

VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

SEPTEMBER

2014

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VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday

▶ **September 30th, 2014** ◀

Vista Park Community Room
475 Hyde Park Dr.

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

AGENDA

★ Update on Crime Prevention & Safety ★

Presentation by
SJPD Southern Division Commander
Captain Shawny Williams

★ Open Space Authority ★

Presentation by
OSA General Manager
Andrea Mackenzie

~ Ballot Measure Q ~

★ Martial Cottle Park & Trail Updates ★

★ VEP Business Meeting ★

Announcements & Updates

Update on Dave Fadness
Introduction of Candidate(s) for
SJUSD School Board
Plans for Fall
General Election Tuesday, November 4th

★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

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

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 // 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



◆ **2014 is VEP's 45th Year!** ◆

VEP's September Meeting

By Marilyn Rodgers

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **September 30th**. Please join us at September's general membership meeting, when presentations will include:

► **Captain Shawny Williams** will provide an update on burglaries and other criminal activity in the VEP neighborhoods. A continuation of the issues and recommendations initiated at the May VEP meeting, as well as an overview of the new Community Service Officer program will be provided.

OSA General Manager Andrea Mackenzie will provide an overview of the Open Space Authority, what areas are included under the OSA, its importance to current residents in a region where the lifestyle is typically seen as fast paced and high stress, as well as the OSA's importance to future generations.

Separately, information will be made available on the upcoming **Ballot Measure Q**. Construction progress and updates on the Martial Cottle Park and Trail will be provided.

► **VEP Business Meeting/Updates/Announcements** - Many important 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.

May Membership Meeting Synopsis

By Marilyn Rodgers

President Marilyn Rodgers welcomed everyone to the meeting. She introduced all of the VEP Board members. Ms. Rodgers explained that there had been a change in the agenda as one of the speakers had a scheduling conflict. As a result, she was particularly pleased to be able to introduce the speaker who agreed to come on relatively short notice, the new Southern Division Commander for the San Jose Police Department, **Captain Shawny Williams**.

Captain Williams introduced **Lt. Lisa Gannon**. Capt. Williams provided some personal information including the fact that he is happily married. As he is quite tall, he is often asked if he played basketball - which he is pleased to say, he did. Prior to becoming the Southern Division Commander, his duties included administrative ones responsible in part to overseeing department recruitment and training of new officers. He voiced concern over the current level of staffing for the department, and the inherent challenges it poses in providing service to San Jose City residents. However, he is optimistic and looks forward to working with residents in the Southern Division.

This division is the largest "land based" division in the city. Currently all calls for assistance are prioritized by the department. He strongly encouraged all of us to call not only for serious incidents (911) but also for issues of "suspicious activity" (311 or 911) in the neighborhood. He indicated (as Councilmember Khamis had already informed us) that there are not very many calls originating from our neighborhood. He wants to understand, and have accurate information, as to what is happening in these neighborhoods. Several people attending the meeting provided information on recent incidents, including suspicious activity in and around neighborhood parks, as well as voicing concern regarding the number of home burglaries. Capt. Williams hopes to increase both police visibility and assistance to residents by increasing the number of squad cars patrolling the streets.

Ms. Rodgers also encouraged everyone to call 311 and request that a report be made out. This does take time. Often it means a several minute wait prior to talking to an operator/

dispatcher. She stated this is very important to do, as Captain Williams needs information and "numbers" to be able to justify additional staff being made available on the street. Captain Williams also provided suggestions on what information is helpful for the dispatchers. Visual tools such as pictures taken with cell phones and/or video surveillance cameras are also great crime fighting techniques, as well as possible helpful tools for the police to use in their investigations. These tools need to be used with residents' personal safety in mind however.

An additional tool will soon become available - the Community Service Officers Program will be starting in the near future. This is a new program that will provide a new category of officers - or rather a new level of officers. CSOs will not be sworn officers who wear guns, but will have specific law enforcement training which will allow them to provide assistance to residents in matters such as taking detailed reports of home burglaries. They will also be available to assist with community education. The intent is that the Community Service Officers will be able to "free up" sworn officers for time to deal with higher priority crimes on the street. The program will also act as a possible recruitment tool for the department, as several CSOs may wish to become sworn officers in the future. Captain Williams provided his contact information - e-mail address and office telephone number. He also promised to return in the Fall, for a follow-up meeting. He will provide VEP residents with updated information on criminal activity in the neighborhoods, as well as how residents might best assist and work with police to provide for a safer neighborhood.

Ms. Rodgers then introduced **Councilmember Johnny Khamis**. The Councilmember thanked Captain Williams for attending the meeting and for his presentation. He too wanted to once again encourage everyone to call and report all incidents including ones of a "suspicious activity" nature. The Council has taken action to increase the number of Police Academies to train additional sworn police officers. He also encouraged everyone to plan to attend the July 4th Fireworks Festival to be held at Lake Almaden. He is sponsoring this event with monies raised from donations from private businesses in the hope that it will decrease the amount of illegal fireworks and firecrackers people are setting off in neighborhoods, parks, and backyards throughout San Jose.

