

VEP MEETING

7:30 P.M. TUESDAY
November 29, 2005

GUNDERSON HIGH SCHOOL

622 Gaundabert Lane

→ Faculty Lounge ←

AGENDA

★ Open Space Authority ★

Presentation by Virginia Holtz and Greg West
7:30 to 7:55 p.m.

★ Santa Clara County ★

A Presentation by Don Gage, County Supervisor with presentations also by County Parks Director Lisa Killough and County Supervisor Don Gage's Land Use & Parks Policy Aide Rachael Gibson on the status of plans for

Martial Cottle Park and Capitol Expressway Landscaping
7:55 to 8:40 p.m.

★ VEP Business ★

Discuss and vote on request for funds for:
Exec Committee's annual Holiday Dinner;
and

Auger Service for Parkview Tree Planting.
8:40 to 8:50 p.m.

★ Your Community Concerns ★

A chance for you to tell us about your neighborhood concerns
8:50 to 9:00 p.m.

Our November 29 meeting

- Jeri Arstingstall

We look forward to seeing you at our November 29 meeting. VEP is YOUR organization; please be there to continue our long tradition of effective neighborhood representation.

Open Space Authority - The Board of Directors has appointed Ms. Virginia Holtz as Director representing District 5. Ms. Holtz fills the seat vacated by the resignation of former Director Richard Forst. Ms. Holtz recently served on the Open Space Authority's Citizens Advisory Committee, and is an active member of the League of Women Voters. She served on the San Jose Parks Commission for over nine years and helped establish Guadalupe Park and Gardens. She served on the San Jose Hillside Greenbelt Study and was active in the process of bringing the Open Space Authority into creation.

Ms. Holtz, a former elementary school teacher, has been involved in the preservation, protection, and creation of open space with various agencies for the past 25 years. Providing open space for people to enjoy nature has been a life long passion for her.

Raising public awareness of the Open Space Authority and creating educational opportunities is a high priority. Ms. Holtz will complete the un-expired term in District 5 after which she may stand for election in 2006.

Ms. Holtz will be joined by VEP past president, and current Santa Clara County parks commissioner **Greg West**. Greg will update VEP members on the County Park Charter Fund coming up on the June 2006 ballot (see his article in this newsletter).

Santa Clara County – Santa Clara County **Supervisor Don Gage**, along with County Parks Director **Lisa**

Killough and Don Gage's Land Use & Parks Policy Aide **Rachael Gibson** will update VEP members on the status of plans for Martial Cottle Park and Capititol Expressway Landscaping. VEP has worked very hard and diligently on trying to get the Capitol Expressway Landscaped. We trust that Don will be bringing good news to VEP on the agreement.

* * *

VEP Business - We want your input on and need member approval for two proposed expenditures:

1. Each year your VEP Executive Committee volunteers and their spouses have a Holiday Dinner. This is the only real "compensation" they receive for hundreds of hours of dedicated work they do for our neighborhoods.

This year, we are asking for an amount not to exceed \$500 for this event. (Bear in mind that there are ten couples involved; that equates to a cap of approximately \$25 per person.) To save money, VEP Execs typically use coupons when possible. We want your input--and need your approval.

2. With the lack of rains and the tree planting coming up at Parkview Elementary Our City Forest has made arrangements to auger the holes for us. This will save us from breaking our backs digging 22 holes for the new trees. To make this possible, we need your approval to spend \$300.

* * *

Your Community Concerns - Bring your community concerns to VEP's attention. We're eager to work with you on finding and implementing solutions to problems—that's what VEP exists to do. Our ideas and marching orders come from and respond to you.

County Park Fund extension on June '06 ballot

-Greg West (*)

On August 23rd, the County Board of Supervisors accepted the recommendation of its Finance and Government Operation Committee, unanimously passing a resolution directing staff to place an extension of the County Park Charter Fund on the June 2006 ballot.

The Park Charter Fund, first passed by the Santa Clara County voters in 1972, and renewed by voters five times since, has provided a long term and stable source of funding for the acquisition and operations of county parks. As a result, the county parks system now stands at roughly 45,000 acres (70 square miles) contained within 28 parks. The majority of the county parks, including Martial Cottle Park (formerly the Lester property) are in supervisorial district 1, of which VEP is a part.

The Park Charter Fund is not a tax, but a direction to the county executive to set aside a portion of the county budget for parks acquisition and operation. If this ballot measure were defeated at the ballot box, taxes would not be reduced. The county executive would find another place to spend the money.

The current Park Charter Fund directs the county executive to budget 1.425 cents per \$100 of County assessed valuation for parkland acquisition and parks operation. That equates to roughly \$28-million annually, less than 1.5% of the county budget. Of that money, 20% must be used for land acquisition.

On September 7th, the County Parks and Recreation Commission (of which I am a member), endorsed, by a 5-2 vote, renewal of the Fund at the current rate for a 12-year period, but reducing the acquisition percentage to 15%, and requiring that 5% be used for the development and improvement of parks such as Martial Cottle Park. Dissenting commissioners did not object to the renewal of the fund, but to the reduction of parkland acquisition in favor of park development.

As a Parks and Recreation Commissioner, I would be happy to answer any questions that I can or to take your comments about the Park Charter Fund renewal. You can contact me by email at greg@westfamilyweb.net or by phone at 629-1938 or 829-4686.

[()Ed. Note: Greg West is a past president of VEP who currently serves on the County Parks Commission This article was reprinted from the September VEP News.]*

Thu, Nov 24 = Happy Thanksgiving!

Sun. Nov.27 @ 5:15 pm = Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Decker Home—5101 Devon Park Court.

Tue, Nov 29 @ 7:30 pm = VEP meeting, Gunderson High School faculty room. (Meeting focus = Martial-Cottle Park, County Parks, and County Open Space Authority.)

Sat, Dec 3 @ 9 am = Parkview School tree planting (see article in this newsletter); YOUR help is needed for this *volunteer* project.

Sat, Dec 10 @ 9 am = Cilker, Vista, and Parkview II Parks - tree pruning and clean-up (see article in this newsletter).

Mon, Dec 12 @ 7 pm = Pearl Ave. Branch Library Help select an art project (see article in this newsletter).

Help plant a tree on Saturday, December 3

-Dave Fadness

Here's a volunteer opportunity for you and your neighbors that will make a lasting difference in our community. VEP is going to team with *Parkview School Community Association* and *Our City Forest* to plant trees on and around the Parkview Elementary School campus. With your help, this task will be easy to get done and take only a few hours. Please consider helping us.

December 3 = Trees at Parkview School

Volunteers from VEP, Parkview School Community Association, and *Our City Forest* will plant 22 trees on and around the Parkview Elementary School campus. This will be a great project for kids of all ages, and one we and future generations will thoroughly enjoy the benefits of.

