

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

November 2011

## VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday  
► **November 29, 2011** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Drive

## AGENDA

### ★ Santa Clara County Update ★

Presentation by Santa Clara County Supervisor  
**Mike Wasserman**



### ★ VEP Business Meeting ★

Announcements & Updates  
December Christmas Decoration Contest  
No Meeting in December  
Next Meeting January 31, 2012  
Membership Drive Begins in January

### ★ 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 November Meeting

by Marilyn Rodgers

November's general membership meeting:

► **Santa Clara County Update** - featured guest speaker Santa Clara County Supervisor, Seat 1, **Mike Wasserman** will provide an overview of issues affecting Santa Clara County. The Supervisor will provide his impressions of the priorities facing the County now, and into the future, as well as his goals and strategies for addressing those priorities. There will be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions of the Supervisor. Be

## Events in November and December

**Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> – Neighborhood Cleanup**  
**Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup> – Santa in the Park**  
**Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> – Membership Meeting**  
**Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Decorations Contest**

sure to come help us thank Mike, and to welcome him in his first official presentation to VEP, one year into his role as Supervisor.

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

► **Your Concerns and Ideas** – We want to hear from you! Together we can work toward positive resolution. This approach continues to make VEP neighborhoods strong, healthy, and attractive.

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, at the **November 29<sup>th</sup>** meeting. Please join us!

## Neighborhood Cleanup

by Marilyn Rodgers and Ginger Cardona

The hectic activities of the holidays are just around the corner. Come join your neighbors for a couple of hours of cleanup activity - help make the neighborhood look attractive for the upcoming holiday season. This event will be on **Saturday morning, November 19<sup>th</sup>** between 9am and 11am. Beginning at 8:30am, enjoy coffee and refreshments at the Vista Park Community Room – while having the opportunity to meet and talk with neighbors. During the cleanup, we will be picking up litter, removing illegal signs on lightpoles, and doing light pruning/weed removal in selected areas. If you have your own supplies or equipment (such as volunteer vests, pick up sticks and bags - for litter pickup), pruning shears, etc – bring them with you; otherwise equipment and supplies will be provided. We have identified targeted areas for the cleanup. Additional information and instructions will be provided that morning. (The neighborhood cleanup will take place as scheduled, and will only be re-scheduled should it be pouring down rain on Saturday morning.) For additional information contact Ginger Cardona at [cardo-na@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cardo-na@sbcglobal.net).



**2011 is VEP's 42nd year!**

## October VEP Meeting Synopsis

by Marilyn Rodgers and Adina Pierce

The meeting started with the introduction of San Jose City Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Coordinating Staff, **Lori Jones and Liz Ortiz**. Ms. Jones briefly reviewed the process for notification/calling in incidents of graffiti, as well as the additional steps to follow (this information was previously highlighted in the October edition of the VEP Newsletter):

Call or e-mail the Anti-Graffiti Program Hotline:  
866-249-0543 or  
antigrffit@sanjoseca.gov

In addition to the City of San Jose, other agencies should be contacted when their property is involved. Ms. Jones provided attendees with a handout of other agencies contact information: (If in doubt, contact the San Jose City Coordinating Staff at 408/277-3208 for assistance.)

CalTrans for State Highways (sound walls, overpasses, signs)  
408/366-3100 or dot.ca.gov (click on contact us)

### Railroad Property

CalTrain – 800/660-4276  
Union Pacific - 888/877-7267

### Santa Clara Valley Water District

408/265-2607

County Expressways: Almaden, Capitol, and Unincorporated  
Pockets of San Jose - 408/299-3336

VTA-Valley Transit Authority – Bus stops, light rail  
408/321-5800

Abandoned Private Properties (businesses, homes) or 2<sup>nd</sup> Story  
Structures Call Code Enforcement – 408/535-7770

Lori Ortiz provided a review of the contents of the Anti-Graffiti Kit. For additional information, and to sign up as an Anti-Graffiti volunteer, call 408/277-3208.

