

# Santa Monica Canyon News

Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association - Founded 1947

Winter 2012

## SMCCA REHABILITATING HISTORIC GROVE

SMCCA kicked off the new year by starting work on the association-funded rehabilitation of the historic Rustic Canyon eucalyptus grove. The trees were planted by Abbot Kenney in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century on the first forestry station in the country. Over time, drought, neglect and infestation resulted in the death of many trees. Canyon historian, the late Betty Lou Young, worked tirelessly for over 25 years to rehabilitate the grove. SMCCA is proud to carry out Betty Lou's vision as set forth in a comprehensive plan prepared by landscape designer David Card. Because the grove is a state and City-landmarked facility, the plans had to be approved by the City's Cultural Heritage Commission as well as our partners, the Department of Recreation and Parks. The stars aligned and we are finally seeing significant

progress. A decomposed granite path has been constructed along the Latimer Road frontage and 60 granite boulders quarried on Catalina Island have been carefully placed. In addition, three "chair" boulders have been placed in a contemplative arrangement near the far end of the grove. Planting holes for new trees and shrubs have been dug and can be seen as bright orange circles. Currently, a City crew is installing irrigation supplies purchased by SMCCA.

SMCCA has an urgent need for additional funds to accomplish the remainder of the approved plan. This includes the purchase and planting of trees and shrubs, construction of a wooden arbor in the style of Mr. Latimer and a stone arbor similar to one in Santa Monica near Idaho and Ocean Ave., construction of a

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### **Board Members--**

*Andrew Bergman*

*Lisa Bittan*

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### **Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association**

**P.O. Box 3441**

**Santa Monica, CA**

**90408-3441**

**email: [info@smcca.org](mailto:info@smcca.org)**

**[www.smcca.org](http://www.smcca.org)**

## STORMWATER DIVERSION PROJECTS NEAR COMPLETION

Two major projects to improve our beach water quality are nearing completion. Both projects are funded through the \$500M Proposition "O" clean water bonds approved by the voters in 2004 to clean up the ocean.

First is the "Santa Monica Canyon Low Flow Diversion Project" upgrade. This project captures the City's dry weather polluted street runoff before it drains into the ocean. The upgrade will permit year-around operation, except on "rain event" days. The runoff is diverted to the sanitary sewer system so it can be treated before it runs into Santa Monica Bay. The upgraded system will capture runoff from storm drains downstream from the diversion works located adjacent to the Golden Bull parking lot. This is a joint LA City and LA County project. The City's portion of the work is complete at a cost of \$2.5M. The County's work entails the installation of an inflatable dam at the diversion site to increase storage capacity. Current timeline is for completion of the dam installation by mid-summer 2012, in ample time to meet the next rainy season which officially begins October 15.

Still under construction is the "Coastal Interceptor Relief Sewer" which will increase capacity to meet the demand from all the diverted storm water from Santa Monica Canyon and expanded runoff diversion projects up the coast. This is part of the Blois contract that required lane closure in PCH for several months and continues with work in the Entrada Beach parking lot. We are assured the work in the parking lot will be completed before June. Remaining work on this \$8.7M project is the challenging connection from the parking lot to tie in to the main sewer line in PCH near the Annenberg Beach House. All of this work in the highway will be performed at night with reduced traffic lanes. The entire highway will be reopened each morning for commuting traffic. The work area will be repaved or covered with steel plates until work is complete. Completion is expected in October 2012. You can dig up [no pun intended] more information at the websites: [www.lapropo.org](http://www.lapropo.org) and [www.pchpartners.org](http://www.pchpartners.org).

### **Grove update continued.**

second decomposed granite path through the grove, suitable monuments and a revetment to stop the erosion along Hilltree Road. Tax deductible donations may be made in the enclosed dues envelope or via PayPal at [www.smcca.org](http://www.smcca.org).

Work to date has been funded by generous donations from "Friends of Scott Gerwehr," who died in a motorcycle accident not far away on Sunset Blvd. Other significant donations have come from Randy Young, the Pacific Palisades Junior Women's Club, the parents of the Rustic Canyon pre-school, and the SMCCA's endowment.

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### **LA MARATHON; OTHER RACES CLOSE SAN VICENTE ACCESS**

Every year the City of Santa Monica hosts the LA Marathon and other running races along San Vicente Blvd. For the safety of runners, Santa Monica blocks Canyon traffic from crossing San Vicente. Electronic message boards are parked along Entrada Drive to give us advance notice. The messages have created confusion due to their brief, sometimes cryptic nature.

