



★ 2019 IS VEP'S 50TH YEAR! ~ CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE, ACTION & ADVOCACY ★

ISSUE: MARCH 2019 ~ WEB: WWW.VEPCA.NET ~ EMAIL: VEPCA@VEPCA.NET ~ JOIN VEP ON FACEBOOK!

VEP's COMMUNITY MEETING

▶ **Tuesday, March 26th, 2019** ◀

Meeting @7:30pm ~ Late Arrivals Okay! ☺

Vista Park Community Room - 475 Hyde Park Drive

▶ **Everyone is welcome. Invite a neighbor, or two!** ◀

~ MARCH Meeting Agenda ~

☆ Martial-Cottle Park Updates! ☆

Presentation by

ERIC GOODRICH

Park Manager, Martial-Cottle County Park

☆ VEP Business Meeting ☆

Announcements & Updates

**Information & City Updates from the
Office of Councilmember Johnny Khamis
District 10 & City of San Jose**

"Save the Dates"

☆ Your Concerns and Ideas ☆

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

~ CALENDAR CORNER 2019 ~

Right Now! → VEP Membership Drive! Renew Today!
(See Page 5 For Your Membership Form)

Saturday, April 27th:

VEP's Annual Spring Neighborhood Clean-Up Event

Monday, April 15th:

Application Deadline for VEP's 2019

H.S. Senior "Community Service Awards"

Contact: Ginger Cardona - cardona@sbcglobal.net

Saturday, May 4th:

Annual VEP Community Garage Sale (See Page 3)

Look for Event Details in Future Issues of VEP News
and Watch your Doorstep for VEP's "Spring Flyer"!

VEP March Meeting Preview

By the VEP Board of Directors

The primary speaker for our March 26th Meeting will be Eric Goodrich, Manager, Martial Cottle Park, to update us on what is going on at the park and life estate. May, 2019 marks the four-year anniversary of the opening of Martial Cottle Park. For the preceding 150 years, the land was ranched by the Cottle/Lester family. Today, as an operational agricultural park, the primary objective, in Walter Cottle Lester's own words, is to "Inform and educate the public about the agricultural history of the Santa Clara Valley."

Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation in conjunction with the State of California, is accomplishing Mr. Lester's wish with the park facilities, community partners, special events, and educational programs. The neighboring community has been very supportive with visitation rising each month, and staff providing a clean, safe park experience with excellent customer service.

The park also has a thriving volunteer program where community members share their time, skills, and expertise with the park. The Friends of Martial Cottle Park, led by long time VEP members, Bob and Joyce Chesnos, and with many volunteers from the neighboring communities, are enhancing the visitor experience, customer service, and park beautification! This team will continue to grow in 2019.

VEP's February Meeting Summary

By Lisa Sanchez and Greg West

The February meeting began with a VEP member raising the issue of street paving maintenance in the VEP neighborhood, specifically on Kensington, Windsor Park, and Bluefield. He noted that work is currently being done on Royale Park, but streets with bad pot holes need to be repaved rather than just filling the pot holes. (Note: the City's Department of Transportation is currently executing a repaving program for major arterial streets that carry roughly 95% of the city's traffic, according to its website.)

San José Clean Energy (SJCE) Deputy Director Zachary Struyk explained details regarding the transition and billing between SJCE and PG&E, which is in effect for majority of residential customers. Major Points Included:

- SJCE will provide 100% renewable resource to PG&E
- PG&E will still provide paper/electronic billing and usage tiers will still apply
- Compensation to PG&E will occur through a monthly PG&E delivery charge
- A breakdown was provided in the "San Jose Clean Energy Bill Explained" handout
- Customers with solar rooftop panels will NOT be enrolled until year 2020
- The option to "Opt In" for 100% Renewable Resource energy provided by SJCE may cost \$5-\$10 more per month, and does not offer an additional discount (simply allows you the option to further reduce your carbon footprint)
- SJCE has minimized internal expenses and is staffed with 16 employees
- Neighbors may "Opt Out" within 180 days for free, otherwise a \$5 fee may be incurred
- SJCE sources may be any combination of geothermal, wind, solar and hydropower

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VEP NEWS

The **VEP News** is the official publication of the VEP Community Association, a not-for-profit organization of volunteers established in 1969 to serve and represent homeowners in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose. Now, in 2019, this has grown to encompass more than 2,800 homes. 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.

