

VEP MEETING

7:30 P.M. TUESDAY

September 26, 2000

GUNDERSON HIGH SCHOOL

• **Faculty Lounge** •

AGENDA

• **Oakridge Mall Police Substation** •

• **NASCOP** •

Neighborhood Automated Speed Compliance Program

• **Chynoweth & Vistapark Drive** •

VEP's Position on a Proposed S.J. General Plan Change
That Would Delete Extension of These Streets

• **VEP's Goals for 2000-2001** •

• **Your Issues and Concerns** •

EVERYONE IS WELCOME—INVITE A NEIGHBOR

Our September VEP Meeting

-Greg West, VEP President

Our next VEP meeting will be on Tuesday, September 26th at 7:30 pm in the Faculty Lounge at Gunderson High School. We have a busy agenda that includes having the Commander of our new Oakridge Mall Police Substation tell us about the services that this substation can provide to our neighborhoods.

We also plan to have a presentation on NASCOP (Neighborhood Automated Speed Compliance Program), a city program that uses a parked van containing a speed sensing radar unit and cameras to catch speeders on our neighborhood streets. (See related story elsewhere in this newsletter.)

In addition, we have two important pieces of association business to consider: (1) A resolution to support a General Plan change now being considered by the city council that will remove from the General Plan extensions of Vista Park Drive and Chynoweth Avenue through the Lester Property, and (2) discussion and approval of the VEP Goals for the coming year. (A list of proposed Goals appears later in this issue.)

Please plan to attend this important meeting--and bring a friend!

Congressional Candidates' Forum

We are very fortunate in that both Jim Cuneen and Mike Honda have accepted an invitation to participate in a congressional race Candidates' Forum cosponsored by VEP, AVCA, and other area community and homeowners associations. This forum will be held in the Gunderson High School Theater beginning at 7:30 pm on Monday October 23rd.

As members of the California State Assembly, both Cuneen and Honda have been honored guests at VEP meetings in the past. This Candidates' Forum will take the place of our regular October meeting.

According to KQED radio and National Public Radio, this is one of six congressional seat races nationally that could change the balance of power in the US House of Representatives for the coming years. These candidates and this race are getting national attention. And, YOUR VOTE DOES COUNT!

So, please mark your calendars and plan to join VEP, AVCA, and others so that you can meet the candidates, ask them questions that are important to you, and cast an informed vote this November in a political race that has national importance!

Vandalism Reported—Your Help is Needed

During the night of Monday, September 4, vandals keyed a car on Massachusetts Drive and spray painted a fence on the corner of New World Drive and Chynoweth Avenue (across from Gunderson High School).

Again, during the night on Saturday, September 9, several cars were keyed on Massachusetts Drive. One of them had its rear window broken.

The cars that have been keyed are all new vehicles. Older cars parked in the same area were not vandalized.

If anyone sees this type of destruction taking place or knows who is responsible, please contact the police immediately. Thanks for your help.

Garage Sales and Signs: Know the Rules

Holding a garage sale is a great way to recycle items that you no longer need. There are just a few key rules you need to know before you hold your sale:

- (1) You may have no more than 2 garage sales per year.
- (2) Garage sales may last no longer than 4 days at a time.
- (3) Signs that advertise your sale may NOT be placed on:
 - * Sidewalks;

- * Parkstrips;
- * Street Medians; or
- * Anything within the public right-of-way including utility poles, lamp posts, directional or safety signs, street signs, and trees.

If you violate any of these rules, you could be faced with a fine ranging from \$350 to \$1000. For more information call City of San Jose Code Enforcement Supervisor Michael Hannon at (408) 277-4507.

With these few rules in mind, have a great garage sale and keep on recycling.

Neighborhood Developments

- Our City Council member, Pat Dando, has proposed a City of San Jose General Plan amendment to remove from the General Plan the extensions of Vista Park Drive and Chynoweth Avenue through the Lester Property. This proposal will be considered as part of the annual General Plan Amendment process this fall.
- The Safeway at Branham and Snell is planning to expand by nearly 9,900 square feet.
- The 200-unit Cilker apartment development (at the Ohlone-Chynoweth Light Rail Station, adjacent to the Bridge and Eden affordable housing developments) will be entirely market-rate housing according to the developer. Work is now underway, with completion targeted in approximately ten months. This project will complete the 530± units currently approved for the light rail station area.
- A Home Depot has been proposed for the Jacumazzi property on the west side of Almaden Expressway just north of Highway 85. (This site was previously slated for an Auto Nation dealership.)

