

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

Representing More Than 2000 Families In The Blossom Valley Area Of South San Jose Since 1969

May 2010

## VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday  
► **May 25, 2010** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Drive

## AGENDA

### ★ Guest Speaker Pat Sausedo ★

Vice President for Public Affairs and Communication  
Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce

Presentation on  
San Jose's Financial Future  
and the Impact of the Current Budget Crises

### ★ Sacred Heart Community Services ★

Presentation by Mike King

### ★ VEP Business Meeting/Announcements ★

Annual Reports:  
Goals and Objectives  
Treasurer's Report

Board of Directors Election

Announcements  
BRICC Award  
Summer Break

### ★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

Your chance to voice your opinion and/or to seek VEP's help.  
Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

## VEP's May Meeting

*By Marilyn Rodgers*

Topics that are planned for the May general membership meeting:

► **Featured Guest Speaker Pat Sausedo, Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce Vice President for Public Affairs**

**and Communication.** Ms. Sausedo's presentation will include how residents and community associations can partner with local businesses to help the city of San Jose flourish. With San Jose City's current budget deficit of \$116 million, she will provide insights on the current budget crises, as well as how to move forward in to a positive future.

► **Sacred Heart Community Services – Mike King** will provide an overview of the services this organization offers to community residents.

► **VEP Business Meeting/Announcements**

► **Your Concerns and Ideas** - We always leave time to hear from you regarding concerns or issues that we can work together in resolving. This approach continues to make VEP neighborhoods strong, healthy, and attractive.

We look forward to seeing you, your family, your friends, and your neighbors at our **May 25th** meeting. Please join us! (This is the last meeting prior to summer break.)

## Board of Directors Election

*By Dave Noel, Past President and Nominating Committee Chair*

The election of the 2010-2011 Board of Directors for the VEP Community Association will take place at the May membership meeting. The slate of candidates as of this writing is as follows:

**Ginger Cardona**  
**Helen Castillo**  
**Adina Pierce**  
**Marilyn Rodgers**  
**Debra Suydam**

We are **seeking two additional candidates** in order to have a full slate of seven directors. Current boardmember and newsletter Editor **Susan Iverson** is not planning to run for reelection on the board, but plans to continue to serve VEP as Assistant newsletter Editor.

**The candidates listed above have been serving you for years and many are at or near burn-out. We desperately need YOU to step up now.** Working with VEP, **you can make a big difference** in our community's quality of life and property values.

Any member in good standing is eligible to run for a Board position. No experience is necessary – we'll train you. You'll find the skills you learn while on the VEP board to be very valuable in your personal and professional life, and they'll look very good on your resume too.

**2010 is VEP's 41st year!**

**Please contact me ASAP if you are willing to serve your community as a VEP board member.** If that sounds too intimidating, note that we have several non-officer “entry level” positions on the board. If that still sounds too intimidating, you can help by attending board meetings informally, and bringing your perspective, passions, and ideas. We would also appreciate your help on committee work.

Last year, the VEP membership approved changes to the constitution and bylaws that increased the number of Board members from five to seven, with election of the Board of Directors at the annual meeting - which now occurs in May, and selection of officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer) done by the newly elected Board. The changes also authorize the Board of Directors to fill open positions by appointment.

For additional information, please contact me, at dnoel1234@aol.com or 408-266-7183.

## Candidates’ Forum

*By Dave Noel & Dave Fadness*

VEP’s April 22<sup>nd</sup> Candidates’ Forum was a huge success. All declared candidates for each of the races below participated. This was quite a scheduling accomplishment!

### Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, District 1



- Teresa Alvarado
- Peter Arellano
- Tom Kruse
- Mike Wasserman
- Forest Williams

### Mayor, City of San Jose

- Susan Barragan
- Bill Chew
- Thomas Tuan Nguyen
- Chuck Reed (Incumbent)

### Santa Clara County District Attorney

- Dolores Carr (Incumbent)
- Jeff Rosen

### San Jose City Council, District 9

- Jim Cogan
- Robert Cortese
- David Cueva
- Chad Greer
- Larry Pegram
- Donald Rocha

Candidates were given time for opening and closing statements and answered questions from the audience. Our moderator was **Susan Siravo**, spokeswoman for the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and former KNTV Channel 11 news reporter. Our timekeeper was **Janet Darrow**, president of

Pinehurst Residents Association.

This event was Co-Sponsored by **VEP Community Association, Erikson Neighborhood Association, Pinehurst Residents Association, Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Association, Colony Green Homeowners Association, Hayes Neighborhood Association, and Almaden Valley Community Association.**



The number of candidates for our forum swelled unexpectedly when several new candidates announced their candidacies on the very last day of the filing period. To accommodate them, we extended the duration of our event and reduced the time available for Q&A. VEP past presidents **Dave Noel** and **Bob Aquino** edited and combined audience questions so the candidates could answer as many of them as possible.

Special thanks to Gunderson High School Drama Teacher **Trish Buttrill** and Principal **Cary Catching** for allowing us to use their wonderful theater facility and working a myriad of details to have it ready for us and “wired for sound”.

