

# The BEAR FACTS

A publication of Mountain C.A.R.E. (<http://www.mtnicare.com>)

Spring 2021 Volume 15 Issue 1

## Goldspotted Oak Borer Discovered in Forest Falls

by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



The Goldspotted Oak Borer (GSOB), *Agrilus auroguttatus*, an invasive beetle native to southeastern Arizona that can kill oaks native to California, has been detected in California black oak trees (*Quercus kelloggii*) in Forest Falls.

The Forest Falls detection represents the fourth infestation found in San Bernardino County since the initial discovery of GSOB in the Oak Glen area in the fall of 2018, the discovery of GSOB in the Sugarloaf area of Big Bear in the summer of 2019, and again in Wrightwood near the San Bernardino/LA County border in the fall of 2019. Due to the proximity of Forest Falls to Oak Glen, it is unclear whether this infestation is a result of natural spread of the beetle or from the movement of GSOB infested firewood into the area. All previous San Bernardino County infestations are believed to be due to the movement of infested firewood. Officials are urging the public to take critical precautions to avoid transporting infested oak firewood to other uninfested areas. These websites provide information on how to avoid buying or transporting infested firewood:

- <http://firewood.ca.gov> &
- <https://www.dontpackapest.com/>

Any community or area that has coast live oaks (*Q. agrifolia*), California black oaks or canyon live oaks (*Q. chrysolepis*) is vulnerable to GSOB infestation. Communities with significant oak populations include the San Bernardino mountain communities and surrounding national forest lands. CAL FIRE, the San Bernardino and Angeles National Forests, and local agencies and groups are collaborating to develop a response plan for GSOB in San Bernardino County. In the interim, at-risk communities should become familiar with the GSOB threat, prevention measures, how to detect and report suspected GSOB, rapid response planning and infestation management at [www.gsob.org](http://www.gsob.org).

CONTACT: David Haas

CAL FIRE San Bernardino Unit Forester 909-881-6955

Remember:



both the current issue & old issues  
are On-Line with Live Links at:

<http://www.mtnicare.com/bear-facts>



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# President's Message

by Debi Welch

Hello Friends and Neighbors,

As we find winter winding down and the crocus' and grape hyacinth peek through the snow, we look to approaching spring and Earth Day. Somewhere in the early 1990s and in honor of Earth Day, a local resident had the wonderful idea that our canyon and the mountain could use a little love in honor of Earth Day. Hence the wonderful tradition of Canyon Clean-up was started.

Due to our late winter weather, Canyon Clean-up had been moved to May a few years ago, giving us the most favorable chance of success with good weather and minimal snow.

With this in mind, we invite you once again to join us in the annual Canyon Clean-up.

What is Canyon Clean-up you ask? Canyon Clean-up is an event sponsored by Mountain CARE to promote cleaning and beautification of our beloved mountain after a long winter. Mountain CARE, with the help of some government and local support, brings in roll off dumpsters and receptacles for: e-waste, Green Waste, Metal Salvage, Trash, tires and more. (sorry no HazMat). We have sites throughout our communities where different items can be dropped off. You can also participate in graffiti busting and clean up of the creek, picnic area, and roadways.

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, May22, 2021, beginning at 7:30 am and ending when the bins are full or 12 noon whichever comes first! We will be posting flyers in town and on social media with more details as the Clean-up gets nearer.

Many hands make light work and we always need helpers, so if you want to participate in graffiti busting or roadside and trailhead pickup, please don't hesitate to text call or email me:

debi@forestfalls.com 909-260-0215

I look forward to seeing you all around town! Debi

## Household Hazardous Material Disposal

- every Saturday in Redlands 9:30am-12:30 pm  
City of Redlands Corporate Yard  
at 1270 West Park Ave near Kansas Street

- Weekdays M-F from 9am - 4pm  
San Bernardino Fire Dept. Hazardous Waste  
2824 W St, San Bernardino, CA 92415  
(just north of the San Bernaerdino Airport Hangars)



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# Time to Clean it Up



**Save the Date - May 22nd 2021**



**Our 2021 Annual**

*Canyon Clean-up*

**Saturday, May 22nd**



**It's time for a little Spring cleaning**

The Big Falls Picnic Grounds, our local streets, and creek-sides can use our help. Roadside clean-up and graffiti removal crews will be working on this day. Large dumpsters will be available to clean our own properties.

Join us.

Let's clean it up!



