

VEP MEETING

7:30 P.M. TUESDAY
MARCH 27, 2001

GUNDERSON HIGH SCHOOL
* FACULTY LOUNGE *

AGENDA

*** School & Community Safety ***

Guest speakers: Councilwoman Pat Dando,
County Sheriff Laurie Smith,
SJUSD Superintendent Linda Murray,
Bob Lobach, San Jose Police Department
Ray Frank, VTA Crime Prevention
and
Gunderson Principal Linda Fertig-Riley.

*** VEP's Constitution & By-Laws ***

Discuss & vote on proposed changes.

*** Election of 2001-02 VEP Officers ***

Nominate & vote for VEP Executive Board.

*** Your Issues and Concerns ***

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

VEP's March meeting

-Dave Fadness

Leading off our busy March 27th agenda is a panel discussion on Public Safety. Panelists represent city and county law enforcement, the Valley Transportation Agency (VTA), and area schools. District 10 Councilwoman Pat Dando will be our moderator. Topics will include current safety-related activities and programs at Gunderson; San Jose Unified School District's *Safe Schools Initiative*; SJPD's *City Campus Crime Stopper* program; coordination of crime prevention efforts at transit stations by the county sheriff's office, SJPD, and VTA; and VTA's *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)* program. As usual, we will allow time for audience questions.

After our public safety discussion, we'll turn to two very important organizational matters for VEP: our charter and our officers. Last month, we introduced and discussed a set of proposed changes to VEP's Constitution and By-Laws. This month we'll bring those changes to a vote of members present. We'll also elect VEP officers for our 2001-2002 fiscal year.

We urge you to attend, give your input, and help us to decide VEP's future with your vote. Bring a friend!

Additional VEP Charter Changes Proposed

- Greg West

As a result of discussions at our February 27th meeting, a proposal was made to add an Article VIII to VEP's consti-

tution formally stating that we do not endorse candidates for elected public office. This has been a long standing, unwritten rule of VEP (and a requirement of a not-for-profit organization under US Tax code). The proposed new article to the Constitution reads as follows:

ARTICLE VIII

NEUTRALITY IN ELECTIONS FOR PUBLIC OFFICE

The VEP Community Association cannot and will not endorse any candidate for elected public office.

We will vote on accepting this change, along with others, at our March 27th meeting.

In addition, our annual VEP *Community Service Award* was discussed. The current proposal leaves the Award unchanged with the exception that the source of funding must be specified along with the annual Award proposal.

Because the proposed C&BL changes will not impact this year's (2001) Service Awards, a proposal to further investigate changes to the administration of the award was referred to Committee to be appointed at our March Exec Board Meeting. The Executive Board directed the Committee to study this issue further and to present a recommendation to the VEP membership at our September 2001 meeting.

AIRPORT COMMUNITY MEETING

-David Noel

On Monday March 26 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., a community meeting will be held at Gunderson High School to discuss proposed changes to the Airport Master Plan originally adopted by the city council in 1997. If you can't make this meeting, others will be held throughout the city on March 21, 22, and 29th.

The main change is to develop a single terminal with consolidated ticketing and baggage claim areas, rather than three separate terminals with duplicate facilities. The proposal also formally adds the on-airport portion of an Automated People Mover (APM) into the Airport Master Plan. This will connect with an off-airport portion of the APM project, which will connect to light rail on North First Street.

The following is excerpted from a memo from Ralph Tonseth, Director of Aviation, to the San Jose City Council:

The first phase of development of passenger facilities would focus on improving and connecting the existing 31 passenger gates in Terminals A and C into a reconfigured, consolidated terminal facility containing a centralized ticketing and baggage claim area, fronted by a double-level roadway, and a linear concourse of airline gates and holdrooms extending north and south from the centralized terminal functions. This change in design concept does not add to the existing number of passenger gates nor exceed the square footage limitations for terminal facilities (exclusive of Terminal B) approved by the City Council.

For more information, visit www.sjc.org.

Call for VEP Officers

-Dave Fadness

VEP's executive board is comprised of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and newsletter editor. Their term in office is one year. We hold elections at our March meeting. New officers are installed at our Annual Meeting in April and serve for one year.

