

Fountaingrove II Gazette

A Publication of the Fountaingrove II Open Space Maintenance Association

Volume II, Issue I

March 2005

OSMA Board Members

- Gary Specker, President
- Bill Andrews, Vice President
- Sy Rothbard, Secretary
- Bill Mulert, CFO
- Rosemary Yates

OSMA Board Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month at 3:00 p.m. at Focus Real Estate & Investments, Inc., 3936 Mayette Ave. Call 544-9443 to confirm the time and date.

The Fountaingrove II Gazette is a continuation of previous newsletters of the Association. Previous newsletters can be found at www.fountaingrove2.org

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Park Construction Update

Party Planned for May 21st
by Kim Nielsen-Glynn, Park Committee Chairperson

Rincon Ridge Park has, at long last, become a popular destination for Fountaingrove II families and friends. For me and other Park Committee members, it is absolutely delightful to see so many people enjoying our beautiful and almost-complete park.

The City hopes to complete installation of picnic tables, benches, decomposed granite walkways, and drinking fountains in the coming weeks. Also on the list of coming attractions are the much-anticipated bench walls that will be faced with almost three hundred wonderfully handcrafted tiles by area residents. These tile walls will be a truly unique and whimsical addition to our already fabulously scenic park.

The City has also installed deer fencing around the sensitive plant area of the park, an area that has been adopted by the California Native Plant Society. Although it may seem

more desirable to leave the area without a fence, the reality is that the rare and endangered plants we are trying to protect and save have almost no chance of thriving without this type of protection. Fortunately, the fencing is the very same type that is allowed for homeowners in their own backyards. Incidentally, the California Native Plant Society plans on conducting educational tours through the sensitive plant area once or twice yearly to instruct residents on how lucky we are to have this irreplaceable habitat.

Please remember when enjoying the park that there is **NO PARKING** along Rincon Ridge Drive. That street has no parking bays by the park, and it is quite dangerous to try to pass parked vehicles along this narrow and busy sec-

tion. Ample parking is available in the bay around the corner on Park Gardens Drive.

Dogs are always welcome at the park, as long as they are leashed and their responsible owners carry plastic bags with which to clean up after them. Please help keep the park safe and enjoyable for everyone!

Grand Opening Party!
Save the Date:
Sat., May 21st

Let's celebrate the grand opening of Rincon Ridge Park! **Saturday, May 21st** is the date we've set for a festive neighborhood party. We're planning on having lots of fun at this potluck style event, so plan on bringing the whole family. Watch for further details in the near future.

Rincon Ridge Park Spring Work Parties with the California Native Plant Society

This spring volunteers are again invited to come out and see glorious blooms while working to maintain the sensitive plant area in Rincon Ridge Park. In March and April the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) will continue clearing dead brush. The new fence will protect the plants from deer browsing and garbage dumping, but also limits access to two gates, so a good turnout for the work parties will make removing the brush easier.

Three dates are planned:

Thurs., March 24th, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Sat., March 26th, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Sun., April 17th, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Call Lynn Houser of the CNPS for more information:
568-3230 or housers@sonic.net

OSMA Uses CCC Plants for Landscaping

By Karen Andrews, Landscape Committee Chairperson

The OSMA recently completed a special planting of native plants grown from cuttings taken from an area of Fountaingrove II. The OSMA's Landscape Committee had been hoping to cultivate some plants of two unique species and use them in the re-vegetation projects already planned for our open space.

Rincon Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos stanfordiana* ssp. *Decumbens*) and Rincon Ceanothus (*Ceanothus confusus*) are species limited to the ridges of Fountaingrove. Rincon Manzanita has yellow-green leaves and shell pink flowers. Rincon Ceanothus has small, flat, evergreen leaves with blue, lavender or purple flowers.

About a year ago I contacted Chris Sauer at the California Conservation Corps' Napa nursery for assistance. Chris brought a crew to the Rincon Ridge park site and took several hundred cuttings of both the above species.

The newly propagated plants were delivered at the end of January. The Committee chose to install them close to the park site. The area, along the East side of Fountaingrove Parkway between lower Rincon Ridge Drive and the park boundary on Sedgemoore Drive, is now replanted with these wonderful California natives, special to our area. Though small right now, they should fill in



CCC planting area along Fountaingrove Pkwy.

over the next several years. The cost for the project, including plants, was \$ 4,300.

