New MH Library Slated For March 8 Grand Re-Opening

By Bryan Harrison

Following a series of miscues with permits and structural requirements, the new temporary home of the Mountain House Library is nearing readiness. The planned opening is now March 8, 2014.

"We are very excited to be nearing opening day, and the development in this library’s history," Ms. Buffleben told us recently. "The new building is very different than the current location. The staff and I are looking forward to decorating the new space and discovering it's potential for future programming," she said. "We will continue to do our best to serve the Mountain House community."

The temporary, modular building represents not only a significant step for the library, but a strong first step toward the development of the Mountain House Town Center. "We are moving closer to our permanent location. When the permanent facility is built we will be right there to watch it rise. We like that," Kathleen added.

If the public would like to help with the library move they should contact Angel Lamb at the MHCSD.

Kathleen Buffleben, Branch Librarian, Mountain House Branch Library may be reached at: Kathleen.Buffleben @stocktongov.com, or call (209) 831-5661.

MH Blood Drive Surpasses Goal

By Bryan Harrison

Despite a necessary last-minute move from the planned location at the MH CSD building to the Fire House, the 1st Mountain House Blood Drive was a bloody success!

Organizer, Angel Lamb, stated that the goals set for the number of residents to turn-out and give blood were reached and surpassed! With the San Joaquin County Blood Bank RV/bus stationed in the Fire House back parking lot, contributors were able to check-in at the meeting room before entering the bus.

"We were thrilled to have so many people come out for this," Ms. Lamb stated. "We had hoped to have as many as 35 people, and wound up the day with 45," she continued.

The mobile blood bank unit is capable of handling as many as eight donors per hour, stated one of the techs on-board. He explained that it’s a bit slower process than usual due to the cramped quarters. But, any loss of speed is more than worth it for the convenience of being able to come to the community.

A second such event is on the drawing board for hopefully later this year. Stay tuned.
Vanpool Effort Underway

Submitted by Sandy Torres

An effort to create a new vanpool commute service from Mountain House to Oakland is being formulated by one MH Resident, Sandy Torres.

"The commute would be Monday through Friday," Torres explains. "My work time is very flexible. I can start an early commute so that people that start at 8:00am can get there on time."

A one-round-trip per commute day idea, Torres has looked into some options. "There are all sorts of incentives from the city to start a vanpool and I can give each person more information if they wish to learn more about it."

A one-year resident of MH, Torres hails from I the Wicklund Village. "We moved from Concord to get away from the hustle and bustle. My family and I love living in MH and I feel the commute is worth it!"

"I need at least 5 people interested in order to start a vanpool. I will drive to Jack London Square and tw/around Lake Merritt. The cost is approx $150 to $200 per month. Anyone interested can contact me at 925-914-9073, or etb_4_u@yahoo.com.

Recycle For Reading Pays Dividends

Recycle For Reading, the brainchild of MH resident Summer Wolfe, continues to thrive. "I look to our local community to collect CA CRV bottles and cans and donate them to our program. The money that is collected goes to our local Mountain House libraries!"

In the first year of Summer’s program, she effectively raised $971.04, just through work at Questa School. She has been working on expanding her coverage this year.

Summer donates all her time, gas, and energies to collecting qualifying recyclables from the community. She can assist you in securing your own recycle can, and will arrange to have your bags picked up when full.

Text, email, or call when your bag is full and they will be by to pick up your CA CRV Bottles and Cans. If you would like to have a RECYCLE box sent to your home, please contact them with your home address.

Summer Wolfe may be reached at: Cell# 925-570-8770, or email: recycleforreading@gmail.com.

Editor’s Note:

By Bryan Harrison

A huge thank you to everyone who has expressed concern, prayers, love and support in my time of recovery. My health has quickly progressed. In fact, I met with my cardiologist this afternoon to go over the results from all the tests and such, and he stated proudly "It's all good news!"

The LifeVest external monitor/defibrillator I have had to wear since the end of last year can now come off, and I can get back to a sense of a more normal life. Virus-induced Cardiomyopathy is the ultimately diagnosis. My heart strength is well on it's way to a full recovery. So, yay!

I appreciate all our readers, and our advertising sponsors, for your patience in receiving your monthly copy of Mountain House Matters. I am taking this opportunity, as I stated last month, to push back the publishing date each month so that the paper will come out mid-month instead at the beginning of the month, as we had done since we started this little endeavor in September 2012.

We so love living here in Mountain House. I’m excited by the growth and progress, and the promise of what lies ahead. I encourage all residents to do what you can to attend and participate in the upcoming Community Meeting. Details may be found on page 12 of this issue.

May we all experience good health and well-being, and appreciation for all those we have around us as we move into this new year.

Much love and gratitude,

Bryan
This month I’d like to talk about something I’ve seen a lot of recently in the office. I call it “Weekend Warrior Syndrome”. With all the sunshine and warm weather we’ve been having, “Do It Yourself” projects (DIY) have been in full swing.

So, you’ve finally decided to paint your kids’ bedrooms, or planned to put in that backyard landscaping. Maybe your rooftop gutters have become so filled with leaves that the only place for overflow rainwater to go is down the sides of your house and seep into the foundation, and you’ve decided to install a gutter protection system.

Aside from basic rules such as using protective goggles and always having a buddy supporting and stabilizing the ladder you’re up on, safety around the home often depends on your own level of physical fitness. For example, if you’re relatively out-of-shape, it’s easy to strain a neck, shoulder, or lower back muscle when you’re trying to apply paint evenly to a corner of the ceiling. Similarly, if you haven’t done any vigorous exercise on a consistent basis in a while, do-it-yourself activities, such as changing your car battery or even mowing your lawn, can cause a lower back injury or even a twisted ankle or knee.