Greg West has served in his post for three consecutive terms, longer than any previous VEP president. Our treasurer, **Brian Bonnifield** has also served three consecutive terms. Vice President **David Noel** is in his second term. Secretary **Sharon Pardun** is finishing her first term. **Bob Aquino** and I have been NEWS co-editors so long we're virtually fossilized in that position. It's time for an infusion of new talent.

What's required of VEP officers? First, let me state that if you're reading this newsletter, **you** have what it takes. I say that because you care enough about our neighborhoods to be a VEP member; that's the #1 criterion for holding office. No, you don't have to be a management expert, a skilled orator, a Pulitzer Prize winning author, or an expert on local government. We give highest priority to dedication and reliability—that's the VEP tradition. (We've had people who could walk on water and leap tall buildings with a single bound; they typically fizzle out after a brief spurt of enthusiasm.) No experience is necessary: we want good, caring, ordinary neighborhood people on our leadership team.

What are the rewards for VEP officers? In addition to our general meetings, you get to go to an Exec Committee meeting once each month. (Note: VEP only meets Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Sep, Oct, and Nov.) You get to bring your significant other to a Holiday Dinner in early December, courtesy of VEP. You get to help decide meeting agendas, bring your ideas forward in establishing VEP's goals and objectives, and work collaboratively, sharing tasks with what has always been (in my 27 years) a fine group of board colleagues. You'll also get to know good people like yourself from all over our community. Above all, you get a great feeling of accomplishment for having done good things as a volunteer for your community.

What happens if you don't step forward--won't someone else do it? What if everyone else thinks the same thing? We've been around for 32 years, but VEP cannot continue to exist without officers. So, if everyone waits for the other person to volunteer... (Need I say more?)

How to apply for nomination? Email or pick up your phone and call any current officer listed on the mailing page of this newsletter. Or, you can discuss your interest with us in person at our next meeting. We'll be happy to explain the role of each office and our approach to sharing the load, so that no one ends up spending an inordinate amount of time doing VEP stuff.

Please, for the sake of our organization, step forward **today**. VEP *really* needs you!

Neighborhood Developments

- Greg West

The Vista Oaks Driving Range at the corner of Vista Park Drive and Capitol Expressway got a 6-month reprieve and

will remain open until October 2001. The site is slated for high density housing development.

Airport Noise (Revisited)

-Gary Stowell(*)

Having reviewed a copy of your February newsletter, we need to inform you that your "Airport Noise" article contained some incorrect information. The information about the curfew for arrivals and departures of large aircraft is inaccurate. There is a scheduling curfew that all of the airlines and air cargo operators must abide by (and they do). They are not permitted to schedule flights between the hours of 11:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m.

However, our Noise Control Program does make provisions for flights that are required to operate during the curfew hours if they experience weather, FAA Air Traffic Control delays, or mechanical delays. These flights are permitted to achieve their scheduled operation and they are not "violations." The VEP article mentioned "emergencies" as the only permitted curfew operations. Additionally, Stage 3 (quiet technology aircraft) less than 75,000 pounds can operate 24 hours.

The VEP article also had incorrect email addresses for both me and Mr. Locquiao. If your residents have concerns about aircraft noise, it is our preference that they call the Airport Noise Report Recorder at (408) 452-0707. We would like them to leave all of the pertinent information (i.e., name, address, date and time of the event, and the nature of the event that concerned them) on our recorder.

This enables us to review the data from our Airport Noise Monitoring System to find out exactly what did occur. This way, when we return calls, we will have all the details on what took place. If they would like a call back, callers should be sure to leave a daytime phone number and request a call back.

Another option is to send an email to noisecenter@sjc.org with the same information requested above. If they call us directly we will not have the data to be able to explain to them what occurred until we've had a chance to review the information. Sometimes our radar (flight track) and noise data is not available till the next day.

Also, the phone number for our quarterly Airport Noise Advisory Committee meetings is (408) 452-0707, not (408) 452-0701 as your newsletter stated.

