



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association is a volunteer group of residents working to make our neighborhood a better place to live, work and play. Newsletter funds are supplemented by a Community Action & Pride Grant from the City of San Jose.

Issue 122 of your local neighborhood newsletter.

## ***Notes From the President***

SONA doesn't take too many months off, but it seemed appropriate this month to take a little breather. With the school year wrapping up, graduations, Father's Day and the beginning of vacation season, it can be a hectic time. We will start back up with our summer potluck in July, so save the second Thursday for that! Don't worry about impressing us with your cooking; this is simply a "come in, get out of the heat, meet your neighbors and have fun" night. Later this year we'll have another casual night in the park.

I want to take this opportunity to remind all of you that we are seeing an increase in crime in the area. The blocks around Leigh and Stokes (as well as other areas) have seen a jump in auto break-ins. I personally just went through an experience of coming home to find I'd been burglarized. With the downturn in the economy still ongoing and a complete lack of positive activities for our local youth, we can expect to see more problems. It's extremely important that you file a report even if you don't file an insurance claim. The police will not step up patrols if they don't hear from you. Also, call in any suspicious activity. Even if the suspicious people are female and even if you think the police won't get there in time. It's important that they know what's going on and can develop a bigger picture.

What's your favorite local activity during the summer? Concerts, play dates with the kids? Where do you go for a local get away day or afternoon? Share with us! Send us a picture of your favorite summer fun.

A big THANKS to SJPD officers who responded last month after a tree suffered limb drop in the neighborhood. While the Fire Department couldn't do anything and Public Works wasn't all that helpful, it was our local SJPD officers who helped out. Officers helped pull limbs out of public right of way, cordoned off the area and one left his dinner break to come over with tools to help remove debris. This helped establish a safe zone for the kids walking to school the next morning. These officers went above and beyond in following through to make sure the public was safe. Thanks so much.

We hope your summer gets off to a grand start!

***See you at the July meetings...Randi***

## **General Meeting**

**June 9, 2011**

**\*\*\*NO MEETING\*\*\***

**Due to the many conflicts with the last week of school, graduations and other things going on during the first part of June, we have chosen to take a month off. Please join us next month for a summer time potluck and game night. We will take advantage of having access to a cool facility to escape the heat and just take some time to get to know each other. Enjoy your June. Congratulations Grads And Dads!**

## Notes and News

**SONA E-mail List:** We want to add you to our list of online members for several reasons. First of all, it's expensive to deliver newsletters and our grant funding for this has been drying up. Second, it's the right thing to do. We need to reduce the amount of paper we use and become a leaner, greener community. Third, we need to expand our ability to contact each other and stay in touch. The recent McDonalds shooting and school lockdowns showed us how vulnerable we are when we can't communicate with each other. Because our newsletter is delivered monthly, we miss sending you vital information about your neighborhood. We also miss the general "chat" that makes life interesting and fun. Who's having a garage sale, who needs a gardener or plumber, who's looking for a babysitter, who's having a block party, who's selling their home? Online forums will allow us to build these neighbor-to-neighbor ties. **At no point will your information be given out or sold to anybody, at no point will your info be published.**

**PayPal is available on SONA's website!** You can pay your yearly dues with just a few clicks, make donations and contribute to SONA's success. We simply cannot afford to mail out reminders to people, so we are hoping that you will use the PayPal option on the website's front page and make your contribution count. This is a secure and easy way to pay your dues each year and you can also opt to have your dues deducted every year from now on. What a great way to support your neighborhood from the comfort of your own home. **The SONA website is located at <http://www.sona-sj.com/>**

**Friends of Bascom Library and Community Center** are still working hard to identify alternatives that will allow our local site to be opened. There are ongoing meetings being held with other neighborhoods to develop a strategy that brings this to the forefront of budget discussions and work on fund raising ideas. Our community center and library will be doomed to remaining vacant and unused for many years if we can't start moving folks at City Hall to respond to us. If you want to join in on this effort or just want more information, contact either Steve or Marlene (see below). The Friends of Bascom also have a Facebook page that easily keeps you in touch with the latest information.

The City of San Jose recently wrapped up the redistricting that is required after the census comes out every ten years. Residents from around the city spoke out at a series of meetings about how they did (or did not) want things to change. Each council district must attempt to be as close to the average population (gross population of San Jose divided by 10). Our district saw a few changes at the southern and western borders, gaining a new neighborhood. Several SONA members monitored these meetings and we can say democracy can often be loud and messy, but it was an interesting process to watch.

