

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

Representing More Than 2,000 Families In The Blossom Valley Area Of South San Jose Since 1969

JANUARY 2014

## VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday

► **January 28th, 2014** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Drive

## AGENDA

### ★ Update on Martial Cottle Park ★ Perimeter Trail Opens February 1st

Presentation by  
Alicia Flynn, Project Manager  
Eric Goodrich, Park Manager

### ★ Santa Clara County Expressways ★ Focus on Capital and Almaden

Overview by  
Dawn Cameron, County Transportation Planner  
Input from Meeting Participants

### ★ VEP Business Meeting ★

Announcements & Updates

Martial Cottle Park Perimeter Trail  
Opens Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>  
VEP Co-Hosts Opening  
VEP Membership Drive Begins  
Update from TAPS Security Patrol

### ★ 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 January General Meeting

*By Marilyn Rodgers*

### ► Presentations:

**Update on Martial Cottle Park**, by **Alicia Flynn**, Project Manager, and new Park Manager **Eric Goodrich**. VEP Community Association will be co-hosting the opening and ribbon cutting of the first phase of the Perimeter Trail, on Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup> (see article elsewhere in newsletter). Alicia and Eric will provide an overview of the status of the work continuing in Phase I of the project, including initial discussion on opportunities for volunteers.

The second presentation will be provided by **Dawn Cameron**, Santa Clara County Transportation Planner. County transportation staff are currently sponsoring several public forums **to provide information and receive input from the public on future planning for the County's Expressway system**. Ms. Cameron has graciously accepted our request to provide VEP area residents with an additional opportunity. Her presentation will provide visual displays and a brief overview on the County's Expressway system with a **focus on Capitol Expressway and Almaden Expressway**. If you drive a vehicle, this is your opportunity to provide suggestions and voice concerns about the future of our expressways!

### ► VEP Business Meeting/Updates/Announcements

Brief introductions, announcements and updates will be included. VEP annual membership drive begins in January.

### ► 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, on **January 28th**. Please join us!

## Stay Informed, Sign up for AlertSCC

*By Marilyn Rodgers*

A few weeks ago, you may have been surprised to have received an "Alert" regarding a stolen vehicle with a small child inside it. Santa Clara County initiated its **AlertSCC system** to notify residents to be on the look out for the vehicle and report it.

This is a system that can be utilized for any disaster or emergency situation. It is free to residents. If you would like to be notified in the event of an emergency in our area, you just have to sign up for it. To sign up online, to go [www.alertSCC.com](http://www.alertSCC.com). You can request the information be sent to your mobile device, to your e-mail, or to your home landline.

This is another opportunity to be informed and be prepared!

◆ **2014 is VEP's 45th Year!** ◆

## November Meeting Synopsis

By Marilyn Rodgers

President Marilyn Rodgers began the November meeting with several introductions and announcements. County Supervisor Dave Cortese was introduced. Ms. Rodgers indicated that the Supervisor has announced his candidacy for Mayor of San Jose. Mr. Cortese spoke briefly. Ms. Rodgers thanked both the Supervisor and his wife for coming. It was a pleasure to have them attend the remainder of the meeting. Next to be introduced was Councilmember Johnny Khamis. The Councilmember provided the attendees with an update on several issues including the quick resolution of the dangerous situation with feral pigs in the Almaden Valley. He also spoke of his excitement and appreciation of the businesses who have signed on to sponsor recipients of the —San Jose Between the Lines Video Contest” – aimed at encouraging San Jose high school students to submit a video addressing one of 5 areas of concern for responsible driving. The contest deadline has been extended to January 10<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Rodgers announced two new advertisers for VEP, and introduced Mike Ibarra representing J. Romero Construction. Mr. Ibarra spoke briefly about the types of cement projects that J. Romero is involved in. He and his wife stayed for the remainder of the meeting.

The first presenter for the evening was Vanessa Beretta, Program Outreach Coordinator for EHC Life Builders. EHC Life Builders is a non-profit organization that is an integral part of the City of San Jose’s plan for managing homeless in our city. Ms. Beretta provided an overview of the “face” of the homeless in San Jose. Unfortunately homelessness is a major problem in San Jose, with the number of homeless reaching over 7,000. EHC Life Builders, once notified, will go out to a homeless site/encampment and talk to the individuals. Their purpose is to do an assessment of the situation and provide information on resources available. Some of the assistance or services provided through EHC include: emergency housing, food, medical care, case management, legal assistance, education enrollment, and employment programs. EHC works closely with the City, County, and with Caltrans (State) in working to resolve issues revolving around the homeless. Residents can help by contacting EHC on their hotline at **408-510-7600** (24-hour voicemail) to report encampments or to ask for assistance.

