



*"To preserve and enhance the unique village character of Laguna Beach."*

# Newsletter

THE VILLAGE LAGUNA NEWSLETTER • SEPTEMBER 2005 • ESTABLISHED 1971

## Is Your Home Safe from a Landslide?

### Geologist Casts Critical Eye on Laguna Beach Landslide Areas

A geologist working in the Laguna Beach area will present information about the potential for future landslides in the city at a special Village Laguna meeting on **Friday, September 30, 2005, 7 p.m., City Council Chambers, City Hall, 505 Forest Avenue.**

Local geologist Jamie Fink of Coastal Geotechnical will present information describing the general characteristics of various geological formations throughout the city and their potential for landslides. She will also review the scope and purpose of geotechnical reports that they and other geologists produce for private property owners and public agencies. The city has experienced four major landslides in the last 15 years.

With the Bluebird Canyon landslide still fresh in residents' minds and with the rainy season about to begin, Village Laguna is kicking off a series of meetings to help residents learn more about how to protect their homes and themselves. Future meetings will include engineers, who can design ways to make structures more secure, and attorneys, who can help protect assets before a disaster strikes.

Village Laguna welcomes members and non-members alike. Come learn more about this important issue, ask questions, enjoy great refreshments and share your ideas. Don't forget: Friday evening, September 30, 7 p.m., City Council Chambers, City Hall, 505 Forest Avenue. Please call Doug Reilly at 494-4137 for more information. ≈

### Design Review Task Force Recommendations Reviewed

At the general meeting on August 29, we heard from Matt Lawson and Marion Jacobs of the Council-appointed Design Review Task Force. Charged with seeking ways to reduce the contentious-

ness of the design review process, the task force is stressing clearer definitions, better training for board members, community education (to be achieved in part by televising board meetings), neighborhood-specific guidelines and substantial staff support.

Village Laguna members questioned whether it was possible to reduce contentiousness without reducing the scale of projects and asked whether the task force had considered an ordinance specifying a maximum house size. Matt Lawson said that the issue hadn't been part of the task force's charge: "The Council made it clear that they were satisfied with the architectural product" of the process.

The details of the report will be the subject of a public workshop on Saturday, October 22, from 9 to 11 a.m. in the Council chambers. Members are likely to be asking similar questions at that meeting. ≈

### Flea Market to Benefit Slide Victims Scheduled For October 15

On October 15 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Village Laguna will host a flea market to raise funds for the Bluebird Canyon slide victims. All proceeds will be donated to the non-profit Laguna Resource

and Relief Center, which has been

collecting and dispensing funds to aid residents affected by the slide. The event will be held in the parking lot of the Neighborhood Congregational Church on Glenneyre Street at St. Ann's (opposite the Woman's Club). We hope to have antiques, furniture, children's toys and clothing, adult clothing, collectibles, gardening items, and appliances and electronics such as DVD players, televisions, and cameras. Call Doug Reilly at 494-4137 or Cathy Fry at 497-7330 if you have questions or want to donate. ≈



#### SEPTEMBER General Membership Meeting

Friday, Sept. 30, 7 p.m.  
City Council Chambers  
505 Forest Avenue

OCTOBER  
Board Meeting  
Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 a.m.  
Home of Doug Reilly  
2225 Glenneyre St., #D



## Village Laguna Members Participate In Relay for Life

The Village Laguna team for the American Cancer Society's September 17 Relay for Life includes, at the time of this writing, Bette and Ken Anderson, Darrylin and Tom Girvin, Sheryl and Dean Harbold, Arnold and Bonnie Hano, Sieglinde Johnson, Ronald Kaufman, Eve Loftsgaard, Barbara Metzger, Richard Moore, Doug Reilly, Verna Rollinger, Judy Sinisgalli, Liza Stewart, and Phyllis Sweeney. Donations to the event from Village Laguna members and friends totaled almost \$3,000 of the more than \$200,000 raised over the weekend. ≈

needs of 24,500 residents with 3.5 million yearly visitors. Decisions made today will decide whether Laguna Beach can continue as a unique and charming beach community.