Doing regular vigorous exercise provides many benefits in addition to preparing you for real physical work. Physiologically, supporting your exercise and physical work is a specialized system of nerve endings, known as proprioceptors. These nerve cells play a significant role in whether physical activity is done easily and well or, instead, results in an injury. Stated succinctly, proprioceptors tell your brain about your body’s position in three-dimensional space. If this information isn’t transmitted accurately or isn’t received fairly instantaneously, you may suffer an injury, even though the paint cans themselves only weigh 8 pounds each.

Proprioception becomes a critical system any time you go up on a ladder. Maintaining your balance depends on a moment-by-moment, two-directional stream of information between your brain and your bones, joints, muscles, and ligaments. Your nerve system and your musculoskeletal system do all the calculations required to enable you to work safely from the top step of your ladder. But if your proprioception system hasn’t been optimally trained in a while and is, in a sense, out of shape, your balance and overall safety are at risk. Bad things can happen.

Dr. Joseph Russell D.C. is a graduate of Life West Chiropractic College, 2006. In addition, he boasts ten years of massage therapy experience, has lived locally in Tracy for the past 27 years, and is an active member of the community. He joined Valley Chiropractic Center in September, 2009.

For more information or to sign up for their newsletter, log-on to backandneckdreamteam.com, or call their office at 209-832-9221. Look for more health tips and tricks in upcoming editions of Mountain House Matters.
Wine Club Celebrates New Year At January Event

Story & Photos by Vanessa Piccinini
Photos at: Facebook.com/MountainHouseMatters

What better way to celebrate the New Year than with a fine selection of wines perfectly matched to the carefully prepared pairings? Hosts Josh Anderson and Treasure Molina were very kind to once again open up their beautiful home and offer everyone an equally beautiful winter wine garden event.

From Mary Dennis Naleway’s stunning hors d’oeuvres table, décor to each of the wine pairings, every detail was carefully thought out to ensure a fun and wine-licious evening! As a result, the food was incredible, and the pairings delightful.

The evening also included the illustrious presence of Mountain House resident Mykael Cessaro, who along with her husband Ron Dillon, owns Vino 100 in Tracy. Mykael had some exciting news to share about upcoming events at the venue.

Additionally, Chef Jeff Naleway thanked all members of the MH Wine Club for the December donations to Special Spaces, a nonprofit organization that creates dream bedrooms for children with life-threatening illnesses. The MHH Wine Club donations helped him collect enough funds for an entire bedroom. Everyone looks forward to contributing again in 2014! Check out Special Spaces’ website at http://special-spacessanfrancisco.org.

The MH Wine Club has undoubtedly kicked its second year off with a bang and last night’s event gave everyone a taste of what’s to come.

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Starr Fernandes - Transaction Coordinator  650.544.8373

Results That Move You
To find the FREE value of your home, visit: www.MHhomeValue.com
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Stay tuned.
MH neighbors, we are now coming up on the busy season for selling homes. In complete preparation I wanted to ensure that every homeowner in MH has the fair advantage of getting “TOP DOLLAR” for their home. The question becomes: SHOULD I STAGE MY HOME or NOT?

Real estate is an intensely personal experience for many buyers and sellers. After all, a home, at its core, is a personal expression of a homeowner’s entire life wrapped inside four walls.

Ultimately, buyers should be more focused on the bones of the home (the things that will stay after the current owner has vacated). When selling, “staging” your home for optimum appeal, in this market, especially in MH where most buyers visit the model homes, is most often the difference between a flood of buyers and a shortage of hot offers. Poor or no staging can cause sellers much suffering.

Staging can be, and is at times, challenging, but some tough love now, will make for a faster sale after the big offers begin coming in. In a much needed effort to not lose a deal, eight (8) of the biggest staging sins owners make are listed below, along with tips on how owners can avoid these struggles before it costs them a good deal, as shared by Trulia.

1.) Collection Overload:
- It is very difficult for almost any collection to look orderly and neutral, which are two high-level aims of home staging. Unless the homeowner has attractive, high-end built-in cases to house collections, and the target buyers share a similar passion for the objects, even the coolest collection can come off as a pile of space-consuming clutter.
- As agents, it is our job to understand that personal collections are often a source of pride or hold sentimental value. Your home sale will benefit from a more neutral, less-personal, aesthetic.

2.) Your own furniture Plays a HUGE role:
- I can’t count the number of times I took my buyers into what was advertised as an open floor plan. Upon entering the openness of the floor plan was completely taken away by the size and location of the furniture. With homes limited on space as it is, I have been surprised to find each room completely filled up by furniture and the open space as advertised which brought the buyers into the home is no longer a focal point.
- I have noticed that those not staging or staging with zero external or professional input, are often the sellers who are unable to see:
  - that their homes are still significantly cluttered or over-full,
  - that their furniture is too plentiful and too large to show how spacious the home truly is, or
  - that their family pets can and do tend to leave natural odors behind that turn off some strangers.
- I recommend taking a staging field trip (for lack of better expression) to the model homes here in MH. See what buyers are looking at before they come to your home. It would be worthwhile to ask a Realtor to walk you through some existing for-sale homes to see what your neighbors are selling. Having a local Real Estate Team bring their staging professional to your home will ensure you sell faster. Of course, you will have to follow their lead.

3.) Failure to edit:
- As the New York Times recently put it, “the job of stagers is to reverse the accumulated creep of hundreds of small and misguided design decisions, and to erase any hints of the messiness of daily life.” Your client might have a fantastic rug, a beautiful sofa, amazing tchotchkes and the highest-end personal effects, but chances are good that their cumulative messiness of daily life will still fall short of the “one broad stroke of gorgeousness” the Times piece correctly says home sellers should aim for, with proper staging.
- The failure to edit is a generalized syndrome which can manifest in all sorts of specific staging woes, from garden variety clutter to disastrous decor style mash-ups.
- Edit, edit, edit. Then go back and edit again. You should think of de-cluttering as pre-packing. Or, allow the Realtor’s stager to come and take over.