The second presentation by Mr. Alex Hodges, Tree Steward Liaison, was on the Tree Keeper Program through Our City Forest. He provided a brief overview of this new program aimed at assisting in the care and health of neighborhood street trees. The program provides both education and training for volunteers.

The final presentation was provided by TAPS Private Security Patrols. Tips on keeping ourselves and our families safe during the upcoming holidays was highlighted. A demonstration was provided on tools that can be used – combination flashlights with tazers. These can be purchased through TAPS website. (Demonstration models were purchased by members at the end of the meeting.)

TAPS also provided a brief overview of information on security patrols in the VEP neighborhoods. TAPS has initiated private security patrols without requiring a “minimum number” of household signups prior to patrols beginning. However, for the service to continue into the future, additional households will need to signup for this service. Private security patrols provide additional visibility and security – a deterrent to crime! The patrols are made during the day and at night, seven days per week. Subscribers to the service also are provided vacation checks, package pickups, and “verification” of home security alarms (note – police no longer will respond to “unverified” alarms at homes or businesses). This ser-

vice is currently provided at a very reasonable amount of \$17.50 per month. **For additional information, and to sign up for this invaluable service, go online to [www.TAPSPI.com](http://www.TAPSPI.com) or e-mail: [main@tapspi.com](mailto:main@tapspi.com) or call 877-982-7774 or 408-418-3349.**

Announcements included: A reminder about the Christmas Holiday Decorations Contest in December; there is no meeting in December; the Annual VEP Membership Drive starts in January; and the next meeting will be Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>.

President Rodgers wished everyone a Happy Holiday season!

## VEP – Membership Drive Begins in January

By M. Rodgers, D. Suydam, K. Decker, and H. 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 tentatively scheduled is Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 4pm, at the Vistapark Community Room. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Debra Suydam at [drsuydam@gmail.com](mailto:drsuydam@gmail.com) or 408-972-4231 or Katherine Decker at [kddecker1@gmail.com](mailto:kddecker1@gmail.com) or 408-972-4098.

## Congratulations, Residents of W. Bluefield Dr.

By Marilyn Rodgers

In December, residents of West Bluefield Drive received some welcome news. The San Jose Department of Transportation announced that safety improvements for West Bluefield Drive and Edelweiss would be implemented by the end of January. Safety improvements will include upgraded controls, an additional crosswalk at the intersection, and stop signs at all corners (3-way stop).

Residents on the west side of Bluefield Drive voiced their concerns for the safety of children and adults walking or crossing this intersection to reach Meadows Park or to go to Carson Elementary School. These concerns were originally raised as part of a community meeting initiated by Councilmember Khamis and held at Parkview Elementary School. That meeting, held in June, was in response to concerns following a vehicle accident that occurred on east Bluefield Drive, close to Parkview Elementary School. In that accident, a group of pedestrians were struck by a vehicle and resulted in the death of a 7-year old girl.

A second meeting was held to further identify and discuss possible actions that could be taken to improve safety concerns at the intersection/area of west Bluefield and Edelweiss. Those in attendance included residents of the west Bluefield area, staff from Councilmember Khamis’ office, representatives of the San Jose Department of Transportation, and VEP. Several possible interventions were discussed. A priority request was to institute a 3-way stop with required stop signs. A traffic study was required prior to approval of the requested safety interventions. The traffic study was completed in September.

Congratulations and thanks to the following residents whose concern and work improved the safety of their neighborhood:

Rich Giammona  
Zach McCord  
Daniel Barnes  
John & Julia Mangum

We wish to thank Councilmember Johnny Khamis and his staff as well as the staff of SJ Department of Transportation for their assistance in improving the traffic safety of this problematic residential street and intersection.

## Martial Cottle - Perimeter Trail Opens, Feb. 1st

By Adina Pierce & Marilyn Rodgers / Photograph By Adina Pierce

Save the Date, and plan to attend the opening of the initial phase of the Martial Cottle Park Perimeter (Multiuse) Trail. The date and time - Saturday, February 1st, 10am. VEP Community Association is pleased to be a co-host of this event with Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors Board President, Mike Wasserman, and Santa Clara County Parks. Following a ribbon cutting and brief presentation, Supervisor Mike Wasserman will lead neighbors and park and trails enthusiasts on a "walk," officially "opening" the first portion of the multiuse perimeter trail. The gathering place for the ribbon cutting will be on the Snell side of Chynoweth.

