

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

Representing More Than 2000 Families In The Blossom Valley Area Of South San Jose Since 1969

April 2009

## VEP MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday  
▶ April 28, 2009 ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Drive

## AGENDA

### ★Rebuilding Together★

A presentation by Tim Lynds,  
Community Outreach Coordinator

### ★SJPD Update & 911 Emergency Calls★

A presentation by Captain Vaughan Edwards and  
911 Dispatch Supervisor Peggy Martinez,  
San Jose Police Department

### ★San Jose City Budget Overview★

A presentation by Norberto Duenas,  
Deputy City Manager of San Jose

### ★VEP Business★

1. Advertiser Appreciation: Chesnos Painting
2. Appoint a Board Member Nominating Committee

### ★Reports & Announcements★

- ✓ Emergency Preparedness
- ✓ Martial Cottle Park
- ✓ Community Service Award
- ✓ Garage Sale & e-Waste Event
- ✓ Memorial Day Parade & Festival

### ★Your Concerns and Ideas★

A chance to voice your opinion and/or to seek VEP's help.

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

Dispatch Supervisor **Peggy Martinez** will present a brief update on crime in the VEP area, followed by a presentation on the emergency call system (911 and 311) and local priority phone numbers to use from home, office, or cell phone. Tips will be given on what information emergency callers should be prepared to give to the dispatchers.

▶ **City Budget Overview** – Deputy City Manager **Norberto Duenas** will present an overview of the City of San Jose's upcoming budget. VEP members will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback and input into budget decisions for the coming budget year that begins July 1<sup>st</sup>.

▶ **VEP Business – Advertiser Appreciation.** VEP will thank the Chesnos family for their many years of newsletter advertising support and for being committed VEP members and volunteers.

▶ **Announcements** – of upcoming events or issues of interest.

▶ **Your Concerns and Ideas** - We always leave time to hear from you regarding concerns or issues that we can work together in resolving. This approach continues to make VEP neighborhoods strong, healthy, and attractive.

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We look forward to seeing you, your family, your friends, and your neighbors at our **April 28<sup>th</sup>** meeting. Please join us!

### VEP's membership drive ended on April 1<sup>st</sup>

*Thanks for your renewal!*

If you have a new neighbor, please encourage them to join VEP using the application form available in this newsletter or on [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net). Better yet, buy them a gift membership.

## Free home repair & accessibility modifications

*by Tim Lynds (\*)*

*Rebuilding Together* is a non-profit organization that brings together volunteers to provide repair and safety modification work for low to moderate income homeowners, particularly the elderly and disabled. All work is provided at no cost to the applicant.

All repair work focuses on neighborhood revitalization and safety improvements such as grab bar, railing and ramp installation, and minor repairs in plumbing, flooring, electrical & carpentry. Additional work may also include interior or exterior painting and yard clean-up. Applications are accepted year round.

Each year more than 2500 local volunteers are involved with *Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley*. Volunteers assist with our twice a year Rebuilding Day projects as well as office support, language translation, project selection, etc.

## VEP's April meeting

*by Marilyn Rodgers*

These are the topics that are planned for our April general membership meeting:

▶ **Rebuilding Together** – Guest Speaker **Tim Lynds**, Community Outreach Coordinator will provide a brief summary of their exciting volunteer programs to assist elderly and disabled residents with repair and safety modifications.

▶ **Update from SJPD and 911 Emergency Dispatchers** – San Jose Police Department Captain **Vaughan Edwards** and

**2009 is VEP's 40th year!**

We are currently recruiting volunteers for our April 25<sup>th</sup> Rebuilding Day as well as volunteers who are willing and able to volunteer one day a week on a regular basis to help with year round accessibility modification projects in our Neighbor-to-Neighbor program. Experience in construction/home repair is helpful but not necessary.

We are also currently looking for homeowners who need warmth, safety, and independence repairs. Applications are accepted year round.

For an application for home repairs, or information on volunteering, please call Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley at (408) 578-9519 or visit us at [www.rtsv.org](http://www.rtsv.org).

[(\*)Ed. Note: Tim Lynds is the Community Outreach Coordinator for Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley. He can be contacted at [tlynds@rebuildingtogether-sv.org](mailto:tlynds@rebuildingtogether-sv.org) or (408) 578-9519.]

### Have you lost a ring?

A ring was found recently in the sand box at Vista Park. If you've lost a ring, call Marcel at 281-8293 or by email at [mtomassian@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mtomassian@sbcglobal.net) to describe it. He'll be happy to return it.

### Thank you to Chesnos Painting

*by Marilyn Rodgers*

At VEP's April 28<sup>th</sup> General Membership meeting, we will thank Chesnos Painting for their long time support as advertisers in the VEP Newsletter. **Joyce** and **Bob Chesnos** are also long-time residents and VEP members.



As part of their commitment to our community, they are avid VEP volunteers. You may have seen Joyce tending to the small landscaped triangle on the southwest corner of Narvaez and Branham Lane; she has adopted this area and is doing a terrific job—it looks great all the time. Joyce also assists in distributing VEP event flyers, and is a contributor to the VEP Memorial Day event.

Please join us in recognizing and thanking **Joyce** and **Bob Chesnos** for their generous and ongoing support of VEP!



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### 25<sup>th</sup> annual VEP Community Service Awards

*by Dave Noel*

For our 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, VEP will offer grants towards higher education or vocational training for up to three graduating high school seniors having exceptional records of volunteer community service.

