

determined that a retention period of seven years will meet 501(c)3 requirements.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS: Members were concerned that the proposed changes would reduce support of our local schools and students in our membership area.

The existing By-Laws specify separate awards in three categories: Gunderson students, Andrew Hill students, and "At-Large" students. At-Large students must live in San Jose and be nominated by a VEP member.

In September we proposed to expand the number of sources from which we would solicit nominations, and then pool the applicants. We would grant awards to the top "n" students, where "n" is defined in the annual proposal to members at the January general meeting.

For the November general meeting, we have modified the September proposal by eliminating the additional nomination sources, and reducing eligibility for the current At-Large category to students who live in the VEP area, or are children of VEP members and live in San Jose. The new proposal still pools the applicants and grants "n" awards. At the current annual budget of \$2,000, this would most likely mean two awards.

Both the September and November proposals address the following issues with the existing By-Laws. The At-Large category is difficult to manage and budget for, since the number of applicants is unpredictable, often zero or one. We've often had 2nd place winners in one category with better qualifications than the 1st place winner in another category. Finally, our program budget in recent years lends itself best to one or two awards, but we have three categories.

The following text represents the proposed November 25th By-Laws amendment, shown as changes to the September 23rd proposed amendment, with additions shown in Italics, and deletions shown in strikeouts.

ARTICLE XV FUNDS

A) All funds will be kept in one or more federally insured banks in the name of the Association.

B) *All expenditures must be pre-authorized.* ~~All checks for authorized expenditures~~ must be signed by either the President, Vice President, or Treasurer. A sufficiently detailed reimbursement request form and receipt(s) must be submitted prior to payment, and all such forms must be made available for review at the next scheduled Board meeting.

C) The President may authorize any legitimate VEP expenditure up to \$100. Expenditures between \$100 and \$500 may be authorized by the Board of Directors. However, no Board Director may authorize an expense from which he or she directly benefits. Any expenditures in excess of \$500 or from which a Board Director directly benefits must be agendized and approved by a majority vote of members present at a general membership meeting.

D) Bonding of Board Directors is authorized if the association feels it is warranted.

E) Treasurer's records shall be audited by an Audit Committee, as outlined in Article XIV.D.

F) Treasurer's records shall be retained for a minimum of ~~three~~ *seven* years after approval of the applicable Termination Audit. (Ref: Article XIV.D.)

G) In the event that VEP should ever be dissolved, all funds remaining after paying legitimate creditors shall be donated to a non-sectarian, community services charity that is recognized by the IRS as a non-profit organization designated at that time by the Board of Directors and/or VEP membership.

ARTICLE XVII ANNUAL VEP COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

A. The Board of Directors shall annually propose a service award program for membership approval which *may* reward at least one graduating high school student nominated for their outstanding volunteer *community* service ~~to our community~~.

B. Nominees shall be sought from VEP members, *and* from the principal or the principals' designee from *Gunderson High School and Andrew Hill High School at least one local high school*, ~~and/or from recognized non-profit service organization(s) in our area~~. Awards will be granted without consideration of a nominee's scholarship, VEP membership, or residence area, except that the nominees must *either attend Gunderson High School, attend Andrew Hill High School, reside in the VEP membership area, or be the child of a VEP member and a VEP member family* reside in San Jose, California. Awards need not be granted each year.

C. Nominations must include certification signed by an administrator of the nominee's high school that the nominee is a graduating senior.

D. Home schooled nominees must be certified to be the equivalent of a graduating high school senior by a tutor credentialed to teach in the state of California, or by an administrator of the school in which the nominee is enrolled as an independent study student.

E. Other selection criteria may be imposed as part of the annual proposal approved by VEP members.

F. The VEP President shall appoint an impartial Selection Committee to whom lists of nominees' qualifications are presented. Nominees' names and other identifying features shall be removed from lists of qualifications given to the Selection Committee. This Committee shall be comprised of at least three (3) VEP members in good standing, none of whom know the identities of nominees. Decisions of this Selection Committee are final.

G. The amount of the annual Community Service Award appropriation will be generous but consistent with responsible fiscal planning and be specified in the annual *Operating Budget* proposal to VEP Community Association members. ~~The funding source(s) for the award shall also be specified in the proposal.~~ The annual Service Award appropriation will be divided by the number of awards approved. Each award winner will receive an equal share. If fewer than the number of authorized awardees are selected, the remaining part of the appropriation will be returned to the VEP general fund.

H. Awardees must claim their monetary awards in writing to VEP, showing evidence of registration in an accredited post-secondary education or training program, and must use the award within two (2) years after the award date.

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VEP's October General Meeting--Election Forum

By Dave Noel

VEP's October 28th meeting was an Election forum co-sponsored by VEP, Almaden Valley Community Association and Santa Teresa Foothills Neighborhood Association. We covered six ballot issues from the November 4th general election.

Our event coordinators were **Dave Noel** and **Dave Fadness**. Our moderator was **Art Boudreault**, president of AVCA. Art prepared an excellent PowerPoint presentation to present the ground rules, introduce the speakers, and display ballot text for the propositions as they were being debated. Assisting Art with the visuals was AVCA member **Mike Boulland**, who is also president of **Friends of Santa Teresa Park**.

On hand representing STFNA was their president **Matt Freeman**.

We were fortunate to hold the event in Gunderson's beautiful theatre, with special thanks to Gunderson's principal **Cary Catching**, teacher and drama director **Trish Buttrill**. Trish helped us plan the facility and technical arrangements, and drama student technical assistants **Kim Hunter**, **Dylan Baker** and **Kenny Faulcon** provided excellent support at the event.

We also thank our excellent speakers:

Measure B: 1/8-cent sales tax for BART

Peter Skinner*, Proponent

Greg Perry, Opponent

Measures C & D: VTA transportation plan approval,
and change from citizen to VTA committee review

Charlotte Powers, Proponent

Greg Perry, Opponent

Measures J & K: San Jose 9-1-1 System Access Fee,
and telecommunications Users Tax

Lee Wilcox, Proponent

Brian Darby, Opponent

Proposition 11: California redistricting constitutional
amendment

Herb Engstrom, Proponent

Darcie Green, Opponent

* Peter Skinner replaced Bob Hines, who could not attend.

Results on Measures and Propositions discussed.

