



## A message from our President

-Joe Tajnai, VEP President

When Dave Fadness called last spring to ask me if I would be willing to take on the office of Vice President of VEP, he told me it would be easy. "Just pick a couple of issues and take them on at your own pace over the next year. Nothing big and only what you choose."



Recently, when for health reasons VEP's new President Arlene Peterson had to step down, my wife Nancy pointed out to me, "Now you just have one issue: VEP". I guess that did make it simpler, but not any easier.

After much soul searching, I decided to take on the office and give it my best. I asked the Board for their tolerance, their ideas, and their guidance, and received more than I ever expected. Everyone has been very supportive. I look forward to making the VEP Presidency my own by enabling all of us to better our neighborhoods.

Our immediate past-President Marilyn Rodgers has agreed to step in temporarily as our Vice President. So, VEP is looking for a new VP. Any takers? "Just pick a couple of issues and take them on at your own pace over the next year. Nothing big, and only what you choose." Please?

Call me at 578-5882.

## Martial-Cottle Park news

-Adina Pierce

The Martial-Cottle Park planning process is well underway! This past summer, the County Parks & Recreation Department accepted applications from people interested in serving on the Task Force for the Martial-Cottle Park Master Plan.

Out of 43 applicants, five people were chosen as "At-Large" members. They will join twelve other appointed people on the Task Force. Nominated by the VEP Executive Board, I was appointed as VEP's representative. Marilyn Rodgers is our alternate.

These are the Task Force members:

1. Rachael Gibson, Policy Aide, Office of Supervisor Don Gage, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, District One.
2. Greg West(\*), Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation

Commission Chair, Martial-Cottle Park Master Plan Committee Liaison.

3. Khoa Vo, Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation Commission Vice-Chair, Martial Cottle Park Master Plan Committee Liaison.
4. Erik Carstan Smith, City of San Jose Parks Commissioner (Alternate: Commissioner Julie Matsushima).
5. James C. Rowen, Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commissioner.
6. Mike Potter, Chief Policy Aide, Office of Assembly member Joe Coto.
7. Frances Grammer, Field Representative, Office of Assembly member Jim Beall, Jr.
8. Virginia Holtz, Board of Directors, Santa Clara County Open Space Authority.
9. Eric Crane, Policy Aide to Councilmember Nancy Pyle, San Jose City Council District 10.
10. Kevin O'Day, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, County Department of Agriculture & Environmental Management.
11. Adina Pierce(\*), VEP Community Association (Alternate: Marilyn Rodgers).
12. Frank Giordano, Mr. Lester's Agent.
13. Charlie Friedericks(\*), Member-at-large.
14. R. Brian Gardiner, Member-at-large.
15. Rob Iverson, Member-at-large.
16. Bruce Medlin, Member-at-large.
17. Laura Monczynski, Member-at-large.

(\*)VEP members

This Task Force will serve as primary advisors to staff and consultants responsible for developing the final edition of the park Master Plan. This process is expected to take place over the next 18 months. Public hearings will be set at key times in the development process to provide additional opportunities for the public to provide input.



The first Master Planning meeting will be on Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at the Almaden Winery Community Center. It is open to the public.

~ VEP's Martial Cottle Park Committee ~

VEP is forming its own Martial-Cottle Park committee to discuss any neighborhood desires and priorities for the park, which will then be shared with the Task Force by Marilyn and I. A few people already expressed their interest in being on the committee at the May general meeting. If you would like to join our committee, please contact me ([adinap@yahoo.com](mailto:adinap@yahoo.com)) or Marilyn Rodgers ([MRodgersRN@aol.com](mailto:MRodgersRN@aol.com)).

The first meeting of VEP's committee will be at 7:30 pm on Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup> in the Vista Park community room. Please join us!

In related news, on September 11, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors accepted a gift from Walter Cottle Lester of the property bound by Highway 85, Cahalan Avenue, Southcrest Way, and Blossom Hill Road. This land will be used to provide pedestrian access into Martial Cottle Park.

To view more information about the Martial-Cottle Park project including the donor's vision, deed restrictions, and Task Force meeting updates, please visit [www.vepca.net/](http://www.vepca.net/) or contact me at [adinap@yahoo.com](mailto:adinap@yahoo.com).



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## Traffic problems at Gunderson High School

-Joe Tajnai, Jeri Arstingstall, Marilyn Rodgers

During the last week of September, our Executive Board received a complaint from a VEP member who described in detail his concerns and frustration regarding traffic generated on Sunday mornings by the Van Lang Vietnamese Language & Culture Education Center (Vietnamese School) held at Gunderson High School. This member resides on Gaundabert Lane.

The issues he raised were traffic and noise on Gaundabert, excessive on-street parking, blocked driveways, vehicles making illegal turns and/or using residents' driveways to turn around, and safety issues including dropping off and picking up children in the middle of the street.

Other VEP members have expressed concerns regarding the large volume and speed of vehicles using Vista Park and Hyde Park Drives to access Gunderson for student drop-off and pick-ups by families of students on Sunday mornings. Executive Board members immediately responded to the complaints by contacting the schools involved and San Jose Unified District representatives.



On Sunday morning, September 30<sup>th</sup>, VEP Past-Presidents **Jeri Arstingstall** and **Marilyn Rodgers** personally observed the previously described traffic issues and concerns, and collected data to provide to the schools involved. Ms. Rodgers performed an informal traffic count of vehicles at the corner of Vista Park and Hyde Park Drive. More than 500 vehicles passed through this intersection between 8:45 and 9:15 am, and more than 600 vehicles during the 11:45 am and 12:30 pm timeframes (drop off and pick up of students).

This is a major issue as Hyde Park is a two-lane residential street which is not able to accommodate heavy traffic in a short timeframe. The designated traffic route for large events held at Gunderson is Pearl to Chynoweth and reverse, as these streets have two lanes in each direction.

VEP President **Joe Tajnai**, immediately contacted the appropriate school officials to initiate dialogue about VEP's concerns. They have been very responsive, but warned us that the problem would take a couple of weeks to resolve, as that amount of time would be needed to communicate with all participants of the Van Lang Vietnamese Language & Culture Education Center.

