Notice: Our parade starts at Vista Park, passes down Hyde Park Drive to Vistapark Drive, then to Bluefield Drive, and ends at Parkview School. "NO PARKING" will be allowed on one side of those three streets from 8 am until 1 pm on 5/25/09. *Vehicles parked in violation will be towed.*

Memorial Day Parade & Festival

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

Monday, May 25th

Parade leaves from Vista Park at 11 am sharp

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

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

Awards will be given for these Costume Categories: Best Family, Most Patriotic, Funniest, Most Original, Most Beautiful, Best Bicycle, Best Coaster Wagon, Craziest, Most Colorful, Most Unusual, Judges' Choice.



Festival follows at Parkview School

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

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

All game and snack proceeds benefit Carson and Parkview Schools

Entertainment we've lined-up for you...

- © Fair & Sylvandale Middle Schools' Bands
- © Andrew Hill High's JROTC Cadets & Drill Teams
- © Carson & Parkview Schools' Choir
- © Town Square Harmonizers barbershop quartet
- © Living Waters Hawaiian dancers
- America Tae Kwon Do martial arts
- Oak Grove High School Jazz Band
- Open again to the property of the property

© DJ music by Mike Lopez

- © S.J. Sharkie
- © Sunny & Twinkles + high school clowns
- © Our City Forest's "O2" mascot
- © San Jose Police Mounties & K-9 Unit
- © San Jose Firefighters & Sharkie Truck
- © Army, Navy, Marines, & Air Force personnel
- © Food by Mojo Burger
- © Drinks & Snacks by Carson and Parkview Schools
- © Crafts sale

Fun kids' games + activities for all ages...

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

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

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

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

This event is supported by VEP membership dues. Membership is open to all interested residents. Visit our website for additional information. To join, send a check for \$20 and mail it to...

★ VEP Community Association ★

Representing More Than 2000 Families in the Blossom Valley Area of South San Jose Since 1969
P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158
E-Mail: vepca@vepca.net Website: www.vepca.net

Prizes

Games



VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

May 2009

VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday ► May **26**, **2009** ◀

Vista Park Community Room 475 Hyde Park Drive

AGENDA

★ Emergency Preparedness
 Home Fire Prevention and Safety ★
 A presentation by SJ Fire Captain Mike Woodworth

★Santa Clara Co. Parks & Recreation ★
What to Do This Summer
A presentation by Tamara Shear
Information Officer

★ VEP Business ★

Advertiser Appreciation Randazzo's Water Conditioning

End of Year Reports Treasurer's Report Goals and Objectives

VEP Election for Board of Directors

★Announcements ★

Emergency Preparedness 2-hr Classes Summer Break

★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

Your chance to voice your opinion and/or to seek VEP's help.

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

VEP's May Meeting

by Marilyn Rodgers

Topics for the May General Membership Meeting:

▶ Emergency Preparedness – Home Fire Prevention and Safety. Featured guest speaker will be San Jose Fire Captain Mike Woodworth, who will provide an overview of the San Jose Fire Department and the services they provide. The focus of his presentation will be how to be prepared for a fire in your home, including a fire escape plan for you and your family.

Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation - What to Do

This Summer. Information Officer Tamara Shear will provide ideas for utilizing and enjoying the county parks this summer. Suggested activities will highlight fun for individuals, families with children, and people with dogs.

► VEP Business – Advertiser Appreciation – Randazzo's Water Conditioning. VEP will be recognizing and thanking Randazzo's for their many years of advertising support to VEP.

Treasurer Ginger Cardona will provide the VEP financial report. With the recent changes to Bylaws and Constitution, this is a transition year to a new fiscal year.

Vice President Marilyn Rodgers will provide a brief review of the 2008-2009 Goals and Objectives.

Election of the VEP Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee will present the slate of the Board of Directors. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. Members will be asked to vote to elect the nominated directors. (See article by the Nominating Committee elsewhere in the newsletter.)

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

We look forward to seeing you, your family, your friends, and your neighbors at our **May 26th** meeting. Please join us!

VEP Board Elections

by Marilyn Rodgers

In May, VEP elects members to sit on the Board. Changes to the VEP Constitution and Bylaws, recently approved by the membership, increased the number of seats on the Board from five to seven. We currently have two open seats on the VEP Executive Board.

Please consider serving on the VEP Board. It is a great opportunity to serve your community, while learning more about your neighborhood and your city. It is also a fun and rewarding way to meet many of your neighbors. If you are new to the VEP area, don't think you should wait until you know more about this community. Whether you are new, or a long time member, we need you - your ideas, energy, and enthusiasm for your community now!! No experience is required. Continuing and former board members are more than willing to serve as mentors while you get your feet wet! How much time is required? About 3 to 6 hours per month. Self nominations are encouraged. For additional information or to volunteer, please contact Nominating Committee Members Judy Elrite or Charlie Herbert (see contact information below), or any board member. Come on, join us, you'll be glad you did!

2009 is VEP's 40th year!

