

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

November 2012

## VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday  
▶ **November 27, 2012** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Drive

## AGENDA

### ★ "HANDS ONLY" CPR CLASS ★

Presented by

Rural/Metro Ambulance Company

**Matt Lane, Paramedic/Trainer**

### ★ VEP Business Meeting ★

Approval of VEP 2012-2013  
Annual Budget

#### Updates/Announcements

Santa in the Park  
No December Meeting  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
December Holiday Decoration Contest  
VEP Annual Membership Drive  
begins in January  
January Meeting – Update on Martial Cottle Park

### ★ 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 November Meeting

*by Marilyn Rodgers*

November's general membership meeting:

▶ "Hands Only" CPR Class. **Matt Lane, Paramedic/Trainer, Rural/Metro Ambulance Company** will provide this free abbre-

viated class on CPR, as the main feature of the November meeting. This class is intended to provide members with a brief opportunity to learn this new technique. (Note: This class is not intended to provide all aspects of CPR and is not a certification class.) There will be a brief business meeting.

▶ **VEP Business Meeting/Updates/Announcements.** Members will be asked to approve the 2012-2013 Annual Budget. Upcoming announcements and updates for the months December and January will be included.

▶ **Your Concerns and Ideas** – We want to hear from you! Together we can work toward positive resolution. This approach continues to make VEP neighborhoods strong, healthy, and attractive.

We look forward to seeing you at the November 27th meeting. Please join us!

## VEP's October Meeting

*by Peggy Golden*

The candidates for City Council for District 10 were the guests of the evening on October 23, 2012. Kathryn Decker acted as moderator and led off with a list of 6 specific questions prepared by Marilyn Rodgers, VEP President, and approved by the board members.

The questions posed to the candidates included topics concerning 1) the sharp increase in crime along with the decrease in police officers. 2) Do they support pension reform for city employees?, and 3) What is their plan for being accessible to District 10 residents?

After the prepared questions were answered and each candidate given a chance for rebuttal, Katherine opened up questions from the audience. Some very direct and lively discussion began. Dave Fadness started with his concern about pay levels of certain city employees and if they were justified. Greg was concerned about the Martial Cottle Park project taking so long to come to fruition.

Each of the candidates had notable ideas regarding the specific problems and issues facing San Jose and how they would approach those problems.

One thing for sure, which ever candidates wins will be busy.

**REMINDER** – There is **no VEP meeting in December**. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 29th.

**2012 is VEP's 43rd year!**



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## Santa in the Park

by Adina Pierce and Helen Castillo

Come to the Vista Park Community Room between 2-4pm on Sunday, November 25th (Thanksgiving weekend) for a photo with Santa! This has become an annual tradition for many VEP families – some have done this for 5 years in a row. At least two families that come routinely have 4 generations represented in their pictures – what a nice tradition! Enjoy talking to your neighbors and have a cup of something warm to drink. Arts and crafts are also available to entertain the smaller members of families.

## Santa is Coming to the Vista Park Community Room 475 Hyde Park Drive

Bring your kids or the whole family for a free photo with Santa. We will also have arts and crafts, and light refreshments.

Have a photo taken by VEP photographer Adina Pierce, or feel free to bring your own camera.

When: Sunday November 25th  
Santa hours: 2 pm to 4 pm

**VEP wants to thank you for  
your support**

**Wishing you and your family a  
joyous holiday season**



## VEP 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Holiday Decorations Contest

by Marilyn Rodgers and Katherine Decker

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Holiday Decorations Contest will be held in December. Do you, or your neighbors, really enjoy decorating the exterior of your house and yard for the holidays? If so, this contest is for you! The VEP Board of Directors is sponsoring a contest for the best house/yard Holiday decorations in the VEP neighborhood. What will you win? Bragging rights of course, and a display sign that says you are a VEP Holiday Decoration Winner. Additional prizes will include a VEP membership for 2013 and a gift certificate. Pictures and an article on the winner(s) will be included in the January 2013 VEP Newsletter. The VEP Board will determine the winner(s) on the weekend of December 15<sup>th</sup>. Board members will drive through the neighborhood to determine winner(s); however, everyone can help by notifying the Board at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) to nominate yourself or a neighbor for consideration. Happy Holidays!

