



## VEP Community Meeting

**WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 27th @7:00 PM**  
**Vista Park Community Room**  
**475 Hyde Park Drive**

~ Everyone is Welcome! Invite Your Neighbors! ~

### SEPTEMBER MEETING AGENDA

- **Special Guest: Rob Lloyd** -  
Deputy City Manager for San Jose

- **Information & Updates: City of San Jose** -  
From the Office of District 2 Councilmember Sergio Jimenez

- **VEP Business Meeting** -  
VEP Bylaws: Review & Ratify Amendments  
Nominating Committee: Review of Charter & Appointments  
Upcoming Events

- **Open Forum / Member Q&A** -  
A chance to voice opinions and/or seek VEP's help.

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER with Alain Mowad

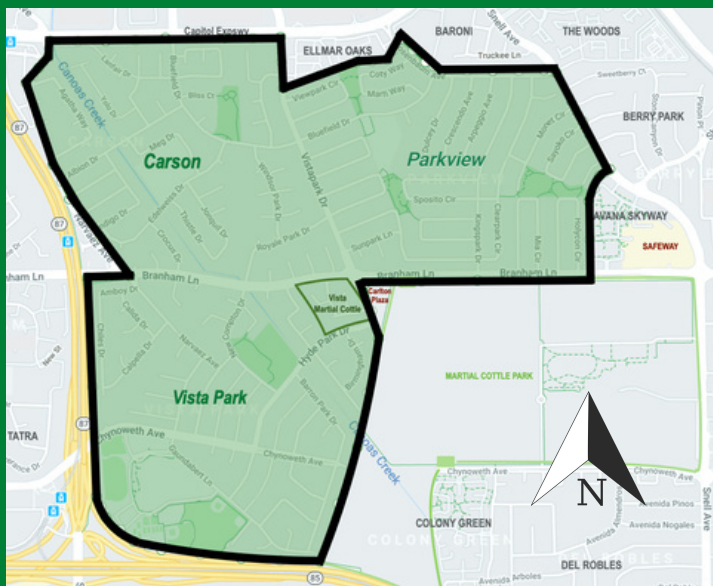
I hope you all had a fantastic summer! It's hard to believe that we are already in September.

First off, I wanted to thank Mayor Matt Mahan and his staff, District 2 Councilmember's staff and BeautifySJ for partnering with the VEP to host a very successful Dumpster Day on Saturday, August 26th. The Mayor spent a few hours with us before heading off to participate in other dumpster day events across the city. We were able to fill over 2 dumpsters with unwanted items. Stay tuned as we plan more of these for our VEP neighbors. A HUGE thank you to Brian Ferry for organizing this event for us and helping make it a success. We also partnered with District 2 Leadership and a number of other District 2 neighborhoods to host this year's National Night Out at Vista Park!

The VEP Board has been busy over the summer planning for general meetings. Our next meeting is in just under two weeks, on September 27th, 7 PM, and you won't want to miss it. Our special guest will be Rob Lloyd, Deputy City Manager, who will share more details on the Council-Manager form of government, departmental structure, City focus areas, BeautifySJ initiatives and the latest update on San Jose 311. Following that, we will focus on two key areas of member business. First, we will review and ratify needed amendments to the VEP's Bylaws, which were last revised in 2018. Next, we will be appointing a Nominating Committee to field candidates for the 2024 Board. Elections are going to

President's Corner continues on Page 2

## VEPCA Membership Area



VEP 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 bi-monthly to coincide with the community meetings, with the exception of the "Summer Break," from June through August.

VEP attempts to publish any and all articles that will be of general interest to our membership community. Articles 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 (CLICKABLE!)

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

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

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

## President's Corner continued from Page 1

be held at our next meeting in November. If you are interested in participating on the Committee, please let us know! Finally, we will review our proposed budget for 2023-2024.

On that note, our budget has shrunk significantly over the past few years. It has become more difficult to secure beautification grants from the City due the increased number of applications from other neighborhoods and reduced funding. We are relying more and more on our membership dues to keep the VEP at the forefront of representing our neighborhoods, providing community service scholarships for our high school seniors and sponsoring beautification projects. Please consider renewing your membership and encouraging your neighbors to join as well. Everything helps, and the more we are, the stronger we will be as an association.

