



the Neighborhood

MVEA COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2012



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MVEA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- ANTHONY J. ACCETTA

MVEA is in the middle of several important activities that as a Homeowner you need to be aware of. As we work to keep our neighborhoods healthy, strong and vibrant we need your continued commitment to actively participate. As I finish out my 3rd year as President and complete my service to MVEA at the end of the year, I am reminded how important it is to constantly get people from our neighborhoods to volunteer and help move us along on the right path. My last four years I've seen many serve unselfishly and dedicate more than just a little time to MVEA and the betterment of our community. As one of our 2,892 homeowners-here are a few things for you to think about in the coming weeks.

- **Make Recommendations on how to improve MVEA and our Neighborhoods** - You are our eyes and ears!
- **Understand MVEA Homeowner Responsibilities:** 1) Pay assessments on time; 2) Keep your Homes looking attractive; 3) Be a good & friendly neighbor, etc.
- **Election Signs** - Please note election signage will be taken down from MVEA common areas. MVEA is a political graffiti FREE ZONE.
- **Fly your American Flags** - I have seen many more American Flags - Thanks for flying the symbol of the USA!



To learn first-hand what we have done this year and what we still have to come we invite you to Our MVEA Celebration & Neighborhood Update on October 7th! We have had nearly 200 people at each of the last two events enjoying friendships, conversation, music and some good food. It will be fun and who knows maybe you will be inspired to become an MVEA Leader & make our Homes and even better place to live and raise our families. As always, I urge you to take care of our neighborhoods, love our Country and FLY YOUR FLAGS!

Anthony J. Accetta
President, MVEA

"My last four years I've seen many serve unselfishly and dedicate more than just a little time to MVEA and the betterment of our community."

Anthony J. Accetta

- **MVEA Elections** - It's that time again where we will be electing Delegates and a new Board of Directors. You are asked to consider serving in a position and at the very least read and vote for those that you want to manage the activities of MVEA .
- **MVEA Celebration & Neighborhood Update** - We will hold our 3rd Annual event on Sunday, October 7 from 4-6:30pm at Lago (formerly Tortilla Flats).
- **Participate in an MVEA Board Meeting** - Thanks to those of you who come to our meetings & the invitation is open to everyone!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7th, MVEA CELEBRATION & NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATE!

The Board of Directors invites all MVEA homeowners to a Community Celebration and Neighborhood Update planned for Sunday, October 7th 4:00-6:30 p.m., at Lago, formerly known as Tortilla Flats Restaurant, located on Lake Mission Viejo. Meet and say hello to your Board of Directors, the Increment Delegates, and Committee Members who volunteer their time each month to assist in making decisions and providing input for work projects and ongoing maintenance throughout the Association. Learn what is going on in your neighborhood.

Discuss, in an informal setting, the beautification plans for MVEA Common Area slopes and high traffic areas. Interact with the Board of Directors, Action Property Management and Bemus Landscape. A taco bar/buffet and soft drinks will be served; door prizes will be raffled and given away. The restaurant is requesting a head count, so if you have not already signed up, please SVP to "Joseph Tully, Association Secretary, by sending an email to joseph.tully@cox.net. and use the subject header PARTY.

MVEA BOARD MEETING & NEWS ITEMS

• MVEA Discusses SFPA at City Council Meeting

The City is working with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) to develop areas in town known as "Special Fire Protection Areas" (SFPA).

MVEA was developed in the late 1970's and at that time design plans were put into place on how our slopes and common areas would be developed and maintained. In a recent OCFA document there are statements being made about dis-allowing pine trees, cypress trees and other species from being planted along with new restrictions on shrubs and ground cover within SFPA zones.



MVEA leaders have successfully argued at the July 2nd and August 20th City Council Meetings that our development & plans have been in place for decades and that our plans should not be changed due to the recent development of these special fire protection zones. MVEA spends nearly \$100,000 dollars/ month on landscaping issues and nearly 100% of our common area is irrigated, and trees are trimmed and groundcovers are maintained regularly.