Also, special thanks to our Gunderson student volunteers who did a great job passing out event agendas and collecting audience question cards: **Beza Ali, Miquel Bernal, Tibein Tedemet, Mariela Garcia, and Carman Gaines.**

## What is VEP Community Association?

- VEP is an all-volunteer organization of your neighbors working to improve our neighborhoods; VEP is our community’s “homeowner’s association”.
- VEP volunteers participate in a variety of activities, all of which originate in and benefit our neighborhoods.
- VEP volunteers make our neighborhood’s views and needs known to government at all levels.
- Founded in 1969, we are one of the largest, most successful, and most active and enduring grass roots volunteer organizations in Santa Clara County.

## Why join VEP?

- To receive our newsletter nine times a year, keeping you up-to-date and informed.
- To participate in and support neighborhood activities and representation.
- To contribute to our annual VEP Community Service Awards for area high school graduates.
- To be part of an outstanding community organization with a long record of success for our neighborhoods.



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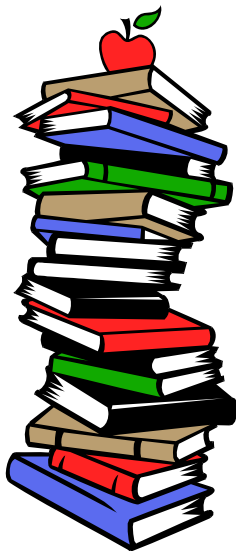
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## Water Your Mind This Summer at the Pearl Avenue Branch Library!

By Shally Lin

Summer is just around the corner, and whether it's the heat that keeps you indoors or summer vacation that brings more free time, there's nothing like a good book to pass the time. San José Public Library's **Summer Reading Celebration** kicks off on June 12. You can read and win prizes just for participating. All participants in the program can register online, but can also get help from our volunteers at the library. Kids who enroll in the children's program—"Make a Splash, READ!"—will receive a print log to track their progress and have a chance to earn sand dollars in order to purchase prizes. Participants in the teen and adult programs ("Make Waves at your Library" and "Water Your Mind, READ," respectively) will log their experiences online and be entered into prize raffles.



The Summer Reading Celebration wouldn't be possible without the help of dedicated volunteers. If you're a teen, please consider signing up to volunteer for the summer and enjoy the nice cool library while helping out and getting credit for **community service!**

Want a chance to win prizes, but don't know what to read? You can join the **Pearl Avenue's Book Club** and read popular selected fiction and non-fiction titles and then enjoy a lively discussion about them afterwards. The club meets once a month on a Tuesday at 6:30pm. Please check online for the exact date. Upcoming titles include *The Girls from Ames: a story of women and a forty-year friendship* by Jeffrey Zaslow and *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett.

The library also offers a number of **free exercise classes** that you can join for a great way to get fit this summer! We have Zumba three Wednesdays a month, Line Dancing twice a month, and Integral Tai Chi, a therapeutic style that combines Yoga, Tai Chi and breath work every Monday and Thursday night.

Summer brings fun programs for children at the library as well! There'll be a fairy tale tea party, cupcake decorating (and eating too), scavenger hunts and crafts. We'll also have

the Bubble Lady on June 24 at 11am and a juggler on June 26 at 11am.

Finally, don't miss out on this exciting discount! **Camera Cinemas** is offering a special promotion for SJPL library card holders. Through the month of June, show your library card, and you can receive \$3.00 off each regular adult admission price. Even better, read the book, and then go see the movie!

To find out more about these and other exciting events at our library, please go to [http://www.sjlibrary.org/about/locations/pearl\\_ave/events.htm](http://www.sjlibrary.org/about/locations/pearl_ave/events.htm) or come by the branch and pick up a calendar!

## Helpful Phone Numbers:

By Dave Noel

San Jose Information Center	(408) 535-3500
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
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 Community Room Reservations	(408) 268-2053

## To Report Graffiti...

	Phone #
24-hour Hotline	(408) 277-2758
Vandalism <i>in progress</i>	911
Vandalism <i>from a cell phone</i>	(408) 277-8911
Vandalism <i>after the fact</i>	311
On libraries, parks & community centers	(408) 277-4741
On painted curbs & on the street	(408) 277-3626
On street signs	(408) 277-4691
On all expressways	(408) 494-1307
On bus stops	(408) 321-5800
On light-rail	(408) 321-2300
On Highway signs	(510) 536-0413
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## Garage Sale Success!

Thank you so much to those persons in charge of the Vistapark garage sale. This was the first garage sale that we have had in many years and we were really impressed with the way you advertised this event and how you also thought of having a Salvation Army truck nearby, so that we could donate the leftovers of the sale.



There were four families that were included in our garage sale and each one was extremely happy with all your work and effort. We had many customers and sold a lot of items, so we were all content at the end of the day. Thanks again, Marilyn Coscarelli



## VEP's Neighborhood Garage Sale

By Ginger Cardona, Helen Castillo, Marilyn Rodgers

Saturday, May 1st was the date of the annual VEP sponsored neighborhood-wide garage sale. This year's event, which is open to all area residents, was another success. Not only did participants enjoy an opportunity to make money by selling all of those unused treasures, they now have cleaner garages, and....



many of them took advantage of the additional option of donating items that did not sell. Thank-you to the Salvation Army for stationing trucks at the end of Chynoweth Avenue (at Barron Park) from 11am to 4pm for the easy convenience of area residents making donations.



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## Community Service Awards

By Dave Noel

For our 26th consecutive year, VEP is offering grants towards higher education or vocational training for graduating high school seniors with exceptional records of volunteer community service.