I look forward to seeing you all again at our general meeting on September 27th!

## May 2023 VEP Community Meeting Summary

By Lisa Sanchez

Here's a recap of VEP's May Community Meeting, just before summer break. We had a pretty good turn out with neighbors and representatives from Congressman Panetta's office, District 2 and San José Police Department.

The meeting opened with the announcement of VEP's 2023 Community Service Award recipients. Followed by Congressman Panetta's representative, Alyssa Marquez, who presented certificates to the two VEP's CSA recipients. VEP recognized these high school graduates for volunteered time serving our community. Both high school graduates were presented a certificate of recognition and \$1,000. award, for future academic expenses.

The two recipients for 2023 are:

Andrew P. Hill High School - Chau Thai

Gunderson High School - April Lee

Congratulations and blessings over your future endeavors. We appreciate your hearts in serving our community!

Next guest speaker was Captain Donohue, of SJPd's Southern Division, which serves our VEP Community. He introduced himself, shared his background and work experience. He gave an overview of CAM (Camera archive & mapping) program and encouraged us all to register and participate. He stressed this does not give SJPd access to daily video feed, only the video clips which are submitted.

He also introduced Crime Prevention Specialist, Marissa García. She is the contact for Community Safety Drug Prevention, National Night Out and Neighborhood Watch programs.

Capt. Donohue closed by sharing the following Southern Division



## May Meeting Summary continued from Page 2

statistics for the previous 2 months:

- There were five vehicle burglaries on Vista Park, zero robberies, two minor vehicle injury incidents and the Southern Division is proactively conducting preventative outreach
- Branham & Almaden Safeways: Undercover Operations in the planning phase to deter thefts, stay tuned!
- Fireworks is a citywide issue, utilize 311: take a picture & submit a report
- Sideshows were recently impacted by a SJPd sting that caught 500, cited spectators & impounded participant's cars
- Sideshows will resurface but SJPd continues working on subsequent sting operations
- Lock your vehicles and remove chargers, backpacks, clothing and any other items from sight. Prevention is key!

Our final guest speaker was Vanessa Sandoval, District 2 Chief of Staff. She reviewed budget document proposals and project updates. From vehicle/blight abatement to emergency housing. She updated the progress of Interim Housing Development on Branham/Monterey Rd, as well. Progress is on schedule.

Meeting was closed with a review of summertime Dates and Events.

VEP community meetings resume in September 2023.



ABOVE: Heidi Racherla (VEPCA Vice President), Vanessa Sandoval (Office of D2 Councilmember Jimenez), Lisa Sanchez (VEPCA Secretary), Alyssa Marquez (Office of Congressman Jimmy Panetta), April Lee (2023 Recipient of a VEPCA Community Service Award), Alain Mowad (VEPCA President), and Brian Ferry (VEPCA Director)



ABOVE: Katherine Decker (Previous VEPCA Vice President), Captain Donohue (SJPd, Southern Division), and Heidi Racherla (VEPCA Vice President)



LEFT: SJPd Captain Donohue (Southern Division) addresses the meeting attendees.



RIGHT: Vanessa Sandoval (Office of D2 Councilmember Sergio Jimenez)



## Membership Corner

Thank you to the VEP friends and neighbors who have joined and/or renewed via Zelle, PayPal, or check over the summer. In recognition of your commitment, all memberships paid by our upcoming meeting dates of Sept. 27th and Nov. 29th will be entered into raffle drawings for a \$20 Starbucks gift cards. Good luck and please share with others in our local community. We'll announce both winners after the respective membership meetings. Reach out with any questions and/or suggestions via email, to [Membership@vepca.net](mailto:Membership@vepca.net)

