



## Los Altos Hills

# TOWN NEWSLETTER

Volume XXVII No. 1

March 2004

## CALENDAR

**April 2, Friday; 6 PM; LAH Volunteer Recognition Dinner** at Fremont Hills Country Club.

**April 24, Sat., 1-4 PM; EARTH DAY** at Westwind Barn. Conversation ideas, Special Event Show, LEOPARDS, etc., Food, wine, displays.

**April 24, Sat., 9 AM, Community Dog Walk;** Meet at Town Hall; Explore LAH Pathway System.

**May 1, Saturday, 12:30 PM DERBY DAY,** Info.: 941-9503

**May 8, Sat., 9 AM; FUN RUN 5K/10K Kids Run;** Meet at Westwind Community Barn, Altamont Road.

**June 6, Sunday, 1-4 PM; TOWN PICNIC,** Little League Fields: Open to residents only. Invite to be mailed in early May. Volunteers needed. Call: 941-7222

## The New Town Hall Create A Community Donor Wall - Legacy for the Future



**H**ave you ever wanted to create a lasting legacy in your home Town? Well, The New Town Hall is going to provide just such an opportunity.

The New Town Hall design will incorporate a beautiful serpentine tile wall leading to the entrance of the New Town Hall and 3-segmented tile walls around the Heritage Oak Tree and 1-retaining wall in front of the Council Chambers.

The tile walls will provide an opportunity for residents of Los Altos Hills to design their own tiles that will be placed on the donor wall creating a wonderful lasting family memory for future generations.

Tiles can be designed as elegant as you want or as simple, but it will be your own design — your baby or pet's paw print, family signature, or own unique design. For those who want to contribute a tile, but feel they are artistically challenged, we will provide design assistance with The Petroglyph Studio who can provide artistic guidance.

The donated tiles will be either 4x4 (\$200) or 8x8 (\$600). Contributions will be tax deductible. Each resident will be able to purchase as many as they wish, but it will be important to make your

interest known early, because the space is limited and likely to go fast.

Donor Wall funds will be used for enhancements to the project, identified by the donor committee as important, but unfunded in The New Town Hall budget.

The goal is to create a wall that enhances the space by including artwork of residents that contributes to a lasting memory in the Town. The opportunity to participate will be limited to residents only (no commercial entity).

A Donor Wall brochure will be mailed to the entire Town in May and the first opportunity to sign-up for Tiles will be at the Town Picnic on June 6th.

The committee is very excited about this wonderful opportunity to involve the entire community in a project that will provide a lasting family memory in the Town.

Members of the Donor Wall Subcommittee are: Alan Bien, Emily Cheng, Jean Mordo, Duffy Price, John Radford, Dean Warshawsky.

*Should you have any questions, please contact Duffy Price, Chair of the Donor Wall Subcommittee at (650) 948-0596 or [duffy@duffysmail.com](mailto:duffy@duffysmail.com)*

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION SURVEY**

We need your opinion about PUBLIC EDUCATION in Los Altos Hills. Our Town Council is concerned about public education and wants to hear from all residents, not just those with school age children.

Please complete the survey that is enclosed. Send it back to Town Hall and your voice will be heard.

### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

**FENCE ORDINANCE**  
If you are interested in revisions to the Town Fence Ordinance, please plan to attend the following public hearings in the Town Hall Chambers:  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**March 11 - 7:00 PM**  
**CITY COUNCIL**  
**April 1 - 6:30 PM**

## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

### Update on City Engineer/Public Works Director Recruitment

The final filing deadline of January 9, 2004 for applications for City Engineer/Public Works Director has been extended. Recruitment is continuing.



*City Manager Maureen Cassingham*

### Town participation on Mercury Thermometer Exchange Program

In partnership with the City of Palo Alto, the Town will be participating in the Regional Water Quality Control Program's thermometer exchange along with Los Altos, Mountain View and East Palo Alto. One of the Bay Area's primary water pollutants concerns is mercury, which has given rise to these efforts to eliminate residential sources of mercury including mercury thermometers. Public Safety officer Steve Garcia will oversee the Town Hall drop-off site to collect old thermometers from residents in exchange for free digital thermometers provided by the Program. Advertisement of the mercury for digital exchange in the local press and other media is scheduled to begin soon.

### Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Planning Begins

On January 26, 2004, KCM Consulting Partnership was selected via a Request for Proposals and interview process to assist the Town's Parks and Recreation Committee and staff with the development of a strategic plan for parks and recreation in Los Altos Hills. Public process design work is scheduled to commence in March followed by a key documents and trends scan, needs assessment, facilities inventory and analysis and concluding with the development of a draft five to ten-year strategic action plan for presentation by the Committee to the City Council. Estimated timeline for completion of this scope of work is two to three months. The final plan will reflect facility capacity, community expectations, marketing opportunities and program strategies that are consistent with the Town's core values and resident interests. With Council concurrence and support of the plan, our fledgling Parks and Recreation Department will have a clear road map to assist it in being responsive to the community's needs now and into the future. A progress report on the project will be presented to Council on February 19, 2004 by Parks and Recreation Supervisor Jimmy Forbis.

—Maureen Cassingham, City Manager

For Council Agenda and Minutes,  
See our Website:  
[www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)

## TOWN COUNCIL SUPPORTS MEASURE B - LIBRARY PARCEL TAX RENEWAL

The Los Altos Hills City Council has voted to endorse Measure B on the March 2 ballot, a renewal of a significant source of income for the Santa Clara County Library (of which Los Altos Hills is part). The original measure was enacted in 1995 to replace funds that the State reallocated from special districts in '92 and '93 to solve its budget shortage.



Measure B money represents more than 1/5 of the library's current operating income and failure to renew it would mean that the library would have to reduce its services by about 25%. The measure asks voters to renew the 1994 parcel tax that provided \$5.3 million annually into eight county branches and a bookmobile with a modest cost of living increase from \$33 per parcel to \$42 per parcel for single-family homes. Measure B would sunset in seven years and requires a 2/3 majority among voters of the district to pass.

## RELAY FOR LIFE

The first annual Los Altos Relay for Life will be at Los Altos High School on June 25 & 26, 2004, 10:00 AM Saturday to 10:00 AM Sunday. Los Altos Hills residents are encouraged to participate.

Relay for Life is the signature event of the American Cancer Society. It is the largest fundraiser in the world, and it is a 100% volunteer-driven event. Participating teams, led by team captains, walk around the high school track for 24 hours to demonstrate their resolve in battling this disease. Luminaries will be sold in honor/memory of someone with cancer and provide light during the night around the track. Great entertainment is planned for this worthwhile event.

The purposes of Relay for Life are, in addition to fundraising, to educate participants and attendees about cancer prevention and early detection, to make the community aware of the Society's research programs and services, and to celebrate and honor cancer survivorship. Relay for Life especially honors those who have lost their battle with cancer.

Cancer survivors are encouraged to get involved and are invited to walk the first lap of the relay. Volunteers are needed to organize teams, to participate in teams, to work at Relay for Life, and to contribute needed equipment and supplies. Sponsors are welcomed.



Contact Co-Chairs Jeanne and Duncan MacVicar at (650) 962-8053



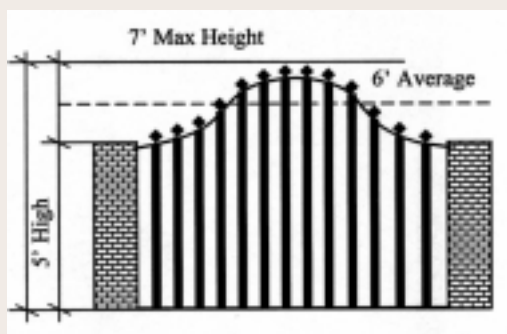
## TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS FENCE ORDINANCE - PUBLIC HEARINGS

On Thursday, March 11th, 2004, on or after 7:00 p.m., the Planning Commission will consider amending the Zoning Ordinance in order to revise Zoning standards for fences, walls, gates, and columns.