Prior to introducing the next presenter, Ms. Rodgers requested that an important item of Business under the agenda be attended to first. That item was to request that the membership approve the Slate of Candidates for the VEP Board. A motion was moved, seconded, and passed.

The next presentation was given by **Manuel Perez**, Program Coordinator for the San Jose City Community Gardens. Mr. Perez provided interesting background information on the community gardens. The program has been in existence since 1977, and provides an avenue for residents to cultivate their own vegetable, fruits, herbs, and flowers. Currently, over 900 gardeners cultivate nearly 35 acres of community gardens. Each City Council District currently has a community garden available to their residents, with the exception of District 10. The Community Garden which will be a partner in the Martial Cottle Park will provide that opportunity for District 10 residents. This community garden will have approximately 185 plots available, with each plot being 10x20 feet in size. While the annual cost for this garden has not yet been determined, the average cost is 20cents per square foot per year. The fee covers the cost of water and mulch. The estimated timeline in which the community garden located at Martial Cottle Park will open, and be available to gardeners, is March 2015. If you are interested in being a participant, you will want to sign up as soon as possible, as there currently is a waiting list with as many as 200 people for some of the community gardens. To put your name

Continues on Page 3

Continued from Page 2

on the Waiting List, e-mail: community.gardens@sanjoseca.gov or call Manuel (Manny) Perez at (408) 793-4165. For this community garden 80% of the plots are reserved for District 10 residents, and the remaining 20% will be for (other) residents of Santa Clara County. For additional information, including a complete list of Community Garden Rules and Regulations, go to: <http://www.sicommunitygardens.org/>.

The third and final presenter was **Eric Goodrich**, Martial Cottle Park Manager. As Alicia Flynn, Park Project Manager, could not attend the meeting, Eric made an announcement for her. For those homeowners whose property backs up on the park property (Birmingham Drive or Barron Park Drives primarily), and who would be interested in having information as to where the trees will be planted along the Martial Cottle Trail, a copy of the plans will be available by contacting VEP President, Marilyn Rodgers. Her e-mail address is MRodgersRN@aol.com. Ms. Flynn would like to hear from residents who have any concerns as to tree placement, as soon as possible. The plan is to plant trees in groups of 3, a few hundred yards apart, along the trail. This is to provide some intermittent shade for those using the Trail. The timeline for the Park and Trail to be completed remains – December 2014. The bridges that will cross over Canoas Creek are scheduled to be delivered for placement during late Summer.

President Rodgers reminded everyone to be sure and vote in the Primary Election scheduled for June 3rd. If you are voting in person, you can do so in the Vista Park Community Room – as it is a Polling Place. If you are voting by mail-in ballot, but have not mailed it already, you can drop it off at any Polling Place including the Vista Park Community Room. Plan now to attend the Lake Almaden Festival and Fireworks display. Ms. Rodgers thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, and reminded the group that this is VEP's last meeting prior to Summer Break. The next meeting will be in September – September 30th.

Dave Fadness Injured in Serious Accident

By Marilyn Rodgers

On June 2nd, while working on projects at his home, long time VEP member, volunteer, and friend, Dave Fadness fell from a ladder. Unfortunately, Dave sustained critical injuries which included permanent damage to his spinal cord. Dave remains hospitalized as of this writing. The Fadnesses are thankful for the excellent medical care that Dave has received, and are hopeful that in the next several weeks, the long awaited opportunity to be moved back home will take place.

Dave's sharp mind and quick wit continue to be an inspiration to all. Dave and Aiko are very appreciative of everyone's well wishes, prayers and support. Written notes and cards sent by reg-

ular mail are especially enjoyed by both Aiko and Dave. If you would like to send a card or note to them, please do so, in care of the VEP Community Association at:

Dave & Aiko Fadness
c/o VEP Community Association
P.O. Box 18111; San Jose, California 95158

Many people continue to ask how they can help or what they can do for the Fadnesses. Aiko and Dave appreciate everyone's concern and offers of assistance. They will let us know in the future what might be of help to them.

Martial Cottle Trail – Bench & Trash Can Fire

By Adina Pierce & Marilyn Rodgers / Photograph by Adina Pierce

In August, neighbors whose property borders the Park notified authorities of a trash can and bench fire on the Martial Cottle Trail. This unfortunate and destructive incident apparently took place at approximately 2:00 am. The bench was completely destroyed, leaving



only the iron supports. The location of the affected trash can and bench is on the curve of the Trail west of the Wellington Park pedestrian entrance as the Trail curves south along Canoas Creek.