# THANK YOU for helping VEP Grow!



### JOIN TODAY!

BECOME A  
VEP MEMBER

### STAY CONNECTED!

RENEW YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP  
ANNUALLY

### PHONE A FRIEND!

INVITE YOUR VEP  
NEIGHBORS VIA TEXT,  
EMAIL, AND/OR SHARE  
ON SOCIAL MEDIA

### GET INVOLVED!

JOIN US AT AN  
UPCOMING  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
OR COMMUNITY  
VOLUNTEER EVENT

**YOUR ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT HELPS OUR  
VEP LOCAL COMMUNITY GROW AND THRIVE!**

## 5 WAYS TO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

① Mail your \$20 check to:  
VEP Community Association  
P.O. Box 18037  
San Jose, CA 95158

② Pay by credit card via our website:  
<https://vepca.net>

③ Pay by cash at an upcoming meeting or  
volunteer event

④ Pay via Zelle: [dues@vepca.net](mailto:dues@vepca.net)

⑤ Join or Renew via  
PayPal \$20/year:



[vepca@vepca.net](mailto:vepca@vepca.net)



# National Night Out 2023

By Alain Mowad

This year the VEP partnered with several other District 2 neighborhoods along with District 2 Leadership to host National Night Out at Vista Park on August 1st. We had about 200 attendees, listened to some great live music, enjoyed delicious food and connected with VEP neighbors while also meeting members from other neighboring associations. Thank you for making this year's National Night out a tremendous success!





# Neighborhood Beautification Update

Hi, Friends!

I hope you all had a wonderful summer and I'm looking forward to seeing some of you at our next beautification event!

Thanks to everybody who helped out at our recent dumpster event at Carson School.

We filled 2 dumpsters with unwanted junk and even had the mayor out helping to unload stuff from folks' vehicles!

**This year's Dave Fadness Beautification Day will be Saturday, October 14, 2023.**

The exact time and location will be announced soon. Save the date!

As we start a new year of action in the VEP, please email me your suggestions for neighborhood beautification projects you would like to see happen: [beautification@vepca.net](mailto:beautification@vepca.net)

Thank you to everyone who helps keep the VEP neighborhoods looking so great!

Brian Ferry

Beautification Guy

Pictured Below, Left to Right:

Brian Ferry, Alain Mowad, and Mayor Matt Mahan





# Our Mission, Should We Accept It: Revitalize & Refurbish our Parks!

By Rachel Witmeyer, Parkview Resident and Mother / "VEP News" Editor

Residents of VEPCA neighborhoods have noticed many deficiencies in our local parks and play spaces, especially those families with children. I had noticed a lot of areas of concern on my walks over the years, but since having a child, those issues have come into high relief. Moreover, in the intervening years, those areas of concern have transformed into sheer ugliness and even danger.

Here are just a few easily observed problems:

**Meadows Park:** The planted areas need attention/replanting; Defacement/carvings in certain play structures.

**Parkview I:** Dead and dying trees at the south end; Limited play equipment on the north end; Frequent trashing of the play area by apartment residents: leaving food, garbage, alcohol containers, and the remnants of smoking, vaping, and/or cannabis use. (I, for one, feel that the gate at the north end should be permanently closed off. The abuse of our neighborhood by people who hold no stake in our property taxes and values is rampant and detestable. But, I digress...)

**Parkview II:** NORTH END: Broken and hazardous play structure components; Defacement and carvings in play structures; Empty poles where a climbing feature once existed (it was only partially removed, but never replaced, and it's been YEARS!). CENTER: A certain tree fell in the major storms last year and was not replaced. SOUTH END: Play structure has had parts and pieces removed over the years, leaving it unsightly to say the least; Bouncy "See-Saw" feature first had one end removed, and recently, the entire thing was taken out; The sand in the sandbox needs totally replaced; The installed trashcans no longer shut closed and often hang open; The exercise stations for adults need some TLC; Planted areas need pruning and some replanting.

**Parkview III:** Defacement and carvings on the play structures; Scratched and clouded plexiglass on the structures; Railings that need repairs and repainting; A damaged ride-on dinosaur that has not be replaced or repaired.

**Vista Park:** I cannot really say. It is the farthest from my home street and I haven't ventured that far with our toddler yet. I do know that in recent years, there were issues with certain folks using the park to "off road" with their vehicles. Installing moderate fencing and vehicle barriers along the perimeter could be a good investment.

