

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

Representing More Than 2,000 Families In The Blossom Valley Area Of South San Jose Since 1969

MAY

2014

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The "VEP News" is the official publication of the VEP Community Association, published monthly during the months of September through May each year.

We appreciate and will, at the discretion of the VEP Executive Board, attempt to publish any and all articles that will be of general interest to our membership community.

The VEP strongly encourages local schools to submit news articles about events and achievements on their campuses. Articles written by students will be given extra special consideration.

Persons, schools, or organizations who are interested in submitting articles, letters, or information to be included in the VEP News are encouraged to contact the Editor of the "VEP News," Mrs. Rachel Witmeyer. Email: [vepeditor@gmail.com](mailto:vepeditor@gmail.com) // Phone: 408-226-2935

### VEP Community Association Membership

Persons who would like to join the VEP Community Association may send their name, address, and \$20 yearly dues to:

VEP Community Association  
P.O. BOX 18111; SAN JOSE, CA; 95158.

Please, do not send cash. Make checks payable to "VEP."

### VEP Community Association ~ Executive Board of Directors

President - Marilyn Rodgers  
Vice President - Katherine Decker  
Secretary - Adina Pierce  
Treasurer - Ginger Cardona  
Director - Helen Castillo  
Director - Rich Giammona  
Director - Peggy Golden  
"VEP News" Editor - Rachel Witmeyer

## VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday

▶ **May 27th, 2014** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Dr.

*Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!*

## AGENDA

### ★ Martial Cottle Updates ★

#### Community Garden

A Martial Cottle Park Partner

Presentation by

Manuel Perez, Program Coordinator,  
Community Gardens, City of San Jose

#### Park and Trail Updates

Presentations by

Eric Goodrich, Alicia Flynn, Phil Hearin

### ★ Water Conservation Tips ★

Santa Clara Valley Water District Staff

### ★ Summer Crime & Safety Tips ★

TAPS Private Security Patrols

### ★ VEP Business Meeting ★

#### Election of Slate for Board of Directors

#### Proposal for Landscaping – Capitol Expressway

Councilmember Khamis and Staff

### ★ Announcements & Updates ★

#### VEP Possible Summer Projects

Parkview Parks Landscaping & Cleanup  
Vista Park – Crime & Safety - National Night Out

Councilmember Khamis - Summer District Office Hours  
3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, 5:30 to 7pm / City Espresso, 630 Blossom Hill Rd.

Primary Election, June 3<sup>rd</sup>

Polling Place, Vista Park Community Room

VEP on Summer Break / Next Meeting, September 2014

### ★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

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

◆ **2014 is VEP's 45th Year!** ◆

## VEP's May Meeting

By Marilyn Rodgers

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **May 27th**. Please join us at May's general membership meeting, when presentations will include:

► **An overview on the San Jose Community Garden** will be provided by **Manuel Perez**, Program Coordinator, San Jose City Community Gardens. This is the first and only community garden in District 10. Information will include how to participate, requirements, waiting lists and sign-ups.

► **An Update on Martial Cottle Park and Trail** will also be provided, including anticipated plans and progress to take place during the Summer months.

► Additional presentations will include both **Water Conservation** and **Crime and Safety Tips for the Summer**. A variety of announcements and brief presentations will provide information on possible activities & projects that will take place over the Summer.

► **VEP Business Meeting/Updates/Announcements. Members will be asked to elect the slate for the Board of Directors.** Announcements and updates 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.

## April Membership Meeting Synopsis

By Marilyn Rodgers

The April meeting began with introductions by President Marilyn Rodgers. Councilmember Johnny Khamis was introduced and thanked for always attempting to attend the VEP meetings even though San Jose City Council meetings often run late into Tuesday evening. The Councilmember had several announcements. First, he thanked everyone who came out for the Great American Litter Pickup held on Saturday. VEP members and residents participated. District 10 sponsored several locations for residents to come together making this annual event very successful. He also reminded everyone that the location for his Community District Office Hours has moved as result of Lime Tree Expresso closing. The new location for this area will be at City Expresso, 630 Blossom Hill Road. Summer office hours are held on the third Wednesday of the month from 5:30 to 7pm. The Councilmember also explained that the City and County staff involved in roads and transportation have been meeting together over the past several months. The purpose is to come to agreement in moving forward toward plans for badly needed improvements for both Branham Lane and Chynoweth (west of Snell). He is hopeful that an arrangement between the City and County will be reached in the very near future.

Next, Marilyn introduced Eric Goodrich, Martial Cottle Park Manager, who provided a brief report including information from Alicia Flynn. The oats will be harvested in the next couple of weeks (starting close to Branham Lane) and then the weeds and mustard will be mowed. Vegetation next to the fences will continue to be pulled out by hand (cannot use chemicals to control these). The bridges that will cross Canoas Creek will be put in place over the summer. However, the remainder of the trail will not open until the Park opens which is scheduled for December 27<sup>th</sup>. One member in attendance asked a question as to who can help with an issue of people speeding down Birmingham to Wellington Park, and who to contact to make a request for signage saying Wellington Park is a dead-end street – these are City issues. Eric indicated that as he was not involved in the original meetings and discussions for planning the park, there may be

questions he is not able to answer. For those questions, contact Jane Mark.

