

# VEP NEWS

## • VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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

### MARCH

### 2015

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The "VEP News" is the official publication of the VEP Community Association, published monthly during the months of September through May each year.

We appreciate and will, at the discretion of the VEP Executive Board, attempt to publish any and all articles that will be of general interest to our membership community.

The VEP strongly encourages local schools to submit news articles about events and achievements on their campuses. Articles written by students will be given extra special consideration.

Persons, schools, or organizations who are interested in submitting articles, letters, or information to be included in the VEP News are encouraged to contact the Editor of the "VEP News," Mrs. Rachel Witmeyer. Email: [vepeditor@gmail.com](mailto:vepeditor@gmail.com) // Phone: 408-226-2935

#### **VEP Community Association Membership**

Persons who would like to join the VEP Community Association may send their name, address, and \$20 yearly dues to:

VEP Community Association  
P.O. BOX 18111; SAN JOSE, CA; 95158.

Please, do not send cash. Make checks payable to "VEP."

#### **VEP Community Association ~ Executive Board of Directors**

President - Marilyn Rodgers  
Vice President - Katherine Decker  
Secretary - Adina Pierce  
Treasurer - Ginger Cardona  
Director - Helen Castillo  
Director - Rich Giammona  
Director - Peggy Golden  
"VEP News" Editor - Rachel Witmeyer

### VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. - Tuesday  
► **March 31st, 2015** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Dr.

**Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!**

#### AGENDA

★ **AARP - Safe Driving Program** ★  
+Brief Highlights of other AARP Programs

*Presentation by*

**Ron Berube and Robert Halem**  
Program Presenters and Driver Instructors

★ **TAPS Residential Security Patrol Program** ★

*Presented by*

**Franciso De La Forre**

★ **4H Club: Martial Cottle Park Partner** ★

★ **Updates on Martial Cottle Park and Trail** ★

**Eric Goodrich, Park Manager**

★ **VEP Business Meeting** ★

**Announcements & Updates**

**Happy Easter - April 5th**

**Save the Date - Saturday, April 25th: All American Litter Pickup**

**VEP Community Service Awards for 2015 High School Seniors**

**VEP Membership Drive Continues in April**

**Updates from Councilmember Khamis & Staff**

**VEP's Next Meeting - April 28, 2015**

**Annual VEP Community-wide Garage Sale: Saturday, May 2, 2015**

★ **Your Concerns and Ideas** ★

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

# ◆ 2015 is VEP's 46th Year! ◆

## VEP's March Meeting Preview

By Marilyn Rodgers

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **March 31st**. Please join us at the February VEP Community meeting, featuring:

► **Presentations:** Featured presentations will include information on the **Safe Driving Program sponsored by AARP**. The presenters of this program, **Ron Berube and Robert Halem**, are also Driving Instructors in this very popular program. Some automobile insurance companies provide a special rate decrease for participants who successfully complete this program (you may want to determine if your insurance company offers such a benefit). Whether this program might be of value for yourself, or for a relative, you won't want to miss this presentation. **TAPS Security Patrols** overview and update will include new program services for residents of Vistapark, Carson, and Parkview, provided by **Francisco De La Torre** of TAPS. Come find out more about this very affordable residential mobile security program which provides one more additional layer of crime prevention and safety for our neighborhood.

► **VEP Business Meeting/Updates/Announcements.** Announcements and updates will be included.

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

We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **March 31st**. Please join us!

## February Meeting Synopsis

By Marilyn Rodgers

President Rodgers welcomed another standing room only crowd to the meeting. She informed everyone in attendance that a nice way to start the meeting is to give everyone an opportunity to meet someone they did not know. She asked them to turn to someone close by and introduce themselves. Introduction was to also include what street they lived on. She gave everyone approximately 3 minutes of time for this activity. As everyone seemed to enjoy this, it was difficult to bring the meeting back to order. Ms. Rodgers then introduced VEP Board Members, Katherine Decker, Ginger Cardona, and Adina Pierce, as well as Past Presidents in attendance – Stephen Kinsey, Greg West, and Dave Noel. Other guests introduced were Virginia Holtz, Board Member for Open Space Authority, and Rayshelle Edmunds, Staff Aid to Councilmember Johnny Khamis.

Ms. Rodgers stated the first presentation would be on the AntiGraffiti and Anti-Litter programs. Ms. Annie Gamblain would be presenting this portion of the program (rather than Marta Dominguez, as previously announced). Ms. Gamblain recently began working as a Community Outreach presenter for the Anti-Graffiti/Anti-Liter programs. However, she is very familiar with city outreach programs as she previously worked for the City of San Jose as a staff member for a resource that was available to assist community associations (no longer in existence). It was housed on Foxworthy.

Ms. Gamblain quickly presented information on both Programs, starting with **Anti-Graffiti**. She encouraged everyone to download and use the App as it provides both an opportunity for a picture of the graffiti as well as initiating a report on graffiti - which is then available to contract staff. It is called the San Jose Clean App and is available for both iPhone and Android.

Editor's Note: Here are some photos that show the San Jose

Clean App –in action!" Board Member Adina Pierce used the App to report graffiti in Vista Park. Staff then sent back a reply and a picture of removed graffiti, as well as documenting time removal was completed – goal is 24 to 48 hours.

**Before: Photo by A. Pierce**

**After: Photo Sent by City Staff**



Utilizing the App helps save time for Staff, prior to them going to the site, as the picture provided helps to ensure correct color of paint. She also encouraged interested residents to volunteer to assist in removing/painting over graffiti. Volunteers will be provided with an anti-graffiti kit which provides needed supplies - paint, roller/brushes, etc. **Volunteers are asked to first go to the headquarters/office/warehouse which is now located at 1661 Senter Road, Building G., San Jose, Ca. 95112**, to both register as a volunteer and then to receive supplies. Prior to going to the office location, call first to be sure staff is available to assist you. **Phone number is 408-975-7233**. Volunteers are also expected to declare volunteer hours by going online at [www.SanJoseca.gov/PRNS](http://www.SanJoseca.gov/PRNS) to document hours and locations of volunteer activity. (This is partially required so that there is documentation assuring that materials are being utilized to actually remove graffiti.) It is also a way to track on number of volunteer hours, and to provide for recognition of volunteers for their service.

For those that prefer to **report graffiti by phone, (24-hour hotline) the number is 1-866-249-0543**, or via e-mail – at [antigrffiti@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:antigrffiti@sanjoseca.gov). When calling in a request for assistance with removing graffiti, the more detailed information you can provide the better. For instance, street location/address, color of paint that has been graffitied, as well as description of the graffiti.

The City/Contractor cannot remove graffiti from private property unless it is documented as gang related and/or has bad language included in it. Otherwise, the property owner is responsible for the removal of the graffiti. Additionally, many of the areas that have graffiti are **not San Jose City property** – but rather belong to other agencies, such as Caltrans, Santa Clara County, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), or Union Pacific. San Jose Anti-Graffiti staff will try to assist in contacting these other agencies, but individual residents can also directly contact the appropriate agency themselves. (Contact numbers of other agencies are listed on the back of brochure provided at the meeting.)

The **Anti-Litter Program** provides opportunities for City residents to volunteer to pickup litter/trash in their own neighborhoods, as well as participant in large City-wide events twice per year. The Anti-Litter Program is especially attractive to residents who may not be able to attend a scheduled event, but do have a few hours per week or month that they can pick-up litter – at a time that is convenient for them. The process for volunteering is similar to that for Anti-Graffiti – go to the headquarters on Senter Road (see above) to register and obtain supplies. Volunteers will be given an anti-litter kit which includes an orange vest, pick-up sticks, gloves, and large plastic bags. Be sure to log your volunteer hours online at: [www.SanJoseca.gov/PRNS](http://www.SanJoseca.gov/PRNS).

Two events are scheduled each year: first, the Great Americ-

*Continues on Page 3*

-an Litter Pickup, scheduled each year in April – this year it will be held on **Saturday morning, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 8am-12noon**. Each San Jose City Councilmember sponsors the event in their Council District. At these events, you will be asked to sign-in, pickup supplies, and receive suggestions and instructions. Snacks and water are supplied to volunteers. Volunteer hour validation is also offered to High School Seniors toward their high school graduation requirement. The second event takes place in September, and focuses on litter removal for creeks and other waterways. Watch for more details on this event.