Finally, It's interesting that many park refurbishment projects have been completed for District 2 in the last couple years since our area was redistricted, yet not a single park in our neighborhoods has made the list. The only thing I have personally seen happen was that specific parts of the rubberized walkway surfaces were replaced at Parkview I and II. VEPCA leaders have communicated with D2 Councilmember Sergio Jimenez's team about the state of our parks (among other things), and yet, nothing. We have all seen our property values and home values go up-up-up, until we have become a community of homes that easily bring sales prices over a million dollars, but our neighborhood parks look trashy. Some of their elements are downright unsafe. The contrast is staggering and unacceptable. Please call and/or email our D2 Councilmember to voice your own concerns and ask that actions be taken to restore our community parks to acceptable conditions. I do believe that if more of us speak up, we will see results! As Helen Keller so famously said, "Alone we can do so little; Together we can do so much." Let's work together for the improvements our families deserve! District 2 Councilmember Jimenez --> CALL: (408) 535-4902 ; EMAIL: [District2@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:District2@sanjoseca.gov)

## A "LITTLE" APPRECIATION: OUR INSECT NEIGHBORS!

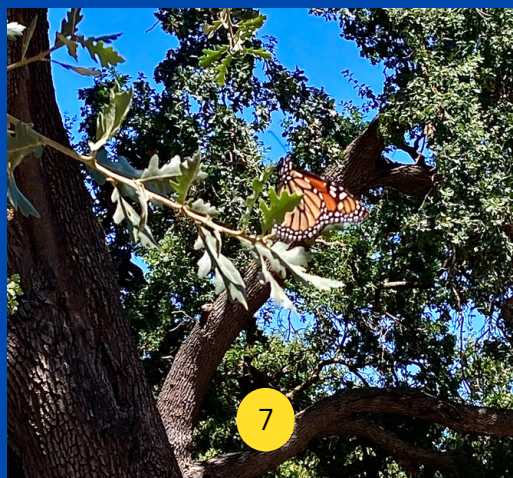
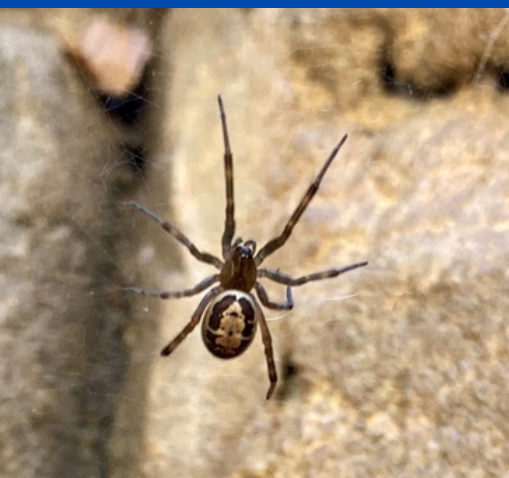
Spotted at Martial Cottle Park: Photos by Rachel Witmeyer

LEFT: A spider enjoys the play structures at "Uncle Monte's Discovery Farm"

CENTER: Monarch Butterflies visiting the heritage oak trees!

Backyard Sighting: Photo by Adina Pierce

Dragonflies have recently been seen in abundance, both in the VEP and around San Jose.





## News from the Friends of Martial Cottle Park

Friends of Martial Cottle Park recently hosted a tour of the Cottle and Lester Historic Ranch at Martial Cottle Park. Along with a tour of the house and the outbuildings, attendees heard about the plans for the renovation of the historic ranch.

Friends of Martial Cottle Park has funded a number of projects this year including refurbishing farm equipment, school field trip transportation to Martial Cottle Park, signs identifying crops growing in the fields, and farmer cut-out figures which will be installed in the park this fall.

Please let us know if you would consider volunteering your time and talent to FOMCP. Our organization has funded many projects at Martial Cottle Park over the last 6 years, and with your help as new board members we can continue that work.

