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Mountain View, California *August 2010*

MONTA LOMA NEWS

Published and Distributed by the Monta Loma Neighborhood Association

Annual Monta Loma Neighborhood Ice Cream Social

¡Vengan todos a conocer y platicar con sus vecinos y amigos!
Come and meet your neighbors while enjoying free ice cream.



Sunday, August 29, 3 to 5 p.m
Monta Loma Park

Help is needed! See page 2.



Just a Few of the Things To See and Do at the Ice Cream Social (ICS)

- Visit the MLNA welcome table first. Sign in, then put your name and street on a nametag so your neighbors can meet you. Check out the free information and volunteer opportunities.
- Visit the ice cream toppings table for add-ons to enhance your ice cream.
- See the new Monta Loma tee shirts. Buy one.
- Meet your city council and school board members and candidates. They're invited so you can chat with them. Volunteer to help with the campaign of a candidate who impresses you.
- Ask Gary the Balloon Man to make you a very cool hat.
- Join in games for all ages. You may get wet!
- Donate stuffed toys to the Animals Beacons of Light (See p. 2.)
- Learn about CERT. Sign up.
- Participate in the decorated-bikes/strollers/scooters parade. Meet at the snack shack at 4:00 p.m.
- ***And, of course, eat ice cream! (You may wish to bring your own cup or bowl and spoon to be really green.)***

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

September 23: New Mayfield Plans Presentation
Meet the new developers of the Mayfield site, see their plans, and ask questions. Summit Land Partners and their architects will give us a preview in the school's multipurpose room on Thursday, September 23. Doors open 6:45 p.m., program begins at 7:00 p.m. This is not a formal hearing, but a presentation by the developer to Monta Loma residents. City staff is likely to attend, too. (See page 3 also.)

October 23: Monta Loma Neighborhood Association Candidates Forum
One of the ways the MLNA helps provide information to the neighborhood is our biennial candidates forum for the city council and school board candidates. This year's forum is scheduled for Saturday morning, October 23. That's 10 days before the election, just about the time we realize, "Ohmygosh, I need to decide who to vote for."

Those who attended this forum in past years say it really helped them decide, so mark your calendar now.

The Monta Loma neighborhood is bordered by San Antonio, West Middlefield, Rengstorff and Central Espressway.

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Please Volunteer for the Ice Cream Social!

It takes many people to make the ICS a success, so please help. The tasks are listed at http://tinyurl.com/ics2010. Please take a look and sign up, or contact Wouter at wsuverkropp@yahoo.com. These are just some of the jobs:

- Pick up the ice cream from Safeway just before 3:00. Requires pickup truck.
- Volunteer your folding tables and shade tents.
- Pick up and return folding tables and shade tents.
- Help set up and take down tables and tents.
- Staff the face-painting table. We have supplies.
- Take a half-hour shift at the MLNA Info table or tee shirt table.
- Organize a simple craft project for kids. We have supplies.
- Take a half-hour shift scooping ice cream.

Stuffed Animals Table at ICS

By Ellen Henson

The Animal Beacons of Light project gathers stuffed animals, freshens them, and gifts them to children around the world who need something to cuddle. We will be at the Ice Cream Social again this year, with arms open wide for stuffed animal donations. Bring yours to our table, or just stop by to chat.

We're seeking new or gently used soft-filled stuffed animals between 6 inches and 2 feet, made of fake fur, plush, or soft cloth, and that are cute, cuddly, and in good condition. Please find other homes for dolls, toys, or stuffies with batteries, moving parts, or commercial advertising.

More information is at http://mlna.wikispot.org/Stuffed_Animals. Questions? Contact Ellen at animalbeacons@yahoo.com or 961-8777.

Monta Loma Tee Shirts



Show your pride in the neighborhood at the Ice Cream Social (and everywhere) by wearing a Monta Loma tee shirt. The new shirts have the words Mountain View, California under Monta Loma Neighborhood. They sell at cost for $10. We've ordered a new shade of blue this year in the popular tapered style for ladies.

If you'd like yours before the ICS, contact Marilyn at 940-1606 or marilyn@gildea.com.