The Vietnamese School also provides their own traffic monitors to assist with traffic control and parking. We appreciate their valiant efforts. Agreements were previously developed between them, San Jose Unified, and VEP which included having the Vietnamese School send home informational flyers prior to the beginning of each semester, and SJUSD committing to not overbook the Gunderson facility.

On Sunday morning, October 7<sup>th</sup>, Past Presidents Jeri Arstingstall and Marilyn Rodgers again made first-hand observations of traffic conditions. School Board Trustee **Veronica Lewis** was also present to observe and assist. Vietnamese School traffic issues were greatly exacerbated that day by two additional large group events held simultaneously at Gunderson--a football game and a swim meet. These events strained the parking capacity at Gunderson and overflowed onto many of the neighboring streets, including Chynoweth,



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Gaundabert, Massachusetts, and New World. Many cars were illegally parked, blocking residents' driveways and fire hydrants. As a result, both Ms. Arstingstall and Ms. Rodgers made separate 311 calls to initiate formal complaints and ask for assistance from the San Jose Police Department. 311 Operators indicated that they had received a large number of calls/complaints from neighborhood residents on this issue.

The VEP Executive Board is committed to help members find a solution to these problems. President Tajnai scheduled a meeting on Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup> with key representatives of VEP, Gunderson, San Jose Unified School District, the San Jose Police Department, and Councilmember Pyle's office. We will continue to keep you informed as to progress. Contact Joe Tajnai at [vep@tajnai.com](mailto:vep@tajnai.com) for additional information.

## VEP Community Calendar

Tue, Oct 23 @ 7:30 pm = VEP General Meeting in the Vista Park Community Room. (See agenda on page 1 of this newsletter.)

Mon, Oct 29 @ 7:30 pm = VEP's Martial-Cottle Park Committee in the Vista Park Community Room. (story on page 2).

Sat, Nov 3 @ 9 am = VEP Tree and Daffodil Planting. (See article in this newsletter—volunteers needed!)

Tue, Nov 6 @ 7:30 pm = VEP Exec Meeting in the Vista Park Community Room. (Call any VEP officer for agenda details.)

Tue, Nov 13 @ 1 pm = VEP NEWS articles deadline. (Email your articles to Dave Fadness at [drfadness@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drfadness@sbcglobal.net))

Sat, May 3, 2008 = VEP Community Garage Sale.

Tue, March 25, 2008 = VEP Home Improvement Faire.

Mon, May 26, 2008 = VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival.

## Time to get your Flu shot!

-Marilyn Rodgers

It's October--the leaves are starting to turn color, and the temperatures are cooling down. It's also the official first month of Flu Season.

The Centers for Disease Control is encouraging everyone over the age of 6 months to get the flu vaccination! This year ample supplies of the vac-





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Why get a flu vaccination? While the vaccine does not provide 100% immunity, it does greatly reduce the risk of getting the flu. It also significantly reduces the severity of symptoms and the length of illness, should you come down with the flu.

Vaccination is of particular importance for all those that fall into a "high risk" category. High risk includes:

- Anyone over the age of 50.
- Anyone with a chronic illness or condition that effects the immune system.
- Anyone who lives with, or cares for, someone who is elderly or has a chronic illness or condition that effects the immune system.
- Anyone who lives with a child that is under 6 months old.
- Healthcare workers.

While most of us consider the flu to be uncomfortable, we also believe it to be relatively harmless. However, last year more than 36,000 Americans died as a result of the flu. To reduce these numbers, and to protect the most vulnerable people--the sick and elderly--California passed new legislation this year which went into effect as of July 1<sup>st</sup>. This new law requires all healthcare workers have the flu vaccination.

Interested in getting the flu vaccination, but hate injections? FluMist is now available – a nasal spray which is an alternative to injections. Getting vaccinated early in the flu season is advisable, as it takes the body approximately two weeks to build up immunity after getting the vaccination. While it is preferable to be vaccinated in October or November, having the vaccination as late as January or February will be of benefit, as Flu Season lasts until April.

Check with your healthcare provider, hospital, or clinic to obtain a flu vaccination. Then have a healthy winter and spring!

## Community Service Awards

- Dave Noel

22 years ago, VEP began rewarding graduating high school seniors with exceptional volunteer service stipends for post-secondary or vocational training.

If you know a high school senior with an outstanding volunteer record, make sure they know about our award. If they attend Gunderson or Andrew Hill, they can be nominated by their ad-

ministrators. Our At-Large award is granted to a graduating senior from any school (or home school) who lives in San Jose and is nominated by a VEP member.

This fall the process starts all over again. We begin with outreach to the schools, then we appropriate funds with a vote of the membership in January/February, we call for nominations in February/March, applications are due in late April, and finally we grant our awards in May.

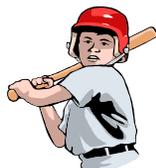
**VEP  
Community  
Service  
Awards**

We plan to consider changes to the Community Service Award program this year. Please contact me at (408) 266-7183 or DNoel1234@aol.com if you have suggestions. Any proposed changes would be published in the VEP News and brought forward for a vote of the membership at a VEP general meeting.

## Oak Grove Little League

- Kristine Selbo

Serving Blossom Valley since 1965, Oak Grove Little League was founded to provide all youth the opportunity to play in a safe, organized sports environment and to teach skills, teamwork, and enhance self-esteem.



Players range from 5 to 17 years of age. The regular season starts between the middle of March and concludes mid-June.

Membership fees:

- Age 5-6 = \$90
- Ages 7-12 = \$125
- Age 13-14 = \$140
- Age 15-18 = \$160

Sign-ups will be held at Roundtable Pizza on Thornwood Avenue on these dates:

- Thursday, October 11, 7pm to 9pm
- Saturday, October 13, 5pm to 7pm
- Thursday, November 15, 7pm to 9pm
- Saturday, November 17, 5pm to 7pm
- Tuesday, January 8, 2008, 7pm to 9pm
- Tuesday, January 15, 2008, 7pm to 9pm

What you need to sign up: All players must provide an original birth certificate for age verification and three proofs of residency. All players must live within the Oak Grove Little League boundary to play.

