

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

## SEPTEMBER 2015

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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 & "VEP News" Editor - Rachel Witmeyer

## VEP'S COMMUNITY MEETING

7:30 p.m. - Tuesday

► **September 29th, 2015** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Dr.

*Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!*

### AGENDA

#### ★ Martial Cottle Park ★

1<sup>st</sup> Annual Fall Festival: October 3rd  
and  
Park Updates

*Presentation by*

**Eric Goodrich**

Manager  
Martial Cottle Park

#### ★ New Crosswalk for the Main Entrance at Martial Cottle Park ★

*Presentation by*

**Cordell Bailey**

Department of Transportation  
City of San Jose

#### ★ VEP Business Meeting ★

Announcements & Updates

Our City Forest - Volunteer Project  
At Martial Cottle Park, October 3rd

Updates from Councilmember Khamis & Staff

VEP's Next Meeting - Tuesday, October 27, 2015

#### ★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

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

◆ **2015 is VEP's 46th Year!** ◆

## VEP's September Meeting Preview

By Marilyn Rodgers

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **September 29th**. Please join us at the September VEP Community meeting, featuring:

► **Presentations:** Featured presentations will include **Martial Cottle Park** and the **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Fall Festival**, with featured speaker, **Eric Goodrich, Park Manager**. Eric will provide both updates on project status for the Park, as well as an overview of all of the activities planned for the festival (Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>). A second brief presentation will be provided by **Cordell Bailey** of the San Jose Department of Transportation on the **new cross-walk on Snell at the main vehicle entrance to Martial Cottle Park**. Informational items and announcements will be provided.

► **VEP Business Meeting/Updates/Announcements.**

Announcements and updates will be included. One such announcement will be provided by Our City Forest - a partner at Martial Cottle Park. This announcement will provide information on an important upcoming volunteer opportunity at the Park, also taking place on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

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

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **September 29th**. Please join us!

## May/June Meeting Synopsis

By Marilyn Rodgers

President Rodgers welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated that she was pleased to see so many new faces at the meeting. She also acknowledged that she knew several people were in attendance to learn more about Video Camera Monitored Response, as a result of several home burglaries occurring in the VEP neighborhoods. As this would be a very busy meeting, she asked that one important business item on the agenda be taken first. That item had to do with the Election for the Slate of Members for Election to the Board of Directors. She asked for and received a motion and second to the motion to approve the election of the slate. It was unanimously approved. President Rodgers thanked the audience and introduced the Board Members: Ginger Cardona, Adina Pierce, Katherine Decker, Rachel Witmeyer, Rich Giammona, and herself. As per the VEP bylaws, the Board of Directors, once elected, will determine and vote for the officers of the organization.

President Rodgers introduced Francisco De La Torre of TAPS Residential Security Patrols. Francisco brought a couple of staff members with him to help with the demonstration and answer questions regarding the Video Camera Monitored Response system. They had a table top demonstration. One of the main attributes to a video camera monitored response system is that it videos intruders/potential burglars and this information is immediately available to the SJPD as a "verified response." How it works: A live person is constantly monitoring the system at a central location. In the event of an alarm, this agent will contact the homeowner to verify there is no mistake/false alarm, and then the information goes immediately to SJPD (in the case of our city/neighborhood). Note: SJPD only responds to "verified" burglary alarms currently. Verification can be made by video and/or by a TAPS Residential Security Patrol Guard in person (if there is no video). So having video camera monitored response system decreases the amount of time for a response and increases the probability of actually catching the perpetrator.

Following the presentation, the audience had several questions, such as how many cameras are needed, where are they placed, what is the cost, what about privacy issues for the homeowner (how long are the tapes kept, who has access to the tapes, and so forth). Francisco stated that because there is an additional cost to the company to pay staff to constantly be watching the monitoring system at the central location, the cost of this type of security system to the homeowner is more expensive than traditional alarm monitoring services. He encouraged the audience to sign up for an appointment where TAPS staff can fully explain the system and costs, based on the individual homeowners needs and wants. Ms. Rodgers thanked Francisco and his staff for their time and the demonstration. She indicated that in addition to this service, several residents in our neighborhood already are subscribers to the Residential Patrols provided on an individual voluntary contract basis to homeowners. Those subscribers are very pleased with the service and they find the price very reasonable.

Ms. Rodgers then introduced Rayshelle Edmunds, Council Assistant to Councilmember Johnny Khamis. Rayshelle apologized saying that the Councilmember had hoped to be here, but this time of year is particularly hectic, as the Budget is about to be finalized for the coming year. She stated the Councilmember and Captain Schroder meet weekly to discuss public safety issues of concern to District 10 residents, and that neighborhood security, particularly home burglaries, is a high priority. The Councilmember has asked for additional assistance for the SJPD including increasing the numbers of Community Service Officers, so that immediate response including follow-up reports can be taken when a home burglary takes place. She mentioned that the numbers for our area recently was 4. This initiated response and discussion from audience members – as the VEP data for the same time period was larger and seems to consistently run between 4 and 10. There was agreement that there seems to be a discrepancy between neighborhood information and that of SJPD. Neighbors were strongly encouraged to be sure to report all incidents – and ask that a report be initiated at the time of the call.