Hyde Park Drive – Speed Limit Set at 25 MPH

By Marilyn Rodgers

On September 12th, the speed limit signs were changed on Hyde Park Drive between Chynoweth and Vistapark Drive. **The speed limit for all of Hyde Park Drive is now 25 miles per hour.** This change was made at the request of many VEP members, particularly those that live along this section of Hyde Park Drive. The change was needed and justified as a result of impact on safety -increased number of vehicle accidents, increased number of "near miss" incidents between vehicles and pedestrians by the Vista Park, decreased visibility for drivers due to curves in street and increased number of vehicles parking on both sides of the street, increased volume of non-residential vehicles using the street as a short cut. Additional traffic calming and safety measures are being considered for Hyde Park Drive in the future.

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Dave Fadness Honored with Two Awards

By Rachel Witmeyer & Marilyn Rodgers

This past August, Dave Fadness received two honors acknowledging his many years of volunteerism. For those who may be new members, Dave has been a committed is a long time VEP member, volunteer, and friend for over 30 years.

On August 2nd, **Our City Forest** honored **Dave Fadness** with a special category of volunteer award - its *highest* volunteer award – the **Our City Forest “Ambassador” Award**. The award was featured and presented as the final award for the Awards Event – a special celebration sponsored by Our City Forest to thank its many, many very active volunteers over the past 20 years! CEO and Founder Rhonda Berry struggled with emotion as she announced and presented the award to be given to Dave. The award acknowledged Dave’s outstanding service as a volunteer, mentor, advisor, and special friend to the organization. Councilmember Johnny Khamis, an avid volunteer himself, also assisted in the presentation of this special award to Dave.

Then, on August 11th, **San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed** presented **Dave Fadness** with a **Commendation from the Mayor’s Office** in the hospital at Dave’s bedside (*For an update on Dave’s injury, please see the article on page 3*). This very special commendation was given in recognition of Dave’s more than 20 years of civic service to the people of the City of San Jose. During this time, Dave has served on a variety of different groups, commiss-



-ions and boards, all with the goal of helping to improve our city. Pictured at the bottom of this page, the Commendation itself lists several of Dave’s accomplishments and contributions to the City of San Jose.

Doug Keller, CFR Pres., Dave Noel, Past Pres. Of VEP, and Marilyn Rodgers, current Pres. Of VEP all felt privileged to witness the presentation of this well-deserved commendation. *Congrats, Dave!*

CITY OF SAN JOSE

Commendation

WHEREAS: Dave Fadness moved to Santa Clara County in 1966 and to San José in 1974, and until 1999 was a talented mechanical engineer who founded two companies and holds a share of eight innovative patents for medical radiotherapy, industrial x-ray, and electron beam equipment; and

WHEREAS: Since moving to San José, Dave has been a distinguished and dedicated civic and community volunteer; he has served on the boards of numerous nonprofits, volunteered with state and local organizations including the D10 Leadership Coalition, California Redistricting Commission, and Mayor Chuck Reed’s Transition Team Committee; and

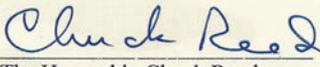
WHEREAS: Dave also dedicated himself to improving economic development and transportation throughout the County by serving on the Santa Clara County Transportation Commission, Santa Clara County Roads Commission, Measure B Transportation Improvement Program Citizen Watchdog Committee, and the San Jose General Plan Task Force; and

WHEREAS: As a co-founder of the well respected Citizens for Fiscal Responsibility, Dave fought fiercely to ensure that government officials are responsible stewards of tax payers’ dollars;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Chuck Reed, Mayor of the City of San José, together with my colleagues on the City Council, on this 6th day of August 2014, do hereby recognize and commend

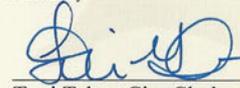
DAVE FADNESS

for his exemplary commitment to public service and his devotion to making San José an exceptional place to live.


The Honorable Chuck Reed
MAYOR



Attested by:


Toni Taber, City Clerk

Almaden Lake 4th of July Fireworks & Festival

By Katherine Decker & Marilyn Rodgers / Photos by K. Decker

The 4th of July Fireworks & Festival at Almaden Lake was enjoyed by all who attended. This was the 1st Annual event especially initiated for residents of District 10, but open free to the public and everyone was welcome to attend. The event was developed and coordinated by Councilmember Johnny Khamis, who wanted to provide an additional option for the residents of San Jose to enjoy fireworks and the traditional fun of 4th of July. It was also hoped that by providing such an option, it would discourage and lessen the dangerous and mushrooming problem of many residents setting off illegal fireworks in neighborhoods, city parks, and backyards. This event was largely funded by private donations from businesses and individuals who were of like mind.

The VEP Board, also concerned about the increase in incidence of illegal fireworks and firecrackers in the VEP neighborhoods (M80's are a particular problem in the Vista Park area this year; Parkview area was a hotspot last year) were supportive of offering an exciting alternative such as the Fireworks and Festival at Almaden Lake. As a result, the VEP Board also authorized a \$250.00 VEP donation to help defray costs for the fireworks.