The judging committee has just finished selecting the winners of the 2010 VEP Community Service Awards. We'll present our awards in late May at Gunderson and Andrew Hill High Schools' respective senior awards ceremonies. We'll also announce our winners in the September VEP News.

This year we received two applications from Andrew Hill, two from Gunderson, and no At-Large applications. The budget is \$1,000. Per the program structure approved by members at the January meeting, the four applications were pooled together. The judging committee ranked the applicants, and decided to grant two \$500 awards (one per school) instead of just one \$1,000 award. Both winners had very impressive community service records.

Many thanks to **Joe Ortega** at Andrew Hill and **Stephanie Heuer** at Gunderson for administering the nomination process at their respective schools.

Also, many thanks to our judging committee members: **Adina Pierce, Marilyn Rodgers, Lu Anne Behringer, Don Ferguson, Rob Iverson, Stephen Kinsey, Dave Fadness, Aiko Fadness, Debra Suydam** and **Louise**.

### VOLUNTEER NEEDED

This will be my last year as the CSA committee chair. If you want to see this program continue, please consider chairing or co-chairing it.

Or, if you'd like to launch a new youth program to replace or supplement the CSA program, we'd love to hear your ideas. For example, we could have a VEP Youth Auxiliary that provides volunteer opportunities and serves the VEP area.

For more information, contact me at (408) 266-7183 or [DNoel1234@aol.com](mailto:DNoel1234@aol.com).

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## CRIME STOPPERS

### City of San Jose Budget Crises

by Marilyn Rodgers

The city of San Jose has a looming \$ 116 million deficit. The city must have a balanced budget prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year, July 1, 2010.

In March, the City Manager presented a plan for possible cuts in staff and services needed to balance the 2010-2011 budget. This was a 29 page "worst case" scenario, which describes cuts to almost all departments and programs, including for the first time, cuts to public safety – police and fire. **These potential cuts are very alarming as many of them will affect the lives of ordinary citizens and have very negative effects on our neighborhoods.** Examples of proposed cuts in programs and services include:

Closure of Community Centers, including 21 satellite centers (this includes the Vista Park Community Room), proposal to have one hub per district. Proposed staff reductions – 32

Defer opening community centers at Edenvale and Bascom

Severe reductions in parks and community services; reduction in Homework Centers and After-School programs; eliminate Senior Nutrition program and the Office on Aging – staff reductions – 43

Eliminate City-wide sports programs; reduce aquatics program from 8 sites to 2 – staff reductions - 26

Libraries – reduce branch hours of operation from 6 days per week to 3 days per week – alternating days with a paired library; reduce hours at Martin Luther King Library,

Proposed staff reductions – 105 positions

Defer opening new libraries at Seven Trees and Bascom

Fire Services – reduction in staff – over 70 positions

Police Services – reduction in staff – over 110 positions

Transportation Services – reduction in staff – over 42 positions

Airport Services – reduction in staff – over 60 positions

Additionally, many of these departments (excluding Fire and Police) reduced programs and staff by significant amounts during the previous year. For a complete description of proposed department/program cuts, go to City Manager's budget information page at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/Budgetinfo.asp>.

In the month of April, over 1300 city employees received tentative layoff notices (to potentially take effect June 30<sup>th</sup>). Lay-offs of city employees means severe reduction in city services to residents and neighborhoods.

In an effort to preserve services to city residents, and to save city employee jobs, the Mayor has called for all city employees to take a 10% reduction in salary and benefits. At the April 27th City Council meeting, the Council provided needed leadership by voting to reduce their own salary and benefits by 10%. In addition, they also voted to reduce salary and benefits by 10% for all Executive Staff and staff that are not represented (not union members). As of this writing, discussions are continuing with city employee unions, with the goal of reaching a 10% reduction in salary and benefits by all employee groups. (See website [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov) to view proposals/counterproposals offered by employee unions.) If this goal is not met by June 3<sup>rd</sup>, employee layoffs will be unavoidable.

For the past eight years, the city has made cuts in programs and services to reach a balanced budget for the upcoming year. So what makes this year different, and.... why is the deficit so large? Several factors have come together this year to make it the largest deficit the city has yet faced:

The state of California (in an effort to balance its own budget deficit) has regularly raided cities. Over the past 12 years, the state has taken over \$500 million from San Jose (\$63 million from restricted funds of the San Jose Redevelopment Agency this year)

Revenues, like sales and property taxes, have dropped significantly due to the national/international recession, and changes in our economy

Building new libraries, community centers, fire stations, and other facilities over the past decade, increased operating costs by over \$20 million per year (this is to pay for ongoing operations and maintenance)

Expenses have grown faster than revenues for the past several years. The average cost per employee has gone up 64% in 9 years, while revenues have gone up by only 18%. The difference is more than \$200 million per year. San Jose has 800 fewer employees delivering services as a result of cuts during previous years.

San Jose has had to make huge new payments into the City's two retirement plans, to cover their losses (in the stock market) over the past two years, and to pay for increased benefits. Payments from the general fund into the retirement system will go up by more than \$50 million for this year alone, and will continue to increase even more in future years. Note – this \$50 million payment is responsible for almost half of this current year's budget deficit.