Meetings on S.J. Airport Transit Access

-Dave Fadness

San Jose International Airport and the City Public Works Department will hold two community meetings this month to discuss proposed transit access to the airport. Staff members will present information about several rail connections and public transit options that are currently under consideration. Members of the public will be able to ask questions and provide input on these proposals.

The first meeting is scheduled for 10 am to noon on Saturday, September 23, in the Media Room at Bachrodt Elementary School, 102 Sonora Avenue (one block northwest of the Gish light rail station).

The second meeting is from 6 to 8 pm on Tuesday, September 26, on the 6th floor of the San Jose International Airport Administration office, 1732 North First Street (across the street from the Metro light rail station).

NASCOP Requested for VEP Area

School is back in session and our VEP neighbors need to be mindful of their driving habits. We have had several requests from members over the last few months to bring NASCOP to various locations in our neighborhoods.

NASCOP (Neighborhood Automated Speed Compliance Program) is a City program to address concerns of San Jose residents regarding speeding and safety on local neighborhood streets. This program uses a parked van containing a speed sensing radar unit, two cameras, and a staff person.

We are working with the City to define the specific locations for NASCOP and expect to see a NASCOP presence in the coming weeks. So, please be mindful of your driving habits at all times and especially near schools, before and after school hours.

President's Corner

- *Greg West, VEP President*

Welcome back from a (hopefully) relaxing summer. Again, the VEP Board stayed active, busily looking after neighborhood issues and planning for the coming year.

We formed a committee of interested VEP members to review the plans for the next phase of Vista Park. We also met with Todd Capurso of the City Parks Department to review the specifics of those plans. We will ask Todd back to our November meeting to review the specific implementation plans.

Our Board also reviewed VEP's Constitution and By Laws. This document has not been updated in more than 10 years. The executive board is discussing proposed amendments. We are planning to formally present the proposed amendments to the membership in November for discussion and a vote in January. A working copy of the proposed amendments is available on the VEP Web site (<http://sites.netscape.net/vephoa>) for your review. The amendments will be also published in the VEP News before they are presented for your consideration.

The most significant amendment is a proposed change in our organization's name from VEP Homeowners' Association to *VEP Community Association*. This change is being proposed to clear up confusion about the purpose and authority of our organization. The term "homeowners' association" has a very specific definition in tax law and also implies that our organization has codes, covenants and restrictions (CC&Rs) on our members' property.

We do not meet the tax law definition of a HOA. Also, as a voluntary membership organization, we do not have CC&Rs on properties. Many people that have tried to pull permits from the city for home improvements have run into

roadblocks because of this confusion. And, besides, the purpose of our organization is more in line with a Community Association than with a HOA.

Although our organization has been called "VEP Homeowners' Association" since its inception more than 30 years ago, we are more commonly known simply as "VEP." VEP has brand identity value for us, and changing our name to VEP Community Association will not change this.

Finally, we will present to you our proposed goals for the coming year (listed elsewhere in this issue) at the September meeting. Our goals include protection of the Lester Property, completion of area parks, and investigating the impact of City Council redistricting on VEP.

We have a number of important decisions to make this year that will impact the future of the organization. I encourage your participation in these decisions at our meetings and hope to see more of you at them this year.

Los Alamitos Creek Trail Extension

-David Noel

Earlier this summer, the City of San Jose extended the paved portion of the Los Alamitos Creek Trail to Blossom Hill Road. You can now enter the walking/bike path at Blossom Hill Road at Blossom River Drive (adjacent to Pier One Imports and Black Angus) and go to Almaden Lake Park, or all the way to Harry/McKean Road without leaving the path.

Of special interest along this new section of the trail between Blossom Hill and Coleman is the fish ladder on the Guadalupe River that allows migrating steelhead trout and Chinook salmon to climb up the dam and reach potential spawning grounds.