[()Ed. Note: Mr. Stowell is the Noise Abatement Manager for San Jose International Airport. His telephone number is (408) 501-7796. The foregoing is his response to our February 2001 NEWS article citing information from a flyer that was anonymously distributed in our neighborhoods.]*

Gunderson High Golf Tournament

-Bob Burns, Gunderson Athletic Booster Club

A golf tournament is being sponsored by the Gunderson High School Athletic Booster Club. VEP members and their families and friends are invited to participate.

What: **Golf Tournament**

When: May 7, 2001
Where: Santa Teresa Golf Club
First Tee Off at 10:00 a.m.
Dinner following golf.

For more information call Louie Aldama at 360-9315 or Linda Lee at 535-6340, ext 123, or 266-4606.

Time-of-use meters—a money saver?

-John Marks

There's been some publicity recently on TOU (time of use) meters that charge residential users more during peak power use hours and less when off-peak. PG&E recently confirmed that such meters are available for residential use, but there's a \$277 installation charge, plus a \$4 per month charge to pay for the meter. But how long would it take you to amortize these charges by savings in power cost?

Since I've had a TOU meter for 20 years, I can tell you how much it saves me; based on 582 kilowatt-hours (kwh) used last August, I was charged 31-cents each for 73 kwh used on-peak (= \$22.63), and 8-cents per kwh for 665 kwh used off-peak (= \$53.20). My total bill that month was \$75.83.

At the standard 31-cents per kwh, my total would have been \$228.78. So, I saved \$152.95. Hence, it appears that the \$277 installation charge could be amortized in just two months' use during the summer. My only inconvenience was having to avoid using power for the six peak hours from noon to 6pm.

It's a different story during the winter, however, when peak power only costs 11-cents/kwh. I'd strongly advise talking to your PG&E representative before having a TOU meter installed. In my case, there was no installation charge and there is no monthly charge now. It pays to be a grandpa!

The Real Time Power Purchase plan applies only to industrial customers, who monitor the real cost of power by receiving a signal from PG&E, and can elect to shut down machinery, lighting, heating, etc., until the rates go down. They're more sensitive to this during the summer peak hours in the afternoon, of course, when air conditioning is on full blast.

For installation or more information on TOU meters, call PG&E's customer service at 1-800-743-5000. For more detailed energy conservation information you can also call PG&E's *Smarter Energy Line* at 1-800-933-9555.

VEP-area basketball teams excel

- Mark Foyer (*)

Hill Boys Cagers win Division I CCS title

Jayson Obazuaye scored 22 points and **Taj Stone** added another 18 points as Andrew Hill High School claimed its first ever Central Coast Section basketball title, taking the Boys' Division I crown with a 68-58 win over Bellarmine. Obazuaye converted a 3-point play with 3:41 left in the game to give the Falcons a 58-52 lead. Bellarmine's **Jason Norman**, who led all scorers with 23 points, followed with a bucket with 3:28 left to pull the Bells to within four.

The game would not get any closer. The Falcons sealed the win, sinking eight straight free throws in the final 1:43. Hill's **Jamaal Kimble** added 14 points, including a jump shot with 52 seconds left to help ice the game. **J.B. Long** contributed 13 points for Bellarmine.

Gunderson knocked out in Quarter Finals

Henry T. Gunderson High School lost its Central Coast Section Division III Quarter Finals match to the team that went on to win the Division title. Gunderson lost to Archbishop Riordan by a score of 69-57. Riordan went on to defeat Santa Cruz in the Semi Finals, 64-53, and Sacred Heart Cathedral in the Finals, 58-37, to take the Division III Championship.

[() Ed. Note: This article is reprinted with permission from the California Interscholastic Federation, Central Coast Section.]*

San Jose district boundaries to be redrawn

-Dave Fadness

The City of San Jose is divided into ten council districts. District boundaries are redrawn every ten years as a result of population counts taken from the decennial national census. Redistricting is an effort to keep the number of residents in each district as close as possible to equal. In San Jose, our goal is to have district populations within 5% of numeric equality.