Visit [www.OGLL.org](http://www.OGLL.org) for boundary lines, suggested documents for proof of residency, for more information, or to register online.

## Pearl Avenue Branch Library update

- Domenic Onorato, San Jose Public Works

Bogard Construction is proceeding with the exterior enclosure of the building, installing glass in the window frames and stucco to the walls. Site parking lot pavement will be installed this month and miscellaneous concrete work throughout the site. Interior sheeting is underway, along with door frames and ceiling installation.

For additional or future information regarding the project or site construction, please contact me at (408) 535-8350 or by email [domenic.onorato@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:domenic.onorato@sanjoseca.gov). You may also contact



The new Pearl Avenue Library

Frank Church or Bill McClain of Bogard Construction at their on-site trailer or by calling at the company number (831) 426-8191. Photos of construction activities are available online at [www.NewSanJoseLibraries.com](http://www.NewSanJoseLibraries.com).

## Edenvale Branch Library about to open

- Lorraine Oback (\*)

Residents waiting for Pearl Avenue Branch Library will soon have another alternative to tide them over. The all new Edenvale Branch Library at 101 Branham Lane East (at Monterey Road) will celebrate its grand opening on Saturday, November 3, starting with a dedication ceremony at 11 a.m.

Join Mayor Chuck Reed, Council Member Forrest Williams and others (including the library's mascot, *Curious Conroy Cougar*) in celebrating the opening of this 22,222 square-foot facility.

The new library includes an Internet Cafe, Community Living Room with a fireplace, Storytelling Area, Technology Lab, Group and Quiet Study Areas, a Community Room, and ample space for seating, collections and computers.

Immediately following the brief dedication ceremony, residents will be able to obtain library cards and enjoy full use of the library, including story time and other fun activities. For public information about this event, call (408) 535-8450 voice or 808-2130 TTY.

[(\*) Lorraine Oback works in Marketing Communications for the San Jose Public Library.]

## Oakridge Mall events for this autumn

- Jennifer Dacquisto (\*)

Earning for Learning (2007-'08 school year): This program encourages families to shop at Westfield Oakridge in order to earn money for their school. Oakridge Concierge will track receipts and schools will be assigned "points" based on dollars spent. At the end of the school year (May '08) \$15,000 in Westfield gift cards will be awarded to top schools. The Earning for Learning Program targets local elementary, junior high, and high schools.

Adopt a School (2007-'08 school year): Throughout the 2007-'08 school year, Westfield Oakridge will lend support to the Carson Elementary community through a variety of programs including providing backpacks and school supplies for Carson students. Additional programs include Westfield employees participating in the *Principle Play Day Lunch* and *Carson Elementary Jump Rope for Heart* fundraiser that benefits the American Heart Association.

~ October ~

Breast Cancer Awareness Month: Westfield Oakridge (along with Westfield Valley Fair) has partnered with the Susan G. Komen Foundation and will be raising money in support of

breast cancer research for the month of October. For the month, Westfield Oakridge Concierge will be selling pink rubber ducks for \$5 and pink ribbon donation cards for \$1. All proceeds will go to benefit the Susan G. Komen foundation.

Haunted House: Gyro's Scream Fest: For the month of October Westfield Oakridge will feature a haunted house event in the northwest corner of the parking lot. Operating days/hours for this family event will be on Wednesday-Sundays beginning October 10<sup>th</sup>, from 7 to 10pm Sunday-Thursday, and 7pm to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

Haunt the Hallow: In partnership with Happy Hollow Park & Zoo, Westfield Oakridge and KBAY will create a safe place for South Bay parents to take their children trick-or-treating. On Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 4 pm, the park's pathways will be transformed into fun and festive trails with several trick-or-treat stations and Happy Hallow Park & Zoo. Families with children under 12 years old will enjoy Halloween activities, the park, food concessions, rides, and the zoo. The event is expected to draw over 6,000 participants!



Halloween Event: On the evening of Halloween, Westfield Oakridge will open its doors to all the ghouls and goblins! Continuing the tradition, Westfield Oakridge will provide the community with a safe, well-lit indoor venue for trick-or-treating. Retailers will be encouraged to participate by passing out candy at their stores. Participating retailers will be listed on a flyer handed out to all trick-or-treaters.

~ November ~

Salvation Army Giving Trees: In partnership with the Salvation Army, Westfield will collect gifts for local underprivileged children and teens. In addition, our management team will donate time to help distribute the gifts to families in the program. Westfield (Oakridge and Valley Fair) is the largest donor of toys in Santa Clara County.

~ December ~

Magical Holiday Evening (in development): Carson Elementary School will enjoy a Magical Holiday Evening sponsored by Westfield Oakridge. On this festive evening, Westfield Oakridge hosts an event at the school that includes a free dinner, music and dancing, face painters, tattoo artists, balloon animals, and clowns. All attendees receive a Westfield gift bag filled with branded toys for the kids, and coupons and valet parking passes for the parents. Last year the event was held at Allen at Steinbeck Elementary and over 500 people

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[(\*)Ed. Note: Jennifer Dacquisto is Marketing Manager at Westfield's Oakridge Mall.]

### YMCA Adventure Guides for fathers and kids

Dads, are you looking for a special way to bond with your son or daughter in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade? Then consider joining us this year! We have father/son and father/daughter groups with immediate openings!

The YMCA *Adventure Guides* program (formerly known as "Indian Guides") is all about father/child bonding. The Y emphasizes community, nature, family, and friendship (particularly friendship between dads and their kids). As such, there isn't the same rigor as with some scout programs. Instead, they just want the kids to have a good time with their dads, including a great deal of one-on-one time that you won't find in other activities!



This program is comprised of small groups who meet on a monthly basis, typically held in the evenings after work. Normally, each father/child pair volunteers to take one month, so we pass the responsibility around.

Meetings give the kids an opportunity to talk about something "good" they did since the last meeting, listen to a story, plan for upcoming events, and participate in arts and crafts (with dad's help). Many groups also do an informal outing up to once a month, to do something fun as a group.