If you're looking for a fun family activity, try taking the kids for a ride up the bike trail to the end, then turn right on Harry/McKean Road, and right on Almaden Rd, and go to the Quicksilver Cafe for a weekend breakfast or lunch. Figure about 7-8 miles each way depending where you live in the VEP area.

Thanks to councilperson Pat Dando who worked so hard to make this possible.

Fall Check up

-John Marks, VEP's Green Gardener

I trust you've been pulling the heads off those dandelions all summer. If not, you should have. Every time you walk to the car to go somewhere and you see a yellow dandelion blossom, don't think, "I'll have to dig that up when I get home." It'll never happen. Prevent that plant from multiplying by going over without delay and plucking the blossom; if it's already progressed to the fuzzy ball, all the

more important to trot over and close it into your hand and throw away, before the wind spreads the spores.

Here are Five September To-Dos:

1. Test your soil for pH and nutrients. Contact your local extension office for a test kit and instructions. Cost is about \$10.
2. Add "lime" to acid soils with a pH of 6.0 or below. Ground dolomitic limestone usually is recommended.
3. In cold-winter regions, dig up begonias, dahlias, gladiolus and other tender bulbs or tubers. Store them in a cool, dark, airy location.
4. Plant trees and shrubs - while the soil is still warm but the air temperatures are cooling so moisture stress is reduced.
5. De-thatch Kentucky bluegrass or fine fescue lawns. Rent a de-thatching machine, or hire a lawn care company.

The best way to control crabgrass— that familiar annual weed with blue-green leaves and spreading stems— is to maintain a dense, healthy lawn that will out-compete it and prevent it from establishing. Mow at a height of 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches, and cut the grass frequently so as not to remove more than one-third of the leaf blade at one time. Also, water deeply and infrequently, and fertilize to encourage a vigorous lawn.

Weed killers are another option. The most effective among them are pre-emergent types that kill weed seeds as they sprout. It's essential to apply the herbicide before the crabgrass emerges from the soil. This happens in spring when soil temperatures are greater than 55° to 60°F for seven to ten consecutive days. Check with your local extension service for timing, or monitor the soil temperature yourself using a soil thermometer inserted at an angle just below the surface. But don't apply weed killers prior to seeding or in an area that's just been seeded.

Proposed 2000-01 VEP Goals

The VEP Board has drafted the following goals for the 2000-01 VEP year. We will discuss these goals and vote on them at our meeting on September 26th:

- Support the San Jose General Plan change that will remove the Vista Park Drive and Chynoweth Avenue extensions through the Lester Property.
- Support a resolution of the Lester tax situation that minimizes the impact on his land.

- Present an updated VEP Constitution and Bylaws to the Membership for discussion, amendment (if needed), and approval.
- Support and drive completion of the next phase of Vista Park and Meadows Park with available City funds.
- Sponsor a community wide social event during the year.
- Continue aiding the City in the maintenance of the palms along Chynoweth.
- Preemptively investigate and mitigate the impacts of City Council redistricting on VEP.

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San Jose's Annual General Plan Review

-Dave Fadness

The adopted San Jose General Plan (GP) is our city's guide for future land uses through the year 2020. This plan is subject to an annual public review. Hearings begin with the City Planning Commission in October (6 pm on October 23, 25, and November 8). Planning Commission recommendations then go forward for final public review and approval by the City Council in meetings at 7 pm on November 13 and 21.

This year, there are 73 proposed GP amendments, most related to increasing the housing supply in our city. In particular, planning staff is recommending high density housing in the Midtown area and along the planned Capitol and Vasona light rail corridors.

Of particular interest to VEP residents is a proposal (GP00-10-03) to eliminate planned extensions of Vistapark Drive and Chynoweth Avenue across the Lester property. This change was proposed at our request by City Council member Pat Dando.

Please make a note of and hold open the aforementioned dates. As the exact schedule for public hearings on this item become known, we will notify you so you can attend the hearings and make your feelings known. (Discussion of this item will occur on only one evening before each deliberative body, so you'll only have to attend two meetings.)

VEP's formal position on deleting the extensions of Vista-park and Chynoweth will be voted on at our September 26th meeting. Be sure to join us.

