

Martial Cottle Park Master Plan Update

-County Supervisor Don Gage

Prior to the initiation of the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan project, the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department is finalizing a contract with the selected planning consultants who will assist the County with the master plan development. It is anticipated that the master planning process will start in early June, 2007 through a partnership with the California State Parks and Recreation Department.

In the meantime, the Parks Department has completed work with consultants on an Oral History project documenting the agricultural legacy and family history of Walter Lester, who so graciously donated the land now known as Martial Cottle Park. This oral history will provide a major piece of background information for the development of the agricultural and interpretive elements of the master plan.

As part of the public participation and outreach process for the master plan development, the Parks Department will form a Task Force comprised of interested citizens and community leaders, who will collaborate with staff and consultants to provide direction and input on the plan. More information will be available in early June regarding the application process for members of the Task Force. If you are interested in a Task Force application, please forward your name and contact information to Jane Mark at (408) 355-2237 or Alice Daly at (408) 355-2230.

[Ed. Note: If you have already provided your contact info to the County Parks & Recreation department for interest in Martial Cottle Park, you will begin receiving information as the master plan process gets started. Jane Mark will bring the list of people who signed up to our May 22nd meeting, so you can confirm you are already on the list, or add your name at that time.]

Pearl Avenue Library update

- Domenic Onorato (*)

The contractor is proceeding with the under-the-slab electrical conduits. Once completed, the gravel for the slab base will be poured and then the concrete slab itself. The Concrete slab pour will be during the next couple of weeks of May, and then the contractor will start working on the framing of the building, which will last through June.

For information regarding this project or site construction, please contact me at (408) 535-8350 or by email at domenic.onorato@sanjoseca.gov. You may also contact



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Frank Church or Bill McClain of Bogard Construction at their on-site trailer by calling (831) 426-8191.

Photos of construction activities are available online at www.NewSanJoseLibraries.com.

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

Donations needed for the new Pearl Library

-Dave Fadness

Progress is now very evident at the Pearl Avenue Library site. Foundations are being poured and, before long we'll see the new building take shape. These are exciting times for patrons in our area who have used this popular branch library since 1971.

At our October meeting last year, VEP members unanimously endorsed fundraising efforts for Pearl Avenue Library enhancements. This fundraising campaign is being conducted entirely by volunteers.



Although its construction is paid for by a general obligation bond voters passed in 2000, that source of funding cannot legally be used to buy interior fixtures, furniture, or equipment. City revenue for those purposes is being used, but there isn't enough to supply the full needs of an ambitious program that will build twenty branch libraries city-wide.

Our volunteers are working with a non-profit citizen group, the *San Jose Public Library Foundation*. The Foundation is asking us to help raise funds to fill the unmet needs for our own libraries. To get the job done right, to make our branch library the best it can be, we're appealing for tax-deductible donations from citizens and businesses in our own neighborhoods.

Donated funds are carefully managed by the Foundation (not the city) and earmarked for use only at the library a donor specifies with their gift. The Foundation designates what will be bought, then uses special discounts available to the city to make purchases. In this way, donations buy what's needed at the best available price.

Patrons of the new Almaden Branch Library raised more than \$260,000. The results are impressive in the range of furnishings, extended collections, computers, and other features that would not have been possible there without broad and generous community support.

Our community can (and should) do at least as well for the Pearl Avenue Library.

Please make a tax-deductible investment—small or large—in your library's future. You can even arrange to donate in small, periodic (even multi-year) installments. Here is how...

- Donate online at www.sanjoselibraryfoundation.org.
- Print a donation form from 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 me and I'll get the form and mailing envelope to you right away (578-6428 or drfadness@sbcglobal.net).

Be sure to specify that your gift is for the Pearl Avenue Branch Library.

This is a chance for you to leave a legacy for future generations to enjoy. Donations of \$100 to \$999 will be acknowledged on the library's *Community Donor Wall*. Gifts of \$1000 or more will be recognized on the library's *Legacy Donor Wall*. Special recognition (naming of rooms or features in the library) will be given for donations of \$5000 or more.

To help or learn more about this library funding campaign, call me at (408) 578-6428 (drfadness@sbcglobal.net); call Mary McLane at (408) 808-2174; or visit The Library Foundation's website at www.sanjoselibraryfoundation.org.

Please help make our Pearl Avenue Library the best that it can be. Donate today!

San Jose Public Library News

-Lorraine L. Oback (*)

Explore Short-Term Career Programs at the Community College Program Faire

Pondering a career change or considering options after high school? Don't know where to start? San Jose Public Library will host a Community College Program Faire at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library on Saturday, May 19 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in rooms 225B/229A on the second floor. Attendees can meet with representatives from seven local community colleges and learn about exciting career programs that can lead to a rewarding future in two years or less. An opening panel will cover the following topics: application, orientation, assessment, career programs, financing, support services, counseling services and student activities. Admission is free. For information, call (408) 808-2397.

Community Service Opportunity

An estimated 25,000 youth and their families participate in Summer Reading Celebration each year. Teens may earn community service credit for volunteering to assist program participants at their neighborhood library. With the exception of teensReach volunteers, summer reading volunteers must be 15 years of age or older. Volunteers commit to assisting 2-4 hours per week over the course of the eight-week program, typically between noon and 4 p.m. Good verbal communications skills and an ability to work with people of all ages is required. Inquire at your neighborhood branch library, or call Volunteer Services at (408) 808-2181.

★ V E P ★

Memorial Day Parade & Festival

Monday, May 28

Parade steps off from Carson School at 11 am SHARP.
Festival follows until 3 pm at Parkview School.

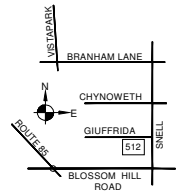
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Summer Reading Celebration: June 16 - August 11

"Get a Clue @ your library" will be the theme of the 2007 Summer Reading Celebration for children from birth through grade 5 at San José Public Library and other Bay Area libraries. A complementary theme, "YNK @ your library," invites concurrent teen participation. The entire family is encouraged to sign up and earn credits together for accumulated minutes of reading starting Saturday, June 16. Credits may be cashed in for a fun prize at any one of five milestones, each representing 6 hours of reading or being read to. For full details, visit: http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/youth/src_info.htm.

For the first time this year, adults can participate independently with their own summer reading program---"Sleuthing @ your library"---which runs through the month of July. Participants submit a form for each completed book to become eligible for weekly prize drawings. Two lucky winners will walk away with a grand prize package at the end of the program, which will include tickets to Winchester Mystery House. Look for further announcements in June at www.sjlibrary.org.

Free activities increase at all San José libraries throughout the summer months providing ample opportunity for fun and relaxation. This year's program includes special performances by P&T Puppet Theatre, Magician Phil Ackerly and Zun Zun, as well as appearances by adult mystery authors.

[(*) Ed. Note: Lorraine L. Oback is the San José Public Library's Marketing Communications Director. She can be reached at (408) 808-2176 or Lorraine.Oback@sjlibrary.org.]

VEP Community Calendar

Thu, May 17 = Bike to Work Day (See County District 4 News article in this newsletter for more info.)