When: **Saturday, December 3 at 9 am.** Arrive early for juice or breakfast coffee.

Where: **Parkview Elementary School**, 330 Bluefield Drive (just a couple of blocks east of Vistapark Drive).

Bring your own yard work tools: sturdy gloves, a spade or shovel, and/or a bow rake.

In order to help plan this event, please call me at 578-6428 to let us know you'll be there. All volunteers must sit-in on a 5-minute, safety training session given on-site at 9 am by the Oak Grove School District.

We appreciate the willing help of Parkview's Principal **Robert Topf** in selecting and placement of trees, and in gaining District approval for planting them. We also thank Oak Grove School District's Superintendent **Manny Barbara** and their Coordinator of Operations **Bruce Murphy** for approving our proposal.

We are especially grateful to *Our City Forest* for donating the 22 trees. Their Arborist, Christian Bonner has been a great help to us in this and all of VEP's tree planting projects.

OCF has donated many trees to VEP neighborhoods and, through the work of volunteers has planted *thousands* of trees over the years in our city. Please consider sending a tax deductible donation to this fine, non-profit organization at 595 Park Avenue #100, San Jose 95110. (Tax ID #77-0371911) Visit their website at www.ourcityforest.org. Do it today!

Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

-Katherine and Dann

Decker

Come one, come all, to the Christmas tree lighting ceremony at Katherine and Dann Decker's home, 5101 Devon Park Court. We have a 70 ft. live Christmas tree in our front yard, we would love to have everyone come and enjoy, the lighting of the tree, Christmas carols, exchange cookies, and drink hot apple cider. All you need to do is come and bring a toy and can of food for donation to *Second Harvest Food Bank* and *Cityteam Ministries*. We are very hopeful that Santa might see the bright star in the sky and stop by *11/27/05 at 5:15 pm*.

Memorial Day -- let's start planning now

-Dave Fadness

It's time to start planning for an even bigger *Memorial Day Parade & Festival* for 2006. Yes, Memorial Day is

months away, but those who worked on last year's event all agreed that we should start planning earlier this time.

There are lots of details to take care of, so your help will be appreciated. We need folks to help plan the kinds of events we'll include, to decide on a parade route, to recruit bands and entertainers, to coordinate the participation of area schools, to apply for permits, to ask their favorite merchants for donations, etc. If we get started now, no one will have to work very hard to insure an *incredible* success. We'll build on contacts and experience developed in 2005.

Annamarie McKnight and I are co-Chairs of the 2006 event. (Our contact info is on the mailing page of this newsletter.) Please call or email either one of us to volunteer for our committee. You'll be glad you did—and will make us very happy at the same time. Thanks!

Pearl Ave. Branch Library Public Art Meeting

- Lynn Rogers (*)

DATE: Monday, December 12, 2005
TIME: 7:00 - 8:30 PM
LOCATION: Pearl Ave. Branch Library

Three artists previously selected as finalists by the community will present their unique concepts for the new Library at this meeting; one of these will be selected by the community!

Everyone is welcome and we encourage you to invite other members of your community to join us for this meeting.

If you have any questions regarding this meeting or the Public Art Program, do not hesitate to call Lynn Rogers at (408) 277-5144 ext. 15.

[(*) Ed. Note: Lynn Rodgers is the City of San Jose Public Art Program Officer]

Daffodil Day

- Dave Noel

On Saturday November 5th, VEP volunteers planted 250 daffodil bulbs as part of San Jose Beautiful's 11th annual citywide Daffodil Day. This was VEP's 5th consecutive year of participation. We planted 125 bulbs at Parkview III park, and 125 bulbs in the triangle median on Narvaez at Branham, among the trees and shrubs we planted there in January 2003.

Our thanks go to **Debra Suydam** who coordinated the event, and her crew of volunteers:

Debra Suydam
Jeff Ismail
John Foley
Bob & Francine Olsen
Robin West
Dave Noel

To view pictures from this event, as well as other recent VEP events, visit:
http://pg.photos.yahoo.com/ph/dnoel1234/my_photos

Cilker Park Tree Pruning and Clean-up

- Dave Noel

VEP volunteers are tentatively scheduled to prune trees and do general clean-up at the new William H. Cilker Park on Saturday December 10th at 9:00 am. Cilker Park is located on Winfield Blvd at Chynoweth Ave. Before we prune the trees, we will receive training from San Jose city arborist **Ralph Mize** or Our City Forest's **Christian Bonner**.

No promises, but rumor has it that **William Cilker** and **Pat Dando** both plan to participate. This will likely be a relatively quick job, and we're tentatively planning to continue on to Vista Park and Parkview II to do

additional pruning immediately after completing pruning at Cilker Park. For more information, call Dave Fadness at 578-6428 or Dave Noel at 266-7183 after November 21st.

San José Unified School District

- Don Iglesias, Superintendent

In San José Unified School District, we believe going to college should be an expectation not a choice. To monitor our progress in support of our Vital Priority, *Establish a College Going Culture*, we have begun administering a district-wide Senior Exit Survey to assess student post secondary attendance. This survey was administered to all 2005 graduating seniors at SJUSD's 6 comprehensive high schools. The survey data we see in the 2005 Senior Exit Survey is quite revealing

Eighty-eight percent of our students responded to the Exit Survey. Of those responding, 52% of our graduates are attending 4-year universities such as UC Berkeley, Yale, MIT, UCLA, Stanford, Harvard, Cal Poly and UC San Diego. Community colleges and career tech have been chosen by 44% of our students and the remaining 4% have chosen the military or are going directly into the workforce.

SJUSD's requirement for all students to take UC/CSU classes has had, and will continue to have, a direct impact on the eligibility and opportunity for students' acceptance into the 4-year universities. We are proud to be one of the first school districts in California to require all students to take the rigorous A-G courses (the more demanding classes necessary to attend college) to graduate. We must continue to set high expectations for all students and have interventions in place to support their academic needs. In doing so, we will continue to open the door to the world that awaits them, giving them the opportunity to make career choices as informed young adults.

To drill deeper into student perceptions of their school and college aspirations, focus groups were conducted with our graduating seniors. Focus group questions were: "What experience influenced you the most?" "What are you most proud of during your high school career?" "What was your biggest challenge?" "Did you feel supported by your school?" and "What do you think of the A-G course requirement?" The students were very candid with us; the following are quotes from the students:

Experiences-

During my freshman year, my World Cultures teacher stood up in front of the class and said, "This class is going to be tough, you will get into college and I'm here to support you." I felt supported.

IB courses in general really prepare you for college. The courses are incredible. It pushes you to go beyond your limits.

My 6th grade math teacher influenced me the most. She taught me how to have confidence in myself and be good at something. My teacher believed in me so much.

Pride-

I'm most proud of my academic achievements. My family is from a different country. At first I found it hard-but afterward I was very happy to get into AP classes.