The City and Program also provide a Volunteer Recognition event, usually held in August of each year. (VEP is proud of the VEP members who have received the —Volunteer of the Year” award in the past!)

Audience participants asked questions, which included – could they sign up tonight? - answer was no – need to go online and then to the program office on Senter; could the upcoming events be listed/advertised on the App? - no, apparently because the App belongs to the Contractor, or advertised on the Website (Ms. Gamblain thought this was a good suggestion and would bring it to the attention of staff).

President Rodgers next introduced **Rayshelle Edmunds**, Staff Aid to Councilmember Johnny Khamis. She shared a list of contact phone numbers to report Homeless issues in the VEP area. President Rodgers had requested an updated list for members, so Rayshelle brought copies to pass along to everyone. The list includes contact numbers for District 10 staff, for City of San Jose staff, and for primary organizations involved in providing initial assessment and resources for homeless people.

#### **March 2015 Updated List of Contacts for Reporting Homeless Issues in the VEP Area**

##### **District 10 Office**

district10@sanjoseca.gov 408-535-4910

##### **Jose Salcido (D10)**

Jose.Salcido@sanjoseca.gov 408-535-4979

##### **Homeless Outreach**

outreach@homefirstscc.org 408-510-7600

##### **City's Homeless Outreach**

**Ray Bramson** Ray.Bramson@sanjoseca.gov

**Art Nino** Art.Nino@sanjoseca.gov

Rayshelle also reminded everyone of the upcoming event at Oakridge Mall. On Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup> from 9 to 10:30am, the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Westfield Oakridge Walk and Senior Resource Fair will take place. Ms. Rodgers stated this event has been very popular with VEP residents in past years. Rayshelle mentioned that there would be some very nice prizes awarded to attendees. Rayshelle also announced that District 10 has initiated a new District 10 website that we should all check out. One meeting attendee asked a question regarding the —age limit” for attending the Senior Fair at Oakridge? Ms. Rodgers laughed and said she wasn't sure, but that it was probably the same as what AARP uses – over 50.

President Rodgers then introduced the next guest speaker **Basim Jaber**, who is a **Mt. Umunhum Conservancy Board Member, and the Historian for the Almaden Air Force Station** which includes the **Iconic Radar Tower**. He provided a very interesting overview of the historic importance the Radar Tower and Almaden Air Force Station (and thus the San Jose and South Bay Area) played in the **‘Cold War.’** The slide show provided a nice visual of the —city in the sky” as the Air Force Station was also home to the Air Force —families” for 22 years, as well as the Air-

men that were stationed there from 1958 to 1980. It included having a base exchange, apartments, barracks, and a bowling alley.

The white tower that stands atop Mt. Umunhum is one of the most notable and historic focal points on the Silicon Valley skyline (as residents look south, southwest). Many residents, however, are not aware how this local landmark protected the Bay Area and the West Coast during the —old war.” The Almaden Air Force Station and the Radar Tower atop Mt. Umunhum defended the Bay Area from invasion by air during the years 1958 to 1980. The Tower was the base for the station's long range search radar antenna. The five story concrete building housed the personnel and electronics to operate the radar – an 85-ton antenna spun every 10 seconds searching the skies for potential incoming airborne threats. The people that built and ran the tower played an important role in shaping the Silicon Valley ecosystem of today.

Mr. Jaber stressed that the iconic Tower that we see still standing today (which is all that is left remaining of the Almaden Air Force Station) **is in jeopardy of being torn down**. Should that happen, an important local historical landmark and the history it represents will be lost forever. The Mt. Umunhum Conservancy was established to prevent the tower from being demolished. The Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District, which owns the property, has given the Umunhum Conservancy until 2017 to raise \$1.2 million to preserve the Radar Tower, otherwise it will be torn down. Interest in preserving the Tower, and the important history that it represents is at an all time high. The Conservancy has raised a significant amount of money, but still has a long way to go to reach the goal of \$1.2 million. The Conservancy is a 501© (3) tax-exempt nonprofit public benefit California corporation, thus allowing for all donations to be tax-deductible. Online donations can be made at [www.umunhum.net](http://www.umunhum.net). Donations by mail: Umunhum Conservancy, P.O. Box 53839, San Jose, Ca. 95153. To contact them by e-mail: [umunhum.conservancy@gmail.com](mailto:umunhum.conservancy@gmail.com) or by phone at 408-827-5150. For additional information on upcoming events: [www.umunhum.net/history](http://www.umunhum.net/history). A longer presentation of the Almaden Air Force and the Radar Tower is scheduled to be held at Old Almaden, on March 29<sup>th</sup>.

On a more personal note: During the meeting, Mr. Jaber mentioned that our VEP neighborhood has a special connection to the Radar Tower. Board Member Adina Pierce has a family connection – her father-in-law (husband Russ' father) served at Almaden Air Force Station from the late 1960's on. He was the senior Master Sgt supervising all of the technical radar staff for the Tower. Also on a more personal nature, during the presentation Mr. Jaber mentioned that all of the technical Radar staff went through their training at the Air Force's Radar Training School located at Keesler Air Force Base. Keesler was located in Biloxi, Mississippi. President Rodgers' father (who also was a career Air Force veteran) and her family were stationed at Keesler. Additionally, long-time active VEP members, Don and Linda Ferguson, had also been stationed at Keesler Air Force Base. What an enjoyable surprise to see how many people had a direct or indirect connection to the Mt. Umunhum Radar Tower!

President Rodgers next introduced **Eric Goodrich**, Park Manager for the Martial Cottle Park and Trail, and thanked him for his patience is waiting to provide information on Martial Cottle until the end of the meeting. Eric indicated that a lot of the repair work had been completed – repairs needed following the damage done by the rain and wind storms in December. He is hoping that the section of the Trail that will cut through the property from Branham to Chynoweth will open by the end of March, first of April. He will send us an e-mail as soon as that happens. Work on the other sections of the Trail is continuing but has been delayed due to issues needing to be resolved by Caltrans close to the freeway.

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The Master Gardner has been selected and the contract is being completed. However, Parks and the County will not make the announcement until everything has been finalized. The work with the Park —partners” is continuing, but it mostly is dependent currently on each organization finalizing the contracts with their individual organizations. The Giordanos did decide to move their operation as the contract under the agreement with Mr. Lester only went through to January 31<sup>st</sup>. Everyone was disappointed about this development, as the Giordanos were an important historical aspect of the property, and had become important neighbors who added enjoyment as well as fresh fruits and veggies for all to enjoy. Some neighbors had been purchasing these items from the Giordanos for over 30 years. One attendee asked about having them return temporarily to provide their concession of fresh fruits and veggies, etc. Eric indicated that the new Master Gardner would be providing that service in the future. Eric asked if there were questions — several questions were asked. One had to do with trash issues close to the entrance gate located at west side of Chynoweth (down from Gunderson). Apparently the home owner had contacted Eric and Alicia. Homeowner was informed that this issue had to be dealt with by the City of San Jose. (Note: property outside the park is the purview of the City of San Jose; trash or other issues inside the park property is the responsibility of the County and County Parks). For issues with trash and/or dumping for San Jose, contact DOT — Street maintenance. Another question asked was whether there was any progress regarding the expansion/improvement of Branham Lane. Eric had no response. Another question had to do with numbers of issues or incidents on the Trail. Eric said that the Rangers were contacting individuals that were not abiding by Park Rules and given information. They were also told that a warning would be issued and could be followed up with a citation. Another question had to do with the progress for improving the slant on the curve by Canoas Creek (where bench was burned) before a new bench is replaced. (This was to decrease the possibility of bicyclists hitting pedestrians/ children darting onto the Trail on this curve.) Eric said he knew it was an issue, but not sure of current status. Ms. Rodgers thanked Eric for all of the updated information.

Of course, Ms. Rodgers cannot end the meeting without having a raffle and making announcements. Vice President Decker helped with the raffle. President Rodgers reminded everyone that the Membership Mailing Prep Party was scheduled for Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> to be held in the Vista Park Community Room from 1 to 4pm. There would be a drawing and snacks, and an opportunity to come network and visit with neighbors.

She also reminded everyone that Daylight Savings Time started Sunday morning, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 2am. The next VEP meeting will be held as usual on the last Tuesday of the month which will be Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. She thanked everyone for coming, and asked that everyone help clean up the room and re-stack chairs.

