

It Ain't Over Yet

By Laurie Guitteau

Now we can relax. The fire cleared the brush for us. How many of us have heard that since the Jesusita Fire? Hogwash! Mission Canyon continues to be ripe for another fire, particularly the Mission Canyon Heights area. There, vegetation on steroids overhangs roads, houses, and fences. Houses sit packed closely together on steep slopes. Narrow roads are choked with cars on each side.

The miracle of the Jesusita Fire is that so few homes burned, and that miracle was performed by valiant firefighters who knew that once the Heights caught, there would be no stopping the fire. Rumors that firefighters did not defend the Heights are totally false. There were incidents in the Heights where firefighters had to take shelter in homes to avoid the firestorm. In some instances firefighters had to change gear from wildland fighting to structure fighting because they were inside houses trying to save them. Spot fires were starting up to a half-mile ahead of the fire. Hard work by firefighters combined with some luck in the wind direction prevented the fire from sweeping through the Heights and destroying hundreds of homes.

Mission Canyon Heights presents its own set of challenges for firefighters and for residents: in addition to the maze of roads, lusty vegetation, and wood houses, there are hedges, wood fences, blind intersections, dead-end roads. Imagine being a firefighter from Coalinga trying to find his way around the Heights in the smoke. Unless you live there, it is easy to get lost, even in the middle of a perfectly clear day.

We have all heard about defensible space ad infinitum, but how do you do it when you live within 100 feet of your neighbor? Privacy trumps defensible space when lots are small. Though vegetation and fences provide screening in these close quarters, they also ensure continuous fuel to feed a fire. A drive through the burned area is a lesson in what burns and how fire spreads.

Clear Roads of Vegetation: People who fled during the firestorm describe driving into the flames of a jet engine, of almost crashing



Overgrown plants, especially resinous ones like the juniper shown here, burn with intensity, often throwing off enough heat to scorch or catch anything nearby on fire, including passing evacuees.

PHOTO: Laurie Guitteau

on a road they had driven for years because of the flames and smoke, and this is through areas that were clear of overhanging trees and brush. The Mission Canyon Association is going to use remaining Fire Grant money to help make roads in the Heights safer, but each of us must do our part.

The parking situation is enough of a nightmare, and the county is working with residents and the MCA to mitigate that, not an easy task. But the vegetation problem is easily solved if each property owner takes responsibility. Junipers taller than a house flow out onto the road, bougainvillea bushes completely block visibility, olive and pepper trees grow over the road. Would you drive on your street during a firestorm? How can we expect firefighters to risk their lives making a stand amid flaming hedges?

If you have the space, 30 feet is considered a safer distance for tall roadside vegetation than the 10-foot setback by code. Consider the radiant heat a wall of juniper or oleander can throw off. That not only keeps firefighters at bay, it also can make for a pretty hot evacuation for your neighbors living up the road.

MCA is urging the County to vigorously enforce the defensible space rules this year, and we think road clearance in the Heights is a top priority.

Grounds for Safety: Gardens needs built-in breaks so that a fire cannot travel from one fuel source to another, from one house to another, from one street to another so quickly.

Ask yourself, how easy would it be for a fire to move from the ground cover to a tree to a bush to your eaves? Make it hard. Take out "ladder fuels"—vegetation that serves as a link between ground cover and tree. Give yourself added protection with "fuel breaks" like driveways, gravel walkways, well-tended landscaping cleaned of dead material.

Limb up all the trees and clear them of dead leaves and wood. Consider removing trees jointly that you and your neighbors decide are dangerous. Think about how pine and eucalyptus burn in your fireplace. Pines, eucalyptus, cypress, and juniper are especially dangerous, not only because they shower sparks and embers when they burn, but because it is almost impossible to keep them clear of the dead wood and debris that surround the tree.

Take a look at the eucalyptus and olive groves on the western side of Mission Canyon. You'll see how hot the detritus of those trees burned. Any tree can be a danger if it is

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Ain't Over (cont. from p.1)

not limbed up, free of dead wood, with little leaf litter below.