VEP had a table/booth with other organizations and vendors at the Festival. (See photos.) Several dignitaries attended the Festival including Mayoral Candidates Sam Liccardo and Dave Cortese, past District 10 Councilmember Nancy Pyle, and Santa Clara Valley Water District Board representative Linda LeZotte, as well as Councilmember Johnny Khamis and his family. The festival included several food trucks. The happy challenge was that there was such a large attendance that most of the food trucks ran out of food. Next year's festival will include double or triple the number of trucks! The festival included lots of music with several very good bands playing throughout, as well as a Children's Costume Parade. We were surprised and pleased to hear the musical talent of Council Aide Rayshelle Brant, who joined one of the bands. Of course, the highlight of the evening, was the fabulous fireworks display. Over 10,000 people watched in amazement at the beauty of the fireworks displayed over the Lake. WOW!

For its first year, everyone agreed this was a definite success! A special thank you to the businesses, organizations, and individuals who supported this event financially; to Councilmember Khamis for his leadership in providing such an enjoyable event; and to all of the District 10 Council staff and District 10 volunteers who worked so hard to make this event a reality!



Plan now for your family to attend the 4th of July Fireworks and Festival at Almaden Lake, in July of 2015!

Report: S.J. City Neighborhoods Commission

By Rich Giammona

My name is Rich Giammona and I am one of two District 10 Neighborhood Commissioners. As a resident of the Vista Park area and a sitting member of the VEP Board, I get the opportunity to address issues pertaining to our area. As commissioners we study issues, set courses of action, and review policies and programs that affect a neighborhood's quality of life. Areas the commission focuses on are code enforcement, public safety, transportation, community engagement, budgeting, and the annual report. The Commission also makes regular reports to the San José City Council, and City Staff.

The Commission meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at San Jose City Hall (Wing Rooms 118-119), from 6:30pm -9:00pm. I would strongly encourage you to attend a meeting to voice any concerns you may have for the commission to consider.

As of 9-12-2014, the 2014-2015 Neighborhoods Commission Action Plan has been set. We will study the following issues:

Code Enforcement—1. Neighborhood cleanup, blight, processing time, costs, graffiti & litter –2. Fireworks: Work with neighborhoods and CSJ to reduce unlawful use of fireworks in San Jose

Public Safety—Neighborhood safety; improved Neighborhood Watch through signage, live video and networking.

Transportation / DOT—Bicycle safety: Work with the City Dept. of Transportation to reduce accidents and injury on city streets

Budget—Annual Budget Process: Inform CSJ of neighborhood's desire to continue to be a part of the budget process (Oct. & Nov.)

Annual Report—Draft, summarize and submit the Annual Report

Community Engagement—District Leadership: promote and share best practices within and between neighborhoods and districts

For more information, email: rich@wonderfulworldlearning.com

For more information about the SJ Neighborhoods Commission: <http://www3.sanjoseca.gov/clerk/commissionboard/nc/nc.asp>

Updates on The Martial Cottle Park & Trail

By Marilyn Rodgers / Photograph by Adina Pierce

Over the Summer months, construction in the Park and its Trail continued. It is on-track to be completed by the end of December. What is newly constructed and/or almost-completed is a children's discovery area, group picnic areas, parking lots, the Visitors' Center, and a Redwood water-tank, originally from Calero Park. Furthermore, construction of the two Canoas Creek bridges is complete. The bridges arrived in August, partially assembled, then were completed on-site. A week later, the bridges were installed in place over Canoas Creek with the assistance of large cranes. Construction of the bridges created a significant amount of excitement, curiosity, and interest for frequent Trail users and neighbors whose homes border the Trail or Creek.

Editor's Notes: Please be sure to see the next two pages of this newsletter (6 & 7), for a gallery of photographs showing the progress in the Park.





Progress at Martial Cottle Park

Spring & Summer 2014

Top Left: Beautiful Views

Middle Left: Walking Path Construction

Bottom Left, Clockwise from Far Left: Children's Discovery Area "Stump Chair," Park-Entry Kiosk, Partial-Building in the Children's Area, Picnic Areas

Top Right: The Visitor Center

Below: Installation of the Canoas Creek Bridges

All Photographs by Sec. Adina Pierce, Unless Labeled "Lettieri." Mr. Lettieri lives near the new Canoas Creek Bridge, and he very kindly shared his photos from the construction project with VEP.

VEP Photo Gallery: www.flickr.com/photos/vepca



Watch Videos of the bridge installations, here:
 Western Bridge: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEkFu_UmlTo
 Southeast Bridge: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njS_pH21rbM

Parkview II Clean Up Day!

Article & Photographs By Peggy Golden

It seems like so long ago, but on a sunny Saturday morning last June (14th) Parkview II park received some much needed attention. Thanks to the efforts of SJ City Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) volunteer coordinator, Mollie Tobias and Wendell Cox, chief gardener, we were able to give the park a little face lift.

