

The Highlands lowdown

September 2010

The Highlands Community Association Newsletter

Volume 56, Number 8

www.highlandscommunity.org



San Bruno Fire -- It Could Happen to Us

by Bryce Robertson

On the evening of Thursday, September 9, hundreds of lives were changed by a massive explosion in a San Bruno neighborhood. Just before 6:30 p.m., a 30-inch gas line exploded beneath the ground, and massive flames were sent shooting up in the air, reaching as high as 100 feet. The explosion and resulting fire killed four people, left three missing and presumed dead, destroyed 37 homes, damaged many more, and left a close-knit neighborhood looking like a war zone.

This disaster is a huge wake-up call for the Peninsula. A tragedy like this could happen absolutely

anywhere; the question is: are you prepared? What would you do if you suddenly had no power? How would you communicate with your loved ones if cell phone towers were down? Do you know where the gas shut-off valve is located in your house? Would you know whether it was safe to enter your neighbor's burning house when you hear cries for help?

Once a disaster strikes, it's far too late to prepare yourself. The Highlands Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, in conjunction with CalFire, is offering CERT training classes to help our neighbors to prepare for

disasters like the San Bruno fire.

The CERT program educates participants about preparedness for the kinds of hazards that may impact our area and trains them in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

Although the San Bruno fire was a horrible tragedy, it was contained in a specific area. Experts say that there is a 62% chance of an earthquake of a magnitude of 6.7 or higher in the next 30 years. If it should happen, emergency service providers will be overloaded and might not be able to get to you immediately. You need to be able to take care of yourself and help your neighbors until emergency services are available. CERT training is the first step to preparing yourself and your family for disaster, and it's FREE!

For more information, see page 10 or contact the Highlands Recreation District at 341-4251.

CERT TRAINING SCHEDULE

Session #1: Tues. 10/5-11/2 6-9 p.m.

Disaster Simulation Day:

11/14 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

HRD Meeting

Tuesday, October 11, 7 p.m.
Rec Center Social Room

lowdown Deadline

Friday, October 8

HCA Meeting

Tuesday, September 28, 7:30 p.m.
Rec Center Social Room

FROM THE HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Rick Priola
HCA President

Fall is here, and we haven't had much of the warm Indian summer weather that we always look forward to. On the other hand, we also haven't had much of the very hot winds that can create fire danger during our dry months, so I'm not complaining. The terrible explosion and fire in San Bruno bring home to us how quickly a pleasant, peaceful neighborhood can suddenly become a scene of destruction and pain.

Our Highlands CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training, coordinated by the Rec Center in conjunction with CalFire, helps prepare neighbors to respond to emergencies of all kinds. It's a coincidence that the next training session begins in October, so soon after the San Bruno emergency. This is training we could all use. See the story on page 1 for details about the program and how to enroll.

Drive Safely: In every September *lowdown*, we remind people that school has started, and it's more important than ever to drive carefully, obey the speed limit, and keep an eye out for children, bikes, and walkers of all species. Those Highlanders who drive up the hill on Ticonderoga got a taste of what speeding can do last month when they saw a smashed-up parked car with a wheel that had been pushed up to the side of a rear window by a speeder.

Road Closure: In July we wrote that in August Skyline Blvd. would be closed between the south-bound exit from Highway 280 and the intersection with Crystal Springs Road while repairs (expected to last more than three years) were made on the Crystal Springs Dam—and then the plans changed! The closing now will take place at the end of September, so we will soon have to use alternate routes to Sawyer Camp Road.

Other road work will also affect us. Signs directing drivers to detours for entering Highway 92 are still covered up as this message is being written, but may be in effect by the time you read it, so keep an eye out for them.

Halloween: On a more cheerful note, we can all look forward to Halloween next month and the clever decorations and costumes that come with it. Our neighborhood is very children-friendly, so be prepared.

As always, I look forward to meeting you and seeing you at the HCA meetings. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at hcapres@gmail.com.

