

VEP'S ANNUAL MEETING

7:30 P.M. TUESDAY

April 27, 2004

GUNDERSON HIGH SCHOOL

→ Faculty Lounge ←

AGENDA

★ Vista Park Ballfield Update ★

A brief update on plans to relocate the west ballfield by Vice Mayor Pat Dando's Chief Aide Josh Howard.

(7:30 to 7:40 pm)

★ Neighborhood Action Program ★

A presentation on how to deal with problem neighbors by San Jose Police Department's Sharon Yamzon.

(7:45 to 8:30 pm)

★ Annual VEP Reports ★

Brief summary reports by President Dave Noel and Treasurer Joe Tajnai.

(8:30 to 8:45 pm)

★ VEP Officer Elections ★

Presentation of slate and election of officers for 2004-05.

(8:45 to 8:55 pm)

★ Your Community Concerns ★

A chance for you to tell us about your concerns.

(8:55 to 9 pm)

Everyone is welcome. Please invite your neighbors!

Our April Meeting

-Dave Fadness

We lead off with a brief update by Pat Dando's aide, **Josh Howard** on proposed re-location of the west ballfield at Vista Park. Josh has some very good news for us. The city has been very busy developing plans and budget, working with a subcommittee of VEP and representatives of organized sports to assure success in this rework effort. Final design and site location--and the possibility of volunteer community involvement--will be the topic of a more detailed report at our May meeting.

* * *

Sharon Yamzon is our featured speaker. She'll tell us about SJPD's *Neighborhood Action Program* and how to deal effectively with problem neighbors. This is a frequently heard concern from our members, so we're as interested as you must be to hear what she has to say. Don't miss it.

* * *

April is *Annual Meeting* month for VEP. It's the last meeting of our fiscal year. We finish with reports from our outgoing president and treasurer, then elect and install officers for the coming year. As such, it's an important end and an auspicious beginning. You are urged to participate.

Our outgoing President **Dave Noel** has been an incredible, totally reliable leader and a rock-solid advocate for VEP; an inspiration and model to anyone who knows him and

has had the opportunity (and sheer energy) to work alongside him. Dave's middle name *must* be VOLUNTEER.

You **MUST** be there on April 27th to join us in thanking him for all he has done as our president these past three years. (He served one year as Vice President before that.) There simply aren't enough good things you can say about Dave, but let's try—okay?

Our current VP, **Jeri Arstingstall** has offered her name in candidacy for President. We still need a candidate (Y-O-U?) for Vice President. Secretary **Ginger Cardona** has offered to continue as co-Secretary with candidate **Kristine Alexander**. Our Treasurer **Joe Tajnai** has also offered his name in candidacy to serve another term. Editors **Bob Aquino** and I evidently face another year of waiting for some miracle to happen—anyone interested in giving relief to our aging bones?

Nominations remain open until the elections are held, so please step forward—we'd love to have you join our all-volunteer Executive Board.

* * *

As always, we welcome your input on community issues—that's how we set our priorities for VEP.

It will be a pleasure to see you at our meeting on April 27th. Bring a friend!

San Jose Neighborhood **Action**

San Jose Neighborhood Action (SJNA) was developed in conjunction with *Project Crackdown* and other community empowerment programs currently operating in San Jose. Its formation was announced in January 1996. The program utilizes mediation between community members to deal with issues of drugs, gangs, and neighborhood blight.

Neighborhood Action is offered in the City of San Jose by a trained coalition of San Jose Police Department members, other city personnel, and residents. The program's step-by-step approach teaches residents how to channel their strengths into an effective action plan in order to reclaim their neighborhoods. Complaining residents mediate a solution with the property owner through designated city personnel.

A 2-HOUR SJNA WORKSHOP TEACHES YOU HOW TO:

- Identify and recognize a public nuisance and the business of drugs.
- Organize a neighborhood.
- Document a public nuisance, drug/gang related nuisance and blighted property.
- File and proceed in small claims court if necessary.
- Collect a judgment.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

Neighbors monitor a property, keeping logs of possible nuisance activity. When enough documentation has been gathered, neighbors send a letter of complaint to the property owners asking them to clean up the property and manage the problem tenants.

WHAT IF OWNERS IGNORE COMPLAINTS?

If the property owners fail to respond to mediation or fail to resolve the problems, the option of going to Small Claims Court is available. The residents present their documentation showing that the owners are allowing illegal/nuisance activity to occur on their property. Under the rules of Small Claims Court, each affected neighbor on the claim may be awarded up to \$5,000 in damages. The judge decides what damages will be awarded. The threat of damage awards often compels owners to step in and take care of the problems.

STEPS TO BE IN A SJNA PROGRAM:

1. It takes just one call (277-4133) from a resident to activate the program.
2. A San Jose Neighborhood Action workshop is scheduled for the neighborhood. The neighbors meet and develop the plan of action.
3. Neighbors document drug dealing, public nuisance, or suspicious activity in an Activity Log.
4. The neighborhood group sends a letter and Activity Logs to property owners requesting action.
5. Property owners join the team and work together with neighbors to make the neighborhood clean, safe, and healthy...or property owners don't take any action at all.
6. If property owners don't respond, neighbors have the option of proceeding in Small Claims Court.

For more information on the Neighborhood Action Program, come to VEP's April 27th meeting and/or contact the San Jose Police Department at 277-4133.

Call for VEP officers

-Jeri Arstingstall

VEP executive officer elections will take place at our April 27th meeting. Please consider joining the board to do great things for our community. We closed 2003 with more than 450 members, so we know there are plenty of you that can help us. No experience is required. Please don't wait for us to call you.

VEP NEEDS YOU! If you think you might be interested, please call me (281-1959).

I would like to thank **Debra Suydam** for helping find **Kristine Alexander**, who has stepped up to the plate to co-op the Secretary position with **Ginger Cardona**. **Joe Tajnai** will continue as our Treasurer.

We are still looking for a Vice President. No experience necessary, just a passion for the neighborhood we live in.

What I find interesting being on the VEP board is the vast amount of history, and that our past-presidents still help out so we are not reinventing the wheel. Please help keep the momentum going.

3rd Annual VEP Neighborhood Picnic

-Yvonne Reddy

Be sure to mark your calendars for Sunday May 16th and plan to attend our 3rd annual **VEP Neighborhood Picnic**. This event will again be held at Vista Park (corner of Hyde Park and New Compton Avenues) from noon to 3:30 pm.

So pack your picnic basket and head on down for fun, games, and prizes. The *America Tae Kwon Do Center* will again wow us with their martial arts demonstration. *Peek-a-boo the Clown* will be on hand to lead fun games and activities for the kids. We'll also have lots of prizes to hand out, compliments of local businesses and individuals. Just remember, you have to be there to claim your prize this year.

We're still looking for a few volunteers willing to help with face painting and "Crazy Hair." No experience required for either of these. If you can share a bit of your time for these kid-pleasers please call Yvonne at 226-9574.

This year's picnic promises to be the best ever, so we hope to see you and your neighbors at this fun event.

Community Service Awards

- Dave Noel

At our February general meeting, our membership approved funding up to \$4,500 for VEP's 2004 *Community Service Awards*. These awards are grants towards higher education or vocational training for graduating high school seniors who have demonstrated exceptional records of volunteerism and community service during their high school careers.

Up to three \$1,500 awards will be awarded; one each for graduating students at Gunderson and Andrew Hill, and one for a graduating At-Large student. Our At-Large category is currently defined as a graduating high school senior residing in San Jose and nominated by a VEP member.