**7:30 to 12:00\***

Cinder Pile Lot

- Regular Trash
- Recyclables
- Green / Garden Trash
- Metal Recycling
- Tires

**Big Falls Lodge**

- Regular Trash

**Fallsvale School**

- E-Waste

**Mountain Home Village**

- Regular Trash

**Sorry, NO hazmat at any of these sites**



## Mountain Gardening

by Frozen Green Thumb Garden Club

### California Native Plants That Offer Color



**Hummingbird Mint - Agastache**

Mountain gardeners often ask for guidance with putting color in their gardens. Well, if we look to California natives ... those plants that are prepared for our environment and pests ... we can find many examples that are around our community. The wild looking shrubs of Buckwheat with white flowers in the spring and red stems in the winter, Rubber Rabbitbrush with its gray green stems and yellow flowers and Manzanita with pink flowers and berries. Or our local flowering native plants like Penstemon, Lupine and, of course, our own Humboldt Lilly. We see these all around. Sometimes we can plant them or just enjoy them where they show up.

If you are interested in another North American native with color, check out the Agastache or Hummingbird Mint. They come in all different colors (red, purples, orange, white) and a variety of heights. They are a “bottle brush” style plant and bloom from summer through fall and can ‘winter over.’ The spikes can be pruned in early spring. They attract both butterflies and hummingbirds. They also work well in containers. Most like the sun but some can handle morning sun and afternoon shade. And, they do not get eaten by squirrels or deer. They can be found at some of our local nurseries that carry water-wise plants. Remember to be fire wise and plant away from your home.



## Considering Books

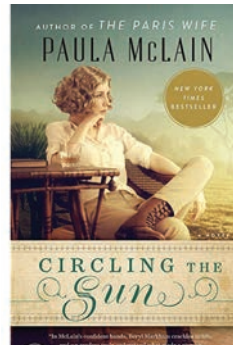
by Katherine Thomerson-Bird

“There is no Frigate like a book to take us lands away”.....Emily Dickinson

In the midst of this disconcerting, wary world, a book CAN take us “lands away” and let readers travel from the “shelter in place” to be safe in and through stories to other times and places. We certainly have time to read – most of us. Some of us need to be taken “far away” right now.



**CIRCLING THE SUN** by Katharine McEwan



This is a novel based on a true story about Beryl Markham. The story is set in 1920’s Africa – Kenya – and on an African farm. Beryl is brought to Kenya by her mother and father from England. She is raised amongst the Kipsigis Tribe who share the estate of her parents. She is raised in an unusually wild setting which motivates her wild and bold character. She grows up as a woman with marvelous strength, disastrous relationships and furthered quests to become a pilot.

Her fate to become a flyer is not the journey expected of a woman in the 1920’s, especially in early-twentieth century Africa. This is the story of extraordinary adventures of a woman before her time. Not only does she traverse the landscape of her ability to run a farm in Africa and fly a plane, she moves into a passionate love affair triangle with safari hunter Denys Finch and writer, Baroness Karen Blixen. This is a fascinating “getting away” book. Newsday quoted, “Circling the Sun soars!” I agree.

Beryl Markham was an English-born Kenyan Aviator. She was the first person (woman) to fly solo, non-stop across the Atlantic from Britain to North America. Her memoir WEST WITH THE NIGHT is an incredible read about her journey flying and living in Africa. This book and Circling the Sun are available from Amazon. I highly recommend it.

McEwan also wrote THE PARIS WIFE, a stunning fictional account of Ernest Hemingway’s first marriage and upstart years in 1920’s Paris. The point of view in that story is from Hadley, his wife. This is another “take us lands away” book. McEwan’s writing in both books – exquisite, exhilarating, well researched and a “sit down with a glass of wine” can’t stop reading pull!!! Travel away!



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## Fallsvale School During Pandemic

by Morgan Anderson



A lot has happened at Fallsvale School this past quarter. At the start of this quarter we were able to come back to school in the hybrid model. A hybrid model gives families the option to keep their kids at home on remote learning or send them to school two days a week, and continue remote learning the other three days. The classroom layout is a lot different then it used to be though. Now when you walk into the classroom you will see that all of the desks are spaced 6 feet apart, and each have their own plastic shields on them. We wear masks all the time and are always 6 feet apart. It is very different at school now, but I am glad we are able to see our friends.

### Mountain C.A.R.E. Board of Directors

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### The Bear Facts - Release Dates

#### Next Submission DEADLINE: May 5th

The regular schedule for the Bear Facts submissions and issue "in mailbox" dates are as follows:

	Submission Deadline	MtnCARE.com post Date	In the Mail Issue Date
Issue 1 Spring	Feb 5th	Feb 20th	Mar 1st
Issue 2 Summer	May 5th	May 20th	Jun 1st
Issue 3 Autumn	Aug 5th	Aug 20th	Sep 1st
Issue 4 Winter	Nov 5th	Nov 20th	Dec 1st

Please make sure any ad artwork, articles, calendar updates, and photos are sent to [bearfactseditor@gmail.com](mailto:bearfactseditor@gmail.com) on or before the submission deadline (all submissions digital please).

