



# Spanish Lakes News

*A Publication of the Spanish Lakes Homeowners' Association*

## Spanish Lakes Homeowners' Association

### President

Lynn Crawford

### Vice President

Jim Hagen

### Treasurer

Craig Thomas

### Secretary

Craig Thomas

### Editor

Bill Crawford

Mark IV  
Property Management Systems  
P. O. Box 1988  
Atascadero, CA 93423-1988  
(805) 466-6275  
info@markiv.net

### Annual Meeting and Barbecue

The Annual Meeting was called to order at 11:15 a.m. Several property owners were in attendance. After the minutes of previous meetings were approved the past year's accomplishments were reviewed (see "Board Notes" below). After these items it became clear that a quorum would not appear during the scheduled time.

Michael Croft was introduced as the new property manager, and noted, that since there was no quorum, the current board may elect to try to have a second quorum meeting or proceed to appoint new persons to fill the two vacant seats. These appointees serve for a one-year terms. Next year, voting for board members will be made to comply with the State regulations regarding associations (secret ballot will be mailed out). Also next year there will be coupons to pay the monthly assessments sent out by Jan. 1, and there is the possibility of having direct deposit also. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

The ensuing barbecue was a great success. The weather was cool, the wine (Paul Nevosh), and food (Templeton Donuts) was superb, and all enjoyed the company of other fellow Spanish Lakians.

### Board Notes

Over the past year several projects have been tackled, some of which are now complete:

- The upper North Lake dam has been repaired. Rebuilding the dam was not pursued now because of the extra time required to gain Fish and Game approval. This repair, well under budget, stopped the leak and should last for a few years.
- Road repairs have been completed. Some or all of our roads will be resealed next year.
- Several drainage issues have been corrected; those not addressed will be monitored.
- The Fire Marshal's strong suggestions for curb numbers and firebreaks around common structures and fire hydrants have now been carried out.

- A trail around the south lake has been completed and maintained, cleaning up poison oak where needed.
- A sponsored volunteer workday was a great success. Much of the barbed wire along the water tank road and unsafe lawn edging at the park was removed.
- One sponsored garage sale per year is authorized if: (1) homeowners request one and (2) a volunteer is identified to run it.
- Minimal maintenance of the few distressed properties has been attempted until the ownership (bank) meets their responsibilities for these properties.
- Trees were planted and the gate landscaping was spruced up.
- Speeding and construction traffic continue to be monitored.
- We acknowledge and appreciate our website and continue to distribute a newsletter.
- A certified property-management company was re-hired (Michael Croft with Mark IV Property Management Systems).

### Current Board

The Board recognizes the contributions of retiring members, John Fazio and Joel Stark. These volunteer homeowners endured, for several years, the often-thankless tasks of Board service. Their services are greatly appreciated.

Until a complete Board can be constituted, Lynn Crawford will serve as President, Craig Thomas as Secretary/Treasurer, and Jim Hagen as Vice President.

### Budget Report

Because the budget is currently in good shape (\$118,000 in reserves, and therefore 100% funded), there is no need to raise monthly assessments for next year. There are a few property owners in arrears on dues/fines, and recovery of owed monies is being addressed with some success.

## Trailers, Trash Receptacles, and Speeders

Trailers parked for long periods, in driveways or on street easements continue to be a concern of many residents. If you have a need to keep a trailer longer than 3 days, please request extra time for your special needs so we can deal with complaints.

Garbage cans left out on the street for longer than 24 hours after pick-up are also a cause for concern. There are many of us who would be happy to take in your cans if you are out of town--just let us know. Also, you also need to be aware that occasionally the garbage truck overlooks a trash container -- it may be left out until the PR Waste truck makes a special trip to empty it. Also, some homeowners have their gardeners take in the cans, and sometimes these workers don't get there until Thursday. As long as cans aren't in danger of being hit by cars, this is probably acceptable to most. Here again, if you let us know of your special circumstances we will be armed to deal with complaints.