If you know a deserving graduating senior at Gunderson or Andrew Hill High Schools, encourage him or her to talk to the administrator below to request that he or she be nominated as one of the three candidates they will submit to VEP (applications are due from the schools by April 27th).

Andrew Hill High School = Joe Ortega
Gunderson High School = Rosa Nieto

If you know a deserving graduating senior at any other school (or home-school), please nominate that student for our At-Large award.

**REMEMBER:
AT-LARGE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
9 PM TUESDAY APRIL 27TH.
THEY ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.VEPCA.ORG**

Gunderson and Andrew Hill students who are not nominated by their school administrator may be nominated by a VEP member for our At-Large award.

Our policy is that we must have at least two applicants for any category in order for us to make an award. Thus, if we receive only one At-Large applicant, we will be unable to issue an At-Large award this year.

Our At-Large award winner will be invited to VEP's May 25th general meeting in order to accept his or her award. Gunderson and Andrew Hill award winners will receive their awards at their schools' senior awards ceremonies, which are both on the evening of May 27th this year.

I'd like to thank our Community Service Awards Committee members for working with me as we planned for this year's awards. **Dave Fadness, Greg West, and Steve Kinsey.** We will need additional help judging applications in late April or early May. If you can help, please contact me.

I'd also like to thank **Laura Probert**, our Gunderson liaison, for promoting our award within Gunderson, and past-president **John Marks** for promoting our award within Andrew Hill.

VEP's report card for 2003-04

- Dave Fadness

In September 2003, our membership unanimously adopted the following goals and objectives for the 2003-2004 year, which ends this month. Our goals were aggressive. We didn't meet them all, but overall we had another excellent year that we can all be very proud of.

The comments in italics represent a report on how well we've met each goal and/or objective.

1. Continue to improve our community association.

A. Values: Place first priority on volunteer efforts that reflect member-endorsed improvements in our community.

Grade = A+. *Member-endorsement is integral in adopting our Goals & Objectives. Our work this year has focused entirely on this broad objective—as this report will attest.*

B. Leadership: Encourage regular turn-over of VEP officers to impart broader membership area representation, fresh ideas, new perspectives, and peak energy in our organization.

Grade = D. *For obvious reasons, we always strive to attract new officers. Our performance in this has been less than satisfactory; we still don't have a VP candidate, for example. YOUR help is desperately needed —please step forward!*

C. Membership: Increase membership and attendance at VEP meetings and events.

Grade = A+. *We have done very well at this. Our meeting attendance has been consistently high all year and membership broke every previous record. Imagine that—we're 35 years old and still growing bigger and better!*

There isn't a volunteer community group in this county that can match us.

D. Fiscal Health: Maintain excellence in VEP's fiscal condition.

Grade = A+. *VEP's fiscal condition is excellent. Our ability to fund three generous Community Service Award stipends, pay for required umbrella liability insurance, underwrite a variety of community projects, and to subsidize production and mailing of more than 500 monthly newsletters is ample testimony to sound financial management.*

E. Volunteerism:

a. Support our VEP volunteer coordinator.

Grade = B. *Volunteers have stepped forward to help with distributing flyers, pruning and watering our landscape projects, etc. We'll never do enough in this job, though.*

b. Develop functional committees that afford structured volunteer opportunities for VEP members and groom future VEP leadership.

Grade = B. *We have been able to form ad-hoc committees for parks projects and other short-term objectives. YOUR help is needed for standing committees we'd like to form..*

c. Continue our VEP Community Service Award program; consider/recommend revisions to At-Large nominee qualifications; revise/update nomination forms; increase student awareness of awards.

Grade = A+. *We greatly improved our applications forms, will fine-tune our At-Large process if necessary after this second year, and have implemented a student awareness outreach. VEP's CSA program is doing very well, thank you!*

F. Communication: Support VEP's Hospitality Committee; repair/replace meeting announcement street signs; improve electronic communication with and among our members; improve website access.

Grade = A. *Our hospitality Committee has done a fine job and we have used email membership communication judiciously. We did not refurbish our street signs (a big job). Website access improvement is ongoing.*

G. Visibility: Strive for positive public recognition through targeted communication and signage; contribute articles to other publications in our community.

Grade = A+. *We have had our events and calendars posted in the Mercury-News, the Blossom Valley Times, and our neighboring community association news media.*

2. Promote community interaction, pride, and preparedness.

A. Organize at least two community events.

Grade = A+. *We did a Community Garage sale and a Community Picnic last year. Both of these events are growing in participation each year. Our Home Faires have become very successful annual events.*

B. Participate as volunteers in the San Jose Beautiful daffodil planting event and at least one other beautification project (e.g. a Dumpster Day, neighborhood clean-up days, etc.). Target Branham Lane (Between Vistapark and Snell) and the vacant parcel at Branham Lane/Narvaez.

Grade = A. *We're still planting daffodils every year and have several beautification projects in process in targeted areas.*

C. Maintain our median plantings on Chynoweth (new & palm trees) and on Narvaez.

Grade = A+. *We continue to maintain all the median projects VEP installed--some as many as eight years ago.*

D. Encourage member participation in crime prevention, safety, and emergency preparedness programs in our neighborhoods.

Grade = C-. *Although we encourage individual member participation, we have NOT vigorously pursued formal efforts to maximize group involvement in programs like Neighborhood Watch.*

3. Work to make local government and businesses responsive and accountable to VEP members.

A. Sponsor election forums that heighten our members' awareness of candidates and ballot issues and encourage their participation as voters in all elections.

Grade = A+. *VEP has always done well at this. We sponsor voter education forums at every election. Our precincts have been consistently above average performers. We vote smart.*

B. Monitor and react to plans for urban development in and around our membership area.

Grade = A+. *VEP has always done well at this. Our members are kept well-informed by way of an always vigilant executive board.*

C. Encourage, monitor, and react to plans for transportation, libraries, parks, and other public infrastructure improvements in and around our membership area. Organize and communicate community priorities.

Grade = A+. *VEP keeps a watchful eye on government planning and keeps our elected and appointed representatives continuously mindful of member views, needs, and desires.*

D. Work with Pinn Brothers Construction and City/County government to satisfactorily complete promised median landscaping and sound wall improvements on Capitol Expressway.

Grade = INC. *Although the city and county didn't contribute to sound wall improvements, Pinn has lived up to its promise; they built a wooden addition atop the existing masonry wall on the south side of Capitol, solving neighbors' noise problems. Pinn begins median landscaping east of Vistapark the week of 4/19. VEP volunteers hope to earn an "A+" on this goal; as Pinn's landscaping work proceeds, the coming weeks will tell.*

E. Work with SummerHill Homes and City government to satisfactorily complete the promised west interface wall,

cul-de-sac and median landscaping on Vistapark Drive, and traffic calming along Hyde Park Drive.

Grade = INC. *We've made astonishing gains through our efforts with SummerHill and Vice Mayor Pat Dando. Although work is not yet complete, we look forward to getting most of what we asked for—AND--a turn-key community room SummerHill will pay for and build at Vista Park!*

F. Seek acceptable remedies to community impacts (including traffic, parking, etc.) imposed by uses at Gunderson High School.

