

VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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



FEBRUARY 2016

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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 // 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

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VEP'S COMMUNITY MEETING

7:30 p.m. ~ Tuesday

► **February 23rd, 2016** ◀

Vista Park Community Room
475 Hyde Park Dr.

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

AGENDA

★ Identity Theft and Fraud Prevention ★

Presentation by

Vishal Bathija

Deputy District Attorney, Santa Clara County

★ Update on Almaden Ranch ★

Presentation by

Sachneel Patel, Hunter Storm

and

Gerry De Young, Consultant

Ruth & Goring for Arcadia Development

★ VEP Business Meeting ★

Announcements & Updates

VEP Membership Drive Begins in February

~ Drawing for Free Membership ~

Councilmember Khamis and Staff

Updates on District 10 and City of San Jose

WOWW - Oakridge Mall Winter Walk & Senior

Resource Fair, Friday, February 26th

VEP's Next Meeting - Tuesday, March 29, 2016

★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

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

◆ **2016 is VEP's 47th Year!** ◆

VEP's February Meeting Preview

By Marilyn Rodgers

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **February 23rd**. Please join us at the February VEP Community meeting, featuring:

► **Please Note:** Featured presentation this month by Deputy District Attorney for Santa Clara County, **Vishal Bathija**, will provide a concise but thorough overview showing how residents can have their Identification stolen and used; as well as current information on recent fraud scams. More importantly, information will be provided on what all of us can do to prevent and protect ourselves from these new era thieves. Examples relevant to young, middle aged, and older adults will be provided. A second brief presentation will be provided by representatives of **Almaden Ranch**, including Gerry De Young of Ruth & Going Consultants for Arcadia Development, and Sachneel Patel of Hunter Storm. Information will include new businesses that will be opening over the next few months.

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

Other informational items and announcements will be provided including updates from Councilmember Khamis and Staff regarding issues of interest on District 10 and the City of San Jose.

► **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 **February 23rd**. Please join us!

January Meeting Synopsis

By Marilyn Rodgers

President Rodgers welcomed an enthusiastic group. The issue of Homeless in, and close to, the VEP neighborhoods has been an issue of concern to many of our residents. Ms. Rodgers stated that there would be two speakers on this subject: one from the City of San Jose, presenting information on recent statistics of numbers of homeless, and resources available including several just announced pilot projects that have or will be starting in the near future. The second speaker would provide an additional perspective and one in which a personal situation with family members motivated her to “do something to help” – which led her to start a project which she initially “self funded” with her own money.

Prior to introducing these speakers, however, Ms. Rodgers stated that Councilmember Khamis was still in a City Council meeting that evening, and that Council Assistant Dora Gonzalez was there in his place. Ms. Rodgers introduced Ms. Gonzalez and invited her to speak. Ms. Gonzalez had several announcements to make and indicated there were several flyers with additional information on the back table. First, on February 26th Oakridge Mall will have its annual Senior Walk and Resource Fair. Second, the Mayor and his office, is sponsoring a Community Budget meeting on February 20th. In past years, a community leader from each community association was invited to attend this meeting which helps start the process of identifying budget priorities for the coming year for the City. This year, the decision was made to open up this important meeting to additional interested residents. Information for registering for this free event will be available in February. (Note: There is a brief article by Ms. Rodgers on this meeting in the January edition of the VEP newsletter.) Ms. Gonzalez also reminded everyone that the Councilmember has Community Office hours twice each month. No appointment is needed – so residents can come and talk face to face with the Councilmember. The first **Community Office hours** meeting is scheduled for the **1st Wednesday every month from 8:30am to 9:30am**, at the

Almaden Community Center/Library at 6445 Camden Avenue. The second opportunity each month, is the **2nd Saturday of each month from 10am to 11:30am at City Espresso Coffee Shop** at 630 Blossom Hill Road (close to Outback Steak House). A flyer with reminder dates and times was available on the back table. Also, so everyone could plan in advance – the annual All American Litter Pickup Day has been scheduled for April 23rd with one of the sites/sign-in areas once again to be held here in the VEP area - at Vista Park. Ms. Rodgers thanked Ms. Gonzalez.

Ms. Rodgers, then introduced Michelle Covert, who is one of the members of the City of San Jose's Homeless Response Team. This team reports through the Department of Housing for the City of San Jose. All calls go through the Homeless Response Team, whose members then go out to the Homeless encampment sites. They talk to the people there, provide them with information regarding resources and help that is available. They also do initial assessments and encourage them to use options that are available to help them.

In her introduction of Ms. Covert, Ms. Rodgers stated that in her discussions with Michelle she had let her know that there were two especially problematic issues in the VEP neighborhoods: in high numbers of individuals involved and high numbers of encampments. Those two areas include all along Branham Lane, but particularly close to Hwy 87 and Narvaez, and along Chynoweth west/northwest of Gunderson High School and the VTA station, under the freeway overpass. Ms. Covert stated that at any given time they have a list of approximately 57 encampments within the City limits, which may be composed of one person, or several people.

The Homeless Hotline is the most effective way to both help and manage the issue of homeless in our neighborhoods. For many residents, their first thought is to call SJPD – either 911 or 311 – for help. However, this is usually not the appropriate resource to call. Homelessness is not a crime in itself. SJPD should only be contacted if the person(s) appears to be a danger to themselves or to others (ie. has a weapon, or is exhibiting very aggressive or potentially violent behavior). Residents who would like to begin the process should call the Homeless Hotline at 408-510-7600 and select Option 3. Provide as much detailed information as possible, such as: exact location, number of people, and so forth. It is also helpful to have more than one person report a location. (Note: Cards with this information were provided to members of the audience and are also reproduced on page 8 of this newsletter, for members reference.)

Once the call(s) is(are) initiated, the Response Team Members will go out to the encampment/area and talk to the individuals that are there. This is done usually within in 72 hours (depending on how many calls they are receiving). However, as homeless individuals have the right to refuse assistance, it may take more than one visit to produce results. Some reasons for refusal may be fear of their own safety in going to a shelter, or concern about their belongings, or several other reasons. One of the major concerns that has come up recently is that many homeless people have pets, which are not allowed in shelters.