Monta Loma's CERT

By Jim Cochran

On June 6 the Monta Loma CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) participated in a city-wide exercise. CERT training gives us the decision-making, organizational, and practical skills to offer immediate assistance to family members, neighbors, and associates until help arrives. Yes, people will respond to others in need, but CERT training helps us do so effectively and efficiently without placing ourselves in unnecessary danger. The next monthly training is on Saturday, September 11, 9:00–11:00 at the CERT trailer next to the school.

Visit the CERT display at the Ice Cream Social, or call me at 207-5518.

MLNA Board Election Results

By Wouter Suverkropp, MLNA President

The slate of candidates for the June 10 board election was uncontested and was elected unanimously. Adam Rakestraw replaces retiring member-at-large Andy Rose. Another volunteer, Isabella Hill, was appointed earlier by the board as an additional member at large. The proposed changes to the bylaws were approved with a small minority voting no. Three absentee ballots were cast. Thanks to Randi Ross, Andy Rose, and Marilyn Gildea for organizing the voting.

We welcome volunteers to assist with neighborhood activities. Even an hour can be very helpful. If you would like join the board as a member at large or volunteer in any way, contact me or any board member (listed on page 2) for more information.

June General Meeting Report

By Wouter Suverkropp

After the board election, Peter Gilli of the city staff gave us an update on Mayfield: the number of Mountain View units may be in the high 200s.

Craig Goldman, the new school district superintendent, gave us a report on Monta Loma School student population, test scores, and projections, and explained the school expansion plans. They include a two-story building behind Benjamin and a new one-story building near the baseball field. The plans sparked many questions and comments, to which Craig responded.

Tom Quaglia of Mission Peak Developers presented preliminary plans for the property at Alvin and Middlefield. Likely 35 or 36 units, three stories facing the street and two stories on the retail corner, with parking in the back of the units.

Mayfield Update

By Wouter Suverkropp

I met recently with the potential new owners of the Mayfield site. Summit Land Partners has signed a purchase agreement with HP, pending approval of permits. A formal permit proposal has not been submitted to the city, but talks are ongoing, and are likely to move forward fairly quickly.

The new plan calls for 180 fewer units in Mountain View, for a total of about 260 units. Townhomes will replace the four- and five-story buildings. Plans for a tunnel under Central Expressway, the underpass under San Antonio, parks, street layout, tree requirement, and uses immediately adjacent to Monta Loma homes all remain unchanged.

It's likely that the whole site will be prepared in one go, provided it can also be built all at once. Demolition is expected to take four months of permitting and four months of actual demolition. If all goes well for Summit, work could start next year. A homebuilder will do the actual building.

Although the project is fully approved, there will be opportunities for input, mostly on details such as planning, building design, and parking. Attend the meeting on Sept. 13 (p. 1), then watch the Monta Loma email list for planning commission hearings and city council meetings.

Monta Loma Plaza

Northwest Credit Union plans to open in mid-October if construction goes as planned. A Fresh & Easy representative told Wouter that they are still planning to open stores in North California, despite the news articles to the contrary. Maybe next year.

Neighborhood Resources

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
Jim Cochran, 207-5514
jimcoch@comcast.net

Neighborhood Watch Coordinator
Open, please volunteer!

Activities Committee
Wouter Suverkropp, 968-3056
president@montaloma.org

Parents' Network and Babysitting Co-op
Verity Cease, 969-6735

MLN Neighborhood Email List
mln@yahoogroups.com
List owner: Peggy Mahon
mahon@pobox.com
To get only official announcements, subscribe at www.montaloma.org

MLNA Websites
www.montaloma.org
Referrals:
mlna.wikispot.org
Webmaster: Cheryl Jasper
webmaster@montaloma.org

Monta Loma School News

By Leane Reelfs, PTA Volunteer Coordinator

We are very excited about two new partnerships supporting our school community. First, El Camino Hospital, which already provides funding for Playworks noontime sports, will also help us educate kids and families about healthy food choices. Second, Project Cornerstone, whose mission is to support every young person in our community, will work with to us develop resiliency in children and deal with bullying, and will support parents, teachers, and kids.

Classes begin on Monday, August 23, so plan around school traffic from 8:10 to 8:35, 1:50 to 2:10, and 3:00 to 3:30. On Thursdays all students leave at 12:30.