Challenges-

The biggest challenge was the language. I was in ESL. It was hard to get involved in the beginning, the language was a barrier. As I got involved, I realized I wanted to do so much. I tried to get Latinos involved. There was always the negative stuff – but it paid off. I got the kids involved.

Biggest challenge in HS is balancing your time (academics and social life). It's really hard to balance sports, extracurricular and friends.

Support-

They take time to help me and talk to me about college-explaining the options I have. The administration was always there saying, "right on." They are always so positive and encouraging us to go to college. There was so much support for everyone.

A-G Requirement-

When I got to high school – I didn't know I needed to take these classes. There was so much college talk I realized how important it was to take the A-G courses. It's wonderful to see so many kids that would not have gone to college having the opportunity to go to college because of the A-G requirement.

We are very proud of our students, their families, our staff and community for their hard work in supporting each child's efforts to set and realize their highest goals and aspirations.

Gunderson High School Happenings

-Cary Catching

I am pleased to share with our community some of the exciting events that are happening at Gunderson High School this year.

Gunderson's Homecoming activities were a rousing success! The students did a fabulous job of planning various school-wide activities, including spirit week events, day and evening rallies and a dance. We hope that our VEP neighbors were able to join us and enjoyed the festivities.

Internal construction projects are nearing completion. The new plasma TV's have been installed in the Forum and should be up and running by the end of the month. In addition, the video production studio is now complete. Staff will begin training on the use of this new equipment within the next few weeks, as we hope to have it operational by the second semester.

As for the external construction, the new softball and baseball fields are coming along nicely. Grass is growing and our teams are anxious for their seasons to begin so they can play on the new fields. In addition, we are hopeful that the new school building project will begin shortly as the deadline for completion is still slated as August of 2006.

Finally, as the calendar year draws to a close, we will be gearing up for our recruitment activities for the 2006-2007 school year. Our goal is to continue to increase our enrollment and educate the community about the good works taking place at our school. We will have a more detailed description of these activities next month. However, if you would like to be included on our mailing list, please contact Principal Cary Catching at 535-6340 or e-mail cary_catching@sjusd.org.

Carson School Update

- Irene Shoberg

Thanks to those who were able to attend Carson Elementary School's annual Harvest Festival, October 14. The event was a huge success with record-breaking attendance. Friends and families enjoyed the wide variety of food and picked up some tremendous bargains at our silent auction while the kids enjoyed the games, music, crazy hair, and the new Fun Zone; giant slide, obstacle course and bungee run.

Carson would like to extend their thanks to the San Jose Fire Department as well as the Canine and Mounted Police units for coming out to the festival. This is always such a treat for the kids. San Jose Sharkie even came out to sign autographs and smile for pictures!

The Carson PTA and Harvest Festival Committee would like to thank everyone who supported the event by volunteering, making a donation, or attending. It was a wonderful night. If you would like to see some photos from the Harvest Festival, please visit the following site:
<http://www.sjusd.K12.ca.us/sites/elem/Carson/harvestfestival2005.html>

Friends of Guadalupe River needs volunteers

The *Friends of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens* can use your help in the following ways:

1. Rose Garden Work Day: every Wednesday and Saturday, from 9 am until noon. Groups are welcome. Assist with garden maintenance and plant care in the Heritage Rose Garden. Volunteers can help on a weekly basis, or occasionally as their time allows.

2. Courtyard Garden Work Day: Weeding, raking, mulching, planting and much more. Flexible hours are available during the week. Groups are welcome. Please call Lucy Perez to schedule.

3. Office Volunteers: always needed for various tasks. Times and tasks vary, so call us to see what is currently available.

4. Education Volunteers: needed to help inspire kids of all ages at events, festivals, and field trips. Environmental and historical hands-on activities are both fun and educational and presented in many different areas within Guadalupe River Park & Gardens.

For more information, visit their website www.grpg.org or contact Volunteer Coordinator **Lucy Perez** at lperez@grpg.org or (408) 298-7657.

Branham clean-up a complete success

-Dave Fadness

With swift, machine-like efficiency, our team of 27 volunteers rolled along approximately 3/4-mile on the south side of Branham Lane Saturday morning, October 22, trimming overgrown bushes, picking up litter, and removing old barbed-wire and chain-link fencing. It was a sight to behold, and testimony to what a relatively small group of dedicated, no-nonsense volunteers can accomplish together in just a few hours.

We started at 9 am. In 2-1/2 hours, our clean-up project was complete between Snell and Vistapark Drive. All that remained was for County Parks to finish loading and haul away dumpsters. There would be five, twenty-yard dumpsters in all.

With the help of County Supervisor **Don Gage**, we gained permission to do this project and the help of County Parks. County Parks assigned two excellent members of its maintenance staff, **George Santiago** and **Felipe Velazquez** to assist us. These fellows gave us a *huge* head-start by mowing and raking weeds along the right-of-way a few days earlier. County Parks donated the dumpsters and had a tractor on hand to load them with trash and fencing materials. They also supplied us with wire cutters, leather gloves, litter bags, and a variety of handy tools that made our work much easier than it would otherwise have been.

Don Gage's Land Use Policy Aide, **Rachel Gibson** was one of our star volunteers that day. She set a tough pace for all of us!

Special thanks to **Mike Silva** who offered free coffee to our volunteers at his **Cool Beans** coffee shop in the Branham-Snell Shopping Center.

These are the folks who showed up to help. We all owe them a debt of gratitude for donating their weekend time and hard work to improve the appearance of our community.

Ben, Skyler, & Deborah Andrews

Jeri Arstingstall

Alan & Ginger Cardona

Joyce Chesnos

Tim Cole

Luigi & Maria DiGregorio

Aiko Fadness

Don Ferguson

Ellen Finch

John Foley

Gilbert Gruber

Jim Hicks

Brenda Johnson

Frank Kistler

Robert Litfin

John Marks

Paul Nichols

David Noel

Pam Rodriguez

Stacie Steffens

Josie Supencheck

Greg West

Please help us watch for illegal dumping. If you see someone dumping trash anywhere in our community, take their vehicle license number and call 311 immediately. Also notify VEP by calling one of our officers listed on the mailing page of this newsletter.



Volunteer Group Shot



Cutting The Fence Into Sections



Hauling a Fence Section Away



A Job Very Well Done!

Join VEP's discussion group

-Don Ferguson ()*

A VEP discussion group has been set up and is available for those community members who want to keep aware of and take part in the day-to-day happenings of VEP. Our group is set up as a private one, to ward off marketing and spam email.

There is no cost associated with becoming a Yahoo Group member, but you will need to have a free Yahoo id and password. To do this, you set up a free Yahoo email account, but you can easily direct your VEP emails to arrive in any email account.

Those who would like to become members of our group should send an email to **Don Ferguson** at vep@donferguson.com with their email address and street address. You will then receive a private email invitation; just click the button to join. It's that easy.

