



the Condor

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Check out PMC's website at www.pinemountainclub.net

It's PMC Election Time Again

The PMCPOA election takes place at the Members' Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 20, 2020 when three new members will be elected to the Board of Directors.

The four candidates vying for the three 3-year openings are:

- **Sandy Brown**
- **Phyllis Throckmorton**
- **Peggy Hoyt-Voelker**
- **Shirin Murphy**

To view the complete resume and position statement packages of these candidates, please refer to the PMCPOA website

(www.pinemountainclub.net) and click on the "Election Documents and Results" menu (<https://pinemountainclub.net/group/pages/election-documents-results>). The candidates are listed at left and on the website in the order in which they submitted Letters of Intent.

Voting will take place up until the closing of the ballot box on election day (usually around 1 p.m.). An Inspector of Elections tallies the votes, with the winners announced immediately thereafter. Election packets will be mailed to the membership this month.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the previously scheduled "Meet the Candidates" forums that were to take place on April 25 and May 8 are being replaced with a videotape of can-

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PMC Locals Describe Life in the COVID-19 Pandemic Era

Ronni Wilde, Condor Editor

Whether we like it or not, we are making history at this very moment. None of us has escaped the affects of the COVID-19 pandemic; our way of life was radically altered almost overnight. With the stoppage of all activities except those essential to keep life going; our homes have become our shelters, and we have been ordered to stay in them. We've had to become more technologically advanced very quickly, and we've had to either partner with our families as our "quaranteam" members, or isolate ourselves from them.

Like the rest of the world, mountain locals have had to change the way they do things, and it's probable that future generations of PMC-ers will be curious about how we survived the great pandemic of 2020. This era will be talked about in future history books, and museums will likely house documents and writings reflective of this epic time in our global culture.

To paint a picture of how Pine Mountain Club residents are handling the COVID situation, we spoke with a sampling of people who live, work and play here.

Kim Bucio, a resident of 20 years who raised her children here and who has owned several businesses in PMC, said she is taking all the needed precautions, because her parents are in their 70s, and her mother is high-risk due to pre-existing health conditions.

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Meet Your Board of Directors

Philip Gabriel said he came onto the PMCPOA Board of Directors in 2019 because he wanted to be a more involved community member, and be a part of the ongoing evolution of Pine Mountain Club. "We fell in love with PMC, and bought our home in 2008. When my daughter was younger, we would come up almost every weekend with a carload of girls, as



Philip Gabriel

her friends would have such a blast in PMC. This is where we plan to retire," he said. "I am most interested in getting things done for the benefit of the entire community."

Gabriel graduated from Washington State University with a degree in Literature. "After college, I owned a bookstore in Westwood, near UCLA, called Butler Gabriel Books. When the large chain bookstores took over, I worked as a loss prevention manager at Border's Books and Music. I opened my current store, Scrubs Unlimited, in 1999, right near UCLA where I sell scrubs, lab coats and medical accessories." Gabriel said his business has grown over the years, and he now enjoys a robust internet business

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"We are having to be extra careful, because my mother fell and broke her hip a month ago and had surgery, and she is diabetic," said Bucio. "There has been a learning curve in trying to get my dad to understand that he needs to wear a face mask out, because he's 'invincible.' But we remind him that my mom is not. If she gets this, she could die. On top of it, I caught a cold from my grandson, so we are wearing masks, washing hands continually, wearing gloves and going around disinfecting everything when at her house."

Bucio owned the former Sage & Cinnamon Restaurant from 2004-2006 and the Sweet Shoppe from 2007-2009, both of which were located in the PMC Village. She was also food and beverage manager of The Bistro (Condor Cafe) from 2009-2012, and she now works with her family at Com Plus, Inc., a small PMC-based business that builds and maintains communications towers. Because the business is considered an essential service, she and her family are able to continue working, although business has slowed because they have lost clients due to the COVID shutdown. "We are fortunate. We have work for another month, but we don't know after that. We are finishing up projects that were already in the works. The maintenance of the towers is ongoing, but as far as new projects are concerned, that has slowed down quite a bit."

To help stay calm, Bucio says she tries



Photo courtesy of Pexels

to focus on the positive. "Walking around in the sunshine is a tremendous boost. I clean house, paint, decorate, re-decorate, pray, listen to positive music and I try to stay away from a lot of the news." She added, "I watch and listen to comedy shows, work in the yard... anything positive. I can't live in fear." Having family around also helps, she said. "My son and daughter-in-law and our 2-year-old grandson live with us, so we've been able to be together. And our second grandchild is on the way."

The biggest challenges on the mountain, she said, are navigating the long lines at the post office, and seeing the price gouging that is taking place. "I'm discouraged by the price gouging I've seen. A lot of people are on fixed incomes; it makes it tough for them."

Laura Williams, owner of Peak to Peak Realty in the PMC Village, said realtors have had to learn new ways of conduct-

ing business with the onset of the pandemic, and that there is a new normal in her industry, as with so many others. "The California Association of Realtors has provided new forms and guidelines for buyers and sellers, as well as agents and brokers. Most homes I've shown lately are non-owner-occupied; the owner-occupied homes concern me more."