Not Called* - Measure B: 1/8-cent sales tax for BART
Passed - Measures C: VTA transportation plan approval,
Passed - Measures D: Change from citizen to VTA committee review
Passed - Measures J: San Jose 9-1-1 System Access Fee,
Passed - Measures K: telecommunications Users Tax
Passed - Proposition 11: California redistricting constitutional amendment

*Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters has not determined an outcome pending final counting by Dec 4.

VEP helps you solve community problems

Community Service Awards

By Dave Noel

Since 1975, VEP has been rewarding graduating high school seniors for their exceptional volunteer service with stipends for post-secondary or vocational training.



At our November 25th general meeting, we'll present a proposal for changing our By-Laws that would result in fundamental changes to our Community Service Awards program. See the Constitution and Bylaws article in this newsletter for more information.

At our January 27th general meeting, we'll present a specific proposal for the 2009 Community Service Awards for your approval. Nominations will be solicited in February and March, with applications due in late April, and we'll grant our award(s) in late May/early June.

If you know a high school senior with an outstanding volunteer record, please make sure he or she knows about our award.

For more information about the Community Service Awards, contact me at DNOEL1234@aol.com or 266-7183.



Wesley W. Terrell

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Appointing New VEP Board of Directors Members

By Joe Tajnai and Marilyn Rodgers

VEP has a new Board of Directors structure. As described in the September Newsletter and passed by the membership at the September general meeting, the VEP Constitution and Bylaws was changed to provide for a 7-member Board. For this current year, the Board has a sitting President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Editor. The expansion of the board of directors was to provide additional opportunities for members to join the board without pre-specified duties. Two additional Director positions now need to be filled.

At the January 5th Board of Directors Meeting, the Board will appoint two members to fill the open positions. Would you like to learn more about VEP, or be more involved with your community association? Or possibly you have an idea or a burning issue you would like to see VEP work on.....this is your opportunity!! If you would like additional information, please contact **Joe Tajnai** at 408/578-5882 or vcp@tajnai.com, or contact any current board member. We look forward to seeing you January 5th starting at 7:30pm in the Vista Park Community Room!

Do Not Call List

By Dave Noel

If you'd like to cut down on calls from telemarketers, you can register with the national Do Not Call registry. You can list all your phone numbers, including cell phones. Your phone number will remain on the registry permanently unless you choose to take it off the registry or your phone number is disconnected. There is no charge for this service.

To sign up, or to check whether you already have, visit www.donotcall.gov or call toll free 1-888-382-1222.

Editorial Note –Corrections from October 2008 Newsletter

By Susan Iverson

- ◆ My apologizes to **Wesley Terrell** for inadvertently failing to include his Century 21 advertisement. Wesley has been a long time supporter and faithful advertiser with VEP.
- ◆ An incorrect number was given for Master Composting classes that will begin in January. The correct number is 408-918-4640 and applications to attend the 10-week long training will be available at www.ReduceWaste.org in early December.




Precious Moments In Time

Family and Children Portraits

Weddings and Special Events

Photography by Jeri Arstingstall
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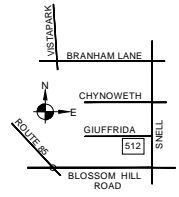
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SeniorNet Willows Receives Honor from National Organization

SeniorNet, the nation's leading technology educator of older adults, today announced the recipient of its annual Chairman's Award, a program designed to recognize SeniorNet Learning Centers that have demonstrated exceptional work in bringing technology access and education to older adults (that's people over 50 years). The recipient of this honor for 2008 is the SeniorNet Willows Learning Center in San Jose, Ca.

The SeniorNet Board of Directors made the selection based on the following criteria: innovative teaching/sharing methods, community outreach, Learning Center growth/sustainability planning, and participation in the national organization's activities from among the 130 learning centers across the nation.

The Willows SeniorNet Learning Center is consistently among those centers with the largest membership in the country. The SeniorNet Board of Directors was especially impressed with the dedicated leadership team and the high level of professionalism of its staff. Both the website (SNLCSJ.ORG) and the class registration exemplify a well-organized, efficient operation according to **Kristin Fabos**, SeniorNet Executive Director. In addition, Fabos cited the monthly "Windows in the Willows" forum that features local high technology corporations in Silicon Valley as well as local elected representatives.

SeniorNet Executive Director, **Kristin Fabos** presented the award to Jerry White, Willows Membership Coordinator. Along with a plaque the group received a grant of \$1000 to upgrade hardware or software.



Vista Park Community Room Beautification

By Dave Fadness, Vista Project Coordinator

On Saturday, October 18, VEP and Our City Forest (OCF) volunteers joined forces with San Jose Parks Department (PRNS) personnel to landscape areas around the front of the Vista Park community room. It was a very successful collaborative effort, taking only seven hours to complete phase one of a more comprehensive plan that will hopefully be finished next year.

Planning for this project began in early spring. Working with a small VEP committee and **Kathy Sutherland** (Councilwoman **Nancy Pyle's** office), PRNS developed an overall landscaping plan. They then installed irrigation and walkways, and arranged to have the old (and very ugly) dumpster cage and PG&E transformers removed. PRNS plans to build an attractive, permanent enclosure for the dumpster cage near the west end of the parking lot. That will happen soon.



VEP combined San Jose Beautiful grant money and a generous gift of trees from OCF to supplement city funds to buy planting materials and decorative boulders. In all, more than 45 volunteers participated in planning and implementing this project.

Starting the week before planting day, VEP volunteers helped to unload and place the boulders and prepare for planting. They also watered planting sites to soften the soil.

Here's what our team accomplished in seven hours on 10/18: we planted and staked five Chinese Flame trees, two Silk trees, two Crape Myrtle trees, six Manzanita *Howard McMinn*



shrubs, thirty-four *Manzanita Emerald Carpet* shrubs, eight Wild Lilac *Yankee Point* shrubs, 1600 *Gazania* plants, and 250 daffodils. We also added a new line to and repaired the irrigation system, and spread about forty yards of decorative mulch.

