



# CalaveraHills.info!

Newsletter & Community Support Information

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Dear Calavera Hills Friends,

Fall is upon us and the year just keeps moving faster! It's good to see all the Halloween decorations up around the neighborhood and the enthusiasm that goes with it. Although some of the more creative items really confuse my dog Molly – each year she is learning more about skeletons and spiders and she responds with the occasional growl! More about Molly later...

In this newsletter we take a look at the latest ideas for fixing the dam at Lake Calavera. We've also included an update (in a long series of updates!) on the Mira Monte Road Barrier and some more recent traffic issues, including a proposal to make College Blvd from I78 to Cannon Road part of the Carlsbad truck route.....

Our special article this month is called 'Molly Conquers Mt. Calavera', complete with pictures and a diary. For a full pictorial to music on Molly's climb, go to [www.calaverahills.info](http://www.calaverahills.info) and click on the link on the Home page. Don't miss it!

Also included are the regular features:

- Announcements
- Real Estate Market Update.
- Real Estate Sales - summary of recent sales in Calavera Hills

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and stay in touch!

Best wishes,

Sue Landis

P.S. I always enjoy and value the opportunity to help friends and neighbors in Calavera Hills achieve their real estate goals. Recently, I worked with Richard & Jennifer Wu who moved from Calavera Hills to Irvine. Richard sent me a thank you note after close of escrow that I'd like to share with you:

*"I want to thank you for the wonderful services you provided my family. You sold my house on the first day of showing it and used innovative strategies to get the best offers from the buyers. Because of your help we were able to sell our house above what we thought was possible. Your great service continued after the house went into escrow. I didn't have to take time off work because you were taking care of things, from scheduling a termite inspection to meeting the repairman and the cleaner. Thanks again for your wonderful service."*

## [New Plans To Fix Lake Calavera Dam Valves](#)

As you are probably aware, the city had put forward a proposal to fix Lake Calavera's long-broken dam control valves by draining the lake, giving workers easy access to the valves. However, this was met by a torrent of letters and complaints from concerned citizens and environmental groups like Preserve Calavera. The problem with the dam is that without the valves functioning properly, water drainage from the lake, particularly in times of heavy rain, cannot be controlled. This has an environmental impact that affects wildlife, but it also affects property owners downstream of the dam due to stronger and unmanaged erosion (Rancho Carlsbad is a good example, where both Calavera Creek and Agua Hedionda Creek converge).

A new plan has been developed that will be voted on by the planning commission in January. This plan does not require draining the lake, but would involve creating a tube-like structure that would be placed over the control tower using a barge. This would then enable workers to access the valves in a dry environment and the price tag for this effort, thankfully, may end up being less than the drainage plan because there will be little need for environmental impact studies with this approach (\$2.5M versus \$2.8M for the initial plan). The job includes both repairing the valves and constructing an onshore control building. If approved work would begin in the late Summer or early fall of 2006 and end sometime in 2007. For a recent North County Times article, go to the 'Newsletters & News' page of [www.CalaveraHills.info](http://www.CalaveraHills.info).



Last winter's overflow

## [Traffic Update: Mira Monte Road Barriers + New Issues for College Blvd](#)

Ironically the Mira Monte situation (whether to open or continue to keep closed, the road barrier between Carlsbad and Oceanside on Mira Monte Dr in Calavera Hills) has taken a 'back seat' to other road and traffic issues now percolating in council chambers in Carlsbad and around North County.

The most recent development is the proposal to add more truck routes to the approved list of streets within Carlsbad to handle truck traffic. Vehicles of more than 14,000 lbs are required to use these signed routes as they make their way through town. There are 5 additions to the list, with College Blvd and Cannon Rd being the ones that could have a big impact on Calavera Hills. The city is aware that this is a sensitive area to run a truck route given that there are Elementary and Middle Schools on some of the proposed routes, along with new residential neighborhoods. Bob Johnston, the city's traffic engineer, stated that 'the new routes have been picked because they are logical links between existing truck routes and they have been built to withstand heavy truck traffic.' At a 3pm meeting at City Hall on November 7<sup>th</sup>, the Traffic Safety Commission will consider the options. It will then go to the City Council at a later date.

Another issue coming to light recently was that Oceanside's City Council voted to cancel any further work on a new interchange about half way between El Camino Real and College, providing access to I78. Residents of Rancho Del Oro have been against it because of concerns of increased traffic volume. It will also have an impact on Calavera Hills. Says Carlsbad Councilman Matt Hall, 'This is going to have a lot of impact on College and Cannon roadways.' Not having the interchange could also impact the development of Robertson Ranch, just south of Calavera Hills, as this development and its approval had partly hinged on the improved traffic handling of an additional interchange. The Carlsbad City Council is requesting that the San Diego Association of Governments look at the matter, as this issue has important ramifications for Carlsbad and the broader area as well.