Featured guest speaker was **Frank McLaughlin**. Mr. McLaughlin, a former police officer with both the Chicago Police Department and the Morgan Hill Police Department, is currently on staff with Councilmember Nancy Pyle's office. Rather than a formal presentation, he asked the audience for questions on their concerns. Mr. McLaughlin provided many tips – which fell into three categories – house and yard lighting, other home security suggestions, and suggestions to improve personal security. Extensive research has been done in the area of house and yard lighting. Frank provided a handout of highlights from CPTED – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Overview. These are strategies intended to reduce crime, the fear of crime, and the opportunities to commit crimes. It attempts to deter criminal behavior through environmental design. Some of the tips included in his handout:

Make your home looked occupied inside – lighting inside the home

Landscape lighting and yard lighting – the more the better (as long as it is not shining into your neighbor's home/yard)

Be sure to prune back bushes and trees so that your yard is easily visible

Motion sensor lights are very helpful

Other house security suggestions:

Put locks on side gates; keep garage side doors locked to prevent easy access into garage and/or home

Invest in a good quality interior alarm system

A motion sensor light with security camera attached may be helpful for specific concerns

Personal safety:

Be aware of your surroundings – major distractions include cell phones and texting

Use whistles to attract attention; have pepper spray easily accessible

Have 911 and San Jose's local dispatch number 277-8911 programmed into your cell phone for ease of use in an emergency

If concerned about someone watching/following you, get to area with lots of people, and call police

Always lock your car

Holidays are close at hand – don't put valuables/gifts in your car – easily visible. Thieves will break car windows to access. Put purse and/or packages in trunk.....and then...., move your car to another parking space (in case someone is watching you). Always, lock your car!

The October meeting utilized a Halloween theme for decorations and treats. Katherine Decker, Board Member and Welcoming Committee Chair surprised everyone by eloquently dressing as a well-disguised "witch". Board Members, Debra Suydam and Helen Castillo followed the theme, also wearing "witches" hats. Board Member Arul Edwin was a very convincing CalTrans Worker.

**Congratulations to San Jose Public Library** on being awarded the 2011 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The National Medal is the nation's highest honor for museums and libraries that demonstrate extraordinary approaches to public service and community outreach. The San Jose Public Library is the first city library in California to receive the award. For additional information, go to [www.sjpl.org/imlsaward](http://www.sjpl.org/imlsaward).



## Christmas Decorations Contest

by Marilyn Rodgers

Do you, or your neighbors, really enjoy decorating the exterior of your house and yard for the holidays? If so, this contest is for you! The VEP Board of Directors is sponsoring a contest for the best house/yard Christmas decorations in the VEP neighborhood. What will you win? Bragging rights of course, and a display sign that says you are a VEP Christmas Decoration Winner (additional prizes to be announced). Pictures and an article on the winner(s) will be included in the January 2012 VEP Newsletter. The VEP Board will determine the winner(s) on the weekend of December 17<sup>th</sup>. Board members will drive through the neighborhood to determine winner(s); however, everyone can help by notifying the Board at [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) to nominate yourself or a neighbor for consideration. Happy Holidays!



## VEP – Membership Drive Begins in January

by Marilyn Rodgers, Debra Suydam, and Helen Castillo

January signals the New Year, and the beginning of VEP's annual Membership Drive. **Volunteers will be needed** to once again fold, stuff, seal, and label membership invitations that go to both current members and to resident non-members. This is always a fun activity and many volunteers enjoy it so much they return year after year. This year, the date is scheduled for Sunday, January 15<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 4pm, at the Vistapark Community Room. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Debra Suydam at [dsuydam@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsuydam@sbcglobal.net) or 972-4231 or Helen Castillo at [hcastillo@vbprop.com](mailto:hcastillo@vbprop.com) or 981-5902.



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REMINDER – There is no VEP meeting in December. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Does VEP have your e-mail address? E-mail is the primary communication tool during months that newsletters are not published.

