

VOLUME FIVE, NUMBER FIFTY-FOUR

MISSION VIEJO, CALIFORNIA

December 2019

# MISSION VIEJO<sup>®</sup>

## REPORTER

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Dave Leckness  
Editor



# CITY SPEAK

## ROTARY

### An Open Invitation to You



by Colonel Greg Rath  
USMC (RET)  
Mayor, Mission Viejo

I joined the Mission Viejo Rotary Club five years ago and I have found it to be a wonderful service organization. Our club meets every Wednesday morning for breakfast and a short program at 7:00 AM at the Mission Viejo Country Club. Rotary is a service orientated club with over a million members worldwide. We gather to exchange ideas, assist local charities, grow our businesses, and meet new friends.

We volunteer to support projects within the Saddleback Valley community, as well as people in Mexico and India. Find out more about our organization at [www.missionviejorotary.org](http://www.missionviejorotary.org). We

invite you for breakfast and a short program with a local speaker. Our meeting concludes promptly at 8:30 AM.

I am the president for 2019/2020 year and I enjoy working within our area and beyond making our world a better place. I thank our members for all they do for our club. I hope to see you at one of our meetings. Check out our recent YouTube video at: <https://youtu.be/FBDhvnref3w>



# CARING



by Trish Kelley  
City Council Member  
Co-founder Mission Viejo  
Community of Character

Mission Viejo has character! As a Community of Character for the past 16 years, the City focuses on 12 character qualities throughout the year. In December, we promote **Caring**, a trait which can be described with the words compassion, loving, or kindness. A caring person is concerned about others. Empathy, the ability to feel what another person is feeling—to imagine “walking in the shoes” of another person—is important. Another word which helps us to understand how to be caring is “altruism,” which means having feelings and actions that show a desire to help other people and an unselfish concern for the welfare of others. As we strive to be more caring, the “Golden Rule” is a good guideline: treat others the way you would like to be treated. We can be caring by giving of our time and talent, and even just by smiling and offering a kind word! Try setting a goal of performing a random act of kindness every day!

*“I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same.” - Rachel Scott*

Trish Kelley, City Council Member Co-Founder, Mission Viejo Community of Character [trishkelley@cox.net](mailto:trishkelley@cox.net)

## HUMANS OF MISSION VIEJO

with John Rodriguez

# THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

### FROM THE UKRAINE TO MISSION VIEJO TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS LOOK BETTER



by John Rodriguez  
M.V. Chamber of  
Commerce Ambassador

My family came to the U.S.A. in 2017 with the goal of opening up a new branch office, as a complement to our thriving, 24 year-old International company we had been running in the Ukraine. As soon as we experienced the Orange County lifestyle, we were hooked here in Mission Viejo! We knew this must be the best place in the world to live and work!

As the owner of an International Company, I learned that it is very important to understand the cultural and business needs of the community, so I joined my local Chamber of Commerce, as it's one of the best ways to meet and learn from other business owners. One of the highlights of my membership has been volunteering as an Ambassador and becoming part of the Daybreakers Networking leadership team. I've also been privileged to work closely with **Mayor Greg Rath**, who is so supportive of the Chamber and our small businesses!

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*Humans of Mission Viejo* is a monthly column written by John Rodriguez. John works as a Senior Mortgage Banker for iFinance Mortgage, helping people find the best mortgages for their needs. Give him a call at **949-456-7056**





# YOU'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER BOAT

## Mission Viejo Man Is Not Afraid To Rock The Boat

Scott Arnott is a real estate broker and the only guy in Mission Viejo, or maybe even Orange County, who takes a boat to work each day. Scott pushes the real estate market to extremes. He makes deals and sells at prices that leave others scratching their heads.

Scott lives in one of the "Fabulous Five" condos on Lake Mission Viejo in the Finisterra on the Lake community. The "Fab Five" are five specially built waterfront condos that were originally designed for the forward thinking, top five executives of the Mission Viejo Company, Paul Stevens, Donald Schulz, James Gilleran, John Biggs and James Huesman, that built Lake Mission Viejo and many of the communities across the city. These condos are the largest condos on the lake at around 2500 sq. ft., each with all kinds of special and luxurious features. Scott sold one of these condos a year ago for an historic price of over one million dollars.



