



# The Riviera Association

Fall 2007 [www.rivieraassociation.org](http://www.rivieraassociation.org) P.O. Box 41838 • Santa Barbara, CA 93140-1838

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## President's Letter

Dear Neighbor,

The Riviera Association sends a spring and fall newsletter each year. Due to the cost of publication and distribution, the spring newsletter goes to paid members, and the fall newsletter goes to all residents living on the Riviera. We use our fall newsletter to renew existing members and to invite all non-members to join the association. It's an investment in our neighborhood community and well worth the \$30 annual dues. Hey...we're all in this together! Please take a moment to join or renew your membership.

Your board of directors has been working hard on your behalf. The articles enclosed speak to some of our recent activities. One of the most rewarding experiences as your president was working with the city fire department on the Riviera Evacuation Drill. Thank you for participating. In conversations with Fire Chief Ron Prince, the city and its residents are better prepared for the next emergency. But really...how prepared are we? If there is an earthquake, would you be ready to stay in place up to a week? How well do you know your neighbors? Do you have a skill or desire to help neighbors? Since the Zaca fire, I've been asking myself, "What else we can do as a neighborhood association to help you be ready for a disaster?"

It has recently come to my attention that a nonprofit corporation, Neighborhood Safety Net, with a unique program for our neighborhoods, is now deploying in Santa Barbara. Their lofty goal is to: "Create a safer world, one neighborhood at a time!" What that means for each of us, should we embrace this program, is if a disaster hits, you will know how to use your neighborhood

resources (know where the people live who may be able to save your life); and how to use the emergency back-up communication system (based on Ham radios and walkie-talkies), so in the event you need to evacuate, you will know how, where, when, and which direction to go.

Neighborhood Safety Net puts in place a program of Organized Social Interaction, a Volunteer Roadmap, and state-of-the-art secure communication hubs for each neighborhood. The result is a reduction in crime, an increased sense of community, better preparation for disaster situations, and an evacuation protocol. I've asked the developer of Neighborhood Safety Net, Chuck Smith, to join us at our general membership meeting on October 21.

In addition to Neighborhood Safety Net, our general membership meeting will include a candidates forum for the three open city council seats. Election Day is November 6. There is a lot going on in the city right now: commercial development, city charter amendments, and a general plan update to name a few. All residents are invited to join us for a conversation with your local candidates on Sunday October 21, at 5:00 p.m. in the Marymount School auditorium.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your president. This next year, 2008, will be my last year in office. I look forward to working with you to maintain and enhance the quality of life we enjoy on the Riviera.

Sincerely,

*Paul Cashman*

Paul Cashman, president  
The Riviera Association

# The Riviera Association General Meeting

**Sunday, October 21, at 5:00 p.m.**  
**Marymount School Auditorium • 2130 Mission Ridge Road**

**Chuck Smith, Neighborhood Safety Net**, a unique program for our neighborhoods puts in place a program of Organized Social Interaction, a Volunteer Roadmap, and state-of-the-art secure communication. The result is a reduction in crime, an increased sense of community, better preparation for disaster situations, and an evacuation protocol.

**City Council Candidates Forum** for the three open city council seats. Election Day is Tuesday, November 6. Join us for wine and cheese, and a conversation with our candidates.

## City of Santa Barbara Residential Utility Undergrounding

*Editor's Note: In our last Riviera Association Newsletter, we printed an article on the undergrounding of residential utilities. We feel that it is important to repeat the information contained in that article.*

On November 22, 2005, the Santa Barbara City Council voted unanimously to approve a draft policy statement for city assistance in the creation of Underground Utility Assessment Districts. Accordingly, it shall be the policy of the City of Santa Barbara to support the undergrounding of utilities when requested by the homeowners of a particular neighborhood. Details of this city program are presented in a "Private Residential Underground Utility Assessment District" (UUAD) packet available through the city's engineering division by calling 805/564-5363.

