



President's Letter



C.S. Noel

THE LONG HAUL OF ADDRESSING THE SHORT-TERM RENTAL PROBLEM

As you might expect, the subject of short-term rentals (STRs) continues to be one of the most troublesome issues for our community. CVA continues to receive regular reports from many residents in a variety of neighborhoods experiencing ongoing concerns.

CVA has been working diligently with our District 5 supervisor, Mary Adams, and Monterey County's office of Housing and Community Development, with discussions centering on several key problem areas. Though progress is slow in coming, we are seeing some important improvements. A recent permit application submitted to the planning commission was recommended for a three-year period instead of "in perpetuity," allowing the permit holder to operate for three years, then requiring the permit's renewal to continue operations. This approach would add some guardrails to the process, while still being a fair way to address permit duration for both residents and operators.

At a previous board of supervisors' meeting, county staff was directed to research and make recommendations on a proposal – brought to the board by Supervisor Adams – to pause permit approvals in order to address the issues creating so many complaints. But, regardless of whether such a moratorium goes forward, it continues to be very important to document infractions so enforcement continues on properties already awarded permits in perpetuity.

Even more important is to have the voices

continued on Pg. 2

GARDEN CLUB SHOW EXPECTS TO DRAW 1,500

by Carolyn Rice



2022 Garden Show photos, by Luana Conley

"Everybody is so friendly and welcoming whether you know anything about gardening or not." This Carmel Valley Garden Club description by Mary Gale, a 20 plus-year member, sums up the way many members feel about the club.

Gale, who has also served on the board for years, said members' gardening talents range from master and professional gardeners who do all their own gardening to those who hire a gardener to care for their garden.

Club President Dianne Woods said a survey showed about one-third of members do all their gardening, one-third do part of it, and one-third hire a gardener for everything. With 160 members, the club is one of the largest in California with many couples and singles attending monthly meetings.

The common thread among members is a love of flowers, fruits, vegetables, and the creation of soul-satisfying gardens.

With no undue focus on members' gardening expertise, the club extends an open invitation to all to join. Many members live in Carmel Valley but others hail from various Monterey Peninsula locations. Woods says members select their own club activities, but the board encourages involvement by everyone, whether it be providing refreshments at the monthly meetings, organizing socials, or

volunteering for the labor intensive annual garden club show, which raises funds for community nonprofits.

The monthly meetings from September through May feature a myriad of gardening topics ranging from specific flowers or vegetables to how-to information sessions on diverse subjects. In recent years knowledgeable enthusiasts and professionals have given talks on subjects such as pruning, beekeeping, succulents, butterflies, composting, and ridding gardens of common pests using environmentally sound methods.

Each monthly meeting begins with a social hour before the program, with Christmas and Valentines parties and an end-of-the-year barbecue rounding out the social calendar.



More show details on Pg. 2

HIDDEN VALLEY MUSIC SEMINARS



Upcoming Concerts Unlock the Hero

Hidden Valley Virtuosi
Wednesday May 3rd

Masters Concert

Mark Kosower, Cello
Robert Walters, English Horn
Tuesday May 30th

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Piano Soloist
Friday June 2nd

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New Works by Ten Gifted
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of Carmel Valley residents heard when the county begins the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process for addressing STRs. This will shape the ordinance and code that will be used to regulate STRs in the future.

Following are some further actions we can all take to address this issue besetting our community.

CVA's Top Priority for Our Community – and We Need Your Help!!

The most important thing we can ask you to do is actively participate in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and EIR process, which will determine how short-term rentals are managed in the future and how the ordinance and codes are written. California state law mandates that via the CEQA process the county must provide an initial public comment period for community input as a part of completing the EIR as well as a public review and comment period for the draft EIR document produced by the county before it is finalized. **This is the time when our community can have the greatest influence on how the county manages short-term rentals in the future and ensure that the process will consider the needs of residents.**

The county's most recent estimate is that the EIR process will start in June and run approximately through August, at which time the county will prepare final documentation with a new short-term rental ordinance ready to present to the board of supervisors at the end of this year.

