



FROM THE FIELDS

A Newsletter of the Los Olivos-Riker Neighborhood Association

January 2012



www.lorneighborhood.com



A MESSAGE from the EDITORS

In this issue, you will notice some subtle formatting and style changes that were suggested by LORNA readers and contributors. Thanks to all our readers, the reportage will continue throughout the year with dynamic and entertaining submissions from members and neighbors. Your humble editors are proud and honored to publish the LORNA newsletter. Thank you for your excellent support! *This is how we do it on the south side!*

HOLIDAY GATHERING



Casa McShane was rockin' once again as LORNA neighbors gathered for a festive holiday party. Hosted by LORNA's unofficial social director, the inimitable **Steve McShane**, the gathering featured appetizer and dessert contests and gift exchange. Steve ignited his outside fireplaces and deck lights, revelers provided holiday spirits, and there was much mirth and joyous rejoicing.

Interim Salinas Police Chief **Cassie McSorley** honored partygoers with her presence and praised the Neighborhood Watch and graciously responded to questions. Thanks to the Chief and Acting City Manager **Jim Pia** for making time to come and speak and be part of the festivities.

USED BOOKS

Contributed by Catherine Adams

Do you still read real books with words printed on paper? If so, and you don't know what to do with all those extra books, **FOSPL** has the answer! We are the **Friends of the Salinas Public Library**, and we accept donations of all types of books. FOSPL is currently planning to open a used book store inside the Steinbeck Library within the next few months, and we need your donations!

Many of you know me from LORNA, and even if you don't, call me, **Catherine**, at **449.8970**, and I will come pick up all your extra books, VHS tapes, DVDs, audio books, and CDs. Clear out a few shelves to make room for new books, and help this worthwhile group continue to support our local libraries by making a tax-deductible donation.

We sell used books at the Salinas Farmer's Market behind Rabobank on Main Street every Saturday, 8:00 am-2:00 pm. Wanna join **FOSPL**? See attached!

HOLIDAY PARADE of LIGHTS

Contributed by Steve McShane

Over 20 people helped plan and construct the 2011 LORNA entry for the Oldtown Salinas **Holiday Parade of Lights**. The result was one of our best entries yet! The event was chaired by local realtor and LORNA business supporter, **Angela Savage**. Thank you, Angela!

We are also once again thankful for the creative talents of **Mary** and **John Richardson**. Generators were provided by **Dusty Eaton**, and **Sarah Smith** and **Kevin Low** provided lots of leadership. The trucks were donated by **McShane's Nursery and Landscape Supply** and decorated in thousands of lights that garnered our entry *Honorable Mention*.

Photography from the event can be viewed on the website at www.lorneighborhood.com/events.

ZONE COORDINATORS and BLOCK CAPTAINS

LORNA needs, wants, has gotta have **Zone Coordinators** and **Block Captains** to make our neighborhood communication effective. The Board intends to actively recruit for these positions in 2012. To that end, the Board encourages any LORNA resident interested in filling these important roles to come and join the fun as the adventure continues.

The Board's focus is on providing the structure and information for the neighborhood to have a general network, and Zone Leaders and Block Captains are the essence of the networking. For more information, please contact **Cynthia** at cyfly@version2dot1.com.

The LORNA zone map can be viewed on the website at www.lorneighborhood.com/membership/zone-maps.



MEMBERSHIP DRIVES



Memberships are inexpensive and are the life blood of the Association. To help bolster our numbers, LORNA leadership is planning one or more membership drives in 2012. Meanwhile, LORNA needs you now, so please become a member and/or renew your membership to help the Association and the Watch become the best in the city.

You can download the membership form from www.lorneighborhood.com/membership. You can also e-mail **Don** at bearpaw05@sbcglobal.net or **Cynthia** at cyfly@version2dot1.com. Join or renew today and receive the very cool and now-legendary **PROUD MEMBER** sign or **Neighborhood Watch** placard!

LOS OLIVOS SAFETY IMPROVEMENT

Contributed by Kevin Low



What started off as a chance conversation between two neighbors ended up as the greatest safety improvement on Los Olivos Drive. About 10 months ago, two neighbors began talking about how unsafe it was to get out onto Los Olivos due to the fast rate of speed so many cars were traveling. This information trickled through an e-mail chain and LORNA officially filed a *Neighborhood Traffic Calming* request with the city of Salinas. About 7 months later, the city completed a traffic survey that resulted in the installation of two speed feedback signs. These signs have significantly reduced speeds on Los Olivos and made the street much safer for residents in cars, on bicycles, and on foot. It truly is amazing to see what a neighborhood can do when it can come together. The possibilities are endless!

