

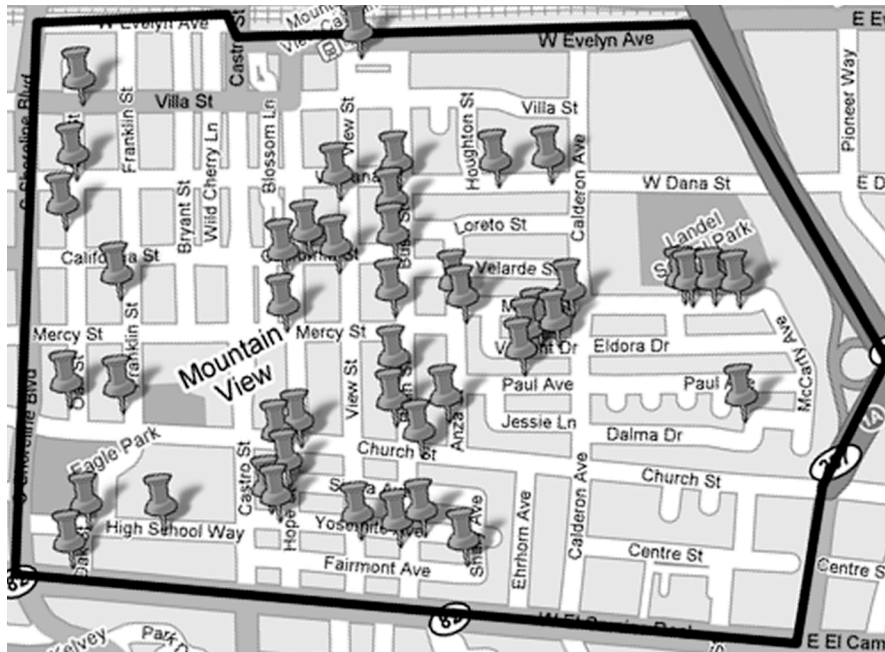
OMVNA Newsletter

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Few Trained Emergency Responders East of Calderon

For nearly a decade our neighborhood has successfully expanded the ranks of our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). There are now 47 volunteer coordinators participating in the neighborhood program. However, there is a troubling lack of volunteers east of Calderon, as shown on the map. A pin marks the home address of each volunteer.

To address this, CERT Chairman **Aaron Grossman** urges residents to contact him to become involved in the free CERT training offered by the Office of Emergency Services with the Fire Department. Each class cycle takes you through the basics of disaster preparedness, identifying and reducing potential fire hazards, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue operations, disaster psychology and team organization, and terrorism. This includes a hands-on field day of disaster simulation at the Fire Department training facility. It's a lot of fun and a great way to make some new friends and connect with your neighbors.

All new and current CERT volunteers are especially encouraged to attend. These are the people who will provide neighborhood coordination and communication if a disaster strikes. Anyone interested in joining should contact CERT Chair Aaron Grossman (aagrossman@yahoo.com). (continued on Page 2)

Farewell from the Chair

By Ken Rosenberg

In 2003, I joined the Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association (OMVNA) Steering Committee. I had just returned to downtown after living elsewhere for about a year and a half. My wife and I were sad when we had to leave the neighborhood, so we made it a priority to move back as soon as we were able.

But moving back was not enough. I wanted to get involved in the community that I loved so much. I quickly joined Leadership Mountain View (LMV) -- an outstanding organization with a wonderful sense of purpose that I documented in the July, 2006 newsletter. You can read that article in the archives at www.ommvna.org. I also joined the OMVNA Steering Committee as an "At-Large" member. Since then, I have served as Vice Chair of OMVNA, then Chair for the past two years. In addition, I also serve on the Board of Directors for the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce.

This article will mark my final submission as Chair. I'm not leaving the group, however. In fact, I am taking on a new and exciting role. I will represent OMVNA on the Downtown (continued on Page 2)

Farewell (continued)

Committee, which advises the City Council. I will report back to OMVNA and you directly through the *Newsletter* as well as through OMVNAtalk, our online discussion group.

I have written and spoken many times about the virtues of living where we do. Our homes have appreciated in value; the neighborhood is continuing its renaissance through homeowner improvement, new development, and retail/restaurant rejuvenation. Still, we're not without our troubles. But on balance, we live in a desirable place that we can be proud to call home.