Any other questions can be answered by contacting me at (408) 629-0303 or vep@donferguson.com.

Our Group home page is: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/vep>

Our Group email address: vep@yahogroups.com

*[(*Ed. Note: Don Ferguson is a member of the VEP Branham Lane Widening Committee, and an active VEP volunteer. An e-list can be an extremely powerful tool to unite a community. Give it a try!]*

President's message

-Jeri Arstingstall, VEP's President

At this time of year I would like to give Thanks to everyone in our neighborhood. We have many accomplishments to be proud of. VEP never sits on its laurels and we continue to achieve.

The Vistapark Community room is near completion. The update as of now is we will be doing a walkthrough this month and helping the city plan the Grand Opening. If all works well VEP could hold our January meeting in the new room. We are keeping our fingers crossed. Also please look in upcoming issues of the Newsletter on how you can rent the room.

Neighborhood Improvement Awards

GOAL OF THE AWARDS

The Neighborhood Improvement Awards Program was established in 2004 to encourage citizen involvement in adding to the beauty of San Jose.

WHO MAY ENTER?

Anyone may nominate a volunteer group or individual who volunteered his or her time to beautify a property in San Jose. You may nominate a group you are a member of or one whose work you admire and feel is worthy of this award. No paid contractors, or other paid services are eligible. Improvements must have been completed in the last calendar year.

IS THERE A FEE?

There is no fee to submit an application. The work that has been done is "fee" enough.

WHAT ARE THE AWARDS?

A Neighborhood Improvement Award plaque will be presented to the top five winners.

WHO WILL DO THE JUDGING?

Representatives from the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, City of San Jose Neighborhood Association, Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, San Jose Mercury News, City of San Jose Business Association, and the San Jose Beautiful Steering Committee will be invited to serve as judges.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Go to <http://www.sjbeautiful.org/nia.html> to download the application form and submit it along with photos of the project. Answer all the questions in the spaces provided. Include at least one recent photo of the property. If possible, a "before" picture should be included as well. (If a "before" photo is not available, please take extra care to provide details of the property's original condition.) Photos will NOT be returned. Please print or mount all photos on 8.5 x 11" paper, and label with the address of the project. You may also call the office at (408) 723-1574

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR APPLYING?

Applications must be postmarked no later than **Friday, December 2, 2005**

MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO: The Office of San Jose Beautiful/1601 Foxworthy Avenue/San Jose CA 95118.

The View From City Hall

- City Councilmember Nancy Pyle

As I drove around our district this past week, it became clear that Fall has finally arrived! The leaves are falling and Halloween was as festive as ever, with all sorts of goblins and ghouls coming by the neighborhood in search of candy. While one of my favorite parts about the Fall is the wonderful holidays that we get to share with our friends and families, I also enjoy this time of the year because it presents each of us

with an opportunity to give back to our community.

I am so proud that District 10 already has so many individuals that constantly go out of their way to support and build a stronger community for all of us. Just this past month, Mayor Gonzales presented District 10's very own **VEP Community Association** with an award for outstanding volunteer service. VEP earned this award because of hard work and superb civic responsibility in landscaping and maintaining several streetscape areas of their neighborhood. It is individuals such as the members of VEP who truly reflect the goodwill and service which is possible from each of us as we go about our day.

In closing I would like to wish all of you a happy and healthy holiday season. While many of us are enjoying a delicious home-cooked Thanksgiving meal, it will truly be a time to give thanks for all that we have; but also to be thankful for the power each of us holds to give back to our community during this time of holiday cheer! Best wishes, Nancy Pyle Councilmember, District Ten

District 10 Announcements

Councilmember Pyle has been asked to plan the invocations for November's City Council meetings. Those giving invocations include **Father Brendan McGuire** of Holy Spirit Church, **Castillero's** Choir, and a number of other fantastic guests who will welcome everyone to the 1:30 pm meetings in November.

The District 10 Office will be closed on the following dates, November 11, 23, 24, & 25. During the month of December, the office will be closed on the 23rd through January 2nd.

The next issue of Nancy's News will be hitting the press in January, 2006.

Community Spotlight

Nancy extends her congratulations to the following groups & individuals for the month of November!

Almaden Business Association – The Almaden Business Association has been integral in helping to raise money to purchase books for the new Almaden Library & Community Center.

VEP – VEP received the Mayor's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service on October 8th for demonstrating superb civic responsibility in landscaping & maintaining several streetscape areas in their neighborhood.

San Jose State University – San Jose State volunteered its services and facilities as the San Jose home site for a number of individuals affected by Hurricane Katrina. Many of the individuals assisted by the university are doing quite well and one has even found success as a chef at the Toll House Restaurant in Los Gatos!

Street Landscaping Renovations Planned for District 10

Beginning in October the Department of Transportation will be initiating 4 new street landscape projects in D-10. These renovations aim to remove plant material that is unsightly and inappropriate for the locations in which it was planted due to maintenance costs and pedestrian safety concerns. Each of the projects is outlined below:

Median Island on Coleman Rd. (Between Santa Teresa & Winfield)

Removing: Acacia ground cover, due to frequent trimming & safety issues

Adding: Red Carpet Roses, which grow to a height of 3 feet maximum

Median Island on Winfield Blvd. (West of Coleman)

Removing: Abelia shrubs, which require trimming

Adding: Low-growing shrubs similar to Abelia (don't require trimming)

Roadside Properties on both sides of Coleman Rd. (Santa Teresa & Foothill)

Removing: Photinia shrubs, which are very old, woody, and unattractive

Adding: Keeping area bare to provide a cleaner and more maintained look

Median Island and Roadside Properties on Blossom Hill Rd. (Each side of Chambertin)

Removing: Lantana ground cover, a plant which is difficult to contain
Adding: New wood chip mulch, giving the area a clean look & blocking weeds

Happy Thanksgiving

Councilmember Nancy Pyle would like to wish everyone happy holidays as we move into November and December. In order to share in the spirit of the season, Councilmember Pyle and her staff plan to volunteer their time at **Sacred Heart** on November 23rd. Working with staff from several other District Offices, Nancy plans to help distribute holiday meals to those who need them the most. If you are interested in helping out in a similar fashion this holiday season, please visit <http://www.shcstheheart.org> for more information on opportunities to volunteer.

Tours of City Hall

Approximately 20,000 people toured City Hall on Oct. 15th. If you missed out, you can still tour the new facility Monday – Friday with a self-guided tour or a docent led tour on Tuesdays at noon. Come and visit – we'd love to see you! Call 277-4000 for more information.