## Street Lights Needing Repair

by Marilyn Rodgers

With Fall - daylight hours become shorter, and everyone becomes more aware of dark streets in our neighborhoods. Recently, several street lights were dark on Vistapark Drive, south of Branham Lane. In fact, over the period of approximately three months, 7 lights in a row went out, enveloping this area in darkness. The pole light numbers and addresses were called into the city's Street Light Repair number at 277-5517. In the past, the goal of city staff was to repair street lights in 7 – 14 days of notification. Many city services have been necessarily reduced as a result of budget deficits. One such reduced service is repair of street lights. Currently, the timeline for repairs has been extended to several weeks. Staff will, however, repair street lights on a first come - first serve basis – **thus, increasing the importance of residents reporting street light outages as soon as possible.** Remember, adequate lighting discourages criminal activity!



An additional issue of concern (which also results in service delay) is the cost and availability of materials – specifically copper wiring (which is used in the repair of street lights). Copper is in high demand, and short supply – making it expensive and attractive to thieves. Whenever several street lights in a row go dark, possible theft of copper wiring is suspected. Should residents notice unmarked vehicles and/or workers without identifying city worker uniforms working on or around street light poles, contact the police department.

For Streetlights Needing Repair – call 277-5517. The information required includes the pole number, the street address and/or location, and your name and phone number. Help keep our neighborhood safe!



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## CRIME STOPPERS

### GUNDERSON NEWS

Gunderson High School staff and students are in the midst of the last 6 weeks of the Fall 2011 semester. The school has been busy with all manner of academics, activities and athletic events. As the semester winds down, the Gunderson campus prepares for a winter break and some fun holiday activities.

Leadership is holding a fall dance, "Party Like It's 1621!". The dance is scheduled for Saturday, November 19.

Gunderson students will attend school for a minimum day on November 23, the day before Thanksgiving. This minimum day will be district wide.

The choir and band will perform at the annual winter concert on Thursday, December 8 in the theater at 7pm.

Advanced drama students will perform GRINCH one night only on December 1 at 7pm, benefiting TOYS for TOTS. Admission is a new toy, but no one will be turned away for lack of a toy. Students would like to collect new toys that will be distributed through the Toys for Tots program.

Live news bulletins continue twice a week at Gunderson through the closed circuit television system. Journalism students are the news anchors, video production students man the microphones and cameras and other students are creating stories in the field to broadcast to the student body. In addition, the Acting for Camera class has been producing a series of commercials and educational video shorts that promote Grizzly PRIDE.

FINALS will take place December 15 and 16, marking the end of the fall semester. Winter break will last 2 weeks, with school resuming on January 2 for teachers, and January 3 for students.

Be sure to check out the NEW athletics web site at:  
<http://www.gundersonathletics.com>

The athletics page is full of information including schedules, profiles of athletes, statistics and so much more. There is a lot of new Grizzly Athletic Gear, with more to come in the near future. Consider REPRESENTING Gunderson Athletics with some GHS swag.

Principal Bejarano holds chats at 6pm on the FIRST Thursday of every month. The next chat will be Thursday, December 1.

<http://gunderson.sjUSD.org/>

### City of San Jose's "Bring Your Own Bag" Ordinance—Begins on January 1, 2012

All grocery and retail stores in San Jose can no longer provide single-use carryout plastic bags at checkout. Consumers will have the option to bring their own reusable bags or to purchase recycled content paper bags.



#### Important Information About the New Ordinance:

Stores may sell paper bags made of a least 40 percent post-consumer recycled content for a minimum 10 cents for each bag. The minimum price will increase to 25 cents after two years on January 1, 2014. Stores retain all of the proceeds from the sale of recycled paper bags.

Protective plastic or paper bags without handles are allowed for items such as meat, fresh produce, bulk food, and prescription medication, and for items that could damage or contaminate other food or merchandise when placed together in a reusable bag or paper bag at checkout.

Qualifying WIC and CalFresh "food stamp" purchases can be exempt from the cost of recycled paper bags at checkout through December 31, 2013.