Even our majestic oaks have become a problem, as many have canopies that have grown so large that firefighters spotted fire jumping across the crowns of the trees.

A beautiful hedge may be all dead wood on the inside. Fires love the nice dry, toasty wood in hedges and fences, especially bamboo and rattan. For privacy, consider staggering the hedge so that it is not a continuous fuel source. Could you replace the wooden fence with a fence of steel, cementitious composite, or other non-flammable material? At least where it touches your home or sits under your eaves. One burned fence on Tunnel has already been replaced with cementitious composite: good looking and fire resistant.

Ornamentals are not the problem, but lack of care and maintenance invites fires. Choose plants carefully or be prepared to garden constantly. Prune your plants; perhaps take out

some of the vegetation. Your goal is to provide small fire breaks within your property. Most experts agree that it is most important to have adequate space between plantings; more important than what you plant is how you plant.

Our steep hillsides create some especially difficult situations. Fire travels uphill faster, for one. Some have solved the need to retain the land by terracing with railroad ties or spreading thick coatings of wood chips. While thick mulch will retain water, it also promotes fire by becoming flying embers downwind. Mulch thinly. Railroad ties become an issue because the creosote in them catch fire easily and are time-consuming to extinguish.

Resources are stretched thin during large-scale wildfires. During Jesusita, fire crews taking time to fully extinguish railroad ties, or come to the rescue of citizens defending their homes and overrun by fire, pulled engine companies from other structures. In some instances, those other structures were destroyed.

For the Future: The Jesusita Fire stopped at Montrose and Williams Way, but the next fire could start where Jesusita left off. Each resident of Mission Canyon needs to realistically assess his or her property and do what needs to be done. Better yet, work together on your street to ensure that a firefighter could safely make a stand in front of your homes.

Let's not forget that the landscape and vegetation choices we make now as we replant our properties have real repercussions. County Fire's David Neels made this clear during his presentation on fire-safe landscaping on June 17. That talk is available online at sbcounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=5&clip_id=842, and is unfortunately only supported on PCs, not Macs.

Hopefully, every resident in this canyon realizes now that fires do happen to us. We must take action so that Mission Canyon Heights does not become the next Oakland Fire, which killed 25 people. Working as a community, neighbor with neighbor, is our only chance to avoid a future tragedy.

When Is Your Scope of Loss Complete?

By Stephen Olson

architect and Mission Canyon resident

First let me say that I'm not an expert in insurance, however, like the people recovering from the Jesusita Fire, I too lost a house in a disaster. My loss was caused by the Northridge/ Santa Monica Earthquake. I subsequently rebuilt. I also produced rebuild documents for total fire losses from the Old Topanga/ Malibu Fire. In my recovery process I dedicated several years to learning about disaster recovery. I know firsthand how difficult it is to be thrown into that situation.

What is a "Scope" or Scope of Loss? Think of it as a document that is a combination between an inventory and an estimate which lists the "scope" or extent of the loss.

When is your Scope complete? Short answer: when you are satisfied with it. However, a Scope equals a sum of money equaling the total cost of replacing all of your structures and all of your contents. You will want everything included.

I'm sure that if you've lost a home you know that the Scope has two parts, structure and contents. There's a lot to "contents," which is a list of everything you lost inside the house and on the property with the addition of estimates or appraisals for special or unusual items like jewelry, art, and antiques/ furniture.

The structural portion of the Scope, however, can be far more extensive. Think of

the structural Scope as re-creating your house and outbuildings on paper. This re-creation will then be estimated in today's construction costs. Being an architect I feel more comfortable with this side of the equation.

I suggest focusing on covering the entire loss. In my opinion the policy limit has nothing to do with the loss. What was lost is what was lost. I will leave the subject of policy limits to attorneys and non-profit insurance assistance entities.

Be sure to use licensed experts. Include architectural fees, engineering fees, and contractor's overhead and profit as that can increase your cost by large percentages (30 to 40 percent). Make sure you include everything, for example, two coats of paint and primer plus spackle.