Scott Arnott works at Coldwell Banker on Lake Mission Viejo. Each day, Scott walks out his back door to his boat (named Live Beautifully) and drives it across the lake to the dock at his Coldwell Banker office. Scott is the Lake's biggest fan. He says the current LMV management who run the lake are the best in the business and really care about the lake. Scott explained to the Mission Viejo Reporter that there are only 7 planned lake communities in all of Orange County (Lake Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, Lake Forest 1 & 2, Woodbridge Irvine 1 & 2 and Eastlake in Yorba Linda), but he emphasizes that Lake Mission Viejo is the only one of the seven with an unparalleled level of utility including body contact with the water such as swimming & with various water related activities. Scott has lived in the City for over 20 years and grew up from early teenage years working in the Arnott Real Estate family business, a well respected 50 year real estate family here in south Orange County. Scott is a very experienced real estate broker with over 30 years in the business, in addition to being a State Certified Appraiser for 24 years.

Here are some fun facts from Scott Arnott's list of Mission Viejo accomplishments:

- Sold home on San Lucas for the highest sale in this City's history at \$3,650,000.

- Sold condo on Trocadero for \$1,100,000. First condo to sell for over 1M in history of the City.

- Sold two of the three highest tract homes (non-custom) sales ever in the city on Shadow Ridge and Stillwater.

- Highest lease of a single family home in Mission Viejo at \$10,600 per month

- Highest lease of a condo in Mission Viejo at \$4,000 per month

- #1 in Sales for the entire City, 9 of the past 13 years



Mission Viejo Highest Sale



Million Dollar Condo

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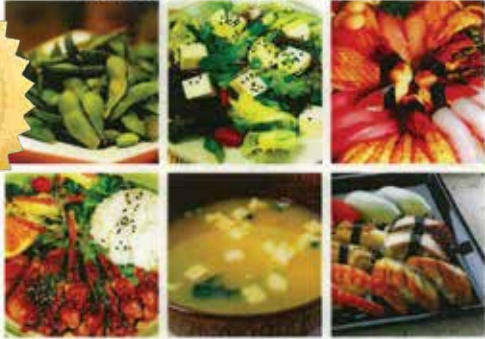
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FROM OUR SHARP EYES DEPT.

## NIGHTSTALKER

### LOCAL LITTLE HERO STOPS HIS RAMPAGE

The summer of 1985 was hot and terrifying for Southern California. On August 25, 1985, **Richard Ramirez** pulled his orange Toyota station wagon onto Via Zaragosa in Mission Viejo looking for someone to kill. At home, in the garage working on his mini-bike was 13 year old **James Romero**. James heard footsteps on the side of his house and then saw, through the little screened vent a few inches off the garage floor, a pair of feet walk by.



Richard Ramirez awaiting court appearance

Petrified, James ran to his dad yelling they had a prowler in the yard. They both went to the front window and saw a man run across their front yard and get into the orange Toyota. James and his dad went outside, and as the Toyota drove slowly by, James wrote down the license plate number and called police.



The mini-bike that helped stop a killer

An hour later, Richard Ramirez drove down Chrisanta Drive in Mission Viejo and saw a house with the garage door slightly open. He crawled inside the house, found and shot Bill Carns in the head and raped his girlfriend.

It would be the last attack from the Night Stalker. Orange County Sheriff Deputies used the license plate number provided from James and his dad and had the name and fingerprint of Richard Ramirez. He was arrested not long after that terrible night when he made the decision to come to Mission Viejo.



James and L.A. Rams owner Georgia Frontiere: The plaque said "To a Real American Hero"

Thirteen year old Mission Viejo resident James Romero was a hero. He received reward money, Rams tickets, an ATV from Mission Yamaha, and he testified in an LA courtroom for two days. Today, James is 45 years old, married and with 4 kids.

The **Mission Viejo Reporter** asked James what the strangest moment during that whole experience was. James said that during his time on the witness stand, Richard Ramirez would stare at him, and one time, Ramirez locked eyes with him and winked.



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FROM OUR **LIGHTING THE SEASON** DEPT.

## LIGHTS of MISSION VIEJO®

*Beginning October 1 and finishing on Thanksgiving,  
the City installs all of its beautiful holiday lights.*

**Here are some fun facts:**

- 10,000 strands of lights
- 70 lights per strand = 700,000 LED lights
- Begin installing lights October 1 of each year; and finish by Thanksgiving. All are taken down and stored by the end of January.
- It takes 3 different contracting firms along with City staff to coordinate and install all of the decorations.
- The star on the Community Tree at La Paz and Chrisanta is 4 feet across.
- It takes 2 large shipping containers to store all of the lights.
- Over 700 extension cords are needed.
- Over 23,750 feet of electrical tape are used. That's 4.5 miles of tape.







