

Peaceful Mountain Monitor

Monte Sereno Fall 2023 Community Newsletter

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A Message from the Mayor

It is my honor and privilege to serve as the Mayor of Monte Sereno in 2023 – it has been an exciting year with many positive changes and a great path forward.

We have increased community involvement by residents on various committees – we originally formed the Community Center Committee with one resident and expanded involvement to include five (5) residents. Our Youth Commission is gearing up for the 2023-24 year. And I'd like to thank our residents for serving on the Site & Architectural Commission and Better Streets Commission.

The pace of progress with our community center has been slow, yet steady. We have solicited and encouraged involvement from our neighbors and residents every step of the way. An Eagle Scout candidate, Johann Jacob, prepared a city-wide digital survey to quantify potential uses of the community center. City Council approved the design of the community center, construction drawings are being completed, and a use permit was issued. Importantly, we will be launching a capital campaign to provide all residents with an opportunity to support our community center.

Our housing element remains to be certified and our staff have worked tirelessly on addressing issues raised during the review process and answering requests for additional information. As part of the process, City Council directed staff to change our existing Senate Bill 9 (SB9) lot split regulations to address requests from residents – the SB9 lot splits will help with our housing element.

The positive profile and leadership of Monte Sereno in Santa Clara County has increased in 2023. Our city picnic had over 250 residents attending a beautiful lunch in Vasona Lake County Park, where they were able to meet with regional elected officials and show appreciation for their service.

Our picnic offered an opportunity for our service partners to interact with residents and provide

information on important developments during 2023. A major change to organic waste disposal started in 2022 and is transforming waste collection in 2023. Senate Bill 1383 (SB1383) requires the collection and processing of food waste with yard waste throughout California. West Valley Collection & Recycling had four representatives at our picnic educating residents how to separate their waste into recycling, organic waste and trash.

Having elected officials attend our picnic and meet our residents was extremely positive. Monte Sereno is a small municipality with a low profile – while this is good in many respects, it does make it difficult to have our positions known on matters at the County and State level. The redistricting has added complexity and, to some extent, confusion in residents knowing who represents them. Senator Josh Becker, Assemblymembers Evan Low and Gail Pellerin, County Supervisor Joe Simitian, District Attorney Jeffrey Rosen, Mayors from Sunnyvale, Los Altos Hills, Cupertino, Campbell, Saratoga and Los Gatos were at the picnic and were joined by councilmembers from Los Altos Hills, Palo Alto, Saratoga and Los Gatos. Thank you to all residents, elected officials and service partners for attending our picnic and making it a successful and fun event. And a special thank you to our City Clerk, Gloisy Gonzalez-Langarica, for putting the picnic together!

Our City Manager, Steve Leonardis, has helped to create and encourage a focus on customer service by city staff to our residents. The team at City Hall has transitioned in the past year to include City Attorney Kirsten Powell, City Engineer Daryl Jordan and Special Projects Manager Sarah Chaffin. They join other staff that work together in delivering exceptional, high touch, customer service to our residents.

There is much to continue working on in 2023 and I've been proud to contribute!

Bryan Mekechuk, Mayor

Welcome New Staff Members

Monte Sereno enthusiastically welcomes the addition of new staff:
Daryl Jordan, Sarah Chaffin, and Riley Peterson.



Daryl Jordan started as the Public Works Director in Monte Sereno in July 2023. He has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from California State University Fresno and is in the process of completing his Master of Business Administration Degree. He has over 30 years of engineering experience, having worked in local government at the executive level for over 13 years, with an additional 10 years of upper management experience in the private consulting sector. In conjunction to his management background, Mr. Jordan has performed engineering design and construction support for various large commercial power centers throughout the west coast and extensive subdivision projects throughout California. His career incorporates municipal work at the cities of Merced, Ceres, Scotts Valley, and Gilroy, before joining Monte Sereno.