HCA Meeting Tuesday, September 28, 7:30 p.m.
Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Review and Approval of the Minutes
- III. Sheriff's Dept/CHP/CDR Cal Fire
- IV. Treasurer's Report
- V. Reports
 - A. First Vice President
 - B. Second Vice President
 - C. Treasurer
 - D. Membership
 - E. *lowdown*
 - F. Public Utilities Committee
 - G. Emergency Services Committee
 - H. Land Committee
- VI. Old Business
- VII. New Business/Announcements
- VIII. Adjournment

HCA Board Officers for 2010

President:	Rick Priola	574-8313
First VP:	Jean-Pierre Bernard	357-7644
Second VP:	Gene McKenna	346-7348
Treasurer:	David Krakower	(415) 398-1100
Secretary:	Denise Haas	372-0373
<i>lowdown</i> Editor:	Dorothy Greene	341-1752
<i>lowdown</i> Co-Editor:	James Nemschoff	570-5023

HCA Committee Chairs for 2010

Land:	Sam Naifeh	572-8787
Public Utilities:	Wil Pinney	345-2546
Emergency Services:	Pam Merkadeau	280-9046
Membership:	Liesje Nicolas	773-7805
Technology:	Beverley Madden	574-1593

HCA MINUTES

by Denise Haas, Secretary

Tuesday July 27th, 2010

I. Call to Order – the meeting was called to order at 7:42 p.m. by President Rick Priola.

II. Review & Approval of the Minutes – Motion to approve the minutes of June 22, 2010 was moved by Melissa Wilson, seconded by Dorothy Greene, and carried unanimously.

III. Sheriff's Department/California Highway Patrol/CDF – Deputy Cosgriff is working on the October CERT class. Station 17 will hold a friends and family CPR refresher course on August 18.

IV. Reports

A. 1st Vice President –Margaret Glomstad reported on a tree removal project at the HRD.

B. 2nd Vice-President – The Board thanks Gene McKenna for a successful 4th of July celebration.

C. Treasurer – David Krakower reported on the HCA budget.

D. Membership – Liesje Nicolas reported that the membership drive is at 77% of its goal; the HCA website is now operational; and a “Welcome Party” will be held on Sunday, September 19, from 1 – 3 p.m., at the Rec Park. All residents are invited to attend.

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E. Lowdown – Dorothy Greene announced the deadline for *lowdown* submission as Friday, September 10.

F. Public Utilities Committee – Wil Pinney reported on Board of Supervisor's approval of county residential chicken ordinance and

that there will be a new formula for calculating sewer rates.

G. Emergency Services Committee – no report

H. Land Committee – no report

V. Old Business – Residents are asked to call the HRD if they can supply storage space for 4th of July supplies.

VI. New Business/Announcements – none

VII. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

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Rec Soccer
Sat. 9/25-10/30
9-11 a.m. \$65/70

A non-competitive, Instructional Soccer League for boys and girls ages 4-6 and 6-8. This league is designed for youth and is a volunteer parent-coached program. Rec Soccer will teach the basics of the game in a recreational environment. This league will consist of warm-up, drills and games. Each team will consist of 10 players max! Teams will have the opportunity to pick a team name at the first meeting. Fee includes equipment and t-shirts. Pictures will be taken on the second week-end of the league. There will be two levels of play, a 4-6 year old league and a 6-8 year old league. Age groups will play at different times.

Mandarin Language Program

Kinder. 9/14-12/14

Tues./Thurs. 1-2 p.m.

1st/2nd Grade 9/13-12/13

Mon. 2:30-3:30 p.m., W 1-2 p.m.

3rd Grade 9/14-12/14

Tues./Thurs. 2:30-3:30 p.m.

4th/5th Grade 9/14-12/14

Tues./Thurs. 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Jian Zhu will focus on language acquisition through language immersion and cultural activities. Class fees are \$420/425. Class will be held at the Highlands School in Room 20.

Intro to Cartooning

Tues. 9/21-10/26 3:30-4:30 p.m.
\$60/65

Tues. 11/2-12/7 3:30-4:30 p.m.
\$60/65

Have you ever wanted to be able to draw your favorite cartoon

character or comic book hero or to be able to create your own character from your imagination? Join artist and instructor Matthew St. Lezin for Intro to Cartooning.