VEP News is 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. 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, Mrs. Rachel Witmeyer. Business entities who are interested in advertising with the VEP News are encouraged to contact the Treasurer, Mr. Leonard Lucero. (See Below for contact information.)

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

President: Greg West - GREG.WEST@EARTHLINK.NET - 408-829-4686

Vice President: Cindy Bosworth - BOZ555@MSN.COM

Secretary: Laura McGeever - LJMGEEVER@ME.COM

Treasurer: Leonard Lucero - LEONARDLUCEROJR@YMAIL.COM

Director: Robert Supencheck - ROBERTSUPENCHECK@GMAIL.COM

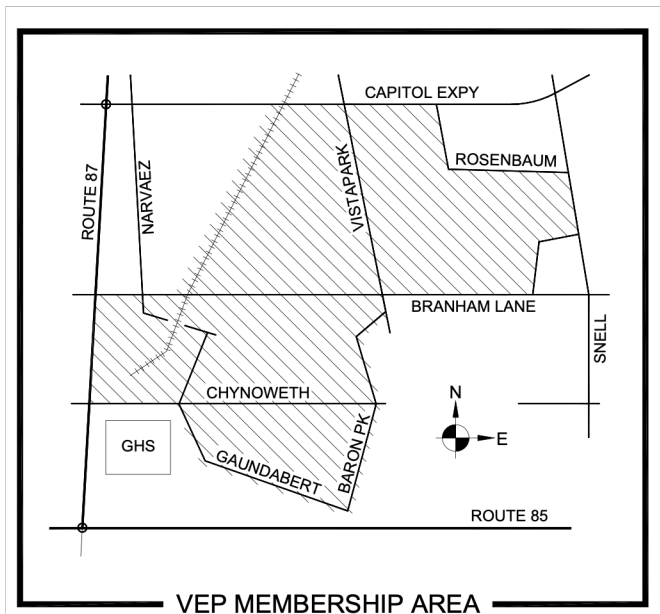
Director: Lisa Sanchez - LISAS.VEP@GMAIL.COM

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WEB: WWW.VEPCA.NET

EMAIL: VEPCA@VEPCA.NET

- Join VEP Community Association's Facebook Group -



VEP MEMBERSHIP AREA

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- SJCE questions may be referred to:
customerservice@sanjosecleanenergy.org or
833-432-2454, M-F, 8AM to 5PM.

Next, Mrs. Aiko Fadness shared some history and a touching story that inspired the Community Service Awards. The back-drop was 1981, when two high school students approached VEP. VEP printed their appeal for help in the VEP newsletter in 1981. The students asked for donations of equipment, supplies, acting volunteers and film making expertise. Two years later, the Gunderson Parent, Teacher, Student Association sponsored the showing of the completed movie in the Gunderson Theater, for a \$1 donation. VEP again provided support by advertising the event in our November 1983 newsletter. After two years attending West Valley, the film was completed and ready to be debuted. VEP offered to debut the film and ask for an additional \$1.00 viewing collection, for additional costs incurred by the two students.

The Community Service Awards for volunteerism by Gunderson and Andrew Hill seniors were written into the VEP ByLaws in March 1984, when David Fadness was VEP President, inspired by a wish for VEP to find ways to support youth in the community. The At-Large category was added later to include students in the community who didn't attend Gunderson or A.P. Hill.

This year, one of these students, now working in the film industry, won the Oscar for film editing: John Ottman! The meeting attendees all commented on how special this fact is, and how proud VEP should be of supporting John as a filmmaker-in-the-making.

It was also suggested that VEP attempt to find the student's film and show at a future VEP meeting.

Finally, Joyce Chesnos provided some information regarding Martial Cottle Park and Museum. She reported that the Spring Festival and Master Gardeners' Spring Garden Market is scheduled for Saturday, April 13, 10 AM to 3 PM. In addition, succulent sales occur every 3rd Saturday of the month. The park is still in need of volunteers. And, all are invited to the Visitor Center and Museum to learn about the history of the Martial family. Finally, the Park is celebrating their newest addition -- a calf was just born!

