

A Rainbow Appears above Martial Cottle Park on a recent Stormy Day.  
- Photo by Adina Pierce

## VEP Community Meeting

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25th @7:00 PM**  
**Vista Park Community Room**  
**475 Hyde Park Drive**

~ Everyone is Welcome! Invite Your Neighbors! ~

### JANUARY MEETING AGENDA

**- Updates from the VTA -**

Information about the Studies for Local Light Rail Stations

**- Information & Updates: City of San Jose -**

From the Office of District 2 Councilmember Sergio Jimenez

**- VEP Business Meeting -**

- Treasurer's Report
- Beautification Events
- Upcoming Events / VEPCA Calendar

**- Open Forum / Member Q&A -**

A chance to voice opinions and/or seek VEP's help!

### January Meeting Preview: VTA Access Study

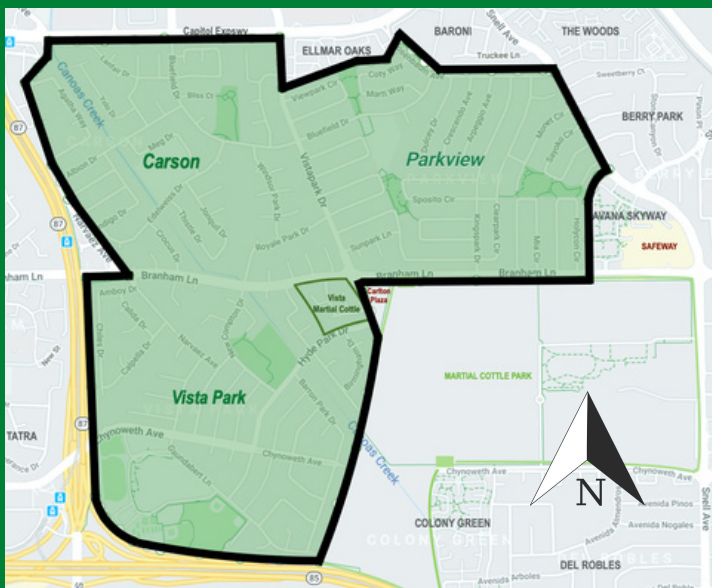
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is studying opportunities to improve access to the Capitol and Branham Light Rail Stations. The study will identify transportation improvements that will make it easier to walk, bike, and take connecting transit to the light rail stations from the surrounding neighborhood. VTA will be conducting outreach to community members over the next month to identify key transportation issues in the study area and locations where improvements may be needed.

We want to hear from you! VTA staff is attending the next VEP Association Meeting on January 25, 2023, to provide a brief presentation on the access study. We invite you to attend to learn more about this study and to share your input with VTA staff.

VTA will also host the following community pop-up events to gather additional feedback.

1. Capitol LRT Station  
January 26, 2023 ~ 7:30 AM – 10:30 AM
2. Pearl Branch Library  
January 26, 2023 ~ 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
3. Westfield Oakridge Farmer's Market  
January 29, 2023 ~ 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

## VEPCA Membership Area



VEPC Community Association is a not-for-profit organization, supported by a board of volunteers. First established in 1969, it is one of San Jose's oldest community associations. VEPCA serves and represents homeowners in the Blossom Valley area of southern San Jose and has grown to encompass more than 2,800 homes. Its primary focus is on neighborhood beautification, safety and local civic affairs. This newsletter is emailed to all current VEPCA members, but is also available on line for all to view.

**VEP News** is typically published monthly, with the exception of the "Summer Break," June through August. VEPC attempts to publish any and all articles that will be of general interest to our membership community. Articles, Images, and/or information may be submitted to the VEP News Editor. Business entities interested in advertising are welcome to contact the editor as well, for rates.

VEP News Editor: Rachel Witmeyer - [newsletter@vepca.net](mailto:newsletter@vepca.net)

### VEPCA EXECUTIVE BOARD of DIRECTORS

President: Alain Mowad - [president@vepca.net](mailto:president@vepca.net)

Vice President: Heidi Racherla - [vp@vepca.net](mailto:vp@vepca.net)

Treasurer: Marc McGeever - [treasurer@vepca.net](mailto:treasurer@vepca.net)

Secretary: Lisa Sanchez - [secretary@vepca.net](mailto:secretary@vepca.net)

Beautification: Brian Ferry - [beautification@vepca.net](mailto:beautification@vepca.net)

Web & Social Media: Adina Pierce - [socialmedia@vepca.net](mailto:socialmedia@vepca.net)

Membership - [membership@vepca.net](mailto:membership@vepca.net)

Visit VEP's website for information regarding your volunteer run association - <http://www.vepca.net>

### VEP SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS (CLICK!)

IG <https://www.instagram.com/vepca95136/>

FB <https://www.facebook.com/vepca95136>

FBG <https://www.facebook.com/groups/vepca>

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Alain Mowad

Happy New Year to everyone in the VEP community!

