# VEP NEWS

### • VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

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



# Table of Contents

Nov./Dec. Meeting Preview	page 2
October Meeting Synopsis	page 2
Community News & Updates	page 2-3
Holiday Events in San Jose	page 4
VEP's Annual Holiday Events	page 5
October "Photo Album"	page 6-7
Honoring VEP's Veterans	page 8-9
Columns on Local Issues	page 10
Community Calendar	page 11

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 // 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 18037; SAN JOSE, CA; 95158.

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

### VEP Community Association ~ Executive Board of Directors



# **VEP COMMUNITY MEETING**

# Tuesday, December 5th

Come a Little Early @7:15pm for a Holiday Cookie Social!

Meeting @7:30pm ~ Late Arrivals O.K.!

Vista Park Community Room 475 Hyde Park Drive

Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

# **AGENDA**

### ★ Santa Clara Valley Water District ★

**Overview of Role & Responsibilities of the District** 

Presentation by \*\* Linda J. LeZotte \*\* Director, District 4

### ★ VEP Business Meeting ★

**Announcements & Updates** 

**Councilmember Khamis and Staff** Updates on District 10 and City of San Jose

Upcoming Winter Events / Save the Dates:

"Santa in the Park" Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>

VEP Home & Yard "Holiday Decorations" Contest Begins Week of December 10th Judging: December 15th-18th

### ★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

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



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### VEP's November/December Meeting Preview By Marilyn Rodgers

► HOLIDAY COOKIE SOCIAL! 7:15pm! Enjoy some holiday cheer with your neighbors as you *connect* over *cookies*! VEP will provide cookies and also encourages everyone to bring some of their wonderful homemade goodies to share!

► Santa Santa Clara Valley Water District, Board Director Linda LeZotte, representing District 4 of the Water District (which includes the VEP neighborhoods) will provide an overview of the role and responsibilities of the Water District. She will also provide information on the differing responsibilities of the District with the water retailers, such as the San Jose Water Company, who provides water to the majority of San Jose residents.

### ▶ VEP Business Meeting / Announcements

Additional informational items and announcements will be provided including updates from Councilmember Khamis and Staff regarding issues of interest on District 10 and the City of San Jose.

#### ► 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 at 7:15pm on Tuesday, December  $5^{th}$  (Please Note: Late arrivals are always welcome!).

### **October Meeting Synopsis**

### By Marilyn Rodgers

President Rodgers welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that the speaker that had originally been scheduled for tonight's meeting had to cancel. Then, County Supervisor Mike Wasserman had graciously attempted to change his prior commitments so that he could attend as a guest speaker, but he was unable to do so. President Rodgers commented on how appreciative she was that the Supervisor had attempted to change his schedule to assist VEP. She stated that the Supervisor would, however, be scheduled to be a guest speaker after the holidays.

Ms. Rodgers stated that given the circumstances, she was especially appreciative of the guest speaker, Katie Ziemba from San Jose Department of Environmental Services, who was able to literally "step in at the last minute", to attend VEP's meeting. Ms. Rodgers asked everyone to give Kate Z (as she likes to be called) an especially warm welcome. Kate Z then provided a brief overview of Environmental Services. President Rodgers had previously informed her that several residents had voiced concerns about trash pickup, recycling bins, and green waste pickup, Kate Z provided additional information on these services (see below). She also stated that a very popular program - "the large item pickup" is not only continuing, but has been expanded. It now allows for an unlimited number of requests for service by residents for "large item pickups." Large items includes such things as couches, mattresses, desks, and so forth. Previously, each household was restricted to 3 items per year. With the expansion of the program, residents can now call for service as often as needed, with no extra charge. Residents do, however, need to call and arrange for a scheduled pickup in advance.

Several residents had previously voiced concerns about the apparent change in behavior by some of the contracted drivers for garbage/recycling/greenwaste services. Drivers appear to be in a great hurry. So much so, that containers are often dropped midair, resulting in trash being scattered in the street, and containers either being badly damaged, and/or ending up in front of another neighbor's house. Kate encouraged residents to call in and voice their concerns.

An additional concern and/or recommendation made by a neighbor attending the meeting: It would be appreciated if Environmental Services would provide an opportunity for residents to respond to a survey about their satisfaction (or lack thereof) of the service provided - *prior* to the waste/recycling service companies receiving an automatic increase for wages.