Note: In case you are not aware of it, our city parks are on a very 'basics only' maintenance routine. They get watered (drought minimums) and mowed, of course, and somewhat monitored (damage control). But, beyond that the city relies on volunteers from the community to accomplish such tasks as:

- Preserve and enhance beautiful landscapes
- Remove non-native invasive plants
- Prune, weed, mulch, and reseed
- Restore vital native habitats
- Remove graffiti
- Pick up litter

Back to Parkview II:

While the inside grounds of the park are fairly tidy and littler free, it was the outside perimeter of the park that I felt needed work. And, that dirty little sandbox. So, I set a date with Mollie and Wendell to bring their 'tool truck' and I put an event notification on the Nextdoor website to ask for neighborhood volunteers.

Mollie worked on her corporate volunteer list and was able to get Deloitte to donate wood chips for the playground areas. She also ordered a big truck load of sand for the sand box!

About a week before the scheduled clean up, about 30 volunteers from Deloitte came and spread wood chips around both play areas of the park. Then, the day before, Wendell and his crew of one, delivered and spread a huge truck load of new sand for the sand box! So, that meant that on the day of the scheduled clean up we could concentrate on pulling weeds, trimming shrubs, raking leaves and removing lots and lots of dead stuff!

Again, I'd like to thank the Parkview neighbors who came to help - Suzanne and Gary Bloomfield, Graham Harbman, Weeone Cheng, Allison and Jen Franklin, Joelle Garetson, Bill Golden, Shree Khairnar, and Norm Nakahara. Also, the Missionary team from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and high school students Bryant and Viet Nguyen and Dad Tuan and Alice Goldin. Councilman Johnny Khamis came out to help with his two boys as well. 31 volunteers in all!

I wish I had more time this summer to do the same at Parkview I and III. But, with six grandchildren, my summers get mighty full with family activities. If anyone would like to coordinate another park clean up please get a hold of me and I will help get you started. My email is: peggygolden@mac.com.

Please Slow Down on Neighborhood Streets

By Marilyn Rodgers

These days everyone is in a hurry, and more often than not – stressed and distracted. Please remember to slow down as we drive on neighborhood streets.

Many people do not realize that, whether posted or not, the speed limit by schools, parks, and assisted living facilities is 25 miles per hour. Please, make sure that you slow down whenever you pass the schools, parks, and assisted living facilities in our neighborhood, and.... Encourage and support your family and friends to do the same! *Safety First!*



Be In the Know with 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 also have links to crimereports.com and California's Megan's Law website on our homepage, www.vepca.net.

Water District Continues Conservation Incentive Programs

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

Earlier this year, the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Valley Water District doubled or substantially increased the water conservation program incentives offer by the District in response to the severe drought conditions. For example, landscape conversion rebates were doubled from \$1 per square foot to \$2 per square foot. To facilitate this program, on Aug. 26th the Board voted unanimously to allocate up to \$4 million so that the increases could continue through September.

As a result of these increased incentives, the demand for the landscape rebate program has increased fivefold. More than 360,218 square feet of high water using landscapes have been replaced with drought tolerant ones. And there are many more projects already in the pipeline that have been approved to start. In short, the influx of interest in water conservation programs has been overwhelming.

Therefore, the money we just allocated is not likely to last long, so if you have been thinking of participating in one of our programs, call our water conservation hotline at (408) 630-2554 or visit our website (www.valleywater.org/drought2014) right away to determine if you are eligible and to get started.

All of our water conservation programs are helping to address the current drought, but they are also reducing long-term water use, which will help alleviate future drought conditions as well. As part of our long-term water supply management plan, the water district is working hard save 98,500 acre-feet of water per year by 2030, which is projected to account for about 20 percent of the county's total water supply needs.

Why is it important to reach the immediate 20 percent reduction target? First, we don't know what 2015 will bring. We are in our third dry year, but no one knows if it's the last.

Second, our groundwater levels have already begun to fall. Due to continuing drought and limited water supplies, the district has reduced its groundwater replenishment program in 2014. You will notice as you drive around your community that some of the percolation ponds are complexly dry. At the same time, groundwater pumping has increased in some areas to meet Santa Clara County water needs, resulting in groundwater levels dropping up to 37 feet compared to the five-year average for September. Groundwater is a tremendous resource for our county in dry years, but it is not an endless supply.