We give our heartfelt thanks to the following people who gave a Saturday to make our community a better, more attractive place in which to live:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jessica Aldama | Nathan Pare |
| Sergio Baez | Dave Pfaff |
| Gil Bashan, OCF | Adina, Juliana, & Kevin |
| Phil Bejar (Vista Project | Pierce |
| Committee member) | Sam Reeves |
| Mike & Sandy Bousman | Chrissy Rivera, OCF |
| Helen Castillo | Marilyn Rodgers |
| Daniel Chau | Dave Saxton, OCF |
| Marianne Dannon | Kimberly Soria |
| Angela Dube, OCF | Irving Sosa |
| Aiko Fadness | Clay Sperry (Vista Project |
| An Ha | Committee member) |
| Marietta Harris | Josie Supencheck |
| Jim Hicks | Kathy Sutherland |
| Jeff Ismail | (Councilwoman Pyle's |
| Susan Iverson | office) |
| Bill Johnson | Debra Suydam |
| Dan Kelley, John, and | Joe Tajnai (Vista Project |
| Roy; the PRNS crew | Committee member) |
| Frank Kistler | Nancy, Katy, & Mindy |
| Laura Lamas | Tajnai |
| Chris Marguerra | Joshua Valladares |
| Shaneatra Nance | Mike Wharten, PRNS |
| Dave Noel (Vista Project | Kippe San Jose College |
| Committee member) | High School |



Special thanks to **Starbucks** (605 W. Capitol, at Home Depot) for donating morning coffee and to **Turner Construction Company** for donating a pizza lunch for our volunteers.

Editors Note : The following article was submitted for publication in the October Newsletter and was inadvertently left out.

Correction: Taxpayer lawsuit against OSA

By Greg West

The September, 2008, edition of the VEP News incorrectly reported that the State Supreme Court ruled against the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority's property assessment taxes, and that the OSA was ordered to refund all collected assessments to taxpayers. According to Open Space Authority General Manager, Patrick Congdon, the Court ruled that the OSA refund only District 2 assessments to tax payers. You will notice the impact on your 2008-09 property tax bill. Line 990 of your 2007-08 bill listed "OPENSOURCE DISTRICTS". Your 2008-09 bill lists "SCCOSA ASMT DIST 1" reflecting the removal of Assessment District 2.



According to the OSA's web site, "The primary goal of the Open Space Authority is the preservation of undeveloped land in its natural state." As you look around the valley, you can see the impact of the OSA as you appreciate some of the undeveloped hillsides that the OSA has put into public trust. The OSA has also had a significant and direct positive impact on the VEP neighborhood. According to the County Parks and Recreation Department Director, **Lisa Killough**, the OSA chipped in \$150,000 in support of the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan.

Greg West is a long time VEP member and a member of the County Parks and Recreation Commission representing the South County including the VEP neighborhood

Update: Taxpayer lawsuit against OSA

By Dave Fadness

As reported in our September newsletter, the *Silicon Valley Taxpayers Association* (SVTA) prevailed in their State Supreme Court appeal against a 2001 property tax assessment by the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (OSA).

The State Supreme Court found those taxes to be unconstitutional and ordered OSA to refund to taxpayers all collected funds over and above their \$12 per annum assessment (see line 990 on your Secured Property Tax Bill). Details of how those



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refunds will be distributed are now being negotiated in mediation by the two parties.

Property owners will continue to pay the \$12 per year assessment imposed in 1994 on single family parcel--and multiples of that sum for apartments and businesses. That tax was not challenged in SVTA's lawsuit.

Their lawsuit was over OSA's second assessment, imposed in December 2001 on 314,000 parcels of real estate at the rate of \$20 per single family parcel. Higher amounts were imposed for apartments and businesses. An annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) escalator was included to account for inflation. Those assessments have yielded \$8- to \$9-million per year for OSA's open space budget and have been renewed annually from 2002 to 2007.

SVTA's lawsuit was not about open space. It was based upon Proposition 218 (California Constitution, Article XIII D), challenging the legality of OSA's tax and the manner in which it was imposed.

Passed by voters in 1996, Proposition 218 limited local government's ability to impose real property assessments in two significant ways. An assessment can be imposed only for a "special benefit" conferred on real property and the assessment on any parcel must be in proportion to the special benefit conferred on the particular parcel.

This suit was based upon two fundamental issues:

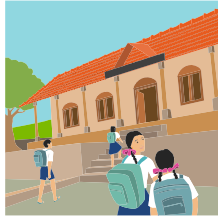
1. OSA's property owner balloting process violated constitutional and statutory requirements.
2. OSA's assessment violated Proposition 218 because: (a) it was a mere spending budget not based on the cost of a public improvement; (b) it conferred no special benefit on assessed parcels and failed to separate general benefit; and (c) its levy was disproportionate to benefits accruing to parcels.

Negotiating how refunds will be distributed may take a year or more. Watch your mail for a notice and instructions on how to claim your share of the OSA assessments struck down by the Supreme Court.

Add VEP's website www.vepca.net to your "favorites"

Oak Grove Community School District

By Manny Barbara, Superintendent - Oak Grove School District



Thank you, Oak Grove Community! On Election Day, Measure S, our \$125 million bond measure, passed overwhelmingly with 74.2% of the vote. Your support will ensure that our Oak Grove schools will be safe and properly maintained for years to come. Basic maintenance such as roofs, seismic retrofitting, painting, bathrooms, playgrounds, and grounds will now continue. Furthermore, our intermediate schools will have new gymnasium/theater complexes for not only students, but community use as well. Details on anticipated building projects can be accessed through our web site at www.ogsd.k12.ca.us.

Over the years, we have been very fortunate to have a dedicated Board of Trustees providing superior governance for our district. After over 17 years on our Board of Trustees, **Jacquelyn Adams** will be stepping down. Mrs. Adams was first appointed to the Board of Trustees in 1991 to fill a vacant position and re-elected as a trustee four times. We thank Jackie Adams for her years of service to the Oak Grove community.

Mary Noel was elected to serve on the Board of Trustees replacing Mrs. Adams and will be sworn in at the December 11th regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Congratulations to Special Education Teacher at Oak Ridge School **Merle Sweet** who was selected as the Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Year. **Ms. Sweet** has served in the Oak Grove School District for 19 years. We are proud of her selection for this special award.