President's Corner

By Greg West

In VEP's 50th year of continuous operation, we continue to be one of the most enduring neighborhood based community service organizations in the City of San Jose. We have several opportunities for neighborhood improvement over the next couple of months beginning with our Spring Neighborhood Clean-up Day on April 27th. We will work with our City Council office to define a couple of specific neighborhood clean-up activities that need to be done, as well as doing general clean-up and maintenance at our neighborhood boundaries, and in our thoroughfares and parks. We do these clean-ups in memory and honor of Dave Fadness, VEP volunteer extraordinaire.

Ginger Cardona, our VEP Community Service Award chair is looking for volunteers to screen applications from high school students for the awards. Again, this year, we have budgeted \$3000 for the awards, \$1000 each to a graduating, college bound senior from Andrew Hill, Gunderson, and from a VEP family for the "At Large" category.

May 4th will be the VEP Community-wide Garage Sale for which VEP will advertise in the Mercury News and on social media. There's an interesting story behind the beginning of the neighborhood garage sale that I may tell at a later time. Neighbors that have been in the neighborhood for 20 years or more may remember the story. Everyone in the VEP area will be encouraged to participate with flyers distributed community-wide by VEP volunteers.

Also, it takes a dedicated and active leadership team to bring things together for meetings and events. We have that team in place now, and I think most of the team is willing to serve another term.

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However, if anyone has interest in joining the VEP leadership team as an officer, our nominating committee will have a call for officer nominations at our March and April meetings with officer elections in May. The term of office is from the September meeting to the September meeting of the following year.

Finally, remember to renew your \$20 annual VEP Membership by April 1st, 2019, to continue receiving the benefits of membership and the VEP News.

Got Fruit?

Reprinted with Permission from Dave Noel and E.N.A.

If you have too much fruit growing on your property, don't let it go to waste or become a mess. Village Harvest volunteers can pick it and donate it for you.

Info: (888) FRUIT-411, or www.villageharvest.org



Why Some Criminals Are Not Being Held to Account

One of the frustrations I hear from constituents is that many criminals seem to be getting away with their crimes - breaking into cars, committing burglaries, and even more severe crimes. Our police are also frustrated that the pendulum of justice has swung too far in favor of the criminal, and I agree with them. Our system needed reforms to ensure all people are treated fairly and that those who have committed minor crimes have a chance to redeem themselves, but as with most reforms, they came with unintended consequences. To fix the major flaws we've seen develop in our criminal justice system, California's citizens have placed on the 2020 ballot the Reducing Crime and Keeping California Safe Act which will fix the biggest flaws in our criminal justice system while preserving the elements that ensure equal treatment under the law and an opportunity for restorative justice for those willing to change their ways. To understand a bit about how we got to where we are today and why voter action is necessary, I asked my staff to pull together a history of the issue.

The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) is the most authoritative court in our political system, with the power to review Administrative and Legislative actions to determine if they align with the U.S. Constitution. The judicial path taken by the SCOTUS has ramifications that can ripple through all aspects of the justice system. One such ripple was felt in 2011 when the SCOTUS ruled that California prisons were in violation of the Constitution's 8th Amendment due to severe overcrowding. Soon thereafter, Propositions 47 and, later, 57 were drafted to dramatically reduce the prison population. Prop 47 allowed non-violent felonies to be reduced to misdemeanors, and Prop 57, penned by former Governor Jerry Brown, allowed for non-violent felons to apply for early parole. These two initiatives, combined, allowed for the immediate release of 7,000 inmates across California.

Although the effects of Prop 47 and 57 are, without a doubt, cause for concern, a proposition from 2000, titled Prop 21, compounded the issue. This proposition intended to alter juvenile sentencing; however, it also included language that made it more difficult to change the violent felony penal code by requiring any bill that would do so to receive a super-majority - 2/3rds - of both houses of the State legislature. There have since been many attempts to add non-violent felonies to the violent felon penal code but they have all died at the State Capitol. Opponents cited court-ordered caps on inmate populations as the reason for their opposition, and supporters were not able to secure the votes needed to fix the penal code.

Therefore, the abduction of a child for prostitution, an assault on a police officer, and the rape of an intoxicated person, among many other inherently violent crimes, are not considered violent felonies in the State of California. The Reducing Crime and Keeping California Safe Act was written in a way that patches the gaping holes in the laws left by Props 47 and 57. While the felony penal code, dating back to 1976, has always included obvious, violent felonies such as murder and the sexual abuse of a child, it lacks the inclusion of certain rape crimes and domestic violence; crimes that blatantly have the words "assault" and "violence" prefacing the name of the crime.

