

VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

September 2009

VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday
► September 22, 2009 ◀

Vista Park Community Room
475 Hyde Park Drive

AGENDA

★ Swine Flu: Possible Pandemic

Are You and Your Family Prepared? ★

A presentation by Marlene Landau, RN
Manager, Health & Family Support Program
San Jose Unified School District

★ VEP Business ★

Advertiser Appreciation
Precious Moments In Time

Membership to Approve
2009-2010 Goals and Objectives
2009-2010 Budget

Introduction of VEP Board of Directors

★ Announcements ★

Emergency Preparedness 2-hr Classes
Martial Cottle Park Master Plan

★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

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

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

VEP's September Meeting

by Marilyn Rodgers

Topics that are planned for the September general membership meeting:

► **SWINE FLU – Are You and Your Family Prepared?** Featured guest speaker will be Marlene Landau, RN, Manager of Health & Family Support Program for the San Jose Unified School District. She will present an overview of the Swine Flu, including tips on prevention, what to do if your family becomes infected, immunizations, and recommendations for all groups by age and health status. As a school nurse she will also provide

information on school recommendations and policies for students and their families.

► **VEP Business – Advertiser Appreciation – Precious Moments in Time.** VEP will be recognizing and thanking Jeri Arstingstall for her many years of advertising support to VEP.

2009-2010 Goals and Objectives – President Marilyn Rodgers will present the G&O for the coming year.

Budget for 2009-2010 - Treasurer Ginger Cardona will present the projected Budget for 2009-2010. This is the first budget under a new fiscal year as approved by the members in the revised Constitution and Bylaws. Copies of the budget will be available at the meeting. If you would like a copy prior to the general meeting, please contact Ginger at 408/227-0222 or cardona@sbcglobal.net or Marilyn Rodgers at 408/225-7553 or MrodgersRN@aol.com.

Members will be asked to approve the proposed goals and objectives, and the budget for the coming year.

Introduction of the VEP Board of Directors.

► **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.

We look forward to seeing you, your family, your friends, and your neighbors at our **September 22nd** meeting. Please join us!

2009-2010 Goals and Objectives

1. Continue to improve our community and our association.

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

a. Initiate a survey of members to determine level of satisfaction with organization's priorities and projects.

B. Leadership: Encourage regular turn-over of VEP Officers to impart broad, area-wide membership representation.

a. Develop written guidelines on roles, functions, and projects to provide the basis for a structured orientation for new Board members.

C. Membership: Monitor changes in paid VEP membership.

a. Contact and encourage new residents to join VEP.

D. Meetings: **Monitor and increase attendance** at VEP meetings and events, **with a goal of 40 attendees average per membership meeting.**

E. Fiscal Health: Continue to maintain VEP's positive fiscal condition.

a. Investigate and foster the use of Grants (and any other possible sources) to increase funding available for VEP Projects

2009 is VEP's 40th year!

b. Continue work toward incorporating VEP as a 501 (c)(3) Nonprofit organization.

c. Initiate annual internal audit of financial records.

d. Review VEP's insurance needs, and make recommendations to the membership.

F. Communication:

a. Continue publishing the VEP NEWS nine times per year.

b. Monitor and increase the usage of the VEP Website.

c. Utilize e-mail to communicate important VEP business with members.

d. Maintain relationships with local media outlets **and electronic entities to publicize VEP activities, including submitting articles for publication about VEP.**

G. Strive to increase VEP's public and social recognition.

a. Increase VEP visibility at appropriate events

H. Volunteerism: Increase opportunities for VEP members to volunteer by:

a. Developing ad hoc committees that will expand leadership opportunities and cultivate new talent for future VEP Board of Directors positions.

b. Maintaining a VEP database of volunteers by activity (including general meeting attendance) with the intent of using it as a reference for future VEP officer grooming and increasing participation in future VEP volunteer activities.

c. Developing and advertising additional volunteer activities, making use of the database.

I. Develop a values and mission statement to support the purpose of the organization.

2. Promote Community Interaction, Pride, and Preparedness.

A. Encourage member participation in neighborhood safety programs, crime prevention, and disaster/emergency preparedness.

a. Continue to support residents in community education for Emergency preparedness and initiate a Community-wide "block captain" program.

B. Organize and encourage participation in pruning, community cleanup, and maintenance projects.

a. Encourage individual member "adoption" of parks, streets, and smaller identified areas within the community.

C. Identify and encourage graffiti removal when/where ever it occurs in and around our area.

D. Continue to sponsor, promote, and underwrite **community-wide annual events for all residents, such as:**

a. Memorial Day Parade and Festival

b. Faire - Home Faire, Sustainability Faire, or Health & Fitness Faire

c. Garage-sale, e-Waste Recycle, and Donation event

d. "Santa in the Park" Holiday event

E. Continue to offer at least one Community Service Award acknowledging outstanding volunteer service by high school Seniors.

F. Continue to work on improving marketing and self promotion material for VEP.

3. Work to Assure Local Government and Businesses' Responsiveness and Accountability to VEP Members.

A. Sponsor Election Forums that heighten our members' awareness of candidates or ballot issues, and encourages their participation as informed citizens and voters.

B. Work with City/County government and developers to Install and/or maintain public landscaping in the VEP Membership area.

a. Determine the type of projects/activities that are safe and appropriate for volunteer participation.

C. Work with the City to provide traffic safety measures on VEP area streets as needed

a. Continue to monitor community impacts including increased traffic and parking.

D. Encourage, monitor, and react to plans for urban development, transportation, libraries, parks and other public infrastructure changes in and around our membership area.

a. Organize and communicate community priorities and concerns.

4. Monitor, Create, and Maintain High-Quality Public Services for the VEP Area

A. Promote, **participate, and advocate for VEP members and residents** in the planning and development of the Martial-Cottle Regional Park (Lester Property).

a. Upon completion of the County master plan, consider initiating a volunteer foundation, e.g. "Friends of Martial Cottle Park".

B. Continue VEP member involvement during the design and construction process of widening Branham between Vistapark and Snell Avenue, and other improvements between Vistapark and Narvaez.