In many cases the home will not be rebuilt exactly as it was before the fire. An important distinction is that you are entitled to be paid for your home as it was, not as you might change it. When developing the Scope, concentrate on what was lost, not on how you would make in the future. In addition, there



Use the Scope of Loss to get you back to where you were before the fire.

are many subtleties of construction that would cost more to build today when built exactly as they were originally. These items could greatly increase the dollar amount of your Scope. It may take an architect of an engineer to pick up on these.

Are you going to be satisfied with the Scope before the bottom line sum is enough to cover bringing you back to your pre-loss condition? I know that I wasn't at first. So when is your Scope complete? I think it's when the total at the bottom is what would bring you entirely back to your pre-loss condition.

Good luck to you all and remember that it doesn't have to be all drudgery. You will learn a lot of interesting things while working on it and meet some interesting people.

Erosion Control in Mission Canyon

By Jean Yamamura

Ray Smith, Tim Steele, and I spent one very long day in June surveying the canyon slopes with Tom Lockhart, a soil scientist with the Cachuma Resource Conservation District. What we realized, as we looked at some pretty scary situations, is that watersheds encompass streets, neighborhoods, and neighbors who might only know each other as lights in the night on the hillsides across from them. That the actions we take now will affect many downstream is something we need to be mindful of. Here are the highlights of that day and the talk Tom gave later that evening.

Cover It Up

Plants and their roots make the best soil-stabilizers around. Not only do they provide cover over the dirt, but their roots help rain infiltrate into the ground so less flows downhill. Even the roots of dead plants serve this purpose.

The good news is that there is probably viable seed in that burned-over dirt uphill from you, and native plants tend to be deep rooting. All they need is a little water to get them going. If you're not going to wait for the winter rains, watering with micro-emitters might be your best bet to prevent unnecessary runoff. However you do it—if you're going to do it—be careful and keep an eye on your watering devices.

A thin coat of mulch over the dirt helps retain moisture and promotes seed germination. While mulch is available free from the county, either at their yard near the dump out on Calle Real or nearby at the Tunnel water tank or the Botanic Garden parking lot, that mulch comes from all around the South County and contains random seeds. But did I mention that it's free?

Mission Canyon Association may be facilitating the purchase of truckloads of a clean Douglas fir mulch called WoodStraw. Mike Perry of ForestConcepts in Seattle donated several hundred bales of the stuff, and we tested one of them on a steep slope. Even with a hose turned on it, the wood straw stayed put, and Perry says it won't blow away during a Sundowner. He tells us that about 150 bales will cover an acre. It costs \$10.92 a bale. One truckload contains 540 bales. Check out the website *WoodStraw.com* to see it in action, and call us if you're interested.

Adding seed to the mulch will maximize root growth. Native seed mixes are available in bulk from S&S Seed in Carpinteria (*ssseeds.com*), and in smaller quantities from its retail division Albright Seed Company (*albrightseed.com*). S&S is a knowledgeable,

local source for bulk seed. Though rye and barley grasses were mentioned in the June 17 erosion control meeting, they are generally considered fire-prone and not good choices for our area.

And speaking of fast-growing species like rye or barley grass, when you make a decision to plant, think long-term of what weed whacking will be like, or the other maintenance you will have to do through the years to keep your property fire safe once the chaparral grows back. Andrew Wyatt, director of horticulture at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, plans to design a natives garden with erosion control in mind. That resource should be on tap very soon.

Jute or coconut matting staked down will soften the blow of raindrops hitting the earth, as will staked-down straw wattles, but they do not slow the downward movement of water. Plastic tarps, on the other hand, not only move water downhill faster, they will cause the water to form channels once it moves past the plastic and you'll have a real mess on your hands.

Get your plants planted or your seed sown before it rains. Once the soil gets wet, you want to avoid walking on or digging in it.