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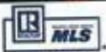


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**Q** Since my Mission Viejo neighborhood does not have a homeowners association, if I wanted to, could I paint my house hot pink?

**A** Essentially, the answer is yes, since you have no homeowners association and the City does not regulate home color in residential areas. However, it might not be the wisest choice. Even without an HOA, there could still be CCR's that you must adhere to.

What's worse is you could incur the wrath of your neighbors and negatively impact your resale value and those around you. Something to consider before bringing John Cougar Mellencamp's song to life.



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# Ask Aunt Sandy



- WITH MISSION VIEJO'S SANDRA FERGUSON

*Mission Viejo's very own advice columnist is a straight shooter and slightly humorous.*

Dear Aunt Sandy,

My next-door neighbor doesn't have much of a yard, so when it's time for his small schnauzer to relieve himself, he picks up his dog and sets him down on my green grass, next to my mailbox, to pee. I get along great with my neighbor and don't want to cause a scene but now, I've noticed several small (4-inch diameter) areas of dead grass near my mailbox. What should I do?

- Steaming in Mission Viejo

Dear Steaming in Mission Viejo,

Well, at least for now it's just potty rather than something "steaming" that this doggy is leaving behind! In any case, "ur-ine" a tough position, and I can see why you're "pissed off." Ah, but Aunt Sandy is not here to amuse herself with wordplay but instead to offer sage advice to Steaming about the "streaming." There's a product on the market called ScareCrow Sprinkler (see eBay) with an infrared eye that, when triggered, makes streams of water shoot out. Try this remedy, and I'm sure your pesky neighbor will think twice before tromping on your lawn to let his little varmint do his business. However, you will now probably have to drive to the post office to pick up your mail because no postal carrier in his right mind will put up with this daily dousing of water.

"[S]praying" for greener grass on your side,

- Aunt Sandy

*If you have a question or comment for Aunt Sandy please email:  
missionviejoreporter@gmail.com*

## Intersections WE REMEMBER



*Lake Mission Viejo, 1975*



*Lake Mission Viejo, 2019*

# Wine Down Mondays



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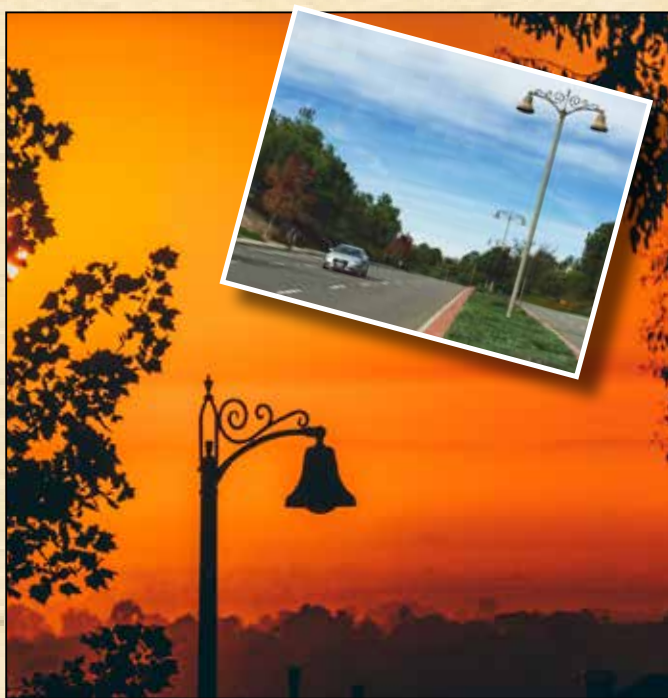
KARL GEBHARD, MD, MS





# IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SCROLL

## The Origin of the Mission Viejo Streetlight



Streetlights are typically not the most interesting subjects to discuss. The iconic ones here in Mission Viejo actually are. Their official name is the 'Mission Bell Luminaire', and they were **commissioned** to be made by the **General Electric Company** for the **Mission Viejo Company's** exclusive use.

They are based on the famous 'El Camino Real Bell' from the San Juan Capistrano Mission and took two years to design by employees of General Electric, with some help from employees of the Edison Company. Photos were taken of the original bell, and then two engineers **scaled** it down to streetlight size in exact proportion. They even duplicated the bell's color. Each streetlight is made of cast aluminum and has 250 watts of power.

The scroll is modeled after a Tuscan Mediterranean Flourish from the Renaissance Period which spread throughout Europe.