The trail is paved asphalt and is designed with waving curves which provide for a more pleasurable walk, run, or bicycle ride. The remainder of the trail is scheduled to open with the official park opening in January, 2015.

For additional information on the perimeter trail, and on the progress and status of the park development, plan to attend the VEP meeting on Tuesday, January 28th at 7:30pm.

Please Note: Only the perimeter trail will be open for public use beginning on February 1st. The remainder of the future park property is not open to the public - it is an active construction area.



## Fatal Bicycle Accident in VEP Neighborhood

By Marilyn Rodgers

On Tuesday evening, December 3rd, at approximately 7pm, a vehicle hit a young man on a bicycle at the southwest corner of Vistapark Dr. and Branham Lane. The driver of the vehicle stopped to assist. Unfortunately the bicyclist, 17-year old Anthony Garcia, was pronounced dead at the hospital. Our condolences go out to the families involved in this tragedy. As of this writing, the causes of the accident have not been released for publication.

Sadly both pedestrian/vehicle and bicycle/vehicle accidents have significantly increased during 2013. This accident was one of three such fatalities within a 24-hour period. As of the first week in December, the number of vehicle deaths in the City of San Jose was in excess of 41, with over 27 fatalities involving a pedestrian or bicyclist.

While there may be many reasons for such accidents, drivers in VEP neighborhoods should be aware of the following issues.

The number of bicyclists travelling along Chynoweth, Hyde Park Dr., Vistapark Dr., and Branham Lane has significantly increased over the past two years. This trend is expected to continue with another dramatic increase of bicycle traffic as the first part of the perimeter trail is completed in the Martial Cottle Park, opening as of February 1st. Please be aware: watch for bikes, slow down on neighborhood streets, and report street light outages!

For those that ride bicycles, or have friends or loved ones that do, please encourage them to equip both themselves and their bicycles for safety. This is particularly important when riding (or walking) at dusk, or after dark - vehicle drivers' may have difficulty seeing you! To be safe, bicyclists should wear helmets, wear light colored clothing (preferably white), or use reflective tape on clothing, have a headlight (or flashlight, if walking), and have reflectors on the multiple areas of the bicycle. If you walk your dog, use reflective tape on the dog and/or collar, or have reflective leashes. Use of these techniques will make it much easier for drivers of vehicles to see you in time to avert a possible tragic accident.

## S.J. Opens "Budget Games" to All Residents

By Marilyn Rodgers

On Saturday, January 18th, the City of San Jose sponsored a meeting inviting neighborhood leaders to participate and provide feedback to the Mayor, City Council, and City Staff on neighborhood priorities for the San Jose annual budget process. This year, that opportunity is being expanded to include as many San Jose residents as possible. The feedback will be provided via a facilitator-led online "budget game." Below, is a letter the City sent out.

The VEP Board encourages all our VEP neighbors to participate in this important activity which will influence how the budget priorities for the City of San Jose are set for the coming budget year. You do not need to be a resident of San Jose, be 18 years old or older, and have access to a computer to participate.

REGISTER NOW @ <http://conteneo.co/budgetgames>

*Letter from the City of San Jose:*

### Attention San Jose Neighborhoods: Online Budget Games

Get involved in San José's budget process by playing the Budget Games online! Over the last three years, the Budget Games were conducted in-person, using physical money and calculators. Now, with our pro-bono partner Conteneo, we've expanded the games online for 2014.

The online version will allow even more residents to get involved and provide feedback about San José's budget in a collaborative, game-style environment. The free, dare I say fun, hour-long online budget sessions will be held Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Jan. 23 - 25, from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. You get to choose the times and dates that work best with your schedule.

We're hoping to have thousands of San José residents involved in the online Budget Games. After all, San José is the Capital of Silicon Valley so let's take community participation in the budget process to a whole new level.

For additional information - go to the City of San Jose website.



