

Vista del Cañon Newsletter

December 2002

RAIN-TESTED

It felt like the beginning of forty days and forty nights of rain, as we waited in suspense to hear how our new roofs were holding up, but it was actually just three days of rain earlier this November. The good news is that none of our new flat roofs leaked, and there weren't any window or stucco leaks reported either. Two leaks were reported, one from a loose tile, and one from an air conditioning duct. They have both been repaired.

Although the weather men don't want to say so yet, this early rain in November might be the beginning of this year's El Niño. If that is the case, it is more important than ever that we repair the areas of our driveways that seem to have "eternal" puddles. We don't want them turning into huge potholes that could present safety hazards. The square footage of these areas has been measured in order to get accurate quotes for the costs of repair. Some sections of pavement will be cut out, and re-poured, and drainage slopes will be improved to enable water to run off these areas. Sidewalk repairs will also be part of this project.

The painters completed their "production" elastomeric painting of all our homes on November 15. They are now doing the "pick up" work to complete all the residential buildings, and also applying latex paint on the site walls, pool house and Jacuzzi. These walls and facilities need this maintenance to protect their structural integrity. The painters will also be returning to the "first eleven" buildings, to touch up the new metal coping that was installed atop the parapet walls.

To assure that we can find our way around, among all our newly-painted buildings, new building numbers and letters will be installed in the next few weeks. No one's home address will change, we are just replacing the wooden numbering and lettering which wore out and had to be chipped-off to paint the buildings. Acceptable letter samples were finally received in mid-November, after an extensive search, and decisions could be made. The new unit letters and building numbers will be attached to pads that will be glued to the buildings, so that the entire letters and numbers will not have to be broken off "next time" we paint. The letters and numbers have a lifetime warranty against fading or cracking.

HOLE COSTS

Homeowners and/or residents must be very careful when doing anything on the outside of the buildings. The new roofs and the new paint on our buildings must not be punctured in any way. The cost of repair is very expensive, especially if water intrusion is not discovered immediately. If the homeowner/renter or his agent does any damage to the outside of the building, they will have to be billed for the whole cost of the repair. Exterior punctures or other damage can also prevent our elastomeric manufacturers from issuing or honoring warranties.

Satellite dish installations seem to be one of the biggest problems. We are preparing schematic drawings for residents to use as guidelines on how to install satellite dishes properly. The simplest satellite dish installations are the freestanding ones, on balconies or patios. The dishes can be attached to concrete-weighted bases so that wind cannot knock them over.

[Hole Costs, continued from page 1]

With the year end holidays approaching, and many new residents, it is important for us to keep these points in mind as we do our holiday decorating: Holiday lights are best displayed on the inside of windows, where weather cannot affect them. They should not be affixed to the outside of the buildings. Front door wreaths should be hung from over-the-door hooks, or from hooks on magnets, since the metal doors will hold large magnets very securely. Decorations placed in flowerbeds should only be in the flowerbeds immediately adjacent to the owners' units.

We can all enjoy this holiday season, and its colorful traditions, without harm to our newly-refinished buildings.

LITIGATION

At various times, most large homeowners associations become involved in litigation over one matter or another. Vista del Cañon currently has three claims filed by homeowners over water intrusion. These claims have been referred to our insurance carrier, whose attorneys are defending them at no cost to the Association. The attorneys expect fair and favorable outcomes for the Association. Nevertheless, some homeowners who were refinancing or selling their homes, have reported that their lenders were concerned about the litigation. Our attorneys have prepared a letter, which can be sent by our Property Manager to lenders to resolve their issues. Virtually every lender has accepted this letter for their files as sufficient reassurance. If particular staff at a few lenders don't understand the information from our attorneys, and do not process loan applications here, out of concern over these claims, there are many others who will be glad to lend. In every case, the Association has been able to provide enough information to assure loan closings for everyone buying, selling or refinancing a home at Vista del Cañon.

WELCOME COMMITTEE

Our Welcome Committee has been very active recently, meeting with fifteen new homeowners during the past couple of months. The get togethers went quite well, providing new homeowners an opportunity to meet and become friends with more of their neighbors, learn about the amenities of our property, get helpful information that their sellers did not provide them, and learn the important benefits of our homeowner association "covenants" with one another.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact our property manager.

HOMELESS SHELTER

The City of Santa Clarita is planning to open its winter homeless shelter on December 1st, at the Via Princessa Metrolink station parking lot. The shelter is scheduled to be open on a temporary basis, from December 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003. The City has leased a temporary, prefabricated building, with shower and restroom facilities. For the past few years, the shelter was located at the Sports Complex near Home Depot, but an aquatic center is being built on that location. The shelter at the Sports Complex typically housed about 175 people per night.

Your Board of Directors is very concerned about this development. Vista del Cañon was not notified about this by letter. Only two adjacent properties received letters from the City. Instead, a notice was run in a local newspaper, a notice was displayed at a library, and a notice was displayed on the City's website. A Vista del Cañon homeowner learned about the shelter plans from a homeowner at the Friendly Valley HOA shortly before the shelter was scheduled to open.

The need for homeless people to be able to find shelter and "get back on their feet" is understandable. We are not opposed to the concept of shelters. However, we are concerned about the City's choice of a location so near to our homes and markets. Board members, and other concerned homeowners, who responded to notices placed on our bulletin boards and mailboxes, have attended two City Council meetings and voiced our concerns.