- The Board of Friends of Martial Cottle Park

Email: [info@fomcp.org](mailto:info@fomcp.org)

Website: <http://fomcp.org/> (CLICK!)



## Fall Festival at Martial Cottle Park

Come celebrate our valley's rich agricultural history! The Fall Festival will have local arts, crafts and foods, kids activities, agricultural workshops, animal presentations, historical autos, antique farm equipment, live music, food trucks, exhibitors, entertainment, pumpkin patch - and more. **VEP will have a booth. Stop by and say "Hi!"**

Join us on October 7, 2023 from 9 am to 2 pm

Free Admission \$6 Parking Fee - Parking is limited

Questions? Email [Jacqueline.Zizana@prk.sccgov.org](mailto:Jacqueline.Zizana@prk.sccgov.org)

Event Link Online: [CLICK HERE!](#)



## Volunteer Open House at Martial Cottle Park

Interested in giving back to Santa Clara County Parks in a long-term, defined capacity? Join us for an upcoming Volunteer Open House to learn about what opportunities we are recruiting for, their requirements, and how to get started! And... bring a friend!

Meet us at the Martial Cottle Park Visitor Center

Browse current volunteer position openings: [CLICK HERE!](#)

Sign up online for the open house of your choice below - advance registration is preferred but not required.

All long term volunteers must complete a background check, COVID-19 vaccination verification, Outside Employment Form, and Sexual Harassment Training. Additional training and onboarding requirements vary by position.

Minimum age: 18

Queries: Call 408-918-4930 ; Email [volunteer@prk.sccgov.org](mailto:volunteer@prk.sccgov.org)



Preview volunteer opportunities at  
[www.parkhere.org/volunteer](http://www.parkhere.org/volunteer)

## VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE

Learn more about short and long-term volunteer opportunities with Santa Clara County Parks and our Park Partners

**Saturday, October 28th - 9am-1pm**

Location: Martial Cottle Park

5283 Snell Ave. San Jose, CA 95136

Meet at the Visitor Center building just inside the entrance.

**Spotlight on: Visitor Hosts & Trail Watch**



Please join us for a drop-in open house-style session to learn more about Santa Clara County Parks and how to contribute as a volunteer. Opportunities exist for children, families, community groups, retirees, and those wanting to share their knowledge and passion for the outdoors.

Pre-registration is encouraged but not required. Drop-ins welcome. Any level of interest or participation is welcome and encouraged.

Scan the QR code with your phone camera to sign up.



# SR-87 FULL HIGHWAY CLOSURES

(BETWEEN I-280 AND SR-85, SAN JOSE)

~ A message from Caltrans Bay Area ~

**NORTHBOUND - WEEKEND OF SEPTEMBER 22**

**SOUTHBOUND - WEEKEND OF OCTOBER 20**

Caltrans is scheduled to close Northbound and Southbound SR-87 on two weekends between late September 2023 and mid-October 2023. During the 56-hour highway closures, Caltrans will perform major pavement repair work on northbound and southbound SR-87 in Santa Clara County. One traffic direction on SR-87 will be worked on at a time. Detours will be in effect. All work is weather and conditions dependent.

## WHY THE WORK IS NEEDED?

The purpose of the project is to improve ride quality, enhance safety, and extend the service life of the pavement. These full weekend closures are necessary for worker and public safety during the work. Caltrans will perform major pavement rehabilitation on the two center traffic lanes in both the northbound and southbound directions of SR-87. The roadway has become worn and in need of major repairs due to decades of high traffic use.

**CLOSURE WILL START FRIDAYS AFTER 9 P.M. AND CONCLUDE ON THE FOLLOWING MONDAYS NO LATER THAN 5 A.M.**

These closures will allow for concrete pavement in traffic lanes to be replaced. These closures will shorten the duration of the project by providing improved safety and better ride quality to the public. These series of weekend SR-87 closures will reduce the number of overnight lane closures needed to complete this work by 2024 instead of completing in late 2025.

You can learn more about the project on our Caltrans Bay Area project website at: [SR87pave.com](https://sr87pave.com) (CLICK!)

If you have a question or want to share a concern, please call our Project Hotline at (510) 286-0319.