Sat, May 19 @ 8:30 am = City of San Jose Great American Litter Pick Up. Meet at the Vista Park luncheon will follow. (See VEP President's message article in Community Room. Citywide volunteer this newsletter for more info.)

Sat, May 19 @ 11 am - 2 pm = Community College Program Faire at the MLK Library (See article this page for more info.)

Sat, May 19 @ 11 am - 3 pm = 2nd Annual Celebrate Cambrian Festival at the Camden Community Center. (See District 9 News article in this newsletter for more info.)

Tue, May 22 @ 7:30 pm = VEP General Meeting in the Vista Park Community Room. (See page 1.)

Mon, May 28 = VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival.

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~ Greg ~

★ A VEP member ★

Thanks for your feedback

- Marilyn Rodgers and Jeri Arstingstall

One of the best parts of the annual membership drive is reading the comments on your remit envelopes. Here's a sample:

"Keep up the good work" - Enid Darland & Bette Sheldon; Ranjit & Ajanta Ghosh

"Our community is so blessed to have you. Thank you!" - Jeannie Mullins

"We thank you for all you are doing" - Robb & Kit Whitney

"Thank you for the VEP teams' commitment" - Akshay & Pinky Amin

"Thanks for a GREAT organization" - Charles & Cindy Herbert

"Thanks for a very informative newsletter" - Stuart & Kathy Scott

"Thanks for all you do" - Philip & Leslie Bejar; Dan & SuAnn Fehderau; Larry & Darlene Chickos

"Thanks for all of your efforts. You guys DO make a difference" - Mike & Marietta Harris

"We take great pride in our neighborhood – thanks everyone. We are looking better every year" - Marianne Damon & David Pfaff

"Thank you all for the great work you do" - Stacey Steffens

"You are doing a very good job – thank you" - K. Tribes

"Thank you for all you do for our community" - Romeo & Tammy Bilbes; Ruben & Genesee Rubio

"Thank you for a great job!" - Arye & Barb Green

"Great job" - Doug & Teri Slifer

"Thank you for all of the hard work. We hope to be helpful soon." - Jeff & Paula Walters

"Great Newsletter" - Dan & Ronda Rastler

"Dave Fadness – a special thanks to you for all of your hard work. Also thanks to everyone else" - Barbara Erling

Craft sale

-Ginger Cardona

Do you sell your own crafts? Are you looking for a large group of people to sell your crafts to? We are considering the possibility of adding a craft sale at our annual *Memorial Day Parade & Festival* on May 28. Hundreds of your neighbors attend this function at Parkview School.

If you are interested, and only if you sell your own hand-made crafts, please contact me at cardona@sbcglobal.net for more information.

2007 Memorial Day Parade & Festival

-Dave Fadness

VEP's *Memorial Day Parade & Festival* will be held on Monday, May 28. We still need your help to make this event bigger and better than last year.

Here's what we have lined up for our parade and festival:

Fair Middle School Band & Choir.

Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force personnel.

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

Gunderson High School clowns.

Parkview + Carson Choirs.

Oak Grove High School Jazz Band.

Dance Kraze Dancers.

San Jose Police K-9 Unit.

San Jose Police Horse-Mounted Unit.

San Jose Fire Department (tentative).

San Jose Firefighters' BBQ team.

S.J. Sharkie.

America Tae Kwon Do.

DJ music by Mike Lopez.



There will be costume awards, lots of field and booth games for kids, and plenty of refreshments for our crowd. We're also planning to include the sale of homemade crafts (see *Craft sale* article by Ginger Cardona in this newsletter).

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 inexpensively by volunteers from participating public school groups. All proceeds will be shared by the participating school (PTA) organizations.

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

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

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

To help with game/food booth duty and field-event games.

To help clean-up after the event.

To find event sponsors and donors (Safeway has already donated \$500).

Having your help in 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 is willing to add to the fun.

If you or a neighbor has 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.

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. Please don't wait because you think someone else will step forward. For this to be a success, we *really* need your help now.

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

VEP's new website

- Dave Noel

If you haven't seen our website in a while, check it out at www.vepca.net. VEP's Webmaster **Adina Pierce** recently gave our website a new look.

We've finished Branham-Narvaez

-Dave Fadness

The trees we planted on that rainy day last January have been re-fitted with proper irrigation. Because it was so wet and muddy on January 27, we simply stubbed-out irrigation hoses above ground, near the trunk of each tree. Even doing that much was an unpleasant job until the sun began shining.

It was deja-vu all over again on April 14 when our crew of four volunteers headed back to Branham-Narvaez to finish the irrigation job according to original plans. Yes, it rained hard--again!

Enjoying cool but sunny days in the week that followed, our resolute crew undergrounded the irrigation lines and fitted a pair of bubblers in vertical 4-inch perforated pipes, each covered by a grate at ground level. Now each tree has two roughly diametrically opposed bubblers. The irrigation work is done!

VEP thanks these fellows for their dedication and extraordinary gift of time: **Dennis Nitschke**, **Dave Noel**, and **Bob Olsen**. Dennis, Dave, and Bob also worked on January 20, when we did the trenching and laid the initial irrigation lines, and on January 27, when we planted trees and spread two mountains of mulch in a bone-chilling downpour. Thanks to **Aiko**, too, for bringing hot coffee and brunch snacks for our rain-drenched crew of volunteers.

All who worked on that landscaping project deserve a hearty BRAVO! It looks *maaaaveulous*!

Get paid to exercise!

-Dave Fadness

Times Media, Inc. is looking for 1 to 3 reliable walkers to distribute the *Blossom Valley Times* each month in the VEP area. Their newspaper is distributed to approximately 2400 homes here during the second week of each month. Times Media will pay walkers (or donate to VEP) \$75 per thousand newspapers delivered.

Contact **Bill Bellou**, Publisher/CEO, Times Newspaper Group, 1310 Tully Road, Suite 107, San Jose 95122. Telephone: (408) 483-5458. Email: william@timesmediainc.com.

Upcoming Volunteer Events

Unless otherwise specified, be sure to call any VEP officer (listed on mailing page of this newsletter) to find out specifics and/or to volunteer for these events.

- Volunteers are needed to help set-up, assist in booths and games, and clean-up after our 2007 Memorial Day Parade & Festival. The more volunteers we get, the less work each will have to do. Contact Dave Fadness at 578-6428 if you are willing to help lighten our load.
- City of San Jose *Great American Litter Pick Up*. Meet at the Vista Park Community Room at 8:30 am on Saturday, May 19th. Citywide volunteer luncheon will follow event. (See *VEP President's message* article in this newsletter for more information or call Stephanie Holm in Council Member Nancy Pyle's office at (408) 535-4982.)

**Add VEP's website
www.vepca.net
to your "favorites"
Do it today!**

Thank you, volunteers!

- Marilyn Rodgers

It takes a "team" effort to prepare and mail the VEP Newsletter each month. Thanks to the following volunteers who prepared and folded the April newsletter for mailing. In addition, they prepared the "We Miss You" letter mailing, which was sent to members who hadn't yet renewed their memberships.

