

ECS Newsletter

June 2025

Preparedness in ECS communities

It has been an unprecedented time for ECS. The impact of the Eaton Fire in Altadena was felt by us all. After an evacuation order that lasted more than two months, MonteCedro residents were able to return home on April 11, 2025. Members of the ECS Board of Directors, as well as ECS and MonteCedro leadership joined residents for a welcome message from me, and a blessing of the community and inspirational words from Bishop John Harvey Taylor.

Many residents have expressed deep gratitude for the hospitality shown to them by residents and team members at The Canterbury and The Covington — so much so that a reunion has already been requested.

Since returning home, MonteCedro residents have participated in numerous events, activities, and celebrations. Despite their own disruption and loss, they are providing financial support to a local foundation for neighbors affected by the Eaton Fire, and to the Staff Assistance Fund for Emergencies (SAFE) administered by ECS for MonteCedro team members who lost their homes.

We are especially grateful to the many people and organizations that made it possible for the safe evacuation and return of MonteCedro residents, including but not limited to the following:

- The MonteCedro team
- Altadena Sheriff's Station overseen by Captain Jabari Williams and Lt. Ethan Marquez
- Los Angeles County Fire under the leadership of Patrick Sprengel, Division III Assistant Fire Chief, and Community Services Liaison, Maria Grycan
- Supervisor Kathryn Barger's office, including Senior Field Deputy Sussy Nemer and Director of Planning, Housing and Public Infrastructure, Anish Saraiya.

Emergency personnel told me that most organizations plan for 98% of emergencies, and the Eaton Fire would account for the remaining 2% of situations. Exceptional means being prepared for the worst and hoping for the best, which is why we are conducting a thorough review of our policies, procedures, and training. We strive for 100% preparedness for any emergency and will provide the necessary support and training to ensure that our preparedness is as exceptional as the individuals we serve.

James Rothrock
President and CEO



Highlights

This newsletter features stories of the confidence that ECS communities inspire each day.

MonteCedro

Meet interim ED,
Mo Beith

The Covington

Expanding amenities
and capacity

The Canterbury

Fresh designs presented

Emergency Preparedness Plans

Training team members
and residents



MonteCedro

**MonteCedro interim ED,
Maureen (Mo) Beith**

*ECS has a special place
in her heart*

Sometimes life comes full circle. Maureen (Mo) Beith, Interim Executive Director of MonteCedro is a living example of this phenomenon.

"My first job in senior living was at The Scripps Home, which was the community on this property prior to the development of MonteCedro," she says. Mo went on to work at other communities as the VP of Operations and as CEO, but says she always had a special place in her heart for ECS.

Mo retired in 2022, and she and her husband moved to Washington State. "I had no plans to come out of retirement," she says. But with the Eaton Fire, she saw the devastation that was taking place in Altadena, a community where she and her husband had lived, and where they still have a lot of friends. "Then I heard that the Executive Director of MonteCedro had retired," she says, "and this idea popped into my head: I wonder if I could help."

She contacted James Rothrock, the CEO of ECS with what she describes as her "wild idea".

James connected her with Sharon Pewtress, SVP Operations and COO. "I was overcome by a profound sense of relief and gratitude, as I knew that she is exactly what MonteCedro needed during this time," Sharon says.

Mo joined MonteCedro in mid-March and will be the interim ED at MonteCedro as we search for a permanent Executive Director. "She's so approachable," Sharon says. "She understands our company and our values. Her leadership style, experience and presence are perfectly aligned with what we need right now."

Sharon comments that having Mo in this role lets ECS search for the right person to take on the permanent position at MonteCedro. "It allows us to have a very thoughtful, well-rounded process where we can include the management team and the residents to consider the qualities of the next Executive Director," Sharon says.

The Covington

**Enhancements at
The Covington**

*Expanding amenities
and capacity*

The coming years will see the completion of a breadth of new features at The Covington. The work began with the redevelopment of the outdoor pavilion. "It's called



Margaret's Pavillion," says Cash Benton, Executive Director of The Covington. Residents now can enjoy updates to the secret garden and an all new barbecue area. "We also finished a Wi-Fi project throughout the community. We upgraded our common space Wi-Fi and also added to our resident Wi-Fi capabilities."