Grade = B+. *This effort is (and will probably continue to be) ongoing. Our neighbors in the GHS area have steadfastly kept pressure on city and school district officials. Significant improvement has been experienced. However, because of the changing and seasonal nature of school uses, eternal vigilance will be necessary.*

4. Create and maintain high-quality public services in our area.

A. Support preservation of the Lester property and efforts to make it a park.

Grade = A+. *VEP is only one of many forces that worked in harmony to achieve recent success in transferring ownership to the public—a giant step toward realizing Mr. Lester's dream. To our credit, VEP was decades ahead in supporting and lobbying for this, always keeping its need in high profile. Now protected, we need to push hard to get that land developed as a park.*

B. Monitor and provide input to the city's capital improvement plan for neighborhood needs.

Grade = C. *Except for parks funding, VEP has not been as involved recently in the city's capital improvement plan as in past years. This may be a reflection of the maturing nature of our community.*

C. Work with the city to develop, renovate, and maintain our neighborhood parks and to ensure that all (developer) parkland dedication fees paid in our neighborhoods are used for improvements to parks that serve our neighborhoods. Focus on a Community Room at Vista Park and the completion of new Cilker Park.

Grade = A+. *We have had stellar success in this objective. Cilker Park is being built and working drawings are being prepared for building a community room (our future "home") at Vista Park. We owe a debt of gratitude to our City Councilwoman, Vice Mayor Pat Dando, for these achievements.*

D. Work with the City and Councilwoman Dando's office to ensure that impacts of any proposed high-density development along the Guadalupe Corridor are fully mitigated; focus on building a city park at Capitol/Narvaez and improving traffic level of service there.

Grade = INC. *These goals are a work in progress and will need to be carried forward into our next councilmember's term.*

As you can see, we have been very busy—and quite productive--this year. No, we didn't get straight-As, and yes, we did get a few INCs; you'd suspect that we set our goals

too low if we got 100%, though. The trick in winning big is setting goals slightly higher than anyone could reasonably expect you to achieve.

We won big--and look forward to your participation in setting ambitious goals again next year. With your support and involvement, *anything* is possible!

Thank you, VEP volunteers

-Josie Supencheck ()*

The VEP Community Association wishes to thank the following volunteers who helped distribute VEP's "pink" community events flyer last month. We appreciate their assistance with this important task--especially during the warmest week of the month.

Kristine & Todd Alexander
Maria & Ali Arid
Chris & Dana Belstler
Bob & Jane Burns
Michael & Robyn Catelani
Nancy & Ken Hardy
Penny & James Martinez
Mark & Marcy Mossawir
Kathy & Chean Pang
Bonnie & Clay Sperry
Bill & Marynett Sim
Pat Souza
Diane & Marsh Syverson

These four high school students also helped:

Jennifer Cardona
Stephanie Hadley
Andrew Iskander
Kyle Van de Pitte

Again, our thanks to you from the entire community!

*[Ed. Note: **Josie Supencheck** is one of VEP's champion volunteers—a real dynamo, she is always willing to help in our neighborhoods and throughout San Jose. Hats off to this fine, dedicated, and amazingly energetic woman!]*

VEP's 7th Annual Home Faire

- Dave Fadness

VEP gives thanks and its grateful appreciation to our Past-President and event-organizer **John Marks** and the exhibitors who attended and contributed door prizes for our highly successful Home Faire this year. We are also pleased that so many of our members were attracted to this annual VEP event.

The exhibitors who attended are:

- Affordable Sunrooms; Nancy Healy, 248-3001
- Body Basics; Veronica Mitchell, 220-8144
- California Bathroom & Kitchen Remodeling; 360-9700
- Capitol Automotive; Gary, Rauh, & Ellen, 267-2292

- Consolidated Plumbing; Doug Douglass, 446-5665
- Composting Education; Ken Kelly, Sarah, 918-4640
- Crime Stoppers; Ken Kelly, 918-4642
- Day & Night Heating & Air Conditioning; Kathy/Wayne Ward 829-7635
- Gina Ray Realtor; Gina, 445-4135
- Home & Garden Decorating; Melissa Aiellow, 978-2115
- Michael's Construction; Jeff, 371-3064
- Morazan Roofing; Marvin, 224-5785
- Pampered Chef Cooking, Yvonne Reddy, 226-9574
- Precision Flooring & Carpets; Don, Terri Gupton, 224-4960, 391-7021
- Precious Moments in Time Photography; Jeri, 281-3393
- Referral Realty by Ken Goyeau; 448-4947
- Student Painters; Carrie, 800-295-9675
- Summer Winds Nursery; Brian Appleby, 866-0970, X10
- Tile Designs; Scott & Melissa Graeser, 225-7717
- Century 21 Realty; Sandra Sample, 829-8821

Our lucky door prize winners were:

Sylvia Corpuz, \$50.
Doug Douglass, \$50.
George Matoba, \$50.
Maricela McCullough, \$50.
Earl Nichols, \$50.
John Pavlow, Composting bucket (\$25 value).
Bernice Ryan, \$50.
Sandra Sample, \$50.
Flo Sayer, \$50.
Ron Stuart, Composting bucket (\$25 value).

SJPD Community Services Division

- Dave Noel

Even long-time VEP officers are occasionally taken by surprise regarding services available to the citizens of San Jose. One neighborhood in VEP has been suffering with "bad apple" tenants at a rental house in the neighborhood for quite a long time.

On occasion, they've asked me what they could do. Other than call the police when they see a law being broken, I was at a loss for what to suggest. They'd already called the police many times, but the problems were not subsiding.

Eventually they learned about SJPD's *Neighborhood Action Program*. On May 30th, **Sharon Yamzon** from the SJPD *Community Services Division Crime Prevention Unit* held a meeting with the neighborhood regarding the problem house. The neighbors were so happy with the presentation and the prospects for improvement at the problem house that they suggested we invite Sharon to speak at a VEP general meeting.

Excellent suggestion. We did just that and Sharon will present at our April 27th meeting.

I hope you don't have any "bad apple" neighbors. Whether you do or not, we're sure to have a very captivating presentation by Sharon at our April 27th meeting. I hope to see you there.

I commend the neighbors for working together on this situation and passing on what they've learned to VEP.

VEP Community Calendar

Sat, Apr 24 = City-wide *Great American Clean-Up* (see articles in this newsletter).

Tue, Apr 27 @ 7:30 - 9 pm: VEP's Annual Meeting - Brief Vista Park ballfield update; SJPD Presentation; VEP officer elections (see article, page 1).

Sat, May 1: VEP's *Community Garage Sale* (see article).

Wed, May 5 @ 7:30 pm: VEP Exec Meeting (call for details).

Sun, May 16 @ Noon - 3:30 pm: VEP Community Picnic at Vista Park (see article).

Tue, May 25 @ 7:30 - 9 pm: VEP General Meeting – Vista Park Community Room and west ballfield relocation; Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren; VEP At-Large Community Service Award presentation.

Thu, May 27: Awards Night at Andrew Hill and Gunderson; VEP Community Service Awards presentation (TBA).

Wed, Jun 2 @ 7:30 pm: VEP Exec Meeting (call for details).

VEP's annual *Community Garage Sale*

-Ginger Cardona

Saturday, May 1st is the date for our annual VEP Community Garage Sale. Whether or not they're VEP members, tell your neighbors about it now so they'll be ready to join us that day. Let's make this a big success that folks will look forward to every year!

VEP will advertise this event in the *Mercury-News* and *PennySaver*. So, you can take advantage of an increased number of shoppers by offering your unwanted household treasures for sale on the same day as the rest of your neighbors throughout our membership area.

To participate simply put your items out on Saturday morning and begin selling. There is no need to sign-up. If you would like, you can post signs and display eye-catching balloons. However, please remember to remove them after the sale.

Spread the word to your neighbors. Let's make this year's Garage Sale the biggest one yet!

VEP's Annual Garage Sale

...will take place on Saturday, May 1st

It is time to start gathering your items.

Tell your neighbors about this—the more, the merrier!

Great American Clean-Up

- District 9 San Jose City Councilwoman Judy Chirco

Last year we met at Branham Park to clean the adjacent creek and shopping center. It was a fabulous effort and I thank you all for your tremendous service.