Pam Rodriguez
Chris Gray
Debra Suydum
Jim Hicks
Josie Supencheck
Marilyn Rodgers

I'd also like to thank our "behind the scenes" volunteers: **Dave Fadness**, Editor and prolific contributor to the Newsletter, **Dave Noel**, Asst. Editor and contributor to the Newsletter, **Jeri Arstingstall**, who manages the VEP membership database and arranges the mailing labels for all membership mailings, **Debra Suydum** who coordinates our newsletter preparation volunteers, and to **Bob Aquino** who delivers the many trays of newsletters to the main San Jose Post Office for special processing and mailing. **Thanks to you all!**



Busy April VEP News mailing preparation volunteers



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VEP's May 5th garage sale

-Dave Noel



We hope you enjoyed VEP's Annual Community Garage Sale on Saturday May 5th.

Did you meet new neighbors, or perhaps recruit new VEP members? Do you have ideas to make it even better next year? Would you like to help us next year?

Ginger Cardona would love to hear your feedback. Contact her at (408) 227-0222 or cardona@sbcglobal.net.



VEP Member Josie Supencheck and her grandson, who sold his bicycle at the VEP garage sale.

VEP Community Service Awards

- Dave Noel and Marilyn Rodgers

At this writing, the VEP Community Service Awards selection committee is reviewing applications and selecting winners. Gunderson and Andrew Hill administrators submitted three candidates per school. VEP President **Marilyn Rodgers** will present a \$1,000 award to one deserving student from each school at their respective senior awards nights (May 30th for Andrew Hill, and June 7th for Gunderson).

We'll announce our winners and selection committee by name in our September newsletter, and we'll include a summary of our winners' community service and college plans.

Many thanks to **Lara Sandora** at Andrew Hill and **Becky Bruni** at Gunderson for administering the nomination process at their respective schools.

Our selection committee was faced with a difficult choice regarding our At-Large category this year. We offer this award to a graduating high school senior who lives in San Jose and is nominated by a VEP member. This was the first year we did not have a restriction requiring at least two nominees in order to grant an award.

This year we received just one At-Large application. Due to some concerns, the selection committee regrettably decided not to award the At-Large category. In accordance with the funding allocation approved by our members at our January general meeting, the unspent \$1,000 will remain in the VEP treasury.

We may consider changes to the VEP Community Service Awards this coming Fall. If you are interested in participating in the committee that will study this, please contact Dave Noel at (408) 266-7183 or DNoel1234@aol.com.

VEP President's message

-Marilyn Rodgers

May is here. When you read this article we will have already celebrated Cinco de Mayo, and VEP's annual neighborhood-wide Garage Sale. We are in the final planning stages of our largest annual event – the VEP Memorial Day Parade and Festival. This is truly a community event, and we hope you will join us!

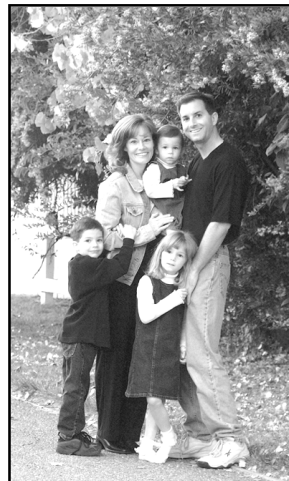
We will hold our Executive Board elections at the May 22nd membership meeting. The slate of candidates for the executive board – some new members, some continuing members – is an exciting one. They are all eager to continue the work and tradition of a well respected and very active community association now in its 38th year!



This past year has been a very busy and exciting one! It's been a year in which all VEP volunteers can be proud of our many accomplishments made on behalf of this great community of ours. For me, it is a time of reflection and some sadness as I make the transition, from President to Immediate Past President. While I will no longer have the honor of serving as your President, I will continue to be active in VEP community activities.

Here are some of VEP's upcoming activities:

- May 19th – join with Councilmember Nancy Pyle, your VEP neighbors and other District 10 residents in the Great American Litter Pickup event. The kickoff for District 10 this year is in our very own Vista Park Community Center, and starts at 8:30 am. Come help pick up litter for two hours, and then enjoy a free luncheon for all volunteers at 11:30 am at the Center for Employment Training (CET) at 701 Vine Street near I-280.
- Be sure to attend the May 22nd VEP general meeting, which starts at 7:30pm at the Vista Park Community Center. This will be a very exciting meeting as it will focus on two topics of great interest to many VEP members – Martial Cottle Park development, and the traffic congestion at Capitol Expressway/Narvaez/Hwy 87. Also come and vote for your new Executive Board.
- May 28th is the VEP Memorial Day Parade and Festival. Over 1000 of our neighbors joined us last year, and this



Precious Moments In Time



Family and Children Portraits



Weddings and Special Events



Photography by *Jeri Arstingstall*

★ VEP MEMBER ★

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year is shaping up to be even more fun and exciting! Don't miss it!

- Just a reminder – VEP does not produce a newsletter during the Summer months, so... if you would like to receive e-mail alerts during the summer, please provide us with your current e-mail address. Your private information is handled in a confidential manner.
- Have an enjoyable and safe Summer!

Recently Changed Your E-mail Address?

-Marilyn Rodgers

If you changed your e-mail address in the last few months, did you remember to include VEP in your notifications? If not, please send us your new e-mail address. In recent membership email communications, we have experienced an increased number of "bounced back" e-mails from addresses that are no longer active. If you haven't received an email from us lately, we probably don't have your correct address.



During the Summer months VEP does not produce a newsletter, so the primary method for us to provide you with updates is through e-mail alerts.

City responds to VEP's traffic questions

-Dave Fadness

In advance of her scheduled presentation at VEP's April 24th meeting, we sent a list of questions to City Council Member **Nancy Pyle**. Unfortunately, the council held a special meeting that night, so Pyle could not attend ours. Standing in were her Chief of Staff **Lee Wilcox** and **Manuel Pineda**, Senior Civil Engineer from the San Jose Department of Transportation.

These were our questions and her responses regarding traffic issues and the city's level of service rating at the Capitol Expressway- Narvaez-northbound Route 87 onramp:

1. When will the City of San Jose change its current traffic level of service (LOS) rating to reflect the actual observed/measured morning peak hour (volume vs. capacity, and delay time) conditions at the intersection of Narvaez and Capitol Expressway and the northbound Route 87 onramp? Will VEP be notified regarding any related public hearings or other opportunities to review and comment on the supporting analyses? Who will notify VEP of the resulting LOS rating?

Response:

The current level of service rating for this area is B.

The City is not proposing to modify the results for the Level of Service (LOS) for the 87/Narvaez intersection. As a rule the City does not manually modify the TRAFFIX results, which are based on actual count data, due to a number of reasons including defensibility and consistency throughout the City.

For the 87/Narvaez intersection, the constraint is not due to insufficient intersection capacity, but due to the metering rates and freeway volumes. Even if modifications to increase capacity at the intersection are implemented, the ramp vol-



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umes still control the flow for certain movements.

