Mountain View, California November 2020



MONTA LOMA HOLIDAYS

Gratitude chalk walk, food donations, Ernie's trains, and a scavenger hunt all planned to keep our spirits high.

See inside for more details on holiday events for a festive season in the neighborhood.

Fencing Monta Loma Park: A Work in Progress as Neighbors, School, City Seek Solutions By Heather Schoell, Editor

In mid-September, the neighborhood became aware of a plan by the Mountain View Whisman School District to use Measure T funds to fence off Monta Loma park from the public during school hours (7:30 am - 3:30 p.m.).

The reasons for the fence as presented by the school district are to prevent unauthorized visitors from entering the school, allow for monitored entrances to comply with COVID guidelines when school re-opens, keep pets and non-school affiliated visitors off fields during school hours, and keep children prone to wandering in a safe and contained area during outdoor school activities.

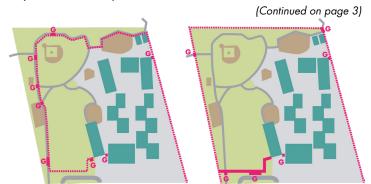
Two plans for the fencing are under consideration, both are a combination of chain-link fence and decorative fencing, 6' high. Plan 1 connects existing fences and adds more along the walkway past the rest rooms and connecting to the front of the school. This plan allows for public access to the city-installed playground, picnic tables, and rest rooms during school hours. Plan 2 closes the entire park during school hours. This second plan eliminates the fence from interfering with broader uses of the park, but cuts off community pass-through during school hours. All gates are to have remote, timed, auto-lock and unlock functionality so they will open at the appropriate hours.



Fence Plan 2 rendering. Source: MVWSD

The response from the neighborhood has been mostly opposed to the plans yet understanding of the district's desires to keep the children and teachers safe and allow for a school re-opening.

As soon as the MLNA board became aware of the plans in September, Tricia DelGaudio, MLNA Board President, initiated communications with Dr. Rebecca Westover, MVWSD Chief Business Officer who is in charge of the fencing project, as well as other city and school board leaders, to ensure that the neighborhood had a role in the process. Neighbors have voiced their concerns at a number of meetings over the past few months; school board, city council, and parks and recreation.



Fence Plan 1 (along walkways)

Fence Plan 2 (gates at entrances)

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IN THIS EDITION:	
Holiday Activities	p. 2
School Park Fencing Contact Info	р. 3
Halloween Gallery	p. 5
Joke Corner and Children's Gallery	p. 9

#### **MLNA Board Members**

Phone messages: (650) 691-5258

#### **President**

Tricia DelGaudio president@montaloma.org

#### **First Vice President**

Chris Williams vp1@montaloma.org

#### **Second Vice President**

Nirvana Nwikidu vp2@montaloma.org

#### **Treasurer**

Andre Valente treasurer@montaloma.org

#### **Secretary**

Baidra Murphy secretary@montaloma.org

#### **Newsletter Editor**

Heather Schoell newsletter@montaloma.org

#### Member-at-Large

Marilyn Gildea (communications) member-at-large@montaloma.org

#### MLNA Newsletter

#### **Editor & Layout**

Heather Schoell newsletter@montaloma.org

#### **Advertising Manager**

Baidra Murphy ads@montaloma.org

#### Illustrations/Photos

If interested in contributing, please e-mail the editor for content ideas. Submissions for relevant cartoons also welcome.

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#### **HOLIDAY SEASON IN MONTA LOMA**

#### Gratitude Chalk Walk in Monta Loma Park

**Friday, November 27, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. –** Take a walk to the park and express in chalk on the walkways what you're grateful for in this challenging year. We've seen so much beautiful sidewalk art that we'd like to bring some of that joy into our shared space in the middle of the neighborhood. Chalk will be available for all to use. We will be following the 6' social distance guideline and all are asked to wear masks while participating in the activity.

We're looking for volunteers to be "greeters" throughout the day. Sign up for a time slot (tinyurl.com/ML-ChalkWalk) to say hi to neighbors and help them find some chalk and a spot to share their words or pictures. All ages are welcome! (Rain cancels.)

## Second Harvest Holiday Fundraiser, the Tradition Continues

Every year during the holidays, the Monta Loma Neighborhood Association raises funds for the Second Harvest Food Bank. Any amount is welcome and your generosity much appreciated. Each dollar donated provides enough for two meals. Please check whether your company offers matching donations.

This fundraiser will be open until December 20th.

