



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

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

VEP's COMMUNITY MEETING

► **Tuesday, Sept. 24th, 2019** ◀

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

Vista Park Community Room - 475 Hyde Park Drive

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

SEPTEMBER MEETING AGENDA

☆ Crime Statistics & Updates ☆

with Captain Gina Tibaldi

*Bureau of Field Operations, Southern Division
San Jose Police Department*

☆ VEP Business Meeting ☆

Announcements & Updates

**VEP Membership Approval Request:
Current 2019 VEP Budget**

**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.

VEP September Meeting Preview

By Greg West

The first VEP Community Meeting of 2019-2020 will feature a speaker from the San Jose Police Department: Bureau of Field Operations, Southern Division. Captain Gina Tibaldi will present neighborhood crime statistics and will address any questions that we may have.

Captain Tibaldi, a San Jose native, has worked for the San Jose Police Department for 17 years. She has worked in the Violent Crimes Enforcement Team, Internal Affairs, Family Violence, the department's Research and Development Unit as the Chief's adjunct, before being assigned to the Bureau of Field Operations. She currently supervises the Southern Division of the Patrol Division. She received a B.S. in Biochemical Engineering from USC and a Masters in Criminal Justice from University of Colorado, Denver.

Per the Bylaws, VEP Treasurer, Lisa Sanchez, will provide the current 2019 Budget for the Consideration and Approval of the membership in attendance.

VEP's May 2019 Meeting Summary

Article By Greg West & Rachel Witmeyer

Photographs By Lisa Sanchez

At the start of the meeting, Joyce Chesnos, of Friends of Martial Cottle Park (FOMCP), announced that their Private Tour of the Martial Cottle Life Estate had already sold out, however, additional events would be planned for the future.

VEP's Vice President, Cindy Bosworth, then presented the 2019 "At-Large VEP Community Service Award" to Madeline Glynn of Gunderson High School who is planning to attend The University of California at Davis, to study Law and Social Justice (*Pictured Right*). In attendance were Miss Glynn's family and church pastor, who gave a few words to acknowledge this outstanding young lady.

Mark Camilleri, Principal of Henry T. Gunderson High School, and Jose Hernandez, Principal of Andrew P. Hill High School each gave presentations about their respective schools. Mr. Camilleri presented Gunderson's major focus areas, student outcome data, school programs and student options, student support and guidance options, and other programs and offerings. Mr. Hernandez presented Hill's unique programming in ESHSD, the school's vision and philosophy, programs and student support programs.

VEP President, Greg West, then presented a plaque to Adina Pierce thanking her and recognizing her for 10 years of service as a VEP Director and Secretary.



~ CALENDAR CORNER 2019 ~

- 10/5 Martial Cottle Park: Fall Festival
→ Visit VEP's Booth! ☺
- 10/26 VEP's Annual "Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Day" @Vista Park
→ Please See Page 3 for Details!
- 10/29 October VEP Community Meeting
- 12/1 VEP's Annual "Santa in the Park" Event
- 12/3 Nov./Dec. VEP Community Meeting
- DEC. VEP's Annual "Holiday Home Decorating Contest"

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 each month annually, with the exception of a "Summer Break" from June through August. We appreciate and will, at the discretion of the VEP Board of Directors, 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, Rachel Witmeyer. Business entities interested in advertising with the VEP News are encouraged to contact the Treasurer, Lisa Sanchez. (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 - LJMCGEEVER@ME.COM