As it does everywhere in the City where a signal operates differently than its reported LOS due to non-intersection constraints, any future traffic report will be required to describe the situation. Furthermore, for this specific location City staff would propose to report the Level of Service of the freeway segment adjacent to the metered ramp since the constraint is actually a result of the ramp meter rate and the software used to measure the intersection level-of-service is not the best tool in this circumstance. In addition, the City also is also considering proposing new ramp storage/queuing analysis. A ramp analysis would be more appropriate since it analyzes the capacity constraint in the area.

2. What developments are planned, approved, in the pipeline, or otherwise foreseen in the vicinity of the 87/ Capitol interchange that may be subject to EIRs and/or subject to traffic mitigation fees that could be used to effect traffic relief at the northbound Route 87 onramp at Narvaez Avenue?

Response:

Currently there are no formal land use proposals in the area. However the City has started working with the VTA to master-plan a future interchange (if feasible). If an improvement is identified future projects, including the possible redevelopment of the park and ride lot and a remaining parcel on Communication's Hill could contribute to the mitigation.

3. What other potential resources could the City of San Jose utilize to effect traffic relief at the northbound Route 87 on ramp at Narvaez Avenue?

Response:

Although not currently in the Valley Transportation Plan 2030, if a feasible improvement is identified, the City would work with VTA to identify future funds.

4. Will the City of San Jose work with VTA, Caltrans, MTC, and interested citizens to define, program, and fund a preferred alternative for traffic relief at the northbound Route 87 on ramp at Narvaez Avenue?



Response:

Yes, the City has started exploring alternatives for possible interchange reconstruction at this location and is beginning coordination with VTA.

5. Will our District 10 Council office actively assist in fulfilling these long-standing VEP goals:

- Work to ensure that traffic impacts of any proposed development along the Guadalupe Corridor are fully mitigated; and
- Pursue opportunities for improvements in traffic level of service at the Northbound Route 87 onramp at Narvaez Avenue?

Response:
Yes!

These were our questions and her responses regarding on-going issues along Chynoweth Avenue:

A. Regarding replacement of damaged/destroyed palm trees on Chynoweth, -would the council member provide suggestions as to how to institute an automatic plan for replacement of trees with a goal of completion within 30 days of occurrence? (Case in point, the palm tree destroyed on February 10th, has yet to be replaced.) The current length of time required to replace a tree is of particular concern, given the palm trees provide a safety net (protection from head-on collisions) along this corridor, as well as their esthetic value for the neighborhood.

Response:
Unfortunately the City currently does not have a program that is detailed enough to address the replacement of particular trees in a specific area of the City within a 30 day time-frame. We will be in contact with City Arborist **Ralph Mize** to explore potential options, however given our current budget issues it is unlikely that a new program will be established at this time. My Office will report back to VEP after a final budget it adopted by the Council.

B. What is the timeline and projected date of completion for the previously agreed to addition of marked bicycle lanes (in both directions) on Chynoweth between Pearl and Gaundabert/New World?

Response:
This project is currently scheduled to begin in the next budget cycle. Although it has not been officially scheduled yet, representatives from the Department of Transportation have indicated that they are hoping the project will begin by Summer. My Office will monitor the City's Manager's Proposed Budget to ensure funding for this is included.

Neighborhood scuttlebutt

- Dave Fadness & Dave Noel

Branham Lane widening project: The City has applied for a right-of-entry from the County to do the surveying necessary to develop the preliminary base plans for the Branham Lane and Snell Avenue Widening Projects. These plans will be the basis for the preliminary design and subsequent meetings with the VEP and other stakeholder groups. Ideas from VEP's Branham Wish List will be the agenda for the first neighborhood meeting which will be held this summer.

Chynoweth at Pearl: (See story above.)

Chynoweth palm tree: (See story above.) Update: The palm tree that was hit on February 10th was replaced on ~ May 7th.

Blossom Hill/Almaden Expressway: Think traffic's bad there now? *Whole Foods* is going to build their largest store in Northern California in the space now occupied by *Rite Aid Pharmacy*, located in the southwest quadrant of this notoriously congested intersection. Whole Foods' lease begins March 1, 2008, and plans to open in summer of 2009 after a massive renovation which will include tearing down nearly every store in the west side of the mall.

Route 87-Capitol-Narvaez: Come to our May 22nd general meeting to learn the latest on VTA's proposed high-density housing development with retail in the south park-n-ride lot, as well as a panel discussion on possible solutions to traffic congestion and gridlock in the area.

Our goal is to formulate a local consensus on an acceptable solution and a strategy to obtain funding. With that, we can begin lobbying at regional, state, and federal levels, as will probably be necessary.

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 Fire-fighter! 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 #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.

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Camp Vista

for ages 6 - 11

Help us celebrate the very first Summer Camp at the Vista Park Neighborhood Building! Make new friends and cherished memories at Camp Vista this summer. The veteran staff has gone over and beyond to design a camp that will challenge and entertain your child. Each week will be filled with wacky games, team oriented activities, expressive arts and crafts, and an exciting field trip every Thursday.

Campers are required to provide their own lunch and water everyday. A newsletter, listing the weekly activities and field trip information, will be distributed on the first day of each session.

We want to make this camp enjoyable for you and your child. Please let us know of any special accommodations you may require by contacting Steve Ryan at steve.ryan@sanjoseca.gov or call (408) 268-2048.

If a session reaches capacity, your child will automatically be placed on a waiting list and will be notified should an opening become available.

The Vista Park Community Room is located at 795 Hyde Park Drive.

~ CAMP VISTA SCHEDULE ~

Course No.	Days	Date	Times	Price
252.1.915	M - F	6/18 - 6/29	9 am-3 pm	\$168
252.1.916	M - F	7/ 2 - 7/13	9 am-3 pm	\$152
252.1.917	M - F	7/16 - 7/27	9 am-3 pm	\$168
252.1.918	M - F	7/30 - 8/10	9 am-3 pm	\$168

~ EXTENDED HOURS OPTIONS ~

Course No.	Days	Date	Times	Cost
252.1.921	M - F	6/18 - 6/29	3 - 6 pm	\$50
252.1.922	M - F	7/2 - 7/13	3 - 6 pm	\$45
252.1.923	M - F	7/16 - 7/27	3 - 6 pm	\$50
252.1.924	M - F	7/30 - 8/10	3 - 6 pm	\$50

Registration fees include supervision (10 to 1), arts and crafts supplies, games, activities, field trip admission, bus transportation, and one camp shirt for the summer. No camp on July 4th.

~ CAMP VISTA FIELD TRIPS ~

- 6/21= Bowling and Swimming
- 6/28 = Great America
- 7/5 = Children's Discovery Museum
- 7/12 = Raging Waters
- 7/19 = Morgan Hill Aquatics Center
- 7/26 = Santa Cruz Boardwalk
- 8/2 = Movie and Roller Skate
- 8/9 = Golfland & Waterslides

~ HOW TO REGISTER ~

You may choose to register by mail, drop off, or fax. Make checks payable to the "City of San Jose"

Mail or drop off:	Fax to:
Almaden Community Center Attention: Camp Vista 6445 Camden Avenue San Jose, CA 95120	Almaden Community Center Attention: Camp Vista (408) 997-1222

All refund requests must be made 14 calendar days prior to the first day of the session that you are registered. No exceptions.