Drainage

Given our naked hillsides, a whole lot of water is going to come down them. If you've got a culvert on your property, make sure there is an energy dissipater at the outlet. A heap of rocks there keeps the water from digging out the soil and adding to the sediment flow. At the inlet, be sure it's cleaned out.

The same strategy is true for roof eaves as well. Especially before a rain, keep them cleaned out and place an energy dissipater at the outlet to prevent scouring.

Other structures like catchment basins and debris racks are better left to contractors to evaluate and install.

One drainage device that's already causing problems is the gopher. Tom tells us they love a dirt landscape since it enables them to see their predators. They don't like taller grasses (and be careful here what you plant for fire reasons), mulch, water or traps.

Resources

Tom Lockhart's **talk on erosion control** June 17 can be viewed in the second half of sbcounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=5&clip_id=842. The first half is County Fire's excellent presentation on fire-safe landscaping. Unfortunately, that site only supports PCs and not Macs.

During the week of July 27, many state and county professionals who work with **watershed issues will visit** Mission Canyon and burn areas to the west. If you haven't already signed up for a visit, please contact Ray (682-5583) or me (896-1477). The current plan is to organize morning meetings by watershed to give and hear a general overview of local conditions, and then conduct as many site visits as possible during the rest of the day. These meetings will be limited to the affected homeowners only as we only have five days to visit more than a hundred properties.

The County Public Works Water Resources Division website (countyofsb.org/pwd) has a number of **publications** with good advice on sandbags, water flow, and erosion control. Again, be aware of the downstream effect on your neighbors of any water diversion device you create.

Get familiar with available **weather forecast sources** now: online, on television, on the radio. You'll want to be warned of

rain well before it arrives. If you feel you are in danger from flood waters, mudflow, or landslide, either call the fire department (911) for help or evacuate immediately.

Master's degree students at UCSB's Bren School of Environmental Science & Management completed in March of this year a sedimentation study of Mission Canyon. They specifically looked at various **fire and flood scenarios**. Those studies can be viewed at fiesta.bren.ucsb.edu/~hydro/Home.html.

To the extent that we non-experts can determine, the National Flood Insurance Program (floodsmart.gov) covers rising waters and the silt it contains, but does not cover mudflow, earthflow, or landslide. The California Department of Insurance (800-927-4357) tells us that **insurance against earth-flow-type events** may be obtained through surplus line insurers, which count such giants as Chubb and AIG in their ranks. A list of eligible companies can be found at the website for the Surplus Line Association of California (slacal.org). Whether earthflow this winter can be covered by fire insurance from this spring's fire is a question that appears to be headed for the courts. All we can say is, keep asking questions until you're certain you're covered.

MarBorg will deliver **free mulch** to your door, from 11 cu.yd to 40 cu.yd (a roll-off box). You only pay \$75 for the truck costs.

MCA Is Here to Help

by Laurie Guitteau

The Jesusita Fire not only changed our neighborhoods, but it had a big impact on your Mission Canyon Association. The fire's cruelty struck hard when we learned that Tim Steele, who has worked tirelessly and practically full time the past several years to protect all of us in Mission Canyon from fire, lost the house he shared with Kathy Koury, another of our hardworking board members. It is Tim who secured fire grant money, who brought the goats to Mission Canyon, who worked week after week with County Fire's David Neels to supervise the vegetation clearing in the canyon, not to mention all his other work for the association. Fires aren't fair.

Tim's loss has triggered the Association's loss of his presidency, a job he felt he could not continue while rebuilding. Replacing Tim is impossible, so an Executive Committee was formed to serve as president during this time of crisis. Ray Smith will conduct monthly meetings and interface with the County, Bill McCullough will conduct our frequent fire recovery meetings, Laurie Guitteau and Jean Yamamura will continue to provide behind-the-scenes support.

MCA has dedicated itself to providing support to fire survivors, and this requires a restructuring of emphasis, committees, and a Herculean effort. We welcome you to serve on these committees because volunteers are needed; we see residents already taking responsibility for helping each other. The Tea Fire survivors have given us experienced guidance, and we know that we need to stay flexible and ready to move in whatever useful direction aids our community.