IN THE MEANTIME - Other Things to Focus on to Make a Difference:

In-Perpetuity Permits

Virtually all short-term rental properties that have been granted permits to date, with one exception, have received permits "in perpetuity," which carry with the parcel number forever. The only way these permit holders can have their permits revoked is if they violate the ordinance code.

And here's where you can help CVA and yourself. If there is a troublesome STR near you, get a little notebook and keep a list of time, date, type of infraction (noise, parking, lighting, special event, responsiveness of the STR responsible person on problems, etc.) and any other

detail you want to include. This history of infractions collected over time can be provided to the county office of Housing & Community Development, and based on a history of code violations, the county can revoke the permit. The operator can re-apply, but the county is not obligated to re-issue a permit.

And if a property in your area is applying for a permit, and you have concerns, write a letter to the county and attend the planning commission meeting. This can help head off the in-perpetuity problem before it gets further embedded.

Moratorium on Permits

Our supervisor Mary Adams and her staff have worked very hard to get approval from the board of supervisors on a proposal placing a temporary moratorium on STR permits. It would be great to give her a shout out for having our backs. Regardless of whether the moratorium is put in place or not, going forward, we still have the drudgery of documenting infractions on the existing in-perpetuity permits, but this proposal would go a very long way toward keeping the problem from getting worse.

Fire Pits and Fire Safety

Support CVA in pushing Monterey County to outlaw fire pits and enforce PRC 4291. Short-term rentals and the huge fuel loads expected this year don't mix! Just one fire pit ember or careless cigarette, combined with an unfortunate wind and the property location, could draw a fire quickly and broadly through our area.

If you live in an SRA (State Responsibility Area), and most CV residents do, ask your fire district to do an assessment of the STRs in your neighborhood to enforce the legal requirement for property owners to comply with CA State PRC 4291. This will ensure the STR property is in compliance with this important code, improving the fire safety of neighborhoods and protecting us all. Fires don't know to stop at property lines.

You can check that you are in an SRA at this link:

<https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/state-responsibility-area-viewer/>

That's CVA!! We're here with you for the long haul since 1949.

Garden Show Details and Schedule



Prize-winning flower arrangement of 2022

Bargain plants, stunning flowers fresh from local gardens, and experiences galore up for bid at the silent auction lure attendees each year to the Carmel Valley Garden Club annual show.

The May 13-14 show, “Spring After the Rains,” promises to be bigger and better with a much larger plant sale and a great flower competition thanks to the wet spring, according to Dean Hatfield, show chairman, who expects a turnout of more than 1,500.

Now in its 52nd year, the show opens from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, transforming Hidden Valley Music Seminars in the Carmel Valley Village into a spectacular array of plants and flowers. In addition to cut specimens, the show includes potted plants and floral arrangements. It draws visitors from as far away as San Francisco each year.

Entries open to all include:

✿ Cut flowers, floral arrangements, potted plants with accredited judges picking

Story and photos by Carolyn Rice
the best of each category.

✿ Photography contest with experienced photographers on hand to answer questions.

✿ Buzzy’s Garden, where children can catch a tadpole or pet a ladybug in a fanciful outdoor garden created for preschoolers to upper elementary age. Creative crafts are available along with lemonade and treats.

✿ A silent auction with art, experiences, garden décor, and artisanal products and new auction items both days of the show.

✿ Carmel Valley Garden Club member-raised assorted vegetable starts along with flowering plants and succulents on sale.

✿ Vendor booths featuring specialty items to ease gardener’s chores, plus jewelry, plants, and unique gifts.

✿ Good Time Catering, serving food between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. each day.

For information on entries and the show, please consult the Carmel Valley Garden Club Show 2023 page at cvgardenclub.org.

New Natural Heritage Committee Launches

by Charlie Wahle

This year, CVA is re-envisioning our efforts to conserve the natural ecosystems of the Carmel Valley. Many reading this newsletter are drawn to the valley for its rustic architecture, rural charm, historical feel, and low-key lifestyle. Many also revel in the valley’s natural qualities like its spectacular landscapes, inspiring views, amazing hiking trails, quiet evenings, starry nights, curious wildlife, singing frogs, and vibrant and diverse habitats. One of CVA’s aims is to ensure that we all continue to enjoy both the human and natural side of Carmel Valley by spotlighting how healthy natural ecosystems enable healthy human communities and by providing knowledge and tools to make that possible.

