



**\*\* Membership Application \*\***

*Note: none of the following information will be shared with any third party.*

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

Last name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

First name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments): \_\_\_\_\_

Can you give VEP a few volunteer hours? \_\_\_\_\_

**I am willing to volunteer for:** Beautification/clean-up projects VEP News/mailling prep Memorial Day Parade & Festival Distribute flyers Serve on a Committee Serve as a VEP officer or committee chair Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What happened to John Ottman?**

*-Dave Fadness*

To those who looked forward to seeing Hollywood film editor and composer **John Ottman** at our January 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, we extend his sincere apologies. Mr. Ottman is working on a major film project in London. His producer demanded that he be there on-location, so he had to cancel his date with us. (Feeling terrible about having to cancel just a few weeks in advance, Mr. Ottman actually offered to fly here from London to speak on January 30 then fly back the next day! We suggested that he return another time instead.)

In addition to our meeting, we had also arranged presenta-

tions by Ottman to film and performing arts classes at Gunderson, Leland, and Willow Glen High Schools and at DeAnza College. He is eager to reschedule upon return from the U.K.

Stay tuned, we will try again.

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# VEP Community Calendar

Thu, Feb 22 = George Washington's birthday.

Sat, Feb 24 @ 9 am - 3 pm = Free Electronic Waste Recycling at the Camden Community Center (see article in this newsletter)

Tue, Feb 27 @ 7:30 pm = VEP General Meeting in the Vista Park Community Room. (See agenda on page 1 of this newsletter.)

Mon, Mar 5 @ 7:15 pm = VEP Exec meeting in the Vista Park Community Room.

Sun, Mar 11 = Daylight savings time begins—be sure to set your clocks ahead (*Spring forward!*) before going to bed Saturday night.

Tue, Mar 13 @ 1 pm = Deadline for VEP NEWS articles and Bulletin Board ads (send to drfadness@sbcglobal.net)

Tue, Mar 13 @ 6:00 pm = County Parks dog use policy public meeting at County Gov't Center (see article in this newsletter)

Tue, Mar 27 @ 7:30 pm = VEP Home Improvement Faire in the Gunderson High School Forum (see article in this newsletter)

Tue, Apr 24 = Carson Elementary School Open House (see article in this newsletter)

Tue, Apr 24 @ 7:30 pm = VEP General Meeting in the Vista Park Community Room.

Tue, Apr 24 @ 9:00 pm = VEP Community Service Award applications due

Sat, May 5 = VEP Community Garage Sale

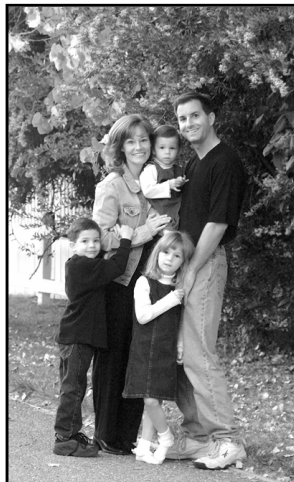
Mon, May 28 = VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival

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# Upcoming Volunteer Events

Unless otherwise specified, be sure to call Maria at 226-4614 to find out specifics and volunteer for these events.

- ◆ Volunteers are needed to plan, organize, and/or participate in our 2007 Memorial Day Parade & Festival. Contact Dave Fadness at 578-6428 if you are willing to help.
- ◆ VEP newsletter preparation and mailing for March.
- ◆ VEP flyer distribution in March (Home Faire), April (Garage Sale) and May (Memorial Day Festival and Parade).



*Precious Moments In Time*

Family and Children Portraits

Weddings and Special Events

Photography by Jeri Arstingstall

★ VEP MEMBER ★

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## VEP's Home Improvement Faire

-John Marks, Coordinator

Our 10<sup>th</sup> annual *Home Improvement Faire* is scheduled for Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to attend—if for no other reason than to enter our raffle for MONEY. Exhibitors have donated enough for prizes totaling about \$700 in cash. You don't have to buy anything, just come, get a ticket stub, and wait to see if your number is called.

Contractors and tradesmen will display a wide variety of products and services in the Gunderson High School Forum area. Please make a special effort to come and match the effort of these suppliers to be there for you. Exhibitors' services include sunrooms, windows, bathroom remodeling, screens, plumbing, composting, doors, floors, kitchens, roofing, hardware, cooking, body & health care, pest control, photography, water softeners, gardening, painters, garage doors, and landscaping. You won't be disappointed, while you munch on free goodies provided by VEP.

If you have had a good experience with a contractor and would like to seem that contactor represented at our Home Improvement Faire, contact John Marks at 629-6433.

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, March 27, 7:30 pm at Gunderson High School. We look forward to seeing you there.

## Make your May 5<sup>th</sup> garage sale a **BIG** success

-Dave Fadness and Ginger Cardona

This year, our annual *Community Garage Sale* will be held on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. Make sure to mark it on your calendar now, and start gathering those treasures from your garage, attic, and under the back porch.

The idea is to get everyone in our community to have a garage sale on the same day. The best way to help that priceless old junk find a new home is to increase traffic to your home. So, VEP will advertise this event in local newspapers and by distributing flyers around our neighborhoods.

Your best resource is you--activity attracts more activity. Get your neighbors involved. People will pass by your street unless they think something is happening there. Try to get *everyone* on your street to join in. You might even pool all your neighbors' goodies into one big second-hand superstore. If your neighbors aren't selling, ask if you can spread out to their driveway.

Plan now to make sure you can be seen from the street. Put up balloons or signs. Have your out-of-area friends bring garage sale items that add to yours--make it a big, fun event on your street or cul-de-sac. A little energy and creativity now will pay off in big dividends, freeing up space in your garage and putting extra money in your pocket.

## 2007 Memorial Day event—Check this out!

-Dave Fadness

Planning is already well underway for this year's *Memorial Day Parade & Festival* to be held on Monday, May 28. With your help, we can make this event bigger and better every year. Your early involvement is encouraged.

Here's what we have lined up so far in the way of entertainment for our event:

Fair Middle School Band & Choir

Andrew Hill ROTC Color Guard, Honor Guard, Drum Corps, and Drill Team



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Parkview-Carson All American Kids' Club Choir

Pioneer High School Varsity Singers

Oak Grove High School Jazz Band

*Dance Kraze* Dancers (tentative)

Town Square Harmonizers barbershop quartet (tentative)

America Tae Kwon Do

We're also considering a return demonstration by the SJPD K-9 Unit. There will be costume awards, lots of field and booth games for kids, and plenty of refreshments for our crowd.

This event is free and open to the public. The only charges will be for food and drink, face painting, "crazy hair", and booth games—which will be offered at a small mark-up over cost by volunteers from participating public school groups. All proceeds are shared by the participating school organizations (PTAs, etc.).

You can help. We need lots of volunteers...

To pick up and return equipment the day before and after.

To post parade route "NO PARKING" signs the day before.

To help with set-up the morning of the event.

To help with food booth duty and event games.

To help clean-up after the event.

To find event sponsors and donors.

Having your help taking care of one or two of these details will make this event successful for kids of all ages in our community. Let me know if you or someone you know will add to the fun.

If you or a neighbor have an antique, classic, or hotrod car, have them give me a call if they're interested in showing it off in our parade. If you belong to a service group or other organization, we'd like to have you there with us—especially if you'd be in costume--anything from square dancing or scouts to...well, you name it. We also need a couple of flatbed trucks to use in our Parade and to move items to and from our Festival site.

Call me at 578-6428 or email me at drfadness@sbcglobal.net if you're willing to help even in a small way with our third-annual Memorial Day event. Don't wait because you think someone else will step forward--please don't. For this to be a success, we *really* need your help.

Above all, please be sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend with your family and friends on Monday, May 28, 2007.



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Clearing weeds and trash



Group Shot – Workday 1 – January 20<sup>th</sup>



GroupShot – Workday 2 – January 27<sup>th</sup>

### VEP planted 40 trees at Branham-Narvaez

-Dave Fadness, Project Coordinator

On Saturday, January 20, fifty-five eager volunteers turned out to install an extensive irrigation system in the vacant, city-owned parcel at the corner of Branham Lane and Narvaez Avenue. That was the first in a successful, two-weekend beautification project aimed at planting trees on the 1/3-acre

lot.

