

VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

MARCH 2014

VEP'S MEETING

7:00 p.m. Thursday
▶ **March 27th, 2014** ◀

Gunderson High School Auditorium
622 Gaundabert Lane

★ Mayoral Candidates Forum ★

Co-Sponsored by

VEP Community Association
Almaden Winery Neighborhood Association
Erikson Neighborhood Association

Candidates

Dave Cortese
Rose Herrera
Sam Liccardo
Madison Nguyen
Pierluigi Oliverio

Moderator

Rachel Wilner
San Jose Mercury News

Announcements & Updates

Please Note: No Meeting Tuesday, March 25th

Vista Park Cleanup Day, March 22nd

VEP Annual Membership Drive Continues

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

Mayoral Candidate Forum, 7pm on March 27th

By Dave Fadness

Mark your calendars now, tell your family and friends, and be sure to attend our Mayoral Candidates Forum in the theater at Gunderson High School at 7 pm on Thursday, March 27.

San Jose's mayoral candidates **David Cortese, Rose Herrera, Sam Liccardo, Madison Nguyen, and Pierluigi Oliverio** will be in attendance to tell us about their platforms and answer your questions. This is your chance to see and hear them in person, side-by-side.

Our moderator is San Jose Mercury-News Editorial Writer **Rachel Wilner**. Rachel is widely respected and very well versed on local politics and issues. She'll be an excellent moderator.

VEP sets the stage for candidate forums by sending questions in advance. **The five candidates' responses, are published as a special pull-out section in this newsletter, between pages 8 and 9.** Be sure to read it and keep it handy as a reference when deciding who to vote for on June 3.

This event will be co-sponsored by **VEP, Almaden Winery Neighborhood Association, and Erikson Neighborhood Association**. It's free and open to the public. Be sure to attend.

February Meeting Synopsis

By Marilyn Rodgers

President Marilyn Rodgers began the February meeting with announcements and introductions which included Councilmember Johnny Khamis. She emphasized that the March meeting would be a Mayoral Candidates Forum. The Forum will be held in place of the usual membership meeting. The date for the Forum will be Thursday, March 27th, and it will be held in the Gunderson High School Auditorium.

The schedule for this evening included three presentations. The first speaker introduced was Kevin Lee, of Our City Forest. Ms. Rodgers indicated that VEP has had an ongoing relationship with Our City Forest who has been a partner in assisting VEP in the planting of many trees. Mr. Lee provided a brief introduction of a proposal for a new program Our City Forest is offering to neighborhood associations – Group Tree Trimming. The program includes the potential for a discounted rate for homeowners who have their large trees trimmed. A few attendees indicated they may be interested. Our City Forest will screen several tree pruning companies to assure that they would properly trim and care for trees. A representative of the neighborhood association will be needed to work with Mr. Lee to contact potential tree trimming-

Continues on the Next Page

◆ **2014 is VEP's 45th Year!** ◆

Continued from Previous Page

-companies. Ms. Rodgers asked for a volunteer for this project. No one at the meeting volunteered. Ms. Rodgers said she would discuss the proposal with Mr. Lee at a future time.

The next presentation was an Update on Martial Cottle Park and Trail. Alicia Flynn and Eric Goodrich both spoke. Ms. Flynn, the Project Manager, relayed that the plans for building the two bridges that will cross over Canoas Creek had been approved by the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Work on the bridges should begin in the near future. With the possibility of rain during the next several days, a member of the audience asked about the planning and development for water drainage off of the trail, (the levelness of the trail) in the event of a large amount of rainfall. Ms. Flynn stated that the trail was equipped to drain water that pooled. Eric Goodrich, Park Manager, spoke next providing some statistics on numbers of users on the trail since the opening. Several people in the audience, who live on Wellington Park Drive, were very verbal about not knowing that a gate would be at the end of their street; were quite distressed over the lack of security, and shocked that the "gates" are not actual gates that can be closed/locked at night. They were particularly concerned about the numbers of people walking on their street to enter and leave the trail after dark. Eric indicated that he was not in a position to change County Parks policy or rules, but stated he would communicate everyone's concerns through the chain of command. Ms. Rodgers also asked this group of residents to stay after the meeting to further discuss their concerns with her. She also suggested that they may want to consider TAPS Security Patrols as another option for increasing security for their property. She also stated that there is at least one other park locally that is locked at night – Emma Prusch. A neighbor on Birmingham Drive (whose property backs up on the trail) described an alarming encounter he had with someone on the trail after dark. Mr. Goodrich encouraged everyone to avoid engaging anyone on the trail after dark, and to report it to San Jose Police Department by calling 311, provide the dispatcher with detailed information, and ask for SJPd response. Discussion ensued and questions were asked as to who was to be called and under what circumstances. In an emergency, call 911. Otherwise, a Park Ranger is available between 7am and one hour after Sunset. Park Rangers will respond if residents call County Communications at 408-299-2311, tell the dispatcher what you have seen, and request a Park Ranger response.

Ms. Rodgers introduced Councilmember Johnny Khamis who wanted to make a few comments. He reminded everyone that the Annual Winter Senior Walk and Resource Faire would be Friday, February 28th from 8:30am to 10:30am at Oakridge Shopping Center – Macy's Courtyard. This event is co-sponsored by Councilmembers Khamis, Kalra, and Rocha, as well as Kaiser Permanente and Oakridge Shopping Center. The Councilmember also announced that due to the number of complaints he is receiving regarding safety on Hyde Park Drive, the speed limit will be lowered to 25 miles per hour (in the next few months). Councilmember Khamis also strongly encouraged everyone in our area to call

Mark Your Calendars!



★ **VEP's March Meeting** ★

Mayoral Candidates Forum

Thursday, March 27th @ 7:00pm

**Gunderson High School Auditorium
622 Gaundebert Lane**

311 to report any illegal or suspicious behavior, and also ask that a report be made out. He indicated that when he relays our concerns regarding public safety issues in our neighborhoods to the SJPd, they tell him that they rarely receive calls from our area.

The third presentation was provided by Gerry deYoung of Ruth & Going on the Almaden Ranch development. Ms. Rodgers thanked Mr. deYoung for his willingness now, and in the past, to provide information and presentations to neighborhood associations on projects he was involved in. She stated that while they were often on opposite sides of an issue, he was always willing to listen to community concerns, and when possible, to act on them in their favor. One such issue had to do with VEP's long standing opposition to the connection of Cherry to Chynoweth, which would have brought volumes of traffic through the VEP neighborhood. Mr. deYoung thanked Marilyn for her kind words.