The committees and their chairs are:

Communications Committee: This committee is attempting to contact all affected by Jesusita, even those not in Mission Canyon. At the same time, it is updating contact information for all canyon residents to better inform them of upcoming events.

The Communications Committee coordinates meetings and has many future events planned. Among the potential subjects are:

- Post-Jesusita Discussion with County Fire
- Fire Hydrants and Roads
- The Rebuilding Process
- Tax Seminar
- Septic Issues
- Roads and Parking
- Insurance
- FEMA

We do not yet know which types of organized meetings will help residents the most.

Your suggestions and comments are needed and will help us decide. Please contact Bill McCullough, committee chair. (Contact info in Officers & Directors list.)

Also, we will probably not be able to inform residents of these meetings by mail. Email and street signs serve as the most efficient and cost-effective means of communications. If we don't have your email (or you need to be telephoned), please let Bill know.

Insurance Committee: Insurance issues are the top priority for fire survivors. We are not insurance experts, but we will try to connect you with those who can help. If a concerted group effort becomes necessary with certain carriers, this committee plans to organize residents by insurance carrier to better the chances of success. Cathia Mahaffey, the chair, can be reached at cathia.mahaffey@verizon.net or 722-7307.

Housing Committee: This committee works specifically with fire survivors to help them with their housing needs. Chair Georganne Alex has already provided many families with information to find housing.

Planning & Development Committee: This committee will take on the issues that come up between our steep and poor soils-prone canyon and the county building department. Alastair Winn chairs this committee.

ADRC: Though rebuilders are not required to visit MCA's Architectural Design Review Committee before going to the county for building permits, we would recommend it. The architects and contractors who make up this committee have decades of experience in building in Santa Barbara and can be of great help to you. Fees are waived to Jesusita rebuilders for two years. Chair is Tom Jacobs.

Watershed Committee: This committee is organizing residents in the canyon's various watersheds to provide education on effective erosion control. It is also working through the county to stay in touch with the various landholders, including the City of Santa Barbara and the federal Forest Service. Ray Smith chairs this committee. If you haven't already signed up for erosion visits, contact Ray with your name, street address, email address, and phone numbers.

Fire Committee: This committee will continue MCA's commitment to fire safety, administering the fire grant, participating in the Fire Safe Council, proactively working to reduce the danger in our canyon, and installing our long-awaited Webcam, which now will also view the Mission Creek debris basin. Clearing will continue along major

roads, and MCA will now be making efforts to clear vegetation in Mission Canyon Heights. Milt Roselinsky is the chair.

Parking & Traffic Committee: Parking is an ongoing concern, especially in Mission Canyon Heights, and one not easily solved. The County Office of Long Range Planning is working with residents to resolve these issues. Richard Axelrod is chair. An important and well-attended workshop was held April 8; ongoing neighborhood participation is essential for these issues to be solved. The fire reminded us of the critical nature of this problem.

Other committees that have been named but haven't yet met are **Conflict Resolution/Mediation** (Ralph Daniel, chair), the **Garden Volunteers/Beautification** (Cass Ensberg, chair), **Fire Access/Road Width Compliance**, and **Botanic Garden**.

There have been so many meetings since the fire! Eight by our count, from the Fire Unified Command presentation on May 14 to the California Fair Plan meeting on June 30.

The board members of Mission Canyon Association are committed to helping our community survive and flourish in spite of this disaster. Let us know how we can help you and please volunteer in an area of interest to help your neighbors. One thing everyone can do is to be sure you have paid your \$25 dues for 2009. We will have extraordinary costs this year, and dues pay those bills. Together we will rebuild a safer canyon.

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*Chair of committee

The MCA Newsletter was prepared with the help of Lee Anne Dollison, graphics, production and photography.

Emotional Recovery After the Fire

By Erika Felix, Ph.D.