The City Manager told us that more than 85 different sites were looked at. Proximity to public transportation was one of the main factors in the decision. We have requested a copy of the complete site study. We were also told that security will be provided at the shelter every evening, and most of the shelter's occupants will go to jobs during the day, but just can't afford to rent their own places. We were told that there weren't any problems in the area around the Sports Complex during the past few years that the shelter was located there.

We have urged the City to reconsider other sites, such as the Santa Clarita Metrolink station, that are not across the street from residential areas, but are still adjacent to public transportation. If you would like to contact the City Council about this matter, please write to them at:

City Council
City of Santa Clarita
23920 Valencia Blvd, Suite 300
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

The City Council members' e-mail addresses are on the City's website at www.santa-clarita.com. The Vista del Cañon Homeowners Association is working with other HOA's and businesses in the area, the City's Director of Community Services, the Community Development Corporation, the City Attorney, Mayor and City Council to try to find the best possible site for this shelter in a location which cannot impact residential areas. If you would like to help in this effort, please contact our Property Manager, write the Board through the contacts link at www.vistadelcanon.com, or call the hotline at 661-251-3302. The fastest way for us to reply and keep you informed of activities such as the next community meetings with the City will be via e-mail, so please provide an e-mail address if you have one.

Treasurer's Trove

As of October 31, 2002, the following amounts were in the Association's funds:

<i>Cash Operating:</i>	\$ 10,787.82-
<i>Cash Reserves:</i>	\$428,271.42
<i>Defect/Earthquake Accounts:</i>	\$460,974.70
<i>Total Cash:</i>	\$878,458.30

Board of Directors



Ken Greaves, President
Dennis Booker, Vice President
Jim Allaire, Treasurer
Marla Adams, Secretary
Jim Reedy, Member-at-Large

SIX DOLLARS

Yes, that's all it may really cost to have new mesh installed in your torn window screen. The trickiest part of the repair job is removing the screen from the window frame. The sliding glass window itself must be completely lifted up and out of the window frame first, so that it is not blocking you from pulling the window screen through. Once you have the screen out, you can take it to local hardware stores such as the Do-It Center, Home Depot, OSH or Newhall Hardware to install new mesh for as little as six dollars per window screen. There are few better repairs for the price, that have a bigger visual impact, that a resident can do for their home here at Vista del Cañon, than to replace any badly-torn window screen mesh.

TRASH SERVICE IMPROVED

Many homeowners have reported problems recently with neighbors leaving their trash cans outside all the time, instead of bringing them back inside their garages the evening of trash pickup day. Several months ago there was an article in this newsletter about how the trash company would be picking up these "abandoned" trash cans. The Association has had difficulty getting the trash company to respond and actually provide this service.

[Trash Service Improved, continued from page 4]

We are pleased to inform everyone that we have finally made arrangements with our maintenance company for the removals. They will operate on an “as requested” basis, rather than on any set schedule. Our management company will make the requests when needed. This should help keep the cost down, while still providing the service and the incentive for everyone to be responsible and put their trash cans away. The cost of special trips by the maintenance company to remove abandoned trash cans will be billed directly to the owners of the cans. The cost of a special trip could be substantial, depending on the driving time involved. Trash cans that are not labeled with the unit numbers and letters of their owners are subject to immediate removal at any time without further notice.

If a resident has a special circumstance, such as out-of-town travel on trash pickup day, the resident should make arrangements for a neighbor to put their trash can back in their garage on trash day. Residents may also arrange with neighbors to leave their trash in a plastic bag next to their neighbor’s trash can, so that it will be picked up and their own can will not be left out. The trash company will only pick up plastic-bagged trash if it is placed next to the regular brown, blue or green trash cans. If a resident cannot make an arrangement with a neighbor, another option would be to make a special trip to a dumpster that they have permission to use, a day or two before or after trash pickup day. Most of us have had to make one of these kinds of special arrangements due to our travel schedules.

If your trash can is being picked up by the trash company on a different day than the regular weekly trash day for some special reason, please inform the Property Manager so that she can make sure it is not mistaken for an “abandoned” trash can and removed by the maintenance company. Make sure to leave your name, address and phone number in case of any questions.

We have all become frustrated at one time or another by unsightly trash cans left out in driveways, getting in the way of our cars as we try to make the turning circle in and out of our garages. Even worse is when garbage is left in these trash cans, to bake in our warm, sunny weather. It can get pretty disgusting when a neighbor doesn’t have the courtesy to “keep their trash to themselves.” This added service from our maintenance company should help solve that problem.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Our property management company’s offices will be closed the week of December 25 for the Christmas holiday. They will have staff on call to pick up messages and respond to emergencies. They may be reached at (818) 907-6622 x811 in the event of an emergency.

HELPFUL CONTACTS

Property Management

Tiffany Barron, Managing Agent
818-907-6622
800-843-8727
818-907-0749 (Fax)

Ross Morgan & Company, Inc.
15315 Magnolia Blvd, Suite 212
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
tbarron.rmc@covad.net

Ext. 201 (Tiffany)
Most questions, comments and concerns

Ext. 811 (Emergency Line) After-hours
emergencies, including damaged utilities,
plumbing, safety hazards, etc.

Website - www.vistadelcanon.com

Security

Maxwell Security Services, Inc.
661-254-6910
800-277-4827

For reporting disturbances, vandalism,
parking enforcement, etc.

Landscaper

Landco Maintenance- 818-891-0398

Construction Hotline – 661-251-3302

For all construction-related questions

Construction Manager- Professional Services

David McLeroy, Project Manager
Onsite Trailer (661) 250-8149
Office (949) 635-6700 – in emergencies

Emergency Services

Dial 911 for all emergencies, including fire and medical.