Slate of Nominees for Election to the VEP Board of Directors

by Nominating Committee Members -Judy Elrite and Charlie Herbert



The slate of nominees for the Board of Directors for 2009-2010 is as follows: (listed in alphabetical order)

Helen Castillo Susan Iverson Adina Pierce Marilyn Rodgers Debra Suydam

There are currently two open seats on the Board. Nominations for these positions will be accepted up through the VEP General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, May 26th. The membership will elect the new Board at this meeting. As per the recently approved changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, the Officers to the Board – President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary are then elected by the Board of Directors. For additional information, or to volunteer/self nominate, contact Judy Elrite at 227-1296 or judy.elrite@lamrc.com or Charlie Herbert at 578-5601 or chasherbert@sbcglobal.net.

Thank You to...

Randazzo's Water

Randazzo's Water has been a long time advertising with VEP and we would like to thank them for their support. The family does not currently reside in the VEP neighborhood, but many years ago was recommended to advertise by a VEP member.



Lou Randazzo - 1944

Lou Randazzo, founder and patriarch of Randazzo's Water, began his career in water treatment with the US Navy during World War II. After Lou Randazzo's return from the service he began to work in the industry in which he had the most experience water treatment.

Since then, Lou and his two sons, Rick and Steve, have helped establish a family business dedicated to water treatment. Both the immediate and extended family members work together and are dedicated to a perfect water treatment solution for every customer, and providing the very best in customer satisfaction. Rick attributes the company's long standing success to the ability to offer a better value and price to local customers.

Randazzo's Water provides an assorted of water oriented product and services including water softeners, drinking water purification systems, and service for systems. Be sure to mention VEP for a member discount.

VEP helps you solve community problems

A Special Thanks to our VEP Volunteers

By Helen Castillo, Volunteer Coordinator

Special thanks for stepping up to the plate and getting our Flyers distributed for the Memorial Day Parade and Garage Sale/E-Waste events. Many thanks to Brent Castillo, Jaclyn Castillo, Brandon Castillo, Sarah Goodrich ,Paige Ferrio, Jim Hicks, Bob Olson, Barbara Aquino, Kathy Pang, Karen Mulaly, Pat Souza and Joyce Chesnos. This is a special Thanks to Josie Supencheck who so graciously offered to help but we were out of flyers. Thanks again.

Disaster & Emergency Preparedness Conference

By Helen Castillo

The disaster preparedness conference held at Pioneer High

School on April 25th was a huge success! Approximately 500 people attended and took part in the variety of classes and workshops offered. I am extremely proud that so many people including our council woman Nancy Pyle and Mayor Chuck



Reed took the time on a Saturday to participate in what many said was the best disaster preparedness event they had at-



tended. Many thanks to our venders and class speakers. A special thank you to our Keynote speaker Harold Schapelhouman serves as fire chief in Menlo Park and San Jose Prepared for their support. The credit goes to the fantastic team of volunteers who

organized the conference.

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April General Meeting Synopsis

By Adina Pierce

There was a big turnout for the April General Membership meeting at the Vista Park Community Room.

The meeting began with District 10 Councilmember Nancy Pyle's introduction of city leaders in the audience. In attendance were City Manager Debra Figone, Deputy City Manager Norberto Dueñas, and District 6 Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio. She then announced the next speaker: Mayor of San Jose, Chuck Reed.

Mayor Chuck Reed spoke about the state of the city budget, then introduced Deputy City Manager Norberto Dueñas.

Mr. Dueñas presented an overview of the City's Budget. At the end of the presentation, members of the audience had the opportunity to submit questions.



Next, Tim Lynds of Rebuilding Together gave a brief overview of their program. For more information, visit rebuildingtogether-sv.org

The next presentation was by SJPD Lt. Gordy Bowen. He said the crime rate in the VEP neighborhood is pretty low compared to other areas of the city. Go to the SJPD website at www.sipd.org and click on the crimereports.com link to see more information. He then introduced 911 Dispatch Supervisor **Peggy Martinez** who told us about the 911 emergency call system, and how it works. If you need to call 911 from your cellphone, use the following: 408-277-8911.

VEP's Super Saturday Successful Despite Rain

By Dave Noel

On May 2nd, VEP held three successful events. We hope you had the opportunity to enjoy some or all of

First, we had our annual Community-Wide Garage Sale. Residents all over the VEP area cleaned out their homes and garages, picked up bargains, and met their neighbors. While the rain definitely put a damper on this event, many neighbors worked together to put up canopies and didn't let the rain spoil the fun.

Special thanks goes to VEP's Treasurer Ginger Cardona, who initiated VEP's annual garage sale several years ago and has coordinated the event ever since.

Second, we had our second annual E-Waste Collection event in conjunction with Parkview Elementary School and Earth-

> care Recycling, with proceeds split 50/50 between VEP and the Parkview School Community Association (PSCA).

This year we collected 3417 pounds of ewaste, netting proceeds of \$102. This was quite a bit less than last year's proceeds of \$777, which we attribute mostly to the weather,

and partly due to lower prices for recyclables this year.

VEP thanks PSCA president Tanya Summers and Parkview principal Debbie Roach for hosting and co-sponsoring this event, as well as for promoting it within the Parkview commu-

VEP also thanks Steve Ramona at Earthcare Recycling. If you ever have occasion to run an e-waste fundraising event, I highly recommend Steve and Earthcare Recycling. They make the event easy and are very generous with the proceeds. Unlike some of their competitors, they never charge for their services, and they provide all the staffing needed for the event.

