

VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

April 2003

VEP MEETING

7:30 P.M. TUESDAY
April 22, 2003

GUNDERSON HIGH SCHOOL
★ Faculty Lounge ★

AGENDA

★ County Expressways ★

Presentation on Santa Clara County Roads'
Comprehensive Expressway Planning Study
7:30 to 8:45 p.m.

★ Annual Meeting ★

President's Report: VEP's 2002-03 Goals & Objectives.
Treasurer's Report: 2002-03 Ending Balances.
Election of VEP Officers for 2003-04.
8:45 to 9:00 p.m.

★ Your Community Concerns ★

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

Our April meeting

-Dave Fadness

Santa Clara County is unique in California for many reasons, just one of which is that we alone have a locally owned and operated expressway system. Mention "expressway" in Los Angeles and they give you a weird look (expressway, what's *that?*). Thank your lucky stars that we have them, though, as our expressways carry 1.5-million car trips per day. Without them, 55% of our county residents would be faced with the impossible task of finding another way to do their daily travel.

Problem is, on a per-capita basis, our county doesn't get a nickel more from the state to help us maintain our expressway system. The money for our expressways comes from a small fund that also pays for county streets and roads. Result is that we can do no more than barely maintain the expressways, facilities that have served us so well over the past three or four decades, but haven't grown in capacity to match growth in county population and travel demands.

Two years ago, the county began a *Comprehensive Expressway Planning Study*, the first serious look in 30 years into the public's vision of the future and funding of our expressways. This study is nearing completion, and a set of

recommendations is being reported to the public. That's what we are going to hear about at our meeting April 22nd. We think this is very important.

Dan Collen and **Dawn Cameron** will be our guest speakers. Mr. Collen is the Study's managing engineer, a seasoned expert from the County Roads Department. Ms. Cameron is a consultant who has spent years in Santa Clara County transportation planning (see her article below). These two people know every detail of the Study and its recommendations, and probably know every bump and crack in our expressway system, as well. I've seen their presentation and think you'll be impressed.

VEP will follow up our meeting with a letter that reflects our members' input and questions, to be sure they are on the record and addressed in the final Expressway Study implementation plan. If you aren't there that night and/or don't speak up, your views will not be heard. Be sure to attend, at least to learn about what's being planned for you.

April is VEP's *Annual Meeting* month. This is when we hear brief reports on progress for the past year and install new officers. Our President, **Dave Noel** has submitted a detailed report on 2002-03 Goals & Objectives in this newsletter. Our Treasurer, Joe Tajnai will report on VEP's finances that night. We'll elect officers for 2003-04 and be done. (All of this will take maybe 15 minutes.)

Oh, yes, we need a volunteer for our Vice President position. All other slots are filled in our election slate. *Pleeeeeeease* step forward and help us with this--we need you and are certain you'll do a great job at it.

We look forward to seeing you at 7:30 pm on April 22nd. Bring a friend--hey, bring the whole neighborhood!

County Expressway Study

-Dawn Cameron

The *Comprehensive Expressway Study* provides a long-term plan for improvement and maintenance of the County Expressway System. The Study's Draft Implementation Plan is being circulated for public review and comment through May 14, 2003.

The Draft Plan is the culmination of a strong collaborative planning process involving elected officials and staff from 10 cities, County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors, County Roads Commission, and the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Board of Directors. Various methods of community involvement have been used during the Plan development including community meetings, telephone

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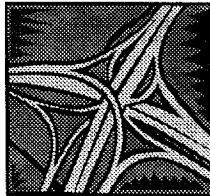
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public opinion surveys, and a project web site.

The plan includes a total of \$1.6- to 1.9-billion in recommended roadway capacity and operational improvements for the 62-mile expressway system. Another \$75-million in bicycle, pedestrian, sound wall, and landscaping needs for the eight expressways have also been identified. In addition, the plan identifies the need for \$18.6-million annually to support enhanced maintenance and operations of the expressways, bringing them to a level generally desired by the cities and public.

For Almaden Expressway, the Draft Plan includes approximately \$45-million in roadway improvements and close to \$10-million in bicycle, pedestrian, and sound wall needs. For Capitol Expressway, \$85- to 106-million in roadway improvements and over \$6-million in bicycle, pedestrian, and sound wall needs are identified.



At the VEP meeting on April 22, County Roads staff will present an overview of the entire Draft Plan and specific recommendations for Almaden and Capitol Expressways. The effectiveness of this Plan in improving level of service conditions will be described. Also to be discussed are the proposed funding strategies for the Draft Implementation Plan.

For more detailed information about the Comprehensive Expressway Study prior to your meeting, please visit our web site at www.expressways.info. You can also find Plan summaries at VEP's website, www.vepca.org.

Your input is desired. Please be sure to attend VEP's meeting at 7:30 pm on April 22nd.

[Ed. Note: Dawn Cameron will be one of our speakers on April 22nd. She is a consultant for Santa Clara County Roads on the Expressway Study.]

Information about the Expressway Study is also available on VEP's website, www.vepca.org. If VEP has

your correct email address, you will be receiving informative emails on this subject as well. If you are a VEP member and are not receiving our emails, please send a note to www.vepca.org to request to be added. Your email address will be used for VEP business only, and will not be shared.]

Branham Lane traffic safety

-Vice Mayor Pat Dando

The tragic accident on January 26 that occurred on Branham Lane and Prince Royal Place alarmed many neighbors. In response to the numerous e-mails and telephone calls my office received, I asked the San Jose Police Department and the City's Department of Transportation to review this stretch of Branham Lane for safety enhancements and items that may need attention.

It was determined that the accident on January 26 was caused by a car traveling at a high rate of speed and the driver lost control of the vehicle. In reviewing the crash history of this area, there have been very few accidents in this area in the past several years.

SJPD has aggressively stepped up traffic enforcement in this area. In just the past few months, over 65 traffic citations have been issued to motorists in the vicinity of the accident. Our Police Department's Traffic Enforcement Unit will continue to enforce traffic laws on Branham Lane and in the surrounding area. On Friday, March 28, over 85 citations were issued along Santa Teresa Boulevard for speeding and unsafe driving.



The message board that displays how fast one is traveling will continue to be placed on Branham Lane. These boards have been very helpful in reminding motorists how fast they are driving and serve as a blunt reminder to slow down.



Branham Lane will be re-paved next summer. This work will address many of the cracks and dips that are currently in the roadway.

Making our streets safe for pedestrians and motorists remains one of my highest priorities. In the coming weeks, I will be asking my colleagues on the City Council to support a proposal I am currently drafting to improve pedestrian safety and increase the penalties for unsafe driving. I look forward to sharing my proposal with you for your input in the near future.

I will continue to work with SJPD and the Department of Transportation to address traffic safety issues throughout our community.

[Ed. Note: We have invited Vice Mayor Dando to attend our May 27th general meeting.]

A message from our County Supervisor

-Don Gage, Santa Clara County District 1

I would like to update you on important issues with our transit system. Recently, the Mercury-News has detailed the dire financial situation of the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). The downturn of the economy had a big impact on VTA's budget, as 80% of its revenues are based on sales taxes. The VTA Board will be making some tough decisions in the weeks ahead in its effort to keep the agency running.

For the past three months, I've been chairing an Ad-Hoc Financial Stability Committee to provide recommendations to the full VTA Board on how to address the financial crisis. Some of my colleagues from the VTA Board, such as San Jose Vice-Mayor **Pat Dando** and Councilman **David Cortese** also serve on that Committee. In addition, I invited stakeholders from many interest groups including business, labor, people with disabilities, transit riders, and citizens to participate in the discussions.



The Committee worked with three independent consultants to develop a list of recommendations. To address the potential of a \$150 million annual shortfall, the consultants made findings for possible new sources of revenues, higher fare box recovery, reevaluation of services, reduction in benefits for employees, and operating efficiencies. Our goal is to continue to provide services to our residents and keep the agency afloat.

The Committee will finalize a list of recommendations for the VTA Board on April 16th. The VTA Board will discuss those recommendations in a workshop on April 25th. At the earliest, the VTA Board will take action at their May 3rd meeting.

If you have suggestions or comments you wish to make on the future of the VTA, please contact me by email at: don.gage@bos.co.scl.ca.us. As always, if you need assistance on any issue, please contact my office at 299-5010, or page me directly at 681-4609.