Rayshelle also announced that planning for the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks and Festival was well underway, and that volunteers and donations were still needed and appreciated. This event is sponsored by the District 10 office and Councilmember Khamis to encourage residents to attend one of the professionally sponsored events, rather than being involved with illegal fireworks. She reminded everyone that all fireworks in the City of San Jose are banned and illegal. This year there is increased safety concerns, as this is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the drought; everything is extremely dry and increases the potential for fires. Ms. Rodgers seconded that advice. VEP is a Community sponsor of the fireworks festival at Lake Almaden – including having a booth at the festival. She encouraged everyone to volunteer, donate, and/or attend (or all three) this very enjoyable event. She stated that seeing the fireworks over Lake Almaden is really special!

Since having such a large event for the public's enjoyment, free of charge, is an expensive endeavor, a fundraiser to assist in deferring the cost of the fireworks is being planned by neighborhood association Playa del Rey. It is scheduled for June 20<sup>th</sup> at Buffalo Wild Wings (corner of Blossom Hill and Santa Teresa). She reminded attendees to see flyer included in the current issue of the VEP News. (Note: the cost of this fireworks event is primarily paid for by individual donations and business sponsorships.)

Ms. Rodgers then introduced Sheila Barry, the Santa Clara County Director for the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) and a Park Partner for Martial Cottle Park. She is also the Livestock Advisor. Ms. Rodgers thanked Ms. Barry for her patience in waiting. She also brought her school-aged daughter with her to the meeting.

*Continues on Page 3*

Ms. Barry provided a brief history and overview of what the University of California Cooperative Extension is. All public universities were established through "land grants" from the U.S. government. As a result there is direct oversight by the government through the U.S. Department of Agriculture which continues to this day. California, as most of us know, is a very large agricultural state producing much of the nation's food: produce, beef, dairy, etc. So the connection and partnership with Martial Cottle Park is an exciting one. As of yet, the contract has not been signed with the County. However, everyone is anxiously awaiting for that to be finalized. It does, unfortunately take a considerable amount of time to go through the contractual process as each aspect – University, State, etc - is involved.

4-h Clubs are also under the auspice of the UCCE. Their offices are on Berger Road in San Jose. Ms. Barry also included an overview of her interest and expertise which includes livestock, or larger farm animals. Ms. Rodgers thanked her for her presentation and stated it was exciting to have an opportunity to learn more about the UC Cooperative Extension and how it will interface with Martial Cottle Park. She said she hoped Ms. Barry would come to VEP meetings in the future, to provide additional information.

Ms. Rodgers then introduced Eric Goodrich, Park Manager for Martial Cottle Park, who gave the attendees an update on the Park. There continues to be issues with Caltrans regarding the freeway overpass and the surrounding area. Unfortunately the date for finalization and opening of the remainder of the Perimeter Trail remains unknown. Ms. Rodgers thanked Eric for how attractive the planting along the Trail was looking – and particularly so for the area surrounding the pedestrian entrance at the western side of Chynoweth.

The Master Farmer – Jacobs Farm del Cabo - has begun planting. Tomatoes and flowers will be harvested this year. Unfortunately, again due to delay in the contracting process, the planting started later than they had hoped. Initial plans for a food stand and a harvest festival has begun, with both to take place in the Fall – hopefully in September.

The Park did officially open on May 15<sup>th</sup>, and the current plan is to have all that the Park has to offer fully available for the Fall Harvest Festival. While the park is now open, not all the areas and activities are as yet available for use. As a result, most of the fees will not be initiated until later this year. There eventually will be a charge to drive in and park on the property, but for now, the Park is open with free access and parking. Currently the Park staff is being cautious and protective of recently re-established grassy areas. After the damage caused by rains and some flooding in December, the grassy areas have been roped off to allow the grass to be well established prior to having heavy foot traffic on it. Watch for more information becoming available during late Summer, prior to the Fall Harvest Festival.

Prior to closing the meeting, a raffle drawing was held - always a popular part of the meeting! Ms. Rodgers thanked everyone for attending. She reminded them that VEP takes a "summer break" with the next meeting not until September. She also encouraged everyone to provide VEP with their e-mail address, as this is the primary communication tool with members during the summer months. Ms. Rodgers also reminded attendees that VEP member e-mail addresses are kept confidential, are not shared with anyone, and VEP does not overload your e-mail box with lots of e-mails – usually a maximum of 2 or 3 per month. She wished everyone a happy and safe summer. Finally, she thanked everyone in advance for helping to stack chairs and assisting in cleaning up the Community Room.

