

# Scott Valley Voice

November 6, 2003

Newsletter of Scott Valley

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR BY FRANCINE MILLMAN

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The recent fires in Southern California have made many of us sensitive to how vulnerable we all can be to the unexpected nature of natural and unnatural emergency occurrences that impact and potentially reshape our lives, especially given that we reside in what is considered to be a 'high-fire' area.

In addition, prior to the Southern California fires, we scheduled a meeting with Fire Marshall, Jeff Davidson of the Mill Valley Fire Department who met with the Board recently to discuss additional ways Scott Valley can prepare itself for disasters. In addition to discussing earthquakes, much of the topic shifted to fire prevention and safety in light of the intense heat wave we recently experienced and the fire tragedies in Southern California.

Here are some **very important tips and recommendations** we encourage people to consider incorporating on and around their property:

- **Clear vegetation** within 10 or more feet of your house and overhangs. The fire department would ideally like 30 feet, especially if you are on a slope;
- **Continue to clear vegetation** around your home. Maintenance is important;
- **Prune your trees** -- Make sure that tree branches near the home are not touching one another. One of the quickest ways for a fire to spread through vegetation is for small branches to be touching other small branches of other trees. The fire will jump from tree to tree to deck to roof, etc etc. The more space between each tree, the less chance of continued burning. Trimming and modifying your ornamental vegetation so there is not a continual fuel bed can be critical.
- **Screen chimneys** to prevent embers from being carried onto the roof of your or other homes.
- **Address Posting** – even though many people dislike paying the street number painters who come around, having your address CLEARLY posted at the curb COULD MAKE THE

DIFFERENCE in the fire or other emergency vehicles finding their way to your during an emergency.

- **Non-Combustible Roofing** – In the case of a fire disaster, having roofing material that is non-combustible could make the difference in how fast or slowly a fire moves through your home. Is your roof wood shingle? This may be a fire disaster waiting to happen!
- **Attend CERT classes.** While this may take 10 hours of your time (and that may seem like a lot), having this knowledge could save you and/or others in your area.
- **Have a plan for your family.** With families being as mobile as they are today, not everyone in a family is at the same place at the same time. Set up evacuation drills in your home. Make sure each family member has your phone numbers so you can be contacted in an emergency.

**IF THERE IS A MAJOR DISASTER, the fire department asks the following:**

- **Do NOT call 911 if the emergency has already been reported.** Rather, turn to your local channels to get regular updates. Calling 911 only jams the lines and does not assist the fire department once the disaster has already been reported.
- **Listen for the emergency sirens** which we hear being tested each first Saturday of the month.
- **Tune to one of your local radio or television stations** to get current updates and important instructions.
- **Have a battery-powered radio** in case electricity is out and you cannot turn on your television or electric radio.
- **FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO YOU VIA RADIO OR TELEVISION.** If you are asked to WALK, WALK rather than drive. There is a reason for being asked to do specific things – roads may be blocked, for example, which would not allow a car through and may impede your ability to reach safety.

- **Be flexible as possible.** There will be tension and frustration, so listening to changing instructions and following them will potentially save you and your family.
- **Remaining CALM** will be the best opportunity for survival.

The Mill Valley Fire Department is available to do home inspection at no charge to you. They will advise you of any potentially dangerous areas in and around your home and how you can better disaster-proof your surroundings. Please feel free to call the Mill Valley Fire Department at (415) 389-4130 to schedule a Home Safety Inspection to prevent home wild land fires.

Have a wonderfully safe, healthy and prosperous New Year!

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**BECOME A SVHA MEMBER**

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**I**t's that time again! For \$40 a calendar year in tax-deductible dues, your board continues working on your behalf to keep you informed and to represent the interests of Scott Valley. We need both your community and financial support. Part of these funds is being targeted for our own emergency preparedness supplies, a list of which is presently being compiled. Please send your check to: Scott Valley Homeowners' Association, P.O. Box 392, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

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**SCOTT VALLEY SWIM & TENNIS  
CLUB DIRECTOR NEEDED**

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**T**he Scott Valley Homeowners' Association is responsible for appointing two Scott Valley Swimming & Tennis Club proprietary members to the SCSRC Board of Directors. This is to ensure that neighborhood concerns are heard. The appointments are for two-year terms and require attendance at monthly evening meetings. If you have questions or are interested in being appointed for the term running from 3/03 through 2/28/05, please call Tom Ashley at 388-0109 by March 7<sup>th</sup>. This is a fun way to participate in your club and neighborhood!

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**LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT  
BY JOAN BOESSENECKER**

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**H**ello Members:

It's been almost three years since the S.V.H.A. was reorganized and a new board of directors elected. In that period, we have tried to be a sounding board for Valley concerns, improve communication through production of a newsletter, tend to ongoing maintenance of Scott Valley median strips as well as monitor conditions in our adjacent open space areas.

At present, a major portion of our time is being dedicated to the implementation of an emergency preparedness program (C.E.R.T.) for Scott Valley. Under the capable chairmanship of Ken Campbell, we are making significant progress in acquiring supplies and stimulating interest in more homeowners participating in the C.E.R.T. training. I hope each one of you will consider taking this training course which will benefit you as well as your neighborhood.

As to other ongoing issues: there is nothing new to report on plans for possible reconstruction of the Alto Tunnel and the coyotes do not appear to have been troublesome this year, for the most part remaining in the open space area, which is their home.