Additionally, the YMCA has a number of activities planned this year, in which all the groups can participate, including:

- Fall Campout
- Spring Campout
- Hike
- Ride in the Los Gatos Holiday Parade
- Bike Ride
- Skate Night
- Bumper Bowling
- Pinewood Derby
- Pancake Breakfast
- Memorial Weekend Roughout at San Jose Family Camp for the entire family
- Sock Hop

Don't feel overwhelmed--every one of these activities is OPTIONAL, so you can do as much or as little as you want. It's YOUR (and your child's) program!

To register, visit the YMCA office at 5632 Santa Teresa Boulevard (between Coleman and Blossom Hill). Or, for additional information, feel free to contact Tim Davidson (YMCA representative) at [tdavidson@scvymca.org](mailto:tdavidson@scvymca.org), or Joe Tajnai (dad volunteer) at [joe@tajnai.com](mailto:joe@tajnai.com).

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Great website resources for you...

- Dave Noel

At VEP's September meeting, SJPD Captain **David Caval-**

laro introduced VEP members to a new website you can use to check for crime in your area, [www.crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com). At this website you can enter an address and get a map that shows recent crimes reported in that area, with information about the date and type of crime, and final disposition. You can even sign up for automated email updates for crimes in the area you selected.



Perhaps you've already use or have heard about **Craig's List** ([www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)) to buy, sell, and rent things. You may have also heard about **Freecycle** ([www.freecycle.com](http://www.freecycle.com)) to give or get items for free. But what if you want to lend or borrow something for free? Now there's **neighborrow.com**. Sign up to lend and borrow anything from books, videos, music, tools and more. I haven't tried it yet, but it may just catch on. The more members they have, the better it will be.

If you haven't seen VEP's website in a while, check it out at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net). VEP's Webmaster **Adina Pierce** has given our website a new look and is doing a marvelous job in keeping it up to date.

### Carson School update

- Betsy Doss, Principal

The Carson Cougars started October with a great event. On October 5 we had our Walkathon and Harvest Festival. All of our students participated in the Walkathon and raised more than \$12,000 for our school. A big "thank you" to our neighbors who contributed!

More than 300 people attended our Harvest Festival. Games, food and a silent auction brought in even more money to our Carson programs. Our active PTA did a terrific job organizing these events.

This month we still have Picture Day and a Halloween Parade to look forward to. October 19 is a holiday for students and our teachers will be participating in professional development.

### Oak Grove School District news

-Manny Barbara, Superintendent

Recently, the San Jose Mercury News ran an article on extended-day kindergarten. Unfortunately, in listing districts that have extended-day kindergarten in their schools, Oak Grove



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was inadvertently left out. In fact, we have had extended-day kindergarten in all our schools for the past five years.

Our kindergarten classes provide 260 minutes of instruction daily, 60 minutes more than the state minimum of 200 minutes. We are very proud of the excellent way our kindergarten teachers use the additional time to provide an extra boost for our students.

In an effort to generate additional resources to benefit our students, we are considering the possible sale of the Calero School site. Calero School has been closed for more than twenty years. Demographic projections indicate that we will never need to use that site as a school again. Three other closed school sites would be available in the unlikely event that a new school would be needed. Currently, the closed school is being leased to a church and a county school program, generating approximately \$180,000 annually in revenue.



The Calero site is expected to be worth a minimum of \$20,000,000. Invested at the current 30-year bond rate, that is an additional income of \$1,000,000 per year. The funds will be used to support student and staff technology, enrichment programs (such as the Summer Language Camps), music and art programs, and remedial help for students below standards. Our board of trustees will hear information on the proposed sale at their regular meeting on Thursday, October 25, at 7:30 p.m.

As always, please feel free to contact me on any matter pertaining to the Oak Grove School District at (408) 227-8300, extension 202, or visit our website at [www.ogsd.k12.ca.us](http://www.ogsd.k12.ca.us).

## Gunderson High School happenings

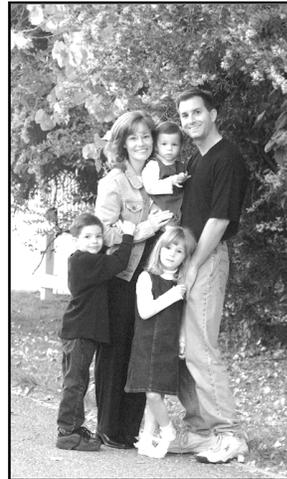
*-Cary Catching, Principal*

Gunderson started the school year with an increase in enrollment (approximately 45 students more than last year). Many of these students are from our surrounding neighborhood. In addition, we have not had near as many students requesting transfers to other high schools as in the past. We are thrilled that our community is starting to look at Gunderson with an objective eye and to realize what a fine school it is.

We have welcomed eight new teachers this year. Those teachers who left us did so either to pursue other careers or because they retired or moved out of the area. We have a new Assistant Principal. **Paul Yllana** joined us to replace **Dominic Bejarano**, who became the new Principal at Bret Harte Middle School. Paul is coming over from Leland where he served as the Assistant principal of Activities.

With this stability, comes increased school stability, increases in academic performance, and school pride. To this end, I am thrilled to say that Gunderson increased its API by 21 points; the highest increase of any high school in San Jose Unified School District and the 12<sup>th</sup> highest increase in Santa Clara County!

Besides this monthly article, another way to keep on top of activities at the school is Gunderson's quarterly newsletters. These newsletters are chock-full of information about our school, including activities, curricular information, outreach services information, etc. Please contact me at (408) 535-



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6340 if you would like to be put on the mailing list. Alternatively, you may come by the school and pick up the current issue at the front counter.

Finally, I will continue to hold monthly Principal's Coffees. These are an opportunity for parents and community members to meet with me and discuss school activities, upcoming events, concerns, etc. My next "Coffee" is slated for Friday, November 2 at 7:30 a.m. in the Conference Room. You are invited to attend.

## Emailing teachers in SJUSD

*- Dave Noel*

If you have children in San Jose Unified School District, plan ahead if you want to communicate by email with teachers and staff. SJUSD has a spam filter that blocks all incoming email unless it is coming from a registered (trusted) email address.