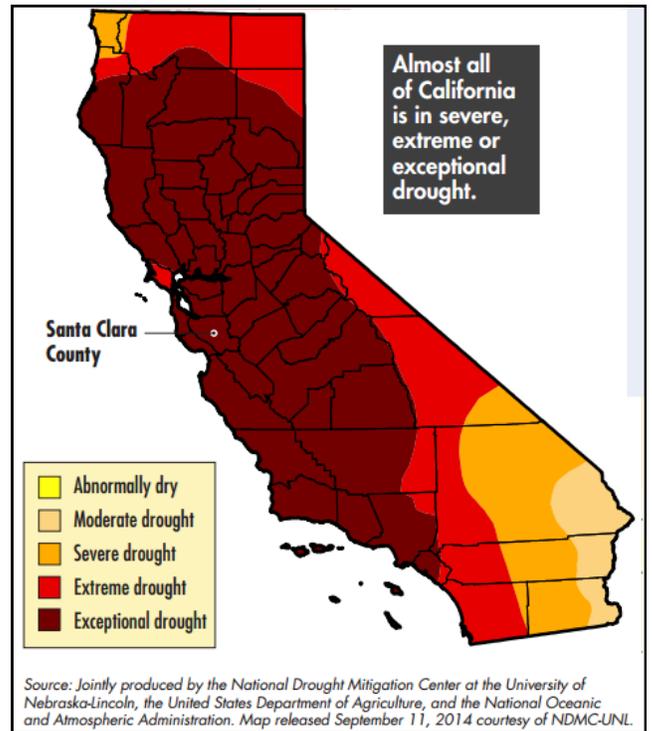
Over-pumping our groundwater basins would have dire consequences. Salt water could be drawn into the basin, affecting drinking water quality. Subsidence, or the sinking of the land, could cause expensive damage to underground infrastructure and increase flood risks in low-lying areas.

While water conservation has in some measure become a long-term way of life in California, there is much more we need to do to reach this year's drought goal of saving 20 percent compared to our 2013 water use. Our February through July figures show that the county has reduced its water use by 11 percent.

Please do what you can to reduce your water use even further. As the weather cools and the days grow shorter, landscapes need less water, so don't forget to adjust your watering schedule accordingly. Please remember to use water wisely.

We appreciate all of the businesses and residents who have let their lawns suffer this summer, proudly proclaiming that "Brown is the New Green." You can get a free lawn sign, while supplies last, by signing up at www.valleywater.org/drought2014.

As always, I am available for questions or comments as your District 4 representative for the City of Campbell and the San Jose neighborhoods of Cambrian, Willow Glen, Blossom Hill and North Almaden area. Feel free to contact me at (408) 265.2600.



Editor's Note: Graphic from the "Drought Fact Sheet" September, 2014. Available from the SCVWA, at <http://www.valleywater.org/Drought2014/>



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Announcements from the Office of Mike Wasserman

Mountain Lions: News of a mountain lion attack this month serves as a great reminder to take precautions whenever you venture out into their habitat. A mountain lion is a wild animal and their actions can be unpredictable. To prevent problems with a mountain lion, hike with a friend, keep a close eye on small children, and leave your dog at home. While seeing a mountain lion is rare it is always good to be prepared. If you do encounter a mountain lion, do not run. Instead make yourself big and make a lot of noise. Mountain lion sightings may continue to increase as the drought drags on and they seek prey closer to residential areas.

The Drought: Are you geared up to reduce your water usage during the drought? The average household residence uses over 100,000 gallons of water (indoor and outdoor) in one year. Lawns are generally the single biggest water user for a typical property. That means they offer the greatest potential for water savings. Even a small lawn can use more than 18,000 gallons of water per year! Visit valleywater.org to read up on tips for minimal water usage during the drought and learn how you can get your own —Brown is the New Green” lawn sign and/or a water-collection bucket. Reducing water usage is just one way that we as a region are grappling with the drought. The newly-opened Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center takes treated wastewater that would have otherwise been discharged into the San Francisco Bay and purifies it through microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light. A collaborative effort by the City of San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley Water District, this new locally-controlled, high-quality water source produces an amazing 8 million gallons a day of highly purified water!

Wine Trail: Have you seen the new Wine Trail signs? I'm proud to announce that the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors officially approved the Santa Clara Valley Wine Trail Route. The new Wine Trail is a 28-mile loop through Morgan Hill, San Martin and Gilroy marked with directional way-finding signage to help drivers locate two dozen wineries. —Don't Drink and Drive” signs can also be found along the route. We were able to overcome past obstacles and create a directional sign program that is both aesthetically pleasing and promotes our local wineries -- a real win-win for our County! Many thanks and kudos to all involved with this effort including the Santa Clara Valley Wineries Association, Cities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy, Gilroy Welcome Center, Morgan Hill Tourism Alliance, Santa Clara County Farm Bureau, and the many individuals who also played key roles.