## Greyback Disaster Preparedness Group Is Recruiting Volunteers

by Jan Lisboa, Angelus Oaks C.E.R.T.

The Greyback Disaster Preparedness Group was established as a 501C(3) non profit organization in 1993 after a major earthquake created rock slides which isolated the community for over two weeks. The mission of the Group "is to prepare the people in the mountain community of Angelus Oaks and its outlying areas for the event of a major disaster/emergency. Preparation shall include training for residents and responding personnel, and the storage of food and supplies to enable the community to be self-sufficient for a minimum period of 72 hours or more, operate and maintain a communication system that will be able to make contact for outside assistance, as well as within the community, a management system that will afford the most effective use of available resources. The management system will operate, prepare, update, and distribute the "Community Emergency Plan" as needed.

Greyback Volunteers are known as Trained Volunteer Emergency Workers (TVEW) and are organized either geographically as Block First Responders, or as Special Reserves who have support functions such as radio communication, first aide, managing shelter or food supplies, equipment maintenance and general assistance. Block First Responders are trained to do damage assessment and reporting during the initial phase of a disaster event in an assigned area in their neighborhood.

Presently there are 24 members, five of whom are also CERT qualified. You do not need to be CERT qualified to be a Greyback volunteer. The opportunity for CERT training will be available to any interested volunteer as COVID 19 restrictions allow.

Jan Lisboa is the Greyback Disaster Preparedness Group and CERT Coordinator for Angelus Oaks. You can contact her on Facebook, Messenger, Messenger+, phone (910) 368-1075 or email: [lisboanc01@gmail.com](mailto:lisboanc01@gmail.com) Please consider volunteering to become a member of our disaster preparedness and response team.



The New Effinger Street Sign Behind the Fire Station

The area behind the fire station has been dedicated to the memory of Joyce Effinger, honoring the decades of contributions she and Dave have made to the safety and preparedness of our residents and visitors. Joyce will be missed but not forgotten.

## On Being Prepared

by Frank Sexton, Mill Creek Canyon C.E.R.T.



The Coronavirus Pandemic hasn't stopped your neighborhood C.E.R.T. personnel. Even though we haven't been able to put on any training classes of late, there has been much to do in the

area of disaster preparedness.

The Angelus Oaks and Mill Creek Canyon teams while still maintaining their independence and commitment to their local responsibilities have administratively merged their resources.

In the event of any localized emergency or disaster, each team will now immediately mobilize to help the other while the County Office of Emergency Services organizes their other C.E.R.T. teams to begin the trek to the mountains.

With communications so vitally important and so easily disrupted, the importance of reliable radio communications to the "outside world" has been identified as a major priority for our communities.

A joint Radio Operator Group serving Mountain Home Village, Forest Falls and Angelus Oaks has been established and is coordinated by ONE Radio Operator Group Leader. This "RADO Group" has been working to coordinate and tune their skills, as well as repair and enhance our communication capabilities now, and in the future. Consisting of licensed Ham radio operators in Mill Creek Canyon, Angelus Oaks, and (so that word can get out and be relayed to the Emergency Operations Center) Yucaipa.

These (Ham) radio operators are requested to come on the air the first Sunday of every month at 7:00 pm to check in and practice.

In the event of total communications failure, as has happened locally recently, residents can reach out to any Ham radio operator in their neighborhoods and ask for help communicating their needs. We are tied in with the County of San Bernardino Emergency Operations Center and the County Communications Center (Sheriff & Fire), the addresses of your local Ham operators should be disseminated amongst your neighborhoods soon.

There are large storage containers placed throughout our communities which are designed to provide emergency disaster supplies to our communities in the event that we become isolated from resources "down the hill". Team members are taking inventory and a needs list will be established. Thanks to our sponsors, the Valley of the Falls Community Center Inc., the Greyback Preparedness Group, and grant money provided by Southern California Edison we hope to improve our capabilities in this area.

You are encouraged to pose any questions about our programs to: Frank Sexton, 909-553-5483 or Jan Lisboa 909 809-4117

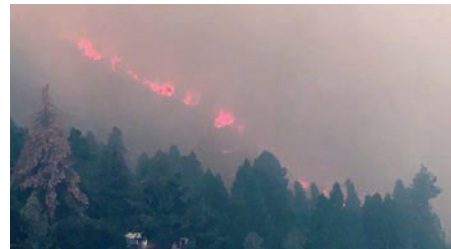
## It's Not If, ...But When...