The Committee is hoping to continue this process, especially since the cost to cut and root is only about \$2.50 per plant.

Unfortunately, due to budget cuts, the CCC nursery is closing. If the plants do well the Committee may try to find another nursery to continue propagating local native plants.

Fuel Management - New Projects Update

by Bill Andrews, Fire Safety Committee Chairman

The Fire Safety Committee began the last large fuel management project in January. The project, known as the East Ridge project, was defined in November '04, and bidding by three contractors followed. Progress has been subject to delays by the rainy weather but will be completed well before the upcoming fire season.

This is one of the largest fuel management projects in Fountaingrove II open space, covering parcels from Daybreak Court, continuing behind Rocky Knoll Way, Sage Hill Place, Fox Hill Place, areas of Rincon Ridge Drive, Shelter Glen Way, Chanterelle Circle and ending at Heathfield Place. When finished nearly 12 acres of open space bordering 7500 feet of private property will be treated. The treatment includes extending the existing fuel reduction areas from 30' to 100'. Dead brush, Fir seedlings, and grass will be removed. Trees will be

limbed up to 8 feet and the chaparral will be thinned.

This is an extremely difficult project because of the steep terrain and the limited access points to the project area. Much of the cut

material will have to be hauled up to flatter areas for chipping. The project cost is \$98,260.

This year's remaining projects will be much smaller in scope and will bring several additional areas up to the new OSMA specification.

The OSMA Board and Fire Safety Committee were notified in December of new legislation, signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger in September 2004, mandating a minimum of 100' fire breaks in areas

designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Fountaingrove II is one of these zones. The OSMA had already completed much of the work in other areas that complies with the new legislation.

Senate Bill 1369 amends previous code

in the following manner:

- Increases the minimum clearance requirement from 30' to 100'.
- Provides for state law, or local ordinance, rule, or regulation that may specify distances greater than 100'.
- Allows insurance companies to require home/building owners to maintain firebreaks greater than 100'.

The East Ridge project will be completed well before the upcoming fire season.

Landscape and Fire Break Maintenance — New Contracts Signed

By Bill & Karen Andrews

The OSMA has undertaken a very large fuel reduction program in Fountaingrove II open space (see story—previous page, and the Dec. '04 news-letter). Additionally, the OSMA recently became responsible for new acreage of open space. Because of the resulting changes to the size of fire break areas, the Board agreed to seek new bids for the annual Fire Break Maintenance contract.

Growth of the treated areas is due to two causes:

- During 2004 and continuing into 2005 projects have extended the fire breaks from 30' to 100' from private property lines.
- In January '05 an agreement was reached with Christopherson Homes to accept the last of the open space parcels in the West. Christopherson had previously agreed to extend the fire breaks for these parcels to comply with new OSMA guidelines prior to turnover.

Growth in the number of acres of open space maintained by the Board as wild land increased from 140 acres to 194. The amount of treated fire break area increased from 11 acres to 58.4 acres—just over 5 times more acreage than in 2004.

Last year's contract covered about 11 acres of fuel breaks at a cost of \$19,000. The contract called for up to three "passes" during the spring and summer to keep the fire breaks free of grass and re-growth.

The amount of treated fire break area increased from 11 acres to 58.4 acres—just over 5 times more acreage than in 2004.

Three contractors bid on the new work, and the contract was awarded again to Cagwin & Dorward with a bid of \$48,600. The specifications again call for up to three passes to keep the areas clear of dangerous material during the fire season. The bidding process saved residents money. With 5 times more acreage, maintenance will NOT cost 5 times more!

The addition of the new parcels in the West also added new landscape maintenance areas. There are three new irrigated areas which increased the length from 18,450 feet to 23,050 feet. There is an additional 1,000 feet of natural area to maintain and

two more dry water areas, doubling that type of area from 400 to 800 feet. Cagwin & Dorward re-bid the new areas and increased the base to cover the new plantings from last spring and fall. The increase was \$432 per month. The new monthly amount is \$4,945.00.

The Board unanimously agreed that the new bids were acceptable and issued the contracts for Landscape and Fire Break Maintenance to Cagwin & Dorward for another year.

Landscape Committee Announces Spring Plantings

At its February '05 meeting the OSMA Board approved, and the Landscape Committee reaffirmed, plans for the spring planting. Planned projects were previously prioritized by Committee members.