Beginning and Intermediate Guitar

Mon. 9/21-12/6 4-6:30 p.m.

\$200/205

Tues. 9/22-11/30 3-6 p.m.

\$200/205

Wed. 9/23-12/1 4:30-6 p.m.

\$200/205

Thurs, 9/24-12/9 4:30-6 p.m.

\$200/205

Learn how to play the guitar by focusing on technique and ear training. This class will de-mystify the sometimes overwhelming and confusing technical information given in manuals and instruction books. The approach and method is beginner-friendly and aims to make each lesson a productive and enjoyable experience. Teacher Robert Razon is a multi-instrumentalist, arranger, composer and

teacher, who for nearly three decades has been studying, researching, teaching, and performing within the musical genres of Blues, Rock, Latin, and World. Sign up for your 30-minute lesson time today.

Youth Tennis Lessons

Pre-T Ages 3-6

Youth I Ages 6-10

Youth II Ages 8-13

Students will be instructed in the basic fundamentals of proper grip, forehand, backhand, serve and volley. Youth I and Youth II lessons are for beginners and intermediate tennis players.

Highlands Rec on Twitter

Please follow the Highlands Rec on our new Twitter account: www.twitter.com/highlandsrec Updates will be sent out regarding upcoming events, classes and any news about the Highlands Rec Center.

► **Rec Programs: to page 10**



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CERT CLASS OCTOBER 5th

In the wake of the catastrophe in San Bruno, please recognize how important it is to take the CERT Class. Call the Rec Center to sign up - 650-341-4251



"Expect the Best"

COMMUNITY NEWS



Sun Shines on Labor Day Block Party

by Eva Voisin

About 75 Highlands neighbors and their families attended the ninth annual Labor Day block party at Brandywine and Forge. We were all happy to reconnect with old friends and meet several new members of our neighborhood, all with interesting personal and professional backgrounds.

For some, it was an opportunity to see friends' children with their children and reminisce about the Highlands tennis club, babysitting co-ops and the elementary school decades ago. It was fun to see so many children on their bikes and skateboards, running around and enjoying playing with neighborhood and visiting dogs.

We were lucky to have a warm day, with no wind or fog, which allowed us to linger outside till 9 p.m. without sweaters and plan an even bigger celebration next year for our tenth anniversary.

Free Photos--Get Them While They Last!

by Colleen Sullivan

Do you wish that you had a copy of your Kindergarten class from 1972? Highlands Elementary and Buena Vista Elementary schools class photos dating back to 1957 are available to anyone who would like them. Come to the Rec office to take a look at the photos and take home those that are important to you or your loved ones. Thank you to the Highlands Rec staff for helping these photos find their rightful homes!

The San Mateo County Pharmacists Association in collaboration with AARP invites you to:

Talk with a Phamacist Day

Saturday, October 9

10 a.m – 3 p.m.

Hillsdale Shopping Center

For information, call 341-0896 or e-mail ddonovan@pacbell.net

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Pacchetti Sisters Create a Restaurant in 24 Hours

by Dorothy Greene

Twenty-four hours to create a restaurant? That's the incredible challenge faced by sisters Lisa Sheehan and Barbie Apt when they appeared on the Food Network's weekly 24 Hour Restaurant Battle in July, competing with another team of two to design, outfit, staff, and open a restaurant in 24 hours.

Daughters of Allegheny residents Marge and Ted Pacchetti, the girls were raised in the Highlands and began working in restaurants in their teens. Barbie is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, and Lisa has managed several restaurants.



(from left) Lisa and Barbie

Though neither now works in the field, Barbie has been a chef and both sisters have been involved in opening restaurants and have worked with very well-known restaurateurs. Both live in Texas with their families.

In the contest, each competing pair was given \$4,000, warehouse space, and 24 hours to turn it into a restaurant, complete with staff, decor, furniture, linens, tableware, a menu and food. All the kitchen equipment was provided by the network.

To get the work done, the girls divided the task, with Lisa in charge of the front of the house and Barbie running the back. The network provided the necessary staff. Inspired by their father Ted who had always wanted to open a restaurant with music, they used his initials (TAP) to name their restaurant "Taps, a Modern Tavern and Piano Bar."