In 2003 I spent four months with nine members of Coastwalk. We walked 1,156 miles, from the Oregon state line to the Mexican border. The farther south we came the more I saw the devastating effects on the California coastline and coastal communities from overzealous development.

Back in 1971, citizens who felt the same dismay organized Village Laguna. They opposed construction of high-rise buildings along the coastline of Laguna Beach. Height limits agreed to then are still safeguarding the village today.

In 1974, Main Beach Park was dedicated. It took decades of community discussion, demolition of buildings that no longer met community needs, issuing a bond, and future revenues from the Festival of Arts to fund the project. Now the debts are paid, our beloved Main Beach Park stands as testament to a collective vision and the will of those who came before us.

I love our town. All proceeds from this calendar go to Village Laguna.

The calendar is now available for \$16 at Coast Hardware, Fawn Memories, the T Shirt Company, the Thalia Street Surf Shop, Toes on the Nose, Tuvalu, Latitude 33, and Zinc Market. They will also be available at Village Laguna meetings. For immediate assistance, call Janette at 494-4448. ≈



## 2006 Village Laguna Calendar Now Available

Village Laguna member Janette Heartwood has produced and published a 2006 calendar full of color photographs depicting Laguna's charm. On the back page of the calendar she describes her project as follows:

My intention in creating this photo essay is to capture images of places and activities that make Laguna Beach special. Our community strives to balance the

### 2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Boardmember e-mail addresses are available on our website: [villagelaguna.org](http://villagelaguna.org).

## Fund Set Up to Help Put City Records Online Now

The City of Laguna Beach was on the point of placing all its archives and current records online, where they would be available to the public through home and office computers, when the budget cuts required by the June landslide put the plan on hold indefinitely. Verna Rollinger, former City Clerk and a participant in and advocate of the project from the beginning, is hoping that local business and professional people and private citizens who would welcome easier access to City records will contribute the funds needed to post the records on the City's website now.

More than \$100,000 has been spent in the creation of a database of City records to protect them and make them more accessible. Some two million pages of documents have been input into the system since 2003. When the landslide occurred, City staff was able to provide detailed information on the properties in the affected area very quickly, providing some 20,000 images to the public on CD/DVD. The final step in the project, placing the database on the City's website, involves the purchase of a duplicate server to be placed outside of the City's firewall.

Hoping to complete the project this fall, the City Council allocated \$21,000 to the purchase of the server in the 2005-2006 budget, but landslide-related costs sidelined this project along with many others. It is doubtful that funding will be available any time soon.

A fund has been set up in the City Treasurer's office to receive contributions from interested individuals and groups. Checks should be made payable to the City of Laguna Beach and will be returned if they are not used. Note at the bottom of your check "Server Fund" and mail it to Laura Parisi, City Treasurer, 505 Forest Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651. For additional information, contact Verna Rollinger at (949) 494-9878. ≈

## Friend of Village Laguna Among Landslide Victims

Tim Saunders lost his home, which was included in the Charm House Tour in 2000, in the Bluebird Canyon

landslide of June 1. Tim was in Oxnard when he received a frantic telephone call from his sweetheart, Sherry Way. "The house is breaking up and sliding down the hill," she cried. Sherry had just stepped out of the shower and put on a bathrobe when she heard noises upstairs. She described the crackling noises as being like hail hitting the skylights. It was the sound of the house being ripped apart by the shifting hill. As she opened the front door, the road in front of the house was buckling. Neighbors were running from homes on each side. "Get out, get out, the houses are falling!" they yelled. Sherry said she had to get dressed, but they told her she didn't have time, that she had to get out now! She grabbed her purse; she later said that if she were going to be buried alive, she wanted to be able to be identified.