At Monta Loma School, Community Enhanced Learning combines the efforts of students, teachers and parents to create a strong sense of community, values, and high student achievement. If you would like to be a big or small part of our school community, please contact me at reelfs@comcast.net or 255-4851.

Sixth Annual Anna Avenue Block Party

by Sheri Morrison

On Sunday, August 1, a record number of residents of Anna, Whitney, and Elka avenues gathered for food and fun at our annual block party. Joining us were former neighbor Howard with his partner, Naomi; Herb's sister Susan from Mountain View, and Jenny's daughter Angela from Fremont. We'd moved the date up from our usual Labor Day in order to bid farewell to neighbors Jarrid and Shelly, who were moving to Pasadena for Jarrid's new job. We also wished bon voyage to Bev, Craig, and family, who are going on a sabbatical to Copenhagen. We also welcomed new neighbors Raymond White and the Cook and Palacios families. While the adults stood or sat around catching up or getting to know each other, the kids rode bikes and scooters up and down our barricaded street. Thanks to all for pitching in to make a wonderful summer gathering

Neighborhoods Committee Awards City Grant to MLNA

By Marilyn Gildea

The city's annual Neighborhoods Committee meeting on June 17 was preceded by an informal dinner, which allowed MLNA board members Wouter Suverkropp, Carolyn Schmittzeh, and me to chat with members of the other neighborhood associations and learn what they are doing. It's always gratifying to hear how much they admire the MLNA.

The city's Neighborhood Grant Program provides annual grants "to help resident-based groups carry out programs and activities designed to improve participation and neighborhood conditions." This year, grant applications exceeded the total money available, so we were gratified to learn later that the MLNA was once again awarded $1,500, the maximum allowable. We receive the funds when we submit receipts for our block parties, Spring Fling, Ice Cream Social, and our biennial candidates forum.

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Thanks to those who delivered the June newsletter: Julie Baher, Donna Clarke, Martha Elderon, Marilyn Gildea, Harry Gordon, Grant Grundler, Maria Harnoto, Isabella Hill, Paul Kostka, Bill Lambert (2), Allison McGill (2), Ann McMillan, Hanneke Meijer, Shelly Ostman, John Thomas, Elizabeth Wee, and Pat Young.

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.



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Ben Baumgartner Looks Back 50+ Years