•Sales •Service •Rentals •Body Shop

900 CAPITOL EXPRESSWAY AUTO MALL • SAN JOSE

**266-9500**

Serving San Jose Since 1875



Joel Romero  
Owner

Office: (408) 289-8600  
Fax: (408) 289-8833

[joel@jromerobros.com](mailto:joel@jromerobros.com)

1336 old Bayshore Hwy, San Jose, CA 95112

## Nextdoor Neighbors Rise Up to Help!

By Peggy Golden

It all started on December 14th, when a neighbor from Nextdoor Parkview posted a message for help. She was reaching out to her neighborhood for a friend that was starting a center for homeless high-school-aged children in downtown San Jose. The friend's organization, Stand Up For Kids, had raised enough money to lease an empty building for kids to come in out of the cold, take a shower, grab a meal, do their homework and, hopefully, talk to a mentor. They were looking for donations of boys and girls clothes, and things appropriate for ages 14 to 20. There were approximately 18 replies and numerous donations. She got such a good response for clothing, a few days later she decided to do another posting to see if anyone would be interested in helping mentor. Again, being fairly specific, her post explained that the center was looking for 1:1 mentors. People who could be a big brother or sister, help with homework, fill out job applications, etc. This time she gave a separate email address to help keep the information direct. Again, the responses were many.

On December 28th she posted a thank you note to Parkview and the 10 surrounding neighborhoods that had given donations to the teen center. It had included a big carload of clothes, a bit of furniture and toiletries for the kids. "Thank you and Happy New Year", she wrote. She was very grateful!

It didn't stop there. Using her original posting, she decided to one-up her request for items to desks, tables and chairs. What could it hurt? What about games? Then she shared the fact that they would be posting official long-term volunteer positions on [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org) and that anyone could learn more about the center by visiting [www.standupforkids.org/siliconvalley](http://www.standupforkids.org/siliconvalley). There is a Facebook page, too. Soon after Christmas, things were going so well with so many wonderful responses, she even posted the needs for the entertainment room. A ping pong table was donated, and TV's - not one, but several. People had bookcases, printers, desks, and chairs to donate and they needed someone to pick them. So, another Nextdoor Parkview member put out the request for someone with a truck, so they could coordinate a day of pick up and delivery. That's where I came in. We happen to own a pick up truck and were more than happy to help.

So here is her last posting on January 5<sup>th</sup>.

—Day, in the last two weeks we have collected and delivered 10 truck/car loads to the center! We have fulfilled about 90% of the wish list, we got 9 new mentors, two of which will tutor. A couple of new contacts that can help with future donations, an offer to apply for a \$12,000 grant from a neighborhood church, donations from a group of realtors, a contact that wants to help inspire and teach Science and Engineering to the kids, and a dental hygienist that will continue to donate DDS supplies.

This is just amazing! It took a lot of people in my neighborhood, the use of Nextdoor to accomplish this, I'm so proud of them all!"

I think the most remarkable thing about this particular story was how quickly it all happened. Without the use of Nextdoor, and it's ability to reach so many so quickly, the teen center would still have much to find. Furthermore, this particular story is just one way Nextdoor has proven to help solve so many neighborhood problems, and/or bring us together toward a common goal. Neighbors have posted pictures of many lost pets, and then other neighbors are able to make connections that help get them back to their owners. There was a produce exchange in a nearby park last summer whereby neighbors brought produce from their gardens and shared with each other. No money needed, just an exchange of bounty. We have had a few tragic stories as well - fatal accidents that no one could ever possibly be prepared for. Nextdoor gave us a way to share our grief and support.

There are many other remarkable stories regarding crime and safety in the neighborhood, classifieds, recommendations, neighborhood events, etc. This just happens to be one of the latest. Thank you Nextdoor, and Happy New Year!

## DANGER: Electrical Ground Required!

By Dave Fadness

If you have had to replace the pipe from the water meter to your home, remember you must assure that you maintain a proper ground for your home's electrical system. Special care is needed if you replace the old pipe with a PVC or insulated metal one.

In many homes, electrical grounding is accomplished by attachment to the original metal water pipe. If you disconnect this pipe and replace it, you must re-establish the ground. The electrical ground must be buried at least eight feet in the earth and the results must be continuity tested.

If you replace the original with a PVC or insulated metal pipe, your home will no longer be grounded. You will have to install and connect a proper grounding bar (available at most hardware stores). The use of a jumper from the old pipe to a new ground is taboo—you must have a single, continuous lead of adequate capacity from the circuit box to the primary ground element: NO SPLICES ALLOWED.

A good way to protect yourself is to obtain a building permit so the ensuing final inspection will assure that you have an adequate ground. Alternatively, call a licensed electrical contractor. Whichever approach you take, be sure your home is safely grounded.

[Ed. Note: This article was taken from the Aug. 4, 1978 VEP NEWS.]

## California BATHROOM & KITCHEN

Remodelers Inc.