For those who have already taken the Basic course and want to review or perhaps those who have started the course but did not finish, check the Mill Creek Canyon CERT page on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MillCreekCanyonCERT/> for more training opportunities. For more ideas on being prepared, check out the C.E.R.T Website: <http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>

## Is Your Property Ready For 2021 Wildfire Season?

submitted by Jan Lisboa, Angelus Oaks FireSafe Council  
Fire Hazard Abatement

As our community has seen, fires are a serious problem in Southern California. In an effort to reduce the threat of wild fires, the San Bernardino County Fire Hazard Abatement (FHA) Program enforces the fire hazard requirements outlined in San Bernardino County Code Section 23.0301–23.0319. The primary function of the Fire Hazard Abatement Program is to reduce the



risk of fires within communities by proactively establishing defensible space and reduction/removal of flammable materials on properties.

The Fire Hazard Abatement Program conducts surveys to identify fire hazards throughout the year. Fire hazards are identified and notices to abate the hazard(s) are mailed to property owners. Property owners are given 30 days to abate the violations. Failure to abate may result in citations, penalties, and/or fees for abatement by the County. The Fire Hazard Abatement Program responds to complaints year round in the unincorporated areas and contracting Cities and Fire Districts. The services are as follows:

- Valley & Desert Regions get two surveys per year during early spring and early fall due to growth cycles of differing types of noxious vegetation.
- Mountain Regions receive one survey in the summer. Angelus Oaks typically has the survey in May. Fire Hazard Abatement is an important component in keeping our communities safe and minimizing the devastating effects of wild fires within our communities. The defensible space guidelines can be found at the Fire Hazard Abatement web site URL: <https://cms.sbcounty.gov/lus/FireHazardAbatement/FireHazardAbatementHome.aspx>

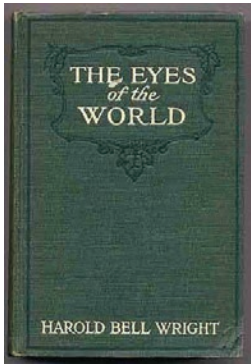
Fire Hazard Abatement may be reached at the following numbers: (909) 884-4056, (760) 995-8140, (909) 387-8311 or Email: LUS-FHA@lus.sbcounty.gov



## The Eyes of The World

by Shannon Wray

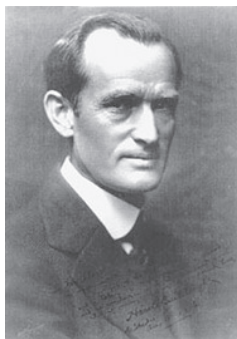
You have probably heard the term “Eyes of the World” applied to the long straightaway on California State Highway 38 east of Mountain Home Village. It’s one of those place names handed down until it’s connection to the original meaning is all but lost. However, there is a true story, and a fascinating one, behind the name.



In 1914, novels were still among the most popular forms of entertainment. Authors were the equivalent of movie stars or rock stars today. Top among them was a writer named Harold Bell Wright, who was the first American author to sell a million copies of a book and to earn \$1 million from the sale of his books. That year, Wright published a novel entitled *The Eyes of the World*, which was a number one bestseller, sold 750,000 copies, and had a scandalous effect on

the city of Redlands, California.

Wright served briefly as the minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Olive Street in Redlands in 1907, just as his literary career was taking off. He had grown up in abject poverty in upstate New York, the son of an alcoholic Civil War veteran. His mother died when he was eleven years old, and his dad abandoned him and his siblings. Young Harold wandered to the Ozarks, where he stumbled into the ministry one day at a revival meeting when the preacher didn’t



**Harold Bell Wright**

show. It was not so much a calling as a small paycheck and a way to eat. Throughout that time in his young life, he wrote in notebooks, collecting stories about his experiences. His mother had instilled in him a love of nature. When he moved with his wife and children to Redlands, the author felt drawn to the mountains outside the town and spent considerable time camping in Mill Creek Canyon. Redlands at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and during Wright’s time there, was the winter playground of millionaires from the east. *The Eyes of the World*, Wright’s seventh novel, was a denouncement of the social and moral excesses of the rich in Redlands and ruffled quite a few costly feathers. The story centers on a jaded novelist, Conrad LaGrange, and a young painter, Aaron King. They rent a small house in the orange groves next door to Sibyl Andres, a beautiful young violinist born and raised in the mountains. The wealthy Taine family, wintering in the town, begin to draw both young artists into their decadent sphere, much to their peril.

