next **Board Meeting is on Friday, January 12th at 9:30 am**. An Agenda and ZOOM invite will be sent to all Montage Homeowners by Monday, January 8th.

The **Annual Homeowners Meeting** will be held on Saturday, March 16, 2024 and the Welcome and Social Committee is planning our annual Block Party. Stay tuned for details of both events in the coming weeks.

If you have any questions or comments or would like to discuss any HOA-related issues please give me a call or drop me an email.

HOA DUES PAYMENT INCREASE FOR 2024

BY THOMAS HARP, Board Treasurer



The **Finance Committee**, consisting of all the Board members, met in October to develop the **Annual Budget & Reserve Study for 2024**. Both of these updates were approved at the October Board meeting.

Our HOA dues increase is primarily due to the 2024 increases in the following expenses: Mission Hills Country Club Social and Sports Membership, utility fees, Conserve LandCare

(our landscape maintenance company), an increased contribution to our Reserve budget, and overall inflation. It should also be noted that Montage continues to have one of the lowest HOA fees in the Coachella Valley.

The increase in our Reserve contribution was based on the recommendation of our **2024 Level III Reserve Study**. This increase will continue to keep us in a strong position for our current and future financial obligations.

The **January e-statement** will reflect the increase in dues. If you remit through **auto payments** you need to update the payment amount beginning in January to **\$325**.

SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

It's hard to believe that the Holidays are over—but they are and so we need to remind owners that "Holiday Decorations" must be taken down by January 10th. We

know some of you can't bear to part with your reindeers, Santas and Elves, and we hate to be *Humbugs*, but remember they can all come back next year.



2024 ANNUAL HOMEOWNER ELECTION

BY JOHN GEARY, Inspector of Elections (IoE)

Happy New Year to all! The nomination process for the two open Board of Directors positions officially closed on December 27, 2023. As of this date two candidates who currently serve on the Board (Thomas Harp and Norm Giere) submitted their nomination materials to Personalized Property Management. Since the number of nominees (two) is equal to the number of positions up for election in 2024, the Board will vote to seat the two candidates by **Acclamation** (without balloting) at its regular Board meeting January 12th. This is the first time that the Montage community has had an **Election by Acclamation**. As a result, you will **NOT** be receiving an election ballot in February. At the January meeting, the Board will discuss the matter of voting on the Revenue/Income carryover (per IRS requirement) which may be taken by a show of hands at the Annual General Meeting scheduled for Saturday, March 16th. Details to be determined—updates will follow. For more information about the election, please visit montageatmissionhills.org



Norm Giere retired from a career in graphic design. He was first elected to the Board in 2020 and currently serves as Board Vice-President. Norm chairs the **Architectural Review Committee** that oversees perimeter landscape maintenance (including the palm replacement project) and reviews all **Architectural Improvement Requests (AIRS)**. He redesigned and currently edits the **Artisan**, our bimonthly newsletter, and serves as Board liaison to the Montage **Welcome Committee**.



Thomas Harp is a former educator and was elected to the Montage Board in 2022. He currently serves as Treasurer. Thomas has worked with the Board to develop the yearly operating budget, monitor monthly expenses and oversee our reserve fund. In addition, he has been part of the team that programs homeowners' cars to the entrance gates. Since joining the Board, he has co-chaired the **Gate Access Committee** that provides primary oversight to ongoing gate maintenance and repair.

Please join me in congratulating Norm and Thomas.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns related to the election, please contact me at geary1925@gmail.com

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (ARC)

BY NORM GIERE, Chair



As Chair of the Architectural Review Committee I want to personally acknowledge our Committee volunteers for their contributions, commitment, and support throughout the year. They are an amazing group and a tremendous asset for our Community—**Sue Johnson (the Board Liaison), John Geary, David Leytus, and new members Ed Schnaars, Brian Holt and George Dobosh.** I also want to acknowledge three retiring members—**Tony Michaelis, Dave Busick and Richard Meyerson** for their participation and major contributions while on the Committee.

Through a process of review and peer approval it is the goal of our Committee to maintain the overall feel and aesthetic beauty of Montage. The **ARC** has one guiding principle—to keep Montage looking great so it continues to be regarded as an excellent place to reside in the Coachella Valley.

Remember, an **Architectural Improvement Request (AIR)** is required for all exterior home and landscape improvements. The Committee meets on the first Friday of each month and posts Agendas on the Monday prior to our meeting. **AIRs** need to be on our Agenda for consideration, so please submit your projects the Friday before the meeting.

