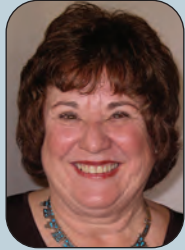




PRESIDENT'S LETTER

CVSOS GROUP CONTINUES WORK ON AIRFIELD LAND PROTECTION



Let's Avoid Deja Vu in 2030!

Priscilla Walton

2020 has been quite a year for all of us! But despite the fractious local and national politics, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the historic fires we have just experienced, our community has pulled together to support and help one another. As Carmel Valley residents, we can be very proud of our community.

We will continue to face some of the same challenges into 2021 and beyond. However, it seems that we do have one real ray of light on the local horizon, guided by the recent report that reviewed the Monterey County Resource Management Agency (RMA) prepared by Citygate Associates, LLC. The report finds and describes some of the same issues and problems memorialized in the grand jury report of 2005. This new report found that some of the same issues identified back then continue to exist today. The report included 76 recommendations for improvement in four areas that included the following:

1. Establishing trust to applicant and stakeholder satisfaction
2. Calibrating workforce with workload
3. Managing performance
4. Realigning the organization

The CVA board was interviewed in depth by Citygate, and over 100 members of CVA responded to the stakeholder's survey. Our comments and those of the members who responded were included in the information that resulted in the findings.

The Carmel Valley Association identified the following issues based on its years of interacting with RMA:

by Lorraine Surprenant

What is happening with the Carmel Valley airfield property? As you may have heard, two of the three parcels for sale are in escrow with contingencies, but Carmel Valley Save Open Space (CVSOS) is currently working to purchase the remaining parcel on the eastern end of the property.

Carmel Valley has a long history of citizens organizing in support of the community. CVSOS is one of these groups. Carmel Valley in all its diversity is a coherent community. Whether you live at the mouth of the valley, mid valley, the village, or upper valley, we all recognize the beauty and uniqueness of this magnificent place we call home.

In June of 2018, a group of citizens held a meeting at the Community Center to share ideas and develop a plan to purchase the 30-acre property in the heart of the village, known as the vintage airfield, for community safety. Recognizing that this property provides a natural fire break, an open space for fire-fighting personnel and equipment, a helipad for emergency evacuations, a clearing for shelter-in-place during earthquakes, and in calmer times, a holiday gathering place for our traditional Santa Fly-In and parade staging, as well as a place to observe nature and walk in peace, CVSOS incorporated as a non-profit and began work on purchase plans.

By June of 2019, CVSOS had made two offers to purchase the property. Unfortunately, neither offer was accepted. Determined work continued on plans to raise monies to make an offer with a shorter escrow, as the length of the escrow proposed in the initial

offers appeared to be unfavorable to the seller. It is hoped that with the help of state and local officials and the steadfast work of CVSOS and the citizens of the valley, it is not too late to procure this property for the safety of the entire Carmel Valley.

On August 18, Supervisor Mary Adams, hours after the River Fire and then the Carmel Fire started, made a referral to the Board of Supervisors for "Ensuring Public Safety and Disaster Response Capacity through Airport Acquisition." The referral requests that "opportunities be explored for a County, and/or a County-Community Partner(s), acquisition of the Carmel Valley Airport to ensure public safety and disaster response capacity, particularly related to fire response, as well as preservation of open space." If you support this effort, send your message to Clerk of the Board at COB@co.monterey.ca.us.

CVSOS is looking at all options to obtain funding so that it can make an offer to purchase. Weekly board meetings are being held via Zoom. Donations can be made at CVSOS.org. Your support is needed now. In these unprecedented times of wildfires raging, the community being evacuated not long ago, and the threat of fires ever present, it is more vital than ever that the community come together for all our safety.

CVSOS is looking for a treasurer for its board of directors. If interested, contact Cynthia Hall at cynthiahall@comcast.net or 831-659-4463. Please visit CVSOS.org, *Carmel Valley Save Open Space* on Facebook, and *cvsaveopenspace* on Instagram, to learn more, support, and share.