(Please note – these "reasons" were taken from a document provided by the Mayor's office. For additional information on the Budget, go to website <http://www.sanjose.gov/mayor/goals/budget/citybudget.asp>)



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So how can we get out of this budget crises, without suffering drastic cuts in services to our residents and businesses? Again, the Mayor is suggesting that the short term options to avoid service cuts are to reduce employees' pay and benefits, and/or to increase taxes. Two-thirds of the budget goes into employee pay and benefits. If all employees give back 10% in wages and benefits, the Mayor believes services can be saved and layoffs prevented.

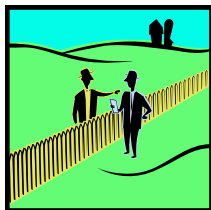
The Council has also placed a measure on the ballot for June (Measure K) to increase taxes on two card clubs in San Jose. If this measure passes, it will generate \$5 million per year in new revenue.

As residents of San Jose who will be impacted by the potentially severe reductions in city services, we need to first educate ourselves about the issues, and then make our concerns and preferences known to the Mayor, and to all of the members of the City Council. To begin the education of residents, each councilmember hosted a Community Budget meeting in their respective districts, during the month of April. During the month of May, the Mayor's office will sponsor small group study sessions on specific budget issues. (See schedule on the Mayor's website.)

While currently we are most concerned about balancing the 2010-2011 budget, San Jose's financial challenges are not limited to this year – this is not a one-year problem! Starting July 1st, San Jose must be aggressively proactive in developing strategies to prevent the city from spiraling into a decline. Be sure to attend the May 25<sup>th</sup> VEP membership meeting. The guest speaker will focus on possible options for city residents to consider, as we move into 2010-2011 and beyond.

### Looking to Recycle Your VEP Newsletter?

If you have finished reading your VEP Newsletter, and you can't bear the thought of tossing in the recycle bin, consider passing it on to a neighbor who is not a VEP member. Take a minute to tell them about all the great things that VEP does for the community, and encourage them to join!



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### Thank you to the Current VEP Board of Directors

by Marilyn Rodgers



I wanted to thank the current members of the VEP Board of Directors. This year has been an exciting and... challenging year for many members of the Board. All of our current Board Members are employed, with family responsibilities and commitments, in addition to being dedicated volunteers. As with many of our VEP members, several board members also faced financial challenges this year, particularly in regards to employment – changing from being employees to starting their own businesses or becoming independent contractors. Those with businesses, faced the issues affecting our larger community ... the economic downturn. Two Board members suffered losses of close family members, while others dealt with serious illnesses of family members. One member suffered a physical injury. Through it all, they were committed to seeing that VEP continued to be a successful organization. Please join with me in thanking them for their continued leadership and support of VEP!!

### Thank You to VEP Volunteers

Wow! Another year has past and we are coming to a close on our news letter for 2010. I wanted to write this article to all of our VEP Flyer Group and also all our Volunteers through out the year who with your timeless hours of volunteering have helped create a neighborhood that really cares for our environment and giving back to the community. With your busy schedules you are still always ready to help get the news out for VEP, plant flowers and trees, attend meetings, do clean up, plan parades, keep VEP members updated with the a news letter, yahoo groups, attend city hall meetings and board meetings, represent our community to the city, garage sales, home fairs, etc. There are so many names I could thank but I would not want to forget one, I know you know who you are and I want to thank you from my heart. I have enjoyed getting to know you and look forward to chatting with you next year.



Your dedication to our community is very much appreciated and have a great Summer!!

Your Volunteer Coordinator, Helen Castillo

## 2009-2010 Goals and Objectives

1. Continue to improve our community and our association.

A. Values: Place first priority on volunteer efforts that reflect member-endorsed improvements in our community.

a. **Initiate a survey of members to determine level of satisfaction with organization's priorities and projects.**

B. Leadership: Encourage regular turn-over of VEP Officers to impart broad, area-wide membership representation.

a. **Develop written guidelines on roles, functions, and projects to provide the basis for a structured orientation for new Board members.**

C. Membership: Monitor changes in paid VEP membership.

a. **Contact and encourage new residents to join VEP.**

D. Meetings: **Monitor and increase attendance** at VEP meetings and events, **with a goal of 40 attendees average per membership meeting.**

E. Fiscal Health: Continue to maintain VEP's positive fiscal condition.

a. Investigate and foster the use of Grants (and any other possible sources) to increase funding available for VEP Projects

b. **Continue work toward incorporating VEP as a 501 (c)(3) Nonprofit organization.**

c. **Initiate annual internal audit of financial records.**

d. **Review VEP's insurance needs, and make recommendations to the membership.**

F. Communication:

a. Continue publishing the VEP NEWS nine times per year.

b. Monitor and increase the usage of the VEP Website.

c. Utilize e-mail to communicate important VEP business with members.

d. Maintain relationships with local media outlets **and electronic entities to publicize VEP activities, including submitting articles for publication about VEP.**

G. Strive to increase VEP's public and social recognition.

a. Increase VEP visibility at appropriate events

H. Volunteerism: Increase opportunities for VEP members to volunteer by:

a. Developing ad hoc committees that will expand leadership opportunities and cultivate new talent for future VEP Board of Directors positions.

b. Maintaining a VEP database of volunteers by activity (including general meeting attendance) with the intent of using it as a reference for future VEP officer grooming and increasing participation in future VEP volunteer activities.

c. Developing and advertising additional volunteer activities, making use of the database.