The Almaden Ranch property is located at Cherry and Almaden Expressway. All plans have been approved and the work to build the new shopping center has begun. While not all of the stores going into the development have been determined, the largest (cornerstone) store will be BassPro. As one of the largest BassPro stores to date, it will be their flagship in this region. There will also be a skin care/cosmetics store, a physical fitness store, and several others. Concern had previously been voiced that only fast food outlets would be at this location. However, some of the eateries will provide a walk-in and sit-down (quick and informal) option for customers. Streets will be improved – Arcadia (the developer) will pay for an additional lane exiting off of Hwy 85 onto Almaden Expressway. Cherry from Almaden Expressway, the main entry into the shopping center, and is currently being widened. There will be three signals between Almaden Expressway around to Sanchez (street leading up to Blossom Hill Road). Both the developer and City Council District 9 have provided the money needed to build a pedestrian bridge across Guadalupe River. This will allow pedestrian/bike traffic to access Oakridge Shopping Center and the Light Rail. Almaden Ranch Shopping Center is scheduled to open by the summer of 2015.

Ms. Rodgers thanked everyone for coming.

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VEP Community Service Awards 2014

By Marilyn Rodgers and Helen Castillo

Once again, VEP Community Association will provide an opportunity for up to three high school seniors to be awarded a Community Service Award (scholarship) for recognition of volunteerism in their community. This is the 30th consecutive year that VEP has awarded scholarships to local high school seniors in recognition of their outstanding volunteer service to their community. A panel of judges, who are also volunteers in our community will determine the winner(s), based on predetermined criteria, after reviewing submitted applications. As in previous years, applications will be solicited from Gunderson High School, from Andrew Hill High School, and through the VEP newsletter and website for the "at-large category". The "at-large category" are students who attend any other high school in San Jose, but must live in the geographical boundaries of the VEP Community.

Both the criteria and the budgeted amount for scholarships will continue as has been approved for the last several years. \$1,000.00 was included in this year's budget. The program criteria which has been approved for the last several years, is as follows:

"Up to 3 awards to be granted at the judges' discretion, evenly distributed among selected winners. Nominations to be solicited from AHHS, GHS, and in the VEP newsletter (for Member-at-Large). School administrators will be asked to nominate at least 2 students per school with no upper limit. No more than 1 award per category (AHHS, GHS, At-large). Ok to grant an award in a category with only 1 nominee. Ok not to grant an award in any category, if judges feel the candidate(s) don't merit an award."

Applications will be available by the end of March at each high school and on the VEP website, or by request (for the At-Large Applications). At Gunderson High School, the administrator to contact for an application is Ms. Stephanie Heuer, and at Andrew Hill High School, the administrator to contact for an application is Ms. Larrie Peters. For the At-Large category, applications will be available on the VEP website at www.vepca.net or by contacting one of the VEP coordinators. The At-Large student applicants will need to provide contact information to VEP for an administrator at their high school (for verification purposes).

If you know a deserving high school senior, who is a **very active volunteer**, please let them know about our Community Service Awards.

Thank you to VEP Board Member Helen Castillo who volunteered to assist with the CSA program this year!

Why Are So Many Streetlights Dark?

By Marilyn Rodgers

Several members have contacted us asking why so many streetlights are out in the VEP neighborhoods.

You may have noticed that there are more than eight lights out on the south side of Branham Lane from New Compton to the intersection of Vistapark Drive. There are also two or three lights out on the north end of Vistapark close to Capitol Expressway, and three more out at the southend of Vistapark, south of Branham. All of the street lights are dark on the section of Chynoweth in front of Gunderson High School - on both sides of the street.

When there are several lights out in row, it usually indicates that the copper wiring has been stolen. New technology is being developed which will prevent this from happening, but the new technology will not be available for several months. The City Council has approved an additional \$500,000 for streetlight re-

pairs because the need has become so great throughout the City.

Please continue to report street light outages. If several neighbors report the outage, that is also helpful! The current number to call and report street light outages is: **408-794-1903**.

Community-Wide Garage Sale on May 3rd

Our annual *Community Garage Sale* will be held on Saturday, May 3rd. Make sure to mark it on your calendar now, and start gathering those treasures you no longer use from your garage, attic, and closets.

We want to get everyone in our community to have a garage sale on the same day. The best way to find a new home for your unused stuff is to increase traffic to your home. So, VEP will advertise this event in local newspapers and by distributing flyers around our neighborhoods.

Activity attracts more activity. Your best resource is you. Get your neighbors involved. People will pass by your street unless they think something is happening there. Try to get *everyone* on your street to join in. You might even pool all your neighbors' goodies into one big second-hand superstore. If your neighbors aren't selling, ask if you can spread out to their driveway.

Plan now to make sure you can be seen from the street. Put up balloons or signs. Have your out-of-area friends bring garage sale items that add to yours-make it a big, fun event on your street or cul-de-sac. A little energy and creativity now will pay off in big dividends, freeing up space in your home and putting extra money in your pocket.

If you will be participating and would like to have your street specifically listed on craigslist, please email just the street name to vepeditor@gmail.com.

VEP Membership Drive Continues: - Comments from Members

By Marilyn Rodgers, Ginger Cardona, and Adina Pierce

The annual VEP membership drive continues in March. As the membership renewals come in, we are very appreciative of continuing members support, and look forward to other residents in our neighborhoods joining us. It is through your continuing support that VEP is able to advocate for keeping our neighborhoods safe and attractive.

We also appreciate and enjoy reading the comments you include on the membership envelopes. Here are some examples:

- Best homeowner's association in San Jose!!! -Great job!
- It is with thanks to you and the amazing team work, that we can all live in this wonderful VEP community.
- We really appreciate all that VEP does. -Thanks for all you do!
- Appreciate all that you do for our community.
- VEP does a wonderful job! -Thank you for your hard work
- Please use the extra money for whatever you need!
- We so appreciate VEP and all of its volunteers.
- Appreciate your work for our community
- Appreciate all of your efforts. -Keep up the good work!
- Thank you for all of your great work and efforts
- I read your newsletter completely! Thank you very much.

We would also like to acknowledge those members, who included an additional amount above and beyond the membership dues:

Jeanne Mullins, Ben & Cheri Scales, and Ronald & Mary Stuart

Note: If you did not see your comment or our acknowledgement, we hope to have it in next month's newsletter.

Update on Martial Cottle Park Perimeter Trail

By Marilyn Rodgers / Photos by Adina Pierce & Katherine Decker

The first phase of the multiuse trail has been open for use for almost six weeks (as of this writing). The trail is being well utilized, with both people and dogs seemingly enjoying themselves.

Daily numbers of users range from just 100 – on a cold, very rainy and very windy day— to well over 500 on the Sunday of the President's Day Holiday weekend. The majority of trail users to this point appear to be walkers/joggers – of which approximately 60% are walking their dogs, on leashes. In addition, there are also large numbers of families walking together, pushing carriages, and/or riding bicycles. This group includes many small children.