*[Editor's Note: As the VEP News is going to press, VEP received a notice from the Umunhum Conservancy Board. The VEP Board has not had an opportunity to take a position on this matter, but given the significant positive response to the presentation about the Radar Tower at VEP's February meeting, we are printing part of the notice for members' information.]*

#### **Update on Status of Radar Tower — Umunhum Conservancy Requesting Assistance from the Public — Possible Designation as a “County Historic Resource”**

The Umunhum Conservancy Board is requesting interested residents attend the April 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission, and ask the Commission to put the Tower atop Mt. Umunhum on the County's —Heritage Resource Inventory.

If the Tower is officially declared —historic” then it will be more difficult to demolish. The County recognizes two levels of historic structures. The most protected ones are Historic Landmarks. The hope is to have the Tower eventually achieve that status, however, the process is lengthy, and the Tower's owner — Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District, would have to agree.

In the meantime, the Conservancy hopes to secure some interim protection for the Tower by getting it listed in the County's Heritage Resource Inventory. While not as valuable as Landmark status, being designated as a Historic Resource will help protect the Tower from demolition.

If you support preserving the Tower, please come and speak at the Historic Heritage Commission meeting. The meeting starts at 6:30pm, and is held in the Board of Supervisors chambers on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor at 70 West Hedding, in San Jose. The Commission will vote on whether to recommend that the County Board of Supervisors include the Tower on the Heritage Resource Inventory.

## **D10 Neighborhood Commission Update:**

*By Rich Giammona*

Just a review, my name is Rich Giammona and I am one of two City of San Jose District 10 Neighborhood Commissioners. At our last commission meeting, we heard a proposal to amend the municipal code. The amendment will only apply to fresh food / vegetable vendors. I have outlined the information below.

Proposed Amendment to Municipal Code.

**THIS APPLIES ONLY TO FRESH FOOD / VEGETABLE CARTS.**

Increase time to vend without permit from 2 to 4 hours per vendor.  
Decrease buffer between Vending Facility and Residentially Used Lot from 100 feet to 50 feet (measured from lot line to closest part of Vending Facility)

Term of Admin Permit be:

- Change back to one year, Renew Annually
- Reduce cost to \$283 for 1 year, from \$850 for 3 years.
- Allow the administrative permit to apply to multiple approved vending sites on private property.

This issue will be addressed in a public meeting (see, below). If you are unable to attend, I highly encourage you to contact District 10 Councilman Johnny Khamis to address your concerns. (district10@sanjoseca.gov) If you would like information about attending the neighborhood commission meetings, I can be reached by email, at rich@wonderfulworldlearning.cove

*[Editor's Note: Are you interested in serving on a Commission for the City of San Jose? There are currently several positions open for D10, including Parks & Recreation and Seniors Commissions! Visit the city's webpage, “Vacancies: Volunteer Boards and Commission Openings,” at: [www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=337](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=337)]*

## **COMMUNITY MEETING**

**on Outdoor Vending  
from Private Property**

**Sponsored by the City Manager's Office  
and Neighborhoods Commission**

**Presentation followed by Question and Answer Session**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2015**

**10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

San José City Hall, Wing Rooms 118-120,  
200 E. Santa Clara St.

## Concerned about Crime in VEP Neighborhoods? Organize a Neighborhood Watch Presentation! Example of Successful Individual "Street Presentations" By Marilyn Rodgers

Our neighborhoods are unfortunately very high on the list of San Jose City neighborhoods with the most home burglaries and vehicle break-in and thefts. At the January VEP membership meeting, SJPd Crime Prevention Specialist, Sonia Azevedo presented an **overview** of the Neighborhood Watch Program. Bringing small groups of neighbors together to get to know each other better and to learn safety and crime prevention tips and techniques – provided in the **Neighborhood Watch program**, are **one of the most effective ways to reduce and prevent crime.**

VEP wants to encourage our neighbors to take that next step, and organize a Neighborhood Watch presentation for your block or street.

**On March 10<sup>th</sup>, Jim and Carol Skoogs did just that.** Following the VEP meeting overview presentation, they took the time to talk to their neighbors on New Compton Drive and Court. They provided a couple of possible dates – that were good for their neighbors. Then coordinated the possible dates with Crime Prevention Specialist Sonia Azevedo and made arrangements with VEP to schedule the Vista Park Community Room. They had a very good turnout for the presentation – with 24 people representing 17 homes in attendance! Ms. Azevedo provided fun and practical tips and techniques for all to use. Those in attendance seemed to really enjoy the presentation and were eager to implement many of the crime prevention techniques they had heard. Everyone also left with a special Neighborhood Watch sign to post in their windows!

**If you have been thinking about organizing a Neighborhood Watch presentation for your neighbors on your street or block, don't be shy – go for it!**

By way of a reminder, here is some information on how to contact and schedule Ms. Azevedo for a presentation. She can be contacted at 408-277-4133 or [www.sjpd.org](http://www.sjpd.org). Ms. Azevedo does request 2 weeks minimum notice to schedule a presentation, a confirmed location to hold a meeting, and a minimum of 10 households attending, as well as the name of a meeting host. For assistance to schedule the Vista Park Community Room (should a home meeting not be possible), contact Marilyn Rodgers at 408-225-7553 or [MRodgersRN@aol.com](mailto:MRodgersRN@aol.com).

**Let us know that you have scheduled a Neighborhood Watch meeting, and how it went.** We want to continue to encourage and acknowledge those that are taking that extra step to provide additional safety for our neighborhoods!

## Martial Cottle Park: New Trail Section Opens

Article by Adina Pierce and Marilyn Rodgers

Photographs by Adina Pierce

On Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, an additional section of the Martial Cottle Trail opened for public use. This new addition cuts through the middle of the Park property from Branham Lane to Chynoweth. The multiuse Trail is adjacent to one of the roads on the property that will be used by Park maintenance and those farming the property (not to be used by the Public). From time to time, the adjacent Trail may be blocked for a few hours should there be concern about pedestrian safety if there is large equipment being transported on the maintenance road.

Access to the new portion of the Trail: the original plans included this portion of the Trail ending/opening with an entrance on

Chynoweth. On the Branham side of this section of the Trail – the entrance for public use is accessed by the Perimeter Trail that runs adjacent to Branham Lane. The original plans did not include a public entrance at this location on Branham, due to the potential danger with vehicle traffic. Access along Branham will continue to be via the entrances at Snell and Branham, and Vistapark and Branham.

Work on the remainder of the Trail continues. Landscaping has now reached the western side of the Park along that portion of the Trail from Branham/Vistapark toward Wellington Park Drive. Landscaping includes smaller plants/shrubs as well as both decorative trees and trees of a larger variety – Oaks.

Everyone on the Trail has been quite enthusiastic about the new addition, as the views of the entire property are quite amazing! The mustard is particularly spectacular this year and provides a bright yellow field with (currently) green Santa Clara hills/mountains providing the backscapes. Our VEP member photographers continue to be both inspired and enthusiastic about taking and sharing photographs of the changing seasons and progress of the Park and Trail development.







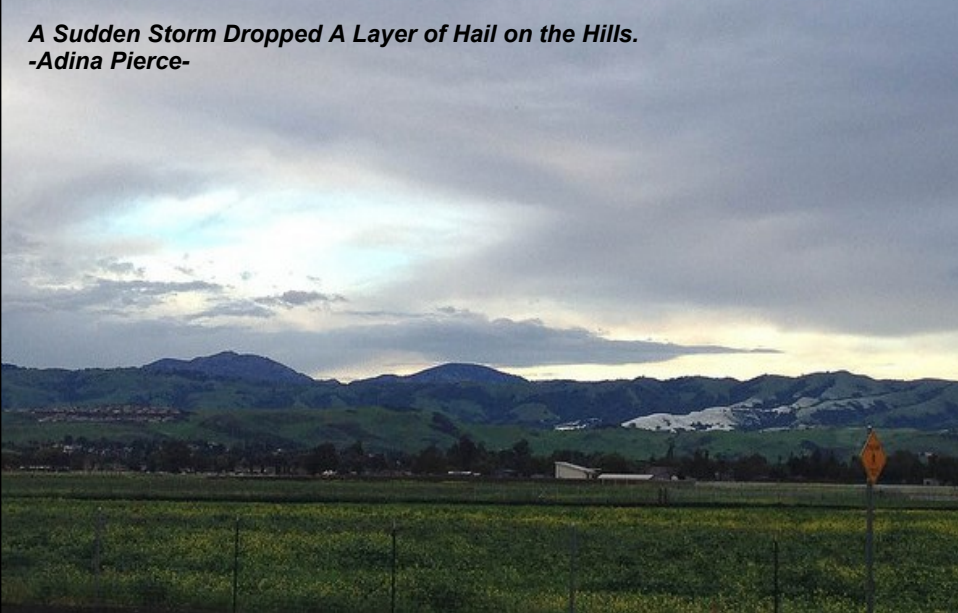
**View of Mount Hamilton  
& Lick Observatory  
-Katherine Decker-**



