



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Notes from the President

This month's meeting will feature Jane Light, Director of Library Services for the City of San Jose. While we often think of libraries as just a place to store books, they have evolved over the years into being a huge resource for the community. While each branch runs a little differently (reflecting it's unique neighborhood), they all offer a wide range of services beyond checking out books, music and videos in multiple languages.

Our local libraries offer a wide range of activities and classes for all ages. You can join a book or knitting group, learn basics of computers and the internet, attend music programs and learn a variety of crafts. Kids can join in on story hours, play games, attend homework classes and enjoy events targeted towards their specific age group. While each library has exhibits and cultural displays, the community rooms host dancing, exercise, tutoring, health education and other events. Our branch libraries offer classes in English, job search and resume writing, all things that help our residents obtain jobs and build a better future. This is our opportunity to discuss what we want in our new library and learn what is offered around the city.

The construction of the Bascom Community Center and Library is due for completion this year. Funds are available to stock the facility, but the current intent is to keep it closed until the economy supports opening a new center. While other facilities have seen some cut backs, and will probably see more, we are being told that our community is not important or deserving enough to open at all. We are being told that it is better for people who currently enjoy their facilities to continue to enjoy them while we continue to do without. Enough is enough.

I am proud to say SONA residents voted unanimously to support opening all facilities on a part time basis at a previous meeting. Facilities have been built with our money and continue to operate with our money. Understanding the current economic situation, we realize that we will see services cut across town. But, we aren't getting any of the services we paid for. We have patiently waited, have continued to pay our taxes and have done without long enough. We should not be asked to spend years waiting while a brand new facility is completed, stocked and ready to go but closed.

We will be discussing our options and creating a game plan during the second half of our meeting. The budget decisions will be made in the next month by City Council. We can join together and make a difference or we can continue to pay for something and not get it. ...hope to see you at the meeting....Randi

SONA

General Meeting

March 11, 2009

6:30 PM Coffee and Snacks

Catch up with your Neighbors

7:00 PM Jane Light

Director of San Jose's Library System

Information on what our libraries offer, what will be available at the new Bascom Library followed by a community discussion.

8:30PM Adjourn

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at the Sherman Oaks Community Center, 1800A Fruitdale Ave. SJ CA 95128

Funds for our newsletter are supplemented with a Community Action and Pride Grant through the City of San Jose

Notes and News

Kelley Park and Happy Hollow Zoo is celebrating a grand re-opening on March 20, 2010. This landmark has been closed for almost two years to undergo a \$72million renovation of rides, exhibits, entertainment, zoo and veterinary facilities. Having served San Jose since 1961, the site was overdue for upgrades. Families will be glad to know Puppet Theater is coming back along with new educational facilities and guest services. An early bird preview will be held the week before for members. For more information call 794-6400 or go to www.hhpz.org.

Jussi and Lisa have offered to run another pick up of recyclable bottles and cans, so start saving! This recycling drive allows SONA to generate funds to help offset the cost of newsletters. The next pick-up drive will be on Wednesday, May 19, 2010. If you have paid a deposit on soda, water or beverage containers, they can be sorted and put to good use. Contact either Jussi or Lisa (numbers are below) to make arrangements.

If you have some free time on March 20 (and it's a busy day!) join a few of us at the corner of Leigh and Moorpark to pull weeds on Moorpark. Bring gloves and digging tools. Rains this year have encouraged a lot of growth and we need to get the weeds cleared out around the oak trees we planted. We'll meet at 9am and go until we're done. We'll also sweep the sidewalks and make sure our gateway is looking good. Thanks to the monthly litter pick ups run by residents from Buena Vista, the litter and trash has been kept clear. Mother Nature, however, has left us with loads of weeds.

Many thanks to our new and renewing members who paid dues last month: **Yoka Drion & Paul Gonda, Lynn Sisson, Jan & Jim Hawkins.** Other funds were raised from donations and recycling. Most memberships are due between now and April. Contact Michael if you have any questions.

For those of you who missed our February meeting, it was quite informational. We learned of a new pilot program that the City of San Jose is participating in that will allow any family or business to reduce energy costs and upgrade your home or business without upfront costs. This program is unique in that it covers single family homes, multi-family complexes and commercial property. You first go through an energy audit and learn what needs fixing, replacing or upgrading. Contractors who are certified with the city and PG&E will outline a plan to replace windows, install installation, replace water heaters, roofs and even install new solar systems. Property owners then apply for the program and are granted funds based on the cost of the upgrades (minus California or Federal rebates). The program is funded through a bond and, once approved, the bond pays for the upgrades and improvements. The loan to the property owner is then attached as an add-on to property taxes and paid off with the taxes using the interest rate attached to the bond. What makes this program unique is that it covers everyone in San Jose, does not depend on your credit rating and travels with the property. Watch this space for more details next month.