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

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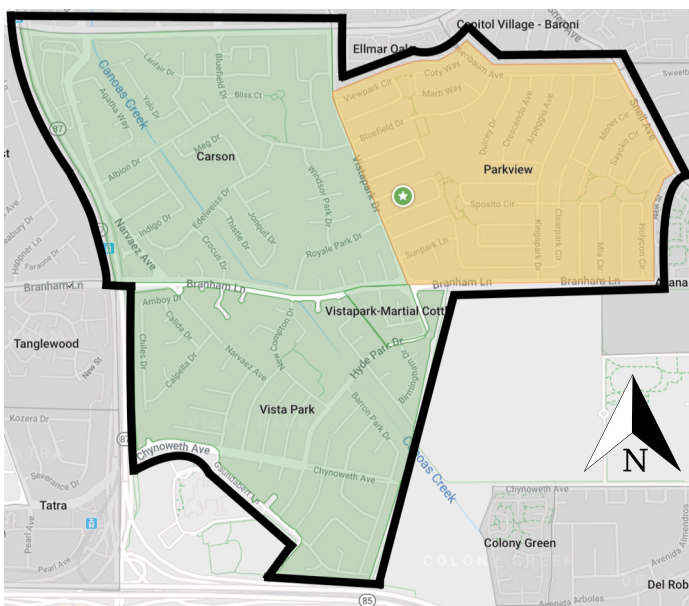
Director & VEP News Editor: Rachel Witmeyer - VEPEDITOR@GMAIL.COM

Director: POSITION VACANT

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- Join VEP Community Association's Facebook Group! -



VEP Membership Area

Continued from Page 1

Councilmember Johnny Khamis gave updates on the City budget and his request for funding of streets, safety and enforcement items.

The current VEP Board of Directors were presented to the membership as a slate candidates for the next year, noting that we did not have a candidate for Director of Web & Social Media Marketing. No volunteers came forward for this position. The membership unanimously elected the slate: Greg West - president, Cindy Bosworth - vice president, Laura McGeever - secretary, Lisa Sanchez - treasurer, Rachel Witmeyer - newsletter editor, and Rob Supencheck - director of beautification and neighborhood events.

Finally, following a suggestion from Board Member Rachel Witmeyer, former VEP Treasurer, Ginger Cardona, made a motion that VEP donate \$500 to the annual "Fireworks & Family Festival" at Almaden Lake Park, to be held on July 4th, 2019. Marilyn Rodgers seconded the motion and the members in attendance approved the motion unanimously.

President West reminded everyone that VEP would be on a "break" until September, and wished everyone a great summer!



Photo Op! - Pictured Above (Left to Right): VEP President Greg West, Past VEP Secretary Adina Pierce, District 10 Councilmember Khamis

President's Corner

By Greg West

We've had some neighborhood issues over the summer that VEP was able to address and resolve with the help of the City and City Council Member Johnny Khamis' office. The biggest issue was the homeless encampment that sprouted up on the bike/walking path at Chynoweth and HWY 87. Initially, campers set up under the freeway on Chynoweth and then moved onto the bike path between the sound wall and a chain link fence (less visible from the street). At its peak, my guess is that 10 or so folks were camping there. I think I mentioned at one of the Councilmember's summer community meetings, that the encampment would need its own zip code if it got much bigger. A couple of weeks later, and more importantly, before school started at Gunderson for the fall, the encampment was removed. We give our thanks to the Councilmember and his office for their role in cleaning up that encampment.

The second issue that we had was graffiti, again, on Chynoweth under HWY 87. That area was struck twice over the summer. VEP reported the graffiti to the City through the My San Jose app within a day or so of the area being struck. In both cases the City was out painting over and removing the graffiti within a couple of days of reporting it. One instance took 3 days because the area got hit on Friday night of a three day week-end. We reported it on Saturday morning, and the City was out cleaning it up the following Tuesday morning. In the other instance, the City was out within 48 hours of reporting. In my experience, so far, the My San Jose app has been a wonderful tool.

Finally, the wooden Vista Park sign on New Compton at the end of Massachusetts Drive rotted out after roughly 40 years, and fell

Article Continues on Page 3

out of its concrete base. The Councilmember's office has submitted a work order for the City to replace the sign. Since the sign is custom, it may take some time to procure and replace.

We have two community events coming up: **The 5th Annual Dave Fadness Memorial Neighborhood Beautification Day on October 26th**; and **Santa in the Park on December 1st**. We have a flyer announcing our events that will be distributed to the neighborhood around the beginning of October. **If you have a little time to distribute just a couple of hundred flyers to your neighbors at the beginning of October, please contact me** (408-829-4686 or greg.west@earthlink.net).