On Thursday, April 1st, 2004, on or after 6:30 p.m., the City Council will consider the Planning Commission's recommendation and public testimony with regard to the proposed Fence Ordinance.

The Planning Commission and City Council will consider the following changes to the Fence Ordinance:

- Consolidation of fence rules into a single ordinance
- Introduction of a six (6') foot average height and seven (7') maximum height for "open" driveway gates



- Standards for deer fencing and open space-conservation easement perimeter fencing
- Establishment of prohibited fence types

A draft copy of the proposed Fence Ordinance is available for public review at Town Hall, 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills, California, 94022. Please contact Planner Angelica Herrera Olivera at aolivera@losaltoshills.ca.gov for an electronic version of the proposed Fence Ordinance.

Resident Input: Any member of the public may appear to speak at the public hearings, or comments may be sent prior to each hearing to Town Hall 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022, faxed to (650) 941-3160, or e-mailed to [planning@losaltoshills.ca.gov](mailto:planning@losaltoshills.ca.gov).

### Town Newsletter - Statement of Purpose

To communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the Town and to facilitate, encourage and improve interaction between the residents and Town government. The 2004 Newsletter will be published quarterly in the months of March, June, September, and December. Deadline for the next issue is April 30, 2004.

Internet Address: [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)

#### About Our Publication

The Town Newsletter is published with assistance from our Town Volunteer Committees.  
Editor: Dorothy Duffy Price  
Associate Editors: Barbara Lamparter, Linda Seidel, Karen Emierzian

#### Los Altos Hills City Council

• Emily Cheng, Mayor • Mike O'Malley, Mayor Pro Tem  
• Robert Fenwick • Breene Kerr • Dean Warshawsky



## PATHWAY COMMITTEE 2004 NEW PEOPLE, NEW PROJECTS

There is much happening in the town Pathway Committee and 2004 promises to be a busy year. We have a larger Committee, several new members, a new Chairman and a number of new projects underway.

Last Spring, the Town Council expanded the size of the Pathway Committee to eleven members. Faced with a growing number of projects and initiatives, the Council felt more Committee members would provide the extra volunteer time and resources to help the Committee achieve its goals. New members include Dick Cassam, Nancy Ginzton and Chris Vargas. In addition, Chris Vargas was elected Chairman at the annual re-election meeting. Thank you to Dubose Montgomery for his hard work as Chairman for FY'02-03.



The Committee has a number of goals and initiatives for the 2003-2004 fiscal year. These include:

**1. Update the town pathway map.** The Committee will review our current pathway network and recommend changes necessary to promote its development, maintenance and enjoyment by all residents. A number of special meetings will take place over the next several months as part of this update project. Resident input is key to the success of this important project!

**2. Improve existing pathways.** The Committee created a new way of identifying and prioritizing maintenance and upgrade of town pathways. We maintain and regularly update a list of paths that need substantial improvement. Each project is prioritized and recommended for implementation, as funds are available. The list is reviewed and updated at our first meeting each quarter (Jan, Mar, Jul, Oct).

**3. Create new, accurate maps for residents.** We are working on a new map that is color-coded, easy to read and accurate. Thanks to the tremendous work of the Ad-Hoc Pathway Map Committee, we are very close to having a highly accurate pathway map.

**4. Encourage resident input.** Ever noticed a path that needs maintenance work? Have you ever walked a path and reached a point where you weren't sure where to turn next? Have a creative idea on how to improve our pathway network? The best ideas come from those who use the paths, and we launched a new "resident report" form to help turn your ideas into projects. Please pick up a form from our city staff. Or send an email to any of the Pathway Committee members. We'd like to hear from you!

In addition, there are a few more interesting programs "in-the-works" that we hope to announce this year.

In closing, 2004 will be a busy year for the Pathway Committee. We welcome your ideas, feedback and suggestion to help us continually improve our pathway network. We welcome you to attend our meetings and share your comments in person. The Pathway Committee meets the 4th Monday of every month, at 7 PM, in the Town Chambers meeting room.