Despite a downpour of rain that turned the parcel into ankle-deep mud, sixty-seven brave souls showed up on the gloomy morning of January 27. They planted 32 trees and spread a veritable mountain of reddened wood chip mulch 4-inches deep over the entire lot. Another eight trees were planted along the ped/bike path across the street, replacing those that have died over recent years.

The results were beautiful and *very* satisfying—a long-held dream come true! Everyone left that afternoon with a well-deserved sense of pride for a job well done.

Organized by VEP, this project obviously aroused the popular support of neighbors, young and old, who were tired of the weed- and litter-strewn moonscape. Houses across the adjacent court had for years been blasted by dust and debris as prevailing winds whisked unimpeded across the barren dirt. Time was ripe, so when we distributed flyers and emails to neighboring residents, the results were predictable: people turned out, eager to get the job done.

VEP lobbied for more than ten years get permission to do this job. Our volunteers landscaped a median island across the street four years ago. It was clear then that neighbors were eager to make the entire intersection more attractive—it's a major portal into our community. The city explored all potential alternative uses before giving the go-ahead to proceed on the vacant lot.

City Arborist, **Ralph Mize** selected appropriate tree species and prepared a site design. With the help of Maintenance Manager **Tom Ferguson**, the San Jose Department of Transportation (DOT) had water service installed, a key to the potential success of this effort. DOT's **Greg Shultz** and **Jimmy Silva** offered expert advice on VEP's irrigation plans. VEP applied for and won a \$1959 grant from **San Jose Beautiful**, which covered the cost for irrigation hardware.

Non-profit **Our City Forest** (OCF) donated the 40 trees, tree stakes, and expert guidance by Arborist **Christian Bonner**. OCF also sent volunteer Tree Amigos, **Anthony Nispel**, **Franci Card**, and **Jeffrey Powers** to supervise and assist with planting the trees. Gunderson High School Principal **Cary Catching** and Activities Director **Trish Buttrill** helped recruit student volunteers.

Browning-Ferris Industries donated 162-cubic yards of Pro-Chip mulch, enough to cover the entire parcel four inches deep. *A-Rental* owner and VEP member, **Fred Koslowski** provided trenching equipment and a skilled operator, **Jeff Godley** who made the job of installing 960-feet of water lines possible for us, despite rock-hard soil conditions. **Davidson Drilling** augured holes for planting the trees.

**Starbucks Coffee** (on Capitol Expressway at Timberloop Drive) twice donated coffee and condiments. **Muffin Break** (Oakridge Mall) donated delicious muffins. VEP members popped for lunch and other refreshments to sustain a thirsty and hungry volunteer workforce.

We're grateful for advance press coverage by the **Blossom Valley Times** which was a powerful benefit in alerting and reminding those who would volunteer to help.

This truly was a *community* project, as it involved a public-private partnership of dedicated neighborhood volunteers, a fine local non-profit, city government and its employees, and

the unselfish generosity of local businesses.

These community-minded people volunteered:

**Kamlesh Amin**  
**Marylou Avanzino**  
**Sharon Benitez** (Santa Teresa High School)  
**Christian Bonner** (Our City Forest)  
**Cindy Bosworth**  
**Bob Capitolo**  
**Franci Card** (Our City Forest)  
**Alan & Ginger Cardona**  
**Art Cervantes**  
**Art Cervantes, Jr.**  
**Joyce Chesnos**  
**Dale Crandall** (Pinehurst Residents' Association)  
**Janet Darrow** (Pinehurst Residents' Association)  
**Phil, Kathy, Tristan, & Allison Davis**  
**Franklin Duenas** (Pioneer High School)  
**David & Aiko Fadness**  
**Pierre Feghali**  
**Brian Ferry**  
**Emily Ferry** (Castillero Middle School)  
**Ian Ferry** (Gunderson High School)  
**Matthew Ferry** (Pioneer High School)  
**Amie Fong** (Gunderson High School)  
**Mary Garnica**  
**David Gulizia**  
**Marietta Harris**  
**Phil Hennessy**  
**Stevan Huynh**  
**Jim Hicks**  
**Antonio Ibarra**  
**John Jackson** (Gunderson High School)  
**Scott Johnson**  
**Dick & Cheryl Juarez**  
**Ganesh Karishna**  
**Inderjit Kaur** (Gunderson High School)  
**Terry Kelly**  
**Frank Kistler**  
**Henry Lee** (Gunderson High School)  
**Larry Lee, Lilia Yon, Kiana, & Alexandra Lee**  
**John Marks**  
**Dena Merritt** (Gunderson High School)  
**Steve Mitchell**  
**Masim Mohajeri** (Gunderson High School)  
**Jasmin Moreno** (John Muir Middle School)  
**Thuong Nguyen** (Gunderson High School)  
**Tuan Nguyen** (Gunderson High School)  
**Paul Nichols**  
**Arti, Sathya, & Vivek Nigam**  
**Anthony Nispel** (Our City Forest)  
**Dennis Nitschke**  
**Dave Noel**  
**Bob & Francine Olsen**  
**Linda Owens**  
**Michael Osborn** (Gunderson High School)  
**Arlene Peterson**  
**Laura Peterson**  
**David Phan** (Gunderson High School)  
**Jeffrey Powers** (Our City Forest)  
**Alex Puentes** (Gunderson High School)  
**Irma Puentes**  
**Matthew Puentes**  
**Deepika Sharad** (Gunderson High School)  
**Dave Sheldon**  
**Larry & Cheri Silveira**  
**Michael Strauss**  
**Josie Supencheck**  
**Yodit Tesfay** (Gunderson High School)  
**Joe Tajnai**  
**Lien Tran**  
**Minh Tran**  
**Ngu Tran** (Gunderson High School)  
**Stephanie Trujillo** (Gunderson High School)  
**Steve Van De Pitte**  
**Linh Vo** (Gunderson High School)  
**Robb & Kit Whitney**

**Mario Zapata**

**Jennifer Zhong** (Gunderson High School)

Although every one of these people contributed mightily to the success of this project, there are several superstars that deserve special mention because they worked there frequently during days before and after our designated weekend workdays: **Jim Hicks**, **Frank Kistler**, **Dennis Nitschke**, and **Bob Olsen**. Hats off to these incredible volunteers!

\* \* \* \* \*

The following tools were left behind at the Branham-Narvaez work site. If any of these belong to you, please email me to arrange pick-up (drfadness@sbcglobal.net).

- (1) 8-inch leaf rake with a yellow handle;
- (1) 16-inch leaf rake with a yellow handle;
- (1) short (about 27-inch long) spade shovel with a blue "D-grip" handle; and
- (1) Ames Kodiak trench shovel with a chrome "D-grip" handle (looks like new).



A Job well done (32 trees and mulch)

## San Jose commission vacancies

-Dave Noel

The **San Jose Elections Commission** has two vacancies, one for a term ending March 1, 2009, and the other for a term ending March 1, 2011. Applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. Friday, March 2, 2007.

The **San Jose Advisory Commission on Rents** also has two vacancies, both for terms ending December 31, 2009. Applications will be accepted until the positions have been filled.

For more information, call (408) 535-1260, or visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/clerk/Vacancy.asp](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/clerk/Vacancy.asp).



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## VEP Community Service Awards

- Dave Noel

At our January general meeting, members unanimously approved the executive board's recommendation to fund up to three Community Service Awards of \$1,000 each for graduating high school students in Gunderson, Andrew Hill, and "At-Large" categories.

For our 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year, VEP will offer these grants towards higher education or vocational training for graduating high school seniors who have demonstrated exceptional records of volunteer-ism and community service during their high school careers.

Applications are being distributed to the administrations at Gunderson and Andrew Hill High schools this month. We will ask the designated administrator at each school to nominate three students and provide us their completed applications by April 24th. If you know a Gunderson or Andrew Hill student deserving consideration for this award, please encourage them to talk to their principal or guidance counselor to find out who will be making the nominations this year and talk to that administrator to be sure they are considered.

**VEP  
Community  
Service  
Awards**

Our At-Large application form appears in this newsletter, and will also be available on our website at [www.vepca.org](http://www.vepca.org). Our At-Large category is defined as a graduating high school senior residing in San Jose and nominated by a current VEP member. The At-Large application deadline is 9 p.m. on April 24th, our normal VEP meeting night.

