

EUCALYPTUS HILL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2020

FROM THE PRESIDENT

CHALLENGING TIMES CONTINUE, BUT WE WORK TOGETHER

As 2020 draws to a close, we can all agree that it's been quite a year. As a neighborhood, and despite quarantining, I believe the pandemic has brought us closer together. It's given us time for reflection, to refocus our goals, adapt to new challenges, and to move forward. While challenged with the pandemic, the EHIA board has been looking at ways to improve our neighborhood, such as emergency preparedness for wildfire, earthquake, and overall safety.

With wildfire, we need to look at our evacuations plans, defensible space, hardening our homes against wildfire, vegetation management around our homes and in our canyons, and firewise landscaping. You should also be registered with ReadySBC Alerts to get notifications for evacuation. There is a link to sign up through our website at <https://www.eucalyptushillia.com/disaster-preparedness/aware-prepare>.

We've tried to keep you informed about crimes such as mailbox theft, as those continue to occur, and we're still encouraging you to get a locking mailbox, or at least collect your mail and packages as soon as they are delivered. It helps to take advantage of package tracking emails and texts, so you are informed when packages are delivered. Keeping your vehicles locked is still important as well, as there are still thieves looking for crimes of opportunity—especially when at home or out holiday shopping. We also continued to look at speeding and police enforcement in our area, as well as traffic impacts with the 101 construction.

With neighbors working together, we've been enhancing landscaping in some common areas of the neighborhood and added new landscaping in front of the office and the entrance to Cleveland School. We would also encourage you to trim and cut hedges back along our streets to make pedestrian walking and parking safer.

We've been fortunate to add more block volunteers and radio carriers and we thank all of you that have stepped forward to help us! We could still use some help on Chase Drive, Barker Pass, Santecito Drive, and Aleeda Lane. If anyone else is interested, please let us know. Regretfully, we couldn't hold our annual meeting, but we are looking forward to being able to host it on Sunday, May 23, 2021. Please save the date and we hope to see you then!

Loy Beardsmore

Loy Beardsmore, EHIA President

CLEVELAND SCHOOL'S NEW LANDSCAPING PROJECT TAKES ROOT



Neighbor Bruce Savin contacted the EHIA with an idea of sprucing up the landscaping at Cleveland School.

Working with Principal Gabe Sandoval, the Santa Barbara School District, Foothill Nursery, and Santa Barbara Sand & Top Soil, the first phase of the project got underway on October 19. School district gardeners removed all the old landscaping in front of the school office,

repaired the drip irrigation, and readied the ground for new plantings.

The new plants, which were donated by Bruce Savin, were installed the following Monday and they consisted of new gold lantana and plumbago, which were chosen for drought tolerancance and being in the school colors! Next, decomposed granite was then placed around the plants.

Plans to start the second phase of the landscaping project are underway. If you are interested in making a donation to this project, visit www.gofundme.com/f/beautify-cleveland-school.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

BARNEY & NANCY MELEKIAN

I caught up with busy Barney and Nancy Melekian a few days ago and learned about their interesting backgrounds and continued activities in our community. Part of the draw that brought them to Santa Barbara in 2013 was their son, Scott Chapman, who is a Montecito Fire battalion chief, and resides here with his family. After visiting often from Pasadena, where Barney was chief of police and Nancy ran her own promotional products and marketing business (her big client being the Rose Parade) they decided to settle in Santa Barbara. But “settle” is probably not the right word.

A little background might be in order. After an extensive career in law enforcement and thirteen years as the police chief of Pasadena, Barney was recruited for a political appointment in the Obama Administration as the director of policing services. His acceptance was partially driven by a desire to make a difference in American law enforcement, so off to Washington, DC, they went. But after traveling back and forth from Pasadena to DC for four years, they were ready to take things down a notch and move to the place they had always dreamed of living—Santa Barbara.

In the meantime, Nancy sold her business in 2012 and began hunting for homes on Zillow, where she found a beautiful view home in our Eucalyptus Hill neighborhood—but buying the house did not turn out to be so easy. After being the third backup offer on the house, the first two offers withdrew, and then the buyer in front of them failed to fulfill an important contingency, making that deal fall through. Being the third backup in line turned into being first and they bought it. It seems they were meant to be in our neighborhood.

Once here, Barney thought he would semiretire by establishing a consulting business, that is until an old friend and colleague, Sheriff Bill Brown, asked him if he would consider the Santa Barbara County undersheriff position—an offer he could not refuse. In this position, Barney served as the chief operating officer for the Sheriff’s Office. He then later transitioned into a position with the County Executive Office, where he is presently in charge of the County Executive Office’s cannabis program. So much for retirement.

And Nancy—not exactly an idle person herself—and a lover of flowers, enrolled in the master gardener program at Lotusland (where she also became a docent). Then in 2015, she learned about an opportunity to assume the position of executive show manager of the Santa Barbara Orchid Show. With her background, she was snatched up. This year was



her fifth, as well as the show’s seventy-fifth anniversary, but the pandemic shut things down just hours before the show was to open. This was extremely disappointing and a terrible financial disaster for everyone involved, but she is hoping the Orchid Show will be able to reopen in 2022. Oh, and Nancy is also on the 19th District Agricultural Association, Santa Barbara Fair and Exposition Board of Directors.