She and the neighbors — a father and his two young teenage children from the home on the left and a mother with her two toddlers from the home on the right — climbed into the cab and bed of a neighbor's pickup truck. The driver and his teenage daughter lived farther down the street. They started to back out, as the street in front of them had already buckled and become impassable. At that moment the wooden utility poles fell across the road, one in front of them and another behind them. Now they were really trapped as the power lines brushed by the truck sending sparks flying. For an instant they feared getting out of the truck with all the power lines around but quickly realized they had no choice. It was chaos. They headed for a vacant lot nearby and ran down the hill. They were literally running for their lives to keep ahead of the slide. Most of them didn't have shoes on. They had to climb two chain-link fences to reach the driveway of a downslope home and raced to the street below. That driveway was later obliterated by the slide. They were only minutes ahead of what could have been a much worse disaster. Fire and police began to arrive on the scene. Other than some cactus spines in the feet, no one was hurt.

Tim's home was a total loss. Virtually all homeowner's insurance policies have landslide exclusions. The mortgage, however, remains in place. Until Tim and Sherry establish another permanent address, they can be reached at P.O. Box 355, Laguna Beach, CA 92652, or at tlsaund@ix.netcom.com. ≈

**Join Village Laguna!** Pay annual dues of only \$20 per member or \$35 per family and receive our informative monthly newsletter, attend fun parties, stay informed at our monthly meetings, participate in our annual Charm House Tour, and support local city and school board candidates. (If you are already a member, check your membership status on your mailing label. For example, 1/1/2005 means your membership expired in January of this year.)

If you would like to join Village Laguna or if you need to renew, please clip and return this form with your check. If you are already a member, why not share this application with a friend or neighbor?

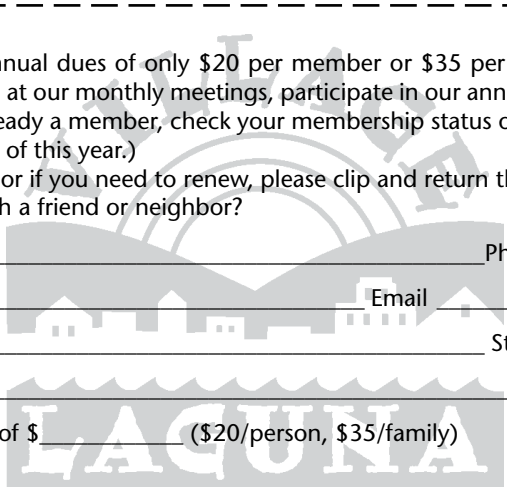
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer for \_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed my check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$20/person, \$35/family)





P. O. Box 1309  
Laguna Beach, CA 92652

FIRST CLASS MAIL

**FRIDAY, SEPT. 30  
SPECIAL MEETING!**  
Laguna Beach Geology and  
Landslide Areas  
City Council Chambers

## Group Formed to Preserve the Dog Park

The City of Laguna Beach has entered into a 10-year contract with the South Coast YMCA to construct and operate a skateboard park in the northern part of the dog park.



The contract calls for a facility of 35,000 square feet, not including parking. Since the park is about 90,000 square feet, a minimum of 39% of the park will be lost. Concept review of the YMCA's proposal by the Design Review Board is scheduled for December 14.

The dog park is one of the few such parks large enough to remain grassy even with heavy use. In a smaller park, the grass tends to be worn away, creating a dirt field. A group of Lagunans who use the park has recently come together to found the Friends of the Laguna Beach Dog Park, which aims to "recognize and preserve the Laguna Beach Dog Park as a unique resource for dogs and for the community at large." For information, visit [www.lbdogpark.org](http://www.lbdogpark.org) or call Mallory McCamant at 949-910-9947. ≈

## More Village-Friendly Remodels

In addition to the recent cottage remodels shown in the August issue, three others deserve recognition and are shown here. ≈