This year we will meet on Saturday, April 24th in Room 6 at Kirk Community Center (1601 Foxworthy Avenue) and then traveling to the Guadalupe River (near Foxworthy) and two other sites to clean up our neighborhoods and city. Here's our schedule:

8:30 to 9 am = Registration.

9 to 11 am = Pick up litter in designated areas.

11 to 11:30 am = Leave litter bags at designated areas.

11:30 to 12:30 pm = Celebration Lunch at Cathedral of Faith, 2315 Canoas Garden Avenue (Curtner Avenue at Hwy. 87.)

Representatives from District 9, the City, and Supervisor Jim Beall's office will be there.

I was very impressed with the amount of trash collected last year and hope for an equally successful clean-up this year. If you are interested in becoming involved in this clean-up or know of an area in need of cleaning, please contact my office at (408) 277-5275

Neighborhood news

-District 10 City Councilwoman/Vice Mayor Pat Dando

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

Is There a Sex Offender on Your Block?

I strongly believe that parents need to be notified when sex offenders live in their neighborhood or close to parks, libraries, and schools. Recently, I worked with our police department to post information on the Internet about high-risk sex offenders living in San Jose. By visiting the SJPD website, residents can easily access important information on the identity and whereabouts of these dangerous individuals.

I hope this tool will help you better protect your children. You can access this database by visiting the Police Department's website at www.sjpd.org. This service has been very successful--in just three months there have been over 22,000 visits to the website.

Help Keep San Jose Clean

On Saturday, April 24th, the City will host its third annual litter pick-up day. Working together, volunteers, corporate sponsors, and government partners will clean-up San Jose streets, vacant lots, creeks, and parks. Your help is needed to make this effort a success.

District 10 volunteers will meet at the Vineland Library, 5750 Blossom Hill Road at 9 am to receive their litter pick-up kits and information about making our neighborhoods litter free.

Lunch will be provided to all volunteers at Cathedral of Faith following the clean up. If you would like more information on how you, your scout troop, or volunteer group can join this effort, please contact me.

Community Volunteer Opportunity

One of the assets of our Airport is the team of HOST Volunteers who ensure that travelers and visitors to San Jose have a pleasant experience in our city. HOST Volunteers work at the information booths near the baggage claim area, providing travelers with maps/directions, transportation information, flight schedules, dining suggestions, and event information.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Airport, please contact Kathy Quiroz at (408) 792-4145.

If you would like further information, please contact my office at (408) 277-5251. I can also be reached via e-mail at pat.dando@ci.sj.ca.us

PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCIES

DEADLINE TO APPLY:
5 PM FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 2004

The San Jose City Council will be accepting applications until 5 pm Friday, April 30 for appointments to the San Jose City Planning Commission. This commission advises and makes recommendations to the City Council on all matters relating to the future physical development of the city with respect to land use and development, zoning and subdivision regulations, and the city's Capital Improvement Programs.

There are four positions available on the Planning Commission for four-year terms ending June 30, 2008. The four incumbents are eligible for reappointment. Applicants to this commission must have been both a citizen of the United States and a resident of the City of San Jose for one year preceding an appointment, and additionally must be a registered voter in the City of San Jose at the time of appointment.

Appointment Process: All applications received by the deadline will be submitted to the mayor and council members who, in turn, will notify the city clerk as to whom they would like to interview. Applicants receiving four or more

such indications of interest will be asked to appear to be interviewed during a regularly scheduled council meeting to be held on June 1, 2004. The mayor and council then cast written ballots that are read into [the record by the city clerk. Applicants receiving six or more votes, or the highest number of votes over six, will be appointed to serve on the Planning Commission.

Applications may be obtained from the Office of the City Clerk, Room 116, City Hall, (408) 277-4424. If you would like additional information, please call (408) 277-4576.

Chynoweth bridge

- *Dave Noel*

While VTA's *VTP2030* (Valley Transportation Plan) shows the Chynoweth bridge as a very high priority for San Jose, it is not imminent. In order for this bridge to be constructed, funding needs to be made available by developing the bare land on the Almaden Expressway side of the Guadalupe River and percolation ponds. **Tim McCullough** from Councilmember **Judy Chirco's** office assures me there is nothing in the works for that land or the bridge at this time.

Tim assured me that the re-striping on Chynoweth near the percolation ponds and the new traffic sensors installed recently at the intersection of Winfield and Chynoweth are not related to future bridge construction. Traffic sensors were installed to repair damage caused by construction at the adjacent Cilker Park.

VEP will continue to monitor this situation since we have major concerns about the threat of directing arterial traffic from Almaden Expressway onto our residential streets.

Neighborhood developments

- *Dave Fadness*

We're still working to get approvals for volunteer neighborhood beautification projects in and around VEP's traditional membership area. Look for smaller projects to occur in the next couple of months--like replacement of bushes on the south side of Branham Lane, immediately west of New Compton, and re-painting the beat-up old sign on the north side of Vista Park.

A relatively major project we wanted to undertake this month with the cooperation of Gunderson High volunteers is erosion control on the south side of Chynoweth Avenue, under the Route 87 over-crossing. Whenever it rains or the sprinklers run there, mud runs down the slope and onto the sidewalk, forcing pedestrians onto the street.

It turns out that VTA is going to do that work for us! They now have a landscaping project scheduled for July completion under Route 87 from the bike trail head (east side) to the LRT station staircase (west side) that will install ero-

sion control and plant English ivy, some bushes, and a few Crepe Myrtle trees. Hooray!

We're still in the process of seeking approval for projects along Branham Lane, between Snell and Vistapark Drive; on the vacant parcel at Branham and Narvaez; and on the north side of Chynoweth between Route 87 and Pearl Avenue. Our efforts with Pinn Brothers are still underway to have the median of Capitol Expressway landscaped—a long-held dream by us VEP old-timers.

Parks and trails

- *Dave Noel*

Cilker Park: By now you have probably noticed the dramatic progress in construction of the new William H. Cilker Park on Winfield Boulevard, between Chynoweth and the light rail tracks. VEP anticipates a grand opening ceremony will be held shortly, but we don't have a date to announce yet. Watch your May VEP News or your email for an update.

Vista Park: **Joshua Howard** from Vice Mayor Pat Dando's office will provide a brief update on the west ballfield situation at VEP's April meeting. Our May meeting will feature a comprehensive update on the community room that SummerHill Homes will build at the park, as well as significant news regarding relocation of the west ball field to enhance its safety and usability.

Opinion: 2nd Unit Housing = *Anybody Units*

- *Len Procker*

[VEP Members: I am very concerned about the recent proposal to allow secondary units to be built on existing single-family residential lots within the City of San Jose and am recommending that VEP oppose this ordinance. I met Len Procker recently at an Almaden Valley Community Association meeting where he spoke--and I asked him to write this opinion piece for our newsletter. He has resided in a single family San Jose neighborhood for 24 years. -Jeri Arstingstall, VEP Vice President.]

What is It?

The Second Unit Housing proposal currently on its way through the San Jose city bureaucracy would change the existing R-1 zoning law for single-family dwellings to allow the construction of an additional 650 square foot second residence on any 6000 sq. ft. or larger single-family lot. The owner need only get permits--no neighbor input or other control is required.

Why?

Behind all of this is a 2002 State law pushed by low rent, high-density housing advocates requiring cities in California to consider such second units. San Jose City Councilman Chuck Reed said Second Unit housing "would solve a chronic shortage of low cost housing" in San Jose (ABC Evening News, 04/06/04). He forgot to say that now

homeowners will solve this problem at their expense, not the City.

