

# **vHIDDEN TRAILS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**

## **AUGUST 2005 NEWSLETTER**

**HOA Officers:** President: Brian D. Swanson (760) 739-5451; Vice-President: John Lindsay; Secretary/Treasurer: Joe Esther.

**Design Review Committee:** Chair: Brian D. Swanson; Co-Chair: Angel Martinez; Karen Burns, David Milne, Rick Woods, Ellie Montalvo.

**Property Manager:** Kyle Remp, Menas Realty (858) 270-7870. Please visit web site [www.menas.com](http://www.menas.com) for information on who to contact for billing or repairs.

Escondido Police Department: emergency = 911; non-emergency = (760) 839-4722.

**New Property Manager.** Thanks to Julie Menas for nearly two years of managing our homeowners association. Julie took over after a series of personnel changes, and provided stable leadership. She will continue to be a resource to Menas Realty employee Kyle Remp who recently assumed responsibility for managing Hidden Trails. The Board looks forward to working with Kyle to ensure that Hidden Trails runs smoothly.

**PARTY TIME!!!! HIDDEN TRAILS COMMUNITY PICNIC.** This is a great way to meet your neighbors, and homeowners from other streets. Groves homeowner Gloria Fonterela has volunteered to chair this committee, but she needs a few able homeowners to assist her. Any activity is so much easier if several people step in to assist. Please contact Brian or Gloria to help out!!! ([bswanson@sempra.com](mailto:bswanson@sempra.com)).

**HOA Meetings.** It has been said that good government requires the intelligent involvement of all citizens. The same could be said of our homeowners association. Meetings are held at 6:30PM at the East Valley Community Center, a half block west of the Vons. Meetings are held quarterly on the first Wednesday of each quarter (Jan/June/Sept/Dec). This is changed from the first Thursday to the first Wednesday. Next meeting is September 7th.

**DUES INCREASE?** Not at this time. In fact, your Board has just hired a new landscape company, saving the Association a significant amount of money compared to our prior contract. Also, the Board asked Menas Realty investigate a \$20,000.00 water bill recently received from the City, and has learned that not only did the \$20K bill belong to Lyon Homes, but also that nearly \$10,000.00 in other water bills paid by the Association last year should have been paid by Lyon Homes.

The result is that Lyon Homes will be paying the large bill, and will be reimbursing the Association for nearly \$10K paid for a handful of other water bills. We should feel \$30,000 richer (\$100 per household)! Although our dues have remained the same for 3 1/2 years, instead of increasing dues, the Board is currently working with our

accounting advisors to determine exactly how much we can **REDUCE** our monthly dues. Stay tuned.

**Lost Treasure:** If you have submitted your application for architectural improvements, and have completed your work but not received any refund that may be due, please send your Notice of Completion and the Design Committee will schedule a visit to review your improvements. Once approved, any refund will be sent a week or so later.

**HOA Meeting Minutes.** This is the record of business conducted by your HOA. Please view the Menas Property website [www.menas.com](http://www.menas.com) to view our minutes. You will need a password which will be provided by our property manager, Menas Realty (see Web site).

**Yipes, yaps, howls and barks.** Summer is a time when most of us spend lots of time outdoors, and our windows are more often open during both day and night. Most of us are considerate pet owners. If your pet Spot, Fido or Fifi is regularly doing more than a short “arf”, please attend to it promptly. Younger dogs need to be effectively trained to avoid becoming a nuisance.

A neglected dog, or a dog left outside after dark, is a recipe for disturbing your neighbors. One noisy dog tends to start a chain reaction in the neighborhood, depriving children and adults of deserved tranquility and sleep. Please be considerate and control your barking dog. Please be especially considerate in keeping dogs quite after dark and before 7AM. Note: Association rules allow a maximum of two dogs per household.

**Violations - Fine Hearings.** Some people just don’t get it. A few homeowners have received Notice of Violation from our property manager. If you receive a NOV, you must respond to it in writing. Failure to do so, and to correct the violation, can result in a fine hearing before the Board. At the hearing homeowners have the opportunity to present their explanation to the Board. When appropriate the Board can levy a fine on the offending homeowner. Ongoing violations may receive ongoing fines. You are advised not to ignore notices of violation or fine hearing letters.