Although **Census 2000** population numbers have not yet been handed down by the feds, a preliminary look at what may happen in our city can be gleaned from the number and location of new housing units constructed during the 1990s. Approximately 29,000 new units were built, accommodating roughly two-thirds of the 150,000 new residents in San Jose. This is how those new units were distributed:

Council District	New Housing Units	% of Total
1	613	2.1%
2	2,743	9.5%
3	2,641	9.1%
4	5,687	19.6%
5	1,141	3.9%
6	2,584	8.9%
7	2,574	8.9%
8	6,000	20.7%
9	1,262	4.4%
10	3,741	12.9%
City Total =	28,986	100.0%

Districts 4 (Berryessa) and 8 (Evergreen) had the highest growth in new housing. Districts 1 (West San Jose), 5 (East Central), and 9 (Cambrian Area) had the least. Our District 10 (Almaden/Blossom Valleys) came in third highest in new housing.

Based upon an assumption that new housing proportionately reflects new population, the biggest changes in boundaries will likely occur in the districts with smallest and largest numbers of new housing units. Districts 4, 8, and 10 will need to be made smaller. Districts 1, 5, and 9

will need to become larger. In this quest for population parity, other adjoining districts may need to be redrawn as well in order to avoid irregularly shaped districts and to preserve certain “communities of interest.”

Redistricting is a particular concern for residents of Thousand Oaks, Pinehurst, and VEP communities, as our membership areas comprise an exposed northern “pan-handle” of District 10. VEP, in particular, has in the past been torn between congressional districts, state assembly and senate districts, council districts, and school districts. We know how disruptive this can be and seek to avoid changes in the unity we’ve enjoyed in representation at city hall—and the neighborhood alliances we’ve formed in District 10—since 1991.

According to our City Charter, a *Redistricting Advisory Commission* must adopt a set of recommendations by May 30th. Those recommendations are made to the San Jose City Council for final approval. Although they are scheduled to consider the Advisory Commissions’ recommendations at public hearings in August, the Council’s deadline for adopting a *Redistricting Ordinance* is October 31, 2001.

As an appointed member of the Redistricting Advisory Commission, I urge you to be watchful and involved. I will keep you informed regarding proposals that affect District 10 and, in particular, the VEP/Thousand Oaks/Pinehurst areas. Following is our tentative meeting schedule (please email me if you want to receive real-time changes in meeting times and places):

Redistricting Advisory Commission
Meetings Schedule

Mar 21	Public Hearing #1	City Hall, Room 106 @ 7 p.m.
Apr 4	Advisory Commission	City Hall, Room 106 @ 7 p.m.
Apr 18	Advisory Commission	City Hall, Room 106 @ 7 p.m.
Apr 25	Public Hearing #2	Silver Creek High School, Room M2 @ 7 p.m.
May 2	Advisory Commission	City Hall, Room 106 @ 7 p.m.
May 9	Public Hearing #3	Willows Senior Center @ 7 p.m.
May 16	Advisory Commission	City Hall, Room 106 @ 7 p.m.
May 23 (*)	Advisory Commission	City Hall, Room 106 @ 7 p.m.
May 30 (*)	Advisory Commission	City Hall, Room 106 @ 7 p.m.

(*) The Commission hopes to have its work concluded on May 16th. May 23rd and May 30th dates are being held open in case additional meetings are necessary.

You may call or email me to informally discuss your redistricting suggestions and/or concerns (my email address is drfadness@earthlink.net; phone number is 578-6428). To formally communicate with the Advisory Commission, attend one (or more) of our meetings and/or write to:

Redistricting Advisory Commission

c/o Patricia O'Hearn, City Clerk
City of San Jose
801 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95110

VEP Community Service Award

-Bob Aquino

Former VEP President Steve Kinsey and his wife Lynn have proposed a modification of the selection process for VEP's annual Community Service Award. Much discussion surrounded this topic at our February meeting. This is a complicated issue that requires some thoughtful study. It may ultimately lead to a formal change to our by-laws.

Anyone interested in participating in the discussion, please contact me at 629-5459 or baquino@bobaquino.com.