For both North County Times articles on these topics, go to the 'Newsletters & News' page of [www.CalaveraHills.info](http://www.CalaveraHills.info).

## [Announcements:](#)

***We'd like to WELCOME all of the new homeowners in Calavera Hills to the community!*** We have a steady stream of families moving into existing neighborhoods. But we also have all of the new homes recently purchased in Montara, Summerhouse, Mystic Point and Ravinia. Our newsletter circulation is growing each month as new residents move in. *We hope you really enjoy living here.*

## Molly Conquers Mt. Calavera

*Have you ever climbed Mt. Calavera? Read on to experience an important day in the life of Jack Russell Terrier, Molly Landis.*

Cooling my feet in the refreshing waters of Lake Calavera, I prepared for my journey to the summit of the mountain. Normally all I care about are the ducks and how to get my paws on them. But today is different...today I gazed up at the mountain that lured me to conquer it. There in the distance stands the towering peak shrouded in the warm haze of another sunny day in Calavera Hills.

When I read the Calavera Nature Preserve page on the website [www.CalaveraHills.info](http://www.CalaveraHills.info), I learned that the word 'calavera' means skull, which probably comes from the unusual shape of the mountain. The 513-ft. Mount Calavera is not really a mountain at all but rather a 22 million-year-old volcanic plug. A volcanic plug is a mass of volcanic rock that solidified in its vent millions of years ago. When the volcano becomes extinct and starts to erode away, the "plug" is all that is left behind. Mount Calavera is one of only three volcanic plugs in Southern California. I was a little disappointed to learn that I was climbing a 'plug' not a mountain, but it's still a formidable challenge nonetheless.

I prepared for the climb by packing plenty of water. You need to make sure that you are hydrated throughout a climb like this one. My preference is Arrowhead Mountain Spring Water, but a good slurp out of a muddy puddle can be quite satisfying as well (but that's just me). I also wanted to make sure that I knew what to look for on my ascent, so I went to the Preserve Calavera website (in case you weren't aware of it, that's [www.preservecalavera.org](http://www.preservecalavera.org)). The animal I'm most interested in seeing (and getting close to) is the *Yellow-breasted Chat*. They say it's a bird but I think they might have added an 'h' to the last word by accident. The plant that intrigues me the most is the *Little Mousetail* – some of you may know of it by its scientific name *Myosurus minimus ssp.apus*. I'm worried

that if I see one I may go wild. They tell me I was bred to catch critters like that.

As we climb higher I'm seeing and smelling things that are really new to me. I like to look at plants like the ones with the red berries. They look so colorful and tasty, but my parents have told me never to eat them – the berries may be poison. For that matter they have also told me never to hike up here alone.



I do take a rest quite often because, you know, I'm one of those city dogs that only go out for walks a couple times a day or maybe to Tiny Tot Play Camp once a week. That hardly keeps a dog in shape for this intense climbing. The edge of the cliff also makes me a little nervous, as it should. That's why you see me staying several feet from the edge. It's a very long way down.





Summerhouse & Ravinia



Mystic Point, Capistrano,  
Sheffield, Montara &  
Barrington



Calavera Hills Elementary &  
Middle Schools



Nantucket

Ah, I've arrived at the summit. A dog like me works up a big thirst with my panting and heavy dog breathing. A dry mouth leads to other less desirable effects on a dog's breath (I have been working on it with 'Greenies' from PetSmart!). So I made sure I took little sips of water all along the way, and then left some for more my descent from the peak. If you drink too fast and slurp up too much at once, you can get a first-class tummy ache. But I must say, up here it tastes even better.



That first glimpse east over the peak is dramatic. Of course being a proud dog I like to scan the whole landscape for the view – if I should glimpse a delectable critter while I'm looking, that's OK with me too. All the new neighborhoods in Calavera Hills are just about finished. You know that they started planning the Calavera Hills Master Plan community back in the 70s. That's another little factoid from [www.CalaveraHills.info](http://www.CalaveraHills.info). Check it out, it's on the 'About Calavera Hills' page. I must say that looking over the community from up here is really inspiring. It makes me want to run down the mountain and play with my friend Lucy Peterson – I can see her house from here. She's an Italian Greyhound with just about as much energy as I have! I'm sure there are a lot of dogs worth meeting and having fun with all over Calavera Hills (oh and that goes for people too!).