Complete Custom Bathroom & Kitchen  
Remodeling Since 1994

From Planning & Design To Detailed,  
Quality Craftsmanship

Personalized Service, Clean & On Time

Excellent References

408.360.9700

www.cabr.net  
LIC.NO.698718



SHOWROOM BY APPT.  
1261 LINCOLN AVE.,  
SUITE 112, SAN JOSE, CA 95125



## CHESNOS PAINTING, INC.

COMMERCIAL ★ INDUSTRIAL ★ RESIDENTIAL

CA LICENSE #501042

BOB CHESNOS  
★ VEP MEMBER ★

(408) 978-6640

INTERIOR ★ EXTERIOR ★ INSURED & BONDED

QUALITY PAINTING SINCE 1977

## Branham/87 Clean-Up a Big Success

By Dave Fadness

An energetic group of 48 dedicated volunteers did a great job of cleaning-up three quadrants of the Branham/Route 87 overpass area on Saturday, November 16. We removed trash and weeds, pruned trees and shrubs, and pulled hundreds of tattered, graffiti-smudged slats from chain link fences.

The area was overgrown and unsightly when we arrived, but looked neatly manicured when we were finished.

This project followed-up on the city's removal of recurring homeless encampments in the heavily traveled overpass area. Precipitated by the intimidation of pedestrians and bicyclists that had occurred there, the goal of our project was to not only remove unsightly campsite and other trash, but to discourage re-encampment by improving surveillance visibility from the street. Pedestrian and bicyclist safety was greatly improved as a result.

VEP organized this event in cooperation with the city and Caltrans. Our volunteers were drawn from VEP, Gunderson High School, Pinehurst, LDS Church members, and Councilmember Johnny Khamis's office. Johnny was there, too, working with us all afternoon!

Hats off to all who unselfishly gave time and talent to make our community a better and safer place!

## Holiday Tree Curbside Pick-Up

From City of San Jose

[www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=1548](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=1548)

Recycle your holiday tree on your regular collection day from December 26th throughout the entire month of January each year.

Natural and flocked holiday trees will be collected for recycling on the same day as your garbage, recycling, and yard trimmings. You don't need to attach an "Extra Garbage" sticker, but you do need to remove all tinsel, decorations, and the tree stand. Trees should then be cut into five-foot lengths and placed in the street. Be sure to keep the sections 1 foot from the curb and 5 feet away from your garbage and recycling carts, and any parked vehicles.

If you live in an apartment, townhouse, or condo, ask your property manager if special arrangements have been made for recycling holiday trees on-site.

## Does VEP have your e-mail address?

E-mail is our primary communication tool during months that newsletters are not published. Contact VEP Secretary, Adina Pierce at [adinap@yahoo.com](mailto:adinap@yahoo.com) to provide or change your e-mail address.

(Note: VEP does not share e-mail addresses with anyone.)

## VEP Christmas Decorations Contest Winner

By Katherine Decker and Marilyn Rodgers

Congratulations! Bob and Francine Olsen of 595 Amboy won the 3rd Annual VEP Christmas Decoration Contest.

The Olsen's house and yard display included use of over 26,000 lights, large stars on the roof (crafted by Bob), artificial snow, two 12-foot soldiers, 15 reindeer – four of which were flying, a colored balloon tree, decorated brick pillars, and much more! The Olsens were eager to share their display with VEP neighbors, and hopefully you and your family were able to drive by and see it. The display was also online at [lightsofthevalley.com/sanjose](http://lightsofthevalley.com/sanjose)

The Olsens were presented with a yard sign for display as the 2013 VEP winners (along with "tagging rights" of course), as well as a free VEP membership for 2014, and a gift certificate.



Once again, the VEP neighborhoods were all well decorated for the holidays. Thank you to neighbors that sent e-mails nominating potential winners. Two runner-ups to the finalist were: 309 View Park Circle (off of Vistapark Dr.) and 4929 New World (at Chynoweth). Also of note: on New World – corner of Dunraven – two neighbors strung lights over the street between houses; and three neighbors on Chynoweth all had enchanting displays.

Many houses were unique in a variety of ways, three that were in this category: 3893 Luneta Drive – polar bear, dog, and geese; 4644 Holycon – electronic icicles that appear to be dripping; 618 Albion Drive – largest number of inflatables."

Several streets had the majority of the houses decorated for the holidays. As many people enjoy driving around the VEP neighborhood to see the decorations, the following streets were suggested: Kings Cross Way, Churchill Park, Hyde Park Drive, Massachusetts, Hastings Park, and Bluefield Court.