#### Shopping with Reusable Bags is the Best Choice

Plastic bags are one of the most common litter items found in creek cleanups. A high quality reusable bag has the potential to replace over 600 single-use plastic bags over its lifetime. Shopping with reusable bags is a great way to take part in reducing litter and conserving natural resources.

For additional information, visit [www.sjrecycles.org/bags](http://www.sjrecycles.org/bags), or e-mail: [bring-ur-bag@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:bring-ur-bag@sanjoseca.gov), or call 408/534-2962. (Note: Information reprinted from insert in City of San Jose Utility Billing Service mailing.)

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## Shop San Jose – 4 Reasons

### What You Want is Here:

San Jose offers a wide array of fascinating shopping choices that help satisfy anyone's need for retail therapy from quaint neighborhood shops with one-of-a-kind merchandise to amenity-filled malls with internationally recognized luxury brands.

### Create Jobs Here:

Metro reports that money spent at local businesses "stays in our community, multiplying as it circulates." It concludes that "every dollar spent at a local business is ultimately worth \$1.68 to the community."

### Keep it Green Here:

Climbing into your car to drive to another city not only costs you time and gas, it contributes to greenhouse gasses.

### Support Public Services Here:

Sales taxes pay for a big part of San Jose's parks, libraries, police and fire, and other public services. With the declining economy, these services are in jeopardy. By buying locally, you can make a difference.

To begin shopping locally, visit: [www.shopsanjose.biz](http://www.shopsanjose.biz)

- Find stores and restaurants
- Check out reviews
- Share with your friends
- Get special offers, and more

((Note: Information reprinted from insert in City of San Jose Utility Billing Service mailing.)

## IN MEMORIAM

The VEP Board of Directors would like to honor the memory of Marschelle "Marsh" Syverson, long time VEP resident and member. Mr. Syverson was accidentally killed while riding his beloved Segway in Morgan Hill; hit by a suspected drunk driver. Our sympathies to Mr. Syverson's family and many friends.



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## VEP to Supply "Doggie Bags" to Neighborhood Parks

by Marilyn Rodgers, Debra Suydam, and Ginger Cardona

In the future, VEP will be donating "doggie bags" for the containers in the neighborhood parks within the VEP area. VEP is working in collaboration with San Jose Parks Foundation and San Jose City's Adopt-A-Park to implement this program. If you would like to volunteer to assist in replenishing doggie bag supplies in one of the parks, or would like to consider becoming an "Adopt-a-Park" volunteer (see article elsewhere in newsletter), please contact one of us.

## U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree

by Marilyn Rodgers

There is a little more than the usual excitement surrounding the Capitol Christmas tree this year. First, congratulations to the State of California. California was the state selected to provide the Capitol Christmas Tree, a 60-foot Sierra white fir from Stanislaus National Forest (outside of Sonora). There is also a San Jose connection.

A retired professional truck driver, Duane Brusseau, a resident of San Jose, will be driving the truck that will haul the tree from Sonora, across country to Washington, D.C. and the front lawn of the U.S. Capitol. The tree weighs 8,300 pounds and will require 60 gallons of water per day to keep it fresh. The tree's entourage will make several stops at small towns and cities along the way, beginning with communities in the Central Valley of California, travelling along Hwy 99 to Southern California before turning east. The convoy will collect and deliver 5,000 handmade ornaments from children and adults in California to be placed on the tree in time for the lighting ceremony on December 6<sup>th</sup>. The Forest Service is also providing an online tracking system this year that allows people to track the tree. For more information go to <http://capitolchristmastree2011.org>. To follow the tree's journey, go to <http://www.trackthetree.com>.



## Home Sales

By Helen Castillo

Pending home sales in California fell in September, as is typical for this time of year, but were up from the previous year for the fifth consecutive month. Additionally, distressed home sales increased slightly in September from both the previous month and year.

### Pending home sales:

California pending home sales fell 5.2 percent in September, but were up from a year ago, according to C.A.R.'s Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI)\*. The index was 118.5 in September, based on contracts signed in that month, down from August's index of 125.0. The index was up 8.4 percent from September 2010. September marked the fifth consecutive month that pending sales rose from the previous year. Pending home sales are forward-looking indicators of future home sales activity, providing information on the future direction of the market.