Issues of Concern - As with all good things, sometimes there are also issues of concern that need to be addressed. As the multiuse trail is new to our area, many neighbors and others using the trail, are unaware of the **Trail Rules**. The issues addressed below are provided to insure that everyone will have a **safe, secure, and enjoyable experience!**

Trail Hours – Open from Sunrise to Sunset

Many people have been unaware of the hours in which the trail is open for use, resulting in large numbers of people on the trail at or after dark. Please help spread the word that **the trail is closed at dark!** If the sun has already gone down, and you are just entering the trail, consider how long it will take you to walk, jog, or bike – including the amount of time to return and exit the trail.

Dogs Must Be On Leashes At All Times

As indicated above, there are large numbers of dogs walking and enjoying the trail with their owners. In addition to the amount of traffic on the trail, many of the users are small children, making this trail rule especially important.

Pet Owners – Please Pick Up After Your Animals

Doggie bags are available in dispensers at each pedestrian entrance. However, should the dispensers be empty, it is always a good idea to bring your own supply.

Please Review All of the Trail and Park Rules! (There are posted signs at each entrance.)



Santa Clara County Parks website www.parkhere.org provides a detailed list of **Trail and Park Rules**, found under **Activities**.

The following is an abbreviated list found at each of the entrances to the multiuse trail at Martial Cottle Park:

Trail Use

– Sunrise to Sunset

Trail Users:

- * Stay on designated trail
- * Keep right
- * Keep dogs on leash
- * Clean up all waste left by your pet, dog, or horse
- * Pick up litter
- * No fires
- * No motor vehicles
- * Alcohol prohibited
- * No smoking

Bicyclists:

- * Yield to pedestrians
- * Ride cautiously
- * Maximum speed is 15 miles/hr
- * Bicyclists under 18 must wear helmets
- * You are responsible for knowing trail rules and regulations



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Who to Call for Issues or Incidents on the Martial Cottle Perimeter Trail

In an Emergency – Call 911

For suspicious or illegal behavior, do not engage the individuals involved. Call one of the following:

During the hours -

7am until 1 hour after sunset, call **408-299-2311**

County Communications. Tell the dispatcher what you have seen, and request a Park Ranger response;

One hour after Sunset until 7am, call **311**

Tell the San Jose dispatcher what you have seen, and request San Jose Police Department response

(Note: As Martial Cottle Park, and Trail are new entities, you will need to be prepared to give information about the location – i.e. Branham and Snell, or the new County Park located in the middle of San Jose. Include street perimeters. Also tell the dispatcher that you have been encouraged to call this number to report issues and incidents.)

Special Thanks to a Neighbor

By Adina Pierce and Marilyn Rodgers

We would like to say a **special thank you to neighbor Ellen Finch**. Ellen has been out on the trail every day since the opening, with her two dogs. In addition to enjoying the trail herself, she has voluntarily been picking up litter, and then documenting what and where she has found it. The most common litter has been beer bottle caps, cigarettes, and doggie-doo.

Thank you again, Ellen, for your concern and consideration of other trail users and your willingness to make the Martial Cottle Trail experience an enjoyable one for all!

Common Questions About Martial Cottle Park

By Adina Pierce and Marilyn Rodgers

1. When will the remainder of the trail, and the park open?

The remainder of the perimeter trail will open no later than the park opening, which is scheduled for December/January 2015. The trail over Canoas Creek to the west side of Chynoweth (which will also have a Pedestrian Gate) and beyond was delayed until the plans for the bridges across Canoas Creek were approved by the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

2. When will the plans be approved for the bridges that will cross Canoas Creek? The plans were recently approved, and work on the bridges is scheduled to begin in the near future.

3. How were entrances determined? As planning started for development of the Master Design for the Park, VEP made strong recommendations to the County Staff regarding "vehicle entrances." There was significant concern in the VEP Community -



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that vehicle entrances should not be placed at Vistapark, Wellington Park Drive, or W. Chynoweth. The main vehicle entrance was placed close to the half way point on Snell between Branham and Chynoweth (close access to where the Visitors Center and on-site Parking would be located). The County had initially proposed the main vehicle entrance be located on Branham close to Snell, across from the shopping center. Pedestrian entrances were discussed as part of the large community presentations provided by the County. Pedestrian entrances were announced by County staff. Initially, the County recommended eight pedestrian entrances. At one point, an additional pedestrian gate (Gaundabert) was suggested by the County, however, the final number reverted back to/ remained at eight pedestrian gates.

4. Why aren't basketball courts or other sports activities included in the plan for this park? Mr. Lester laid out specific plans and wishes (and he reinforced those during the planning phase) as to what would, and would not, be included in the Park. It was his wish that the focus for the park be on education for current and future generations regarding agriculture, and its importance to the "Valley of Hearts Delight." In addition to the focus of this agriculture park being on education, it also has as a priority to keep as much of the property as possible dedicated to growing a variety of crops. There will be some recreational activities available for public use, such as the perimeter trail and picnic areas.

5. Where is there parking available for those wanting to use the trail? Parking is limited. The intent of having so many pedestrian entrances was to provide access to the multiuse perimeter trail. Currently there is parking on east Chynoweth (west of Snell) along the park property. Once the park is opened, there will also be onsite parking inside the Park.

6. Now that Mr. Lester has died, will his house and the other properties listed as part of the "Life Estate" be available for the public to see? Mr. Lester made arrangements to keep the Life Estate portion of the property for his exclusive use as long as he was alive. However, as part of his wonderful donation and upon his death, he had incorporated plans in the "donor's wishes" for the Life Estate to become an integral part of the Park. This will not happen immediately however, but once his estate is settled.



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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 44 years of success in our neighborhoods.



Calling All VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers Needed for Vista Park Project, 3/22

By Dave Fadness

Volunteers are needed for a project at Vista Park. Among other tasks, it's time to replenish the wood chips in the play lots again. Our task will be to move 150 cubic yards of chips from the parking lot and distribute them around the playground. The city will provide the wood chips (Fibar), wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, and brooms. All volunteers will be asked to sign the usual waiver forms, giving them workers' comp coverage; I will email you a copy. Volunteers under 18 will need their parent's signature on the waiver form (no exceptions).

Bring your signed forms and your energy. Be sure to wear sturdy work clothes and shoes, a hat, and gloves. Registration begins at 8:45 am. We'll start working at 9am sharp on Saturday, March 22. Vista Park is located at 475 Hyde Park Drive. We expect to have the job done by noon. (Come even if you can only help for an hour, or two.)



Gunderson students will be there, but we'll need more hands. Call or email me ASAP if you're willing to help (408-578-6428 or ddfadness@sbcglobal.net). Thank you!

** 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.

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Thank you!



Gardening with John: Annuals for the Summer

By John Marks, Gardening Editor

By now, the perennials and bulbs you planted are in full swing! Continue to care for these plants, providing them proper nutrients, moisture, light, and protection from pests and diseases.