Computer Corner

-Bob Aquino

Well, I recently got a lesson in personal preferences. A cousin of mine is a semi-invalid. I'm not clear what the disease is, and it doesn't matter, but the symptoms are that she is generally weak, and she has a skin condition that makes it painful for her to use a keyboard. She's been using a computer for about 15 years, but because she is in education it has been a MAC. She now wants a computer that is voice recognition compatible which, as it turns out, the Apples are not.

She called me on the phone and asked me for advice on buying a new computer. She would prefer a laptop, so that she could use it while resting in bed. I asked her if 7-8 pounds was too heavy for her to manage. She said she didn't think so. We were going to visit her, so I did my research at Fry's. Her budget was \$2000-\$3000 so there was a broad selection. I settled on a couple of standard models with 600MHz processors, 128 MB RAM, 14-inch displays and 8GB hard drives. Then we went up to visit her.

The first thing I did was check out her tolerance for weight. We got a 5 lb package of flour. If the computer weighed more than this, would it be a problem? (Standard laptops weigh in at 7-8 lb) Yes, it probably would. OK, we can rule out the standard models, we need to look at thin and light. In general, thin and lights tend to have less powerful processors to preserve battery life. Batteries are the heaviest component, and lifetime is a function of their weight.

There's also a heat issue with the skin temperature on the back of the case. Well, that's OK; we can live with a 500Mhz CPU.

But wait a minute; the small computers have smaller displays. Can she live with a display that's smaller than 14 inches? Well gee. I don't really know.

At this point it became clear to me that my describing the system would not be satisfactory. The bottom line is that she had to go to the computer store herself, feel the heft of the computer, use some applications running on the screen, and make her own selection based upon personal preferences.

This just goes to show you, it doesn't matter how much you understand about computers, the selection of a particular model is a matter of personal preference. No one can make that selection for you.

Now, on the subject of voice recognition software, I'd like to point out to you that the dynamic is very moment dictating to my computer. The computer is a firm a master of pronunciation. It demands that you pronounce things clearly without contractions or elisions. In fact I just had to type in the word *elisions* because the computer did not recognize it. The second time I used the word it got it right. (I case you're wondering, elision is the omission of a vowel, consonant, or syllable in pronunciation.)

The trick with using voice recognition software is to make corrections as the errors occur. I'm withholding judgment as to the effectiveness of the software until I have dictated a good deal more text. If you're considering voice recognition software be prepared to work with it. Also if you must have voice recognition software, get as powerful a computer as you can. The analysis of speech uses a great deal of computational power.

I'll try to remember to dictate my newsletter articles into the software and we'll see how well it likes my writing style and techniques. I'm actually learning a little something about my pronunciation due to the errors that the software is printing out. In the end, it may turn out that the computer is correcting my pronunciation rather than that I am correcting the spelling of the computer. One is entitled to ask who is training whom.

That's it for this month. Happy computing!

Adult Services Resource Faire

-Dave Fadness

The Ninth Annual Santa Clara County Adult Services Resource Faire will be held from 10 am to 4 pm on Thursday, September 28th at the Mediterranean Center, behind the San Jose Airport Hyatt. This free event offers education, information, and resource networking for adult service professionals, consumers, and the general public.

Attendees can receive free blood pressure tests and free glucose and cholesterol screening. There also will be a free raffle and prizes.

A variety of community and non-profit service agencies that serve dependent adults and the elderly will be featured. Co-sponsors include the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency, Council on Aging of Santa Clara County, City of San Jose Office on Aging, KNTV Channel 11, KICU Channel 36, and the San Jose Mercury News.

Simple Rules for Attractive Neighborhoods

To keep our neighborhoods looking their best, it is important to follow a few simple rules. First, be sure to remember the days your weekly garbage/recycling service and monthly street sweeping are done. Then...

- Don't put your garbage and recycling containers or yard waste on the street more than 24-hours before scheduled pick-up. (This is required by city ordinance.)
- Be sure to bring your garbage and recycling containers in by the end of pick-up day. Remember: City ordinance also requires that these items be stored behind your front gate, out of sight from the street.
- Sweep-up any yard waste debris that is left behind and put it in your yard waste container or garbage. Yard waste left on the street is not only unsightly, it also leads to storm sewer blockage, consequent street flooding during the rainy season, and it seriously contaminates our creeks and the Bay.
- Be sure to move your vehicle(s) off the street on street sweeping day. Doing this allows more complete removal of unsightly debris that will eventually find its way into our streams and the Bay, threatening wildlife and water quality.