Limited Cal Fire staging during Carmel Fire

Photo courtesy CVSOS

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President's Letter, continued from Pg. 1

Policy and Leadership Level

- The disconnect between county policy and project approvals
- The use by leadership of the administrative approval process to fast track and/or bypass both policy and legal requirements
- The high number of exemptions from The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) contrary to CEQA requirements

• Special interest influence in planning decisions and ethical issues within the work context and related to external parties

- Poor executive management that fosters a dysfunctional planning environment
- Understaffing and poor allocation of resources to implement policy

Staffing Level

- High rate of staff turnover
- Low morale in the department
- The low professional quality of work in planning
- The qualifications of planning staff
- Inadequate staffing levels
- The inordinately slow and inefficient process implementing policy

Enforcement

- The general lack of enforcement and funding for it
- The backlog of work not implemented since the 2010 General Plan
- Lack of condition compliance monitoring
- No balance between policy and its implementation (enforcement)

Public Involvement

- Lack of, and/or inconsistent public notification process, thereby reducing public input
- The reduction of Land Use Advisory Committee's input in the areas of the community planning process

• Minimizing the role and importance of the Carmel Valley LUAC, resulting in more flawed projects and more subsequent lawsuits

All of these problems have affected the timeliness and the quality of work. As an example, it should not take seven years to develop a short-term rental ordinance, and then have the planning commissioners throw up their hands in response to an incomprehensible, poorly written and

unenforceable document. Nor should it take ten years to develop the Development Evaluation System (DES) that is required to evaluate projects developed in specific areas of unincorporated Monterey County. The above have led to the rendering of many policies and ordinances completely ineffective, thereby encouraging a scofflaw attitude by the public.

The most far-reaching recommendation of the Citygate report was that RMA should be reorganized and split into two new stand-alone departments-- (1) A Community Development and Housing Department that would include planning, building inspection, and housing; and (2) A Community Services Department that would include public works, parks, and facilities. Each department would be headed by a department head reporting to the County Chief Administrative Officer.

CVA's Land Use Committee has developed a better working relationship with some planning staff members, most notably Brandon Swanson and John Dugan. Our monthly meetings to review CVA residents' concerns, issues, and problems have helped us address some problems.

Our greatest concern going forward is that while the reorganization is taking place, the same leadership is essentially in place. Without a substantive change in leadership at the top, we may just be reorganizing the deck chairs on the Titanic. We hope that there will be an open selection process that considers new leadership for both new departments without delay. Otherwise, it might just be déjà vu all over again ten years from now.

Finally, the Citygate report includes a work plan and time line for addressing its 76 recommendations. We urge the CAO's office to assure its implementation with quarterly reports to the Planning Commission.

As always, your comments are welcome. And, thank you for your ongoing support of CVA! We wish you a very Happy Holiday Season!!!!



Some RMA administrative tasks

CREATING A HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK ~ One Yard at a Time

by Paola Berthoin

Caring about the land isn't just about the heart. Numbers tell us a lot.

In 2005, it was reported we have destroyed 60% of Earth's ability to support us. Ninety-five percent of wildlife habitat across the United States has been lost due to human uses of one form or another. Sixty percent of water is used for lawns in the west. In 2019, it was reported there is a 41% insect species decline, with a two-and-a-half percent insect biomass loss every year. Close to three billion adult breeding birds, representing one in four birds, have been lost since 1970. There is the potential loss of one million animal species in the next ten years. Most recently, the World Wildlife Fund reported that there has been a 68% drop in animal biodiversity since 1970. These numbers come from reputable sources from a wide cross section of data around the world. Some of the key drivers of these staggering and sobering numbers are human-caused habitat destruction, conventional agricultural practices, climate change, and the consequences thereof. Additionally, outdoor cats, mostly feral, play a devastating role in the loss of one to three billion birds each year.