Who?

Often referred to as “Granny Units” for its emotional appeal, the reality is that these second units are really “Anybody Units”. “Anybody” is exactly that: unrelated adults, families with children, communal groups, even paroled criminals with nowhere else to go and, of course, a grandmother. How many occupants can there be? I calculate 7 (according to code, 650 sq. ft. – 160 sq. ft. kit/bath = 490 sq. ft; 490/70 sq. ft. per person = 7 people).

But San Jose hasn't enforced existing code currently on the books prohibiting Second Units in the first place, so who knows? Further, there is nothing to stop the owner of the primary residence from moving into the second unit and renting the primary unit to as many people as would wish to live there. And there would be more cars, dogs and cats, and visitors.

The Effect...

First, protection the City promised with R-1 zoning would simply evaporate. The City, in effect, would be breaking its 'contract' with R-1 neighborhoods by changing the rules right out from under them. Your single family neighborhood would become a candidate for “high density”.

Many middle class people who worked and saved for years to move to a “nice” neighborhood could see it change, and quickly.

Second, with the increased density comes more noise, more coming and going at all hours, more people you've never seen before, more congestion, parking problems, increased pollution, and a further strain on already strained government services: schools, fire and police protection, health services, and other City services, not to mention the potentially increased load on charitable organizations and non-profit assistance groups.

This is *uncontrolled* growth. When these things happen, and they will, driven by greed, cultural desires, and especially the time tested Law of Unintended Consequences, some families will move out. Some others will follow. Whatever drove families out will put off new owners unless they pay less. Therefore, the remaining families will see their property value decline. It could be a lot.

For the middle class, a home is what drives their wealth. 60% of their assets is the value their principal residence (Ref: Penelope Wang, “How are You Doing--a Look at Key drivers of Wealth...” Money, July 2002). A decline of 20-25%, not unrealistic, could mean a significant loss. The neighborhood, as you knew it, will have collapsed.

What to Do?

I was struck by comments from others that most of the people attending City Council meeting were for Second Units.

If you do not want Second Units in your neighborhood, you need to act.

- Attend the proposed community meetings to get input on the Second Unit proposal.
- Attend City Council and Planning Commission meetings and voice your opposition.
- Send letters (and e-mails) opposing Second Units to the City Council, the Planning Commission, the newspaper editors, and anyone else who has influence. And keep doing it until the proposal is soundly rejected, just like it was in 1984, the last time it came up.

Computer corner

-Bob Aquino, VEP's Computer Guru

There are several new issues that arise out of the appearance of digital photography on the market. They tend to center around the software that you use to support your hobby. Most good cameras come with some elementary software to support them, but you'll probably want to get something more robust.

First of all, once you've invested in a few hundred megabytes of flash memory, you now have the capability to take a LARGE number of pictures for zero cost. You no longer have the cost of film to hold you back. When your memory chips are full, you simply download them to a hard drive somewhere, wipe the chips clean and start all over again.

Next, you don't have to get every picture developed. We all take bad shots. With film, you frequently have to pay to develop pictures that you don't want to get those that you do. With a digital camera, any pictures that are totally messed up can be reviewed on the spot and deleted from the chip.

After downloading, the pictures can be further reviewed. You can look at the pictures in a very large format, with a critical eye and reject the marginal ones.

It gets even better than that! On a recent vacation trip, I took some pictures in a very large darkened area. When I reviewed the pictures at home, they were disappointingly dim. However, with a competent software program, I increased the brightness and contrast, bringing out detail that was not apparent on the original.

Professional photographers have always been able to do things like this by adjusting the processing in their dark room, but digital makes this available to all of us. Similarly, if you have a face shot that is very good except for the fact that you forgot to turn the red eye suppression, and all the people look like the spawn of Satan with flaming eyes, you can also edit that out on screen.

Next, with all the pictures that you can take, you'll need some way to name and organize them to view them at a

later time. Then, you might want to create slide shows to bore your relatives and associates.

My personal take on printing the pictures is that, in general, I'd rather pay to have that done, if I am making pictures to keep for a long time. If you do try printing, you'll need photographic quality paper to get acceptable results. And as anyone who has a color printer knows, the manufacturers make their profit on selling supplies, not printers.

All in all, I have to say that digital photography adds a lot to an already interesting hobby.

Conversion rebates now available

-Ginger Cardona

Santa Clara County currently has an upgrade program designed to promote the elimination of wood-burning appliances. You are eligible for a \$500 rebate if you replace an existing wood-burning stove or fireplace insert with a gas insert. You may be eligible for a \$300 rebate if you convert your wood-burning fireplace to a gas-burning fireplace.

Go to www.sparetheair.org for details about the program. Barbecues Galore in Almaden Fashion Plaza (408) 264-0420 also has information about the program and the necessary rebate forms. Additional retail stores are listed on the web page.

President's message

- Dave Noel, VEP President

This is my last month writing to you as president. Serving as VEP's president for the last three years has been extremely rewarding and I've learned a tremendous amount. I've been able to apply what I've learned to my daily life and my "day job".

We're indeed fortunate to have many of our past presidents from our 35-year history still actively involved and willing to lead major tasks as well as provide guidance and mentoring. I'll be proud to join their ranks. But I'll also enjoy having more free time – being president of VEP is major commitment. I am truly grateful to **Jeri Arstingstall** for offering to take over the reigns.

While I don't aspire to become an elected official, I've met many of them as president of VEP, and I feel I've walked a mile in their shoes. While it's easy to poke fun at politicians, you'll find their job isn't so easy when you try it yourself. Representing 2000 homes for three years on a wide variety of issues, I've experienced some of the fundamental truths of human nature:

- If people are unhappy, they let you know it.
- If they are happy, they usually don't. (That's why your comments in membership renewals are so valuable to us.)
- When you make a decision, you have to balance the silent majority with the vocal minority. And of course,

- You can't make everyone happy all the time.

An organization with the (human) resources of VEP can do anything it sets its mind to. The challenge is to prioritize and focus on a set of achievable goals.

In a private meeting with Vice Mayor **Pat Dando**, Pat praised VEP's leaders for doing such a great job of prioritizing the needs and wants of the VEP community, and she let us know how much that helps her. This was quite a compliment, and is indeed one of VEP's strongest points.

When VEP executives present the community's position or priorities on any given subject, that is the culmination of one- to two-months of advance planning. We assign a core group to evaluate alternatives and propose a position. We review it among our executive board. Then we publish it in the VEP News and, ultimately, our membership votes on it at a general meeting.

While this process may seem slow, it is actually very fast considering what we are producing--a decision that best represents 2000 households. By the time we present a position to an elected official, he or she knows they can trust our position to best represent the needs and wants of our community.

Often politicians have to work with pockets of opportunity. If the community knows what it wants, it is much better positioned to take advantage of those opportunities. But remember, that means hard work and thinking ahead.

It's easy to assume that politicians know everything about each community they serve. But how can they? They can't be everywhere at once. They need your help--not just in pointing out problems and opportunities, but also in prioritizing and addressing them. This is another area in which VEP shines.

We have a winning formula. We set achievable, yet aggressive goals at the beginning of the year, and at the end of the year we review our progress and amaze ourselves on how much we were able to accomplish.

As I leave as President of VEP, I know that it is stronger than ever. But our strength is only as strong as our active leaders. We need more of you to step up to represent your neighborhoods at VEP executive meetings and to lead volunteer tasks.

Unless someone steps up by the April meeting, we'll start the new year (after our April 27th elections) without a Vice President. We need new volunteers who will grow with us and become future presidents. Please consider it. As we always say, no experience required, we'll teach and support you. Call me today!