Ms. Covert provided a very informative PowerPoint presentation with an extensive amount of information. Over the last several months the City of San Jose has initiated several pilot projects. The first step toward this action was in obtaining accurate and detailed information on homeless in our City. Every two years across the country, cities and counties are now initiating Census Surveys specifically to determine numbers and locations of homeless people. The most recent survey (count) was done in 2015.

In the County of Santa Clara, slightly more than 6,000 people

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are homeless. (Note: This is down approximately 15% from the previous year's survey.) Of those, a little over 4,000 are in the County's largest city: San Jose. One attendee asked if people are coming in from other areas and if San Jose has better programs/more assistance for homeless people. Ms. Covert stated that the information shows that the vast majority of the homeless are and were residents of San Jose. There are a few that have come from surrounding cities, and a few that are from Southern California and/or other parts of the U.S. People, even when homeless, tend to stay where they are familiar and/or have friends or family.

Homeless people fall into several categories: individuals (men and women), families with children, veterans, and youth (including unaccompanied children, transition-age youth, and parenting transition-age youth who are under 24 but caring for another child).

The survey also included questions asking why they were homeless, if they would move into housing if it were available, and other questions about their situation. 65% of survey respondents reported they had some kind of a healthcare condition. 92% answered "yes" to a question about if they were willing to move into affordable housing should it become available. In the last two years, available housing all over the Bay Area, but particularly in the South Bay, has become the overwhelming problem for all homeless. This is true, even for veterans who are homeless, but who also have income: either vouchers from VA and/or who have incomes from other means such as Social Security. Veterans can qualify for vouchers from the Government for approximately \$800/month, however, this is not nearly enough. As a result, many of the veterans on the street as homeless, would not be, if there was housing available at this amount. Currently, rents are running over \$2,000/month for a one bedroom apartment and there is a long waiting list for every available apartment.

While housing appears to currently be the largest problem for homeless being able to get off the streets, in the most recent two years jobs and job skill training has been, and continues to be a significant issue. Some of the many challenges for homeless in obtaining work or a job are access to and skill training on computers. Also needed as people are looking for jobs is to have access to showers, laundry for clean clothes, and reliable transportation to and from job interviews (to name just a few).

The County of Santa Clara is primarily responsible for providing homeless people with possible assistance and resources (monies from State and Federal sources funnel this type of assistance to the Counties). However, as over two-thirds of the homeless population in Santa Clara County is in San Jose, the City of San Jose has made homelessness a priority. In the past few months, San Jose has begun to initiate several small pilot projects to provide housing for homeless.

The City works with several non-profit partners to provide assistance and to initiate pilot projects. One such project will be Vermont House which will begin shortly to house homeless Veterans. The veterans can partially pay utilizing their VA benefits and/or Social Security benefits.

Faith-based organizations/churches have also initiated a coalition over the last 60 days which would provide for temporary shelter during inclement weather. This initiative began as concern rose that there were neither adequate numbers of shelters, or shelters (i.e. walk-in "warming centers") where people felt safe to temporarily house homeless during El Nino rainstorms and/or very cold weather. Again, many hurdles had to be overcome. However, several churches are now providing temporary shelters (less than 30 days in duration) to specific groups. For example, one church is providing shelter to 10 homeless women for 30 days. All of these groups/churches are also asking for assistance from their

members, or the public, to assist in providing food, clothes, toiletries, and laundry supplies.

Over 70 organizations are involved with the City of San Jose to provide some aspect of case management and/or specific assistance and/or resources to the homeless. For example, Downtown Streets Team is one nonprofit that provides (in conjunction with other groups) case management for the homeless, job skills training, and jobs. Downtown Streets Team was initiated, and continues to be supported, by San Jose's Downtown Business community. This model has a very successful record and can/should be replicated.

Ms. Rodgers thanked Ms. Covert for her very comprehensive presentation.

The second presenter on homelessness was Ms. Karen Addato, Executive Director and Founder of Breakthrough Outreach Shelters Network. Karen thanked Ms. Covert and mentioned how they worked together to assist the homeless. Ms. Addato has a business background in private industry, but a few years ago started this nonprofit (and 501(3)c) hoping she could assist homeless people to find a way off the Streets. She started this self-funded project because she had a personal family connection: two of her brothers had been homeless on the streets and, unfortunately, died.

A visible tool Ms. Addato has developed is the **Hi Tech Rover**. This innovative, one of a kind (but only the first of many), **30-foot, customized homeless outreach vehicle** is used to provide sustainable solutions and services to the homeless and at-risk individuals. This service is provided often just steps from where the homeless congregate and often at their encampments. Ms. Addato's organization launched the Hi Tech Rover just a few months ago which is a mobile resource center aimed at bridging the gap by bringing access to the homeless to necessary technological resources. This helps them to overcome their desperate situations and work toward a better future. In her words, the Hi Tech Rover provides wrap-around services to meet all of the immediate and many of the long-term needs for each homeless individual served. **This Hi Tech Rover has been called a mobile first response unit for the homeless.** It is a high impact hand - up off of the streets, on a fast track, in high-tech style.

The vehicle is equipped with Wi-Fi, computers, printer, digital training screens, and workstations to facilitate many of the dire needs of the homeless population when seeking housing and/or job opportunities. This includes, but is not limited to:

- * Emotional support and encouragement
- * E-mail set up and training
- * Resumes
- * Craigslist/Internet training for job/housing searches
- * Grooming, Shower, and Career Closet - all on board
- * Connection to resources such as detox, recovery classes, Housing lists, non-profit programs, case managers and Jobs
- * Housing Services
- * First Aid
- * Connect to pre-existing resources where available
- * Re-Connection to lost loved ones/family members
- * Relocation Services – when needed to move to more affordable areas in and out of the State
- * Future goals – Bring Case Managers on-site to large encampments, on a set schedule
- * Provide a safe, controlled environment – in which community members and churches, can serve the homeless with sustainable solutions in the community

Ms. Addato believes it takes a village to tackle the problem of

homelessness, and as such, has a strong focus on collaboration with other non-profit organizations, government agencies, private corporations, faith based groups, universities, and the general community. Social Services (case management) sends an outreach team to all of her events.