Researcher with UCSB's Gevirtz Graduate School of Education and a licensed clinical psychologist affiliated with Santa Barbara Behavioral Health.

The enormity of the Jesusita fire has affected local residents in many ways. Please contemplate these common reactions to disaster, and know that you are not alone in how you feel.

Following the fires, you may find that you are:

- Feeling numb
- Having trouble concentrating
- Jumpy and startle easily at sudden noise
- On guard and alert
- Having bad dreams or memories
- Feeling nervous, helpless, fearful, sad
- Avoiding people, places, and things related to the fire
- Being irritable or more easily upset

You may also experience more physical reactions such as:

- Stomach upset, trouble eating
- Trouble sleeping
- Pounding heart, rapid breathing
- Severe headache if thinking of the event, sweating
- Worsening of chronic medical problems

Do I Need Professional Help? Some people experience reactions during and after

disasters that concern them or interfere with work or relationships. Some responses that may be reasons for concern include:

- Terrifying memories, nightmares, or flashbacks
- Using alcohol or drugs to avoid disturbing memories
- On-going emotional numbing
- Panic attacks, rage, extreme irritability, intense agitation, exaggerated startle response
- Severe anxiety (paralyzing worry)
- Severe depression (loss of energy, interest, self-worth, or motivation)
- Loss of meaning and hope
- Sustained anger or rage
- Feeling unreal or outside oneself, as in a dream; having "blank" periods of time one cannot remember

If you have worries in any of these areas, you may want to consider talking with a professional about what you are experiencing.

Helpful Ways to Cope: Make sure you take care of yourself through getting enough sleep, eating well, and trying not to solve everything at once.

Talk with friends, families, and other survivors. Support one another.

Get regular exercise to reduce stress.

Take recovery one day at a time. Do not overwhelm yourself trying to get everything fixed at once.

Avoid using alcohol or substances to cope.

How Can I Help My Child? Many parents are concerned about how the fire affected their children. Here are some suggestions from the experts:

Children do best in secure, stable, and predictable environments. Try to create a calm, safe atmosphere and re-establish basic routines and everyday activities as soon as possible.

Be available to your child to answer questions about wildfires: how they start, how they spread, and how they are put out.

Provide information appropriate to the age and level of understanding of children. Be available to provide comfort, respond to concerns, and reassure them of your ability to care for them.

Talk with your children about what happened and what they think can be done to make them feel more comfortable and safe. Help children understand that their experiences and reactions to the fires are normal.

To find a psychologist in your area, go to sbpsychologists.org.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Brush Day Heroes

Kudos to David and Mario Borgatello, owners of MarBorg Industries, for all they do for us. Once again, they donated roll-offs, drivers, a porta-potty, and their time and expertise for an entire day to make MCA's Brush Day on June 13 a huge success. In addition, we thank Dan Upton of Upton Construction and Dirk McKnight, general contractor, for donating their time and equipment. Thanks to the front loader and two backhoes they skillfully ran all day, we volunteers enjoyed the day more as a social outing than the usual brutal workday. A whopping 33 tons of brush were taken to the dump, where our fees were waived, thanks to Supervisor Salud Carbajal, who also dropped by to cheer us on. If not for the loan of the Santa Barbara Woman's Club parking lot for us each year, we wouldn't be able to hold this event nearly as safely. And, of course, we thank all of you who took advantage of Brush Day to further lighten the fuel load in our sadly singed canyon.—**LG**

Loans Available

Securing a low-interest loan through the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) could help you should you need extra funds for landscaping or to weather a bad business cycle. These loans are available to homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private, nonprofit organizations whose property was damaged or destroyed by Jesusita. The Electronic Loan Application is available on SBA's secure website at disasterloan.sba.gov/ela.

The filing deadline to return applications for property damage is July 20, 2009. This application can be amended when more information is known about your losses. The deadline to return economic injury applications is February 22, 2010.

