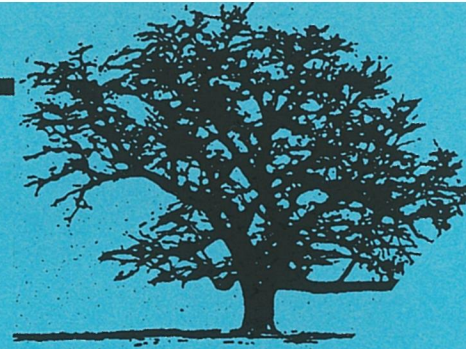

BENNETT VALLEY VOICE

BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION
VOLUME 19 NUMBER ONE WINTER ISSUE, 1995



A HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION

25TH ANNIVERSARY FOR THE B.V.H.A.

The Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The association was founded when a group of residents realized that they needed to organize in order to preserve and protect the rural, scenic character of Bennett Valley. What led them to this conclusion were two development proposals; a mobile home park in what is now Woodside, and one-fourth acre home lots near the Firehouse.

Bennett Valley residents held meetings at the Grange to discuss the future of the Valley. As a result, the Homeowner's Association was formed, and by-laws were drawn up by Secretary Paul Mowbray. On June 1, 1991, the Articles of Incorporation were signed by then Secretary of State, Edmund G. Brown, Jr. The first Board of Directors for the Association were Walter Benson, Ash Cutchin, Paul Hamilton, William Jacobs, Bradford W. Lundborg, Paul Mowbray, Charles Nunnemaker, William Pisenti, and David Sandine.

The first Bennett Valley Area Plan was then drawn up. The Plan had provisions restricting growth, pro-

tecting the environment, zoning for the valley and slopes, and agricultural and residential land use. In all of Sonoma County there are only three areas that have such an area plan; Bennett Valley, Sea Ranch, and Alexander Valley.

By 1977 it was clear that the first area plan, although a great stride forward, was inadequate. A 15,500 acre Bennett Valley Study district was established by the Board of Supervisors in response to local resident concern about the impacts of residential development. An eleven-person Citizens Committee, appointed by the Board of Supervisors to provide a policy framework for the second area plan, set as its goals provision of residential opportunities and the protection of agriculture while retaining the rural character in Bennett Valley. The 1978 Specific Plan came into being.

In 1989, the Board of Supervisors adopted an update of the above Plan. The Board determined that the Bennett Valley Specific Plan was either redundant or in conflict with the Sonoma County General Plan. But the revision preserved the spirit and intent of the Bennett

Valley Specific Plan of 1978.

During the 1992 Compliance Review, some deletions and background language did occur, but the content of the original plan was still preserved.

On July 1994, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution which gave the B.V.H.A. official recognition. The resolution was important because it gave the association status as an advisory body to the County. This gave the Association the responsibility for reviewing and making recommendations on proposed development projects within the Bennett Valley Study Area.

The resolution also stated that the Homeowner's Association "...shall serve as a forum for community participation in the formation of

(continued on next page)

In This Issue

- THE PURPOSE OF DESIGN REVIEW
- MEMO FROM THE BOARD
- A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
- SONOMA MT. NATURE PRESERVE

(continued from page one)

policy and/or regulations that materially affect Bennett Valley. The B.V.H.A. shall provide a bridge for communication between governmental agencies and the general public."

The first issue of the *Bennett Valley Voice* was published in January, 1978. The Board began the Newsletter because they felt that a way was needed to inform Bennett Valley residents of matters that might affect their community. *The Voice* was seen as the means of doing this. The first editors were John and Cindy Bridgwater.

The main article in the first issue reported on the Citizens Advisory Committee that was being formed to help develop the Bennett Valley Specific Plan.

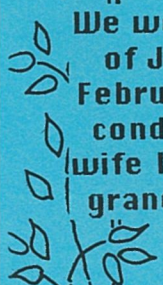
It is hoped that looking back on the last 25 years of history of Bennett Valley will remind us all that this is a very special community, and will inspire us to work to keep it that way.



IN MEMORIAM JERRY TOSO

MEMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We were very sorry to hear of Jerry Toso's death on February 17th. Our deepest condolences go out to his wife Isabel, and to his sons, grandchildren, and family.



THE PURPOSE OF DESIGN REVIEW

Bennett Valley Design Review was born with the adoption of the Bennett Valley Specific Plan in 1978 by action of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors. It was an outgrowth of the desire of the community to preserve and protect the natural state and the visual integrity of the Bennett Valley area while accommodating the projected growth that would more than double the population of the area. The Design Review element of the Plan was an important ingredient in mitigating the impact that would accompany the large amount of projected growth.

