

## Features

### A Personal View

*Leah Lubin*

#### **Skylonda in the Twenty First Century: Still nestled in the redwoods**



**In 1993, I started living in Skylonda. My husband had bought our home after much looking six months prior to my arrival, nostalgic to recreate an earlier living experience he had had in La Honda.**

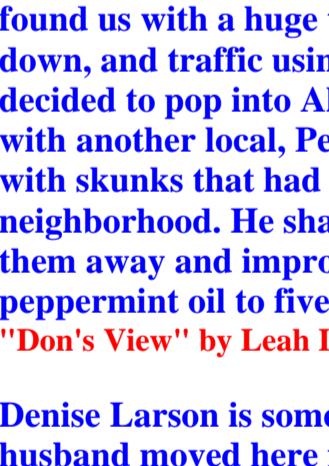
**From small, but busy Mountain View to magnificent London, my living experiences were all city life.**

**So here I am living in an ancient forest setting. Around me are huge redwood trees. Although many of the older trees have been cut down in the last hundred years, the trees, old and new, are tall and majestic. The forest feeling is strong and powerful, and although as many as 600 families live here, the forest still rules.**

**The neighborhood includes an interesting variety of people, but I was interested in bringing what I consider "community involved locals" into this column.**

**Metiko Salsbury has been here eleven years, raising three children and hosting the annual neighborhood Halloween party. She told me that there are a lot more kids and young families now. "This is a different lifestyle experience for each family. There are the old timers (here over twenty years), families with kids that have moved here within the last ten years or so, and those who have moved here for the privacy."**

**One Saturday night in the middle of June**



**found us with a huge traffic problem due to Highway 17 being shut down, and traffic using Highway 84 to get around the closure. We decided to pop into Alice's Restaurant for dinner, and caught up with another local, Peter. He began discussing a recent problem with skunks that had been extremely bothersome in our neighborhood. He shared a recipe with me that he said would chase them away and improve the aroma in general: One part peppermint oil to five parts water.**

**"Don's View" by Leah Lubin**

**Denise Larson is someone that I turn to for local news. She and her husband moved here from La Honda seven years ago because it was quieter and they wanted more land. A busy mom, she told me that she would love to see a local little park with a playground for the expanding children's community.**

**The desire for a park is a theme picked up by Beshara at the Skywood Trading Post, which has served this community for over eleven years: "Our one bus going up and down the mountain twice a day is packed with kids," he said. "Beautifying the parking lot was a goal that the market had recently achieved with the help of the locals."**

**Next door to the market at Skywood Realtors, Karen Bird was excited at the opportunity to talk about Skylonda. She described Skylonda as starting from Bear Gulch West, south to Old La Honda Road. The general diversity of people and the secret hideaway of homes are very magical for her. "Just when I think I've seen it all, I get invited to a house I never knew was there," she said.**

**To balance some of the isolation that can occur up here, in 1998, in the home of Karla Olivera, the idea of a "Mountain Women's Gathering" was hatched. Karla told me, "It became a really good way for the women in the neighborhood to connect. Plus a way to get emergency information out. Trees fall down and we are often without power in the winter for up to eight, even ten days. We are not part of the rest of the world," says Karla. So now, both wild and tame mountain women gather approximately once a month in a hosting home.**

**Although we attract a huge crowd on the weekend, up for the drive and the beckoning coast, rarely is this small neighborhood discovered.**