I hope that you have enjoyed my articles, my various editorials and opinions that I've expressed for the past two years. I have tried to be as diplomatic as possible; ours is a neighborhood with as many perspectives and ideas as we have households! As I leave, OMVNA is in wonderful shape. We have more money in the bank than ever before, we've held extremely well attended General Meetings (most especially the summer Ice Cream Social), and there are more subscribers to OMVNAtalk than at any time in its history. I also hope that I have inspired at least a few people to go out and get involved in the community. We live in a democracy that requires participation. Simply put, it just feels good to be involved.

I will be succeeded in this position by **Noam Livnat**. Please welcome him as the new Chair. He is intelligent, deliberative, and well spoken. OMVNA is in good hands.

Responders (continued)

There are five training cycles scheduled for 2008. The dates of these trainings are:

Cycle 1: Begins February 14, 2008, Thursday evenings from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Runs February 14, 21, 28, March 6 and Saturday, March 8 from 1-4 p.m. Classes take place at 1000 Villa Street.

Cycle 2: Begins April 12, 2008, Saturdays from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Runs April 12, 19 and 26 from 1-4 p.m. This class will be held at Fire Station #4, located at 229 North Whisman

Cycle 3: Begins May 20, 2008, Tuesday evenings from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Runs May 20, 27, June 3, 10 and Saturday, June 14 from 1-4 p.m. Classes take place at 1000 Villa St.

Cycle 4: Begins September 24, 2008 Wednesday evenings from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Runs September 17, 24, October 1, 8, 15 and Saturday, October 18 from 1-4 p.m. Classes take place at 1000 Villa,

Cycle 5: Begins November 1, 2008, Saturdays from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Runs November 1, 8 and 15 from 1-4 p.m.

Class descriptions are available online at tinyurl.com/3y6aps. Register with the Fire Department online, by e-mail, or telephone.

Steering Committee Dates

Future meetings: **Monday Jan. 14 and Feb. 11** at 7:30 p.m. at 580 Castro in the Chamber of Commerce Board Room. Everyone is welcome to attend! Agendas are sent to the OMVNAtalk e-mail list a few days before each meeting. To suggest a topic, send e-mail to: chair@omvna.org

Newspaper Delivery Elves Help Make OMVNA Great

by Julie Lovins

The *OMVNA Newsletter* is a critical part of what makes Old Mountain View a great place to live. Our advertisers provide the revenue that pays for our events, but our volunteer delivery people are the ones who get it to your door eight times a year.

Each year we pay tribute to those who have helped get the news to you. Hats off to our 2007 corps of volunteers: **Jean Anderson, Tori Atwell, Olivia Bartlett, Brad and Kathy Bettman, Pat Bennett, Ronit Bryant, June Casey, Joseph Cayot, Kim Copher, Hugh Donagher, Aimee Folden, Donnie Foster, Peggy Goodman, Aaron Grossman, Denise Healy, Bruce Karney** (delivering as well as editing), **Shelly King, Robin Kuborssy, Darion Lawson, Tim Lee, Rose Lesslie, Noam Livnat, Julie Lovins, Susie Mader, Kristen McGuire-Husky, Gretchen and Don McPhail, Jessica Millar, Tom Pare, Jennifer and Russ Parman, Rita Pilkenton, Karl Pingle, Kathleen Podrasky, Bea Pollert, Carol and Allen Price, Jan Proceviat, Carol Pursifull, Rhonda Radcliff and Robert Mullenger, Ken Rosenberg, Larry Rosenberg, Brian Rountree, Jeff Segall, Jamil Shaikh, Lydia Sherrill, Maggie Sias, Monica Smith, Sara Valentine, Charlie Weigle, Lisa Windes, Lorraine Wormald, Caroline McCormack Yarwood, and Lauren Zuravleff.**

If you'd like to become a delivery elf yourself, perhaps by

starting as a substitute, please call **Julie Lovins** at 964-0368.

Two Ways to Shut Off the Gas After an Earthquake

By Kevin Carney

If last month's earthquake had been severe you might have needed to shut off your gas.

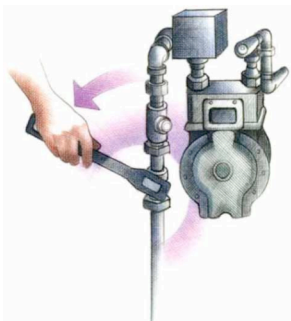
Do you know how? Do you have a gas valve wrench? What if you're not home when the quake hits?