The best way to get added to the registered email list is to have someone from inside the school district send you an email. Then you should be able to send emails to SJUSD teachers and staff, at least for awhile.

Another way to get added to the trusted list is to visit: [www.sjUSD.org/school/district/info/C2270/](http://www.sjUSD.org/school/district/info/C2270/).

There were reports that this method of registration was not working at the beginning of this school year, but hopefully it will be by the time you read this.

## District 10 news

*- City Councilmember Nancy Pyle*

I serve as the chair of Santa Clara County's Emergency Preparedness Council whose mission is to create a standard operating procedure for disaster preparedness and response for all governmental entities residing within Santa Clara County. If and when a disaster does occur in San Jose, each city in our county, the water district, and other local entities will be prepared to work together.

# D-10

This year marks the sixth anniversary of the tragic events of 9-11. Although we are far from "Ground Zero", the impact of this event continues to influence us in San Jose. As we reflect upon that day, I want to share with you ways that it has influ-

enced our preparation here.

Shortly after 9-11, the federal government initiated homeland security grant funding to provide financial resources to cities and counties so they could better prepare for terrorist events. The City of San Jose was the direct recipient of \$16-million through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant and we have received additional funding from grants that were awarded to Santa Clara County.

The San Jose Office of Emergency Services, working in conjunction with their public safety partners, developed a strategic vision to ensure that homeland security funds would enhance our preparedness for both natural and manmade disasters. This vision had three areas of focus and included equipment, training, and field exercises.

Utilizing subject matter experts from our police and fire departments, equipment purchases were initiated which enhance our ability to respond to, or recover from, events involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive agents. Our first responders now have a variety of tools available to detect and mitigate the effects of the agents associated with weapons of mass destruction.



While our first responders have always trained for the traditional hazards they face, after 9-11 that training now had to include a focus on terrorist events. Depending upon their role in an actual event, the training they have received has ranged from courses on situational awareness and incident command to intensive Israeli Special Agent de-briefings. Additionally, specialized teams like the police department's bomb squad and the hazardous material team from the fire department have participated in military sponsored "live agent" training.

Several times throughout the year, our crews participate in live exercises designed to mimic the actions they would take in actual events. These local exercises are conducted to ensure our response is the very best it can be. This November, San Jose is co-hosting the Golden Guardian '07 exercise with Santa Clara County. This state-wide event has been in the planning stage for the past nine months and will focus on a biological incident at a large stadium venue that will involve participants from throughout our county operational area. This exercise will culminate with a medication center being estab-

lished to distribute medications to those involved.

Rest assured that behind the scenes our staff is working diligently to take us to the highest level of preparation possible. I am mindful that one of the basic premises of local government is to provide for public safety and I want you to know that the City of San Jose maintains a clear focus on the actions which are needed to face regional emergencies.

San Jose and the Bay Area region at large are nationally recognized as leaders in the field of emergency preparedness and response. However, recent tragedies including Hurricane Katrina have caused me to reflect on what additional steps need to be taken to protect residents in the event of a disaster.

The most important lesson learned from these catastrophes is that preparedness starts at home with families and neighborhoods. Immediately after a disaster strikes, whether the incident is a serious earthquake or a terrorist attack, communities must come together and care for themselves. San Jose's Office of Emergency Services recommends that each household be prepared to care for themselves for at least 72 hours.



Tragically, in Hurricane Katrina it was the elderly, the poverty stricken, and persons with disabilities who were left behind. We should not allow these people to be forgotten should disaster strike San Jose. Preparing every household and neighborhood in our city is an ambitious plan, but history has proven that involving neighborhoods is the only way to protect all of our residents in a disaster.

My city council colleagues and I took a very positive first step in January of this year by authorizing the hiring of two additional full time positions in the Office of Emergency Services (OES). Armed with these new employees, OES has been directed to train 500 new residents this year to care for themselves and those around them in an emergency.

San Jose's OES has created a new two-hour course offering for neighborhoods and families in our city. I encourage each District 10 resident to get together a group of friends and neighbors to take this course. San Jose OES will teach the course in your neighborhood and is available on nights and weekends in addition to normal working hours. Ideal class size is 10-40 residents.

I am working with many local neighborhood associations and residents to better publicize these training sessions and hope to provide the tools necessary to prepare every neighborhood within our District in the event of a disaster.

For more information on OES, please visit their website at [www.sanjoseca.gov/emergencyservices/](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/emergencyservices/). If you would like more information on the Emergency Preparedness Council or have additional questions regarding ways to stay prepared, please call my office at (408) 535-4910.

### Halloween safety tips

*-American Academy of Pediatrics*  
Halloween is an exciting time of year for kids. To help ensure they have a safe holiday, here are some tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):

~ All dressed up ~

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An advertisement for California Bathroom & Kitchen Remodelers Inc. It features a large photograph of a modern kitchen with dark wood cabinets and a granite countertop. To the right, there is a smaller inset photo of a white bathroom sink. The text provides contact information and describes their services.

- Plan costumes that are bright and reflective. Make sure that shoes fit well and that costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement, or contact with flame.
- Consider adding reflective tape or striping to costumes and Trick-or-Treat bags for greater visibility.
- Because masks can limit or block eyesight, consider non-toxic makeup and decorative hats as safer alternatives. Hats should fit properly to prevent them from sliding over eyes.
- When shopping for costumes, wigs and accessories look for and purchase those with a label clearly indicating they are flame resistant.
- If a sword, cane, or stick is a part of your child's costume, make sure it is not sharp or too long. A child may be easily hurt by these accessories if he stumbles or trips.
- Provide flashlights with fresh batteries for all children and their escorts.
- Teach children how to call 9-1-1 (or their local emergency number) if they have an emergency or become lost.



~ Carving a niche ~

- Small children should never carve pumpkins. Children can draw a face with markers. Then parents can do the cutting.
- Votive candles are safest for candle-lit pumpkins.
- Candlelit pumpkins should be placed on a sturdy table, away from curtains and other flammable objects, and should never be left unattended.