Ms. Rodgers again thanked Kate for coming and providing a helpful update on services provided by Environmental Services department.

President Rodgers then provided updates and announcements. Of immediate importance: The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Day, scheduled for Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>. She introduced Aiko Fadness sitting in the audience. Ms. Rodgers then stated that Dave's sister, who had travelled a long distance (from Wisconsin), to be here for Saturday's event, was also in attendance at the meeting. She invited Aiko to introduce Dave's sister to everyone. Ms. Rodgers informed the audience that the plan for Saturday was for everyone to meet in the Community Room at 9am. In addition to sign-in for the event, snacks & coffee would be provided, and everyone would be given a few minutes for networking with neighbors, prior to starting the work. Regarding the work plan: There would be two sites/locations – one in Vista Park and the other along a portion of Chynoweth, under Highway 87 and next to the VTA station parking lot.

President Rodgers continued by providing information on a meeting that she thought would be of special interest to many VEP residents. The California Public Utilities Commission had scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7pm. While most CPUC meetings are held either in San Francisco or Los Angeles, this meeting would be held in San Jose, at San Jose City Hall - in the City Council Chambers. She said this hearing was specifically to hear testimony and concerns from residents regarding a request from San Jose Water Company, for yet another increase in water rates. Many residents are concerned and/or angry, as this is the third request for an increase by San Jose Water Company in less than two years. She noted that the City of San Jose was also very concerned. The City of San Jose is a large customer of San Jose Water Company. The water rates for the City have increased over 60% in just a few years. This too should be of concern to residents, as they are not only paying for an increase in their own water bills, but they are also paying for an increase for the City of San Jose's water bill. Representatives of the City of San Jose will also be in attendance at this meeting to "object" - as a "customer" of San Jose Water Company.

(Note: For more information on this issue, please see article on Page 10 of this newsletter.)

Ms. Rodgers reminded everyone that the VEP meeting for October had been moved from the <u>last</u> Tuesday in October to the  $4^{th}$ Tuesday, as Halloween is the last Tuesday of this month. She encouraged everyone to be especially careful on Halloween – whether driving on neighborhood streets (please slow down), or escorting children as they walk around for "trick or treat."

President Rodgers also reminded everyone that the next VEP meeting will be on **Tuesday**, **December 5**<sup>th</sup>, instead of a Tuesday close to Thanksgiving. Additionally, she reminded everyone to be sure to "save the date" for "**Santa in the Park**" which is a very popular event held on the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend in the Vista Park Community Room.

(Note: See Page 5 of this newsletter for additional information.)

She ended by thanking everyone for coming, and requested assistance in cleaning up the Community Room.

### **3rd Annual Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Day: Saturday, October 28th, 2017**



### Article By Marilyn Rodgers

Photographs by Katherine Decker and Rachel Witmeyer

On a beautiful Fall morning, an eager crowd of 35 volunteers and park staff came together in the Vista Park Community Room to sign-in, have coffee and goodies, and to enjoy visiting with both neighbors, and relatives of Dave Fadness (in addition to Mrs. Aiko Fadness – Dave's sister and two cousins were in attendance).

After several pictures were taken by VEP Board Members Katherine Decker and Rachel Witmeyer, volunteers and staff broke into two main work groups. The first stayed in Vista Park putting in new dark wood chips in front of the Community Room, in addition to planting new flowering plants. Another smaller group planted three trees toward the north end of the Park, as well as completing a variety of other tasks in the Park.

The second group of 10 or so hardy volunteers lead by Past President, Dave Noel, did a fabulous job along Chynoweth, underneath the Hwy87 freeway, and close to the VTA station parking lot. Bushes and trees were pruned along the north side wall, and bags of litter and brush were picked up and/or swept up into large bags. Additionally very large piles of green waste from the pruning was left along the wall. Thanks as well to the staff from both Greenwaste and San Jose Department of Transportation for their assistance in removing the large piles of pruned material.

Thank-you again to everyone for making our neighborhood so much more attractive! Dave would have been pleased, and proud of everyone who attended!



Aiko Fadness introduced Dave Fadness' sister and cousins, who traveled from out-of-state to attend "Dave's Day."



New, Darker Mulch makes the Community Room Look Fabulous!

### \* TO THE VEP COMMUNITY \*

The 3rd Annual Dave Fadness Beautification Day, on October 28, 2017, was a success due to the outstanding volunteers who gave up a sunny Saturday morning to clean and beautify Vista Park and Chynoweth/Pearl Avenues.