Annual Report

-Dave Noel

The VEP year runs from May through April. Our April meeting is known as our *Annual Meeting*. That is when we report back to the membership on how well we accomplished our goals and objectives that were adopted at the close of our summer break.

In what follows, I've listed and comment on VEP's *2002-03 Goals and Objectives* that were published in our September 2002 NEWS and formally adopted at our September general meeting.

1. *Continue to improve our healthy, thriving community association.*

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A. Membership: Increase membership and attendance at meetings and events.

Meeting attendance has been consistently very good (even at our November, Thanksgiving week meeting), and our Home Improvement Faire attendance was much improved over previous years.

B. Communication: Implement VEP's Hospitality Committee; repair/replace meeting announcement street signs; improve electronic communication with and among our members; improve website access.

We formally established our Hospitality Committee as a standing committee, and it expanded its role to take on volunteer coordination as well. We have not repaired our street signs. We have improved our email distribution process and made several improvements to our website. We are investigating implementation of a list server for electronic communications.

C. Visibility: Strive for positive public recognition through targeted communication and signage; contribute articles to other publications in our community.



We reached out to Gunderson High School with an article promoting the community service awards early in the school year. We invited families from about 12 local schools to our January Internet Predator program. We contributed to front page articles featuring VEP, with photos in two issues of the *Blossom Valley* and *Santa Teresa Times*, and our calendar of events is now published monthly in the *Times*. Our calendar is also printed in Gina Ray's real estate newsletter.

D. Values: Continue our VEP Community Service Award program; improve outreach for nominees.

We approved an increase in the award amount from \$1000 to \$1500 per award. We expect at least three nominees for the At-Large award, compared to zero last year.

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E. Fiscal Health: Maintain excellence in our fiscal condition.



Our budget is balanced, and doing very well. We did a fantastic job managing the grant funds for the *San Jose Beautiful* landscaping project and have sufficient funds remaining to cover our three-year maintenance obligation.

F. Volunteerism: Establish a volunteer coordinator.

Our Hospitality Committee took on this role.

2. Promote community interaction, pride, and preparedness.

A. Organize at least two community events.

We are hosting a community-wide Garage Sale and Family Picnic.

B. Participate in the San Jose Beautiful daffodil planting event and at least one other beautification project.

We planted 2500 daffodils, and landscaped two street medians.

C. Maintain the Chynoweth palm trees.

We continued to prune the trees and ensured any that died were replaced.

D. Encourage member participation in crime prevention, safety and preparedness programs in our neighborhood.

We joined the SJPD email notification system for crime notification.

3. Work to make local government and businesses responsive and accountable to VEP members.

A. Sponsor an election forum that heightens our

members' awareness of candidates and issues in the November 2002 elections.

We held candidates forums for both the November 2002 and March 2003 elections.

B. Monitor and react to plans for urban development in and around our membership area.

We have worked closely with Pinn Brothers on their project at Capitol and Vistapark, as well as SummerHill on their project at Branham and Vistapark--both will present the results at our May meeting. We had Westfield Shoppingtown Oakridge at our September meeting.

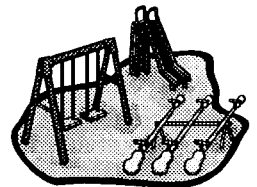
C. Encourage, monitor, and react to plans for transportation and other public infrastructure improvements in and around our membership area.

VTA presented their Capitol Expressway light rail plans at our February meeting, and we formally provided comments for inclusion in the Environmental Impact Report for that project. The county roads department will present the Comprehensive Expressway Planning Study at our April meeting. We have been continuously involved in seeking and planning park improvements for the VEP area. No public infrastructure project (planned or hoped for) in our area escapes VEP's input and involvement.

4. Create and maintain significant recreational facilities and public services in our area.

A. Support preservation of the Lester property and efforts to make it a park.

We've kept abreast of developments, and remained poised to help if the opportunity availed itself, which it did not this year.



B. Monitor and provide input to the city's capital improvement plan for neighborhood needs.

We did not do this.

C. Work with the city to develop, renovate and maintain our neighborhood parks, and to ensure that all (developer) parkland dedication fees paid in our neighborhood are used for parks in our neighborhood.

We participated in the dedication ceremony for the completion of Vista Park phases 2 and 3, and kept track of various construction issues. We attended city meetings on park renovation improvements at various other parks in our area. We planted daffodils at most of our area parks. We are working with the city and SummerHill with the goal of providing a turn-key restroom and perhaps a community room at Vista Park in lieu of parkland dedication fees for their Branham/Vistapark housing development.

D. Seek an acceptable remedy to parking and traffic impacts on Gaundabert Lane.

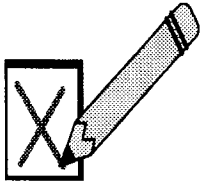
We worked with the school district and the San Jose Department of Transportation. Many traffic calming measures were implemented in the area. "NASCOP" radar speeding enforcement was implemented on Gaundabert Lane. With very positive results, SJUSD revoked the license of the adult soccer league. We continue to work closely with Gunderson administration.

VEP officers needed--NOW

-Dave Fadness

It's **your** turn. C'mon, folks, you can do it!

Here's a golden opportunity for caring neighbors who can give back a few hours each month to their community. VEP is looking for a handful of volunteers to lead and shape the objectives of our organization. We especially need a candidate for Vice President to fill our slate for 2003-2004.



VEP's elected officers are president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and newsletter editor. This year, elections and installation of new officers will be held at our April 22nd Annual Meeting.

VEP officer job description:

- Term of service: one year.
- Meetings per month: two.
- Pay: zero.
- Personal rewards: infinite.
- Special experience required: *absolutely* none.

All we ask is an interest in and eager dedication to our neighborhoods. You definitely have what it takes!

Call any member of our current team of execs with questions or to discuss your interest. Our numbers are listed on the mailing page of this newsletter.

Make our day--volunteer to be an officer of VEP.

Service Award nominations due

-Dave Noel

Each year, VEP grants awards to area graduating high school seniors to reward them for exemplary volunteerism during their high school careers and to encourage all students to carry the habit of volunteerism into their adult lives. The award is based only on the student's volunteer record during high school.



Awards will be granted to one deserving senior from each of the VEP neighborhood high schools, Henry Gunderson High School and Andrew Hill High School. An "At Large" award category was established in 2002, and is



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again offered this year.

Members voted in January to approve a budget of \$1500 for each of the three award categories for 2003. This is a \$500 increase per award over previous years.

Nominations for all three categories are due by the end of our April 22nd, 2003 Annual Meeting. The "At Large" award nomination form was published in the February edition of the VEP News, and can also be found on our web site (www.vepca.org). If you missed it, do not have access to the Internet, and want to submit a nomination, call a VEP officer *today!*

Completed nomination forms may be returned at our April VEP meeting; mailed to: VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose, CA, 95158; or submitted to Dave Noel (266-7183, dnoel1234@aol.com). Do NOT submit completed nomination forms to other VEP execs.)

Any VEP member may nominate a graduating high school senior that lives in San Jose for the "At Large" award category.

* PLEASE NOTE *

"At Large" nomination forms must be signed by a school administrator to verify the nominated student's status as a 2003 graduate. In order to ensure there is a choice, a minimum of two students must be nominated each category for an award to be granted in that category. As of this writing, we have received nominations for two students in the At-Large category, and we expect at least one more.

VEP'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE!

Saturday, April 26th is the date for our annual, community-wide VEP Garage sale. VEP members or not, tell your neighbors about it now so they'll be ready to join us. Let's make this a big success that folks will look forward to every year!

VEP will advertise this event in the *San Jose Mercury News* and *Pennysaver*. This is an excellent opportunity for you to take advantage of an increased number of

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shoppers by offering your unwanted household treasures for sale on the same day as the rest of your neighbors.

Spread the word to your neighbors. Let's make this year's Garage Sale the biggest one yet!

Become a Tree Amigo!

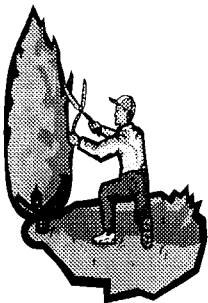
Plant Trees! Help Green Silicon Valley! The next *Our City Forest* "Tree Amigo" volunteer training course begins May 7th. Those completing this 18-hour training will become certified to coach volunteers at neighborhood and school tree plantings sponsored by Our City Forest.

DATES & TIMES: Wednesdays: May 7, 14, 21, and 28 from 6 to 9 pm and Saturdays: May 17 and 31 from 9 am to noon.