Sarah Chaffin has over 15 years of experience in real estate finance, including land use, below-market programs, and commercial and residential real estate. Ms. Chaffin founded SupportTeacherHousing.org and oversaw the construction of the Affordable Teacher and School Employee Housing Model, which serves both Monte Sereno and Los Gatos.



Riley Peterson has joined Monte Sereno as Administrative Assistant I / Maintenance Worker. Previously, Mr. Peterson worked for the cities of Morgan Hill and Santa Cruz in a similar capacity. Residents may see Mr. Peterson out in the community fixing, cleaning, and trimming. For any maintenance requests, Mr. Peterson may be emailed at riley@cityofmontesereno.org

Monte Sereno is proud to have Mr. Jordan, Ms. Chaffin, and Mr. Peterson as valued members of the City's team.



Recognizing Outstanding Resident Ruth Alexander



Ruth Alexander was born in South Africa in Fairyland, District 6. Ms. Alexander immigrated to America, studied fashion at the Pacific Design Institute of San Francisco, and marketed her designs throughout the Bay Area.

In addition to fashion, Ms. Alexander has pioneered the International Children's Book (ICB) language into gospel hymns and English for over 19 years for the elderly and children of all ages. Ruth also operates a nonprofit organization named the Alexandria D'Souza Dance/Music Guild.

Ms. Alexander's latest endeavor is a book entitled "Born in District 6, Cape Town, South Africa." Ruth's fictional short stories captivate and transport readers miles and decades away into a world few have truly seen or known. The book is presently available on Amazon or where other fine books are sold.

Ms. Alexander is a proud, self-made woman and a 35-year Monté Sereno resident. Monte Sereno is proud to have Ruth, her husband Daniel, and the entire Alexander/D'Souza family as neighbors.



Fascinating Facts Monte Sereno's Beat Connection

Did you know famed Beat Generation pioneer, Neal Cassady, and his family once lived in Monte Sereno? In 1954, the Cassady family constructed a home located on Bancroft Lane, where Cassady resided with his wife of 15 years, Carolyn Cassady.

Cassady was a larger-than-life figure, who was often referred to as a muse and the inspiration for characters in famous literary works. Jack Kerouac's "On the Road," "Desolation Angels," "Dharma Bums," and "Visions of Cody" featured Cassady's persona and travels.

Cassady inspired other works, including poems by Allen Ginsburg and Tom Wolfe's "The Electric Kool-

Aid Acid Test." A Grateful Dead song written by Bob Weir, entitled "The Other One," includes Cassady.

Kerouac, Ginsberg, and later, Ken Kesey (author of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest"), frequented the Cassady family residence. There are anecdotes of Kerouac sleeping under the tree in the backyard and Cassady driving Kesey's Merry Prankster psychedelic bus, named "Further," in reverse down Bancroft Lane.

Cassady's family sold the home on Bancroft Lane in the 1990's. The family who purchased the home tore it down in 1997 to construct a new home at the site.

Belong, Connect, and Discover with the Santa Clara County Library District

A public library card can open doors for all people and help residents do more of what they enjoy. It can also help students be successful with homework and research tools available for all grade levels. A library card is an essential school supply and the one card that everyone at any age will benefit from.

The library offers free access to services and resources that would normally cost hundreds of dollars. Here are the top five things a library card can do for everyone:

1. Check out 2.3 million books, eBooks, Audiobooks, magazines, movies, music and video games in the libraries or online.
2. Go exploring with the library's Discover & Go museum pass program or visit a California State Park for free.
3. Find job help or learn new skills using free online resources like Brainfuse JobNow and LinkedIn Learning.
4. Get homework help using HelpNow by Brainfuse and tutoring on any subject with an online tutor from 1:00 pm to 10:00 pm every day.
5. Discover more about personal family history with genealogical resources, including Ancestry Library.