#### ▶▶ APPLICATIONS ARE DUE APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup> ◀◀

At our January general meeting, members unanimously approved a plan to award up to three CSAs of \$650 each for graduating high school students from Gunderson High School, Andrew Hill School, and "At-Large" (or \$1000 each if we grant only one or two awards). Our At-Large award is available to students who live in the VEP area, or are children of VEP members and live in San Jose.



Applications were distributed to Gunderson and Andrew Hill High schools in mid-March and are also posted on VEP's website. Each school has been asked to nominate at least two students and will submit their completed applications by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

If you know a Gunderson or Andrew Hill student deserving consideration for this award, please encourage them to talk to their designated administrator right away:

**Andrew Hill = Noemi Ramirez**  
**Gunderson = Nabil Shahin**

Our At-Large application form was published in the February VEP NEWS, and is available on VEP's website.

We will present our Gunderson and Andrew Hill awards at each school's respective senior awards night in late May or early June. If we have an At-Large winner, we will present that award at VEP's May 26<sup>th</sup> general meeting.

If you have any questions, or would like to serve on our Community Service Awards committee, please contact me at (408) 266-7183 or [DNoel1234@aol.com](mailto:DNoel1234@aol.com).

\*\*\*\*

Reaffirming VEP's belief in the importance of community service, Gunderson's Career Center technician **Stephanie Heuer** reports that studies have shown a correlation between community service and lower high school drop-out rates.

### Thanks to volunteer palm pruners

*by Dave Fadness*

The palm trees in the median of Chynoweth Avenue have again been pruned by VEP volunteers. Pruning was done between Gaundabert Drive and Pearl Avenue the week before Palm Sunday, a time specifically chosen to make palm fronds available for interested churches in our area.

Special thanks to **Bill Johnson**, **Bob Shoberg**, and **Aiko Fadness** for the many hours of hard work they gave to make our community an attractive place to live. We also thank the city for removing the cut fronds.



Once- or twice-annual pruning has been performed by VEP volunteers since 1995. There are a total of 170 palm trees along busy Chynoweth Avenue.

**VEP makes good things happen!**



## Vista Park parking lot improvements

by Kathy Sutherland(\*)

VEP can look forward to a new and improved parking lot at Vista Park this summer. To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Vista Park parking lot needs new sidewalk ramps and striping for ADA parking spaces. Since re-striping requires a slurry seal to remove the old striping, potholes will also be repaired.



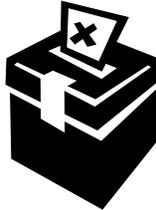
The City's General Services Department just received contract approval from the City Attorney and expects construction to begin at the end of May or the beginning of June. This work will be completed within 30 days. Once asphalt repairs begin, the parking lot may need to be closed for up to 5 days. The Parks Department will communicate with sports programs and VEP to ensure proper notification.

[(\*) Kathy Sutherland is San Jose Councilwoman Nancy Pyle's Chief of Staff.]

## Upcoming VEP Board elections

by Marilyn Rodgers

This month, we begin the nomination process for the VEP Board of Directors. Elections are held at our May meeting. Recently approved changes to the VEP Constitution and Bylaws increased the number of seats on our Board from five to seven. Although all seven seats are up for election, we currently have two openings.



As with most volunteer organizations, a few stalwart members do the lion's share of VEP's work. Eventually they get burned out. *We are at that point now.* If we don't get new members to join our board, we will need to cut back on our community advocacy, projects, and events next year.

### **Please step up now, we really need you.**

We encourage those looking for a fulfilling opportunity to step forward. Your community needs your ideas, talents, and expertise. If you have an idea or project that you feel passionate about or would like to see VEP sponsor, join our Board help to and make it happen.

### **Don't be shy, let us know you are interested!**

VEP is one of the oldest, most continuously active and successful--and undoubtedly *the* largest--volunteer community associations in San Jose. We're celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Let's keep our proud tradition alive!

For additional information, please contact any board member listed on the mailing page of this newsletter. Come join us--you'll be glad you did!

## Community-Wide Garage Sale on May 2<sup>nd</sup>

by Ginger Cardona & Dave Noel

It's almost here! Our annual *Community Garage Sale* will be held on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, starting as early as 7 am.

We want everyone in our community to have a garage sale on the same day. The best way to find a new home for your unused stuff is to increase traffic to your home. So, VEP will advertise this event in local newspapers and by distributing flyers

around our neighborhoods.

Plan now to make sure you can be seen from the street. Put up balloons or signs. Have your out-of-area friends bring garage sale items that add to yours--make it a big, fun event on your street or cul-de-sac. A little energy and creativity now will free up space in your home and put extra money in your pocket.



**We've arranged to have a Salvation Army truck at Parkview Elementary School, 330 Bluefield Drive, from 10 am to 6 pm** to collect unsold treasures in return for tax deductible receipts. For questions about the Salvation Army, contact Jonathan at (408) 298-7600 Monday-Friday or at [jonathan.frederick@usw.salvationarmy.org](mailto:jonathan.frederick@usw.salvationarmy.org).

On the day of the event, you may request home pickup of large items by talking to the truck drivers at Parkview (there are no phone numbers to call on weekends). On weekdays, you may call 1-800-SA-TRUCK to schedule home pickups.

## e-Waste pick-up set for May 2<sup>nd</sup>

by Dave Noel

VEP is teaming with Parkview Elementary School and *Earthcare Recycling* to hold an e-waste pick-up from 9 am until 5 pm on Saturday May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the same day as VEP's *Community-Wide Garage Sale*.

Special thanks to VEP member and Parkview School Community Association President **Tanya Summers** for co-sponsoring this event and arranging the use of Parkview School.