4.) Overboard Scenarios:
- The difference between staging and interior design is simple: staging is cost-and-time efficient design, undertaken with the specific objective of showing a home off to its best potential, playing up its features, and helping prospective buyers visualize the best lives they could possibly experience in this home. Unfortunately, this has led some well-intentioned sellers and stagers to believe they should stage one bedroom as if you’re standing in Europe (Eiffel tower mural included), another with a full blown butterfly theme and the third as the beach, complete with umbrella, towels on the wall and sunscreen bottles on the nightstand.
- You MUST stage the home to show off its space, light and conveniences, and the best, basic purposes that unusually small or large spaces could be used for. If the backyard is a huge

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Growth Pervades Around Town
BV Bryan Harrison

The roads in Phase I of the all-new Hansen Village (aka, "Village C") have been laid. Street lights dot the landscape as builders get ready to make real the next village in town.

Plans from Shea Mountain House, LLC, the developers for the project, reportedly include building out three neighborhoods in the coming season.

View in the photo to the left is from one of the new streets of Hansen Village, looking across Central Parkway at construction of Mountain House High School.

As reported by MHHS Principal, Ben Fobert, at the February planning meeting, Central Parkway is slated to be finished at Grantline Rd, pictured above in its present state. Intersection to be complete with a traffic signal, by the time school opens in the Fall.

The new intersection at Grantline and Byron Rd. is up and running. A few kinks to work out, but by and large, traffic flowing so much better, and more safely, than ever.

Altamont School construction has come along by leaps and bounds. Like the High School, the new K-8 is scheduled to open in time for the Fall 2014 school year.

Altamont School

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**Staging For Optimum Sale**

Continued from page 6

selling point, stage it with outdoor dining or living room furnishings. Similarly, if the home is a two-bedroom with a bonus room in an area of four-bedroom homes, staging the bonus room as a bedroom or home office helps buyers understand the solutions that can minimize the brunt of your home’s challenges.

Staging your home to create “cute” scenarios with no relationship to the selling points or solutions buyers care about is of no value and can create a low budget feel.

5.) The Lived in Look:

When a home is being shown for sale, it must be immaculate, every single time it’s being shown. It should look like no one lives there: no toothbrushes, curling irons, protein shake mixes, or paperwork allowed.

Is this difficult to keep up? Absolutely. But you would be surprised at what a bad impression just a few personal toiletries or dishes can make.

Please remember this phrase, “flawless showing”. Create a system for putting everything away and wiping down all kitchen, bathroom, and other daily messy hot spots every single time the home is going to be shown. Yes it is tough, but it is also short term pain for long term gain. After all, we want to sell the home, not make a habit of showing the home.

6.) Closet cramming:

Out of sight is not out of mind. Home buyers today are desperate for storage space and will undoubtedly open those same, crammed-tight doors in an effort to evaluate how the home ranks for storage. Beautifully organized closets with ample room create an impression in the buyer’s mind that they, too, can have an orderly life in the home; I wrote about this in January’s MH Matters Newspaper.

Staging is an opportunity to sell, donate or throw out things you no longer need. Even huge closets, if crammed to the gills, make buyers wonder how they’ll ever get by with so little closet space.

7.) Failing to stage for all the senses:

A house that smells like pet mayhem or smoke or has a noisily defective heater is a brunt of your home’s challenges.

Ultimately, the most shockingly bad of all staging decisions is the surprisingly frequent and non-staged spectrum, this is how lovely homes with vast potential end up selling at a discount which had residents still sound asleep in their beds, in the dining room, as the listing agent second they walk in. The moment they do is the moment we as Realtors call “turn-off time.”

I know this can and will hit an uncomfortable spot for many of us, myself included, as I, too, have pets.

Instead, remember that time you stepped into a new home and smelled the brand new carpet? The freshness of a home just painted? The smell of fresh-cut grass in the summer? Or maybe you just walked into your home after having had it cleaned? These smells are all familiar, and should be viewed as the expectation of potential buyers.

Failing to stage for all the senses has cost some to lose the big sale.

8.) Not to stage:

Ultimately, the most shockingly bad of all staging decisions is the surprisingly frequent decision not to bother staging the home at all. This explains homes like the one I once viewed which had residents still sound asleep in their beds, in the dining room, as the listing agent walked me and my mortified buyer clients through the property. On the less bizarre end of the non-staged spectrum, this is how lovely homes with vast potential end up selling at a discount - as cosmetic fixers. This is particularly tragic in cases where the owners could have painted, spruced, moved loads of things out, and a few newer things in, and made much, much more money on their homes, not to mention selling the home much more quickly.

If there is something putting you off about staging, consider your reason(s). Is it a budget concern? Something as easy as focusing on de-cluttering and small accents or paint, will make a big difference on a dime. Don’t let staging offend you. Remember, you are selling your home, it has now become a financial investment/decision for you and your family. If staging can improve the bottom-line for you and your family, changing your mindset just makes sense. Switch hats - take off your homeowner hat, and put on your investor hat.

Joshua L Anderson, Realtor / CDPE / BPO / REO, KLEMM Real Estate, is a 10 year resident of Mountain House, CA, and a strong proponent of the use of local, Mountain House-based, realtors for optimum effectiveness. He may be reached directly on his cell, at: (209) 688-5251; office line (209) 229-1369; fax (888) 814-3958; or email homesbyjosh@yahoo.com

DRE License Number: 01880040 - www.mhhomevalue.com

Follow Josh on his blog: www.joshuatherealtor.com/

**Fobert Continues Regular MHHS Planning Meetings**

By Bryan Harrison

Mountain House High School is on the fast-track to completion. Slated to open for business this Fall, with classes starting for Freshman and Sophomores the first year, leaders are touting the 21st Century learning approach being set in place. Principal Ben Fobert has been conducting monthly community update/planning meetings as part of the preparation. The latest such meeting was held at the Questa School Multi-Use Room Tuesday, February 12, 2014. Principal Fobert utilized a PowerPoint-type slide show in offering-up an overview of school plans, and to discuss the latest progress.