Ms. Rodgers thanked Ms. Addato for her presentation.

(Editor's Note: For additional Information about the City of San Jose's Census of the Homeless, as well as the "Homeless Hotline" and the "Hi Tech Rover," please see pages 8 and 9 of this newsletter.)

Following the last invited speaker, several announcements and other business was addressed. Included was an update on the status of the Community Gardens development.

★Update on Status of Lease Agreement/Contract for the Martial Cottle Park Community Gardens between City of San Jose and the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors:

Ms. Rodgers gave attendees a brief update on the status of the contract between the City of San Jose and the County Board of Supervisors for the Martial Cottle Community Gardens. The City of San Jose, who is the Partner to build and provide the Community Gardens at Martial Cottle Park, is the 5th partner for the Park and the last contract to be signed. Each contract for the other partners took several weeks/months to go through their respective organizations for finalization. The same was true for the Community Gardens. However, apparently, the Board of Supervisors had some concerns about this contract, causing the contract to go back and forth between the two groups for revision. The latest concern was the 10% allowed for County residents, with 90% for City residents (who would have access to use of plots in the Community Gardens). The County Board of Supervisors was concerned that as this is a County Park (actually a Regional Park, with the State of California), they were concerned that County residents should not be hindered from equal access to the Community Gardens. The San Jose City Council has just voted to approve this stipulation. (Note: This proposal was originally initiated as part of the negotiations that went on during the development of the Master Design phase. This partnership (as with all of the proposed Park Partners) and its stipulations were a result of the work of city/community residents, whose property surround the Park property. These residents had agreed to receive less of an easement (space) between their property line and the Perimeter Trail. In turn, they received the option for development of a Community Gardens by the City.) Matters regarding all Park Partners were discussed and agreed to in the negotiations during the Master Design phase.

All Park Partners were known by, and approved by, Mr. Lester prior to his signing-off on the original documents. These documents were not only signed by Mr. Lester, but were also approved by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, prior to going on to the State of California for approval.

Ms. Rodgers indicated that she has been told that there is also an additional concern by some of the members of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors regarding the fact that Mr. Lester did not like the City of San Jose. As a result, he would not have wanted the City of San Jose to be involved in the Park. Mr. Lester, as well as most of the farmers who had property in the valley basin, did not like the City. This ill-feeling goes back to the late 50's/early 60's when the then-Mayor of San Jose implemented "imminent domain" on behalf of the City (which partially resulted in many of the City's larger roadways). Many farmers were forced to sell property at the then-current market rate, which obviously was a much, much lower rate than today's market worth.

Ms. Rodgers stated however, that Mr. Lester personally told her how appreciative he was for the assistance and intervention provided on his behalf by San Jose City's elected officials. This enabled him to start the process for his being able to donate the property. This happened following the crises of his sister's death and the very large inheritance tax bill he owed – with no funds to pay it. (Note: It is not unusual for farmers to be "land rich and cash poor.") He was very well aware that without the City's intervention and assistance, there would not have been any option other than to sell, if not all of the property, a significant portion of it. And, therefore there would not be the current park as we know it. Mr. Lester voiced this appreciation of the City's intervention to Ms. Rodgers more than once.

Ms. Rodgers also stated that Mr. Lester had very strong feelings about what would be on and done to the property that he planned to donate, and what would not be done or included. In addition to strong feelings about the City early on, he also had some serious concerns about the County. At one point during the Master Design meetings process, Mr. Lester became quite distressed by the private discussions and negotiations he was having with County Staff - so much so, that he called Ms. Rodgers to ask for her assistance. He wanted her to act on his behalf, "to broker a new partner for him and the Park project." He informed her that he absolutely did not want the County involved any longer and he intended to have no further discussions with County staff. As a result, he refused to allow the County staff on the property for the next two months. Ms. Rodgers contacted County staff to let them know of Mr. Lester's concerns and encouraged them to resolve the conflict and ill-feeling with him as soon as possible. County staff had initially told Ms. Rodgers at the time of her notification to them that Mr. Lester "was very difficult to deal with." She stated she understood, but that he was after all the "donor" and as a such, his issues and concerns needed to be addressed and resolved in a positive fashion, if they wished the project to go forward with County involvement. Fortunately, those issues were finally resolved.

Ms. Rodgers said she was bringing this issue forward, because while Mr. Lester did have concerns about the City, he also had concerns about the County. At this point, she is hopeful that any remaining hesitancy that members of the Board of Supervisors may have, can be quickly resolved. **The City has the expertise, and is willing to put a significant amount of money into the development of the Community Gardens. The project that the City plans for the Community Gardens under this proposed lease agreement with the County will be something that everyone – City and County – can look forward to, and certainly be especially proud to have included as part of the Martial Cottle Park.**

Ms. Rodgers stated she is in the process of contacting individual members of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to see if they still have concerns. That as a volunteer leader and a resident who has been involved in this project for 20 years, she may have additional information that would be helpful to them so that the contract can be quickly finalized and signed.

Ms. Rodgers thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, and stated she hoped to see them all at the next meeting which had been scheduled for February 23rd.

Annual VEP Membership Drive Begins Now!

★★ Enter the Drawing for a Free Membership ★★

Bring your Membership Envelope and Payment to the VEP Community Meeting on February 23rd!
(If you win, your payment will be immediately returned to you!)

Water Main Project, Vista Park Area

By Marilyn Rodgers

Beginning the middle of January, San Jose Department of Public Works initiated a project in the Vista Park area of VEP. This project is to replace the 47-plus years-old water main along Hyde Park Drive. The work includes portions of the southern end of Vista Park Drive, and extends west on Hyde Park Drive. It also includes portions of Birmingham Drive.

For residents who have lived here more than 3 years, most will remember that there have been at least three major water main breaks over that period of time, in this area. One of these incidents happened on a holiday – 4th of July. Needless to say this incident was especially problematic for the impacted neighbors - being without water on a summer holiday, in hot weather. The above-mentioned breaks often started with noticeable water running in a street gutter. Then, it would spread and/or increase to water raising the road pavement (once as high as 15 inches) prior to breaking through the pavement and resulting in a geyser-like spout into the air. Because of these past incidents, residents who had been impacted were pleased to find that our area was a priority in **having new water main lines/pipes replaced, rather than continue with patching** the broken lines.