Also thanks to **Steve Ramona** at Earthcare Recycling for providing the recycling pickup and sharing half of his proceeds with VEP and Parkview School. VEP and Parkview will share the proceeds 50/50.

See [www.earthcarerecycling.com](http://www.earthcarerecycling.com) for a list of accepted items.

This will be a win-win event. Here's why:

- Parkview School and VEP will receive funds from the recycling value of the e-waste.
- After your garage sale, you can drop off all your garage sale leftovers at Parkview School. Your e-waste will be properly recycled, and your Salvation Army donations will net you a tax deductible receipt (see the Garage Sale article above). And...

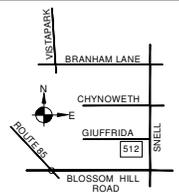
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- People dropping off e-waste can visit our garage sales.

## VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival

by Dave Fadness

Our Memorial Day Parade & Festival will be held on Monday, May 25. Our parade steps-off at 11 am sharp from Vista Park (475 Hyde Park Drive). Our festival begins at Parkview



School (330 Bluefield Drive) as soon as the parade arrives. We have a full program of fun things lined up for you—and Mojo Burger will serve yummy food again this year.

The addition of new ideas and new talent is what makes this event get bigger and better every year. Last year, more than 3000 people attended.

This year, our fifth, we expect to exceed that number--and you can be a part of this success. Planning is well underway, but your involvement is needed and encouraged.

Call me (578-6428) or **Dianne Conry** (224-8456) if you or someone you know will add to the fun. We need entertainers and parade participants. If you belong to a service group, are involved with Scouts, a school group, a sports league or any other organization, we'd like to have you there with us—especially if you'd be in uniform or in costume.

If you or a neighbor have an antique, classic, or hotrod car, have them give me a call if they're interested in showing it off in our parade. Consistent with safety and its family nature,

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we're open to anyone and anything that will add interest and color to our event.

We also need crafters. If you are or know someone who makes and sells crafts, please call **Ginger Cardona** (408) 227-0222 for information on free booth space at our Festival.

We need sponsors and donors. The net proceeds from this event are given to Carson and Parkview Elementary Schools, so we try our best to keep costs low for VEP (for event participants, too). Donations are what make this possible. Give **Marilyn Rodgers** (225-7553) or **Irene Shoberg** (225-3477) a call if you have a business or have contacts with businesses that would be willing to make cash or other donations to our event. We will acknowledge all donors in our Memorial Day Program and in our VEP newsletter.

We need at least one photographer to take lots of digital pictures of our event.

Needless to say, we need lots of hands-on volunteers. Call **Helen Castillo** (981-5902) if you are available...

- ✓To help with ideas for event games and attractions.
- ✓To pick up and return equipment the day before and/or the day after.
- ✓To post parade route "NO PARKING" signs the day before.
- ✓To help with set-up/tear-down the day of the event.
- ✓To help with booth duty, ticket sales, and event games.
- ✓To help clean-up during and after the event.

Your help in taking care of one or two of these details will lighten our load and make this event successful for kids of all ages in our community. Remember, none of us gets paid--everyone works as a volunteer in VEP activities.

Call or email me at drfadness@sbcglobal.net if you're willing to help even in a small way. Don't wait because you think someone else will step forward or because Memorial Day is long from now; we need your ideas and to know now whether your help will be available.

Above all, please be sure to mark your calendars, spread the word, and plan to attend with your family and friends on Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>

**Safety in VEP neighborhoods**  
*by Marilyn Rodgers*  
 Several of our members have voiced concern recently about a variety of safety issues. The VEP Executive Board does re-

San Jose District 10

# DISASTER & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

C O N F E R E N C E

Free Admission

Special Programs For Kids

Saturday, April 25 • 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
 Pioneer High School • 1290 Blossom Hill Road

Meet District 10 councilmember Nancy Pyle Check out vendors offering equipment and supplies Attend workshops and seminars on what you need to know	Our keynote speaker: Harold Schapelhouman, is Menlo Park's Fire Chief and leads an urban search and rescue team. He has been involved with many high profile rescue situations including the 2001 World Trade Center attack.
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## VEP Community Association

VEP plans to conduct a pilot program for our neighborhood, working with the San Jose Office of Emergency Services. Please plan to attend one of the following 2 hour classes:

Vista Park Community Room  
 April 18th, 9-11:00 a.m.    May 30, 9-11:00 a.m.    June 6, 9-11:00 a.m.

Learn how to prepare for an earthquake Learn about household toxic hazards Learn how to prevent fires Learn what to do if the worst happens and much more	For more information on classes or becoming a block captain contact: Helen Castillo 408-981-5902 or hcastillo@vbprop.com
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Get more information and register to reserve seats for workshops and kids classes at [www.sjdep.org](http://www.sjdep.org)  
**72-Hour Emergency Kits** are available for purchase on the web site for \$19.50 each





To request an accommodation for a disability, please contact Stephanie Holm at (408) 535-4982 or (408) 294-9337 (TTY)  
 Questions-General: [depinfo@gmail.com](mailto:depinfo@gmail.com) Class Registration: [depclass@gmail.com](mailto:depclass@gmail.com) Emergency kits: [depckit@gmail.com](mailto:depckit@gmail.com)

spond to these concerns by publishing articles in the VEP News which provide information and highlight helpful city resources. In addition, many of the scheduled speakers for the monthly general membership meetings focus on one or more areas concerning resident or neighborhood safety. As safety spans many different issues, here are some suggestions for your consideration.