What does "VEP" stand for?

"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.

District 9 news

-City Councilmember Judy Chirco

2nd Annual Celebrate Cambrian Festival

The Grand Opening of the Camden Community Center will be celebrated with a Fun Walk and Festival on Saturday, May 19th from 11 am to 3 pm. Business and Community Sponsors are being sought for this great event that raises funds for the Camden Community Centers programs and equipment. Last year's event raised over \$12,000. Sponsorship levels range from \$750 to \$150. For further information please contact Vickie Johnson at 408-369-1842.



The Festival will include a community resource fair, musical entertainment, free children's activities and demonstrations of various classes offered at the center. There will also be the opening of the new public art designed by students at San Jose State University. The art highlights the history of area including the legacy of Camden High School. A free hot dog lunch will be offered. Please come and learn more about what District 9 has to offer as we as have a good time with friends old and new. Camden Community Center is located at 3369 Union Ave. Overflow parking will be accommodated next door at the Campbell Union High School District Office parking lot.

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Gunderson High School happenings

-Cary Catching, Principal

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

It's hard to believe that the 2006-2007 school year is almost at a close. Overall, it has been a successful year for Gunderson. Some of the highlights include:

Our API increased 21 points last year (the 8th largest growth for any high school in Santa Clara County)

Our students scored a 96% pass rate on the district's Foreign Language Challenge Exam

We continue to offer two SAT prep classes a year

Our incoming student enrollment for the 2007-2008 school year is up 15% from 2006-2007... most of which can be attributed to a large freshmen class

After months of construction, the new classroom building is complete and occupied

Project Cornerstone awarded Gunderson the **Caring School Climate Award** – the first award of its kind to any high school in the county



This has been exciting year at Gunderson. We have seen a marked increase in school spirit as demonstrated by some very exciting rallies, increased attendance at all school activities, and a new line of "Grizzly Gear".

We are looking forward to next year as well. For the first time in many years, we anticipate no changes in the administrative team at Gunderson. In addition, at this point, the only teachers leaving Gunderson are those who are retiring (3) or moving out of the area (3).

Thank you for the continued support of our school. The relationship we have with the VEP Community is much appreciated.

Carson Elementary School Update

-Betsy Doss, Principal

The Carson School Choir recently performed for Open House. They sounded great and the students are very excited about the whole VEP Community hearing them sing with Parkview School on Memorial Day.

Students have been working hard to complete their STAR testing during May. When all the results are calculated, Carson is looking forward to reaching their API goal.

As we wind up the school year, PTA and school staff have various volunteer recognitions planned. Carson is so grateful to have so many parent volunteers to help our school.

When we return in August, Carson School will have a new look in the instructional building. Walls are being put up in the open pods over the summer months and our preschool facility will be expanded. It will include a new playground for our youngest students. Measure F funds are paying for some of these improvements.



On a personal note, Irene Shoberg who has

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written these articles for the last several years, is retiring in June. She started volunteering in San Jose Unified in 1977 and became a Carson employee in 1986. We wish her many years of health and happiness in her retirement. We will miss her at Carson, but I'm sure she will become one of our most enthusiastic volunteers!

Oak Grove School District news

-Manny Barbara, Superintendent

We are well into the kindergarten registration process. Please contact your neighborhood school or our District Office for registration information. The Oak Grove School District is proud to be one of just a couple of districts that offers an extended-day kindergarten at all our schools. Wherein the State minimum is 200 instructional minutes, all Oak Grove kindergarten classes offer 260 minutes of daily instruction.

The first day of school for the 2007-2008 school year will be Tuesday, August 28.

Junior Kindergarten: If your child is entering kindergarten in the fall, but would like to consider a preschool option instead, please contact Laurel Olsen, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, at 227-8300, x 270. This option will first be considered for younger students born between September 1 and December 2, and eligible to start kindergarten in the Fall of 2007. We are also considering expanding the age range from July to December 2, depending on the amount of interest we receive. This option would allow students to attend, in essence, a preschool or prekindergarten at no cost, with students then entering regular kindergarten the following year.

Summer School: In addition to summer school classes for students needing additional assistance in reading and math, we plan to offer accelerated mathematics in classes for existing grade 6 and grade 7 students and Language Camps, offering foreign language instruction to Oak Grove students in grades 1 through 8 (incoming 8th graders) who are already proficient or advanced in reading. Information will be sent to Oak Grove families shortly. Summer school will be held from June 27 to July 27 at four different Oak Grove school sites.

On May 24, our Board of Trustees meeting will be dedicated to community input to the 2007-2012 Five-Year Plan priorities. The public meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m., at the District Office, 6578 Santa Teresa Boulevard.

As always, please feel free to contact me any time if you have questions or concerns. Our web site is: www.ogsd.k12.ca.us. You can access all Board policies, dates, agendas and summaries of all Board meetings, and an assortment of other information about the Oak Grove School District.

New registration plan at SeniorNet Willows

-John McCulloch

In an effort to reduce the carbon footprint of its students, SeniorNet Willows is offering computer class registration by mail. Those who send in a Registration Proxy will be accorded the same opportunity to enroll in a class as those who show up in person for class registration on Saturday morning, May 19.

In order to get a Registration Proxy, you have to be on SeniorNet Willows' mailing list. To do this, go to www.snlcsj.org, click on Willows, and then click on Membership. You can also go to the Willows Senior Center office and ask for an application--or call Judy at 364-1430.

The Registration Proxy and your check for tuition must be received by SeniorNet Willows at least two days before registration (by May 17 for the upcoming registration). Until now, Registration Proxies were accepted by mail but they were assigned classes *after* the Saturday registration; this policy has changed to allow both those who show up and mail-in registrations the same opportunity for each class.

If you prefer to register for a computer class in person, come to the Willows Senior Center, 2175 Lincoln Avenue (at Curtner) in San Jose on Saturday morning; 9 am for intermediate classes, or 10:30 am for Introduction to Computer classes. For more information about us, visit our webpage at www.snlcsj.org.

Typical class offerings include: Word Processing, Digital Photography, Photoshop Elements Organizer, Photoshop Elements Editor, E-mail, Best of the Internet, Fun with Google, Buying and Selling on E-bay, File Management, Next Class after Intro., Windows XP, Greeting Cards Plus, and more!

Having more than 240 learning centers nation-wide, SeniorNet is a non-profit organization whose mission to provide computer education and access to people 50 years of age and above.

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VEP's March meeting summary

-Jim Hicks, Secretary

VEP president **Marilyn Rodgers** opened the meeting with a warm welcome.