Neighborhoods that seek to have utilities undergrounded should submit a petition in accordance with the requirements of Santa Barbara Municipal Code Chapter 4.60 "Public Works Benefit Assessment District." This municipal code chapter provides the direction for the formation of the Private Residential Underground Utility Assessment Districts (UUAD). The combined procedures of Proposition 218 and the Municipal Improvement Act of 1913 will also be followed in the establishment of any UUAD.

The city will support petitions through city staff coordinating with local utilities, providing a handout defining the process, and start-up funding support.

The city will fund start-up support for the formation of a district if a petition is submitted requesting the city council to institute proceedings for the formation of a benefit assessment district and if the petition is signed by property owners of not less than sixty percent (60%) of the area of land proposed to be included within the benefit assessment district. A copy of the requisite petition is included in the UUAD packet. This support consists of an assessment engineer, who prepares

the engineer's report, project design and cost estimates, and assistance with the Proposition 218 voting process. If the assessment district is ultimately approved, the city will be reimbursed for all the costs of the start-up support and those costs will be made part of the assessment. If the district fails to be approved, the city will not seek to recover the funds.

If the assessment district is approved by the property owners and city council, the city will not contribute to any of the construction costs.

Additional questions should be directed to Jim Britsch of Facilities Management Specialists LLC at 805/729-4629. Jim is the city's coordinator for these projects.

## El Encanto Hotel Update

On June 1, 2007 the tennis court of the El Encanto construction site was the scene of a great neighborhood party. Invited guests and neighbors were treated to delicious food and a preview of the rehabilitation progress. Several cottages and the motel style building abutting Mission Ridge Road have been meticulously remodeled and tastefully refurbished in order to meet the expectations and requirements of future hotel guests.

The site of the main building has been excavated and is being prepared for reconstruction. Several large Eucalyptus trees have been pruned for maximum view of the city and many other activities have taken place behind the wooden construction fencing. Members of the association are looking forward to the completion of the project. —*Brigitte Forssell*

## Association Membership— Important for Your Home & Safety

The Riviera Association is active on many fronts. Two of particular importance right now are various zoning issues and wildfire safety. The association monitors new development proposals from the perspective of what is good and bad for the Riviera as a whole. The association is active in wildfire safety planning, emergency preparedness, evacuation drills, and making information available **during an emergency**.

When the Zaca Fire was seen as threatening Mission Canyon and the Riviera, the association e-mailed a daily (sometimes twice daily) comprehensive update to its members. These updates were a big help in making sure our neighbors knew what was happening and what the near term outlook was.

When developers make proposals for higher density building which may impact traffic or safety and evacuation routes, the association works hard to increase our safety margins and to preserve the character of our neighborhood.

We have 1,800 homes in the Riviera. Some 650 are members. Membership is only \$30 per year. **The daily e-mails during wildfire emergencies are certainly worth more than that.**

Renew your membership now. Or join for the first time. The important thing is to be a continuing member! Use the enclosed membership card—and **make sure to clearly print your e-mail address!**

P.S. Visit [www.rivieraassociation.org](http://www.rivieraassociation.org) to learn about the many issues that affect your neighborhood—the view ordinance, the neighborhood preservation ordinance, undergrounding utility wires, wildfire hazard clearance on our roads, traffic hazards, crime alerts, Franceschi Park, St. Francis Hospital site redevelopment, the El Encanto Hotel, and other development projects. —*Bob Johnson*

## Riviera Evacuation Drill a Success!



Riviera Association President Paul Cashman at the "All Agency Briefing" the morning of The Riviera Evacuation Drill. Over 20 city, state, federal and nonprofit agencies joined forces to participate in the drill. The evacuation drill was proposed by the Riviera Association to City Fire Chief Ron Prince and was a tremendous success in coordinating Riviera residents with city evacuation procedures.

## Franceschi Park & House Update

**Park:** Only a small number of volunteers showed up for the park workday on a Saturday morning in May. General clean-up and defining the border of the demonstration planting bed was all that could be accomplished. Installation of the landscape planting design has been postponed due to a lack of funds. Of the approximately \$30,000 needed, a \$5,000 gift has been received from the Horticultural Society. Contributions for this project can be made to the PARC Foundation. Within the next few months, the upgrade of driveway and parking lot will take place, paid for by a state grant.