Disaster loan information and application forms are also available from SBA's Customer Service Center by calling SBA toll-free at (800) 659-2955, emailing to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov or by visiting SBA's website at sba.gov/services/disasterassistance. Hearing-impaired individuals may call (800) 877-8339.—**Pat Saley, county Jesusita Fire ombudsman**

2-Year Limit on Building Pass

County officials have assigned Project Case Managers to all parcels and property owners facing the rebuilding process. Most of the property owners involved in the Jesusita Fire already have been in contact with their case managers, however, those who still need the names and contact information for their case managers should call Petra Leyva with the County's Planning & Development Dept. at 568-2071. Another option is to call me at (805) 560-1098 for case manager information and other special assistance.

Property owners are reminded that they have up to two years to rebuild under an exemption from planning permits assuming the new structure is essentially the same size and in the same location as the burned structure.

If a property is sold, the exemption passes to the new owners, but they must have a building permit in hand by May 2011 to qualify for the exemption.

Contact your case manager regarding the permit process if you wish to rebuild a larger structure or change its location. In all cases, a building permit is required and current fire and other codes must be met.—**Pat Saley**



MISSION CANYON ASSOCIATION

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

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Your MCA Newsletter Summer 2009

Post-Jesusita Fire Issue Emotions, Scope of Loss, Erosion, Safety

Retail Inventory Help

Several local stores have agreed to help Jesusita Fire survivors assemble a registry to help them value their belongings. You can request a Jesusita Fire Survivors ID card from MCA via webmaster@missioncanyon.org and use it to receive personal help and some discounts too! Participating stores, so far, are Barnes and Noble, Bed Bath and Beyond, Williams Sonoma (please ask for the manager), and Pottery Barn. Chaucer's Books cannot do a registry, but is offering gift certificates and discounts. Please check missioncanyon.org for more information.—

Cathia Mahaffey

Water Rates

City Water's Bill Ferguson tells us reducing water rates for Mission Canyon is still under discussion, with the legalities of cutting rates for one set of customers over the rest an obstacle yet to be surmounted. The city offers a rebate program for landscape water conservation, with details at santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Water/Water_Conservation/index.htm. The three-inch mulch requirement in that program is under reconsideration in view of Firewise Landscaping needs for thinner applications of mulch.—JY

C A L E N D A R

- July 11** **CARe (Community Assisting Recovery) and United Policy Holders**, consumer insurance advocates, make a Santa Barbara stopover for insurance counseling. 11:30 a.m.–5 p.m. MacVeagh House, Museum of Natural History, 2559 Puesta del Sol. Call 448-9688 for info.
- July 22** **MCPAC reports on residential parking strategy project** and prohibition of parking on Foothill Road between Cheltenham and Tye. EIR comments accepted for draft MC Community Plan, Residential Guidelines, and Land Use and Development Code amendments. 6 p.m. Planning Commission Hrg Rm.
- July 27** **Erosion control experts from state, federal, and county agencies** visit burn areas this week.
- July 29** **Farmers Market** begins Thursdays, 3 p.m., at Harding Elementary School.
- July or Aug.** **Rebuilding Workshop**. Learn about the rebuilding process and gain perspective on new regulations, timelines, dealing with contractors, and rebuilding costs; make the best possible decision about whether to rebuild; how to get the most out of your limited rebuilding resources. Date, time, and location TBD.
- Aug.** **Caltrans target time for completion of work and reopening of Foothill Road**. FYI: Contractor got road open for fire engines May 5 because of pre-stocked load of sand which they used to fill open trench.
- Aug. 4** **MCA Board Meeting**. 7:30 p.m. MacVeagh House, Natural History Museum,
- Aug. 5** **S.B. Botanic Garden Vital Mission Plan** comes before Planning Commission. 9 a.m. PC Hrg Rm. More info at 568-2000.
- Sept.** **Post-Jesusita Fire Meeting**. County Fire discusses what happened during the May fire. Date and time to be determined.
- Sept. 15** **MCA Board Meeting**. 7:30 p.m. MacVeagh House, Natural History Museum.