There was a rather last minute reminder to residents that this meeting was taking place. While numerous folks made it out because of the email and Facebook page reminders, Mr. Fobert also stated that all the meeting dates are posted on the Google Calendar.

Initial student registration was held a few weeks ago. "When we closed the registration window, 400 of our 500 kids had registered," Mr. Fobert stated. "Courses were then selected for those who didn't register. We have a total of 512 students on rosters," he added.

MH High School is offering numerous tailored pathways students can follow, from college prep. to certification programs and such. Available course pathways range from: Engineering and BioMed Sciences; to Media Arts & Entertainment; a sophisticated Culinary Arts program; International Studies and Languages; and hopes for a Crime Scene Investigations program to be added in the near future. The Culinary Arts program, as an example, will be set next to main kitchen, for easy access to the latest technology. It will offer certifications, and be in-line with programs beyond high school.

Addressing the question of concerns about community use of the on-campus sports facility, Mr. Fobert deferred to the School Board. He stated that "the school board is reviewing policies, procedures, use fees, etc." to determine how to proceed so that all are accommodated.

‘Access will be provided. I think it may be different than people might think,’ he added. ‘But, we are having sports next year,’ he assured.

Going on to explain some of the issues at hand, he outlined the need to determine the best steps. The Life of a stadium field is gauged at about 10 years, with a cost of roughly $1 million to replace turf. Overuse of the field could potentially cut that lifespan in half. So usage fees and such will likely have to be built into the planning for community use.

Fobert went on to discuss the district's cutting edge plan, utilizing Chromebooks for all students, in lieu of most traditional paper books. "One-to-one technology is happening," he

Continued page 12
It might have just rained recently, but that doesn’t lift California out of hot water— or rather, lack of water. This California drought has prompted the first-ever “zero water allocation”, in which the state reservoir will be closed starting this spring, and the State Water Project, a 54 year old system, will not allot any water to the 25 million people and 1 million acres of farmland in California. This just might be the most serious drought our state has ever faced.

California needs everyone’s help, including ours, to get out of this horrible drought. Although you should try to conserve water all the time, it is absolutely crucial now. Here are some tips to get your water conservation going:

1.) Check faucets and pipes for leaks: a small drip from a sink faucet can waste 20 gallons of water daily.

2.) Take shorter showers: although many of us (myself included) love taking longer showers, minimizing the time you spend under the water can save lots of water. Simply a four-minute shower can use approximately 20 to 40 gallons of water.

3.) Avoid turning on sprinklers on extremely windy days: lots of water can be wasted by the wind carrying the water away, and your lawn won’t even be watered. Here in Mountain House, when you turn on your sprinklers on a windy day, your neighbors at the other end of the street will get a watered lawn.

4.) Keep a bottle of drinking water in the fridge, or water in a kettle: running tap water for warm it up for drinking water is wasteful.

5.) Turn off the water after you wet your toothbrush: this is the classic tip that you hear everywhere.

Conserve what we all need, reduce your monthly bills; get California out of the drought.

Let’s get moving before we all become fish out of water…

**Vital: H2O**

By Sangeetha Bharath

Hello Friends, today we are going to talk about pet animals, such as cats and dogs. Taking care of a pet is a big responsibility in itself. As easy as it looks, it comes with great responsibility, like taking care of a baby. One has to be careful while taking care of them.

Here are few tips to take care of cat or dog.

Cats like to play with a ball. So, one home-made idea is to give cat a ball of yarn. Believe me, the cat will love it. But, mind you, cats get pissed-off quickly. They are somewhat short tempered.

Dogs like to run around and play. They like to chase around a tiny red dot on the ground. My personal experience has been that dogs tend to be more friendly than cats.

In a nut shell, what I am trying to say is be careful and take care of your pet. They are like babies. Feed them on time, take them out on a walk, and clean-up after them when they leave some thing behind.

Last but not the least, I would like to shout out to my friend Katrina Amistad for giving me the idea to write on this topic. If you, as a reader, would like me to write on a specific topic, then please do let us know. You can contact me via Mr. Bryan Harrison.

Email: info@mhmatters.net and put "Sukhjanvir Topic Suggestion" in the subject.

**Join The MHHS Booster Club**

Submitted by DiAnna Corden

The newly founded Mountain House High School Athletic Boosters Club would like to encourage your participation, membership, and support.

**Join MHHS Athletic Boosters - We Need You!!**

The success of the sports program at our awesome new high school will be heavily dependant on the support of our new Boosters organization. All are encouraged to jump on-board to help in the cause!

**MHCSD Community Meeting - Join In!!**

MHHS Athletic Boosters will give a short presentation during the Community meeting and will be available at a table following the meeting for membership info, questions, sign-ups, and spirit wear sales after the meeting.

**MHCSD Community Meeting**

Wednesday, February 26th

6:30pm • Questa Elementary School

**Do Your Part - How Can You Help?**

- Spirit wear for sale!! *Come get your MH Mustangs Sweatshirts!!*
- Meet your current MHHS Athletic Boosters Board and ask questions
- Find out how YOU can help support your new MH Mustangs Athletics programs
- Participate in the MHHS Athletic Booster Club Texas Roadhouse Drive-thru Fundraiser Coming in March 2014 !!!
- Watch the MHHSBoosters.org website, FaceBook page, and MH Villages forum for details coming soon!!
- And, as always, we NEED YOU!! If you are able to help the MHHS Boosters, please send an email to MHHSBoosterClub@gmail.com and let us know. We are actively seeking volunteers in the following areas:
  - Corporate Fundraising
  - Grant Writing
  - Advertising and Sponsorships
  - Many, many other opportunities for you to help

Thank you very much for your support and dedication to your MH Mustangs Athletics programs!!