It was a totally exhausting but exhilarating experience, and despite some minor glitches, they got the job done in 24 hours. Their reward was spectacular! The judges named them the winners of the competition and awarded them a \$10,000 prize. The Highlands cheering section is still basking in the glow.



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1523 Forge Rd., San Mateo- Remodeled 4BD/2BA. Views of the bay from liv rm. Updated kitchen, separate office w/hrdwd flrs, atrium, 2 car garage. **Listed @ \$920,000**

1784 Lexington Ave., San Mateo- Updated 3BD/2BA. Backs to open space with views. **Reduced to \$948,000**

2315 Ticonderoga Dr., San Mateo Beautiful town home 2BD/2.5BA + loft. **Listed @ \$645,000**

1719 Monticello Rd., San Mateo- Updated & Expanded 3BD/2BA +office. **Reduced to \$850,000**

COMING SOON- 50 Lundys Ln.- Dramatic high-end contemporary 4BD/3.5BA, fam rm. **Call Glenn for price.**

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2060 Bunker Hill Dr.- Sold @ \$1,598,000
1435 Lexington Ave.- Sold @ \$1,150,000
1259 Laurel Hill Dr.- Sold @ \$928,000

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Senior Network to Hear Economist

by *Cliff Donely*



The Highlands Senior Network has sponsored several potluck lunches in the past with great success, thanks to

those who have volunteered the use of their homes for the events. They have been great fun and so well-attended that we would like to do more. But we are running out of volunteers. Therefore, please contact me if you would be willing to

host a potluck in your home.

On **Thursday, October 21**, the Senior Network is planning a double feature. The first will be a barbecue lunch at the Rec, starting at 12:30 p.m. The menu will include hamburgers, hot dogs, salad, dessert, and a beverage and will cost \$5. If you plan to attend, please RSVP by e-mailing highlands-senior-network@googlegroups.com or phoning me at 349-5290.

The second feature of the day will take place at 2:15 p.m. in the

San Mateo Community College District headquarters' second floor board room, 3401 CSM Drive. (Look for the District's headquarters building on the right side of CSM Drive just before you enter the CSM campus. Noted economist and faculty member Dr. Lee Miller will speak to our group and lead a discussion about the condition of the economy now, and what we might expect in the future. We are very fortunate to hear from an economist of his stature.

Highlands Book Group

by *Jo Nassutti*



The Book Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month, at 10:15 a.m., in the Exercise

Room at the Rec Center.

On **October 5** we will discuss *Handle with Care* by Jodi Picoult. The novel deals with the relationship between two siblings, one "normal" and the other "broken" and the center of attention who is "handled with care." The book delves into how we cope with differences, trying to be fair to all concerned.

Our choice for **November 2** is *Evidence of Things Unseen*, by Marianne Wiggins. Called an uncommon masterpiece, it deals with the ethical and emotional issues arising from World War II and the use of the atomic bomb to bring it to an end.

Questions? call Jo Nassutti at 650-345-8915.

Curious? come by and observe.

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HIGHLANDS RESIDENT

COMMUNITY NEWS

Explore the Rich Array of Opportunities At CSM

by Valerie Anderson, Office of the President, CSM

As residents of the San Mateo Highlands Community Association, you are also a part of the College of San Mateo community. We encourage you to explore the educational opportunities and resources that CSM offers throughout the year. While our fall semester is already underway, the college has dozens of late-start and short courses that are still open for enrollment. For more information on these classes, visit collegeofsanmateo.edu/schedule/shortcourses.asp.

You might also be interested in our very popular Community Education program featuring an extensive selection of workshops, classes, and activities. Enjoy the fun of learning and making new friends in your community! Whether you are looking to develop your skills, explore an interest, get healthier, or grow professionally, Community Education has an opportunity for you!

Here is a sample of our upcoming fall classes:

*Reach for the stars! Discover fascinating fall constellations projected onto our state-of-the-art planetarium dome in the astronomy class, Fascinating Skies of the Fall. Or dance like a star while improving your health in Hot Salsa Dancing for Beginners, or Belly Dance for Fitness

& Fun classes. Get glamorous with Saturday workshops and make your own Luscious Lip Balms, Lip Gloss & Exfoliator and Luxurious Bath and Body Products.