Finally, **Rachel Witmeyer, the VEP Newsletter Editor, has announced that she will retire from the position at the end of this VEP fiscal year (May, 2020)**. She has done an outstanding job as NLE for the last 6 years (beginning in 2013), but, we need to find someone to replace her. **She is willing to train a new Editor this year, if we can identify someone to replace her**. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Rachel or myself - and the sooner we can get you working with Rachel, the better prepared you will be for the job! (Email: vepeditor@gmail.com)

Back to School Safety

By Robert Bosworth

With school in full swing, now is a good time to remind ourselves about safety around schools and in school zones. Trying to get around in a crowded school zone can be a daunting experience if not totally frustrating. Some things to keep in mind:

Keep in mind that the traffic directors (teachers, administrators and volunteers) are trying to keep traffic flowing safely and efficiently.

Drivers:

- Pay attention to what the traffic directors are trying to tell you.
- Don't speed, don't double (or triple) park, don't unload your kids from across the street, pay attention to crossing guards (if any.)
- Don't park or drop off your kids in the bus zones.
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks

Driving around or near Buses:

- You may need to add more time to your commute, because when buses stop to pick up students, other drivers need to stop, too.
- Yellow flashing lights mean slow down, not speed up, because the bus is preparing to stop. There are likely students waiting to get on the bus or parents waiting nearby to pick up children.
- Red flashing lights mean stop (in both directions) and wait at least 20 feet behind the bus because children are getting on or off the school bus. Stay stopped until the red lights stop flashing, the extended stop-arm is withdrawn, and the bus begins moving.
- Even when lights aren't flashing, watch for children, particularly in the morning or mid-afternoon, around school arrival and dismissal times. Be alert as you back out of a driveway, or drive through a neighborhood, school zone or bus stop.

Walkers:

Walking to school is great exercise, but children under 10 years old should be accompanied by an adult or with someone who will make sure they walk safely.

If you're walking:

- Use the sidewalk whenever possible.
- Whenever they are available, use marked crosswalks to cross the street, and look left-right-left for vehicles or bikes before crossing.
- Make sure you never play, push or shove others when you walk around traffic.
- Never use electronics while walking in a school zone – they are distracting.

Bikers:

Riding your bike can be a fun and quick way to get to school. Be sure to do these simple things to keep your bike ride safe:

- Always wear a correctly fitted helmet.
- Ride in the same direction as traffic, and follow traffic signs and signals.
- Stay in the bike lane whenever possible.
- If riding on the sidewalk, be very careful of others that are walking
- Never use electronics while riding – they are distracting.

VEP Community Association Invites You to Join Us:

5th Annual Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Day!

Vista Park Community Room 475 Hyde Park Drive
Saturday, October 26th - Starting at 9:00 am

Come continue our annual tradition of honoring Dave Fadness' legacy by beautifying our great neighborhoods. We all know how much Dave loved to help keep our community beautiful! His dedication and love of volunteering in the VEP and in greater San Jose is greatly missed. Among the activities we engaged in last year for Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Day were the following:



- Bush trimming & cleanup along Branham Ln.
- Tree planting at Vista Park
- Pruning at Vista Park
- Spreading wood chips at Vista Park
- Cleaning and litter pickup: Parkview Park 1&2
- Pruning, raking & sweeping: Parkview Park 1
- Sweeping and raking along the extended fence at the corner of Vista Park Drive and Branham Lane
- Leaf raking and litter pick up along Chynoweth Avenue, from Hwy 87 to Pearl Av.



We are looking forward to expanding this list of activities this year with your participation! Please come out for as long as you can to help us keep Dave's legacy of beautification projects alive!

Event Details:

- Light Breakfast & Water will be provided for volunteers.
- All the necessary tools & equipment will be provided by the City of San Jose Parks Department, including gloves! (Or bring your own!)
- Be safe and plan ahead for a day of work in the sun:
Wear Hats, Sunglasses, and Sunscreen!

Community Service Hours Available! Great for High School students!