~ Home safe home ~

- To keep homes safe for visiting trick-or-treaters, parents should remove from the porch and front yard anything a child could trip over such as garden hoses, toys, bikes and lawn decorations.
- Parents should check outdoor lights and replace burned-out bulbs.
- Wet leaves should be swept from sidewalks and steps.
- Restrain pets so they do not inadvertently jump on or bite a Trick-or-Treater.

~ On the trick-or-treat trail ~

- A parent or responsible adult should always accompany young children on their neighborhood rounds.
- If your older children are going alone, plan and review the route that is acceptable to you. Agree on a specific time when they should return home.
- Only go to homes with a porch light on and never enter a home or car for a treat.
- Because pedestrian injuries are the most common injuries to children on Halloween, remind Trick-or-Treaters to:
  - Stay in a group and communicate where they will be going.
  - Carry a mobile phone for quick communication.
  - Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk.
  - If no sidewalk is available, walk at the far edge of the roadway facing traffic.
  - Never cut across yards or use alleys.
- Only cross the street as a group in established crosswalks (as recognized by local custom). Never cross between parked cars or out driveways.
- Don't assume the right of way. Motorists may have trouble seeing Trick-or-Treaters. Just because one car stops, doesn't mean others will!
- Law enforcement authorities should be notified immediately

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of any suspicious or unlawful activity.

~ Healthy Halloween ~

- A good meal prior to parties and trick-or-treating will discourage youngsters from filling up on Halloween treats.
- Consider purchasing non-food treats for those who visit your home, such as coloring books or pens and pencils.
- Wait until children are home to sort and check treats. Though tampering is rare, a responsible adult should closely examine all treats and throw away any spoiled, unwrapped or suspicious items.
- Try to ration treats for the days following Halloween.

## Fall fundamentals

-John Marks

What, you still don't have a compost pile or receptacle? You can learn how to compost yard waste and food scraps and get a schedule of free how-to composting classes through the Master Composters program. Just call 299-4147. We'll have some literature on this topic at our October VEP meeting.



I routinely throw grapefruit and orange peelings, coffee grounds, onion tops, wilted greens, banana peels, apple cores, carrot peelings, over-ripe fruit, radish tops, celery tops, and trimmings from most meal preparations into a plastic corner box that sits in our sink. That gets carried to a compost container in the yard, which is no more than 18-inches square and 2-foot tall with a lid. You can get attractive compost boxes from Orchard Supply. Give it some thought!

Yes, it's time to get ladders out and peer into your rain gutters. There, you'll find stray tennis balls, toys, and worst of all, a bunch of rotting leaves. Not only will they rust out the gutters, but render downspouts useless. So plan to get up there on a sunny Saturday and clear them out.

Leaves that fall on the ground can be tossed into the compost pile, too. Or you can use the lazy gardener's method by raking them into garden beds and use them to cover exposed soil. Leaves will break down over the winter and turn into rich garden humus by spring.

Cool-season vegetables to plant included broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, peas, radishes, green onions, beets and lettuce-

grapefruit. Plant spring-flowering bulbs now, including daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, and crocus.

The National Gardening Association web site, [www.garden.org](http://www.garden.org) is full of general information for gardeners. One of its most useful features is a localized report. There are also how-to basics, on-line courses, a horticultural dictionary and plant name finder, events calendar, message board, seed swap, and links to a children's gardening site. You can search the site's library for articles.

If the recent heat wave sizzled your bougainvillea, don't over-react and take it out. The branches and roots are still healthy and will have new growth, more leaves, and dazzling flowers next spring.

Rose lovers take note: Barbara Milo Ohrbach's 16<sup>th</sup> book on roses, "Roses for the Scented Room: Beautiful Ideas for Entertaining, Gift-Giving and the Home" (Clarkson Potter, \$25) is now available. This lavishly photographed book covers everything from the history of the rose to selecting the best varieties and decorating with roses.

Among her helpful suggestions in buying, gathering, conditioning, and arranging roses include: Pick roses from the garden in the early morning when their scent is strongest; revive drooping roses by inserting a straight pin in the stem to perk up droopy rose heads.

Interesting recipes include rose-petal vinegar, jasmine rose tea, rose cuticle cream, and rose-petal splash and fabric wash. There is also a source list for books, suppliers, catalogs, organizations and associations.

## Upcoming gardening tasks...

~ OCTOBER ~

**SNAPSHOT:** Warm early in the month, turning to brisk days and cool nights. If you're planning a landscaping project, get it going now so tree and shrub roots can get off to a good start before winter. Install hard-scape and irrigation systems.



**FLOWERS:** Cool-season annuals do great. Try coneflowers, pansies, primroses and Iceland poppies. Scatter wildflower seeds. Add some low-water-using California natives. Plant spring-blooming bulbs in containers.

Work in compost.

**VEGETABLES:** Sow or transplant cool-season crops, along with artichokes, established herbs, garlic, parsley, spinach and onions. Don't forget to plant a little extra in your Good Neighbor Garden.

**TO-DO LIST:** Get ready to say ta-ta to the summer garden; pull up spent plants and clean up. Compost only pest-free plant debris. Plant lawns from seed or sod by mid-month. Plant shrubs, trees, and ground covers. Feed over-wintering plants with low-nitrogen fertilizer to help them become cold-hardy. Spread compost or composted manure over all planted areas.

~ NOVEMBER ~

**SNAPSHOT:** Typically, this is when we get the first hint of winter chill, with frosty nights, wind and rain. Smart buys: left-over garden stock, especially citrus and avocado trees.

**FLOWERS:** Cold-season annuals such as calendulas, Iceland poppies, fairy primroses, pansies, snapdragons and violas, along with winter sweet peas, will give you color through the spring. Go for the four-inch pots; tiny plants from six-packs may just sulk. For a memorable spring bloom, try mass plantings of color-jolted tulips and daffodils.

**VEGETABLES:** Sow seeds of fava beans, chard, peas, radishes, and spinach. Plant garlic, onions, and shallots.

**TO-DO LIST:** Give your tools a good cleaning. Don't forget to turn off your automatic sprinklers if we get regular rains. Feed compost pile with fallen leaves. Remove weakened tree branches likely to fall in high winds. Move container plants under cover or close to the house.