The last step in completing your planting is to add annuals and roses to the garden. Consult your garden plan before heading off to pick up these plants. Know what types of annuals and roses will grow healthy and successfully in your garden.

* There are so many varieties to choose from. Consult a plant encyclopedia to choose the best annual and rose varieties for your garden.

* When selecting annuals at the nursery or garden center review plants to see that they are pest and disease free, with no holes in the leaves or discolored edges. Look for healthy leaf color, and see that the roots are not overcrowded.

* Once you have your annuals home from the nursery, get them into the ground or container as soon as possible. Planting will allow you to get the annuals the proper nutrients and moisture they need to begin developing roots.

* When planting annuals, make sure to properly amend your existing soil. We recommend using Miracle-Gro Garden Soil for Flowers and Vegetables to improve the condition of the soil and provide essential nutrients needed by your plants.

* To make the most of the annuals you have, plant them in groups, or staggered, depending on the size of the garden.

* If you are planting in containers, try to place the annuals that will grow tallest in the center and from there, plant the remaining plants in descending height toward the edge of the container. This will keep shorter plants from competing for light with the taller plants.

* Before placing annuals into the soil, gently break apart roots that have become overgrown. Removing the matted tangles before planting will allow roots to grow strong once in the ground.

* Keep your annuals growing strong and healthy with the proper nutrients. Feed them every other week with Miracle-Gro All Purpose Water Soluble Plant Food.

Another booster for your roses and annuals is a homemade start-up meal.

Mix 1 tbsp. of liquid dish soap, 1 tbsp. of hydrogen peroxide, 1 tsp. of vitamin B-1 starter, and 1 tsp of whiskey in a half-gallon of warm water. Treating your plants occasionally with this mixture will help them perk up and bloom.



A Year of Salads, Sandwiches, & Soups

Online @ ayeartofsaladssandwichesandsoups.blogspot.com

By Kathy Wood, Baker

What's in YOUR purse? So, maybe I carry a few more items in my handbag than I really need. But, if I ever showed up at the "Let's Make A Deal" show, I could more than likely win something.

When children are babies and toddlers, everything can be tossed into a diaper bag and no one notices how big of a bag you are toting, because babies need a lot of stuff. Well, even when the babies turn into teenagers, Mom's bag still becomes the catchall for "you never know" situations. Formula bottles turn into water bottles; pacifiers turn into lollipops; teething rings become jerky or licorice and diapers transfer to gym shorts. Baby wipes turn into, oh heck, you can still use those (I don't care how old you are).

Before arriving at the airport to take a trip my purse goes through a complete overhaul. Hard decisions are made on the importance of some items. My mace and my pocket knife are the first things to go (they frown upon these items in the baggage department). I probably don't need to carry my 3 extra cloth bags for the grocery store. A collapsible cup for my dog to get a drink can stay at home, since she is. A roll of quarters weighs too much and I won't be parking since, again, my car will be at home, with the dog. With modern cell phones there is no longer a need to carry a complete photo album to share with strangers your sweet grand-kids pictures. That roll of duct tape that fixes anything can be purchased almost anywhere, although I may hand the pilot a roll as I'm boarding... you never know!

One important item that always remains is a small notebook. I still like to hand write recipes wherever I find them, so in the future they can be tried and either transferred to my cookbook or tossed out (recycled, of course). This sandwich recipe puts a new (delightfully so) twist on an ordinary grilled cheese sandwich.

Dark Chocolate, Raspberry, and Brie Grilled Cheese

Ingredients:

- 2 thick slices of French or Italian bread
- 2 tablespoons of butter
- 2 ounces of Brie cheese
- 2 ounces of a dark chocolate bar, broken into pieces
- 2-3 Tbsp. raspberry preserves, or ½ cup smashed raspberries

Instructions:

Spread butter on one side of each slice of bread. Slice the brie and spread on unbuttered sides of the bread. Add raspberry preserves and chocolate pieces, top with remaining slice of buttered bread. Heat a skillet over medium heat and add sandwich. Cover with a lid and cook about 5 minutes, or until golden brown on bottom. Carefully flip sandwich, and cook a few more minutes or until the chocolate and cheese have melted and bread is golden brown. Enjoy!

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VEP Community Schools Calendar

March / April 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16	17 	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 "Gunderson's Got Talent" ~ 6:00-8:00pm ~ @GHS Theater	26 11th Grade Family Night ~ 6:30-7:30pm ~ @GHS Media Ctr	28 Falcon Dance ~ 6:30-8:30pm ~ @JMMS Cafeteria	29
30	31	1 Open House ~ 7:00pm ~ @Carson School	2 "Gunderson's Got Talent" ~ 6:00-8:00pm ~ @GHS Theater	3 Spring Pictures Free Dress Day @Carson School	4	5 "Spring Fling" ~ Noon-4:00pm ~ @GHS FORum
6	7	8 PTA Meeting ~ 7:00-8:00pm ~ @Carson Library SELAC Meeting ~ 6:30-7:30pm ~ @Gunderson	9 PTSA Meeting ~ 6:30-8:30pm ~ @JMMS Library "GHS Got Talent" ~ 6:00-8:00pm ~ @GHS Theater	10 Gunderson H.S. Cheer Fundraiser ~ 3:00-9:00pm ~ @Round Table Pizza	11 Minimum Day @JMMS	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<p>← San Jose Unified Schools on Spring Break ~ NO SCHOOL →</p>						

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 Association

June 3, 2014 Primary Election ★ Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire ★

Note: Candidates were asked to limit their answers to 100 words for each question.