Wright set some of the novel in Mill Creek Canyon. However, he chose to obscure his settings by giving Redlands the name Fairlands and named Mill Creek Canyon “Clear Creek Canyon.” He accurately identified many features of our mountains, such as “the gates” at the entrance to the canyon, the pipeline trail, Galena Peak, Yucaipa Ridge, and Mounts San Bernardino and San Geronimo. Some of the most evocative passages still describe present-day Mountain Home Village and the orchards planted by the canyon’s

first homesteaders, Peter A. Forsee and William Petty. “Across the wide, gray, boulder-strewn wash of the mountain torrent’s way, with the gleaming thread of tumbling Clear Creek in its center, they could see the white dots that marked the camp back of the old orchard; and, farther up the stream, could distinguish the little opening with the cedar thicket and the giant sycamores that marked the spot where Sibyl was born.” Unquestionably, he was describing Mill Creek Canyon.

It’s easy to imagine how the canyon residents felt about being immortalized in America’s most famous novel. Perhaps the most excited resident was D. Rhea Igo, who lived with his bride Maud in a tiny cottage next to the willow-lined creek midway down the canyon. Cars were quickly multiplying in Southern California, and traffic into the mountains for scenic drives wildly increasing. In 1914, the toll road to Bear Valley officially opened. Igo built a store at the crossroads of that thoroughfare, which went north up Mountain Home Canyon, and Mill Creek Road, which went to Forest Home Resort. Igo is said to have befriended Harold Bell Wright during the writer’s camping trips along Mill Creek and often claimed that Wright modeled characters in the novel named Charleton on him and Maud.

In 1916, the year that Igo opened his store, the Clune Film Producing Company came from Hollywood to Mill Creek Canyon to make the silent film version of *The Eyes of the World*. Igo acted as a location scout for the crew. The movie company built a small cabin on his property to represent the modest mountain cabin where Sybil Andres was born. Later, Igo erected a billboard claiming that the little cabin was where Harold Bell Wright had written *The Eyes of the World*. As he’d intended, it became a roadside tourist attraction and landmark on the trip into the mountains. In actual fact, Wright wrote the novel at his ranch called Tecolote in the Imperial Valley, where he’d moved in 1909. In any case, the movie version of the story was an enormous national success and one of the most extravagant silent film productions to that date.

In 1919, Igo’s mother, Mary, a canny real estate investor, obtained a homestead patent for twenty acres along the north side of Mill Creek. Rhea inherited the land the following year when his mother passed away. He called it Eyes of the World Ranch and tried to subdivide it and sell home lots. Unfortunately, he couldn’t gain the water rights, and the development never happened. But the name Eyes of the World emblazoned on the billboard and given to the land stuck. It remains the reference for the long stretch of meadow between Mill Creek and Highway 38 above Mountain Home Village. Along that stretch, you can still see the chimney of Igo’s first home.

That explains the place name, but what was Harold Bell Wright referring to with the title *The Eyes of the World*? The author, who had gained worldwide fame only to fall into obscurity by the mid-twentieth century, gets the last word. “The man, who, in the eyes of the world, had won so large a measure of the success that his friend desired; and whose life was so embittered by the things for which he was envied by many; made no reply other than his slow, twisted smile.”

Shannon Wray is the author of the book *Pioneers of Mill Creek Canyon*, published by The History Press. [www.shannonwray.com](http://www.shannonwray.com)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS CALENDAR

## Angelus Oaks - Forest Falls - Mountain Home Village

### Spring 2021

<b>Mar 6th</b>	<b>Seven Oaks Restaurant</b>	Seven Oaks Restaurant re-opens to the public. Come on down and get the best burgers
<b>Mar 12th</b>	<b>Olin Richey Jr</b>	Olin Richey Jr turns 18 Happy Birthday Olin!
<b>Mar 15th</b>	<b>Garden Club</b>	The Frozen Green Thumb Garden Club resumes in-person meetings at Big Falls Lodge
<b>May 22nd</b>	<b>Canyon Clean-up</b>	Saturday the 22nd of May at several spots in town, Dumpsters will be available for residents of Angelus Oaks, Forest Falls, and Mountain Home Village to unload trash, green waste, e-Waste and recyclables.