**I. Develop a values and mission statement to support the purpose of the organization.**

2. Promote Community Interaction, Pride, and Preparedness.

A. Encourage member participation in neighborhood safety programs, crime prevention, and disaster/emergency preparedness.

a. **Continue to support residents in community education for Emergency preparedness and initiate a Community-wide "block captain" program.**

B. Organize and encourage participation in pruning, community cleanup, and maintenance projects.

a. **Encourage individual member "adoption" of parks, streets, and smaller identified areas within the community.**

C. Identify and encourage graffiti removal when/where ever it occurs in and around our area.

D. Continue to sponsor, promote, and underwrite **community-wide annual events for all residents, such as:**

a. **Memorial Day Parade and Festival**

b. **Faire - Home Faire, Sustainability Faire, or Health & Fitness Faire**

c. **Garage-sale, e-Waste Recycle, and Donation event**

d. **"Santa in the Park" Holiday event**

E. **Continue to offer at least one Community Service Award acknowledging outstanding volunteer service by high school Seniors.**

F. **Continue to work on improving marketing and self promotion material for VEP.**

3. Work to Assure Local Government and Businesses' Responsiveness and Accountability to VEP Members.

A. Sponsor Election Forums that heighten our members' awareness of candidates or ballot issues, and encourages their participation as informed citizens and voters.

B. Work with City/County government and developers to Install and/or maintain public landscaping in the VEP Membership area.

a. **Determine the type of projects/activities that are safe and appropriate for volunteer participation.**

C. Work with the City to provide traffic safety measures on VEP area streets as needed

a. Continue to monitor community impacts including increased traffic and parking.

D. Encourage, monitor, and react to plans for urban development, transportation, libraries, parks and other public infrastructure changes in and around our membership area.

a. Organize and communicate community priorities and concerns.

4. Monitor, Create, and Maintain High-Quality Public Services for the VEP Area

A. Promote, **participate, and advocate for VEP members and residents** in the planning and development of the Martial-Cottle Regional Park (Lester Property).

a. **Upon completion of the County master plan, consider initiating a volunteer foundation, e.g. "Friends of Martial Cottle Park".**

B. Continue VEP member involvement during the design and construction process of widening Branham between Vistapark and Snell Avenue, and other improvements between Vistapark and Narvaez.

C. Work with the City to develop and maintain our Neighborhood Parks.

D. **Continue to work with the City to implement the master plan for the immediate area surrounding the Vista Park Community Room and secure funding for the plan's implementation.**

D. Monitor opportunities to build a city park at Capitol/ Narvaez.

E. Work for real improvements in traffic level of service at Capitol/Narvaez/northbound 87 onramp.

F. Work with the City to ensure that impacts of any proposed development along the Guadalupe Corridor are fully mitigated.

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**Review of VEP 2009-2010**  
**Goals and Objectives**

*By Marilyn Rodgers*

The past year has been one of many accomplishments for VEP. Of particular note, VEP has been the proud recipient of two prestigious awards. First, a nomination by District 10 Councilmember Nancy Pyle, resulted in an award given by San Jose City Mayor Chuck Reed as a Community Honoree "for outstanding commitment to building a stronger community and a vibrant city".

The organization has also continued to be financially sound. This is another significant accomplishment given the economic woes both locally and nationally/internationally. With a successful membership campaign, VEP continues to have approximately the same number of members. Many members sent additional donations with their membership checks this year. Their support is much appreciated. We also initiated a policy of maintaining a minimum 6-month operating balance, to be held in reserves.

Many of our on-going goals were met or exceeded. For instance, VEP, now in its 41st year, is one of the few community associations that provide both monthly membership meetings (between the months of September and May) with knowledgeable speakers on topics of concern or interest, while also producing a newsletter (averaging 14 to 20 pages in length) eight times per year. Members have the option of receiving the newsletter via traditional mail or by e-distribution.

VEP also exceeded the goal in providing (including financially underwriting the cost of) several community-wide events. These included Santa in the Park, Home Fair, Neighborhood Garage Sale, and the upcoming Memorial Day Parade and Festival. Additionally, VEP sponsored a very successful Candidates Forum in April. This year's "election forum" reached another plateau through cooperation and co-sponsorships of six other community/neighborhood/homeowner associations who joined in the collaborative efforts. (Refer to Goals 2.D and 3.A.)

However, not all goals were met, or even initiated. This was partially due to the ever eager Board members wanting to accomplish more and more each year, without needed volunteer energy and commitment. Many of these goals will be re-evaluated over the summer, and a determination will be made as to whether to recommend they continue as goals going forward into a second year, or to have them dropped from consideration. The following goals fit in this category: 1.A.a., 1.B.a. 1.E.c. and d., and 2.F. (See previously listed highlighted goals.)

Goals which were initiated, or partially completed include:

1.C.a. Contact and encourage new residents to join VEP. This was done only informally, but with some success.

1.D. Monitor and increase attendance at meetings and events. This goal was met at least 50% of the time.

1.E.b. Continue to work toward incorporating VEP as a 501(c) 3 (IRS status) organization. The paperwork was submitted several months ago. We are still waiting for determination by IRS.