Changing the classification of felonies has historically required piecemeal legislation and voter initiatives; Reducing Crime and Keeping California Safe Act, on the ballot in 2020, will re-classify the violent acts currently classified as non-violent felonies as violent felonies, expand DNA collection, and reform the parole system. Because the courts don't make legislation, but instead determine whether administrative actions and legislation is consistent with the Constitution, it is sometimes up to the legislature to fix the law when unintended consequences of court rulings result. If the legislature fails to act, the California Constitution allows the people to take action. With the Reducing Crime and Keeping California Safe Act, voters will finally have a chance to fix the issues that resulted from court rulings and the interactions among Props 47, 57, and 21.

VEP's Annual Community-Wide Garage Sale

By Rachel Witmeyer

We all know how hard it can be to deal with household clutter and make decisions about which family "heirlooms" can be gotten rid of, but if you get motivated now, you can be ready to take advantage of the VEP Community-Wide Garage Sale on Saturday, May 4th! You can "find" new owners for all those unwanted and unneeded items in your home, and turn a little profit at the same time!

VEP Pays for the Advertising - You Make the Profit!

VEP pays to place print advertisements in the San Jose Mercury News, and the VEP Board of Directors will make posts on Craigslist and Nextdoor as well. This effort will bring lots of "Garage Sale Gurus" to our neighborhoods, increasing the "traffic" at everyone's sales. Many customers will literally drive from house to house, checking out all the treasures available. This makes it easy for VEP community members to have a successful sale.

How Can Neighbors Participate? Just Have a Garage Sale!

Neighbors often ask, "How do I sign-up?" or "What's the fee to participate?" The answers are quite simple: There is no fee, no registration and no sign-up required. Simply plan to have a sale, gather all your items, put up a few signs in the area to "point" shoppers to your sale, and start setting things up around 7am on Saturday, May 4th. Yes, it is that easy!

What About "Leftover" Items I Don't Want?

The VEP Board of Directors is currently working to secure a donation truck from the Salvation Army. Specific details will be provided in the April edition of the VEP News, as well as via Email communications.

A business card for Helen Castillo, a realtor. The card features a photo of Helen Castillo on the left. The top right corner has the logos for "Better Homes and Gardens REAL ESTATE" and "VENTURA BARNETT PROPERTIES". Below the photo, her name "Helen Castillo" and title "Realtor®" are listed. The bottom section contains contact information: "BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS REAL ESTATE LLC VENTURA BARNETT PROPERTIES", "5985 Almaden Expressway San Jose, CA 95120", "www.bhgrealstate.com", "Office 408.997.9999 x555", "Mobile 408.981.5902", "Fax 408.997.1111", "HCastillo@vbprop.com", and "DRE #01472483". A small disclaimer at the bottom reads "Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated".



County Update

Many VEP residents rely on hospitals such as Good Samaritan, El Camino, the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, and Kaiser Permanente. These and other hospitals and clinics make up the complex network of health care services for the 1.9 million residents of Santa Clara County. However, if one hospital closes, it can have a devastating effect both for those who rely on it, and for other area hospitals, which must absorb the increased regional health care needs.

That is why in August of 2018, the County jumped at the chance to purchase Saint Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy, the DePaul Health Center in Morgan Hill and O'Connor Hospital in San Jose for \$235 million when the owner -- Verity Health -- filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. There were no other bidders, which means that if the County did not purchase them, the hospitals would have closed, effectively eliminating 451 hospital beds and nearly 2,000 hospital jobs.

As straightforward as this transaction might have seemed, these hospitals came dangerously close to closure due to threats from the California Attorney General Xavier Becerra to block their sale to the County because of his desire to regulate the terms. Thankfully, Judge R. Gary Klausner denied the Attorney General's emergency motion to stay (halt) the Bankruptcy Court's order authorizing the sale, and the County assumed ownership on March 1. It is chilling to think how close we came to losing two hospitals and a clinic in our County.

The 358-bed O'Connor Hospital, the 93-bed Saint Louise Regional Hospital, and the De Paul Health Center will continue to operate as they do now with a focus on providing high-quality care and services, as well as improving the health of the community. Changes will include offering financial assistance programs to ensure that the most underserved in the community have access to high-quality care, as well as back-office technology improvements to billing and purchasing.