We will present our Gunderson and Andrew Hill awards at each school's respective senior awards night in late May. We will present our At-Large award at our May 22<sup>nd</sup> general meeting.

If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer to help the Community Service Awards committee, please contact me at (408) 266-7183 or [DNoel1234@aol.com](mailto:DNoel1234@aol.com).

## VEP President's message

-Marilyn Rodgers

January has passed with a lot of VEP activity and accomplishment! Thanks to the many volunteers who helped turn the lot at Branham and Narvaez into an attractive area... one we will be proud of for many years to come.

**Membership drive** – included in the VEP newsletter this month is an envelope to mail in your VEP membership renewal. We hope you will continue to support VEP by being a member, and will encourage your neighbors to join/renew as well. If you would like to volunteer some of your time to VEP, please indicate on the envelope which type(s) of volunteer activity you would prefer to be involved in.

**VEP Newsletter Preparation** – each month there is a dedicated group of volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure that we have the newsletter in our mailboxes on time. They write, edit, and format the newsletter (thanks to Editor **Dave Fadness** and Assistant Editor **Dave Noel**). Other volunteers then make arrangements to have the newsletter printed, and to have the address labels printed. A final group of volunteers folds and labels the newsletters, then compiles them in order of specified address codes, boxes the newsletters, and delivers them to the main post office for mailing. Thanks to all of

you for your quiet continued dedication.

**Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities** – March through May is very busy with annual VEP events. March 27th will be the **Home Improvement Faire** at Gunderson High School, followed by the annual spring **Community Garage Sale** on Saturday, May 5th. Our largest event will be on May 28th, our third annual **Memorial Day Parade and Festival**. VEP volunteers distribute flyers to advertise these activities to all residents in the VEP area. Our first flyer will be distributed the first week or so of March. If you can help distribute flyers, please contact **Maria Digregorio**, our Volunteer Coordinator at 226-4614. VEP will validate volunteer hours for high school students involved in any VEP volunteer activity.

**VEP Community Service Awards** – Each year VEP grants a Community Service Award to up to three worthy graduating high school seniors. These awards are educational grants for outstanding volunteer service. Do you know a high school senior who should be nominated for this award? For more information, see the article and application form in this newsletter.

**Daffodils** – I hope you are enjoying the daffodils that are popping up all over the VEP area, planted by VEP volunteers over the last several years. Watch for our newest daffodils at Parkview 3 Park, and at the far west end of Chynoweth along the percolation pond trail.

Our next VEP General Membership Meeting is on Tuesday February 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM at the Vista Park Community Room. Please plan to attend, and bring a friend.

## Needed: volunteer committee members

-Marilyn Rodgers

Are you good at organizing and contacting people? Would you like to get more involved with VEP? This year, as part of the VEP Membership renewal process, we are asking members who are willing to volunteer some of their time to VEP, to indicate their preferences of volunteer activities. Options include beautification projects, distributing VEP flyers for annual activities like the Spring Garage Sale, or assisting with the Memorial Day Parade and Festival, to name a few

Our Volunteer Coordinator, **Maria Digregorio**, would like to form a small committee of two or three volunteers to assist in organizing and mobilizing VEP volunteers by preferred activity. If interested, please contact me at (408) 225-7553, or Maria at (408) 226-4614.



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# VEP Community Association

Representing More Than 2000 Families in the Blossom Valley Area of South San Jose Since 1969

## ★ 2007 Community Service Award - "At Large" Nomination Form ★

VEP's annual *Community Service Award* is an attempt by VEP to encourage and reward high school students who have begun what we hope will be a lifelong pattern of volunteer community service. Awards will be granted exclusively on the basis of a graduating high school senior's voluntary community service accomplishments during his or her high school years.

To be considered for this "At Large" category, a nominee must:

- A. Be nominated by a VEP member using this form (both pages), mailed to VEP at the address shown below and received by April 24, 2007, or hand delivered to our 7:30 p.m. Annual Meeting on April 24th;
- B. Be certified to be a graduating high school senior by:
  1. An administrator from the nominee's school;
  2. If home schooled, by a state-credentialed tutor;
  3. If an independent study student, by an administrator from the school where enrolled in independent studies;
- C. Be a resident of the city of San Jose; and
- D. Not also be a nominee in the Andrew Hill or Gunderson High School categories.

This form is also available for download and printing (pdf) at [www.vepca.org](http://www.vepca.org). Submit an original signed hardcopy to VEP.

(Optional) A single one-page cover letter or letter of recommendation may be submitted with the application.

For any questions, see the **VEP News**, visit [www.vepca.org](http://www.vepca.org), or call any VEP officer listed in your latest **VEP NEWS**.

### ★ PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ★

Nominee's name: _____		Date: _____
Nominee's address: _____		
		Telephone Number: _____
Name and address of nominee's high school: _____		Month/Year Graduating: _____
Number of community service hours required for graduation: _____	Number of community service hours required for any other purpose: _____	Please explain: _____
Name and address of nominating VEP Member: _____		
Telephone Number: _____		
<i>I certify that the nominee's community service record reported on this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.</i>		
Nominating VEP member's signature: _____		Date: _____
<i>I certify that my community service record reported on this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.</i>		
Nominee's signature: _____		Date: _____
<i>I certify that the nominee has senior class standing at the above named high school, is expected to graduate in the month and year indicated above, and that the nominee's community service record reported on this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.</i>		
High school administrator's signature: _____		Date: _____
Print high school administrator's name: _____		

(Be sure to include information requested on the next page.)



## VEP Community Association

Representing More Than 2000 Families in the Blossom Valley Area of South San Jose Since 1969

### ★ Community Service Record Form ★

★ PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ★

Nominee's name:		
Please describe in detail below the nominee's high school community service record. Use additional sheets if necessary.		
Name of volunteer organization:	Dates involved (example: 1/03 – 5/03):	Total volunteer hours:
Describe activities and accomplishments:		
Name of volunteer organization:	Dates involved (example: 1/03 – 5/03):	Total volunteer hours:
Describe activities and accomplishments:		
Name of volunteer organization:	Dates involved (example: 1/03 – 5/03):	Total volunteer hours:
Describe activities and accomplishments:		
Name of volunteer organization:	Dates involved (example: 1/03 – 5/03):	Total volunteer hours:
Describe activities and accomplishments:		

**(Use additional sheets if necessary.)**

*(Optional) List any other information our judges should know about the nominee and his or her volunteer community service record:*



## VEP elections

*-Marilyn Rodgers*

Elections for VEP Executive Board positions will soon be upon us. Have you thought about serving as a VEP officer? It's a great way to meet more of your neighbors, and to learn more about the VEP Community and the City of San Jose, and... *it's fun!*

The Executive Committee consists of the elected offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and VEP News Editor. We plan to add a new elected officer position, the Director of Electronic Communications. Past Presidents plus the Executive Committee together make up the Executive Board. We are fortunate to have several past presidents who stay active on the board, mentoring new officers and leading projects and committees.

Interested, but would like more information? Contact me or any of the Executive Board members (see the mailing page of this newsletter). We will be happy to assist you. Also, all members are welcome to attend our monthly Executive Board meetings. Our next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 5th starting at 7:15PM in the Vista Park Community Room.



## VEP's January general meeting

*-Jim Hicks, VEP Secretary*

VEP Vice President **Cindy Bosworth**, opened the meeting with a warm welcome to a full house, estimated at 60 or more attendees.

Our first guest was our newly-elected Mayor, **Chuck Reed**. He is the first Mayor who has visited our community meetings after being installed in office. For that, VEP feels that he is living up to his campaign promise of increased community involvement during his administration.

Mr. Reed expressed his optimistic views and his plans to work toward budget reforms with a community-based budgeting process, and aligning government policies with community priorities. His immediate funding priorities are focused on our parks, libraries, pools and other community projects. After his formal remarks, he answered several questions from the audience.

Cindy then introduced our next guest, Ms. **Laura Wells**, Division Manager in the San Jose Department of Transportation. Laura addressed the traffic calming measures already implemented and under consideration along Chynoweth Ave be-

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tween Pearl Ave and Gaundabert/New World. Her department performed another traffic assessment after installing the traffic calming measures, most notably the electronic speed signs, other signage, and lane and crosswalk stripping changes. The results showed a definite reduction in traffic speed.