PLACE: Our City Forest, 595 Park Avenue, Suite 100, San Jose, CA 95110.

DIRECTIONS: Our City Forest is located at the corner of Park Ave. and Montgomery (Bird), just off Hwy 280 (Bird exit).

COST: FREE.



This course consists of six 3-hour classes. Students will learn planting techniques, species identification, basic tree care, and how to help organize a community planting. There will be a tree nursery tour, a walking tree tour and a tree-planting project. The training is free and open to all. No previous experience is necessary.

For more information and to sign up for the course, please contact **Melanie Kimbel** at (408) 998-7337 or email mkimbel@outcityforest.org.

Upcoming VEP meetings and events

Thu Apr 17, 6:30 pm: Almaden Lake Master Plan Improvements meeting #2 at Pioneer High School library. (Contact Parks Manager Brian Hartsell at 938-2013 for more information.)

Tue Apr 22, 7:30 - 9 pm: VEP Annual Meeting at Gunderson High School (County Expressway Study, annual reports to members, VEP officer elections).

Tue Apr 22, 9 pm: Nominations deadline for VEP's annual Community Service Award.

Sat Apr 26, 7 am - ??: VEP Community Garage Sale.

Wed May 7, 7 - 9 pm: VEP Executive meeting (call for location).

Sun May 18, noon - 3 pm: VEP's Annual Family Picnic at Vista Park (@ New Compton & Hyde Park Drive).

Tue May 27, 7:30 - 9 pm: General Meeting at Gunderson High School (SummerHill Branham/Vistapark development, Pinn Bros Capitol Expressway/Vistapark development, Pat Dando, and Don Gage--tentative).

VEP'S 2nd ANNUAL COMMUNITY PICNIC

Bring your picnic, blanket and sunscreen and come join your neighbors at the VEP's 2nd annual VEP Community Picnic. There will be fun, games, and prizes.

Where? Vista Park (Hyde Park Drive at New Compton).
When? Sunday, May 18th from noon to 3 pm.

The *America Tae Kwon* school's demonstration team will be on hand to entertain and amaze you. Our special thanks to **Loretta Chappelle** for her help in contacting local businesses to support this event.

This promises to be a fun-filled afternoon that you shouldn't miss. So be sure to invite your friends and neighbors, bring your food and family, and we'll provide fun and friendly activities for the young and young-at-heart--with door prizes and rewards for participation.

Come, meet your neighbors and renew old friendships, and don't forget your sunscreen. We're looking forward to having you join us for a great day together in the park!

For more information or to volunteer to help at the picnic, call Yvonne or Ian @ (408) 226-9574.

Volunteers wanted:

Young-at-heart volunteers to help run games and races at VEP's Community Picnic, Sunday May 18th. Contact Yvonne or Ian Reddy @ (408) 226-9574.

Route 85/87 interchange project

-Tiffany Thomas

Thank you for your continued patience during the Route 85/87 Interchange Project construction. Effective early May 2003, the Ohlone/Chynoweth Light Rail Station East Park & Ride Lot will reopen for commuter parking, bus service, and pedestrian/wheelchair access.

At this time, VTA bus stops serving Express 102 will be permanently relocated to the Ohlone/Chynoweth light rail station. The temporary VTA bus stops near Westfield Shoppingtown Oakridge on Santa Teresa Boulevard, south of Thornwood Drive will be discontinued.

If you have any questions, please call me at (408) 321-5807 or speak with me at the next VEP Meeting.

[Ed. Note: Tiffany Thomas is a Public Communications Specialist for VTA's Marketing and Customer Service Division. She attends almost all of VEP's meetings.]

VEP membership drive

-Dave Noel

Is this good bye? Not if you are one of the vast majority who have sent in your membership dues--thanks! Our membership drive is now closing. If you're one of the last 10% who haven't renewed, this will be your last newsletter. Please don't let it happen!

VEP has been working exceptionally hard for you this year, as we have for the past 34 years. Please send in your renewal now. A copy of the renewal form is included in this newsletter (below).

We love to hear your comments on your renewal forms. Here are a few of the comments we received this month:

- Keep up the good work, we really appreciate it!
- I enjoy the newsletter very much and find it useful.
- We are in the process of moving after 28 years in VEP. Thank you for all your work and efforts to make this a great neighborhood.
- We are proud to have such an active and dedicated association working on our behalf.
- Idea for newsletter--show before and after photos of VEP members' remodeling projects with description of what they did and budget.
- Thanks for all your work--great job on the landscaping projects!

This year several families generously contributed a little extra with their dues. This month we'd like to thank **Jim** and **Linda Dumanowski** for their extra contribution. We'd also like to thank **(Mrs.) Michael** and **Wolfgang**

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Strauss for including a gift subscription for their neighbors **Bill** and **Jennifer Ross** along with their own membership renewal--what a great gesture! Do you have a neighbor you'd like to buy a gift membership for?

**VEP membership renewal
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Snooze, you lose!**

To renew, write a check for \$15 to VEP and mail it in the remit envelop that was included with your January VEP NEWS. If you've misplaced that envelop, simply fill out the form below (or use a separate piece of paper). Mail it and your check to VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose, CA 95158. Easy as that!

We encourage you to include your email address and phone number so we can get timely information to you between editions of the VEP NEWS. We only use this information for official VEP business.

**** Please Type or Print ****

[None of the following information will be sold to or otherwise shared with any third party.]

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First Name(s): _____

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Comments: _____

Can you give VEP a few volunteer hours each month?

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Email list server

-David Noel

Do you have experience running an email list server? If so, please contact VEP treasurer and email distribution list manager **Joe Tajnai**. His phone number and email address are listed on the mailing page of this newsletter.



Joe is looking into implementing a list sever for VEP. This could be a great way for our community to network.

The Willow Glen Neighborhood Association has a wonderful e-list. When someone in Willow Glen is seeking recommendations for a contractor, pointing out a safety hazard, looking for a lost dog, or announcing a public meeting, they ask their neighbors first using their e-list. And it's a perfect way to distribute SJPD email crime alerts too.

Please call if you can help us with this.

Speaking of email...

-Joe Tajnai

Did you know that VEP maintains an email list of our membership? This list is only used to send our members relevant, time critical information such as important local public hearings and VEP event reminders every week or so.

Are you getting our emails? If not, or if your email address changes, please let us know! To update us, send an email to vepca@vepca.org. Your personal information will not be shared or sold to anyone. Thank You!

Home Improvement Faire a **BIG** success

-John Marks, Faire Coordinator

Last month's *Home Improvement Faire*, attended by 75-100 members and 32(+) vendors was both useful and enjoyable. I think we've found the secret to getting a larger attendance and participation: advertising, tasty hospitality, and a no-cost lottery.

The following VEP members won cash prizes:

- Walt Arstingstall \$100
- Sil Corpuz \$100
- Josephine Nichols ... \$100
- Paul Nichols \$100
- Sharon Pardun \$100

These VEPers won gift certificate prizes:

- Bunnie Rose Orchard Supply Hardware
- Josie Supencheck Los Gatos Brewing Company

Everyone enjoyed the brownies, fruit, drinks and other desserts. Many of the vendors are making plans for next year, including Orchard Supply who will bring a cart full of plants to give away by lottery, and probably some tools. Others want to do a similar kind of thing.

Moving the event to March also helped to keep the event from competing with other social commitments, such as graduation, travel, etc. Mark your calendars for March 23, 2004; we want to see you there. Bring a friend.

Kudos to VEP's Hospitality Committee

-Dave Noel

One of the biggest reasons we had such an outstanding turn-out at our 6th annual *Home Improvement Faire* was that approximately 2000 flyers were distributed to nearly all the homes in the VEP community a few days before the event. This was a large task, and we're honored to recognize the dedicated volunteers who made this possible.

To start, **Jeri Arstingstall** provided the maps and other information she put together when she led the a flyer distribution effort for VEP last year. Hospitality committee chair **Katherine Decker** pulled together members **Yvonne Reddy**, **Maureen Noel**, **Kristine Alexander**, and **Josie Supencheck**. This group worked on the content of the flyer, and called VEP members to find delivery volunteers for the 2000 flyers. Yvonne Reddy designed the flyer and got all the copies made.