The meeting started with a brief presentation by **Paul J. Gonzalez** of San Jose's Anti-Litter / Anti-Graffiti program. Paul announced the annual Great American Litter Pickup event to be held on May 19th. He showed the attendees items available for each volunteer, such as trash pick-up sticks, safety gloves, safety vests, and litter bags. This event is fun and allows each volunteer to feel pride in helping to make our neighborhoods litter-free. Please join us Saturday, May 19th at the Vista Park Community Room at 8:30 am. For more information, call (408) 535-3500 or (408) 277-3208.

Next, there was a lively discussion about traffic congestion at the Capitol and Narvaez intersection, and a VTA high-density housing project planned for that location. Councilwoman **Nancy Pyle** was unable to attend, however, her Chief of Staff, **Lee Wilcox** made a brief presentation on the status of recent meetings between the City of San Jose, VTA and CalTrans. He then introduced **Manuel Pineda**, a Sr. Civil Engineer with the San Jose Department of Transportation. Together they addressed a list of prepared questions VEP executives submitted to Councilwoman Pyle's office prior to the meeting.

This segment of the meeting focused mainly on the current Level of Service (LOS) designation of "B" at the Capitol/Narvaez intersection. LOS "B," indicates a "good" flow of traffic. Any driver who has traveled that intersection knows it is not good, so it is important that the city officially recognize that fact in order to set the stage for future improvements.

Mr. Pineda explained that the Levels of Service are rated from "A" to "F." There are 850 intersections in the City and each intersection is rated based on capacity and not traffic flow. Mr. Wilcox will take our concerns to the City, but we were told they could not promise to change the LOS due to high traffic delay times. However, there was agreement to perform a new traffic count in the near future.

Another hot topic was the traffic load getting onto northbound Highway 87 via the Narvaez on-ramp. There is major gridlock during the morning commute. Some conceptual long-term relief-options were discussed, however, more studies are needed to determine the best alternative. The attendees were very concerned about how the City and the transportation agencies will mitigate the traffic congestion resulting from pending construction of retail and living units on the Capitol/Narvaez VTA south park and ride lot. Members were also concerned about preserving the land needed to make traffic improvements.

Lee Wilcox reported that the bike lanes requested on Chynoweth between Pearl and Gaundabert are budgeted and may be started by August this year.

Our next speaker was Ms. **Laurel Godley**, from the San Jose Environmental Services department. She discussed in detail the new recycle-plus rate increases proposed to take effect on July 1st. She invited all of us to attend a public meeting on the rate increase on May 8th in the City Council Chambers. If you have questions, please call Ms. Godley at (408) 975-2517.



VEP past president **Dave Noel**, our Community Service Awards Coordinator, gave us a status of the CSA program and asked for nominees for the At-Large CSA award and volunteers to serve on the selection committee. These awards are based solely on senior student's volunteer contributions to the community and not on grades. For more information, see the CSA article in this newsletter.

The attending membership voted in favor of allowing VEP to make a \$1,000 donation to the Pearl Avenue Library in the name of VEP. To commit funds, this will need to be agendaized and voted on at a subsequent VEP general meeting.

The meeting ended after a brief discussion and results of the annual VEP Goals and Objectives "report card".

The annual membership drive is currently wrapping up. A membership application is printed in this newsletter.

VEP's green gardener

- John Marks (*)

Control Ivy Without Legislation

Recently, Oregon outlawed ivy. Maybe we should too. It's such a pain to get rid of. It grows into yards from the neighbors, and it provides shelter for rats, not to mention squirrels.

You can rid your yard of ivy with a two-step method. In the spring, cut it back as close as you can with a weed mower or rotary mower. When new leaves emerge and grow to almost full size and are still bright green, spray with Finale, an herbicide that will kill it, roots and all. Then you can dig it out or rototill it under.

Bumblebees in the Attic?

You may have seen "bumblebees" going in and out of a vent hole in your attic. Those "bumblebees" are really carpenter bees. They lay eggs in the wood parts (rafters, beams and studs) of the house and their larvae bore tunnels while eating the wood. They do very little structural damage, if any, but can become a noisy nuisance (have you heard buzzing in your ears?).

To get rid of them, plug or cover the entrances/exits you see them using. They are not able to seek new exits, as they are not that intelligent. The larvae will die, and you can unplug the entrance later, but keep a watchful eye for new colonies.

Green Thumb Tip

Parsley increases roses' fragrance, so plant some around your favorite bushes to enhance their sweet smell of success. It works well for your bad breath, too.

Cutting the Grass at the Right Height

Different grasses have different ideal heights, and you should mow to keep the lawn within that optimum range. Cool-season northern grasses, such as Kentucky bluegrass, fescue and ryegrass, grow upright and should be cut higher than southern grasses, like Bermuda and Zoysia, that spread out as they grow. More often than not, homeowners mow too low. There are three good reasons for mow-



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ing higher. First, grass, like all green plants, lives mostly on food manufactured in its leaves. Taller grass produces more food, so it's more vigorous and disease-resistant. Second, the longer the top growth, the deeper the roots. Deep roots are better able to withstand drought and extreme cold. Finally, tall grass shades weed seeds, keeping them from sprouting.

You need to cut cool-season grasses at the top end of the cutting-height range in July and August, because they falter in the heat of summer. Lower the cutting height for these grasses during the cool weather of spring and autumn. And make the last few cuts of the season at the bottom end of the ideal range. This prevents the grass from matting up over the winter, and also makes fall leaf cleanup easier. However, forget the "mow high in summer" advice if you have a lawn of warm-season grass, such as Bermuda, St. Augustine or Zoysia. These grasses love scorching weather. With them, your task is to mow within the optimum range often enough through summer to keep up with their rapid growth. Checking the mowing height of your mower is simple: Mow a swath of lawn and then measure the length of the grass blades from the ground up. Compare that measurement to the recommended mowing heights. If your mower cuts too low or too high, adjust it. *Mow When the Grass Needs It.* For northern grasses, this may mean mowing twice a week in the spring, every two weeks in the summer and once a week in the fall. It's different for warm-season grasses. Typically, they require a cutting once every two weeks in spring and fall, and once a week or more in summer.

On the web

For more gardening information, visit Gardener's Supply Company's website, www.gardeners.com.

[(*) The articles above on ivy and bumblebees were condensed from the San Jose MercuryNews, 4/18/03 and 5/2/03.]

Upcoming gardening tasks...

We won't publish another VEP newsletter until September, so here's your gardening task list for the coming summer months:

MAY

SNAPSHOT: We're in full swing now. Water deeply (don't just sprinkle). Smart buys: sun-loving tomatoes and peppers.

FLOWERS: Plant now: hot-weather annuals such as asters,



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cosmos, marigolds, petunias and portulacas. Pinch azaleas, fuchsias, mandevillas and marguerites for bushier plants. Give roses a good feed.

VEGETABLES: Reseed or transplant seedlings every three weeks for successive harvests of beans, corn and squash. Plant pumpkins, melons, and gourds. Put in extra and designate it for the Good Neighbor Gardens project, where gardeners donate their produce to help out food banks and community centers. For a free starter kit from the Mercury News, call (408) 920-5241.