**-Katherine Decker-**

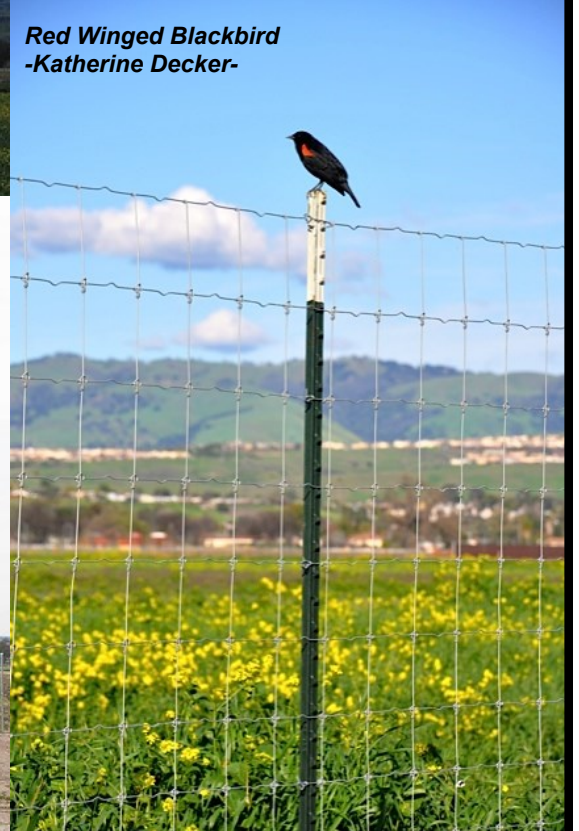


**A Sudden Storm Dropped A Layer of Hail on the Hills.  
-Adina Pierce-**



**Happy Dog!  
-Katherine Decker-**

**Red Winged Blackbird  
-Katherine Decker-**



**New Areas, Now Open!  
-Adina Pierce-**



## Two Events: Neighborhood Leaders Budget Meeting w/Mayor; State of City Celebration

By Marilyn Rodgers

Two important City of San Jose events took place on two consecutive Saturday mornings in March. Both will have an impact on the City's goals in moving forward, and on the City's budget planning for the coming year!

On Saturday morning, March 7<sup>th</sup>, the new Mayor Sam Liccardo sponsored the annual **Neighborhood Leaders and Youth Commissioners Meeting on the Budget with the Mayor**. The meeting was held, as has been the practice in recent years – at City Hall. The new Mayor, however made some changes in the pace and style of encouraging budget planning and public participation for the coming year for the City of San Jose. The good news shared by the Mayor is that San Jose's budget appears to be moving toward a more positive position, with a small... but definite budget surplus. The tool this year for collecting ideas and priorities from the neighborhood leader participants was to respond to a paper and pencil survey. This survey listed 35 plus possible categories of areas where additional monies could/should be spent as the budget continues to move toward the positive side of the ledger. Participants were to use the example of \$100.00 – how would you advise the City Council to direct this amount of money, if and when it becomes available during the year? Some examples included additional monies for libraries and community centers, parks, repair roads – both neighborhood streets and larger roadways, and so forth. While of course participants were free to prioritize monies to be used on additional police officers and/or benefits for public safety and other city employees salaries, the Mayor did indicate that he was strongly encouraging that all city employee unions immediately begin negotiations with the City to determine these issues. Following the survey, staff compiled information from participants. All of this information will be made available as part of the total process for seeking input from the public, and then finalizing the Mayor's Budget proposal which will eventually be approved by the City Council – only after many public meetings and discussions, however.

The next step in the process will be to invite the public's participation and input via an online survey. The survey should be available next month. Watch for more information to participate!

The second meeting took place at **Independence High School on the morning of Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. This was the annual State of the City Celebration**. Activities included honors and awards given to outstanding city employees and outstanding volunteers in each of the 10 City Council Districts; an introduction by the Mayor's father – who provided some very interesting background information on his son, the new Mayor; a State of the City Address by the new Mayor, Sam Liccardo; and finally - a Resource Fair following the event. The State of the City Address provided some insights into the hopes and goals of the new Mayor for the City where he grew up, and in which he obviously has a deep concern. As this event took place on the east side of San Jose, many references were made to the diversity, needs, and strengths of the people living in this area of San Jose. Many areas were covered in the Mayor's address, however one of the overriding concerns of the Mayor is providing opportunities for education and jobs for young San Joseans.

The Mayor announced that he is moving forward immediately in providing funds which will allow the San Jose library branches to all be open and available for use 6 days per week (beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>), rather than the current 4 days per week – half of the library branches are now only open Monday through Thursday, the other half are open Wednesday through Saturday. This announcement was very warmly received by the audience.

One of the Mayor's major concerns is the lack of opportunities for young people – first in education – thus more availability in libraries, and secondly – opportunities for employment, especially Summer jobs! He announced that a coalition of large employers have come together to provide a significant number of Summer jobs for young people.

Watch for more information about the Mayor's goals for the City, and be sure to attend the upcoming Budget meetings which will be provided in each Council District as the process continues toward the development and approval of the budget for the City of San Jose for the fiscal year starting July 1<sup>st</sup>!

## VEP Community Service Awards 2015: 31<sup>st</sup> Year of Recognizing Student Contributions

By Helen Castillo and Marilyn Rodgers

Once again, VEP Community Association will provide an opportunity for up to three high school seniors to be awarded a Community Service Award (scholarship) for recognition of volunteerism in their community. This is the 31<sup>st</sup> consecutive year that VEP has proudly awarded scholarships to local graduating high school seniors in recognition of their outstanding volunteer service to their community.

A panel of judges, who are also volunteers in our community, will determine the winner(s), based on predetermined criteria, after reviewing submitted applications.

As in previous years, applications will be solicited from Gunderson High School, from Andrew Hill High School, and through the VEP newsletter and website for the ~~—large category.~~ "The ~~—large category~~" is available for students who attend any other high school in San Jose, but must live in the geographical boundaries of the VEP Community.

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

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

Applications will be available by April 1<sup>st</sup> at each high school, and on the VEP website and/or by request for the At-Large applications.

At Gunderson High School, the administrator to contact for an application is Ms. Stephanie Heuer, and at Andrew Hill High School, the administrator to contact for an application is Ms. Marquez.

For the At-Large Application, contact one of the VEP Coordinators – Helen Castillo or Marilyn Rodgers. Please note: the At-Large student applicants will need to provide contact information to VEP for an administrator at their high school (for verification purposes).

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



## Mayor Announces Plan to Restore Library Hours

Article by the San José Public Library Foundation

Mayor Sam Liccardo today announced a plan to open San Jose's 23 branch libraries six days a week, beginning July 1.



"Our libraries provide a safe learning environment for thousands of children, even while open only four days a week," Mayor Liccardo said. "By expanding library services to six days a week, we'll open the door to learning and opportunity to another 7,000 children each week."

San José reduced library hours in the midst of a decade of budget cuts so deep that four branch libraries, funded with voter-approved construction bonds, sat vacant for nearly two years. Branch libraries currently operate on a four-day schedule, and are open either Monday through Thursday, leaving a neighborhood without weekend service, or Wednesday through Saturday, which leaves students without library access after school two days each week.

Mayor Liccardo will be recommending funding to restore the six-days a week schedule in his March Budget Message, which will be released on March 16. Funding will come from a combination of reserves in the Library Parcel Tax Fund and the General Fund with a goal of phasing costs fully into the City General Fund over five years.

Mayor Liccardo made the announcement at the Biblioteca Latinoamericana in the Washington neighborhood just south of Downtown. The library serves students from Washington Elementary School next door as well as residents of the larger neighborhood.