1. Why are you running for Mayor?	
David Cortese	I'm running for Mayor of San Jose because I care deeply about this city and I want to bring it together.
Rose Herrera	<p>I have the right mix of experience, character and commitment to keep the city moving forward and solve the challenges our residents face.</p> <p>I grew up in a working class San Jose neighborhood, served my country in the Air Force, graduated from college, worked in the real world and ran a small business - before running for City Council. I'm ready to serve now as Mayor.</p> <p>I have a vision for our City's future, focused on expanding our economic base, improving schools, and making citizens safer. We have to do this while ensuring a balanced city budget, and recognizing that there are limits to what we can do.</p> <p>Since my election to the City Council, I've focused on getting things done - even when there were political consequences.</p>
Sam Liccardo	<p>I am running for Mayor to create a safer, smarter, and stronger San Jose. We live in era of great promise and prosperity in the Valley, yet we see a withering City Hall, and chronic budgetary shortfalls. Many of our residents feel resigned to live in a city with declining services, deteriorating infrastructure, and even worse, a diminishing sense of their own safety.</p> <p>My vision is to overcome this sense of resignation with a distinctively Silicon Valley solution: innovation. We need to serve our community differently--more innovatively--than we have in the past. I am the mayoral candidate who has led, far more than any other candidate, initiatives leveraging innovative approaches to address our most critical needs.</p>
Madison Nguyen	I am running for mayor because San Jose needs a leader who connects with people from all walks of life, someone who understands firsthand the struggles of ordinary citizens and will work hard to improve their quality of life. These connections are critical to my commitment to represent ALL of San Jose. I am passionate about public service because my work can make a positive difference for members of the community. For these reasons, I am a public servant because I am committed to building a better city for everyone who chooses to make San Jose their home.
Pierluigi Oliverio	Same reason I ran for city council. To allow San Jose to live up to its potential.
2. If elected, what are your top 4 priorities?	
Pierluigi Oliverio	Police, roads, sewers, and operational efficiency.
David Cortese	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restore public safety sector to reduce crime and blight in San Jose. 2. Reprioritize transportation to repair our aging city and neighborhood roads. 3. Protect the city's tax base in order to increase our solvency. 4. Maximize access to city community centers and libraries for public.
Rose Herrera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand our economic base. Make doing business easier with technology, preserve land zoned for job-creating commercial uses, support industries that provide better-paying jobs to help reduce expanding income divide. • Make Neighborhoods safer. We cannot go backwards on pension reforms, but we have to find ways to restore "boots on the ground," employ technology to improve efficiency, and civilize non-patrol jobs to reduce costs. • Partnering with schools to improve education opportunities. We should inventory city land and facilities to see where we can partner with school districts to provide rooms or technology for libraries, computer science homework centers, and playgrounds. Increase funding for truancy abatement programs we are seeing tremendous success with our current deployment of the Truancy Abatement Burglary suppression (TABS) program in San Jose. A large percentage of the students that are being stopped are taken back to school or returned to their parents. Even a 1% increase in school attendance can mean significant additional revenue to a school. We should connect schools to the private sector for internship opportunities. Innovative programs used in private schools like Cristo Rey that is opening in San Jose offer low income students the opportunity to spend one day a week working at a company. This opportunity should exist across the city in all schools. • Develop a long-term plan for city services to prioritize funding of critical programs. We must recognize that we cannot do everything, so we should focus budget to ensure we do the most critical things well.
Sam Liccardo	<p>My top priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Safety • Expanding Job Opportunities by Attracting & Supporting the Growth of Employers • Restoring and Repairing Infrastructure, and • Fiscal Reform
Madison Nguyen	<p>If elected, my top four priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return public safety in San Jose (police and fire) to our previously high standards, including restoring the burglary unit. • Make San Jose attractive for new businesses and jobs. • Fix our roadway infrastructure including potholes, street repairs, and sidewalk improvements for better mobility. • Improve core city services such as open full-time and accessible libraries, senior and youth programs, and recreational amenities.



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3. In 2012, 69% of San Jose voters passed Measure B. If elected, will you support funding for court costs (and other necessary expenses) needed to prevail in the challenge and subsequent appeals to Measure B? Explain why or why not? Once successful in the courts, will you work for full implementation of Measure B? Explain why or why not.	
Madison Nguyen	San Jose voters gave us a mandate to seek pension reform, and we have a duty to see it through. We cannot continue down a path that is simply unsustainable and we must address this issue if we are to see a long-term sustainable general fund that can afford the essential services our residents deserve. Once Measure B is fully litigated, I will implement Measure B in compliance with all applicable laws. We need to have sustainable and secure pension and retirement plans that are available for employees upon retirement, but also do not continue to strain essential city services.
Pierluigi Oliverio	Yes and yes. We cannot have a situation where annual pension costs exceed all property tax revenues.
David Cortese	I do not foresee supporting funding for any further attempts to litigate Measure B. It's time to bring this city back together again. Although I do support the two-tier pension system and other pension reforms that have already been gained. I have voiced my concerns over the legality of some of the litigated Measure B provisions since it was first drafted for the ballot in 2012. I based those concerns on sound legal opinions by members of the City Attorney's Office, and as an attorney myself, legal precedent in the courts. I do not believe in wasting taxpayer dollars on pursuing components of Measure B that are significantly flawed and that are now crippling our ability to hire and retain cops. The city would be embroiled in litigation and would likely spend years in court. This would create continued uncertainty for existing public safety personnel and the hiring process. That uncertainty has already led to the resignations of a majority of the 450 cops who have departed in the past few years and the inability to keep needed recruits from leaving as well. I do not believe the city will achieve any material successes in court beyond the reforms that have already been approved. Police officers are still resigning at a rate of 70 per year. We cannot afford to lose any more officers. We need to begin rebuilding our police force before we do not have one anymore. Further fiscal reforms should be negotiated in a court settlement or at the bargaining table.
Sam Liccardo	I've been a vocal and consistent advocate for retirement benefits reform. In 2010, two years before Measure B appeared on the ballot, I wrote an op-ed in the Mercury News advocating for pension and retirement benefits reform , two years before Measure B appeared on the ballot. I will fully support litigating Measure B until we achieve success, and to the court of highest jurisdiction. Although litigation of this scale costs millions, those costs amount to a bargain compared to the billions in costs that we incur by doing nothing. I will work to ensure that implementation is fair, complete, and effective.
Rose Herrera	I was one of the most vocal leaders of passing Measure B - and the chief target of its opponents. I am committed to ensure it is fully implemented.
4. What are your priorities for economic development in San Jose? What would you do to make San Jose more attractive in competition with other cities and states?	
Rose Herrera	San Jose must grow a bigger economic base and increase the number of higher paying jobs and companies in San Jose. Currently, we have only .85 jobs per employed resident. For a healthy economy, that needs to be at 1:1 or greater. Resist converting industrial land. We need to utilize our remaining industrial land for job creation. We need to utilize zoning to encourage job-creating uses, make it easier and faster to do business, reduce regulation, and take aggressive action to help businesses tap into the state's new Economic Development Initiative. We need a real economic development plan San Jose has an opportunity to create the next 5 year economic development plan next year this time we should seek more input from job-creators, Venture Capital community and seek expertise beyond the south bay. Engage the chamber, leadership group, universities throughout the bay area to assist us in asking the right questions focus on San Jose's core strengths such as advanced manufacturing. And we need to focus on "branding" San Jose better. As a councilwoman, I met with businesses to recruit them to move into critical areas in my district, as Mayor, I will personally recruit name companies to locate downtown.
Madison Nguyen	In order to achieve this, we must prioritize economic development for the betterment of all San Jose residents. We can attract successful businesses to relocate to San Jose through more business-friendly initiatives such as my proposal for a streamlined permit approval system, to be completed within 100 days. If elected as Mayor, I will designate a member of my staff to be the Mayor's Business Advocate (MBA) to efficiently share resources with individuals who want to do business in San Jose. These policies will put us in the right direction toward improving and sustaining economic development.
Pierluigi Oliverio	Retain jobs and recruit local companies that offer jobs. Offer value without subsidy.
David Cortese	My priorities are to: -protect the city's tax base in order to increase solvency -eliminate barriers to businesses operating in San Jose to create jobs -Protect highest tax generating land uses In my two decades plus of public service, I have worked to position San Jose as an eager and willing demonstration site for regional and federal programs. I will continue to leverage relationships with federal level representatives and administrators in this effort.
Sam Liccardo	• San José needs to tackle the byzantine permitting process that hinders the ability of small businesses to start and thrive. In 2013,