Third, VEP arranged to have the **Salvation Armv** locate trucks at Parkview Elementary School to collect unsold treasures from

neighborhood garage sales. By the end of the day, the Salvation Army collected about a full truckload of charitable donations, and VEP residents returned home with tax-deductable receipts and extra space in their homes and garages. This year the Salvation Army also offered to do home pick-ups of large items n the day of the event.



If the rain kept you from holding a garage sale and you still have large items you'd like the Salvation Army to pick up, you can call 1-800-SA-TRUCK Monday through Friday.

VEP thanks board member Helen Castillo, and Jonathan Frederick of the Salvation Army for arranging and coordinating the Salvation Army trucks and staff for this event.

VEP's 25th annual Community Service Awards Bv Dave Noel

For our 25th consecutive year, VEP will offer grants towards higher education or vocational training for up to three graduating high school seniors with exceptional records of volunteer community service.

Applications were due on April 30th. At this writing, the VEP Community Service Awards selection committee is busily reviewing the applications and selecting the winners. Gunderson and Andrew Hill administrators submitted four and two candidates, respectively. VEP Vice President will present awards to one deserving student from each school at their respective senior awards nights (May 27th for Andrew Hill and June 4th for Gunderson).

As we did not receive any At-Large applications, there will not be an At-Large award this year.

At our January general meeting, members unanimously approved a plan to award up to three CSAs of \$650 each for graduating high school students from Gunderson High School, Andrew Hill School, and "At-Large"; or \$1000 each if we grant only one or two awards.

We'll announce our winners in the September VEP News and include a summary of their community service and college plans.

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

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

Helpful City of San Jose Phone Numbers:

By Dave Noel

Abandoned Shopping Carts	(408) 535-3500
Abandoned Vehicle on street	(408) 277-5305
Barking, Injured or Stray Dogs	(408) 578-7297
Blighted Properties	(408) 277-4528
Graffiti 24-hour Hotline	(408) 277-2758
Household Hazardous Waste Disposal	(408) 299-7300
Inoperable Vehicle on Private Property	(408) 277-5305
Potholes	(408) 277-4373
Recyclables Scavenging	(408) 277-4528
San Jose City Hall Customer Service	(408) 535-3500
Street Light Repair	(408) 277-5517



Envision San Jose 2040 Task Force Meeting

On Wednesday, May 20th, the Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Update Team will host a community meeting at the Roosevelt **ENVISIONSAN JOSE 2040** Community Center.

To receive periodic updates and meeting invitations for the Envision San José 2040 General Plan Update, please sign-up at: www.sanjoseca.gov/development/subscription/ email_updates.asp

> Community Meeting Wednesday, May 20, 2009 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registration starts at 6:00 p.m. Roosevelt Community Center 901 East Santa Clara Street

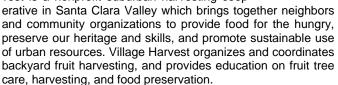
By the year 2040, San José is projected to have a demand for over 160,000 new housing units and over 313,000 new jobs. The purpose of the community meeting is to obtain feedback on where job and housing growth will occur in the City over the next 30 years. Input from the community will inform and influence the Envision San José 2040 Task Force and City Council decisions on where to locate growth. Staff will make a brief presentation on the status of the Envision San José 2040 General Plan Update process before engaging the community in a discussion on potential growth locations. Background information and key documents are available on the

Envision San José 2040 Website: www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp_update

To request an accommodation under the American's with Disabilities Act, contact Lee Butler at (408) 535-77851 / (408) 294 -9337 (TTY) or Lee.Butler@sanjoseca.gov.

Village Harvest

If you have more oranges or other crops than you can use, Village Harvest will come pick them and donate them for you. Village Harvest is a nonprofit suburban harvesting coop-



Village harvest works closely with County Agriculture officials to ensure that their Harvesting for the Hungry efforts are in compliance with local quarantines, providing special inspections to support their harvests.

For more information, call (888) FRUIT-411, or visit www.villageharvest.org.

Surviving the House Downturn

By Vice Mayor Chirco

Many of us have had the experience over the past year of noticing homes in our neighborhood, once lived in, suddenly go



vacant as a result of foreclosure. There are signs everywhere of the impact the rise in foreclosures, along with the broader economic downturn, have had on our community, whether it's stories of friends and neighbors trying to find a way to make their next payment, or a foreclosed property down the street in need of proper maintenance. With a foreclosure rate at 1.7% of all homes, San Jose has faired better than other parts of the country, but we've still seen a dramatic increase, from 5800 filings in all of 2007, to a total of 14,000 in 2008. There are ongoing efforts at the Federal and State level to address this problem, but I believe that we at the local level have a special obligation to help residents facing foreclosure access the best information and advice, and to respond when vacant properties become blighted. I'd like to give you an update on efforts the City is making in these areas.