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Ribbon Cutting For iMortgage Brings Out Locals & Dignitaries

Photos by Bryan Harrison

Let me help protect you before mayhem strikes.
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Mountain House Feral Cat Rescue
Cat & Kitten Adoption Fairs Continue!

There will be many adorable cats and kittens on display for you to hold and cuddle and fall in love with. Maybe even take one or two home as your very own.

Moving to Saturdays
As of December 14
11am-3:30pm
at Petfood Express: 1436 1st St., Livermore
www.MountainHouseCats.com

John D. Flanagan, Branch Manager of the Tracy iMortgage location, cut the ribbon celebrating the opening of the new W. Grant Line Rd office on Thursday, February 13, 2014.

Dignitaries present at the Mortgage Ribbon Cutting included, above, L-R: County Supervisor Bob Elliott; Tracy Chamber of Commerce President Bruce George; Tracy Mayor Pro Tem Michael Maciel; and a representative of Assemblyman Jerry McNerney’s office.

John Flanagan accepts a certificate from Bruce George, of the Tracy Chamber of Commerce. Each of the dignitaries on-hand gave similar presentations.

Mountain House locals were prevalent at the ribbon cutting, including, clockwise from above: Drew & Colleen Jacobsen; Shaun Zamrykut; and Alicia Hernandez, center right, (shown with Juana Dement, left, and Amy Costa, of iMortgage).
February Wine Club A Sweet Affair

By Bryan Harrison

The MH Wine Club held their February gathering the day after Valentine’s Day, February 15, 2014, at the lovely home of Erich and Jules Kolb. Valentine’s was also the host couple’s 4th wedding anniversary. So, indeed, “sweet” was the order of the evening.

Deliciously scrumptious dessert pairings were matched with very tasty varietals that fed every last sweet-loving tastebud.

The crowd was a fine blend of club regulars and new members. Always good to see more folks coming out for these events.

The next MH Wine Club event will be Saturday, March 22nd, at the home of Amanda and Eric Avila.

Stay Tuned for complete details on the upcoming May 24th Mountain House Wine Stroll.

More photos at: www.facebook.com/MountainHouseMatters

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First Mountain House Community Meeting of the Year To Be Held February 26, 2014 at Questa School

Do you have questions, concerns, ideas or issues with regard to any aspect of living here in Mountain House? Do you feel like you have nowhere to learn and/or address things? Then you haven’t been to one of the town’s quarterly Community Meetings!

Held generally on a weekday evening at one of the local school halls, the Mountain House Community Meetings provide a wealth of information, contacts, and resources. Leaders from our various agencies, local and regional government representatives, and developers, speak to the gathering from 7:00 pm to roughly 8:30 pm, with time for group and individual questions and meet and greets for all.

Our next community meeting - the first for 2014 - will be held at Questa School on Wednesday, February 26th. Come at 6:30 and enjoy refreshments and talk with some of our local representatives. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm. There will be lots of great information so please plan on joining us.

When: Wednesday, February 26, 2014
Time: 6:30 pm social mixer, 7-9 pm meeting
Where: Questa School MultiPurpose Room
For more information, please go to www.MHCSD.com, or call (209) 831-2300.

MH High School Leaders Continue To Roll Out Plans

stated. Another new California school, El Capitan High School, in Merced, just opened with the same approach. Use rules, and security features are built-in. Anything blocked will be blocked wherever they go. “it’s a safe environment for students.”

“Textbooks” will be hosted on Chromebooks (online/“in the cloud”). This new technology will allow for textbook updates without the cost or time delays traditionally experienced. As times change, and new information is learned, textbooks tend to be obsolete almost as soon as they come out. Plus, the cost to replace or update a standard textbooks can run over $1 million dollars per school. At approximately $250 each, providing each student with a Chromebook will actually save the district real dollars.

There is research being done, Fobert added, to possibly offer families insurance to protect against any mishaps. Hard shell cases may be made available, as well.

Additionally, Mr. Fobert stated that the intersection of Central Parkway at Grantline Road is slated to open with a traffic signal in place when school opens this Fall.

The next planning meeting is slated for March 11th, location to be announced.
Indoor Cat? Yes, Vaccinate!

Submitted by: Mountain House Feral Cat Rescue
www.MountainHouseCats.com

In our society, there tends to be a lot of misinformation when it comes to cats. People commonly think many things about cats that amount to mythology. Common misconceptions include that cats are not social; that they can fend for themselves; that they do not need attention in the way that dogs do. One of the most prevalent myths is that: “cats don't need vaccinations”.

Truth is, cats ARE very social (both within their own colony and with humans), and have much greater survival rates and longer lives when they have human support and interaction.

As pet owners, the importance of caring for your cats cannot be understated. Neglecting or choosing not to get core vaccinations for your cats — FVRCP and rabies — can prove to have severe consequences. Besides direct effect to your individual pets themselves, without vaccines, they potentially expose other animals that they come into contact with, and even people.

Some cat owners think that because their cats are strictly indoor animals and don't venture outside, they don't need to be vaccinated at all. However, they're wrong! Experts agree that vaccinations are crucial, even for indoor pets.

According to the American Humane Association, an organization dedicated to the well-being of children and animals, "To protect your pet from contagious diseases, keep his essential vaccinations up-to-date. This is important even if your pet is kept mostly indoors. Many contagious diseases are airborne and your pet could easily be exposed through an open window. There is also always a risk that your pet could accidentally slip out the door.”

As humans, we are regularly albeit inadvertently bringing stuff into our homes on our shoes, hands, our clothes, etc. Additionally, if you have other pets and they venture outdoors — or if you have other pets who visit your home — they bring those viruses and the like (think parasites) in with them and expose your unprotected cats to something that could make them seriously ill, or potentially even kill them.