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	<p>I launched an initiative to leverage technology, through an open data initiative, to lend transparency, accountability, and speed to the City's permitting processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San José must win what I call the "War for Talent"; the nation's most innovative workers are choosing to live in vibrant urban communities—like Austin, San Francisco, and Manhattan—where companies increasingly choose to launch and grow. • Finally, we can turn our airport into a job engine, by utilizing "congestion pricing" to maximize opportunities to gain flights with increasing delays in San Francisco.
5. Name at least three ideas you have for continuing budget deficit reduction and restoration of city service levels.	
Sam Liccardo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get out of the way where the private sector better delivers the service. E.g., In 2010, I pushed to halt the wasteful \$32 million in RDA subsidies for start-up incubators. • Better leverage technology to improve service delivery, e.g., I've urged greater on-line automation of permit processes, the use of data analytics to better deploy police officers, and an on-line registry to "crowdsource" video camera evidence. • Eliminate unnecessary operational restrictions in existing labor contracts, e.g., setting aside minimum staffing requirements by expanding the use of 2-person squads to respond to medical emergencies. • "Finish the job" on fiscal reforms. Differentiate between pay increases needed to retain skilled employees, versus positions where compensation exceeds the private sector's.
Rose Herrera	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It must start with acknowledging that we cannot do everything, and that we continue with the fiscal and pension reforms. 2. Fire Department - If we move from 4 firefighters on an engine to 3 we would save enough money to end brown outs and open all fire stations. 3. Police Department - Hire an additional 21 Community Service officers (which cost much less than Sworn Officers) to bring the level of authorized CSO's to 42 (which is still only half of the number recommended by the City Auditor) to perform functions to assist with burglary, investigation and other police services and free up sworn officers. 4. Police Department - Contracting out for conducting background checks would free up to 25 police officers for other duty like patrolling neighborhoods.
Madison Nguyen	<p>We can achieve budgeted service levels through reorganization and updating our staffing models and exploring cost saving measures such as partnering with other agencies, non-profits, or business groups. We must continue to be progressive in how we utilize technology to achieve greater efficiencies and expand service, as well. We have already implemented new technologies in how we address public safety, utilities, and transportation and must continue to invest in new technologies that will pay off in the long run. Lastly, if we have achieved all possible efficiencies and still are not meeting service level goals we can begin to explore short-term revenue measures, if absolutely necessary.</p>
Pierluigi Oliverio	<p>Competitive bidding to provide present day city services for less, selling or leasing properties that drain the general fund, and naming rights.</p>
David Cortese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater contributions to benefits by employees • Consolidation of services • Prioritization of ending fund balances toward essential services
6. If the city's financial picture improves, what three priorities would you fund (not including public safety)?	
David Cortese	<p>Transportation infrastructure Parks and open space Libraries</p>
Sam Liccardo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full funding of annual required retiree healthcare contributions, including the annual required amortization of the plan's unfunded liability. By failing to "pay the credit card bill" do so today, we're adding to our—and our children's-- \$3.7 billion burden. • Restoration of funding for pavement and street maintenance. • Investment in IT infrastructure, particularly where doing so can boost revenues. For example, I've led the effort to use tracking software to improve accountability and transparency in our permitting and planning departments, and to launch an "open data" initiative to automate unnecessarily bureaucratic permit processes endured by businesses and homeowners.
Rose Herrera	<p>Invest in technology infrastructure. Despite our region's status as the world innovation & technology leader, San Jose trails other cities in e-government solutions that ultimately save money and improve services.</p> <p>Fix our roads.</p> <p>Fully open our libraries and community.</p>
Madison Nguyen	<p>San Jose must be a business-friendly city. By streamlining the permit approval system, providing incentive funds, and utilizing tax-sharing program or credits, we can help businesses start up quickly and on the right foot. These businesses will create high paying jobs for San Jose residents and improve revenue for the city. I will also prioritize fixing our roadway infrastructure including potholes, street repairs, and sidewalk improvements for better mobility. Finally, I will partner with business and private foundations to invest in programs that support quality education for our children. With our partnerships, we can invest in after-school programs, project-based learning, STEM, and summer-school programs.</p>
Pierluigi Oliverio	<p>Information Technology (there is enough need that there is no room for another two).</p>



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7. What cost savings would you pursue to make more funds available for essential services? Which services would you give priority to?	
David Cortese	Greater contributions to benefits by employees Consolidation of services Prioritization of ending fund balances toward essential services I will use these funds to prioritize the health and welfare needs of our residents
Sam Liccardo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will push for greater use of Zero-Based-Budgeting over incremental budgeting, to expose the "hidden" uses of public dollars to public view. • I will look to shrink managerial positions, to push greater authority downward to empower line employees, and reduce layers of decision-making. • I will create a stronger whistleblower program through the city auditor's office. This office would communicate with contractors, the public, and city employees to allow individuals to anonymously and safely report waste, and to provide monetary incentives for cost-savings. • My top services to prioritize would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Public safety ✓ Infrastructure Repair and Rehabilitation
Rose Herrera	We need to re-examine where funds being spent and set clear priorities, and we need to ensure that critical savings from Measures V&W and B are protected. I think the top priorities have to be public safety, programs that facilitate business growth, and quality of life such as Streets and Roads, Parks, Community Centers and libraries.
Madison Nguyen	The City has seen its retirement costs increase dramatically from \$73 million per year in FY 2001-02 to \$245 million per year in FY 2011-12. The City's two retirement funds have nearly \$3 billion in unfunded liabilities. I will champion the cost savings strategy San Jose voters overwhelmingly approved: pension reform ballot Measure B. Pension reform will ensure more funds are available for city essential services. I will prioritize public safety by hiring more police officers through re-establishing the burglary unit and city services benefitting all San Jose residents, which facilitates crime prevention and builds community.
Pierluigi Oliverio	Competitive bidding to provide present day city services for less. Police.
8. Do you support an increase in San Jose sales tax, bond, or parcel taxes? If so, which one(s) and why?	
Pierluigi Oliverio	No. However if a charter amendment passed that set aside a percentage for police then perhaps.
David Cortese	No I do not support a San Jose tax increase. I believe that property and sales tax growth will dispense with the need to discuss new taxes in San Jose. We will have a much better feel for this after April tax installments and the June budget process.
Sam Liccardo	In 2012, I voted against putting a sales tax measure on the ballot, with residents still reeling from the Great Recession. With an improving economy in 2014, I would entertain placing a tax on the ballot if limited to public safety with explicit and codified assurances that it would only fund an increase in levels of service. Simply, I want to avoid using a tax increase as an excuse to avoid needed fiscal reforms. In 2013, I crafted a strategy to restore 200 officers to our police force, which the council overwhelmingly approved. Mayor Reed and I identified \$35 million to pay for this plan, but it will require additional revenue to fully fund.
Rose Herrera	I support continuing/extending the current Library parcel tax. Libraries are essential for our communities, and continuing the existing funds is essential for current library operations. I supported J&K to extend 911 and telecommunications by reducing the rate and broadening the base. Raising additional revenue to support services is contemplated in the fiscal reform plan which I support.
Madison Nguyen	I am in support of the continuation of the library parcel tax. As for additional taxes, I am cautious and would like to be sure we have considered all other ideas and opportunities for savings before we ask voters to approve additional tax increases. I also believe it will be difficult to pass an additional sales tax while the pension measures, and their savings, are still tied up in court. We do need to recognize that when we implemented pension reform we said cuts needed to be made first and then revenue measures can be considered. So while tax increases are not preferred, we still have an obligation to meet service levels our residents deserve and I want to work toward achieving that goal.
9. As a city and region, there has been long-standing support by elected officials for public transportation/transit; unfortunately, to the detriment of streets and roads. Would you provide leadership for a more balanced approach in the spending of current transportation dollars? Why or why not?	
Madison Nguyen	One of my top priorities for San Jose is the restoration of our roadway infrastructure, such as fixing potholes, street repairs, and sidewalk improvements. We must explore partnerships with the county, VTA, Caltrans, and try to obtain federal grants and/or other means of funding to repair potholes and other surface deficiencies. Once we identify all of the opportunities for collaboration available, we can develop a sustainable plan for addressing our surface transportation needs. Lastly, we must be more engaged and assertive at the regional and state levels to ensure that our needs in the future are met and that we are not placed at a greater disadvantage.
Pierluigi Oliverio	We need to recognize the majority of people drive cars and road maintenance must have more funding.