**Parking Variance.** Owners of trailers, motor homes, boats, campers, etc. must submit and obtain approval for a Parking Variation prior to parking their vehicle in our community. When adequately screened, and approved in writing, one such vehicle or other approved vehicle may be parked on the side of the house. The Parking Variance application, submitted to Menas Realty, must include details on all vehicles parked at the residence.

**Business use of Homes.** Our rules prohibit running a business out of our home when it brings clients to your home. The Board tries to exercise good judgment in enforcing this policy. If you suspect a problem in our community, please send a Notice of Violation to our property manager.

**New Landscape Company.** O’Connell Landscaping’s contract ends August 31. The new contractor has been invited to make a presentation at the start of our Sept. 7th quarterly meeting.

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**Design Review Committee News.**

**Congratulations for a job well done.** Homeowners and next-door neighbors Tony Bufalini and Steve Waggoner joined the Design Committee nearly two years ago, and faithfully performed their duties (attended monthly meetings, provide reasoned input, view completed improvements, keep a sense of humor). They provided valuable input and perspectives as we deliberated the aesthetics of various improvements. They will be greatly missed as they move on to other family and work and volunteer responsibilities. The Board and fellow DC members congratulate them for their service and wish them luck in their future endeavors. In anticipation of this change, homeowners David Milne (Groves), Ellie Montalvo (Meadows) and Rick Wood (Vineyards) have recently joined the committee, adding fresh perspectives and new energy.

**Details, details!** It has been said that “the devil’s in the details”. Many homeowners submit incomplete applications, yet the Design Committee can’t make a decision without necessary details. Be sure to list all improvements on the application page, and include a plot plan showing home and improvements on the lot, and detailed profile sketches for all structures (patio covers, walls, BBQs, etc.), and required details on improvements (length, width, color, etc.) and plants. This volunteer committee meets once a month to review applications. Plan ahead and submit a completed application early so you are not in at time crunch.

**Hidden Trails Community Association Architectural Guidelines.** Please be sure to read it and retain for reference. One change is that improvements valued less than \$1,000 do not need to submit an initial deposit with the application.

**Stacking Walls.** All walls need to be approved in writing prior to installation. Keystone Legacy walls are not approved for front yard installations. Keystone Country Cottage or Country Manor have a much nicer appearance, and are more likely to be approved for appropriate front yard applications. RCP in Escondido carries the Keystone products.

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**Neighborhood Watch.** *The Meadows is actively building its Neighborhood Watch program. We need a homeowner to step up and chair the broader Neighborhood Watch program for the entire community.*

**Fireworks, Rockets, etc.** The hot and dry season is upon us. Please ensure that your children and guests do not use fireworks or play with matches.

## **Outdoor News:**

**Rattlesnake Season.** Warm weather means that reptiles are more active. With warm nights, rattlesnakes are often out hunting mice after dark. I found a beautiful red diamond rattler on my driveway about 9PM in early July. I captured it and moved it to a safe location where it wouldn't harm people or pets, or be run over by a car. If you find a rattler don't touch it. You might use a broom, sweep it into a trash can (head first), and call me to pick it up for you. Our only poisonous snake is the rattlesnake, and they all have a dull tail (newborns only have a button, gain rattles as they shed their skins).

**Swallows depart soon.** The swallows who have made clay jug nests under some homeowners' eaves, will be departing for South America soon. If you leave their nest up they will return next year to eat 2,000 mosquitoes a day. Knock the nest down and they are unlikely to rebuild. I wish I had a few nests on my house so I'd have help controlling my mosquitoes.

**Feeding the "Homeless".** Many of us enjoy seeing wildlife living near our community. But, please help keep our wildlife wild. Do not feed possums, raccoons, coyotes (bird feeders are fine). If animals are fed by people, they lose their fear and may have to be destroyed.

**WISH LIST:** Volunteers to a) chair the Neighborhood Watch Committee, b) assist Gloria in planning end-of-summer HOA picnic, and c) develop or assist on HOA maintained website.

Ideas for articles? Talent for writing? Ready to volunteer? Please contact Brian Swanson (619) 699-5115 days (best), (760) 739-5451 evenings, or Hidden Trails property manager, Julie Menas (619) 276-5169, <a href="mailto:jmenas@menas.com">jmenas@menas.com</a> .
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