For those at risk, the first step to avoiding foreclosure is to seek advice and learn the best strategies to address their situation. When people miss a payment, their first impulse is often to avoid contact with the lender, but the best strategy is almost always to engage the bank in trying to find a solution. The City is working with a local nonprofit, Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV), to provide foreclosure prevention counseling that can help our residents work through these issues. To learn more about NHSSV's counseling program, call them at (408) 279-2600, or visit their website at www.nhssv.org/. All counselors are certified by the Federal Department of Housing, which also provides a useful online foreclosure avoidance guide, http://www.hud.gov/ foreclosure/index.cfm. The City is taking steps to make sure our community is aware that these and other services are available to those at risk. On Thursday, April 23 from Noon until 5:00 pm, the City's Housing Department is sponsoring a foreclosure prevention fair at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds. A variety of resources will be available, including foreclosure prevention counselors, bank representatives and social services providers.

In addition to helping our residents avoid foreclosure, the City also has a duty to respond when foreclosed properties become a blight on our neighborhoods. The City's Code Enforcement Division has stepped up enforcement on foreclosed properties in an effort to head off these problems. They began by creating a database that allows them to identify foreclosed homes across the City and track ownership information. Once they identify a problem, recent State legislation has given us a new enforcement tool: cities can now levy fines of \$1000 a day against banks that own foreclosed properties but don't meet their maintenance obligations. Code Enforcement reports that most banks have been responsive once a problem has been identified. After the problem is resolved, Code monitors the property for a one year period, conducting periodic inspections, to ensure that the blight does not recur. If you have concerns about a foreclosed home in your neighborhood, please contact Code Enforcement at (408) 277-4528.

These are challenging times for all of us, but I'm confident that we'll be able to meet them. If you have questions or comments about the foreclosure issue, or any other matter, please get in touch with my office at (408) 535-4909 or by email a district9@sanjoseca.gov.





Family and Children Portraits

notes

Weddings and Special Events

Photography by Jeri Arstingstall

* VEP MEMBER *

(408) 281-3393

Come Share Your Thoughts and Concerns

Mayor Chuck Reed and the San Jose City Council invite you to attend one of the 2009 Community Budget Meetings.

With the recently reported drop in property tax revenue, the shortfall facing San Jose now stands at \$78 million. It is critical that the community come together for an open and somber conversation on upcoming cuts to City staff and services

Wednesday May 20 6:30pm City hall wing 188-119 200 E. Santa Clara Street

Call 2-1-1- for One-Stop Referrals

2-1-1- a direct line to critical services and resources in Santa Clara County now officers streamlined access to food and shelter, financial assistance, counseling, drug and alcohol intervention, job training, child and elder care, health care, youth programs, and volunteer opportunities, 2-1-1- Santa Clara County is a free, confidential service that operates 24/7 in over 140 languages. It also gives disaster official a way to provide the public with up-to-date information about resources, following a disaster, including rescue services, power information, medical care, fuel, shelter, and food. For more information including volunteer opportunities, call 2-1-1- or visit 211scc.org.

VEP Community Association is Making a Difference

VEP is under way with conducting a Disaster & Emergency pilot program for our neighborhood, we are working with the San Jose Office of Emergency Services San Jose Prepared. A class on Disaster & Emergency Preparedness was held on April 18th at the Vista Park Community room with much success. The class is 2 hours long and is free. After completing the class you will receive a very informative booklet on topics like, the supplies needed for a disaster, how to make a family plan in case of a fire, how to store water, and much more. Please see below for our upcoming class schedule. Please call Helen Castillo to register 408-981-5902

Vista Park Community Room May 30- 9:00 - 11:00 June 6- 9:00 -11:00

May Events at the Pearl Avenue Library

By Jane Cronkhite, Librarian Pearl Avenue Branch Library

Summertime is just around the corner and with it comes Summer Reading Celebration at San José Public Library. It's time to kick back, read and enjoy a book (or several) of your own choosing. "Be Creative @ your library" is the theme for children from birth through grade 5, while teens in grades 6 through 12 are invited to "Express Yourself @ your library." This year all registration and recordkeeping will take place online, so there are no paper logs to keep track of. The ability to download eBooks and audio books from the library's digital media collection makes it possible to participate even when out of town. In addition, participants will be able to set their own reading goal. A free book and a pizza coupon await those who reach their goal (while supplies last). Free activities increase at all San José libraries throughout the summer months providing ample opportunity for fun and relaxation. There will also be a summer reading program for adults; details to be announced. For more information as summer draws near, visit SJLibrary.org, contact your neighborhood library or call (408) 808-2183.

Summer Reading Celebration is co-sponsored by the Friends of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Friends of Branch Libraries, and Round Table Pizza, with additional support from Bay Area Parent™ and other community organizations.

- ▶ New Book Scouts on Monday, May 25 at 4 p.m. is for children in grades 1-6. Children can earn badges for learning various things about the library and books. Activities include crafts and snacks.
- ▶ Baby Signs is for parents of babies up to 18 months, or expectant parents. Learn American sign language and tricks and tips to integrate signing into your baby's life. Tuesday, May 26 at 11 a.m.
- ▶ Plan a Victory Garden and grow your own vegetables on Saturday, May 30 at 11 a.m.

Story Times:

- Preschool Story time for ages 3-5 is every Wednesday at 11:30 am.
- Toddler Story Time with Stay and Play for ages 18-36 months is every Friday at 10:30 am.
- Family Story time is held on Saturdays at 10:30 am.
- Chinese Story time for all ages is on May 26 at 7 pm.