This was to be done by implimenting the following standards which would enable the additional structures to be hidden or screened from view as much as possible: *to have structures designed to fit the lay of the land; to have structures painted in earthtone colors which blended in with the natural surrounding of the individual parcel; to minimize the impacts of roadways and driveways; to identify areas of sensitivity which needed to be protected ; to preclude building to protect open vistas, hilltops, ridgelines, riparian and unique biotic habitats, unstable areas, etc.; to encourage the screening of existing structures which might be highly visible with native vegetation; and to encourage all residents to buy into the concept of blending in*

with our natural surroundings by following the standards of Design Review when remodeling, renovating, or maintaining structures.

The Design Review Committee is made up of seven members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Each member serves a term of five years. Members come from various walks of life and many bring particular areas of expertise such as engineering, architecture, farming, construction, and planning. Vacancies open up periodically and anyone who is interested in being considered should write Supervisor Mike Cale a letter of application. Potential members should be interested in furthering the goals and policies of the Bennett Valley Plan, have the time and inclination to familiarize himself/herself with the content of the Bennett Valley Plan, which includes the Design Review element, and be willing to meet twice monthly and make site reviews on most projects.

It is not an easy job, and the responsibility is not to be taken lightly. However, for the most part, Design Review has been effective over the years in helping preserve the beauty of Bennett Valley from the ravages of thoughtless growth which has afflicted numerous other areas in the Bay area which were once on a par with Bennett Valley.



MEMO FROM THE BOARD



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thank you for electing me to be a director and for allowing me to serve valley residents. A friend once told me that we should all serve our community in some capacity "because someone has to stand up and catch the tomatoes." I guess it is now my turn.

We are now in our 25th year as an organization, and as we look around Bennett Valley, we can see the results of the past efforts to preserve the beauty of the area. Early residents could have easily let development take its course, and the results would have been similar to those in Rincon Valley. We are all thankful to our founding directors for their vision and forethought. The effort to preserve and protect is never really won. Developers want to develop and cities want to expand. The pressure will always be present to circumvent any safeguards we have in place to protect the valley. The Bennett Valley Area Plan is in place; however, it takes constant vigilance on our part to see that the county enforces the plan. This past year a resolution by the Board of Supervisors gave us an official presence in the political process by making us an Advisory Organization to the Board.

Three issues we will be closely following this year are the golf course expansion, communication towers, and the question of ultimate urban boundaries for the city of Santa Rosa. We will keep you informed about these and other issues through articles in *The Voice*.

All residents of Bennett Valley are invited to attend Board meetings on the third Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Bennett Valley Fire Station.

Please take time now to make out the check for you annual dues.

Thank you,

Bill Sullivan

BOARD TRANSITIONS

There were three openings on the Board in last October's election. Bill Sullivan was re-elected, and Nancy Dell'Ergo and Ray Longman were elected to a first term.

Leaving the Board are Lois Brown and Geoff Hornsby. Lois served two terms; one as *Voice* Editor, and one as President. Geoff served one term. He was responsible for working on a system whereby Realtors would inform prospective clients of the restrictions of the Bennett Valley Area Plan.

We would like to thank both Lois and Geoff for their years of service to the community.

BU PRESERVATION FUND

In 1995, this fund was established to be used exclusively as a resource to insure that any development project complies with all of the recommendations and mitigation measures placed upon it by the County.

A separate account was established for this Fund apart from the B.V.H.A. membership account. However, it has been pointed out to the Board that it would be best that the Preservation Fund be totally separate from the B.V.H.A.

Therefore, the Association Board is now working on how best to do this so that the Fund can be used more effectively as a tool if rules and regulations of the BV Area Plan are flagrantly disregarded.

Thank you to all 1995 Preservation Fund contributors. If anyone wishes to give to this fund, their contribution can be sent in care of the B.V.H.A.

(more Memo next page)

(Memo continued from previous page)

T-SHIRTS

Bennett Valley T-shirts, whose sale raises money for our Fire Protection District, are available at the Fire Station.

The shirts have a beautiful design of the rolling hills of the valley, and come in either Oaktree green or natural. The cost is \$12.00 for sizes M,L, and XL, and \$14.00 for XX L.

GOLF COURSE UPDATE

Under pressure from the golfing community, the Santa Rosa City Council has decided that at the present time it isn't feasible to built a 9-hole Golf Course adjacent to the existing Bennett Valley Golf Course.

The City Council has given a challenge to the golfing community to come up with a site that can be developed as an 18 hole course. If this does not come to pass,we will be sure to keep you appraised of the next development in this unfolding drama.

VOTING

March 26th is the day of the California Primary Election. Several Board members have volunteered to drive any Valley residents needing a ride to the polls .

If you would like a ride, call Roger Creer at 584-5199, and transportation will be arranged.

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

There is an opening for a new member on the Design Review Committee.

Anyone interested in serving on this committee should submit a letter of application to Supervisor Mike Cale, 575 Administration Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.