Annuals for the summer

-John Marks, VEP's Green Gardener

By now the perennials and bulbs you planted are in full swing! Continue to care for these plants, providing them proper nutrients, moisture, light, and protection from pests and diseases.

The last step in completing your planting is to add annuals and roses to the garden. Consult your garden plan before heading off to pick up these plants. Know what types of annuals and roses will grow healthy and successfully in your garden.

- There are many varieties to choose from. Consult a plant encyclopedia to choose the best annual and rose varieties for your garden.
- When selecting annuals at the nursery or garden center, review plants to see that they are pest and disease free, with no holes in the leaves or discolored edges. Look for healthy leaf color and see that the roots are not overcrowded.
- Once you have your annuals home from the nursery, get them into the ground or container as soon as possible. Planting will allow you to get the annuals the proper nutrients and moisture they need to begin developing roots.
- When planting annuals, make sure to properly amend your existing soil. We recommend using *Miracle-Gro Garden Soil for Flowers and Vegetables* to improve soil condition and provide essential nutrients needed by your plants.
- To make the most of the annuals you have, plant them in groups or staggered, depending on the size of your garden.
- If you are planting in containers, try to place the annuals that will grow tallest in the center. From there, plant the remaining plants in descending height toward the edge of the container. This will keep shorter plants from competing for light with the taller plants.
- Before placing annuals into the soil, gently break apart roots that have become overgrown. Removing the matted tangles before planting will allow roots to grow strong once in the ground.
- Keep your annuals growing strong and healthy by applying the proper nutrients. Feed them every other week with *Miracle-Gro All Purpose Water Soluble Plant Food*.

Another booster for your roses and annuals is a homemade start-up meal. Mix one tablespoon of liquid dish soap, one tablespoon of hydrogen peroxide, one teaspoon of vitamin B-1 starter, and one teaspoon of whiskey in a half gallon of warm water. Treating your plants occasionally will help them perk up and bloom.

Black Mold on Oranges (*)

When you go to pick your oranges, you may notice black “dirt” on the oranges as well as the leaves. You may also notice a lot of scale all over the trees.

That “dirt” is called sooty mold. The scale comes from aphids, mealy bugs, and other sap-sucking insects that eat more sap than they can digest and exude the excess. It all falls to the fruit and leaves below, and a fungus grows on this exudate.

Sooty mold grows only on the surface and can be washed off. The exudate is sweet and serves as a food source for ants.

To control the scale, prevent ants from climbing the tree and natural predators will usually take care of the scale. To stop ants, wrap a three-inch-wide band of masking tape around the trunk and spread sticky goo (tanglefoot) on the tape. Although the ants can't cross the tape, they will look for other ways to get at the food that they scent. You'll also have to remove any branches, twigs, or leaves touching any structure or another shrub or tree.

Degenerate Tomatoes (*)

Tomatoes in our area can be infected by two soil-inhabiting fungi, verticillium wilt and fusarium wilt. Both can cause the fruit to become deformed, stay small, and turn leaves brown, but the most likely culprit is fusarium wilt. These two fungal diseases persist in the soil for up to twenty years and affect many other plants, as well.

Do not plant tomatoes in the same place each year; rotating the area where tomatoes are to be planted is an old but effective practice. If possible, plant only those that are labeled VFN (verticillium-, fusarium- and nematode-resistant). These will help prevent the spread of the diseases.

[(*) *Ed. Note: The articles above on orange mold and tomato infections were condensed from the San Jose Mercury News, 3/28/03.*]

San Jose Airport community meetings

- Dave Noel

In March 2003, San José voters approved the *Airport Security and Traffic Relief Act* allowing the airport to begin construction of the new facility once roadway projects were within three years of completion. As a result, the design process for the airport has started.

The airport's outreach team, and representatives from the Airport's architecture firm, Gensler hosted a series of public meetings throughout the city over the last several weeks to solicit feedback on the design of the new and improved Airport. For more information, visit www.sjc.org, or call Adrianna Rivas at 408-501-7616.

Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens

Gardening For Wildlife Workshop

Saturday, May 1, 10 am to 1 pm
Mayfair Community Center
2039 Kammerer Avenue, San Jose
FREE

Got animal magnetism? This free workshop will teach attendees to create a garden wildlife will want to visit. Santa Clara County residents are encouraged to learn how to attract birds and other wildlife to their gardens.

Featured speaker, local landscape architect and Gardening with Natives Coordinator, **Stephanie Morris** will describe gardening for wildlife using California native plants that attract birds, hummingbirds, butterflies and native bees to gardens.

Additional speakers include **Michael Pulhamus** of Master Composters who will conduct a live worm bin demonstration and **Freddie Howell** of the Wild Bird Center in Los Gatos. Ms. Howell will discuss the best methods of attracting birds with bird feeders and seeds.

Due to space limitations, reservations are required. For more information, or to make reservations, call (408) 298-7657 or send an email to education@grpg.org.

* * *

All About Dahlias

Sunday May 2, 1 to 4:30 pm (planting)
Saturday July 24, 9:30 am - Noon (maintenance)

You have your tubers--now what? Follow John E. Stowell Dahlia Society's **Sue Evanicky** through the summer months to get hands-on experience planting your tubers and maintaining your dahlias once they shoot up in your garden. This workshop will include hands-on demonstrations in the garden--so be sure to wear your "grubbies".

* * *

Composting Workshop

Wednesday, May 5
6 to 8 pm
FREE

Instructor: Phil Cornish, Master Composter

Worms are not only for fishing--leaves are not only for raking! Let Master Composter **Phil Cornish** educate you on the ways in which worms and your leaves can work to amend your garden soil. Co-sponsored by Santa Clara County Home Education Composting Program, this workshop will cover items such as: what can be composted, the various methods of composting, and how to use the finished product. We will also discuss worm composting, or vermicomposting, and help you choose which methods work best for you.

Events on May 2 and May 5 will be held at the Guadalupe Garden Center, located at 715 Spring Street in San Jose. Space is limited, so reserve your spot early by sending a check to: Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens, 50 West San Fernando Street, Suite 1100, San Jose, CA

95113. Visa and MasterCard are also accepted via phone or mail. Refunds for the events will only be made if the event is cancelled or if there is a waiting list.

For more information please visit www.grpg.org or contact Kary Wilson, the Education Coordinator, at 408-298-7657 or at education@grpg.org.

* * *

Are you Drinking Dinosaur Pee? Children's After School Water Workshops

Kids, join the Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens for a wet adventure into the exploration of water! Get involved in several hands-on activities including: making green cleaning kits, river water testing and creating pollution soup!

These workshops will be held on three consecutive Thursdays, from 3:30 to 5 pm, each with a different theme relating to the watershed. Sign up for one or all of the following days:

April 29th = From Dinosaur Pee to Your Kitchen Sink; Where does our Water come from?

May 6th = Pesticides, Erosion & Trash--Oh, My! Water Pollution and Prevention.

May 13th = There's a River in San Jose? Exploration of the Guadalupe River.

The cost to attend is \$5.00 per child per class and is for children between the ages of 7 and 10. For more information or to sign-up, please contact **Kary Wilson**, Education Coordinator, at education@grpg.org or 408-298-7657.

Carson Elementary School news

-Irene Shoberg

Carson School's *Open House* will be on May 11th from 6:30 to 8 pm. Carson's parent group will be holding a *Book Faire* during that time. This Book Faire will also be open during school hours that week. Funds raised will help buy new books for Carson's Media Center.

Carson School will also hold its annual *Walk-a-thon* on May 15th from 10 am to 2 pm. There will be a Silent Auction, food, and community fun. Join us and cheer our students on as they walk to raise funds for various school activities.