One of the Committee's responsibilities is to conduct a review of Homeowner exterior lighting. After completing our review some Homeowners received a notification from PPM indicating the required repairs. It's important to note that the Committee conducted the light inspections as a group.

One of the recurring issues we noted was aging address signs. Most of the address signs are original, and therefore they are around 15–20 years old. It is probably time to replace the old fixture with the new LED technology. If you would like to spiff up the front of your home with a new lighted address sign we suggest the LED light from Aero-Lite.



The model is **PLHN4LED** and features a warm white LED strip that improves light dispersion. If you are interested in the new light you can [CLICK HERE](#) and you will be taken directly to their website.

Yearly date palm inspection—For our arborist report, we have again contracted with Gregston Young of *GDY Consulting*. With over 40 years of experience, Gregston specializes in palm tree care, maintenance and assessment. He is also *ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified*. Gregston will be providing the Board with a rigorous analysis of our remaining date palms on the perimeter and within the detention basin. His report and recommendations will enable the Board to update our palm tree replacement plan.

Conserve tree maintenance—In October we had **Conserve**, our landscape contractor, do the annual trimming of our mesquite trees in the detention basin. This pruning is not only meant to maintain the health of the trees, but also to add to the aesthetics and overall beauty of Montage.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

BY CHUCK MIDDLETON, Chair



Distribution of the **Earthquake Preparedness** materials proceeds apace. Over 20% of the homeowners have now received their copies, including all of the new neighbors who have moved here since October who received theirs in the **Welcome Packet**. This has been accomplished without my having to ring doorbells as I walk around the neighborhood. That will change in January—so if you want to get ahead of the rush please send me a note letting me know when you're available. It takes 3 minutes max to complete the process.

Block Captain selection has nearly been completed. I will be meeting with the volunteers soon to establish protocols for post-shakeout actions.

The Committee is looking for volunteers to serve with the two continuing members after Barbara Little's departure. If you are interested in learning more about how much time and effort are involved, let me know. **HINT:** Very little time and virtually no effort (except thinking). I know of no better way to pass along your expertise in this area or, if you are a novice like I was, to learn all you can about it. My phone number and email are listed on the last page in the **Contacts** section.

WELCOME AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

BY FRANK SAN JUAN, Chair



We hope all of you had a wonderful Holiday Season and are now ready to enjoy our beautiful desert paradise with the perfect outdoor weather this Winter/Spring season.

On behalf of the **Welcome and Social Committee** we want to welcome and acknowledge our new residents joining our Montage Community.

- **Jack Woods and Marlon Seperak at 69884 Van Gogh Road**
- **Jack Fitzsimmons and Walter Gendell at 36315 Dali Drive**

We also want to acknowledge **Robert and Brenda Holt**, who previously lived at 36303 Artisan Way and have now moved to 36229 Dali Drive.

In order to foster greater Community Spirit, please take the time to reach out and say "Hello" to our new Montage neighbors.

*We wish our new residents peace, enjoyment,
and lasting memories in their new homes!*

Welcome Home

WEATHER PROOFING SUGGESTIONS

The **NOAA (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Agency)** U.S. Winter Outlook released recently by the [Climate Prediction Center](#)—a division of the National Weather Service—El Nino is in place heading into winter for the first time in four years, driving the outlook for warmer-than-average temperatures for the northern tier of the continental United States, and wetter conditions in the west and southeast United States. The drought in California is officially over, as reservoirs reach capacity for this time of year, and the likelihood of increased weather events and greater rainfall in the future seems like a fact now.

In August, Montage stormwater systems got perhaps their greatest stress test ever with the arrival of Hurricane Hillary and over 3.6 inches of rain in about five hours on August 18th. This amount of rain was roughly equivalent to the much-feared 100-year flood. Montage roofs, gutters, downspouts, French drains and deck drains were put to the test. There were many reports of leaky roofs, overflowing pools, flooding, and near-flooding backyard decks and patio roofs.

The **Architectural Review Committee (ARC)** has received **Architectural Improvement Requests (AIRs)** for expensive landscape upgrades to improve grading and drainage around homes. These are the kinds of improvements that, once completed, should permanently solve the problem. There are, however, a number of other remedial and inexpensive ways to resolve some of these water problems that you should consider, beginning with seasonal maintenance in the months of October and April. Owners with contemporary-style homes should pay particular attention to these issues, since flat roofs generally have more problems.