<b>Forest Falls Fire Department</b>	Meets every Tues at 6:30pm, Forest Falls Fire Station. 794-4413	<b>Angelus Oaks Fire Department</b>	Meets on the 2nd & 4th Tues every month at 6pm at the Angelus Oaks Fire Station.
<b>Valley of the Falls Community Church Youth Group</b>	Meets Wednesdays 6-8pm. Ages 12-18. (temporarily postponed due to COVID) Valley of the Falls Community Church	<b>Angelus Oaks Fire Safe Council</b>	Meets periodically. Dates are announced on the A.O. FSC Bulletin Board in the Angelus Oaks Post Office.
<b>FrozenGreenThumb Garden Club</b>	Meets 3rd Monday every month at Big Falls Lodge. All are welcome.	<b>Angelus Oaks Garden Club</b>	Would you like this space to remind your members about meetings?.
<b>Mill Creek Canyon C.E.R.T.</b>	Our CERT program is considering regular meeting dates, check in soon, 909-553-5483	<b>AO &amp; MCC CERT RADO Team</b>	Monthly NET, licensed HAM operators are invited to come on the air the first Sunday of the month at 7:00 pm on Channel 146.46
<b>The Needlers knitting group</b>	Meets every Tuesday 9:30-11:30 am at 7th Day Adventist Church. Contact Denise Reid 794-5130. All Welcome	<b>Music Night in Forest Falls</b>	Tuesday 6:30-9:30pm at Big Falls Lodge All musicians, all styles, all levels welcome, anyone can come play and listen. Checkout our Facebook page.

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## New Legislators for our Mountain Towns after the November Election

by Mark Wirth

After the November election, Forest Falls, Angelus Oaks and Mountain Home Village have all new representatives for the House of Representatives, the State Senate and the State Assembly. Congressman Paul Cook declined to run for re-election. Republican Assemblymember Jay Obernolte was elected as our U.S. Representative for the 8th Congressional district. The district runs from Mammoth Lakes to Yucaipa and Yucca Valley. Obernolte's district office is in Hesperia. His website with contact information is <https://obernolte.house.gov/>.

Republican and former Hesperia City Councilmember Thurston Smitty Smith was elected to Obernolte's open Assembly seat. The 33rd Assembly district includes the San Bernardino Mountains and the Victorville region. His district office is in Hesperia. His website with contact information is <https://ad33.asmrc.org/>.

State Senator Mike Morrell termed out of office. Republican, Yucaipa School Boardmember Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh was elected to the Senate seat. The 23rd Senate district includes the San Bernardino Mountains, Redlands, Moreno Valley, Hemet and Beaumont. Her website & contact information is <https://ochoa-bogh.cssrc.us/>. Her district office is in Rancho Cucamonga.



## NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

### Mountain Communities Food Pantry

The Community Food Pantry (at the Valley of the Falls Community Church) is happy to announce that we are back to scheduling appointments for the remainder of winter and open Thursdays from 10am -12pm. If you, or someone you know, needs a little help this winter or spring stop by and stock up!

\*\*Please note: Covid protocols are strictly followed, everyone is required to wear a mask, sanitize hands prior to shopping, and will be escorted by one of our volunteers, one person/family in at a time. If you need us, call us!

THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND DONATIONS. You are most welcome to drop food off at Gilmore Real Estate Office on Valley of the Falls Dr.

**Community Food Pantry**  
Please contact one of us if you need assistance

Michelle Mayfield 909-794-3135  
Renata Campbell 408-410-7510  
Jenn Hollingsworth Text: 619-992-1872  
Dee Konczal 909-794-0885



# Valley of the Falls Community Center Inc.

Think  
**Big Falls Lodge**  
for your next event...



[www.VFCCi.org](http://www.VFCCi.org)

**Caretaker**  
Megan Danner  
909.809.7605

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909.260.4431

## Happy New Year from VFCCi!

There are many families new to Forest Falls and the surrounding communities. We are saddened that, due to the current pandemic, they are unable to experience the many community events held during the holidays and throughout the year at Big Falls Lodge. We want to welcome all of you, and give you a brief overview of the history about your community center.

Two important events made Big Falls Lodge possible. The first was Redlands banker N.L. Levering's purchase of a section of land (640 acres) from the Southern Pacific Railroad. Levering sub-divided the land, calling it Valley of the Falls Tract and officially opened it for sale on May 30, 1925. The second important event was the opening of a new paved road the length of Mill Creek Canyon on August 6, 1926. The upper reaches of "the scenic wilderness" were accessible at last, which made it feasible to develop resorts.