TO-DO LIST: Build water basins around shrubs, trees and roses to catch every drop, and add mulch to hold in moisture. Plant avocado, citrus, and other tender trees. Watch for snails and slugs; hand-pick, if you can stand it. Otherwise, the safest product on the market is iron phosphate.

JUNE

SNAPSHOT: Gardens should be zooming along by now. Smart buys: shade loving plants, especially coleus, impatiens, and ferns.

FLOWERS: Get instant color from marigolds, verbena, zinnias, dahlias and other hot weather bedding plants. Perennials such as coreopsis, penstemon, salvias, and statice offer height diversity as well as bright shots of color. Add a few that hummingbirds adore: clarkia, hollyhock, morning glory, columbine.



VEGETABLES: Seeds of corn, squash and melons, and transplants of eggplants, peppers and tomatoes thrive in hot weather. Sow more beans (bush or pole), beets, green onions, and radishes. Plant cucumbers, herbs, and zucchini. Add more to your Good Neighbor Garden.

TO-DO LIST: Check roses for rust. Handpick and destroy (don't compost) diseased leaves. A sulfur-based fungicide may help; otherwise, water early in the morning and avoid wetting the foliage. Cut lawns 1- to 2-inches high; mow weekly. Encourage beneficial insects (and cut down on toxic sprays) by planting cosmos, sunflowers, yarrow and lavender. Tend container plants; they need mulch, too.

JULY

SNAPSHOT: Hot, windy, smoggy. Harvest vegetables. Start seeds of cool season vegetables indoors. Irrigate faithfully. Invest in a good garden hose and a watering wand or install drip irrigation. Mulch under trees.

FLOWERS: Freshen things up. It's not too late to put in four-inch pots of annuals such as zinnias, bedding dahlias and marigolds. Add geraniums, chrysanthemums and penstemons. Attract butterflies with some of their favorites: alyssum, coneflowers, cosmos, catmint and larkspur.

VEGETABLES: You know you want to, so go ahead and squeeze in just one more tomato plant. From seed, good bets are fast maturing beans, beets and corn.

TO-DO LIST: Deep-water established trees. Support limbs of apple, peach, pear and plum trees, which should be laden with fruit about now. Control spider mites by spraying the undersides of leaves with insecticidal soap or lightweight horticultural oil. Be alert for signs of tomato russet mite. Stems will take on a bronzy color and leaves will wither at the bottom of plants, moving upward. Spray with wettable sulfur mixed with a spreader-sticker at the first sign of this.

AUGUST

SNAPSHOT: Think you're sweltering? Imagine how your garden feels. Deep soak tree basins once a month, shrubs every two weeks.

FLOWERS: Asters, impatiens, marigolds and zinnias planted now will see you into the fall, color-wise. Perennials that offer long bloom include yarrow, lantana, Mexican bush sage and lavender. Nourish beneficial insects with buddleia, thyme and zinnias.

VEGETABLES: Harvest beans, squash, radishes and lettuce. Harvest corn when the tassels have withered and the kernels are well formed and squirt milky juice when punctured. Plant peas. Fertilize tomatoes. Take out spent vegetables and improve the soil for cold season planting by digging in compost. Start seeds of cool season vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower. Try some cool season tomatoes this year: Look for short season varieties such as Stupice, Polar Baby, Polar Star, Siberian, and Taxi to start from seed for planting in September.

TO-DO LIST: Lawns may be suffering, so keep up with deep watering. Clean up fallen fruit. Feed camellias, azateas, rhododendrons and fuchsias.

SEPTEMBER

SNAPSHOT: Call this the swing shift, when you will be harvesting some of the last-of-summer veggies and planting fall-winter crops. Nurseries are stocking up for the big fall planting season. Smart buys: spring-flowering bulbs.

FLOWERS: Freshen up containers with late summer annuals such as salvia and chrysanthemum. Perk up the planting mix while you're at it. Trim bearded iris foliage. Plant day lilies. Trim roses, feed and water. Check to see that watering basins are intact.

VEGETABLES: Plant broccoli, cauliflower, radishes, beets, spinach, lettuce, peas, and chard. Sow herb seeds or buy herb transplants.

TO-DO LIST: Clean up fallen fruit. Plant new trees, shrubs, ground covers, lawns, perennials and vines. Fertilize lawn about mid month, or roll out new sod. Divide and replant crowded perennials.

[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.net).

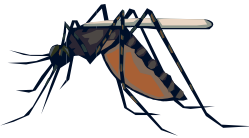


Stomp-out West Nile virus—you can help!

- Dave Fadness

Now that our rainy season is finally coming to an end, be sure to drain or treat all stagnant water sources in your yard. This includes such seemingly innocent, but notorious mosquito breeding areas as birdbaths, flower pots, old tires, etc. Even small sources must be drained, changed, or treated weekly. Even one cup of stagnant water can breed thousands of mosquitoes. Report any stagnant water or mosquito activity, neglected or abandoned swimming or wading pools, hot tubs, or fish ponds to the Santa Clara County Vector Control District at (408) 792-5010.

West Nile virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne disease. It's considered the fastest-moving "vector"-borne disease the U.S. has ever seen. Vectors transmit pathogens from one host to another; in this case, mosquitoes carry the virus from bird to bird, bird to human, and bird to animals (primarily horses).



Who is affected?

Humans and animals, including birds, may all be affected by WNV. People most at risk are the elderly and those who have compromised or weakened immune systems. There is no human vaccine or treatment.

What are the symptoms?

Most people who are infected with the WNV will not experience any type of illness. Mild symptoms include a few days of fever, headache and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body and swollen lymph glands. Severe symptoms include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle

weakness, and paralysis. These may last several weeks, although neurological effects may be permanent. It is estimated that 1 in 150 persons infected with WNV will develop a more severe form of the illness.

How does it spread?

WNV is normally spread through the bite of an infected mosquito.

What can I do to fight West Nile virus?

Target the source: Drain or treat all stagnant water sources (see above).

Report dead birds: If you see recently dead birds--particularly crows, blackbirds, jays, magpies, and raptors such as hawks and owls, report them immediately to (408)792-5010. Do not touch the birds.

Contact SCCVCD at (408)792-5010 if you are experiencing problems with mosquitoes, need a free home and/or yard inspection, or want free mosquito-eating fish for ponds in your yard.

Help Educate the Public: Tell friends and neighbors about this important public health issue and how to avoid it.

To avoid being bitten, wear protective clothing and use an insect repellent containing DEET, particularly at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.

For more information, contact Santa Clara County Vector Control District:

(800) 314-2427 or (408) 792-5010

www.sccvector.org
westnile.ca.gov

Home maintenance

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

~ May ~

TOP JOB: Check furnace filter. Clean or replace if necessary. Do furnace or central air conditioning maintenance recommended by the unit's manufacturer.

ALSO: Clean and prepare swimming pool, pond or fountain. Repair cracks in driveways, walkways and sidewalks. Check that vent screens to attic or crawl space are not damaged. Repair or replace as needed. Remove accumulated mineral deposits from shower heads and aerators by soaking them in or scrubbing with white vinegar. (Wear eye protection.)