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SONA Newsletter Editor: Randi Kinman

Where Can I Turn/How Can I Help?

The current economic crisis is unprecedented in our lifetimes. While many of us have ridden out valley recessions, there has not been a time in recent decades where so many were affected. The valley goes through its ups and downs, but this time it isn't just us; it's the nation and the world who are reeling. When local downturns coincide with global downturns, the housing market and financial institutional collapse, some of us are holding our breath, some of us are struggling and some of us are in over our heads. The stories aren't about people "out there", they are our neighbors and sometimes us. The hardest three words are, "I need help" and most of us have no idea where to turn for help.

SONA would like to make sure our friends and neighbors know some of the places to turn to and some of the ways you can help each other.

Second Harvest of San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties runs a variety of programs targeting specific groups (seniors and families with children) along with the general population. Call the **Food Connection Hotline at 800.984.3663** for assistance in multiple languages if you or your family is in need. If you are choosing between food and other expenses, if you cannot afford to maintain adequate nutritional standards, make the call. You may learn of food banks, be directed to brown bag sites, figure out where a produce mobile is stationed or become part of a mobile food delivery service. Second Harvest assists non-profits in serving meals and can also assist you in filling out an application for food stamps. The programs are too numerous to mention in one article and one phone call could mean the difference between getting by or not. Second Harvest also has numerous locations for food drop off. Call or visit their website.

Santa Clara County and United Way have a 24/7 free hotline operating in 170 languages that allows those in crisis to reach out for services. The **211.org** program provides referrals for housing, health, senior, disability, employment, financial, self-help, clothing, immigration, legal and other services. You can locate seasonal or H1N1 flu shots, obtain disaster relief information or other non-emergency information by dialing 211. This hotline allows people in crisis to connect to services and service providers easily. If you would like to be one of the service providers you can contact United Way at 345-4301 or email 211@uwsc.org.

President Obama's Federal Stimulus Bill has released funds to local agencies to provide for people in need through September 2010. Recognizing the current economic times have created problems for many families, funds have been assigned to help people get through hard times. Money is available to eligible persons for a variety of **short term (utilities, moving costs, evictions) and long term (financial literacy and other educational needs) programs**. The Emergency Assistance Network has a number of agencies throughout the county based on zip code. **For 95128 residents, your contact point is Sacred Heart Community Services, 1381 S. First Street, San Jose, 95110 or call them at 408.278.2160.**

The City of San Jose is sponsoring a free program to help both renters and home owners facing foreclosure problems. The **Foreclosure Help Center** provides referrals and information to help you cope. You can call 794-1242 for information or to schedule an appointment or email questions to help@foreclosurehelpsc.org or visit the website at www.foreclosurehelpsc.org.

The **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** provides a variety of free services for low income families in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. These services range from weatherization (caulking, weather stripping, etc.), to heater, water heater, stove, refrigerator and microwave replacements that will reduce a family's energy bills. Available to both property owners and renters, HEAP will also provide minor home repairs. For more information call 920-3953. HEAP also provides a once per year assist with credits towards your energy costs based on gross incomes of the members of the households.

Funding for many of these programs is determined by statistics generated by the United States Census. In mid-March of this year each household will receive their initial packet from the Census Bureau. It is extremely important that each household fill out their forms correctly and return them by April 1, 2010. The State of California will lose \$3,000 per year for the next 10 years for each person that is not counted, reducing our share of transportation, education, senior and health care funds among other things. By law this information cannot be shared with law enforcement or immigration, so please fill out those forms.

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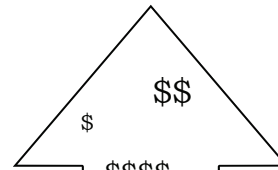
Join your District 6 fellow residents and help clean up San Jose. The annual city-wide litter pick up has been moved forward this year by one month, allowing us to get a jump on things.

Anybody of any age can participated in this event that runs from 8:30-11:30am. Participants can join in at anytime during those hours.

District 6 residents will be meeting at the Sherman Oaks Community Center (same room our meetings are held in!) which is adjacent to Sherman Oaks Elementary School (Fruitdale and Leigh). Park in the lot on Fruitdale Avenue and check in with staff. They will give you the tools you need, a map and you'll be on your way. For more information contact city staff at 277-3208.

Fundraising Goal

\$3,000



You can help. Collect cans and bottles, gather electronic Waste, or donate.

\$130
 E-Waste in August

\$342
 Donations & Cash for Cans & Bottles

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