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Since 1875



New Martial Cottle Park Bench is Dedicated in Honor of Fallen Officer Michael Johnson

*Article By Rachel Witmeyer
Photographs by Adina Pierce and Lisa Sanchez*

The morning of June 1st was warm and bright, like Michael's famous smile. Family and friends gathered in the sunshine near a brand new bench at Martial Cottle Park. It had been recently installed and it was ready to be dedicated to fallen SJPD Officer Michael Johnson: an Alumni of Gunderson High School, a VEP resident, and the son of Past VEP Vice President, Mrs. Katherine Decker.

Readers may recall that Officer Johnson was killed in the line of duty in 2015, while responding in a situation with a person who was armed and barricaded in an apartment. Readers may also recall when Officer Johnson was honored with a named section of Hwy 87.

Ms. Angela Tirado, "The Voice of San Jose," gave moving vocal performances and led the ceremony. Local and state officials, as well as several Officers of the SJPD were in attendance. Along with Ms. Tirado, there were several speakers, including Mrs. Decker.

Many VEP members attended this dedication event in honor of Michael and to support his family and friends. Former VEP resident and Past VEP Board Member, Mrs. Peggy Golden, drove up from Morgan Hill, saying, "I wanted to be here for Katherine."

Neighbors can find "Michael's Bench" near the "Rear Entrance" to Martial Cottle Park, at Chynoweth Ave. and Barron Park Drive. It's in a great spot, overlooking the large field at the southwestern corner of the park property with a nice view of the hills.



Top: Katherine Decker ; Above: Angela Tirado and Katherine Decker



Above: California District 27 State Assemblyman Ash Kalra, Santa Clara County District 1 Supervisor Mike Wasserman, San Jose District 10 Councilmember Johnny Khamis, San Jose Police Chief Eddie Garcia



"FRIENDS OF MARTIAL COTTLE PARK" Host Successful Fundraiser, Plan Another

By Joyce Chesnos and Adina Pierce, of F.O.M.C.P.

Friends of Martial Cottle Park hosted a private tour of the Martial-Cottle "Life Estate" and a luncheon for 35 people on June 6th, 2019, on the Life Estate portion of the property at Martial Cottle Park. This was the first fundraising event for FOMCP and it was a success! Here are some photos from the event and some of the feedback from our guests:

"I had a great time at yesterday's tour! Informative, intriguing, fun. Everyone involved made me happy to be there. Great lunch, too, under the spread of the huge oak tree, reminding me of how my grandparents on their farm on a couple of occasions set up tables under their huge old maple (?) tree back in New York."

"Yesterday was an educational and enlightening affair. I hope people realize how fortunate we are to have this marvelous green space right in our backyard and that there are volunteers like you who are giving of your time and energy to make it an agricultural experience for future generations."



Following the high demand and positive feedback from our first event, we will be hosting another **Life Estate private tour and luncheon on October 17th** from 10:30-1:30pm. Space is limited! Please sign up, in advance, at www.fomcp.org

Become a "Friend" and help support our local gem, Martial Cottle Park! The mission of our 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is "to inspire the community to care for, learn about and enjoy Martial Cottle Park and the agricultural heritage of Santa Clara Valley."

We do this "by promoting agricultural and environmental awareness and education programs and projects that support and preserve Martial Cottle Park."

The projects we take on are not covered by the County Parks budget. For example, our 2019-2020 fundraising focus is the "Hedgerow Project." When complete, it will have installed plantings of native vegetation adjacent to the organically farmed fields at Martial Cottle Park. These plantings will attract beneficial insects and birds to help control crop pests and provide pollinators, limit wind and dust, and also add beauty!

We invite you to pitch in by attending one of our events (*like the Life Estate Private Tour and Luncheon!*, on October 17th!), joining our membership, or donating to our organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Visit our website at www.fomcp.org

Private Tour of the MARTIAL COTTLE LIFE ESTATE



Join us on October 17, 2019 from 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Tour includes Japanese House, Green Barn, Old Barn, Heritage Orchard, and 1883 Cottle House

A catered lunch will be served at the Life Estate

Reserve Early - Limited Tickets

Special Fundraiser to support
Friends of Martial Cottle Park 2019-2020 Hedgerow Project

Donation: \$95 per person

Tickets must be purchased by Friday, October 11, 2019

For more details on how to purchase your ticket, please visit our website:
<https://fomcp.org>

For more information contact
mvanzuiden@comcast.net



Join Our Team of Dedicated Volunteers!