This year, I was touched by the fact that David's sister, Lori Clark, and cousin, Sandy Burns, from Wisconsin and cousin PollySue Belcher from Michigan, flew halfway across the country to participate in this memorial event. They enjoyed working in the sunshine along with those of you who turned out to keep alive David's spirit of volunteerism.

Much gratitude is expressed to VEP Board Members who gave their time and donations to this event, as well as to Josie Supencheck for her donation of yummy donuts. Special thanks to County Supervisor Mike Wasserman, who split his valuable time between two clean up events that morning. I know our District 10 Councilmember Johnny Khamis would have been volunteering as he always does, had he not been out of the country on business. Thanks to Dora Gonzalez for representing

Johnny's office. Appreciation is expressed to Dave Noel and the Erikson Neighborhood Association for participating in this community clean up. The event could not have happened without the help of Mollie Tobias, Volunteer Coordinator, San Jose Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, and Melody Goodwin and John Dixon, Parks Maintenance staff.

THANKS for keeping VOLUNTEERISM alive and our community clean and beautiful. David would be proud of all of you!

Always with a grateful heart, Aiko Fadness





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### By Marilyn Rodgers and Katherine Decker

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual VEP Holiday Home Decoration Contest will be held again in December – decorations will be judged over the weekend of December 15th through 18th (approximately). Do you and/or your neighbors really enjoy decorating the exterior of your houses and/or yards for the holidays? If so, this contest is for you! The VEP Board of Directors is once again sponsoring a contest for the best Holiday Decorating done on a house and/or yard in the VEP neighborhoods – Vistapark, Carson, and Parkview.

As in the past several years, there will be more than one winner! **What will you win?** There will, of course, be a Grand Prize Winner, plus three additional winners, by categories: 1) Spectacular (this one puts everyone in awe)!, 2) Religious theme, 3) Fantasy theme, and 4) Best use of Animation and/or Inflatables. Prizes will include for 3 of the categories: membership in VEP Community Association for the calendar year 2018 (\$20.00 value

# \*Santa is Coming!\*

...to the Vista Park Community Room 475 Hyde Park Drive

# Sunday, November 26th Santa Hours: 2:00pm to 4:00pm Food & Blanket Drive Hours: Noon to 4:00pm

Bring the kids, or the whole family, for a free photo with Santa! A VEP Photographer will be on-duty, or bring your own camera.

### Fun for the whole family!

\* Crafts! \* Refreshments \* Food & Blanket Drive! \*

Join your neighbors for this VEP neighborhood tradition!

We are Collecting Canned Food and Non-Perishable Food Items, as well as New or Gently-Used, Clean Blankets & Sleeping Bags. ~ No Glass Please - Thank You! ~

Event Hosted by VEP Board Member, Helen Castillo. For questions, please call Mrs. Castillo at 408-981-5902 each), and bragging rights of course!

For the Grand Prize Winner: a yard sign indicating they are the winner for 2017, a gift certificate, and membership in VEP for 2018 – and of course, bragging rights! In addition to these winners, there a usually several "honorable mentions" as well. There will be pictures and an article in the January edition of the VEP newsletter, so be sure to watch for it!

The Board of Directors functions as the judges for the contest! However, member and resident participation are greatly encouraged. Everyone can help by notifying the Board at <u>www.vepca.net</u> of houses/yards to consider. Please nominate your house/yard, and/or nominate a neighbor(s) for consideration!

A VEP e-mail announcement will be sent out prior to Christmas, indicating the winners, so that you, your family, and visiting friends and relatives, can drive (or walk) around the VEP neighborhoods to enjoy the spectacular decorations our neighbors put up for all to enjoy!

Experiment V Assessed Christmas Decoration Contest The Olsens of Amboy Drive Reigning Champions (2011-2016)



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# **3rd Annual "Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Day" ~ Saturday, October 28th, 2017** Full Article on Page 3 // Photographs Courtesy of The Office of D10 Councilmember Khamis, VEP Vice President Katherine Decker & *VEP News* Editor, Rachel Witmeyer



Above: Rich Crowley (D 10 Leadership Coalition) and VEP Board President, Mrs. Marilyn Rodgers

Below: Many THANKS! to All the Community Volunteers and Parks & Recreation Staff!!!



Above: Volunteers Repainting the Backstop @Vista Park

CAPITAL OF

Above: Mollie Tobias, Parks & Recreation Dept.

Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

VEP LUNTEER

7

Below: VEP Vice President Katherine Decker, with Parks and Recreation Staff (Left), and Santa Clara County, District 1 Supervisor, Mike Wasserman (Right)





## Honoring Our Neighbors Who Are Veterans

By Marilyn Rodgers

Even though Veteran's Day was November 11<sup>th</sup> (as this newsletter was being written), please join us in honoring our neighbors who are Veterans!

The VEP Board of Directors would sincerely like to honor all the Veterans in our community. If you are a Veteran, have a Veteran in your family, or know a neighbor who served, and you don't see their name in our list, please contact Marilyn Rodgers at mrodgersrn@aol.com

Please include the following information in your message:

- 1. Veteran's name
- 2. Military Branch(es) Served-In
- 3. Years of Service
- 4. Major Conflicts, or any additional details



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

# \* **U.S. ARMY** \*

**Bob Shoberg** U.S. Army – 1963-1966

**Craig Ash** U.S. Army - Vietnam era

**Gary Johnson** U.S. Army, 1964-1966

Mario Zapata U.S. Army, 1965-1967

Micheal (Mike) Reppas U.S. Army – Vietnam

**Dave Pfaff** U.S. Army, 1967-1990 - Vietnam

> **Omar Villa** U.S. Army, 2013-2016

John Poffenroth U.S. Army, 1966-1968 Vietnam

John E. Melani U.S. Army, 1945-1946 Korea

\* U.S. AIR FORCE \*

**Don Ferguson** U.S. Air Force – Vietnam – 1963-1967

Linda Ferguson U.S. Air Force – 1963-1965 Vietnam (Nurse)

### **Tony Fischer**

U.S. Air Force – 1962-1966 – Cold War Stationed at Almaden Air Force Station Mt. Umunhum

Arthur (Bud) Sliger

U.S. Air Force - 1962-1966 Vietnam War

Jerry Ryan U.S. Air Force, 1947-1967

David J. Sharkey, Sr. U.S. Air Force, 1966-1986



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# \* U.S. MARINE CORPS \*

### **Bob Olsen**

U.S. Marine Corps - 1969-1975

### Quan Nguyen

U.S. Marine Corps – 1990-2004 Operation Enduring Freedom Operation Iraqi Freedom

### Ron Stuart

U.S. Marine Corps, 1966-1970 Vietnam



### Pat Hanna

U.S. Navy – Security Group – Vietnam War 1969-1976

### **Dave Rodarte**

U.S. Navy, 1966-1968 Vietnam

Gary Bloomfield U.S. Navy, 1966-1970

**Mike O'Connell** U.S. Navy, Desert Storm

**Frank Kistler** U.S. Navy - 1948-1952 Berlin Airlift & Korean War

Gerald (Jerry) Bradley U.S. Navy - 1956-1980

# \* NATIONAL GUARD \*

Stuart Scott Ca. Army National Guard – 1964-1970

## \* RESERVES \*

**Jeff Poffenroth** Ca. State Military Reserve, 2012 – Current

### **David Heinrichsen** U.S. Army Reserve, 1969-1975

# FOREIGN SERVICE \*

**Ian Sharkey** British Army, 1987-1995 Gulf War

# \* MULTIPLE BRANCHES \*

Rey L. Call

U.S. Navy – World War II – July 1942-Sept 1945 Army National Guard (Lt.) – June 1950-July 1952

### **George L. Prior**

U.S. Navy – Pacific Theatre, WWII – 1944-1947 U.S. Army – 1949-1951

### Don R. Rodgers, Jr.

U.S. Navy/Marines, 1965-1969 Vietnam



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### California Public Utilities Commission Hearing: S.J. Water Company Requests Rate Increase By Marilyn Rodgers

On Tuesday, November 7th, the California Public Utilities Commission held a hearing at San Jose City Hall in the Council Chambers. This meeting began at 7:00 PM.

The purpose of the meeting was to hear testimony and allow for public input into the request brought forward by San Jose Water Company, and 3 other water companies, for a rate increase.

There were over 250 people in attendance, with 54 people requesting/signed-up for the opportunity to speak. The audience was informed that each speaker would be allowed to speak for two minutes.

Introductions of Commission members were made and general information was provided to the audience. Members of the Commission (CPUC) were in attendance along with a recorder who would be recording all testimony/proceedings of the Commission, with a particular focus on input from concerned residents.