1.F.d. Maintain relationships with electronic entities to publicize VEP activities, etc. This was partially completed with activities highlighted through Neighborhood Development Center and United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County e-mail distributions. VEP also initiated VEP Yahoo Groups and Webmaster initiated use on Facebook. Advertising (for May Garage Sale) was done on Craigslist.

1.I. Develop a values and mission statement. This was partially discussed, but no further development was done. VEP has a partial values and mission statement included in the Constitution and Bylaws.

2.A.a. Emergency preparedness education, and initiation of a community-wide block captain program. Community classes were continued during last summer and early fall. The block captain program will be evaluated for a second year goal.

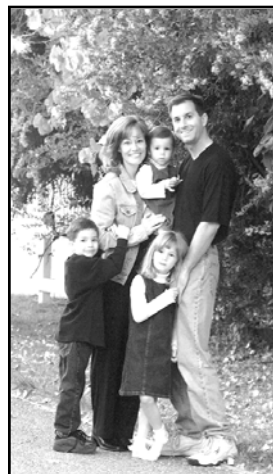
2.B.a. Encourage individual member adoption of community areas; and 3.B.a. Determine safe and appropriate projects for volunteer participation – both of the goals have been initiated, and work with the City is continuing.

2.E. Continue to offer at least one Community Service Award – this goal will be accomplished this year, but without additional volunteer leadership, the program may not continue in the future.

2.F. Continue to work on improving marketing. Only initial discussions were held on this topic, including use of electronic media and increased usage of organizational signage.

4.A. and 4.A.a. Continue to advocate for VEP members and residents in the planning and development of the Martial Cottle Regional Park. This goal was partially completed. The work has been somewhat delayed, and the timelines extended due to budget issues and staff energies being utilized for other park projects. 4.A.a. will not be initiated until after the completion and approval of the Master Design Plan.

4.D. Continue to work with the City to implement the master plan surrounding the Vista Park Community Room. Significant progress was made in completing this goal. Additional irrigation was installed and several tree planting sessions were accomplished this year.



*Precious Moments In Time*

Family and Children Portraits

Weddings and Special Events

Photography *by* Jeri Arstingstall

★ VEP MEMBER ★

(408) 281-3393



## VEP Receives BRICC Award

by Marilyn Rodgers

On Saturday, April 17th, VEP Community Association was one of four community associations in Santa Clara County to receive the prestigious BRICC Award. BRICC, which stands for "building resourceful inspirational creative community," is donated by the Anabo family in honor of Elizabeth Anabo, and is administered by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

Marilyn Rodgers, President, accepted the award for VEP, which won as a "seasoned" community association. The award winners were announced during a ceremony at the annual United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County daylong conference.

Presenters were Santa Clara County Supervisor Ken Yeager and Leigh Stilwell, Vice President of Donor Engagement, Silicon Valley Community Foundation. The award includes both a commemorative brick and an unrestricted check for \$1,000.00.

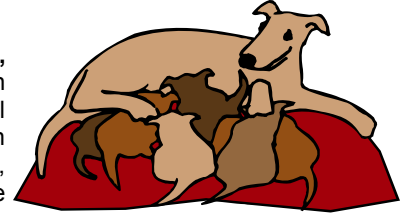


A special thank you to Dave Fadness, who nominated VEP for the BRICC award.

## HSSV Launches the PUP (Prevent Unwanted Pregnancies) Program

MILPITAS, Calif.,  
March 11, 2010 --

In an effort to help control pet over-population in Santa Clara County, HSSV has launched the PUP (Prevent Un-



wanted Pregnancies) program. Dr. Julia Lewis, director of medical services for HSSV, says the PUP program provides a resource for owners whose dogs have had a litter and are unable to find good homes for the puppies. As part of this program, Dr. Lewis says pet owners can bring their unwanted litters to HSSV and surrender them at no charge, and arrange for the canine parents of the litters to be spayed and neutered for free through HSSV's Medical Center.

"The pet owners benefit because they no longer have the financial burden of feeding and providing initial veterinary care for the puppies, and can rest easy knowing the puppies will go to good homes through the HSSV adoption process. Plus, we'll spay and neuter the parent dogs free of charge." Dr. Lewis says HSSV and Santa Clara County benefit by making sure that the dogs that were the sources of the unwanted litters do not produce further unwanted puppies and that the next generations of dogs are responsibly spayed and neutered before adding to the pet over-population problem. "It's a win-win for everyone."

HSSV will actively promote the PUP program through our volunteer ambassadors. These ambassadors will peruse local newspapers classified sections and other online sources where puppies may be advertised, and reach out to these advertisers to inform them of this program and encourage them to participate. HSSV also encourages members of the public who are concerned with pet over-population in our county to inform people they may see selling or giving away puppies to take advantage of the PUP program. For more information, or to schedule an appointment please e-mail [customer\\_care@hssv.org](mailto:customer_care@hssv.org) or call 408-262-2133 x110. Visit the PUP Program at: [www.hssv.org/surrender\\_prevent-unwanted-pregnancies.html](http://www.hssv.org/surrender_prevent-unwanted-pregnancies.html)

## VEP on Summer Break until September

by Marilyn Rodgers

Just a reminder - following the May 25th membership meeting, and the Memorial Day Parade and Festival on May 31st, VEP takes a summer break until September. While, the Board of Directors continues to work during the summer to prepare for next year's events, the main method of communicating with members is through e-mail. If you would like to receive e-mail updates during the summer, please be sure to provide us with a current e-mail address at [vcp@vepca.net](mailto:vcp@vepca.net)



# "VEP" Community Association

### What does "VEP" stand for?

### How did we get that odd name?

"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.