## Dave & Aiko Fadness' 50th Anniversary

By Marilyn Rodgers

On June 5th, Dave and Aiko Fadness celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary at the rehab facility where Dave continues to receive his care. The VEP Board of Directors, on behalf of the VEP Community, sent a large floral arrangement to acknowledge and celebrate this very special day! Aiko and Dave were both very moved by the VEP's gesture to them, as their note shows.

*"Dear Marilyn and Members of the VEP Community Association:*

*We would like to take this means of expressing our heartfelt thanks for the breathtaking floral arrangement sent to us on our 50th Wedding Anniversary. We were brought to tears by your thoughtful and generous gesture. Because of David's hemiplegia and many medical needs, he has been unable to return home since his accident a year ago. The colorful and lovely flowers certainly brightened our hearts, as well as his room at the skilled nursing facility where he is being treated.*

*Thank you for keeping us in your thoughts during these long months. Your cards, calls, and visits have helped tremendously to brighten our days and spirits. Your kindness has been greatly appreciated.*

*We are proud to continue our membership in VEP and congratulate YOU for your active participation in keeping our community one of the best in San Jose.*

*With sincere appreciation, David and Aiko Fadness"*

## Martial Cottle Park 4-H Club: August Meeting

By Adina Pierce and Marilyn Rodgers

Friday, August 28th several volunteers and staff initiated the first meeting for Martial Cottle Park 4-H Club. The meeting began at 6:30pm, close to the vehicle entrance and on Park property. However, as the Park closes at dusk, future meetings would need to be held elsewhere. The attendees, including parents and potential members of 4-H, heard information and encouragement from several very-involved members. Jason Bombardier is one such young man. Jason will be the initial Community Club Leader as he has many years of very positive experience with 4-H. As an experienced leader in 4-H, we are fortunate to have Jason agree to assist the local group start and become a successful club for the Martial Cottle area.

The second meeting is planned for Monday, September 28th. A location is still to be determined, so additional information will be sent out via e-mail. Interested children and adults can also contact Jason by email: [Jason.coyote\\_crest@yahoo.com](mailto:Jason.coyote_crest@yahoo.com).

## Summer Events

Article By Marilyn Rodgers & Rachel Witmeyer

During the months of June, July, and August, VEP takes a "Summer Break." We do not hold scheduled community meetings and the VEP News is not published for three months. Please enjoy our highlights of the summer community events we missed!

### 1. June 20th: Fundraiser for July 4th Festival & Fireworks

This event was sponsored by our neighbors, the Playa Del Rey Neighborhood Association, and was held at Buffalo Wild Wings. Originally, 10% of the profits were pledged. However, Buffalo Wild Wings made a significant increase in the total donated to the festival! They were also a business sponsor and food vendor for the event. Please consider stopping by Buffalo Wild Wings to thank them for their generous support of the July 4th Fireworks & Fest.!

*Summer Events Coverage Continues on Pages 4 through 6.*

Continued from Page 3

## 2. Mayor's Summer Safety Briefing – July 1<sup>st</sup> at Vista Park

VEP was honored to play host to Mayor Sam Liccardo's Summer Safety Briefing. This event took place outside, in Vista Park. The event was attended by VEP residents and representatives from several other District 10 neighborhoods, as well as City officials. Additionally the press attended with print, radio, and TV represented. The focus of the briefing was to highlight the new Video Camera Registry and to provide information and encouragement to residents to not purchase or use illegal fireworks (note: all fireworks within the City of San Jose are illegal), but rather attend one of the three public fireworks displays for 4<sup>th</sup> of July available within the City of San Jose.

The Video Camera Registry will assist SJPD in identifying and capturing suspected criminals. Residents who have video cameras are encouraged to consider participating in this program. SJPD would only contact you if there had been an incident in your neighborhood that the police thought might have been caught by your cameras. This is for outdoor cameras only.

The Mayor spoke first, highlighting how the Video Camera Registry would be helpful to both SJPD as well as to residents. Councilmember Khamis was next to speak. He encouraged residents to attend the Fireworks Festival at Lake Almaden. SJPD Southern Division Commander Captain, Ed Schroder, also spoke, as did SJPD Crime Prevention Specialists - highlighting the Neighborhood Watch Program, and the upcoming National Night Out event scheduled for August.

As the intention for this program was to encourage more individual residents to register their outside residential video cameras, we were pleased to have two VEP members speak briefly. Both Don Ferguson and Kathy Welch have video cameras and provided good examples of how they have helped SJPD identify and apprehend suspects. They both also stated they would certainly be interested in participating in the new Video Camera Registry. Additional information about this program is online at [sjpd.org](http://sjpd.org).

**Photographs by Kathy Welch**



Continued from Page 4

### 3. 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival and Fireworks at Almaden Lake

This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks & Festival, and once again, it was very well attended with over 20,000 people enjoying the festival. It included a variety of business vendors, lots of food trucks and food vendors, as well as entertainment during the afternoon and early evening. As twilight approached, so did the anticipation for the main attraction: the fireworks display, over the Lake! Attendees were not disappointed!