Well I can't stay up here all day. And I need to save enough energy for the climb down. It can be harder going down that coming up because you really have to watch your footing. Unfortunately there is still a little glass on the summit that could cut my paws if I'm not careful. I have heard that good people around the area help to keep the Calavera Nature Preserve clean and usable for people, and dogs on leashes. That's great because I want to come back some day.



As I come to the end of my special day, I think back on all of the new sights, sounds and smells I had. *That's really the best part of having a really special day like today.* Cooling my feet once again in the lake and looking back up toward the peak, really fills me with a sense of accomplishment. NOW WHERE'S THAT DUCK!



## [Molly Conquers Mt. Calavera – Virtual Diary](#)

Have you ever walked to the top of Mt Calavera? See this multi-media slide show at [www.CalaveraHills.info](http://www.CalaveraHills.info) (requires a high-speed internet connection and Windows Media Player 9.0). Be sure to let it load the buffer which you'll see at the bottom of the viewing box, then click on the link to the left of the picture box that will expand it to your full screen. And turn on your sound!

## Real Estate Market Update

The property market nationally remains extremely hot. The National Association of Realtors reported that sales of previously owned homes in August posted their second highest level on record and that median home prices climbed to a record of \$220,000, a 15.8% increase over a twelve month period – the biggest 12-month increase since July 1979.

The still record low interest rates are driving a lot of that buying activity. There are also an increased number of speculators and people buying second homes that are affecting it as well.

When you look at the southern California markets, the counties in and around Los Angeles are still seeing some double digit gains on re-sale homes from a year earlier. In San Diego county we seem to be the first of the southern California markets to show some significant flattening in appreciation rates. The median price of a resale single family home in September 2005 was \$550,000, versus \$520,000 in September 2004 – that's a 5.8% increase over 12 months. While that is not nearly what appreciation rates have been recently, the good news is that it's still on the positive side.



While some are concerned that home prices are out of reach of most new homeowners now in our market and that could stifle demand, many industry analysts continue to talk about the fact that there is an overall housing shortage in San Diego County and that alone could keep prices steady if not increasing into next year. Another factor that could affect new home inventory in the future are the increases in prices of raw materials – wood, cement, steel, and all petroleum-based products including everything from plastic piping to insulation to shingles. The last nine months have seen raw materials increase by over 20%. Because of these increases builders may be less apt to take the risk on a new construction when their profit margins have already been cut by inflation.

In the Carlsbad market, we've seen a record number of properties on the market – over 700 residential properties. That is a 14% increase over the record Summer of 2004. The end of Summer and early Fall tend to be slower months seasonally. So the size of the inventory is at least partly due to the time of year.

One statistic that is trending higher is Cancelled or Expired listings. That is where a home does not sell in the desired time-frame at the desired price and the seller takes the home off the market. This fits with the related trend that homes are sitting longer on the market (the Days On Market or DOM number that you hear about quite a lot). That number is now in the mid-50s in Carlsbad. Some analysts see that as a solely seasonal variation and that home sales will pick up again as we get into the new year. Seasonally homes sales start to build in late Winter/early Spring and peak in mid-Summer.

This month in **Calavera Hills** there are 12 single family detached homes on the market for re-sale versus 11 last October. And the Days On Market figures are slightly higher – in 2005 the average number of days a listed home has been on the market is 51. Last year that figure was 38. What has been different is the average days on the market it takes to sell a home. Last year the average, which included the prior six months of sales, was 19. This year the same average is at 55. So it's definitely taking longer to get a transaction done this year. The longer it takes to sell a home at the desired price the more pressure there is for listed prices to come down. The most telling tale will be when we get into the new year and see how strong sales are for the peak selling months.

## REAL ESTATE SALES

### Market Report for Barrington, Nantucket, Sheffield, Capistrano, Montara, Mystic Point, Ravinia and Summerhouse neighborhoods of Calavera Hills

#### Active Listings

ESF = Estimated Square Feet    LP/SF = List price per square foot    DOM = Days On Market

