



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

ISSUE #17

the Neighborhood

MVEA COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2014



Community News
PAGE TWO



Annual Meeting of Delegates
PAGE TWO



Water Rates Set To Increase
PAGE FOUR

MVEA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- DONNA BOURASSA



As another year ends and transitions begin in our homeowner's association, this would be a good time to reflect upon all that has been accomplished during this past year. These achievements could not have been reached without the commitment of many of our dedicated homeowner volunteers, sharing their talents, time and energy.

While many other homeowner associations have seen their assessments increase, MVEA's assessments have decreased two years in a row the first two years of serving as treasurer. With the reduction of dues MVEA was still able to maintain our beautiful landscape, while keeping a healthy budget and reserve. The Water Conservation Sub Committee headed by Frank Fossati (Increment 4) and Joe Holtzman (Increment 8) led the way in discovering new methods in holding down our water consumption while saving MVEA thousands of dollars. These two gentlemen have shared a wealth of

information and experience with our community to place us on the cutting edge of water conservation. The savings that we realized from our water conservation coupled with wise expenditures and careful investing allowed for the decrease in assessments. Hopefully in the years to come under new boards, we can still maintain the direction that has been plotted out for us.

Keeping within the scope of fiduciary responsibility the contract committee determined that it was necessary to open a bidding process for competitive bids for MVEA's landscape contract.

Bemus Landscape's contract cost had increased substantially. MVEA successfully negotiated a new contract saving our homeowners over 20% a year. The contract was awarded to Artistic Maintenance, Inc. their service began December 1, 2013. We are very grateful for the excellent work that Bemus provided throughout the many years of dedicated service. Their performance will be hard to match, however, MVEA's expectation from our new vendor, Artistic Maintenance, will have to match or exceed the standards set by Bemus.

Our homeowner's association get together event held in October was a great success. Meeting so many of our wonderful homeowners and seeing their interests in continuing to keep this community thriving was very encouraging. This event is held primarily to inform our homeowners about the upcoming election of their Increment Delegates, to meet the Board of Directors and to encourage homeowners to participate in serving MVEA. A big thank you goes out to David and Jojo Collins (Increment 5) for helping us with a well-organized event. A big thank you to all the vendors who contributed to our dessert tables, and the local businesses who donated to the raffle items.

At this time I would like to give a special thank you to our most dedicated property manager, Stephen Stanton. He represents not only MVEA, but also Action Property Management Inc. as a great team participant always hard working with integrity and professionalism. With the team of Board members, Action Property Management, Delegates and all whom have served MVEA unselfishly, a very special thank you. New board members will be elected in January 2014. With the assistance of all of us in the community, we wish them good luck. I want to take this time to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year! And I'll see you in the future as I continue to serve MVEA as a volunteer. May god bless you.

Donna Bourassa

Ms. Donna Bourassa, President MVEA

MVEA BOARD MEETING & NEWS ITEMS

DELEGATES ELECTED

The Increment Delegates were elected in October and November by ballots of owners in the respective Increments. The term of office starts January 1st and runs through December 31st. Congratulations and thank you to these volunteers who perform a valuable service for their community and neighborhoods. The Increment Delegates are as follows:

- Increment #1, Mr. Bill Hunt**
- Increment #2, Ms. Linda Wilkes**
- Increment #3, Ms. Deborah Currie-Teele**
- Increment #4, Mr. Frank Fossati**
- Increment #5, Ms. Connie Beardsley**
- Increment #6, Mr. Dale George**
- Increment #7, Ms. Donna Bourassa**
- Increment #8, Mr. Joe Holtzman**
- Increment #10, Mr. Richard Florence**

The Board welcomes Linda Wilkes as a new Delegate representing Increment #2 to this year's roster of volunteers. The Delegates are primarily responsible for representing the owners in their Increments during the Annual Election of the Board of Directors and on any other voting issues that come before the membership as a whole. They also act as important liaisons between the homeowners and the Board, and they represent the interest of their various communities on Common Area landscape issues as well as provide notice on the overall condition of the properties.