Contact: 408-299-5010 / mike.wasserman@bos.sccgov.org

DOWNTOWN SAN JOSE FARMERS' MARKET
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May 2 - Nov. 21
Fridays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
San Pedro Square

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You're invited! • Quý vị được mời • ¡Está invitado!
Coyote Valley Family Harvest Feast
Saturday, September 27, 2014
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Feast on plenty of fresh, delicious foods and enjoy lively entertainment in the beautiful 348-acre Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve! A free, family-friendly event!
• Bluesman Willie G, singer-songwriter Andy Z, Folklorico dancers and more are scheduled to perform.
• Healthy, affordable, multicultural foods.
• Guided hikes and games galore!
• Live animals and storytelling!
• A green, zero-waste event with free admission and parking.
PRESENTED BY OPEN SPACE AUTHORITY SANTA CLARA COUNTY
SPONSORED BY greenwaste a biggie food of green BayAreaParent
THE FEAST TAKES PLACE AT Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve 550 Palm Avenue, Morgan Hill (just south of San Jose)
Register for this FREE EVENT at: harvestfeastcv.eventbrite.com

Coyote Valley Family Harvest Feast: Fresh, healthy food & fun in the Valley of Heart's Delight

Guest Column By The Santa Clara County Open Space Authority

The Open Space Authority cordially invites the community to attend the festive **Coyote Valley Family Harvest Feast**, a celebration of nature's bounty, and the many ways nature contributes to our health, quality of life, and strength of the local economy.

Cost of Parking & Admission: FREE!
Register at: harvestfeastcv.eventbrite.com
When: Saturday, September 27, from 11:00am to 3:00pm
Where: The Open Space Authority's 348-acre "Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve" 550 Palm Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

—Our purpose is to celebrate this last remaining area in the iconic Valley of Heart's Delight, and to help people experience firsthand how important nature and its benefits are to our everyday lives," said Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager. —Open space land helps protect our clean air and water, wildlife habitat, and provides healthy food produced by local farms and ranches. Open space is here for everyone to enjoy - we encourage people to visit often."

The Open Space Authority's Greenprint identifies Coyote Valley as one of the highest priority areas for conservation in Santa Clara County. —Coyote Valley encompasses one of only two critical landscape linkages that allow wildlife movement between the Diablo Range and Santa Cruz Mountains. It is a critical recharge area for the groundwater basin on which Silicon Valley depends. Its farmland provides opportunities for the sustained livelihood of farmers and ranchers," said Matt Freeman, Asst. General Manager.

The Family Harvest Feast will offer docent-led hikes and educational booths that reflect the South Bay's deep agricultural roots and its vibrant conservation community.

Visitors will enjoy delicious, affordable, multicultural food including crisp and juicy rotisserie porchetta, fresh fish tacos, veggie kabobs, roasted corn on the cob, turkey dogs and falafel, pad Thai, and healthy salads. The Chili Pepper Display will feature sixty types of chilies, ranging from the mild Aji Dulce to the piquant Golden Cayenne to the extremely hot Trinidad Scorpion.

The entertainment schedule is as follows:
11:15-11:30am ~ Vietnamese Lasallian Youth Troupe (drums/dancing)
11:30 – 12:00 noon ~ McKon Kathak Dance School (traditional dance)
12:00 – 12:30pm ~ Grupo Folklorico de Laureles (Hispanic dancing)
12:30 – 1:00pm ~ Andy Z (singer/storyteller for all ages)
1:30 – 3:00pm ~ Willie G (renowned Bay Area "Bluesman")

Since 1993, the Open Space Authority has protected over 16,000 acres of open space, natural areas, watersheds and wildlife habitat — providing outdoor recreation opportunities and preserving the natural beauty and environmental health of Santa Clara County.

Visit us online at www.openspaceauthority.org



Gardening, with John Marks

Fall Plantings

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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A Year of Salads, Sandwiches, & Soups Online @ ayearofsaladssandwichessoups.blogspot.com

By Kathy Wood

What to write, what to write, what to write... In the middle of the night when sleep eludes me, why is it that's when I can think of a hundred different things to write about? I should just get up and write them down but my body is soooo tired and if I lay still maybe sleep will come. I should know by now this isn't the case. The stats on that scenario are about the same as Santa showing up on your rooftop in July.

I've had the summer off so I should be all refreshed and full of ideas; well, I think the heat fried some brain cells...the good ones, the creative and imaginative ones, and there could be a little dehydration going on from the lack of water here in our state. The cells that remain get me through the day (barely), but aren't always reliable when it comes to remembering where I parked the car - looking like a thief wandering around the parking lot searching for a car to steal. What is embarrassing, is that when I do find my car, I don't remember parking it there - someone *must* have moved it while I was shopping.

Those same cells always know when it's dinnertime; heaven forbid I forget a meal, or when they are in need of a boost-COFFEE! Brain cells need to have daily stimulation - we're told to do puzzles (all kinds) to help strengthen the mind. I think it could have the opposite effect - make one feel stupid because they can't unscramble a word, or fit a jigsaw puzzle piece in the right place, thus causing frustration and anger and most likely having that same puzzle thrown at the opposing wall. So, my brain cells are telling me that if I haven't already been practicing this puzzle exercise all along the path of my life, I probably shouldn't attempt it now, for my own health and safety and for those around me.