While it is helpful to have an important part of the infrastructure replaced, it is/has also been somewhat stressful to the residents most impacted. This project has also been a challenge and stressful for the contractor. Even so, to their credit, the Contractor and staff continue to be helpful and polite. **The work is done from approximately 8:30am until 4pm (sometimes ends at 3pm) every week day.** The contractor does not perform work on the weekends. At times, the work on the neighborhood streets includes having a portion of Vista Park and/or Hyde Park Drive **blocked off.** The Contractor makes every effort to lessen this impact on immediate residents. **However, others who drive through the neighborhood to use Hyde Park as a short cut, or as a means of avoiding traffic signals on Branham and/or Capitol Expressway, are strongly encouraged to avoid this area during construction!!**

The construction work includes digging a ditch/trench in the middle of the roadways that is approximately 4 feet deep and 15 inches in width (and larger). Each evening, to accommodate immediate residents, the trenches are temporarily filled-in. This patching is temporary, and as a result, does make the road surface uneven and rough. Again, it is advised that speed be reduced in this area. The work area also requires residents to move their vehicles out of the work area, so you will notice signs about having vehicles towed if left parked in certain areas. As the Contractor can usually only anticipate the exact workload 2 to 3 days in advance, tow away signs may be left for several days along a given section of planned construction work. Additionally, large pieces of equipment may be parked overnight along this stretch of streets, where the construction is being done. This may also hinder visibility somewhat of other vehicles and/or pedestrians/bicyclists. **Again, please drive with caution in this area.**

For the residents most impacted by this project, it has also raised everyone's awareness of the **amount of traffic going in both directions on Hyde Park Drive all during the day and evening hours.** Also very evident is the amount of traffic which is "drive through traffic" – those folks who do not live in the neighborhood, but routinely use this route as a short cut, (or to avoid traffic signals), rather than using Branham and/or Capitol Expressway. Unfortunately several of these people even tried to ram their way through a closed/blocked street, until confronted with a 4-foot deep and 15 inch (or more!) wide trench.

This project definitely raises an obvious need to find ways to

discourage the large amount of "drive through traffic." Just a friendly reminder, the **speed limit** on the south end of Vista Park, and all of Hyde Park Drive is **25 miles per hour (and 15 miles/hr when turning right on to Hyde Park from Vista Park Drive).** Hopefully, neighbors will attempt to be good role models for those folks who are just driving through the area, and reduce their speed - at least while this project is in progress, through March.



Saving a Seat for Dave

Dave Fadness Memorial Bench/Plaque at Vista Park By Marilyn Rodgers and Rachel Witmeyer

In November, VEP sponsored the 1st Annual Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Event. Prior to that, several people had made recommendations as to ways that Dave Fadness might be honored for his volunteerism and dedication to the Community. Several of these ideas however, cannot be implemented for another 5 to 7 years, due to restrictions and/or requirements by a variety of governmental agencies.

Along with the annual Beautification event, an additional option which can be initiated immediately is a Memorial Bench and Plaque in Dave's honor. This idea, as was the annual Beautification event, has been discussed with, and approved by, the Fadness family. With research and assistance from San Jose Parks and Recreation staff, VEP is initiating this project. The cost for a memorial bench and plaque to be placed in Vista Park will be approximately between \$2,400 and \$3,000. We know that several friends of Dave's have already made donations in his honor: to VEP, to Our City Forest, and to other worthy organizations of their choice. We all appreciate that very much. However, we felt this would be one more option for people to consider and participate in, if they wish. We are hoping to have the funds collected, the bench and plaque ordered and ready for dedication as part of the 2nd Annual Dave Fadness Beautification Event in the fall of 2016.

Should you wish to participate, there are two options:

- 1.) You can send checks to VEP – Please include a note on the "memo" line that says: "Dave Fadness Memorial Bench & Plaque"
- 2.) Should you appreciate having this donation qualify as a tax deduction, that can be done through **San Jose Parks Foundation. GO TO: <http://sanjoseparks.org>**
 - a.) On left side of page - choose: "**Donate 3 Easy Ways**"
 - b.) Select "**Donate Directly to Programs & Services**" then scroll down to bottom of page - you will see **VEP**, however, you **cannot donate here.** Go to the right side of page,
 - c.) Select **Donate Now box** (on right side of page)
 - d.) Select **amount** to donate - and **frequency** (ie. once)
 - e.) Bottom of page - "**I want my donation to be dedicated:...**"
 - f.) Type in "**VEP - in honor of Dave Fadness**"
 - g.) Check the box on right side of page to send an acknowledgment to Organization etc.



Attacking or Attracting Businesses?

From the Office of Johnny Khamis, D10 Councilmember

Over the past three years, San Jose has been successful in making the City more business friendly than many of the cities to our north and east. This was thanks to an improving economy and the work of previous and current City Councilmembers, Mayor Sam Liccardo, former Mayor Chuck Reed, and the City's fantastic Economic Development team. We have seen buildings rise downtown, five new international non-stop routes added at Mineta San Jose International Airport (SJC), and many businesses locating here. Moreover, while you've been stuck in traffic, we have been working to bring jobs here to San Jose - where people live - and to fix the jobs-housing imbalance.

This new growth was accomplished by: decreasing fees for developers of high-rise housing, cutting fees for large employers like Samsung, improving customer service in the planning and building departments, and providing incentives for airlines to land at SJC. The City decreased fees and improved service because the Council and staff recognized that jobs bring in a lot more tax revenue than does single-family housing. This concept is clearly understood by the neighboring cities that have attracted some of the biggest businesses in the world.

Now, as our tax revenues are beginning to grow from these efforts, a veritable war on business has begun. It is a war being waged on many fronts. A Council majority has already imposed a \$17 per square foot fee on all new rental housing developments, the minimum wage has been raised from \$8 to \$10.30, and a County-wide effort is under way to study taking the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. We are looking at imposing further restrictions on the business viability of apartments that already fall under rent control.