Here's a short list of suggested fixes:

1. Remove build-up around gutters and roof drains, and make sure all drain caps are in place to stop larger debris from clogging the drain.
2. Replace original builder-grade roof vents with new roof vents with a higher lip opening to stop backup into ceiling.
3. Install louvered covers over all vertical wall openings to prevent horizontal wind-driven rain from being pushed through wall openings into attic space.
4. Clean/pressure wash/router-out clogged horizontal deck drains under the patio around house and the pool.
5. Replace worn out weather stripping or install an anodized aluminum door drip cap above French door.
6. Install inexpensive 9" x 9" low profile (3 1/2" high) portable catch basins with downspout extensions (shown below) to deploy at the bottom of the downspouts to catch water and divert it into the yard away from filled drains and door openings.



HOA VIRTUAL MEETING UPDATE

BY SCOTT REESE, Webmaster



In October, Governor Newsom signed into law AB 648 (Virtual/Electronic Meetings) that took effect January 1st, 2024. Previously, virtual meetings were only permissible as long as

there was also a physical meeting place attended by at least one board member. A limited exception was made during the COVID pandemic to preclude the need for a meeting place. That exception ended on February 28th, 2023, when the Governor declared the pandemic emergency over.

The Montage experience with virtual meetings has generally been very positive and has led to increased regular and annual meeting attendance and participation by those in attendance. Virtual meetings are generally easier to attend, and members can listen to the Board's work without participating, should they desire. This brings additional understanding, openness, and transparency to Board operations.

AB 648 adds a new section to the Davis-Stirling Act (§ 4926) that states that under the following conditions, HOAs can hold purely virtual meetings other than those where ballots are counted, such as the **Annual General Meeting** or a special meeting where votes are to be counted. Vote counting must always be visible.



The new law provides that virtual meetings may be held under the following conditions:

- The notice for any such meeting must, in addition to the customarily required information, also contain: (1) “clear technical instructions on how to participate by teleconference”; (2) a telephone number AND email address of a person who can provide technical assistance with the teleconference process, both before and during the meeting”; and (3) a reminder that any member can ask for individual delivery of meeting notices, with instructions regarding how to do so.
- The ability of any director or member to participate in the meeting must be the same as if the meeting were held in person.
- All votes of the Board must include a roll call vote.
- Any person entitled to participate in the meeting is also given the option of participating solely via telephone (assuming that the meeting is being conducted by more than phone, such as via Zoom).

As a result of the change in the law, it will no longer be necessary for the Board to meet in person at **Personalized Property Management** unless a Board decision is made to do so.

Information about how to participate in a board meeting using Zoom will be included on each upcoming agenda circulated to members four days before each board meeting. Information can also be found on the Montage website by [Clicking Here](#).

MONTAGE RULES AND REMINDERS

Trash—Tuesday is our trash pickup day. Our rule states: *“trash bins shall not be put out earlier than 24 hours prior to pickup and brought back in within 24 hours after pickup.”* If you are a part-time resident please consider the roll-out service provided by Burrtec.



Bin wheels blocking water flow



Bin wheels are on black asphalt

We want you to be aware that Burrtec’s pickup time fluctuates on Tuesday. In order to make sure that your trash is collected you should have it on the street by 7:00 am on Tuesday morning. If you put your trash out later than that you may miss the pickup. Please don’t put your trash bins in the gutter, it blocks the flow of water to our detention basin. Place your bins on the black asphalt.

Front yard lighting—Please be aware that your front yard “original fluorescent fixtures” are the responsibility of the HOA to maintain. If you notice your lights are not coming on in the evening or staying on all day, contact Nick Evans at PPM nevans@ppmineternet.com to be put on the monthly lighting repair list.

Garage lighting—Garage lights, including garage wall sconces, must always be on, even when the homeowner is not in residence. These lights are needed for safety as well as aesthetics. Also, always replace lights with a “warm white light appearance” bulb between 2700K–3000K. Daylight bulbs greater than 3000K are not acceptable. This requirement is in our new *Rules and Regulations*.

Dogs off leash—It has been observed that there are dogs in the Community that have been roaming around the streets unleashed and unattended. Our Montage rules state:



“Pets shall not be permitted to run at large and shall be on a leash held by a person capable of controlling the animal.”

Regardless of the size of your pet a leash is required when your pet is outdoors. Please be a responsible pet parent and follow this established rule and avoid being contacted by PPM with a violation letter.