As always, please feel free to contact me regarding any matters pertaining to the Oak Grove School District.
email: superintendent@ogsd.k12.ca.us Phone: (408) 227-8300 ext. 202

Youth Guide on Police, Safety, and Crime is now available

By Councilmember Pyle

The city's Independent Police Auditor has created a Student's Guide to Police Practices to explain basic police practices, important legal issues, and laws that affect young people in San José. New sections discuss issues including gang violence, hate crimes, internet safety, dating abuse and suggestions on what to do (and NOT do) if stopped by a police officer. The guide may be downloaded in English, Spanish, or Vietnamese at www.sanjoseca.gov/IPA. Please call the Independent Police Auditor's office at (408) 794-6226 to get a printed copy or CD. You may also request a presentation for your school, church, community group, or local agency. 15,000 copies of the guide have been printed and 4500 are available on CD. In order to make this information available to even more students, I have challenged the Mayor and Council to donate money from their budgets to create additional CD copies of the guide.



Gunderson High School Happenings

By Cary Catching

I am pleased to share with our community some of the exciting events that are happening at Gunderson High School this year.

Gunderson's Homecoming activities were a rousing success! The students did a fabulous job of planning various school-wide activities, including spirit week events, day and evening rallies and a dance. On top of all that, we defeated a strong competitor in Del Mar High School. The event was extra special as we were able to hold it at night, under our newly installed lights. We hope that our VEP neighbors were able to join us and enjoyed the festivities.

Another source of pride this month is that senior student, **Sanjay Heera**, was named Student of The Year by the Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce. He was selected for this honor by his peers, because of his diligence in attending the monthly workshops, his insights and thoughtful reflections regarding his experiences in the San Jose Leadership Academy. Sanjay was honored at the Chamber's annual Legends and Leaders Banquet at the Fairmont Hotel in October. Congratulations Sanjay!

Finally, as the calendar year draws to a close, we will be gearing up for our recruitment activities for the 2008-2009 school year. Our goal is to continue to increase our enrollment and educate the community about the good works taking place at our school. We will have a more detailed description of these activities next month. However, if you would like to be included on our mailing list, please contact Principal Cary Catching at 535-6340 or e-mail cary_catching@sjusd.org

Proposal to Train Community Volunteers to Supplement Paid Crossing Guards

By Councilmember Pyle

Some of the most dangerous pedestrian and bicycle traffic occur during the morning and afternoon drop off period around neighborhood schools. The city provides crossing guards for the most dangerous intersections in the city. Unfortunately, financial and recruitment barriers have prevented the city from staffing all school intersections with paid guards.



In order to expand the number of trained adult crossing guards in the City, **Councilmember Pyle** has proposed to the Rules Committee we create a program to recruit and train volunteers from schools, senior organizations and churches to serve as crossing guards at a school of their choice to supplement the paid guard program. Many people would like to serve as crossing guards but are unable to commit to serving in the position five days per week two times per day. This program would provide the opportunity for community to volunteer to enhance safety and promote the health of young people by encouraging them to walk to school.

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**No Drugs Down the Drain Week -
Drop Off at Camden A Success**

By Councilmember Judy Chirco



I am happy to report that over 100 Cambrian residents participated in the State-wide "No Drugs Down the Drain Week" in October. They dropped off 335 pounds of unwanted medicines to the site at the Camden Community Center during this half day event. Our site was one of six free collection event in San Jose to remind the public to dispose of leftover or expired medications safely – not to flush them down the toilet. The total pharmaceuticals collected for the week in San Jose was 1,695 pounds according to the City's Office of Environmental Services who coordinated the campaign.

Flushing drugs down sinks or toilets are a harmful act to the environment and human health. While wastewater from indoor plumbing is treated to meet strict regulatory standards before being discharged to our Bay, the treatment plant cannot filter or neutralize medicinal ingredients. Even low levels of drugs can have negative effects on the health and reproduction of marine life. The landmark 2002 U.S. Geological Survey study found that 80 percent of streams sampled contained drugs, including steroids and reproductive hormones. While it is important to take medicines as needed, we can help keep unwanted drugs out of our wastewater.

If you still have medicine that needs to be disposed of safely, here are three other options for Safe Drug Disposal: visit ask if your pharmacy accepts unwanted medicines, or visit www.baywise.org for locations that will accept them; make an appointment with the County Household Hazardous Waste Program online at www.hhw.org or by phone at (408) 299-7300 to dispose of medicines, sharps, and mercury thermometers along with other household chemicals such as paint, auto fluids, batteries, pesticides, cleaners, etc.

Don't Get Stuck with Your Sharps –Dispose of them properly

Home-generated sharps are **needles, syringes, and lancets** that assist people, who manage an illness at home. When sharps are improperly disposed of they pose a health threat to sanitation workers, adults, children, and even pets with needle-stick injuries. Because of the high risk to the community and environment, Senate Bill 1305 was passed and took effect September 1, 2008. This law makes it illegal to place home-generated sharps in the trash or recyclable containers. **Properly and safely dispose of your sharps – Here's how:**

Pharmacies, Doctor's Offices, or Clinics: Place your used

home-generated sharps in an approved sharps container and contact your pharmacist, clinic administrator, or personal physician, and ask if they have a take-back program in place.

Mail Back Services: If you purchase sharps on-line, please remember to request a pre-addressed, prepaid mail-back box for your used sharps. A list of mail back services approved by the California Department of Public Health can be found at the following website: www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/medicalwaste.

The Countywide Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program: The HHW Program accepts home-generated sharps and other household hazardous waste from Santa Clara County residents (except Palo Alto residents). For more information on pharmacies and other locations that accept used home-generated sharps or to make an appointment to dispose of your sharps, visit www.hhw.org or call **408-299-7300**. Remember, residents **must** place their used sharps in an approved sharps container.

Definition of approved containers: A rigid, puncture resistant, unbreakable, leak resistant, container and have a tightly sealed lid and labeled "Sharps Waste" or with the international biohazard label.