For some cat owners, treatment with the felineleukemia (FeLV) vaccine is something to consider, as well. The Wikipedia page for Felineleukemia states that it is a virus that suppresses the immune system, with symptoms that include: "recurring bacterial and viral illnesses, anemia, diarrhea, and jaundice." It goes on to explain how this disease does not end well, with a lingering painful death the result.

Further, "asymptomatic carriers will show no signs of disease, often for many years. one that can be prevented with a vaccine."

So please, please, please vaccinate your cats. You'll be doing the right thing for you and your cat and those that come into contact with your cat and avoiding some major vet bills.

In other words....spay/neuter/vaccinate!

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MH Sports
MH Flag Football Adult League Opens March 2
Submitted by Andy Su
The MH Flag Football (MHFF) Adult League is back for its 4th season! The deadline to sign up is Sunday February 23 and the 6 week season starts on Sunday March 2 and ends on Sunday April 6. The cost is $300 for the team (8-10 players) and the format this year is 5 on 5. All games will be at Bethany Park in Mountain House. Last year, 16 teams competed in two divisions, recreational and competitive. This year, we may increase the league to 18 teams which is really capacity for the two fields at the park since each team plays two games every Sunday. “The Black Mambas” led by Captain Eric Hill will be back to defend their back to back competitive division championship while the back to back division recreational division champion “Team Crossfit” led by Captain Andres Gamboa will be moving up to the competitive division as the “Spartans” after going undefeated over the last two seasons. For more information or to register a team, please go to www.mhflagfootball.com or email andy@mhflagfootball.com.

MHFF Tennis Club Returns for 4th Season
The Mountain House Tennis Club (a division of MH Flag Football) is back for its 4th season! Youth group lessons continue to expand and are now offered on Saturday mornings (8-12 noon) and Thursday afternoons (4-8 pm). Last year, 66 kids in Mountain House participated in our program and we expect to grow that number to over 100 this year. The cost is $10 per class and $40 to $50 per month (based on the number of classes). The deadline to sign up for the next month’s classes is the last day of the month. The head instructor of our program is Gary Heil, who has been with us since the beginning of the program and has over 25 years of teaching experience. For more information or to sign up, please go to www.mhflagfootball.com or email andy@mhflagfootball.com.

MHFF Golf Club Also Returns for 4th Season
The Mountain House Golf Club (a division of MH Flag Football) is back for its 4th season! Our season starts on March 30 at Lone Tree Club in Antioch and ends in October at Stevinson Ranch Golf Club in Stevinson. New courses this year include Shadow Lakes Golf Club in Brentwood and Coyote Moon Golf Course in Tracce (our first far away tournament). Costs vary but usually around $50-$70 (except for Coyote Moon). Deadline to register for each tournament is two weeks before the tournament (except Coyote Moon the deadline is 1 month before the tournament). Winners will get a trophy and some prize money. Closest to the pin winners will get a car. There is no cost to become a member of the club so come join the fun! For more information or to sign up, please go to www.mhflagfootball.com or email andy@mhflagfootball.com.

MH Little League Opening Day Slated for March 15
MHLL Opening Ceremonies are scheduled for March 15th from 9 am at Wicklund Park and game field! If you are interested in being a vendor, please contact any board member or email mhlltreasurer@gmail.com for more info - $25 is a great deal for a spot!

Vendors Apply Now!

MHYB

The Mountain House Youth Basketball wound up its 2nd season with a most successful tournament Sunday, February 16, 2014. Teams played throughout the day, with the final game being featured in these photos.

MHYB was started by Reno Ursal and Lemuel Vergara.
Coach Reno is the Principal Director of the Mountain House Wolverines A/AU travel club (http://mhwolverines.org/), Head Coach of the Encinal High Jets Boys Freshman team and Assistant Coach of Encinal Boys Varsity (http://ehs.alamedausd.ca.schoolloop.com/basketball_boys).

Coach Len is a current Head Coach with the Mountain House Wolverines (http://mhwolverines.org/) and Principal at Questa School (http://www.lammersvilleschooldistrict.net/news/display.cfm?SEC=Questa%20Elementary%20School).

Congratulations MH Youth Basketball on a very successful season.

MH Youth Basketball Standings

2013-14 MHYB Final Standings

<table>
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<tr>
<th>5th/6th Grade Division</th>
<th>TEAM</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>PF</th>
<th>PA</th>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>80</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulls</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Titans</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lakers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Elite</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>66</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<th>L</th>
<th>PF</th>
<th>PA</th>
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</thead>
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<td>MoJo's</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jadon's Warriors</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warriors</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spurs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CELEBRATION OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE YOUTH BASKETBALL
Sunday March 9, 2014
Oracle Arena, Oakland CA
Golden State Warriors vs. Phoenix Suns
NBA Tipoff at 5:00 pm
For more, go to: www.mh-sports.org/click on Youth Basketball tab
MH Youth Basketball Wraps Season Two With Tournament

Photos by Bryan Harrison

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Unforgettable First Fil-Am Christmas Party Dec 14, 2013

Submission Susan Lapeña Yraola - and Photos by: Cherrie De Leon and Susan Lapeña Yraola

MH Filipino American Society

Thanks to all our new Kaibigan at Kapitbahay (friends and neighbors) who attended. I want to give a special Thanks to all who Donated Gift & Prizes, everyone that helped set up n clean up. Our awesome DJ from Night Vision, KC dela Cruz, Charlotte Castillo for their Awesome Voice.

From the bottom of our hearts -
Thank you!

Susan Lapeña, Tes Banagan, Pia Jensen, Regz Banci, Merla Torres, Kristine Flores, Rona Bustamante, Ces Lee

To find out more about the Filapino American, join the facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/MHFILEAMS.