Link for online donations: impact.shfb.org/team/328691

## Ernie's Trains, an Annual Favorite, Keeps Chugging

John Bianco, Ernie's son, will continue the tradition of running his model trains from Thanksgiving through Christmas Day. Weather permitting, trains will run Wednesday through Sunday on Adele Ave. from 6:30 to about 9:00.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, trains will run on the indoor tracks only. The engines and cars change daily. Generations of families have visited the train display and John looks forward to continuing the experience this year.

Ernie also began the Christmas Eve tradition of curbside luminaria (candles in paper bags). Over the years, neighbors added their own, so a row of the softly glowing lights lines Adele.

Our family loves the holiday trains and walked to them several nights a week last year. We also love walking around the neighborhood and admiring the neighbors' lights and decorations.

– Christen on Craig Ct.

# Holiday Scavenger Hunt, Holiday Fun for All

Karla Valente is planning a neighborhood scavenger hunt for local kids to enjoy. All you need is a stuffed animal with some festive attire. The Holiday Scavenger Hunt will take place between December 10th and 25th.

Neighbors will try to find everything by walking through the neighborhood. They will write down the home number of each clue that they find. On December 27th Karla will send participants an email with the number of items they should have seen. This activity gets us outside and gives us something to do other than staring at a screen all day. To participate, send an email to klvalente@yahoo.com.

And lastly, let's decorate our homes so we can share the joy as we walk around. If you have decorations you do not use, consider offering them to a neighbor. Let's make the end of 2020 colorful and cheerful to bring good energy for 2021.

# Neighbors React to School Board Plan to Fence ML Park

(From page 1) Some neighbors have joined an email discussion group to coordinate plans to attend meetings and share responses to letters. A group of Laura Ln. neighbors have been also active in reaching out to city and school board leadership in an effort to keep the conversation open and not allow the school board to move too quickly without evaluating the needs and perspectives of all community stakeholders.

In addition to working with the school board, many neighbors are also pressuring the City of Mountain View to convert more space north of Central Expressway into park space to make up for lost park space if Monta Loma Park is fully fenced. At press time, the plans were still in the works, with no specific next steps to share. When asked for comment, the following was received: From Rebecca Westover, Chief Business Officer, MVWSD:

The District will be holding work group sessions with the community and will announce the specifics in the coming weeks. From Alison Hicks, MV City Council Member:

I am very concerned about the threat to green space and park access in our city and the Monta Loma area in particular. I believe that urban open space plays a critical role in building health, well being and community and that every Mountain View neighborhood deserves ample green space. California law recognizes that right through the Quimby Act which states cities must provide three acres of parkland for every thousand residents. I think our city needs to follow that law in both fact and spirit by making sure our parkland is accessible and distributed throughout our neighborhoods. I also think our parkland needs to go beyond ball fields and playgrounds, important as those features are. Our parks must include features that meet the needs of people of all ages and abilities, including walking and running paths, shaded and attractive picnic areas, dog walking areas and more. I encourage residents to contact me with concerns regarding parkland, green space and access.



Current entrance to Monta Loma Park from Thomson, which would be fenced in according to current plans under discussion. Adding fencing around the park will change the fabric of the neighborhood. Photo: Jim Cochran

# Speak Up Now! Share Your Thoughts on the Fence Plans

Read more about the plans from the school district: www.mvwsd.org/district_business/facilities/school_construction/monta_ loma_elementary_construction

#### Contacts

Rebecca Westover, Project leader for School Dist.: rwestover@mvwsd.org

Ayindé Rudolph, Superintendent: arudolph@mvwsd.org

MVWSD Board: trustees@mvwsd.org

Mountain View City Council: city.council@mountainview.gov

Mountain View Parks & Rec: prc@mountainview.gov

Email discussion group: groups.google.com/g/fencing-monta-loma

#### **Neighborhood Resources**

#### Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Tim Slattery, (650) 964-6389 CERT@montaloma.org

#### Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

Tom Purcell, (650) 224-5110 MontaLomaNBC@gmail.com

## **Traffic/Parking Liaison**

John Canata, (650) 269-5646 trafficliaison@montaloma.org

#### MLN Neighborhood E-mail List

To subscribe, send a message with subject 'help' to mln-request@lists.montaloma.org Contact moderator: mln-owner@lists.montaloma.org

#### **MLNA** Websites

www.montaloma.org Referrals: localwiki.org/montaloma

Webmaster: Hien Do webmaster@montaloma.org



Thanks to those who delivered the last newsletter: Susan Jee, Silke Gurlich, Dave McCleary, Vania Mendonca, John Thomas, Harry Gordon, Raymond White, John Canata, Maria Harnoto, Dianne McCleary, Dave Erskine, Paul Kostka, Ivy Lu, Shelly Ostman, Chuck and Cookie Henderson, Herb and Victoria Perry, Martha Elderon, Grant & Birgit Grundler, Isabella Hill, Leane Reelfs

We welcome more volunteers, even those who can help only occasionally. It's a good way to get to know your neighborhood and get an hour's exercise.