I did gather enough brain cells to continue with the salads, sandwiches, and soups marathon (probably because it involves food). This is a salad that was popular when I lived in Michigan several years ago. It's good for autumn, or your Christmas get-together.

~ Cinnamon Apple Salad ~

Ingredients:

¼ cup mini cinnamon candies (*the ones for decorating cookies*)
1 3-ounce package cherry Jello®, 1 cup diced apples
1 cup diced celery, ½ cup walnuts, chopped.

Instructions:

Dissolve candy in 1 cup water over medium heat.
Add enough boiling water to make 1 ½ cups of liquid.
Add dry Jello® and stir until dissolved.
When mixture begins to thicken, fold in apples, celery, nuts.
Chill until completely thickened.

For a picture of this salad and other recipes, please visit the blog!



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VEP Community Schools Calendar

September / October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21	22	23 	24	25  Seniors College Night ~ 6 - 8 pm ~ @Gunderson HS	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
 San Jose Unified Schools on Fall Recess ~ NO SCHOOL						
5	6	7	8 PTSA Meeting ~ 6:30 pm ~ @JMMS Library	9	10	11
12	13 SSC Meeting ~2:30-3:30 pm~ @Carson School Room C-10	14	15  Make-Up Picture Day @Carson School	16  9th-11th Grade Family Night @Gunderson HS	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25

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

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://gunderson.sjUSD.org/> PHONE: (408) 535-6340



VEP Community Calendar

September / October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21	22	23  First Day of Autumn	24 San Jose Library: Knit/Crochet Club 3:00 pm @Pearl Ave.	25	26 San Jose Library: Kids LEGO Club 3:30 pm @ Pearl Ave.	27 Coyote Valley Family Harvest Feast 11 am to 3 pm 550 Palm Avenue Morgan Hill
28	29	30  VEP Community Meeting ~ 7:30 PM ~ @Vista Park Community Room	1 San Jose Library: Knit/Crochet Club 3:00 pm @Pearl Ave.	2 San Jose Library: teensReach Mtg. 4:00 pm @ Pearl Ave.	3 San Jose Library: Spooky Halloween Science Workshop 4:00 pm @ Pearl Ave.	4 San Jose Library: 1-on-1 Computer Help Class 3:00-5:45pm @ Pearl Ave.
25 History San Jose: YARD SALE! ~ 10am - 2pm ~ @SJ History Park 1650 Senter Road	6	7	8 D10 "Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 8:30-9:30am ~ @Almaden Valley Community Center	9 San Jose Library: Line Dancing 1:00 pm @Pearl Ave.	10 San Jose Library: @ Pearl Ave. Kids LEGO Club 3:30pm Live Animal Show: -Happy Birds" 4:00pm	11 San Jose Library: @ Pearl Ave. Sci-Fi Book Club 11:00am 1-on-1 Computer Help Class 3:00-5:45pm
12	13	14	15 San Jose Library: Knit/Crochet Club 3:00 pm @Pearl Ave.	16 San Jose Library: Free Workshop: -s Starting a Business Right for Me? 6:00 pm @Pearl Ave.	17 San Jose Library: Kids LEGO Club 3:30 pm @ Pearl Ave.	18 San Jose Library: 1-on-1 Computer Help Class 3:00-5:45pm @ Pearl Ave.
19	20	21	22 D10 "Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 5:00-6:00pm ~ City Espresso 630 Blossom Hill Rd	23 San Jose Library: Line Dancing 1:00 pm @Pearl Ave.	24 San Jose Library: Kids LEGO Club 3:30 pm @ Pearl Ave.	25 History San Jose: Ghosts in the Valley of Hearts De-light! (21+) 7:00-10:00pm @SJ History Park 1650 Senter Road

Important Dates to Remember!

VEP Community Meetings

September 30, 2014
October 28th, 2014
November 25th, 2014
December - No Meeting
January 27th, 2015



VEP Community Events

Santa in the Park
Sunday, November 30th, 2014
Holiday Decorations Contest Judging
Weekend of December 12th-14th, 2014
VEP Community-Wide Garage Sale
Saturday, May 2nd, 2015

THE VEP NEWS



VEP Community Association

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 Email: vepca@vepca.net Website: www.vepca.net

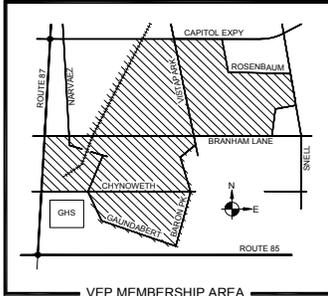
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

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 Let us know at vep@vepca.net.



VEP MEMBERSHIP AREA



Check our website: www.vepca.net

Community Room

Vista Park

7:30 pm in the

Be sure to attend
 VEP's Community Meeting
 Tuesday, September 30th