Josie Supencheck and helper **Nancy Hardy** coordinated the delivery volunteers, who were:

- Jane Burns
- Loretta Chappelle
- Barbara & Leo Corbalis
- Katherine Decker
- Nancy & Ken Hardy
- Veronica & Bill Lewis
- Rob & Kim Littleton
- Penny & Jim Martinez
- Laura & Marc Mc Geever
- Fred & Loretta Schader
- Dian & Marsh Syverson

**VEP
 thanks these
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 Superstars!**

So if you received the flyer at your door, you now know how much work went into making that possible.

If you'd like to be added to the volunteer list to join these friendly neighbors on future projects, please call Katherine Decker at 972-4098. The more people we get involved, the less work it is for each of us--that's what VEP is all about!

News from Andrew Hill High School

-Bruce Shimizu, Principal

International Baccalaureate World School

On February 15, Andrew Hill High School was authorized as an International Baccalaureate World School. The IB Program offers the most prestigious and highly recognized honors curriculum in the world.

To bring this opportunity to our school, a group of teachers worked together to develop a lengthy proposal. In November, the school underwent a review process, which we successfully passed. Andrew Hill's new identity as an IB World School is a testament to the quality of the academic programs and the teaching taking place at Andrew Hill. Having the program is an unique honor. We are one of only six IB schools in the Bay Area, and part of a community of only 1400 schools worldwide.

The program is open to our current freshman class and subsequent classes thereafter. Students take courses to prepare for the program in the ninth and tenth grades, and begin the official program in their junior year. The academic goal for students is to receive the coveted IB diploma. Students enrolled in the diploma program take six courses across subject disciplines, three of which are taken over a period of two years.

During the course of the year, students complete anywhere from two to four projects that are assessed internationally as part of a final score for the class.

Students in the diploma program also have to complete a community service requirement, write an extensive thesis essay, and take a special philosophy class called Theory of Knowledge. If students successfully complete the requirements and score at least 22 points overall, they will be awarded the IB diploma. Students holding this diploma are highly sought after by prestigious universities such as Stanford, Harvard, and UC-Berkeley.

We are currently recruiting incoming eighth graders and any current freshmen. If you want more information about the IB Program, you can visit the IBO Website at www.ibo.org. To contact **Michael Winsatt**, Andrew Hill's International Baccalaureate Coordinator, please call 408.347.4100 or e-mail winsattm@esuhsd.org.

Measure "G" Funds change Andrew Hill

Because you as community members supported Measure "G", the face of Andrew P. Hill High School will change significantly over the next ten years. Early in February, I met with the representatives of Perkins & Will, the architectural firm contracted by the district to

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assess the facilities needs of each school. The outcome of that meeting was incredibly promising and uplifting.

So here is the good news. Andrew P. Hill has been allocated approximately \$25-million dollars over the next ten years to modernize old facilities and to rebuild others. While specific design and construction plans have not yet been created, the ten year master plan vision includes the following concepts: raze the "100 Building" and create a new two story structure which would house enough classrooms to reduce or eliminate the need for portables; build a theater which could be used by the school and the community; explore the feasibility of building a new gymnasium; upgrade the physical education and athletic facilities by adding a lighted all weather track, synthetic turf football field and a concession stand with restrooms; and beautify all aspects of the school including the student quad area and the perimeter of the school along Singleton Road, Senter Road, and Capitol Expressway.

The ultimate goal of the school and the district is to have you, the parents and community, say, "We are so proud to send our children to such a beautiful, modern school. It is a pleasure to see the school each time we drive by, and we love to show it to our friends and family members."

Summer School 2003

Andrew Hill summer school applications will available in the guidance office the first week of April. Students are encouraged to meet with their counselors to sign-up for classes. Summer school will begin on June 19, 2003 and end on July 25, 2003.

For more information please contact Tim Nguyen at: (408) 347-4140.

News from Gunderson Grizzly Country

-Linda Shipes

Successful Run of Footloose!

Two weekends in March saw the Gunderson Theater rocking with the energetic production of *Footloose*.

Brian Bonnifield Real Estate Consultant

408-559-4100 x107

Home: 408-226-6004

Email: brian@brianbonnifield.com

Website: <http://www.brianbonnifield.com>

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Based on the blockbuster movie of the 80s, this musical features a variety of musical styles including disco, country, techno-rap, and soft ballads.

Congratulations to **Aaron Nool**, **Chris Lequang**, and **Tony Feenan** for being nominated for Best Performer Award by American Musical Theater! The awards ceremony will be held at the Center for Performing Arts in Downtown San Jose on June 4th. You guys are awesome!

9th Annual Golf Tournament

Join Gunderson for its 9th Annual Golf Tournament to be held at Spring Valley Golf Course in Milpitas, Sunday, May 18, 2003. The cost is \$110 for golf and dinner. There will be a raffle after dinner that evening.

Call **Candra Bailly** at *82-281-0323 to register or obtain more information. Come join us for a day full of sun and fun. All proceeds support Gunderson Athletics.

Gunderson Places in Botball Competition

On Saturday April 5, 2003 Gunderson High School participated in the Northern California Regional Tournament Botball Educational Robotics Program. This event was hosted by Santa Clara University at the Leavey Center San Jose.

29 schools from northern California participated in this regional tournament. Gunderson High School's team was awarded a Certificate for being one of the finalists.

Student Photography on Exhibit!

Some of Gunderson's best student work will be on display in the art gallery of West Valley College, April 9-18. Our Advanced Photography class has entered the 2003 Olympiad of the Arts Photography Competition and, as a part of this event, twelve of our best black and white photographs will be exhibited.

Students with work on display are: **Melody Rizzo**, **Joann Athans**, **Mary Loredo**, **An Truong**, **Dean Tuggle**, **Elizabeth Ramsell**, **Trang Nguyen**, **Trang Ngo**, **Rosanne Martins**, and **Eric Butler**.

Among the work entered are two exceptional photographs by **Eric Butler** and **Trang Nguyen**. Eric has accomplished a great amount in the less than one year that he's been in photography. His self portrait has flawless technique and is very expressive and unique. Trang Nguyen's photography is always beautifully carried out, and her nature scene is absolutely gorgeous with its contrast of bright, curved snow against the dark, straight lines of pine needles.

Gunderson photographers are creating some great artwork. Come take a look! The West Valley College Art Gallery is located at 14000 Fruitvale Avenue, Saratoga. Judging for awards takes place Friday evening, April 11th. An exhibit reception, open to all artists and guests, takes place from 5-7 pm on Wednesday, April 16th.

Labate wins gold in SkillsUSA contest

Gunderson High junior, **Jarrett Labate**, who attends Central County Occupational Center, won a gold medal in a regional SkillsUSA contest held February 1st in Salinas.

The SkillsUSA Championships are the showcase for the best career and technical students in the nation. Contests begin locally and continue through the state and national levels.



In this year's regional contest, Jarrett competed in the TIG Welding division. In addition to skill preparation, the entrants prepared a detailed resume, cover letter, letter of recommendation, and references to be reviewed by prospective employers as well as by judges for the event. Each student had to demonstrate verbal, written, and diagnostic skills in the competition.

Congratulations Jarrett!

Campisi selected for Leadership Forum

Gunderson High School student **Krystle Campisi** has been selected to participate in the *National Youth Leadership Forum on Defense, Intelligence, and Diplomacy* to be held in Washington, D.C. February 18-23. Krystle will be joining 400 students from all over the United States for the Forum.

While in Washington, she will be taking part in learning how the U.S. is developing its role in global conflict resolution. She will also have the opportunity to meet with leaders from key agencies and institutions, such as the State Department, U.S. Naval Academy, and the Defense Intelligence Agency and embassies.

Congratulations to Krystle!

President's message

-Dave Noel, VEP President

On the morning of April 8th, **Dave Fadness**, **Greg West** and I had the opportunity to meet privately with Vice

Mayor **Pat Dando** and her aide **Joshua Howard**. This was a truly enjoyable and productive meeting. VEP went to Pat with several topics of interest to the VEP community and we all left with action items--well, it was a meeting after all. But in the process of working our various topics (area parks, agreements with housing developers, traffic safety, etc.), what really struck me was the mutual respect and professionalism of everyone in the room.

Pat offers real solutions and guidance for VEP. Likewise, Pat really listens to us when we offer her solutions and guidance. What sets VEP apart from many other neighborhood associations is that we understand and tackle a wide variety of issues and projects in a fairly large geographical area. We see the big picture, we know how to set priorities, and how to get things done. And of course, these are Pat's forte as well.