Regular events and workshops:

- Free2Succeed: Resume Reviews are available all month long; submit your resume to pearlavelibrary@gmail.com. Please allow one week for a librarian or volunteer to respond.
- The ESL Conversation Club meets on Mondays at 5 pm. This one-hour session is a great way to practice your English and to make friends at the library. No pre-registration required.
- On Tuesdays, the library offers Internet Basics at 11 am and Internet Básico en Español at 6 pm. Sign up for at the service desk.
- Pearl Avenue Book Club will read One Red Paperclip on Tuesday, May 26 at 6:30 p.m.
- Wii Gaming for Teens is every Thursday at 4 pm.
- Wii Fitness is light exercise on Thursdays at 11 am.
- Children grades K-6 are invited to our Monthly Craft on Friday, May 22 at 4 p.m.
- Children are invited to the **Read and Win Jeopardy Game** on **Monday, May 25** at 3:30 p.m., where we will read <u>The</u> Cay by Theodore Taylor.

For news of other library activities, including those at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, visit: http://www.sjlibrary.org/

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Tomatoes For You

By John Marks

Growing tomato plants is easy, and the rewards are well worth the effort. Nothing beats your own vine-ripened beauties. You'll probably wish you had planted more.



Experiment first with just a few plants; each one can produce 10 to 15 lbs. of fruit. To get the best results with the least effort, purchase seedlings from a local nursery at planting timeafter the last expected frost. Choose plants with straight, stocky stems about 6- to 10-in. tall.

Plant tomatoes in well-drained soil where they will receive sun all day long. When planting, work a complete fertilizer, such as 5-10-10 or 5-20-20, into the upper 6 in. of soil, following package directions. Space plants 24 to 36 in. apart. Plan to plant no later than the end of May, and expect the plant to set blossoms only after the night time temperature stays above 55 deg. Remove the plant from its container, pinch off the lower leaves and set it in a deep planting hole so the roots and stem are buried up to the first set of leaves. Roots will form along the buried portion of the stem, resulting in a strong plant.

Stake or cage the plant soon after planting so as not to disturb the developing roots later. Tie plants to their support as they grow. As the plants gain in height, pinch off the lower branches; these are called bleeders because they suck moisture and nutrients from the main plant, but produce nothing. A well-pruned tomato plant is stronger and more productive.

Water through the entire growing season to keep the soil moist, and fertilize regularly. Depending on variety, you can expect red, ripe tomatoes as soon as six weeks after planting. You'll be proud.

If you have tomatoes in planters or pots, the vines may begin to die at the bottom about the time the fruit begins to ripen, and soon the whole vine is dead. This is a classic symptom for verticillium wilt (can you pronounce that?), a common soil disease in our area. There is no chemical cure, and this disease is persistent in local soil; once present, it can last for about 20 years, I am told

You may want to try the upside-down planter advertised on TV; I got a couple, and they're doing fine.

Oak Grove School District Appoints New Superintendent

The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the appointment of Tony Garcia as the next Superintendent of the Oak Grove School District, effective August 29, 2009. Manny Barbara, the current Superintendent, will retire



at that time after serving 10 years in this position. The Board would like to thank Manny for his hard work and leadership. The Board of Trustees Unanimously approved the appointment at the regularly scheduled Board Meeting on April 9, 2009.

Mr. Garcia is currently the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for the Oak Grove School District and possesses a wealth of education experience. He has over 34 years in the education field, 32 of which have been dedicated to serving the students, staff, and community of the Oak Grove School District. During his tenure with the District, he has held the positions of intermediate school teacher, Student Service Specialist, Elementary School Principal, Intermediate School Principal, and Director of Human Resources. Mr. Garcia also serves as the Region 8 State Human Resources Managers Representative and has recently been awarded the 2009 Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Region 8 Personnel Administrator of the Year.

VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival

By Dave Fadness

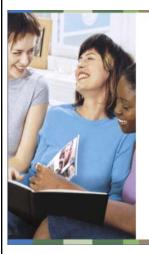
We include a full page notice of our *Memorial Day Parade & Festival* in this newsletter. We hope you and your family and friends will attend this fun event.



This our fifth year and we expect at least 3000 people to attend from our community. All proceeds benefit Carson and Parkview Elementary Schools.

We can still use hands-on volunteers. Call me (578-6428) or **Helen Castillo** (981-5902) if you are willing to help.

Above all, please be sure to save the day, spread the word, and plan to attend with your family and friends on Monday, May 25, 2009. See you there!



Susan Iverson

Independent Consultant San Jose, Ca 95136 (408) 813-0592 memorieshelpers@sbcglobal.net

Book your Seat at a Crop Today! Wednesday December 3 - 6 to 9:30 Friday January 2 - 6 to Midnight Wednesday January 14 - 6 to 9:30 November 22 - 10 am to Midnight December 13 - 10 am to Midnight



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Wesley W. Terrell

★VEP Member & Resident★
Vista Park Specialist



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It's Easy to Be Green!

by Our City Forest

Sign up for a new and exciting opportunity with Our City Forest. Learn how you and your neighbors, co-workers, or favorite group can get involved with *Green & Healthy Neighborhoods*. It's simple, it's fun, and it's FREE!