SMCCA asked Santa Monica to make these messages clearer and improve communications. The city listened. Messages will be clarified. San Vicente will be opened as early as possible consistent with runner safety. A twitter feed will operate on the day of the Marathon to give updates: [@santamoniacity](https://twitter.com/santamoniacity). Santa Monica also operates another twitter feed year-around to give notice of activities that may impede traffic: [@SMConstructs](https://twitter.com/SMConstructs).

The city has announced four 2012 events that will close San Vicente: LA Marathon – March 18, LCL 5k Run – April 10, Santa Monica Classic 5k/10k – May 20, and Santa Monica 5000 – October 7

As soon as any event application is processed, the event will be posted on the city's website Community Events Calendar (on the home page at [www.smgov.net](http://www.smgov.net)). Also, race route descriptions as provided by sponsors can be found on the events website at [www.smgov.net/events](http://www.smgov.net/events).

Finally, SMCCA will post notice of events on our web site as we learn of them.

### **WE GET LETTERS . . .**

*Dear Canyon Neighbors,*

*My husband Earl and I have lived in the Canyon since 1981. We have witnessed many changes, but the most unexpected of these is the enormous increase in the use of pesticides.*

*This can be attributed in part to the replacement of the neurotoxin DDT, with new neurotoxins called Pyrethroids.*

*The house and garden market for the Pyrethroids has grown exponentially, in spite of reports of injury, illness, and even death from its uses. Because a chemical is approved by the EPA — does not mean it is free of toxicity or of harm.*

*Neighbors often use these chemicals without considering they may be harming infants, children, and adults —pets, birds, bees, fish and other sea creatures, etc. Homeowners might imagine these chemicals remain in their own backyard. In reality, once sprayed, they move like second - hand smoke into the next-door neighbor's house and garden and beyond.*

*It is taken for granted, that their use is good and necessary to preserve ones property with pesticides. But, the fact of the matter is — there are safer alternatives that are easily acquired and used. One does not need to call a pest service for an infestation of dry wood termites, when 20 Mule Team Borax can immediately incapacitate them.*

*On the web, go to Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides. They offer a plethora of information for maintaining a pest free garden without pesticides. Also, many people do not want spiders in their gardens, but they may not know spiders provide free pest control by devouring hundreds of insects every day.*

*Please contact me with questions.*

*Thank you,*

*Carol R. Fisher      [mudwerks@aol.com](mailto:mudwerks@aol.com)*

**Editor's comment:** Permethrin is one of the common types of pyrethroids and is found in Raid and many other products. Just read the label. You can prevent insects on roses or other plants by spraying with water containing a little olive oil and dish soap.

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### **REPORT ALL CRIMES TO LAPD TO ASSURE WE RECEIVE OUR FAIR SHARE OF SERVICES**

Police staffing is based on reported crime. So, it is vital to report all incidents, no matter how minor they appear, to LAPD. Some crimes can be reported over the phone to 310.444.0702. This is the front desk of our local station.

Nonemergency crimes may also be reported to 877.ASKLAPD (877.275.5273). If you are not receiving Officer Moore's weekly crime report, check the box on the enclosed reply envelope and give us your email address.

## **CALIFORNIA INCLINE UPDATE**

SMCCA has closely followed the City of Santa Monica's project to rebuild the California Incline bridge for over six years. We submitted well-reasoned comments on the environmental studies for this project in 2007 and again last October after the studies were revised. We have received support from all the local elected officials that represent our canyon and will continue to monitor Santa Monica's progress.

Briefly, we have urged Santa Monica to work around-the-clock to complete the construction as fast as possible. We have also demanded that advance signage be provided to warn cross-mountain commuters to avoid PCH during construction. Some of the other specific recommendations we have made include that local traffic be closely monitored and that Appian Way, the street that extends from the Pier to Pico Blvd., be opened for the duration of the project to reduce congestion at the McClure Tunnel. Our complete list of recommendations is posted on our web site, [www.smcca.org](http://www.smcca.org).

The city has conducted additional traffic counts in our canyon as part of its response to public comments. The goal is to have a hearing before the Santa Monica City Council before Summer to obtain environmental sign off. Future steps include actual design of the project and competitive bidding by contractors to build the replacement structure. We believe that the earliest work can commence would be mid-2013. Previous time lines announced by Santa Monica have all turned out to be too optimistic. Let us know if you want to be on our Incline email notification list and check [www.pchpartners.org](http://www.pchpartners.org) for current project status.



## **RUSTIC CANYON PARK REPORT**

There are banners on the fences, a new bulletin board near the tennis courts, and flyers posted in the recreation building - what is happening at Rustic Canyon Recreation Center? The past two years have been a period of transition. Not only has the Department of Recreation and Parks been going through a reorganization, but Rustic Canyon RC has as well. Through it all, our number-one focus has been to follow the motto of "building community through people, parks, and programs." We want you to feel the passion for recreation as we do. Most of all, we want you to make Rustic Canyon Recreation Center a part of your weekly routine.