NEW BRIDGE ON GRANGE ROAD

The bridge crossing Matanzas Creek on Grange Road will be completely replaced. The project is now in the planning stage.

The current plans call for the new bridge to be built to Federal Specifications with some exceptions, and to be constructed to the west of the present one. The roadbed will be 12 feet higher than the present bridge to eliminate the disconcerting dip that exists now.

The B.V.H.A. Board will be meeting with Susan Klassen, who is a designer with the Department of Public Works, to discuss all aspects of the project.

We will be sure to keep you informed as the project proceeds.

PERMIT FOR TOWERS DENIED

On March 5, 1996, the application by Radio Station KMXN to install four communication towers on the Southeast side of Petaluma Hill Road near Crane Canyon Road was denied by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors. The vote on this proposal was three to two. Voting against the building of the 195' towers were Mike Cale, Ernie Carpenter, and Tim Smith. These Supervisors felt that the structures would have a significant visual impact on the surrounding area. The two Supervisors supporting the application were Jim Harberson and Paul Kelley.

At the February meeting, the B.V.H.A. Board unanimously agreed to write to Supervisor Mike Cale opposing the construction of these towers.

KMXN radio station has said that they would be unable to operate if the permit was denied. However, we understand that another station (KSRO) has offered them the use of their facility. It is not an emergency situation for them as they have said.

Sonoma County is currently studying the entire issue of communication towers, and how to formulate provisions for towers in the General Plan.



SONOMA MOUNTAIN NATURE PRESERVE

Sonoma Mountain is a volcanic ridge formed less than seven million years ago. Its geological heritage makes for unusual and diverse habitats. That is why there is a 210 acre Nature Conservancy Preserve located on the western slope of the mountain. This is the Fairfield-Osborn Preserve.

Fairfield -Osborn was the former president of the New York Zoological Society and the author of two influential books on ecology titled *Our Plundered Planet*, and the *Limits of the Earth*. His daughter and son-in-law, Joan and William Roth lived on the present site, and in 1972 donated it to the Nature Conservancy. Osborn dedicated his life to educating others about the importance of protecting the environment, and that is the purpose of the Conservancy Preserve. It serves as a classroom and field laboratory for biology students from Sonoma State University, and for fifth-grade students who take part each year in the Preserve's environmental education program.

The Preserve is open to the general public on weekends only during daylight hours. It is located at 6543 Lichau Road which is off Roberts Road. There is an interpretive center and self-guided nature trail. It is a wonderful place to see year-round wildflower displays, and to watch for birds during spring and fall migrations.

Source: Dwight Holing, California Wild Lands.



BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Membership Dues 1996 \$10.00

WE'VE APPRECIATED YOUR PAST SUPPORT AND HOPE THAT IT WILL CONTINUE THROUGH 1996!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

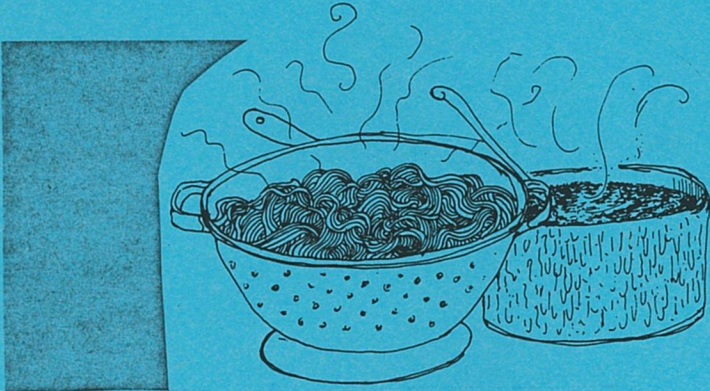
Please make your check payable to B.V.H.A. and use the enclosed envelope



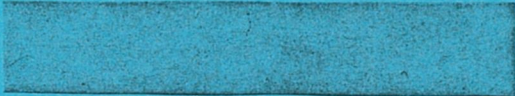
ZA891067CAR-RT SCRT **RD 45
 MRS. MARJORIE EHMANN SIMON
 2820 BARDY RD
 SANTA ROSA, CA 95404

BULK RATE
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 SANTA ROSA, CA
 PERMIT NO. 945

BENNETT VALLEY
 VOICE
 BENNETT VALLEY
 HOMEOWNERS ASSOC.
 P. O. Box 2666
 Santa Rosa, CA 95405

GRANGE SPAGHETTI FEED
SATURDAY APRIL 27TH
GRANGE HALL



BONA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Bill Sullivan | President |
| Roger Creer | Vice-President |
| Marge Simon | Secretary |
| Sharon Delaney | Treasurer |
| Marilyn Stocks | Jerry Toso |
| Ray Longman | Eve Boling |

Nancy Del'Ergo

The Board meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Bennett Valley Fire Station. We invite your attendance and participation.