I hope you all had a happy and restful holiday, and are ready for 2023! We are excited for all of the opportunity this new year brings to our city and our community.

I'll start by congratulating and welcoming our new Mayor, Matt Mahan. We are excited that he will be taking the helm here at the City and look forward to all the great things he plans to accomplish, including addressing the critical issues that face our city right now.

Last month, after almost 3 years, we hosted the return of Santa in the Park at Vista Park on December 10th. What a turnout! So many kids got to meet Santa, do some crafting and enjoy some treats. And many thanks to our Marines who participated to help with donations for the Toys for Tots program.

We look forward to our first meeting in the new year on January 25th. The VTA will be presenting regarding an access study they are conducting on the Branham and Capitol Light Rail Stations. They are looking for community input, and you'll have the opportunity to provide it directly to them at this meeting. Please note that they are looking for input specifically on accessibility of each of the stations and how to improve that. They are not involved in the housing projects planned for both stations, which will be addressed in a separate session. We will provide an update on the status of the housing projects separately during the meeting.

As we turn to 2023, we have an opportunity to influence real change in our community and our city. More to come as the Mayor's agenda unfolds.

Thank you, and looking forward to 2023!



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## Santa In The Park & Toys for Tots 2022

By Lisa Sanchez

Despite heavy rains and gloomy weather, VEP's annual holiday event had a great turn out! Santa in the Park was paired with Toys for Tots, in an effort to bring toys to other families with children. Special thanks, to our neighbor and veteran U.S. Marine Roberto Ruiz, for providing the donation bins and in-person Marines to staff the donation drop-offs. We received about 30 toys, which will be a blessing to many children and families.

VEP appreciates all the families who joined this event, in an effort to get the kids out of the house and do something fun on a cold, rainy day. VEP provided various stations where the children could take their time with crafts, coloring, refreshments and Santa. And bless Santa's heart for taking time out of his busy schedule. He was so patient to talk with the kids, listen to their requests and end with a photo-op with the "parent paparazzi".

The VEP Board thanks all who joined us and brought donations for Toys for Tots. Seeing the community come together truly brings joy, especially during the holiday season.



VEPCA Executive Board of Directors, from Left to Right: Alain Mowad, Lisa Sanchez, Santa (a.k.a. Brian Ferry), Adina Pierce, and Marc McGeever.







# Stormy Scenes in the VEP



24 Hour Difference: CANOAS CREEK, Looking West from the Pedestrian Bridge, Martial Cottle Perimeter Trail



New Years Eve 2022 - Photo By Adina Pierce



New Years Day 2023 - Photo By Rachel Witmeyer



Tree Lost at Parkview Park II  
Photos By Rachel Witmeyer, January 9th, 2023

Tree Down on Branham Ln. near Vista Park Dr.



## STORM PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

### NEVER TOUCH DOWNED WIRES



Assume any downed power line is energized and extremely dangerous. Call 9-1-1 and PG&E at 1-800-743-5002.

### CHARGE CELL PHONES AND LAPTOPS



Prepare for power outages by charging cell phones and laptops. Have a backup power supply.

### ALTERNATE PLANS FOR MEDICINES & MEDICAL DEVICES



Have alternative plans in place for refrigerating medicines or power-dependent medical devices.

### HAVE FRESH DRINKING WATER AND ICE



Freeze containers filled with water and place them in your refrigerator during an outage to prevent foods from spoiling.

### USE GENERATORS SAFELY



Standby electrical generators should be properly installed by a licensed electrician and placed in a well-ventilated area.

### USE FLASHLIGHTS, NOT CANDLES



During a power outage, use battery-operated flashlights, not candles, due to risk of fire.