On top of these attacks on business comes two initiatives and several new tax proposals that could have companies fleeing for

friendlier places. The first of these initiatives would place a San Jose gross receipts tax on all business with revenues over \$1 million. The City would become a mini-IRS, requiring that most business owners turn over their sales figures to the City and pay taxes not on the profits of their businesses, but on TOTAL sales - a company would have to pay the tax even if they made \$0 in profit! This effort is being sold as a way to help the City pave streets, but what it will really do is drive up the cost of your groceries, the cost of selling a home, the price of a night out for a dinner and a movie, just to name a few examples.

Our airport is struggling to recover from the great recession and pay for \$1 billion in improvements. The gross receipts tax would be imposed on the service providers at the airport - car rental companies, food vendors, gift shops - some of which operate on very small margins, not to mention the newly-opened private aviation facility operated by Signature Air. Raising costs on airport vendors could put them, and, in turn, the airport's viability at risk. If the Airport Authority were to default on its debts, it would tarnish the City's reputation of strong fiscal management and could endanger the City's own credit rating.

A second initiative would place restrictions on businesses with over 35 employees from using part time or 1099 (contract) labor, micromanaging the hours a business must offer to its employees. If these actions were not enough, the City of San Jose, the County of Santa Clara, and the VTA are all proposing increases to our sales tax. While I support letting the voters decide on a dedicated sales tax to support police services and the paving of our dilapidated streets, I have a real problem with all of the general sales tax ideas. With a general sales tax, there is no guarantee that the money will go to a single police officer or a single mile of street repairs. In fact, the County's 2012 Measure A sales taxes generated more revenue than expected, yet very little has gone to Expressway repairs or to many of the other service improvements promised in the ballot statement.

What can you do to help?

First, come to the City Council meeting on Tuesday, February 23rd at 1:30 PM in the City Council Chambers, fill out a yellow comment card for agenda item 3.5, and let the City Council know how you feel about a new ¼-cent or ½-cent general sales tax proposal or a targeted alternative.

Second, if you cannot attend the meeting, please email your thoughts on agenda item 3.5 to the City Council at agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov. You may also want to send a copy of your email to our office - district10@sanjoseca.gov.

Finally, before you sign a petition, put your name to a ballot statement, or vote on new taxes and regulations that promise to fix everything under the sun, consider that you may be attacking the very businesses that are creating jobs and helping our City out of its financial challenges.



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Ellen Burtis
CRS, GRI, SRES



Sereno Group Real Estate
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35 Year Resident of Vistapark
Full time Realtor in San Jose for over 30 years
Call or text: (408) 406-9323

It's Time to Renew Your VEP Membership!

VEP membership is based on a calendar year, January through December, so it's time to renew your membership. You'll find a remit envelop in this newsletter. Please be sure to fill in the information requested, enclose your \$20 check made payable to VEP, and mail it back to us as soon as possible--while it's still fresh in your mind. That's all there is to it!

In a very real sense, renewing membership is your vote of confidence and support for the work we do as VEP volunteers. Yes, we get an occasional "thank you," but proof positive of your appreciation is your willingness to renew membership each year. We also appreciate the nice comments many of you offer along with your renewal—for that, we offer our thanks!

VEP membership is the best value you'll ever experience. Renew today and ask your neighbors to join our growing family. Thank you.

What is VEP Community Association?

- VEP is an all-volunteer organization of your neighbors working to improve our neighborhoods.
- VEP sponsors many projects and events that improve safety, our quality of life, and the appearance of our community.
- VEP volunteers make our neighborhood's needs, views, and concerns known to government at all levels.
- VEP was founded in 1969. We are one of the largest, most successful, and most continuously active and enduring grass roots volunteer organizations in Santa Clara County.

Why join VEP?

- To receive our newsletter nine times a year.
- To receive monthly email alerts.
- To keep our neighborhoods beautiful, safe, strong, and prepared.
- To participate in and support effective neighborhood activities and representation.
- To support VEP's annual *Community Service Awards* for high school graduates.
- To be part of an outstanding volunteer community organization with 47 years of success in our neighborhoods.

YOU COULD WIN a **FREE** 2016 VEP MEMBERSHIP!

Bring your completed Membership Application, with payment, to this month's VEP General Meeting on Tuesday, February 23rd! You will be entered in a drawing to have your membership fee returned to you, that night!



Just imagine getting all the great benefits of VEP Membership, *free!*

Tell your neighbors!



** VEP Membership Application **

Note: None of the your personal information will ever be shared with any third party.

**** Please type or print legibly ****

Last name(s): _____

First name(s): _____

Street address:

Telephone # _____

Email address(es):

Comment(s):

Can you give VEP a few volunteer hours? _____

I am willing to volunteer for:

- Beautification/clean-up projects
- VEP News/ mailing prep
- Large Event/Festival, i.e. 4th of July
- Distribute flyers
- Serve on a committee
- Serve as a VEP officer or committee chair
- Other: _____

Please let us know:

- I prefer getting my newsletters by email.

Mail your \$20 check to:

VEP
P.O. Box 18111
San Jose, CA 95158.

Thank you!

SAN JOSE

HOMELESS CENSUS & SURVEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2015

Every two years in January, communities across the country conduct comprehensive counts of their homeless population to gain a better understanding of the individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness, and to apply for federal funding for homeless programs.

The 2015 San José Point-In-Time Count was a community-wide effort conducted on January 27th and 28th, 2015. In the weeks following the street count, a survey was administered to 626 unsheltered and sheltered homeless individuals, in order to profile their experience and characteristics.