The Fireworks Display was even more spectacular than last year! In fact there were 3 different finales and a constant chorus of "oohs and ahs." While all fireworks displays are enjoyable, this one seems to be more memorable because of the setting. It's something very special about the reflection on the Lake with the Fireworks being set off to honor our nation's birthday! (And...let us not forget, those who have fought to keep our nation free so that we can all continue to enjoy such events!)

Everyone agreed it will be hard to match (or exceed) this year's fireworks display, but everyone is ready to try again next year! So...watch for information throughout the coming months on how you and your family can participate! And, plan now to attend the July 4<sup>th</sup> event in 2016 at Lake Almaden! You won't want to miss it!

**Many Thanks to Our 4th of July Photographers:  
Katherine Decker, Michael Dorn, Raylene Fedor-Segura**



Continued from page 5

#### 4. National Night Out (Photographs by Katherine Decker)

National Night Out is an annual event that the City sponsors and encourages. This year it took place on **August 4<sup>th</sup>**. The purpose is to bring neighbors and/or neighborhoods together so they might get to know each other, to be aware of safety concerns, and learn crime prevention techniques... and to have a little fun while doing so. Representatives of SJPD attempt to attend all registered groups having a National Night Out event. Elected officials also try to attend all registered events in their districts.

VEP Vice President, Katherine Decker, and VEP President, Marilyn Rodgers, attended three separate functions. All three had the same goal in mind, but each was held in a very different venue. All were fun, all were successful!

a. **First**, and foremost – a Neighborhood Block or Street Party in the **VEP neighborhood** initiated by neighbors on **Wellington Park Drive**. Had games and fun houses for the kids, lots of good conversation with Bar-b-que and other good food for adults and kids. Took place right in their driveways and yards along the street! (They have done this for several years.) Bravo!!

b. **Second** event – Hayes Mansion sponsored by the Hayes Neighborhood Association. Very large event – very well put together, with a spectacular location (talk about a venue!!). The entertainment was great – very good band, and the food was catered by the Hayes Mansion staff (wow). Bravo to you Hayes Neighborhood Association – you know how to put on an event!

c. **Third** event – Erikson Neighborhood Association. Ideal neighborhood group coming together for some old fashioned fun. Included an “ice cream social”, lots of fun raffle prizes - announced by the “younger” members of the group (school age children), fun activities with both SJPD and SJFD. Held in Erikson Park. (Erikson has done this for several years) Bravo!

### Throw a Driveway or Block Party, and Get Acquainted with Neighbors! VEP Can Help!

By Marilyn Rodgers and Rachel Witmeyer

Whether you are relatively new to the VEP neighborhoods, or a long time resident, you may want to consider having a “get acquainted” driveway or block party. And....VEP can help!

Everyone is very aware that the housing market appears to have made a “positive bounce back,” with many of our neighbors now taking the opportunity to sell their homes. Most of us have new neighbors, including those who have just moved into the neighborhood a month ago, or even a year or so ago.

You also may be concerned to hear (often a surprise to new neighbors) that our neighborhoods, while attractive, may not be quite as safe as you had hoped or expected. VEP neighborhoods are not alone in this concern. Everyone is becoming more aware that as neighbors we need to get to know each other – not just because it is the nice thing to do, but for everyone’s safety.

If you would like to initiate a driveway party, or a block party, VEP might be able to help – with suggestions, and possibly with more than suggestions! We are considering providing small stipends for groups of neighbors who want to do a driveway/block party. The stipend would be intended to cover the costs of permits and such expenses related to the event(s). As yet, we have not finalized the official criteria for receiving a small stipend from VEP. However, we will consider your request, if you would be willing to be a “pilot” for us. That is, help us go through what works well and what doesn’t work as well! So again, if you are interested, don’t hesitate – give us a call!



# First Annual Harvest Festival



**Saturday  
October 3  
10am-3pm**

**Come celebrate  
our valley's rich  
agricultural history!**

- Free Entry & Parking
- Food & Produce for Sale
- Farm Costume Contests
- Watermelon Eating
- Pumpkin Carving
- Petting Zoo
- Music & More



*parks for life*



SANTA CLARA COUNTY PARKS



COUNTY SUPERVISOR  
**Mike Wasserman**  
DISTRICT 1

**5283 Snell Road, San Jose**

Visit [Parkhere.org](http://Parkhere.org) for more info  
or volunteer opportunities



Beginning in the middle of September, a new "HAWK" crosswalk will become available and begin working to protect pedestrians as they cross Snell at the vehicle entrance to Martial Cottle Park. Below, please find excerpts from a visual safety brochure, which provides information on this unique crosswalk. Mr. Cordell Bailey, the Traffic Safety Education Officer for the Department of Transportation for the City of San Jose, will provide a brief overview on this crosswalk at the September 29th VEP Community Meeting.