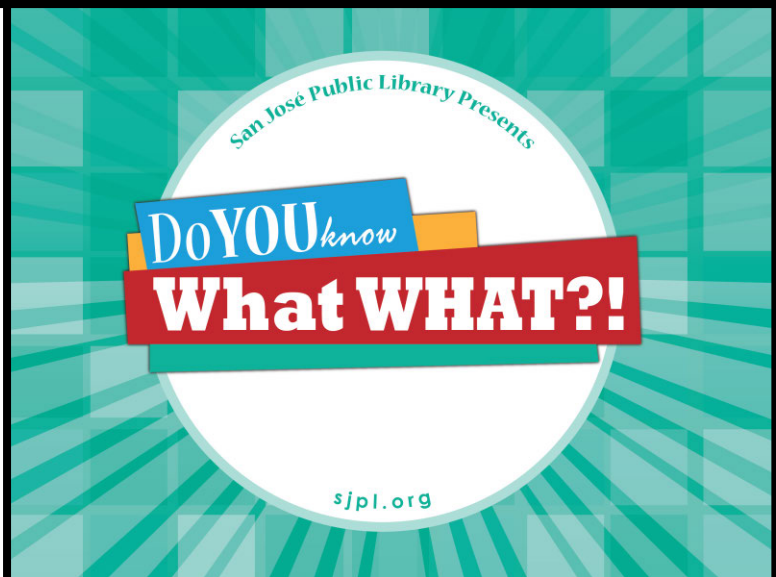
"Last year, more than 80% of our voters stepped up to approve an extension of a library parcel tax saving \$8 million a year in funding for libraries," Mayor Liccardo said. "Our residents know how critical libraries are to keeping neighborhoods safe and expanding access to the opportunities Silicon Valley offers."

Mayor Liccardo made the announcement at the Biblioteca Latinoamericana in the Washington neighborhood just south of Downtown. The library serves students from Washington Elementary School next door as well as residents of the larger neighborhood.

"As a former police officer and substitute teacher, I know our neighborhoods need libraries to be open," said Councilmember Raul Perez, whose district includes the Biblioteca. "Libraries spark children's imaginations and give them a healthy alternative to being on the streets. For parents, they provide access to tools like English classes and literacy services that help them build better lives."

"Many of our residents rely on our libraries for Internet and computer access," Vice Mayor Rose Herrera said. "At the same time, many employers require online job applications, even for entry level positions. Our libraries are opening the doors to new opportunities and have become lifelong learning centers for children, families, youth, job seekers and seniors."

"The number one question I am asked is 'why is my neighborhood library closed?'" said Jill Bourne, Director of the San Jose Public Library. "Library staff have made this our highest priority, and we are excited to open the doors of all our branch libraries and provide services to our communities."



## Do You Know What WHAT?! The Library Game Show at San Pedro Square Market

*Nicolas Tesla, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein ...*

These geniuses shaped the face of the world, but even they would tremble to face what's coming to San Pedro Square Market!

From the secret archives of the San Jose Public library comes the most sensational game show you have ever seen!

The Amazing Erik, game show host, will take two teams through a variety of trivia questions and head-to-head competitions performing hilarious stunts.

Even spectators can earn points for prizes by participating in the Table Game.

Ask your friends, ask your neighbors, ask the random stranger eyeing you from across the room, Do You Know What WHAT?! Game Show held at the San Pedro Square Market from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. every third Wednesday of the month - Starting Wednesday, February 18, 2015.

### Rules:

The Team in control will select a subject category and answer its question.

Watch out! Sometimes there is a stunt hidden beneath a category.

Right answers are worth points.

Wrong answers pass control to the other team.

Earn the most points to earn a chance to compete for a grand prize provided by San Pedro Square Market.

### Ways to Play:

Go for glory and rock it as a member of a team.

Earn points at your table by playing the Do You Know What WHAT?! Table Game.

Answer pop culture questions and play word games, be the first to turn in your card and get a prize!

Look for the library infographic chart – use a sticky dot to answer the question.

**See more at: [www.sjpl.org/blog/do-you-know-what-what-library-game-show-san-pedro-square-market](http://www.sjpl.org/blog/do-you-know-what-what-library-game-show-san-pedro-square-market)**



## VEP Membership Mailing Prep Party

Article By Debra Suydam, Bob Aquino, Adina Pierce,  
and Marilyn Rodgers

Photographs by Adina Pierce

For the last several years, VEP volunteers have gathered together for a few hours on a Sunday afternoon, to prepare the membership invitation letter and envelopes for mailing. This is part of the annual VEP Membership Drive. While there definitely is work involved, it is also a fun and popular event...as it provides neighbors an opportunity to get together with old friends, and...to meet new neighbors. While envelopes are stuffed, sealed, and labeled, lots of enjoyable conversation takes place (and several snacks are consumed as well!!)

This year the project was completed in **record time** – all done is just over 2 hours and 45 minutes! The Mailing Party group could put any —assembly-line— to shame!

This year's group of volunteers was quite diverse, spanning several ages/generations from pre-teen to retired grandparents!

A special thank you to Adina Pierce who printed all of the mailing labels, and to Bob Aquino who transported and processed this large mailing at the main San Jose Post Office on Lundy.

Thank you to the following volunteers:

Bob Aquino	Jeri and Walt Arstingstall
Leslie Bejar	Bette Elkins
Bill Johnson	Urmi Mody
Marilyn Rodgers	Josie Supencheck
Debra Suydam	Adina, Juliana, and Kevin Pierce





## Save the Date! – Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> VEP's Annual Community-wide Garage Sale!

By Rachel Witmeyer, Ginger Cardona, Helen Castillo,  
and Marilyn Rodgers

Start planning now – including getting your neighbors involved! The VEP Community-wide Garage Sale will take place once again, on the **first Saturday in May** – this year that is May 2<sup>nd</sup>! So...mark your calendars, and start gathering all of those "treasures" you know you no longer use from your garage, attic, closets, and storage bins.

**We want to encourage everyone in our community to have a garage sale on the same day!** The best way to find a new home for your unused stuff is to increase traffic to your home. Activity attracts more activity. Your best resource is you. Get your neighbors involved. People will pass by your street unless they think something is happening there. Try to get everyone on your street to join in. You might even pool all of your neighbors goodies into one big second-hand superstore. If your neighbors aren't participating, ask them if you can spread out into their driveway.

Plan now on how to make sure you are seen from the street. Put up (secured balloons) or signs. Have your out-of-the-area friends bring garage sale items that add to yours – make it a big, fun event on your street or cul-de-sac. A little energy, creativity, and pre-planning now will pay off in big dividends, which will also free up space in your home, and put extra money in your pocket!

**VEP sponsors and pays for all of the advertising** – with banners, posters, ads in print – local newspapers, and online. All residents of the VEP areas of Vistapark, Carson, and Parkview are invited to take part! If you plan to participate and would like to have your street specifically listed on Craigslist, please e-mail just the street name to [vepeditor@gmail.com](mailto:vepeditor@gmail.com)

## VEP Membership Drive Continue:

### Real Comments from Members

By Marilyn Rodgers, Ginger Cardona, and Adina Pierce

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

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

*We thank everyone for all they do for VEP. We are very appreciative!*

*I am very thankful to VEP. So many people do so much! I live close to Vista Park and pick up trash while I walk.*

*Our adult children just bought a house and moved back into the neighborhood – we want to pay for their membership in VEP!*

*We appreciate all of the volunteer hours that go into making VEP the best neighborhood association!*

*Enjoy your monthly update. Due to health issues, unable to help.*

*So proud of everything VEP does. Wonderful neighborhood to live in!*

*Thanks to VEP leadership for all of the work done on Martial Cottle Park on behalf of their closest neighbors.*

*We have lived here since 1970, and cannot imagine the outcome of our community without the dedicated people and leaders of VEP. So we offer you a huge round of applause with our thanks!*

*Thanks for all of your great efforts!*

*Appreciate all you do for the community.*

*VEP is the best neighborhood group ever! We're grateful for all the work and dedication of the members.*

*We so appreciate VEP's work to keep our community friendly, happy and safe.*

*Thank you!! I am very proud of my neighbors and neighborhood association.*

We appreciate all of our new and renewing members. However, we would also like to acknowledge our members who included an additional amount above and beyond the membership dues: Mary Bagan, Jenny Annear/Ron Faulkner, and Cheri & Benjamin Scales

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



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*It's The New Year ...*

## Time to Renew your VEP Membership!

VEP membership is based on a calendar year, January through December. So if you haven't already - please renew your membership! Be sure to fill in the information requested, enclose your \$20 check made payable to VEP, and mail it back to us as soon as possible, while it's still fresh in your mind. That's all there is to it!