Contact the editor to learn more.

## **Prevent Holiday Thefts**

By Tom Purcell, Monta Loma Neighborhood Watch Captain

With the holidays approaching, we can expect a spike in package thefts. Take steps to avoid having deliveries loiter unattended on your doorstep. If you can, have packages delivered to your work, or utilize delivery lockers that some retailers offer. Many package deliveries offer detailed tracking information and delivery preference options so that you can make sure you or a trusted neighbor can secure a package soon after it's delivered.

For a tip sheet on preventing package theft as well as other helpful safety tips, isit the Neighborhood Watch page on montaloma.org.

Take care to avoid leaving signs that you're not home, such as empty trash bins at the curb. If you leave before your bins are emptied, ask a neighbor to roll them off the street. If you have home security cameras, include in the coverage area where you expect packages to be left.

Thefts from vehicles continue, so avoid leaving valuables in yours, and always lock it. The police urge you to call whenever you see anything that seems suspicious. For emergencies and in-progress incidents, call 911. For other matters, suspicious circumstances, or crimes that have already occurred, call the non-emergency number (650) 903-6395.

## **Annual Financial Report**

By Andre Valente, MLNA Treasurer

Despite the pandemic and not being able to hold our signature Ice Cream Social and as many neighborhood block parties, we have had a good year. We invested more in our newsletter, now in color and with a much improved layout.

Below is a condensed financial statement for the 2019-2020 fiscal year, audited by the Board. Feel free to contact me if you need more detail. Please patronize our newsletter advertisers; they provide significant financial support to the association.

Beginning balance	(7/1/2019)	\$6,587.77
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With	drawals	Deposits
City Grant	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
Ice Cream Social	\$241.83	\$0.00
Block Parties	\$679.36	\$0.00
CERT	\$40.00	\$0.00
Newsletter	\$2,415.23	\$3,703.43
T-shirts	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fees	\$20.00	\$0.00
Internet Hosting	\$190.80	\$0.00
Branded logo items	\$ \$377.52	\$507.00
Supplies	\$122.50	\$0.00
Total	\$4,267.24	\$6,210.43
Ending balance (6/	/30/2020)	\$8,530.96



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# CERT is Staying Ready for Action and is Open to New Members

By Tim Slattery, CERT Leader

CERT continues to have meetings held by Zoom, but Covid health concerns restrict most of our activities. We are adapting to the new rules, finding ways to maintain our equipment and overall readiness for the kind of emergencies we have trained for. Many of our members are helping in other ways outside the CERT organization, and doing what we can to help our community.

At this time the City has suspended all CERT classes and all in-person meetings for 2020. Refresher classes have been canceled until the county health recommendations change.

Monta Loma CERT is always looking to welcome new members. It is not necessary to take the training before joining. At this time we would invite new members to our Zoom meetings and include them on the mailing list. If you would like to join us contact Tim Slattery at CERT@montaloma.org

#### **Produce Donations Welcome All Year**

Do you have extra produce growing in your yard that you would like to donate to families in need? Each week on Sunday mornings, Monta Loma resident Caroline Chan delivers extra produce from our neighborhood to the school district she works for as part of an ongoing effort to help families struggling with food insecurity. If you have any excess produce that you would like to donate, please drop off what you have in the shade in front of Caroline's garage (2531 Mardell Way) by 10 a.m. on Sundays. Non-perishable food as well as toiletries are also welcome. This is an ongoing effort, so if you don't have any extra produce, non-perishables or toiletries to donate on a given week, you can always donate in the future!







Photos: Caroline Chan

## **Traffic & Parking Resources**

By John Canata, MLNA Traffic and Parking Liaison
The chatter bars have been re installed at the
intersection of Victory and Dell, making the left
turn onto Victory from Dell a little safer for us.
A few contacts for your reference:

- Abandoned vehicle (more than 3 days): call (650) 903-6358.
- Police enforcement at a specific intersection: call (650) 903-6146.
- Other traffic related concerns:
   e-mail trafficliaison@montaloma.org

# Google X (RAILS) Relations

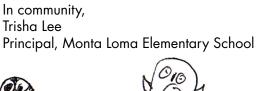
If residents have questions or concerns they can e-mail John Canata at the traffic liaison e-mail address above, and he will be happy to forward those concerns to our Google representative(s). The Google Reps are more than happy to answer any questions or concerns the neighborhood might have and in turn, John will let the neighborhood know any correspondence that he receives directly from Google X Rails.