Even with their busy responsibilities, they make the time to spend with their extended family which includes seven grandchildren. The two of them also enjoy traveling, hiking, golfing, going to the theater and movies, and are voracious readers. If he ever retires, Barney hopes to write a book on American policing. So, if you think your life is busy, think of the Melekians!

Thank you, Nancy and Barney—we are so proud to have you as our neighbors!

—Sue Burk, EHIA board member

“GET OUT NOW!”

The phone call or the loudspeaker directs you to immediate action—you are half asleep, not at full function... What do you do first?

Most people will panic and forget what they planned to do in a scenario like this. If a fire is bearing down, and you are forced to evacuate quickly, what are your first steps? Knowing what to pack up, where your keys are, and the best way out all play a role—and it's pretty straightforward to think about it now, when you are clearheaded and not under pressure.

But how do you help with that clearheaded planning at the critical moment? One thing that we have done is to make an emergency card for each person in the house, with a list of things they are responsible for doing, in order of importance. These are then put on a lanyard/cord so we can pull this on over our heads while we gather the necessary items and papers. They are printed, laminated, and hung around the neck upside down, so that as you complete each step, you just look down at the card for the next one.

We keep these in our nightstands along with headlamps. Before you start to load a vehicle, check the fuel level. Some of the items and actions that we want to be sure we take include:

- The dog (pets) with leashes
- Laptops, external hard drives, and chargers
- Prescriptions
- Checkbooks
- Home and life insurance policies
- Safe deposit box key
- Paintings
- Jewelry
- Phones and chargers
- Change of clothes
- Photo albums
- Financial documents
- Purse and wallet
- Glasses and medications
- Did you turn off the utilities? Gas and electricity left on can make a disaster worse.
- Do you have food and water for a few days?
- Do you have emergency cash on hand?
- Do you check on neighbors?

Be prepared! It makes all the difference in an emergency situation. More info is available at readysbc.org. —Jan Ferrell



EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

Much like preparations for wildfire the same holds true for earthquakes. Simple plans include:

- Food and water for at least two weeks; water—at least one gallon/person/day and extra for any pets you have
- Flashlights and spare batteries
- Portable, battery-powered radio
- First aid kit
- Fire extinguishers
- Special need items such as medications, eyeglasses, contact lenses, hearing aid batteries
- Items for infants (formula, diapers, bottles, etc.)
- Tools, such as wrenches—for turning off gas and water valves
- Important papers and cash
- Extra clothes or jackets in case it is cold and you are without heat
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Pet needs: food, water, pet carrier or leash.

This is a very abbreviated list. There are more resources on our webpage at eucalyptushillia.com, fema.gov, and others. We encourage you to prepare now.

WHY BELONG TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION?

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & AWARENESS

EHIA's volunteer member efforts have built a strong response network. Our goal is to help our small community be self-sufficient in disasters when first responders are overwhelmed. Our system has been praised by local emergency experts, and other homeowner groups are now following our lead. Our efforts include:

- **Telephone tree network** to rapidly inform EHIA residents of impending danger (used successfully in Jesusita Fire).
- **Email ALERT networks** to homeowners from block volunteers.
- **Block volunteer program** with over forty volunteers who have collected data on their blocks regarding special needs, skills, and equipment.

- **Radio Network:** a base station, repeater system, battery back-up, antenna, and thirty-one radios with trained operators throughout the Eucalyptus Hill neighborhood.
- **Our website:** www.eucalpytushillia.com
- **Red Flag Warning program** ready to activate in high fire danger weather conditions.
- We have numerous **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** trained neighborhood volunteers.

These programs require a constant inflow of volunteers. If you would like to join our collective effort, we welcome any time you can offer. Email us at info@eucalyptushillia.com for more information.

WHY BELONG TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION?

Your \$40 annual membership in the Eucalyptus Hill Improvement Association is an investment in your neighborhood. Memberships paid now will cover one year of dues. Our new website can also process membership payments, so visit www.eucalyptushillia.com/renew-or-join to join today! If you would like to renew your membership or join by mail, please use the form below and send this with your check to the address at the bottom of this form.

Name(s)

Address

City State Zip

Home Phone Cell Phone

Email(s)

Comments or suggestions

Make checks payable to Eucalyptus Hill Improvement Association. Mail to: EHIA, PO BOX 40182, Santa Barbara CA 93140-0182.

BE PREPARED. A GREAT MOTTO NOW MORE THAN EVER!