C. Work with the City to develop and maintain our Neighborhood Parks.

D. Continue to work with the City to implement the master plan for the immediate area surrounding the Vista Park Community Room and secure funding for the plan's implementation.

D. Monitor opportunities to build a city park at Capitol/ Narvaez.

E. Work for real improvements in traffic level of service at Capitol/Narvaez/northbound 87 onramp.

F. Work with the City to ensure that impacts of any proposed development along the Guadalupe Corridor are fully mitigated.

Thank You to VEP Advertisers

by Marilyn Rodgers

VEP wants to say **thank you to our advertisers**. Several of our advertisers have been loyal supporters of VEP 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 is developing additional opportunities to increase our advertisers' visibility with our members. These include spotlighting one business each month at our general membership meeting, with an accompanying article 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.

**VEP helps you solve
community problems**

May General Meeting

By Adina Pierce

Ten firefighters and the Captain from the San Jose Fire Department, Station 13 came out to Vista Park for VEP's May 26 general meeting. Captain Mike Woodworth and his team talked to the members about fire safety, what to do in an emergency, and spoke about the various procedures for his department.



VEP Member Mike Bousman got to try on the full firefighter gear

After the meeting inside, meeting attendees went outside to the parking lot to see the various types of fire trucks that are used at Station 13. The firefighters did a demonstration on how they check vitals on a patient (blood pressure, EKG), and also showed us the various technologies available to them on the trucks.

Meeting attendees all received the "Vial of L.I.F.E." which is Lifesaving Information For Emergencies. It's a place for you to store important medical information that emergency medical personnel need in a time of crisis. You can pick up the Vial of L.I.F.E. kit at any San Jose Fire Station. For more information, visit <http://www.sjfd.org/vial.asp>.

Following the Fire Department activities, VEP Treasurer **Ginger Cardona** presented our financial year end report, and VEP President **Marilyn Rodgers** presented a brief report on our performance against our Goals and Objectives for the program year.

VEP member **Stephen Kinsey** reported that the Vista Park Community Room men's room was recently severely graffitied.

We concluded the meeting with our 2009-2010 officer elections. The proposed slate of seven directors was elected unanimously. Congratulations to **Marilyn Rodgers, Ginger Cardona, Marlene McCaslin, Susan Iverson, Adina Pierce, Helen Castillo and Debra Suydam**. Per our new Constitution and ByLaws, our new directors will select among themselves to fill our officer positions of president, vice president and treasurer.



Meeting attendees check out the fire trucks



VEP Member Steve Kinsey volunteered to be a patient for the EKG demonstration

Dig In & Help Your Community Grow

By Our City Forest

Our City Forest's Tree Amigo training course will begin September 30th. Receive free training and join a team of dedicated volunteers.



Our City Forest offers a free 18-hour course designed to educate and empower their volunteers. Taught by certified Arborists, attendees will learn to:

- Coordinate tree plantings
- Conduct planting demonstrations
- Coach volunteers
- Provide basic tree care
- Prune properly

The training course is intended for citizens interested in assisting groups organize and carry out tree planting and tree care projects throughout the San Jose area. Graduates of the training become official "Tree Amigos" - Our City Forest's specially trained volunteer corps.

Beginning September 30th, the course will consist of: Five (5) classroom sessions at the OCF Office - 151 Mission Ave. San Jose 95110 - on Wednesdays 6:00pm-8:00pm (September 30th, October 7th, 14th, and 21st)

Three (3) field sessions at various locations in San Jose on Saturdays 9:00am-12:00pm (Oct. 3rd, 10th, and 17th)

No prior experience is necessary! Tree Amigos are expected to attend monthly meetings and volunteer one weekend a month planting trees, coaching volunteers, conducting community presentations and more.

For more info and to RSVP please call (408) 99-TREES x105 or e-mail volunteer@ourcityforest.org

Be a VEP volunteer!

Meet the VEP Board of Directors for 2009-2010

By Marilyn Rodgers

Marilyn Rodgers, President. Marilyn has previously served as Vice President and President. A registered nurse, she works part time as a healthcare career consultant for a firm that assists adults seeking employment and/or transitioning into second careers. As Marilyn has had a long and varied healthcare career, she utilizes that experience in her own business focusing on risk management, patient care and safety issues. This expertise also includes developing effective employee incentive and rewards programs as targeted goals are achieved. She and her husband, Don, have been VEP residents for 30 years, moving to South San Jose after both graduated from San Jose State University. She is concerned about maintaining the attractiveness and safety of the neighborhood, particularly in the areas of traffic/speeding vehicles, and disaster preparedness. As a homeowner, whose property is adjacent to the Lester property, she actively participates as the VEP Alternate on the Regional Advisory Task Force for the Martial Cottle Park master planning process. Other local volunteer activities include Adopt-A-Street (cul-de-sac on Vistapark Drive), and City of San Jose Anti-Litter Program. Marilyn is a member of several local high school and college/university advisory boards, as well as boards of both state and national healthcare organizations and foundations.

Ginger Cardona, Treasurer. This is Ginger's fifth year serving as Treasurer. Prior to that, she served as VEP's Secretary for three years. Ginger and her family are long time residents of San Jose. She and her husband have three children. Ginger is employed as a Product Manager for a medical software company. She originally became active in VEP and the Board of Directors when high-density development was proposed for the (then) golf driving range on Capitol Expressway and Vista Park Drive – across from where she lives. She has been a staunch and effective advocate for improvements to sound walls and landscaping there. She also coordinates the activities for the annual VEP Neighborhood Garage Sale, and has been a very active volunteer for the annual Memorial Day event.

Adina Pierce, Secretary and Webmaster. This is Adina's second year as serving as VEP's Secretary, and the fourth year as the Webmaster. She has lived in the VEP neighborhood since November 2005, but has lived within three miles of the area her entire life. She met her husband Russ at Pioneer High School and has been married for 12 years. They have two children – Juliana (age 8) and Kevin (age 4). After graduating from San Jose State University, she worked at Hewlett Packard for nine years, and for the past three years has worked for Cisco as a web developer. Her main interest in the VEP community is the development of the Martial Cottle Park. Since her family lives on the edge of the property, she is passionate about providing input and feedback for future plans. She represents VEP as a Task Force Member for the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan for the County of Santa Clara. In her spare time, Adina enjoys digital photography, scrapbooking, cruising, cooking, and swimming with her kids.