*Weave your way through the World Wide Web. Do you have an attic full of treasures you would like to sell? eBay can provide a world-wide market for your items. Learn the Basics of Selling on eBay. Tap into customers all over the globe and delve into the world of Internet Marketing. Uncover proven strategies to become financially independent, and learn how to develop a website that sells.

Broaden your world and discover a wide range of classes, workshops and fun activities offered locally, at convenient times and affordably priced. For a unique gift, give someone special the gift of lifelong learning with a Community Education e-gift card, good toward any class, workshop or activity we offer.

For more information about Community Education classes and workshops, or hundreds of online courses, check our online fall catalog <http://CommunityEd.smccd.edu> or call us at (650) 574-6149.



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Highlands lowdown

Editor and Business Manager:

Dorothy Greene
phone: 650-341-1752
email: lowdowneditor@gmail.com
mailing address: 1879 Lexington Ave., San Mateo, CA 94402

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Neither the lowdown nor the HCA is responsible for the accuracy of any information in the display or want ads. Readers are encouraged to check that licenses are current and to get references. Subscriptions for non-residents of the Highlands are \$25 per year. Individual issues are \$2.50 each, if avail-

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL, UMC AND COMMUNITY NEWS

Highlands School News

by Mary Tsao



Welcome to the 2010-2011 school year. This year's theme is "A **Community of Heroes.**" It is inclusive and inviting. All teachers, staff, students, parents and community members work together to make Highlands Elementary safe and enjoyable for all.

How you can help: We encourage and need support for our school from the entire Highlands community. There are many ways that local families and community members can directly help Highlands.

E-scrip: With E-scrip, when you shop at participating businesses, Highlands receives a percentage of the sales. For information about how to sign up, see the Highlands website www.highlandses.org.

Recycling: Look for upcoming dates for community recycling. This is an easy way to help raise additional funds for Highlands School.

PTA: Direct contributions to our PTA are also appreciated. The Parent Teacher Association at Highlands is one of the most active in the district. The PTA helps fund crucial programs that keep our school highly rated in the San Mateo-Foster City school district.

A highly rated school keeps this a desirable neighborhood for families looking to purchase a home. For more information about the PTA and how you can help, contact 2010-2011 co-presidents Linda Siguenza (lin3@comcast.net) or

Ed Chang edchang8@yahoo.com). Thank you for your support!

School Dates for Your Calendar

- September 24** - Picture Day
- September 27** - Professional Development Day (no school)
- September 28** - PTA Meeting
- September 29** - Family Dinner Night at Round Table Pizza (say you're from Highlands!)

UMC News

by Christina Brown

Crystal Springs United Methodist Church
Open Heart ~Open Minds ~Open Doors

Activities Calendar

- Worship Services** at 10 a.m., Dr. Nancy Landauer preaching.
- Choir Practice** – Began Tuesday, September 12. Open rehearsals, directed by Joe Trimble
- Children's Choir** – Begins October 3 for Ages 3-7. Every Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to noon, directed by Louis Vaili.

For information, call 650-345-2381

Join the HCA

by Liesje Nicolas

With three months left in 2010, we've reached 80 percent of our HCA membership goal. It's only a few months since our spectacular 50th Anniversary 4th of July celebration, and as this *lowdown* is being prepared, we're getting ready for our Highlands Welcome party on September 19. These are only some of the activities you support by when you join the Highlands Community Association.

In addition to organizing the annual 4th of July events and producing and distributing the *lowdown* 10 times a year, the HCA advocates our common interests before San Mateo County government bodies on issues such as traffic, safety, public utilities, sewers, emergencies, and land development, and works diligently to protect our Highlands quality of life. You can pay your dues by mailing a check to HCA, 205 De Anza Blvd., #49, or with your Pay Pal account, pay online on our website, www.highlandscmmunity.org. **If you're not yet a member, now's the time to step up and join and help us get to 100 %!**

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COMMUNITY NEWS

► **Rec Programs:** from page 4



Laughter is in the curriculum at the Rec's preschool program.