Be a good neighbor. Following these simple steps can go a long way toward keeping our VEP area one of the most attractive in Santa Clara County.

Neighborhood News

-City Councilmember Pat Dando

I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on activities and events in District 10.

Group Homes

Many of you may remember that in January our community had a tragic experience with a group home. With the help of the community, we closed that facility. I have since pledged to you that I will work hard to make sure our neighborhoods are safe from ill-run group homes.

As a result of my pledge, I have been working closely with District Attorney George Kennedy's office and other local elected officials. Hard work has resulted in the D.A.'s proposal called *Guidelines 2000*.

Guidelines 2000 proposes a background check on potential group home residents to screen-out those who are convicted felons, arsonists, and registered sex offenders. *Guidelines 2000* will ensure that no individual with serious criminal records will be referred to live in group homes in our residential neighborhoods.

Currently, this proposal is under review by the County Board of Supervisors. Please contact the Board of Supervisors (299-2323) and urge them to adopt *Guidelines 2000*.

Improvements for Neighborhood Streets

One of my highest priorities is making sure that our streets are safe. After working with local neighborhood groups and homeowners associations, I am happy to report that the installation of a traffic light at the intersection of Pearl Avenue and Edenberry Lane has been approved. This comes in response to neighborhood concerns for the high-speed traffic and the accident rate at this intersection. It is hoped that this new light will slow traffic, reduce accidents, and ease congestion in this area.

As you may know, we have been working to get numerous streets in the district repaved. Good news, we have more than 30 streets in our district that are scheduled to be repaved by the end of the year. To find out if your street is included in this project, please visit

<http://www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/council/dist10/dist10.html>

Homework Center Success

Due to the success of the 13 Homework Centers in our neighborhoods last year, I have been successful in securing funds for additional centers in our district. This year, we have added a Homework Center at the YMCA on Santa Teresa Boulevard and I am working hard to bring two more centers to the community. Homework Centers provide students with a place to complete school homework, work on projects, and receive tutoring.

New Teen Recreation Programs

As a result of our Teen Advisory Committee, I am pleased to inform you of some new recreation programs for teens between the ages of 11 and 15. These programs will offer teens the opportunity to participate in sporting events, field trips, arts and crafts, and games. The programs are offered on a "drop-in" basis and are free (there is a nominal fee for field trips).

Before-school programs are offered Monday through Friday at Castillero Middle School and Steinbeck Middle School. After-school programs are offered Monday through Friday at Bret Harte Middle School and Steinbeck Middle School.

To find out more about these programs, please contact our teen program specialist Kiersten McCormick at (408) 267-8594.

Computer Classes for Seniors

I am pleased to report that computer classes are now being offered for senior citizens at the Almaden Community Center. *Senior Net* provides the teaching materials and training for volunteer instructors.

We have had over 100 people sign up for these classes. Thanks to a good staff and talented instructors, we have been able to accommodate the great interest.

Currently, the center offers introductory classes focusing on the basic use of internet and e-mail. In addition, a few

advanced courses are offered including Microsoft Windows.

Community Beautification Project

Each year we work with **San José Beautiful** to provide daffodil bulbs to homeowner associations, schools, and other interested groups. This program allows neighbors to come together with the goal of making their community a little brighter in the spring.

If you are involved with a group that might be interested in planting daffodils in your neighborhood, please contact my office. This year's daffodil planting is scheduled for Saturday, November 4.

Assistance League of San Jose

I would like to thank **The Assistance League of San Jose** for their many years of service to the children and seniors of the greater San Jose community. They support projects in schools, convalescent homes, and crisis centers.

If you are interested in joining this hard working group of women, you will want to attend their yearly coffee for prospective members on October 11. For information on membership, please contact Glenna Trudeau at (408) 268-2249 or Marilyn Roach at (408) 978-8764.

Almaden Valley Counseling Service Benefit

I hope you will join me in supporting a very important Almaden event, the **Almaden Times 10-K and 2-Mile Run** which will be held on Sunday, October 15.