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If you haven’t by now met one of the darling Kaho’onei children or their gorgeous parents, Mo and Monika, I’m guessing you don’t leave your house, like ever. Maybe though you have heard about The Hurricanes, our local tackle football team. If the answer is still no, I am glad you are here today with me as I shed some important info upon you. I am honored, excited, filled with warmth and pleasure as I get to spend the morning with some very special friends. So grab some coffee or tea, sit down and learn about some of Mountain House’s very own.

Monika was one of the first friends I made when moving here over two years ago. I remember, after watching her easy movements with her family of six children (now seven) that she was somewhat of an unrecognized hero. As if maybe underneath her street clothes, a superwoman shirt was hiding. At the time I met her, Mo, her husband, now a Senior Chief, was deployed at sea with the United States Coast Guard. I guess what could be more fitting than two heroes marrying, am I right? That’s Mo and Monika for you, local do-gooders and our current first ever “duo” residents of the month!

It’s men like Mo who make other men want to do better, to BE better. Not only has he helped to raise some incredible kids, he has helped to shape our country. He has risked his life to save strangers. He has put HIS family’s life on hold while he made the world we all live in a safer place. While he was at sea, his wife, Monika was heading the troops at home. These two are a pair to be reckoned with. As I was speaking with them it was apparent they had flow. They were in sync.

Mo and Monika moved to Mountain House in 2007, from San Jose, mostly for the community and the safety of a small town. Her parents followed suit soon after and found a house directly behind them. A retired police officer, Monika’s father, and her mother are a constant presence in their kids’ everyday life. They demonstrate the value of a tight knit community in the best way; actions! The Kaho’onei Family act, do, help, show, be and commit. Friends, this dedicated family lives in our town, and I am here to take you behind the scenes, of why they give as much as they do.

A long time coach of kids and adolescent sports, Mo had it in his head since they first arrived in MH that a tackle football team needed to be born. Early-on, he coached T-ball when his daughter Dominique played. That experience effectively demonstrated the value of being involved.

“I was deployed in 2007 so when I returned for good in 2011, I got on it right away,” he said. Mo and Monika explained to me that it was a team effort. The idea may have been created in the Kaho’onei home but it took a village (yes, literally mhvillages.com) for it to come to life.

“We posted on the website looking for interest. We got it, and help began to trickle in,” Building a non-profit from ground up isn’t an easy task, especially with your own football team living at home. 7 kids, it’s almost a team, right? It makes Mo and Monika the perfect couple to head up The Hurricanes, no one has more life experience than them. “We are so lucky we got the help we did,” Monika informed me. “Friends like Jason Wood, helped us get the league up and running and Amber Ziegler who was a key player in setting up the non-profit.” Mo chimed in, looking proud and thankful that he was surrounded by so many wonderful volunteers. “And Jeff Grondz for his countless hours of work and dedication as President, all The MHSI and MHYB Board members, coaches, our Cheer Director Megan Rosales, and anyone else who came out to help or just cheer us on.”

The Hurricanes are now in their third season. “By the second year we had seen 69% of kids in the school playing football, our local kids.” By the third year, Mo decided it was time to “dive deeper” into their community. The result was the birth of a non-profit called The MHSI, the Mountain House Sports Initiative.

Mo chimed in, “The MHSI is a non-profit that allows us to be selfish enough to provide a safe place for kids to do what they love.” As I was speaking with them it was apparent they had flow. They were in sync.

Monika was heading the troops at home. While he was at sea his wife, Monika was heading the troops at home. These two are a pair to be reckoned with. As I was speaking with them it was apparent they had flow. They were in sync.

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The Hurricanes are now in their third season. “By the second year we had seen 69%
growth in enrollment," Mo informed me. "We want our football teams to be a feeder system into high school level. I am working with the Principal there and it's going to be a successful program. The town will have its own Friday and Saturday night lights!" That statement sent chills up my spine. I was thrilled at the idea. What a perfect small town weekend event!

As Mo and Monika spoke, they often were finishing each others sentences. The interview took place on Valentine's Day, which also happened to be their wedding anniversary! "Working full-time and starting a non-profit sport organization is a lot of work," Mo says. "There is no way we could have done it without supporting each other. When I was deployed Monika took care of everything at home. I am so proud to be married to her. She has given me the most beautiful family. I just love her."

Monika responds with a smile saying, "He tells me when there's a game, where I need to be and what needs to get done. He's the boss on the field, and I head up the household. He gives so much to everyone's kids. Not just our own. I'm just as proud to be married to him."

I asked Mo why he decided to do this. I mean, he had just returned from being on a boat for three years. He was now a Senior Chief with an entire staff to run. How could he possibly add anything else to his already busy schedule? (A schedule, I might add, that consists totally of helping others.) "I did it for the community. We want to start raising and teaching these kids to be good citizens. They aren't just football players and cheerleaders, they are studious and helpful, strong and respectful."

He went on to tell me about the Scholar Athlete Program. "The kids have to have a 3.0 to be a Scholar Athlete. We award their hard work with a medals and a certificate. We also do grade checks. You need a certain GPA to play. Like I said, we want well-rounded kids, and we know school comes first."

Along with encouraging positive study habits, MHSI is a huge supporter of our community, and advocating a healthy lifestyle.

"In August there will be a Family Fun Run organized by Erin Carter and Herbal Life. The proceeds will go to MHSI. It's a great way to get out with your family and exercise or introduce your young children to that way of acting," Mo stated. "We couldn't be more thankful for this opportunity," he added.

MHSI is all volunteer based. They put on fabulous fundraisers to buy the safest equipment for their players. "The third annual Luau night will be happening this year," Monika said. "We have a wonderful Hawaiian Band that plays and it's been such a success. It's fun for families and a way to spend more time with your friends in the community while supporting local sports."