The natural world is not just something out there somewhere. We depend on it inextricably. The ongoing insect loss affects the birds, amphibians, reptiles, and fish. Without the insects, they starve. Without insects, larger animals also starve because they depend on the smaller animals. Without the insects that pollinate food plants and plants in the wild, we starve. It's what is known as ecological collapse. Can't get more basic than that.

What does this have to do with Carmel Valley? Everything. When people remove habitat wholesale for fire protection, rather than tending it appropriately, we are contributing to the ongoing losses mentioned above, not to mention the increase of invasive plants that also destroy biodiversity. The ecological wasteland of lawns adds to habitat loss. When indigenous plants are replaced with introduced plants, native bees, of which there are over 4,000 kinds in the United States, don't have food they depend on. Indigenous plant habitats in a given locale evolved over eons to support specific insects, birds, and animal life, and vice versa.

Carmel Valley residents could be a part of an innovative idea to help turn the tide, one community at a time.

In his book *Nature's Best Hope*, entomologist Douglas Tallamy puts forth the idea of establishing a Homegrown National Park that takes root in individual yards across the country. He begins with the premise that if half of the 40 million acres of sterile lawn across the United States are restored to native habitat, what a difference it would make for resident and migrating birds that depend on the millions of insects and caterpillars necessary to feed their young each season. If you don't have a lawn in your yard or have replaced it with native grasses, YAY! The next step is to restore native plant habitats to your land, large or small.

When we see the preservation of the natural world from a collaborative community perspective rather than a myopic private property approach, we will be helping everyone increase the health of the earth and that of our very selves. As Tallamy says, when we see plants as the principal in a savings account, then the best action to take is to preserve that principal, rather than spending it down. So, if the heart doesn't lead the way, maybe numbers will?

Check out the Resource Library links at the Santa Lucia Conservancy website: slconservancy.org
Learn how to increase wildfire resilience while maintaining native habitat at defensiblespace.org.
Discover how to preserve our remarkable chaparral ecosystem at Californiachaparral.org.



Sticky Monkey and Golden Yarrow freed from the invasion of genista. Photo by Paola Berthoin

VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE VILLAGE HOLIDAY LIGHTS

by Andy Sudol

One of the best things about traveling through the village in late November and through to the New Year, when it's getting dark early, is seeing the festive holiday-themed lights along Carmel Valley Road. They greet all visitors with holiday cheer as people visit the fine restaurants and shops in Carmel Valley Village or drive home.

Danielle Carlson has volunteered to coordinate the light display since 2018 as part of her service to the Carmel Valley Community Youth Center (CVCYC), where she is also a member of the board of directors. She and her family have contributed a new decorative item each year, and the CVCYC is accepting donations to replace the old lights with new, energy efficient LED ones, add new lights to expand the display, and provide refreshments for hard-working volunteers. Electrical power is provided by Regency Construction.

Speaking of which, **volunteers are needed** for the lighting display set-up on Saturday before Thanksgiving, November 21, beginning at 10 am and lasting throughout the day. The more hands, the faster everyone is done. Especially appreciated are volunteers with some basic electrical and mechanical expertise. COVID precautions will be in place. Bring a mask and gloves. It's a great way to meet your fellow community members and participate in a fun fall activity that benefits everyone who passes by the display.

CVCYC is also coordinating the event that will substitute for the traditional Santa's Fly-In on Saturday, December 12. Due to COVID-19, the group gathering on the old airfield will not take place. Live stream the Elf Cam as Santa & Mrs. Claus ride around the Village. Will they go by your house?

Traditions like these are a valuable part of our local heritage. Your support of them is much appreciated by young and old. May the lights brighten your evening and bring joy to the village people.

For more details visit CVCYC.org and the Carmel Valley Santa's Fly-In page on Facebook, or e-mail Danielle@cvcyc.org.