Pat took a moment to remind us of our tremendous accomplishments over the last few years. She said we've earned the title of regional planners for our community. Last week, we were involved at the city level to help name the new park on Winfield Boulevard. At the same time, we have been working with the city, county, and developers of the housing project at Capitol Expressway and Vistapark Drive to secure median landscaping and sound walls on Capitol Expressway. Earlier this year we saw the near-completion of Vista Park. We completed two major landscaping projects and planted 2500 daffodils. And this is just a sampling.

VEP executive volunteers are respected professionals, and we all learned on the job. Now it's your turn.



Our annual elections will be held at our April 22nd meeting, and I'm disappointed to say we don't have a full slate. I have offered to continue as President, **Joe Tajnai** has offered to continue as Treasurer, and **Ginger Cardona** has offered to continue as Secretary. **Dave Fadness** and **Bob Aquino** have offered to stay on as co-editors (as they have for many years).

Unfortunately, **Ian Reddy's** schedule will not allow him to continue as Vice President, but he will continue to lead important projects and events such as the spring family picnic next month. **Greg West** continues to serve with the board in the non elected role of Past President (my aspiration too!). **Kathy Decker** serves as our Hospitality Committee chair, and past president **John Marks** runs our Home Improvement Faire each year. I can't thank our board enough for all their accomplishments, dedication, and support this year.

You've seen how great our community is. In the coming months I'll suggest some committees to bring more talent to work with the board to accomplish new things and hopefully become future board members. Most people join due to a passion--whether it's to fix a safety hazard, get a park improvement, beautify an eyesore,

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fight or support a project, or something else. What's your passion? Come join us and you'll be amazed what you can accomplish on our team.

VEP's been strong for 34 years, mainly because of our dedicated board members. Now it's your turn, and we need you. Please come to an executive board meeting and check it out. You are always welcome.

Advertising & privacy concerns: Part II

-Al Bender

Is your phone line rendered inoperative by unsolicited fax transmissions? Do you hear the sound of your fax machine operating at 3 am? Annoying as this can be, there is another issue.



Whenever you receive unsolicited advertisements, the advertiser is **shifting the cost** of advertising from their business to the consumer. So, not only do unsolicited fax transmissions (junk faxes) tie up your phone line and constitute an annoyance, they also cost you money. That paper, ink, and wear and tear on your fax machine represents real costs. When extrapolated over the millions of junk faxes sent every day, the costs are huge.

Fortunately, aggressive steps are being taken on many levels of government and by private organizations and persons to end the scourge of junk faxes.

First, a short history is necessary. In 1992, California enacted a regulation of junk faxes. Essentially, they were prohibited unless the sender included a toll free number by which the recipient could call the advertiser and have his/her phone number removed. Basically, the exception swallowed the rule.

Shortly thereafter, the federal government enacted the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA). This Act prohibited the sending of junk faxes, with some specific exceptions such as for non profits. This resulted in a conflict of law and varying interpretations as to whether federal or state law controlled. Also, the junk fax indus-

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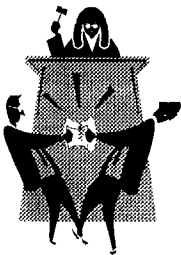
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try (it is large and powerful) worked diligently to attempt to get the TCPA and state laws invalidated as being unconstitutional.



With rare exceptions (such as a federal trial court in Missouri, although that decision was just reversed on appeal) courts uniformly rejected the constitutional challenges. Also, law enforcement, recognizing the real harm being caused by junk faxes, has turned its attention to the issue.

Finally, in California, the Legislature got involved. Effective January 1, 2003, the former law was repealed, allowing federal law to control (the bill was AB 2944, by Assemblywoman Kehoe).

Numerous enforcement actions are in progress. Our Attorney General, Bill Lockyer, has taken the lead in local law enforcement actions, filing against Fax.com, Inc. in San Diego.

On the federal level, the Federal Trade Commission has proposed a \$5.4-million fine against Fax.com, Inc., which would be the largest fine ever proposed by the F. T.C. for violations of the TCPA.

Finally, numerous private lawsuits are pending, including a monster class action suit filed last August by Silicon Valley entrepreneur and philanthropist Steve Kirsch against Fax.com, Inc. and Cox Communications, seeking \$2.2-trillion in penalties (as set forth in a news release of August 22, 2002).

For those readers who have fax machines at home, are serious about this problem, and want to get involved, there are several internet sites which are quite informative and helpful. They include:

www.junkfax.org

www.consumerwatchdog.org/other/junkfaxes

www.junkbushters.org

And, you could do what a local citizen recently did: sue the firm in Small Claims Court. He collected \$3,000 from a local mortgage broker who sent him two faxes, the second one three weeks after he wrote to the firm

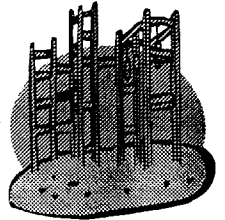
demanding to be removed from the list.

[Ed. Note: Al Bender is a past president and long-time resident of VEP, a Supervising Deputy District Attorney of the Consumer Protection Unit, and is known in the DA's office as "Al the Consumer Pal."]

Neighborhood parks

-Dave Noel

Vice Mayor **Pat Dando** and Parks Manager **Brian Hartsell** hosted an extremely well attended meeting on February 26th to review, prioritize, and select design options for several improvements at Almaden Lake Park. On Thursday April 17th at 6:30 p.m., Pat and Brian will host a follow-up meeting in the Pioneer High School library to present updated concepts based on the community inputs gathered at the first meeting. I encourage you to attend to learn about the proposed a new group use picnic area, a new marina complex, new Bocce ball courts, a new east side play area, and some other miscellaneous items.



Construction should begin this summer on a new park on Winfield Boulevard, with completion in early spring 2004. VEP executives **Dave Noel** and **Dave Fadness** formally nominated the name "**William H. Cilker Park**". Dave Fadness spoke eloquently in support of our nomination at the Parks and Recreation Commission hearing on April 2nd, with Dave Noel and past-president **Greg West** also speaking in support.

The commission voted to recommend that the San Jose City Council name the park "Cilker Park", and to recommend that a plaque be incorporated into the park design to explain the historical significance of the Cilker family name in San Jose. We'll be back to speak in favor of our nomination at a city council meeting in the next month or so (date to be determined).

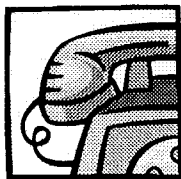
As always, if you notice problems with parks in our area, please call or email any of the board members listed on the back of this newsletter. If you would like to get more involved, please consider attending our executive board meetings. We could use extra help identifying and tracking resolution of neighborhood park issues.

Pre-register now for **Do Not Call List**

Californians can now pre-register for the nationwide **Do Not Call List** that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is expected to launch this summer. California is joining in the Do Not Call registry which is free to consumers.

If you sign up now, you can stop unwanted calls beginning in October 2003 under this nationwide program.

California's Office of the Attorney General will deliver the pre-registered California telephone numbers to the FTC as soon as the federal agency is ready to receive them, most likely in July 2003.



Only California residential and mobile telephone numbers are eligible for this program. Business telephone numbers are excluded. Beginning October 2003, telemarketers must stop calling consumers whose telephone number is on the national Do Not Call list.

While most telemarketer calls will be prohibited, there are certain exceptions. For example, charities and companies that have an established relationship with a consumer will still be allowed to make calls.

Signing up through the California Department of Justice website means that your information won't be used for any purpose other than to get onto the FTC **Do Not Call List**. However, don't be fooled by bogus registration sites.