"While recent pending home sales have increased from last year's levels, housing inventory remains lean across all property types, particularly REOs (real estate-owned), which currently is at a 2.6-month supply. However, some major lenders recently announced they would accelerate the release of REOs onto the market, which should help alleviate the current shortage of housing inventory. With the inventory being down we are still seeing multiple offers on homes listed on the market that are priced correctly.

Santa Clara County has desirable new home loan programs for buyers. If you are interested you can call me for more information. Helen Castillo 408-981-5902

## Neighborhood Christmas Lights Display

By Bob & Francine Olsen

Once again, beginning December 1st the Olsen's will be lighting up the neighborhood with our Christmas lights. Hopefully we will set a new record over last years 24,432 lights. Please drive by and enjoy! The address is 595 Amboy Drive, displayed most weeknights from 6-9 p.m. and 6-10 p.m. on weekends.

Merry Christmas,

<b>Restaurant &amp; Catering</b>		<b>4472 Pearl Ave</b> (in Branham Plaza behind Weinerschnitzel) <b>(408) 269-2221</b>
<b>Hours:</b> Tue-Sat 4 pm - 9 pm Sun 5 pm - 8 pm Closed Mondays		
<b>Half price entrée with purchase of entrée of equal or greater value</b> Expires 12/31/11 Not valid with any other offers Must present coupon	<b>All-You-Can-Eat Spaghetti, Meatballs, Salad &amp; Garlic Bread</b> Tuesdays 4 pm - 9 pm \$6.95 per person No coupon required	



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## Our Parks Need Help

By Ginger Cardona

Over the years each of our five local neighborhood parks has been a source of pride for our VEP Community. Even before the City of San Jose reduced services to our parks, our local community reached out to each of our community parks and were adopted by local residents.



We are currently in need of new volunteers to adopt the parks. With the reduction in city services, it is more important now than ever to provide help with our parks, making sure they stay a destination for families and neighborhood recreation. It does not require an excessive commitment just, about a day a month. You simply report the hours worked over a one year time period. Some of the things you can do include replenishing the doggie bags (VEP will continue to provide these), pick up litter, rake leaves, remove graffiti, report park hazards, sweep courts and pathways, pull weeds, care for ecosystems, plant native plants, report homeless encampments, illegal dumping, storm damage, injured or dead animals, mountain lions, and other hazards. The duties and needs will vary slight by park and your own preferences and desires. Training will be provided.

In addition, volunteers are given a certificate of adoption, a t-shirt, and an invitation to an annual recognition event. After sixty hours of volunteer work your name will be placed on a plaque which will be posted at the park. If you are unsure of your time commitment, you can join forces with a neighbor and have a group adopt the park, requiring only a few hours a month per person. Please help our community and volunteer to adopt a park. Contact Ginger Cardona for more information. Contact information is on the back of the newsletter.

**Santa in the Park**  
**Come Have a Family Picture**  
**with Santa**  
**Sunday, November 27th, 2-4pm**  
**Vista Park Community Room**



## Picasa—One of Google's Best Kept Secrets

### SeniorNet Sign-up January 7, 1:30 pm

By John McCulloch

Picasa is a free software program from Google used to manage your photos. SeniorNet Willows offers 2 classes, a 4 week class to introduce you to it and an 8 week class to aid the student in mastering the finer points of the program.



Picasa is one of the most intuitive and useful interfaces available. As you'd expect from a Google product, the search feature is top notch, including searching by tags, captions, date and location.

You can use the brightness and contrast adjustments if you wish or use Picasa's "I'm feeling lucky" button to optimize your photos. Other editing features include cropping, resizing and removing red eye.

This software enables you to share photos in many creative ways. The movie option lets you make a slideshow of your photos that includes sound, transitions, video clips and more. When you are done with your movie, click the You Tube button and post it online.