Susan Iverson, VEP Newsletter Editor. This is Susan's second year serving as the Newsletter Editor. She was born and raised in the Bay Area, and attended local elementary, high school, and college. Susan, and her husband, Rob, have three children ranging from 19 to 23 years of age. Susan, whose education is in civil engineering and business management, currently works as a Project Manager for

Turner Construction. Her husband, Rob, is a science teacher at Gunderson High School. She became involved in VEP by responding to an article recruiting a new editor. Her main focus with VEP is to build community through social events and neighborhood communication.

Helen Castillo, Director. Helen has lived in the VEP area for over 30 years, first with her parents, and now with her husband and children. The Castillo's have four children – two in college and two in high school. Helen is a real estate agent with Ventura Barnett Properties. She plans to complete work on a book called "Hope's Choices", a motivational book on goal setting. She wants to donate the proceeds from the book to charities, in honor of her mother (whose name was Hope). Helen is an enthusiastic volunteer and as Volunteer Coordinator, has been very active in recruiting and coordinating volunteer activities for neighborhood-wide flyer distributions and the Memorial Day event. She also is providing leadership in disaster preparedness in the VEP neighborhood.

Debra Suydam, Director. Debra is a long time VEP volunteer. She has previously served as both Hospitality Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator. She currently coordinates VEP's participation in the annual San Jose Daffodil planting, as well as assisting with the monthly VEP newsletter mailing preparation. Debra has her own business which develops and designs laboratories. She is also a very active volunteer with the Humane Society.

With the approved changes in the VEP Constitution and By-laws, past presidents no longer have voting rights on the Board of Directors. They do however continue to be active and valued organizational members.

Jeri Arstingstall, Past President. Jeri served as President of VEP for two years, and as Vice President for one year. She is a professional photographer who is celebrating her 19th anniversary as owner of Precious Moments in Time. She, and husband Walt, met 29 years ago while both were working for the (then) Frontier Village Amusement Park. Jeri manages the VEP membership database. She is a very energetic and involved community leader, who enjoys volunteering and helping others.

Dave Noel, Past President. Dave's service on the VEP Board of Directors began in 1999. He first served as Vice President for two years, and then as President for three consecutive years. He remains very active, leading our Community Service Awards program, and various other activities throughout the year. He also contributes several articles for the VEP News each month, and serves as co-editor. Dave has been a local resident since 1971, taking time off between 1979 and 1983 to study Electrical Engineering at Cal Poly Pomona. He briefly settled in Santa Cruz, before returning to this area in 1987. Dave and his wife Maureen have been married 25 years, and have two sons. Dave's "day job" is Customer Service Manager for Aeroflex Cupertino, a manufacturer of electronic test equipment for broadband applications such as satellite communications and military radios.

Dave Fadness, Past President. Dave has been actively involved in VEP since March 1974. He served as President in 1976-77, and again from 1983-85. Dave was Vice President from 1981-1983. Dave also served as the VEP's News Editor from 1979-1981, again in 1987 and 1988, and continuously from 1992-2008. He coordinates many of the VEP beautification projects, and is chairman of VEP's annual Memorial Day Parade and Festival. Dave currently represents District 10 on San Jose's Envision 2040 General Plan Task Force, and is

Chairman of the County Roads Commission. Volunteer community service has always been an important and very satisfying part of his everyday life.

VEP to Plant Daffodils on November 7

By Dave Noel and Debra Suydam

Saturday November 7th is Daffodil Day in San Jose. VEP will participate again this year in this annual city-wide event sponsored by *Keep San Jose Beautiful*. We will plant 250 daffodils, and 100 each of additional native bulb species.



Depending on how many volunteers we get, we may also tackle additional neighborhood beautification and cleanup projects on the same day.

Watch your October VEP News for more information including when and where to meet. This is a perfect opportunity for high school students to earn community service hours, and we'll be happy to sign their service worksheets.

For more information, and to let us know you'll be able to help, please contact Debra Suydam at 408-972-4231. We look forward to seeing you there!

Neighborhood Developments

By Dave Noel

Arco Station: The Arco station on Pearl Ave at Branham Lane has applied for a Conditional Use Permit to demolish existing buildings and construct new buildings, canopy, and allow off-sale of alcoholic beverages on their 1.28 gross acre site.

Branham Lane: Branham Lane will be repaved next year from Almaden Expressway to Pearl Avenue using federal stimulus funds.

VEP's 25th Annual Community Service Awards

By Dave Noel

As the 2008-2009 school year came to a close, VEP proudly presented our annual Community Service Awards at the Senior Awards nights of Andrew Hill and Henry Gunderson high schools. This was VEP's 25th consecutive year of granting stipends for post-secondary or vocational training to graduating high school seniors with exemplary records of volunteer community service.

Congratulations to our 2009 winners, who each received \$1,000 towards their ongoing education:

Andrew Hill: Linda Phan.

Over the last six years, Linda volunteered over 2100 hours tutoring at Fair Middle School, and volunteering at Sequoia and Stanford Hospitals, and Second Harvest Food Bank. Linda is now attending the University of California San Diego, and majoring in Psychology. Her ultimate goal is to become a Pediatrician.



Gunderson: Carol

Vo. In her high school career, Carol volunteered over 400 hours to groups including the Vietnamese American Center, the Gunderson Link Crew, the Gunderson Varsity boy's basketball team, and the Key Club. Carol is now attending the University of California San Diego, and majoring in Mechanical Engineering.



At Large: We did not grant an At-Large award this year. We did not receive any At-Large applications.