This race serves as a major fund-raiser for the **Almaden Valley Counseling Service**, a non-profit organization that provides counseling to people of all ages in our community. While their counselors see a growing number of seniors in keeping with the changing demographics of our community, the service continues a special focus on young people and maintains full staffing and support for the highly successful **Counselors on Campus** program.

With your support, the Almaden Valley Counseling Service will continue to provide great service for our community as they have for over 20 years.

Healthy Neighborhoods Venture Fund

As you may know, San Jose was successful in acquiring \$250-million over the next 25 years from the national settlement with tobacco companies. In order to determine how to best allocate this money, an advisory committee composed of myself, Councilmember Alice Woody, Councilmember Charlotte Powers, and several community members has been formed.

During the last two weeks in August, meetings were held throughout San Jose to take input from the community on how they believe the money should be spent.

The current timeline for the advisory committee is as follows: For 2000-01, there will be \$8.9-million allocated by December 30, 2000. For 2001-02, there will be \$10-million allocated by June 30, 2001.

I will keep you informed as the advisory committee begins their work. Please contact my office if you have any comments, questions, or ideas on this issue.

New Services Coming Soon to City Hall

A new information Call Center is coming to City Hall in January 2001. This service will allow you to speak directly to an individual who can handle your service needs rather than listening to a variety of pre-recorded messages. The call center will offer the best of personal attention and modern technology to track and respond to your requests.

New District 10 Staff Members

Jim Cogan and Joshua Howard are the newest members of our District 10 team.

Jim has been in the bay area for the past year working for a law firm in Palo Alto. He was born and raised in New Hampshire where he developed a deep commitment to public service. Jim has a degree in Political Science and Philosophy from Wheaton College in Illinois. He can be reached at (408) 277-5251 or via e-mail at james.cogan@ci.sj.ca.us.

Joshua graduated with a degree in Political Science and Public Sector Studies from Santa Clara University. Joshua also studied at the University of Durham in England. Prior to coming to my office, he was an intern in Assemblyman Cunneen's office. Jim can be reached at (408) 277-5251 or via e-mail at joshua.howard@ci.sj.ca.us.

Tune In To City Council Meetings

Live coverage of San José City Council Meetings is now available on cable channel 37A. Additionally, web users can listen to the meetings from their desktops via streaming audio from the City's web page

<http://www.ci.san-jose.ca.us>

The Council meets every Tuesday at 1:30 pm and at 7:00 pm on the first and third Tuesday of every month. Additionally, meetings will be rebroadcast at 7:00 pm on Thursdays and again at 10:00 am on Saturdays.

Channel 37A will also provide viewers with information about meeting schedules, city services, and special events.

I Appreciate Your Input

If you would like information about any of the events or organizations listed above, or if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (408) 277-5251. I can also be reached via e-mail at pat.dando@ci.sj.ca.us. Visit my website at:

<http://www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/council/dist10/dist10.html>

Your input is vital to the success of our neighborhoods.

Bulletin Board Ads

MR. FIX-IT will repair leaks, sticking doors, locks, latches, lights, and life's little ills. No job is too small. Call John Marks @ 629-6433.

PET-SITTING WORK NEEDED: 15-year old will pet-sit, dog-walk. Is flexible and reliable. References available. Call Alex @ 224-0853.

* * *

VEP will print free ads for its members for transactions involving less than \$250, for lost-and-found, for announcements of general interest to our community, and for kids under 18 or retirees who are looking for work. Free ads must be submitted monthly for publication.

Commercial ads cost \$1.00 per line per month, 10 lines maximum, must be prepaid before publication, and may only be run once per calendar quarter. Commercial ads must be submitted quarterly. No graphics allowed. For information on full-sized ads with graphics (camera ready), contact VEP'S Treasurer listed on the mailing page of this newsletter.

One line contains 50 characters, including spaces. Mail to VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose, 95158. Ads must be received no later than the 10th of the month for inclusion in that month's newsletter. Use the following form as a guide for submitting an ad:

NAME: _____

PHONE # _____

AD WORDING: _____

The VEP Executive Board reserves exclusive right to refuse any ad for any reason. VEP does not certify nor is it responsible in any way for the claims, goods, or services of any advertisers.