If you have any other safety concerns or ideas on how to improve LORNA, please contact **Cynthia** via e-mail at cyfly@version2dot1.com.



Indigo Yoga offers yoga and Pilates classes in a variety of levels and features unique community events such as meditation and stress reduction. An on-site massage therapist is also available.

Marketing Coordinator and Instructor **Lee Richmond**:

"Saying that you are too stiff to do yoga is like saying you are too thirsty to drink water. The regular practice of yoga offers many health benefits such as improving flexibility and range of motion, greater strength and balance, reducing stress, and improving concentration and mood, to name a few. Indigo Yoga offers a welcoming space with comprehensive and affordable yoga for the absolute beginner to the advanced practitioner."

Visit the website at www.indigoyogasalinas.com, and/or call **772.YOGA**.



Contributed by Kevin Low

HUGE THANKS go out to the **Vanolis** in Greenfield for donating cobble to complete the center median on Los Olivos and Blanco, **Steve McShane** for allowing LORNA to borrow his dump truck, the **Beardshear** and **Graham** families for manually loading the dump truck, and all of the other volunteers who helped unload and place the cobble.

Come by and check out the median. I'm sure you'll agree it truly makes our neighborhood look more beautiful! Next project: a final (and I mean final!) design for signage at Los Olivos and Blanco welcoming people into the neighborhood. If you have any other beautification ideas, please contact **Kevin** at g.appletree@juno.com or **751.9654**.



SORRY for YOUR LOSS

Condolences to **Diane Garren** on the passing of her mother and to **Melissa Mears** on the passing of her grandmother.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Salinas City Councilman **Steve McShane** has planned a Community Meeting for the City of Salinas for Wednesday, January 25th, at Villa Serra, 1320 Padre Dr., 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm. The meeting will serve as an opportunity for local residents to meet the new City Manager. There will also be a *State of the City Address*, and coffee will be served. RSVPs are welcome to **Steve McShane** at **970.4141** or via e-mail at steve@mcshanesnursery.com.

BILL SLEZAK

In December 2010, **Bill Slezak**, LORNA's Treasurer Emeritus, was admitted to Stanford Hospital for treatment of acute myeloid leukemia (AML). Over the course of a year Bill and his family and friends have endured an extensive and intense treatment schedule, including a bone marrow transplant. His doctor predicts a very good 2012!

From Bill's journal: *"It is amazing how the sorrows of last year have turned into the happiness of today. My heart is filled to the brim with thankfulness! I feel very blessed and feel that together we have built something incredible."*

If you're interested in keeping in touch with Bill please go to www.caringbridge.org/visit/billslezak.



Special thanks to these dedicated VIPs for their consistent extra efforts: **Gary** and **Denise Beasley**, **Dusty Eaton**, **Renae Gerhardstein**, **Steve McShane**, **Melissa Mears**, and **Mary** and **John Richardson**.

VeeP's Praise and Peeves

Contributed by KK Roberts

Praise:

- **The increased friendliness** and neighbor-fellowship because of LORNA. We are waving to each other a lot more!
- **The close and positive alliance** with our Salinas Police Department. We're waving to them, too, as they drive through with their eyes on our neighborhood.
- **The incredible positive attitude** that we are all generating within our community while remaining safety-vigilant.

Peeves:

- **Dogs off-leash:** 1) due to owners not leashing, 2) due to a collar that is too big that the doggie can get its fool head out of the collar whenever it feels like eating a toy poodle, or 3) not curbed or secured in a yard/patio. Our little guy has been attacked five times in the last year [one resulting in an urgent vet hospital visit] while we're out walking together, with his harness and leash that stay on, and carrying paper towels and plastic bags for the poogie-pickup.
- **Oh yeah**, the other peeve is the poopies that are left out there for us all to step on by the irresponsible, nincompooie dog owners!
- **Los Olivos Village owners/renters** parking in the VISITORS ONLY parking spaces so that my 84½-year-old dad has to park on the street when he drives over to visit. Not okay! What if it was your dad/grandpa?!