WHAT IS IT?

A chance to sit down with others and learn how you can save money while recycling more, using less water, conserving energy, eliminating household toxins, and more.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Meet with a *Green Amigo* coach weekly for six weeks. The coach will help your group complete a simple "Action Guide", filled with free ideas, fun activities, and more.

WHO CAN JOIN?

Any San Jose residents who want to be green, save money, and help our community have a healthy future.

You can sign up on your own or with several neighbors, club members, co-workers, sorority members, or *any* other interested group.

WHERE?

Your group selects the home, library, coffee shop, or other meeting site. Our *Green Amigo* will join you there.

WHY GET INVOLVED?

Who doesn't want to live in a greener, healthier community? We can have one if *each of us* steps up to do our part. There's no better time than now to begin a new "green" lifestyle, while protecting your family's health and cutting costs at the same time.

ACT NOW! Groups across San Jose will begin meeting soon. Space is limited, but booking is available for later sessions.

To sign up or for more information, please call or write: Monica Nanez at mnanez@ourcityforest.org or (408) 998-7337 x 108.

Add VEP's website www.vepca.net to your "favorites"

Free Summer Shakespeare and Music

By Susan Iverson

Summer is close approaching, and it is a great time to review a variety of local vents which are available for free. Two favorites are local concerts in city parks, and productions of some of Shakespeare's most popular plays. A few of the closest venues and events are listed.



Genre of music varies by location, so contact the event organizer for additional details. Some locations will incur parking fees.

Music and Concerts in the Park

San Jose

Scion Music in the Park presented by Dos Equis and Metro Newspapers

http://www.sidowntown.com/eve_eve_mus.html

Thursday evenings 5:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.
Plaza de Cesar Chavez
June 4 to August 27

Los Gatos

Music in the Park 2009

http://www.town.los-gatos.ca.us/index.asp?NID=350

Sundays 5 TO 7 PM

Town Plaza Park,

June 21 to August 30

Los Gatos

Vasona Vibrations
Vasona Park (entry fee applies)
http://www.southbayfolks.org/vasona/
Saturday 5-7pm, June 6th thru July 25th

Free Shakespeare Performances

Cupertino

http://www.sfshakes.org/park/index.html
The Comedy of Errors
7:30 pm Fri – Sun, Aug 8 thru Aug 23
Cupertino's Memorial Park Amphitheater

Sanborn Park

http://www.shadyshakes.org/about/index.php
Rotating schedule of As You Like It and Richard III
7pm Fri – Sun, August 7 - September 13



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Gunderson High School Events

Gunderson Theater

The annual One Act Play Festival will take place May 20 and 21 in the Gunderson theater at 7pm. All drama students participate in this yearly event.

Gunderson Clowns

Drama students are preparing to work the VEP Memorial Day Parade. Through the generosity of David Fadness, theater students have the opportunity to study with professional clowns to hone their skills for the parade and festival. This year, more students than ever are participating and looking forward to a fun day. Look for them at the parade!

Spring Concert

On May 28, music will fill the air at the Gunderson Theater at 7:30pm for the annual spring concert. Tickets will be sold at the door.

New Web Site

Gunderson's web site has beem completely revamped. Check it out at; http://gunderson.sjusd.org/home/home.html

Science Fair

The Science Department of Gunderson High School will be presenting a Science Fair on the evening of June 3 in the forum. Stop on by and see what our students have been experimenting on! In addition, the new science wing has been completed. Teachers moved in after spring break and are enjoying their new digs.

Prom

The Gunderson prom will take place on May 30. This year, prom will be held at the Avalon Night Club in Santa Clara. Leadership students have been busy promoting and selling tickets to this annual event.

Senior Awards Night

Outstanding seniors will be recognized on June 4 in Gunderson theater. Scholarships, awards and other accomplishments will be highlighted for thise seniors who have distinguished themselves in academics, community service and the arts and sciences.

Graduation

Once again, the Rose Garden will be the location of the Gunderson graduation on June 9 at 6pm.



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Gunderson High School Happenings By Cary Catching, Principal

I am pleased to share with our community some of the exciting events that are happening at Gunderson High School over the next few weeks.

It's hard to believe that the 2008-2009 school year is almost at a close. Overall, it has been a successful year for Gunderson. Some of the highlights include:

- •our API increased last year 15 points (the second largest growth for any high school in San Jose Unified School District)
- •97% pass rate on the district's Foreign Language Challenge Exam
- •we continue to offer 2 SAT prep classes a year
- •our incoming student enrollment for the 2009-20010 school year is up 20% from 2008-2009... most of which can be attributed to a large freshmen class and a large senior class
- •we had our first, all-night game football season
- •we hosted two night soccer games
- •the science wing has been completely modernized; the forum floor was replaced, the cafeteria was remodeled into a food court; sound panels were installed in the gym and forum; a new scoreboard was installed in the gym; the snack shacks in the gym and stadium were updated; and the ticket booth was remodeled

This has been exciting year at Gunderson. We have seen a marked increase in school spirit as demonstrated by some very exciting rallies, increased attendance at all school activities, and a new line of "Grizzly Gear".

We are looking forward to next year as well. The only changes is the teaching staff will be associated with increased enrollment and thus, the need for more teachers. We will also maintain stability at the administrative ranks, with no changed for the 09-10 school year.