Clicking the photo collage button organizes the photos in the album into an automatic collage. You choose the options to organize the photos in a mosaic, grid formation or other. No need for artistic talent to get great results with this tool. After you're done, e-mail it, burn it to a CD as a gift, store it on a thumb drive or upload it to the Picasa web gallery online.

Overall, Picasa is a user-friendly digital photo software. Those with little to no experience uploading photos and videos, editing photos and dealing with extra gadgets can get the hang of it quickly without much trouble. All of the program's buttons are very easy to find and use, and the layout gently guides you through the process.

If you would like to take this or any of the other 13 classes we offer, come to our computer class registration on Saturday, January 7, 2012 at 1:30 pm at the Willow Glen Community Center. It is located 2175 Lincoln Avenue near the corner of Curtner Ave. Each class is \$20 for an 8 week class. There is an annual fee of \$40 to pay for the SeniorNet organization; this enables you to take classes at Almaden or any of the other 70 SeniorNet Learning Centers around the nation.

Check our web page at [www.snicsj.org/willows](http://www.snicsj.org/willows) to see the other classes available and their times. Questions? Call Libby at 371-3999. SeniorNet is open to adults over 50 years of age who are looking for some brain exercise.

Other classes available are Introduction to Computers, Word 2007, E-mail, Fun with Google, Exploring Windows 7, Computer Maintenance, Photoshop Elements Editor and much more.

**Have an Enjoyable  
Thanksgiving!**



## 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.

### 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.

### Bulbs go in NOW

There is still time to plant spring-flowering bulbs. Most nurseries and garden centers remain well-stocked with dozens of colorful selections. To help you plan your garden, check out [www.bulb.com](http://www.bulb.com) for a wealth of information and tips about how to choose, plant and otherwise care for your bulbs. The site is maintained by the Netherlands Flower Bulb Info Center (where else?). Once you get those bulbs in the ground, give yourself a little instant gratification by planting winter-color annuals on top. Good choices for sunny spots include pansies, violas, primrose and Iceland Poppies. For shady or dappled spots, try cineraria and cyclamen.

## A Year of Cakes

By Kathy Wood, Baker

Can you smell it? Ahhhhhh, the aromas of Thanksgiving dinner. One or two whiffs of turkey roasting in the oven make your stomach growl with hunger. Consuming too much food is a given for this special time of the year when we gather together with our families and friends. I love the flavors of Autumn and early Winter-pumpkin, apples, butternut squash and all the delicious dishes you can prepare with them. Butternut squash bisque is one of my favorites along with one soup recipe I just tried recently-carrot ginger soup. Pumpkin pie and apple pie are always welcome. Here is a cake recipe using pumpkin that would be a grand addition to your Thanksgiving meal or anytime. You may want to make more than one because it doesn't hang around for long.

**Pumpkin Cake Roll:** Ingredients: 3 eggs, 1 cup granulated sugar, 2/3 cup canned pumpkin, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, 3/4 cups all-purpose flour, 2 teaspoons cinnamon, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg, 1 cup finely chopped nuts. Cream cheese filling: 6 ounces cream cheese, softened, 1 cup confectioners' sugar, 1/4 cup butter, softened, 1/2 teaspoon vanilla.

**Instructions:** Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease a 15x10x1 inch baking pan; line with waxed paper. Grease and flour the paper; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs on high for 5 minutes. Gradually beat in sugar until thick and lemon-colored, about 1 minute. Add pumpkin and lemon juice, mixing well. In a small bowl combine flour, cinnamon, baking powder, salt and nutmeg; fold into the pumpkin mixture until well combined.

Spread batter into pan; sprinkle with nuts. Bake in preheated 375 degree oven for 15 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched. Have a clean linen towel ready. Remove from oven and immediately flip out onto towel. Remove pan, then remove waxed paper carefully. Roll cake up in towel, starting with short end. Leave for 5 minutes; unroll and let cool for 10 minutes. Re-roll in towel once again and allow to cool completely. Meanwhile beat frosting ingredients until fluffy. Carefully unroll cake. Spread filling over cake to within 1 inch of edges. Roll up again, without the towel. Cover and chill until serving. Dust with confectioners' sugar and slice into desired widths.