Eric introduced Phil Hearin, who came to the meeting to be introduced in his new role, to answer questions attendees may have, and to provide information on safety and law enforcement for the Trail and Park. Phil is the new Park Ranger Supervisor. His area of responsibility is the Hellyer pod which includes Martial Cottle and the Coyote Creek Trail. Phil provided some information about his background, including a stint as a Marine and various assignments as a Santa Clara County Park Ranger. He has been a Park Ranger for over 25 years. Raised in the Morgan Hill and Gilroy area, he has been a San Jose City resident for over 23 years. He and Eric have known each other for some time.

Phil continued by stating that he would like to first provide us with information on how the Park Rangers work, and then would like to spend some time suggesting how we might form a partnership in working together. He wanted to reassure us that he is committed to being available and helpful to us, but also needs some assistance from us as well. Current staffing levels are as follows: there is one Senior Park Ranger (which is him) with 4 park rangers who cover a large territory; hours being approximately 7am to 12midnight. Park Rangers are law enforcement officers, but do have some limitations. They do not have guns – instead they rely on use of excellent verbal/communication skills. They have a relationship with both the San Jose Police Department and with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department, both of which can be utilized, should assistance be needed with violent felons. Park Rangers have a Memorandum of Understanding with surrounding agencies which describes who will provide which services. They currently have 6 full time Sheriff's Deputies assigned to Parks with 6 additional seasonal (summer) deputies – with an increase of one additional deputy this year – total of 13.

Phil reviewed the process for reporting an incident or suspicious activity. You call 311 or 911 – dispatch on Communications Hill. Dispatchers take a variety of calls. As a result sometimes there may be a delay in response time, but our calls will be processed and there will be a response. Depending on the lateness of the hour, we may not get a phone call to follow-up, as they do not want to disturb us late at night. Also, with issues involving people on the Trail – they are transitory, meaning by the time the Rangers respond, the individual(s) may have moved on. However, the Rangers once there, will remain on-site for some time.

The reality of course is that resources are limited. Currently, the Park Rangers are making random rounds on the Trail and Park property. How we can be of help? The best option for them would be for us – particularly those whose property backs up on to the Trail - is to keep a log of issues or concerns. Note: There is also a Volunteer Program and a Trail Watch Program. These programs may be of interest to us in the near future, but they do involve some training. Again, Ranger Hearin encouraged us to keep a log. Simply jot down the date, time, and issue. Then at the end of the month give the items/log to Marilyn to pass on to him. The notes or logs do not have to be fancy, but try to include as much information as possible. This will enable him to determine what hours & days are the priority for current/additional staffing needs.

He believes it is vitally important to form a partnership with the residents that surround the parks. He offered his contact information – we can e-mail, text, or call him. (If you would like his cell or other contact information, Marilyn can provide it to you.) His days off are Wednesday and Thursday. He will also be attending VEP's monthly meetings to provide updates and answer questions. Marilyn thanked him for his detailed report.

The next group of three speakers was introduced. This group

*Continues on Page 3*

Continued from Page 2

was led by Jerry Strangis. Mr. Strangis is a Consultant with KB Homes. KB Homes is the developer who is putting forward the second phase of the plan which includes building up to an additional 2200 housing units on Communications Hill. Jerry provided an overview of the plan for the development, which will be phased in over the next 15 years. Housing will be built in four sections with approximately 500 units per phase. The overall plan, in addition to housing, includes a Village Center and a Commercial Center up on top of the Hill, as well as a plan for an elementary school (The Hill is in the Franklin McKinley School District). Additional parks and trails are included (an increase from ¾ to 4 miles), as well as six additional staircases (which in addition to providing access to housing, have become very popular tools for physical fitness enthusiasts). An Industrial Park, while part of the plan, will be built later in the process. It will be located on the eastern side of the development with access to Monterey Road.

Next to speak was Mr. Daryl Boyd, currently a contractor with the San Jose Planning Department (previously of the San Jose Parks Department). He reviewed the process. This development is going through a variety of required reviews including an administrative review. There are pieces of the property that are in the County which will be annexed by the City, Carol Drive not included. Another aspect is to assure that the development is brought into alignment with the Envision San Jose 2040 Plan. As this is the second phase of a development plan originally approved several years ago, this phase only requires a smaller "Subsequent" Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). The draft SEIR should be available for review by the middle of May. This will be followed by the usual 45 days for public review and a planned Community Meeting, tentatively set for June 9<sup>th</sup>. The proposed plan will then go forward to the San Jose City Planning Commission on September 10<sup>th</sup>, and from there to the City Council for approval.

The third speaker was Karen Macht of the San Jose Public Works Department. Ms. Macht reviewed the process for evaluating the need (traffic mitigation) for the roadways that will be impacted: Curtner, Snell, Monterey, Vistapark, Communications Hill, and - of particular concern for the VEP area - the Capitol Expwy / Narvaez / Hwy 87 North on-ramp. They look at traffic reports covering over 20 years. Independent traffic engineers do the evaluation and reporting. The model used, called the C-model, evaluates and predicts where traffic is going, where the jobs are, and where the hot spots are located. They attempt to emulate driver behavior. The determination was that 70% of the traffic goes north (and will increase), and 15%-plus goes south. This means that Curtner will be the most impacted and therefore justifies the majority of funding for improvement. However, Capitol Exp/Narvaez will be included by the developer for some improvements as well.