Or you can contact [sr87pave@dot.ca.gov](mailto:sr87pave@dot.ca.gov)



CMS signs and Detours will be in place. Motorists are advised to expect delays and allow extra time.

For real-time traffic, click-on Caltrans QuickMap [quickmap.dot.ca.gov](https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov) (CLICK!)





## Foundation Alumni Homecoming Event

HOSTED BY GUNDERSON HIGH FOUNDATION

Where: Gunderson High School across from  
the Football Stadium

When: October 13, 2023 at 6:00 pm

Scan QR code to  
RSVP



Join us before the Varsity Game that starts at 7:00PM and  
enjoy some food, and share some stories.

**Did you attend Gunderson High?**  
Have you stayed connected By joining  
OUR Foundation?

Show your grizzly PRIDE  
IT'S ONLY \$25 FOR A LIFETIME  
MEMBERSHIP, SO SIGNUP TODAY!



**GUNDERSON ALUMNI  
BECOME A MEMBER!**

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- ✓ Lifetime Membership
- ✓ Invite to Homecoming Game
- ✓ Quarterly Newsletter
- ✓ Community Service Opportunities



JOIN NOW

**DO YOU HAVE A BUSINESS?**

**REACH MORE FAMILIES BY ADVERTISING  
WITH US IN THE "VEP NEWS!"  
REASONABLE RATES!  
AND - YOU'LL BE HELPING TO SUPPORT  
THE WORK OF VEPKA!**

**CONTACT: [NEWSLETTER@VEPKA.NET](mailto:NEWSLETTER@VEPKA.NET)**

## FREE Library Events!

Friday, Sept. 22nd @ Pearl Library  
**Moon Festival Celebration**  
with Balloon Artist, Arts/Crafts,  
and Mooncake Tasting  
4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Saturday, Sept. 30th @ Pearl Library  
**Friends of the Pearl Avenue Branch**  
~ **Book Sale** ~  
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Wednesday, Nov. 1st @ Edenvale Library  
**Sugar Skull Face Painting to  
Celebrate Dia de Los Muertos**  
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM



### ROBERTO RUIZ

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VEPKA MEMBER  
MARINE CORPS VETERAN





# District 2 Fall Festival

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023**

**11 A.M. - 2 P.M.**

**EDENVALE GARDEN PARK**

200 EDENVALE AVE.

\*FENCED GRASS AREA NEAR PARKING LOT  
AND HAYES MANSION\*

**Free dessert for first 200 people!**

Free resource fair, games & activities,  
& more!



## ~ DATES TO REMEMBER ~

### VEP COMMUNITY MEETINGS: 2023-24

@Vista Park Community Room - 7:00 PM

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2023**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH, 2023**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31ST, 2024**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27TH, 2024**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH - D2 FALL FESTIVAL**

<-- See Flyer at Left for Details.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7TH - FALL FESTIVAL AT M.C.P.**

See Flyer at Bottom Left AND [Page 8](#) for Details.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13TH**

**GUNDERSON HOMECOMING GAME & ALUMNI EVENT**

See [Page 10](#) for Details.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14TH**

**VEP: DAVE FADNESS MEMORIAL BEAUTIFICATION DAY**

Watch for Details in Your Email

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31ST - HAPPY HALLOWEEN!**

VEP Wishes Your Family a Fun & Safe Holiday!

**NOVEMBER 1ST/2ND - ¡FELIZ DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS!**

"Memories Keep Us Alive."

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH - DAYLIGHT SAVINGS**

"FALL BACK" - Turn Clocks Back 1 Hour

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH - VETERAN'S DAY**

Honoring Those Who Have Served

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH - SANTA IN THE PARK**

**FREE FAMILY EVENT HOSTED BY VEP**

Get Your Holiday Photo with Santa @Vista Park



**Jayshree Reddy**

All Things Real Estate

Your Neighborhood Realtor

Ph: 408-489-6812

[jr.homesold@gmail.com](mailto:jr.homesold@gmail.com)

[jayshreedy.exp Realty.com](http://jayshreedy.exp Realty.com)

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