



# The Bonita Highlander

July 2021

## From the BHHA Board President

Happy times! We are now allowed to remove our masks if vaccinated. It's a start toward some normalcy again in our County. I'm hoping that we'll be able to again meet in person, as soon as the Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Department again opens its Training/Community room to the public again.

**Road work.** My last contact with County on the leak near 4111 Corral Canyon indicated that the source of the leak has alluded County and Sweetwater Authority leak detection efforts.

**Open Space Mowing.** Mowing is underway and should be completed in a few weeks. I must say that Michelle and the LandCare open space maintenance team have been doing a superb job culling trees and brush, removing dead branches, cleaning out overgrown brow ditches, rebuilding and dragging trails, and just bringing our open spaces back to their former glory. Well done all!

**Major Projects and Permitting.** If you haven't made the time to walk some of our trails, please consider doing so. Our open spaces and trail system are what make the Bonita Highlands unique to the South County. Our Architectural Control Committees for Architecture and Conformance (John and Sylvia respectively) have been working hard to help ensure that homeowner projects remain to code and are aligned with our Covenants, Conditions, & Restrictions (CC&Rs) as well as our Rules & Regulations. With our 667 residences, there are challenges at times when homeowners stray "outside the lines" of our Association's requirements, but through our committee Chairs' efforts, major problems are minimal. Please do ensure that any major project outside the home is detailed in a Structural Change Request (SCR), which may be downloaded from our web site. Major projects usually require a County Permit to ensure the project is up to State and County standards for construction. Unpermitted projects may "backfire" should insurance claims be sought or a residence is being sold and an inspector notes a substandard structure. Additionally, our ACC-C inspectors may note a non-compliance condition that must be rectified at some cost... all of which could have been avoided if an SCR had been submitted via our ACC-A Chair.

Lastly, County Planning and Development Services (PDS) will not issue a permit for a major project in the Bonita Highlands if an approved SCR doesn't accompany it. The County permitting process is challenging and somewhat complicated. If you wish to learn about the process, San Diego County PDS has an excellent step-by-step chart that may be downloaded in .pdf format from the following web site address: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/pds441a.pdf>

**A "Dark" Month.** We reaffirmed that there would be no monthly Board meeting in July at our last BHHA monthly Board of Directors meeting. Therefore July is considered "dark," as in "the lights are out in the office." No SCR approvals or other routine staff work will be performed during July. However, our Open Space maintenance crew will continue working in July. Any true emergency staff work will also occur, as may be appropriate, but July is "vacation opportunity month" for the BHHA Board and Staff members.

I hope you all enjoy your summer as we move out of pandemic conditions and hopefully on to some normalcy again.

~ Mike

**Bonita Highlands... unique in San Diego County... city-close country living! ~ Mike**

Herpetology in the Highlands. HUH?

## Open Space Report

Herpetology is the study of reptiles and amphibians. Here is some idea of what kind of cold-blooded animals you might encounter on our trails and in your backyards. Reptiles live on land and Amphibians need a wetter area like Morrison Pond or the drainage canal in Proctor Valley. It is worth the walk down the trail at the end of Blacksmith Road to the drainage canal. The following information was taken from the website [www.CaliforniaHerps.com](http://www.CaliforniaHerps.com). Please visit them for more detailed information and color photos. You may now see the Bonita Highlander in color on our website at [www.bonitahighlands.org](http://www.bonitahighlands.org).

I am by no means a Herpetologist, but I have seen a few lizards and snakes in my backyard and on the trails and you may have seen them, too. Here is a short list and description of the most common reptiles in Bonita Highlands.



Let us start with lizards. I am sure most of you have encountered the *Woodland Alligator Lizard*. I find these in my garden all the time and... they scare me. They can get large, 3-7 inches long without their tails. With tails, these guys can be 16 inches long and they move like a snake with undulating motion. They are usually brown to grey in color and are seen during the day eating bugs, slugs, snails, and worms. That is why I find them in the garden. May through July they lay eggs which hatch in late summer or early fall.



The *Western Side-blotched Lizard* and *Western Fence Lizard* are similar and common to our area. One difference, as the name infers, is a black spot behind the leg on the Western Side-blotched Lizard. They are much smaller than the Alligator lizard, only 1.5 to 2.5 inches long, without their tail, which they have usually lost in some battle. They can be found in rocky areas during the day. The males can be very colorful with blue speckles on their backs and chest. Females and young are not as colorful. These lizards eat a variety of small insects including, beetles, grasshoppers, ants, spiders, scorpions, and ticks.



Snakes are our friends and most of the common ones in the Highlands are not harmful to humans. We have many snakes that are similar in color that can be seen during the day. The *California Kingsnake* and *California Striped Racer* (both non-venomous) are two that are brown, black, or gray with stripes. The Kingsnake is the slowest moving and by far the most varied in pattern. It can be brown or black and have stripes around it, down it or be spotted. The Striped Racer is faster moving and has stripes on each side and no stripe on the back (which the Kingsnake has). These two snakes eat small mammals, lizards, snake eggs, frogs, and other snakes.