Laura then presented drawings showing possible lane configurations if Chynoweth were narrowed to one lane in each direction between Pearl and the Gunderson High School parking lot. Given the speed improvements so far, and concerns about the long lines of traffic into Gunderson High School during peak morning drop-off times, members did not want to proceed with the proposed single-lane solution.

Motions were made and passed to:

- Keep Chynoweth configured with two lanes in each direction between Pearl and Gaundabert/New World
- Add a bicycle lane in both directions on Chynoweth between Pearl and Gaundabert/New World
- Do not add Botts dots as rumble strips or left median "drifting reminders" on Chynoweth under Route 87

Members also requested:

- Traffic light timing changes at the intersection of Pearl and Chynoweth
- Improvements at the intersection of Capitol Expressway and Narvaez.

**Dave Noel**, Community Service Award (CSA) Chairman, gave a brief presentation about the VEP CSA scholarship awards for graduating seniors at Gunderson, Andrew Hill and at-large high schools. A motion was made and passed to allocate \$3,000 for CSA scholarships for three student awards for 2007.

The final agenda item was our first annual **Volunteer Recognition Celebration**. For 38 years, VEP has operated exclusively on the dedicated volunteer hours of VEP's executive board and active members. Cindy expressed VEP's appreciation of our many volunteers by listing a several volunteer projects and having those who participated stand for recognition. That list is published in the next article.

After recognizing our many volunteers, the meeting adjourned with the cake-cutting and distribution of the Volunteer Celebration cake.

## VEP's volunteer recognition celebration

-Cindy Bosworth, VEP Vice President

VEP turned 38 years old in January, and it gave me great pride to celebrate by recognizing our many dedicated volunteers in our first annual Volunteer Recognition Celebration at our January general meeting.



Here is the list of recent projects I cited at the meeting, all made possible by the hard work of our volunteers:

### Beautification Projects:

Branham/Narvaez Project – special thanks to **Dave Fadness**  
Oleander planting and maintenance on Vistapark Drive at Branham Lane

Tree planting and maintenance in Vista Park  
Branham Lane clean-up from Vistapark to Snell  
Tree planting and maintenance at Parkview School  
Landscaping and maintenance of median islands on Narvaez and on Chynoweth

Tree pruning and maintenance at Cilker Park  
Graffiti clean-up (area wide)  
Pedestrian-bike path clean-up along Route 87 south of Chynoweth Avenue

Maintenance of cul-de-sac at south end of Vistapark Drive  
Maintenance of city parks--by VEP/Adopt-A-Park volunteers  
Twice annual pruning of 170 Chynoweth palm trees

Daffodil planting  
Successful lobbying for landscaping on Capitol Expressway median islands

Successful lobbying for soundwall improvements on Capitol Expressway west of Vistapark Drive

Successful lobbying for improvement of median island on Rosenbaum at Capitol Expy

Restoration of old Vista Park sign  
Oleander planting and maintenance on Branham Lane, west of New Compton Drive

Successful lobbying for community room landscaping  
Successful lobbying for re-orientation of the west ballfield at Vista Park

Ongoing lobbying for a park on Narvaez, south of Capitol Expressway

### Communications:

VEP News article submission and editing  
VEP News assembly, labeling and distribution  
VEP Event flyer distribution  
VEP Website and emails to membership

Neighborhood street signs for meetings  
Developing and managing the VEP member database

### Traffic:

Traffic calming on Chynoweth Avenue  
Ongoing lobbying for traffic improvements at Narvaez onramp to northbound Route 87

### Special Events:

Candidate forums for local elections  
Annual VEP Community Service Awards  
Annual VEP Memorial Day Parade and Festival  
Annual VEP Home Faire and Community Garage Sale

# VEP is Working for you

## The Long-Term Care Insurance Decision

-Steve Gregerson (\*)

Despite the recent economic downturn, more and more people of all ages are buying long-term care insurance policies. You, too, may be wondering if long-term care insurance is the smartest decision for you and your family. In this article, a long-term care industry specialist explains the key factors in making the long-term care insurance decision.

Over the past few years, public interest in long-term care insurance is quietly and steadily growing. In fact, more than four million people held individual long-term care insurance policies at the end of December 2003.<sup>1</sup>

The recent interest in long-term care insurance is likely due to three factors: the evolution of these insurance products, limited alternatives for financing care and growing consumer awareness of the benefits of long-term care insurance.

### Product evolution

Long-term care (LTC) insurance policies have evolved over time to be far more flexible than they were in the early days, when they were known as nursing home policies. Today, most policies allow the insured to receive care in the setting of their choice, whether this is at home, in an assisted living facility, adult day care center or nursing home.

Industry standards have developed as well. Most policies offer benefits when a person can no longer perform two out of six "activities of daily living" (such as bathing, dressing, toileting or eating), or when they need substantial assistance due to a cognitive impairment. New benefits have come on the scene, such as additional cash allowances on top of basic coverage which pay for extras, like home modifications and home safety checks. Benefits like this make it easier for people to receive assistance at home.

### Limited alternatives

Almost every day we read that the public safety net is slowly disappearing and the Social Security system may be in jeopardy 20 years from now. Even today, publicly-available options for managing long-term care expenses are severely limited.

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For example, Medicare typically covers only certain types of care for a limited period of time, leaving many long-term care costs uncovered. Medicaid also is an imperfect solution because it requires people to spend down their assets to state required levels to qualify. In addition, Medicaid primarily pays for care received in a nursing facility, not at home. Perhaps this explains why even the Government recently decided to offer its employees the option to buy long-term care insurance through a special Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program.

### Consumer awareness

In part, LTC insurance sales have been driven by a growing consumer awareness of the benefits of long-term care insurance coverage. With more than 25 million adult caregivers in the U.S. today, many people are experiencing long-term care within their own families.<sup>2</sup> Some have witnessed the positive effects of long-term care insurance, which may have allowed their loved ones to remain in their own homes by paying for in-home care.

But many families without long-term care insurance coverage in place have seen the opposite effect—that is, limited choices and the impact of the high costs of long-term care on their family's financial foundation and security.

### What advisors recommend

For the majority of the population who cannot afford to self-insure this risk, some financial planners are beginning to recommend LTC insurance as a core element of a family's financial plan. The advantages of planning ahead and purchasing the insurance at younger ages (under age 55) include:

- The younger you buy, the cheaper the premiums.
- Younger buyers are more likely to be in a healthy condition to qualify for coverage.
- If long-term care is needed at an earlier age, the family's finances will be protected as the policy will help to cover the costs of care.
- The coverage can pay for caregivers to come into the home, where most people prefer to receive care.

This may explain why the average age of a long-term care insurance buyer has dropped from 72-years old in 1990 to almost 58-years old today.<sup>3</sup>

### Is it worth it?

Few people regret purchasing car insurance or home insurance policies when an accident takes place. The coverage earned is far greater than the annual premiums paid, especially when you consider the alternative: paying for a new car or a new home out-of-pocket. The same is true of long-term care insurance. The benefits paid out under a long-term care insurance policy for one year alone often can exceed the cumulative premiums a client pays into a policy over many years.

For example, if a 55-year-old man purchases a policy that costs \$2,000 per year and pays premiums for 20 years until he needs long-term care at age 75, he will pay a total of \$40,000 in premiums over those 20 years. Compare this to the cost of care at a skilled nursing facility, which can reach \$58,000 per year and is expected to grow five percent per year.<sup>4</sup> In 20 years, the average annual cost of long-term care may be well in excess of \$100,000.

In addition, new policy options available on the market today



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allow partners and family members to share the benefits of a single policy. This gives policies even greater value by making it more likely that the benefits will be used by one family member or another at some point in time.

### Tips for a positive buying experience

1. Engage in a family discussion and plan ahead  
If you are helping your parents, make sure you understand their future wants and desires. If you are a couple planning for your own long-term care needs, think through your own priorities and those of your children. Long-term care is a family issue.

2. Seek assistance  
Long-term care insurance is best understood with the help of an insurance agent or financial planner who can assess a family's situation and specific needs. Experienced LTC insurance advisors will help you through the buying process by explaining the various features of a policy and how they will benefit you at claim time.