## FINANCIAL OPTIONS FOR UNDERGROUNDING UTILITIES

In the last newsletter we reviewed the benefits of undergrounding our wires. Few residents disagree with the benefits, but many worry about the cost. Here's an overview of some of the cost issues and options.

Financing an undergrounding project in our town is a big challenge. We have 64 miles of overhead lines throughout the town, and it will cost roughly \$50M to bury them all, right up to each house.

This figure is based on the latest estimates by R. W. Beck & Associates, an engineering firm with extensive experience in undergrounding and municipal utility projects. We believe it is a reasonable planning estimate, but it is not a fixed bid.



A sizeable cost, certainly, but an important aspect of this estimate is that it assumes the project is done for the entire town in a staged but integrated package, not as series of independent projects undertaken by individual neighborhoods. The integrated approach would take 3-5 years, and offers significant economies of scale reflected in the \$50M figure; the piecemeal approach - a typical route taken by other cities - will be far more costly per parcel.

If we were to spread the total cost equally across the town's 3000 parcels, each owner would be billed about \$17,000. While many residents are willing & able to pay this much for the benefits of undergrounding, many others could not, even with low-interest financing. The 2000 census indicates that a significant percentage of our residents are retired and on a fixed budget. Our goals for undergrounding are to beautify and upgrade our town, not to bankrupt neighbors. So even if a majority supported this "equal payments" method, it does not make sense for our town.

Another approach is to use a municipal funding instrument called a Benefits Assessment District. Tiburon, Manhattan Beach and Hermosa Beach are using it for their undergrounding projects, but in our case it would shift much of the financial burden of the project to those in the town who could least afford it. So again, this is not a good option for us.

It seems the best option to underground our town is to use a General Assessment. While this approach will require 2/3rds voter support, homeowners would pay an amount proportional to their own property taxes. With a General Assessment, homeowners would likely see a 10% increase in their current annual property tax bill for a period of 20-25 years.

Sound reasonable? We think so. You'll hear more about it in the coming months; until then please let us know if you have questions or comments.

— LAH Underground Utility Committee

## SUPPORTERS OF WESTWIND BARN RECEIVE GRANTS

The first year of the new non-profit organization, "Supporters of Westwind Community Barn" has been highly successful. SWCB President, **Elaine Nelson** states, "This first year has been a whirlwind! Starting in September 2003, SWCB has been raising awareness and funds for the restoration of the barn and the creation of a community room within its footprint. The community room will be used for arts and environmental classes, as well as for the handicapped-riding program."



**Jean Mordo**, treasurer of SWCB states, "We are grateful to our generous donors including individuals, businesses, and foundations, including grants of \$5,000 each from the **Los Altos Community Fund, the Skoll Foundation, and the Packard Foundation.**"

SWCB is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, and is separate both from the Town and the "Friends of Westwind," who operate the Barn.

The SWCB hosted several events during the past six months. They were beneficiaries of the "Westwind to Wineries" event sponsored by Hills 2000-Friends of the Hills. Additionally, the board of SWCB produced a craft fair at the Barn called "Home for the Holidays." Entertainment, magnificent lighting and an enormous wreath, which brightened the Barn throughout the holiday season, enlivened the event. One resident remarked, "Until we saw the Barn adorned in holiday lights, we never knew the Barn existed." (See the wonderful article that appeared on December 12th in the SF Chronicle. The online link is through the archives at [www.sfgate.com](http://www.sfgate.com)).

Contact Elaine Nelson at: [elainenelson21@aol.com](mailto:elainenelson21@aol.com) to receive event invitations, join their activities or make a donation. **Next event is DERBY DAY on May 1st.**

## 3rd Annual LAH Earth Day Celebration

**Location: Westwind Barn**

**Date: Saturday, April 24th**

**Time: 1 PM to 4 PM**

**EVENT SPONSORS:** Representatives of the LAH Recreation Committee, the LAH Environmental Design Committee, and the LAH Community Relations Committee will work together with the Friends of Westwind in planning for the Earth Day Celebration.