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

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

### What is VEP Community Association?

-VEP is an all-volunteer organization of your neighbors working to improve our neighborhoods.

-VEP sponsors many projects and events that improve neighborhood safety, our quality of life, and the appearance of our community.

-VEP volunteers make our neighborhood's needs, views, and concerns known to government at all levels.

-VEP was founded in 1969. We are one of the largest, most successful, and most continuously active and enduring grass roots volunteer organizations in Santa Clara County.

### Why join VEP?

-To receive our newsletter nine times a year.

-To receive monthly email alerts.

-To keep our neighborhoods beautiful, safe, strong, and prepared.

-To participate in and support effective neighborhood activities and representation.

-To support VEP's annual *Community Service Awards* for high school graduates.

-To be part of an outstanding volunteer community organization with 40 years of success in our neighborhoods.

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

*Note: None of the your personal information will ever be shared with any third party.*

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

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

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

Street address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Email address(es):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Comment(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

### ***Please let us know:***

- ☐ I prefer getting my newsletters by email.

Mail your \$20 check to:

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

***Thank you!***

[Note: The following is the original keynote address provided by Congressman Mike Honda at the Opening Ceremony for the Martial Cottle Park, held on Saturday, December 13, 2014. We thank Congressman Honda for graciously providing his comments for publication in the VEP Newsletter. -Marilyn Rodgers, President, VEP.]

*"It has been over almost 25 years since I stood on this property with Walter Lester as he shared his vision for creating a living memorial to Santa Clara County's agricultural past. This 288-acre parcel, a tribute to four generations of a farming family dating back to the 1850s, is a jewel of the Santa Clara County Park's department.*

*Today, both Walter Lester, and his sister Edith Ethel Lester have fulfilled the dream of their mother, Ethel, to honor her father, Martial Cottle by transforming the farm into a public historical agricultural park to "promote, educate, and sustain farming traditions in the Santa Clara Valley."*

*Over the decades, Walter never strayed from his mother's vision. I remember meeting Walter in the early 1990s in the little white outbuilding on his property. We discussed how to insure that his property would never be sold, or come under control of the City of San Jose. We strategized about how to preserve the estate and protect it from taxes. And later, as a state and federal legislator, I made sure that state park funding supported acquisition and federal estate taxes would not eat away at his donation.*

*Walter was a patient man. He outlasted four county parks directors during the negotiations. In 1999, upon the death of his sister, the issue of inheritance taxes became a seemingly insurmountable obstacle to his pending donation. By then, as a member of the state assembly, I was able to reconnect with Walter and lend my support to resolving remaining obstacles.*

*Being from a family who sharecropped nearby, I know how this valley has changed and how children from urban areas have little or no opportunity to experience agriculture. Walter knew that a park comprised of a working farm would not only give children an appreciation for the history of the Valley of the Hearts Delight, but would connect them to the food they consume.*

*Walter Lester has done for our children what we would have been unable to accomplish on our own. He has given them a permanent connection to the history of this valley and our agricultural roots. He has left behind a precious vehicle for teaching environmental stewardship. And it is our duty to honor his memory and cherish the gift that he has left us."*



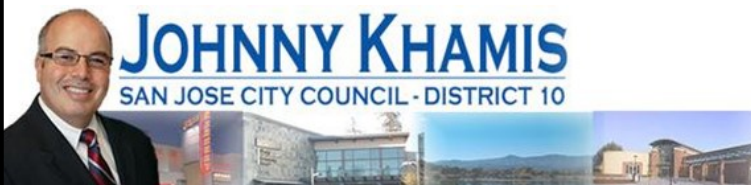
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FROM THE OFFICE OF



## DISTRICT 10 – PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Last month, on February 11, Mayor Sam Liccardo, SJPDP representatives, and I addressed a standing-room-only crowd at Bret Harte Middle School regarding the recent spike in home burglaries in the area. It was a productive meeting and I am thrilled to say that the results of that meeting are already being felt!

As of yesterday, 7 people have been arrested in connection to many of the burglaries that have taken place in D10. We are very appreciative of the SJPDP for their work in apprehending these criminals. In addition, we are grateful to the vigilant neighbors who provided the SJPDP with detailed information regarding the burglars! The SJPDP's proactive approach of dispatching increased patrols and implementing truancy abatement in the area combined with residents' increased vigilance, have been paying off.

Although we are making progress, we still have much to do to ensure that our community experiences a return to the peace to which it is accustomed. For this reason, my office is currently working with our State elected officials to set up a Community Safety Meeting to discuss how changes in state law and rehabilitation efforts are affecting the crime rates in our area. We have partnered with our representatives in the state senate and the state assembly to put this meeting together. More details about this meeting will be distributed as soon as they are available.

In addition to my monthly meetings with San Jose Police Chief Larry Esquivel, I have also set up semi-monthly meetings with the Southern Division Commander, Captain Ed Schroder, to continue the conversation about how best to keep District 10 safe. My staff has also created a helpful Safety Resources page on my new website:

<http://www.sjd10.com/safety-resources.html>

As always, I cannot stress enough the importance of getting to know your neighbors! You are each other's eyes and ears on the block. Please look out for one another, protect each other, and stand united in making your street crime free. Be sure to report suspicious activity and crimes to the San Jose Police Department. Please contact my office to learn more about how you can start an official Neighborhood Watch program in your area.

Working together is the way we improve the safety of our neighborhoods!



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**Another Successful WOWW:** I had a great time at the Annual Westfield Oakridge Winter Walk Senior Walk and Resource Fair! The event was hosted by Councilmembers Johnny Khamis, Don Rocha and Ash Kalra. This year's walk was well attended once again. This free event combined resources and important information for Seniors in one convenient location. There were fun activities and a spirited walk around the mall. If you were unable to make it this year I hope to see you there next year!

**Bringing Farms Back:** In an effort to counter the loss of farmland and take advantage of unused urban areas, Supervisor Yeager and I proposed an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone for Santa Clara County. Imagine small urban farms where there were once vacant lots. Successful urban agricultural nonprofit organizations have been popping up in urban neighborhoods, providing people with fresh produce and healthy food options. Gardens that the entire community can enjoy will greatly enhance the quality of the neighborhood. A voluntary agreement between the County and a landowner designates the use of vacant parcels of land for crop production, thereby entitling the property owner to a significantly reduced property tax bill. An Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone puts farming in cities, where thousands of people benefit.

**2015 Youth Summer Jobs Initiative:** Studies have linked a high school summer employment experience to career success later in life. I am proud to announce the 2015 Youth Summer Jobs initiative, proposed by Supervisors Cortese and Chavez and approved by the Board of Supervisors. The new program will create up to 500 paid summer internships and job opportunities for at-risk youth from ages 16 to 21 years old. This pilot program targets foster youth, CalWorks families, low-income and disconnected youth and is expected to help get kids off the streets and into a career path. Similar programs in Chicago and San Francisco have resulted in dramatic reductions in crime rates among target populations. Paid internships and employment opportunities will be coordinated with public-private and nonprofit employers through the non-profit Work2Future.

**Internships with the MTC:** Speaking of high school summer employment, the Metropolitan Transportation Committee (MTC) is currently accepting applications for their paid summer internship program. Students in grades 10 through 12 who are interested in pursuing a career in the field of transportation are encouraged to apply. During the course of the internship, students will learn how public transportation agencies shape transportation decisions. Students will assist MTC staff and MTC's transportation partners like the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. The deadline to apply is March 22. For more information, call MTC's high school internship coordinator, Yulee Kim, at (510) 817-5807.

**Martial Cottle - Santa Clara County's Newest Park:** I know we need rain --and lots of it-- but while the sun is shining I encourage you to visit Santa Clara County's newest park! At Martial Cottle Park, walking, biking, and leashed dogs are welcome, from sunrise to sunset! Wouldn't sun during the day and rain at night be wonderful?

As always, you can reach my office by phone, at (408) 299-5010, or you can send me an email with your comments and/or concerns: [mike.wasserman@bos.sccgov.org](mailto:mike.wasserman@bos.sccgov.org)



## Recent Grants Benefit Local Communities

By Linda J. LeZotte, Director  
Santa Clara Valley Water District

In the past month, the Santa Clara Valley Water District has awarded Community grants in two categories, —Trails and Open Space,” and —Conservation.” These grant programs are part of the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program, a parcel tax approved by voters in 2012.