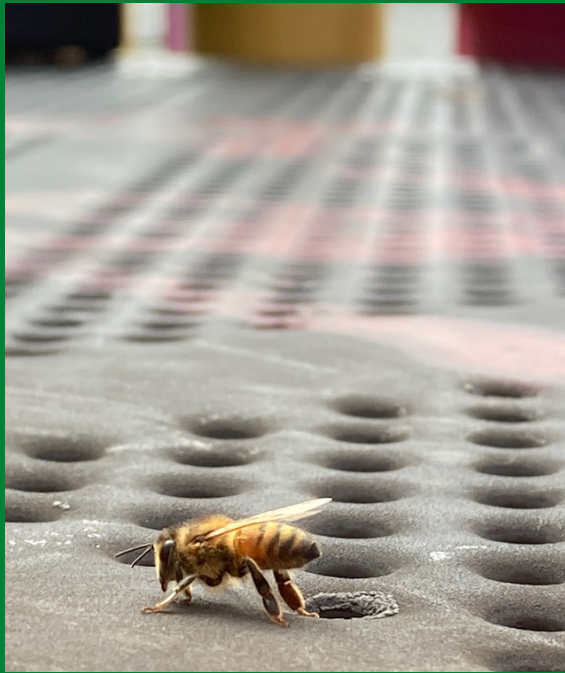


# Nature in our Neighborhoods

Resplendent Raptors and Enchanting Eagles - Here in Our Community!  
Photos captured by Adina Pierce, Heidi Racherla, and Lisa Sanchez



Cold Weather! Ice that had formed inside a wheelbarrow: Dec. 2nd, 2022  
Photo By Adina Pierce



A honeybee trying to recover after the storms, on the playground at Parkview School, during the coldsnap on Jan. 8th.  
Photo By Rachel Witmeyer



## Monthly VEP Beautification Opportunity

Hi, Friends! Unfortunately, we had to cancel our first Second Sunday Clean Up event in earlier this month due to the weather. Equally unfortunately, I neglected to take into consideration the Super Bowl falling on the same day as our February event. Please mark your calendars for our next event, starting at the Vista Park Community Center!

**Sunday, March 12th, 2023 - 9:00am - 12:00pm**

@Vista Park - Hyde Park Dr & New Compton Dr.

No RSVP needed, stay as long as you can; this is a very casual event! Bring some yard tools and come help us give the park the "VEP Treatment"!

If you have any questions or would like to suggest a neighborhood location that would benefit from the "VEP Treatment," my email is [beautification@vepca.net](mailto:beautification@vepca.net)

Hope to see you there! Brian Ferry, the Beautification Guy

## ~ MORE DATES TO REMEMBER ~

**VEP COMMUNITY MEETINGS IN 2023**

@Vista Park Community Room - 7:00 PM

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25TH (SEE PAGE 1)**

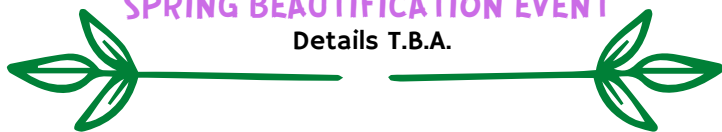
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29TH**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 25TH, 2023**

**SPRING BEAUTIFICATION EVENT**

Details T.B.A.



It's official! Mayor Matt Mahan's Inauguration will take place on February 1st at the Center for the Performing Arts at 6:00 p.m. This is our moment to celebrate our city and all in can be. Please join us as we bring our city together and imagine a better future for all San Joseans. Capacity is limited, so RSVP today: [bit.ly/sjinauguration](http://bit.ly/sjinauguration)

## What is Proposition 19?

By Jaysree Reddy

Prop 19 is a law in the state of California that went into effect in early 2021. It altered many of the existing laws that governed transferring your property taxes to different counties of the state. While Propositions 60 and 90 used to limit the counties you could move to, Prop 19 now allows you to transfer your tax anywhere across the state of California. This is a huge advantage for Californians.

### Who does this proposition benefit?

- Benefits people over the age of 55. That's because the goal of this proposition is to help people in retirement to save money. They can do this by moving their property tax base to another county without having an increased expense to worry about.

- Benefits people with disabilities and others affected by wildfires or other disasters. These were pieces of other propositions that were pulled in under the same guidelines.

When a Californian decides to leave Santa Clara County, they might move elsewhere in California because of more affordable homes or a slower pace of life. With Prop 19, you can move like this while keeping your established property tax base.

My team recently helped someone sell a home that was purchased in 1976. The original purchase price was under \$40,000, and the property tax base today was only \$67,000. After selling their home, now worth \$1,000,000, they could move to a different area of California with all that equity and keep that low property tax base. That means that they are only going to be paying \$2,100 in property taxes annually. Without Prop 19, they would be paying over \$7,500 per year. That's an over \$500 per month difference, which can be a huge impact if you are living on a fixed income.

Make sure to talk to a financial advisor to see how you can take advantage of this proposition.