The Center has been known for its enormous Summer Camp and adult art programs, but that is not all. We have brought in new programs and events. We have introduced Movies at the Park, brought in a new tennis program, revived the Holiday Art Boutique, celebrated Halloween, and begun many capital improvement campaigns. In 2013, we will observe the Uplifters' 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; with a grand celebration.

We truly believe that "Parks Makes Life Better" and we want you to experience that with us. We have been building our program for two years and this is just the start. We have even more creative and innovative ways for you and your family to experience recreation. Whether it is through sports or having your birthday party here, Rustic Canyon is much more than just a park, it is community. Just as the Uplifters upheld the principles of community, we want to continue the tradition with a modern twist. We invite everyone to experience an adventure at Rustic Canyon.

To receive our quarterly brochures, information about upcoming events or park projects, please e-mail us at [rusticcanyon.rc@lacity.org](mailto:rusticcanyon.rc@lacity.org). Information about our Park Advisory Board, special events, facility reservations and more are posted on our website [www.laparks.org](http://www.laparks.org) keyword Rustic Canyon.

We hope to see you experiencing community and recreation at Rustic Canyon!

-Jackie Koci  
Recreation Coordinator at Rustic Canyon Recreation Center



To current resident, or

Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association  
P.O. Box 3441  
Santa Monica, CA 90408-3441

### **A RED FLAG DAY PRIMER**

Ever wonder what is meant by a weather report that a "Red Flag Day" is in effect? The Los Angeles Fire Department ([www.lafd.org/redflag/](http://www.lafd.org/redflag/)) has the answer.

A *Red Flag Day* occurs when high wind/low humidity weather conditions create extremely high potential for a fast-moving brush fire.

Fire officials have identified areas that would create a problem for citizens while evacuating and for fire companies entering during a fast moving brush fire. These areas have been posted by the DOT. Illegally parked vehicles will be towed on Red Flag days.

On Red Flag days there will be announcements in the news media and also on the City's web site, [www.lacity.org](http://www.lacity.org). Citizens can phone 3-1-1 or sign up at the LAFD website listed above to be placed on an email notification list. The good news is that no streets in Santa Monica Canyon have been posted. For further information and to access any immediate warnings go to <http://www.lafd.org/redflag/>

### **DO YOU HAVE EYE-CATCHING SHRUBS?**

Neighbors, please take the time, several times a year, to walk by the public areas of your property, and look at it from the point of view of a toddler. This is approximately the height of a baby in a stroller, and the bare legs of older children who might skate or cycle by. Some of us, the writer included, sometimes have plants that overhang public sidewalks or streets. The worst offenders are thorned roses and bougainvillea, but anything that might injure a child's eyes should be trimmed back. While you are at it, have some compassion for adults, as well, and trim more than thrice that height.

### **2012 Dues Now Payable**

SMCCA is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt all volunteer organization. Your dues and contributions help keep your association strong. Yearly membership still is only \$10 per person, a modest price for supporting your community. Please send payment to SMCCA at PO Box 3441, Santa Monica, CA 90408-3441, or Pay Pal through our web site, [www.smcca.org](http://www.smcca.org)

Ten dollars per resident will not cover the substantial cost of rehabilitating our historic Rustic Canyon eucalyptus grove. Any additional contributions are welcome and greatly appreciated. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Please give us your email address and let us know if you want to receive our weekly crime report. We do not share your personal information.

If you would like to participate on the board or in any other capacity or have areas of interest, please tell us in your reply. The Board meets on the second Tuesday of most months and our **Annual Meeting is May 8--** please save the date for an interesting program..

### **Reporting Graffiti - Call 3-1-1 or on the web:**

**Most graffiti:** <http://Anti-Graffiti.LACity.org>

**On PCH;** <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/maint/msrsubmit/>

**On Flood Control walls** [www.ladpw.org](http://www.ladpw.org)

**Other important phone Numbers-- Call 3-1-1, or**

**Illegal Leaf Blowers** 1.800.996.2489

**Illegally Parked Vehicles** 1.213.485.4184

**Pothole Repair** 1.800.996.2489

*If you cannot reach LA City by dialing 3-1-1 from your home phone, please let us know so we can notify the City's 3-1-1 coordinator. email: [info@smcca.org](mailto:info@smcca.org).*

### **Newsletter Staff--**

Carol R. Fisher

Sharon Kilbride

Jackie Koci

Marilyn Wexler

Diane Wolfberg

George Wolfberg