For a picture visit [ayearofcakes.blogspot.com](http://ayearofcakes.blogspot.com).

Have a Happy Thanksgiving! Let's Bake a Cake!

## What's The Breed?!?

### DNA Dog Breed Special available throughout November.



Are you curious about the breed of your dog? HSSV offers DNA testing using the Mars Wisdom Panel MX through the Medical Center. During the month of November they are offering a \$20 discount off the regular \$135 price. Plus, there is a mail-in rebate coupon for an additional \$25 discount from Mars.

No appointment is necessary. The Medical staff will collect a small blood sample from your dog, which will be sent to the Wisdom Panel laboratory for analysis. Your pet's DNA results will be mailed directly to you in the next two to three weeks.

"We chose the Mars Wisdom Panel MX over other available DNA tests because it is considered to be the gold standard in the industry," said Dr. Julia Lewis, veterinarian and director of animal welfare for HSSV. "This test detects almost 160 breeds in the panel with 90% accuracy. The advantage of DNA testing using blood versus other types of specimens is that blood provides the highest quality DNA analysis."

The Medical Center is open 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturdays. We are closed on the Thanksgiving Holiday Thursday November 24th 2011.

#### Humane Society Silicon Valley

901 Ames Avenue  
Milpitas, CA 95035  
Phone: 408-262-2133

### Communication with Our Members

by Marilyn Rodgers, Adina Pierce, Susan Iverson

Face to face communication is usually the most meaningful and rewarding. Monthly membership meetings between September and May, special events and projects provide this opportunity. However, we have many non-face to face opportunities as well – they are as follows:

As you are reading this newsletter, you already know about our Number 1 (and most popular) way to communicate with our members – through the **VEP NEWS**. Our members continue to tell us how much they enjoy receiving and reading the newsletter. We continue to evaluate and utilize electronic means of communicating with our members, particularly in between editions of the newsletter (remember **e-distribution of the newsletter** is available upon request as well).

**E-mail alerts** – if you have e-mail and would like to receive monthly e-mail Alerts, please be sure we have a current e-mail address. (We usually send one or two e-mails per month, so we will not fill your mailbox with junk e-mails; and e-mail addresses are confidential).

**VEP Website** – [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) – find current information, highlights of upcoming events, as well as historical information on the website. Our website is intended for use by both members and non-members. Look for an increasing amount of information to be available on the website in the future.

**VEP - Yahoo groups and Facebook** – for those members interested in additional electronic access and use "social media" sites, VEP has a **Yahoo group** and is on **Facebook**

# Randazzo's

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# VEP Community Calendar

## November / December 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 Neighborhood Cleanup Vista Park
20	21	22	23	24 Happy Thanksgiving 	25	26
27 Santa in the Park 2pm—4pm Vistapark Com- munity Room	28	29 VEP Commu- nity Meeting— 7:30 PM— Vista Park Community Room	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Christmas Decorations Contest

### Dates to Remember!

#### VEP Community Meetings

November 29, 2011  
January 31, 2012  
February 28, 2012  
March 28, 2012  
April 24, 2012  
May 29, 2012

#### **Community Events**

**Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> – Neighborhood Cleanup**  
**Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup> – Santa in the Park**  
**Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> – Membership Meeting**  
**Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Decorations Contest**  
**Saturday May 5, 2012—Community Garage Sale**

# 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)

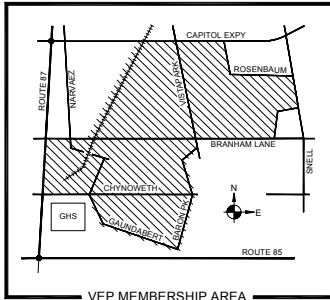
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

### VEP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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



Check our website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

Community Room

Vista Park

in the  
 7:30 pm

Be sure to attend  
 VEP's  
 November 29th Meeting