BOARD SELECTS NEW LANDSCAPE VENDOR

During the November Board of Directors meeting the Board selected and approved Artistic Maintenance, Inc. as the new vendor for landscape and tree maintenance for the Association. Bemus Landscape, the vendor for the past 10 years, indicated early in 2013 that they would not be able to hold the line on their current contract pricing and would have to increase the monthly contract price by as much as 20%. The Contract Review Committee worked with Bemus representatives for a few months trying to work through adjustments to the expected increase; but it was eventually determined to place the landscape contract out to bid. The process included bid invitation to 12 vendors, a pre bid conference, follow-up interviews to finalists, and visits to inspect other referenced Association properties before the committee made their recommendations to the Board.

The decision dynamic was based on the Board's intention of finding a landscape company that would offer outstanding service at an exceptional value for the Association. The Board is confident that Artistic will provide those qualities without having to increase the quarterly assessments. Artistic started on December 1st.

TREE TRIMMING

The Association's landscape contract includes the annual trimming of the Association trees. Some of the trees have been done, but the majority are to be scheduled. Contract negotiations and selection of the new landscape vendor delayed this annual project but all trees will be trimmed within the first 5 months of 2014.



THANK YOU!

The Association gives a sincere thank you and farewell to Board Members, **Donna Bourassa** and **Joe Tully**. Donna and Joe have served on the Board of Directors for the past four years and the term limits set forth in the governing MVEA documents does not allow either to run for the Board for another three years. Both were instrumental in successive years of assessment reductions for all homeowners.

During Donna's three years as Treasurer she effectively searched out and found banking institutions that provided a substantially higher than market rate of return for the Reserve Fund investments; a search that continues to be carried forward in today's market. Donna served as the Board's President this past year.

During Joe's four years he has served as the Secretary and Vice President of the Association. Joe has worked on the Landscape Committee since he has been a Board Member and has served as the Landscape Chairman for the past two years, a tremendous and successful undertaking.

The Association is indebted to both Donna and Joe for volunteering their time and energy to their community. Donna will continue her voluntary service as the new Delegate representing Increment 7. Joe intends to continue with the Landscape Committee. Heartfelt thanks to both!



ANNUAL MEETING OF DELEGATES

Annual Meeting of the Delegates to Elect Two New Board Members

The Annual Meeting of the Delegates is scheduled for Monday, January 6, 2014, at the Norman P. Murray Center, 24932 Veterans Way, 6:00 p.m. The Increment Delegates will meet to elect two new Directors to the vacated Board positions. The new Board will meet to determine who will serve in specific officer positions. The results of the election and the selection of officers will be posted to the Association's website, mveahoa.com after the Annual Meeting.

Committee Volunteers Needed and Welcomed

At the upcoming January and February Board of Directors meetings the Board accepts new volunteers to fill existing positions on the Association's Committees. Some active Committees that assist with recommendations to the Board are:

Architectural Committee
Landscape Committee
Water Conservation Sub Committee

If you are interested in helping or finding out more about these committees please do not hesitate to contact Management.



ACTION PROPERTY MANAGEMENT NEWS

VIVO PORTAL AND HOMEOWNER SERVICE FEATURES

Visit the homeowner's portal, VIVO, <http://www.vivoportal.com>, and check your account balance, request a work order, email your community manager, sign up for auto payments on the quarterly assessment, or opt in for electronic billing.

REMINDERS & GENERAL USE RESTRICTIONS

SIDE YARD EASEMENTS

If you own a property and have been granted a "sideyard easement" from the lot next door, it is your responsibility to ensure that drainage of the area is intact and irrigation water or rain water does not accumulate in the area adjacent to your neighbor's exterior side wall. Now is the appropriate time to make sure the drainage in this area runs unencumbered to the street and sidewalk area as originally intended. If you are the owner of the lot that provides the easement, rain gutters and downspouts attached to the eaves of the roof in this side yard area should be inspected and cleaned of debris to ensure that water is draining into the downspout properly.

Also, please be aware that nothing should be attached to the exterior wall of the property. All landscape material in this area should not encumber or encroach upon the wall.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW AND WRITTEN APPROVAL

The ARC continues to review all applications on a weekly basis and generally turns the requests around within a week. The most recurring applications are for exterior painting, vinyl window installation, solar panels and re-roofing. Please keep in mind that storage sheds are considered exterior modifications and need to have an application approved prior to installation. A major factor in a shed's approval is its visibility to the street and the neighboring property. The ARC will ask for a concealment plan prior to the shed's approval.

The ARC's purpose is to maintain the architectural character and visual unity of the community. Mission Viejo city permits are also required for structural, mechanical or electrical engineering.

