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Do you have a story, event, good neighbor nomination or other item to you'd like to see in the SONA newsletter? Submit your entry to randikinman@yahoo.com. Deadlines are listed below:

- November Newsletter Ads and Copy due 10/21/03
- December Newsletter Ads and Copy due 11/20/03
- January 2004 Newsletter Ads and Copy due 12/16/03

For rates, see the advertising section at <http://www.sona-sj.com>

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Issue 33, October 2003

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With October upon us, it's time to think about getting ready for the winter. While our days are still warm and lovely, the cooler nights are a reminder that we need to look forward. It's time to test your heater (and get those new filters), clean the gutters and check the weather stripping on doors and windows. The SONA newsletter this month includes articles on programs for repairing your home and balancing out those PG&E bills. In addition, we will have a speaker at our meeting who works with PG&E on energy audits for the home.

Some of you will be visited by SONA board members this month. We are finally beginning to conduct the SONA-wide survey to collect the data we need to take your issues one step closer to being resolved. If anyone wants to help in this effort, contact any SONA board member.

Don't forget to attend at least some of the events at San Jose City College this month. Construction on the new buildings is wrapping up and the campus is beginning to look "finished" in many areas.

Our November meeting will be a pasta feed. We hope that you will come out and enjoy the chance to relax with your neighbors. If anyone would like to help in this event, contact Michael LaRocca. There's always room for another helping hand.

My thanks to everyone who has helped out with newsletters, meetings and organization in the last few months. It is always a pleasure to see how willing people are to pitch in.

Randi Kinman, President

SONA's SILLY QUIZ FOR OCTOBER

Which U.S. city banned all Halloween celebrations from its schools in 1995 because of the holiday's roots in pagan tradition? Hint... it's a bay area city

All correct answers turned in at the October 9 SONA meeting will be entered into a drawing to win a gift certificate from a local coffee shop.

The answer to last month's question: "Name the first lighthouse to use electricity" is the Statue of Liberty.

OCTOBER MEETING AGENDA—10/9

- 6:30 Snacks and Socializing**
- 7:00 Welcome/Approval of Minutes**
- 7:02 Treasurer's Report**
- 7:05 Police Report**
- 7:15 Parks & Recreation Neighborhood Services - Jane Hemeon**
- 7:30 California Home Energy Efficiency Rating System-Jerry McGhie**
- 7:50 Announcements**
- 8:00 Adjourn**

SONA meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month. Refreshments and socializing begin at 6:30 p.m. The meeting begins at 7:00 pm Meetings are held at the SOCC*.

OCTOBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 8 Safe Walk To School Day**
- 8-10 City college open house and events**
- 9 SONA Meeting* (6:30 pm)**
- 18 United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County Annual Workshop**
- 22 PAC Meeting (6:30 pm)**
- 23 NAC Meeting* (6:30 pm)**
- 28 SONA Board Meeting* (7:00 pm)**
- 31 Halloween**

NOVEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 13 SONA Meeting* PASTA FEED!**

* Sherman Oaks Community Center
1800A Fruitdale Avenue, San Jose, CA 95128
City Council Meetings: Tuesdays at 1:30 pm.
Evenings: 7:00 pm on the first and third Tuesday's.

GOOD NEIGHBOR CORNER

Neighbors on Sherman Oaks Drive celebrated their "3rd Annual Labor Day Potluck B.B.Q." organized by **Yoka Drion** and **Paul Gonda** at the corner of Sherman Oaks and Kingman. Neighbors enjoyed themselves and look forward to others joining in next year.

Thanks for your efforts **Yoka** and **Paul**.

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC (PG&E) ENERGY PROGRAMS

PG&E Payment Arrangement Line - Payment arrangements may include making an upfront "good faith" payment with additional payments due before the next bill. Call PG&E at 1-800-743-5000.

Balanced Payment Plan - The Balanced Payment Plan helps eliminate big swings in your payments by averaging your energy costs over the year. For more information, call PG&E at 1-800-743-5000.

California Alternative Rates for Energy (CARE) - CARE provides a 20% discount on monthly energy gas and electric rates to income qualified households, certain non-profit organizations and facilities housing agricultural employees. Recipients are also exempt from the recent 9% electric rate increase. To receive CARE rates, the household's income must be verified. Certain PG&E metering restrictions may apply. To learn more about CARE and to download an application, please visit the company's website at www.pge.com/care or call 1-866-PGE-CARE.

Customers can also call a toll free multilingual assistance line for information in Chinese, Spanish or Vietnamese: 1-866 PGE-CARE (743-2273).

The new income guidelines (effective June 1, 2003) based on pre-tax annual income are as follows:

- 1-2 Person Household \$23,000
- 3 persons: \$27,000
- 4 persons: \$32,500
- 5 persons: \$38,000

HELP WITH WINTERIZING YOUR HOME AND PAYING HEATING BILLS

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funded by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), assists eligible low-income households in meeting the heating or cooling portion of their residential energy needs and weatherizing their homes to make them more energy efficient. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funded by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), assists eligible low-income households in meeting the heating or cooling portion of their residential energy needs and weatherizing their homes to make them more energy efficient.