### In Memorium - Don Rodgers

The VEP Board of Directors would like to honor the memory of Don Rodgers, long time VEP resident, and the husband of VEP President, Marilyn Rodgers. Don passed away suddenly in October. Our sympathies to Marilyn, their family, and many friends.



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## Gunderson High Elevates API Scores!

By Rob Iverson, GHS Activity Advisor

Gunderson High School is very proud to announce that our Academic Performance Index, or API, for academic year 2011-2012 went up 22 points! This is one of the highest jumps in San Jose Unified School District. This increase represents Gunderson's API going from 688 to 710. The entire faculty and staff are very excited that all of our students' hard work is paying off. One specific area that has had a big impact on our students is with our Grizzly PRIDE. All that we do revolves around Personal Responsibility, Respect, Individuality, Diversity, and Excellence. Gunderson students have embraced this concept so well that we are receiving recognition from other school districts in the state, such as Oakland Unified School District, who will be visiting us at the end of November to talk with our staff and students to find out more about our success.



Sports are also continuing to grow at Gunderson High School. Our fall sports just wrapped up, and our football team was just one win away from going to CCS Divisional playoffs. Gunderson was also able to take a moment to recognize the success of a past player. During the last home game of the year, Gunderson Football retired the jersey of their very own James Jones, current wide receiver superstar of the Green Bay Packers. James was on hand to receive this honor and meet with Gunderson fans. His Number 3 jersey will hang in the gymnasium for years to come, inspiring years of future Grizzlies.

In other sporting news, Gunderson's winter sports programs will be starting up in the next month. Girls basketball will be moving up to the A Division; while both boys and girls soccer programs have expanded their rosters; and wrestling will be hitting the mats.

Stay up to date with all that is happening at Gunderson High School. Please visit our website at <http://www.sjUSD.org/gunderson/> and check out the calendar for upcoming activities. Please also visit <http://www.gundersonathletics.com> for all things sports.

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## VEP – Membership Drive Begins in January

by Marilyn Rodgers, Debra Suydam, and Helen Castillo

January signals the New Year, and the beginning of VEP's annual Membership Drive. **Volunteers will be needed** to once again fold, stuff, seal, and label membership invitations that go to both current members and to resident non-members. This is always a fun activity and many volunteers enjoy it so much they return year after year. This year, the date tentatively scheduled is Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 4pm, at the Vistapark Community Room. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Debra Suydam at [dsuydam@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsuydam@sbcglobal.net) or 972-4231 or Helen Castillo at [hcastillo@vbprop.com](mailto:hcastillo@vbprop.com) or 981-5902.

## Neighbors trim Chynoweth palms

By -Dave Fadness

No, those people you see pruning palm trees on Chynoweth Avenue are not city employees or "weekend warriors" working off DUI charges. They are *volunteers* who want one of the primary gateways into our community to look presentable and are willing to give their time and energy to make it happen.

In 1995, VEP planted 171 palm trees in the median of Chynoweth, from Barron Park to Pearl Avenue. With few exceptions ever since, our volunteers have maintained those trees, nurturing and watering them, replacing those that get destroyed by cars, and pruning them twice each year for the first eight years. As the trees got taller, we started pruning them annually--until about three years ago when the city asked us to stop. They pruned from Gaundabert to Pearl that year. That was the last time.

In three years since, the palm trees have become ugly. Many folks who use that busy street comment on the need for pruning. This is especially true of those palms east of Gaundabert Lane, where pruning has not been done in at least a half dozen years. The city says they have no funds.

True of any maintenance effort, waiting has made it a much bigger task. Dead fronds hanging against their trunks makes pruning those palm trees much more difficult--it's now *really* hard, slow-going work. Each tree requires removal of an average of fifty fronds--that's why the piles are so big out there!

Special thanks to **Debra Suydam**, **Jess Espitia**, and **Bogdan Kurysh** for their volunteer work which is producing steady progress toward completion. Thanks, too, to neighbors **Albert Cavazos** and **Marshall Pilkington** (both of *TARC Construction, Inc.*) for their major contribution to this effort.