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David Cortese	Yes. As a member of the MTC for the last eight years, I have worked hard to ensure that attention is given to both aging infrastructure and new transportation modes and will continue to do so. Most recently I successfully completed a nearly 11 year effort to obtain funding for the 101/Capitol Expressway/Tully Rd/Yerba Buena interchanges. This was my number one priority coming onto the San Jose City Council and the County Board of Supervisors and the major reconstruction is nearly complete. I have fought hard for similar funding for the Brokaw bottleneck at 880 and the Valley Fair interchange. Our local roads are suffering from an \$800 million dollar backlog currently. That must be addressed.
Sam Liccardo	I will provide, and have provided, leadership to better fund road repair. In an anticipated countywide measure in 2016, I will push to ensure that it prioritizes street repair. More than any other candidate, I have led efforts to improve road maintenance. As VTA Chair, I led the voter-approved countywide 2010 Measure B initiative, providing over \$6 million in repaving for San José. On the MTC Board, I led the effort to substantially boost our county's allocation of flexible OBAG dollars to over \$80 million. I won't push to defund transit programs, however. Beyond my policy-based objections to doing so, it's illegal to reallocate transit-restricted dollars from voter measures and dedicated federal/state sources.
Rose Herrera	Yes, we need to increase the amount of money we are spending on roadway maintenance. We have a large unfunded liability to repair our roads. We have only 20% of what we need on an annual basis. I've supported prioritization of the money we do have to repair major streets and arterials first where over 80% of drivers use and are impacted. I'm supportive of looking at different ways to fund pavement maintenance. We also must continue to support transit such as BART to San Jose and local transit to reduce impact on our freeways, roads and environment. As the population ages we will need multiple transportation alternatives.
10. Increasingly, issues that affect San Jose residents are not under the exclusive domain of city staff and officials; but rather overlap with other agencies, (e.g., County, VTA, Caltrans, etc.). An example that impacts our members is the serious, long-term traffic problems at the Capitol Expressway/Narvaez/Hwy 87 onramp. As mayor, what would you do to resolve inter-jurisdictional problems like this?	
Rose Herrera	Cooperation is vital, but I think some actions by un-elected bodies have a significant impact on San Jose. Each of these authorities will require different strategy. Some of the extra-governmental authorities (Council's of Government, AQMD, etc) have been empowered by the Legislature to impose regulation on municipalities in their jurisdictions, and CalTrans is a standing state agency - we will need to prod our state Legislators for assistance. I sit on the VTA board and have pushed for more transparency & accountability from board members. San Jose must exert more influence of the regional transportation bodies. San Jose has achieved more representation on MTC but we must push harder to achieve the influence that San Jose should have as the 3 rd largest city in the state.
Madison Nguyen	In the past 8 years, I have served on a number of regional boards that addressed issues such as transportation, environment, health care, and education. As Mayor, I will have the opportunity to serve on many other boards and/or agencies. I want to work collaboratively with representatives from other municipalities, agencies, and boards to ensure that the needs of San Jose are recognized on a regional level. I have built relationships with these agencies, and will continue to build and leverage these relationships to see that progress is made on issues important to San Jose. We must always be sure we have a seat at the table in these matters.
Pierluigi Oliverio	Be vocal and take action. Use leverage on other issues.
David Cortese	The VTA's Policy Advisory Board is intended to serve as a cross functional board of City and County representatives on issues of joint purview. If elected Mayor I will work with the VTA the Governor's Office to ensure that CalTrans has a seat at this board in order to resolve such inter-jurisdictional problems. I fought hard for the passage of AB 57 (Beall) which finally gave the Mayor of San Jose permanent appointment in the MTC. I will take full advantage of this seat to leverage the needs of our community on an interagency basis.
Sam Liccardo	Where critical local interests are at stake, San José needs to assert itself more forcibly on boards like the VTA where we hold, directly or indirectly, a majority of votes. I have demonstrated the ability to forge regional coalitions and leadership—as evidenced by my roles as a Chair of the VTA Board, and as a President of the Cities Association of Santa Clara County—to promote San Jose's interests. Where Caltrans poses challenges, I would reach out to my fellow MTC Board Member, District 4 Caltrans Director Bijan Sartipi, to reach a resolution, as I have in the past. We can't wave a magic wand to make regional or state authorities go away, and there are no simple solutions to bureaucratic battles. We have to work with them, and that requires building relationships and coalitions. Where that fails, we elevate the issue publicly in the media—as I have with graffiti on the 280 and 101 overpasses—to force other agencies to act.
11. San Jose vehicle deaths rose to more than 40 in 2013. Vehicle vs. pedestrian/bicycle deaths exceeded 25. Three of those deaths (in addition to several serious injuries) occurred in VEP neighborhoods. What solutions would you pursue to end this problem?	
Sam Liccardo	With a scarcity of dollars for road improvements or traffic enforcement, I have pushed for low-cost alternatives to reduce speeding in key pedestrian corridors: speed bumps (I recently negotiated with the Fire Chief to enable a limited deployment of speed bumps on residential streets, overcoming longstanding objections over emergency vehicle access with a redesign of the bump), road diets (using street paint to reduce road width, and even eliminating lanes on overbuilt streets), flashing beacons at intersections, and moveable speed radar trailers. With more OBAG funding available (see #9), we can implement more of these solutions. According to our DOT studies, establishing 15 mph zones around schools appears ineffective, so I won't implement that.
Rose Herrera	We need to take a multi pronged approach. More targeted police enforcement of speed limits in affected areas. More pedestrian safety education using community groups and faith communities to get the word out. Many of these deaths are at night and involve seniors crossing dimly lit streets often in unprotected areas with no cross walk. Education for Bicyclists and motorists to share the road safely. San Jose has the potential to be a great biking city. We have flat geography. Many bicyclists ride bikes to commute to work. We need to continue to add bike lanes across our city and promote traffic safety.