The *San Diego Gopher Snake* (non-venomous), and the *Southern Pacific Rattlesnake* and *Red Diamond Rattlesnake* (both are venomous) may be confused with each other. The Gopher snake is the most seen snake in our area. Unlike the Rattlesnake whose bite can be deadly to humans and animals, ornery gopher snakes only mimic the rattlesnakes' defensive posture. They are not harmful to humans but can be scary if you come across one. The difference in appearance



between the gopher and rattlesnakes are subtle. The gopher snake is slender, 4-5 feet long, and has a pointed tail with no rattle. The rattlesnakes are fatter, 3-4 feet long, have a large triangular shaped head, and a rattle on the tail. One more difference, while the rattlesnake can be seen during the day (mostly in the shade), they prefer the twilight and evening hours. A gopher snake is active during the day. All dine on small mammals, birds, and eggs.



Keep your eyes open when on the trails. They have been dragged, are clear and have great visibility. With that said, during the hot, summer months snakes and lizards own the open space. Be careful while on the trails and do not approach a snake. Snakes and lizards are beneficial to our area. Snakes help keep rodent populations down and the lizards take care of insects and snails. What a great team!

Michelle Kriz, Open Space Committee Chair (This article was requested by Dave Schlesinger, BHHA Board Vice-President)



**New Neighbors:** Call the Bonita Highland's "Welcoming Committee" representatives **Bobbie and Ray Snider** and "get mugged" (a coffee mug, that is)!  
Call (619) 421-9384 to set up an appointment or ask questions.





The Bonita Optimist Club is hosting its annual **HEROES FOR CHILDREN GOLF TOURNAMENT** Friday, July 16, 2021 at 1:00 pm on the Chula Vista Golf Course. Registration fees: \$125/single; \$450/foursome.



The Player's Package includes a gift bag, cart, box lunch, and after-tournament banquet.

~ Sponsorship opportunities are also available to promote company visibility and recognition. ~

Please visit the Bonita Optimist website ( [www.bonitaoptimist.org](http://www.bonitaoptimist.org) ) where you will find event details, sponsorship availability, and tournament registration.

For general inquiries, please call (619) 245-8041.

The proceeds from this event go to childhood cancer research as well as local community events that **"Bring Out the Best in Kids"**



U.S. Postal address for the **BHHA:**  
Bonita Highlands Homeowners' Association  
PO Box 458  
Bonita, CA. 91908-0458

E-mail address: [bhighlander@cox.net](mailto:bhighlander@cox.net)

FAX only: (619) 479-2200 (24 hours)

You may also find documents, forms, meeting minutes, and notices on our **BHHA** web site: [bonitahighlands.org](http://bonitahighlands.org)

**ANARRS coming soon!** Annual Notice of Address, Representative and Rental Status form



This fall, a copy of the audit report along with the request for Annual Notice of Address, Representative, and Rental Status form will be sent out via first class mail to owners of record.

If you do not return your form, then your last mailing address provided will be used, if none, then the property address will be deemed as the mailing address for legal notices.

Update: Annual Assessments as of the print date, **99.9% of homeowners have paid.**

Thank you. ~ FO



Until the Fire Department's Training Room is again opened for community use, BHHA monthly meetings will be held by way of Zoom video teleconference (VTC). Our next VTC meeting will be on

**August 10 at 6:30 p.m.**

All Bonita Highlands Homeowners are welcome to attend! Homeowners wishing to attend the VTC meeting must send an e-mail to our Recording Secretary requesting that they be included in the distribution of the e-mail, which will provide the meeting's VTC link: [bhighlander@cox.net](mailto:bhighlander@cox.net)

Homeowners wishing to attend who don't have a computer may send a letter to our above U.S. postal address with their phone number and our Recording Secretary will contact them to provide a homeowner's address who has volunteered an outside

**The Bonita Highlander** is the monthly newsletter of the Bonita Highlands Homeowners' Association, a California non-profit corporation whose mailing address is: **P.O. Box 458, Bonita, CA 91908-0458**



This newsletter is distributed (postage paid) to each residence within the Bonita Highlands community.

Editor / Distribution: **Mary Ellen Phillips**

Submissions for publication should be sent to the editor, copy-ready, at [bhighlander@cox.net](mailto:bhighlander@cox.net). The deadline is the 15th of the month for publication the following month. The Association reserves the right to edit any copy submitted for publication.





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The next monthly BHHA HOA meeting will be held on **Tuesday August 10, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.**  
The meeting will be convened on a Zoom Video Teleconference.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance, Announcement of the Next Meeting, Adoption of Minutes from Last Meeting.
2. Homeowner Open Communications.
3. Homeowner appearances for appeals to violation notices, fines, requests for structural alterations.
4. Committee and staff reports.
5. Old Business.
6. New Business. 7. Community items of interest.
8. Board Member Comments. 9. Adjournment.
10. An Executive session may be held.



The Bonita Highlands Homeowners' Association Board of Directors welcomes and encourages e-mail and letters from other homeowners. Any letter sent to the Board may be published in this newsletter. Please sign letters and include a phone number (which will NOT be published). Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author, the editor, or other contributor and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Board of Directors or any member thereof.