3. Investigate your LTC insurance carrier  
When you look at the various LTC insurance carriers, consider their relative financial strengths and stability, in addition to their years of experience in the long-term care insurance market. S&P (Standard and Poor's), Moody's, Fitch IBCA and A.M. Best rate most long-term care insurance carriers.

### Sources:

1. 2003 LTC Insurance and Medicare Supplement Sales and In Force Survey, LIMRA International
2. "The Economic Value of Informal Caregiving," Arno, P.S., Levine, C., and Memmott, M. M. Health Affairs, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1999.
3. Long Term Care Insurance in 1998-1999, Health Insurance Association of America (HIAA), 2002.
4. Metlife Mature Market Study, 2003.

*[(\*)Ed. Note: Steve Gregerson, CFP, is a VEP Member and a Senior Financial Consultant for Thrivent. Steve sells long term care insurance offered by John Hancock Life Insurance. As approved by VEP members at the May 2006 general meeting, Steve has applied to offer VEP Members a group discount equal to 5% above the best rates offered to individuals, at no cost to VEP. In order for VEP members to qualify for the discount, at least 5 applications must first be approved. For more information, contact Steve at (800) 972-2880 or come to our February 27<sup>th</sup> general meeting to see his presentation.]*

## Gunderson High School happenings

*-Cary Catching, Principal*

I am pleased to share with our community some of the exciting events that are happening at Gunderson over the next few weeks.



Gunderson High School recently completed our recruitment activities. In addition to several tours, prospective families also participated in Shadow Days and a Parent Information Night. We are pleased to announce that, as a result of these efforts, we more than surpassed the numbers from last year of students and families that attended our recruitment activities, and thus, learned more about Gunderson.

We will not hear what our incoming student numbers are until late March, but we are hopeful for a large freshmen class!

Construction on the new building is complete. Teachers are slated to move in over the Winter Break (beginning February 16). If you are interested in seeing the new building after break, I will be conducting a tour as part of the agenda for the next Principal's Coffee on Friday, March 2. The Coffee begins at 7:30 a.m. in the Conference Room.

Just a reminder, Gunderson is currently on Winter Break, with no school from February 19 thru February 23. In addition, Spring Break will follow six weeks later – April 6 thru April 13.

Finally, congratulations go out to all the staff and students at Gunderson High School. We were recently recognized by Project Cornerstone as an Asset Champion for Creating a Caring School Environment. I will be accepting the award on behalf of the school at Cornerstone's annual Breakfast in March at the Fairmont Hotel.

## SeniorNet Expands Curriculum

*-John McCulloch*

SeniorNet has made some changes in the curriculum to assist computer learning. The Introduction to Computer class has been expanded. It has the original 8-week class with the same title. In addition, a 4-week class has been added titled: "Next Class After Intro." which goes over some of the necessary skills for successful computer use such as mouse proficiency, selecting text, opening-renaming-saving files, cut-copy-paste as well as folder and file management.

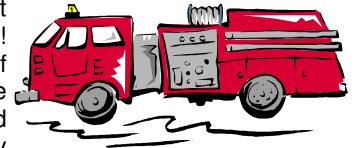
For those of you interested in digital photography, SeniorNet offers three classes. The recommended first class is "Digital Photography" which teaches the student how to use Picasa, free software from the internet. The emphasis is on downloading pictures from your camera to your computer as well as beginning organization. The Photoshop Elements class has been expanded from one 8-week class to two 8-week classes. The first class titled "Photoshop Elements Organizer" will cover moving the photo into the computer hard drive, organizing photos, repairing common problems with Quick Fix and sharing photos via e-mail. The follow-on class titled: "Photoshop Elements - Editor" will teach the student how to modify digital images, eliminate red eye, brighten or darken that photo, and remove that palm tree you don't want.

If you would like to take these or any of the 12 classes offered by SeniorNet Willows, come to our class registration on Saturday, March 10 at 9 a.m for intermediate and advanced classes. The sign-up for the Introduction to Computers class is at 10:30 a.m. The registration is held at the Willows Senior Center, 2175 Lincoln Ave. (at Curtner Ave.). Most classes cost \$20, and there is an annual SeniorNet fee of \$40. SeniorNet is open to anyone 50 years young and over. For more information, call (408) 364-1430 or go to our web site at [www.snicsj.org](http://www.snicsj.org).

There are two other SeniorNet learning centers in San Jose, Almaden (408) 268-1703 and Cypress (near Valley Fair) at (408) 244-1353.

## San Jose fire station open houses

Here's your opportunity to visit a station, take a look around, ask questions, and see what it's like to be a real Firefighter! Learn about the importance of smoke alarms, exit drills in the home, when to call 9-1-1, and more while enjoying quality time with your family!



The following Fire Stations will be hosting Open Houses:

### Fire Station #22

6461 Bose Lane at Camden Ave.  
Saturday, March 17, 2007, 2:00 p.m.5:00 p.m.

### Fire Station #16

2001 S. King Road at Cunningham Ave.  
Saturday, April 21, 2007, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### Fire Station #29

199 Innovation Dr. at Zanker Road  
Saturday, May 19, 2007, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### Fire Station #7

800 Emory Street at Laurel Street  
Saturday, June 16, 2007, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### Fire Station #6

1386 Cherry Ave. at Minnesota Avenue  
Saturday, July 21, 2007, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

To make a reservation for your group – boy scout troop, girl scout troop, club or organization - please contact the San José Fire Department Office of Public Education at [pubed@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:pubed@sanjoseca.gov) or 408-277-2878.

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## Neighborhood Scuttlebutt

-Dave Noel

Branham Lane widening project: The City and the County are continuing to work through the details of the land transfer agreement, which would grant the necessary right-of-way to the City for the Branham and Snell widening projects. With this progress, the City has applied for a permit with the County to get on the land to perform preliminary survey work so that the design can begin. Once this data is collected, the City will reinstate discussions with VEP on the details of this project.

If you are interested in joining VEP's Branham widening Committee, call Dave Fadness at 578-6428. Meetings with city staff will resume soon after the land transfer deal is formally approved.

Chynoweth Avenue traffic calming: **Laura Wells**, Division Manager for the San Jose Department of Transportation presented results of traffic calming measures to date on Chynoweth between Pearl and Gaundabert/New World at our January general meeting. See the article titled "VEP's January general meeting" in this newsletter for details on decisions made by members at the meeting.

After that meeting, you may have noticed traffic counting apparatus on Chynoweth near Gunderson High School. Gunderson Principal **Cary Catching** notified VEP that San Jose Unified School District commissioned a private traffic study in conjunction with their stadium lights proposal.

Another palm tree down: We are sad to report that another mature palm tree was knocked over on Chynoweth just east of Pearl on Saturday February 10<sup>th</sup>. That tree was sheared off above the root line, so it was not recoverable. It appeared to have been hit by a westbound Chynoweth driver. At this writing, we do not know if a police report was filed, which might allow the city to recover the cost of replacing it.

Branham median fence at Hwy 87: A driver hit several sections of chain link fence in the median of Branham on the east slope of the Hwy 87 overpass near Narvaez. The Department of Transportation will repair the fence, and if funding is available, extend the fence to the Narvaez crosswalk to improve safety by encouraging pedestrians to cross Branham at the crosswalk instead of taking diagonal shortcuts.

Capitol-Narvaez: As reported in the January VEP News, VTA commissioned a traffic study in conjunction with their proposal for high-density development in the south park-n-ride lot. County Supervisor **Don Gage's** office is working to get us a copy of the report as soon as it is released, which is currently anticipated to be in early-to-mid March.

## Home maintenance

[Ed. Note: This is the second in a series of monthly reprints taken from "Home Maintenance Calendar 2007" which appeared in the December 30, 2006 San Jose Mercury-News.]

~ February ~

TOP JOB: Using binoculars, inspect your roof from the ground (walking on a damp or wet roof can be dangerous). Look for loose, missing, or damaged roofing materials. Repair any damage. If you have access to the underside of the roof, check it for leaks during a heavy rain.

ALSO: Clean condenser coils or fins beneath or behind your

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refrigerator according to the manufacturer's instructions. Make certain air flow around the appliance is adequate.

Trim branches around your roof line to keep squirrels and other pesky animals off the roof. Inspect all vents, repair as needed and remove any debris blocking airflow.