A huge thanks to **Ronnie Esparza** from **Comcast** for sponsoring dinner for the hungry volunteers working on the LORNA float entry for the 2011 Holiday Parade of Lights. Ronnie is known as the *No-Worries Cable Guy* and is offering a LORNA Special of \$89 for cable, internet, and phone service for twelve months. Call him today at **320.9328**.



Steve McShane has co-produced and appears in a LORNA video presentation on YouTube! Visit the site, watch Steve tour our neighborhood, and view his other interesting and entertaining video pieces while you are there.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK-d7fxD3O4

LORNA MEETINGS

Association meetings are scheduled for the second Monday of each month at **Villa Serra**. Fun and business begins at 7:30 pm. All are welcome, so please come and join your neighbors!

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE for SAFETY and PEACE

Suggested by Cheri Shiffman

Salinas PD has established an office in the Hebronn Family Center as an integral part of an ambitious initiative developed by the **Community Alliance for Safety and Peace (CASP)**. A highly-focused, cross-functional team of 34 CASP members from diverse government agencies and nonprofit organizations provide a high level of support for the Hebronn community, one of the most troubled areas of the city.

Two officers walk the beat and interact with residents in an effort to become familiar trusted faces, working toward an ultimate goal to rid the area of gang violence. City leaders are hopeful that a successful initiative will provide a model for the rest of the city.

(Source: Monterey County Herald)



Self Defense Products

J&L Self Defense Products is a family-owned company providing high quality personal safety equipment and self-defense products, such as pepper spray and stun guns. Visit Irv Miller's website at www.selfdefenseproducts.com, do some shopping, and sign up for his newsletter.

CHIEF FETHEROLF

LORNA wishes now-retired Salinas Police Chief **Louis Fetherolf** all the best in his new endeavors. He was faithful to his philosophy of Neighborhood-oriented policing which includes fixing the responsibility for crime and problem solving as a shared responsibility between police and community. He has always been a friend to LORNA and we will miss his unwavering support which he freely and sincerely gave to all Neighborhoods.

SALINAS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

The Year of the Neighborhood, 2011, brought much interest in neighborhoods, and interest in developing a united front for promoting our city. New city-wide volunteer organizations have been developing out of grass-roots movements in our neighborhoods, along with collaborative efforts among neighborhoods, businesses, and government.

The **Salinas Neighborhood Council** will begin its monthly meetings in January 2012. The focus of these meetings and the actions of this council will be to help make changes, so that our city can offer a pleasant and welcoming vision to our community.

Become involved to improve the quality of life in your neighborhood; and contribute to the welcoming vision of our community. Visit the council website at www.salinaneighborhoods.org for information about crime prevention, safety and security, and improving your neighborhood.



The Watch – Eyes and Ears of the Los Olivos-Riker Neighborhood

A MESSAGE from the WATCH DIRECTOR

Contributed by Don Jones

LORNA Neighborhood Watch wishes you all a safe and happy New Year! We are all aware that there have been reductions in Salinas PD staffing this past year. This means it is even more important that we continue to be the first line of defense by observing and reporting suspicious activities in our neighborhood.

The police, our newspapers, and LORNA email alerts strive to make us aware of criminal activities that threaten our homes and neighborhoods. In recent months, conscientious LORNA neighbors have reported suspicious people, bikers, cars, and vans in our neighborhoods.

Leaving a radio on while you are away is a good practice to prevent criminal activity at your home. Leaving a radio on has a miniscule effect on your PG&E bill and may prevent a burglary attempt on your home. Leave the radio on loud enough so it can be heard from the outside, both in front and in back. And always answer your door, even if you don't open it. That way a stranger will at least know you are home and will not likely try to break in.

NEIGHBOR ROBBED on SHELLEY WAY

In December, a LORNA resident was robbed as she pulled into her driveway. This is one of the most horrendous crimes perpetrated in our neighborhood in recent years. It is also an unusual occurrence on the south side, but an important reminder to stay aware. The police do want us to call in suspicious people, so trust your instincts and call if you are at all suspicious or uncomfortable.

Salinas PD released the following:

The victim, a 41 year old female, was pulling into a residential driveway. As she opened her car door, she heard footsteps behind her. She was confronted by a Hispanic male adult, about 5'10, 18-19 years old with a medium build, clean shaven, wearing a black hooded sweatshirt. He was armed with a black semi-auto handgun. He demanded her money. She handed over a small amount of cash. She then noticed a second suspect standing near the front of her vehicle. He was dressed in dark clothing and appeared to be pointing something at her. After getting her money, both suspects then fled on foot southbound toward Kipling. Investigation continues.