To pre-register for the **Do Not Call List** go to this URL: <http://nocall.doj.state.ca.us>

Celebrate Spring in Guadalupe Gardens

-Phil Cornish

It's time to celebrate *Spring in Guadalupe Gardens*. Join us on Saturday, April 26 from 9 am to 3 pm for plant sales, garden tours, gardening information, and free children's activities that will educate as well as entertain. Spring in Guadalupe Gardens will be held at Columbus Park in Guadalupe Gardens, at the intersection of Spring and Taylor Streets in San Jose. There is no admission charge and plenty of free parking. The festival will feature:



- Plant Sales – featuring tomatoes and peppers from the Master Gardeners, roses and perennials
- Garden Accessories – garden art, stepping stones, antique seed packets
- Alternative Energy and Solar Cooking Demonstrations
- Tours of Guadalupe Gardens – Heritage Rose Garden, Historic Orchard, Recycled Water Garden and more
- Free Professional Garden Advice:

9 - 10 am Tom Liggett, Horticulturalist General Gardening and Irrigation

10 - 11 am Bette Lloyd, Master Gardener; Garden Veggies

11 - 12 noon Bracey Tiede, Master Gardener; Integrated Pest Management

12 - 1 pm Tom Liggett, Horticulturalist; General



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Gardening and Irrigation

1 - 2 pm Bob Chapman, Mercury News Columnist; Plant Diseases (bring in your own samples)

Blair Glenn, Saratoga Tree Service; Proper Tree Pruning

- Heritage Rose Garden in Full-Bloom
- Compost Bin Sale
- Trail Information
- Free Compost Give-Away
- Kid's Korner featuring educational games and activities –Butterfly Activity, Paper making, Seed Planting, Bubble Blowing, Wizard Hat Making

For more info, call Friends of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens, at (408) 298-7657 or visit www.grpg.org

[Ed. Note: Phil Cornish is Program Manager for Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens.]

Neighborhood developments

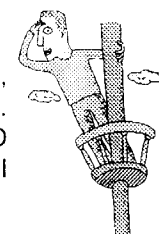
-Dave Noel

If you receive a notice of a public hearing regarding any kind of development or group home, please contact a VEP executive board member immediately.

When a developer or group home operator applies for a permit, the city requires them to notify all residents within a relatively small radius of their project. In some cases, only next door neighbors are notified.

These notices are usually so thick in legalese that they are barely recognizable as English. But have no fear, VEP executives are bilingual! We can translate gobbledegook into English and rally the neighborhood if needed.

Time is our enemy when we need to act fast, so please let us know as soon as possible. THANKS FOR BEING OUR EYES AND EARS! Don't assume your neighbor will tell us--they may not have received the notice.



Computer corner

-Bob Aquino, VEP's computer guru

Sometimes problems creep up on you without your knowing it. My old machine (4 years) was a 300-MHz Celeron machine with Win98 as an OS.



My daughter and her family had been living with us while they remodeled their house, and both she and her husband complained about how slow my system was to boot up. At first I just blew them off, but then I timed the boot up, and realized that it was taking 4-5 minutes to get an arrow cursor. I tried everything I could think of to put some life in the old girl, but it was strictly a losing proposition. So, I guessed that it was time for a new system.

I bit the bullet and bought a new motherboard and processor. This time it was a 1.6-GHZ P4 and I put in 1-GB of DDR RAM. The motherboard was equipped with a special hard drive controller called a RAID controller. Among other things, this controller allowed me to interleave data on two different hard drives, which minimizes the search time on each of the drives and allows them to have a higher effective speed.

I put in a G3 graphics card. Since the motherboard had a built-in network chip from a hardware point of view, I was set. On to the operating system...

Because I have a son who works for Microsoft, the cost of the operating system was nominal. I decided on Win XP Professional. While installing it took some time, the process went smoothly. An even bigger surprise was how simple connection to my home network was. I'm normally not a big fan of Microsoft's, but they appear to have gotten it right with this version of Windows. I do, however have to observe that they seem to be issuing patches to the software on about a weekly basis.

After loading up my applications, my new computer booted up in a very respectable 30 seconds.

So, now I have a new computer, what to do with the old one? Well, why not try to get it back up to speed? Since I had tried everything I knew what to do except one thing, it was time to do that one thing. That is, to reformat the disk and re-install the OS.

Since I was satisfied with Win XP, I decided to go with that. I'm happy to report that after the operation, the patient completely recovered. I now could boot up in about 1.5 minutes. It's certainly not as snappy as my P4, but why should it be? It is operating at an accept-

able level, and will be usable for some time into the future.

What are the lessons here? First, computers do get slower as they get older. This is not a mechanical or electrical issue, it's software based.

The first thing to do if your system seems sluggish is to get rid of programs that you don't use. Remember, uninstall them, don't just delete them. The next action is to defragment the hard drive. Continual writing, deleting, and overwriting causes the data on the disk to be non-contiguous. When this happens, the drive head is constantly searching for the next piece of data, slowing down the drive. You'd be amazed at the amount of work that the hard drive does in Windows, without your conscious participation.

When these approaches don't work, reformatting the disk and re-installing the OS is possible. This is a drastic step, not to be approached lightly. IF you decide to do it, back up all your files on another system or possibly a separate physical drive on your system. However, sometimes the best strategy is to drop back ten yards and punt. That's what reformatting is.

By the way, since I have retired from the work world, if anyone has any questions or problems with their systems, I'd be more than happy to see if I could help them out. My rates are reasonable (\$0 per hour, time and a half for overtime) Who knows, you might read about your problem in an upcoming issue of the VEP Computer Corner!

New city trails coordinator

-William Jeske

Some people work on projects from the isolation of an office and never see their finished products enjoyed by the public. **Yves Zsuttu** doesn't want that to be the case for him.

Zsuttu, who graduated from Willow Glen High School in 1982, went on to San José State University to major in civil engineering. He interned with the city and upon graduation took a job with the department of transportation, where he worked on projects involving traffic light timers and designing more efficient traffic light control stations.



But after 10 years with the department, followed by 18 months with the San Jose Department of Public Works, he jumped at the chance to apply for the city council's newly created trails coordinator position with the San Jose Department of Parks and Recreation.

"The position really appealed to me because I am a hiker and a biker, and what also drives me is the opportunity to be creative in my job," Zsuttu says. "What I saw here was the opportunity to put enhancements in the trail system."

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These enhancements might involve creating more attractive trail gateways or linking trails to retail and commercial centers so the trails have more of a "commute" function.

Zsutty's been on the job for a month, but his experience with hiking the Los Gatos Creek Trail as well as the Almaden Quicksilver County Park in San Jose and the Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve in the Los Altos Hills has exposed him to a diverse array of opinions from other hikers about the trail system's progress.

He believes people look at trails "in a rather straightforward way," adding, "I think that's where there's frustration." He says some people believe that making trails is as simple as just laying down asphalt.

"But the truth is, you have to work with a lot of permitting agencies and coordinate with inter-jurisdictional agencies. You need to get the community on board to agree on what the alignment's going to look like. You need to see if you can intersect with any parks, and I think the public and council members look at the trails and wonder why this can't be done sooner," Zsutty says. "There are just a lot of challenges. And it's my job to pursue those challenges."

"The department of parks and recreation is getting as much support as possible to get as much done as soon as possible," says San Jose District 6 City Council member Ken Yeager, who is also a marathon runner. Yeager wants the city to finish connecting the Los Gatos County Creek and Guadalupe Creek trails. In an effort to see this completion become a reality Yeager was instrumental in convincing the city council that a trails coordinator position was necessary.

One of Zsutty's duties is to look into inter-jurisdictional issues, such as working with neighboring cities, the Santa Clara Valley Water District and Caltrans. "It's not just San Jose's trail system," Zsutty says. "There are all these agencies we need to work with; there's the fish and game bureau; there's permits--all those things, and I want to begin building relationships so we can get things done a little more quickly."

There are several ongoing trail-related projects, so he's working with city staff to compile a database listing every project, which will enable him to access data quickly if anyone--from the public or the city--wants to know a particular project's status.

But Zsutty knows that it won't just be cyclists, runners, joggers or hikers who'll be asking. He says that those most wanting to see the parks program completed are families out for strolls. "I think the trails need to be de-

signed with the entire community in mind," including those who use wheelchairs and canes. He is also looking for ways to accommodate inline skaters or skateboarders, but it's too soon to say, he adds.

"There's a lot of work and opportunities to keep me busy for a few years," he says.

[Ed. Note: This April 2, 2003 **Willow Glen Resident** article was edited for length and is printed with permission.]

SJPD e-mail crime alerts

-David Noel

You may have seen an article in the April 2nd San Jose Mercury News: San Jose plans e-mail alerts on area crime. The San Jose Police Department will send timely email crime alerts to businesses, youth centers, neighborhood associations, and any other group of ten or more.

VEP has signed up for this service and will forward any pertinent emails that we receive from the SJPD to our members. The SJPD sends these emails based on zip code, so we should receive any information they deem pertinent to 95136.



If you haven't received any emails from VEP recently, we don't have your email address. If you are a VEP member and would like to be added to our email list, send us a note at vep@vepca.org. We will not share your email address with any third party, and it will be used for official VEP emails only.