Martial Cottle Park School Program Docents Wanted

Docents lead farm based hands-on activity stations for 2nd & 3rd graders. It's a great experience working with kids.

Training: Orientation, shadow & receive site-specific training about the program

Additional Requirements: Live Scan (background check)

Schedule: Twice per week during school year

Time Commitment: Two programs per month

Martial Cottle Park - 5283 Snell Ave.

**Become A
Volunteer**

Contact: Ms. Armijo, Park Interpreter - michelle.armijo@prk.sccgov.org - 408-535-4052



Roberto Ruiz

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South Bay Historical Railroad Society



Visiting South Bay Historical Railroad Society's Edward Peterman Museum of Railroad History

By Stephen & Lynne Kinsey

Are you interested in miniature scale train layouts? If you are, we found a place for you located in Santa Clara. It is the South Bay Historical Railroad Society, which is located at 1005 Railroad Ave. and is open Tuesday evenings 5-8 pm and Saturdays 10am-3pm. Admission is free. The historic Santa Clara train depot, which was first built in 1863, is largely filled with miniature train tracks, scaled replicas of historic businesses, community buildings, and geological features. The operational HO and N-scale model trains run continuously and model train enthusiasts are on hand to answer questions and explain the intricacies of the track layouts or particular cars & trains. It replicates Western Railroad from the 1940's to the 1960's. Note that it is advertised as kid-friendly.

We visited there with VEP members Joyce and Bob Chesnos this past summer. We had no idea what to expect or what we would see, but we had seen many articles about it in local newspapers over the years. For us visiting one time, and knowing that it exists, & where it is, is probably enough for us. There are elevated ledges around the perimeter of the scaled display for those not tall enough to see on their own. Using these vantage points give viewers a clear view of the moving trains. I wouldn't leave children alone in the facility. Signage lets you know you can have birthday parties here.



We came away impressed by the number of volunteers there that pay \$35/month to be members and to be required to work 12 service hours each month. They clean the buildings and surrounding area; work on the rail layouts; and do whatever other work is needed. There were historic railroad items on display and lots of photographs. It is not large, but we were glad to have visited. There are lots of local places to have lunch afterwards.

Lynne adds that she is curious whether any VEP members are members and active in this society.

South Bay Historical Railroad Society and Edward Peterman Museum of Railroad History

1005 Railroad Ave, Santa Clara CA 408-243-3969 www.sbhrrs.org

**FALL
OPEN HOUSE AND
MODEL TRAIN DISPLAY**

November 2nd & 3rd - SAT: 10am-5pm; SUN: 10am-4pm

- Two museum-quality model railroad displays, running multiple trains (HO- and N-scale).
- Enjoy our museum of real railroad artifacts.
- Check out our used items for sale at the Company Store.
- Live Blue Grass music by Santa Clara Valley Blue Grass Association on Saturday from 12:00 - 3:00 pm.
- Come on by and talk railroading with fellow railfans and SBHRS members.
- Come see one of the best railroad libraries in Northern California.
- All-Day Lunch Counter

Tickets & Information: www.sbhrrs.org/page-18196



September 2019 County Update

Last month's Women's Equality Day Celebration hosted by the Santa Clara County Commission on the Status of Women bore witness to the triumphs and challenges women still face. It is staggering to think that 2019 marks the 99th year since the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting many women the right to vote. My office has hosted dozens of outstanding future women leaders as part of my student internship program that offers valuable, real-world job experience. A big thank you to Sophie and Ria, who completed their summer internships last month and who are now back in school. I am grateful to them for dedicating their time to serving the public and wish them all the best in their future endeavors! As a County, we continue to stand up for Women's Equality in numerous ways.