For this 3rd Earth Day Celebration at Westwind Barn, Leopards, Etc. will again be bringing their wild cats for viewing. Two educational shows have been scheduled, and families will have an opportunity to view close up a mountain lion, lynx, cheetah, and other wild cats.

Admission is free but donations will be gladly accepted to defray costs of the event.



## INVITATION

**RUN FOR THE ROSES - KENTUCKY DERBY 2004**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**BUY YOUR TICKETS EARLY!!**



*On May 1, 2004, you are invited to watch the Kentucky Derby at Los Altos Hills' newest, fabulous horse barn on Elena Road. There will also be a horse jumping demonstration with the internationally acclaimed horses that occupy this barn.*

*Ladies, start buying your hats, because there will also be a contest for the prize-winning hats!*

*The festivities will begin at 12:30, with the 130th Run for the Roses at 3:05 pm.*

*Traditional Derby Day food and drink will be served, auctions will be held, the view is incredible and the afternoon will be memorable! Come enjoy all this with your friends and neighbors.*

*Proceeds will benefit Westwind Barn and the creation of a community room at the Westwind site. Sponsored by Supporters of Westwind Community Barn, a tax-deductible 501(c)(3). You may purchase your tickets early (\$130) by calling 941-9503 or by an email request to elainenelson21@aol.com. Attendance will be limited and is expected to sell out early.*

### 7<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL LOS ALTOS HILLS TOWN PICNIC SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 6

**L**os Altos Hills residents should plan to enjoy all of the fun and excitement at the 7th Annual Los Altos Hills Town Picnic on Sunday afternoon June 6 from 1 PM to 4 PM at the Little League Fields on Purissima Road. Chicken, all-beef hot dogs and vegetarian dinners will be cooked by our terrific firefighters from Santa Clara County Firefighters Local # 1165 and served with firefighters chili, tossed salad, and garlic bread. Soft drinks, beer, wine and ice cream sundaes will be provided. Entertainment, games and a variety of attractions for both adults and children will be featured.



The Family Picnic is organized by volunteers from the Community Relations Committee with help from many other volunteers in Town. If you would like to volunteer to help with the Picnic, work on the registration desk, help by organizing a children's game or serving ice cream, please let the committee know by calling Town Hall at 941-7222.

The entire event is hosted by the Town for the purpose of bringing our Los Altos Hills community together. Since there is no charge for attending, the picnic is limited to Los Altos Hills residents - so please encourage your Los Altos Hills neighbors to attend with you, but do not invite friends from other cities because they will be turned away at the gate. Also, by city ordinance, dogs are not allowed on the Little League Fields, so please leave Fido at home.

A registration coupon will be mailed to all Town residents in May, and advance registration will be required so we can order the correct number of dinners.

### TRAVEL TIME

#### RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR HILLS' RESIDENTS — TRADE MISSION TRIP TO CHINA

The Government of China is investing heavily in preparation for the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai and the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The US-Asia International Exchange Association will lead a business mission to these cities from April 16-25, 2004 to observe opportunities for Los Altos Hills and Silicon Valley residents, government officials and companies. The delegation will meet with China officials and senior executives from selected companies.



One of the key goals is to participate in a policy dialogue (regulatory reform, privatization, etc.) with government officials and to increase the visibility of Los Altos Hills, Silicon Valley and California companies as global leaders. Cities to be visited: Major: Beijing, Hangzhou, Shanghai Additional: Chengde, Jinhua & Jiaying

**Start Date:** April 16, Friday

**End Date:** April 25, Sunday

Open to all residents of Los Altos Hills.