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## Communication with Our Members

by Marilyn Rodgers, Adina Pierce, Susan Iverson

**New\*\*\* - VEP** has just initiated a new "private" Facebook account. See below!!

Face to face communication is usually the most meaningful and rewarding. Monthly membership meetings between September and May, special events and projects provide this opportunity. However, we have many non-face to face opportunities as well – they are as follows:

As you are reading this newsletter, you already know about our Number 1 (and most popular) way to communicate with our members – through the **VEP NEWS**. Our members continue to tell us how much they enjoy receiving and reading the newsletter.

We continue to evaluate and utilize electronic means of communicating with our members, particularly in between editions of the newsletter (remember **e-distribution of the newsletter** is available upon request as well).

**E-mail alerts** – if you have e-mail and would like to receive monthly e-mail Alerts, please be sure we have a current e-mail address. (We usually send one or two e-mails per month, so we will not fill your mailbox with junk e-mails; and e-mail addresses are confidential).

**VEP Website** – [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) – find current information, highlights of upcoming events, as well as historical information on the website. Our website is intended for use by both members and non-members. Look for an increasing amount of information to be available on the website in the future.

**\*\*NEW - VEP - Facebook** – for those members interested in additional electronic access and use "social media" sites, VEP has just initiated a "private" Facebook account. This Facebook account will be limited to VEP members only.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/vepca/>

**Does VEP have your e-mail address?** E-mail is the primary communication tool during months that newsletters are not published.

## Keeping SAN JOSE CLEAN is just a click away

Free Smartphone App Available to Report Graffiti, Litter and City Park Concerns



The City of San José's Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services and the Anti-Graffiti/Anti-Litter Program launched a **free SAN JOSE CLEAN** application last Winter. This app allows residents with smartphones to point, click and send photos and reports of graffiti, litter and city park conditions to City staff.

These applications also allow users to choose an option to receive updates on the status of their request. Both the Droid application and iPhone application are now available for the public to download to their smartphone.

### For Droid-type Phone Users

Download the application from the Droid Market by searching for the keyword "San Jose Clean" and then click on SAN JOSE CLEAN.

### For iPhone Users

Download the SAN JOSE CLEAN application from the iPhone App Store by searching for the keyword "San Jose Clean" and selecting SAN JOSE CLEAN.

The SAN JOSE CLEAN application was developed by App-Order at no cost to the City.

Residents can still continue to report graffiti to the Anti-Graffiti Program by email at [antigrffiti@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:antigrffiti@sanjoseca.gov) or by phone at (866) 249-0543. Litter can also be reported by email to [antigrffiti@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:antigrffiti@sanjoseca.gov) or by phone at (408) 277-3208. City park conditions can still be reported by email to [parkconcerns@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:parkconcerns@sanjoseca.gov) or by phone at (408) 794-5510.

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



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## Grizzlies clean up Chynoweth Avenue

By Dave Fadness

Kicking-off their first monthly workday event for this school year, students at Gunderson High School joined hands on October 20 with adult community members, Caltrans, and the City of San Jose to pick up trash and clean-up Chynoweth Avenue and the Route 87 ped/bike path. They did an incredible amount of work and those facilities (including the Chynoweth/Ohlone Light Rail parking lot) looked great when they were done.

Gunderson's Counselor **Stephanie Heuer** helped to organize this *Gunderson Grizzly* event and encouraged the following students to participate:

Evan Conry  
Ryan De La Cerda  
Jacob Espitia  
Alexandria Pignataro  
Jacqueline Garcia Ruvaloaba  
Angie Varela  
Horeish White

Gunderson students will receive community service hours credit for their work. San Jose Unified requires students to complete 40 hours of community service in order to graduate.

Adult supervision was provided by **Scott Conry, Dianne Conry, Vic Goodrum, and Sherri Goodrum**--all of whom also wielded litter-grabbers, rakes, and brooms to get this huge job done. These folks are always there when help is needed.