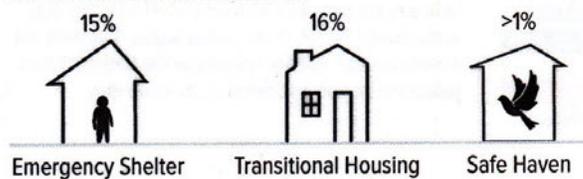
HOMELESS CENSUS ELEVEN-YEAR TREND



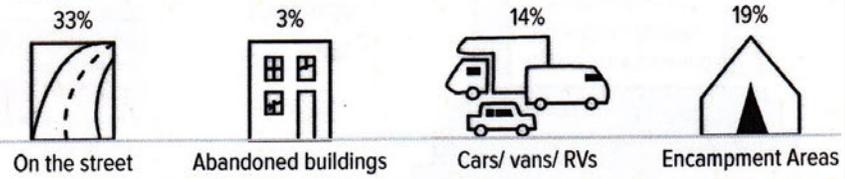
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS ENUMERATED DURING THE 2015 POINT-IN-TIME HOMELESS CENSUS



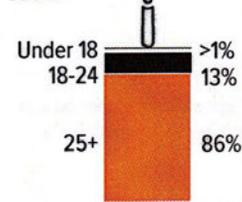
SHELTERED INCLUDES:



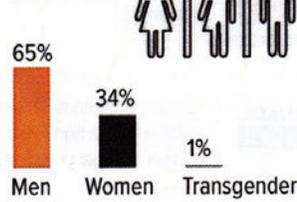
UNSHeltered INCLUDES:



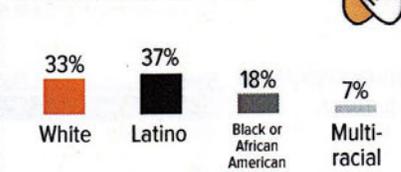
AGE



GENDER



RACE/ETHNICITY (TOP 4 RESPONSES)



FOSTER CARE
(respondents that have ever been in the system)

18%

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
(currently experiencing)

3% of individuals

**HOMELESS HOTLINE
408-510-7600**

ARE YOU AWARE OF A HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL OR ENCAMPMENT IN THE SAN JOSE COMMUNITY?

PLEASE REPORT TO:
408-510-7600, select option 3
or outreach@homefirstscc.org

OUR GOAL IS TO CONNECT HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS IN THE CITY OF SAN JOSE WITH SERVICES INCLUDING:

- Emergency Housing
- Food
- Medical Care
- Case Management

We strive to respond to reported locations within a standard business day.

CONTACTING THE HOMELESS HOTLINE IS THE FIRST STEP TO ADDRESSING HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT SITES.

408-510-7600
SELECT OPTION 3

outreach@homefirstscc.org
Staffed from 8-5, Monday through Friday.

FOR ALL OTHER RESOURCES DIAL: **211**

CITY-FUNDED HOMELESS SERVICE PROVIDERS ARE:



IF YOU SEE A CRIME IN PROGRESS OR A LIFE-THREATENING MEDICAL EMERGENCY, PLEASE CALL: 911

Reinventing hope with our innovative solutions to homelessness



Home of the *Hi Tech Rover*

Customized Outreach Vehicle ♦ Mobile 1st Response Unit

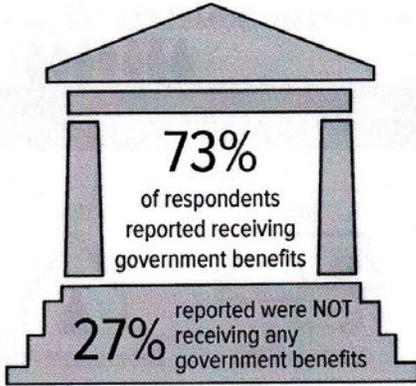


Karen Addato
Executive Director

(408) 399-3300
Karen@hitechrover.org
www.hitechrover.org

Breakthrough Outreach/Shelters Network
Mail 481 N. Santa Cruz Avenue #173, Los Gatos, CA 95030

SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE



Reasons for NOT receiving government services (Top 3 Responses)



No permanent address



Don't think they are eligible



Don't want government assistance

Services/assistance currently being utilized (Top 3 Responses)



Food Stamps



General Assistance



Medi-Cal/Medicare

SUBPOPULATION DATA

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS



Sheltered	Unsheltered
13%	87%
1,398 Individuals	
50%	50%
4 Families with 11 Family Members	

An adult with a disabling condition or a family with at least one adult member with a disabling condition who:

- » Has been continuously homeless for 1 year or more and/or;
- » Has experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness within the past 3 years.

VETERANS



Sheltered	Unsheltered
52%	48%
498 Individuals	
100%	0%
2 Families with 6 Family Members (2 Veterans)	

Veterans are persons who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

FAMILIES



Sheltered	Unsheltered
97%	3%
121 Families with 388 Family Members	

A household with at least one adult member (persons 18 or older) and at least one child member (persons under 18).

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN



Sheltered	Unsheltered
6%	94%
32 Individuals	

"Unaccompanied Children" are children under the age of 18 who are homeless and living independent of a parent or legal guardian.

TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH



Sheltered	Unsheltered
13%	87%
503 Individuals	

Homeless youth are defined as individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 years old.

PARENTING TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH



Sheltered	Unsheltered
86%	14%
21 Families with 51 People	

A youth who identifies as the parent or legal guardian of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent, where there is no person over age 24 in the household

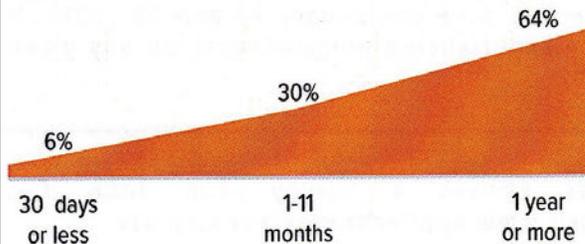
FIRST TIME HOMELESSNESS



Yes (32%)
No (68%)

51% of those experiencing homelessness for the first time had been homeless for one year or more

DURATION OF HOMELESSNESS

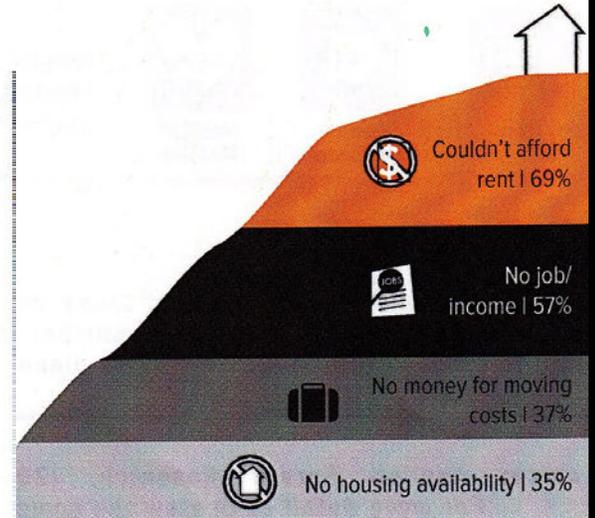


92% of survey respondents said YES when asked if they would want affordable permanent housing were it available.