Although the City voted in the new SFPA zones MVEA is working with the City Council on the issue and we are fine tuning an agreement so that we have autonomy to continue to maintain our property to existing plans in place for beautification, soil erosion, slope stability and privacy issues. To find out if your street was put into the SFPA zone we urge you to contact the City of Mission Viejo. Stay tuned on this one!

• CC&R & Bylaw Revisions

The CC&R Revision Committee has made their final recommendations to the Board of Directors and the Board has reviewed the documents and sent them along to the Association's attorney for comment. Some of the items to be addressed and updated are:

- **A broader definition and application for the current Term Limits provision on the Board of Directors;**
- **RV storage and specific guidelines on visibility issues;**
- **Time frames of up to 5 years on Reserve Financial Investments;**
- **Lien notices and signatures on the required notarized documents.**

The CC&Rs and Bylaws may be amended when approved by the Delegates representing at least a majority of the voting power of the Association.

• Delegate Elections scheduled for October 18th

The Association is preparing Ballots for the Increment Delegate elections. Ballots will be mailed the last week of September and should be returned to Management so they can be delivered to the Inspector of the Elections. Please cast your vote and return the ballot to Management prior to October 18th so they can be tallied and compiled. The results will be announced at the conclusion of the Board of Directors meeting that evening. The Delegates represent their respective increments and cast votes for the election of the Board of Directors in January at the Annual Meeting of Delegates.

• Board of Director Candidates

Two Board of Directors terms expire this year and as these two Directors have served two terms each, and the Association's governing documents provide for term limits of no more than two terms (four of service), the Board of Directors will have two vacancies in 2013. A formal request for candidates will be mailed to the membership in early November. If you have an interest in serving the Mission Viejo Environmental community, addressing the Association's annual calendar items, resolving items that come before the Board, and in general assist in charting the course of action for Association related matters; consider running for the Board of Directors in 2013.

MORE COMMUNITY UPDATES



• Annual Tree Trimming

The annual tree pruning is scheduled and will be performed during the months of September through January. Proposals have been approved for all 9 Increments. Trimming has started in Increment #1. The schedule is available on the Association's website, mveahoa.com, under the Calendar tab, Common Area. The "four year" Pines along Santa Margarita Parkway, Melinda and Alicia will be trimmed in December-January 2013. These Pine trees are done every four years as per good and accepted arboricultural practice.

• Insurance Services

Brian Berg Insurances Services, Inc. in Lake Forest, CA was again awarded the Association's 2012-2013 insurance policies. The Board reviewed proposals from insurance brokers and agents at their August meeting. The insurance year runs from September 1, 2012 through August 31, 2013.

• Pro Forma Budget

The Association's fiscal year runs from January 1 through December 31. One of the most important items the Board is presented with each year is to approve the upcoming annual budget and quarterly assessments. MVEA's Budget and Finance Committee typically reviews and fine-tunes Management's original budget draft and makes a recommendation to the Board for approval. It is a State requirement that each owner receive a copy of the pro forma budget 30 days prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. The Board will approve the 2013 Budget at their October meeting and homeowners should expect their copy in early November.

REMINDERS & GENERAL USE RESTRICTIONS

• Mail Boxes

All mail boxes elements, whether they are cluster boxes originally issued by the US Post Office or the shared post and cross bars that support usually two to four mail boxes, continue to be the maintenance responsibility of the owners that are served by them. After thirty years of exposure to the elements there are many original clusters that may be in need a “face lift”. Recently letters have been sent to some owners requesting new boxes to replace the unsightly rusted boxes still being used.



Mail boxes sharing the same post should be the same color and style to maintain the uniformity and the aesthetic of the system. All address numbers should be of the same size and type. If the wooden post or cross bars have deteriorated a new coat of paint or new wood elements might be needed. Some newer replacements posts have used a concrete footing as an anchor for the new 4x4 post. If you are contemplating a change to the current design an ARC application is required.