In the coming months, CVA’s new Natural Heritage Committee will seek to partner with interested people and organizations to help celebrate, protect, restore, and sustain Carmel Valley’s natural ecosystems and the social, cultural, spiritual, and economic benefits they provide to residents and visitors alike. Relying on education, engagement, and collaboration, we aim to strengthen the vital linkages connecting people and nature in Carmel Valley by highlighting how healthy ecosystems sustain our quality of life and how our individual and collective actions can support or degrade nature in the Carmel Valley in ways that can last for generations.

You can help! CVA’s Natural Heritage Committee is seeking volunteer members who want to help make this vision a reality. We anticipate using a mixture of approaches, including:

- Outreach and education via newsletter, website, and social media
- Hands-on efforts in the field
- Research and assessment on important issues
- Advocacy for beneficial policies, management actions or best practices among agencies, residents, and visitors

CVA’s website will regularly post updates on the Natural Heritage Committee’s plans and activities, so if you are interested in joining this critical endeavor, check in there or contact the committee’s chair, Charlie Wahle, at charliewahle@gmail.com.



Double rainbow over the Valley, captured by Mibs McCarthy.

RANA CREEK RANCH — A RICH HERITAGE AND A FUTURE IN FLUX

by C.S. Noel

Among many denizens of Carmel Valley, one of the most fondly and wistfully remembered periods of Carmel Valley's past is the ranching era, when dozens of classic working ranches threaded through the length of Carmel Valley like a string of iridescent pearls.

Though ranches and equestrian properties are still prominent in the Valley, today many have been broken up and sold off, making way for new development, lavender farming, vineyards, and other pursuits. Heck, we even have a property out here offering goat yoga retreats.

Yet there has always been one special ranch that remained untouched by these changes, one of the most iconic and well known to almost all valley-ites: Rana Creek Ranch.

Much of Rana Creek Ranch, as we currently know it, emerged from the land grant period of the 1800s. In 1924 it was purchased by the Marble family, who operated it into the 1970s. And unlike so many other ranches that in time were turned over to other uses, when Rana Creek was sold by the Marble family in the 1980s to Mike Markkula, it was spared this fate. Markkula, an

executive and the second CEO at Apple, in fact both purchased Rana Creek and combined additional contiguous acreage to the property, and Rana Creek continued on uninterrupted as a working ranch under his auspices. Today, at a total of 14,000 acres, Rana Creek Ranch is the largest contiguous tract of land remaining in Carmel Valley.

But change at last caught up with Rana Creek when Markkula put the ranch up for sale and has had it listed on and off over the past decade. This jewel in the crown of Carmel Valley ranches is now in escrow and appears on track to change hands perhaps as soon as sometime this summer.

With its future in flux, it seems questionable whether Rana Creek Ranch will continue life as a working ranch. But we can hope and work toward a Rana Creek Ranch whose natural beauty and important heritage can be preserved and appreciated for future generations.

And we just may have a shot at that vision.

The buyer for Rana Creek Ranch is The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC), and they are currently in escrow for the property.

TWC owns and operates California's largest nonprofit nature preserve system and has purchased 200,000 acres of property and created more than 20 preserves, largely in California. The Wildlands Conservancy describes itself as "California's nonprofit leader in land stewardship and staff-led land restoration and species repatriation."

The Wildlands Conservancy makes properties available free to the public and creates guided interpretive programs and free educational programs with a particular focus on children. It has provided free educational field trips for California youth since 1998.

CVA urges all Valley residents to join us in learning more about this organization, what they represent, and the expertise they can bring to fostering the unique ecosystem that exists at Rana Creek Ranch. Let's find out together how TWC's presence will impact and be integrated both with our beautiful Carmel Valley in the interests not just of those who abide here now, but also for future generations.

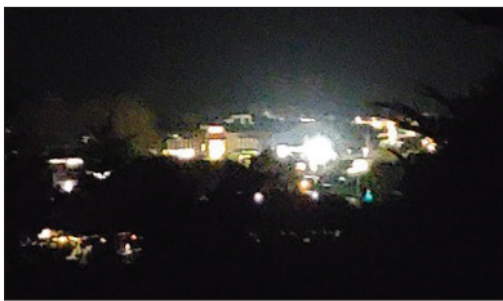
Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.