## HAWK SIGNAL IN SAN JOSE

HAWK stands for **H**igh-Intensity **A**ctivated **C**ross**W**alk. It is a type of pedestrian crossing signal intended to increase safety for pedestrians at crosswalks. The HAWK signal was first developed and installed by the Tucson, Arizona Department of Transportation in 2000. The HAWK was officially added to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices as an approved signal device by the United States Department of Transportation in 2009. The HAWK has been shown to decrease vehicular crashes with pedestrians by 69% at crosswalks after installation. Studies have also shown that 97% of drivers comply and yield to pedestrians at HAWKs. The City of San Jose is installing new HAWKs in appropriate locations to enhance pedestrian safety while minimizing delays to motorists.

Additional questions regarding the proper usage of the HAWK as well as questions regarding how to be a safe and alert motorist or pedestrian can be answered at [www.getstreetsmarts.org](http://www.getstreetsmarts.org) or sent by email to [info@getstreetsmarts.org](mailto:info@getstreetsmarts.org)



## PROPER HAWK USAGE

To the pedestrian, the HAWK signal is very much like a standard signalized crosswalk. The pedestrian activates the HAWK by pushing the button on the pole and waits for the walk signal to appear before crossing. Pedestrians should look to ensure all traffic has stopped. During the countdown sequence, the HAWK will begin flashing red; motorists must stop at the stop bar, then proceed if the pedestrian has cleared their lane of traffic. This gives the pedestrian a protected phase to start crossing the roadway, but also helps keep traffic moving when the pedestrian has crossed. The HAWK will go dark when the walk cycle is finished.

For drivers, the HAWK cycles through: flashing yellow, solid yellow, solid red, and flashing red, before returning to dark. When the HAWK is activated by a pedestrian, the signal starts flashing yellow to alert drivers. After a few seconds, it turns to solid yellow followed by solid red. Drivers must come to a complete stop at the stop bar during solid red. After several seconds, the HAWK signal will begin flashing red. During this time, each driver must stop and then proceed through the intersection only if the pedestrian has cleared their lane. When the walk cycle finishes, the HAWK returns to dark. When the HAWK signal is inactive, drivers may proceed through the intersection. Drivers must always obey the posted speed limit and yield to pedestrians.

### WHAT IS A "HAWK" SIGNAL?

"HAWK" stands for High-Intensity Activated Cross Walk, a new pedestrian crossing signal proven to increase safety for pedestrians.

### WHAT DRIVERS SEE/DO

#### SEE THIS...

#### DO THIS...

### WHAT PEDESTRIANS SEE/DO

#### SEE THIS...

#### DO THIS...

1. When not in use, the traffic signal is dark, and a solid raised hand indicates **DON'T WALK** (raised hand).



Proceed with caution.



Push the button to cross.

2. When a pedestrian pushes the button, the traffic signal flashes yellow for several seconds.



Slow down, prepare to stop. Pedestrian has activated the push button.



Wait.

3. After the flashing yellow interval, the traffic signal displays a solid yellow to give motorists enough time to stop.



Stop if safe to do so.



Continue Waiting.

4. After the solid yellow interval, the traffic signal is solid red, and the pedestrian signal displays a **WALK** (walking person symbol), indicating that pedestrians are allowed to cross the street.



Stop.



Start Crossing.

5. The traffic signal then flashes alternate red, and the pedestrian signal flashes **DON'T WALK**. Drivers may proceed after stopping if there are no pedestrians in the crosswalk.



Stop. Then proceed with caution if clear.



Continue crossing. If walking, continue. Those who have yet to step off the curb, do not start.

6. After the flashing **DON'T WALK**, the traffic signal is dark again and the pedestrian signal indication is a raised hand (**DON'T WALK**) until the next pedestrian pushes the button.



Proceed with caution.



Push the button to cross.

## Almaden Ranch LED Freeway Sign

By Dave Noel, Reprinted from Sept. 2015 ENA Newsletter with permission from the Erikson Neighborhood Association

At ENA's request, the Planning Director's hearing for the proposed 84 foot tall sign was deferred from Aug 12th to Sep 2nd, and a community meeting was held on Aug 19th.

About 50 people attended the Aug 19th community meeting at the Pearl Ave library. The developer noted that proposed sign height, programmable LED square footage and brightness are less than maximum allowable by the city. Community members expressed many concerns including aesthetics, brightness, traffic safety on northbound Hwy 85 (where traffic is often stopped in between Hwy 87 and Almaden Expressway), and the perceived lack of a need for a sign. A big concern regarded illumination overnight, due to our experience with the LED sign at Almaden Plaza. The Almaden Plaza sign had been on after 10 pm against its permit, and that plus a brightness issue were subsequently corrected after the meeting. The general audience consensus was that they would strongly prefer no sign at all, or to have the sign moved closer to Almaden Expressway.

About 10 residents and ENA board members attended and spoke about the same concerns at the Sep 2nd Planning Director's hearing. The developer committed to further reduce the brightness by 20%, provide ENA results of quarterly brightness monitoring, and ensure the LED portion of the sign is off between 10pm and 6am. In the end, the sign was approved, and that decision can be appealed to the Planning Commission with a deadline of Sep 14th. At this writing, an appeal is being considered. Caltrans approval is also required in order to build the sign, and that is still pending.