While we haven't experienced a heat wave yet, the odds are that before the next newsletter comes out, we will. If your home does not have air conditioning, don't forget that the City of San Jose has "cooling stations" scattered around town at local community centers. This free service allows you to grab the kids or seniors and take a much needed break when it's too hot. For more information, you can visit the city's website at [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov) or call the 24-hour service number at 535-3500.

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SONA's newsletter is published monthly and distributed to 1500 residences. All ad copy is due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Newsletter editor is Randi Kinman. Our all-volunteer group welcomes your participation. Feel free to contact any of us with ideas or questions.



## **Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County**

Our May 2011 meeting was all about gardening, plants and pests. Thanks to a wonderful presentation by Laura Westley and a Q&A period after, SONA residents were given great facts of what the Master Gardener program is all about.

Since 1914 the University of California Cooperative Extension has provided residents with education and training in all areas of horticulture. The UCCE program helps keep local experts close at hand for residents around the state. In 1982 the first program in Santa Clara County began. Master Gardeners receive extensive training and then complete volunteer hours before becoming certified. All are volunteers though many work in the field of landscaping and/or gardening. You don't have to be a homeowner or have an extensive piece of property to be interested in growing plants and food at home. The Master Gardener program covers everything from landscape renovation to what grows best in a pot on the patio.

The Master Gardener program provides a variety of programs and services through their hotline, website and at the many demonstration gardens around the county. The San Jose hotline (408.282.3105) operates from 9:30am-12:30pm Monday through Friday to answer your gardening questions. You can also bring in items for identification at the main offices located at 1553 Berger Drive Monday through Wednesday. The website allows you to stay up on the latest events and news, request a speaker for your group and provides you with lots of hints, information and links to other sites. Visit [www.mastergardeners.org/scc](http://www.mastergardeners.org/scc).

The Master Gardener program operates demonstration gardens throughout the county. If you are thinking of re-doing landscape, want to see how a water wise yard might look, are interested in growing something new, you can see these ideas in action in different climates throughout the county. The program also offers classes and workshops that allow you to figure out how to put your ideas into action.

For those who grow food at home, the program has a wealth of resources. You can use online tools to find out what grows best where and when to plant it as well as monthly gardening tips and "to do" lists. The Master Gardeners operate test gardens in various locations that allow them to determine whether or not a new tomato, pepper or chile grows consistently well here and then conducts plant sales at two major events each year. The spring sale is held at Kelly Park while the fall sale is held at Prusch Farm. If you are shopping for plants, get there early and bring something to carry your purchases in. These events have a wide variety of vendors offering anything you could possibly want for your yard, patio or acreage. The workshops and seminars run all day long, there are plenty of activities for kids and each location is a great place to spend the day.

The Master Gardener program can connect you with an amazing list of resources. You can download a copy of the California Master Gardener Handbook or pick one up at headquarters. While you're there you might also want to pick up one of the citrus or chili cookbooks on hand. You can connect to local certified landscapers, find a specific plant society or simply get caught up on the latest information concerning pests. Your group, organization, church or business can call on the speaker's bureau and they will tailor the visit to your needs.

Many classes and talks are held throughout the year at local libraries as well as at the demonstration gardens. Check the website, sign up for their online tips (emailed to you monthly) or join their Facebook page at UCCE Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County.

This organization runs on volunteers and does not charge for events, classes or workshops. It doesn't matter whether you are an old hand at gardening, a professional landscaper or just want to grow a single plant on your patio; this is the group that can help you achieve your goals. Many thanks to Laura for inspiring us.



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## Summer Activities

While SONA has a few activities in the hopper for this summer, there are other groups providing great things for those summer days and night. The SJ Parks and Rec Department has an ongoing list of classes, outings, pool hours and programs that you can obtain online at [www.sanjoseca.gov/prns](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/prns) or by picking up a catalogue at City Hall or branch libraries and community centers. Remember that PRNS also runs cooling stations during those days when the heat is just too much.

The Guadalupe River Park Conservancy has programs for youth and adults along with summer camps. You can sign up online at [www.grpg.org](http://www.grpg.org), visiting the main office at 438 Coleman or calling 298-7675.

You can hop over to Campbell and Los Gatos using the Los Gatos Creek Trail and take advantage of farmers markets, concerts and other free fun events.

Downtown San Jose hosts concerts and festivals along with museums and parks, all just a short hop on light rail away. Grab the kids and cool down in the fountains at Plaza de Caesar Chavez, explore the Children's Discovery Museum during the day or head out for an adult date night and enjoy the outdoor dining.

Have a tip for having fun? Let us know and we'll spread the word. Join us later this year for game night and an evening in the park. Have a safe and fun summer.