Please take a closer look at some of the aged units and make arrangements to upgrade these very visible curbside elements.

• The Architectural Review Committee

ARC continues to review all applications on a weekly basis and generally turns the requests around within a week. The most recurring applications are for exterior painting, vinyl window installation, solar panels and re-roofing. Please keep in mind that storage sheds are considered exterior modifications and need to have an application approved prior to installation. A major factor in a shed's approval is its visibility to the street and the neighboring property. The ARC will ask for a concealment plan prior to the shed's approval.

The ARC's purpose is to maintain the architectural character and visual unity of the community. Mission Viejo city permits are also required for structural, mechanical or electrical engineering.

WEBSITE INFORMATION - MVEAHOA.COM

There is a tab on the MVEA website's Homepage, **Reference Documents & Policies**. Visitors to the website, mveahoa.com, will find the Association's CC&Rs available for review or download at this location. The CC&Rs listed under this new tab are available without registration, username or password. During a transfer of ownership sellers are usually required to provide a copy of these documents to prospective buyers. CC&Rs are one of the documents that escrow companies almost always order and charge the seller of the property. Be aware that you may circumvent this charge by providing the document to the escrow company yourself.

The City of Mission Viejo encourages residents and owners to visit the City's website at cityofmissionviejo.org and their blog at missionviejolife.org to stay up to date on the City news and events.



ACTION PROPERTY MANAGEMENT NEWS

A reminder to all homeowners that Action has recently offered an optional electronic statement program; whereby, homeowners who elect to sign up for this service will receive email communication for their quarterly billing. You, of course, may pay the quarterly assessment in any manner you choose; but you would not receive a US Post Office delivered invoice. This quarterly newsletter mailed with the invoice would be sent as a pdf attachment. You may visit the new website, <http://www.vivportal.com>, and opt for this service.

Action Property Management's corporate offices are located in Irvine at 2603 Main Street, Suite 500. The new mailing address for the quarterly assessment is **MVEA, PO Box 25013, Santa Ana, CA 92799**. If you use an online banking service to pay your quarterly assessment, please make sure that you contact your service and redirect them to use this new P.O. Box.

ACH Payments

Using an Automated Clearing House system for your quarterly assessment automatically debits or “sweeps” from your designated bank account the amount of your quarterly assessment and deposits it into the Association's account. There is no charge for this service. Forms and applications are now available for submission through the new homeowner portal, <http://www.vivportal.com>.

MVEA IRRIGATION WATER FACTS AND THE WCSC

MVEA has 92 water meters & controllers with 1,281 separate watering stations/valves, 10,175,778 sq. ft. or 233 acres of Common Area landscape, of this 201,148 sq. ft. or 4.6 acres is turf (grass). Thus, grass is only about 2% of MVEA landscaped area. Each day we water our plants it costs about \$2,450. Our normal watering plan calls for about 114 days/year. Of course, we shut the system **off** when it rains and save money. Thus in one year, with “no” rain, we will budget about \$270,000. Currently we pay about \$2.25 for 100 cubic feet of water (hcf). There are 7.48 gallons of water in one cubic foot. So there would be 748 gallons water in 100 cubic feet. Thus, we pay about 3/10 cents for one gallon water. We use about **68%** reclaimed water The reclaimed water costs slightly less but sometimes causes corrosive maintenance issues for us - but it is the “green” thing to do. It conserves precious domestic water.



Past cost / usage data: (WCSC started July 2008)

<u>Year</u>	<u>\$ water cost</u>	<u>hcf used</u>	<u>gallons</u>	<u>ave. \$ / hcf</u>
2007	\$423,000	226,203*	169 million	\$1.87*
2008	\$282,929	150,589	112 million	\$1.88
2009	\$301,815	149,355	112 million	\$2.02
2010	\$245,812	111,107	83 million	\$2.21
2011	\$236,373	107,574	80 million	\$2.20

* 2007 volume estimated based upon average \$1.87 per hcf cost - before MVEA logged data.