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA, HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW) PROGRAM

Deposit used home-generated sharps into an approved sharps container, when the container is ¾ full permanently seal shut and make an appointment through our website at www.hhw.org or call **(408) 299-7300**

Drop off locations for Sharps Waste

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Kaiser Permanente- Campbell
Medical Offices,
220 E. Hacienda Avenue,
Campbell
(408) 871-6500
(Kaiser Members only)

Kaiser Permanente- San
Jose- 250 Hospital Parkway,
San Jose (408) 972-3000
(Kaiser Members only)

Santa Clara Drug-
2453 Forest Avenue,
San Jose (408) 296-5015

SAN JOSE

Evergreen Dialysis- 2240
Tully Rd, San Jose
(408) 238-9100 (Patients
only)

Santa Clara Valley Medical
Center-
751 S. Bascom Avenue,
San Jose (408) 885-5000

Good Samaritan Hospital-
2425 Samaritan Drive, San
Jose (408) 559-2011
(Sharps bin is near bus stop
by Samaritan Drive)

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CRIME STOPPERS

Vistapark Sand Lot Update

By Joe Tajnai

Art Rosales of the Parks Department has confirmed that there is a policy in place to remove sand features from all city parks. This changeover at Vista was set to take place when fibar material is added to the rest of the play areas. However, due to VEP asking that the sand at Vista Park stay in-place, an exception will be made and the sand will be left at Vista Park. Eventually Vista Park may be the only park in the city with a sand feature! Mr. Rosales did ask that a few VEP members help out by sweeping the sand back into the box occasionally. Please let VEP know if you are willing to help out with sweeping the area every week or so.



Get your name in the Pearl Avenue Library

By Dave Fadness

Although the grand opening ceremony was held on August 9 for our new Pearl Avenue Branch Library, you can still get your name, your family name, or your business name on Pearl's *Community Donor Wall*; all it takes is a donation of \$100 or more.



Your tax-deductible donation will be used first to complete the new facility and then for equipment and library materials as they become needed in coming years.

To donate, ask at the library for a donation form. You can also get forms and/or donate directly online at www.sjplf.org. If you don't have internet access, call **Mary McLane** during normal business hours at (408) 808-2174 for a form and answers to any questions. I, too, will be happy to help with anything you need—call me at (408) 578-6428 or email at drfadness@sbcglobal.net.

Donations can be made by check or credit card. They can be one-time, or spread out conveniently over one or more years in the form of a pledge. Be sure to specify that your donation is for the Pearl Avenue Library.

No gift is too small. Donations of \$100 or more are acknowledged on Pearl's *Community Donor Wall*. Gifts of \$1000 to \$4999 are recognized on a *Legacy Donor Wall*; those over \$5000 get *Laureate Donor Wall* listing.

Do it as soon as possible—before the permanent Donor Wall plaques are ordered. This is a one-time-only opportunity. We'd love to see your name listed among the hundreds of community members who have generously donated.

Recycling – Supersize It

By Dave Noel

Do you often have more green waste than will fit in your green waste container, or bulky recyclables that won't quite fit in your recycle container? There is no charge to upgrade to a larger size for either of these containers.



Recyclables and green waste containers are available in 32, 64 and 96 gallon sizes. Green waste containers cost \$4 per month regardless of size. For more information, call the number on your garbage bill, or call the city help line at (408) 535-3500.

Get a Free Tree from Our City Forest & PG&E

By Our City Forest

PG&E, in partnership with Our City Forest, is sponsoring a pilot yard tree planting program for San José residents. "Shade & Save" is designed to conserve energy and save money on summer cooling bills.



You Qualify if:

You are a San Jose resident
You are a PG&E customer
You have an air-conditioner

To Get Your Tree:

Fill out an application
OCF does a site evaluation
We plant your free 5-gallon tree!!

Benefits of a Shade Tree:

Save money and conserve energy
Raise property value
Improve local air quality
Beautify your house

Visit www.ourcityforest.org/pge to print an application. Mail your completed application to Our City Forest, 151 Mission St., San José, CA 95110.

Act now! This is a limited time offer ending in December. Please help us by spreading the word to anyone who might be interested in a free tree for their yard! We look forward to receiving your applications! For more information, call (408) 998-7337 x111.

Repairing Burned Out Street Lights

by Marilyn Rodgers

With the return to Pacific Standard Time from Daylight Savings Time (and darkness coming about 5:30pm), you may have noticed several burned out street lights. You can help improve safety in our community and assist the City of San Jose by reporting burned out street lights.

The City has a goal to repair burned out street lights within 7 days of reporting. You can report burned out street lights at www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation/s_streetlights.htm or by calling 408/277-5517. The following information is needed when you call:



Your name and phone number

The street pole number – this is a 6 digit number on the pole located at approximately eye level. The address of the street pole (if there is no building/residence with an address, it is helpful to give information such as "southwest corner of Chynoweth and Pearl").

Fire Station 17 Grand Opening Event – Dec. 4

By Councilmember Judy Chirco

The newly constructed Fire Station 17 will hold a grand opening on Thursday, December 4th at 3 pm. This event is open to the public and will include a ribbon cutting ceremony as well as tours of the station. The Fire Station is located at 5170 Coniston Way.

Disaster/Emergency Preparation Summit District 10

Saturday, April 25, 2009

Pioneer High School

By Helen Castillo



San Jose's District 10 Council Member **Nancy Pyle** is spearheading a campaign to encourage District 10 residents to get prepared soon. A group of volunteers have formed a committee to work on an emergency plan for District 10.

A disaster/Emergency Preparation Summit is in the planning stages. The Disaster/Emergency Preparation Summit will include many fun activities, hands-on presentations, and handouts. There will be two-hour seminars to help District 10 residents learn to prepare for the disaster or emergency.

Do you know the difference between a "disaster" and an "emergency"? It is simple, but not many of us know until someone explains it to us.

*A disaster is a sudden calamitous event which brings widespread damage, loss, or destruction.

*An emergency is a sudden, unforeseen crisis to health, life, property, or environment (to a person or family unit) which requires immediate action.