When a client is looking for a home, they are shown photos and videos of the home first to make certain that they really want to see the home. If they do, all parties involved wear gloves, masks and booties, and Williams and her clients ride in separate cars to the property. Her office is closed, so meetings take place online or over the phone. "I'm thinking about doing face-time videos of me showing the homes," she said. "Everything can be done electronically, but sometimes, a client really must see the property."

Williams purchased a vacation home here in 2012, and said she knew PMC was where she wanted to live in retirement. She retired from her first career in 2014, earned her real estate license and opened Peak to Peak in 2018.

The most difficult part of the COVID situation for her, she said, is not seeing her immediate family members, who are in Bakersfield and Tulare. "I was super active with my grandkids, but now we're doing lots of messaging. They love using Messenger and Zoom," she said with a laugh. To help keep herself healthy, Williams said she is doing lots of hiking.

Although the demand for real estate is definitely down compared to last year, she said, Williams is confident that the slowdown will be short-lived. "There is no comparison to last year. There has only been one property that has gone into escrow since the end of March," she said. "There are changes to the lending process; some lenders are doing checks to make sure people are still employed up until the day a loan closes. But I believe real estate will bounce back quickly. I think this will be short term. The real estate market was strong, and people still want a place to escape to." She added, "Everybody who can, please think about those who are less for-

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tunate.”

Strangely, the coronavirus outbreak has caused two familial scenarios to arise: For those whose children are grown and gone, isolation and loneliness have often been the result, as families stay away from each other to protect one another. But for those whose kids are still in school or college, the stay-at-home order has brought about intense togetherness due to the school closures. For Rick and Linda Rivette, long-time PMC residents who have eight adult children, this has been the case.

“The biggest change for us is that three of our daughters came home — our oldest is on the faculty of Azusa Pacific University, and is also working on a doctorate degree from USC, so she is online teaching lessons as well as taking classes,” said Rick Rivette, who is pastor of Pine Mountain Christian Community Church (PMCCC). “My daughter in grad school is also online taking classes, having chat groups with other students and working to complete assignments. Then my youngest daughter is a junior at the university, and she too is online for classes and meeting with other students to complete group projects.” He added, “Sharing the house with our daughters is a change that we are enjoying. We have played games and watched a movie on rare occasions when everyone has the evening free. We all meet each night for prayer — usually after dinner before leaving the table.” On Easter Sunday, Rivette said they did a group face chat with their other grown children in L.A., Seattle, Appleton, Wisconsin and Louisville, Kentucky. “We have also had to adjust to buying more food and cooking larger meals, and we have to be very careful backing up in our driveway with three additional cars,” he said with a laugh.

As with many churches across the country, PMCCC is streaming services on Facebook and uploading them on YouTube. “We had to purchase new equipment and learn how to use it. We have wanted to do this for a long time, but the COVID situation forced us to move on this form of communication now.” To keep connections strong within the congregation, Rivette said he’s been calling members ev-



Photo courtesy of Pexels

ery week to check in, pray and take note if there are any needs. “Church members have done well staying in touch by phone or text. Some of our church folks don’t go online for anything, so we have been busy finding other ways to include them, like providing a CD of the sermon.”

As a family, Rivette said the biggest challenge for them on the mountain, like Bucio, has been waiting in line at the post office to get mail, and going on shopping trips. “The shopping has not been a big problem; we mountain folk are used to stocking up with at least two weeks’ worth of food. But the waiting in line to get into a store has made the trips to the valley longer.”

To help cope and stay well, the Rivettes get outside for fresh air, and they follow the guidelines set forth by the health organizations, he said. “We are doing the normal things like eating well, jogging, hiking and exercising. We are washing our hands after every activity. Linda has made some face masks that we use if we go out to a public place, like the post office. I’m the one traveling to the valley to do shopping, so I take my mask and gloves, and when I get home, our daughters wipe everything with a disinfectant, and I take a shower and put my clothes in the washing machine.” He added, “We are all staying at home, except that I am out delivering things to people in need (gift certificates to the local market, firewood, putting gasoline in people’s cars, etc.) and doing work at the church alone.”

Liz Venegas, recreation manager of PMCPOA, said COVID-19 has effected her job tremendously due to the fact that there are no events or activities going on at the moment. “All the planning and scheduling came to a screeching halt,” she said. “For a minute, it seemed like all I was doing was canceling all these things we put time and effort into planning.”

On the days when she feels worried, Venegas agrees with Bucio, Williams and Rivette that getting outside works wonders. “There are those days when I feel a little extra anxious or stressed, and that’s when I get up and go outside and take a walk, and take advantage of the beauty of this place in which we live.”

She said she feels fortunate in that she is married so is not home alone, but that she misses spending time with family and friends. “Luckily, I have the company of my spouse, which is nice. But our relationships with people are a big part of our lives, and not being able to see them face to face has been rough. Thank goodness for technology; I don’t know what I’d do without FaceTime,” she said.

“With all of that being said, the one thing I have truly been grateful for is this community. There has been so much kindness and generosity, it warms my heart. When it comes down to it, we are a family up here, and when someone needs help, there is always someone there to lend a helping hand.”

PMC Specialists!

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