[Ed. Note: A long-time member of VEP, Irene Shoberg is the Categorical Program Assistant, Library Assistant, and VEP's liaison at Rachel Carson School.]

Oak Grove District seeks parent input

-Manny Barbara ()*

We are once again faced with having to make budget reductions to present a balanced budget for the 2004-05 school year. \$3-million less in State revenue this year will

result in necessary program reductions. Although difficult, school closings did help us save approximately \$900,000. We hope to eventually achieve an additional \$900,000 in lease revenue.

At the April 8 regularly scheduled meeting of our Board of Trustees, I will be presenting \$1.25-million in budget reductions. The Board will not take action until their regularly scheduled April 22 meeting.

The following budget reductions are proposed:

- Teachers' Lab position (District level)
- 1.5 custodians
- maintenance position
- administrative position (District level)
- English Language Learner certificated position (District level)
- 1.2 clerical positions (District level)
- classified position in Human Resources (District level)
- Reduce 4 clerical hours at each intermediate school
- Reduction of hours for some bus drivers
- Eliminate 1 warehouse/delivery position (District level)
- Increase Print Shop Fees
- Hiring 6 fewer teachers among all K-8 grades
- Reduce all general fund budgets by 5%

Understandably these proposed reductions are painful and will affect every department. However, every effort was taken to make reductions as far away from students as possible. In this spirit, I would like to highlight the programs that will not be affected by this year's budget recommendations:

- Class Size Reduction Program in grades K-3
- Visual and Performing Arts in grades 4-6
- Extended Day Kindergarten
- After School Sports in grades 7-8

These programs will all remain intact for the 2004-05 school year.

If you have questions regarding the foregoing proposed budget reductions, please feel free to contact me at:

Phone = (408)227-8300 or Fax = (408)629-7183.

[() Ed. Note: Manny Barbara is the Superintendent of Oak Grove School District, which serves elementary and middle school students who live in the VEP area east of Vis-tapark Drive. This article was extracted from his April 1, 2004 open letter to District parents.]*

VEP membership drive

- Dave Noel

Our annual membership drive is now complete. Thanks so much for your membership renewal. As of this writing, 422 of you have renewed, putting us at 94% of last year's record membership, and renewals continue to trickle in. On top of this, SummerHill Homes is generously paying first year's VEP membership for the new owners of all 78 of

their new homes in the *Las Brisas* community at Branham and Vistapark Drive.

I'd like to thank several of you who included extra money with your renewal or purchased a gift membership for your friends and neighbors. This includes Realtor **Wesley Terrell** who buys memberships for the new owners of homes he sells in the area. We challenge all other realtors in our area to do the same.

And, of course, many THANKS to those of you who noted on your renewals that you're willing to volunteer for VEP.

Thanks for your compliments

- *Dave Noel*

On behalf of the VEP executive board and our committee volunteers, thanks so much for your kind words on membership renewal envelopes:

- We are extremely impressed with the wonderful things you have accomplished
- Great job - very informative
- Thanks for watching out for our neighborhood!
- Thanks for all you do!
- Keep up the good work!
- Fantastic Job!
- Great newsletters, thanks
- You're great, thank you.
- Member since 1971! Thank you for all of the time and work you do for our community!

Neighborhood cleanup "Dumpster Day"

- *Dave Noel*

With the neighborhood cleanup on Saturday April 17th, every home in the VEP area has been covered within the last 2 years. It is our goal to work with the city to equitably distribute neighborhood cleanups within the VEP area.

The city can cover about one third of all single-family households each year, so most homes should see a neighborhood cleanup about once every three years. Following this rule, the VEP membership area north of Branham and west of Vistapark should be able to expect a neighborhood cleanup in the Spring of 2005.

The April 17th neighborhood cleanup was in the area bounded by Branham, Vistapark, Hwy 85, and Hwy 87. There were seven pickup locations in all, and our goal was to have one or two VEP volunteers at each site to meet and greet neighbors as they wait in line for the dumpsters, and to provide them information on VEP. We will recognize these dumpster day volunteers in our May VEP News

Free Car Seat Inspections

- *Dave Noel*

On Mondays at the Willow Senior Center, TABS (San Jose Police Department's community policing division) does FREE car seat inspections and installations, in room #15. If you would like your car seat installed or looked at, please call 277-4133 to schedule an appointment.

VEP's history in a nutshell: 1979 – 1982

–Greg West (*)

Celebrating our 35th anniversary year, the following is another in a series of summaries of VEP history taken from the VEP newsletter archives. This summary covers 1979 to 1982. VEP has taken on a project to scan archived newsletters and make them available on line at the VEP web site www.vepca.org.

1979 Posted speed on Branham Lane increased to 40 MPH. Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission present Santa Clara Valley Corridor Evaluation recommendations to VEP and the South San Jose Alliance of Homeowners Associations. The \$400-million plan includes \$150M for light rail, \$45M for new buses, \$140M-\$160M for highway improvements, and \$100M in annual operating costs. VEP takes stand specifically against the light rail plan.

Cherrywood Developments seeks rezoning of 78-acres at the southeast corner of Capitol and Snell for 1900 apartments and 20 duplexes to be built between 1980 and '85. VEP takes no position on the development but questions the EIR and impact mitigation process. Plan goes to the City Council in August with no recommendation from the Planning Commission (by a 4-2 vote). Council approves the rezoning.

City polls residents about which services to cut in the wake of Proposition 13.

70% of homes surveyed in the *Willow Glen 1* subdivision report electrical wiring problems with aluminum wire. PG&E addresses energy conservation at April meeting during looming energy crisis.

City announces several improvements Edenvale planning area roads including Branham, Snell, Blossom Hill, Pearl, and Coleman. City Manager **James Alloway** speaks at VEP's May meeting. Vistapark center strip mall (Vista Park at Capitol) opens in May. City allocates \$137K for Parkview III Park (Clearpark and Mia Circle).

VEP successfully takes on issue of neighborhood crime prevention by organizing neighborhood patrols and working with SJP. Councilmembers **Iola Williams** and **Larry Pegram** announce plan to complete Highways 85 and 87 with local redevelopment bonds. **Bill Johnson**, VEP Treasurer wins "Ugliest Kid" contest at Halloween Event.

VEP resolves to support the County's "Alternative 8" for the Guadalupe Transportation Corridor calling for a four

lane freeway, additional busses and upgraded SP rail service.

1980 VEP membership defeats dues increase to \$7 annually. Dues remain at \$4. City Council votes 5-0 to oppose the use of the Lick Spur for transportation. Under pressure from the rail union, the County "Board of Control" votes 4-2-1 to use the Lick Spur for transportation. VEP unsuccessfully lobbies for a reversal of that decision. City Council records objections to the plan in writing in the Guadalupe Corridor Study. Councilmember **Iola Williams** talks at VEP's March meeting.

Crime, Schools and Transportation top list of VEP member concerns in neighborhood survey. 85% of respondents agree that VEP is doing an effective job. VEP begins meeting at Parkview School. **John Marks** serves first term as President. VEP member **Cheryl Mc Laughlin** runs for newly districted City Council seat. Juvenile Court Judge **Lawrence Terry** reports at our June meeting that the single most common disability of teenage offenders is that they can't read. Police Chief **Joe MacNamara** featured at July meeting.

VEP opposes use of construction and conveyance funds to expand and rehabilitate the city sewer system. The ICC authorizes Lick Spur abandonment by SP. Frontier Village closes.