Our goal is to educate District 10 residents at the Summit to be prepared. I came up with a plan to bring a disaster/emergency preparation into our neighborhoods. We have decided to have VEP become a Pilot Program. I am chairing this program and working on a plan with Alex Fraser who works with the city of San Jose office of emergency service. We are looking for 30 volunteers who would be interested in taking a free course on Disaster/Emergency Preparedness and would like to be part of VEP's Emergency Team. I want this to be a fun interactive way of meeting new people, getting educated, brain storming a final plan and doing something good for our community. So if this sounds like something you are interested in PLEASE call for more info. Your help in this is needed and will be greatly appreciated. **Helen Castillo** 408-981-5902

Future of the SCC Fairgrounds

By Helen Castillo

On October 22nd the county Board of supervisors had a meeting that was open to the public called the Fairgrounds Community Meeting. The supervisors' chamber was filled to capacity with people of all ages, many carrying signs, wanting to have their voice be heard regarding the future of our Santa Clara County Fairgrounds and Catellus involvement. The speakers ranged in age from 9 years old to senior citizens. The supervisors sat and listened as a myriad of impassioned community citizens who came from such areas as Palo Alto, Gilroy, Morgan Hill, Mountain View, Cupertino, Milpitas, Saratoga, Campbell, Almaden, Los Gatos, and San Jose spoke their minds. It was amazing to hear so many eloquent speakers in favor of keeping our Fairgrounds open. The outcome of the meeting was for the Fairgrounds to remain open and the Board of Supervisors revisit the issue at a future date. If you would like more info you can visit www.friendsofscfairgrounds.org or call Helen Castillo at 408-981-5902



Planting/Caring for Hydrangeas

By John Marks



Hydrangeas are an attractive perennial that call for little care. Few insects or diseases affect hydrangeas. But planting hydrangeas requires some care. After you obtain a starter, dig a hole larger than the container it came in. Place the plant in a hole where it will get a northern exposure, ensuring that the crown of the plant is slightly above the level of the native soil. Backfill with a mix of soil with a lot of compost, using excess soil to build a watering basin. Fill the basin with water, checking to see that there is little or no settling of the plant.

Hydrangeas thrive on ample water. Feed the plant when it leafs out in the spring and every other month during the growing season; use about one-quarter cup of sulfate of ammonia, and spread it in a wide circle under the hydrangea and water in afterward.

In hot spells, may show signs of wilting, only to recover when the sun goes down. This is a natural occurrence called "incipient wilting." It happens even if the soil is very wet.

Hydrangeas bloom on the shoots produced in the previous year. Cut off the blossoms after the flowers have faded. Prune them just above the second set of buds from the bottom of the stem. The new shoots that grow from these buds will bloom in the following year. It is hard to kill a hydrangea.

After the plant is several years old, you may need to thin out the multitude of stems, removing any crossing, dead, or diseased stems. The older stems will be a darker color, with brown or gray scaly bark. These may no longer be productive and need to be pruned back to a set of buds near the base of the plant. New stems will emerge to replace the old.

*The above article extracted from the 1/17/2003 issue of the Mercury News.

November Reminders

Sprinkle some color into your winter garden, if you're not growing vegetables this year. Sow wildflower seeds, and the winter rains will water them for you. You could also plant winter flowers, such as pansies, stock, snapdragons, and primrose. I've got some cosmos that keep re-seeding themselves in a neglected former tree hole in the driveway; they grow tall and beautiful, a thing of beauty to behold every day when I leave and return.

For veggies, plant those snow peas, broccoli, chard, etc. Garlic planted now can be harvested in May; set cloves (pointed end up) in soil that has good drainage. Plant about one inch deep, three to six inches apart.

Also, get ready to spray fruit trees; after leaves have fallen, spray peach trees and nectarine trees with lime sulfur to control peach leaf curl. Spray apricot trees with a fixed-copper spray, coating the stems and trunk thoroughly.

Continue to clip spent roses off the plants. You can expect more roses through December, even if the weather is frosty. But hold off on serious rose pruning until January.

Time to Get Your Flu Shots

By Marilyn Rodgers

Getting a flu shot is strongly recommended by healthcare agencies for all adults and children over 6 months of age. For many of us the flu is seen as a part of the Fall and Winter season, and while it is an uncomfortable annoyance, it is not life threatening. However, each year over 47,000 people die of the flu and its complications. Recent research indicates that people over 60 (a group which generally is at higher risk for severe complications from the flu) who live in a neighborhood with children, are 4 times as likely to catch the flu. As a result, there is more and more concern by healthcare providers that we all do our part to help prevent or minimize the flu. For the following groups of people, it is particularly important to have a flu shot:



Anyone 50 or older,
Anyone with a chronic health condition, such as diabetes, asthma, or diseases of the heart, lung, or kidney,
All children 6 months or older,
Pregnant women (or women who may become pregnant during the flu season)
Anyone who lives with, or cares for, a person in one of the above groups, or has a child less than 6 months old.

If you have an allergy to chicken eggs, or have an illness/disease not listed above, it is always recommended that you consult with your doctor or healthcare provider before having a flu shot.

Where to get a flu shots? Most doctors, and large healthcare providers will provide opportunities for you to have a flu shot. In addition, many organizations are offering opportunities (many offer free or low cost shots) such as Safeway, Rite Aid, and the Willows Senior Center.

Pneumonia vaccination - If you or a loved one is 65 or older, consult with your physician or healthcare provider about having a pneumonia vaccination. This vaccination provides additional protection for older adults against pneumonia, meningitis, and some blood infections. This is normally a one time injection (but if you had this vaccination more than 5 years ago, a booster shot may be recommended.) For additional information and recommendations, visit the Centers for Disease Control website at cdc.gov.

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Volunteer Corner

By Helen Castillo

Hello Everyone, I want to thank all of you who came out to help with the Daffodil Planting. It looks great! The volunteers, who so graciously at a moments notice pitched in to deliver the flyers for the election forum; we couldn't have got the job done without you. Thanks! There is a list of events that take place throughout the year. Please look at the list and see if there is anything you are interested in helping out with. Your help is needed and appreciated.