### Meanwhile in San Juan Capistrano:

*They use the bell shape of the Mission Viejo streetlight, but without our trademark scroll it looks a little anemic.*



FROM OUR BUILDING A CITY DEPT.

# COYOTES + SNAKES

## CHANGING FROM ONE TYPE OF RESIDENTS TO ANOTHER



There are numerous accounts of what had to happen in order for the Rancho Mission Viejo company to turn this desolate haven for coyotes and snakes called Rancho Mission Viejo, (essentially a cow pasture) into what is now considered one of the safest and most livable cities in America. **Gaspar de Portola** marched right through Mission Viejo in 1740, and according to one rumor, saw a snake and declared this valley unfit for humans.

In the 1960's, there was much doubt as to whether people would drive this far down in the OC to live. The coyotes and snakes were of no help whatsoever. After spending (with help from Edison) most of their money in developing infrastructure, the Rancho Mission Viejo Company, in case it didn't work out, shrewdly engaged the Dean Brothers to build the first group of homes on the La Paz hill. Much drama, much anxiety.

It ended with a lottery and was a huge success. People liked the country feeling and the concept of a planned community. Huge sigh of relief, as word spread, and Mission Viejo was on the map! Coyotes and snakes were given orders to move on!

Gaspar would be shocked -- Mission Viejo now has over 100,000 humans and is a model of community development. It is recognized internationally for the famous Natadores diving team. It boasts a lake with real fish, the 1984 Olympics bicycle race monument, a prehistoric **whale** fossil, paved roads, a giant YMCA complex, award winning schools, a library with a world class 'STORY ROOM', etc., etc. Who wouldn't want to live here? Almost everyone now it seems, except for coyotes and snakes. - **C.J. VerBurg**



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## Mission Viejo's Water Source is Safe

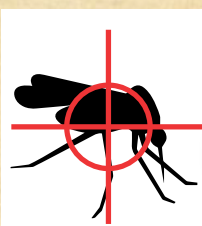
Camouflaged in the hills throughout Mission Viejo are several water tanks. **Santa Margarita Water District** has three of them and all are on constant security surveillance watch - Alicia (located on Alicia Pkwy between Santa Margarita Parkway & Olympiad), Casta del Sol (located in the CDS development), and O'Neill (located on Felipe just south of La Paz.)



The tanks are located on select hills due to the need for efficiency and the cost of moving water both into and out of the reservoirs. Part of the beauty of Mission Viejo is the topography, but it takes a lot

of energy to move the water around and up and down those grades.

The system is designed to pump water into the reservoir at night when energy is cheaper, and then gravity takes care of moving water during the day.



# KILLING 'SQUITOS

## MAKE MOSQUITOS UNWELCOME AT YOUR HOME



**by Bob Ruesch**  
Orange County Trustee for Vector Control representing Mission Viejo.

Can you "Tip and Toss?" No, this isn't a cooking show challenge, we are talking about how you can help you and your neighbors prevent an outbreak of the nasty and hungry mosquito. We are now into the season and getting bit multiple times is just not fun, but the itch is just a part of the problem. These nasty creatures also are known to spread some interesting diseases like Dengue and Yellow Fever, West Nile Virus, and Zika to name a few.

Today, take a few minutes to "Tip and Toss" any standing water in your yard. Look for things that collect water like old toys, plastic cups and tarps, anything that as little as a thimbleful of water can stay.

The Orange County Vector Control is challenging every resident of our city to help stop the spread of mosquitoes and make life outside enjoyable! For more information on the Tip and Toss program, go to: <https://www.ocvector.org/mosquitoes>

Taking a few extra minutes today and the only bites going on at your backyard BBQ will be on tasty food!





*your mission viejo neighbors*

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# NATIONAL CHAMPS!

CELEBRATING OUR 1997 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM



**In 1997,**

our very own

South Mission Viejo

Little League All Stars

won the US National

Championship and

advanced all the way

to the Little League

World Series Final

in Williamsport,

Pennsylvania. In

2017, to celebrate

the 20th

anniversary of

this achievement,

the SMVLL

reunited the

players and

coaches at this year's Opening

Ceremonies. Most of the team members

were able to attend. Many brought memorabilia and

souvenirs from their championship journey.

The coaches from the 1997 team spoke to the crowd of current players and talked about the importance of teamwork and believing that everything is possible.