## Monta Loma School News: From the Principal

Greetings, Monta Loma Community! I am the new Monta Loma Elementary School principal, Trisha Lee. While I am new to the Monta Loma neighborhood, I am not new to the Mountain View community, having been born and raised close to Mountain View High School. At Monta Loma, we continue to serve our students through distance learning, focusing on building up their abilities to persevere and weather adversity through social-emotional learning. As a district, we continue to monitor the health of our community, watching patterns and trends and make plans to move into Stage 3. The one consistent of 2020 has been to expect the unexpected and to be ready for change. As our school year progresses, community members can learn about our plans for bringing students back to campus on our district website. As we weather this storm together, I invite community members to connect with me at tlee@mvwsd.org or by calling me at 650-903-6915.







Penguins by Liliana, age 7

# HELPFUL HINTS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## Keeping Monta Loma Clean and Green

#### Street sweeping:

- Help the sweeper clean your gutter by moving your vehicles and trash bins off the street the evening before the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. This is especially important in fall with dropping tree debris.
- Cars should be moved by 6:00 a.m.
- The only street-sweeping date in the remainder of the year is 12/10. The regular schedule resumes in January.
- If you have tenants who park on the street, please keep them informed of dates as well.

#### Walkable Sidewalks:

- Please trim shrubs back to the full width of the sidewalk and to a height of seven feet, as req'd by city code.
- Keep sidewalks clear of fallen leaves, especially after rain, for the safety of pedestrians.
- Please keep weeds under control, especially those nasty foxtails that get into our pets' toes, ears, and noses.
   Sweep sidewalks after mowing weeds.

#### Dogs:

- Always pick up dog messes deposited at the Monta Loma Park fields. Dogs will not be allowed on fields when school is back in session.
- Pick up droppings from yards.
- Please don't deposit doggie bags in neighbors' trash cans after they've been emptied.
- Incontinent dogs should be walked in the gutter, not on sidewalks.

# What goes in which bin: Visit mvrecycle.org

#### Repair Cafe:

 The Repair Café has successfully gone virtual. To learn about upcoming events, join its mailing list e-mail at RepairCafeMV@gmail.com.

Moving out? Go to HHW.org or call (408) 299-7300 for a list of household hazardous waste collection options. Note: Hazardous waste drop-off is currently closed.

Moving in? If you found unwanted household chemicals in your new house, visit or call HHW to find nearby household hazardous waste drop-off locations.

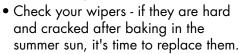
# For Your New Neighbors

Look for the "New to Monta Loma?" link under MLNA at montaloma.org, or share a copy of this newsletter with your new neighbors.

## **Greetings from the Car Gal!**

By Leane Reelfs, The Car Gal at Helming's Automotive

As we head into the cooler, wetter months, there are a few things to put on your to-do list to get your car ready for whatever comes our way:





- Check your battery if it's over three years old, it's probably time to replace, but have your mechanic perform a load test.
- Check your tires your tires have "wear bars" between
  the tread interspersed along the tire. If the wear bar is
  even with the tread, it's time for new tires. And if you
  use your tires more than brakes on those winding roads
  (we know you, Speedracer!), they probably have less
  tread on the edges, so see if your mechanic recommends tires.
- Check your cabin air filter this is sometimes difficult and you have to remove the glove box to access it, but we had a LOT of smoke this summer, so check to see if it's dirty vs. pristine and white. It could also be full of leaves and pollen and ready to be changed.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me at helmingsauto@comcast.net. Have fun and be safe!





Along with these lovely gum tree leaves, Marilyn Gildea says her favorite thing about fall in Monta Loma is, "the Chinese Pistache trees turning color (actually, all different colors) in November. The ones on Jane Lane near Fay Way are outstanding."

# HALLOWEEN GALLERY

# Haunted and Happy, Monta Lomans Celebrated Halloween in Pandemic Style

While it wasn't your typical Halloween, the current precautions didn't stop the neighborhood from enjoying themselves this Halloween. From candy chutes to mask wearing goblins, the candy, creativity and cheer was abundant.











On Hamilton Ave., we had fun decorating for Halloween and setting up a table with candy at the end of the driveway and waving to customers. Our kids trick or treated wearing face masks and in small groups and appreciated the creativity of neighbors in making sure Halloween still happened.