Dave Fadness, has been involved in this process since he participated as a public member on the original task force in 1992. He also nicely assisted in presenting some of the information,

particularly regarding how the interchange at Capitol Expressway and Narvaez will be improved at the developer's expense. A third lane north will be added on Narvaez. This will increase the "stacking capability" on Narvaez and decrease the "wait time" on Capitol Expressway.

In terms of the timeline, improvements to Capitol Expressway will occur first, prior to improvements being made on Curtner. Additional improvements to Capitol Expressway will be: building of sidewalks on the southern side of Capitol Expressway, and improvements to the crosswalks on the southern side Narvaez and Capitol Exp, providing for additional safety to pedestrians trying to access the bus and VTA station.

Curtner will be improved with an additional lane for better flow west of Monterey Road, and an additional lane for stacking on the onramp north to Hwy 87. Vistapark Drive, which becomes Communications Hill, will be expanded north along the property line with a bridge over the railroad tracks, then by Oak Hills Cemetery to Stone Avenue to Curtner. Snell will be improved later in the process with the development of the Industrial Park.

Ms. Rodgers thanked the speakers for their presentation, and for all of the intense work that has gone into providing additional improvements in the roadways. The representatives of the developer took the feedback and concerns expressed by VEP and other groups whose residents will be negatively impacted by the additional volume of traffic generated in this new addition and developed this newly configured plan.

President Rodgers thanked everyone for staying later to allow time for the speakers to complete their presentations. She reminded attendees that the VEP Community-wide Garage Sale would be Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, and would include the availability of a Salvation Army donation truck. The truck would be located at the end of Chynoweth, at Barron Park Drive, south of Gunderson High School. The District 10 presentation for the San Jose City Budget Community Information Meeting was planned for Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. The next VEP meeting will be Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>.

### Notice of the Slate for VEP Board of Directors

The May annual VEP business meeting includes the election of a slate of members to serve as the Board of Directors. The by-laws require that the names of members be included in a slate, and then be announced to the membership for election at the May meeting. The slate of members running for the VEP Board of Directors is as follows:

Ginger Cardona, Helen Castillo, Katherine Decker, Rich Giammona, Peggy Golden, Adina Pierce, Marilyn Rodgers, and Rachel Witmeyer - who will continue as the "VEP News" Editor.

Once the membership elects the Slate, the Board will then elect officers, i.e. President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Board may also appoint members to fill any open/unfilled positions which may occur between election cycles.

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## Annual VEP Community Garage Sale

By G. Cardona, R. Witmeyer, H. Castillo, and M. Rodgers  
Photographs Contributed by The Castillos & Katherine Decker

The first Saturday in May was the annual VEP Community-wide Garage Sale. Everyone in the VEP neighborhoods is always invited to participate. The VEP Community-wide Garage Sale continues to be a popular community activity.

Each year, VEP pays for print advertising of the Community-wide Garage Sale, as well as placing online advertising. The event is provided free to all neighbors living in the VEP neighborhoods. All neighbors need to do is place their treasures out for all to see – and then reap in the fun and profit! Many residents had their neighbors join in – and put up signs for their street or cul-de-sac to entice garage sale hunters. This year, the street that had the most houses participating in the garage sale was Hyde Park Drive – with 7 homes!

Thanks to Board Member Helen Castillo for making arrangements for several new large banners as well as several small stand-alone signs. These signs and banners were placed in several locations throughout VEP neighborhoods to provide additional advertising, especially for casual visitors driving through the neighborhood, informing them of the ongoing area garage sales.



Also, for the last several years, the Salvation Army has provided an additional service which community members appreciate – the availability of having a donation truck provided during the hours of the garage sale. This makes it especially convenient for residents to donate items whether or not they choose to participate in the garage sale. For those that have garage sales, it is easy to donate items that may not be sold (saving residents the challenge of re-storing unwanted items back into their homes or garages).



The annual Community-wide Garage Sale has now been taking place continuously each year for over 12 years! If you were not able to participate this year...plan now for next year:  
**It will always be scheduled for the first Saturday in May!**

## Thank-You to Garage Sale Volunteers

By Helen Castillo, Rachel Witmeyer, and Marilyn Rodgers

At the end of April and beginning of May, a dedicated group of VEP volunteers walked the neighborhoods of VEP to deliver flyers to residents.

The flyers advertised the annual Community-wide Garage Sale and notified all residents that this event was available for all to participate on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Distributing the flyers is an important aspect of letting all of our neighbors know that they are invited and encouraged to participate in this fun annual activity in our neighborhoods.

VEP thanks the following volunteers:

Kevin and Luann Budd  
Joyce Chesnos  
Bill and Marie Johnson,  
Diana Muzyka  
Kathy Pang  
Josie Supencheck



## Opportunity for Volunteers: Deliver Flyers in a VEP Neighborhood

By Helen Castillo, Rachel Witmeyer, Marilyn Rodgers

Do you enjoy walking, especially walking in the VEP neighborhood? Do you have a few hours, once or twice per year, that you could volunteer to help distribute a flyer that VEP initiates to advertise an event, activity, or issue?

If you answered “yes” to the first two questions asked above, then you may want to volunteer as a “Flyer Walker” – that is... a volunteer who delivers flyers. This activity usually only takes place a couple of times per year.

Typically these events or activities are ones that VEP wants to be sure all VEP residents are aware of as they are ones that everyone is invited to participate in, such as the annual Community-wide Garage Sale.