A Santa Clara County Library District library card is valid at any of the eight locations and the Bookmobile. The best part – it's free and when a resident signs up at one of the libraries, one can get a free gift (while supplies last). Visit any of the locations today to get a full use library card to borrow anything from the physical and online libraries, or visit scclld.org/card to instantly receive an e-card, good for borrowing anything from the online library.



DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR MOBILE CLEANER IS DUMPING TO?



Wash water from mobile businesses is not just water. It can also contain pollutants such as dirt, soaps, pet waste, plastic, and chemicals used in cleaning. Wash water that is dumped into the street and storm drain inlets flow untreated to our local waterways and the San Francisco Bay.

For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/MobileBusinessFactSheet>.



Make an Impact on Senior Services

The City of Monte Sereno is considering a new community center, located in the former post office space at the Monte Sereno City Hall/Civic Center site. The concept presents a wonderful opportunity for residents to congregate, attend events, and create memories.

The local population of adults who are over age 55 (seniors) is projected to increase over the next decade to nearly 30% of the total population of Monte Sereno/Los Gatos. A large percentage of those who currently use community centers are over the age of 55. This means a community center will be a useful resource for seniors who will comprise nearly a third of the City's population.

During the pandemic, it became glaringly obvious there are core services seniors require. Better transportation, reliable communications, different ways to socialize, and learning new technologies are just some examples of need.

Older adults sometimes require help to get through life's daily challenges. Some ideas, such as those in the previous paragraph, are very broad, while others may be very specific.

For example, at a recent brainstorming session with Monte Sereno residents, it was noted there used to be a refuse can service where one could sign up to have refuse bins taken out and put back

away on pickup days. Other ideas soon followed - more (and safer) walking paths; transportation that is accessible and low cost; local restaurants and entertainment offered at lower cost for seniors; interaction with students who can teach the latest technology applications; and monthly gatherings, lectures, book clubs, cooking classes, and game nights.

One of the more prevalent concerns expressed by older adults is how to age in place. In other words, how to continue to live at home safely and easily. Having to move from one's home and/or the community one knows to another location is difficult. This would be a very relevant topic for a guest speaker to present specifically to Monte Sereno residents, who value privacy, along with open space and serene surroundings.

The possibilities are endless, and it is exciting to think about what can be achieved on behalf of the community. With senior services in mind, who can meet and discuss this in depth? Please email Ms. Pearson at kiwanislosgatos@gmail.com. She is able to meet for coffee, or she can meet in a group. Once there is a coalition, it'll go and grow from there.

Nancy Pearson
Monte Sereno Resident
(408) 313-7060



The Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority (SVACA) Field Services Team provides animal control field services to the cities of **Campbell, Monte Sereno, Mountain View, and Santa Clara**. SVACA's services range from rescuing animals in distress to providing stray animals with emergency veterinary care.

SVACA Animal Control Officers are available for emergency response 24-hours-a-day, every day of the year.

SVACA Animal Control Officers will:

- Investigate animal abuse and neglect
- Investigate animal bites
- Investigate complaints concerning animals roaming at large and animals acting aggressively
- Investigate dangerous dog complaints
- Pick up confined stray animals
- Patrol for stray, roaming animals
- Transport stray animals for emergency veterinary care, if needed
- Rescue animals in distress
- Rescue and transport injured or sick wildlife
- Loan traps to capture stray animals
- Pick up owner-surrender animals for a fee
- Respond to an animal emergency 24-hours-a-day
- Investigate animal limit laws
- Investigate unsanitary conditions (excessive animal waste)
- Collect deceased animals

Reporting Animal Complaints

Please visit SVACA's Animal Complaints page (svaca.com/services/animal-complaints) to report any of the above animal issues in the cities of Campbell, Monte Sereno, Mountain View, or Santa Clara.