~ March ~

TOP JOB: Turn off all water in your house. Check the water meter then, after an hour, check it again. If it has moved, there is a leak somewhere in your plumbing system.

ALSO: Check for leaks at valve where water enters the house, at outdoor faucets and at any valves to toilet, bathroom, or kitchen sink, bar, etc. Turn each off and on several times to check for leaks. Inspect grout and caulk around sinks, tubs and showers. Repair or replace damaged areas. Inspect water heater for leaks and flush tank. Clean underside of range hood and clean or replace filters.

~ Each month ~

Test and inspect smoke, heat, and gas detectors.

Check fire extinguishers. Replace or service as needed.

Check to be certain nothing flammable is near a source of flame, such as a water heater pilot light, gas range, furnace, etc.

Practice your family fire-escape plan and review earthquake preparedness. Inspect electrical cords for damage. Repair or replace if needed.

Check the operation of all electrical circuit breakers by turning each off and on. Do the same with ground fault circuit interrupters, usually found in bathroom, kitchen, garage, and outdoor outlets. Replace those not working properly.

Always be alert for other safety hazards, such as cracked walkways, hazardous materials that aren't properly stored, or unsecured heavy bookcases or other furniture that could topple during an earthquake.

Check water softener. Add salt if needed.

Clean garbage disposal by grinding up two trays of ice cubes made from a mixture of 1 cup white vinegar in 1 gallon of water. (Be certain to use the disposer cap when grinding.) For a pleasant smell, follow the cleaning by grinding a lemon.

# Join VEP today!

## A fantastic alarm system

Here's a good idea: Put your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to get into your house, just press the panic button for your car. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until either you turn it off or the car battery dies.

This tip came from a neighborhood watch coordinator. Next time you come home for the night and you start to put your keys away, think of this: It's a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no installation.

Test it. It will go off from most everywhere inside your house and will keep honking until you reset it with the button on the key fob chain. Also remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. Share this tip with everyone you know. It could save a life or prevent burglaries or an assault.

## Daffodil time

-John Marks

Daffodils are the first flowers of spring. Mine have been blooming since the first of the month. They are also the symbol of hope for cancer patients and their families. Dollars raised by the sale of these flowers during Daffodil Days support research public education and patient services in our community.

Orders for daffodils will be taken through February 28, and the flowers delivered during the week of March 22. Here's how to get involved. Bouquets start at \$10 for ten flowers. Other special arrangements range from \$55 to \$75.

The most popular offering is the Gift of Hope, ten flowers in a vase delivered anonymously to a cancer patient. Gift of Hope bouquets are \$25.

To order daffodils, call 879-1032, then 3 after recording starts. You may also e-mail [svdaffodildays@cancer.org](mailto:svdaffodildays@cancer.org) or visit the website [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

~ Watering tips ~

Keep indoor plants warm and cozy; never water them with cold water, or allow the watering can to sit overnight first. This also minimizes the amount of chlorine, a chemical harmful to many delicate indoor plants. And, if you use a water softener, remember that the salt you add to soften the water is not good for sensitive houseplants. Use bottled water that you buy at the store.

If your plant's leaves do turn brown, you need to get rid of toxic salts before they kill the plant. Do this by flushing the soil thoroughly. Take the plant to the sink, or outside, and run water through it twice. If the container is too large to handle, use a turkey baster to remove excess water from the saucer under the container after you flush the soil.

Flush a third time using water to which you have added half a teaspoon of vinegar per quart of water, which will leach out accumulated salts. Then use a vinegar/water solution instead of regular water every other week when watering. The vinegar neutralizes the harmful salts, and will lower the pH of the soil, making it more acidic and keeping it salt-free. Your houseplants will love it. New growth will be lush and green.

You can also over-water, especially bougainvillea vines outside. If they drop their blossoms too soon, you need to use a

little benign neglect. Refrain from watering until you feel that it has almost reached the wilting point, then soak the soil to a depth of two or three feet.

Some gardeners think of these vines as being tender tropicals, but they really are hardy. However, bougainvillea blossoms drop continuously after they start and can be messy.

~ Thorny berry vines ~

If you're getting scratched too much by thorny black berry vines or olallieberry vines, consider planting the thornless blackberries. Plant the Logan variety for early fruiting, and the Arapraho (or any of its kin--Apache, Chickasaw, Kiowa, Navajo, and Shawnee) for a midseason crop. The Chester variety produces berries late in the season. Otherwise, consider converting to harmless vegetables, such as lettuce, cabbage, radishes, beets, spinach, broccoli and cauliflower.

~ To-do list for February ~

SNAPSHOT: Frosty nights and rain, rain, rain. Stay off water-logged soil to keep it from being compacted.

FLOWERS: Plant hardy annuals and perennials, including calendulas, fairy primroses, pansies, snapdragons, and violas. Callas and tuberous begonias are good bets. Check out new day lilies for planting now.

VEGETABLES: Plant dormant roots of asparagus, rhubarb, artichokes, horseradish and strawberries, plus potatoes, onions and garlic. Transplant broccoli, cauliflower, leaf lettuce and chard.

TO-DO LIST: Feed fall-planted annuals and perennials. Fertilize lawns late in the month. Pick up camellia blossoms to control petal blight (avoid overhead watering). Before new growth emerges, apply dormant spray to fruit trees. Prune lantana. Apply pre-emergent control for crabgrass in the lawn (try a shaker bag to apply this if your lawn is small). Too much citrus? Call Village Harvest at (888) FRUIT 411 (888-378-4841) to ask about donating it to feed the hungry.

~ To-do list for March ~

SNAPSHOT: Crisp days and chilly nights. Smart buys include aza-leas, rhododendrons and camellias in bloom. Start summer vegetable and flower seeds indoors to transplant outside when soil warms. Plant ground covers.

FLOWERS: Attract hummingbirds and butterflies to your yard by planting passion vine, trumpet creeper, cape honeysuckle and wild lilac. Many types of ground cover can be planted now, including Mondo grass and ground morning glory. Get

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**VEGETABLES:** Plant your herb garden, and this year put in some catnip for your favorite feline. To rejuvenate perennial herbs such as sage and mint, cut back dead or old growth. Put in broccoli and cauliflower transplants; get peas, lettuce, spinach and carrots going from seed.

**TO-DO LIST:** Check drip irrigation system; flush out sediment and clean or replace emitters. To encourage robust spring growth, fertillize plants that have special nutrient requirements, such as annuals, using slow-release nitrogen as found in alfalfa meal. Take a free composting class; call (408) 918-4640 for a schedule or check [www.reducewaste.org](http://www.reducewaste.org).

[Ed. Note: The foregoing "To-Do Lists" are taken from the January 6, 2007 San Jose Mercury-News.]

**DO NOT TOP TREES:** Topping trees is very harmful to proper tree growth and appearance. When a tree is topped, it is shocked into producing fast growth to the sides of the topped branches. The new growth will look very unnatural as it matures over time, and will also be weaker than normal growth. For full details, see your April 2006 VEP News (available at [www.vepca.org](http://www.vepca.org)).



### Scam alert: phony water company workers

- Barbara Feder Ostrov (\*)

Three thieves posing as water company repair workers have burglarized homes from San Francisco to Morgan Hill in the past two months, vexing Bay Area police who on Wednesday warned the public to be on guard. The thieves appear to be targeting seniors, with all of the victims in their 70s, 80s and 90s, Mountain View Police Chief **Scott Vermeer** said.

Two men posing as water company repairmen tell a resident that the home's water lines are contaminated and must be flushed or that a line is broken. One of the "repairmen" takes the resident outside to check a water line or turn on a hose, while the other steals jewelry, cash and other items.

The men don't carry bags and appear to steal only small items, including travelers' checks, credit cards and cell phones. They seem to strike in the morning. And they seem to be professionals, taking only five to 15 minutes to pull off each burglary, detectives said. White pickups and construction-style vans have been seen in some areas where the men operated, but the vehicles have not been conclusively linked to the thieves, Vermeer said.

The men have been described as Latinos between 35 to 40 years old, heavysset and ranging in height from 5 feet 6 inches to 5 feet 8 inches. The men are described as clean-cut. They typically wear orange or gray construction vests or light blue shirts and dark blue pants.

Vermeer advised Bay Area residents to not open their doors to strangers, to ask for identification or verify employment with the utility company, and to call police if the person leaves without explanation. Anyone who has information about the suspects is asked to call his local police agency.