➤ District 10 is sponsoring an Emergency Preparedness Conference scheduled for Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> (see Helen Castillo's article in this edition of the VEP Newsletter). This conference will highlight a variety of safety and preparedness issues including fire and earthquake. Helen also plans to start an Emergency Preparedness Committee for VEP.

➤ Crime, including car and home break-ins, is always of concern to residents. At our April 28<sup>th</sup> General Membership meeting, Captain Edwards of the SJPD will present a brief update on issues for the VEP area. In addition, you can monitor your immediate neighborhood by obtaining information on websites for crime statistics/reports. VEP's website has a web link – go to [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) and then to [links](#), or through the City of San Jose and the SJ Police Department webpage at [www.sjpd.org/CrimeStats/CrimeReportsFAQ.html](http://www.sjpd.org/CrimeStats/CrimeReportsFAQ.html) which also provides information/definitions to the various codes.

➤ One of the most effective ways for residents to protect themselves is by being vigilant neighbors, and by starting a Neighborhood Watch program. **Tami** and **Bryan Borough** have done just that. They encouraged their neighbors on Wellington Park to come together to start the program for their street. (See the article by Tami in this edition of the VEP News.) Tami is also happy to talk to other VEP members who would like some preliminary information about the program.

➤ Last month, **Jim Cogan**, a VEP member and current President of the Silicon Valley chapter of *Crimestoppers* presented information at our VEP general meeting on their very effective program. The *Crimestoppers* emblem is listed in each month's newsletter with contact information. Use it...

Should VEP members see anything unusual, call 911 and report it (in the city of San Jose you can also call 277-8911) or, call *Crimestoppers* to anonymously report a crime you have witnessed. Help protect yourself and your neighbors.

In general, the VEP area is considered very safe, and the City of San Jose still ranks as the second or third safest city of its

size in the country. However, vigilance is the key! We are all concerned about making and keeping VEP a safe and attractive neighborhood!

## Bowling for Badges

by Dave Fadness

The San Jose Police Foundation will hold its first fundraising event *Bowling for Badges* on Thursday, May 8 from 5:30-8:30 at *300 San Jose* (formerly Oakridge Lanes) in San Jose. Proceeds from the event will be directed to unfunded San Jose Police Department (SJPD) projects such as: trauma kits for officers, Segways™ for patrol, and improved peace-keeping technology.



Corporate sponsorships are available for \$10,000-\$1,000; Teams of five are \$250 each and Lane sponsorships are \$250 each. Individual bowlers, at \$50 each will be placed on a team. Non-bowlers can come for the all-evening gourmet buffet, and to cheer the teams, for \$25 each. Details and sign-ups are available at [www.bowlingforbadges.com](http://www.bowlingforbadges.com).

Various City officials, Chamber of Commerce members, corporations, and area businesses will have teams, and a healthy competition is expected. It's all about fun, and raising money for much needed projects.

*Bowling for Badges* sponsors include Westfield Mall, Heritage Bank of Commerce, Yellow Cab, Hoge Fenton, and 3i info-tech. To date, the Foundation has raised more than \$50,000 to support specifically identified projects that enhance the protection and service mandates of SJPD not covered by traditional funding sources.

"This is a great way to support the San Jose Police Department and have fun at the same time," says **Leigh Weimers**, president of the San Jose Police Foundation Board. "In this case, three strikes is a good thing."

For more information, contact **Beverly Lenihan** at (408) 873-9266 or online at [www.sanjosepolicefoundation.org](http://www.sanjosepolicefoundation.org).

## Martial Cottle Park update

by Adina Pierce

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Lisa Killough and Jane Mark from the County Parks staff, and Isabelle Minn from DCE Consultants presented the *Draft Preferred Alternative for Martial Cottle Park Master Plan* to the County Parks and Recreation Commission.

Some modifications were made to the draft master plan since the February 17<sup>th</sup> version. The main changes are:  
The main park entrance on Snell Avenue was moved farther south.

The Future Agricultural Marketing Area which includes an expanded produce stand, farmers market, farm café, and parking was moved to the main entrance on Snell Avenue.

The commission accepted the Draft Plan and will forward a favorable recommendation to the County Board of Supervisors' Housing, Land Use, Environment and Transportation (HLUET) Committee, scheduled for April 16, 2009.

To view the April 1<sup>st</sup> Revised Draft Preferred Alternative Master Plan for Martial Cottle Park, visit the VEP website at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) (or the County's Martial Cottle Park Master Plan Project website at [www.parkhere.org](http://www.parkhere.org)).



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For more information about Martial Cottle Park and VEP's involvement, please contact:

Adina Pierce at 408-362-0937 or [adinap@yahoo.com](mailto:adinap@yahoo.com)  
Marilyn Rodgers at 408-225-7553 or [MRodgersRN@aol.com](mailto:MRodgersRN@aol.com)



The Martial Cottle Park Plan (partial)

## Thank you to VEP advertisers

by Marilyn Rodgers

VEP wants to say *thank you* to our advertisers. Several of them have been loyal supporters for many years. Their financial contribution is invaluable to VEP's success and longevity.

Please take a minute and browse through the VEP NEWS, with an eye to the variety of businesses represented. Be sure to **contact them first** when you, or your family and friends, have a need for their type of service or product. Also, don't forget to let them know that you saw their ad in the VEP NEWS, and how much their support is appreciated.



VEP has developed additional opportunities to increase our advertisers' visibility with our members. These include providing links to their business from our website at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net), and spotlighting one business each month at our general membership meeting--and in the VEP NEWS.

We currently have space for a few more advertisers. If you own a business, or know of a business that would benefit from advertising in the VEP News, please contact us.