How does it work? As a “flyer walker” you will be given approximately 100 flyers (more if you like). You will deliver one flyer to each house in a certain area (a map is provided). Generally, you can request the area you would prefer – such as your own street. Normally, you will be given one to two weeks in which to deliver the flyers, making it easier to accomplish at your convenience. Veteran “flyer walker” Bill Johnson says he plans his walks so he can deliver a few flyers each day for several days.

For additional information, and to volunteer, contact Board Member and Volunteer Coordinator, Helen Castillo at:  
[hcastillo@vbprop.com](mailto:hcastillo@vbprop.com) or 408-981-5902.

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## Annual Great American Litter Pickup

Article By Marilyn Rodgers

Photographs By Katherine Decker

On Saturday morning, April 26<sup>th</sup>, several VEP residents came together for the purpose of picking up litter in our neighborhood. For several years the City of San Jose has sponsored this event which now takes place on an annual basis during the month of April. Each City Council District sponsors one or more locations for litter pickup. Depending on the need, additional activities can also be included such as graffiti cleanup, weed and brush cleanup, tree pruning and/or planting, and sound-wall painting. For the VEP area, neighbors met in the parking lot of the VTA station at Chynoweth and Pearl to sign-in, pick up supplies, along with bottled water and snacks. The litter bags this year were larger and more sturdy – which was helpful (It's amazing how heavy litter can be!). The Chynoweth and Pearl VTA station was one of six locations that Councilmember Khamis and his staff sponsored and "manned" for District 10.



A hardy group of 16 volunteers did an amazing job of litter

pickup along Chynoweth between Pearl and Gaundabert/New World – including the area of the VTA parking lot and surrounding area. Another area that a couple of volunteers tackled was a portion of Branham Lane between New Compton Drive to Vistapark Drive to Kingspark Drive. These areas seem to be "magnets" for large amounts of litter which included the usual amounts of paper products and containers, bottles (plastic and glass), cans, and also some large items: car parts, parts of tires, large cardboard signs and boxes, large cushions, and broken toys, for example.

It was a perfect day for litter pickup – sunny and cool. 18 bags and several containers were collected over three hours. Vol-

unteers in the VEP area were a diverse group. A single man, a mature married couple, a mother and young son, a family of 4, which consisted of a husband and wife with a teenage daughter and son, a teenage girl completing a requirement for community volunteerism for high school graduation, and two single women were among those that participated. This is evidence that people of any age can participate in this activity! One woman decided to con-



## Earth Day 2014

### Great American Litter

# PICK UP



tinue picking up litter into the early afternoon along Branham Lane, collecting an additional 5 bags full of litter.

A special thank you to the following volunteers:

N J Olson  
Bill Olson  
Bailey DeCarlo  
Ashley Dennis  
Stephen Kinsey  
Marilyn Rodgers  
Susan Bartlett-Schefke  
Steven Schefke  
George Prior  
Phyllis Prior  
Joe Inocencio  
Stacey Inocencio  
Wade Inocencio  
Kassandra Inocencio  
Katherine Decker  
Jeannette Moghrabi



## Crime and Safety in the VEP Neighborhoods

By Marilyn Rodgers

### Home Burglary on Wellington Park Court

On Monday morning, May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 9:48am there was a home burglarized on Wellington Park Court (Vistapark area). The 3 suspects were in a mid-size dark blue car (may have been an Acura) who drove up to the house. One man walked up to the front door, then walked around to the side gate, breaking into the garage side door and into the house. A second man from the car joined him in the house which was ransacked with a considerable amount of goods stolen from the house. A third man remained in the car. The car, and incident, was caught on tape by a neighbor's front window video camera. The car left by the same way it came in – which was back down Wellington Park Drive to Birmingham Drive, out on to Hyde Park, and then to Vistapark Drive. The neighbor who caught the incident on video, contacted the SJPD, and then immediately put the video online using Nextdoor to alert neighbors. She also went door to door alerting her immediate neighbors as to what had happened. As of this writing, no further information is available.

### Baby Stroller and Water Hose Stolen from Front Porch

On Grandpark Circle (in the Parkview area) a couple reported that their baby's stroller and a water hose were stolen from their front porch. After notifying neighbors, the items were reported being seen by several people. The suspect may have been driving a large high-end sedan (Mercedes or Lexus). The incident was reported to SJPD. Neighbors are advised to be on the lookout as this suspect may have stolen additional items from other area yards and/or porches.

The purpose of reporting these incidents is to alert residents in the neighborhood to continue to be vigilant, to be aware and careful of their surroundings, to inform their neighbors of incidents, and to encourage reporting of any and all suspicious behavior to SJPD. For those who may be interested, an additional option for security is TAPS Private Security Patrols.

**Special “Parcel Tax Exemption” for Seniors**

Exemption enrollment period open through June 30, 2014

*By Rick Callender, Santa Clara Valley Water District*

The Santa Clara Valley Water District offers an exemption for qualifying low-income seniors from the 15-year Safe, Clean, Water Creeks special parcel tax. This tax was approved by Santa Clara County voters in November of 2012.

The exemption allows the district to remove the charge from a qualifying senior household's property tax bill. Currently, the charge is around \$55 for a single family home and \$23 for a townhouse or condo. Seniors 65 years and older can apply for the exemption if they live in their own home as their primary residence. Please note that mobile homes in parks, and homes that are in an irrevocable trust, are not eligible for this exemption.