Photo simulation created by ENA

The sign will be 8.5 ft. higher than the tower on Bass Pro, and have an 488 square foot sign area, of which 237 square feet is a programmable electronic sign. It will be located adjacent to Hwy 85 just west of where Cherry Ave. will go under the freeway to connect with Sanchez Dr.

For info and concerns, contact:

**City Planning Project Manager, Rebecca Bustos**  
(408) 535-7847 or [rebecca.bustos@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:rebecca.bustos@sanjoseca.gov)

**The Office of City Councilmember Donald Rocha**  
(408) 535-4909 or [district9@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:district9@sanjoseca.gov)

## D10 Neighborhoods Commission Update

By Rich Giammona

My name is Rich Giammona and I am one of two City of San Jose District 10 Neighborhood Commissioners. The following is an update of what the commission has been up too.

At our September 9th, meeting we set our agenda for the coming year. We will be forming N.C. committees to study:

- gang & crime prevention
- ways to develop community input
- illegal dumping and blight prevention
- illegal fireworks
- homelessness

We will also hear a presentation regarding police body cameras.

I will be serving on the homeless committee. We will be researching / develop strategies to reduce encampments in our neighborhoods, storefronts, freeways and other areas. This will be done by gathering information from other cities in our nation, that have solid strategies in place such as housing, food, mobile shower, shelter, and counsel / rehab programs.

Homelessness / living in poverty is a topic of which requires a multi-step approach. It's one of which the City, Neighborhoods, and local community will need to address together. If you have any thoughts about this topic, I would like to hear from you. ([rgiammona14@icloud.com](mailto:rgiammona14@icloud.com))

On a side note, there is a community meeting planned to address outdoor vending on private and public property. This will happen on September 28, 2015 at the Mayfair Community Center at 6:30pm. The address for the meeting is 2039 Kammerer Avenue, San Jose, CA 95116.

## Music With Yvonne

Private piano, voice and recorder lessons  
Preschool music classes



**Yvonne Reddy**  
408.221.1414

MTNA & CAPMT Member  
[musicwithyvonne@gmail.com](mailto:musicwithyvonne@gmail.com)  
[www.musicwithyvonne.com](http://www.musicwithyvonne.com)

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**JOHNNY KHAMIS**

SAN JOSE CITY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 10



### Reporting Encampments, Getting Help to the Homeless

For more information on homeless resources or reporting homeless encampments in your area, please visit the Housing and Homelessness resource page at my [www.sjd10.com](http://www.sjd10.com) website. City staff informs us that, at the end of September, you will be able to speak to a live person to report homeless encampments at the City-funded Homeless Help Line: 408-510-7600 You will also have the option of emailing [outreach@homefirstsc.org](mailto:outreach@homefirstsc.org). The Homeless Help Line staff will provide feedback to constituents, dispatch outreach workers to a site, and begin the process for encampment abatement. The line is available now, but constituents can only leave recorded messages with no direct feedback functionality.

### District 10 Internship Opportunities

The District 10 Council Office is currently seeking responsible, civically-minded individuals for unpaid internship opportunities. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about public policy, city government, or community building, contact us about this great opportunity! For high school students, this is the perfect chance to earn community service hours and it is a great resume-builder for college students. For more information, email Shane Patrick Connolly at the District 10 Council Office at [district10@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:district10@sanjoseca.gov) or call us at 408-535-4910.

### Saying Farewell to Rayshelle

I consider myself blessed to have a staff who are dedicated to public service and work so hard for the betterment of our City and its communities. So, whenever we have staffing changes in the office, it's always difficult to say goodbye. Rayshelle Edmunds has been a part of the D10 team from the very beginning. Next Friday, Rayshelle and her husband, Mike, are saying goodbye to San José and heading up to Portland, Oregon. For the past two and a half years, Rayshelle has been an instrumental part of the D10 team. She has worked on several policy issues, from Education and Parks and Recreation to Transportation and the Environment. In addition, she has created our newsletters, built the District 10 website, and done the majority of the promotional and graphic design work for District 10 events. Rayshelle's departure hits us doubly hard because we are also losing her husband, Mike. Mike has been a tremendous behind-the-scenes volunteer for District 10. Thank you, Rayshelle and Mike, for your dedication and service to our community. You will be missed! We wish you the best!

FROM THE OFFICE OF

D I S T R I C T O N E

**SUPERVISOR**

**MIKE WASSERMAN**



Please join me as we celebrate Santa Clara County's rich agricultural history at the **First Annual Martial Cottle Park Harvest Festival on October 3 from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM**. There will be food and produce for sale, farm costume contests, watermelon eating, pumpkin carving, a petting zoo, music, and more. Entry and parking are both free. More information: [www.parkhere.org](http://www.parkhere.org)

Are you on **Nextdoor.com**? My office recently joined this new private social network that lets neighbors communicate with each other about lost pets, yard sales, crime, and more. We will notify residents on Nextdoor about important policy issues, meetings and events that affect your neighborhood. The service has been growing steadily in popularity and more than 1 in 4 homes in our County are now on Nextdoor.com. If you haven't already signed up, I encourage you to check it out by going to [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com) and registering your household.

