



Bennett Valley VOICE

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Bennett Valley Homeowners Association (BVHA)

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GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY !

The first issue of the Bennett Valley VOICE was dated January, 1978. Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association was incorporated in 1971, spurred by a proposed mobile home park in Bennett Valley. The proposal was stopped, but it was seven years before BVHA had a newsletter. "***BENNETT VALLEY'S FUTURE - YOU HAVE A CHOICE***", the headline story on Volume 1, No. 1, was written by Brian Kahn who was then the 1st District Supervisor. He explained that he was concerned about the haphazard residential development which he had seen in Bennett Valley during the two years he had been on the Board of Supervisors. As he said then, "***If you're interested in the future of Bennett Valley now is the time to get involved.***"

Other quotes from this first VOICE follow:

"We hope this maiden issue of the Bennett Valley VOICE will signal the optimistic beginning of a continuing source of information to serve the diverse opinion represented by individual members ... of the Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association. The VOICE should be just that: The voice of the people of Bennett Valley. We all love this valley and we need a strong medium to make our opinions known to both neighbors and government. Let us know what you think and hopefully the VOICE will act as a powerful amplifier to make your voice heard by all in Bennett Valley and beyond."

These hopes are the heart of the Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association. Its VOICE should provide a strong medium to make our varying opinions known to both neighbors and the government as we find ways to work together to promote and preserve the rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley.

The BVHA Board of Directors has introduced a number of changes in order to provide residents with more information and opportunities for participation. One change relates to the number of issues of the Bennett Valley VOICE, which has been increased from three a year to at least six a year. At least two issues are sent to all parcel owners in the Valley. The VOICE is sent out every *other* month during the year and the schedule is arranged so that it should be received just prior to the BVHA Board meeting that month. The VOICE will include information about what occurred at the last two Board meetings and the tentative agenda for the next Board meeting. (See pages 4 & 5.) You are encouraged to attend these meetings, in order to present your opinions about the issues.

Bennett Valley 2000 (now to be Bennett Valley 2001) is another innovation by the BVHA Board. These Community Forums

TURN TO BVHA MEMBERSHIP, PAGE TWO

BVHA MEMBERSHIP; A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

increase both information for and discussion by Bennett Valley residents. At the last Forum held in October, the following were identified by those in attendance as the important issues facing the Valley:

1.) What role should the BVHA Board take to help increase funding to the Bennett Valley Fire Department? 2.) How can the Board broaden its efforts in increasing the sense of community and communication between the BVHA and all homeowners in the Valley? 3.) What steps might be taken by the Board to determine whether water concerns are a growing problem in Bennett Valley?

In the recent BVHA Board elections each of the six candidates running for the three available positions were asked to write their thoughts on these particular issues (which were published in full in the last issue of the VOICE mailed only to the voting members of BVHA). As stated by Board member Michael Friedenberg at the last meeting of the Board, ***“This was the first contested election (in some time) and a goal for the future will be to ... make every effort to be inclusive of all in the Valley. Each of the candidates’ written thoughts are a useful reference for BVHA’s future actions.”***

This year be sure to join BVHA, so you can receive all the issues of the VOICE, be kept informed about important issues in the Valley, make your opinions known, and be a voting member of BVHA. Most important of all, we need *your* participation and involvement, through your paid membership, in order to achieve better representation and communication in Bennett Valley. Use the attached membership statement and envelope to join us for 2001!

BENNETT VALLEY TIDBITS

● **BENNETT VALLEY CALENDARS** - Thanks to all who purchased our second calendar of Bennett Valley views and vistas. And thanks to Laura Claggett at Longs Drugs; Dennis, Doug and Babbette at Ace Hardware; and Aaron Smith at Copperfield’s, who, as a community gesture, gave us space to display the calendars. From our printing of 300 calendars, all but a few are sold. Fire Chief Kent Reynolds has offered to keep those at the BV Fire Station for sale by the firefighters on duty, so if you want to buy a calendar, you can do it at the Bennett Valley Fire Station. Remember that all profits from the calendar sales will be donated to the Bennett Valley Volunteers Firefighters’ Association. Now is a good time to begin planning your entries for our 2002 calendar with these suggested guidelines: Color slides as well as color prints will be accepted -- in fact slides are being encouraged because of superior color quality in reproducing images. To avoid distortion in the selected photographs, only horizontal photos will be considered and since we need images for all twelve months, it is not too soon to capture the unique beauty of Bennett Valley on film.