[(\*) Ed. Note: Reprinted and shortened without permission from the San Jose Mercury News, published 12/14/2006.]



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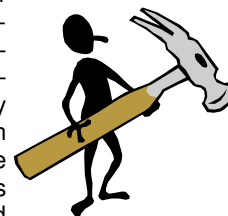
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### Free repairs for low-income homeowners

- Kevin Heuer (\*)

**Rebuilding Together**, formerly **Christmas in April**, is a non-profit organization that brings together volunteers to provide repair work for low-income homeowners and Non-Profit Facilities at no cost to the applicant. Rebuilding Together projects are primarily one and two-day projects, held each spring and fall. Throughout the year, the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program performs repairs that improve accessibility and mobility in the home.



Repair work focuses on neighborhood revitalizations and safety improvements such as grab bar and railing installation and repairs such as minor plumbing, flooring, electrical and carpentry. Additional work can also include interior or exterior painting.

For more information or an application, contact Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley at (408) 578-9519. Applications are accepted year round and can also be downloaded from our website at [www.rebuildingtogether-sv.org](http://www.rebuildingtogether-sv.org). We are currently looking for homeowners that need warmth, safety, and independence repairs for our April Rebuilding Days program.

Rebuilding Together is the nation's largest volunteer home repair agency. Last year our Silicon Valley affiliate repaired and rehabbed 95 homes and non-profit facilities, utilizing 1500 volunteers.

[(\*) Ed Note: Kevin Heuer is Program Development Specialist for Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley. He can be contacted at [kheuer@rebuildingtogether-sv.org](mailto:kheuer@rebuildingtogether-sv.org) or (408) 578-9519.]

## "VEP" Community Association

"VEP" represents the first three letters of our original subdivision names started here in 1969:

- V** = Vistapark;
- E** = Encore (and Echo Valley); and
- P** = Parkview Valley.

## Free Electronic Waste Recycling – Sat Feb 24

-Dave Noel

FREE Electronic Waste RECYCLING sponsored by the Volunteer Center of Silicon Valley in partnership with San Jose City Councilmember Judy Chirco and Council District Nine Neighborhood Associations. Don't dump it... *Recycle!*

**WHEN:** Saturday, February 24, 9am-3pm

**WHERE:** Camden Community Center  
3369 Union Ave (near Camden), San Jose

**CONTACT:** Steve Ramona at EarthCare Recycling  
408-573-8573  
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## Pearl Avenue Library February Update

- Domenic Onorato (\*)

The contractor is currently installing the site and building underground utility lines. Building layout and excavation of the perimeter footing will begin at the end of the month. The concrete pour of the footing will begin in March, followed by the concrete slab pour.



For additional information regarding the project or construction, please contact the City of San Jose Project Manager Domenic Onorato, at 535-8350 or [domenic.onorato@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:domenic.onorato@sanjoseca.gov). You may also contact Frank Church or Bill McClain of the General Contractor, Bogard Construction, at the site trailer or call Bogard Construction at (831) 426-8191.

Photos of construction activities will be available online at [www.NewSanJoseLibraries.com](http://www.NewSanJoseLibraries.com).

[(\*) Domenic Onorato works for the City of San Jose Department of Public Works, on the City Facilities Architectural Services & Branch Library Development Team.]

## County Parks Dog Policy — Meeting Mar 13

- Dave Noel

In August 2003, the Parks and Recreation Department completed its Strategic Plan, which serves as the Department's roadmap towards future expansion and operations. As part of this process, the Board of Supervisors asked the Parks and Recreation Department to reevaluate its dog use policy to identify, plan and develop future recreational facilities for visitors with dogs.

The Parks and Recreation Department has now completed a system-wide review of its dog use policy and will present a



policy update to the Parks Commission in April.

A public meeting will be held on March 13, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. for those interested in making comments on proposed changes. The meeting will be held in the Isaac Newton Center on the first floor of the Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street in San Jose.

For more information or to be added to the Parks Project e-mail list, please contact:

Joe Schultz, Deputy Director, Santa Clara County Parks  
298 Garden Hill Drive, Los Gatos, CA 95032  
(408)355-2200, [Joe.Schultz@prk.sccgov.org](mailto:Joe.Schultz@prk.sccgov.org),  
[www.ParkHere.org](http://www.ParkHere.org)

Since Martial Cottle Park (previously known as the "Lester Property") at Branham Lane and Snell Ave. will be a future county park, this policy will likely affect the VEP area.

## Dial 2-1-1 for SCC Health & Human Services

- Arlene Peterson

This month Santa Clara County and United Way Silicon Valley launched a new toll free number to give County residents access to vital information. 2-1-1 is a free, non-emergency, confidential service that operates 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week, in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Mandarin, and 140 other languages.

2-1-1 provides access to health and human services such as food, shelter, counseling, drug and alcohol intervention, employment assistance, job training, youth programs, counseling, and much more. It also provides a link for individuals seeking to volunteer, provide resources, and assist during a crisis. 2-1-1 may also be used by adult children seeking services for elderly parents, laid-off workers struggling to feed their families, or people impacted by a disaster trying to connect to loved ones.

To make 2-1-1 possible, United Way Silicon Valley raised funds with government entities, private donors, corporations, and community-based organizations, providing \$150,000 per year for two years as "seed money" for ongoing fundraising. Through a unique partnership the 2-1-1 calls will be directed from a call center in Ventura County, eliminating the expense of a full local center.

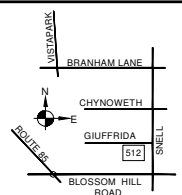
Forty-one states now offer 2-1-1 services. California offers services in the counties of Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange,

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For more information, visit [www.uwsv.org](http://www.uwsv.org). For everyday needs and in times of crisis, don't forget to dial 2-1-1.

## Carson School Update

*-Irene Shoberg*

Carson is gearing up for the third year of a pre-school on the site. This is a pre-kindergarten program with developmentally appropriate curriculum. It is a parent cooperative with parents working in the classroom one day a week. Parents are enrolled in parent education classes as part of the program. The pre-school runs from 8:30 to 11:30 on Mondays through Fridays. The tuition is currently \$150 per month; this may change slightly next year.



Please call Shelly Gonzales at (408) 838-8814 if you have any questions. Better yet, come to an Open House from 9:00 am to 11:00 am on March 7th in Room G-27 on Carson's campus.

Registration for Kindergarten has started. Please enroll your incoming kindergartener at Erikson Enrollment Center on Pearl Avenue.

Mark your calendars for Carson's Open House scheduled for April 24th. More info will be coming next month.

Over the summer, there will be a lot of construction activity on Carson's campus. A number of projects are planned. The main one is that walls will be going up in the instructional building. Each classroom will be separated by these walls.

*[Ed. Note: Irene Shoberg is the Categorical Program and Library Assistant at Rachel Carson School. She is also a long-time VEP member.]*

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## Kudos for graffiti and litter clean up volunteers

*- Rob Boyles*

Just a quick note of thanks for your volunteer efforts in keeping San José clean, safe and beautiful. We now have over 6,000 volunteers in our graffiti and litter program and you are making a huge difference in the quality of life for all of our residents.

It would seem that graffiti is again slightly on the rise so please be alert and diligent in reporting and removing it as soon as possible. Please call 277-2758 to report graffiti. For free supplies please call us at 277-3208.

*[Ed. Note: Rob Boyles is the volunteer coordinator for the City of San Jose's Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Program.]*

## District 10 news

*- City Councilmember Nancy Pyle*

It is hard to believe that two years have passed since I took office. It has been a pleasure to work with so many wonderful people and organizations for the betterment of District 10. As a former teacher and community advocate, I came to the city to make a difference. I am pleased to say that there have been many successes in our neighborhoods, one of the many reasons why I find my job so rewarding.

Serving as a San Jose City Council member is an awesome responsibility. Each of the ten council members represents roughly 90,000 residents, which is roughly equal to the populations of Campbell, Morgan Hill, and Los Gatos combined. We also cast about 2000 votes annually.

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## CRIME STOPPERS

There are many challenges to face, but there is always a feeling of immense satisfaction at the end of the day. I know everyone on my staff feels the same way. We all strive to make a difference in residents' lives and for the city as a whole.