Built in 1926, Big Falls Lodge and its adjacent cabins, which are now privately owned, were a popular mountain resort for decades. Sadly, the beautiful original stone structure burned to the ground in 1957. It was rebuilt and continued as a resort until the 1970s when it became the Saddle Tramp Saloon bar and restaurant. By the 1990s, the old resort building was all but abandoned. Gail D. Cox was a long-time resident of Forest Falls whose generosity made the purchase of the Lodge as a center for the community possible. Residents and friends of Forest Falls contributed their own talents and money to restore Big Falls Lodge to its current beautiful state. On May 26, 2007, the Gail D Cox Community Center at Big Falls Lodge was dedicated to the community in Ms. Cox's memory. We are all very proud of this effort, it is truly a wonderful place! We invite you to visit our website at [vfcci.org](http://vfcci.org) where you can find the entire history of Big Falls Lodge along with a beautiful photo gallery of all the fun events we've been a part of and some great information. We hope to see you all soon!

Please donate: We would like to invite you to make a donation to support VFCCi and Big Falls Lodge. Just go to [www.VFCCi.org](http://www.VFCCi.org) and look for the Pay-Pal link. Also, if you haven't done so already, please sign up for "Amazon Smiles", then choose "VFCCi". This is a free way to support VFCCi and give back to the community every time you make an Amazon purchase.

The VFCCi board of directors meets every other month to discuss ongoing concerns so if you have ideas or suggestions for a great use of the building or fundraising, reach out – we'd love to hear from you! We work hard to make it available to everyone, we hope you appreciate having this great building in your community. You can email [director@vfcci.org](mailto:director@vfcci.org) or call 909-389-0585 and leave a message.

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Check out old issues of the Bear Facts at [www.mtnicare.com](http://www.mtnicare.com)





Local Big Horn Sheep

photo by David Russell

see more of his photography on the various Forest Falls Facebook pages and on Youtube at Stonecabinphotos

“It’s hard not to stand in awe and enchantment with the beauty in which nature expresses herself”

~ Steve Maraboli

The Bear Facts is a publication of Mountain C.A.R.E., a non-profit organization.

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# The John Elliot Trail

submitted by Karen Hill

John Elliott, the Super Hero of the Loch Leven Trail (Old Highway 38). If you have hiked or ridden a bike down the old highway in the past 30 years, you need to thank John Elliott. John moved to Mountain Home Village many years ago. At the time, he was a physics teacher at Riverside City College (where he taught for 33 years). A runner in his free time, John began riding a mountain bike when his knees began to complain. Mountain biking was a natural thing to do when living near such great trails. Elliott could be seen riding up from Mountain Home Village in the mornings with his dog, "Woofie" tagging along.



Over the years, nature tried to reclaim the old highway from Mountain Home Village to Angelus Oaks. Storms caused washouts, slides came down over the road, and rocks and trees appeared in the trail from time to time. John began digging

drainage trenches, building berms to redirect water (over 100 through the years), moving rocks, trimming sharp yucca leaves and over-eager branches, and creating a passage for hikers and bikers. In 1987, John built the hike-a-bike which bypassed the old bridge which was removed by the Forest Service. Throughout this time, John did this because it needed to be done.



More recently, John was officially named steward of the mountain bike patrol by Gina with the local Forest Service. In this capacity he watches for potential problems and reports them to the Forest Service. He also turns in monthly hours which he and his recruits log-in while working on the trail. Although he has worked to get others to help him in these endeavors, John remains the driving force for all of these activities. If it were not for him, the trail would not be navigable at this time. In addition to this work, he and his wife Donna, began a goat-head eradication program along the road to Loch Leven. They can be seen walking the edges of the road looking for these invasive plants which wreak havoc to tires on a regular basis. John has also served as president on the water board in Mountain Home Village for the past 50 years. Our mountain communities owe John a huge thank you for his dedication and hard work on a continuing basis for the care of this trail. Kudos to you John!



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## Time to Paws & Talk about Rattlesnakes

by Veronica Hampton

Approximately 300,000 dogs and cats are bitten by rattlesnakes each year in the USA. These bites are life threatening to our furry loved ones and require immediate action to give our pets a chance for survival. The pacific rattlesnake lives among us here in Forest Falls. The snake uses heat-sensing, facial pits to locate prey, from small mice up to a rabbit size mammal. In the three years I have lived in Forest Falls, I've encountered a pacific rattlesnake three separate times, all while walking right down Valley of the Falls Drive. Because they are here to stay and we need to protect our pets while co-existing with them, it is important to know: the precautions to take, signs that your pet is in trouble, preventative measures and how to get help.