By Isabella Hill

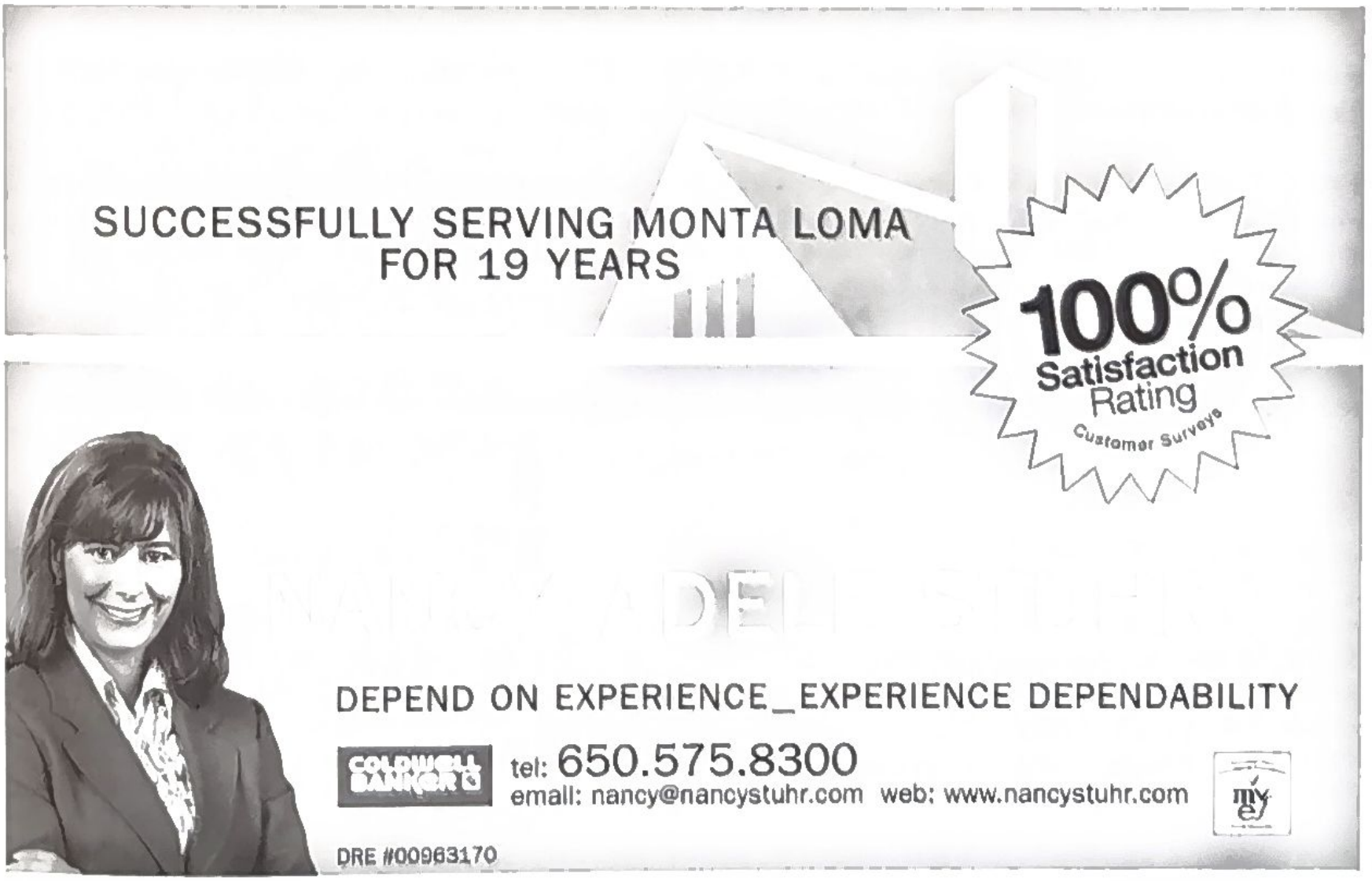
Godfrey (Ben) Baumgartner remembers when he actually had a "mountain view" from his backyard on Betlo. Ben bought his house in 1957 because "the mortgage was cheaper than rent." At the time, he could see San Antonio Road, because everything north of his house was clear. According to Ben, the homes in the Monta Loma neighborhood were "prefab": the lumber was preassembled and brought over in batches to be put into the foundation of each home.

Having lived in Mountain View since he was six months old, Ben witnessed the transformation of not only the neighborhood but the entire city. During his youth, downtown Mountain View was hardly more than a village, with two or three grocery stores, two banks, a music store, a creamery, one Chinese restaurant, a novelty store, a sheet metal shop, an electric shop, a watchmaker/jeweler, and, most important for a kid, a movie theater. "Within three blocks you could get everything you needed. Public transportation was better during the Depression; people walked to the train stations, and the buses served some of the farming areas, as well as the town."

Fifty years ago, the neighborhood was closer-knit. Ben hosted an annual July Fourth party that included a sewing contest. He knew most of his street's residents, and was known as "the handyman" to all his neighbors. Ben has never once called a plumber or electrician since he's owned his house. "[The neighbors] used to bring me their old Westinghouse stoves," he recalls, chuckling at the remnants still in his garage. At 78, Ben continues to do all his own repairs and stays active in the community. When asked why he has stayed here all these years, he replied, "The house is big enough for all my stuff."

Ben is a bit of a Renaissance Man. His extensive list of accomplishments include fabricating his own cement mixer out of an old water barrel, removing a wart using a soldering iron, winning the 2004 "In the Trenches Award" given by The Skeptic's Toolbox, being considered by his fellow workers as the machine shop's "union leader" at Varian when no union even existed, and picking apricots from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. every day for 11 straight weeks. He was called "Fearless Ben" by a Sylvania top boss whom most workers feared, a title that he proudly embodies. Ben is an outspoken person who is actively involved in his community—be it his neighborhood, city, or country. His personal mantra is "Always question and evaluate the information you are given before accepting."

If you have memories to share, contact the editor at marilyn@gildea.com or 940-1606.



Keeping Monta Loma Safe...and Clean...and Green

Police Advice on Recycling Thieves

Liz Wylie, the Police Department's Public Information Officer, emailed this advice:

"Recycling theft is an ongoing problem, and we need the community's help. Call us when you see someone stealing recyclables. That is the best way for us to catch these people.