In response, LORNA delivered flowers to our neighbor victim and reassured her that all our neighbors have increased their vigilance. The LORNA board is also proposing a *Comfort Fund* and investigating what services are offered for victims of crimes such as this.

BAD ACTIVITIES

Contributed by Cynthia Shaffer

There have been some bad activities in our neighborhood lately. The most recent are robberies at **Villa Serra** and a scare at **Madonna Manor** of a suspicious male lurking on the property. Both Villa Serra and Madonna Manor are dear neighbors in our area. These bad acts are particularly egregious since both establishments are senior citizen/assisted living quarters.

Take a look at the information/details provided below, and note that Salinas PD was called in each incident. This is great news. We must keep the police informed and give them as much information as possible, as soon as possible.

- **From Villa Serra:** *We have had robberies here lately at Villa Serra. They are young men, white and Latino about 21 to 22 years old. They have stolen items from residents and confronted residents in their apartments. They enter Villa Serra between the hours of 3-6pm. The Salinas Police Department has been notified. I was wondering if we could get any help from LORNA or Neighborhood Watch.*
- **From Madonna Manor:** *Upon arriving to work at 10:45pm I noticed a white car in our parking lot, so I hurried into work and closed the door. The husband of a co-worker was in the white car and he was checking the parking lot and property because the ladies saw someone sitting on the bench in front of B-wing's parking – a tall, thin male wearing a black hoodie sweatshirt with a black coat. When the co-worker was walking to the front door he got up and walked towards her. She rushed inside and when she looked back he was gone.*

Her husband stayed on the property until I entered the building. Just to be on the safe side, at 11:30pm I called the non-emergency police line to have them drive by and check the property, because we weren't sure if he was still around. He might have hidden himself in the B-wing patio because it is dark there. I'm putting in a work order to have a floodlight installed on that patio.

Crime is cyclical and the holiday season was one of the peak times. A special thank you to the Citizen Patrol neighbors who take our Watch to the next level. We appreciate your dedication. **E&E!**

TURN on YOUR LIGHTS



Outside security lighting can be an effective deterrent to any prowler creeping around your home. It gets dark very early these evenings, so turn on your outside lights at dusk, and leave them on till dawn. Light exposes, so criminals avoid it.

SALINAS TAKES ACTION on GRAFFITI

Contributed by Steve McShane



In the last two years, Salinas has faced a couple of major spikes in both the square footage and incidents reported for graffiti. In response to this activity, several individuals, businesses and community groups have banded together to address this challenge. After nearly a year of regular meetings, sting operations, and rapid response, there is good news to report.

Established in Spring of 2011, the city of Salinas now has a **Graffiti Task Force**. The mission of the task force is to network business, residents, community groups, and government in an effort to wipe out graffiti in the city of Salinas. The task force and its activities have had huge support from the city.

Since its inception, a thorough review of the Code Section and enforcement addressing graffiti has been underway. At the September 13th meeting of the Salinas City Council, major reform to city statutes addressing graffiti took place. The changes ultimately give law enforcement more tools to address graffiti. In addition, parents will now be held accountable for graffiti performed by juveniles. Finally, a great deal of code section was updated to include new materials used in graffiti.

At the forefront of the success in addressing graffiti are a large number of private citizens that have volunteered their time and private resources. Folks like **Brian Foucht, Mark Zanko, Julie Cavassa, Caleb Randall, Don Jones, Kevin Low, Tom Martella, Elena Lightbown,** and **Greg Yancey** have been true leaders.

It is also worth thanking the many business and neighborhood groups that have collaborated as well. These include: the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, Oldtown Salinas Association, Core Surveillance, Navy Postgraduate School, Monterey Park Neighborhood Watch and the Los Olivos–Riker Neighborhood Association.



At the core of addressing graffiti are Republic Services and the leadership provided by Doug Kenyon and Cindy Rogers. Since Summer of 2010, Republic has been contracted to address graffiti in the city of Salinas. They have not only done the job, but played a valuable role in leading the Graffiti Task Force for the city. Anyone wishing to report graffiti should call the hotline at **751.5493**.

Should you wish to donate or get involved, please contact task force facilitator, **Steve McShane**, at steve@mcshanesnursery.com or **970.4141**.

REMEMBER:
TO REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY, CALL THE NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER AT **758.7321**.