● **LIVING AMONG THE OAKS** - At Bennett Valley 2000, Rob Gross, a consulting arborist specializing in oak trees, spoke to us regarding the condition of our Oak trees. He talked about a pamphlet called “Living Among the Oaks” that was available through UC Berkeley. This pamphlet presents practical information on protecting and enhancing native oaks growing on California rangelands, especially in areas of subdivision and urbanization. The first pamphlet is free, but any more will cost \$1.50 per copy. If you want more than one copy, the check should be made out to the UC Regents. These pamphlets can be obtained from the following address;

University of California
Environmental Science, Policy and Management
160 Mulford Hall, #3114
Berkeley, CA 94720-3114

Also available is Oak Information online. Two web addresses are as follows:

- 1.) <http://danr.ucop.edu/ihrmp>
- 2.) <http://himlaya.cnr.berkeley.edu/oaks/TN26OAKDEATHbw.pdf>

There will be more information about Sudden Oak Death in the next issue of the VOICE. If you have any questions about ordering this pamphlet or using these web sites, please contact Bobbie Blair, 542-1608.

● **GRANGE ROAD BRIDGE** - Negotiations continue between the consulting engineer and Sonoma County Public Works regarding completing the detailed plans for the proposed Grange Road Bridge. The plan is for it to follow the same roadway, thus reducing the number of oak trees which will have to be cut down.

MATANZAS CREEK WATERSHED

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The Sotoyome Resource Conservation District (SRCD) invites the Bennett Valley community to the first in a series of Community Creek Stewardship meetings for the Matanzas Creek Watershed. The SRCD Watershed Stewardship Program focuses on collaboration with the community to restore natural resources, stabilize roads, control erosion, improve water quality and monitor creeks and watersheds.

DATE: Thursday, February 15, 2000

TIME: 7:00 to 8:30 pm

LOCATION: Bennett Valley Grange Hall

This Matanzas Creek Watershed Program is the direct result of our initial Bennett Valley 2000 meetings in 1998 - 1999, when one of the invited speakers was Bob Tancreto, Manager of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. He mentioned the Watershed Stewardship Program as a possibility for us and referred the BVHA Board of Directors to the Sotoyome Resource Conservation District. The Board requested assistance in forming the Matanzas Creek Watershed Group from SRCD. After receiving the necessary authorization and funding, SRCD is now able to proceed.

Volunteers participating in the Program receive training and assistance in assessing the watershed in which they live. Volunteer monitoring offers the community a way to learn about their watershed while creating a valuable scientific record to use in prioritizing restoration and erosion control projects. The creek stewardship program allows volunteers to participate once a year, once a month or more often. It includes training for water quality monitoring, measuring creek channels and siltation, evaluating erosion on roads and slopes, and measuring water flow throughout the watershed. As potential restoration projects are identified, SRCD can assist groups in applying for funds and implementing projects. Resource Conservation Districts are non-regulatory local districts formed to assist communities in the conservation of watersheds. You can call 569-1448 for more information.

BENNETT VALLEY

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

● **BE SURE TO GET YOUR "SAFETY" ADDRESS SIGNS** - You can still get the Explorers' address signs that are extremely useful when emergency crews (as well as your guests) are looking for your home. They have a green background with white lettering, are easily seen both day and night from both directions, and cost only \$12.50. You can easily attach them to a mail box, post, fence, etc. To order them please call 578-7761.

● **BENNETT VALLEY EXPLORERS** - The Explorers are high school students who live in Bennett Valley and are interested in firefighting training, which they receive on Monday evenings at the BV Fire Station. This year there are nine Explorers in Bennett Valley. With the funds they raise, such as through the sale of "Safety" Address Signs, they send a group to the Annual Firemen's Academy in Southern California for a week of intensive hands-on firefighting training. Last year six of them were able to attend this training. Four of the six have since graduated from high school and are now serving as well-trained volunteers with the Bennett Valley Fire District.