To put our water usage into perspective, if we use 80 million gallons irrigation water annually, that amount of water could fill 5,333 average size (15,000 gallon) swimming pools. We only have 2,892 homes in MVEA, so if everyone had a swimming pool we could almost fill it twice per year. After 2007 when water costs went “out of control”, a subcommittee was formed called the water conservation subcommittee (WCSC). The WCSC began compiling monthly water bill data in electronic format in July 2008. Thus, computer technology could easily be used to analyze where we were wasting water, resulting in great opportunities for conservation as well as cost reductions.

Since then, many conservation techniques have been implemented, as follows:

- **Reduction in turf areas**
- **Conversion to a drought tolerant plant scheme**
- **Installation of soaker hoses in narrow landscape beds**
- **Run-off surveys and needed spray-head corrective actions**
- **Homeowner help in reporting broken spray heads**
- **Purchase of 25 automatic evapo-transportive (et) controllers that remotely adjust water lay-down per real-time weather conditions**
- **Monthly meetings with our landscape contractor to review current month’s data and take corrective actions**



The WCSC has been very successful in saving the MVEA homeowners a lot of money. Historical annual water costs for irrigation had been about \$375,000 for several years prior to 2007. Thus, based on that norm, about \$433,000 has been saved in just four years (from 2008 thru 2011). These savings were the main reason for the MVEA being able to give-back to its homeowners some of this money in the form of dues reductions in both 2010 & 2011.

We hope all our homeowners will follow the local water district’s “be water wise” irrigation schedule for the various months of the year. Also, avoid water run-off by setting your controller to only water in no more than 5 minute run-times, with at least 30 minutes between cycles. So, instead of setting your run-time for 10 minutes to start at 6 a.m., set that station for 5 minutes to start at 6 am, and again for 5 minutes to start at 7 a.m.

If you see a broken sprinkler head, get it repaired promptly so you will not waste water. Also, try planting some drought-tolerant (dt) California-native plants, such as those on display in the MVEA dt display area on the corner of Antela & Boltana in Mission Viejo. Please visit this display and take note of the various “labeled” dt plant materials.

Good luck in your own water conservation practices!

Frank Fossati- MVEA Homeowner & Volunteer / MVEA WCSC - Chairman



BOARD OF DIRECTORS / OFFICERS

Anthony Accetta, President
Donna Hinshaw, Vice President
Donna Bourassa, Treasurer
Joseph Tully, Secretary
Peggy Russo, Member at Large

2011 INCREMENT DELEGATES

Increment 1, Bill Hunt
Increment 2, Margie Hartford
Increment 3, Deborah Currie
Increment 4, Frank Fossati
Increment 5, Cathy Niesen Lenz
Increment 6, Dale George
Increment 7, William Ernisse
Increment 8, Joe Holtzman
Increment 10, Richard Florence

BOARD MEETING DATES

The Board of Directors meets on the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the Norman P. Murray Center, 24932 Veterans Way, in Mission Viejo. A Homeowners Forum is scheduled at the beginning of every meeting. Homeowners may address the Board on any Association related topic. Here is a list of the meeting dates for the fourth quarter of 2012:

Thursday, October 18th
Thursday, November 15th
Thursday, December 20th

The monthly meeting agenda is posted on the community bulletin board located off Marguerite Parkway at the corner of Antela and Lovios. It is also posted on the MVEA website, MVEA hoa.com.

Your community manager is Stephen Stanton available by phone and email at 949-450-0202 ext. 313 and sstanton@actionlife.com. The manager’s assistant and administrative support is Selah Short at ext. 344 and sshort@actionlife.com.