### Trail and Open Space Grants:

\$571,000 to provide new public access to trails and open space. All projects must be completed by June 30, 2018.

**County of Santa Clara, \$200,000:** Project provides access to previously inaccessible areas adjacent to Calero Reservoir at Calero County Park, with 5 miles of new multi-use, natural surface trails. Total project cost is estimated at \$348,000.

**Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, \$200,000:** Project provides an outdoor learning center that will serve as an event venue and outdoor classroom for educational and interpretive programs. Project also includes a creek-side loop trail that provides 0.66 miles of trail accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Overall project cost of \$530,000.

**West Valley College, \$171,000:** Trail provides approx. 1,750 feet of ADA-compliant access adjacent to a restored section of Vasona Creek and a new wetland area within the West Valley campus. Trail will connect with the City of Saratoga's Heritage Loop Trail, improving public access to the West Valley College campus facilities and recreational opportunities. \$420,000 total project cost.

### Conservation Grants:

\$223,500 for projects expected to help the district meet its long-term goal of saving more than 32 billion gallons of water per year by 2030. All projects must be completed by June 30, 2017.

**San José Water Company, two \$50,000 grants:** First grant will be used to evaluate an advanced metering infrastructure system for single family residential customers. Second grant will be used to evaluate the water saving potential of using new advanced ultrasonic water meters for single-family residential customers. Both will be implemented in the Willow Glen area.

**Bevilacqua-Knight, Inc. (BKI), \$50,000:** Partnering with large employers throughout Santa Clara County, offering an employee rewards program that will help encourage employees to take steps toward water efficiency and conservation in their homes.

**City of Morgan Hill, \$48,500:** Grant to test a new lawn irrigation technology system on two areas near swimming pools at the Morgan Hill Aquatics Center.

**Bay Area Fresh, \$25,000:** Grant to study the efficiency of using farm wastewater for commercial growth of leafy vegetable crops through a hydroponic system. Bay Area Fresh proposes to use a method that captures wastewater from one commercial hydroponic system and recycle it into another hydroponic method system.

The water district expects to distribute nearly \$35 million in grants, partnerships and rebate programs over the life of the 15-year Safe, Clean Water Program. These programs will benefit all residents in Santa Clara County, and leveraging local funding and commitment to expanding trails and achieving water savings in our communities.

*As always, I am available for questions or comments as your District 4 representative for the City of Campbell and San Jose neighborhoods of Cambrian, Willow Glen, Blossom Hill, and North Almaden area. Feel free to contact me at 408-265-2600.*



## Parkview Elementary School is hosting a Clothing Drive Fundraiser!

**Start Date: April 13th**  
**Final Collection Date: April 17th**

Help us raise funds for our school by cleaning out your closet! We are hoping to collect at least 5,000 pounds of clothing and items. Savers will pay 20 cents per pound of clothes collected.

Please, drop off your donations at the school from April 13th to 17th, or contact Cyndi to schedule a pickup. Items accepted are: clothing items for any age and gender, ties, purses, jackets, blankets, towels, pillows, shoes, sheets, and comforters.

Contact: Cyndi Lubben cynthleigh99@hotmail.com (559)816-3028



**Earth Day 2015**  
**Great American Litter**

# PICK UP



**Saturday, April 25, 2015**

**8 am to 12 noon**

**VEP Meeting Place TBA - Watch for Details!**

You can clean up your own street, or any of the areas in your neighborhood that need attention.

Volunteer hours are available for  
high school seniors' graduation requirements!

**VEP COMMUNITY-  
WIDE GARAGE SALE!**

**Saturday, May 2nd**

Mark it on your calendar now, and start gathering those treasures you no longer use from your garage, attic, and closets.  
VEP pays for the advertising! Just put out your items, and sell!

**July 4th Fireworks & Festival  
at Almaden Lake**

*Picture you and your family here!*

## Emergency Preparedness: Part 4 Practice, Revise, & Refine!

By Rachel Witmeyer



I call this part —Practice, Revise, & Refine” because the next four steps recommended by Santa Clara County are basically prompts to do just that! With practice and revisions, your family’s emergency plan will take-on a smooth and seamless quality that provides a real sense of confidence and security if and when things go haywire.

Item 4: —Choose an out-of-town contact person whom family members may call to report how and where they are during an emergency.”

You have already chosen someone to include in your plan, but the next step is to confirm with them. This person, or persons, needs to be fully aware of your intention for them to be your communication —lifeline” during an unforeseen disaster. You can even hold telephone —drills,” coordinated between your family and your contact person(s), so that such calls feel routine and are not bogged-down by panic in the case of real emergencies. If your contact person is not comfortable with all these responsibilities, find someone else!

Item 5: —Know where to go during an emergency; designate a park, school or other convenient location.”

This, too, is already a line-item in your plan, but does each of your family members know the best route to this location? Can they easily direct themselves to the right spot, after safely exiting your home? This is where the emergency drills and practice come into play. Don’t stop your drill when everyone has gotten out of the house, but continue the drill onwards to the family meeting place. In a real emergency, each family member should be able to automatically find their way directly to the designated location. The only way to guarantee that kind of preparedness is to practice, especially with children. If the location is hard to find, change it!

Item 6: —Prepare your children and remember those with special needs, such as infants, seniors, and people with disabilities.”

Unless your child attends some kind of special school focused on wilderness preparedness, the odds are that they don’t already know how to handle emergency gear and supplies. In fact, most adults don’t have this sort of knowledge anymore. We can blame it on our modern society, where we get power with a flick of a switch and we can —make” our food in under 3 minutes, but we can also remedy the problem!

Run practice sessions with your family, in which the emergency gear is actually set-up and used. This will provide much of the necessary experience to navigate a real disaster. Young children can be taught the basics of how to use a first-aid kit and operate a crank-flashlight or radio. Older children can be taught to pitch a tent and turn off utilities. Here again, familiarity is the best defense. In a true emergency, children with experience and confidence handling equipment will be better able to deal with the effects of disaster in a calm, mature - and safe - manner.

This item also reminds us to work with those in our families who have mobility issues or other disabilities. Discuss the emergency plan in detail, and figure out what the most challenging aspects will be for those persons. Problem-solve to find suitable solutions. Designate another family member to be their —emergency buddy” so no one will be left without the necessary assistance. If possible, keep extra mobility aides in a storage area outside the residence, that could be accessed during a disaster. In general, tailor your solutions to your family members’ needs.

*In the Next Issue: Saving our Animal Friends!*





## Gardening, with John Marks

### Annuals for the Summer!

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 the 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 check to make sure 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 (recipe, below).

#### Ingredients:

1 tbsp. liquid dish soap, 1 tbsp. hydrogen peroxide, 1 tsp whiskey,  
1 tsp. vitamin B-1 starter, 1/2-gallon warm water

#### Directions:

Mix together well and apply to soil.

Treat plants occasionally to help them perk up and bloom.



## Random Tidbits, with Kathy Wood



Yup, I'm a list-maker (and darn proud of it)! Throughout my life I have found writing items down on a piece of paper has saved me more than once. People who know me have probably heard the phrase, *"let me check my list,"* a time or two.

A list picks up the overlap of what the memory part of the brain cannot completely hold. It sure would be helpful if one could add more memory to the brain as easily as adding it to your phone or camera by inserting an SD card. On the other side, it would be great to be able to push a DELETE button to rid a few, if not all, of those not-so-wonderful memories that would best be forgotten.

Satisfaction and accomplishment occur when completing a task and physically crossing that item off of the list. I like to start my day writing tasks down on a notepad that can easily be glanced at several times during the day. This is what I would like to accomplish within the next 14-15 hours. My problem is I usually put down more than what I can physically perform, but those unfulfilled tasks are then transferred to tomorrow's list.

Experience has also proven that making a list when beginning a home improvement project or planning a party can save time and that never-ending question, *"What am I forgetting?"* How many times have you bought a food item for a get-together then proceeded to forget to serve it. If it was on your list (and then you have to read the list) your guests would have enjoyed it and you wouldn't be eating it every day for the next week.

Panic can set in quickly when one's list cannot be found. You can blame the dog for eating it, or the kids for using the back of it for an art project, or your husband for depositing it in the trash. The notepad feature on your smart phone is a surefire fix for this problem. That information is always at your fingertips, in your pocket, and away from sticky fingers.

Speaking of parties, this recipe is a good starter for the upcoming Easter dinner or a summer brunch.