● **GOLD RIDGE/BENNETT VALLEY FIRE INTERNS** - The interns are college students who are enrolled in the Fire Science program at Santa Rosa J.C. There are about 20 to 30 interns each semester in the Gold Ridge/ Bennett Valley Fire Districts and they are rotated between the different fire stations for broader work experience. They spend about one to two days (16 hours) working each week in this program and help tremendously in the daytime staffing at these fire stations. To pursue a profession as a firefighter in California, it is necessary to receive a California State Firefighters' Certificate, which takes an Associate of Science Degree in Fireman's Science. There are only two quality Fireman Science programs in California: one in San Diego and the other in Santa Rosa.

● **CURRENT STAFF, BENNETT VALLEY FIRE STATION** - Duncan Smith and Brandon Palmer were the two new firefighting engineers who were hired for the BV Fire Station as of the first week of July, 2000. They worked with Greg Martin, Battalion Chief, to cover shifts A, B & C, at the Fire Station. Brandon has now been hired by Santa Rosa City Fire, so Josh Kitchens was just selected to replace him on the B Shift, with Duncan and Greg continuing to cover the A & C shifts. In the evening/nighttime hours the BV Fire Station pays three experienced firefighters, Trevor Galeazzi, Jason Mallory and Ryan Tweltridge, to work with some of Bennett Valley's current 25/26 volunteers, in the sleeper program.

**REPORT ON THE BVHA BOARD MEETINGS,
November 15th & December 20th, 2000**

The Board Agenda for each of these meetings is posted on a Bulletin Board at the BV Fire Station at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. The agenda includes a brief description of items for proposed action or discussion at the meeting, including information on the scope of the proposed action. The purpose of this is so the public can be informed ahead of time about what issues or actions are to be considered at that particular meeting.

At the 11/15/00 Board meeting, there were eight Board members and approximately 22 other Bennett Valley residents in attendance. Bill Sullivan, President, introduced the members present who were running for the Board positions in the next month's elections: Michael Cronin, Jim Cobb, Gordon Endow, Marilee Jensen and Lolly Mesches. After the Treasurer's report, Michael Friedenberg suggested that the Board develop a policy to determine the best investment of BVHA funds, as some of the funds are now in time-restricted Certificates of Deposit. Suzanne Dougherty then provided information about the Bennett Valley Calendars and recommended that any profits from the calendars be turned over to the B.V. Fire Protection District. This recommendation was approved unanimously by the Board.

As a follow-up to BV 2000, the Board approved a \$150 donation to the BV Grange for their help. The Fire Committee from BV 2000 (Michael Friedenberg, Frank LaCombe and Weldon Jackson) met with Kent Reynolds, BV Fire Chief, and Gary Galeazzi, BV Fire Captain, to discuss funding needs for the BV Fire Protection District. The District needs a number of specific items, such as a heater and a well, as well as a significant increase in their overall revenue. Recently, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors has authorized funding for a voluntary "strategic analysis" of local fire districts. The BV Fire District has requested inclusion in this analysis, in order to have their operations and financial condition evaluated in light of the best strategic management practices in fire service at this time. Once this is completed, Kent Reynolds will contact the BV Fire Committee with the results and recommendations about the financial help which would best serve their needs. Meanwhile Kent encouraged BV residents to attend their BV Fire Board meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, at 7 pm. Board member, Marilee Jensen, generally attends these Fire Board meetings for further information and coordination between these two BV organizations.

The next item discussed was Nicole Wagner's complaint about the bus stop on her property being removed by her neighbors, after BVHA had agreed to pay for a dumpster for them. A number of people spoke up at the meeting who were willing to help

rebuild this bus stop. Nicole Wagner submitted an estimate of approximately \$2,100 to rebuild the bus stop; but, as Carl Gast stated, "with volunteer labor the bus stop could be rebuilt for closer to \$1,000 to \$1,500." The BVHA Board agreed to offer Nicole Wagner \$1,050 as redress for her damages, with 5 Board members in favor and 2 nay votes.