Back row from left to right: Team Asst Andy Potter / Coach Al Elconin / Taylor Bennett / Andrew Nieves / Ryan O'Donovan / Ashton White / Gavin Fabian / Greg Oats / Gary Gattis / Adam Sorgi / Coach Ed Sorgi  
Front row from left to right: Adam Elconin / Brian Kraker / Matt Cusak / Chad Lucas.  
Missing from the photo: Manager Jim Gattis / Nick Moore.

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FROM OUR SUBURBUAN RANCHING DEPT.

# WHERE'S THE BEEF?

In 1975, Buying A Home Could Get You A Cow



1975



2019

**Thomas and Nicki Perry** were the proud owners of a 1,000 pound steer, for purchasing the 1,000th Barcelona Homes house! Next to them is **Grant Sullivan**, who was the general sales manager of the Mission Viejo Company at the time and **Bob Freeman** on his right, who was the project manager. The girl walking the cow is unknown and no one knows exactly what happened to the cow....

FROM OUR COUNTING CROWS DEPT.

# IF CROWS COULD SPEAK!

**C**rows often get a bad rap. Historically they've been associated with death, disease and bad omens... reviled as crop-stealers by farmers and condemned as nuisances by city dwellers. To cap it off, a group of Crows is called a Murder! Totally unfair in our humble opinion.



In truth, Crows are fascinating creatures, and so smart and so good at improvising that some zoologists admiringly call them "feathered apes". Black, regal, intelligent and possessing the largest brain to body weight ratio in the bird kingdom, they use tools, understand death, recognize faces and link them to emotions and memory, so if you're nice to them, they'll remember and if you're mean to them, they will hold a grudge.

However, Crow brains are the size of a human thumb and lack a neocortex, which in mammals is considered the home of intelligence. So, neuroscientists are studying them more and more closely, trying to unlock the secrets of how they are able to do the things that they can with the brain that they have. In doing so, they hope to learn not only more about crows' minds, but ours as well and believe that there is much future benefit from this study. Something to consider the next time you see one of these feathered animals and think of them as merely a pest.

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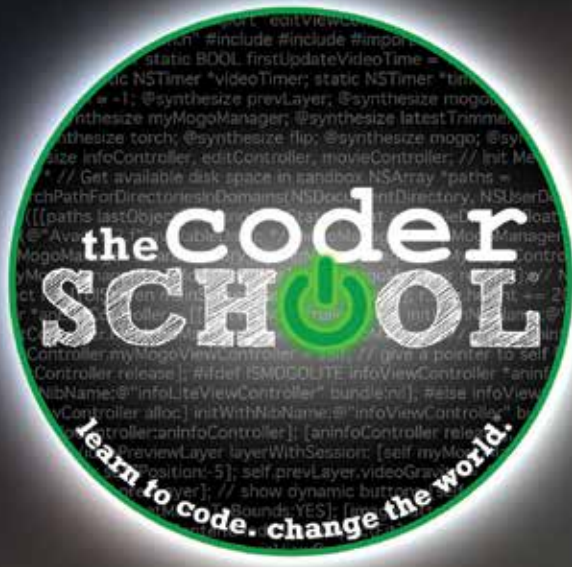
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## **SOUTH COUNTY LEXUS PRESENTING ATHLETE OF THE MONTH Olivia Saalberg - Cross Country**



A famous coach once said that "Sports do not build character, they reveal it." These words resonated with **Olivia Saalberg**, as she went from barely being able to run a mile in 8 min., to her current 5K PR of 20:21 min. Encouraged by family and friends to give cross country a try, Olivia soon found a new passion and her true grit. Surrounded by talented athletes, the girl who did not even like running, made it her goal to run with the best.

She immediately set to challenge herself by putting aside her self-doubts and getting out of her comfort zone. Determined to be in the best physical shape, Olivia diligently started strenuous core and endurance training. She then focused on enhancing her mental toughness, ready to help her team win. During her Sophomore year, the team took 1st place at the OC Championships. While her confidence soared, she lead most of the races as a top 5 scorer on the JV team and individually placed in the top ten in several JV races.

Throughout all the competitions, cross country has mostly "revealed" her integrity & leadership skills. Olivia explains that being one of the Captains this season, "has been one of the most rewarding experiences" for her. She understands that a leader can bring a team together by continually working on her own skills and acknowledging her teammates' individual efforts at the same time. In her eyes, each athlete is a valued member of the team. She is now paying it forward by encouraging others, the same way that she was when she started this sport. A favorite memory that she has is when "a Freshman told me that I have been the older sister she's always wanted."



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