Your board will always try to field complaints, take some action, and get back to you regarding that action. We have noticed that there have been fewer complaints regarding speeding -- the Board thanks you.

## History of Spanish Lakes

John Van de Wouw has assembled a compelling history of Spanish Lakes. It includes geologic history of the area, as well as the role of Native Americans and the Spanish in the development of Spanish Lakes. The specific history of Spanish Lakes included the roles of the previous owners in creating our current environment. John obtained a dozen or so photographs to embellish his words. The Van de Wouw history is now available from the home page on our website. (<http://www.spanishlakes.org>)

## Reported Dog Attack

A homeowner reported a dog attack, while she provided the following information, she asked not be to be identified.

“On Saturday, October 25, our dog was attacked by two dogs coming out of a trailer. They were two medium-sized mixed-breed dogs and I'm in the middle of it. What did I do? I just screamed. They [the dogs] left and came back. The sad thing was that the owners were across from me talking to a neighbor about the delivering they were making. None of these “gentlemen” (!!) considered assisting me or asking if my dog was hurt. Finally my neighbor came and asked if my dog was hurt. I said “okay”(?) can't you see how she is bleeding? Are there any people left to help you if you are in need? Look for that nice person who can be there for you. Where is our “leash law” in Spanish Lakes?”

The County Code [Title 9, Chapter 9.08.020] states the following: “It is unlawful for any person to suffer or permit any dog owned, harbored, or controlled by him to be on any public street, alley, lane, park or place of whatever nature open to and used by the public in the unincorporated area of the county unless such dog is securely leashed and the leash is held continuously in the hand of a responsible person capable of controlling such dog, or unless

the dog is securely confined in a vehicle, or unless the dog is at “heel” beside a person and obedient to that person's command.” .

The County Code [Title 9, Chapter 9.08.125-140] also establishes a procedure for “biting dogs.” Any dog that inflicts a wound that penetrates the skin on a person or an animal is considered to be a “biting dog.” A physician or veterinarian who treats a bitten human or dog is required to report the incident. A bitten person may request to begin criminal proceedings. The owner of a bitten dog may demand the Animal Control Division to consider confining or surrendering the biting dog.

## Magic of Birth and Sadness of Death

The Hagens were fortunate enough to witness the birth of two fawns in their back yard this fall, and they have shared it through pictures on our website. We also had two baby foxes born by the Creston gate, but, unfortunately, a passing car killed one baby and its parent.

## Focus on Our Wildlife

Most of us have seen them, those large hairy spiders that give us the willies. There are over 800 species of tarantulas found all over the world. They are distributed in the dry and warm areas of the United States, like the southwest. While the ones seen here are usually black, others are brown, brown and black, and some species are even blue or red. The California variety (*Eurypelma californicum*) may live 30 years!

Our tarantulas hunt and live solitary lives in existing burrows or under rocks. They are typically active in late afternoon and night as they go out hunting for small insects, other spiders, and small lizards. They mate in the fall and produce over 500 young. One friend reported seeing a tarantula carrying dozens of tiny youngsters on its back.

Other than humans, snakes, some birds, and “tarantula hawks” are the tarantula's natural enemies. The tarantula hawk is common to Spanish Lakes; it is a fairly large wasp-like insect with copper colored wings. This insect will kill a tarantula by its sting, drag it to its burrow and deposit its eggs within the tarantula's body.

Tarantulas have large fangs; however, their bites are reported as being about as severe as bee stings with possible allergic reactions. Their hairs are irritating and serve as additional defense mechanisms. If bitten, clean the bite area with soap and water; irritating hairs can be removed with tape. [http://desertusa.com/july96/du\\_tarant.html](http://desertusa.com/july96/du_tarant.html)

## Lynn's Corner

*“If you're going through hell, keep going.”*

The times recently have been ugly indeed. We all need to be aware that many of us, or I venture to say most of us, are under economic stress. It is most important for us all to step back, take a deep breath, and remember that we still live in a beautiful place, with really good people as neighbors.