**House:** In July, the chain link fence around the house was removed. As a result of continued vandalism, windows and doors have again been secured with plywood panels. Graffiti continues to be an ongoing problem. The Pearl Chase Society rehabilitation plans have been reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission and are nearly ready for the City plan check process. A second and detailed agreement is required, outlining the funding, construction, maintenance, and operations of the rehabilitated house. The Pearl Chase Society request to designate the structure a historic landmark will be addressed by the Council later this year. —*Brigitte Forssell*

## Jorgensen Ranch Development

The Jorgensen Ranch subdivision at 561 W. Mountain Drive was appealed to City Council on July 24, 2007. The neighborhood opposition was based on several issues: modifications for garages, public street waivers, and public street frontage waivers, density of the development and the impact on public health, safety and welfare.

After input from the developer and the neighborhood appellant, and after lengthy discussion, the Riviera Association Board decided not to take a position on the development. Instead, in a letter to the City Council, the association requested that the impact of continuing development in High and Extreme High Fire Hazard Zones of our community be discussed and addressed as part of the General Plan Update. This concern was echoed by many neighbors, especially in case of evacuation due to wildland fire.

During deliberation, the City Council unanimously acknowledged the need for such discussions. In addition, and with the agreement of the developer, the project was reduced by one home and the requested garage modifications were removed. To approve the changed project, a new subdivision map will be required by City Council. —*Brigitte Forssell*

# Riviera Association Information Network Tested During Zaca Fire

During the Zaca Fire, we found that the Riviera Association became a valuable network for keeping our neighbors informed. Since Paul Cashman, our President, has made "Safety and Disaster Preparedness" his theme for his tenure as president, this network has become a key element of these goals.

We thought we'd share with you some of the responses to his daily e-mails sent to the members. His e-mails were a result of his close affiliation with Ron Prince, Santa Barbara City Fire Chief. This connection gave us access to the most up-to-date information available to anyone, anywhere.

For space considerations, and because we haven't received specific permission to use names, we have trimmed them a bit and eliminated authorship. We know they won't mind, because we're all in this together. What follows are excerpts from a few of the many e-mails we received:

"... It has helped to keep us focused on what the fire was doing each day. We went through papers that we hadn't touched in over twenty years. At least we accomplished the impossible. It forced us to take action. We will be looking forward to hearing what kinds of things we can do as a community to prepare..."

"...Indeed, you have done a great job keeping the hill informed about this terrible fire. We are moving to another Santa Barbara area and will not be members of the Riviera Association. The folks who have bought our home will be moving

in around August 30. I hope you will invite them to join the group here on the hill..."

"...We just want to thank you most sincerely for the daily updates you've sent us for many, many days. How thoughtful. How caring. How important for each homeowner to be informed about the fire danger. We are currently at our home in Virginia, so you can be sure we really appreciated those daily updates..."

"...Paul, I am new to the Riviera and love being a part of the association. You are doing a great job!"

"...Thank you for the updates—it's been a big help to know the actual facts. I lost a home in the Sycamore Fire so am especially wary of the "monster on the other side of the mountain."

"...We looked for your report everyday..."

"...Thank you so much. I am widowed, live alone, and this stuff is scary to go thru alone..."

"...I really felt like I was getting accurate info..."

"...Thanks for your e-mails on the Zaca fire. It has made us more prepared too..."

"...having lost our home in the Sycamore Canyon fire. We had to be gone for a week in August and found from your information that we could get the update on the computer. Greatly relieved our minds. Thanks to your organization, the fire department, and the firefighters..."

The goal of the board of directors of the Riviera Association is to enroll every single household within the boundaries of the association, and register their e-mail addresses, so that no one is left behind when these disaster events occur. Please join us at our general membership meeting on Sunday, October 21, at Marymount School, 2130 Mission Ridge Road, and learn more about the association and its goals. We know you'll want to be a member.

## Riviera Association Sponsors

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As a Riviera resident of 25 years & Real Estate professional for over 30 I can bring you personal knowledge of our Community & guidance for you & your home.  
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