



# Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

## Notes From The President

Neighbors & Friends,

January's meeting was a productive one. Our Administrative Vice President Randi Kinman lead a general discussion on goals for next year. The following is a list of outcomes; if you have some other ideas, issues, or projects you like to have included please let us know.

- We need another dumpster day
- Vehicle abatement needs to be boosted in the area
- An electronic waste day could be held in conjunction with dumpster day and be used as a fund raiser
- Can we have a flea market at the school
- Raise funds with a hotdog sale
- Expand street sweeping signs; cars are migrating and some streets aren't being swept
- Encourage participation in Burbank/Del Monte NAC priority setting and outreach
- Movie night
- Any/all events will need participation
- Recruit block captains and board officers
- Resolve traffic and parking issues
- Enhanced street sweeping

### Volunteers Needed

SONA needs someone to manage and maintain our website. After serving for several years as SONA's Website Administrators Sonya Paz will relinquish those duties to pay more attention to family and business activities. If you are interested, please let me know. *Michael*

### AGENDA

#### SONA GENERAL MEETING

Thursday

February 14, 2008

6:30 p.m.

**Social Mixer**

7:00 p.m.

**Announcements**

**SJPD**

**General Meeting**

⇒ **Finalize 2008 Activities**

⇒ **Continued Traffic / Parking Issues**

⇒ **Open Forum**

**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**

## Good Neighbor Corner

Another homeowner within the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association's boundaries have taken the time, care, and energy to improve the appearance of their front yard and it goes without saying that it is appreciated. They are Richard & Susan Ryzing who own the home at 880 Sherman Oaks Drive. It has been pointed out to us that Richard & Susan put in the necessary time, care, and energy to improve their front yard which helped to improve appearance of the block. Take the time to enjoy this asset to our neighborhood.

**Rick & Susie Thanks for Being a Good Neighbor**

## Notes and News

Last month we told **Knox Box units** that would allow easy access for emergency responders. We have been advised that, while the program was touted by our local fire department, it is not in effect city wide. We are still checking on the discrepancies.

SONA residents met last month and decided on priorities for **events and activities for 2008**. Among the suggestions were dumpster days, E-waste recycling day, hot dog sales and other events. Residents also agreed that we should continue our efforts to bring traffic calming and parking programs to our neighborhood. If you have an event or activity you are willing to help out with, let us know. SONA residents also agreed that the City should look at hiring full time grant writers and volunteer coordinators which can tap new resources and address the budget deficit.

**SONYA PAZ** has turned over our website coordination to SONA board members. Sonya's business is continuing to grow and we congratulate her on her success. Some of Sonya's paintings have been converted to wearable art in the form of watches that are included in gift bags at many international events including this year's Sundance Festival. We would like to thank Sonya for her years of aid in keeping our website up and running.

**SONA Board Elections** will be held soon term limits will rotate some people off the board, allowing us to bring in new people and keep our volunteer base fresh. Our board works in a cooperative manner. Area Captains help us keep eyes and ears open in the neighborhood. We all pitch in and help set up meetings, arrange for speakers and get the job done. We are looking for new recruits this year. We are also looking for people with web experience so we have more than one person who can manage our site.

### Indoor Safety / Heat Your Home Safely

If you plan to use a wood stove, fireplace, or space heater, be extremely careful. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and remember these safety tips:

- Use fireplace, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and do not leak flue gas into the indoor air space.
- Do not burn paper in a fireplace.
- Ensure adequate ventilation if you must use a kerosene heater.
- Use only the type of fuel your heater is designed to use—don't substitute. Never use charcoal or briquettes as they can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Do not place a space heater within 3 feet of anything that may catch on fire, such as drapes, furniture, or bedding, and never cover your space heater.
- Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water.
- Never leave children unattended near a space heater.
- Make sure that the cord of an electric space heater is not a tripping hazard but do not run the cord under carpets or rugs.
- Avoid using extension cords to plug in your space heater.
- If your space heater has a damaged electrical cord or produces sparks, do not use it.
- Store a multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher near the area to be heated.

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Website	www.sona-sj.com	

SONA's newsletter is published monthly and distributed to almost 1500 residences. It is partially funded by a City of San Jose CAP Grant. All ad copy is due by the 15th of each month. Our all-volunteer group welcomes your participation and comments.

SONA Newsletter Editor: Randi Kinman  
SONA Website Administrator: Help Needed

## **Burbank/Del Monte Neighborhood Advisory Committee**

Years ago when Prop 13 limited raising property taxes, cities found other ways to fund long term infrastructure development and maintenance. The City of San Jose did this by establishing the Redevelopment Agency (RDA). While a separate body than the City Council, council members make up the governing RDA board. RDA has the ability to sell bonds to generate revenue. They outline a project area that is considered legally blighted, create a development plan to rehabilitate the area and pay off the bond through the additional taxes generated in the redevelopment area. Percentages of these funds must be passed to school districts, the County and other groups and the balance is then reinvested.

Redevelopment law is very strict about where and how money can be spent and also requires an oversight group for the project area (project area committee=PAC).

Residents throughout San Jose wondered what it would look like if some of these funds were diverted from large scale projects (e.g. downtown rehab and the North San Jose tech triangle) and diverted to neighborhoods that had been long neglected. The city embarked on a long term project called the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) which declared close to 1/3 of the neighborhoods in the city blighted and divided them up into 20 different groups within the larger project area. Each smaller group developed it's own board of directors. The entire project area was overseen by citizen volunteers who were members of the SNI PAC.