Let's keep our kids safe; October 5-9, 2015 is International Walk and **Bike to School Week**. Each year, over 23,000 students in Santa Clara County join schools around the globe and participate in a weeklong celebration of events and activities in support of Walk and Bike to School Week. These events remind everyone of the simple joys of walking and biking to school, the health benefits of regular daily activity, and the need for safe places to walk and bike. There are many fun ways to get kids excited about walking and biking to and from school, among these include: walking school buses and bicycle trains. For more information, visit: [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org)

Recent earthquakes in the Bay Area serve as important reminders of the importance of **earthquake preparation and safety**. While earthquakes are unpredictable, you can still secure yourself and your loved ones. Begin by familiarizing yourself with the earthquake safety checklist (<http://goo.gl/NISsx2>) prepared by the Red Cross so that you know what steps you can take before, during, and after an earthquake. Numerous other organizations, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Ready.gov, provide additional information on how to plan and prepare for an earthquake. Also, be sure to sign up for the County's free ALERT SCC system which will notify you when an emergency occurs in your neighborhood. [www.alertscc.org](http://www.alertscc.org)



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# ~ Random Tidbits ~

\* A Column By VEP Member, Kathy Wood \*

## Life With My Animals

"He's looking at me!" "She touched me!" "He's eating my food!" "How dare he jump up on that fence without me!" These are phrases that could be visualized if comic balloons hovered over my cat and dogs' heads all day long. A few others may be: "Gotta go, gotta go, open the door..now!" "I'm starving here; feed me. C'mon, put some of that delicious wet stuff in my bowl!"

Dogs and cats are different in many ways, from how they eat and drink to how they greet you upon returning home. Cats have an attitude of arrogance (think they are better than everyone else, especially those darn dogs). The greeting from my cat depends on his hunger level: bright eyes, a spring in his step and a loud meow means "I'm hungry, where have you been?" If he's in the middle of a nap (on the back of the couch shedding another five pounds of hair), I may receive a squinted-eye or eyes look that interprets "Oh, it's just you; back to my dream."

On the other hand, my dog jumps with delight, tail wagging, back-side wiggling, and tongue ready to share kisses...even if I was only gone 10 minutes. She doesn't understand the "time" thing. Out of her sight means you've been gone for days. Maybe we humans could learn a lesson from our dogs-nothing should be taken for granted.

As I'm writing this, we are preparing to take a little trip. I pulled the suitcases out of the storage shed yesterday and as I'm bringing them through the door I can literally watch the brown sparkly eyes of my dog droop downward, sparkle gone, tail down and still. "You're leaving me and I can't be any sadder." I drag the luggage upstairs, unzip one to prepare to pack and after walking into the closet to retrieve some clothes I return to find my suitcase full...of cat. "This is a nice cozy spot to lay. You did open this up for me, didn't you?" is what the bubble above his head reads.

Routine is common in both of their worlds; they know when it's time to eat, time to go to bed and in my dog's case, time to go for a walk. The leash is her friend-it means traveling briskly on down the sidewalk, running from bush to shrub, sniffing in all the previous walkers. I wonder if she puts smells with faces. "Oh, Rusty from down the street has been here. I better leave a scent for him so he knows I've been here too." Her short legs carry her full round belly and bobbing head to the next amazing odor until SHE decides it's time to cross the street for the return home...and to TREATS!! I understand her thinking; when I walk I need a treat or two upon completion also.

Lily (my dog) is getting up in years now. She has arthritis (common in our house), her eyes are getting glassy, her left leg doesn't always cooperate or move as it should, but she still looks at a ball and sees it as play. In her younger days one round ball equaled hours of retrieval and fun; now once or twice for a short distance will make her happy. In her mind, she's a young pup, but when she tries to move, her body reminds her of its true age.

One thing my animals have in common is devotion. They recognize us, whether by sight or smell, as their family members (the food and love distributors) and continue to make us smile daily. I can't imagine life without Lily or Tango.



# ~ Gardener's Corner ~

~ A Column By VEP Member, 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.

Finally, 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.