Volunteers needed throughout the year for the following events

Upcoming Volunteer Events

- ☺ If you would like to write an article that you believe is informative to our community. You can write an article and send it to our Editor, Susan Iverson. Deadline is 2nd Friday of the month. All articles must approved by the board members.
- ☺ 3rd week of the month from Sept-June: We will need 5 volunteers total to help fold/label and deliver the news letters to post office.
- ☺ In January and March on the 3rd weekend, the kick off membership drive for VEP begins. 15-20 volunteers will be needed
- ☺ Distribution of flyers - need 30 volunteers for each month flyers are distributed October, March, and April. Each volunteer will distribute about 125 flyers in the neighborhood.
- ☺ CSA student awards given annually 5-8 volunteers for selection committed starting in January, winners announced in May.
- ☺ Help out with the Home Fair in March.
- ☺ Beautification/ clean-up projects, 10-30 people needed. 1-2 events per year. Advance notice provided.
- ☺ The Memorial Day Parade event 30-60 volunteers needed, there will be a sign-up sheet in January's news letter for specific jobs. Here are some examples.
 - ◆ Help get donations.
 - ◆ Set up booths/ day of event.
 - ◆ Take down booths
 - ◆ Work booths
 - ◆ Pick-up trash
 - ◆ Pick-up ice chests for event
 - ◆ Work a booth on the day of the event
 - ◆ Make calls to the schools and other volunteers
- ☺ 30 Volunteers needed to take part in the Disaster/ Emergency Preparedness VEP Team starting January 2009. We will be educating ourselves for an emergency and brainstorm ideas at meetings. The main objective is to have VEP prepared for when a disaster hits.

My pledge to this community is to make it a memorable, fun, safe and rewarding experience. Your help in anyway is needed and very much appreciated. If you have any question please don't hesitate to call **Helen Castillo** your volunteer coordinator at (408) 981-5902.



2nd Annual Blanket Drive

Giving Back to the Community
All blankets will be delivered to Inn Vision
Bring a blanket to Sonoma Chicken Coop
Almaden location. Receive 15% off your
next visit with blanket donation.

Blanket Drive drop off Dates daily December 5th -14th
Blanket Drive Hours 12:00-2:00 and 5:00 to 7:00
Bring your kids and camera for a free family photo with Santa

Santa Dates

December 5th, 6th, 7th and December 12th, 13th, & 14th
Santa Hours from 5:00pm to 7:00 pm

We hope with your support we can bring warmth to someone
this holiday Season

For more info or would like to help please call Helen Castillo
at 408-981-5902



VEP will also be sponsoring a toy drive for **Toys for Tots**.
New, unwrapped toys may be brought to the November 25th
VEP General Meeting, the November 30th Santa Photo ses-
sion, or may be dropped off any time at 5088 Barron Park
Drive. All donations must be received by December 10 to
assure delivery before Christmas.

VEP's Holiday Break – Breaking News by Email

By Dave Noel

Our next full newsletter will be the January edition. In De-
cember we'll send our annual holiday greeting. If there is
urgent news over the holiday season, we'll send it to our
members by email.

If we don't have your current email address, send it to me at
dnoel1234@aol.com, and we'll update our records. Your
email address will not be shared, and will be used only for
official VEP business such as meeting and event reminders,
and breaking news. We typically send only 1-2 emails a
month.



Susan Iverson

Independent Consultant
San Jose, Ca 95136
(408) 813-0592

memorieshelpers@sbcglobal.net

Book your Seat at a Crop Today!
Wednesday December 3 - 6 to 9:30
Friday January 2 - 6 to Midnight
Wednesday January 14 - 6 to 9:30
November 22 - 10 am to Midnight
December 13 - 10 am to Midnight



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Santa is Coming to the Vista Park Community Room 475 Hyde Park Drive

Bring your kids or the whole family for a free photo with
Santa! Bring your camera or have a photo taken and
emailed to you.

Sunday November 30th
Santa hours: 2:00-4:00

VEP wants to thank you for your support
Wishing you and your family a joyous holiday season

Neighborhood Christmas Tree Lighting

Katherine and Dann Decker have provided the neighborhood
with the wonderful decorated tree many times over the past
years. This year they are asking for the neighborhood's assis-
tance to defer the
significant costs asso-
ciated with this pro-
ject. In order to do so,
they have set up a
nonprofit foundation to
accept tax deductible
donations. Anyone
can donate to the fund
by just going to any
Wells Fargo's bank
and asking about the
**Blossom Valley
Christmas Tree
Fund** or mail a check
to Blossom Valley
Christmas Tree Fund
P.O Box 18341 San
Jose, Ca 95158-8053



The tree display will be accompanied by a food drive for Second
Harvest Food Bank. Collection barrels will be located under the
tree beginning 11/28, the day after Thanksgiving. Please help to
keep this great neighborhood tradition alive. Look for the lights
to come on the day after Thanksgiving!

Volunteers for January Membership Drive

By Helen Castillo and Marilyn Rodgers

January is the beginning of a new membership year for VEP. Volunteers will be needed to assist in mail preparation for the January newsletter and for a letter mailed to all VEP residents who are not currently VEP members. This is always a fun volunteer activity requiring about 2 to 4 hours of time! If you would like participate, please contact **Helen Castillo**, VEP Volunteer Coordinator, at 408/981-5902 or at hcastillo@vbprop.com.



Helpful City of San Jose Phone Numbers:

by Dave Noel

Abandoned Shopping Carts	(408) 535-3500
Abandoned Vehicle on street	(408) 277-5305
Barking, Injured or Stray Dogs	(408) 578-7297
Blighted Properties	(408) 277-4528
Graffiti 24-hour Hotline	(408) 277-2758
Household Hazardous Waste Disposal	(408) 299-7300
Inoperable Vehicle on Private Property	(408) 277-5305
Potholes	(408) 277-4373
Recyclables Scavenging	(408) 277-4528
San Jose City Hall Customer Service	(408) 535-3500
Street Light Repair	(408) 277-5517
Vista Park Comm Room Reservations	(408) 268-2053

Thank you to VEP Volunteers for Flyer Distribution

By Helen Castillo and Marilyn Rodgers

VEP volunteers distributed 2800 flyers in the VEP area during October. This flyer was hand delivered to all VEP residents to advertise free upcoming events. Thank you to the following volunteers:



Brent Castillo	Bryan Castillo
Dave Fadness	Chris Gray
Albert Castillo	Dian Syverson
Jim Hicks,	Marilyn Rodgers
Pat Souza	Diane Muzika
Karen Mullaly	Barbara Aquino
Josie Supencheck	Kathy Pang
Bill Johnson	Joyce Chesnos
Mike and Sandy Bousman	

VEP plans to have additional flyer distributions in the Spring – one during the first part of March and another during the last part of April. This is a fun activity which takes about 2 hours of time, and helps VEP and your Community. If you would like to participate, contact **Helen Castillo** at 408/981-5902 or hcastillo@vbprop.com.