VEP Community Association

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★ Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire ★


	As Mayor, I don't expect to have all the answers, but I know enough to bring together people who do - then create a plan to actually get something done. That is how I was able to forge support to approve ballfields at the Arcadia site and get unanimous support from the Council.
Madison Nguyen	Many of the issues regarding pedestrian/bicycle versus automobile accidents relate to the somewhat antiquated design of our neighborhoods. San Jose currently has plans to implement urban villages and other neighborhood improvements aimed at making our communities more walk-able, bike-friendly, and accessible by public transportation. This will help alleviate some of the car traffic, but more importantly, many of the designs are specifically focused on slowing vehicle traffic and creating landscape and beautification between pedestrians and traffic, as well. Additional safety improvements will be made as we find ways to improve surface transportation conditions, and as we work with VTA and Caltrans to address highways and other regional corridors. We also need to do a better job of raising awareness and educating the public drivers, bikers and pedestrians about the need for caution when sharing the road.
Pierluigi Oliverio	A charter amendment that set aside a percentage for police would allow for more enforcement. Advocate for change in state law to allow technology to give out speeding tickets 24/7 without a police officer.
David Cortese	As a San Jose City Councilmember, my office worked closely with the Transportation Department to hold "Traffic Calming" Meetings in nearly every neighborhood in the district I represented. These meetings were designed to not only identify short and long term transportation improvements but also to bring all the stakeholders together (residents, area schools, etc.) in order to discuss traffic safety in general and to implant and install needed improvements. In addition I will ensure that street lighting is sufficient on all city streets. I plan to reinvigorate the Traffic Calming program in order for every neighborhood in the city to participate.
12. What would you do to improve employee morale and retention and to encourage city employees to increase productivity and lower costs while maintaining or improving quality of service? Describe at least two ideas.	
David Cortese	-Morale will improve once employees feel that they are valued and their ideas are valued. Restoring competitive compensation packages will be an important step towards increasing productivity. -Modifying the city's annual budget process by holding employee forums in order to share ideas for increasing productivity and re-designing service delivery is another idea to reflect the Mayor and City Council's commitment to employees.
Sam Liccardo	I support the ideas offered by Citizens for Fiscal Responsibility to offer a financial incentive or award for employees who can identify cost-saving ideas and productivity-enhancing innovations. I also support thinning management staff, and focusing resources on staffing where our customers—our residents and businesses—need city services the most. Most importantly, I will offer city employees the leadership that motivates them around an aspirational goal, convincing them that we are all are part of something—and serving something-- greater than ourselves. We can make San Jose the "best practices" city for the nation. We can make San Jose the most innovative city on the planet. All of that requires a cultural paradigm-shift—and that comes with leadership.
Rose Herrera	First, I think we need to do a better job understanding why employees stay. Businesses like VSP, Adobe, and Cisco consistently rank among the best places to work in CA, and a big part of that is understand the characteristics of employees who are happy, then recruiting employees who share those characteristics. Incidentally, even in Silicon Valley's famously generous workplace culture, none of these private employers provide pension or benefit at the level city employees still enjoy. I think our employees provide important services and want to do well - we need to give the authority to do so, ensure better management, and reward the most effective employees and those who self-identify savings.
Madison Nguyen	One employee benefit I have taken the lead on is to provide paid parental leave for city employees. We compete for talented employees in one of the most competitive markets in the world. While we are still not in a position to grant across the board pay increases, we can take steps like this to be sure our employees enjoy greater benefits, especially those who are committed to not only working here, but raising a family in San Jose, as well. As Mayor, I believe we must continue to work with our employees, in an honest and straightforward manner, so that we all can be partners in improving core city services to San Jose residents. I am also supportive of giving our employees a stake in service improvements through a suggestion program. This recognizes that our employees are a valuable resource. They are delivering services directly to our residents and should be recognized when they find ways to so the job better and more efficiently. As Mayor, I believe we need to continue to work with our employees in an honest and straightforward manner, so that we all can be partners in improving services for San Jose residents.
Pierluigi Oliverio	Participate in public adult conversations with employees and implement a merit based system rather than only a years on the job approach.

[End]

Mayoral Candidates' Forum
7 pm Thursday, March 27
Gunderson High School Theater

VEP Community Calendar

March / April 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16	17 	18	19 D10 "Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 5:30-7:00pm ~ Lime Tree Espresso 171 Branham Lane	20	21	22  Volunteer Work Project @Vista Park 8:45am-NOON 475 Hyde Park Dr.
23	24	24	26	27 <i>VEP's</i> MAYORAL FORUM ~ 7:00 PM ~ @Gunderson H.S. in the Theater	28	29
30	31	1 	2 D10 "Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 8:30-9:30am ~ @Almaden Community Center Community Rm. 6445 Camden Ave	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 D10 "Office Hours" Meeting w/Johnny Khamis ~ 5:30-7:00pm ~ Lime Tree Espresso 171 Branham Lane	17	18	19

Important Dates to Remember!

VEP Community Meetings

March 27, 2014 - Mayoral Forum
April 29, 2014
May 27, 2014

VEP Community Events

Vista Park Volunteer Project
Saturday, March 22, 2014

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 Website: www.vepca.net

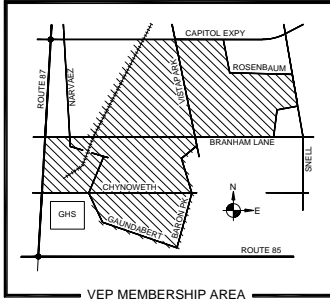
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Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance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

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 Let us know at vep@vepca.net.



Be sure to attend
 VEP's Mayoral Forum
 Thursday, March 27th
 7:00 pm
 in the
 Theater at
 Gunderson H.S.
 Check our website: www.vepca.net