As for the upcoming election on the BVHA Board of Directors, it was agreed by the Board that the BVHA Nominating Committee, Phil Temko, Eve Boling and Jean LaCombe, would count the ballots on 12/20/00.

As a new Board member, Michael Friedenberg requested that the Board develop a more complete orientation package to the Board, such as the BVHA Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, policies, a mission statement and information about the Brown Act as it relates to BVHA. The Board agreed.

At the 12/20/00 Board meeting, six Board members and approximately 29 other BV residents attended the meeting. The meeting started with two complaints from the audience about the incumbents using membership lists to solicit votes and about having to be a dues-paying member of BVHA in order to vote for the Board of Directors.

The first action the Board took was to approve \$2,000 from BVHA funds towards repair of the heater at the BV Fire Station, which hadn't been working correctly for some time. This check was sent directly to the Fire Chief, Kent Reynolds. In regards to a BVHA Web Site, Kathleen Elsey, Michael Friedenberg and David Phillips had come up with a preliminary design, which the Board agreed should be used to solicit bids.

A letter and a check for \$1050 had been sent to Nicole Wagner on 11/21/00, but as of this date (12/20/00) it had not been cashed. Marilee Jensen had written a letter from BVHA to Sonoma Co. Public Works requesting improvement of the center reflectors on the 3.8 miles of Bennett Valley Road from Warm Springs Rd., westerly. John Maitland, Supervisor of Road Maintenance, has agreed to explore the matter further, in his usual cooperative spirit.

In the BVHA Board of Directors' election, Phil Temko, Chairman of the BVHA Nominating Committee, stated that they had received and counted 210 ballots. The candidates elected were Marilee Jensen, Leanore Mesches and Marilyn Stocks. The meeting was then adjourned. Following the meeting, the new Board elected the following officers: President-Marilee Jensen, Vice-President-Michael Friedenberg, Treasurer-Nancy Dell'Ergo, Corresponding Secretary-Lolly Mesches, Recording Secretary-Bobbie Blair. An orientation packet for the Board was then handed out to each Board member.

BVHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TENTATIVE AGENDA - 1/17/01

- 1.) Jeff Bovee, California State Parks, re: proposed BV property for Annadel Park
- 2.) Public Input
- 3.) Minutes and Treasurer's Report
- 4.) Bids Received on BVHA web site
- 5.) Update: Nicole Wagner's decision
- 6.) Silent Auction Proposal, BV
Community Day, Fire District Fundraiser
- 7.) Conflict of Interest Policy
- 8.) BVHA and the Brown Act
- 9.) BVHA Financial Determination: Where and What?
- 10) PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS - If the meeting runs past 9 pm, one or more of these items will be postponed until the following month:
 - A.) BV 2001 - What changes might improve attendance and participation?
 - B.) Bennett Valley VOICE -How many during the year should be sent to all BV parcel owners, regardless of BVHA membership?
 - C.) Regularly Scheduled BVHA meetings - by resolution in advance, should meetings in certain months be cancelled, such as June, August and/or December?
 - D.) Updating "A Guide to Bennett Valley".

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We are encouraging Bennett Valley residents to ***"make (their)... opinions known to both neighbors and government"***. Please submit no more than 200 words in your letter and do not submit a letter more than once every 90 days. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Only original letters, signed with the writer's true name, address and phone number can be considered. Send the letters to P.O. Box 2666, Santa Rosa, CA 95405 or send by FAX to 576-0405. The first letter or commentary follows:

"COMMENTARY by Frank LaCombe

Many people of Bennett Valley demure from joining the BVHA because they perceive our organization to be "a club", "a special interest clique", "exclusive". Once again we have given them reinforcement for their feelings.

When new candidates tried to run for seats on the board, they practically had to move to legal action just to obtain our membership list. When this was finally granted at the October 18, 2000 meeting, the board stated then "we will not give out the phone numbers".

A level playing field means that all candidates are treated equally. No one is more privileged than the other.

Yet the incumbents used their privileged access to the membership phone list to call members to solicit votes and promote themselves to the electorate. No small coincidence that the largest vote ever occurred.