# Randazzo's

WATER CONDITIONING

WATER SOFTENERS & FILTER SYSTEMS

SALES + REPAIRS

Parts and Repairs for Most Brands

FAST SERVICE \* FAIR PRICES

Discounts Available to VEP Members

Family Owned & Operated

License #514073

(408) 978-5355



Better  
Homes  
and Gardens.  
REAL ESTATE

VENTURA  
BARNETT  
PROPERTIES

Helen Castillo  
Realtor®

BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS REAL ESTATE LLC  
VENTURA BARNETT PROPERTIES  
5985 Almaden Expressway  
San Jose, CA 95120

[www.bhgrealstate.com](http://www.bhgrealstate.com)  
Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated

Office 408.997.9999 x555  
Mobile 408.981.5902  
Fax 408.997.1111  
[HCastillo@vbprop.com](mailto:HCastillo@vbprop.com)

DRE #01472483

## It's Time to Renew Your VEP Membership!

VEP membership is based on a calendar year, January through December, so it's time to renew your membership. You'll find a remit envelop in this newsletter. Please be sure to fill in the information requested, enclose your \$20 check made payable to VEP, and mail it back to us as soon as possible--while it's still fresh in your mind. That's all there is to it!

In a very real sense, renewing membership is your vote of confidence and support for the work we do as VEP volunteers. Yes, we get an occasional "Thank you," but proof positive of your appreciation is your willingness to renew membership each year. We also appreciate the nice comments many of you offer along with your renewal—for that, we offer our thanks!

VEP membership is the best value you'll ever experience. Renew today and ask your neighbors to join our growing family. Thank you.

### What is VEP Community Association?

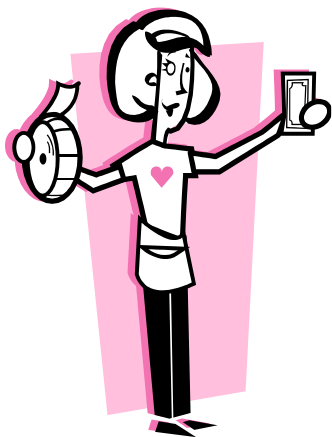
- VEP is an all-volunteer organization of your neighbors working to improve our neighborhoods.
- VEP sponsors many projects and events that improve safety, our quality of life, and the appearance of our community.
- VEP volunteers make our neighborhood's needs, views, and concerns known to government at all levels.
- VEP was founded in 1969. We are one of the largest, most successful, and most continuously active and enduring grass roots volunteer organizations in Santa Clara County.

### Why join VEP?

- To receive our newsletter nine times a year.
- To receive monthly email alerts.
- To keep our neighborhoods beautiful, safe, strong, and prepared.
- To participate in and support effective neighborhood activities and representation.
- To support VEP's annual *Community Service Awards* for high school graduates.
- To be part of an outstanding volunteer community organization with 40 years of success in our neighborhoods.

## ENTER TO WIN FREE 2014 VEP MEMBERSHIP

Bring your completed Membership Application, with payment, to this month's VEP General Meeting on Tuesday, January 28th! You will be entered in a drawing to have your membership fee returned to you, that night! Imagine getting all the great benefits of a year-long VEP Membership, for free!



# Invite your neighbors to join VEP

## \*\* VEP Membership Application \*\*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

### *I am willing to volunteer for:*

- Beautification/clean-up projects
- VEP News/mailling prep
- Memorial Day Parade & Festival
- Distribute flyers
- Serve on a committee
- Serve as a VEP officer or committee chair
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Please let us know:*

- I prefer getting my newsletters by email.

Mail your \$20 check to:

VEP  
P.O. Box 18111  
San Jose, CA 95158.

**Thank you!**

# Neighbors In the Know



A Year of Salads, Sandwiches, & Soups

Online @ [ayearofsaladssandwichesandsoups.blogspot.com](http://ayearofsaladssandwichesandsoups.blogspot.com)

By Kathy Wood, Baker

What's better on a chilly winter night than a bowl of soup in the tummy? What's better on a hot summer day than a refreshing crisp salad? Sandwiches go along with either soup or salad and can be hot or cold. They pretty much consist of a filling snuggled between two pieces of whatever you desire—bread, muffin, tortilla, bun or roll, waffle, etc. This is the year of the —Triple S!

Anyone can open a can of soup and warm it in the microwave, but if you can take a little extra time and make it yourself with your own fresh ingredients, what a better bowl of soup you'll have. Many soups can be frozen in small containers to be consumed at a later date.