AREA COMMANDER and CSO

Contributed by Mary Richardson



LORNA residents were honored to welcome Salinas PD Commander **Vincent Miaorana** and Community Service Officer **Jenny Bryant** to a recent meeting. They teamed up for a special presentation and to answer pre-submitted Neighborhood Watch and security questions.

In an introductory statement, the officers explained that, due to staffing reductions, Salinas Police Department has limited ability to provide service to our community. At any one time, there are only eleven officers on duty to cover the entire City of Salinas. That is why it is so important to encourage everyone to call the non-emergency number with anything that is suspicious or does not feel right. Always call 911 to report a crime in progress. You can remain anonymous, but there are also benefits to ask an officer to talk to offenders and file a complaint yourself.

A simple rule should be that if you **see something, say something**. Commander Miaorana advocates small talk in a non-confrontational way when you see someone out of place in the neighborhood. Don't ignore strangers and think they will go away. Complacency kills!

If someone knocks on your door and you choose to answer, find out what he/she wants and make mental notes. Be aware that strangers may be working in teams. One knocks on the door, and if no one answers, the other checks the back of the house for access. Don't waste time if you are not sure of who they are or what they want.

Other highlights of the presentation include:

- **Operation Knockout**—Salinas was a multi-jurisdictional hub for investigations to combat gangs.
- **Booming Car Speakers**—City ordinances and California penal codes for vehicles state that you should not be able to hear booming speakers within 50 feet. The violation is a moving citation; however, the officer has to witness it to do anything about it.
- **Fireworks**—"Things that fly in the air and go boom are not legal", but unless neighbors/witnesses make a positive identification, the police cannot do anything.

Commander Miaorana emphasized that the success of Salinas PD is predicated on our involvement. If neighbors get out and get to know each other, that simple act can turn around a neighborhood. He also elaborated on **command presence**. Anything "uniform-looking", including our Citizen Patrol vests, conveys an authoritative posture and people are very responsive to it. Meaning, bad guys steer clear and neighbors feel more secure.

LORNA expresses its appreciation and special thanks to Commander Miaorana and CSO Bryant for their time and efforts!



REAL ESTATE MARKET SNAPSHOT
KK Roberts, REALTOR®

Data as of January 12, 2012 unless noted



STATUS*	PROPERTY	SALE PRICE	LIST PRICE**	BEDS	BATHS
Available	1252 Los Olivos Drive		350,000	3	2
Available	1241 Dickens Drive		299,799	4	2.5
Available	434 Shelley Way		279,000	3	2
Available	208 Chaucer Drive		229,000	3	2
Available	1329 South Riker Street		225,000	4	2
Available	1253 Los Olivos Drive Unit 28		179,000	2	2.5
Pending Sale	348 Kipling Street		238,000	2	2
Pending Sale	1253 Los Olivos Drive Unit 4		199,000	3	1.5
Pending Sale	1310 Primavera Street Unit 112		179,000	3	1.5
Closed Sale	313 Primavera Way	340,000	337,500	3	2
Closed Sale	139 Chaucer Drive	335,000	335,000	4	2
Closed Sale	21 Dickens Circle	300,000	303,000	3	2
Closed Sale	18 Riker Circle	275,000	279,000	3	2
Closed Sale	1216 Los Olivos Drive	273,000	269,900	3	2
Closed Sale	236 Chaucer Drive	225,000	245,000	3	2
Closed Sale	1336 Dickens Drive	235,000	229,000	3	1.5
Closed Sale	1253 Los Olivos Drive Unit 25	200,000	220,000	3	1.5
Closed Sale	1253 Los Olivos Drive Unit 14	176,000	180,000	3	1.5
Closed Sale	1310 Primavera Street Unit 111	171,000	171,000	3	1.5
Closed Sale	345 Coleridge Drive Unit 105	169,000	169,800	2	1.5
Closed Sale	1310 Primavera Street Unit 114	160,000	166,500	3	2

*Closed Sales reflect the dates January 1, 2011 to January 12, 2012

**Current price of the home and may not reflect the original list price

For more complete and detailed data, please see www.LORNeighborhood.com

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE	PENDING SALES	CLOSED SALES SINCE JANUARY 1, 2011
5 homes from \$225,000 to \$350,000 1 townhome for \$179,000	1 home and 2 townhomes	7 homes sold from \$225,000 to \$340,000 5 townhomes sold from \$160,000 to \$200,000

INFORMATION DEEMED RELIABLE, BUT NOT GUARANTEED