San Jose City Council District 9 News

- City Councilmember Judy Chirco

San Jose Work Experience Program for Youth

The Work Experience Program is hiring 25 Youth leader positions and is looking for enthusiastic and motivated youth ages 14 - 16 to apply. Youth selected for the program are paid \$6.75 per hour and are required to attend weekly workshops. The positions available are clerical, recreation, parks, and library. The application deadline is Tuesday, November 22 by 5:00 p.m. For additional information or an application please contact Bridget McKay at 793-5590.

[Ed. note: This program is repeated several times each year.]

Neighborhood Development Center Moves into Neighborhood.

I want to give a hearty welcome to the Neighborhood Development Center (NDC) that moved into Kirk Community Center last month. This is a great resource for all city residents. The mission of the Neighborhood Development Center is to build strong neighborhoods by connecting individuals to information, technology, and opportunities for civic engagement. They are open for business from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday and by appointment. The NDC has a library of over 200 books for community use on a variety of subjects such as organizing, fundraising, grant writing, effective meetings, and volunteer recruitment. In addition, there is a computer lab available for community use and a meeting room that can host over 20 people. They have a high-speed copier available for your use – just bring the paper!

The NDC is hosting their open house on Wednesday, December 7th, from 6 p. m. to 8 p. m. at Kirk Community Center. That would be a great time to tour their offices and see what they have to offer. Check out their website at www.sanjoseca.gov/prns or reach them by phone at 408.723.4114.

AWARDS AND GRANTS:

Proud of Your Home? The Office of San José Beautiful is accepting applications for the Neighborhood Improvement Award. Applications are due Friday, December 3, 2005. Call 408.723.1574 or email ndc@sanjoseca.gov to have an application mailed out to you.

Recognition for Families that Volunteer - The Family Fun Volunteers Program recognizes families that volunteer together to benefit others or improve the community or world. Families that enter this contest should consist of a minimum of two persons, at least one of who is under 18 and one over 18 years of age. For five Grand Prize families, Disneyland will donate \$5,000 to the nonprofit charity or public school of each family's choice, and for 25 First Prize families, \$1,000 will be donated to the organization of each family's choice. All winning families will receive a package of FamilyFun books and kits. The entry deadline is January 15, 2006. Submission instructions are available at <http://familyfun.com/volunteers>.

Support for School Enrichment Projects - The Toolbox for Education Grant Program, administered by Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation, supports school and parent groups that develop school

projects that encourage parent involvement and build stronger community spirit. Examples of funded projects include school nature trails, peer tutoring, disability awareness, after-school programs, etc. Grants of up to \$5,000 will be provided to school or parent groups nationwide that have a group tax ID # or official 501(c)(3) status from the IRS. Lowe's expects up to 1,000 schools to receive grants during the 2005-06 school year. The application deadlines are November 1, 2005 and March 15, 2006. For more information, please visit <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/>.

NICE TO KNOW:

We and Our Neighbors Club invites you to join them on Saturday, November 19th for a potluck luncheon and a program from the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles entitled, Quilt History. The historical clubhouse is located at 15480 Union Ave. For further information contact Penny Canario (408) 267-8175.

As always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact our office at District9@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 535-4909.

Special benefit (tax) districts at train stations

If you live within ½-mile of any present or future BART station, light rail station, or train station, you should read this. The Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) was empowered by AB 2817 (signed into law on 9/21/04) to create "special benefit districts" within a radius of ½-mile around rail transit stations. Property owners in these special benefit districts will be required to pay property taxes to finance rail transit stations and rail transit-related facilities in the benefit district.

Check this Internet address for the law's text:

http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/03-04/bill/asm/ab_2801-2850/ab_2817_bill_20040921_chaptered.html

This law is obviously written to finance BART stations and facilities in Milpitas, in Berryessa, near the Five Wounds Church, and all the way to the airport. However, it will be applied to various other light rail and train stations as well.

[Ed. Note: This article was taken from the Save Open Spaces In North San Jose e-news, 10/24/05. Contact sos@dalewarner.com]

Guest writers wanted--you!

- Dave Noel

We often receive notes from VEP members, especially realtors, who want to get more involved in our local community. Do you want to get your name or topic of interest out to our community? Here's an idea, submit an article to the VEP News.

You can do it. You don't have to be a great writer or speller; we can polish your article. All we ask is that your article be of general interest to our members and less than 400 words. We publish our full newsletter in January, February, March, April, May, September, October and November. Our newsletter article deadline is generally the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Our newsletter arrives in mailboxes about ten days later.

If writing isn't your cup of tea, we have many other ways to get you involved in our community. Just contact any of the board members listed on the mailing page of this newsletter or send an email to vep@vepca.org. We'd love to hear from you!

What is VEP Community Association?

VEP is an all-volunteer organization of your neighbors working to improve our neighborhoods; VEP is our community's "homeowner's association".

VEP volunteers participate in a variety of activities, all of which originate in and benefit our neighborhoods.

VEP volunteers make our neighborhood's views and needs known to government at all levels.

Founded in 1969, we are one of the largest, most successful, and most continuously active and enduring grass roots volunteer organizations in Santa Clara County (maybe the world!).

What does "VEP" stand for? How did we get that odd name? It's simple, "VEP" represents the first three letters of the original subdivision names built here in 1969:

V = Vistapark;

E = Encore (and Echo Valley); and

P = Parkview Valley.

That's all there is to it! Of course, we've grown over the years to include the Blossom Heights subdivision and many others. But the original name VEP stuck, and we've been known by it for 36 years. (Some like to think of us as **V**ery **E**nergetic **P**eople.)

[Ed. Note: See the mailing page of this newsletter for a map of our core membership area. We also welcome members from outside these boundaries who share common interests.]

Why join VEP?

To receive our newsletter nine times a year, keeping you up-to-date and informed.

To participate in and support neighborhood activities and representation.

To contribute to our annual VEP Community Service Awards for area high school graduates.

To be part of an outstanding community organization with a long record of success for our neighborhoods.

Superior Court records online

-Dave Noel

This is good advice: Check the Superior Court Records of Santa Clara County before you hire any type of contractor. And now that is easy to do, as they have a Public Access Case Information Site on-line at: www.sccaseinfo.org.

Secondary "Granny" Units in San Jose

- Dave Noel

You probably recall that the city of San Jose held a series of community meetings regarding a proposal to allow secondary units, often called "granny flats". In May this year, the city council voted to approve a one-year pilot program to allow new secondary units. On November 15th, the city council is scheduled to vote on the framework of the pilot program, which would be in effect for calendar year 2006, and be capped at a maximum of 100 secondary units. By the time you read this, the decision has probably already been made.

In 1984, the San Jose city council culminated a lengthy review process and decided to make them illegal. The state of California has asked all cities to review their secondary unit policies in 2003, and that kicked off the current review.

To the city's credit, the pilot program framework has been improved from what was proposed in the 2004 public meetings, incorporating solutions to concerns raised in the meetings. Fortunately, the requirement for an additional on-site parking space still remains in the new framework. This important key provision helps keep cars off the streets. It is also the Achilles Heel of the program, since it disqualifies most homes that would otherwise qualify for a secondary unit.