~ June ~

TOP JOB: Clean lint from clothes dryer vent, from the dryer drum to where the air is vented outdoors.

ALSO: Repair or replace damaged window screens and weather stripping. Caulk open joints, particularly around windows and doors.

Repair or replace gates, fence posts, landscape borders, etc. Replace worn faucet washers. Clean decks, gazebos, fences and patio furniture.

~ July ~

TOP JOB: Carefully climb on the roof (provided the roofing materials can be walked on) and inspect it or have a qualified roofer do it for you. Look for damage to shakes, shingles or tiles. Inspect anything that protrudes through the roof for rust, open seams or other damage. Be careful.

ALSO: Check exterior walls for cracks, peeling paint or other damage.

Check operation of attic fans and turbine vents. If attic space is accessible, make certain that attic insulation is not blocking



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air flow through vents. While in the attic, check for worn electrical wiring, water damage, loose ducts, etc.

~ August ~

TOP JOB: Clean underside of range hood and clean or replace filters.

ALSO: To possibly eliminate water hammer (a banging noise in pipes), shut off the incoming water to your house. Open the highest and lowest faucets, valves or outdoor faucet, and drain all water from pipes to restore air cushions in the plumbing system.

Clean condenser coils or fins beneath or behind refrigerator according to the manufacturer's instructions. Check to be certain there is adequate airflow around the appliance. Is it time to replace your refrigerator's water filter?

~ September ~

TOP JOB: Inspect water heater for leaks and flush tank. Test temperature and pressure relief (TPR) valve according to the manufacturer's instructions.

ALSO: Paint the inside of your house if needed. Remove and clean "pop-up" drain plugs.

Inspect grout around sinks, tubs and showers. Repair or replace damaged areas.

Clean patio furniture and prepare for winter storage. Protect metal.

~ 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.

Distractions, speed blamed in S.J. road deaths

-Gary Richards (*)

The first 3-1/2 months of the year have been especially deadly on South Bay freeways and San Jose streets, with 26 drivers, passengers and pedestrians killed in car crashes.

Police are blaming dis-tracted motorists, careless pedestrians and speeding drivers--often not wearing seat belts--for the numbers, which are nearly twice as many as the same period last year. This has occurred despite a dry winter, an early start to daylight-savings time, and an intense crackdown by the Highway Patrol in Santa Clara County, factors that usually lead to fewer road deaths and injuries.

Sixteen deaths occurred on San Jose streets. Ten occurred on highways in the greater San Jose area. In at least two cases, police suspect pedestrians were listening to iPods, and at least one driver was fiddling with his radio. If this pace continues, the body count for 2007 would far exceed last year's 53 deaths and top the total for each of the past seven years.

"You look at gender, age, urban vs. rural, and there's one thing most common," said Lt. John Carr, commander of the San Jose Police Department's traffic investigations unit. "The attention of people is occupied by something--iPods, the cell phone, a TV on the inside of the navigator, the stereo. We've become so obsessed with doing things like text-messaging while driving or walking in a crosswalk. Everything is so focused inward that when we go out there to drive or walk, people have lost that basic instinct--to stop, look and listen."

This trend runs counter to what is happening statewide, where highway deaths fell nine percent in 2006, the biggest drop in fourteen years. Yet deaths on Bay Area freeways rose nine percent last year.

In nearly a dozen instances, drivers were going too fast, and of those, half weren't buckled up.

The dangers of driving while distracted have gained nationwide attention, after a study last year by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found it to be a leading cause in nearly eight of ten collisions or near-crashes. In a national survey, three of four motorists admitted to being distracted behind the wheel.

Cell phones aren't the only concern. Instead of concentrating on driving, motorists are often seen typing into Blackberries and other phones or handheld computers and reading the screens on their PDAs.

Two months ago in Yuba City, a driver was killed while apparently using his laptop computer. He crossed into oncoming traffic and collided with a Hummer. The dead man's computer was still running and plugged into the cigarette lighter of his Honda Accord when police arrived.

In Westminister last fall, a 7-year-old boy was struck and killed by an SUV whose driver lost control as he was trying to reach a cell phone and plowed into a bus stop. And last summer a spilled cup of coffee is believed to have caused a fatal head-on collision on Highway 121 in Sonoma County.

The fear is that crashes and deaths caused by distraction are only going to rise.

Vermont, Texas and Maryland are among states considering bans on eating, drinking, smoking, reading and writing while

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driving. California will require drivers to use hands-free phone devices beginning July 1, 2008.

Police say none of this year's deaths in the South Bay appear to have involved the use of a cell phone. But they believe that may be more luck than anything. For when they are at a scene involving a fatality, there is one constant sound they hear: A ringing cell phone, coming from the pocket or car of the dead.

[(*)Ed. Note: This story was adapted with permission from a 4/24/07 Mercury-News article by Gary Richards. Contact him at mrroadshow@mercurynews.com or (408) 920-5335.]

Weekend fun and volunteering

Imagine a weekend camping in a beautiful place without having to make the reservations yourself, and without having to worry about food cooking or packing. Now, add the satisfaction of a great workout and making a lasting contribution.

Volunteers for Outdoor California (V-O-Cal) engages the community to build and maintain trails and restore natural habitat. We work in partnership with public agencies other non-profit organizations and conduct large-scale weekend volunteer stewardship projects all over Northern California. The two projects below each need 250 volunteers:

June 2-3, 2007

Muir Heritage Land Trust - Sky Ranch, Martinez

August 11-12, 2007

Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park Felton

For more info, call (650) 298-9774 or visit www.v-o-cal.org.

** 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 _____

Mail your \$20 check to VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose 95158. Thank you!

Gunderson High School

Theatre Program

proudly presents



ONE ACT PLAY FESTIVAL

All Gunderson Drama students perform in an evening of one act plays.

MAY 31, 2007

7:30 pm

\$5 GENERAL ADMISSION

FOR MORE INFORMATION about the GHS Theatre Program

or to see how you can help, log on to:

<http://gunderson.sjusd.org/%7Edrama/index.html>

<http://gunderson.sjusd.org/%7ebuttrill/>



Bulletin Board Ads

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.

POTTED CANA LILLIES: Free. Call John @ (408) 629-6433.

To submit a Bulletin Board ad, send your name, phone number, up to (4) lines of text, and payment (if applicable) to the address below. Free ads may be submitted by email to drfadness@sbcglobal.net.

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 15 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.
5. The VEP Executive Board reserves exclusive right to refuse any ad for any reason. VEP does not certify nor is it responsible in any way for the claims, goods, or services of any advertisers.

THE VEP NEWS



VEP Community Association

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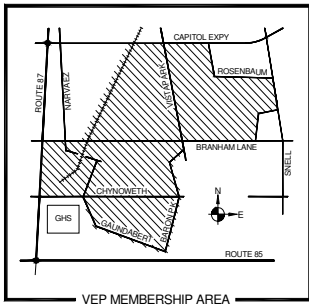
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Check our website: www.vepca.net

Community Room

Vista Park

7:30 pm in the

Be sure to attend
VEP's
May 22nd Meeting