Address	Neighborhood	Beds	Baths	ESF	LP/SF	List Price	DOM
Jetty Point	Mystic Point	3	2	1363	\$378	\$465,000 - 515,876	32
Jetty Point	Mystic Point	3	2	1363	\$363	\$495,000	57
Backshore Court	Mystic Point	3	2.5	1390	\$378	\$519,000 - \$525,900	118
Jetty Point	Mystic Point	3	2.5	1535	\$355	\$525,000 - 545,000	115
Rockfield Court	Barrington	3	3	2050	\$351	\$669,000 - \$719,000	31
Harwich Drive	Barrington	4	3	2287	\$328	\$729,000 - \$749,000	79
Harwich Drive	Barrington	4	3	2287	\$319	\$729,000	60
Foothill Avenue	Nantucket	4	2.5	2642	\$295	\$739,000 - \$779,000	27
Strata Drive	Sheffield	4	3	2579	\$320	\$775,000 - \$825,000	15
Shale Court	Capistrano	4	2.5	2913	\$300	\$835,000 - \$875,000	3
Stoneridge Road	Nantucket	5	3	2944	\$288	\$849,000	59
Rock Ridge Road	Montara	3	3	2026	\$426	\$862,897	18
Rill Court	Nantucket	4	3	2944	\$299	\$879,900	70
Rill Court	Nantucket	4	3	2944	\$323	\$950,000	68
Rock Ridge Road	Montara	4	4	2822	\$342	\$966,079	7
Rock Ridge Road	Montara	3	3	2691	\$366	\$984,541	17

#### Pending

OMD = Off Market Date (e.g. offer accepted)

**Sue's Listings!**

Address	Neighborhood	Beds	Baths	ESF	LP/SF	List Price	OMD	DOM
Jetty Point	Mystic Point	3	2	1363	\$367	\$469,900 - \$499,900	09/29/2005	38
Jetty Point	Mystic Point	3	2.5	1535	\$352	\$489,000 - \$539,888	10/21/2005	21
Foothill Ave	Nantucket	3	2.5	2050	\$331	\$649,000 - \$679,000	10/17/2005	9
Saddle Drive	Capistrano	4	2.5	2913	\$291	\$799,000 - \$848,999	10/20/2005	211
Strata Drive	Sheffield	5	3	3373	\$275	\$889,000 - \$929,000	09/21/2005	29

**SOLD BY SUE**

#### Sold

SP/SF = Sold price per Square Foot    COE = Close of Escrow

Address	Neighborhood	Beds	Baths	ESF	Sold Price	SP/SF	COE	DOM
3734 Saddle Drive	Capistrano	4	2.	2726	\$787,000	\$289	03/03/2005	98
3908 Rockfield Court	Nantucket	4	3	2944	\$768,000	\$261	03/09/2005	77
3990 Foothill Avenue	Nantucket	3	3	2050	\$680,000	\$332	03/24/05	85
3529 Hummock Drive	Nantucket	4	3	2765	\$770,000	\$278	04/01/2005	7
3745 Cavern Place	Capistrano	5	3.5	3300	\$891,000	\$270	04/01/2005	5
3864 Stoneridge Road	Nantucket	4	2.5	2662	\$735,000	\$276	04/05/2005	73
3631 Barranca Court	Barrington	4	3	2287	\$694,000	\$306	04/15/2005	5
3658 Jetty Point	Mystic Point	3	2.5	1411	\$545,000	\$386	04/21/2005	55
3848 Stoneridge Road	Nantucket	3	3	2050	\$660,000	\$322	05/02/2005	60
3948 Plateau Place	Capistrano	4	3	2913	\$799,000	\$274	05/05/2005	0
3598 Granite Court	Montara	5	3.5	2622	\$740,000	\$282	05/13/2005	125
3534 Harwich Drive	Barrington	4	2.5	2160	\$699,000	\$324	05/20/2005	4
3732 Whitesands Court	Capistrano	3	2.5	2160	\$699,000	\$324	06/01/2005	13
3919 Rill Court	Nantucket	4	3	2944	\$825,000	\$280	06/14/2005	8
3729 Saddle Drive	Capistrano	4	3.5	2900	\$805,000	\$278	06/22/2005	22
3635 Barranca Court	Barrington	4	2.5	2160	\$675,000	\$313	07/01/2005	21
3637 Strata Drive	Sheffield	5	3	2865	\$850,000	\$297	07/05/2005	0
3644 Barranca Court	Barrington	3	2.5	2160	\$685,000	\$317	07/25/2005	16
3580 Gorge Place	Montara	5	3.5	2592	\$794,014	\$306	08/23/2005	201
3611 Contour Place	Sheffield	5	3	2865	\$865,000	\$302	08/26/2005	144
3561 Sand Court	Montara	4	3	2691	\$729,000	\$271	09/21/2005	29

This information was compiled by Sue Landis on October 25, 2005 from the Multiple Listing Service. If your home is currently listed with another company, please do not consider this a solicitation.