## Good news for Branham Lane

by Dave Noel

Our sister community association **Pinehurst Residents Association** reports that federal stimulus money will likely pay for repaving of Branham Lane between Almaden Expressway and Pearl Avenue.

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

## Pyle responds to 5-Year Plan suggestions

by City Councilwoman Nancy Pyle(\*)

As a parent and former teacher, working to improve the success of all our students is one of the goals in my 5-year plan. VEP's suggestions for my *Goal #2 - Help San Jose become a force for Youth*, included vocational education, job training and information, internships, and recognition. I am also committed to providing diverse educational opportunities for students in addition to a four-year college degree.

# D-10

San Jose supports the work done by *work2future* to address many of these needs. I have included a link on my website [www.sanjoseca.gov/district10](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/district10) to a memo from *work2future* with information about job training, internships and education opportunities for young adults in San Jose.

If you would like more information, please visit the *work2future* website at [www.work2future.biz](http://www.work2future.biz).

Laura Cowan is my staff liaison to the D10 Youth Advisory Council. With her guidance, D10 YAC members will develop a page on my website. This page will feature and recognize outstanding youth in D10 and provide information about YAC activities.

[(\*)Councilwoman Nancy Pyle is our District 10 representative on the San Jose City Council.]

## Oak Grove picks new superintendent

by Dave Fadness

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the Oak Grove School District (OGSD) Board of Trustees appointed **Tony Garcia** to replace Superintendent **Manny Barbara** who will retire this year. Mr. Garcia is currently OGSD's Superintendent of Human Resources. His appointment followed an extensive selection process that included parents, staff, and community leaders. Mr. Garcia will step into his new position on August 29.

Having 34 years of experience in education, Mr. Garcia has spent 32 of them in the Oak Grove District, serving as a teacher and a principal in elementary and intermediate schools before becoming a district administrator. He was recently awarded the 2009 Association of California School Administrators Region 8 Personnel Administrator of the Year.

Manny Barbara was OGSD's superintendent for ten years, successfully navigating a host of fiscal and other challenges to

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Vista Park Specialist



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the benefit of district students, parents, and professional staff. A good friend of VEP, Manny will be missed by all who have worked with him. We wish him many years of good health and happiness in retirement.

### Gunderson High School news

~ Community Service Fair ~

Gunderson High School hosted sixteen local community non-profit organizations on March 25 for the first annual Community Service Fair sponsored by the Jefferson Awards Youth Service Initiative. Those service agencies provided Gunderson students with information and resources about community service opportunities available to them.

This event was an enormous success and plans are in the works to hold a similar event next fall.

~ Theater ~

Drama students at Gunderson recently attended the world premier production of *The Kite Runner* at San Jose Repertory Theater. The students enjoyed the show and were moved by the incredible story of two Afghan boys.



Drama students are looking forward to attending the Rep production of the musical *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* in May. The Rep's youth program has proven to be a great opportunity for Gunderson students to attend theater and to learn to become lifelong theatre-goers.

Gunderson's annual *One Act Play Festival* will take place May 20 and 21 in the Gunderson Theater at 7pm. All drama students participate in this yearly event.

~ Poetry Slam ~

Gunderson students performed their poetry at the yearly Poetry Slam, a weeklong event that culminated on April 3 at an evening finals competition. Students competed in this contest all week during lunch in the theater. An award-winning guest "slammer" from Santa Cruz performed for the students as well.

The Poetry Slam has gained popularity over the years and all performances were standing room only.

~ Multimedia Festival ~

Gunderson filmmakers and photographers will be highlighting

their works in the Gunderson Theater on May 7. In addition to creating films, the students had to produce movie posters. Trailers and posters will be posted soon on the Gunderson website: <http://gunderson.sjusd.org/>

~ Spring Concert ~

May 28, music will fill the air at the Gunderson Theater at 7:30pm for the annual spring concert. Tickets will be sold at the door.

~ Science Fair ~

The Gunderson's Science Department will be presenting a Science Fair on the evening of June 3 in the forum. Stop by to see what our students have been experimenting on!

### San Jose Library teen graphic novel contest

Youth between the ages of 12 and 19 are invited to create a graphic novel, up to 10 pages long on letter-size paper, to enter in a contest sponsored by San Jose Public Library Youth Services. Each submission must be the creative and original work of a single individual. Submissions may be dropped off at any San Jose branch library; limit one entry per contestant. Entries must be received no later than 6 p.m. on Friday, May 8, 2009.



Entries will be judged by a panel of library staff and community volunteers, based on the content and illustrations. Winners will be notified by May 29. Four prizes will be awarded:

- First prize = \$100 gift card
- Second prize = \$75
- Third prize = \$50
- Fourth prize = \$25

Up to fifty copies of the winner's book will be reproduced in black and white, then be distributed free of charge. One copy per person may be picked up at the following branch libraries while supplies last: Almaden, Berryessa, Cambrian, Calabazas, Alum Rock, Evergreen, Hillview, Joyce Ellington, King, Pearl, Tully, and West Valley. For more information, call (408) 808-3030.

### April events at the Pearl Avenue Library

by Jane Cronkhite, Librarian

You don't want to miss the quarterly Friends of the Pearl Avenue Branch Library Book Sale on Saturday, April 25 from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

~ Story Times ~

- Chinese Story time for all ages is on April 28 at 7 pm.
- Preschool Story time for ages 3-5 is every Wednesday at 11:30 am.
- Toddler Story Time with Stay and Play for ages 18-36 months is every Friday at 10:30 am.
- Family Story time is held on Saturdays at 10:30 am.