Be Safe While You Shop

By Dave Noel

When shopping, stay aware of your personal belongings in your shopping cart. For example, it only takes a moment for someone to snatch your wallet from inside your purse if you look away.

When you purchase gift cards, select cards that have unblemished scratch-off coatings over the card number. If the card does not come with a scratch-off coating over the number, select one from behind the counter instead of one in plain sight. Crooks can write down the card number, and then use it on the store's website after the unsuspecting user has activated the card.

Not a VEP member? We welcome anyone who lives in, or shares common interest and purpose with the membership area shown on the mailing page of this newsletter. **New memberships received after October 1st will be considered paid through calendar year 2009. Please join now!**

** Membership Application **

Note: your personal information will be used for official VEP business only.

**** 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?

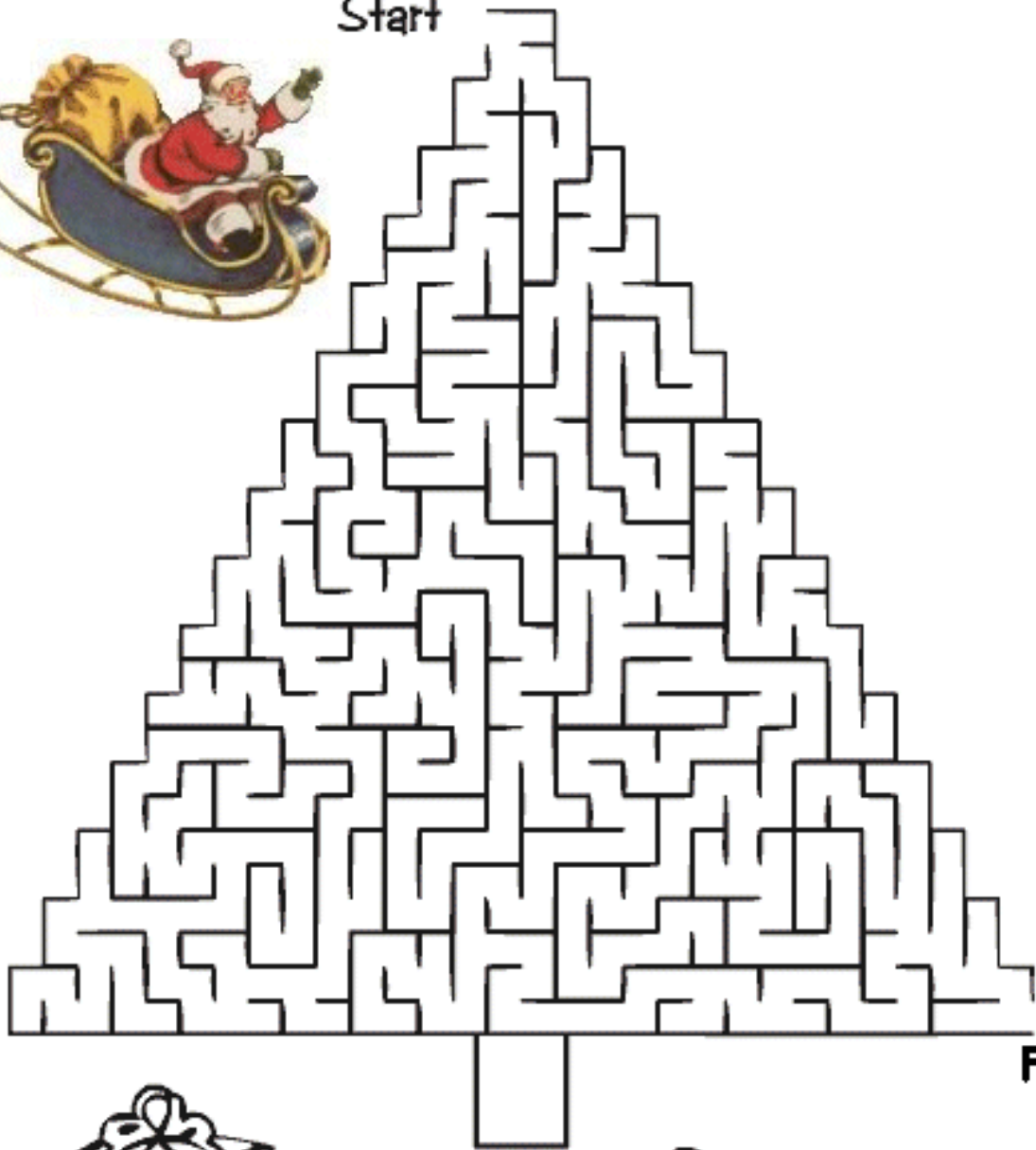
I am willing to volunteer for:

- Beautification/clean-up projects
- VEP News/ mailing 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!

**Renew your
VEP membership
today!**

Start




Finish



Bring your completed and/or colored page to the Vista Park Community Room during a VEP Event and they will be posted!

VEP Community Calendar

November / December 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 7:30 pm - VEP General Meeting - Vista Park Community Room	26	27 Happy Thanksgiving 	28	29
30 2 pm - Santa is Com- ing! - Vista Park Community Room	December			4 3pm - Fire Sta- tion 17 Grand Opening - 5170 Coniston Way	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 	22	23	24	25 	26 	27
28	29	30	Coming January 27, 2009 VEP General Meeting : “Being safe and Secure on the Web”			

THE VEP NEWS



VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158

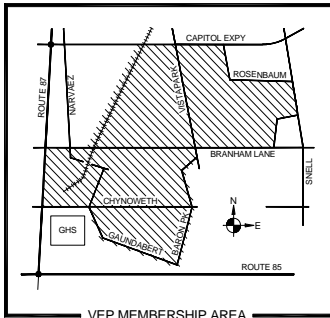
Email: vepca@vepca.net Website: www.vepca.net

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

VEP EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President	Joe Tajnai	578-5882	VEP@tajnai.com
Vice President	Marilyn Rodgers	225-7553	mroddgers@aol.com
Secretary	Adina Pierce	362-0937	adinap@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Ginger Cardona	227-0222	cardona@sbcglobal.net
Editor	Susan Iverson	813-0592	vepeditor@sbcglobal.net



Check our website: www.vepca.net

Community Room

Vista Park

in the

7:30 pm

November 25th Meeting

Be sure to attend VEP's