OCTOBER SOCIAL EVENT

ARROYO TRABUCO GOLF CLUB

On the second Sunday of October the Association hosted its fourth annual Neighborhood Celebration Event at the Arroyo Trabuco Golf Club. It was held in the open courtyard with a ranch style barbeque buffet; a wonderful day blessed with beautiful Southern California weather. The event is designed to foster fellowship, promote community and provide interested homeowners an opportunity to meet with the Delegates and Board of Directors. It is also hoped that the event will help generate future volunteers who will shoulder the responsibility of decision making for the 2898 homes and 250 acres of slopes and Common Area that make up the largest HOA in Mission Viejo.

A sincere thank you to all the MVEA vendors and the local businesses that donated to the raffle drawings and help make the event so notable:

Action Property Management
Bemus Landscape
Brian Berg Insurance
Hickey & Petchul, LLP, Attorneys at Law
Richardson, Harmon and Ober
Arroyo Trabuco Golf Club
Bourassa Vineyards
Antonucci's Restaurant
Lake Mission Viejo Association
Art Form Pilates Studio

Water Rates Set To Increase Another 8% January, 2014

By Bill Ernisse

Due to experiencing the worst drought since 1920 and the fact that over 50% of Southern California water is imported, each of us will see another increase in our water /and sewer costs. In fact, our cost of imported water has risen 142% since 2006. Nevada and Arizona's allocation of Colorado water has been cut & the Sacramento / San Joaquin Delta Reservoir acreage has been depleted by 65% over past 10 years.

Domestic water supplies and increasing cost are expected to be our next "bubble" in the coming next 5 to10 years.

"Our assessment of the current water situation [in California] is bleak," says Ellen Hanak, a Public Policy Institute of California economist. "California has essentially run out of cheap, new water sources." 70% of California's entire residential water is applied to grass and plants!

What can we do?

- ◆ The website listed below suggests 100 ways to conserve in our homes, yards & businesses. <http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/>
- ◆ MVEA has installed many "Smart Controllers" and significantly reduced our water usage by over 25% over the past 4 years by eliminating sprinkler run off via use of drip lines and planting drought tolerant plants over our 250 acres where appropriate.
- ◆ Visit the MVEA Drought Tolerant Plant Display located at corner of Antela & Boltana for ideas when you replant. Also, Rancho Santa Margarita Water District will have classes on February 8, April 12, & June 7th from 9 am to noon @ 26111 Antonio Parkway on water wise planting and managing irrigation properly.
- ◆ Install smart weather Irrigation Controllers & precision sprinkler heads to replace existing yard units. Saves 13,500 gallons of water per year!
- ◆ Replace clothes washers & toilets with new high efficiency products saving over 8000 gallons of water per year.

Did you know?

There are substantial rebates available (\$386 for new Sprinkler Controllers, \$75 for rain water barrels, high efficiency toilets starting at \$50, washers starting at \$85) from Southern California Water Smart Program? Check all the available rebates for residential & commercial available rebates at socalwatersmart@egia.org.

Water, in our area, will get scarce and become significantly more expensive in the coming years so let's do our part to conserve this valuable resource and save our hard earned monies.

Read more: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2011/02/24/California-water-future-called-bleak/UPI-42531298594783/#ixzz2mjGmVR1M



2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS /OFFICERS

Donna Bourassa, President
Joseph Tully, Vice President
Bill Ernisse, Treasurer
Peggy Russo, Secretary
Bill Aitken, Member at Large

2014 INCREMENT DELEGATES

Increment #1, Mr. Bill Hunt
Increment #2, Ms. Linda Wilkes
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BOARD MEETING DATES

The Board of Directors meets on the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the Norman P. Murray Center, 24932 Veterans Way, in Mission Viejo. A Homeowners Forum is scheduled at the beginning of every meeting. Homeowners may address the Board on any Association related topic. Here is a list of the meeting dates for the third quarter of 2014:

Thursday, January 16th
Thursday, February 20th
Thursday, March 20th

The monthly meeting agenda is posted on the community bulletin board located off Marguerite Parkway at the corner of Antela and Lovios. It is also posted on the MVEA website, www.mveahoa.com.

Your community manager is Stephen Stanton available by phone at 949-450-0202 ext. 313 and by email at sstanton@actionlife.com.

The manager's assistant and administrative support is Selah Short at ext. 525 and her email address is sshort@actionlife.com.