Two inner streets in the Vistara subdivision—Beauford and Rutherford—and the west side of Fountaingrove Parkway between the two Hadley Hill Roads, will be planted with shrubs and perennials, and then re-mulched.

The work will start in several weeks and should be completed by May.

Residents Urged to Avoid Planting Invasive Brooms

Scotch Broom, other brooms and gorse continue to appear in Fountaingrove II on the hillsides, in open space areas, along the parkway and in some private yards. Broom is an invasive shrub native to central and southern Europe. It forms dense stands which prevent establishment of native and desirable plant species and increases fire risk.

The states of California, Oregon,

Washington, Idaho and the province of British Columbia all have programs to control broom, as evidenced by the many Web sites which contain information about broom eradication. The OSMA has worked to control broom in open space areas, but cannot enter residents' yards. Broom is easily spread by its seeds.

Recently some Fountaingrove resi-

dents have noticed that a local home improvement store is selling broom. Residents are urged to learn more about this invasive species and select more suitable plants. Our Web site (www.fountaingrove2.org) has a picture of Scotch Broom with its yellow flowers. Additionally we have posted a list of suggested plants. The California Native Plant Society also has information about hearty plants suitable for our yards at www.cnps.org.

Group Meets to Discuss New Neighborhood Council

A group of over twenty Fountaingrove II residents from both the East and the West met on February 16th at the home of Gary and Sue Specker to discuss the formation of a new Neighborhood Council.

As discussed in the last newsletter (December '04), the OSMA Board would like to develop a group of Neighborhood Representatives who can have a voice in all aspects of OSMA responsibility: landscape projects and maintenance, community and fire safety, infrastructure, and relations with the City of Santa Rosa.

A wide-ranging discussion took place at the meeting about ways to foster communication and more participation within our community, and what might be the expectations for Representatives' involvement.

Several people spoke of their interest in becoming involved and cited how neighborhood involvement resulted in the construction of Rincon Ridge Park. Others voiced the need for flexibility of responsibility due to pressures of time.

The meeting addressed ways to communicate in a

timely manner with neighbors, and between the Board and the community. It is felt that people will want to get involved when they feel they are making a contribution in a spirit of cooperation.

In general most seemed to agree that the following will be the duties of the Neighborhood Representatives:

- Be the eyes and ears of the Board for problems, suggestions and general feedback, particularly within their own neighborhoods
- Be a conduit for information to neighbors
- Encourage neighbors to stay informed and to participate
- Attend about 3 Council meetings per year and the annual meeting

In turn the Board will commit to:

- Good ongoing two-way direct communication with Rep's through e-mail and possibly the Web
- Respect for the time of volunteers

Safety Committee Meets; Still Awaits Parkway Audit Report

The Safety Committee, headed by Robert Greenberg, met in mid January. Participants included Lt. Brian Davis of the Santa Rosa Police Dept., assigned as a liaison.

The Committee discussed the January non-fatal accident on the Parkway just east of Parker Hill Rd. where a car plunged off the roadway attempting to pass. Robert said that his two highest priority safety concerns are the intersection at Parker Hill and the Park-

way, and the intersection of upper Rincon Ridge and the Parkway (at the new park). The accident was in this "danger zone".

As of the end of February, the Committee (and the City) still had not received a final Fountaingrove Parkway Roadway Safety Audit report.

Robert has urged the City to expedite the No Parking signs on Rincon Ridge by the park. Parking is available in the parking bay on Park Gardens Drive.

Shorts Subjects & Miscellaneous

Association Dues

Did you know that you can pay your association dues automatically and not have to worry about late charges and writing that monthly check?

All you have to do is go to www.fountaingrove2.org, click on the Focus Real Estate link, click on the link to the Authorization Form, print and fill it out, and send it in. No more worries!

Good Samaritans

The Board and many residents have noticed and want to thank the "Good Samaritans" who are picking up trash in our community. Even though the OSMA has

trash collected from the open spaces, trash still accumulates and may be missed for collection. We don't know their names but we greatly appreciate their efforts!

More on Mail

There has been more mail tampering and theft. A new report was posted on the Web site on February 7th (see the Headline at fountaingrove2.org). Fortunately we are seeing more locking mailboxes installed in our community all the time. These have become a necessity. Note: Leland Spragle on Repton Way says, You can't install one that requires a key for the mail carrier. They aren't legal. Get one with a slot for delivery. You unlock the other area with a key for mail retrieval.