# **NEIGHBORHOOD FOODIES**

#### **Instant Pot Tomato Soup**

(Recipe From PressureCookRecipes.com, shared by Jo Chun-Wood)

3 pounds (1396g) field or Roma tomatoes, cut in half horizontally

3 cups (750ml) unsalted chicken stock

3 (11g) garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 (248g) medium onion, chopped

1 (102g) carrot, chopped

 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (125ml) heavy cream

2 tablespoons (30ml) olive oil

1 tablespoon (14g) unsalted butter

2 tablespoons (30ml) fish sauce

2 tablespoons (30g) jasmine rice

A pinch of dried basil
A pinch of dried thyme
Salt, sugar & ground black pepper
Garnish: Fresh basil



#### **Roast Tomatoes**

Preheat oven to 400°F. Layer tomatoes (cut side up) in a baking tray. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt & ground black pepper. If your tomatoes are not in season, sprinkle a little sugar on the tomatoes to help them caramelize better.) Place baking tray in the oven's middle rack. Depending on your oven and tomatoes, it will take 45–65 minutes.

#### **Prepare Pressure Cooker**

Heat up your pressure cooker over medium high heat. Instant Pot: press Sauté button, then Adjust button to Sauté More function. Ensure your pot is as hot as it can be. Instant Pot: wait until indicator says HOT.

#### Sauté Onion, Garlic, and Carrot

Sauté onions in 1 tbsp unsalted butter for roughly 2 – 3 minutes until soft. Add in garlic and season with a pinch of salt and ground black pepper. Sauté for 1 minute until fragrant. Add in chopped carrots and saute another minute.

#### Deglaze

Pour  $\sim \frac{1}{2}$  cup unsalted chicken stock. Scrub all the brown bits off bottom of the pot with a wooden spoon. Keep the brown bits as they are very flavorful.

#### **Cook Tomato Soup**

Add roasted/browned tomatoes, 2 tbsp (30g) jasmine rice, a pinch of dried basil, and a pinch of dried thyme in Instant Pot. Pour in 2 tbsp (30ml) fish sauce and remaining unsalted chicken stock. Close the lid and cook.

Pressure Cooking Method: High Pressure for 3 minutes, then turn off the heat and do a 10 minutes Natural Release. Open the lid carefully.

#### **Blend & Season**

Blend tomato soup into desired consistency with an immersion hand blender. Strain the tomato soup over a fine mesh strainer for maximum smoothness. Add ½ cup (125ml) heavy cream. Taste the soup and season with salt if necessary. Depending on the tomatoes, you may want to add a pinch (or a few pinches) of sugar to balance the acidity flavor. It does wonder to the flavor!

#### Serve

Garnish with fresh basil. Enjoy immediately!!

# Ay Carumba! La Bamba is Moving!

By Heather Schoell

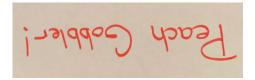
Sadly, the days of sitting on the patio eating tacos and watching kids bounce in the bounce house at our local taqueria, La Bamba, are at an end. In talking with the manager, he said that the rent was just too high to be sustainable, but the family wants to keep the business running. The restaurant is relocating at the beginning of December to a food truck arrangement in the parking lot of O'Malley's Sports Pub on Old Middlefield near Rengstorff. Still within walking distance from Monta Loma, the food offerings will remain, and La Bamba promises to have outdoor seating set up in the parking lot. Only the bounce house remains deflated.



Uni-taco by Vivienne, age 6

# Kids of all ages!

Submit your art, jokes, or games to newsletter@montaloma.org



Answer

# WE LOVE MONTA LOMA KIDS!



Joke corner by the Phillips Kids (answer on page 8)



Bird by Leila, Age 10



Bluebird by Isobel, Age 6



Pumpkin by Bryce, age 5



Pokeball, in the style of an icon with stained glass by Nathaniel, Age 8



Pirate Ship by Zsofia, age 6





Holiday Memory: Jeff Mills on Alvin says one of his favorite holiday memories is "Building parade floats for Tournament of Roses on Jan 1. Unfortunately no parade this year because of COVID-19." Photo: Jen Mills



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MICHAEL SUTTON (650) 799-2253 sutton@serenogroup.com MichaelSuttonRealtor.com DRE # 01916467



# Wishing You a Safe and Happy Holiday Season

It has been a difficult year for everybody. Let's all take some time to enjoy the blessings of the sesason while continuing to STAY SAFE!

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