The PAC concentrated on the big picture items, changing the policies that led to so many neighborhoods becoming blighted. Among the accomplishments was enhanced notification when new liquor licenses are requested in SNI areas. This allows neighborhoods to be better informed and has led to the denial of new permits. They also concentrated on helping to develop pilot programs such as graffiti abatement that led to the initial blighted conditions. This allowed the city to test new programs before launching them city wide.

Teams of employees from every department then went into the neighborhoods, helped develop neighborhood groups and helped neighbors and business districts determine what the solution to their problems might be. The one difference in the SNI program is that the additional tax revenues generated do not go into the RDA coffers.

Because each Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC, and now called Neighborhood Action Coalition) determined it's own priorities, the resolution to problems varied from group to group.

The Burbank/Del Monte NAC includes part of SONA. The boundaries are generally east of Fruitdale between Bascom and Meridian in our area. The boundary extends down W. San Carlos to the Diridon area and over to Auzeais at Race. The B/DM NAC includes all or part of five different neighborhood groups along with the West San Carlos Business district. The area within and adjacent to the NAC boundary is thus eligible for funding of projects through RDA. Among the local projects that have already received funding are the Richmond/Menker rehab which includes gang abatement, the incoming signal at Leigh and Kingman and the enhanced street sweeping on many streets.

The original program began in 1999 and a comprehensive list of goals and objectives was developed. This allows neighborhoods to pair up similar items for funding. A good example of this is the streetlight program that was developed for Scott and Auzeais. There is now a neighborhood pedestrian corridor that runs from Bascom to downtown that is always well lit. It spans the Burbank, Buena Vista and Del Monte Neighborhoods in our NAC and through the Delmas NAC into downtown.

**What does this mean for you?** The B/DM NAC is in the process of updating it's priority list. This means reviewing existing proposed projects and developing a new list for funding priorities. At this point the NAC will consider whether or not they want to go forward with existing but unfunded projects such as the feasibility study for the freeway park. It will also be the time when new funding priorities can be added to the list. This is a time where we can develop funding for traffic calming or parking programs, work with our schools and churches and put projects that will benefit SONA residents in the money pipeline. For this to be successful for SONA residents, we will need your participation at upcoming community meetings. We also need people to commit to helping to oversee the projects and act as our neighborhood representative. You will have a chance to help determine how our neighborhood can make positive changes. Meetings should begin in March or April; we'll keep you posted.

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## SONA Resident Help Develop

### New Commission

The City has a number of commissions who advise the City Council on a variety of specific issues such as parks, public art, housing and development. Commissioners are appointed by council for set terms. Thanks to a group of people involved in the SNI PAC (see story page 3) San Jose is developing a commission that would address neighborhood issues that are not addressed elsewhere. For instance, there is no group that permanently advises the council on traffic policies.

A two year city wide pilot program is being developed that will differ from all other commissions. The Neighborhood Commission will be made up of people elected by residents themselves. Each council district will elect 3 representatives and two alternates through a district wide caucus. The newly elected commissioners will be certified by the City Clerk and formally approved by the council. After the two year period City Council will decide whether or not this becomes a permanent city wide commission.

Each neighborhood group is allowed one delegate to the caucus but all are encouraged to attend. A mock caucus was held on Saturday, Jan 12 at Sherman Oaks Community Center as a training exercise. Michael LaRocca has been on the organizing committee. Nancy Moritz, Jussi Rajna and Susan Price-Jang were mock delegates and Randi Kinman was a mock candidate. Volunteers acted as candidates and delegates, speeches were given and voting was done immediately and on site. This program will move forward with the real caucuses later this spring.

This program puts San Jose in the forefront of community organizing and participation. It is being closely watched by cities around the country and participants at the mock caucus helped set standards for district wide caucuses to be held later this year.

Once seated, the Neighborhood Commissioners will have one or two year renewable terms. This will allow the commission to seat new residents each year.



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RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

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## Humane Society of Silicon Valley

With February being National Adopt a Pet Month, this is a good time to visit the local Humane Society. Pets are part of more than half the households in the United States. Those who live in households with pets enjoy better mental and physical health according to studies. Being a pet "owner", however, can raise challenging issues for low income residents.

During February HSSV will spay or neuter your animal for 50% off the regular price. There are also free ongoing programs for pit bull owners and low cost programs for seniors. You can get your dog, cat or rabbit examined and obtain required vaccinations and licenses. You can sign up for obedience classes or purchase pet supplies. You can have your animals tested for common diseases and have them micro-chipped. If you adopt an animal, your fees include a free wellness visit at a local veterinarian within 14 days. Volunteers can always drop off food, toys and blankets to support the shelter.

HSSV has a strong educational program for schools, scouts and other groups that includes tours, training and outreach. Among the creative activities is the kids birthday program that allows you to have a 3-hour party at the shelter where the kids will listen to stories, learn about shelters, receive a gift and then make a canine treat that they will deliver to shelter dogs. For more information contact them at their website [www.hssv.org](http://www.hssv.org), visit them at 2530 Lafayette St., Santa Clara or call 408.727.3383 for services, hours of operations or just to learn how you can help support this operation.