I'd like to thank our 2009 Community Service Award Selection Committee members: **Lu Anne Behringer, Dave Fadness, Aiko Fadness, Adina Pierce, Jeri Arstingstall, Louise, Marilyn Rodgers, Stephen Kinsey, and Debra Suydam.**

I'd also like to thank our 2009 award presenters, VEP Past President **Stephen Kinsey** (Andrew Hill) and VEP President **Marilyn Rodgers** (Gunderson).

Last but not least, many thanks to **Joe Ortega** at Andrew Hill and **Stephanie Heuer** at Gunderson for administering the nomination process at their respective schools.

If you know a high school senior with an outstanding volunteer record, make sure he or she knows about our award. Application forms are released in late February, applications are due in late April, and awards are presented in late May and early June.

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Introducing the Class of 2013

By Dave Noel

Each summer **Beloit College** in Wisconsin issues their Mindset List. A creation of Beloit's Keefer Professor of the Humanities **Tom McBride** and Public Affairs Director **Ron Nief**, it looks at the cultural touchstones that have shaped the lives of today's first-year students, most of whom were born in 1991.

As the class of 2013 heads off to college with another new host of *The Tonight Show*, enjoy a sampling of this year's list. For the full list, visit www.beloit.edu/mindset.

1. Pan American Airways, Michael Landon, Dr. Seuss, Gene Roddenberry, and Freddie Mercury have always been dead.
2. Dan Rostenkowski, Jack Kevorkian, and Mike Tyson have always been felons.
3. The Green Giant has always been Shrek, not the big guy picking vegetables.
4. They have never used a card catalog to find a book.
5. Margaret Thatcher has always been a former prime minister.
8. Tattoos have always been very chic and highly visible.
10. Rap music has always been main stream.
17. They have never had to "shake down" an oral thermometer.
20. American students have always lived anxiously with high-stakes educational testing.
22. State abbreviations in addresses have never had periods.
23. The European Union has always existed.
27. Christopher Columbus has always been getting a bad rap.
31. There has always been a Cartoon Network.
36. We have always watched wars, coups, and police arrests unfold on television in real time.
37. Amateur radio operators have never needed to know Morse code.
38. Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Latvia, Georgia, Lithuania, and Estonia have always been independent nations.
44. There have always been flat screen televisions.
50. Everyone has always known what the evening news was before the Evening News came on.
56. The status of gays in the military has always been a topic of political debate.
63. There has always been a computer in the Oval Office.
64. CDs have never been sold in cardboard packaging.
75. There has always been blue Jell-O.

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CRIME STOPPERS

Recycling – Supersize It

By Dave Noel

Do you often have more green waste than will fit in your green waste container, or bulky recyclables that won't quite fit in your recycle container? There is no charge to upgrade to a larger size for either of these containers.



Recyclables and green waste containers are available in 32, 64 and 96 gallon sizes. Green waste containers cost \$4 per month regardless of size. For more information, call the number on your garbage bill, or call the city help line at (408) 535-3500.

www.crimereports.com

By Dave Noel and Adina Pierce

To check up on crime in your area, visit www.crimereports.com. You can enter an address and get a map that shows recent crimes reported in that area, including 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.

For your convenience, we have links to [crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com) and California's Megan's Law website on our homepage, www.vepca.net.

Emergency Preparedness – 2 hour Class

By Helen Castillo and Marilyn Rodgers

An additional session of the very popular 2hour free class on Emergency Preparedness is scheduled for Wednesday evening, September 30th beginning at 7pm. It will once again be held at the Vista Park Community Room, 475 Hyde Park. Those VEP members who had already attended this informative and helpful class, highly recommend it to everyone! Please contact Helen Castillo at 408/981-5902 or hc Castillo@vbprop.com for additional information, and to register.



Martial Cottle Park Update

By Adina Pierce

On September 2, 2009 at the 2009 California State Fair in Sacramento, Martial Cottle Park received recognition for preserving agriculture in the Santa Clara Valley from the California Agricultural Heritage Club. This club recognizes agricultural family enterprises and agri-businesses that have been in operation for 100, 125, and 150 years or more.. On behalf of the ranch, the Santa Clara County Parks Department accepted an award for both the 100 year and 125 year recognition.

For the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan, things are moving along with a lot of work behind the scenes to prepare for the draft Master Plan/State General Plan report and a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Currently staff and consultants are working on preparation of these reports.

The next task force meeting will be held sometime in the Fall, although no date has been set yet.

For more information, please contact Adina Pierce at 408/362-0937 or adinap@yahoo.com or Marilyn Rodgers at 408/225-7553 or MRodgersRN@aol.com

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
Graffiti 24-hour Hotline	(408) 277-2758
Household Hazardous Waste Disposal	(408) 299-7300
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

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Chynoweth-Thornwood Connection Preferred

By Dave Fadness



A dozen years ago, Arcadia Development proposed building a large commercial/high-density residential project on their vacant parcel of land across from the car wash on Almaden Expressway, at Cherry/Chynoweth Avenues. The city required building a \$6-million bridge across the Guadalupe River as a condition for development. Arcadia balked. The project went back into hibernation, where it remains today.

The plan then was to extend Chynoweth easterly across the river to connect at Winfield Boulevard, bridging between the two existing ends of Chynoweth Avenue. An engineering study showed very serious traffic impacts at Chynoweth/Winfield. VEP's concerns for neighbors in that vicinity extended to well-founded fear about potential cut-through traffic pouring through our community past Gunderson High School and along Hyde Park Drive.

VEP opposed the Chynoweth/Chynoweth connection, a plan that no longer made sense after the city decided (on our request) to eliminate its crossing the Lester Property, making Chynoweth a permanent dead-end street.

We proposed to instead have a bridge connect Chynoweth easterly from Almaden Expressway across the Guadalupe River to connect at Thornwood Drive, the street that runs behind Oakridge Mall. There's a traffic signal there now on Winfield Boulevard, just south of the Route 85 overcrossing..

Since then, the city has adopted a preferred alignment that will extend Chynoweth easterly to a new intersection with Sanchez Drive. If and when it's built, a bridge would extend Thornwood Drive westerly from Winfield across the Guadalupe River to connect at Sanchez.