President's Corner

- Greg West

I've found that a good test of effectiveness as an organizational leader is to ask the question, "Did I leave it better than I found it?" I've been able to answer, "Yes!" to that question in most of my organizational leadership challenges, both volunteer and professional, throughout my career. But, as I roll off my three year gig as this organization's President, I have to be honest with myself, and answer this question, "No." VEP is such a high quality and long standing organization with **"Very Excellent People"** that the challenge was not to improve the organization, but to maintain our high level of activism and commitment to the community. So, the proper question to ask myself in the case of VEP is, "Did I leave it as *good* as I found it?" I can honestly and proudly answer this question, "Yes!"

I also take a personal assessment in a time of transition like this and ask myself two additional questions. The first is, "Did I grow as a result of this experience?" The second is, "Did I have fun?"

The first question is really an assessment of what's in it for me. If I have learned things or gained experience that will help me do a better job in a current challenge or in one yet to come, then the experience was worthwhile to me personally.

The second question is really a test of my competence to do the job. As a result of another leadership experience, I learned that, if your not having fun, your probably not doing it right. To both of these questions, I can emphatically answer, "Yup!"

My personal satisfaction with my experience over the last three years is really a testament to the neighbors that make up this organization and their commitment to our neighborhoods. When we have called the neighborhood to action to stand up for something that we believe in, people have come out. When we've put out a call for volunteers to get something done in the neighborhood, people have stepped up. Believe me, being able to count on people when you need them makes this type of experience a whole lot more fun.

Although I'm stepping down as President, I look forward to continuing to work with my neighbors in VEP and to serve the organization in what ever ways the incoming Board my see fit.

Bugs You Don't Want

-John Marks, VEP's Green Gardener

Grow plants in your yard, and you're bound to have pests. There's no way around that, but how you deal with the critters is changing. A decade ago it was common to reach for potent bug sprays that killed--indiscriminately--as soon as the creepy crawlers were sighted. But with increasing concern over chemicals in the environment, there are now safer ways to manage pests in our yards.

Here are some common bugs you don't want and how to get rid of them:

Aphids

Description: Small, soft-bodied sucking insects; green, pink, yellow, red, brown or black.

Where: They congregate at succulent stem tips and underside of tender leaves.

Damage: Curled leaves, yellow foliage, sticky honeydew, transmission of plant diseases Controls: Forceful water spray, insecticidal soap, horticultural oil, ladybugs, lacewings, neem.

Slugs/Snails

Description: Soft-bodied, legless soil dwellers with shells (snails) or without shells (slugs).

Where: Found in moist, shady areas. Fruits are favorite plants.

Damage: Chew holes in leaves; leave slime trails.

Controls: Use drip irrigation to keep garden drier. Also try Sluggo and Escar-go baits, copper barriers around individual plants, diatomaceous earth, saucers of beer and trap boards. Toads, snakes, ducks and geese feed on slugs.

Lawn Grubs

Description: May/June beetle adult is reddish brown to black with a hard shell; Northern masked chafer adult is chestnut brown. Larvae of all are 1-inch long, white, C-shaped grubs.

Where: Larvae live in soil under turfgrass.

Damage: Adults of May/June beetle chew foliage of oak, willow, apple, poplar and birch trees. Most damage from larvae comes from their chewing on grass roots; turf turns brown from lack of roots in summer.

Controls: Predatory nematodes (Steinernema and Heterorhabditis, Grub Guard, Grub-Away) mixed with water and applied to soil.

Spider Mites

Description: Reddish-brown or pale, tiny, eight-legged. Often produce webbing more visible than the mites themselves.

Where: In dry areas throughout North America. Common in warm locations; most often on leaf underside. Roses, beans and marigolds are favorites.

Damage: Mites suck plant juices from leaves. Create silvery stippling on leaf; leaves yellow and brown; webbing.

Controls: Forceful water spray, insecticidal soap, horticultural oil, lacewings, ladybugs, predatory mites (Galandromus, Phytoseiulus), neem, sulfur dust.