[Ed. Note: The foregoing "To-Do Lists" are taken from the January 6, 2007 San Jose Mercury-News.]



## DO NOT TOP TREES

Topping trees is very harmful to proper tree growth and appearance. When a tree is topped, it is shocked into producing fast growth to the sides of the topped branches. The new growth will look very unnatural as it matures over time, and will also be weaker than normal growth. For full details, see your April 2006 VEP News (available at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)).

## Home maintenance

[Ed. Note: This is the seventh in a series of monthly reprints taken from "Home Maintenance Calendar 2007" which appeared in the December 30, 2006 San Jose Mercury-News.]

~ October ~

**TOP JOB:** Replace batteries of smoke, heat and gas detectors.

**ALSO:** Insulate outdoor pipes to avoid freeze damage. Clean gutters. Leaves and other debris will hamper drainage and may promote rusting. Compost the leaves. Inspect and clean the fireplace and flue before lighting your first fire. Hire a professional if needed.

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Stack firewood away from the house.  
Check furnace filter. Clean or replace if necessary.

~ November ~

TOP JOB: Inspect crawl space after rain for water accumulation or excessive moisture. Do not block vents to the crawl space in winter.

ALSO: Shut off water to washing machine and remove water supply hoses. Check washers. Replace hoses that are damaged, including where fittings are badly corroded. Check the owner's manual for any other maintenance recommendations.

~ Each month ~

- Test and inspect smoke, heat, and gas detectors.
- Check fire extinguishers. Replace or service as needed.
- Check to be certain nothing flammable is near a source of flame, such as a water heater pilot light, gas range, furnace, etc.
- Practice your family fire-escape plan and review earthquake preparedness. Inspect electrical cords for damage. Repair or replace if needed.
- Check the operation of all electrical circuit breakers by turning each off and on. Do the same with ground fault circuit interrupters, usually found in bathroom, kitchen, garage, and outdoor outlets. Replace those not working properly.
- Always be alert for other safety hazards, such as cracked walkways, hazardous materials that aren't properly stored, or unsecured heavy bookcases or other furniture that could topple during an earthquake.
- Check water softener. Add salt if needed.
- Clean garbage disposal by grinding up two trays of ice cubes made from a mixture of 1 cup white vinegar in 1 gallon of water. (Be certain to use the disposer cap when grinding.) For a pleasant smell, follow the cleaning by grinding a lemon.



## Getting rid of moss on your roof

Q: Our house, covered by asphalt shingles, is shaded by three large trees.

In the winter rainy season, moss appears between the separations in adjacent shingles. A very thick growth of moss appears on the north and west sides of the roof.

During a period of rain lasting several days, moisture oozes up under the shingles lifted by the moss and leaks down into the house. Last summer, I scraped off all the moss and glued the loose edges of the shingles down with roofing cement. However, this winter the moss quickly grew back and the roof is leaking again.

Is there any way to keep this moss from re-forming? I certainly do not want to cut down those beautiful, old oak trees. If I have the house re-roofed, will the problem recur?

A: If the moss forms a thin layer on the shingles, you can remove it by wetting down the shingles with a copper sulfate solution (1/4 to 1/2 ounce per 10 gallons of water) or a zinc chloride solution (10 percent zinc chloride and 90 percent water). Copper sulfate has a long-term residual effect and will kill future moss as it forms.

This chemical can damage shrubbery and corrode metal. To avoid problems, be careful with the overflow and make sure



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that gutters and downspouts are clean and clear before you start. After treating the roof, flush them thoroughly. When moss forms clusters, scrape off by hand and then treat the surface of the roof as described to keep it from forming again.

Numerous commercial solutions are available from nurseries and garden-supply stores to kill moss on roofs. One such product, De-Moss, is made by Safer Agro Chem Inc., 728-Center Street, Box 550, Lewiston, N.Y. 14092. It comes in a 32-ounce container, costs about \$13 and covers a 500-square-foot area.

Also, according to the Washington State Cooperative Extension, copper or galvanized ridges and flashing are often effective in keeping moss under control for about 10 feet down from the ridge. If you stretch a heavy copper wire (without insulation, of course) along the roof about 10 feet down from a copper ridge, the corrosive leaching of the copper should control moss in an area from 4 to 6 feet down from the wire. The Cooperative Extension publishes an excellent brochure about moss on roofs. For a copy, write to King County Cooperative Extension, 312 Smith Tower, Seattle, Wash.; 98104; ask for LCH-1, "Moss On Roofs."

[Ed. Note: In response to a recent member inquiry, I found this article in my newspaper clipping archives. It's from a UPI story from the mid-1980s--exact date unknown.]

## VEP's September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting

-Jim Hicks, Secretary

Acting VEP President **Joe Tajnai** opened our meeting with a warm welcome.

Our meeting started with a discussion of crime in the VEP community presented by San Jose Southern Division Police Captain **David Cavallaro**. He opened by reporting a large increase in auto break-ins to steal portable GPS navigation systems units. He stressed the need to keep these units out of your cars and that thieves will break in even if they only see the suction cup ring on your windshield, because they suspect your GPS unit is in the car. To avoid falling victim to a break-in, make sure no evidence of your GPS is visible from outside your car.



He mentioned that San Jose is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest city in the U.S. and that major crimes in San Jose are down. Burglaries are down 42%, auto theft is down 35%, and assaults are down 17%.

Captain Cavallaro shared a website, [www.crimereports.org](http://www.crimereports.org), which shows a map of all the reported crime activity in the last 30 days. To see the crime activity near your home, simply enter the requested address information. On the left-hand panel of the website is a descriptive legend of the crime labels shown on the map. Take a look to better acquaint yourself with the crime activities in your area.

We were given a description of a current scam wherein a person posing as a water company employee will ask to come into your home to check your water pressure. The scam focuses on the elderly. You should not allow these people into your home--you could be the victim of burglary or worse. If you have concerns, you should call 311 or 911 to report the situation. Or call Captain Cavallaro's office directly at 408-277-5530.

Captain Cavallaro says his office is there to help all VEP residents. If you have a crime or suspicious activity to report, please call his office immediately. The hotline number for reporting graffiti is 408-277-4528.

