



September 2023 Newsletter

A Message from Your HOA President

Simona Hellinger

It has been a busy year for the San Elijo Hills #1 Board of Directors. I want to commend all of the board and committee members on their hard work and attention to detail in their various roles. Having served as President of the Board for the last year, I have a new appreciation for how our PC&Rs help to allow our community to function and be the beautiful community we all enjoy.

The board assists in interpreting and explaining PC&Rs and promoting communication between neighbors. All of these tasks take time, and are an example of the many ways your board serves the HOA. As always, we welcome all homeowners to come to our monthly board meetings!

Membership Committee Report

Thank you to all the homeowners that attended the annual meeting in June at the Solana Vista Elementary School. The three current board members listed on the ballot were elected for an additional two-year term: Bill Beck, Tom Carter, and Simona Hellinger. At the board meeting in July, Simona was elected as President, Tom as Vice President, Paul Basore as Secretary, and Paul Sagar as Treasurer. All committee positions remain unchanged this year.

Slopes Report

The HOA started a major slope irrigation upgrade project 5 years ago. We are replacing the original galvanized irrigation pipes with new PVC lines and water efficient sprinkler heads. Many valve boxes are also being moved off private yard areas to the adjacent slope area for easier access.

We are approximately 40% done with the irrigation work on the HOA-maintained slopes and are spending approximately \$10,000 per year to accomplish this work. Our landscaping company, Martinez Landscaping Design, is doing the work. By spreading the work throughout this period, we are avoiding assessing members additional fees in the form of a special assessment. This coming year, we will be focusing on the slope along Santa Victoria.

Due to the abundant rain this year, we have saved significantly on our water bill. Our irrigation systems were completely turned off from December through most of April, saving \$3,000-\$5,000 per month.

In January, we lost what appeared to be a healthy, large, 70' Eucalyptus tree that fell on the slope behind 507 Santa Victoria into the canyon. We found out in March why that tree fell: The buried storm drain running under the tree had collapsed, creating a 40' sink hole and water reservoir behind 507 and 441 Santa Victoria. This storm drain was made up of corrugated metal with a life span of approximately 20-25 years. It had been almost 50 years since it was originally installed. The City of Solana Beach handled all the repair work, which took 5 weeks and included making a temporary roadway for heavy equipment to use east of 411 Santa Victoria that went around 6 homes. Then they laid new pipe, encased the pipe in cement, and refilled the hole. This is currently a temporary fix, as there is still a plastic lining that must be inserted to make the fix permanent. The permanent fix will be done within the next two years. The HOA also negotiated for the City to pay Martinez



Landscape Design to repair the damage done by the heavy equipment to the cement surface drainage ditch that runs behind these 6 homes.

Our HOA removed 5 Eucalyptus trees from the impacted area, regraded the road, replanted ground cover over all areas affected, and reseeded the ruined lawn at 507 Santa Victoria. We will continue to clean-up the bottom of the canyon and fill-in with more plants in the fall.

The unexpected tree work put us \$15,000 over our tree-work budget of \$18,000 for the year. With our water savings and savings elsewhere in the HOA's budget, we will be able to cover these costs without incurring any special assessment for our homeowners. However, these costs did curtail our typical spring planting plans.

We want to thank the homeowners on Santa Victoria affected by this issue. We couldn't have done all the work without their cooperation.

A word of caution: Now is the time to check and see where the water from your gutter and yard drains is going. City Code requires all drainage to flow to the street – not the slope behind your house. If yours is running down the slope you could be liable for any slope failure. A lack of knowledge is not an excuse. Check your drainage system now! It will only take a few minutes to take a hose to your downspout and turn on the water to see where it flows out.

Neighbor-Friendly Lighting

The HOA has added two documents to the www.SanElijoHills1.org website: (1) Five ways to

control obtrusive light in residential communities, and (2) Examples of light fixtures that provide light while minimizing light pollution.

This information is provided to homeowners for their consideration. The recommendations can reduce energy costs and may also contribute to well-being by mitigating the negative effects of light pollution on personal health and wildlife.

Did you know more than 80% of North America's migrating birds migrate at night? San Diego is located on the Pacific Flyway and every night during the fall and spring migration seasons, millions of birds fly over San Diego.

Financial Report

Paul Sagar, Treasurer

Your HOA continues to be in a sound financial position. Thank you to all who have made it a priority to pay your semi-annual bills in a timely fashion. Some of you have had some difficulties with receipt of communications from our bookkeeper. We anticipate that recent changes in our billing system will lead to fewer incidents of undelivered or mislaid invoices in the future.

Invoices included with this newsletter show semi-annual fees of \$725 now due. In recent years it has been necessary to increase fees by 7% annually. You will see that the Board has limited this year's increase to just 3% over last year. This has been made possible through prudent expense control and reductions in water usage as a result of the significant rainfall in 2023.

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