Does behavior like this engender trust and dispel negative perceptions? Fairness may not have changed the election results, but honesty and equality would have helped to heal the rift in the Valley."

NUTRITION IN THE GERIATRIC PET

In the previous edition, we explored what changes the body goes through as we age. One of the most beneficial means to health and longevity is a nutritionally balanced diet specifically formatted for senior animals.

The intestinal tract in elderly pets becomes less able to absorb nutrients and their sense of taste and smell are diminished. Nutrients are ingested but not utilized and finicky eaters become more finicky. This all leads to a lack of the important elements for fitness and health. Many elderly dogs and cats are on specific medications for other medical problems that can lead to a nutritional imbalance. For these reasons we recommend not only senior food, but also supplements. The food is formulated for a "not so efficient" intestinal tract. The protein and fat are restricted to account for less active non-growing and lower metabolic rate bodies. Unused protein from the diet has to be processed by the liver and kidneys so a closely balanced proportion of useable essential protein is calculated.

Pets on diuretics will become depleted in potassium, magnesium and calcium. Patients on Prednisone (a steroid) will need special consideration to safeguard the liver and monitor weight gain. Animals with heart problems should have restricted salt intake and less fat in their diet. Diabetics need to closely watch not only the amount of calories eaten but what kind of calories.

As we noted previously, a geriatric immune system is not as responsive, so supplements with antioxidants, especially Vitamin A and Beta-Carotene are advised. Glucosamine helps combat the inflammation and progressions of Degenerative Joint Disease.

Quite often a problem or disease process caught in the early stages can be managed with diet. This is especially true for geriatric pets. As an owner, you are the first to notice abnormalities or changes in your pet. Has there been a rapid weight change? Is there a change in the bowel or bladder habits? Are they drinking more? Eating less? Looking old? Acting stiff?

In the next article we will begin to take a look at specific disease processes in the older dog and cat such as hyperthyroidism and arthritis. We will discuss what to watch for, what can be done for prevention and how to treat these processes. Once again if you have any questions or comments, please call us at 525-9445. We thank the VOICE for allowing us the space to inform you about how to keep your furry family members happy and healthy.

All Tails Wagging Veterinary Clinic
Dr. Avra Tracht & Dr. Deborah Hodesson

JENSEN MARILEE & NYE
FRANK
2867 BARDY RD
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404-8542
 2001 Member

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*"Committed to promoting & preserving the rural character
and natural environment of Bennett Valley"*

BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 2666
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

☺ BENNETT VALLEY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- 1.) **BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION** - The Board of Directors meets the third Wednesday of each month, 7:30 pm, Bennett Valley Fire Station. The dates of the next two meetings are January 17th and February 21st. Information about what occurred at the last two Board meetings is on page 4 and the Tentative Agenda for January 17th is on page 5, inside. *These Board meetings are intended to be informal and an Open Forum for Bennett Valley residents within certain time limits. Your opinions are welcome and we encourage you to attend.*
- 2.) **BENNETT VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT** - The Board of Directors meets the second Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm, Bennett Valley Fire Station. The dates of the next two meetings are February 13th and March 13th. The Bennett Valley Fire Chief, Kent Reynolds, encourages Bennett Valley residents to attend.
- 3.) **SONOMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** meets every Tuesday, except on weeks when there is a holiday, at 575 Administration Drive, Santa Rosa. Information about the Board of Supervisors agenda, meeting dates or times can be found at www.sonoma-county.org, or you can call 527-2241. Michael J. Cale is the First District Supervisor representing the Bennett Valley Area and Sonoma Valley.

🏠 BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

Marilee Jensen, President (576-0405 - phone # and FAX)
Michael Friedenberg, Vice-President (579-5310)
Nancy Dell'Ergo, Treasurer (525-1202)
Bobbie Blair, Recording Secretary (542-1608)
Leanore (Lolly) Mesches, Corresponding Secretary (545-8684)

Jim Katon, Director (528-9487)
David Phillips, Director
Marilyn Stocks, Director (528-2458)
Bill Sullivan, Director (528-6804)

**We want to express our great appreciation to the numerous other BV Volunteers who help in so many different ways!*