Our next speaker was SALA (Senior Adult Legal Assistance) Staff Attorney **Beatriz Lopez**. Ms Lopez presented the basics of legal planning (e.g., wills and trusts), health care decisions, and directives for your future. SALA specializes in the following areas related to our elder population:

- PUBLIC BENEFITS: Social Security and SSI (except disability cases); Medicare and Medi-Cal; and In-Home Support Services.
- LONG TERM CARE: Nursing Home and Residential Care issues; Alternatives to Institutionalization.
- ELDER ABUSE: Restraining or Protective Orders (for elder abuse or domestic violence); Lodger Statute Evictions; Revocation of Powers of Attorney (for fiduciary abuse).
- HOUSING: Landlord-Tenant; Subsidized/Senior Housing; Mobile Home Residency problems.
- CONSUMER: Medicare HMO or Supplemental Insurance disputes; Long-Term Care Insurance problems.
- INCAPACITY PLANNING: Advance Health Care Directives; Health Care Powers of Attorney.
- PROBATE ALTERNATIVES: Death of Joint Tenant Affidavits; Small Estate Affidavits (valued at \$100,000 or less).
- SIMPLE WILLS: For elders with modest assets (available through SALA's No Fee Wills Panel).



All services are at no-cost for folks over the age of 50. For more information, go to their website, [www.sala.org](http://www.sala.org).

Our meeting concluded with discussions of VEP's 2007-08 *Goals & Objectives* and consideration of a \$1,000 donation to help purchase furniture, computers, etc, for the new Pearl Avenue Library. Both items were unanimously approved by VEP members in attendance.

**Add VEP's website [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) to your "favorites"**

## A message from County District 4

- Supervisor Ken Yeager

When working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, local governments should lead by example. I'm pleased to report that Santa Clara County took a huge step toward preventing global warming by signing on as a "Cool County."

The U.S. Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration is a list of gas-emission goals adopted by counties all over the country. By agreeing to these goals, the Santa Clara County government will measure its current greenhouse gas emissions and reduce them by 80 percent by the year 2050. In addition, the county will work with the community to urge the federal government to reach the same goal.

Evaluating current emissions and setting new standards is the first step toward significantly reducing Santa Clara County's environmental footprint, which will benefit everyone in the community. Working with other agencies in the region will also help us complete our climate action plan to conserve energy and natural resources.

Making the changes necessary to meet these goals will involve a substantial overhaul of how county departments operate. The Board of Supervisors will have to consider the environmental impact of practically every decision and action.

It's part of our duty to be the caretakers of our environment so that future generations will have the natural resources they require. I am glad that my fellow supervisors saw the need to adopt these gas-emission goals and have committed to working to save our environment for years to come.

\*\*\*\*\*

With four elections coming up over the next year, residents who are tired of long lines at the polls can save time by taking advantage of Santa Clara County's Vote by Mail program.

Absentee voting allows residents to cast their votes during their own free time rather than reorganizing their schedules on Election Day.

Beginning about four weeks before a given election, absentee voters will receive their ballots in the mail and fill them out at home. Voters then place the ballot in the provided envelope, sign it, and mail it back to the Registrar of Voters.

Absentee voters who fill out their ballots closer to Election Day can drop off the ballot at the Registrar of Voters or at any polling location once the polls open.

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Voting by mail also helps speed up the process of counting votes. The registrar's office counts absentee ballots as they come in, so they are usually the first results released after the polls close at 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Residents interested in becoming permanent absentee voters can do so by visiting [www.sccvote.org](http://www.sccvote.org) or calling 299-VOTE.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. You can call me at 299-5040 or e-mail me at [Ken.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org](mailto:Ken.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org).

---

## **Invite your neighbors to join VEP**

### **\*\* VEP Membership Application \*\***

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**\*\* Please type or print legibly \*\***

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Street address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address(es): \_\_\_\_\_  
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Comments): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Can you give VEP a few volunteer hours? \_\_\_\_\_

**I am willing to volunteer for:** Beautification/clean-up projects VEP News/mailling prep Memorial Day Parade & Festival Distribute flyers Serve on a committee  
Serve as a VEP officer or committee chair Other \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your \$20 check to VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose 95158. Thank you!



## **Bulletin Board Ads**

ACCORDIAN DOORS: Free. Wood, excellent condition, for 80" high x 61" wide doorway (Arcadia Olympic master BR). Ready and easy to install. Call Dave @ 578-6428.

HANDY-MAN: Mr. Fix-it will repair leaks, sticking doors, locks, latches, lights, and life's little ills. No job is too small. Call John @ (408) 629-6433.

## **Brian Bonnifield, Real Estate Consultant American Eagle Properties**

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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.

#### 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. (Contact our Editor for a copy of VEP's advertising policy.)

## **Pearl Avenue Library Needs your support...**

Make a tax-deductible investment (large or small) in your own branch library's future. You can even arrange to donate in multi-year or convenient periodic installments. It's easy—here's how...

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★ Print donation form from [www.sanjoselibraryfoundation.org](http://www.sanjoselibraryfoundation.org).

★ Write a check payable to "San Jose Public Library Foundation."  
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★ Call or email Dave Fadness to get a donation form and mailing envelope (578-6428 or [drfadness@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drfadness@sbcglobal.net)).

**Be sure to specify that your gift is for our Pearl Avenue Branch Library. Do it today!**

# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

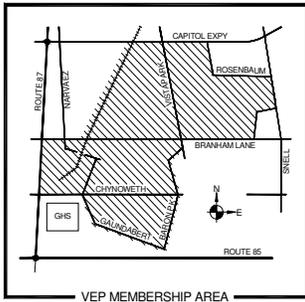
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Email: [vepca@vepca.net](mailto:vepca@vepca.net) Website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance and improvement in its membership area as well as to active involvement in civic affairs. This newsletter is mailed monthly to all members in good standing, to our advertisers, and to schools and government officials serving our membership area. For membership or paid advertisement information, contact our Treasurer or write to the address listed above.

### VEP EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

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Community Room

Vista Park

7:30 pm in the

October 23rd Meeting

Be sure to attend VEP's