Early Education Preschool Program

Mon-Fri, 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Ages 2.5 – 5

The program runs from September to June. Fall registration in progress! Call Rebecca at 341-4251 for more details.

Middle School Dance

Fri, Oct. 8, 7-10 p.m.
6th-8th Graders
\$8 in advance, \$10 at the door
Valid School ID needed

Underwater Pumpkin Patch

Sun, Oct 24, 2-4 p.m.
Come pick out a pumpkin at our first-ever aquatic pumpkin patch! Entrance is free to members and anyone wearing a costume! Carving tools will be provided. Pumpkins will cost \$6-11, based on size. Hot apple cider and other seasonal goodies will also be for sale. This is a great way to pick out your pumpkins for the holiday!

CERT

Tues, 10/5-11/2 6-9 p.m. Free
The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may

impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

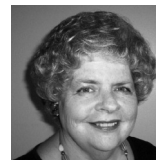
After attending your 5 CERT training classes, you are required to attend a disaster simulation day to receive your certification. The Disaster Simulation Day is Sun, 11/14, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. CERT classes and the Simulation Day are located at Cal Fire Station 17, 320 Paul Scannell Drive, San Mateo.

Lifeguard Training

Sat./Sun., 10/2-10/10, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
\$200/205
Mon.-Thurs, 12/20-12/23
8 a.m.-5 p.m. \$200/205

This comprehensive training program is for the individual who wishes to become a lifeguard at a pool. It will certify the passing student in CPR for Professional Rescuer, First Aid, and Lifeguard Training. Students must be 15 years old or older (proof of age must be shown at the first meeting) and pass a water skills test to be admitted into the class. Bring class material, swim suit, towel, and comfortable clothing. **Students Must Attend All Classes in the Session!**

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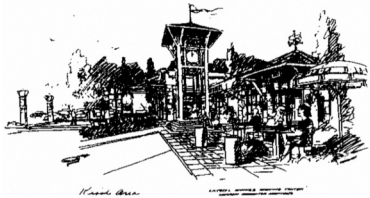
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A VIEW FROM THE HIGHLANDS

Electronic Communications Can't Replace Hugs

by *Florence Beier*

My first computer was a Compaq back in about 1985. The amazing machine meant that I no longer needed a secretary to type, copy, and file. I could sit in my office alone and take care of my consulting business. The good part was the efficiency and perhaps not having to deal with the deficiencies of other people. The not-so-good part was I didn't practice patience and forgiveness. But that was 25 years ago and a lot of electronics have entered my life since then.

Next came the cell phone, theoretically just for emergencies. Ha! We're so hooked that my husband calls me from Costco to see if we need new dishwasher detergent. But do I really need to call home to say that I will be there in ten minutes?

Email now consumes hours a day. Usually it's great to stay in touch with far-off friends, develop

the attendance list for an event, or co-edit a document. Do I really need to email my next door neighbor about how to cook rhubarb? The personal touch surely gets lost in that transaction. Lately there's also Facebook, with my students from 40 or so years ago sending compliments such as "You were my favorite teacher" or "You changed my life." Naturally I eat that up.

My iPod Touch is a handy replacement for my bulky address book and pocket calendar. The Kindle is great for reading on the go, but can't substitute for cruising the library. Totally cool is our new Skype. A few days ago we talked face-to-face with our granddaughter who had just arrived in South Korea, as if she were right here.

Electronics can bring our community together in ways that would be otherwise impossible. The Highlands Senior Network keeps

retired folks here involved in luncheons, programs, transportation, and mutual help. The Parents Network provides tips for baby-sitters, schools, services, and events. Both the Rec District at www.highlandsrec.com and the HCA, www.highlandscommunity.org, have websites with background, meeting minutes, and calendars. These websites need to be kept up-to-date to be useful.

Along with throngs of Highlanders, I walk the neighborhood, visiting along the way. When I hang out at the Rec pool, some of my favorite conversations take place in the locker room there. HCA and HRD meetings, block parties, and potlucks happen regularly. Our personal contacts, planned and spontaneous, can't be beat for meaningful communication. Whatever it takes, let's get together.