Several programs are provided under LIHEAP:

Weatherization Program - The Home Weatherproofing program provides insulation, weather stripping or assistance with energy conservation to both owners and renters to improve the energy efficiency of your home.

Housing and Energy Services Program (HEAP) - HEAP provides financial assistance to qualifying households to offset heating and cooling costs. HEAP will provide one payment per year of between \$87 and \$313 directly to the clients' utility company.

Handy Worker Program - The Handy Worker Program assists low-income families and senior homeowners with minor house repairs.

Emergency Energy Assistance Program - This program helps the elderly and low-income families with utility bill payments. Assistance is determined by the availability of funds, income guidelines, and circumstances such as medical emergencies, etc.

In San Jose, LIHEAP programs are administered by Economic and Social Opportunities, Inc. (ESO). ESO provides a number of federal, state and locally funded energy assistance programs, and is a primary provider of services to homebound, English as a second language, and low-income households. They are committed to providing low income residents emergency assistance who have received a 15 day notice or 48 hour notice of their power being shut off. Income guidelines are according to Federal guidelines.

For more information and to apply for these programs contact ESO:

Economic and Social Opportunities, Inc.
1445 Oakland Road, San Jose, CA 95112
Phone: (408) 971-2560

STATION #4 REMODELING PROJECT

By Ken Yeager

In March 2002, San Jose's voters passed the Neighborhood Security Act Bond Measure. This bond measure will fund 36 public safety projects. Many of the projects are for upgrades to fire stations throughout San Jose, including Fire Station #4 on Leigh Ave.

Bids for the upgrades to Fire Station #4 were received on August 12. The construction contract will be awarded to Falk Construction, with project start expected by October and completion in April 2004.

The project scope will include improving firefighters' privacy within the fire station by adding a new female bathroom and locker room. The work will also include remodeling the day room, kitchen and dining rooms; adding an ADA bathroom; replacing an outdated HVAC system; installing a new telephone system; and installing an emergency generator to power the facility.

During construction a modular building will be placed on the north side of the building next to the

Continued on page 3

HOUSING DEPARTMENT UPDATES

The City of San Jose has finally begun to move forward on budget issues, freeing up funding for programs and services. Among the programs available to low income residents in the SNI area are grants and loans to rehabilitate and repair existing housing. The following is a portion of the programs available in the rehabilitation program:

Money is available for you to fix your house

Terms

- Grants are provided at the discretion of the Housing Department.
- Grants are subject to the terms of the SNI Grant Agreement.
- The Exterior Improvement Grant amount will be based on the actual cost of the needed improvements as determined by the Housing Department Project Coordinator (not to exceed \$25,000).
- The maximum Repair Grant amount will be based on the actual cost of the other needed repairs as determined by the Housing Department Project Coordinator (not to exceed \$15,000).
- The amount of any previous repair grant from the City of San José will be deducted from the Home Improvement Program grant award.

Eligible Improvements

The scope of eligible work is determined by the Housing Department's Project Coordinator. Exterior improvements must be in conformance with the appropriate SNI Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) guidelines.

Eligible Exterior Improvements

- Roof Replacement/Repairs
- Exterior Paint
- Front Landscape/Irrigation
- Private Walkways and Driveways
- Front Fencing
- Exterior Front and Garage Doors

Application Process

Once an application is complete and basic program eligibility has been established, the application will be considered for approval. After approval, a Housing Department Project Coordinator will work with the applicant to make arrangements with the contractors to perform the approved improvements and repairs.

New Roof
 Exterior Paint
 Landscaping
 Irrigation
 Walkways
 Driveways
 Fencing
 Garage Doors

For further information please contact a Coordinator at:

City of San José
Department of Housing - SNI Home Improvement Program
4 North Second Street, Suite 1350
San José, CA 95113
Phone: 408-277-8403
Fax: (408) 286-9109

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT PROGRAM

Our thanks to our September speakers, Maria Holmes and Kimberly DeAnda, who described their experiences as Foster and Adoptive parents and enlightened us on the processes involved.

There are currently over 2000 children in the County foster care system at any time. These children need parents for various durations whether it be hours, days or years. While the goal is to reunite children with their families, this is not often possible in a short period of time. The foster/adoptive parents serve a vital role in this process.

There is also a need for grandparent volunteers who can simply give some time to the program. There is a complicated but necessary procedure for the kids visiting their birth families that sometimes includes waiting for short periods without either foster or birth parents available. Waiting is hard enough for adults, but for kids who are sometimes scared and alone, the presence of a friendly grandma or grandpa can help the child during this waiting period.

The program could also use volunteers who can teach arts and crafts or help with other activities at the program's center. Foster parents often get together for group activities as they need time to meet without the kids. A piano was recently donated to the program, so if anyone is able to donate lesson time, that would be greatly appreciated.

Station #4 Cont'd

hose tower. This building will provide additional space for crews during construction and will contain a kitchen area.

I am excited about these changes that will improve the operational efficiency of our fire and paramedic crews. By building new stations and continually maintaining and upgrading existing stations, the City reinforces its commitment to improve response times and service to the residents of San Jose.