Neighborhood News Update

-Councilmember Pat Dando

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

District 10 Gets First New Library

In November, the voters' passage of *Measure O* assured that the residents of District 10 would see new and improved library services. I am excited to report that on March 6th, my colleagues on the City Council joined me in approving Field Paoli Architects to design the new Blossom Hill Library. Not only is this the first Measure O project to begin in District 10, but the first Measure O project in San Jose. The architect will take the community input, develop designs, and return with me to further discuss the floor plan and programs with the community in late spring. If you would like details on our community meeting, please contact my office.

85/87 Interchange Update

As a member of the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Board of Directors, I will monitor transportation projects for Santa Clara County. One that will be of great benefit to South San Jose is the 85/87 interchange. I am excited to report that on February 8, VTA approved the scope, schedule, and cost for the 85/87 Interchange Project. This project will complete the existing interchange by adding two connector ramps, one from southbound 85 to northbound 87 and one from southbound 87 to northbound 85. Construction is scheduled to begin this summer and should be completed by the summer of 2003.

Highway 101 Widening Project

On March 2nd the VTA Board of Directors unanimously approved the scope, schedule, and cost for the Highway 101 widening project. Highway 101 will be widened from the current 4 lanes to 6 lanes plus a carpool lane in each direction. Widening will occur in the existing median between Metcalf Road and Burnett Road. This will provide an additional two lanes in each direction and a 12-foot shoulder. Construction is scheduled to begin July, 2001 and be completed by early 2004.

Expansion of the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE)

In an effort to increase use of public transit, the Board took action to expand ACE service beyond its current levels. This action will allow ACE to begin operating a third round trip train as early as this month with a fourth ACE roundtrip train in the Fall of 2001. ACE provides service between San Jose Diridon Station, Stockton, and Pleasanton.

Upcoming Improvements for Branham Lane

After many years of working with the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, I am happy to inform you that landscape improvements to the overcrossing at Route 87 and Branham Lane should be completed this summer. This project will beautify the southeast slope of the overcrossing. Sixty trees with irrigation will be planted on the embankment providing privacy to the homes that back up to the area while beautifying this section of Branham Lane.

The existing chain link fence located at the top of the slope will be removed once the trees have taken root. Also, the existing gutter will be rebuilt to allow for a bicycle and pedestrian path to connect to the existing pedestrian path along Route 87 while providing drainage for the new irrigation system.

If you would like to join this effort, please contact my office.

Airport Master Plan Changes

Recognizing a need to improve customer service and minimize the impacts of traffic at our airport, the City embarked on a plan to make services at San José International Airport more efficient while improving the level of service offered to travelers.

The appearance of the airport will change dramatically. Instead of three separate terminals, there will be one consolidated terminal with a two-level roadway. Centralizing and consolidating passenger services will reduce traffic congestion, make one's travel experience easier, and eliminate repetitive services. To accomplish this, all ticketing and baggage claim services will be situated where the old Terminal C is located. Passengers will check-in there and ride an automated people mover to get to the airline gates. At the gate, passengers will board their aircraft on jet bridges and, as the new gates are built, old ones will be removed.

Your input is vital to the success of improving our airport. Airport staff has scheduled numerous meetings throughout the city to share this plan with you. The meeting for District 10 residents will be held on March 26th from 7 pm to 9 pm at Gunderson High School. Please join me at this meeting to learn about the exciting changes that are in store for San José International Airport.

Teen Center Update

The Teen Advisory Committee, composed of students, parents, and faculty from Pioneer, Leland, Gunderson, Bret Harte, Steinbeck, and Castillero schools have been working diligently on the new District 10 teen center. The Advisory Committee has named this Center "The Spot."

The Spot will be located on the Bret Harte campus. The committee is working with local businesses to assist them with the activities for the center's grand opening. The grand opening will feature a variety of activities including a dance hosted by a local radio station and dinner from In-N-Out Burger. The grand opening is scheduled for April.