This design was adopted by the City of San Jose Department of Transportation in deference to VEP's concern over neighborhood impacts. Job well done!

Renew your VEP membership today!

Dear VEP Community Association,

By Councilmember Nancy Pyle

On July 28, 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger signed a package of bills to close the State's \$23 billion budget shortfall.

This Fiscal Year 2009-10 State Budget includes actions that will cost the City of San Jose nearly \$100 million in lost funding. The budget also cuts funding to state programs including education, transportation, public safety, recreation and support for people with disabilities and others receiving special assistance.

The State budget borrows \$20 million from the City general fund:

The State's suspension of Proposition 1A will divert \$1.935 billion of local government property tax (8% of total local property tax revenues) in Fiscal Year 2009-10. This diversion will remove \$20 million in funding from the City's general fund which supports local police and fire, parks and transportation. The State must repay the amount shifted, with interest, no later than June 30, 2013.

The State budget borrows \$62 million from the San Jose Redevelopment Agency:

Redevelopment funds have financed the San Jose Convention Center, HP Pavilion and neighborhood improvement projects. These funds can be used in the future to bring the A's Baseball Team to San Jose and support new companies growing in our City. A similar attempt to "take" redevelopment funds in 2008-09 was found to be unconstitutional, and the California Redevelopment Association is preparing to file another lawsuit to challenge the State's 2009-10 budget action.

Deferred payments will cost the City \$130,000 in lost interest:

The State is deferring payments for the July-December 2009 monthly Highway Users Tax and Proposition 42 funds until January 2010.

Impact to the City of San Jose:

The San Jose City Council unanimously balanced an \$84 million deficit in June of this year. Unfortunately, the additional \$20 million impact to the general fund may put in jeopardy some of the same programs that we were able to save in this year's city budget cycle. We will critically examine all of our planned capital projects using redevelopment funding and determine which projects can be postponed. The City is considering borrowing money to cover the lost revenue until the State pays us back in 2013.

Contact your representatives:

To learn more about the state budget, ask questions or share concerns, please contact your State Assembly or Senate representative. Find your district on my website <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/district10>.

It helps me to know your reactions. Please email me your concerns as well at district10@sanjoseca.gov. Stay tuned and stay well,

September Featured Events at the Pearl Avenue Branch Library

Read a Story to a Canine Friend

Reading to Dogs is a program to help children develop reading skills. This one-to-one activity allows the child to read aloud to a dog without fear of embarrassment. The child will benefit by increased self-confidence, higher self-esteem and a positive attitude toward reading and learning. The dogs participating were trained by Canine Companions for Independence, an organization that trains Assistance Dogs for people with disabilities. These highly trained dogs are calm, focused, people-friendly, very well behaved and can be trusted around children.



Wednesday, September 9 from 4-5:30

Laughter Yoga

Dr. Laugh, takes laughter seriously. His interactive programs are a guaranteed stress-buster, and you'll leave with a truly expanded sense of humor. Dr. Laugh has conducted approximately 400 Laughter Yoga Workshops and approximately 40,000 people have benefited and learned how to be ABC (Always Be Cheerful).

Saturday, September 12 from 1:00-2:00

Small Business Resource Center

Learn about print and electronic resources to start a small business or boost a current business. Discover local agencies that can help your business become successful. Participants can network with other entrepreneurs and listen to presentations from local organizations on a variety of business topics such as online marketing, business plan development, book-keeping, funding sources and more. **This event occurs monthly on the first Tuesday evening from 5-6.**

Friends of the Pearl Avenue Branch Book Sale

The next Huge Book Sale will be held Saturday, October 3. The Pearl Avenue Friends have a full room of wonderful used books covering all genres. There will be many more books available at this event than in the book sale corner in the library. Books will be sold by the inch, plus some special books set on a separate table are priced individually. Come and browse our collection and help support all the wonderful programs at the library. You can also get a smoothie from our new cafe while you're at it. And yes, we are still appreciatively accepting donations.

Saturday, October 3 from 10-5

Story Times:

- **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.**

VEP, truly a friend in need!

Oak Grove School District

By Tony Garcia, Superintendent

Congratulations VEP on your 40th year of serving our community! I would like to start the year off by introducing myself to all of you. I started in Oak Grove in 1975 as a physical education teacher. Over the years I was honored to be selected as the Principal at Hayes School, the Principal at Bernal Intermediate, and then selected Director of Human Resources. Prior to our Board of Trustees promoting me to the Superintendent position, I served Oak Grove as the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. I have served for over 15 years as an administrator in Oak Grove. I am honored and pleased to follow in the footsteps of Manny Barbara and continue to elevate the work he has done in Oak Grove.

Our school year is off to a very positive start. Oak Grove offers parents a variety of choices in their child's education environment. Besides our traditional 16 elementary schools and 3 intermediate schools, we offer INDIGO, a K-7th grade (K-8th in 2010-11) parent participation program based on a constructivist model, an Independent Study Program, a Junior Kindergarten Program for those students whose birthdays fall between August 1st and December 2, the Academy Program as a transition program for intermediate-aged students, as well as small school programs at two of our intermediate sites with a third model in our planning for 2010-11.

Our academic results continue to improve, and we are proud of our staff and their efforts to ensure all students achieve their potential while elevating the success of our students of color in our effort to close the achievement gap. I will share specific results of our assessments in the next issue of VEP.

Oak Grove is not exempt from the fiscal issues facing our State. We have cut over \$9 million over the past couple of years and face an additional \$4.5 million in cuts that must be addressed. Despite all the bad news, we have been able to hold on to our core programs such as extended-day kindergarten, class size reduction in grades K-3, our Visual & Performing Arts Program for grades 4-6, our 7th and 8th after-school sports program, and our intermediate counselors. We will move forward in these tough fiscal times with a fiscally sound direction with student success and safety in mind, and attempt to hold on to our core programs.