A big earthquake hasn't happened here since 1989, but it will happen sooner or later. You need to do one of two things to ensure your gas gets turned off.

Option 1

Get a gas valve wrench (it's a long thin piece of metal with slots in the end specifically sized for a gas meter valve), a two foot section of thin metal chain, and two small keyrings. Ensure you know how the gas valve wrench fits onto your gas valve. Loop a piece of chain through one of the slots in the gas valve wrench and attach two chain links together with a key ring. Loop the other end of the chain around a gas pipe above your meter and attach two chain links with the other key ring. Now, years from now when the wrench has fallen and is buried under the dirt, you only need to find the chain to find the wrench.

The image below is someone using a gas valve wrench to shut off their gas. However, they have not yet chained it to the meter.



Option 2

Install an earthquake-activated gas shut-off valve (don't try this yourself unless you know what you're doing). With one of these valves, the gas will shut off even if you're not there to do it yourself. When your house shakes, the gas shuts off. Some insurance companies now require these when you obtain a new homeowner's insurance policy.

As with many things, I do have a favorite. It is the ASSI Safe-T-Valve, which is pictured below. It is not available at the big box stores, but is available at many specialty plumbing stores such as Barron Park Supply Company in Mountain View.



The Safe-T-Valve pictured above works as follows. The brass elbow part is a valve that replaces the downstream elbow of the gas meter. The grey plastic part attaches to the side of your house. If the gray box shakes, the valve closes. Pushing the black button also closes the valve. The red lever opens the valve. It's all mechanical and it works very well.

Relighting Your Pilots

Of course, you should not turn the gas back on after an earthquake unless you know where all of your pilot lights are and can re-light them. PG&E will come out and do this for you if you call

them. Naturally, unless you're very lucky it will take several days after a big shaker for them to get to your home. But the inconvenience is small compared to the risk of finding that your home – and perhaps your neighbors' – has burned down because of a leaking gas line.

(Kevin Carney owns the local Mr. Handyman franchise.)

Automated Shut-Offs Provide Peace of Mind

By Brigitte Fleeman

I would love for every OMVNA neighbor to learn about this easy precaution. I've recently had it installed on our home.

The cost is only about \$230 for the valve. I'm interested in organizing a group purchase of valves to get a discount, like **Bruce Karney** did for solar panels. Please let me know if you are interested!

If anyone would like to learn more about automated shut-offs or see ours, please e-mail me: dr.gitte@mac.com. We live at 515 Front Lane.

The **OMVNA Newsletter** is distributed to 1900 households and 175 downtown businesses by dedicated volunteers. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the OMVNA Steering Committee.

Let us know what you think!

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The Critter Column

Turkey Vultures

By Jack Perkins

Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) don't nest in our neighborhood but they fly over it all the time. Circling and circling their spread wings look like a "V".



TURKEY VULTURE

You probably think they are looking for carrion like most vultures do, but no, they don't find their rotting carcasses with their eyes, they find carrion by the smell. They have incredible smelling faculties. Their schnoz is like a super-computer. They can smell dead stuff miles and miles away.

Their wingspan can be as much as six feet, yet they weigh only four to six pounds. It is called the "Turkey" vulture because its feathers and bald head resemble those of the North American wild turkey.

There are lots of migrating waterfowl that die along the Bay; Turkey Vultures find them to be quite appetizing.

They do migrate and some of the ones we see circling overhead are heading to far off places, no doubt dreaming of deer carcasses by the roadside.

(continued on Page 7)

Energy Action

The Most Essential Energy Action is Political Action

By Bruce Karney

During the last year and a half I have spent a lot of time learning about energy and sharing what I've learned. I've investigated how we consume it, where it comes from, how much pollution comes with it, how much it costs now and how much it is likely to cost in the future. I've met dozens of people who have reduced the amount of energy they consume, sometimes drastically so.

I've also met hundreds of people who care enough about the environment to invest their own money in products that shrink their carbon footprint, investments ranging from \$5 for a pack of compact fluorescent lamps to \$20,000 for solar panels.

I have no doubt that over the next 20 years the developed countries will become far "greener" than most of us can even imagine. But the speed of this transformation concerns me deeply. Imagine you're driving on a road at 30 mph and realize that a cement truck is barreling toward your back bumper at 60 mph. If you accelerate quickly enough, you'll avoid a collision. But if you accelerate timidly, you'll be injured or killed. You will have run out of time to avoid the truck, and that is the primary challenge that the planet faces; we are simply running out of time.