New Measure to Curb Abandoned Shopping Carts

Abandoned grocery carts are hazardous and a source of blight in our neighborhoods. To address this issue, the City Council passed the Shopping Cart Ordinance on February 6th. Under the ordinance, the City will work with retailers to develop plans to control, retrieve, and retain grocery carts. I am hopeful that this new plan will help reduce the number of abandoned shopping carts on our city streets.

If you wish to report an abandoned shopping cart, please call 408/277-4000.

Memorials for City Employees

Late last year, I co-sponsored a policy to allow memorials in the public right of way for City employees (police officers, fire fighters, and others) who die in the line of duty. Prior to the adoption of this policy, San Jose did not have a method to honor and remember these men and women.

Our new policy recognizes the contributions of these individuals with a program to ensure that we will remember all City employees who lose their lives while serving our community. Hopefully these memorials will remind us all of the ultimate commitment of a City employee to the people of San Jose.

Local Educator Honored

The City of San Jose pays special tribute during the State of the City Address to groups and individuals for their exemplary service to the community. This year, I was honored to present a commendation to Doris Dillon for her life long commitment to the teaching of children and instilling in them a love reading.

Doris has been teaching in San Jose for 30 years. A majority of her time has been spent teaching at schools in District 10. In 1999, she was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. Her condition has not stopped her positive outlook on life nor her contagious enthusiasm for teaching.

Recently, Columbia University announced that they will name their new teacher's center "The Doris Dillon Center" to honor her passion and excellence in teaching.

School Update

On February 23, 2001, I had the opportunity to meet with government students at Gunderson High School. These students were interested in discussing issues that are of concern to them: school truancy, control of graffiti and getting involved in the democratic process. I was very impressed with these students and their knowledge of the City and their commitment to making San Jose a great place to live.

Your Help is Needed

For years I have worked to ensure the safety of our children as they walk to school. Crossing guards at busy intersections near schools are crucial to our children's safety and San Jose needs more crossing guards.

Crossing guards work part-time during the normal school year, providing for the safety of elementary and junior high school children across heavily traveled streets. They are paid a minimum of \$11.00/hour and receive a uniform allowance. If you are interested in becoming a crossing guard, please contact Sgt. Bertelsen at (408) 277-4553.

Tune Into City Council Meetings

Remember live coverage of San Jose City Council Meetings is available on cable channel 37A. The Council meets every Tuesday at 1:30pm and on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm.

* * *

If you would like further information on the items discussed in this update or to confirm the dates, times, & locations of

the events listed, please contact my office at (408) 277-5251 or via e-mail at pat.dando@ci.sj.ca.us.

Computer Corner

-Bob Aquino, VEP's Computer Guru

One of the most commonly used applications of computers today is email. The advantages are obvious. No stamps. It's free (sort of). You can send it to an entire mailing list as easily as to one person. You don't have to go to the post office. There is 24-hour continuous delivery. In short, it's immediate.

This immediacy is built into the premise of the movie "You've Got Mail", which did a lot to make people aware of email's capabilities. While we all might not find true love by email, there are lots of capabilities that we can use.

For example, I use email when I want to get word out to the VEP membership on an important meeting or issue that the membership should be aware of. (By the way, VEP is committed to protecting our mailing list from the scourge of email, spam, the digital equivalent of junk mail.) When I do send out a notice, I send a blind carbon copy to the mailing list. This means no one can see anyone else's address. If you're not on the VEP email list, drop me a note at baquino@bobaquino.com and I'll add you to our list.

I find that, in dealing with complaints to businesses, email occupies the mid-ground between US Mail and telephones. Due to its immediacy, people tend to pay more attention to it than conventional mail. However, you always have to remember that it is in writing, and as always in recording things in writing, it's best to temper your irony, sarcasm, and wit, because things look harsher in writing than they sound in speech.

There is a fundamental limitation in email in that it is restricted to the so-called ASCII code. The ASCII code is a list of 128 binary numbers that correspond to all of the symbols on the keyboard (numbers, upper and lower case letters, punctuation marks and so on). There are also some other codes that are held over from the fact that the ASCII code was originally used on teletype machines. My personal favorite is "bel". Those of us who are old enough to remember the 1940s movies about newspapers have memories of scenes in the newsroom where the conversation is interrupted by the "ding, ding, ding" of the teletype machine. That is actually "bel, bel, bel" because that's the way the signal was transmitted.