Thank you for the continued support of our school. The relationship we have with the VEP Community is much appreciated.

School Year Shift for San Jose Unified Students

By Susan Iverson

Parents planning summer trips and back to school shopping should be aware, San Jose Unified School District Board approved a revised 2009-10 school year calendar which has students returning to classrooms August 17, 2009. The school year will end for students on June 3, 2010.

While this new calendar will shorten the summer this year, it will allow several improvement to the layout of the academic year, including

- © semester break is now aligned with Winter Break
- The number of full, 5 day instructional weeks is maximized
- © Presidents Week and Spring Break are evenly spaced

A full explanation of the rational can be found at http://www.sjusd.org/school/district-new/info/C139/

The new calendar can be found at http://www.sjusd.org/pdf/districtinformation/2009-2010-Calendar.pdf

Thank You to VEP Advertisers

By Marilyn Rodgers

VEP wants to say thank you to our advertisers. Several of our advertisers have been loyal supporters of VEP for many years. Their financial contribution is invaluable to VEP's success and longevity. Please take a minute and browse through the VEP News, with an eye to the variety of businesses represented. Be sure to contact them first when you, or your family and friends, have a need for their type of service or product. Also, don't forget to let them know that you saw their ad in the VEP News, and how much their support is appreciated!

VEP has developed additional opportunities to increase our advertisers' visibility with our members. These include providing links to their business from our website at www.vepca.net, and spotlighting one business each month at our general membership meeting, and in the VEP News.

We currently have space for a few more advertisers. If you own a business, or know of a business that would benefit from advertising in the VEP News, please contact us.

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VEP's Goals & Objectives for 2008-09

Each September, VEP members adopt a set of Goals & Objectives (G&O) for the coming year. Adopted G&O serve thereafter as marching orders for VEP executives when acting on behalf of our membership. At the close of each year, we report and grade ourselves on how well we met them.



- 1. Continue to improve our community and our association.
 - A. Values: Place first priority on volunteer efforts that reflect member-endorsed improvements in our community.
 - B. Leadership: Encourage regular turn-over of VEP Officers to impart broad, area-wide membership representation.
 - C. Membership: Monitor changes in paid VEP membership.
 - D. Meetings: Encourage and monitor attendance at VEP meetings and events.
 - E. Fiscal Health: Continue to maintain VEP's positive fiscal condition.
 - a. Investigate and foster the use of Grants (and any other possible sources) to increase funding available for VEP projects
 - F. Communication:
 - a. Continue publishing the VEP NEWS nine times per year.
 - (1) Immediately identify and groom replacement/assistant Newsletter Editor
 - b. Monitor and increase the usage of the VEP Website.
 - c. Utilize e-mail to communicate important VEP business with members.
 - d. Maintain relationships with local media outlets and submit for publication articles about VEP.
 - G. Strive to increase VEP's public and social recognition.
 - a. Increase VEP visibility at appropriate events
 - H. Volunteerism: Increase opportunities for VEP members to volunteer by:
 - a. Developing ad hoc committees that will expand leadership opportunities and cultivate new talent for future VEP Executive Board positions.
 - b. Maintaining a VEP database of volunteers by activity (including general meeting attendance) with the intent of using it as a reference for future VEP officer grooming increasing participation in future VEP volunteer activities. The database needs to clearly indicate year(s) the member checked their membership forms.
 - Developing and advertising additional volunteer activities, making use of the database mentioned above in item 1.H.b to increase our effectiveness.
 - I. Complete Final Review and update VEP's Constitution and Bylaws to likely:
 - Consider changes in the composition of our Executive Board that could improve our effectiveness.
 - Consider a formal structure for both standing and ad hoc committees.
 - Consider changes to our Community Service Award program.
 - d. Formalize a process for filling vacant Executive Board positions.
 - e. Consider changes to our program/fiscal year.
 - J. Move forward with incorporating VEP as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
- 2. Promote Community Interaction, Pride, and Preparedness.

- A. Encourage member participation in neighborhood safety programs, crime prevention, and disaster/emergency preparedness.
- B. Organize and encourage participation in pruning, community cleanup, and maintenance projects.
- C. Identify and encourage graffiti removal when/where ever it occurs in and around our area.
- D. Continue to sponsor, promote, and underwrite our Home Faire, community-wide Garage Sale, and Memorial Day event.
 - a. Put more marketing "spin" on our self-promotion material to increase focus and avoid overly wordy laundry lists
- E. Develop plans to address the following
- a. Chynoweth landscaping improvements
- (1) Specific attention to the North side between New World and Pearl.
- b. Vista Park Improvements
- 3. Work to Assure Local Government and Businesses' Responsiveness and Accountability to VEP Members.
 - A. Sponsor Election Forums that heighten our members' awareness of candidates and ballot issues, and encourages their participation as informed voters in all elections.
 - B. Work with City/County government and developers to install and/or maintain public landscaping in the VEP membership area.
 - C. Work with the City to provide traffic safety measures on VEP area streets as needed
 - D. Continue to monitor community impacts including increased traffic and parking
 - E. Encourage, monitor, and react to plans for urban development, transportation, libraries, parks and other public infrastructure changes in and around our membership area.
 - a. Organize and communicate community priorities and concerns.
- 4. Monitor, Create, and Maintain High-Quality Public Services for the VEP Area
 - A. Promote and participate in planning and development of the Martial-Cottle Regional Park (Lester Property).
 - B. Continue VEP member involvement during the design and construction process of widening Branham between Vistapark and Snell Avenue, and other improvements between Vistapark and Narvaez.
 - C. Work with the City to develop and maintain our neighborhood parks.
 - D. Work with the City to implement the master plan for the immediate area surrounding the Vista Park Community Room and secure funding for the plans implementation.
 - E. Monitor opportunities to build a city park at Capitol/Narvaez.
 - F. Work for real improvements in traffic level of service at Capitol/Narvaez/northbound 87 onramp.
 - G. Work with the City to ensure that impacts of any proposed development along the Guadalupe Corridor are fully mitigated.