They also have had Bowling Night, Spaghetti Feeds, and have been present at almost every local event. "We feel one of the most important things in a small community like Mountain House is to support when you can, however you can. If its going to a basketball game and cheering even when your kids aren't playing or purchasing a candy bar for a fundraiser, just do what you can. "We have so many great local teams, we need to make those the best we can," Mo added.

Through out the whole interview I could hear laughter from the youngest of the Kaho'onei clan in the living room. I am serious when I say, not only can they run an entire community football team, but they have raised the most darling, respectful children.

My question to this beautiful couple, who together were happily celebrating another year of their life as one, was How? How do you find the time to be alone? I have two kids and still can't find time.

Smiling, Monika told me, "We are realistic. We don't do expensive fancy dates, or go out to eat at 7pm like most couples. That's just not feasible. We make it a priority however to go out when we can and make it work no matter what. It might be at 10pm or it may just be a quick romantic drive through the drive-thru, but it's us, and we're alone, and it's what works for now."

Those words of wisdom seem too simple but, to me, were life changing. They spend all of their time trying to better their surroundings. The love they have for each other seeps into what they give back. For instance, The Thanksgiving morning Turkey Bowl. "It's a way to get people to know each other, it's a bonding experience, Kids Vs. Adults, Mo says.

Around the same time they also organize an Adopt a Family (from the local battered woman's shelter) for Christmas. "The Hurricane families donate toys or time and give a family in need (last year we gave THREE families a Christmas, thanks to the help of Caroline Duvila) the Christmas they deserve," Monika said proudly.

The Kaho'onei couple wants to make it very clear, however, that all of these amazing things they are being honored for in our town are not done by them alone. "Our friends, they give everything they have. The Hurricane families and so many other families in this community are incredible."

"Winning 'Resident of the Month' was totally unexpected but very much appreciated," Monika said. "We are so busy," Mo continued, "we never realized anyone notices what we do, and its nice, to be recognized. It's a wake up call that what we are doing matters and we will continue to do so with everything we have."

Those lovebirds are the masterminds behind Mountain House Sports Inc (MHSI) the non-profit that houses Hurricane Football, MH Youth Basketball (MHYB) and Cheer. If you would like to sign up, volunteer or just watch a game you can visit them online at mh-sports.org

The Hurricanes have a Facebook page as well. Enrollment will remain open until the rosters are filled.
MHCSD Declares Water Shortage Emergency - Mandatory Conservation

from the MHCSD Facebook page

Services District Board of Directors approved a resolution declaring a Water Shortage Emergency, Stage 1 Mandatory Water Conservation. To view the video the February 12, 2014 Board of Director’s meeting where the decision was made, go to http://mhcسد.org/board-agendas-and-minutes/index and select the February 12, 2014 meeting. You will see a list of agenda items from which you can select Item 9.3. By clicking on this agenda item the video will go directly to that point in the meeting.

The Mountain House Ordinances MH-5-3402-3404 outline the restrictions on water use that are now mandatory during this water shortage emergency. The content of these ordinances are provide below. The features that will impact Mountain House citizens the most are:

1) Limits on the hours of irrigation; and
2) Limitations on the use of outside water for activities such as washing cars, boats, driveways, etc.

There will be a presentation at the Community Meeting on February 26, 2014 at Questa Elementary school to explain the water restrictions and to suggest ways that Mountain House community members can reduce water usage without impacting the quality of their landscaping. Over the next few weeks, there will also be information sent out through the monthly newsletter, the website, MHVillages, Facebook, and other community groups on ways to comply with this Emergency Resolution and save water.

The Board of Directors have also directed staff to reassess the current 5 Year Landscaping Renovation Plan and report back to the Board on potential changes to the plan. The changes will concentrate on prioritizing issues that waste excessive amounts of water. The renovations introduce drought tolerant plants and irrigation modifications that drastically reduce the amount of irrigation run-off on Mountain Houses’ main arterial roads. Staff is researching the financial impact of moving more quickly on certain aspects of the renovation plan than called for in the original project timetable. A report will be submitted for review to the Board of Directors at the regular March meeting.

Mountain House Community Services District Board of Directors and staff know that everyone in Mountain House will work hard to do everything possible to conserve water.

Thank you!

Community Egg Hunt April 19

from www.MHCSD.com

Join the Easter Bunny for the annual Mountain House Community Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 19, 2014 at Central Park. All our welcome. Made possible by Southwinds Church, who provided the event insurance, this is one of our biggest community events of the year. Candy to be provided by L2 Properties, and Raffle Easter baskets by MH Dental. Event coordination is done by mountainhouse.macaronikid.com. We thank Southwinds Church for providing the event insurance again this year. Volunteers are needed to help stuff plastic Easter eggs from home. All supplies provided.

Where: Central Park 25 E Main Street along Central Parkway

When: 12:00 PM (First egg hunt starts at 12 noon.)

Who: For the little ones, Pre-K to about 2nd grade more or less. This year we may incorporate a hunt for adults and the older kids.

How: No RSVP. Please arrive 20 minutes before you published hunt time. Detailed schedule of events to follow as the date becomes closer.

Cost: Free. THIS IS A MountainHouseMacaroniKids.com SPECIAL EVENT. NO PAPER INVITES WILL GO OUT THIS YEAR SO HAVE YOUR FRIENDS SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE IF THEY WOULD LIKE UPDATED EVENT INFORMATION.

For more info: shelleyp@macaronikid.com.

Kite Festival Set For June 14

from www.MHCSD.com

The Mountain House Community Services District is pleased to be hosting the 8th annual Kite Festival Saturday, June 14, 2014 from 10am-5pm. Bring your own kite to fly, enjoy one of our Kite Experts’ demonstrations, or make a kite at the festival. There will be entertainment, food and activities for everyone.

If you are interested in being a vendor or preforming at the Kite Festival please contact Angel Lamb - (209)831-5651 or email alamb@sjgov.org.
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