Neighborhood news

-Vice Mayor Pat Dando

Fighting release of Brian DeVries

The news that convicted child molester **Brian DeVries** has been ordered to live in San Jose has greatly alarmed many residents. I strongly believe that this man should not be released from the state's custody. DeVries is clearly a threat to our public's safety and the cost to care for him, \$1-million, is absurd, especially given the budget challenges facing our state and our city.

On April 1st, the San Jose City Council unanimously passed a resolution opposing DeVries' release. My colleagues joined me in sending a message to Judge Baines that this child molester poses a significant risk to the public's safety and the costs to monitor him are too high. I am hopeful that our efforts will not only prevent DeVries from being released, but also encourage our leaders in Sacramento to re-look at the laws that pertain to sex offenders.

Judge Baines has delayed action on DeVries' release until April 30th. I strongly urge you and your neighbors

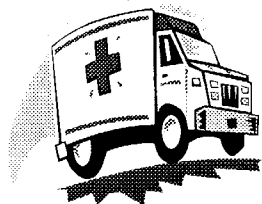
to contact the judge to express your concerns about this man being released. Important contact information, additional background on this issue, and ways to get involved in this effort are posted on my website, www.patdando.com

Is there a sex offender on your block?

With the recent news stories highlighting registered sex offenders, I am working to implement a program to provide the community with easier access to information about registered sex offenders in San Jose. Currently, the only way to find out if a sex offender lives in your neighborhood is to visit a local police station. My proposal to make this information available via the Internet was approved by the City Council's Rules Committee on March 19, 2003. I strongly believe that parents need to be aware that sex offenders may live near parks, libraries, and schools. I am hopeful that this program will be launched in the near future.

District Ten gets new ambulance services

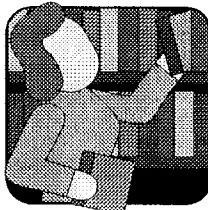
In mid-March, Fire Station 22 on Bose Lane received one of only five Supplemental Transport Ambulance Resource (STAR) ambulances in San Jose. This new vehicle supplements standard ambulance services American Medical Response (AMR) provides to our residents. It will enable fire department paramedics to transport critical patients to a local hospital when an AMR ambulance cannot get to the scene quickly. Having this ambulance will ensure that our residents receive quick and immediate emergency medical care.



Neighborhood library update

Almaden Library and Community Center: I thank the residents who participated in the planning process for expansion of the Almaden Library & Community Center. Their input helped develop a facility that meets the needs of the community. When complete, this community center will offer a gymnasium with cardiovascular exercise equipment, a demonstration kitchen, a room designed for youth programs, and a comprehensive program for senior citizens which will include Senior-NET, nutrition programs, and special events. Ground-breaking is scheduled for early next summer.

Blossom Hill Library: Construction of this new library on Blossom Hill Road continues to move forward. Based on community feedback, the City Council joined me in formally naming this new library the Vineland Branch Library after the former school located at the site. The Vineland Branch is expected to be complete by next January. It will feature a wide collection of books, comfortable seating areas, an Internet café area, and new technology that allows for self-checkout of library materials. I look forward to inviting you to its grand opening.



Almaden Lake Park improvements being planned
Recognizing the changing needs of our community, I have been working with local residents to refine the Almaden Lake Master Plan. To meet these new needs and serve more residents, the community has suggested several changes, renovations, and upgrades to Almaden Lake Park.

Proposals include a bridge connection to the Guadalupe Creek Trail, upgrades to the marina stations, enhancements to the picnic area, and additional recreational amenities such as bocce ball. I will host another community workshop to discuss these improvements on April 17th at 6:30 pm at Pioneer High School (1290 Blossom Hill Road). I encourage you to attend.

Neighborhood park news

Parkview I Park (on Bluefield Drive): Improvements to Parkview I Park are underway. When complete, the park will have new play equipment. Some of the features that the community requested include swings, climbing structures, and a drinking fountain. Construction is scheduled to be complete by early August.

Meadows Park (Bluefield Drive & Bliss Court): Following a community workshop last summer, improvements to Meadows Park are moving forward. This project consists of new play equipment for the park's play areas including swings, slides, interactive play stations, and a small water feature. The park is scheduled to re-open to the community this summer.

Winfield Park (Winfield Blvd. at Chynoweth Avenue): In early January the City Council joined me in approving the Winfield Park Master Plan. The neighborhood which backs up to the future park has recommended that a "low impact" recreational area in a natural setting would best serve their area.

Evergreen trees, oak trees, and flowering plum trees will provide a buffer between the homes and Winfield Boulevard, creating a pleasant gateway to the new segment of the Guadalupe River Trail. Construction on this park is expected to begin this summer with completion in early Spring 2004.

The Parks & Recreation Commission recommended naming this park **Cilker Park**, after an active San Jose family whose family farm and orchard once occupied the land. The City Council will ratify the Commission's recommendation in the next few weeks.

Almaden Winery Park: The Almaden Winery community is working to raise money to enhance the park in their neighborhood off of Blossom Hill Road. To raise money to build a new playground, they will be holding a Casino Night fundraiser on Saturday, April 25th. The tickets, which are tax deductible, can be purchased at www.almadenmothers.org/info.htm. In an effort to begin construction on this new playground within the next 18 months, I have pledged to match any money the com-

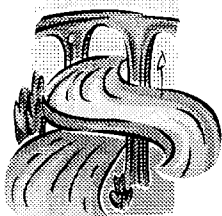
munity raises up to \$150,000.

Neighborhood improvements benefit community

Santa Teresa Boulevard Median Island Landscaping: I worked with Westfield, the owners of Oakridge Mall, to landscape the median island on Santa Teresa Boulevard between Blossom Hill Road and Cahalan Avenue. This project included the planting of over 100 flowering trees reminiscent of the historical orchards of Blossom Valley. Thanks to the strong partnership between the City and Westfield, this median now serves as a beautiful gateway into many neighborhoods.

85-87 Interchange update

The 85-87 Interchange is nearing completion, expected to open in late June. The project will complete the existing interchange by adding two connector ramps, one from southbound 85 to northbound 87 and one from southbound 87 to northbound 85. In addition, I have worked with VTA and Caltrans to construct additional sound walls along northbound 85 to offer residents who live adjacent to the freeway further protection from light, noise, and dust.



Learn more about downtown San Jose

When visiting our downtown you may want to stop by the Downtown Information Center. It provides residents with information about redevelopment, programs across the city, and upcoming events in San Jose. The Center is staffed by volunteers and provides information on:

- San Jose Redevelopment Agency projects & programs
- Updates on construction activity in downtown
- Citywide housing programs
- Citywide neighborhood & small business resources
- Volunteer opportunities

The office is open Monday from 10am to 6pm, Tuesday through Saturday from 10am to 7pm, and is located at 118 E. Santa Clara Street, between Third and Fourth Streets.

Local teens honored

The City of San Jose pays special tribute during the State of the City Address to groups and individuals for their exemplary service to the community. This year, I was honored to present a commendation to The Spot Youth Center Advisory Board for their commitment to the youth of District 10. The advisory board, made up of seven District Ten middle school students, spent countless hours to ensure that the Spot is a success. They offered input on everything from décor and seating arrangements to games and the programs the center offers to our youth. The Spot is open Monday through Friday from 3:45 pm to 7:00 pm and is located at 7050 Bret Harte Drive.

Kudos to VEP volunteers

I thank the VEP Community Association for organizing

66(+) volunteers on January 25th to help plant trees and bushes in median islands on Chynoweth Avenue and on Branham Lane. My office, a San Jose Beautiful Grant, Our City Forest, and the Department of Transportation supported this project. These new trees greatly enhance what were once bare median islands.

New District 10 staff member

The newest member of my District 10 team is **Denelle Fedor**. Born and raised in District Ten, Denelle graduated from San Jose State University with a degree in political science. She has been very active in the community and has spent time working for various elected officials prior to coming to my office. If she can be of any assistance to you, she can be reached at (408) 277-5251 or via e-mail at denelle.fedor@ci.sj.ca.us.

If you would like further information on the items discussed in this update or to confirm the dates, times, & locations of the events listed, please contact my office at (408) 277-5251. I can also be reached at pat.dando@ci.sj.ca.us. If you would like to receive this update via e-mail in the future, please contact me. E-mail is a more reliable and less expensive way for me to stay in touch with you.