One resident on Chanterelle reported another problem. He noticed that mail can be mis-delivered because the street number may be the same for two different houses on two different streets. As always, keep a watchful eye.

Is Fountaingrove Going to the Dogs?

By John I. Torres, friend of "Buster Webb"

What do Stella, Bella and Buster all have in common? They are our beloved pets! They are spoiled rotten and they live better than most people! Although many of us feel as though our dogs are our "children", they really are special creatures (animals) with daily needs. Those "needs" are regular care giving: fresh air, fresh water, good food, a refreshing bath, and lots of attention.

As to the question: "Is Fountaingrove going to the dogs?", the answer is...YES! As the remainder of homes are being built and new families are moving into our neighborhood, we need to be mindful of guidelines and courtesy that can help maintain our neighborhood as pet (dog) friendly. Here are some of the ways we can be proactive:

Barking dog? All dogs bark... NOT! (My little pride and joy, "Buster" does not bark. He is a Rat Terrier breed.) The "normal" dog does bark to alert, encourage and express fear or joy. The persistent barking dog may be a sign of lack of attention or a need for additional

training. Please do initiate conversation with your neighbors about your dog, if you have a dog. If you are not a dog owner, speak with your neighbor before reporting a neighbor's pet to animal control or the association. Yes, we know that there are CC&R's and city regulations, but wouldn't it be in the best interest of our neighborhood if these types of things are worked out at the lowest possible level? Ask your neighbor—they will tell you if there is a problem.

Got bag? Just recently, while walking my dog, I observed a neighbor take his dog out of his home for a brief pit stop. The dog did the natural, obedient "deed" and the caretaker simply turned around and returned with his pet into his home. This is not very neighborly and will not endear our community to dogs. Please always carry a plastic bag when walking your dog, even in the open space areas. Please not only pick up your dog's waste; take it to the nearest trash receptacle. This is

a major complaint in our community. (7-28 Animal nuisances prohibited., Ord. 2943 16, 1992, Violation Code, \$1,000)



Don't tick me off! Ticks are in full season as spring comes to "Highland Hills." Please check your dog for ticks after every walk. Have a brush and towel by your door to use immediately afterwards. Go out and purchase a new flea/tick collar, a flea tick shampoo, or invest in "Frontline." My vet recently prescribed "Frontline", a topical product, which kills fleas, flea eggs, and ticks that may transmit Lyme disease. It is also waterproof. Be mindful that ticks love the ear, neck and underbelly of your pet. Ticks can cause serious illness and/or death to your pet or person in your family.

Recently spotted bumper sticker: "God help me to be the type of person my dog thinks I am."

Coming articles: "Less Stress = Dog?", "Young Pup, Old Dog", "Protecting Your Dog"

Comments & Questions: jonniet@sonic.net

Stay Informed; Send in Your E-mail Address for News

Our Web site is now in its third year, www.fountaingrove2.org. It's a fast way to get current news.



Be sure your name is on our Web update list. Get timely and important Web update notification. Your name and e-mail

address will not be shared with anyone else, and it will be hidden in group e-mails.

Simply send an e-mail with your name to: editor@fountaingrove2.org. State that you want to be on the update list.

Letters to the Editor; Newsletter Contributions

If you would like to comment or contribute to the newsletter, please send an e-mail to:

editor@fountaingrove2.org

Letters to the Editor and contributions will be published as space permits. Next issue: June 2005. Deadline: May 25, 2005.



Photo Gallery

Our new park is getting lots of use!

Do you have a photo to share? Send digital photos to the newsletter editor at: editor@fountaingrove2.org

FOUNTAINGROVE II
Open Space Maintenance Association

The Fountaingrove II Gazette

The Fountaingrove II Gazette is published quarterly by the Fountaingrove II Open Space Maintenance Association. OSMA questions should be directed to the OSMA Board through its property management association:

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Fountaingrove II is a residential community in the hills of northeastern Santa Rosa, CA, in the heart of the Wine Country in Sonoma County. When construction is completed there will be nearly 600 homes within the community.

The Open Space Maintenance Association (OSMA) is responsible for managing the open space within the defined boundaries of the community. All homeowners share the ownership and maintenance of this open space. The Association strives to preserve the natural beauty of the wooded spaces while promoting safety to homeowners and improvements to the landscaped areas along the streets and Parkway.

Keeping our open spaces beautiful

We're on the Web:

www.fountaingrove2.org

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Open Space Maintenance Association

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