VEP executives voted to take a formal position to oppose secondary units, and sent a letter to the mayor and city council in advance of the scheduled November 15th vote asking them to not proceed with the pilot program. We oppose secondary units and the pilot program for three reasons:

1. We estimate only 20 secondary units will be built per year. This small benefit to the city does not seem to be worth the cost of city staff efforts spent since 2003, and continuing through early 2007.
2. We hate to see the city of San Jose have to give up local planning rules in deference to state planning rules in order to allow secondary units.
3. We see allowing secondary units as a break in the contract between government and property owners who purchased their homes in neighborhoods zoned for single family residential.

Our letter closed with the plea: *"It is not too late to "just say no" to secondary units. This would be a bold move, but it would save the city much needed money, prevent potential neighborhood disputes, and preserve local planning autonomy, with negligible impact to housing stock. Please just say no."*

City council member **Ken Yeager** included an excellent summary of the proposed secondary unit framework in an email newsletter. We've included that as our next article in this newsletter.

Secondary Units in San Jose

- San Jose City Council Member Ken Yeager

On November 15, the San José City Council will vote on a secondary units plan for San José. If the Council approves this plan, a pilot program for up to 100 secondary units in a one-year period could be permitted.

A secondary unit, or "granny unit," is a self-contained independent living area that is clearly subordinate and ancillary to the primary dwelling unit. They can either be attached or detached from the main unit.

The proposed pilot program parameters for the secondary units are as follows:

Minimum Lot Size:

For an attached secondary unit is 6,000 square feet.

For a detached secondary unit is 8,000 square feet.

Maximum Unit Size: 600 square feet of gross floor area, with a maximum of 400 square feet of space devoted to sleeping rooms.

Maximum Number of Bedrooms: 1

Parking: 1 additional on-site parking space is required for a secondary unit, in addition to the 2 required covered parking spaces for the primary unit.

Development Standards:

The secondary unit is subject to the setback requirement of the primary unit dwelling.

Detached units must be located behind the primary dwelling unit.

Detached units must be located at least 6 feet away from the primary unit.

Detached units are limited to a maximum of 1 story and sixteen feet in height, with an average roof height of twelve feet. Average roof height is measured halfway up the slope of the roof, and in no case may any portion of the roof height of a detached unit exceed 16 feet.

Design Standards:

Secondary units shall use identical materials, including but not limited to roofing, siding, and windows and doors as the primary dwelling unit.

A secondary unit shall match the roof pitch of the primary unit.

The front door of any secondary unit shall not be visible from the street.

Application Requirements: The property owner is to certify that, at the time of the application for a secondary housing unit permit, they reside on the subject property in the primary dwelling.

Salts in Potting Soil Steal Nutrients

- John Marks, VEP's Green Gardener

If you have planted strawberries or other crops in a barrel, you may notice the berries getting small, or the leaves turning brown. This may happen even though you water frequently and feed with Miracle-Gro and sulfate of ammonia.

The problem is that many potting soils are high in salts. This causes burning of leaf edges. It will also lock up nutrients, and plants slowly starve, indicated by small berries. Try mixing two to three tablespoons of vinegar in two gallons of water and pouring the solution into the barrel. This will counteract salt buildup in the soil. A couple of days later, pour a solution of Miracle-Gro and water into the planter. You will have to live with the burned edges for a while, but if you do this a couple of times a year, whatever you are growing will do better

Veggies that Lose Moisture

Although your harvest of cucumbers and other fleshy veggies yield large, healthy, and impressive results, they may lose their firmness, becoming limp after six to ten hours. Cleaning and storing at refrigerated temperature will not help

The problem is that all fleshy vegetables lose moisture within a few hours after picking, some faster than others. Commercial growers cover their crops in wax right after picking to retain moisture before sending them to market. You are doing nothing wrong, it's just the nature of the veggies; just don't pick them unless you intend to eat them soon after.

Trimming Rhododendrons

Rhododendrons that are planted in the yard may become overgrown and need to be pruned in the winter or early spring. But severe pruning without preparation can destroy blooms next year. To rejuvenate an old, leggy Rhododendron, first feed and water the plant in the summer so that it is strong and healthy, and able to withstand severe pruning. In the winter cut one-third of the old limbs to 8-12 inches from the ground. The following year cut off an additional one-third of the old stems, and a year later cut down the last third. This may take about four years, but you'll retain some flowers every year.

Try to find old growth rings and make your cuts above one of these. New shoots will emerge from these growth rings. If the Rhododendron is too old and growth rings are not visible because of the bark, make the cuts 12 inches from the ground and hope that new growth will emerge from the hidden growth rings. Or, you can severely prune the entire shrub now, but it may be a few years before any flowers are seen.

Bulbs go in NOW

There is still time to plant spring-flowering bulbs. Most nurseries and garden centers remain well stocked with dozens of colorful selections. To help you plan your garden, check out www.bulb.com for a wealth of information and tips about how to choose, plant and otherwise care for your bulbs. The site is maintained by the Netherlands Flower Bulb Info Center (where else?). Once you get those bulbs in the ground, give yourself a little instant gratification by planting winter-color annuals on top. Good choices for sunny spots include pansies, violas, primrose and Iceland Poppies. For shady or dappled spots, try cineraria and cyclamen.

Finally, it's time to look in those rain gutters and clear out the leaves before the heavy rains come.

Pest control without pesticides

Rats:

Thin or remove ivy and other dense vegetation (possible rat shelter).

Keep ALL fruits and nuts dropped from trees picked up.

Feed your pet only the amount of food it will eat at one feeding. Rats love all pet food--including bird seed.

Use metal garbage cans with tight fitting lids and keep cans covered.

Do not let trash accumulate.

Stack firewood at least 18-inches off the ground and 12-inches away from walls.

Keep sheds and shelters tightly closed. Periodically check for rat evidence.

Rodent-proofing your home:

Seal all openings around pipes, cables and wires that enter walls and foundations from outdoors.

Provide a tight fitting cover for crawl space.

Weatherstrip front and side garage doors so they close tightly.

Repair damaged or missing ventilation screens.

Screen or close openings under overlapping roof lines.

Make sure all air vents, including roof vents, are screened.

Cover your chimney with a spark arrester.

Keep door to garage closed.

Remember: Rats only need a hole ½-Inch in diameter to get into your house; mice only need a ¼-inch hole!

If you have rats or mice, use the appropriate-sized snap trap or glueboard to trap them.