Dark Sky Interest is Growing

by John Heyl

It seems keeping our dark skies dark is something everyone in the community can get behind.

Good news abounds!



A new galaxy? Nope, the glare from the Chase Bank on Carmelo Rancho as seen from Rancho Rio Vista

What looks like a new galaxy was the view of the Chase Bank's super-bright lighting on Carmelo Rancho Boulevard at the mouth of the Valley taken from Rio Rancho Road. Citizen complaints to CVA led to the county's Housing and Community Development Department sending a notice of violation to Chase Corporate. Chase

recently responded by angling the formerly garish lighting down to the street and reducing the glare.

Interest in preserving our dark skies is growing. Neighbors on Next Door recently proposed that CV residents turn off their lights at 11:00 p.m. in order to better see the recent comet in the northeast skies. Also, a lighting workshop at the CV Library in February drew 35 participants to hear Meredith Nole's "enlightening" insights into modern bulbs and applications. Another CV Library workshop will coincide with International Dark Sky Week celebrations.

The Monterey County Board of Supervisors is scheduled to deliver a ceremonial resolution designating April 15-22 as International Dark Sky Week in Monterey County, asking "each resident and governmental agency [of Monterey County] to join us, not only in observing and pondering upon this important week, but also in raising awareness and support for protecting our precious dark skies resources."

In other good news, the Astronomy Department at Hartnell College, in coordination with the college's internship program, will be hearing a CVA presentation on dark skies on April 21 in hopes of attracting a summer intern to help with getting recognition for Garland Park as a Dark Sky place. Several CVA members are working to facilitate this designation, and we hope more local agencies can join in to help preserve our night skies.

So keep looking up, folks, and don't forget to turn off those lights you don't really need at night!



Here's another photo of the bank from street level. So glad the Chase people have reduced their excessive light glare.

Supervisors Discuss Local Issues at Annual Meeting



by Andy Sudol

Carmel Valley Association's annual meeting took place on Sunday afternoon, March 5, 2023, at Hidden Valley Music Seminars in Carmel Valley Village. Over 90 guests were welcomed by CVA President, C. S. Noel, and treated to refreshments, music, and informational discussions on local issues. President Noel introduced our very own Monterey County District 5 supervisor Mary Adams and fellow supervisor, Glenn Church, from Monterey County District 4 in North County. Monterey County Sheriff Tina Nieto also attended, spoke briefly, and answered audience questions. It was duly noted that the number of women in leadership roles in Monterey County is at an all-time high!

For residents of unincorporated Monterey County, the supervisors are Carmel Valley's

local government representatives. Building strong alliances with other supervisors is vital to achieve a majority vote of the five-member board. Supervisor Church was invited in order for us to learn more about each other and issues that are common to both districts to facilitate working together on topics such as short-term rental ordinances, natural disaster readiness (most notably fire and flood), housing, building permits, and waterway and road management.

Supervisor Church mentioned the fact that he grew up as the son of Monterey County Supervisor Warren Church, which gives him a great deal of exposure to and experience in issues that supervisors face.

Supervisor Adams acknowledged local community volunteers who provide invaluable assistance in shaping public

Supervisors Glenn Church and Mary Adams above, photos by Mibs McCarthy

policy on local issues such as short-term rental ordinances and local road management by serving on county commissions and voicing the concerns of the community. CVA board member John Heyl was recognized as one of those volunteers, who is dedicated to short-term rental issues and has researched how other communities have addressed possible solutions to an issue that has broad implications on the availability of affordable housing in Carmel Valley, especially as it impacts local service providers and their employees.

Delicious refreshments were provided by Jerome's Carmel Valley Market with beverages provided by Hubert Fabre of Vineyard Brands Wine. Music was provided by the renowned local pianist, Bob Phillips.

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Nora Resindez photographed Rita Picazo's son Leonardo enveloped in poppies covering a Carmel Valley hill.



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Deer country, next to Esquiline Road.
Banner photo by Ron Pierce, 2023.

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More info: cvgardenclub.org