In November 2016, County voters approved a \$950 million Affordable Housing Bond to produce new affordable housing units and to assist first-time homebuyers. To date, 1,900 new and rehabilitated apartments have been built or are approved to be built soon. For example, the County and community partners in August celebrated the first Grand Opening of an affordable housing development funded by the 2016 Affordable Housing Bond. The Veranda is a 19-unit new construction affordable housing development for seniors, with six units set aside for seniors who are disabled and homeless. But much more is needed. Also in August, the Board of Supervisors began discussing the potential of using County-owned land to locate new affordable housing. Several specific sites were discussed, including vacant land in Gilroy near the Valley Health Center and St. Louise Regional Hospital, as well as near the De Paul Health Center in Morgan Hill. I asked that we inventory the hundreds of County-owned parcels throughout all 15 cities. I believe that the best approach is to produce a comprehensive, countywide property inventory and then prioritize which properties would be best suited for affordable housing. Adding housing takes carefully planning and time, and it happens on a project-by-project basis throughout the region.

Voters in 2020 will benefit from a new, modern and secure voting system that includes new ballot scanners, tabulators and ADA-compliant ballot-marking devices at Vote Centers. To ensure voting security, the new Dominion Voting System model has undergone one of the most exhaustive testing and certification programs in the nation. Prior to being certified for use, it received end-to-end testing, including functional testing, source code review, and red team security testing with experts trying to "break in." The machines are not connected to the internet and do not receive or transmit election data electronically through any type of external communication network. The new system will also enable a decentralized count -- remote tabulation at each vote center -- which is expected to expedite election night results considerably.

The U.S. Census Bureau will be canvassing Santa Clara County neighborhoods from now until mid-October to confirm addresses. We urge all residents to cooperate with Census workers to help ensure households are not overlooked in the counting process. Staff can be easily identified with U.S. Census Badges with a photo ID, as well as black canvas bags and laptops with the Census 2020 logo. The U.S. Census Bureau has contacted local law enforcement to make them aware of this effort. If you have any questions, please contact the County of Santa Clara Census team at (408) 678-1029.

Are you a poet? The Santa Clara County Library District and County of Santa Clara, in partnership with SVCREATES, are taking applications for the 2020-2021 Santa Clara County Poet Laureate. This honorary post serves to help elevate the awareness of County residents around poetry and to celebrate the literary arts. The application deadline is September 27, 2019, 5:00 p.m. For more information and to apply, visit www.svcreates.org.

Mike Wasserman - www.supervisorwasserman.org



Office of Councilmember Johnny Khamis
District 10 - City of San Jose

Assembly Bill 516: State Legislators propose impediments to parking enforcement

My office has fielded numerous complaints of vehicles stored or abandoned on City streets, plus occupied motor homes settling into neighborhoods for stays that exceed the 72-hour limit. It's not just an issue in District 10, but throughout the City of San José (<http://bit.ly/SJParking>). DOT personnel responded to 55,000 vehicle abatement requests in the one-year period from July 2017 to June 2018 alone - over 150 per day, every day of the year!

Those who have contacted the City or used their MySanJose app to report offending vehicles know that some people game the system and are able to stay one step ahead of parking enforcement which is stretched thin covering our 180.5 square miles. The system already has big loopholes that make it difficult to prevent people from using streets as public storage for their vehicles, making it hard for residents and visitors to find parking in some neighborhoods. Now, the State Legislature is proposing to make enforcement even more difficult for our Department of Transportation's parking enforcement personnel and the SJPd by passing AB 516.

Two troublesome features of the bill that was passed by the State Assembly and is now waiting to be voted on in the State Senate are: 1) the 72-hour rule will be extended to a 5-business day rule (which can mean 7 or more days); and, 2) law enforcement would no longer be allowed to tow the vehicles of people who have received FIVE citations – even though they have not made any effort to resolve these citations. The official City position on this bill remains "Oppose unless Amended". To read the bill, visit <http://bit.ly/AB516text>.

As I told the San Jose Spotlight in a recent interview (<http://bit.ly/SJSNoTow>), it will make the City less effective at handling things like stolen or abandoned vehicles, increase blight, and make our citizens more frustrated than they already are.

What do you think of this new policy? If you are as concerned as I am, please contact your state representatives, which you may find at <https://eservices.sccgov.org/rov?tab=dt>. The State Senator for District 10 residents is Jim Beall (Senate District 15), and you may contact his office via email at <https://sd15.senate.ca.gov/send-e-mail>.