One of the goals of the Eucalyptus Hill Improvement Association is to help our neighbors prepare for emergency situations. Part of these preparations include having ourselves and our homes ready in case of wildfire. We have been working with the Santa Barbara City Fire Department on ways to prepare. There are some simple things that you, as homeowners, can do that can increase you and your family's survivability, as well as your home's chance of surviving a wildfire, and improve the safety of firefighters defending your property. We recently spoke with firefighters returning from the devastating California fires this year about how to best prepare for wildfire. Here are their brief comments:

Evacuation Plan First and foremost, form an action plan for rapid evacuation.

Prepare an inventory list of what you are taking and what you are prepared to leave behind. Know where your keys are and how to get out if a tree blocks your driveway or street. Have a meetup plan if you become separated during an evacuation, as cell phone connectivity may be compromised. Knowing where you will meet is essential.

Defensible Space Regulations require that you have 100 feet of defensible space. This includes keeping all plants at least five feet away from your structure. Trim trees regularly, removing fallen leaves, needles, twigs and branches from around your property. This also includes mulch. You can harden your home, but without defensible space it won't be effective.

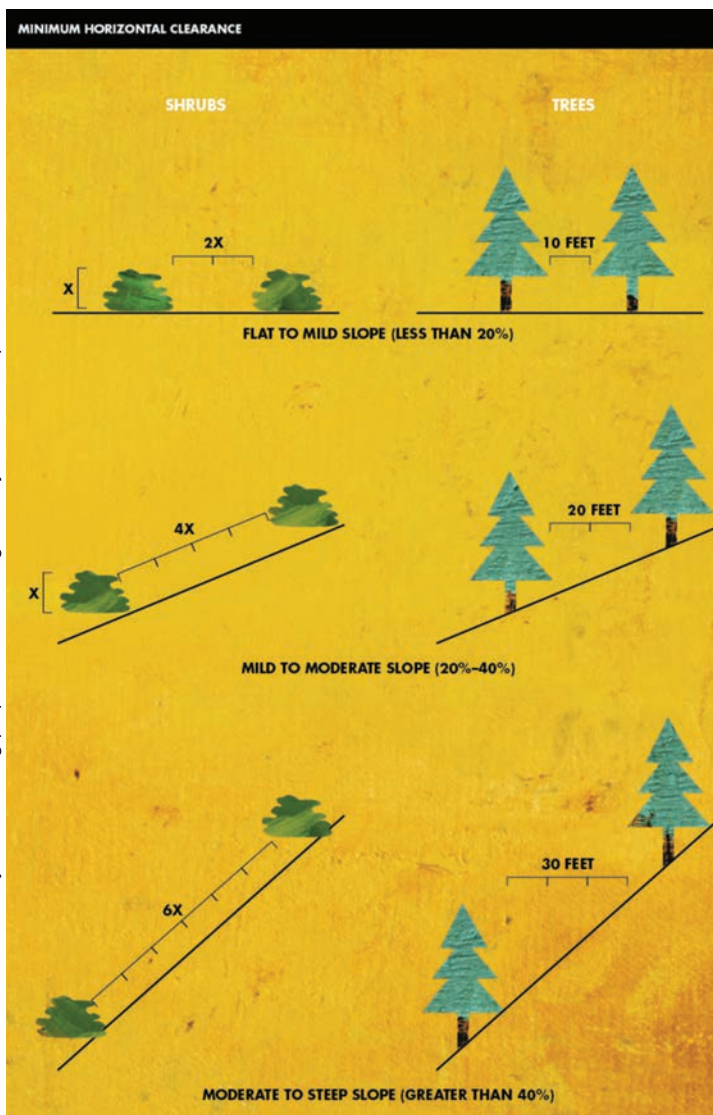
Hardening Your Home To protect your home, you need to cover vents with 1/8" mesh screening, replace wood shingles and/or wood siding with a nonflammable version, dual paned windows, use nonflammable products when building or remodeling, including decks and patio covers. Never store anything under decks. Eaves and soffits should be protected with ignition-resistant

or noncombustible materials. Cover your chimneys with a screen or close the flue. Install weather stripping around and under the garage door to prevent embers from blowing in.

Firewise Landscaping This is the removal of existing flammable plants and replacing them with firewise plants. Firewise plants include succulents, native, and Mediterranean plants. The city has a website page with lists of firewise plants and other tips to protect you home. You can access this at www.santabarbaraca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=16481

We have many resources on our website at eucalyptushillia.com, as well as materials we can share with you. Please reach out to your block volunteer or email us at info@eucalyptushillia.com and we will get literature to you. Call the Santa Barbara City Fire Department at 805/965-5254, and they will be happy to come out and do a free inspection of your property to show you what you need to do to make your home as safe as possible from wildfire.

Our board is continuing to do research and get bids on using goats for fire mitigation in our canyons. If we can garner enough neighborhood and financial support, spring will be the best time of the year to do it. Please understand without doing the proper preparedness steps outlined above, even clearing our canyons will not improve the survivability of your home. Most wildfires are ember driven fires, and as such, create challenges that will require we take all preventative measures possible. Let's work together to do all we can do to stay safe.



Defensible space considerations for shrubs and trees change whether your home and property are on flat land or some degree of slope.