The next phase of work will begin in the fall. The Covington will be replacing the entire roof on the main building. "Then we'll also start with the systematic replacement of all our elevators," Cash explains. The Covington will also be refreshing the corridors along with enhancing the Fitness and Wellness Center. "It's an all new redesign from the flooring, to the wallpaper, and the lighting," he says.

A third phase of work begins in 2026. "Not only are we creating a new area intentionally designed for Memory Care, we'll be adding capacity as well," Cash explains. In addition to enhancing the existing occupational and physical therapy spaces, this phase will create expanded common areas for residents, including a new game room and theater.

There are a lot of enhancements happening at The Covington, and in the coming years, the community will continue to build on the confidence and input from residents to provide even greater amenities and services.



The Canterbury

**Fresh designs for
The Canterbury**

Plans shared with residents

Recently, The Canterbury shared plans for community upgrades. Executive Director, Dave Hone has now presented the short-term and long-term architectural improvement plans, including renderings, to residents and team members. "It's a multi-phased campus improvement that will take several years to complete," Dave explains.

The first phase of work will begin in the fall, with an upgrade to the Valmonte patio shade structure. "We're also going to be adding a retractable wall at the back of the Valmonte room that will give us flexibility for more activities. It will open up to be a really seamless, indoor/outdoor space," Dave says.

Renovations to the Care Suites are expected to begin in January. "It will make our higher acuity assisted living feel more residential," he says. "And as for the wellness center, we're going to be adding some different features that are not typical in senior living like an infrared sauna and a Hydroworx 300, which is a piece of equipment used by a lot of professional athletes, but also helps with rehabilitation." In addition, there will be upgrades to the fitness center.

A large focus of the refurbishments include the interconnectivity of the community. Changes will make movement between the buildings easier and faster. "We will be designing for more natural light with more amenity spaces in a centralized hub."

The response has been overwhelmingly positive. "Everybody recognizes that these upgrades are going to make us a more vibrant community for the next 20-30 years."

Emergency Preparedness

**ECS Emergency
Preparedness Plans**

*Training team members
and residents*

Following the Eaton Fire and the evacuation of MonteCedro, ECS has hired a consultant to review, assess and update our process and approach to emergency preparedness and response. We are proud to be working with Fire and Life Safety, Inc. (FLS) and Stan Szpytek, a former fire battalion chief and President and Founder to identify areas for improvement across all ECS communities.

Given our recent experience, FLS is starting with MonteCedro. In addition to a review of the community's Emergency Operating Plan, Stan and his team also interviewed residents, families and team members. Following the FLS assessment, "Stan and his team spent two days with us at MonteCedro," says Sharon Pewtress, SVP Operations and COO. "He met with residents and held several meetings with members of the MonteCedro leadership focused on emergency preparedness, while

providing training for team members on every shift."

Implementation of many of FLS's specific recommendations are already in-progress with the MonteCedro and ECS teams. "We will be working with the Residents' Council and Residents' Emergency Planning ad-hoc committee to provide status updates as well as establishing the process for rolling out the recommendations within the community," Sharon says.

In addition to the FLS report, ECS held in-person meetings with Los Angeles (LA) County Supervisor Kathryn Barger's team, LA County Fire Battalion Chief Pat Sprengel and his team, and Altadena Sheriff's Captain Jabari Williams and Lt. Ethan Marquez. These meetings aim to strengthen relationships, coordinate efforts, and enhance our collaboration. Similar efforts are being undertaken at The Canterbury and The Covington.

Starting in June, residents and team members at The Covington and The Canterbury will meet with Stan and FLS. "We will be working with FLS for the coming year," Sharon says. "We look forward to collaborating with residents, resident representatives, and team members as we move forward."



MonteCedro Homecoming



Twelve Oaks Reunion



Orchard View Grand Opening



The Faces of Community