That's all there is to it!

Of course, we've grown over the years to include the Blossom Heights subdivision and others, including Las Brisas in 2004. But our original VEP name stuck, and we've been known by it for 36 years. Some like to think of us as...

### Very Energetic People

See the mailing page of this newsletter for a map of VEP's core membership area. We also welcome members from outside these boundaries who share common interests.

## Vista Park April Update

by Marilyn Rodgers

Significant progress toward completing the Vista Park master plan (landscaping surrounding the community room) was completed during two consecutive Saturdays in April – the 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. **VEP project leader Dave Fadness** coordinated volunteer efforts in collaboration with key city staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation. First, preliminary preparation work including additional irrigation and storm drainage was initiated with the dedicated assistance of PRNS staff **Dan Kelley, Norm Serrano, Demetrius, Adriel Castro, and Jesse Sepulveda**.

On April 17<sup>th</sup> a large group of volunteers came together to plant 10 additional trees. This group included able assistance from staff and volunteers of **Our City Forest** lead by **Jennifer Albin and Nichole Groppe**. Long time **VEP beautification volunteers** and Vista Park loyalists **Phil Bejar and Frank Kistler** provided assistance and guidance to newcomers to tree planting.

A group of over 30 volunteers of students and parents from Kennedy Middle School provided enthusiastic completion of the tree planting. Kennedy Middle School encourages community volunteerism as completion of an earth science class.

Refreshments and support were provided by **Aiko Fadness** and **Josie Supencheck**. Thanks to all!



## 365 Cookies

By Kathy Wood, Cookie Queen

Close your eyes, take in a deep breath, and use your imagination. Can you smell them? There is nothing in this world that compares to the aroma of cookies baking. Have you ever taken a walk around your neighborhood and traveled through clouds of various smells that make you want to walk up to the door of the source of that smell and ask, "what's for dinner?" At least once a day my house emits the sweet scent of a different cookie-the best days being the ones involving chocolate.



At the beginning of the year, people attempt to make resolutions that will hopefully improve their lives, such as losing weight, exercising regularly, or to quit smoking. Along with making a resolution or two, I decided to present a challenge for myself: is it possible to bake a different cookie recipe every day for a year? That's 365 recipes! After thinking about it and doing some research, I believed it could be



done. It took a few days to set up my blog and figure out how I wanted to go about sharing my experiences and recipes with others. The result can be found on [ayearofcookies.blogspot.com](http://ayearofcookies.blogspot.com). Each day a new recipe appears with a picture of the finished product and some comments ranging from how the cookies taste to what improvements could be made. Mishaps occur and I explain why this may have happened (most often human error).



It's been fun, so far, to search high and low for different recipes and to bake every day. When the heat of summer hits, it may become more of a chore, but having fresh cookies on a daily basis is the reward.

So that I'm not totally overloaded with cookies, I bake only a half recipe, followed by sharing them with neighbors and friends. Most common phrase heard at my house is, "have you tried today's cookie?" Many cookies also freeze well, making it possible to keep them for special occasions where a platter can hold several varieties just waiting to be



nibbled on by all those involved.

Following you will find one of my favorite recipes up to this point (almost as hard to choose as which child you love the most!)

**Chocolate & Peanut Butter Fusion:** This cookie is a combination of two recipes: Peanut Butter Cookies and Chocolate Brownie Cookies. Extra time is involved because of mixing up two kinds, but the end result is well worth the effort.

**Peanut Butter Cookies:** 1 cup butter-flavored shortening, 1 cup creamy or crunchy peanut butter, 1 cup granulated sugar, 1 cup brown sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 3 eggs, 3 cups all-purpose flour, 2 teaspoons baking soda, ¼ teaspoon salt.

Instructions: In large mixing bowl, cream shortening, peanut butter and sugars. Add vanilla. Drop in eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Sift flour, baking soda, and salt into creamed mixture and fully incorporate. Set aside.

**Chocolate Brownie Cookies:** ½ stick butter, 2/3 cup butter-flavored shortening, 3 eggs, 2 cups granulated sugar, 2 teaspoons vanilla, 1/3 teaspoon salt, 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour, ¾ cup cocoa, 1 cup chocolate chips.

Instructions: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In microwaveable bowl heat butter and shortening together until thoroughly melted, about 1 minute; allow to cool slightly. In another large mixing bowl, beat eggs until light; add sugar, vanilla, and salt and mix well. Blend in butter/shortening mixture, then sift flour and cocoa over dough until fully incorporated. By hand, fold in chocolate chips.

Now, get ready for the fusion fun: using a metal spoon, scrape out a small amount of peanut butter mixture into floured hands, then scrape out same amount of chocolate. Roll these two together gently (will be sticky, but oh-so-gooney!). Place the finished balls onto an ungreased baking sheet, 2 inches apart, and top with a few chocolate chips (if desired).

Pop into that preheated 350 degree oven for approximately 11 minutes (check after 8 or 9 minutes to see if they have set but are still a little soft to the touch). Remove from oven and allow to cool on baking sheet for a minute or two before transferring to cooling racks.

