

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association...the voice of your neighborhood



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association (SONA) general meetings are open to all interested parties. General meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Bascom Community Center, 1000 S. Bascom Ave beginning at 6:30pm. SONA board meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at the Sherman Oaks Community Center at 6:30pm. Newsletter is partially funded with a Community Action and Pride (CAP) Grant from the City of San Jose.

Issue 178 of Your Neighborhood Newsletter

Notes from the President

This month I'd like to write a message of a more serious nature. Many of us watched in utter disbelief of the ongoing problem in Flint, MI. Thank goodness we are not facing a problem of that magnitude. But, that doesn't mean that in our little corner of San Jose we aren't facing some significant social and humanitarian issues: homelessness and crime. Although not necessarily reliant on each other certainly they often interact.

Homelessness is more and more prevalent in our society, an unfortunate outgrowth from a lack of mental health services, a failing criminal justice system and the fallout from the recent economic recession. People have been dumped on the street to fend for themselves and often must resort to living in squalor and substandard quarters.

SONA is attempting to help where we can and I urge you to read the next column that highlights a program that is designed to help these people. Get involved! It doesn't take much effort. But, I assure you, YOUR HELP IS MOST WELCOMED AND DEEPLY NEEDED.

Lastly, a proposal was presented at the Jan. 14th meeting at Immanuel Church. To paraphrase, by design if any illegal activity should occur in/on a rental unit, regardless as to who commits the act, the tenant will be summarily evicted. This is a very poor piece of legislation that serves to only victimize the victims again. From our experience, a small number of landlords have created "slum" properties, refusing to bring them up to code. Their objective is to take as much as they can from these tenants (many of which are undocumented) and keep them living in a state of perpetual fear. This perpetuates a criminal element. This piece of madness is neither fair or just. We should let our leaders know our feelings and urge them to rethink this measure. Yes, we need to control crime in our neighborhoods but not at the sacrifice of human dignity.

SONA General Meeting

February 11, 2016

6:30-8:30pm

Bascom Library Community Room

Second Floor

1000 S. Bascom Ave

Homeless Care Kits

Pack-a-thon

Residents from SONA and the adjacent neighborhoods will package up care kits for distribution to the homeless. While we often wonder who is going to "do something" about helping the homeless, we are the ones who can "do something" by helping those on the front lines who are trying to move folks into shelter.

Our goal is to package up 150 care kits that include basic necessities. Thanks to a generous donation, we have toothbrushes, floss and toothpaste. You can help by donating clean socks, energy bars, disposable razors, travel sized soap, shampoo, body wash, wipes, feminine hygiene supplies, bandaids, q-tips and non-alcohol anti-bacterial gels. If it can fit in a 1-gallon zip lock bag, we can use it.

In addition, we will be taking in mittens, gloves, hats and cold weather gear (gently used and clean).

All products will be delivered to the Valley Medical Foundation for distribution to the teams that conduct homeless outreach.

So, join us or simply drop by with supplies. If you can't make it but want to donate, contact Randi at randikinman@yahoo.com or 408.835.2881. We can't solve the whole problem but we can solve a piece of it.

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association...the voice of your neighborhood

Notes and News

Congratulations to Del Mar High School for becoming an International Baccalaureate School. This is a great achievement for the district and an opportunity for our kids to succeed. This new designation allows the school to offer advanced classes that are weighted in a student's GPA, may be counted in some cases as college credit, and ensures students have a greater opportunity to succeed. Go Dons!

San Jose's Parks/Rec department is extending the discount rates for fitness centers until February 12 so hop over to Bascom Community Center or go to www.sanjoseca.gov/prns and grab this deal. PRNS allows you to hop over to other community centers and use the fitness rooms or join classes, so this is a great opportunity.

Looking for a unique way to celebrate Valentine's Day? You can adopt a rose in your beloved's name and help support our Heritage Rose Garden at the same time. For \$60 you can choose a rose and a commemorative plaque will be installed for a year. Your package also includes gourmet cookie from Café Too! and chocolate from San Jose's own Schurra's. You can visit the Guadalupe Parks & Gardens Visitors Center at 438 Coleman, visit the website at www.grpg.org or call them 408.298.7657.

GRPG also offers a wide variety of school and nature programs, classes for all ages and lessons in how to prune your roses and fruit trees. One of San Jose's gems.

Valley Medical Center

In January a group of community leaders from SONA, Thornton/Downing, Buena Vista, Burbank and the Burbank/Del Monte NAC, and local businesses met with the top administrators and department heads of VMC to discuss ongoing problems. Our goal was to establish a working partnership that ensures our neighborhoods are safe and to make sure VMC's clients are not simply winding up on nearby streets.

New programs that will be funded in the next fiscal year include mobile outreach teams who can bring medical and mental health workers to hot spots. The homeless outreach team will also be adding more staff. This will significantly boost existing programs, but won't answer the immediate needs we face.

Staff and administrators agreed that it was necessary to walk the neighborhoods with us and identify chronic and urgent problems. Just as the Jungle was an identified hot spot that was targeted for outreach, our neighborhoods and business districts have become another hot spot. As the people who deal with it daily, we know where the teams need to go.

We also pointed out that there was a need for just one number to call with issues. We pointed out that we aren't qualified to diagnose issues and that it was a huge waste of money to call 911 when what is needed is homeless or mental health outreach. If somebody is passed out on the sidewalk, they can refuse service if the fire department is dispatched and once they get up and move they are not committing a crime. VMC is developing a hot line.

We also identified the need for better communication when security issues arise. Residents only knew of a recent active shooter lock down because San Jose City College PD sent out an alert.

Meetings will be ongoing. Many thanks to Brian Darrow of Supervisor Ken Yeager's office for facilitating.