My main focus has been on neighborhoods and our children. This includes defending crossing guard funding, slowing down traffic around schools, improving parks and libraries, and improving and adding sports fields.

Over the past year, I visited many schools in my district and discussed with principals, teachers, and parents city programs such as homework centers, sports fields, and ways to improve traffic and pedestrian safety.

As a council member whose district suffers from a lack of sports fields, I have devoted much of my time trying to improve our existing fields and finding space for others. In this spirit, I authored the Community Sports Field Feasibility Study which will enable the rest of my colleagues on the city council to understand the increased demand for sports fields and look for areas in each council district that would be suitable for additional fields.

I also worked with San Jose Unified School District to jointly develop three turf soccer fields at Leland High School. This will add to the District 10 inventory and, by using field turf, will allow greater long-term use for the Almaden Valley Youth Soccer League.

In addition, I also worked with the Almaden Valley Youth Soccer League to open additional locations for our children. One of the most important steps I took was authoring the Park Dedication Ordinance and Park Impact Ordinance (PDO/PIO), which will increase fees on development for parks. This will ensure the city can improve existing parks and have the needed funding to buy land for sports fields.

School safety has been a top priority of mine since my term began. During my first two budget cycles I have fought tirelessly to defend possible cuts to the program. While I was able to restore crossing guards to many of our schools, I plan to fight again in May for all of our schools to be funded, despite an anticipated \$21 million deficit projection in 2007.

A major reason for my interest in serving on the City Council was to ensure not only the safety of our children, but all residents. I currently serve as vice-chair of the Emergency Preparedness Council and our city has been successful at secur-

ing and spending over \$10-million to prepare our residents for a disaster. We still have much work to do in this effort and in 2007 I plan to work with City staff to prepare a neighborhood emergency response plan. Part of this will include training residents through our *San Jose Prepared!* program.

Throughout the year, I co-chaired the Coyote Valley Task Force and worked hard to protect District 10 from possible impacts. A few of the mitigations include improvements to Highway 101, an improved in-valley transit system, and a Caltrain Station, all of which should lessen the impact to District 10. Still, as this process moves forward, I will be asking many residents to give input, so please keep checking the District 10 web site for updates.

After attending numerous neighborhood meetings this year, I asked our city manager to draft a plan to help shopping centers in District 10. Residents have complained about blight occurring regularly at our shopping centers. Also, many local businesses have come to me to discuss the hardship they face in regards to the shopping centers and working with the city. I felt it was important the city assist these shopping centers with façade grants and other important measures that would assist tenants, attract more business, and provide residents with deserved services.

To discuss these or any other matters, contact me at (408) 535-4910 or at [district10@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:district10@sanjoseca.gov). You can also visit the District 10 web site at [www.sanjoseca.gov/district10](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/district10) for more information.

### District 9 news

*-City Councilmember Judy Chirco*

~ Council committee appointments for 2007 ~

Mayor Chuck Reed has made his appointments for this year. These are the committees and commissions that I will be serving on:

- ◆ Neighborhood Services and Education (Chair) - The goal of this committee is to serve, foster and strengthen community by providing access to lifelong learning, opportunities to enjoy life, ensuring a diverse range of housing opportunities, preserving healthy neighborhoods;
- ◆ Transportation and Environment - This committee serves to provide the community with safe, secure, and efficient surface and air transportation systems that support San Jose's livability and economic vitality and to provide environmental leadership through policy development, program design and reliable utility services and infrastructure;



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- ◆ Rules and Open Government - Council Agenda setting; Committee agenda setting; City Auditor work plan; All commission appointments that do not require interviews by the full Council; Ensuring accessible, responsive, transparent and accountable government.

In addition to the standing committees above, I will also serve as Council Liaison to the Early Care and Education Commission, Youth Commission, and Historic Landmarks Commission.

Finally, I will represent the City of San Jose on the Healthy Neighborhood Venture Fund (Chair), Municipal Health Services Program, Santa Clara Valley Water Commission, Santa Clara Family Health Plan Oversight Board, City/Schools Collaborative, and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Board (Alternate).

~ Kirk Seniors Needleworkers ~

The Kirk Senior Needlework Program meets at the Kirk Senior Center every Wednesday from 9 to 11:15 a.m. This dedicated group of about twelve women makes baby blankets and layettes, lap blankets, slippers, wheelchair bags, pillows, toys, and black knitted caps for our soldiers. Approximately 500 items were donated last year to the following charities: Valley Medical Center Neo Natal Nursery, Palo Alto Veterans Hospital, House on the Hill, Sacred Heart Community Center, Agnews Hospital, and nursing homes in the area.

They donate their items twice a year, July and December, and would very much welcome donations of yarn for their projects. We are very proud of all the great charitable work that the Kirk Senior Needleworkers engage in.

For further information please contact the Kirk Senior Center at 408-269-0214.

~ Contact my office ~

If you wish to receive periodic emails from my office please visit the District 9 website at [www.sanjoseca.gov/district9](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/district9) and click on "Join Judy's email list". As always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact our office at [District9@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:District9@sanjoseca.gov) or (408) 535-4909.

## Street light not working?

-Dave Fadness

If you know of a city street light that's not working, here's how to get it repaired...

First, make a note of the number painted at about eye-level on the street light pole. Also make a note of the nearest street address or street name(s) where the defective light is located.

Then call the City of San Jose Street Light Maintenance Desk at (408) 277-5517. You can also report broken streetlights by email or fax. Visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation/s\\_streetlights.htm](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation/s_streetlights.htm) for more information.

If it's a routine repair or lamp replacement, the city estimates no more than seven days to repair it. More complicated repairs typically require no more than two weeks.

Street lights are important for pedestrian and motorist safety and deterring crime. Do your part: promptly report street lights that are not working.



# Pearl Avenue Library

## Needs your support...

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★ Print donation form from [www.sanjoselibraryfoundation.org](http://www.sanjoselibraryfoundation.org).

★ Write a check payable to "San Jose Public Library Foundation." Mail it to 150 E. San Fernando Street, San Jose, CA 95112-3580.

★ Call or email Dave Fadness to get a donation form and mailing envelope (578-6428 or [drfadness@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drfadness@sbcglobal.net)).

**Be sure to specify that your gift is for our Pearl Avenue Branch Library. Do it today!**

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HOUSE JACKS: 32 foundation screw jacks for Arcadia single-story homes. New (never used). \$300 for all. Call Jan @ (408) 832-3672.

HANDY-MAN: *Mr. Fix-it* will repair leaks, sticking doors, locks, latches, lights, and life's little ills. No job is too small. Call John @ (408) 629-6433.

FREE: Red canna lilies. Call John at 629-6433.

Use the following form as a guide for submitting an ad:

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### Bulletin Board advertising rules:

1. Bulletin Board ads are limited to four (4) lines of text. One line contains 50 characters, including spaces.

2. VEP will print free Bulletin Board ads for its members for one-time transactions involving less than \$400, for lost and found, and for services offered by kids under 18 or retirees over 60 years of age. Free ads may be published in a maximum of three successive issues of the VEP News per submission. After three issues, non-renewed ads will be dropped without notice.

3. VEP will print commercial Bulletin Board ads for its members for \$6 per issue of the VEP News. (A commercial ad is one that offers goods and/or services for a fee. The VEP President and/or Editor has final say in determining whether an ad is commercial.) Ads must be prepaid before publication and be of four (4) lines or less in length (see 1, above). Commercial bulletin board ads may be published indefinitely so long as payment is received in advance of publication. Non-renewed ads will be dropped without notice. No graphics allowed.

4. Bulletin board ads and payment must be received at least 12 days prior to the fourth Tuesday of the month for inclusion in that month's newsletter. Mail to: VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose, 95158. prior to the fourth Tuesday of the month for inclusion in that month's newsletter. Mail to: VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose, 95158.

# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158

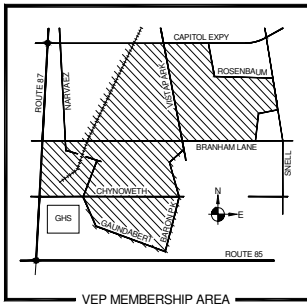
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

Community Room

Vista Park

7:30 pm in the

February 27th Meeting

Be sure to attend

February 27th Meeting