**Ellen Burtis**  
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# VEP Community Schools Calendar

## September / October 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
20	21	22	23	24 SELAC Meeting ~ 10:00-10:30am ~ @John Muir MS In the Library	25 Fall Picture Day @Parkview <b>Jog-A-Thon</b> @John Muir MS	26
27	28 Parent/Teacher Conferences @Parkview	29 @Parkview Parent/Teacher Conferences GATE Mtg-5:30pm PSCA Mtg-6:30pm	30 Parent/Teacher Conferences @Parkview	1 Parent/Teacher Conferences @Parkview	2 Parent/Teacher Conferences @Parkview	3
						
4	5 Parent/Teacher Conferences @Parkview	6 Parent/Teacher Conferences @Parkview	7 Parent/Teacher Conferences @Parkview	8 @Parkview Parent/Teacher Conferences Yearbook Meeting 4:30pm / Room 12 Koffee Klatch Mtg. 6:00pm / Library	9 <b>Walk-A-Thon</b> ~ 8am to 2pm ~ @Carson School	10 <b>Harvest Festival</b> ~ 11am to 6pm ~ @Carson School
11	12 SSC Meeting ~ 2:30-3:30pm ~ @Carson School (Room A-2)	13	14	15 <b>9th-11th Family Nite</b> ~ 6:30-8:00pm ~ @Gunderson HS Library/Media Ctr.	16 <b>Annual Parkview Walkathon &amp; Carnival</b>	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24

### VEP 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://parkview.ogsd.net/> 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 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
20	21	22	<b>23</b> @Pearl Library: Jewelry-Making ~ 12:30pm ~ Knit/Crochet Club ~ 3:00pm ~	<b>24</b> @Pearl Library Line Dancing ~ 1:00pm ~ @Edenvale Library Hispanic Heritage Craft for Kids: Folk Art - Alebrijes ~ 3:30pm ~	25	<b>26</b> @Pearl Library LEGO Club ~ 2:00pm ~ Moon Festival Story & Craft ~ 4:00pm ~
<b>27</b> \$5/Bag Book Sale ~ 1:00-5:00pm ~ @Martin Luther King, Jr. Library	<b>28</b> Community Mtg. -Outdoor Vending- ~ 6:30pm ~ @Mayfair Community Center (2039 Kammerer Ave)	<b>29</b> VEP Community Meeting ~ 7:30 PM ~ @Vista Park Community Room	30	1	<b>2</b> Film Screening: "Spare Parts" (Rated PG-13) ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Library	<b>3</b> 10AM TO 3PM  Harvest Festival
4	5	6	<b>7</b> District 10 Office Hours 8:30-9:30am @Almaden Valley Community Center (6445 Camden Ave.)	<b>8</b> Global Cardboard Build Challenge (For Kids 5 & Up) ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Library	<b>9</b> Film Screening: "Stand & Deliver" (Rated PG-13) ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Library	<b>10</b> District 10 Office Hours 10:30-11:30am @City Espresso (630 Blossom Hill Rd.)
 <p><b>Better Homes and Gardens</b> REAL ESTATE   VENTURA BARNETT PROPERTIES</p> <p><b>Helen Castillo</b> Realtor®</p> <p>BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS REAL ESTATE LLC VENTURA BARNETT PROPERTIES 5985 Almaden Expressway San Jose, CA 95120 www.bhgrealstate.com Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated</p> <p>Office 408.997.9999 x555 Mobile 408.981.5902 Fax 408.997.1111 HCastillo@vbprop.com DRE #01472483</p>			<b>15</b> Line Dancing ~ 1:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	<b>16</b> Navrathi Garba Dance ~ 3:30-4:30pm ~ @Edenvale Library	<b>17</b> LEGO Club ~ 2:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	
			<b>22</b> Line Dancing ~ 1:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	<b>23</b> Halloween: "Bleeding" Art ~ 1:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	<b>24</b> Book Sale ~ 10am - 6pm ~ @Edenvale Library LEGO Club ~ 2:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	

### ★ Coming Soon in the VEP Neighborhoods ★

#### VEP Community Meetings

**OCTOBER**

Tuesday, October 27th

**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER**

Tuesday, December 1st

*Everyone is Welcome!  
Invite a Neighbor!*



#### VEP Community Events

**Santa in the Park**

Sunday, November 29th, 1pm-5pm

**VEP Holiday Decorating Contest**

Dates To Be Announced

**Community-Wide Garage Sale**

Saturday, May 7th, 2016

**4th of July Festival & Fireworks**

@Almaden Lake



# THE VEP NEWS

A Publication of the

## VEP Community Association

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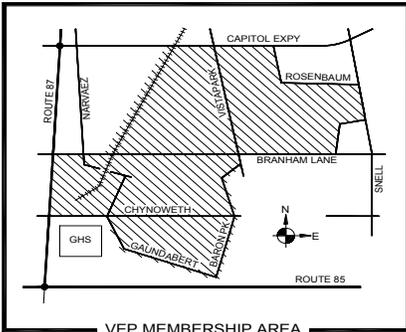
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance and improvement in its membership area as well as to active involvement in civic affairs. This newsletter is mailed monthly to all members in good standing, to our advertisers, and to schools and government officials serving our membership area. For membership or paid advertisement information, contact our Treasurer or write to the address listed above.

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Check our website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

Community Room

Vista Park

7:30 pm in the

Be sure to attend  
VEP's Community Meeting  
Tuesday, September 29th!