I am excited to start my tenure in my new role and as always, please feel free to contact me through the regular channels:

Email: superintendent@ogsd.k12.ca.us

Phone: (408) 227-8300 ext. 202



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SeniorNet Offers Two New Courses, One on Vista

By John McCulloch

Class Sign up is Saturday, October 3, 1 pm

SeniorNet at Willows is pleased to offer a class in Windows Vista. If you have purchased a new computer in the past two years, you have noticed a change in the operating system. You no longer press "Start" in order to turn the computer off. This class covers Windows Explorer and copying or moving files or folders. You can change the size of the icons. We teach you how to activate the three dimension feature used when reviewing files or photos. We teach you how to personalize your desktop in both appearance and color. We show you how to add gadgets such as a clock, calendar, contacts, stock prices, news feeds in the side bar. We show you how to add and remove User Accounts. We show you how to backup your files, perform a system restore, check for desk errors and introduce you to some of the security features of the Vista Operating System.

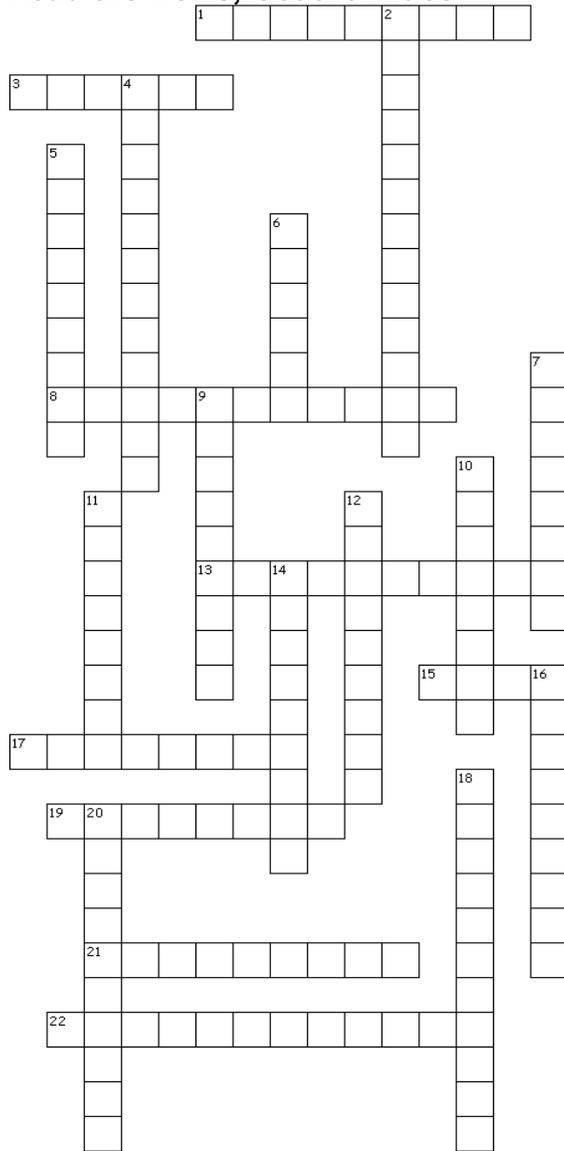
In addition, we have just completed writing a course in Spreadsheets using Microsoft Excel for Office 2007. You can make forms, alphabetize your Christmas lists; plot your stock portfolio changes (you may not have the stomach for it right now.); or use the formulas to predict the future income you will need to pay your bills and taxes. These things and much more!!

If you are interested in these or any of our other courses on digital photography, searching the internet, word processing, e-mail, computer maintenance, file management, genealogy or Introduction to Computers (3 levels). To read more about the classes or our Learning Center, go to www.snlcsj.org and click on Willows. Or you can call 371-3999.

Our Learning Center is located at the Willows Senior Center at 2175 Lincoln Ave. near Curtner Ave. Class registration is Saturday, October 3 at 1 pm for intermediate classes and 2:30 pm for Intro. classes. NOTE: this is a different time from in the past. Each class is \$20 but there is an annual fee to our parent organization of \$40 per year. Our classes are for people over 50.

To see some videos we have made, go to www.youtube.com. Search for "SeniorNet Willows". Three videos should be readily available. One is an introduction. In another, one of our instructors shows how to organize files. And in a third, another instructor demonstrates the use of Photomerge in PhotoShop Elements.

Read the News, Get the Clues!



Across

1. School where Susan's husband teaches (pg 4)
3. Number of years Marilyn has been a VEP resident (pg 4)
8. This will occur at the Narvaez onramp (pg 10)
13. Name of the Harmonizers (pg 13)
15. According to VEP, this is a humble vegetable (pg 11)
17. Class of 2013 has always had a network for these (pg 6)
19. Call 408) 277-4373 to get them fixed (pg 7)
21. SeniorNet class will teach you how to alphabetize this list (pg 9)
22. The May meeting featured _____ (pg 3)

Down

2. The State borrowed \$62 million from this agency (pg 8)
4. Aiko Fadness headed up this Committee for the Memorial Day event (pg 12)
5. Will be planted November 7th (pg 5)
6. Last name of Oak Grove School Superintendent (pg 9)
7. Type of Yoga taught at the Library (pg 8)
9. Ginger's position prior to Treasurer (pg 4)
10. If this happens, Helen will be prepared (pg 4)
11. Debra's Title (pg 4)
12. Linda Phan volunteered as two (pg 5)
14. One of Adina's roles (pg 4)
16. Name of the Our City Forest Training (pg 3)
18. VEP is looking for more (pg 2)
20. The VEP membership will be asked to vote on the Goals and _____ at the General Meeting (pg 1)

Volunteers Clean Up Our Streets

By Dave Fadness

In late June, a small group of VEP volunteers spent many hours cleaning up some of the more unsightly public places in our community. You may have noticed the work they did at these sites:



Removed weeds and trash along the sound wall and in the median island on Chynoweth Avenue, between Pearl and Winfield.

Pruned bushes and removed trash on the south side of Branham Lane, west of New Compton Avenue.

Removed weeds and trash along the wooden fence on the northwest corner of Vistapark Drive at Branham Lane.

Removed a damaged tree and planted a new one in the median island on Vistapark Drive, south of Branham Lane.

Pruned trees and removed weeds in the landscaped cul-de-sac at the south end of Vistapark Drive at Hyde Park Drive.