Our Detention Basin is not a toilet—Just a reminder that the Detention Basin is not a toilet for your dog to use. If your dog poops in the basin it is your responsibility to clean up the waste. Please be respectful and follow the Cathedral City Ordinance as well as our Montage rule that states: *“Owners shall not knowingly fail, refuse, or neglect to clean up their dog’s feces immediately and shall dispose of it in a sanitary manner whenever the dog has defecated upon public or private property.”*

Please be a responsible pet owner!

YOUR DOORBELL MAY HIDE THE SOLUTION

A common question asked by frustrated homeowners is — “*Why doesn’t my outside address light work after I replace the bulb?*” The solution is to replace the transformer— located either inside your doorbell unit or in the junction box behind the address light.



Doorbell chime unit is usually located in the hallway

It turns out that this transformer not only controls the doorbell light and doorbell, but also controls the outside address light.



Transformer inside doorbell chime unit or behind address light fixture

FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS



Our January Board Meeting will be conducted on Friday, January 12th at 9:30 am. The Agenda and instructions will be emailed to all our Homeowners who have provided the **Consent Form** for receiving electronic documents (required by State law) on Monday, January 8th. If you don’t receive this information please contact Tony Michaelis at tonymichaelis@icloud.com to receive the **Montage Consent Form**. Email instructions will be sent to Homeowners prior to the meeting.

Meeting notices and Agendas are posted on the **Community Message Board**, located on the wall at the Da Vinci/Van Gogh curve. Homeowners are encouraged to observe the meeting and are invited to participate during the **OPEN FORUM** portion. Please understand that the Board cannot act on any items that are not on the posted Agenda.

COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS

If you have something that you would like to share with the Community or the HOA Board please email Tony Michaelis at tonymichaelis@icloud.com for Board consideration. If you would like to submit an article for the newsletter please contact Norm Giere at gierearc@gmail.com. We encourage and welcome your participation and feedback to make our newsletter inclusive and reflect our Community.



MONTAGE CONTACT INFORMATION

Association Board Members

Tony Michaelis—President
tonymichaelis@icloud.com
(213.200.4274)

Norm Giere—Vice President
giereARC@gmail.com

Thomas Harp—Treasurer
rthomasharp3@gmail.com
(916.296.1563)

Sue Johnson—Secretary
lsjohnson231@gmail.com
(562.3046370)

Gary Roman—Director-at-Large
grroman@aol.com
(310.600.4279)

Architectural Review Committee

Norm Giere—Chair
giereARC@gmail.com

Sue Johnson—Board Liaison
lsjohnson231@gmail.com

Emergency Preparedness Committee

Chuck Middleton—Chair
cmiddleton@roosevelt.edu

Gary Roman—Board Liaison
grroman@aol.com

Website Committee

Scott Reese—Webmaster
scott.o.reese@gmail.com

Welcome and Social Committee

Frank San Juan—Chair
frankcsanjuan@gmail.com

Norm Giere—Board Liaison
giereARC@gmail.com

Cathedral City Contacts

Cathedral City Emergency—911
Cathedral City Police—
(Non-Emergency)—760.770.0300
Fire—760.770.8200
Cathedral City Vacation Rental Hotline
(Short Term)—760.553.1031

Montage Website

MontageAtMissionHills.org

Community Management Office

Personalized Property Management (PPM)
68950 Adelina Rd, Cathedral City, CA 92234
Tel: 760.325.9500
Fax: 760.325.9300

Community Management Contacts

Shelly Ruegsegger—Sr Community Manager
sruegsegger@ppminternet.com

Nick Evans—Co-Community Manager
nevans@ppminternet.com

Heidi Grasl—Phone gate-access inquiries
hgrasl@ppminternet.com

Mark See—Maintenance Supervisor
msee@ppminternet.com

To Program Your Vehicle for Gate Entry

Thomas Harp: rthomasharp3@gmail.com
(916.296.1563)

Gary Roman: grroman@aol.com
(310.600.4279)

Contact Gary Roman for purchase of a gate access remote control. The current cost is \$45 per unit.

Burrtec Waste and Recycling

Contact for any refuse issues including bin replacement: 760.340.2113 or
burrtec.com/cathedral-city

Cathedral City Guide and Calendar

To have a *Refuse and Recycling Guide* and *Cathedral City Calendar* mailed to your home, contact Deanna Pressgrove with Cathedral City at 760.770.0369 or
dpressgrove@cathedralcity.gov

Discover Cathedral City

Go to: discovercathedralcity.com
There you will find a *City Calendar* of local events, entertainment, local news, senior services, and dining options.