Salads make me think of picnics and get-togethers with versions of macaroni and potato salad along with cole slaw at almost every gathering. Sandwiches take me back to grade school. Every day in my Barbie lunchbox my Mom put in a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and even on snow days or during the summer sandwiches had a place on the lunchtime table.

Many restaurants serving lunch give you the choice of having a combination of two of the —Triple S" items. I mean, really, what's better than Tomato Soup and a grilled cheese sandwich?

My first soup is one of my favorites—Butternut Squash Bisque. I grow my own butternut squash and can't wait for it to ripen in the late summer/early fall. You can make this just as a soup rather than a bisque by not adding the cream, if you prefer.

## Butternut Squash Bisque

**Ingredients:** 1 T. canola oil, 1 T. unsalted butter, ½ cup diced onion, ¾-1 c. carrots, 4 cups peeled and cubed butternut squash, 3 cups chicken broth or stock (vegetable can be substituted), salt and ground pepper to taste, nutmeg, to taste (I also add a pinch of cayenne pepper and about ¼ t. of smoked paprika), ½ cup heavy cream (optional).

**Instructions:** Heat the oil and butter in a large pot over medium heat. Cook and stir the onion in the butter and oil until tender, about 2-3 minutes. Mix the carrots and squash into the pot. Pour in broth, and season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg (cayenne and smoked paprika, if using). Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer until vegetables are tender, 20-30 minutes. In a blender or food processor, puree the soup mixture until smooth. Return to the pot and stir in the heavy cream. Heat through, but do not boil. Serve warm with a dash of nutmeg.

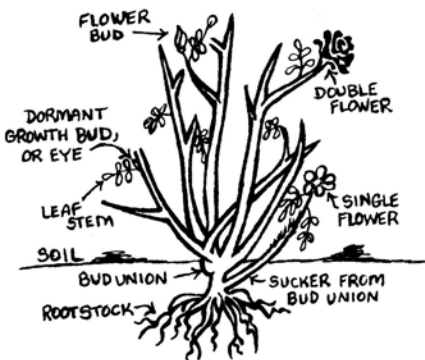
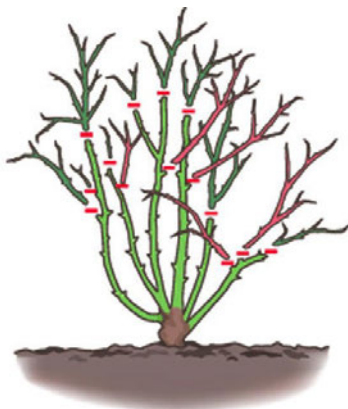
You can find a picture of this soup at [ayearofsaladssandwichesandsoups.blogspot.com](http://ayearofsaladssandwichesandsoups.blogspot.com).

## Rose Pruning Time

By John Marks

It's Tough-Love time for roses; that means stripping leaves, taking shears to lanky canes, and ripping out suckers. This isn't brain surgery; anybody can do it and should.

You don't have to thin out the center of the plant, but you should clip an interior cane that crosses another. And do remove the leaves, so the rose will think it's going dormant. Cut above the node, where the a new shoot will grow.



If you make a mistake, don't sweat it; roses are pretty good at handling themselves. Feed them compost if you have some. Let the aphids come, and then two weeks later, the ladybugs will come and eat the aphids.

If you're interested in some easy lessons, and tips from the masters, you can get three hours of instruction and practice at San Jose's Heritage Rose Garden at Spring and Taylor (or Coleman and Taylor) from 9 a.m. to noon every Wednesday and Friday.

For more info, go to [www.heritageroses.us](http://www.heritageroses.us).

### 4 Easy Rules of Pruning Rose Bushes

1. Remove all dead branches and twiggy growth. Cut cleanly to bud union or to branches from which twigs grew.
2. Open up the center of the bush by removing branches that cross over or grow into the center of the plant.
3. Remove up to one third of the length of all remaining branches. Heavier pruning robs the plant of nutrients needed for new growth.