YES!

OBSTACLES TO OBTAINING PERMANENT HOUSING

65% of survey respondents reported a health condition.



SUMMARY

These data provide a snapshot of those experiencing homelessness in San José on January 27 and 28, 2015. It provides a basic estimation of the number and characteristics of those experiencing homelessness on any given night in order to inform future service planning and provisioning efforts.

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). San José Homeless Census & Survey. San José, CA. For more detail or to view the comprehensive report, please visit www.appliedsurveyresearch.org.

<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Recipe Resource</i>	<i>Grocery List</i>	
Breakfast	Breakfast			
Lunch	Lunch			
Dinner	Dinner			

~ Meal Planning ~

By VEP Member, Tracie Johnson

COPE Certified Optimal Health and Wellness Coach

Do you find yourself overwhelmed, trying to plan and prepare meals at the last minute? Do you stand in front of the fridge or cupboard wondering what you could throw together for dinner? Not planning for your meals can cause stress, as well as negatively affect your wallet and diet. Planning meals a week at a time will save time, effort, and money, while improving your eating habits.

You will eat healthier: Perhaps the number one reason to begin planning meals is that it sets you up for healthier eating. Purchasing your groceries ahead of time and knowing what you will prepare each day cuts out your chances of eating out or ordering take out. You are able to make nutritious choices at the beginning of the week and by simply following your meal plan you are making the healthiest choice.

You shop more efficiently: When you make a habit of meal planning, you also get to grocery shop more efficiently. By creating a shopping list based on your meal plan you avoid the inconvenience of missing ingredients when you are in the middle of cooking a meal. You will also eliminate buying too much food and wasting what does not get eaten each week. Meal planning allows you to buy exactly and only what you need.

You save money: When you are dining out less and shopping for groceries more efficiently, you will naturally save money. In fact, you can even include costs in your meal plans as well so that you have an idea of how much you can expect to spend. Once you know what ingredients you will be needing, you can also find out where to buy these ingredients at the best prices.

You will enjoy variety: It is easy to get stuck in a rut and eat the same foods over and over again when you don't have a plan. Creating a weekly meal plan allows you to explore new recipes and options. Shopping ahead of time and being prepared affords you the time to step out of the box with your meals.

FROM THE OFFICE OF



DISTRICT ONE
SUPERVISOR
MIKE WASSERMAN

The Future of the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds

My best days as an elected official are when I get to spend time hearing from our youth. I appreciate the many people who came to our Board meeting last month to express their thoughts about the future of the County Fairgrounds, including 9-year-old Danelle - who proudly wore her 4H uniform to tell us how much she loves the County Fair. So do I, Danelle.

Our agricultural heritage and history are important, and they need to be preserved. I am in favor of having the annual County Fair continue at its current location. We need to maintain and enhance what we have which includes looking at how to use the remaining property to benefit our community.

The County's 155-acre Fairgrounds in San Jose attracts thousands of people to hundreds of events annually including trade shows, concerts, festivals, dog and cat shows, and of course: the annual County Fair. Our County has changed a lot since the Fairgrounds were established in 1939 when the County population was 175,000 (compared to 2 million now), a loaf of bread cost 8 cents, a new house cost \$3,800 and our region still bore a strong resemblance to "the Valley of the Hearts Delight."

The fairgrounds are a centrally located space within our County to provide a reasonable, cost-effective way for numerous organizations to provide services and opportunities to residents of all backgrounds. If you are interested in the process of planning for the future of the Fairgrounds, please visit:

www.sccgov.org/fairgrounds

Santa Clara County Public Health Survey

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department is conducting a survey to assess the health needs of local children. The survey will run from February through May 2016. If you receive a phone call or letter from the Public Health Department, please participate! Just a few minutes of your time can help make Santa Clara County a healthier place for all children.

All information provided is confidential. If you have any questions about the survey, please visit www.sccphd.org

As always, you can reach my office at (408) 299-5010, or you can email me at district1@bos.sccgov.org with your comments and concerns.

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Join us!

You're Invited to the 9th Annual

W.O.W.W!

Westfield Oakridge Winter Walk & Senior Resource Fair

Friday, February 26, 2016

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Free Breakfast and Free Registration

Westfield Oakridge – Macy's Court

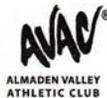
925 Blossom Hill Road, San Jose, CA 95123

Donate your old eye glasses at the Lions Club table
and get an extra door prize drawing ticket!

For more information, call Councilmember Khamis' office at 408-535-4910
or email district10@sanjoseca.gov



Hosted by Councilmembers
Johnny Khamis, Donald Rocha, and Ash Kalra



VEP Community Schools Calendar

♥♥ February / March ♣ 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
14	15 NO SCHOOL 	16	17	18	19	20
OGSD & SJUSD Schools on Winter Break						
21	22	23 PSCA Meeting ~ 6:30pm ~ @Parkview	24 JMMS Falcon Feeding Frenzy Buffalo Wild Wings (Blossom Hill & Santa Teresa)	25 Parent Brown Bag Meeting ~ 12:00-1:30pm ~ @Gunderson	26	27
28	29 Parent-Teacher Conferences This Week @Carson	1 PVCA Meeting ~ 6:30-7:30pm ~ @Parkview	2 Las Culturitas ~ 8:45-9:30am ~ @Parkview	3 PTSA Meeting ~ 6:30-7:30pm ~ @Gunderson	4	5
6	7 SSC Meeting ~ 2:30-3:30pm ~ @Carson	8	9 Koffee Klatch 6pm @Parkview PTSA Meeting 6:30pm @JMMS	10 PTSA Meeting ~ 6:30-7:30pm ~ @Gunderson Early Release @Carson	11 Principal's Coffee (JMMS) ~ 8:30-9:00am ~ Early Release @Carson	12 Spring Dance ~ 7- 10pm ~ @Gunderson
13	14 Talent Show Auditions 3-4pm @JMMS Athletic Booster Club Meeting 6-8pm @GHS	15	16 SELAC Mtg. ~ 6:00-7:00pm ~ @Gunderson	17 SSC Meeting ~ 7:15-7:45am ~ "Preparing for College" Night ~ 6:00-7:00pm ~ @John Muir	18	19