Precautions to take:

- Rattlesnakes are most active when it is hot and they love to sunbathe. During these times, avoid walking in dense brush or rock piles. Choose wide paths where avoiding rattlesnakes is easier.
- While walking your dog or cat, use a shorter leash for more control. Never let your animals off leash!
- Look into taking a rattlesnake avoidance class.
- If you and your pet encounter a rattlesnake, calmly and slowly back away from the snake until you are no longer within striking distance (about the snake's length) Note where there is one snake, there often are more.

The Rattlesnake Vaccination

The rattlesnake vaccine was developed to protect against the venom of the western diamondback rattlesnake. However, the safety and effectiveness of this vaccination is not well tested. Also note while the western diamondback rattlesnake is located in California, they are usually at lower elevations. You may encounter them while hiking, but if you are in Forest Falls or Angelus Oaks, it is the pacific rattlesnake you are more likely to encounter.



**Western Diamondback Rattlesnake**

The vaccination is designed to help control pain and swelling. Yet, even with the vaccine, your pet is still experiencing a medical emergency and needs to get to an animal hospital immediately for the anti-venom.

Signs your animal has been bitten:

- Puncture bite wounds, which may be bleeding.
- Swelling
- Extreme pain
- Drooling and panting
- Restlessness
- Seizures
- Diarrhea
- Collapse
- Muscle tremors
- Weakness/lethargy
- Labored breathing

Get help immediately!


If your animal has been bitten or you suspect they have been bitten by a rattlesnake, they have sustained a life-threatening injury which requires immediate care (even if they have received the vaccination). The following vets have stated they carry the vaccination and the anti-venom (confirmed April 22, 2019). Make sure to call these vets prior to taking your dog or cat in to insure they still have a supply:

- Yucaipa Animal Hospital (909) 794-3118  
32161 Yucaipa Blvd., Yucaipa
- Calimesa Veterinary Clinic (909) 795-003  
980 Calimesa Blvd., Calimesa
- East Valley Pet Hospital (909) 794-1888  
1748 E. Lugonia Ave., Ste 128, Redlands

Resources

- <https://www.embracepetinsurance.com/waterbowl/article/rattlesnake-vaccine>
- <https://www.petcarerx.com/article/how-to-protect-your-dog-from-rattlesnakes/2856>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crotalus\\_oreganus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crotalus_oreganus)

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**Bible Study 10:00 a.m.**

**Musical Praise Service 11:00 a.m.**  
 (Musicians are encouraged to bring their instruments)

**Worship Service 11:30 a.m.**

**Weekly Potluck Fellowship Dinner 12:45 p.m.**





# Not Back on the Chain Gang



“Bear-Proof” mechanisms built on to the dumpsters. Interesting since many canyon visitors haven’t figured that one out yet. In order to throw away picnic trash, the dumpsters get unchained and are made available for hikers and picnickers. So, each evening a specific Forest Falls resident volunteer has stopped by each dumpster to make sure it’s properly closed. Most volunteers also pick up any trash that might have been left behind. Just like with our own residential trash cans, the goal is to not feed the bears and have them be ‘comfortable’ around us.

This Spring and Summer our chain gang will NOT be cruising the picnic grounds, so if you happen to be up there and see any evidence of other visitors having un-chained the dumpsters please put the chains back on, Thanks!

According to the US Forest Service, Big Falls Picnic Grounds will be closed until fall or longer.

For the past few years, some of our local residents have ended their day with a trip up to Big Falls Picnic Grounds to ensure all the trash dumpsters are “chained” closed, this is an extra security measure against the bears getting in and making a mess. Our Black Bears have actually figured how to unlatch the

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**Mountain Citizens Acting to Restore the Earth**

Mountain C.A.R.E. is a non-profit community based organization located in Forest Falls California. We are a group of volunteers that came together in early 1990 to arrange an Earth Day activity. Our articles state that "We are to educate the general public about environmental concerns and the need to restore and preserve the environment for future generations".

Our vision is to:

Encourage the community to recycle, reduce, and re-use;  
enhance knowledge and love of the area;  
and show we care by keeping personal property and  
community areas clean and beautiful.

Your Subscription, Contribution, or Participation with Mountain C.A.R.E. helps to support the education and environmental work we do in the communities of Forest Falls, Angelus Oaks, and Mountain Home Village. It helps to create this Bear Facts newsletter which keeps our communities up to date on local events and important issues. We are a non-profit organization working with volunteers. All donations are tax-deductible as permitted by law and gratefully appreciated. Your donations keep this publication and all Mountain C.A.R.E. activities going strong. Thank you for all your support!

We have a commitment to each other and all our mountain communities. Please join us in that commitment by sending any donations to:

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P.O.Box 13, Forest Falls, CA 92339

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