~ Regular events and workshops ~

- Free2Succeed: Resume Reviews are available all month long; submit your resume to [pearlavelibrary@gmail.com](mailto:pearlavelibrary@gmail.com).
- The ESL Conversation Club meets on Mondays at 5 pm. This one-hour session is a great way to practice your English and to make friends at the library.
- On Tuesdays, the library offers Internet Basics at 11 am and Internet Básico en Español at 6 pm. Sign up for at the service desk.
- Wii Gaming for Teens is every Thursday at 4 pm.

- Wii Fitness is light exercise on Thursdays at 11 am.
- Read and Win Game is for children in grades 4-6 on Monday, April 27 at 3:30 p.m. Call 408-808-3053 for details.
- The Pearl Avenue Book Club meets Tuesday, April 28 at 6:30 pm. We will read *In the Name of Salome* by Julia Alvarez.

For information about these and other events/offerings at Pearl, call (408) 808-3053.

## Village Harvest

If you have more oranges or other crops than you can use, Village Harvest will come pick them and donate them for you. Village Harvest is a nonprofit suburban harvesting cooperative in Santa Clara Valley which brings together neighbors and community organizations to provide food for the hungry, preserve our heritage and skills, and promote sustainable use of urban resources. Village Harvest organizes and coordinates backyard fruit harvesting, and provides education on fruit tree care, harvesting, and food preservation.

Village harvest works closely with County Agriculture officials to ensure that their Harvesting for the Hungry efforts are in compliance with local quarantines, providing special inspections to support their harvests.

For more information, call (888) FRUIT-411, or visit their website, [www.villageharvest.org](http://www.villageharvest.org).

## Green & Healthy Neighborhoods

*by Our City Forest*

San Jose tree-planting non-profit *Our City Forest* has launched its newest pilot program *Green & Healthy Neighborhoods*. This exciting project will reach area residents directly and makes it fun, easy and free to live greener.



Every person can be a part of San Jose's Green Vision with this simple program that offers help from "Green Amigo" coaches, a fun action guide and the support of neighbors. Find out how easy it is to reduce your water and energy uses, reduce garbage, eliminate hazardous chemicals, protect your family's health, and more!

Getting involved is easy. To form a group in your area, call (408) 998-7337 x106 and we'll help you get one started. *Our City Forest* will provide a Green Amigo coach (you can also be a coach!) who will lead your group through a simple action guide for living green.

Your group will meet, discuss and choose action steps to complete together. It is easy, fun and free to be certified *Green & Healthy Neighborhood*. Groups will begin meeting in early May, so gather family and friends and sign-up today!

Green Amigo coaches must complete a 15-hour training course. Classes will be held at the *Our City Forest* office on Wednesdays 6-8 pm and Saturdays 1-4 pm for four weeks. Anyone with a commitment to helping others and who is comfortable facilitating small groups, either in their own neighborhood and/or other neighborhoods, is encouraged to apply. Spanish or Vietnamese speakers are also encouraged to sign up today.

Together, we can make a difference! For more information

and to get involved, call (408) 99-TREES x106 or e-mail us at [rberry@ourcityforest.org](mailto:rberry@ourcityforest.org)

## Gumby-Mumby

*by John Marks, VEP's Green Gardener*

Remember those twistable Gumby toys that you or your children used to play with? Well, now they're quite the rage as attractive twist ties to stake or tie plant stems together. They're more colorful than the little green twisties you normally use to stake plants, and represent different animals.



Along with Twisty Flamingo and Twisty Frog, there's Twisty Duck, which your children or grandchildren will delight in seeing. They're made of soft vinyl, similar to the famous Gumby toy, and can be reused many times. They're available in the garden department at Wal-Mart stores for \$1.49 for a set of three. Probably Orchard's and Woolworths will have them too.

~ Crabgrass controls: How to beat this annual weed ~

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

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

~ Pull those dandelion blossoms! ~

As you head out the driveway on your way to work or shopping, you've probably noticed a yellow dandelion blossom or two. Make a note to at least pull the blossom off before it goes to seed, preventing it from spreading all across your lawn. If you have a dandelion stub, dig up the whole plant, or hit it with RoundUp.

\*\*\*\*

You've probably wondered where I get all the material you see

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in this column. Well, I keep my eyes open and read a lot. Many items are extracted from the Living section of the Mercury News on Friday morning. You can also get helpful hints about home repair as well as gardening at gardening.todayshomeowner.com.

Next month I'll talk about how to get the best tomatoes from your garden.

## A cool option for summer

*by Willow Glen Homeowners Association*

Encore Pool is a neighborhood Cabana Club located at 265 Bluefield Drive, on the corner of Rosenbaum Avenue and Bluefield Drive. Our pool season begins the first Saturday in May and we remain open until the middle of October. We invite you to join Encore Pool and enjoy a summer of pool fun!



Encore Pool is a family-oriented cabana club with one large adult pool and a smaller wading pool for toddlers to enjoy. We offer BBQ areas as well as an

abundance of lounges and tables with seating, allowing our members a relaxed setting to socialize with family and friends.

Encore Pool offers a variety of social activities throughout the summer season. We start with our annual Opening Day festivities. Other summer activities include a Fourth of July Watermelon Eating Contest, Movie Nights, Kids' Day, afternoon Ice Cream Social, and Pizza Night.

Our Cabana Club also offers Swim Lessons for all ages. We have experienced and enthusiastic swim teachers who hold swim lessons during the summer months. Our pool is fully staffed with certified lifeguards and attendants who are eager to answer all questions and ensure a safe and comfortable pool setting for our members.

The Willow Glen Homeowners Association was established in 1972. It oversees this pool facility. The Association consists of 295 homeowners. They offer 65 Associate Memberships to those living outside our neighborhood.