At any rate, this limitation on email constitutes a problem when the user wants to transmit non-ASCII material. Unfortunately, in the Windows world, most material is non-ASCII. There is, however, a work-around. In conventional mail when you want to send Aunt Maude a picture of the new baby, you slip it in the envelope. Similarly, in email, when you want to send non-ASCII material you "attach" it to the letter. Any file that you want can be attached to a letter.

Now come the caveats. First, most people have a 56kb (or less) modem. That being the case, large files take LONG times to up- and down-load. Pictures are particularly problematical in this regard. Be considerate of the people

to whom you are sending attachments. Letters that take 15 minutes or more to download are a pain.

Secondly, there is always the possibility that your recipient does not have the software necessary to read the file you sent him. A good thing to do in this case is to save the file that you wish to attach as a .htm file, if possible. This is possible with pictures, Excel files, and many other types of files. The reason to use the .htm format is that this type of file is readable with a web browser, which almost anyone who can read email will certainly have. In fact, your recipient can read .htm files even if he has a Mac or Unix machine.

Finally, for those of you who use Outlook as a mail client, if your recipients do not have either Outlook or Outlook Express as a client, they may not be able to open the attachments. As usual, there is a work-around. The problem is that Microsoft modified the ASCII code to what they call Rich Text Format. The purpose of this is that if both sender and receiver have Outlook they transmit different formats of text (point size, font, color) rather than have the normal drab appearance of email. The workaround is to go to Tools/options menu. Select the Mail Format tab. In Send in this message box, select Plain Text, and close the window. Now you're set.

Happy mails to you!

VEP 2000-01 Goals Update

- Greg West

At its September 26th meeting, the VEP membership approved our organization's goals for the 2000-01 year. We have completed several of the goals and have made significant progress on most of the others. The goals and progress to date on each one follows:

Goal: Support the San Jose General Plan change to remove the Vista Park Drive and Chynoweth Avenue extensions through the Lester Property. **Status:** GP change approved by the City Council on 11/21/2000.

Goal: Support resolution of the Lester Tax situation that minimizes the impact on his land. **Status:** Initiated letter-writing campaign to elected local and federal representatives to resolve the situation (ongoing effort).

Goal: Present updated Constitution and Bylaws to the VEP Membership for discussion, amendment (if needed), and approval. **Status:** Board review of C&BLs is complete. Recommended changes to be presented to membership for beginning of discussion at our November 2000 meeting. Initial discussion held at February 2001 meeting. Will call for approval at March 2001 meeting.

Goal: Support and drive completion of the next phase of Vista Park and Meadows Park with available City funds. **Status:** Meadows Park completion project is under construction. Met with City Parks & Recreation Department over the summer of 2000. Agreed on completion philosophy. Parks & Rec will update progress periodically. They attended our November 2000 meeting and will be back at our April 2001 meeting with a detailed completion plan for Vista Park.

Goal: Sponsor a community-wide social event during the year. **Status:** Exec. Board has begun discussion. No progress.

Goal: Continue aiding the City in the maintenance of the palm trees along Chynoweth. **Status:** Ongoing. Have identified responsible party in traffic accident that killed one palm. Working with City to get replacement from that party. Working with City to get replacement of second palm that died. City replaced both dead trees with specimens similar in size to the current trees. Have pruned and watered trees over the past year as need arises.

Goal: Preemptively investigate and mitigate the impacts of City Council re-districting on VEP. **Status:** VEP Member, Dave Fadness, appointed to the City Redistricting committee. Dave will keep us informed of issues and meetings.

Goal: Clean up and maintain VEPHOA sign near the intersection of Capitol and Vista Park Drive. **Status:** Exec Board decided to remove the sign. Contacting property owner to schedule removal. We will redesign the sign to be in line with VEPCA (assuming the C&BL changes pass and the organization is renamed) and find a new home for it (possibly at the corner of Vista Park Drive and Branham Lane).

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.

* * *

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.