Because I believe that the speed of our transformation to a sustainable energy society will be controlled by political factors, not technological or economic ones, I believe that **political action** to

achieve a sensible energy policy is something we should all engage in.

Local Experiments Everywhere

I'm encouraged by the many experiments being tried in cities around the country. The best of these will show how rapidly we can change our society into one that doesn't spew out more CO₂ than the planet can absorb. The great thing about having so many experiments running simultaneously is that we will rapidly find out which approaches work and which do not. Berkeley and Santa Barbara are two cities that have developed very ambitious plans and programs.

In November of 2006, Berkeley voters had a chance to vote on Measure G. Measure G asked voters to endorse ambitious goals for steep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. Specifically, the measure called for the mayor to work with city residents to develop a 10-year plan for cutting climate-altering emissions and set an ultimate target of an 80% emissions reduction by 2050. Measure G received 82% approval, giving the City Council a clear mandate to propose truly meaningful measures to reduce greenhouse gasses. In the last year Berkeley has done just that.

Other experiments are taking place in cities that are as far to the political right as Berkeley is to the left. In Lemoore in the San Joaquin Valley, the city is giving grants of as much as \$5000 to residents who buy solar panels.

Even at the city level, initiatives like these can raise the hackles of powerful business interests. Office parks located far from transit that offer free parking lock

employees into commuting by car, and this is made worse when the number of new jobs exceeds the amount of new housing.

As I write this article it appears that the 2007 Energy Bill being hammered out in Congress will continue tax breaks for oil companies and not extend tax breaks for renewable energy that are slated to expire at the end of 2008. This is hardly the result one would have expected from a Congress controlled by Democrats. The power of donations from oil, gas, and coal companies has yet to be broken

Encouraging Our Leaders

I urge you to exhort your elected officials constantly to be bolder when it comes to reducing greenhouse gasses. Energy conservation needs to become "the new normal." Make it clear that your campaign contributions will be contingent on true environmental leadership, not lip service.

Even a Third Grader Can Do It

My favorite local story of political action is about a class of third graders in Foster City. They became concerned that their town, which has an average elevation of five feet, would be endangered by the rising sea levels. They asked the City Council why residents who wanted to install solar panels to cut their carbon footprint were being charged a hefty permit fee. The Council not only eliminated the fee, it also reduced the speed limit on all streets in town to 35 mph or less, which makes it legal for lightweight electric vehicles to drive on any street in Foster City.

Our city is now seeking members for its Sustainability Task Force – please consider joining!

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Give the Gifts of Sight and Hearing for the Holidays

by Hugh Donagher

As the holiday season approaches, many of us are busy clearing space for all our holiday decorations and festivities. If you find old eyeglasses or hearing aids, ask yourself if you've needed them in the past year. If not, the chances are you won't ever need them again.

You may not need them, but you know what? Someone out there in the world will be able to see things or hear things they cannot see or hear today if you donate those old eyeglasses and hearing aids to the Mountain View Lions Club. Lions have been collecting used eyeglasses for decades and used hearing aids for years. We send them to a number of different programs,

where they are cleaned, polished and graded (and refurbished in the case of hearing aids) and then sent to economically distressed areas and matched with people who would not otherwise be able to afford to see or hear better.

Please, drop them off in a Lions Eyeglass Collection box. It's okay to drop hearing aids in with the glasses. There's a collection box at the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce. Most of the opticians along Castro Street, or anywhere, really, will have a box or know how to get those glasses to us. Hearing aids are also collected at the Costco Hearing Aid Center in Sunnyvale.

Old Mountain View residents may also call upon your neighbors, Lions **Hugh Donagher** and **Brian Rountree**. We'll come and pick them up! You can reach us at home at 967-4541.

Turkey Vulture (continued)

If you are lucky to see one close up you will observe them to be elegant, highly maneuverable fliers and they are very clean looking too. Their heads are bald (and red) because if you made your living by sticking your head into rotted carcasses, you wouldn't want your feathers to get gummed up by the rotted flesh either.

They are considered quite intelligent. Years ago I had a pet Turkey Vulture named Carri. She always knew which pocket I had her dead rat in and we'd let her scavenge the turkey carcass at Thanksgiving. She was a great vulture but we let her out every night and she got run over.

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