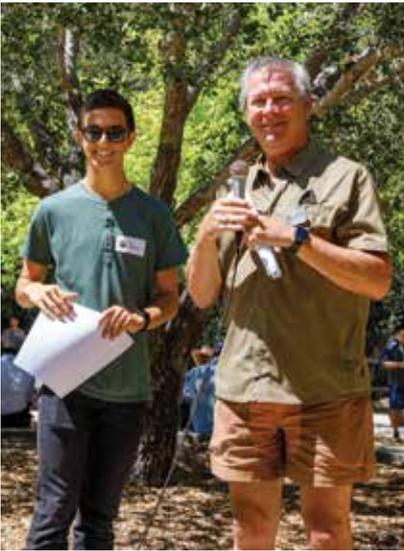
NOTE: SVACA Animal Control Officers will not investigate animal noise complaints. Please contact your local police department.





PICNIC IN THE PARK

On Sunday, August 27, 2023, Monte Sereno residents, councilmembers, staff, and agency partners enjoyed a delicious picnic at Vasona Lake County Park. This event was a wonderful community celebration. Monte Sereno looks forward to seeing everyone again at next year's event in August of 2024.





City of Monte Sereno
18041 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road
Monte Sereno, CA 95030-4299

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Newsflash

The City of Monte Sereno recognizes its City Clerk, Gloisy Gonzalez-Langarica, for her recent achievement of obtaining the status of Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC). Well done and congratulations to Ms. Gonzalez-Langarica!

Reminders

Vacation Checks: Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police offers vacation checks to residents. While you are away on vacation, officers, police staff, and/or Volunteers in Policing will periodically stop by your home to check for open doors, broken windows, or any other suspicious circumstances. Please request a vacation check by going to:

<https://www.losgatosca.gov/forms.aspx?FID=53>

Roadside Vegetation: Keeping roadside vegetation trimmed is important to the safety of all. Parameters for trimming are:

1. Remove any vegetation that obscures the driver's view of signs as vehicles approach the sign, including stop signs, speed limit signs, curve warning signs, and street name signs.
2. Vegetation must be trimmed to create minimum clearances, as follows:
 - a. Fifteen feet (15') above roadways
 - b. Ten feet (10') above bike lanes
 - c. Eight feet (8') feet above sidewalks
 - d. Two feet (2') behind the face of curb or edge of pavement.

Vegetation overhanging roadways creates safety hazards, can result in damage to tall vehicles, and prevents fully sweeping of streets. If vegetation within the public right-of-way is not kept adequately clear as above, the City may have the vegetation removed. Thank you for your help keeping our roadways safe.

House Numbers: The visibility of house numbers is extremely important to emergency service providers, as well as non-emergency service providers. Emergency responders are much faster when they can see your house number easily from their vehicle. In many cases, having numbers at multiple locations can be a good idea.

City Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official city newsletter to communicate current issues, services, and activities in Monte Sereno to the residents of the city — to facilitate, encourage, and improve interaction between the residents and the city government. The newsletter is published twice a year.

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SERVICE PROVIDERS

POLICE.....**911**

Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department

Business/Non-Emergency.....(408) 354-5257

After 5 pm(408) 354-8600

FIRE: Santa Clara County Fire Department.....**911**

Business/Non-Emergency.....(408) 378-4010

ANIMAL CONTROL/SHELTER

Silicon Valley Animal Control.....(408) 764-0344

GARBAGE & RECYCLING

West Valley Collection & Recycling.....(408) 283-9250

ELECTRICITY/GAS

Silicon Valley Clean Energy.....(844) 474-7823

Pacific Gas & Electric.....(800) 743-5000

ROAD OBSTRUCTIONS/ISSUES

City Streets.....(408) 354-7635

After Hours Emergency.....(408) 354-8600

Highway 9 (Caltrans).....(510) 286-4444

SEWER

West Valley Sanitation.....(408) 378-2407

After Hours Emergency.....(408) 299-2507

WATER

San Jose Water Company.....(408) 279-7900

STORM DRAIN SPILL REPORTING

West Valley Clean Water Authority.....(408) 354-5385