### Deviled Cucumber Cups

#### Ingredients:

3 large eggs, 4 medium cucumbers, 1 teaspoon lemon juice,  
2 ½ tablespoons mayonnaise, 2 ½ tablespoons minced red onion,  
½ teaspoon sea salt, 1-2 red or green Serrano chilies, seeded and slivered, for garnish.



Hard boil the eggs; cool. Pat dry and peel.

Cut cucumbers into 24 rounds (¾ inches thick). Using a biscuit cutter that best fits the cucumber, cut out fluted rounds. With a melon baller or small spoon, scoop seeds from centers of cucumber rounds, leaving a bottom to place the deviled eggs into. Place on a baking sheet.

Shred eggs with the finest slatted holes of a box grater and put in a medium bowl. Add mayonnaise, onion, lemon juice, and salt. Mash mixture together with a fork.

Fill cups with egg mixture, mounding slightly. Sprinkle each with additional salt and a few drops of lemon juice to taste. Garnish with a sliver of Serrano chile.

These can be made up to 1 day prior by refrigerating the cucumbers and the filling separately. Blot the cucumbers dry before filling and serving to your guests.

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# VEP Community Schools Calendar

March / April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22	23	24	25 Las Culturitas" ~ 8:45-9:30am ~ @Parkview NJHS Meets @John Muir MS	26 SELAC Meeting ~ 10:00am ~ @John Muir MS	27 SELAC Meeting ~ 8:05am ~ @Carson School Falcon Dance ~ 6:30-8:30pm ~ @John Muir MS	28
29	30	31 PSCA Meeting ~ 8:45-9:30am ~ @Parkview	1 Las Culturitas" ~ 8:45-9:30am ~ @Parkview	2 <i>Gunderson's gotTalent</i> 6:00pm @GHS	3	4
<b>John Muir Middle School: 8th Grade Trip to Washington DC</b>						
5 Oak Grove Schools on Spring Break April 6th-10th	6 SSC Meeting ~ 2:30pm ~ @Carson School 	7 Open House ~ 7:00-8:00pm ~ @Carson School	8 @John Muir MS: NJHS Meets PTSA @6:30pm	9	10  Principal's Coffee @John Muir MS	11
<b>All Week @Carson School</b>						
12	13	14	15 Las Culturitas" ~ 8:45-9:30am ~ @Parkview	16	17	18
<b>Clothing Drive Week @ Parkview Elementary ~ Donations Welcome!</b>						
<b>April 13th through 17th = Spring Break for SJUSD Schools</b>						
19	20	21	22 Las Culturitas" ~ 8:45-9:30am ~ @Parkview SELAC Meeting ~ 6:00pm ~ @Gunderson HS	23 SSC Meeting @John Muir MS SELAC Meeting ~ 10:00am ~ @John Muir MS	24 Box Tops Due for Contest @Carson School	25  Spring Fling ~12:00-5:00pm~ @Gunderson

## VEP Community Schools Contact Information

**Carson Elementary School ~ Home of the Cougars**  
WEB: <http://www.sjUSD.org/carson/> PHONE: (408) 535-6287

**Parkview Elementary School ~ Home of the Panthers**  
WEB: <http://parkview.ogsd.net/> PHONE: (408) 226-4655

**John Muir Middle School ~ Home of the Falcons**  
WEB: <http://sjUSD.org/john-muir/> PHONE: (408) 535-6281


**Gunderson High School ~ Home of the Grizzlies**  
WEB: <http://gunderson.sjUSD.org/> PHONE: (408) 535-6340





# VEP Community Calendar

March / April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22	23	<b>24</b> Computer Help ~ 11:00am ~ @Edenvale Lib. Book Sale ~ 2:00-6:00pm ~ @Vineland Lib.	<b>25</b> Fun with Legos® 3:30pm@Edenvale  Jewelry Making 12:30pm @Pearl Knit/Crochet Club 3:00pm @Pearl	<b>26</b> Author Event: Cristina Henriquez 3:00pm@Edenvale @Pearl Library: Line Dancing-1pm Kids' Knitting-4pm Letterpress Printing Activity for Kids-4pm	<b>27</b>  Legos® Club ~ 4:00pm ~ @Pearl Library Community Room	<b>28</b>  For High School Students: <b>Kaplan ACT Practice Test</b> ~ 1:00pm ~ @Pearl Library
<b>29</b>  \$5/Bag Book Sale ~ 1:00-5:00pm ~ @Martin Luther King, Jr. Library	30	<b>31</b> <b>VEP Community Meeting</b> ~ 7:30 PM ~ @Vista Park Community Room	<b>1</b> @Edenvale: Baby-O!-11:30am TeensReach-4pm Money Smarts-4:15pm Book Club - 6pm @Pearl Library: Jewelry-12:30pm Knit/Crochet-3pm	<b>2</b> @Edenvale: Computer Help-11am Kids: Bunny Money ~ 3:30pm ~  @Pearl Library: Line Dancing-1pm TeensReach-4pm	<b>3</b>  Legos® Club ~ 4:00pm ~ @Pearl Library Community Room	4
5	<b>6</b>  STEAMstacks: Letterpress Printing Activity for Kids ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Branch Library	<b>7</b>  One-On-One Computer Help ~ 11:00am ~ Origami Class ~ 3:30pm ~ @Edenvale Lib.	<b>8</b>  <b>D10 "Office Hours" Meeting</b> w/Johnny Khamis <b>8:30-9:30am</b> @Almaden Valley Community Center	<b>9</b>  Computer Help ~ 11:00am ~ @Edenvale Lib.,  Line Dancing-1pm Kids' Knitting-4pm @Pearl Library	<b>10</b>  <b>Bricks 4 Kidz: Energy Is Everywhere</b> ~ 4:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	<b>11</b>  Book Sale ~ 10am-4pm ~ @Willow Glen Branch Library
12	13	<b>14</b>  Computer Help ~ 11:00am ~ Music & Movement ~ 11:30am ~ @Edenvale Branch Library	<b>15</b>  Jewelry Making ~ 12:30pm ~ Knit/Crochet Club ~ 3:00pm ~ @Pearl Ave. Branch Library	<b>16</b> @Edenvale: Computer Help ~ 11:00am ~ Earth Day Games ~ 3:30pm ~  @Pearl Library: Line Dancing-1pm Kids' Knitting-4pm	17	<b>18</b>  <b>D10 "Office Hours" Meeting</b> w/Johnny Khamis <b>10:00-11:30am</b> @City Espresso 630 Blossom Hill Rd
19	20	<b>21</b>  One-On-One Computer Help ~ 11:00am ~ @Edenvale Branch Library	<b>22</b> @Edenvale: Friends of the Library Meeting-6pm  @Pearl Library: Jewelry-12:30pm Knit/Crochet-3pm Earth Day Games-4pm	<b>23</b> @Pearl Library: Street Smarts: Bike & Pedestrian Safety ~ 11:00am ~ Line Dancing ~ 1:00pm ~ Knitting for Kids ~ 4:00pm ~	<b>24</b>  Computer Help ~ 11:00am ~ @Edenvale Lib.  Legos® Club ~ 4:00pm ~ @Pearl Library	<b>25</b>  <b>Great American Litter Pick-up!</b> ~ 8am - 1pm ~

## Coming Soon in the VEP:

### VEP Community Meetings

Tuesday, April 28th

Tuesday, May 26th

Summer Break:  
June through August

Meetings Resume in September



### VEP Community Events

**Great American Litter Pick-Up**  
Saturday, April 25th

**VEP Community-Wide  
GARAGE SALE**  
Saturday, May 2nd

**4th of July Fireworks & Festival**  
July 4th @Almaden Lake

# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

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Email: [vepca@vepca.net](mailto:vepca@vepca.net) Website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

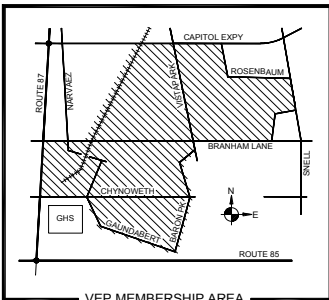
Published monthly by VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent more than 2000 homes in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. VEP is dedicated to neighborhood maintenance and improvement in its membership area as well as to 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.

### VEP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Community Room

Vista Park

7:30 pm in the

Be sure to attend  
VEP's Community Meeting  
Tuesday, March 31st