The enrollment period is April 15, and all new applications must be received by the water district by June 30 to be exempted for the upcoming property tax year. Residents who miss the enrollment period must wait for the next year.

Once a resident has submitted the application, there is no need to re-apply every year. In the spring, usually by the end of March or early April, the district will send the resident a letter to verify eligibility. Once the resident has returned the verification form for ongoing eligibility, the water district will remove the resident's property from the property tax roll for the Safe, Clean, Water charge for the next property tax year.

For more information on the exemption, or to obtain an application form, please visit the website - <http://bit.ly/1ggDMnl> , or email [JulieWilson@valleywater.org](mailto:JulieWilson@valleywater.org) , or call the district's tax information line at [\(408\) 630-2810](tel:4086302810).

**Finding Water in a Drought**

*By Linda J. LeZotte: Director, Santa Clara Valley Water District*

The Santa Clara Valley Water District's skillful management of our water supplies places Santa Clara Valley in a good position to weather the worst drought in State recorded history. While we can all see the lowering levels of water in our local reservoirs, the groundwater basin is the county's largest reservoir and our primary reserve during droughts. While future growth of our region will be met primarily through greater conservation and expanded investment in recycled water, the basin beneath our feet is what provides us with the safety margin for continued economic vitality and quality of life.

Far-sighted groundwater management is the key to coping with drought, and the state of our local groundwater has been the

topic at many of the community meetings I have attended. In a typical year, about half of the water we use in Santa Clara County is pumped from the ground. The SCVWD actively manages groundwater basins spanning from Palo Alto to Gilroy.

The history of groundwater in Santa Clara County dates back to the 1850s, when local communities began drilling wells to supply water to residents, agriculture and businesses. By 1920, with far more water being pumped than naturally replenished, groundwater levels declined and land subsidence, the broad sagging of the land, occurred over many miles. Records indicate that some locations in and around San Jose subsided nearly 15 feet.

The water district was formed in 1929 to address groundwater overdraft and land subsidence. Early water district efforts focused on constructing reservoirs to capture local runoff, and using that water to recharge groundwater through creek beds. These efforts helped groundwater levels to recover somewhat, but explosive population growth after World War II resulted in further strain on groundwater.

Two major breakthroughs helped halt groundwater overdraft and subsidence in Santa Clara County. First, in the late 1960s, Santa Clara County tapped into the State Water Project and imported water began flowing from the Sierra Nevada watersheds through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to our county. Over the next few years, groundwater levels rebounded.

The growth of Silicon Valley continued to expand the region's need for water. In 1987, imported water began flowing through the federal Central Valley Project into San Luis Reservoir and up to our county. Again, groundwater levels rebounded, despite the six-year drought, which ended in 1992.

This severe drought period, 1987-1992, had a significant impact on the state and our region. Since 1980, the population of our county has grown nearly 45 percent, yet our water use has remained flat. One reason is that the water district has significantly expanded water conservation. Programs to replace water guzzling toilets and clothes washers began. Low-flow showerheads became the norm, and the district adopted a model ordinance which promoted water-efficient landscape measures. The water district also began working with local partners to expand the use of recycled water for non-drinking uses, like irrigation and industrial purposes. Both water conservation and recycling reduce demands on groundwater and other water supplies.

You can help us protect and preserve our groundwater resources by preventing pollution in our creeks, streams and waterways and by reducing your water use in this drought. There's never been a better time to take advantage of the water district's numerous rebate programs, many of which have been doubled!

Please visit our Drought Watch page for updated information on the water supply outlook and water conservation rebate programs and tips: <http://www.valleywater.org/drought2014/>. You can also contact me directly at (408) 265.2600.

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**Announcements from the Office of Mike Wasserman**

The County is thrilled to be participating in America's biggest free adoption event, **Maddie's® Pet Adoption Days**. Held Saturday and Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup>, dog and cat adoptions are FREE to qualified adopters, and for each adoption our shelter will receive a stipend of \$500-\$2,000 from Maddie's Fund. The shelter



will be open from 10AM-7PM both Saturday and Sunday. There is expected to be

at least 70 dogs and cats available for adoption that weekend at our shelter in San Martin. The Maddie's® Pet Adoption Days event includes over 200 shelters and rescue groups in nine states. This year, Maddie's Fund wants to find homes for 10,000 animals during the two-day event. You can help make that goal a reality by adopting a pet during Maddie's Pet Adoption Days.

Attention business owners! Join the Santa Clara County Small Business Development Center and co-hosts for a **FREE Small Business Summit on Friday**, May 30th from 9:00am - 2:30pm at the County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose. The Summit will include networking, door prizes, resources for your business and workshops. Participants will learn about the hottest online marketing topics and tools including best practices for Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Blogging, WordPress, Marketing Campaigns, and Email Newsletters. This is your opportunity to uncover tools and resources to help grow your business. The event is FREE and open to the public. Please call my office if you would like more information: (408) 299-5010.



Each month I am spotlighting different County departments and this month I will be spotlighting **the Clerk-Recorder's Office**. The Clerk-Recorder's Office is often overlooked when people think about what services the County provides. Also known as the custodian of the community's life events, this office is responsible for preserving and providing accurate records of birth, death, marriage, business functions, and real property documents. Last year alone the office recorded over 500,000 documents! That includes 48,404 birth certificates, 7,360 death records and 9,401 marriage licenses. The office is also a full service marriage center where you can apply for a marriage license, register confidential marriages, and even have your marriage ceremony conducted onsite at the County Government Center. You can also apply for a passport and file your notary bond and oath at the office. Lastly, the Clerk Recorder's Office has an online search function to find records online: [www.clerkrecordersearch.org](http://www.clerkrecordersearch.org).