If anyone has a matter of neighborhood interest that you would like the Board to address, please contact me at 388-6539 or e-mail [jgboes@aol.com](mailto:jgboes@aol.com) and we will place it on the agenda.

Have a safe and happy Holiday season!

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS  
PREPARATIONS  
EMERGENCY BOX SUPPLY  
BY KEN CAMPBELL**

Since we live in “earthquake and wildfire country” and, in a bid to be as prepared as possible, the SVHA proposed having an Emergency Supply Box located in Scott Valley.

The CERT course taught me about the basic tools and equipment that would be most useful following such a catastrophic event. While many of us have some or all of these tools in our garages the SVHA thought that it would be beneficial to have a container with a full compliment of essential equipment.

After much discussion it was decided that the most logical location for the box was at the Scott Valley Swim and Tennis Club. Together with Dan Miller, the Club Manager we found a suitable location and presented the proposal to the SVSTC board who endorsed the project.

A suitable container that would withstand the elements and potential vandalism was identified and Captain Michael St. John, MVFD assisted with compiling a list of the vital tools and equipment that would be stored. Captain St. John said “You will have a very well equipped emergency supply box”.

In addition, a medical friend helped put together a comprehensive emergency fist aid kit, water purifier and other essential items.

In January 2004 we will have the container and contents in place. By having an emergency supply box it will give our CERT personnel and volunteers the vital tools and equipment that would be needed following a catastrophic event. We currently have 25 CERT members in Scott Valley and we feel that Scott Valley’s residents will be better prepared.

For more information contact:  
Ken Campbell 381-5952 or [kcfilm@pacbell.net](mailto:kcfilm@pacbell.net).

**IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTE**

In recent months, several thefts have occurred right here in Scott Valley. Please use common-sense precautions to prevent thefts occurring in and around your home and neighborhood.

Most importantly, if you see ANY suspicious people lingering around the neighborhood or someone’s house, do not hesitate to contact the MV Police Department.

**REDUCING WILD LAND FIRE  
HAZARDS AND BRUSH  
MANAGEMENT  
BY KEN CAMPBELL**

I live on Underhill Road and our back yard opens on to the bike path.

This summer my neighbors and I were discussing our concerns regarding the heavy undergrowth (fire fuel) next to the bike path – our homes are the first on the line should there be a fire on Horse Hill.

We decided to initiate some brush management with a view to maintaining defensible space around our homes.

Marin County owns the bike path and open space of Horse Hill. Rob Ruiz Chief Park Ranger viewed the scene and we decided to cut back and remove the potential fire fuel from the side of the bike path creating a wide defensible space. Rob was very cooperative, endorsed the brush management scheme and issued the free permit.

Shore Line Tree Services did a great job cutting back and clearing the dead wood and heavy brush. MVFD has a chipper policy and were most helpful with the offer of providing advice and a chipper service.

Collectively it cost just a few hundred dollars and it will take minimal brush management to maintain – but most of all our homes are safer.

If you would like information on how protect your property from wild land fire hazards and improving fire-safety contact Mill Valley Fire Dept, vegetation Hot line at 721-4367.

**GET RECHARGED!  
BY SALLY PALMER**

**FIRE KING**, a mobile fire extinguisher service will bring his van to Scott Valley on **Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup>** From 10am-2pm **\*\*\*RAIN OR SHINE!\*\*\***

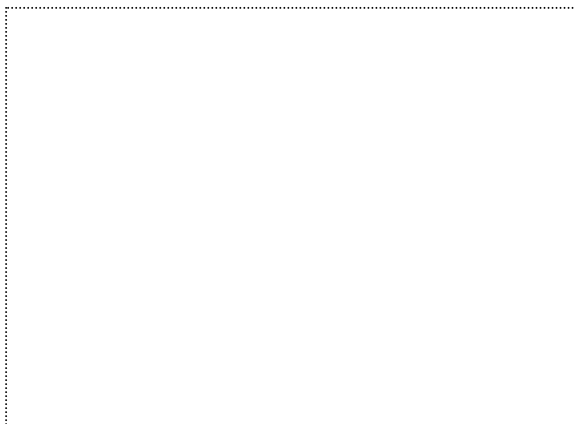
**At 1 Underhill at Stanton Way**

**W**hat will be happening that day:

- Bring your fire extinguishers for recharging while you wait! (\$10)
- Learn to set off a fire extinguisher! (Most of those who have them have never learned how to use them. This is your chance to learn!)
- Don't have a fire extinguisher? Purchase a new one from Fire King. (\$35)
- Smoke alarms are available for purchase
- Fire King will have a table of information on fire prevention and safety for your perusal
- Tea and hot chocolate will be provided by your Homeowners' Association
- Bring your kids! Teach them how to use a fire extinguisher in case of an emergency

This is YOUR opportunity in taking steps to prevent a fire disaster in your home.

**Come meet your neighbors, get educated and GET RECHARGED before the holidays!**



*The members of the SVHA Board of Directors wish you and yours a happy, healthy, safe and prosperous Holiday Season and New Year*

*Your Board of Directors,*

- *Joan Boessenecker*
- *Tom Ashley*
- *Ken Campbell*
- *Ann Dye*
- *Jim Finn*
- *Francine Millman*
- *John Palmer*
- *Sally Palmer*
- *Ellen Weber*

**Return Address:**  
SVHA  
P.O. Box 392  
Mill Valley, CA 94942