Mosquitoes:

Make sure any container capable of holding water is discarded, inverted or emptied regularly. This includes vases, buckets, old tires, bottles, trays, barrels, and tin cans.
Filling rot holes in trees with sand or soil will eliminate that as a mosquito source. If trees are valuable, correction by a qualified tree surgeon may be desirable.
Change water weekly in bird baths and wading pools.
Empty wading pools and turn them over when not in use.
Swimming pools should be filtered regularly.
Leaky faucets can cause puddles that can breed mosquitoes. Repair defective plumbing.
Keep drain lines, roof rain gutters, and down spouts clear of debris.
Pump or provide adequate drainage so water does not accumulate under buildings.
Seal and cover all openings and screen vents over septic tanks.
Drain off excess water in flower pots.
Tighten swimming pool covers to prevent sagging and water accumulation.
Provide a water-tight cover for your boat or store it upside down.
Change water in animal water troughs weekly--or stock them with mosquitofish.
Ponds and ornamental pools should be stocked with mosquitofish, available from Santa Clara County Vector Control District at no charge.

Cockroaches:

Keep your kitchen sink and food preparation areas clean and in good repair.
Cracks and openings around pipes should be sealed.
Repair leaky plumbing and paint kitchen when necessary to seal cracks.
Store food products in containers with tight-fitting lids.
Wrap unused, old, spoiled, or stale food in newspaper and throw away.
Do not leave exposed food, dirty dishes, or garbage in the kitchen overnight.
Clean sinks, counters, food preparation areas, and floors daily.
Routinely clean entire kitchen thoroughly, particularly the floor under appliances.

Fleas:

Wash or change your pet's bedding often.
Keep your pets out of the house as much as possible.
Repair house foundation vent screens so animals can not get under your house.
Do regular housecleaning: dust, mop, and vacuum thoroughly. Use an attachment that will permit careful vacuuming of cracks and corners.

Flies:

Clean garbage pails thoroughly after each garbage collection and line with paper.
Make certain that garbage can covers fit tightly and that there are no holes in the can.
Wrap garbage!
Lawn clippings can remain on the lawn, be spaded into the ground, or scattered thinly in the garden. Never pile grass clippings.
If you have a compost pile, use a tight box with a screen top which may be taken off when adding or removing materials. Cover each new layer of material with a layer of dirt.
Decaying fruit attracts flies. Rake up all fruits that have dropped from your trees at least twice a week and place in a garbage can or bury.

If you have dogs, to control flies:

Clean up pet droppings and food scraps daily.
Wrap droppings in several layers of paper and place in a lined garbage can, or bury to a depth of at least 18-inches each day.
Keep dog runs well drained--if cemented, scrub frequently with a stiff broom.
Use deodorants to control odors on the dog or dog run. This will help keep flies away.

If you have any further questions or would like more information on pest control, call the Santa Clara County Vector Control District at (408) 299-2050 or (800) 675-1155.

VEP Community Service Awards

- Dave Noel

21 years ago, VEP began rewarding stipends for post-secondary or vocational training to graduating high

school seniors with exceptional volunteer service.

If you know a high school senior with an outstanding volunteer record, make sure he or she knows about our award. If they attend Gunderson or Andrew Hill, they can be nominated by their administrators. Our At-Large award is granted to a graduating senior from any school who lives in San Jose and is nominated by a VEP member.

At our January general meeting, the executive board will seek your funding approval for the 2006 awards. Our 2006 Community Service Award application forms will be distributed in February, and the At-Large application form will be published in your February newsletter. The application deadline will be April 25, 2006, and the awards will be presented in May.

Here is a recap of our 2005 winners:

ANDREW HILL HIGH SCHOOL: **Ally Ha** - Ally is now attending Stanford University

GUNDERSON HIGH SCHOOL: **Jorge Rivas** - Jorge is now attending San Jose State University

AT-LARGE: **Kimberly Carpenter** of Santa Teresa High School - Kimberly is now attending West Valley College and plans to transfer to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

If you have any other questions, or would like to volunteer to help the Community Service Awards committee, contact me at (408) 266-7183 or DNoel1234@aol.com.

Flu Season!!

- Marilyn Rodgers

It's that time again...when the flu strikes! Flu season is from November through March each year. This year, there is a lot of media coverage on the flu....the flu that strikes annually, the "bird flu", and now we are hearing about a possible "flu pandemic".

The Bird Flu essentially strikes birds (including fowl). In recent years, there have been several outbreaks in Southeastern Asia. This year thousands of chickens have been killed in Southeastern Asia to prevent its spreading. The concern is that the bird flu can be passed to people. Thus far 120 people have become infected and 60 deaths have resulted.

The reason we are hearing of a possible "flu pandemic" (which means a world wide epidemic of tragic proportions), is the concern that the bird flu virus will mutate, and be able to go from human to human (as our usual annual flu virus does). **To date this has not happened.** But should we be concerned?

At this point, the President has become concerned enough to request additional funding from Congress to: 1) increase surveillance to prevent the spread of the bird flu, 2) increase the number of pharmaceutical companies in the U.S. which have the capacity to develop a vaccine expeditiously and in large quantities, as well as developing adequate supplies of antiviral medications, and 3) to develop plans at each local and State Public Health Department in the event the disease spreads to the U.S. Currently, the only thing we can do, as individuals, is to be vigilante.

However, **we can do something to prepare and to manage our health regarding the usual annual flu virus!!** As the common annual flu virus kills 36,000 Americans every year, we should do everything possible to stop/prevent it. A major preventative method is to have a flu shot. There are ample supplies available this year if you are interested in having the flu vaccine. It usually takes 2 weeks before the immunity works, so October and November are the best months to have the flu shot. However, even having a flu shot as late as December will help. Who should get the flu shot? Anyone who is at increased risk for serious complications from the flu, such as:

- Are age 50 and older
- Have a chronic health condition
- Are a child 6 to 23 months old
- Are a healthcare worker
- Live with someone in any of the above categories or with a child under 2 years old

Of course, should you have questions or concerns, always check with your doctor or healthcare provider.

In addition to a flu shot, **take these steps to avoid catching the flu:**

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth

Wash your hands often (best with warm water and soap – hand wipes are great to have and use with small children)

Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough – keep tissues handy and don't be uncomfortable offering tissues to others who need them

Clean items that many people use – telephones, computer keyboards, and so forth

Boost your resistance to infection by supporting your immune system – eat a healthy diet with lots of fruits and vegetables, get plenty of rest, manage/decrease stress, and exercise regularly – particularly (weather permitting) outside in the fresh air

P

Preparedness—Preparedness—Preparedness!

-Dave Fadness

If we've learned anything from news stories about recent natural disasters around the world, it's that we need to be prepared. Preparation for disaster starts at home—it's YOUR personal responsibility, not that of some bureaucrat in Washington, D.C., Sacramento, or at city hall. Counting on timely help from others to rescue us from calamity is begging for disappointment—or worse.