"Call our non-emergency number (903-6395) and give the dispatcher as much information as you can: description of suspect, direction of travel, mode of transportation, and method of collection (bag, cart, car). We will certainly send an officer to the area as soon as we can."

The best deterrent is to wait until Wednesday morning to put your recycling out.

Tired of Curbside Collection Requests and Solicitations?

By Wouter Suverkropp

Those who are annoyed by unwanted business solicitations or curbside collection requests can

- Call or write the company to complain.
- Ask them to come and pick up the litter.
- Refuse to do business with these companies.

Critters in our Yards

The super-abundance of plums in July may be the reason for more raccoons, skunks, and possums in our yards. One dog's encounter with a skunk prompted several deodorizing recipes on the neighborhood email list. Pat Jordan found a raccoon teaching its baby to use her cat door. You may want to add "Keep pets inside and pet doors secured at night" to "Keep pet food inside and compost enclosed."

Bren on Benjamin adds this advice from a vet: Any nocturnal animal seen during the day is possibly sick and may be dangerous. Call Palo Alto Animal Control at 496-5971.

DEEP Water Your Young Trees!

By Dianne Dryer

This is the critical time for watering young trees deeply around the base at least every two weeks. Trees less than five years old won't survive with occasional lawn or garden sprinkling. They need regular deep watering for 30 minutes near the base of the trunk. With numerous trees being removed due to age, good care of our trees is very important for the long-term beauty and shade they provide, as well as supporting property values.

PLAN A BLOCK PARTY

Several wonderful block parties have already been held, and it's not too late to plan one for your street. It's a great way to meet your neighbors, build camaraderie, and recruit a Neighborhood Watch (NW) Block Captain, if you don't already have one. To encourage Neighborhood Watch, MLNA will help pay for your party. Pick up a flyer with the details at the Ice Cream Social or visit www.montaloma.org and click on Neighborhood Watch and on Block Parties. Scroll to the bottom of the Block Parties page and click on "printable version."

MOBILE LIBRARY

The library's mobile unit stops on Jane at Fay on these Fridays: Sept. 10 and Oct. 8 from 9:45 to 10:15. It stops at Redwood Villa (on Montecito) from 3:00 to 3:30 on alternate Thursdays: Sept. 9 and 23, and Oct. 7 and 21. For more information or special requests, email mobile.library@mountainview.gov or call 526-7029.

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BIRDING IN THE MONTA LOMA NEIGHBORHOOD: THE CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE

by Dotty Calabrese

This constantly moving and charming 4.5-inch bird is named for its call, *tseek-a-dee-dee*. Males, females, and juveniles all look alike: a large head for their body size; short, thin, black bill; dark brown cap; black bib; white cheeks and underside; chestnut back, rump, and sides; and short, rounded, gray wings edged in white.

Chickadees are cavity nesters, and may nest in birdboxes from 4 to 10 feet above the ground. Nesting begins in mid-March. Both males and females care for the nestlings.

Chestnut-back chickadees eat insects, spiders, seeds, and berries. Although primarily insect eaters, they especially like the sunflower seeds and suet in your feeders. Several also sip my hummingbird nectar! They will store food in the fall, then find and eat it in winter.