TINUE FESTIVE DISPLAYS

Photos by Henry Tunahuna



WHO YA GONNA CALL? MARINA EQUESTRIAN CENTER! Horsin' Around the Valley

by C.S. Noel

Looking for a wide-open expanse of trails covering thousands of acres, less than an hour's drive from just about anywhere in Monterey County? Where you can hike, ride horses, bike, or drive your horse-drawn carriage? Want a family-friendly place to board or (post-COVID) join in local horse events? Need emergency help from a local who is trained and registered with local rescue missions to transport equines during natural disasters? Who Ya Gonna Call?! Put (831) 521-6168 on your speed dial now!

Marina Equestrian Association (MEA), the co-op group that operates the Marina Equestrian Center (MEC), is a small local organization that packs a huge wallop of community service for our county. The most recent example of MEA's "We're-there-for-you" attitude occurred this August when thousands of Monterey County residents were ordered to evacuate their homes due to raging wildfires across the county. Many evacuees had horses and family pets but limited options on where to take them.

MEC, an active emergency site for horses and livestock, took in over 120 equines on the spot. With diligence and creativity, they ultimately found space for 351 animals. Everything from ducks to donkeys and equines to emus. With generous community donations from many local businesses and individuals, no one was turned away.

Many equestrians may remember that Marina Equestrian Center found itself on rocky footing earlier this year. Ironically, just four days before the start of the River and Carmel

fires on August 16th, the City of Marina gave notice to the MEA members that, due to a construction project on neighboring property, all horses would have to vacate the facility for an indefinite period with no guarantee that horses would be allowed to return or of the continued operation of the facility.



MEC lines up to evacuate a local ranch while the River Fire spews flames.

Just like the Joni Mitchell song says, it was a case of, "You don't know what you've got till it's gone." But, YOU, the local community, stepped up with a groundswell of popular support, and in only five days, over 5,000 people signed an online petition to save the Marina Equestrian Center in time for the petition to be presented at the City of Marina public meeting on August 18th. Thanks to this community spirit and open-minded city representatives, a motion was passed to rescind the vacate order. How's that for an example of neighbor helping neighbor helping neighbor story? Pass around a big pat on the back to all concerned. You deserve it!

Well, we've made it to November. The local fires are out, the horses are staying cozy in their stalls, and all's right with the world of Monterey County's equines for now. Be sure to keep your eye out for Marina Equestrian Center. With a passion for community service, in this time of COVID, they are releasing a new line of educational videos for kids and a whole new website look! (See MEC's Facebook page or "Horsing Around the MEA" on youtube.)

So, let's keep on helping each other! It works, and you'll make new friends! As Kyle Soliven, MEA association member, said, "Ultimately, we are just honestly happy to help. I hope we can continue to build that community."

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Holiday Events to Change This Year: Angel Project 2020 Style

By Sandy Schachter

Contrary to expectations, the holidays are not canceled! The annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner and Angel Store, both sponsored by the local charity, Carmel Valley Angel Project, have been providing holiday cheer and a deeper sense of community to Carmel Valley residents for more than 20 years, with very little change over the years. The traditions will continue, but, with this new world of pandemic we are living in, some changes will have to be made for 2020: Angel Project 2020 Style!



The Thanksgiving dinner will go on! Chef Michael Jones and his staff will again cook and pack up dinners-to-go. Valley residents are invited to pick up boxed Thanksgiving dinners with all the trimmings by appointment between 11:00 and 1:30 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. Visit our Facebook page or cvangelproject.org between October 26 and November 20 to make your Eventbrite reservation, or call 659-5639 by November 20. The dinners are free, but donations will be welcome at the site.

The Angel Store has traditionally been the place where families who need some help to brighten their holidays come for children's gifts, clothes, and food. This year it will operate differently, not as a "store," but as a drive-through. For more information and to ask for a December appointment, call Alicia at 831-298-7425 by December 4. She speaks Spanish and will call back after 6 p.m.