**Cost:** \$1800 (includes round-trip airfare SFO-China, 4 star hotels, meals, on the ground transportation and trade mission service in China)

**Sponsor:** US-Asia International Exchange Association

**Tel.:** (650) 921-3605, (408) 666-7866

**Fax:** (408) 666-7866

**Email:** samsvt@yahoo.com

This is likely to be a once in a lifetime opportunity for Hills' residents. Travel costs for this trip is funded by the individuals who sign up for the trip (it is not in anyway funded by taxpayers.) The trip is likely to be sold out quickly. If you are interested, please call Sam Zhang at the above telephone number to reserve.

## APRICOTS TO MOUNTAIN TOPS

### PATHWAYS TO OPEN SPACE SPRING HIKE SERIES

**A**dventure is right here in our own backyard! Explore the hills and valleys of Los Altos Hills this Spring by stepping out on our Pathway system. Join me every second weekend on the Apricots to Mountain Tops hike where you'll enjoy sweeping vistas, historic places, an educational farm, unique riparian habitats, and expansive wilderness within open space preserves.

On Saturdays, lace up your boots and bring plenty of water and lunch for a challenging 8-mile loop. We'll take marked Pathways through the Town that connect to wilderness trails in MidPen Open Space. During this exceptionally scenic hike, we'll walk through the Packard Orchards, Byrne Preserve, Hidden Villa, along Adobe Creek, and up the Grapevine Trail to Rhus Ridge and Windmill Pasture. We'll amble back to our starting point via marked Paths. This approximately 4-hour hike is challenging but not difficult. It's a great way to learn how to use Pathways to connect to the vast array of trails through other jurisdictions.

On Sundays, we'll enjoy a shorter and moderately challenging version of this hike. We'll take a 5-mile loop that includes Packard Orchards, Byrne Preserve, and Hidden Villa farm. After a brief stop at the farm, we'll walk on the roadside Path along Moody Rd. and a creek side path through more Town Open Space. This approximately 2-hour hike is a great introduction for anyone wanting to learn more about using Pathways for fitness and fun.

I am an avid hiker and runner, urban planner, organic grilled cheese sandwich lover, and member of the Open Space Committee. Please contact me about this hike at: [hikeLAH@yahoo.com](mailto:hikeLAH@yahoo.com).

**When:** Second weekends, March 13 & 14; April 10 & 11; May 9; 10:00 AM.

**Where:** Meet at Pathway Marker to Packard Orchards, Elena Road and Josefa; next to Foothill College. Parking available along Josefa. Bring water. No dogs please.



*Apricots to Mountain Tops Trail*

—Ray Collins, Member Open Space Committee

## FIRE SEASON - HOT UPON US!

**T**he fire season is fast approaching! It is imperative that homeowners take steps to protect their homes from risks from partial or total fire loss. The Fire Department of Santa Clara County recommends the following:

- A. All flammable vegetation must be cleared a minimum of 30 feet around structures. Ornamental shrubbery and trees cleared of dead leaves and branches. Note: grading is prohibited by ordinance within the Town of Los Altos Hills prior to April 1st. Due to the increased erosion potential; discing is considered to be a form of grading and similarly prohibited. (Note: The LAH Environmental Design Committee recommends mowing to remove weeds, rather than discing because of the potential for erosion.)
- B. Roofs, eaves and rain gutters must be cleared of pine needles, leaves, or other dead or dying wood.
- C. Tree limbs shall be cut within 10 feet of chimneys and/or stovepipes. Dead limbs hanging over the house or garage must be trimmed.
- D. Chimney outlets or flues shall be covered with a spark arresting 1/2" mesh screen.
- E. Address shall be clearly visible for easy identification in an emergency.
- F. Trees 18 feet or taller should be limbed to 6 feet up from the ground.
- G. Woodpiles should be stacked a minimum of 30 feet from buildings, fences, and other combustible materials.
- H. All vegetation and other flammable materials should be cleared from beneath decks. Elevated decks should be enclosed with fire resistive materials.



Should you have a question about the compliance of your property with the required fire safety regulations, call the Fire Prevention Division of the SCC Fire Department at (408) 378-4010 to schedule an inspector to meet with you at your property. A Hillside Fire Survival Information Packet is available upon request.

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