Ken Wall  
408-425-2980

DRE 00782905  
NMLS 881505



15 Year Churchill Park Drive  
Residents - VEP Members



Real Estate Mortgages

Purchase – Refinance

"Call us to discuss your options"

408-771-0684 office

408-273-6704 fax

[commonwealthrei@gmail.com](mailto:commonwealthrei@gmail.com)



Jane Wall  
408-425-2981

DRE 00969124  
NMLS 881506

Leigh Moore


GEN LIC 606322



South Bay # 408-849-9509

# VEP Community Schools Calendar

## January / February 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
19	<b>20</b> <b>NO SCHOOL</b> Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	21	<b>22</b> High School Nite @John Muir M.S.	<b>23</b> Financial Aid College Night ~ 6:30-7:30pm ~ @Gunderson H.S.	24	25
26	27	28	<b>29</b> Honors Night @John Muir M.S. Cafeteria	<b>30</b> Cash for College ~ 5:00-8:00pm ~ @Gunderson H.S.	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	<b>7</b> Poetry Slam Finale ~ 6:00-8:00pm ~ @Gunderson H.S. Theater	8
9	10	<b>11</b> SELAC Meeting ~ 6:30-7:30pm ~ @Gunderson H.S.	<b>12</b> Science-O-Rama ~ 4:00-6:30pm ~ @John Muir GYM PTSA Meeting ~ 6:30pm ~ @John Muir Library	13	14	15
16	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	22
<b>Oak Grove &amp; San Jose Unified Schools on Break ~ NO SCHOOL</b> 						

### Community Schools Contact Information

**Carson Elementary School ~ Home of the Cougars**

WEB: <http://www.sjUSD.org/carson/> PHONE: (408) 535-6287

**Parkview Elementary School ~ Home of the Panthers**

WEB: <http://parkviewca.com/> PHONE: (408) 226-4655

**John Muir Middle School ~ Home of the Falcons**

WEB: <http://sjUSD.org/john-muir/> PHONE: (408) 535-6281

**Gunderson High School ~ Home of the Grizzlies**







WEB: <http://www.sjUSD.org/gunderson/home/> PHONE: (408) 535-6340





# VEP Community Calendar

## January / February 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
19	20	21	22	23	24	<b>25</b>  South Bay Mentoring Coalition: Outreach Celebration <b>9:00am-12:30pm</b> @County Gov't Ctr. 70 West Hedding
<b>28</b> VEP 2014 Membership Drive Mailing Party ~ 1:00-4:00pm ~ @Vista Park Community Room 	27	<b>28</b> VEP Community Meeting ~ 7:30 PM ~ @Vista Park Community Room	29	30	31	<b>1</b>  ~ 10:00 am ~ Martial Cottle Park Perimeter Trail Officially Opens!
2	3	4	<b>5</b> D10 -Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 8:30-9:30am ~ @Almaden Community Center Community Rm. 6445 Camden Ave	6	7	<b>8</b>  San Jose Summit on Crime & Gang Prevention <b>8:30am-2:00pm</b> @Mount Pleasant High School Theater 1750 S. White Road
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	<b>17</b> 	18	<b>19</b> D10 -Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 5:30-7:00pm ~ Lime Tree Espresso 171 Branham Lane	<b>20</b> 2014 State of the City Address ~ 6:00-7:30pm ~ @San Jose McEnery Convention Center 50 West San Carlos	21	22
 <b>*PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED*</b> GO TO the Official Webpage <a href="http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e8kfiqc2f2f5d5e&amp;llr=ffcsvncab">http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e8kfiqc2f2f5d5e&amp;llr=ffcsvncab</a>						

### Dates to Remember!

#### VEP Community Meetings

January 28, 2014  
 February 25, 2014  
 March - TBA

#### VEP Community Events

**Community Garage Sale**  
 Saturday, May 3, 2014

# 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)

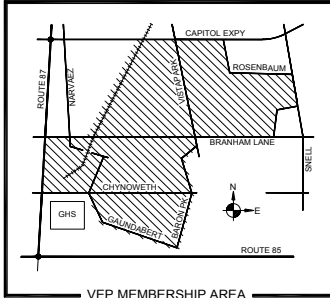
PRSR STD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 SAN JOSE, CA  
 PERMIT #5242

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

President	Marilyn Rodgers	225-7553	mrodgersm@aol.com
Secretary	Adina Pierce	362-0937	adinap@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Ginger Cardona	227-0222	cardona@sbcglobal.net
Director	Helen Castillo		hcastillo@vbprop.com
Director	Peggy Golden		peggygolden@mac.com
Vice President	Katherine Decker		kddedcker@sbcglobal.net
Director	Arul Edwin		aruledwin@yahoo.com
Editor	Rachel Witmeyer	226-2935	vepeditor@gmail.com

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



VEP MEMBERSHIP AREA



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 Community Meeting  
 Tuesday, January 28th