Residents Under A-tax?

The County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors voted 3-1-1 to explore a 5/8-cent (.625) sales tax increase for the 2020 ballot. Supervisors Cortese, Chavez, and Ellenberg supported moving forward with the exploration of placing this new tax on the ballot, and Supervisor Simitian abstained from the vote. The lone Supervisor to oppose exploring the new tax was Supervisor Mike Wasserman.

The Board will vote on whether to place the new tax on the ballot on Tuesday, September 10th (discussion items 36 and 37: <http://bit.ly/2TaxOrNot>). If approved, a vote on the final ordinance will take place on September 24th. A vote of four of the five Supervisors is required to place the tax on the ballot, and if they do so, approval of the tax by the voters in November 2020 would take the sales tax in San José from the current 9.250% to 9.875%. A sales tax is a regressive tax, since it is paid on all tangible goods. Regressive taxes hit lower income residents the hardest.

From 2012 to 2018 - just six years - employment at the County has grown by 25% or 3,587 employees, and, over the same period, General Fund spending has grown by 54% or \$1.1 billion. All the money from the new tax increase would go into the County's General Fund – none of the additional tax would come to the City of San José for police, fire, parks, trails, libraries, community centers, or beautification activities like trash pick-up.

The County has had a tax increase on almost every ballot in recent history and all were approved by voters. Most recently, the "temporary" Measure A 1/8-cent sales tax that raises \$50 million per year for the County and was to expire in 2023 was brought back to the voters in November 2018 and made permanent. The County also had taxes on the ballot in November 2016, June 2016, November 2012, November 2010, and November 2008.

I encourage you to let the County Supervisors know what you think of the tax proposal. The Supervisors meet in the Board Chambers at 70 W. Hedding Street, San José beginning at 9 AM every other Tuesday. If you attend and care to speak on the item, you'll fill out a Speaker's card found at the back of the Chambers, and turn it in. You will then be given an opportunity to speak when the item is called. You may also email them by sending your email message to boardoperations@cob.sccgov.org. Please be certain to name the agenda item in the email subject line: "Agenda Item: Actions related to possible retail transactions (sales) and use tax of five-eighths of one cent." You'll want to send your email before the day of the meetings to ensure your comments are communicated to the Supervisors and are included in the meeting record.

☺ VEP Needs Volunteers, like YOU! ☺

Can You Spare a Little Time?

- Distribute Flyers in VEP Neighborhoods (2 or 3 times/year)
- Volunteer @Events like *Dave Fadness Memorial Beautification Day*

Have a Little More Time?

- Serve as a VEP Director (We are "short" one Director!)
- Be the new Editor of the "VEP News" (We need one in 2020-2021)

YOU and Your Neighbors Matter! Help VEP Stay Strong and Effective!

Interested? Please Contact VEP President Greg West:
GREG.WEST@EARTHLINK.NET - 408-829-4686



Gunderson High School News
Contributed by Kevin Wan, Principal

Gunderson High School Mock Trial Team 2019-2020

The Gunderson High School Mock Trial team is getting ready for an exciting year of competition. Mock Trial is a program that allows students to take on the roles of lawyers and witnesses in a fictional case, prepare the case as real lawyers would, and then take it to court to compete against other county high schools in a real court, before a real judge! This year's case, *People v. Matsumoto*, is the trial of Bailey Matsumoto, the founder of a technology start-up that develops autonomous (self-driving) trucks. Bailey is charged with the murder of Bailey's spouse, Taylor Matsumoto. Students will dissect the evidence in this case to prepare opening statements, write and present direct and cross-examination questions and deliver closing arguments. It should be an exciting year.

Students Earn Adobe Certification

16 out of 19 advanced digital photography students passed the Adobe Certified Associate Exam for Photoshop CC at the end of the 2018-2019 school year. Advanced digital photography students are given the exam for free, and the 84% pass rate shows a high level of success in Adobe Photoshop. Being an Adobe Certified Associate means the students obtain an industry-recognized credential that demonstrates proficiency in Adobe digital skills.

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