Encore Pool has reasonably priced Associate Memberships available for the upcoming 2009 season. Membership and swim lesson information is available online at their website, [www.wghoencorepool.com](http://www.wghoencorepool.com). You may also call our pool

manager, **Jackie Albin** at (408) 226-6445. She will be happy to answer any questions you have.

## VEP annual membership drive ended

*by Marilyn Rodgers and Jeri Arstingstall*

VEP's annual membership drive ended April 1<sup>st</sup>. **Thank you all so much for your continuing support.**

This year we celebrate 40 years of continuous commitment to our community. It could not happen without your support. Although we need to set a date to finalize our membership drive (and to purge our member database to keep it current), we accept memberships throughout the year. If you have friends or neighbors who have forgotten to send in their memberships/renewals, encourage them to do so.

Membership information and renewal forms can be found on the VEP website at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net). We have many exciting community events planned for the next several months. Joining VEP is the best way to stay informed.

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

*Note: none of the following information will be shared with any third party.*

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

Last name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

First name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

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

Comments): \_\_\_\_\_

**Can you give VEP a few volunteer hours?  Yes  No**

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 \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you prefer to get newsletters by email?  Yes  No**

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

Thank you!

[Application is also at [www.vepca.net/membership.htm](http://www.vepca.net/membership.htm)]

# **Invite your neighbors to join VEP**

## VEP's March general meeting

by Dave Noel

VEP's March 24<sup>th</sup> general meeting was well attended and covered many topics.

Vice President **Marilyn Rodgers** opened the meeting with a moving tribute to long time VEP supporter and advertiser **Normandin Chrysler Jeep**. Representing Normandin Chrysler Jeep was fourth generation proprietor **Lon Normandin**. Marilyn presented a plaque to Lon in recognition and appreciation of all that Normandin's has done for VEP since 1969.



VEP's Marilyn Rodgers presents a plaque to Lon Normandin acknowledging Normandin Chrysler-Jeep's 40 years of support.

\*\*\*\*

Our second topic was Disaster and Emergency Preparedness. Perennial San Jose volunteer **Alex Fraser** provided a riveting presentation on the types of disasters and emergencies that we all need to be prepared for. Alex cited several examples of local events that illustrate how close to home emergencies can be. He also pointed out popular misconceptions. For example, Hollywood has taught us that nighttime house fires provide enough light to find an exit, but the opposite is true. Over half of deaths from a disaster happen after the disaster. Many of these deaths could be prevented with training and supplies.

To learn more, attend the **District 10 Disaster and Emergency Preparedness Conference** on April 25<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 4 pm at Pioneer High School. Also, plan to attend one of several two-hour emergency preparedness courses that VEP board member **Helen Castillo** plans to hold for VEP members this spring and summer

Remember this: For faster 911 response from a cell phone in San Jose, dial 277-8911. This routes your call directly to San Jose's 911 call center instead of the CHP in Vallejo.

\*\*\*\*

Our next presenter, **Tim Lynds** of **Rebuilding Together** was unable to attend due to illness and will present at our April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting instead. VEP past president **Dave Noel** provided a brief overview of Rebuilding Together's mission and search for volunteers and residents who need their services.

\*\*\*\*

**Marilyn Rodgers** provided a membership drive update and reminded members that our membership drive ends on April 1<sup>st</sup>, and renewals are due by then to continue receiving the VEP News.

\*\*\*\*

VEP Past President **Dave Fadness** provided a brief overview of the upcoming Memorial Day Parade & Festival. In addition to needing volunteers, we are also seeking anyone with special talents who may be interested in participating in our

event.

\*\*\*\*

Our next presenter was **Jim Cogan**, long-time president of the Silicon Valley chapter of **Crime Stoppers**. Crime Stoppers' mission is simple: cash rewards for tips on crime. Crime Stoppers has been tremendously and increasingly successful. The main advantage for many tipsters is that they can report their tips anonymously. Conviction rates from Crime Stoppers tips are in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Crime Stoppers is reaching out to kids via texting with "Scholastic Crime Stoppers" and reaching out to construction workers with "Construction Crime Stoppers". Since all reward funds come from donations, Crime Stoppers has several community outreach fundraising programs.

\*\*\*\*

**Marilyn Rodgers** then presented an update on VEP's efforts to obtain 501(c)3 non profit organization status. Prior to submitting the application, several changes are needed to our Constitution and Bylaws, as proposed in the March VEP News. The section on "Political Limitation" may still need minor rewording. The following motion was unanimously approved:

*"Approve the C&BL changes proposed in the March VEP newsletter, and pre-approve any subsequent minor changes identified during application processing as needed to gain 501 (c)3 status, given that those changes do not materially change our charter, and that any changes will be brought to the membership for affirmation at the next general meeting."*

\*\*\*\*

The next topic of discussion was a list of inputs VEP board members proposed for inclusion in city councilwoman **Nancy Pyle's** Five Year Plan For San Jose District 10. Nancy's chief of staff Kathy Sutherland represented Nancy. Members learned that Nancy had formally released her Five Year Plan recently, so it was too late to make changes.

Kathy pointed out that our recommendations for Goal #2 "Help San Jose become a force for youth" were consistent with several existing vocational programs.



Nancy's plan consisted of five overarching goals. VEP proposed two more: "Maintain and improve our urban infrastructure to support business development and excellent quality of life for residents in District 10", and "Promote interaction, volunteer involvement, pride, and preparedness in our community". Kathy explained that Nancy didn't want to add additional goals to her Five Year Plan, but the sub-items

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 Gunderson High School



listed under our proposed new goals are things that Nancy already generally supports.