We have worked hard over the past few months to lay the foundation for transitioning these new facilities into the County family of health care resources. While even positive change can be challenging, we are fully invested in supporting this integration to make sure it is as smooth as possible for patients and staff. The hospitals, their staff and physicians all share the County's mission to provide high-quality, compassionate and accessible healthcare.

I applaud the many people who worked with me to save the hospitals by speaking up, contacting our elected officials in Sacramento, and attending rallies. I am relieved that we can continue offering high-quality, critical health care services for all County residents and that our health care services network remains intact.

Mike Wasserman, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Dist. 1
www.supervisorwasserman.org

Visit the Japanese-American Museum of San Jose

By Lynne & Stephen Kinsey



JAPANESE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF SAN JOSE



There are many little-known museums in San Jose. One such museum is the "Japanese American Museum of San Jose," located at 535 N 5th Street, in the heart of San Jose's Japantown. They display and preserve information, stories, photos, and physical items about Japanese-American individuals, families, and communities in San Jose and the larger Bay Area. Information covers Japanese local history, art, and culture. Local Japanese-Americans serve as docent guides to explain the displays and enrich your visit to the museum. During a visit you will learn about their immigration and settlement in San Jose more than a century ago. There are old farm implements used on farms & ranches that were an integral part of early San Jose.

Many items date from World War II when the Japanese people in the US were forced to move into internment camps, leaving their homes and businesses. These people were considered a threat to our country. The camps became little cities with everything the people were thought to need—schools, parks, libraries, stores, medical facilities, etc. Children grew up not knowing or seeing the rest of the cities where they were living. The museum has pictures, newspapers, memorabilia, and personal stories from some of those interned. When the war was over, they returned home and tried to resume their lives. The story of their temples and religious life is told, as is their involvement in San Jose's civic life.

Plan to have a full Japanese experience by having lunch, either before or after your museum visit. There are numerous Japanese restaurants along nearby Jackson Street and one just a few doors away from the museum on N. 5th Street. Take this opportunity to learn about the history of one of the ethnic communities in San Jose.

The museum is open Thursday-Sunday 12:00-4:00pm.

Entrance Fees: \$8 for adults. Children under 5 are free.
\$5 for both Students with ID and Seniors.

Museum Website: <https://www.jamsj.org/> Phone: (408) 294-3138

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ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP



VEP membership is based on a calendar year, January through December, so it's time to renew your membership. Please be sure to fill in the information requested, enclose your \$20 check, made payable to VEP, and mail it 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! Ask your neighbors to join our growing family!
Thank you!

About the VEP Community Association

- VEP is an all-volunteer organization of your neighbors working to improve our neighborhoods.
- VEP sponsors many projects and events that improve safety, our quality of life, and the appearance of our community.
- VEP volunteers make our neighborhood's needs, views, and concerns known to government at all levels.
- VEP was founded in 1969. We are one of the largest, most successful, and most continuously active and enduring grass roots volunteer organizations in Santa Clara County.

Why join VEP?

- To receive our newsletter nine times a year.
- To receive monthly email alerts.
- To help keep our neighborhoods beautiful, safe, strong, and well-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 50 years of success in our neighborhoods!



Roberto Ruiz
Intero Broker Associate
BRE Lic. #01270734

- VEP Member
- Marine Corps Veteran

5580 Almaden Expressway
San Jose, CA 95118
Cell: 408-234-7249
www.RobertoRuiz.info
Ruiz@interorealestate.com



Your Ad
Here

Contact: vepeditor@gmail.com

VEP Membership Application / Renewal

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 spare a few volunteer hours for VEP? Yes No

I am willing to volunteer for:

- Beautification/clean-up projects
- VEP News/ mailing prep
- Large Event/Festival, i.e. 4th of July
- Distribute flyers
- Serve on a committee
- Serve as a VEP officer or committee chair
- Other: _____

Please let us know:

- I prefer to receive my newsletters by US Mail only.
- I prefer to receive my newsletters by email only.
- I prefer to receive my newsletters by both email and mail.

Mail your \$20 check to:

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Thank you!

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Happy Spring!



Celebrating VEP's
50th Anniversary
~ 1969 - 2019 ~

*50 Years of Community Service, Action &
Advocacy for 2,800 Homes in the Neighborhoods
of Vista Park, Parkview & Carson*



Help VEP stay strong
for another 50 Years!

Join or Renew Today
& Keep Volunteering!