The city provided rakes, brooms, and litter grabbers, then removed bags of trash collected on campus and along Chynoweth Avenue. They also provided workman's comp coverage. Caltrans picked up piles of trash, cut weeds, two felled trees, and pruned tree limbs. It was an excellent cooperative project.

\*\*\*

As their second monthly workday event, Gunderson Grizzlies will team with Our City Forest, Caltrans, and VEP-area adult volunteers to plant nineteen trees on the Route 87 ped/bike path (Route 85 to Branham Lane). This project is scheduled for November 10.

Hats off to the Grizzlies and our community-minded volunteers!

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## Pie For a Year

By Kathy Wood, Baker – [pieforayear.blogspot.com](http://pieforayear.blogspot.com)

Have you ever wondered why the presidential elections are always held in November? This is the month of giving thanks, which should happen more than one day a year, but let's "be thankful" for that one day. It is also when we honor (and give thanks to) our veterans, who truly deserve our respect and gratitude for their services (again, this should occur more than one day a year).



for

Politics are not my favorite subject mainly because of all the dishonesty and backstabbing and everyone pushing their opinions on others to vote the way they see fit. Promises are made with every intention of being kept, but sometimes they are beyond the capabilities of one person; a whole committee has to agree (not an easy task).

October 31 might be a better election day when people (including candidates) are hidden behind masks and proclaim "trick or treat"-"treat" is the promise, but "trick" is the result. April 1 could be another option-all promises made could be followed with "April Fool"!

So, one of the things I am thankful for is when the elections are over, the gazillion annoying phone calls cease, and the mail only brings bills (not so thankful for) and store ads. It is the time to be thankful for your family, and your health, and all the little things that make our lives interesting.

I would like to "promise" that this recipe would be everyone's favorite, that there are no calories in it, and the preparation is so simple it practically makes itself, but, I'm not running for any office, so I will leave you to judge. Happy Thanksgiving to all!

### Frost-On-The-Pumpkin Pie

#### **Ingredients:**

1 ¼ cups graham cracker crumbs,  
3 tablespoons granulated sugar,  
½ teaspoon cinnamon,  
¼ teaspoon nutmeg,  
1/8 teaspoon cloves,  
1/3 cup butter, melted,  
1 cup sour cream,  
1 cup canned pumpkin,  
1 teaspoon cinnamon,  
½ teaspoon ginger,  
¼ teaspoon cloves,  
8 ounces frozen whipped topping, thawed.

**Instructions:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In small bowl, combine first 6 ingredients; stir until blended. Reserve 2 tablespoons of crumbs for topping. Press remaining crumbs over bottom and up sides of 9-inch pie plate. Bake for 6 minutes. Cool. In large bowl, combine rest of ingredients except whipped topping; beat 2 minutes at medium speed. Fold in 1 cup whipped topping and pour into prepared crust. Spread remaining whipped topping over filling; sprinkle with reserved 2 tablespoons crumbs. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving.

To see a picture of this pie and for other pie recipes, check out [pieforayear.blogspot.com](http://pieforayear.blogspot.com). "As easy as pie!"

## Planting/Caring for Hydrangeas

By John Marks

Hydrangeas are an attractive perennial that call for little care. Few insects or diseases affect hydrangeas. But planting hydrangeas requires some care. After you obtain a starter, dig a hole larger than the container it came in. Place the plant in a hole where it will get a northern exposure, ensuring that the crown of the plant is slightly above the level of the native soil. Backfill with a mix of soil with a lot of compost, using excess soil to build a watering basin. Fill the basin with water, checking to see that there is little or no settling of the plant.

Hydrangeas thrive on ample water. Feed the plant when it leafs out in the spring and every other month during the growing season; use about one-quarter cup of sulfate of ammonia, and spread it in a wide circle under the hydrangea and water in afterward.

In hot spells, may show signs of wilting, only to recover when the sun goes down. This is a natural occurrence called "incipient wilting." It happens even if the soil is very wet.

Hydrangeas bloom on the shoots produced in the previous year. Cut off the blossoms after the flowers have faded. Prune them just above the second set of buds from the bottom of the stem. The new shoots that grow from these buds will bloom in the following year. It is hard to kill a hydrangea.