Blossom Valley Times

-Dave Noel

After several years' absence, free home delivery of the Blossom Valley Times is beginning to expand back into the VEP area, partly due to urging from VEP officers. The Blossom Valley Times is published monthly and is distributed in approximately the middle of the month. Watch for the VEP calendar of events posted prominently in the community corner of the April Blossom Valley Times.

If you don't receive a copy of the Times, you can pick up a copy at the Pearl Avenue library and some local business places. Call the Times at (408) 494-7000 to find out where to pick up a copy, and let them know you want home delivery on your street.

Annuals for the summer

-John Marks, VEP's Green Gardener

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 will help them perk up and bloom.

Black mold on oranges (*)

When you go to pick your oranges, you may notice a black "dirt" on the oranges and the leaves. You may also notice a lot of scale all over the trees.

That "dirt" is called sooty mold. The scale comes from aphids, mealy bugs, and other sap-sucking insects that eat more sap than they can digest and exude the excess. It all falls to the fruit and leaves below, and a fungus grows on this exudate. Sooty mold grows only on the surface and can be washed off. The exudate is sweet and serves as a food source for ants.

To control the scale, prevent ants from climbing the tree and natural predators will usually take care of the scale. To stop ants, wrap a three-inch-wide band of masking tape around the tree's trunk and spread sticky goo (tanglefoot) on the tape. Although the ants can't cross the tape, they will look for other ways to get at the food that they scent. You have to remove any branches, twigs or leaves touching any structure or another shrub or tree, as the ants will follow the scent.

Degenerate tomatoes (*)

Tomatoes in our area can be infected by two soil-inhabiting fungi, verticillium wilt and fusarium wilt. Both can cause tomatoes to become deformed, stay small, and the leaves turn brown. The most likely culprit is fusarium wilt. These two fungal diseases persist in the soil for up to 20 years and affect many other plants, as well.

Do not plant tomatoes in the same place. If possible, plant only those that are labeled VFN (verticillium-, fusarium- and nematode-resistant). These will help prevent the spread of the diseases. Rotating the area where tomatoes are to be planted is an old, but effective practice.

[()Ed. Note: The paragraphs above on orange mold and tomato infections were condensed from articles in the San Jose Mercury News, 3/28/03.]*

San Jose Front Setback Paving Ordinance

San Jose's *Front Setback Paving Ordinance* limits the amount of paving in the front setback of all lots with a single-family dwelling unit and all lots in any R-1 Residence District in the City of San Jose.

✓ *When did this ordinance go into effect?*

The Front Paving Ordinance went into effect on July 1, 1999.

✓ *Why did the City Council enact this ordinance?*

The Front Setback Paving Ordinance was enacted in response to community concerns about the damaging effect on neighborhood character of paving and parking in single-family front yards. Front yards paved as private parking lots are generally considered to be inconsistent with good neighborhood quality. Parking in front setback areas has increased noticeably in recent years and many neighborhoods have expressed an interest in having limits placed on the extent of such paving and parking.

Off-street parking on single-family lots is currently limited to paved areas in the front yard and corner side yard as a result of the Lawn Parking Ordinance enacted by the City Council in December 1995.

✓ *What is a "paved" surface?*

A "paved" surface is one made of concrete, brick, asphalt, pavers, or other similar material. (For more information regarding parking and paving, please refer to Planning brochure titled "What is the Lawn Parking Ordinance?" VEP will publish this document in our May, 2003 newsletter.)

✓ *What are the limitations under this ordinance?*

Single family lots with a frontage width of 40 feet or greater: No more than 50% of the front setback area may be paved.

Single family lots with a frontage width of less than 40 feet: Paving in the front setback area is limited to 10 feet in width or 50% of the width of the lot at any given point, whichever is greater.

Also, a "parking apron" is allowed as an exception to the 50% limitation only for single-family lots with a frontage width of less than 40 feet. To qualify as an exception, the parking apron must be located directly "in front" of, and provide primary access to, two side by side required parking spaces. In most cases, the required parking will be a garage. This apron is limited to a width of no more than 18 feet and a length of no more than 25 feet and may be located wholly or partially in the front setback area.

✓ *How does the property owner determine the width of the property if it is an odd shape or configuration?*

The width of the property is determined by a line drawn between two points at which the line parallel to the front property line crosses the side property lines. (See Note below.)

✓ *What happens to the properties that don't conform to the Front Setback Paving Ordinance?*

If the paving was done prior to the effective date of the ordinance, the paving is legal. If the paving is legal, the owner of the site would not have to remove it in order to comply with the current regulations. The current regulations do apply, however, to any increases in the amount of paved area after July 1, 1999. If you have questions regarding the regulations, contact the planning staff at (408) 277-4576.

✓ *What is the required front setback for my lot? How can I find out what the setback requirements are?*

The required setback for a lot is determined by its zoning district. Zoning districts in the City of San Jose can vary from block to block. To find out the zoning district and the required setbacks for a lot, contact the planning staff at City Hall Annex, Room 400, 801 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95110-1795 (408) 277-4576.

[Ed. Note: To get a copy of simple illustrations that will help you understand various setback parameters, call Dave Fadness (578-6428)--or the city planning staff.]



Bulletin Board Ads

PURCHASING OR REFINANCING A HOME? Take advantage of today's low rates! Up to 100% financing available now! Call Christopher Lee at Innovest Corp. at (408) 828-9084 or 252-5600 ext 29; email clee@netloans.com.

GOING ON VACATION? Responsible, experienced 13-year old is available for pet, house, and yard care. Call

Matt @ 225-5878.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTARY PUBLIC: Call Peggy at 224-2243 or 250-3236.

PAMPERED CHEF: Make meal preparation fast and easy with quality kitchen tools from THE PAMPERED CHEF®. Like to host a kitchen show to earn free tools? Or would you like the new 2003 Spring catalog? Contact Kristine at 224-7616 or email happykitchens@yahoo.com

AFTER SCHOOL & WEEKEND DAY CARE: On Vistapark Drive, near Rachel Carson and Parkview Elementary Schools. Call Peggy @ 224-2243 or 250-3236.

MR. FIX-IT will repair leaks, sticking doors, locks, latches, lights, and life's little ills. No job is too small. Call John @ 629-6433.

ABC'S & MORE: Licensed family childcare in the Vistapark neighborhood. Infants and up. 7am-6pm, M-F. Call Kristine at 224-7616 or email at: alexanderkristine@hotmail.com

VEP will print free ads for its members for transactions involving less than \$250, for lost-and-found, for announcements of general interest to our community, and for kids under 18 or retirees who are looking for work. Free ads must be submitted monthly for publication.

Commercial ads cost \$1.00 per line per month, 10 lines maximum, must be prepaid before publication, and may only be run once per calendar quarter. Commercial ads must be submitted quarterly. No graphics allowed. For information on full-sized ads with graphics (camera ready), contact VEP'S Treasurer listed on the mailing page of this newsletter.

One line contains 50 characters, including spaces. Mail to VEP, P.O. Box 18111, San Jose, 95158. Ads must be received no later than the 10th of the month for inclusion in that month's newsletter. Use the following form as a guide for submitting an ad:

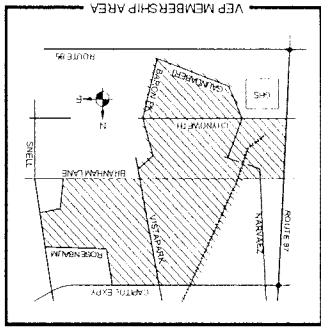
NAME: _____

PHONE # _____

AD WORDING: _____

The VEP Executive Board reserves exclusive right to refuse any ad for any reason. VEP does not certify nor is it responsible in any way for the claims, goods, or services of any advertisers.

VEP
Meeting 7:30 pm
Tuesday, April 22



PRERST STD	266-7183	DAVID NOEL	266-7183	noel1234@aol.com
U.S. POSTAGE PAID	226-9574	IAN REDDY	226-9574	ncnc750@hotmail.com
SAN JOSE, CA	578-5882	GINGER CARDONA	227-0222	cardona@sbcglobal.net
PERMIT #5242	629-5459	JOE TAJMAL	578-5882	Vep@tajmal.com
	578-6428	BOB AQUINO	629-5459	baquino@bobaquino.com
	972-4098	DAVE FADNESS	578-6428	dfadness@earthlink.net
		KATHERINE DECKER	972-4098	ddd83055@aol.com

VEP EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

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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THE VEP NEWS

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Be sure to attend
VEP's April 22nd
Annual Meeting
 7:30 pm at Gundersen

Check us out at www.vepca.org