Pruned all the trees, re-staked some that had been vandalized, removed dead ones, and cleaned-up litter and weeds along the bike/ped path on the south side of Branham Lane, west of Narvaez.

Pruned trees and maintained median landscaping on Narvaez Avenue, south of Branham Lane.

Removed weeds and maintained trees on the northeast corner of Branham Lane and Narvaez Avenue.

Special credit is deserved by **Aiko Fadness**, **Jesse Flora**, **Dave Noel**, and **George Silva** for their hard work at these sites and for ongoing work by **Marilyn Rodgers** (who maintains the Vistapark Drive cul-de-sac), **Bob & Francine Olsen** and **Joyce Chesnos** (who maintain the median island and forested parcel on Branham Lane at Narvaez Avenue), **Tom Richardson** (who waters trees at Parkview School), and **Rob Giannaccaro** (who paints out graffiti *wherever* it occurs). We also appreciate the work of **Phil Bejar**, **Dave Pfaff**, and **Clay Sperry** (who help maintain Vista Park).

We are grateful for the city's prompt response to our requests for removal of debris. However, unless we (volunteers) agree to do the work, the city's new policy is to tear out (yes, *remove*) any landscaping that requires ongoing maintenance. VEP has requested that they contact us first before removing plantings in and around our neighborhoods. We will attempt to line-up volunteers to do the maintenance work.

To keep this from becoming a full time job for a small handful of VEPers, we ask that you offer to help. Although the work will be ongoing, you can target your involvement to specific sites, limit it to a certain number of hours per month, work individually or with a group of other volunteers, do it on regular scheduled intervals or on an as-needed basis, etc.

Without more volunteers, we will not be able to take on more than we already do. The quality and appearance of our neighborhoods will decline accordingly. This will impact your property value—a fact the city apparently fails to understand.

Let us know if you're willing to help. Call me at 578-6428 or email me at drfadness@sbcglobal.net. Please do it today.



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Landscaping at Narvaez Onramp to Route 87

By Dave Fadness

Route 87 was opened to traffic in 1993. Its original plan included landscaping which is now being installed at the northbound, Narvaez Avenue (Capitol Expressway) approach. Sweet Gum and Cherry Plum trees will be planted there as well as erosion control grass covers. The schedule for completion is November 30, 2009.

This landscaping work is being done by the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). VTA will be responsible for its maintenance for three years, at which time it will be turned over to Caltrans.

VTA officials say that this landscaping will have no impact on VEP's hopes for overdue improvements at this heavily congested onramp. Last year, VEP successfully lobbied to get an onramp improvement project listed on VTA's long-range transportation plan (VTP2035); unfortunately, that project is not funded so may not be built for decades to come.

Meanwhile, motorists stalled in backups there each morning will at last have a more attractive view while waiting to get through the ramp meter onto northbound Route 87.

Free Roof Tiles

By Dave Fadness

A neighbor of ours has 120 (Monier brand) red concrete roof tiles left over from an addition to his house. He wants to give them away free to the first taker. These tiles are the kind and color used on William Lyon tract homes in our area. (See photo below).



If you or anyone you know wants some or all these tiles, give Dennis a call (leave a message) at (408) 833-9823. He will even help load them for you! Call him today!

Fall Plantings

By John Marks



September is a good month for planting cool season veggies. including beets, carrots, lettuce, parsnips, certain types of peas, and Swiss chard. Broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi, rutabaga and turnips also do well. Leaves, stems, flower heads and roots are the edible portions of these versatile vegetables, depending on the species.

Anything grown from seed (most of the above) can usually be started in August or September. Those bought as nursery-grown seedlings are usually better transplanted in September, since the same warm weather that stimulates fast seen germination can cause tender, thirsty seedlings to wilt or burn.

Root crops, such as carrots and parsnips require full sun, sandy or loamy soil, and regular irrigation. When sowing carrot seeds keep the soil moist and never let a crust form on top, or the seeds have difficulty sprouting (start indoors?). Unfortunately, parsnips never get as much good P.R. as their orange cousins. Parsnips' creamy white to yellow roots have a unique, mild flavor and can be baked, fried, mashed, or cooked in soups or stews. Cold weather makes them sweeter.

Another favorite is the humble beet. For absolute cut beauty and flavor, go for the Chioggia, also called Bull's Eye, an unusual Italian heirloom beet with concentric white and red rings inside. Albina Verduna is a sweet white beet that grows well here, and Sangria is a classic deep red, like the wine. Because it develops its shape early, Sangria also makes a good "baby beet" when pulled early.

Swiss chard, a leafy vegetable, is actually a type of beet without the tasty bulbous root, and is beautiful on the dinner table served raw, steamed, or stir-fried. It's also an attention getting ornamental in the garden, when you're touring with friends. The Bright Lights variety is especially attractive, showing up with crimson, yellow and white stems.

The obvious leafy vegetable choice is lettuce, which comes in four varieties: crisphead, like iceberg and butterhead, Bibb loose leaf, Oak Leaf, and Romaine, which grows in vertical stocks.

I trust you've been pulling the heads off those dandelions all summer. If not, you should have. Every time you walk to the car to go somewhere and you see a yellow dandelion blossom, don't think, "I'll have to dig that up when I get home." It'll never happen. Prevent that plant from multiplying by going over and plucking the blossom; if it's already progressed to the fuzzy ball, all the more important to trot over and close it into your hand and throw away, before the wind spreads the spores.

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VEP's Memorial Day Parade & Festival

By Dave Fadness

Thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers, our fifth annual Memorial Day event was another great success. We had talented performers, pleasant weather, very good turn-out, a variety of crowd-pleasing attractions, and good food (with less waiting in lines)—what more could you ask for? If you missed it, be sure to attend next year.