The Angel Project is Carmel Valley's very own local charity, run and staffed by your neighbors. Toy donations will not be needed this year, so cash donations are much more important, especially since more valley residents will need help as a result of the fires and pandemic. You can send tax-deductible contributions, with checks payable to CVAP, to Carmel Valley Angel Project at P.O. Box 1305, Carmel Valley, CA 93924, or go to cvangelproject.org to pay online.

CVA History Corner

RANCHO SAN CARLOS WAS ONCE TWO GRANTS

By Elizabeth Barratt, historian with the Carmel Valley Historical Society.

Of these two neighboring Carmel Valley grants, Rancho San Francisquito ("Little St. Francis") was granted in 1835 to Catalina Manzaneli de Munras, a descendant of explorer Ponce de Leon, whose husband Estevan was a Spanish trader in Monterey. It was bounded on the northwest by Rancho el Potrero de San Carlos and includes Pinyon Peak, Chamisal Ridge, Clemente Ridge, and San Francisquito Flat. The grant was sold in 1842 and underwent a number of ownerships, the more recent one being Bradley Sargent. Next door, closer to the mouth of the valley, sat Rancho el Potrero de San Carlos ("Pasture of San Carlos") the former pasturing lands of Carmel Mission. It was originally granted to Fructuoso del Real in 1837. In 1851 Bradley Sargent and his brothers purchased the rancho. During this period the combined old grants were known as the Rancho San Francisquito y San Carlos.

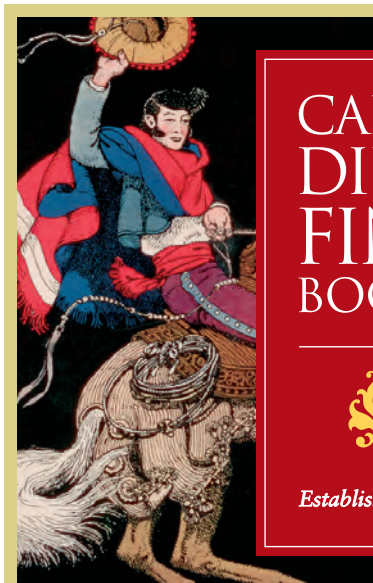
By 1870 Jonathan Wright and Anson Smith owned a section of land on the Rancho San Carlos portion near today's Robinson Canyon Road. In September 1879, Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson was out camping and fell ill on the property. He was nursed back to health in the Wright-Smith cabin. Months before his arrival in Monterey, his future wife, Fanny Osbourne, was the guest of Bradley Sargent on a camping trip and round-up on the ranch. She later wrote about the event and published it under the title "Sargent's Rodeo," in the January 1880 issue of Lippincott's Magazine. Fanny wrote of a wild

bull charge, a cattle round-up and a pleasant night's sleep beneath the stars following a dinner of freshly slaughtered and barbecued heifer. From a spot high in the ranch hills, she described the sweeping valley vista: "Beneath us lay abrupt hills, narrow fertile valleys, and the winding river of Carmel...farther back a rosy light hovered over the brim of Carmel Bay....the song of birds floated up to us on the warm, fragrant breeze."

By 1920, George Gordon Moore purchased the property, naming it San Carlos Ranch. During this period, Moore built an elegant Spanish-style hacienda with guest facilities and introduced wild boar from North Carolina to the estate. The name San Carlos Ranch was retained through the 1930 purchase and ownership of Arthur C. Oppenheimer. In 1990 when the property was sold to the Santa Lucia Partnership, the historic holding once again became known as Rancho San Carlos. *More information on the History Center at carmelvalleyhistoricalsociety.org.*



The still popular, elegant Spanish style hacienda, San Carlos Ranch. Photo from CVHS



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Page 1 banner photo by Brian Steen shows hikers John Hain and Don Gruber bordering the Los Padres National Forest at Anastasia Canyon.

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