**\* IMPORTANT REMINDER \***

**VEP Will Be on Summer Break  
June through August**

**Does VEP have your e-mail address?**

E-mail is our primary communication tool during summer months, when newsletters are not published. Contact VEP Secretary, Adina Pierce at [adinap@yahoo.com](mailto:adinap@yahoo.com) to provide or change your e-mail address.

(Please Note: VEP does not share e-mail addresses with anyone.)



**Birdwatching Along Vasona Lake  
With Adults Age 50+**

**Date and Time:** Wednesday June 11  
From 10 AM to 2 PM

**Location:** Vasona Lake in Los Gatos

**Activity Fee:** \$10, includes picnic lunch

Take a leisurely three-mile walk along Vasona Lake to observe nesting Snowy Egrets, Great Herons and other wildlife. Lead by an experienced guide from Santa Clara County Parks. Binoculars are available to you for close-up views. We end with a picnic lunch by the lake.

**Organized by Bay Area Older Adults, a Santa Clara County-based nonprofit organization that serves adults age 50+.**

**Reservations:** Register by email ([share@bayareaolderadults.org](mailto:share@bayareaolderadults.org)) or call [408-774-0593](tel:408-774-0593) (Leave both your name and phone number.)

**DOWNTOWN SAN JOSE FARMERS' MARKET**

presented by KAISER PERMANENTE



**May 2 - Nov. 21**  
Fridays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
San Pedro Square

Every Friday this Summer, there is an opportunity to find the season's freshest fruits and vegetables, cut flowers, and gourmet treats from more than 30 local certified growers, fine foods preparers and local artisans showing off their wares. Come to the Downtown Farmers' Market, where you will find apricots, blueberries, cantaloupes, cherries, nectarines, peaches, plums, prunes and raspberries. Plus, great people-watching and lunching at more than 25 neighboring restaurants, cafes and eateries within a block of the market crowd. 10am-2pm, each Friday, San Pedro Square, San Pedro and Santa Clara Street.

<http://sidowntown.com/events/sjda-events/farmers-market-presented-by-kaiser-permanente/>



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## Pearl Avenue<sup>(\*)</sup>

More than 100 years ago, a cattleman from south of San Jose "slaughtered a bullock in the shade of a wide-spreading oak on Market Street" and thereby became what was probably the city's first commercial butcher.

The cowman's name was John Quincy Pearl, a young Easterner who had arrived in the Santa Clara Valley in 1852, buying 600 acres of land east of Almaden road on the southwest slopes of the San Juan Bautista hills.

The cow trail that became a road through the ranch now bears Pearl Avenue signposts.

A native of New Hampshire, and a young friend of Daniel Webster back in Boston, Pearl came to California via the Isthmus, arriving two years after San Jose had become an incorporated city, and in plenty of time to watch (and help with) its transformation from a cluster of mud houses around the Plaza to a city of streets, business houses, and homes.

Pearl's granddad had been a soldier in the Revolutionary War and was with Washington when he assumed command of the American Army. Young Pearl served on the Vigilance Committee here in the 1850s.

He was a member of one of the city's first volunteer fire fighting companies, a founder of the Pioneer Irrigation Ditch Co. and active in the Santa Clara County Agricultural Society.

From beef-raising, Pearl went into dairying and by the mid-1890s the ranch was devoted mainly to fruit and grain, according to Pearl's grandson, the late Leslie Adams, who lived there "before I was old enough to go to school."

Adams, who died in 1973, recalled his family was visiting an aunt who lived at Julian and Second streets in San Jose at the time of the 1906 earthquake. The shake caused a one-foot gap to appear between the front stairs and the house. At his grandfather's home, at 256 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, all the plaster fell off the ceilings. The family joined others in sleeping in St. James Park for a week post-quake.

Six years after he came here, Pearl married Sophia Hanks, daughter of Julian Hanks, a sea captain who served on San Jose's council (junta) in 1846 and was a member of the First Constitutional Convention which picked San Jose as the state capital.

Pearl died in 1913, leaving a son and five daughters.

His obituary noted he was "a highly respected pioneer, one of the splendid patriarchs of the Santa Clara Valley--who blazed the trail to the land of promise in the golden age of California." It further stated he died "after a lingering illness of six months, silently wrapped the drapery of his couch about him and laid-down to pleasant dreams."

The Santa Clara County Pioneer Society of which he was an honorary member, was in charge of the services from the family residence on Fourth Street. Burial was in Oak Hill Cemetery, not too far from the old Pearl ranch.

## Blossom Hill Road<sup>(\*)</sup>

Weekends in springtime used to bring "city people" from throughout the Bay Area by the thousands to admire Santa Clara Valley's wonderland of flowering fruit trees.

The miles of pink and white blossoms stretched between the towns and up into the foothills. Artists painted them, amateur photographers took snapshots, and the whole valley seemed filled with their fragrance.

Saratoga had an annual blossom festival, and in the 1950s the San Jose Chamber of Commerce inaugurated bus tours and airplane flights during the blossom season.



Blossoms gave the road its name. From the painting by Frank B. Standish

The valley was the prune bowl of the world; a major producer of cherries, apricots and pears. People thought it would last forever.