Information that was provided to the audience included the fact that the Commission had already received both written communications and telephone calls from over 200 concerned residents. Additionally, the Commission wanted to make it clear to those in attendance, that: 1) no decision by the CPUC would be made that evening, and 2) the CPUC has the authority to approve or disapprove the request for a rate increase, however, it <u>does</u> not set the amount of the rate increase. That is done by the individual water companies themselves.

Prior to the public comment period, a representative of San Jose Water Company, speaking on behalf of the 4 companies requesting approval of a rate increase, was allowed several minutes to provide background and rationale for the request.

To begin the testimony/comments section of the meeting, elected officials were allowed to speak first. This group included San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo and Councilmember Don Rocha who spoke on behalf of the City of San Jose, as <u>the City is a large</u> <u>"customer" of San Jose Water Company</u>. San Jose City officials are greatly concerned that the City's water bills have increased over 60% in the last few years. The Mayor and Councilmember also voiced concern for the large number of residents of San Jose (a city of over 1 million people) who are upset by the continuous rate increases imposed on them by San Jose Water Company. Additionally, other elected officials from surrounding cities, namely from Cupertino and Monte Serreno, who also have San Jose Water Company as their water retailer, voiced their concerns and strong opposition to the requested rate increase

Resident after resident, many of them from either San Jose and/or from Saratoga, provided detailed information about the history of rate increases, and the amount of profit made by San Jose Water Company. They all requested that the CPUC **not** approve this latest request for an increase. (Note: This is the 3rd request that has been made by SJWC for a rate increase in less than two years, and the previous requests were granted.)

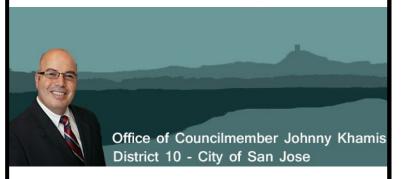
Every city whose water retailer/provider is San Jose Water Company had residents in attendance at this meeting. Additionally, **everyone** who requested to have an opportunity to speak/ provide testimony, spoke **against** the request for a rate increase! They all were concerned about the continuous number of rate hikes, as well as the amount of the rate hikes which have taken place over the last several years.

Everyone in attendance seemed appreciative that the CPUC held this meeting in San Jose. Each and every resident who

spoke implored the Commission to **not approve** this most recent request for an increase.

(Note: A "grass-roots" advocacy group known as WRATES, was established two years ago by two women from Saratoga. This is an all-volunteer group of residents, with individuals who are residents of one of the several cities in which San Jose Water Company is the water retailer/provider. These residents are all very concerned/angry regarding the water rates charged to residents by San Jose Water Company.)

**Watch** for upcoming additional information, especially the decision of the CPUC to approve or deny this latest request for a increase.



### We're Not PLA-ing AROUND

The City Council agenda has been filled with hot topics with a big impact on the City and its residents in the last couple of weeks, and there is more to come in the weeks ahead. First, a bit about what transpired over the past few weeks:

### PLA Policy Imposed on Projects Over \$6 Million

On October 24th, the City Council – with incomplete and changing information - voted on a compromise proposal to impose a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) mandate on new public works contracts for projects of over \$6 million in the City. This new mandate has the potential to reduce competitive bidding, increase project costs, and lower take-home pay of employees of merit contractors. To my mind, a PLA means Pay Larger Amounts!

What might this mean for San Jose residents? Fewer miles of roads paved, less park rehabilitation, and fewer much-needed improvements at our Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility, just to name a few.

It is unclear that there was any problem with our existing bidding process and prevailing wage policy so it raises the question of whether this was simply a special-interest power grab. Unfortunately, my efforts to postpone the vote so that we could get accurate numbers and a better understanding of the potential effects of a PLA policy were thwarted. We were then left with supporting a compromise proposal in order to avert a much worse proposal.

If you'd like to hear more about this topic, listen to my comments at Johnny Khamis on the Record on YouTube and be sure to read the OpEd from Councilmember Dev Davis and me in the Mercury News!

For questions, comments, or concerns you may reach my office at 408.535.4910 or district10@sanjoseca.gov

Office of Councilmember Johnny Khamis 200 E. Santa Clara Street - 18th Floor; San Jose, CA 95113

District 10 Website: www.sjd10.com

YouTube Channel: Johnny Khamis on the Record



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11