Our Planning Committee volunteers deserve most of the credit for the many months in preparation that assured this success. VEP thanks the following Committee members for their work:

Scott and Dianne Conry, Entertainment & Games Committee

Ginger Cardona and Dave Noel, Facilities Committee

Debra Suydam and Ginger Cardona, Promotions Committee

Aiko Fadness, Refreshments Committee

Arti Nigam and Irene Shoberg, Schools Coordinators

Marilyn Rodgers and Irene Shoberg, Sponsorships & Fund Raising Committee

Helen Castillo, Volunteers Committee



The three public schools within our membership area co-sponsored this event with us again this year. By providing volunteers, distributing flyers, and through personal participa-

tion, their involvement was key to our success. We thank...

- **Betsy Doss**, Principal, Rachel Carson Elementary School
- **Debbie Roach**, Principal, Parkview Elementary School (our Festival host)
- **Cary Catching**, Principal, Gunderson High School

We are also grateful for the generosity of these individuals and local businesses for their cash, price discount, and/or in-kind donations:

Safeway (Branham Lane Store #316)

Mojo Burger (Peter Favre, Owner)

Wallace Piano

Gabriel Nguyen, Farmers Insurance

Allied Waste Services

Erik's Deli (Almaden & Branham)

Hand-Pull Noodle House

Summerwinds Nursery

Lucy Perez, Tupperware



Helen Castillo, Ventura Barnett

Keith Bowles Pest Control

San Jose Firefighters Union Local 230

Ginger Cardona & Family

David & Debbie Danitz

Jim & Linda Dumanowski

Dave & Aiko Fadness

Chuck & Barbara Lucchesi

Jeanne Mullins

Don & Marilyn Rodgers

Eric & Cathy Weirshauer

VEP Community Association members

Entertainment is a big part of any holiday celebration. We had a great line-up provided by the following talented individuals and groups, all of whom performed for us as volunteers (no charge):

Andrew Hill High School JROTC's Color Guard, Honor Guard, Drill Team (Armed), Drill Team (Unarmed), and Drum Corps; Lieutenant Colonel Shari Corbett, Commander.

Sylvandale Middle School Band; Andrew Love, Music Director.

Carson School Cougar Choir; Jim Sealy, (Volunteer) Director.

Parkview School All-American Kids Club Choir; Tanya Summers, (Volunteer) Director.

Town Square Harmonizers; Ted McCall, Dave Rail, Pete Sparaco, and Gordon Keeney.



Kauai Kahaku's Island Moves Hawaiian dancers.

America Tae Kwon Do performers; Andrew Suh, Master Instructor.

Oak Grove High School Jazz Band; Chris Moura, Director.

The Bay Team (Dog Agility Demonstration), Ellen Levy Finch.

Mike Lopez, Disc Jockey

Caring Clowns, Sunny (Gordon) & Twinkles (Willa) Markley.

Gunderson High School clowns; coordinated by Trish Buttrill, Drama/Activities/Resource Teacher.

Judges for our Parade costume and decoration awards were: **Manny Barbara**, Superintendent, Oak Grove School District; **Betsy Doss**, Principal, Carson Elementary School; and **Debbie Roach**, Principal, Parkview Elementary School. Their task was made difficult by an incredible showing of colorful and creative costumes, decorated bikes, trikes, and coaster wagons, etc.



Our 2009 costume and decoration awards winners were:
Best Family: The Danitz Family

Most Patriotic: The Andrew Hill JROTC

Most Patriotic Family: The Pierce Family



Most Original: The Carson-Parkview Choirs (in Tom Liddy's decorated speedboat)

Most Beautiful: Mindy Tajnai

Best Bicycle or Tricycle: Elias Khanzada

Best Coaster Wagon: The Olsen-Gaches Family

Craziest: Gunderson High School Clowns

Most Colorful: Kauai Kahaku's *Island Moves* dancers

Most Unusual: Luna the Dog (and her family)

Judges' Choice: The Sylvandale Middle School Band

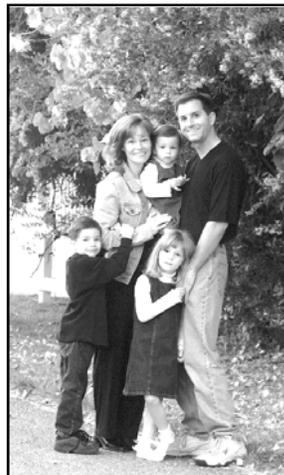
Judges' Choice: Bailey the Dog

Judges' Choice: Allen Shively's covered wagon

The list of performers and volunteers includes hundreds of names, too many to list individually here. We give special thanks to the San Jose Police and Fire Departments; to the United States Air Force, Army, Marines, and Navy; to San Jose *Sharkie*; and to volunteers from Carson, Parkview, Gunderson, and VEP Community Association—the best of the best.

Mark your calendars for May 31, 2010 and be sure to attend. Better yet, volunteer to make next year's event even better—simply contact any of the VEP Board members listed on the mailing page of this newsletter. We need your help!

[Ed. Note: To see a slide show of VEP's 2009 Memorial Day Parade & Festival, visit our website at www.vepca.net.]



Precious Moments In Time



Family and Children Portraits



Weddings and Special Events



Photography by Jeri Arstingstall

★ VEP MEMBER ★

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Halloween Coloring Page



VEP Community Calendar

September / October 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
20	21	22 VEP General Meeting - 7:30 pm - Vista Park Community Room	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Emergency Preparedness - 7pm - Vista Park Community Room 	1	2	3
4	5	6 Board of Directors Meeting, 7:30pm, Vista Park Community Room	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 VEP General Meeting - 7:30 pm - Vista Park Community Room	28	29	30	31 Halloween 

THE VEP NEWS



VEP Community Association

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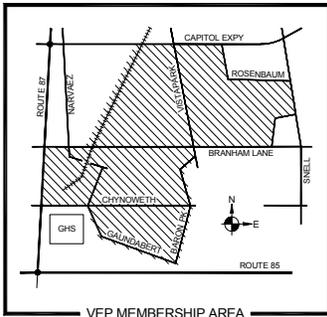
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

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Prefer your newsletter via Email?
 Let us know at vep@vepca.net.



Check our website: www.vepca.net

Community Room

Vista Park

in the
 7:30 pm

September 22nd Meeting

Be sure to attend
 VEP's