In 1940 there were about 150,000 acres of orchards in the county and 174,949 people. After World War II the changes came fast. The orchard acreage shrank to 86,000 in 1950 and the population jumped to 289,000.

Thirty years later homes, schools, shopping centers, freeways and boulevards, to meet the needs of a big chunk of the county's more than a million residents, have replaced the orchards.

Springtime is no longer a panorama of color. It is a flowering quince in the yard next door, or a few dying prune trees on a hillside soon to be cleared for houses.

In the days of the blossom bus tours, the route never failed to include Blossom Hill Road, the view from which was one of the most spectacular on the circuit which wound up the west valley to Palo Alto and over through Berryessa and Evergreen.

Today the name of the long road is a misnomer. The view has changed from a sea of blossoms to a blur of rooftops. Early morning and evening the road is one big slowly moving parking lot.

"Signposts" for Blossom Hill Road date back only to 1928 when ranchers such as A. L. Cilker, John Shaw, and W. A. Riggs petitioned county supervisors for a road to offer a "direct connection between the San Jose-Los Gatos Road and the Los Gatos-Almaden Road."

The county agreed the road would open "a territory through which no public road now passes," and it was suggested it be called Blossom Hill. It was a good name for some three decades more.

But long before San Jose and county officials decided in 1967 to put the Blossom Hill name on the entire length of the road from Los Gatos to Monterey Road, blossoms in this area were getting rarer than the glow of smudgepots on a frosty morning.

Choosing Blossom Hill as the name meant dropping the names of Kooser Road and Downer Avenue, whose pioneer namesakes settled on the land east of Hicks Road nearly a century before.

The name change came over protests from individuals and the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission, the latter body pointing out the lack of historical significance of Blossom Hill, and in fact the name "is a misnomer."

As a concession, a tiny piece of Kooser Road was allowed to remain, but the Downer name was lost.

*[<sup>(\*)</sup>Ed. Note: This story was taken from "Signposts Revisited-A Collection of Streets and Roads Where We Live" by Pat Loomis, 2009. VEP will reprint in future editions stories of other historic "signpost" streets in our area. Special thanks to History San José for permission to reprint these fascinating stories. Thanks also to Dave Fadness for contributing these stories.]*



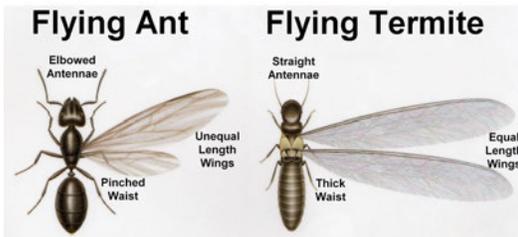
## Gardening, with John Marks

### Pruning Citrus Trees

You may get delicious fruits from your orange, tangerine, and grapefruit trees, but eventually, the trees will get out of control and need pruning. You should remove dead or weak branches first, and thin twiggy growth. It is also possible to rejuvenate an older, established citrus tree, which will usually respond well to hard pruning. Start with the dead, injured, diseased and crossing branches, suckers, and branches growing downward. At the next pruning, remove weak branches and over-crowded growth. Never remove more than one-fourth of the tree at one time. Keep in mind that most citrus trees have a limited supply of carbohydrates in their stem tissues. Excessive pruning at one time may set back growth and fruiting. After the tree is back in good shape (it may take a couple of years), continue to thin as needed. You can also cut back long branches at the tips to promote shoots nearer the center of the tree. If more than one shoot arises around a cut, choose the one or two best-placed shoots to develop as the main branches. It is also possible to top an old citrus (or most trees for that matter) by severely cutting back the tree and grafting on the preferred variety. As far as flavor and sweetness is concerned, many of the grapefruit trees prefer warmer climates to develop the sweetness you desire. However, we are very fortunate to have some relatively new grapefruit-pomelo crosses available in the Santa Clara Valley which have very good flavor and sweetness. These include the Oro Blanco and Melogold varieties. (Article adapted from 4/16/04 issue of the San Jose Mercury News)

### Checking for Termites

If you seem to be invaded by many flying insects with four wings (3/8 to 1/2-inch long) with 3/16-inch ant-like bodies, you may have subterranean termites. Hundreds from the colony develop wings, fly, mate, shed their wings and seek new sites to build nests. They usually leave the nest in October. They will look for pieces of wood or roots next to, or on the soil, and dig tunnels in the wood. If needed, they construct tubes made from the soil to get to the wood, protecting them from desiccation and predators. Termite inspectors look for these distinctive tubes of dried mud leading from the soil and to the foundation and into wood frames of homes where they feed. You might consider doing your own inspection. Use a strong flashlight and look at each footing of the foundation for the tubes.



### Stop Invading Roots

Barriers to our neighbors' vine and/or tree roots may seem needed this time of year. Plastic root barriers, impregnated with chemicals, are available at Orchard Supply in the garden department. The usual practice for installing root barriers is to dig a two-foot-deep trench alongside the fence. If possible, rent a trenching machine to do the digging. These are available from rental yards, and almost anyone can operate them. Place the barrier on the fence side of the trench and backfill. The barriers are supposed to stop all roots from going past them, but some aggressive tree roots will go down and under the barrier in a few years. You can plant shrubs near the barrier, but be aware that the barrier will also prevent the extension of their roots and thus limit their ability to get the nutrients and moisture needed to grow properly. These barriers are not always a permanent solution, but you may be lucky and stop those roots from coming into your yard.