If leftover dough occurs, just form into balls whatever remains and bake all by themselves-both are a stand-alone cookie. This recipe makes about 9 dozen cookies so feel free to cut the recipe in half (unless you're expecting several relatives or your child's sports team). Tip: to cut an egg in half, I either use just the yolk or just the white. These also freeze well.

To see a picture of the Chocolate & Peanut Butter Fusion Cookie, visit [ayearofcookies.blogspot.com](http://ayearofcookies.blogspot.com). It is Cookie Recipe #12.

Cookies Rule!!!

## KP Framing General Contractor

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- Window / Door Replacement
- Interior Trim/crown moulding
- Complete Remodels
- Exterior upgrades
- Fences
- Room Additions
- Bath/Kitchen updates



No Job Is too small or too Big

**Notice:**

Our parade starts at Vista Park, passes down Hyde Park Drive to Vistapark Drive, then to Bluefield Drive, and ends at Parkview School. "NO PARKING" signs will be posted on one side of those three streets. Do not park there from 8 am until noon on 5/31. Vehicles parked in violation will be towed.

# VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival

Co-sponsored by: Gunderson High, Carson & Parkview Elementary Schools



**Monday, May 31<sup>st</sup>**



**Parade leaves from Vista Park at 11 am sharp**

*[Vista is a city park on Hyde Park Drive, a few blocks from where Vistapark Drive ends just south of Branham Lane.]*

Line-up and Costume Review begins at 10 am—wear your costume!

Awards will be given for these Costume Categories:

Best Family, Most Patriotic, Funniest, Most Original, Most Beautiful, Best Bicycle, Best Coaster Wagon, Craziest, Most Colorful, Most Unusual, Judges' Choice.



**Festival follows at Parkview School**

*[Parkview School is at 330 Bluefield Drive, one block east of the 4-way stop on Vistapark Drive.]*

Entertainment, Games, Prizes, Crafts Sale, *Mojo Burger* Food, and More!

★ All game and snack proceeds benefit Carson, Gunderson, and Parkview Schools ★

**Entertainment we have lined-up for you...**

- ☉ Sylvandale Middle School Marching Band
- ☉ Sunny & Twinkles and the Gunderson H.S. clowns
- ☉ Sylvandale Middle School Choir
- ☉ Our City Forest's "O2" mascot
- ☉ Andrew Hill High's JROTC Cadets & Drill Teams
- ☉ San Jose Police Mounties & Canine Unit
- ☉ Carson & Parkview Schools' Choir
- ☉ San Jose Firefighters & Sharkie Truck
- ☉ Town Square Harmonizers barbershop quartet
- ☉ Army, Navy, Marines, & Air Force personnel
- ☉ Island Moves/Halau Na Wai Ola Hawaiian dancers
- ☉ Food by *Mojo Burger*
- ☉ Taema Taekwondo martial arts
- ☉ Drinks & Snacks by Carson and Parkview Schools
- ☉ Rock-n-Roll garage bands
- ☉ Crafts sale
- ☉ San Jose *Sharkie*
- ☉ Music, dance, booth/field games, and family fun!

**Fun kids' games and activities for all ages...**

Giant Astro Slide, Lollipop Tree, Star Catcher, Ducky Pond, Dig for Gold, Tic Tac Toe, Milk Bottle Toss, Bean Toss, Basket Ball, Hula Hoop Cactus, Fishing, Golf, Balloon Darts, Ring Toss, Face-Painting, Crazy-Hair, Sack Races, Three-Legged Races, Wheelbarrow Races, Water Balloon Toss, Tug-O-War. All by age and/or family category—with prizes for kids.

Admission to our Memorial Day Parade & Festival is free and open to the public. *Don't miss it!*

**Bring your friends and entire family—be sure to join our Parade & Festival fun!**

For information or to volunteer, call  
Cherry at 535-6287 (for Carson), Dana at 373-3909 (for Parkview), Dave at 578-6428 (for VEP)

★ **VEP Community Association** ★

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

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158

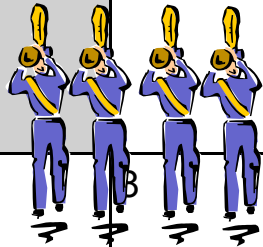
E-Mail: [vepca@vepca.net](mailto:vepca@vepca.net) Website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)



# VEP Community Calendar

## May/June 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 VEP Community Meeting— 7:30 PM— Vista Park Community Room	26	27	28	29
30	31 VEP Memorial Day Parade and Festival	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19



# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158  
 Email: [vepca@vepca.net](mailto:vepca@vepca.net) Website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

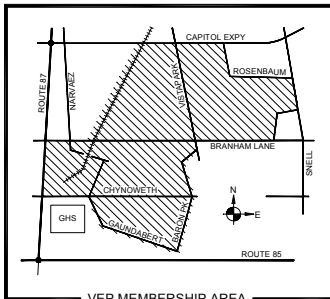
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

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Director	Debra Sudyam		

Prefer your newsletter via Email?  
 Let us know at [vep@vepca.net](mailto:vep@vepca.net).



Be sure to attend  
 VEP's  
 May 25th Meeting  
 7:30 pm  
 in the  
 Vista Park  
 Community Room  
 Check our website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)