1981 City raises garbage collection rate to \$5.49/mo from \$4.23. '66 Corvette advertised for \$10,000. General Electric talks about the breeder nuclear reactor at the March meeting. City Council approves 144 condominium *Capitol Villages* development at Capitol and Rosenbaum. The Bren Company plans 860-unit development on 61.5-acre Frontier Village site. City Council approves the plan on a 10-1 vote.

California sprays malathion to combat Mediterranean Fruit Flies. VEP enlists high school student in membership drive - offers bounty on each new member. **Dave Fadness** and **Marianne Lent** help form *San Jose Citizens' Alliance*. Parkview Elementary School's first principal, **Randy Saugstad**, retires.

San Jose budget proposal increased 21% from previous year, but libraries and parks and recreation budgets are cut. **Taffy the Dog** wins "Best Decorated What-not" at VEP's 4th of July parade.

City's 1981 General Plan proposes office use at Chynoweth and Pearl. Parcourse at Parkveiw Park opens as a result of efforts by Parkview School Association. Over VEP's objection, Councilmember **Iola Williams** votes in favor of a City redistricting plan that splits VEP between Districts 2 and 7. The plan was approved by a 6-5 vote. City Council approves \$187M plan for light rail in the Guadalupe corridor as part of a \$298M transportation plan.

Gunderson student is victim of fatal traffic accident on Pearl Avenue, spurring VEP to join with Gunderson to successfully lobby for traffic safety improvements there. Parks and Rec holds community input meeting for the development of Vista Park at New Compton and Massachusetts.

1982 VEP successfully lobbies Streets and Traffic against the removal of stop signs at Vista Park and Bluefield. (Two residents from outside of the VEP area had petitioned the City to remove the signs.)

Parks and Rec meets with VEP to review plan for Vista Park. SJUSD announces closure of Belden School.

VEP supports League of Women Voters lawsuit against the City over expansion into the Silver Creek hills. VEP holds Mayoral Candidates forum with **Claude Fletcher** and **Tom McEnery** in April. San Jose has \$20M budget shortfall and proposes service cuts.

Gunderson adds 9th grade and expands to 1950 students. Gunderson's first Principal, **Ralph Sleight** retires after being commended by the high school accreditation team for outstanding performance.

VEP considers changing name from VEP Homeowners' Association to VEP Neighborhood Association. We begin meeting at Gunderson again. VEP friend and beat cop **Carter Langdon** and his wife, Marsha, are victims of fatal small plane crash. City Council approves rezoning of Lick Spur to residential. Crime, neighborhood problems, and schools top list of concerns in VEP member survey. VEP begins mailing VEP News only to VEP members, raises dues to \$8, and reduces number of VPs from three to one.

* * *

The following classic article was originally published in the July 1979 issue of the VEP News:

Warning – Disease In Progress

VEP faces one of its toughest foes. This disease can kill, maim, destroy or otherwise mutilate us or our property. This cancer is quite simply--CRIME.

Just how advanced is this disease? We are not certain at this time. We do know that it happens in our neighborhood at least five times per week. Most people are afraid to report crimes because they fear there may be repercussions.

They let the symptoms go unnoticed. However, we can no longer afford to do that. The cost is too much, in terms of our community health. Some things presently happening are:

Cars: A number-one target for vandals. Tires are being stolen, slashed with knives, punctured and air let out of them. Windows are being smashed with bats or rocks.

Homes: Our most precious possession. They are not safe. There are numerous break-ins. Some of it is just for kicks. Such as cutting up the furniture, painting the walls, throwing all the food out of the freezer and refrigerator, kicking in TV screens, and whatever else may strike their fancy. Robberies have one thing in common: they take whatever is of value to them, such as stereo equipment, jewelry--anything that can be turned into liquid assets--which, of course, means CASH.

Yards: Bicycles are stolen in front of our doors. Trees are being ripped out, shrubs destroyed. Nothing is sacred to these undesirable elements.

Parks: Parkview II Park is perhaps our greatest worry. Parkview II Park is the meeting ground for all types of undesirable elements in VEP Country. Do you want to buy drugs? Simply walk over to the park. Young people stand around drinking beer, smoking, leaving broken glass everywhere, and threatening little children who come there to play. Also, we believe there is a young person living in Parkview II Park. He has blonde hair, shoulder length, is chubby, and has a key ring hooked in his back pocket. We do not want this element cruising at 3 am. This has to be taken care of now.

Are you being intimidated by teenagers? Are you being victimized? Are you being harassed? Is this happening to your children or your neighbors?

VEP Country is called the golden ghetto. We got that distinguished title because we are such an easy mark. There are some things we can do--if we want to stop the spread of this cancer. Some concerned neighbors have joined to form a neighborhood patrol to discourage people from being on their streets who do not belong there. It has been effective. They do, however, need more people to volunteer.

If you would like information about volunteering for this neighborhood patrol, please call any of the VEP officers listed on the back of the newsletter. They will then forward your name to the Neighborhood Patrol.

We can begin to really look and listen to what is happening around VEP Country. The police emergency number is 297-3565. Do not hesitate to call them for help or assistance.

At any point and time during the day or night, are you aware of what your children are doing? We are responsible for our children--whether they are with us or not. It is imperative that you come to the next meeting to discuss your concerns with us. We all have to work for a cure together. The meeting begins at 7:30 pm on July 23 at Mercury Saving and Loan, located on Blossom Hill at Pearl Avenue (next to Angels).

Take time today to volunteer for the neighborhood patrol. They definitely need your assistance.

Do not hesitate to call the police or your neighbors. Remember, they need your help and you need theirs.

We want everyone involved, husbands, wives and children, to help us stop this cancer now before it is too late for any of us. We are tired of being sick, and we are not going to stand for it anymore. We really do want a decent neighborhood for ourselves and our children to live in.

[(Ed. Note: VEP Past-President Greg West has taken on the huge task of scanning all of our newsletters from the past 35 years. He is posting them on our website, www.vepca.org. Check it out.]*

Bulletin Board Ads

WAYNE'S LAWN AERATION SERVICE: Most front & back yards aerated and fertilized for only \$60. Also does sprinklers, dethatching, overseeding, and lawn renovations. Call 265-0165 or www.wayneslawnaeration.com.

U.S. MILITARY ITEMS WANTED: Top \$\$ paid. Call Doug at 978-3093 or 629-7436.

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

GOING ON VACATION? Responsible, experienced 13-year old is available for pet, house, and yard care. Call Matt @ 225-5878.

* * *

Bulletin Board advertising rules:

1. Bulletin Board ads are limited to four (4) lines of text. One line contains 50 characters, including spaces.
2. VEP will print **free** Bulletin Board ads for its members for one-time transactions involving less than \$400, for lost and found, and for services offered by kids under 18 or retirees over 60 years of age. Free ads may be published in a maximum of three successive issues of the VEP News per submission. After three issues, non-renewed ads will be dropped without notice.
3. VEP will print commercial Bulletin Board ads for its members for \$6 per issue of the VEP News. (A commercial ad is one that offers goods and/or services for a fee. The VEP President and/or Editor has final say in determining whether an ad is commercial.) Ads must be prepaid before publication and be of four (4) lines or less in length (see 1, above). Commercial bulletin board ads may be published indefinitely so long as payment is received in advance of publication. Non-renewed ads will be dropped without notice. No graphics allowed.
4. Bulletin board ads and payment must be received at least 12 days prior to the fourth Tuesday of the month for inclusion in that month's newsletter. Mail to VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose, 95158.

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.

On-line traffic complaint form

- *Dave Noel*

If you have traffic problems, report them! The more reports of trouble, the higher the priority assigned for enforcement.

Check out the on-line form at:

http://www.sjpd.org/traffic_complaint_form.htm.