After the plant is several years old, you may need to thin out the multitude of stems, removing any crossing, dead, or diseased stems. The older stems will be a darker color, with brown or gray scaly bark. These may no longer be productive and need to be pruned back to a set of buds near the base of the plant. New stems will emerge to replace the old.

### November Reminders

Sprinkle some color into your winter garden, if you're not growing vegetables this year. Sow wildflower seeds, and the winter rains will water them for you. You could also plant winter flowers, such as pansies, stock, snapdragons, and primrose. I've got some cosmos that keep re-seeding themselves in a neglected former tree hole in the driveway; they grow tall and beautiful, a thing of beauty to behold every day when I leave and return.

For veggies, plant those snow peas, broccoli, chard, etc. Garlic planted now can be harvested in May; set cloves (pointed end up) in soil that has good drainage. Plant about one inch deep, three to six inches apart.

Also, get ready to spray fruit trees; after leaves have fallen, spray peach trees and nectarine trees with lime sulfur to control peach leaf curl. Spray apricot trees with a fixed-copper spray, coating the stems and trunk thoroughly.

Continue to clip spent roses off the plants. You can expect more roses through December, even if the weather is frosty. But hold off on serious rose pruning until January.

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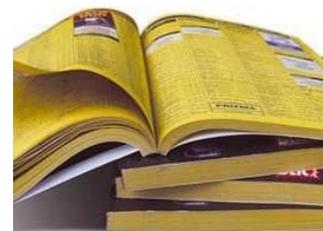


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## How to stop getting the yellow pages

By Lori Bongiorno

With Internet directories and cell-phone lookups, many people consider the printed yellow pages a relic of the past. But the books keep showing up on their doorsteps, year after year. Finally, there's good news for those who want to prevent stacks of unwanted phone directories from being delivered to their front doors.



A new, national opt-out Internet site from the Yellow Pages Association and Association of Directory Publishers lets you control which yellow pages (if any) you receive. In less than five minutes, I opted-out of the 10 phone directories (both white and yellow pages) I was scheduled to receive this year. In the past, you had to contact each phone book publisher directly, and it wasn't always easy to find the publisher's contact information. But this new site lets consumers make all the requests at once. Here's how it works:

Go to [yellowpagesoptout.com](http://yellowpagesoptout.com). Enter your ZIP code. You'll see a list of the phone books that you're eligible to receive.

1. Register on the site. You need to include a valid email address and phone number along with your home address.
2. You'll then receive a temporary password via email. Log in, change your password, and then click the "Opt-Out" tab at the top of the page and select which directories you receive. You can opt-out of everything or choose to receive which phone books are useful to you.

The opt-out should last for [at least three](#) years.

It's too soon to know if this will really work for every phone book publisher, but given that it only takes a few minutes, this is certainly worth a try for anyone who receives a slew of new phone books they don't need.

# VEP Community Calendar

## November / December 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving 	23	24 Small Business Saturday! Shop Local!
25 Santa in the Park—VEP Community Room— 2 to 4pm	26	27 VEP Community Meeting— 7:30 PM— Vista Park Community Room	28	29	30	1 CalTrain Holiday Train @ Santa Clara 7:40 pm
2	3	4	5	6 Walk through Christmas in the Park	7	8
9	10	11 Ice Skate Under the Palms	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22

### Dates to Remember!

#### VEP Community Meetings

November 27, 2012  
 January 22, 2013  
 February 26, 2013  
 March 26, 2013  
 April 23, 2013  
 May 28, 2013

#### Community Events

Santa at Vista Park - Sunday, November 25, 2012  
 Community Garage Sale - Saturday May 4, 2013

# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

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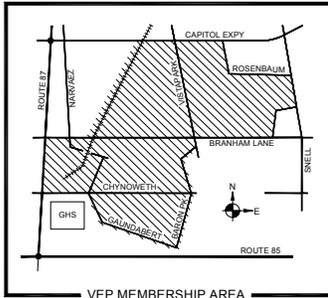
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

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Community Room

Vista Park

in the  
 7:30 pm

Be sure to attend  
 VEP's  
 November 27th Meeting