\*\*\*\*

**Kathy Sutherland** then provided an update on improvements at Vista Park. Due to an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) complaint, it is necessary to make some curb cuts from the parking lot into the play areas. That project will require parking lot repairs, then slurry seal and re-striping. The money to do this will come from the project to build a Vista Park Community Room breezeway gate which is delayed anyway due to design issues. Future funds have been identified to complete the gate.

\*\*\*\*

VEP board members and Martial Cottle Park Master Plan Task Force members **Marilyn Rodgers** and **Adina Pierce** provided a brief update of the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan process. A preferred design will be presented to the County Parks and Recreation Commission on April 1<sup>st</sup>. This is the first of many steps in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process.

\*\*\*\*

VEP community beautification volunteer **Dave Fadness** relayed sad news that the city has adopted a new policy to remove landscaping that requires ongoing maintenance. For example, some landscaping has already been removed from the median of Branham Lane. The city now has only four people to maintain street landscaping. Weed spraying is down to once a year, if that.



Dave would like to mobilize several volunteers to adopt VEP area street landscaping to avoid having the city tear it out. Among the landscaping at risk is that along the south side of Branham Lane between Highway 87 and Pearl Avenue and along the south side of Branham Lane near New Compton Drive.

### Helpful City of San Jose phone numbers

*By Dave Noel*

- Abandoned Shopping Carts \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 535-3500
- Abandoned Vehicle on street \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 277-5305
- Barking, Injured, or Stray Dogs \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 578-7297
- Blighted Properties \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 277-4528
- Household Hazardous Waste Disposal \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 299-7300
- Graffiti 24-hour Hotline \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 277-2758
- Inoperable Vehicle on Private Property \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 277-5305
- Potholes \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 277-4373

- Recyclables Scavenging \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 277-4528
- San Jose City Hall Customer Service \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 535-3500
- Street Light Repair \_\_\_\_\_ (408) 277-5517
- Vista Park Community Room Reservations (408) 268-2053

### San Jose's rules for "parking strip" trees

*by Dave Noel*

Here's a quick reference to the city's rules regarding street trees:

#### PERMITS:

- ☺ You need a permit to plant or trim a street tree
- ☺ The permit is free
- ☺ A permit is not required if you use a pre-approved tree service (see website)

#### VERTICAL CLEARANCES:

- ☺ 8-feet (minimum) from sidewalk to canopy
- ☺ 13-feet (minimum) from street to canopy

#### PLANTING CLEARANCES:

- ☺ See City Code #13.28.190, reprinted in the May 2006 VEP News (and available at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)).

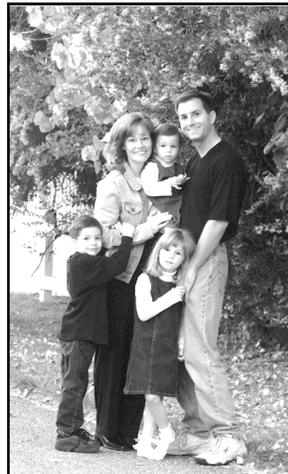
#### FOR MORE INFO:

- ☺ Go to [www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation)
- ☺ Contact City Arborist Ralph Mize during business hours at 277-2756 or [ralph.mize@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:ralph.mize@sanjoseca.gov).



#### REMEMBER: DO NOT TOP TREES

Topping trees is very harmful to proper 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 looks very unnatural as it matures over time, and is weaker than slower growth. For more information, see your April 2006 VEP News (available at [www.vepca.org](http://www.vepca.org)).



*Precious Moments In Time*



Family and Children Portraits



Weddings and Special Events



Photography *by* Jeri Arstingstall

★ VEP MEMBER ★

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# VEP Community Calendar

## April + May 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 19	20	21 VEP Memorial Day planning meeting at 7:30 pm, Vista Park	22 Secretaries' Day	23	24	25 <b>District 10 Emergency Preparedness Conference</b> , 9am – 4pm, Pioneer High School
26	27	28 VEP meeting at 7:30 pm, Vista Park	29	30	May 1	2 VEP Community Garage Sale & E-Waste Event
3	4 VEP Exec Board meeting at 7:30 pm, Vista Park	5	6 VEP Memorial Day planning meeting at 7:30 pm, Vista Park	7	8	9
10 Mothers' Day	11	12 VEP Memorial Day planning meeting at 7:30 pm, Vista Park	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special California Election today!</li> <li>• VEP Memorial Day planning meeting at 7:30 pm, Vista Park</li> </ul>	20	21	22	23
24	25 VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival; parade starts at 11 am, Vista Park	26 VEP meeting at 7:30 pm, Vista Park	27	28	29	30 <b>2-hr Emergency Preparedness Class</b> , 9am - 11am, Vista Park Community Room.

# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158

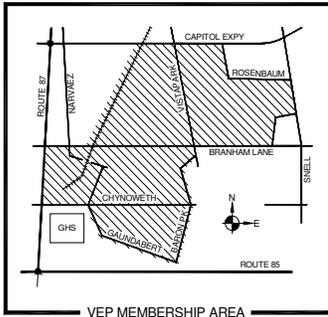
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance 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

President	Vacant		
Vice President	Marilyn Rodgers	225-7553	mrodgersm@aol.com
Secretary	Adina Pierce	362-0937	adinap@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Ginger Cardona	227-0222	cardona@sbcglobal.net
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Check our website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

Community Room

Vista Park

in the

7:30 pm

April 28th Meeting

Be sure to attend VEP's