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

Facilities Calendar → <http://gunderson.sjUSD.org/pages/calendar/facilities.html>



VEP Community Calendar

♥♥ February / March ♣ 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
14 Blossom Hill Farmers Market Every Sunday ~ 9am - 1:30pm ~ Ohlone/Chynoweth VTA - Santa Teresa Blvd. & Hwy 85/87	15 SJPL's Closed 	16	17 Jewelry Making ~ 12:30pm ~ Knit+Crochet Club ~ 3:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	18 Line Dancing ~ 1:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	19 Tech Challenge: Mini Aircraft 3:30pm @Edenvale Virtual Privacy Lab Workshop 1pm @Pearl Lib.	20 Bubblemania! ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Lib.
21 	22 Honoring Heroes: Black History Stories & Art ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Lib.	23  VEP Community Meeting ~ 7:30 PM ~ @Vista Park Community Room	24 Jewelry Making ~ 12:30pm ~ Knit+Crochet Club ~ 3:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	25 Line Dancing ~ 1:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	26 "Make a Kaleidoscope" ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Lib.	27 "Catch-a-Beat" Music & Dance for Kids 10:30am@Pearl and 1:30pm@Edenvale
28 \$5/Bag Book Sale ~ 1:00-5:00pm ~ @Martin Luther King, Jr. Library	29	1 "It's Raining, It's Pouring": Story and Cloud Craft ~ 11:00am ~ @Edenvale Lib.	2 District 10 Office Hours 8:30-9:30am @Almaden Valley Community Center (6445 Camden Ave.)	3 Dr. Seuss Party 11am@Edenvale Line Dancing 1pm @Pearl Lib. Teen Tech Project 1pm @Pearl Lib.	4	5 Science Smart Kids: Let it Rain 3:30pm @Edenvale Author Event: Matt Phelan 4pm @Pearl Lib.
6 	7	8 SCVWD: Weather Stories & Art for Kids ~ 11:00am ~ @Edenvale Lib.	9 @Pearl Lib. Jewelry Making ~ 12:30pm ~ Knit+Crochet Club ~ 3:00pm ~ Author: B. Parzybok ~ 3:00pm ~ Book Club @5:30pm	10 Reading to Furry Friends! ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Lib. Line Dancing 1pm @Pearl Lib.	11 Rhythm of Rain: Make a Rain Stick 3:30pm @Edenvale Open Space Auth. Wildflowers+Wildlife 4pm @Pearl Lib.	12 District 10 Office Hours 10:30-11:30am @City Espresso (630 Blossom Hill Rd.)
13 	14	15 SCVWD for Kids "The Little Blue Hen" ~ 11:00am ~ @Pearl Library	16 @Pearl Lib. SCVWD Kids' Story "The Little Blue Hen" ~ 11:00am ~ Jewelry Making ~ 12:30pm ~ Knit+Crochet Club ~ 3:00pm ~	17 Line Dancing ~ 1:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	18 Spring Activity for Kids: Nowruz Leaping Fish ~ 4:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	19 Children's Concert w/Sean Mendelson ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Lib.

★ Coming Soon in the VEP Neighborhoods ★

VEP Community Meetings

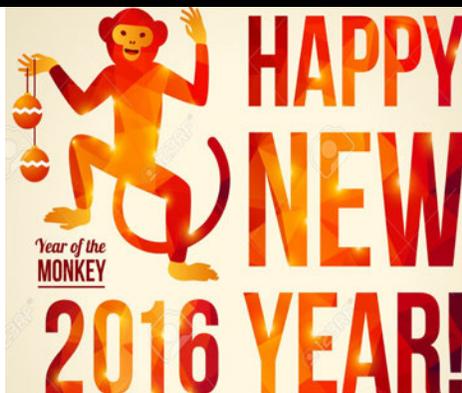
MARCH

Tuesday, March 29th

APRIL

Tuesday, April 26th

Everyone is Welcome!
Invite a Neighbor!



VEP Community Events

Great American Litter Pick-Up & VEP Spring Beautification Day
Saturday, April 23rd, 2016

Community-Wide Garage Sale
Saturday, May 7th, 2016

4th of July Festival & Fireworks
@Almaden Lake



THE VEP NEWS

VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111
San Jose, CA ; 95158

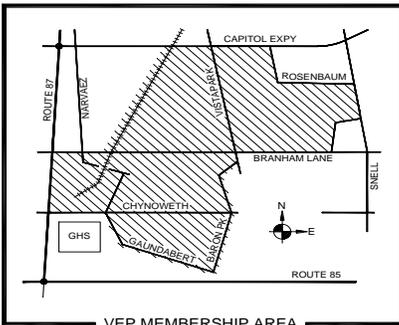
Email: vepca@vepca.net
Website: www.vepca.net

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

VEP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Marilyn Rodgers	225-7553	mrogersrn@aol.com
Vice President	Katherine Decker		kddedcker@sbcglobal.net
Secretary	Adina Pierce		adinap@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Ginger Cardona	227-0222	cardona@sbcglobal.net
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VEP MEMBERSHIP AREA

Would you prefer to receive your newsletters via email?

Please, let us know at vep@vepca.net



Check our website: www.vepca.net

Community Room

Vista Park

7:30 pm in the

Be sure to attend
VEP's Community Meeting
Tuesday, February 23rd!