Invite your neighbors to join VEP

Be a VEP volunteer!

State of the Association—Reviewing Our Goals and Objectives

By Susan Iverson, VEP Editor

The past year has seen a significant number of changes for VEP, but we still managed make significant contributions to the community. While personal reasons required that our President reside mid-term, we were successful in recruiting a new newsletter editor, a new secretary, and two General Board Members. Having never served previously as VEP Board Members, they bring a new perspective and new ideas to the VEP leadership.

The VEP also completed the overhaul and revision of the Constitution and By-Laws. This process had been ongoing for some time, and the completion will allow VEP to move forward with applying for 501(c)3 status. Being a recognized non-profit will assist VEP in obtaining grants and donations.

In addition to holding monthly meetings, VEP continued to strengthen community ties with the return of the Tree Lighting Ceremony, and introduced an afternoon Picture with Santa Party. The opportunity for a low pressure, low cost venue for Santa pictures was a great success, and VEP hopes to repeat it for years to come.

While economy pressure has required VEP leadership to look closely at the budget, we have been able to maintain student Community Service Awards, and the Memorial Day Parade and Festival.

Communication with the membership and neighborhood in general has seen some great improvements. Our Volunteer Coordinator has made it possible to distribute flyers to the entire VEP membership area, *not just members*, on a near monthly basis! The option to receive the newsletter via email reduces cost, reduces environmental impact, and you get color! The use of the membership email database allows quick and timely communication to be sent as needed.

A large portion of VEP energies in the past year was directed to the Martial Cottle project, which adjoins the VEP boundaries. Strong representation on the Martial Cottle Task force allowed our members to stay well informed, and VEP community input resulted in improvements to the plan which will directly affect VEP members.

VEP leadership is excited about the challenges and opportunities that the next year will bring. We hope you will consider attending a Board meeting and learning how you can become more active in this exciting organization!

Please reference the G&O published on the previous page for referenced items.

- **1.B.** We have succeeded in recruiting two NEW Executive Offices and two new Officers at Large.
- **1.F.a.** The creation of the VEP Newsletter has been transitioned to a new editor
- **1.G.** The Santa party and Tree Lighting were a great success, which reached out to the entire community.
- 1.H. Have established a volunteer coordinator who has recruited loyal volunteers
- **1.I.** The exhaustive process of reviewing and updating the VEP constitution and bylaws was completed.

- **1.J.** Research has been completed and the application process has begun to obtain 501(c)3 status.
- 2.A. Members have established a Neighborhood Watch program in the VEP area of Wellington Park.

 Multiple Disaster Preparedness events have been attended by VEP members, with the city commenting on our high participation rates. (No actual disasters have occurred!)
- **2.E.b.** Vista Park beautification projects have been undertaken, and efforts will continue.
- **3.D. & E.** VEP had significant representation on the Martial-Cottle task force and was able to mobilize members to represent their positions to the task force.
- 4.A. Initiated VEP recommendations (VEP Wish List) and member representation on County Advisory Task Force for Martial Cottle Park master plan development
- 4. C. & D. Worked with the City to initiate Master Plan for area around Vista Park community room; utilized VEP volunteers for landscaping/planting following the master plan

Martial Cottle Park Harvest Photos

By Frank Kistler and Adina Pierce



VEP Community Calendar

VEP takes a Summer Break - June through August. Our only means of communication with members during the summer is via e-mail - be sure we have your current e-mail address!

May / June 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	VEP Memorial Day Parade & Festival	VEP General Meeting - Vista Park Community Room - 7:30 pm	27	28	29	30 Emergency Preparedness Class - 9 am - Vista Park Community Room
31	1 VEP Exec Board Meeting - 7:30 pm - Vista Park Com- munity Room	2	3	4	5	6 Emergency Pre- paredness Class - 9 am - Vista Park Community Room
7	8	9 Gunderson Graduation Andrew Hill Graduation	10	Oak Grove Graduation SJUSD - Last Day of School	12	13
14	15	16	17 OGUSD - Last Day of School	18	19	20
21 First Day of Summer!	22	23	24	25	26	27

THE VEP NEWS



VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158
Email: vepca@vepca.net Website: www.vepca.net

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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Check our website: www.vepca.net

Be sure to allend VEP's VISTA Nay 26th Meeting in the in the wista Park Community Room Community Room Community Room