In California, the most probable natural disaster is an earthquake. Attached for your consideration are tips for preparing for an earthquake (taken from the September 13 *Daily Press*, a Los Angeles area newspaper). Use this as a guide in readying yourself and your family for what the "big one" seismologists see as inevitability.

* * *

Are you ready to ride out a big one? With all of the recent coverage of Hurricane Katrina's devastation, now is an excellent time to prepare an emergency kit.

Many stores sell pre-made kits. But you can easily assemble your own with a trip to the home improvement store. Large totes are perfect for storing supplies.

Your emergency supplies should be adequate for at least three days since utilities may not be working. A 10-day supply of water, food, and medicine is recommended. Here are some tips:

~ Before an earthquake ~

Know the safe spots in each room — under sturdy tables, desks, or against interior walls.

Know the danger spots — near windows, mirrors, hanging objects, fireplaces and tall, unsecured furniture.

Conduct practice drills so you and your family know the safe locations in your home.

Decide how and where your family will reunite if separated during a quake.

Choose an out-of-state friend or relative who family members can call after the quake to report their whereabouts and conditions.

Learn first aid and CPR.

Learn to shut off gas, water, and electricity in case the lines are damaged. Do not attempt to relight the gas pilot. Call your utility company.

Check chimneys, roofs, walls and foundations for stability. Make sure your house is bolted to its foundation.

Secure your water heater and major appliances as well as tall, heavy furniture, hanging plants, mirrors and picture frames — especially those over beds.

Keep breakables, heavy objects, flammable or hazardous liquids such as paints, pest sprays and cleaning products, in secured cabinets or on lower shelves.

~ During an earthquake ~

Indoors: Stay there. Get under a desk or table or stand in a corner.

Outdoors: Stay in an open area away from trees, buildings, walls and power lines.

High-rise building: Stay away from windows and outside walls. Get under a table. Do not use elevators.

Driving: Pull over to the side of the road and stop. Avoid overpasses and power lines. Stay inside your car until the shaking is over.

If in a crowded public place, do not rush for the doors. Crouch and cover your head and neck with your

hands and arms.

~ After an earthquake ~

Unless there is an immediate, life-threatening emergency, do not attempt to use the telephone. Check for gas and water leaks, broken electrical wiring or sewage lines. If there is damage, turn the utility off at the source and immediately report gas leaks to your utility company. Check for downed power lines; warn others to stay away.

Check your building for cracks and damage, including the roof, chimneys and foundation.

Turn on your portable radio for instructions and news reports. For your own safety, cooperate fully with public safety officials and follow instructions.

Do not use your vehicle unless there is an emergency.

~ First aid ~

First aid kit. Make sure it's well stocked, especially with bandages and disinfectants.

First Aid Manual — know how to use it.

Critical medication and eyeglasses, contact cases and supplies

Baby supplies

Formula, bottle, pacifier, soap and baby powder, clothing, blankets, baby wipes, disposable diapers, canned food and juices.

~ Tools and supplies ~

Fire extinguisher — Get an "A-B-C" type. Your fire extinguisher should be suitable for all types of fires. Teach all family members how to use it.

Have an adjustable, crescent or pipe wrench for turning off gas and water immediately following a large quake. Make sure the family knows where it is and how to use it.

Axe, shovel and broom.

Tool kit including a screwdriver, pliers and a hammer.

Coil of ½-inch rope or bailing wire.

Plastic tape, staple gun and sheeting for window replacement.

Bicycle and city map.

Communication kit.

Portable battery-operated radio with extra batteries. Most telephones will be out of order or limited to emergency use. A radio will be your best source of information.

Paper, pens, stamps.

Extra pair of house and car keys.

Cash and change.

Watch or clock (battery or spring wound).

If you evacuate, leave a message at your home telling family members and others where you can be found.

~ Safety and comfort ~

Candles.

Matches-dipped in wax and kept in waterproof container.

Blankets or sleeping bags.

Sturdy shoes for every family member.

Heavy gloves for clearing debris.

Light sticks.

Change of clothing.

Knife or razor blades.

Garden hose for siphoning and firefighting.

Tent.

~ Food and drink ~

Food. Enough for three days, preferably one week. Canned or individually packaged; precooked, requiring minimum heat and water. Consider infants, pets, and other special dietary requirements.

Water. Enough so each person has a gallon a day for three days, preferably one week. Store in airtight containers and replace it every six months. Store disinfectants such as iodine tablets or chlorine bleach, eight drops per gallon, to purify water if necessary.

Food, water and restraint for pets (leash or carrier).

~ Sanitation supplies ~

Bar soap and liquid detergent.

Large plastic trash bags for waste; tarps and rain ponchos.

Large trash cans.
Shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant.
Toilet paper, feminine hygiene supplies.
Household bleach.
Powdered chlorinated lime-to add to sewage to disinfect and keep away insects.
Newspapers to wrap waste, garbage or warmth.

~ Mini survival kit for automobile ~

Non-perishable food-store in coffee cans.
Boiled water.
First aid kit and manual.
Fire extinguisher.
Blanket.
Sealable plastic bags.
Flashlight-spare fresh batteries and bulb.
Critical medication, extra eyeglasses.
Tools-screwdriver, pliers, wire, knife.
Short rubber hose.
Pre-moistened towelettes.
Feminine supplies.
Sturdy shoes and gloves.

~ Cooking essentials ~

Manual can opener.
Camping stove for outdoor cooking (caution: Before using fire to cook, make sure there are no gas leaks, never use charcoal indoors).
Plastic knives, forks, spoons.
Paper plates, paper cups and paper towels.
Plastic bags: Various sizes, sealable.
Pots-at least two.
Heavy-duty aluminum foil.

~ Light source ~

Flashlights with extra batteries. Keep flashlights beside your bed and in several other locations. DO NOT use matches or candles until you are certain there are no gas leaks after an earthquake.

Free car seat inspections

- Dave Noel

On Mondays at the Willow Senior Center, the community policing division for San Jose Police Department (T.A.B.S.) does FREE car seat inspections and installations, in room #15. If you would like your car seat installed or looked at, please call (408) 277-4133 to schedule an appointment.

Is spelling really a problem?

I cnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacly uesdnatnrd what I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid, aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a word are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Amzanig huh? Yaeh, and I awlas tghuhot slpeling was ipmorantt.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED: Plant a tree on December 3. VEP needs your help at Parkview School, Saturday, December 3 at 9 am. (See article in this newsletter.) Call Dave at 578-6428.

HELP WANTED: Volunteers needed to help plan and implement VEP's *Memorial Day Parade & Festival* for 2006. Call Dave Fadness (578-6428) or Annamarie McKnight (578-2363) today!

VOLUNTEERS WANTED: Prune some trees or help clean up Cilker, Vista and Parkview II Parks. Come join VEP Saturday, December 10 at 9 am. (See article in this newsletter.) Call Dave at 578-6428 after Nov 21.

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.

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

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 this 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.