Take the Summer Reading Challenge:  
June 1st - July 31st

### Read



Read 20 minutes per day

The San José Public Library challenges people of all ages to spend time reading, learning, exploring, and energizing this summer with this no-cost program.



### Learn



Learn about science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM)

Play games! Earn great prizes! Attend free events! And prevent yourself (or your children) from slipping down the summer slide!

### Prevent the Summer Slide

During summer break, students who do not spend time reading and learning can find their school year skills slipping backwards. Teachers and literacy experts agree that reading for 20 minutes per day during the summer helps students retain their skills and return to school ready to learn.

### Explore



Explore free library and community resources

### Energize



Energize your mind and body

### Read as a Family

The Library also challenges you to share the joy of reading as a family. Everyone from the baby to great-grandpa can get involved! Reading for pleasure is one of the building blocks needed for young people to grow into healthy, productive adults.

Participate in the Summer Reading Challenge online or visit your local library to pick up a paper game grid.

[sjpl.org/summer](http://sjpl.org/summer)  
#SJPLsummer

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# VEP Community Schools Calendar

May / June 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18	<b>19</b> <b>No School</b> @Parkview NJHS Meeting ~ 2:30 pm ~ @JMMS Rm 207	<b>20</b> JMMS: Falcon Feeding Frenzy ~ 4:00-9:00pm ~ @Aqui's Cal-Mex	21	<b>22</b> NJHS Induction ~ 6:00 pm ~ @JMMS Cafeteria	<b>23</b>  Spell-A-Thon @Carson School Minimum Day @John Muir MS	24
25	 <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	27	<b>28</b> 8th Grade "Oscar Night" ~ 6:00 pm ~ @JMMS Cafeteria	<b>29</b> JMMS 7th Gr. Trip: Saratoga Springs Gunderson HS Awards Night & VEP CSA Winner Presentation	<b>30</b> @JMMS 6th Grade Trip to Seabright Beach 8th Grade Promotion Party ~5:30-8:30pm~	31
1	<b>2</b> @JMMS 8th Grade Trip to Great America Minimum Days All This Week	<b>3</b>  Gunderson H.S. Graduation ~ 4:00-5:30pm~ @Rose Garden (Dana & Naglee)	4	<b>5</b> <b>Promotions</b> Carson: 5th Gr. @Amphitheater, 9am JMMS: 8th Gr. @SAP Center, 4pm Last Day of School	<b>6</b> Gunderson H.S. Grad Night Trip To Disneyland Buses Leave @ 5:00am	<b>7</b> Gunderson H.S. Grad Night Trip Return Buses Leave L.A. @ 5:00am
8	9	10	<b>11</b> Last Day of School for Oak Grove Schools	12	13	14
<b>15</b> 	16	17	18	19	20	21

## Community Schools Contact Information

**Carson Elementary School ~ Home of the Cougars**

WEB: <http://www.sjUSD.org/carson/> PHONE: (408) 535-6287

**Parkview Elementary School ~ Home of the Panthers**

WEB: <http://parkviewca.com/> PHONE: (408) 226-4655

**John Muir Middle School ~ Home of the Falcons**

WEB: <http://sjUSD.org/john-muir/> PHONE: (408) 535-6281

**Gunderson High School ~ Home of the Grizzlies**

WEB: <http://www.sjUSD.org/gunderson/home/> PHONE: (408) 535-6340



# VEP Community Calendar

May / June 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18		20	<b>21</b> D10 "Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 5:00-6:30pm ~ City Espresso 630 Blossom Hill Rd	22	23	24
25	<b>26</b> 	<b>27</b> VEP Community Meeting ~ 7:30 PM ~ @Vista Park Community Room	28	<b>29</b> Gunderson HS Awards Night & Presentation of the VEP's CSA Winner	<b>30</b> Santa Clara County Small Business Summit ~9:00am-2:30pm~ @ County Gov Ctr 70 W. Hedding St.	<b>31</b> 10:00am-7:00pm Multiple Locations Check Online at maddiesfund.org 
<b>1</b> 10:00am-7:00pm Multiple Locations Check Online at maddiesfund.org 	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Primary Elections  GET OUT THE VOTE	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> D10 "Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 5:00-6:30pm ~ City Espresso 630 Blossom Hill Rd	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>

## Important Dates to Remember!

### VEP Community Meeting

May 27, 2014



**Report exposed wires or damaged poles immediately**

(408) 794-1900 weekdays 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
(408) 277-8956 all other times, including weekends/holidays



# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158  
 Email: [vepca@vepca.net](mailto:vepca@vepca.net) Website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

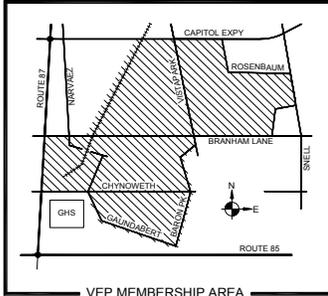
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

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Prefer your newsletter via Email?  
 Let us know at [vep@vepca.net](mailto:vep@vepca.net).



VEP MEMBERSHIP AREA



Be sure to attend  
 VEP's Community Meeting  
 Tuesday, May 27th  
 7:30 pm in the  
 Vista Park  
 Community Room  
 Check our website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)