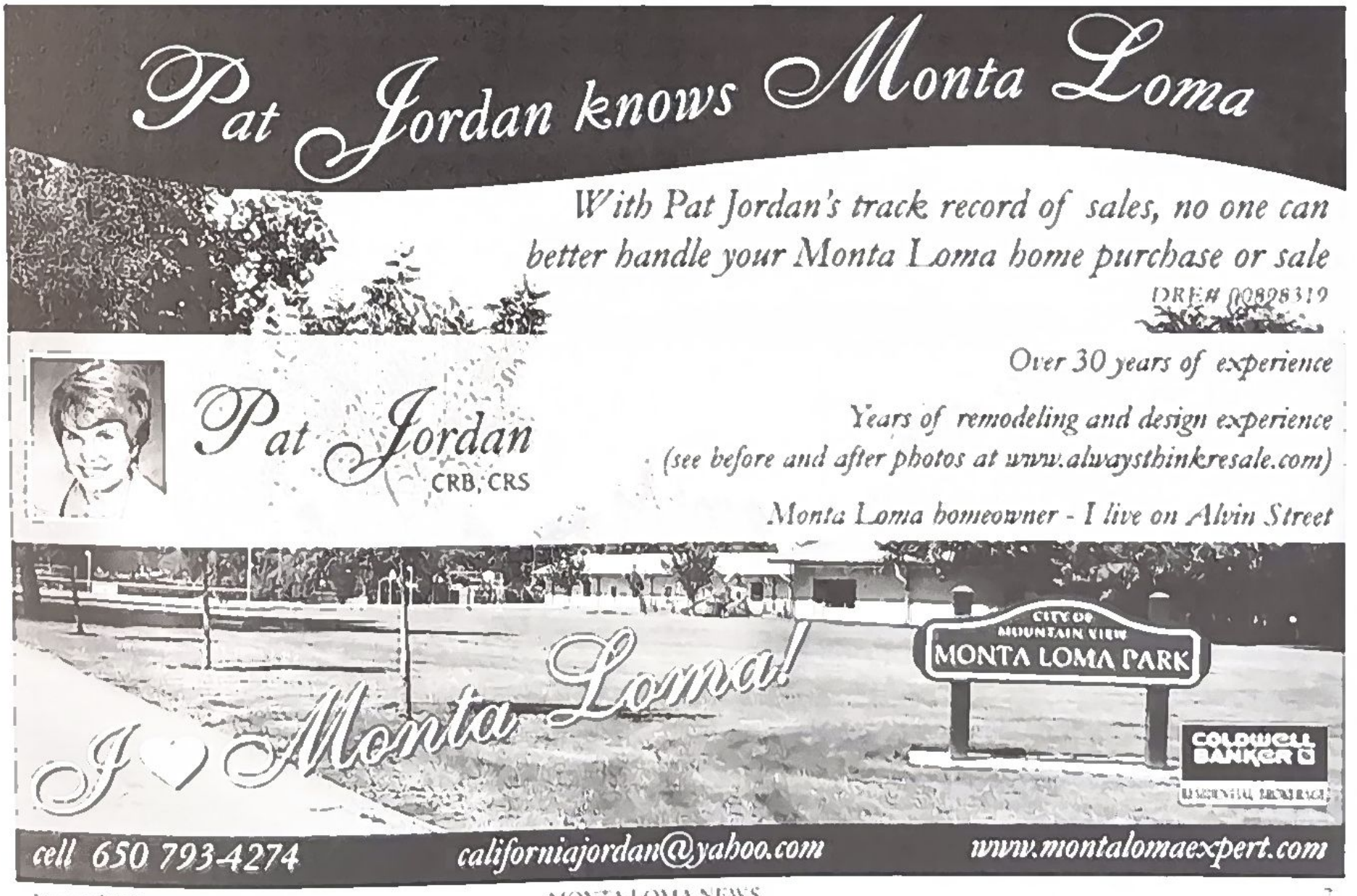
Although their original home is in dark, wet forests, they have adapted well to suburbia, spending much of their time in shrubs and trees around yards and park edges. You may see these social birds in small flocks foraging with titmice, wrens, and bushtits. In winter, listen for their loud *chick-a-dee*. You will often find them, along with the other species that forage with them.

E-mail your bird questions to me at dottycala@aol.com.

Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo

By Marilyn Gildea

My grandsons (5 and 7) had a great time working the exhibits and seeing the bobcats in their new enclosure at the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo. Info is at www.friendsjmz.org or 329-2111.

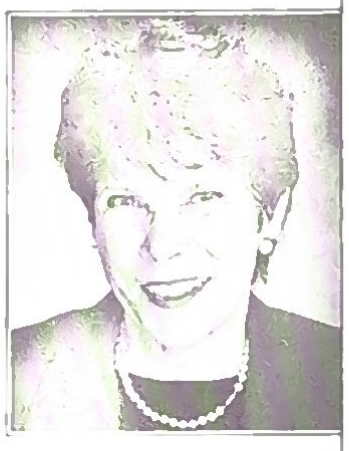


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Good news for sellers: 2009 ended with an increase in activity that has continued into January. Call for details.

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