



Bennett Valley VOICE

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Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association (BVHA)

JANUARY, 2002

Why should you send in your BVHA dues for 2002?

The Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association's mission is promoting and preserving the rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley, while serving "as a forum for community participation and providing a bridge for communication..." (Sonoma County Board of Supervisors' Resolution # 94-1042, approved 7/12/94)

BVHA is a "continuing source of information to serve the diverse opinions of the individual (residents)...of Bennett Valley...We all love this valley and we need a strong medium to make our opinions known to...neighbors and government."

With this mission as the driving force, BVHA has been able to accomplish the following in 2001:

1.) All six issues of this newsletter, the VOICE, were sent to the 900 parcel owners in Bennett Valley, at an annual cost of approximately \$5,000. The current BVHA Board has once again decided that communication with everyone in Bennett Valley is so important that all the issues of the VOICE shall be sent to each parcel owner.

2.) The BVHA Web-page was established at a cost of \$2,000, enabling anyone to learn about Bennett Valley, ask questions, state concerns, add agenda items to the Board meetings, obtain copies of the Bennett Valley Area Plan and/or the VOICE, etc. (<bennettvalleyhomowners.org >)

3.) The Bennett Valley Pamphlet was written, published and distributed to all BV residents, Sonoma County PRMD and numerous real estate brokers/agents, with the printing cost close to \$4,000 for 6,000 copies. The purpose was to more effectively reach and inform people about the Bennett Valley Area Plan. This was one of the outcomes of the Bennett Valley Common Ground Committee meetings in 2000.

4.) BV Pamphlets are being mailed out monthly to real estate agents for any new Bennett Valley property listed for sale.

5.) Three hundred Bennett Valley Calendars were printed and sold, resulting in a \$500 contribution to the Bennett Valley Fire Protection District.

6.) Two Bennett Valley Clean-up Days were held in April & October and 20 new pick-up sticks were purchased @ \$500.

7.) The Bennett Valley Silent Auction was organized & supported, significantly adding to the funds collected for the new fire engine by the Bennett Valley Volunteer Firefighters.

8.) The Matanzas Creek Watershed Stewardship Program was initiated under the auspices of Sotoyome Resource Conservation District and the Sonoma Water Agency.

9.) PG&E's attempt to remove 125 oaks on Grange Road, which weren't interfering with power transmission, was halted.

10.) The Community is now focusing on Bennett Valley Fire District Funding Problems through BVHA articles, meetings, contributions (\$2,000 for new BV Fire Station heater, purchasing new flags and \$50 monthly donations), upcoming neighborhood meetings and BV 2002, a Community Forum.

11.) Besides the above, the VOICE has included informational articles on Sudden Oak Death, Grange Road Bridge, BV water concerns, vineyard water usage, proposed County Supervisor redistricting, Sonoma Co.'s General Plan update, possible dangerous access from BV Road to Annadel Park, BV visual corridor limitations, and BV residents' opinions.

12.) Numerous New Center Reflectors have recently been placed on Bennett Valley Rd., making it much safer especially during the winter, thanks to the extensive cooperation of the Sonoma Co. Public Works Road Maintenance Supervisor.

Your continuing support is very important to us! Please send in your annual dues of \$15, plus any donation you're willing to make, so that we may continue to actively work toward our mission. You can send your check in with the attached dues form and envelope, to Blair/Dougherty, 7373 Bennett Valley Road. Please don't forget. THANKS!

A Few 2002 BV Calendars Left!

The third edition of the beautiful Bennett Valley Calendar is still available at Longs and the Bennett Valley Fire Station. Supply is limited so don't miss out. You can also contact Suzanne Dougherty, 542-1608; Marilee Jensen, 576-0405; Judy Temko, 544-0234; or Leanore Mesches, 545-8684 to purchase calendars. This year's calendars contain both photographs and paintings by local artists. The cost remains \$15 and once again, all profits will go to the Bennett Valley Volunteer Firefighters.

PG&E and The Oak Trees

A group of Bennett Valley residents, including neighbors and representatives of the property owner, Jess Jackson, and a representative from Pat Wiggins' office, met with Greg Holquist, a forester with PG&E, in November along Grange Road to examine the marked trees in that area. Mr. Holquist agreed these oak trees were not threatening or even interfering with Bennett Valley power transmission and should not be cut down. The oak trees will continue to be trimmed every three to five years to be at least four feet away from the power lines as required by State law. As agreed to at this meeting, the blue paint marks which were placed on these 125 oak trees have since been covered up by PG&E. It was the conclusion of this group that fast-growing trees, such as eucalyptus trees, in the immediate vicinity of power lines may be removed by PG&E. Mr. Holquist also suggested that possibly PG&E could provide \$50 vouchers to property owners for the purchase of slow-growing oak trees to replace any fast-growing trees which are removed from their property. The PG&E representative, Greg Holquist, was very cooperative and agreeable.

BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNER'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Matanzas Creek Stewardship Program Update; December 2001

By *Sierra Cantor* - The Sotoyome Resource Conservation District (SRCD) is working with the Matanzas Creek Stewardship Group to train volunteer monitors to measure rainfall and stream flow throughout the Matanzas Creek watershed. If you live on or near a bridge that spans Matanzas Creek and are interested in reading the flow level, please contact me, Sierra Cantor, at (707) 569-1448 or sierrac@sonic.net, and I will get you the necessary equipment and training. The SRCD also provides rain gauges to anyone interested in keeping rainfall records for their property.

At the last meeting in Bennett Valley on November 8th, we solicited ideas from participants for workshops and trainings that would be of interest to Matanzas Creek residents. We always encourage community input, so please contact me with any ideas you might have. Topics we're planning to cover at our next workshop include non-native plants, incendiary plants and fuel load management, less-toxic alternatives to home and garden pesticides and herbicides and more. I am looking forward to working with you in the New Year!

BVHA Board of Directors Tentative Agenda for the Next Meeting, 1/16/02

- Call to Order, Public Input, Approval of Minutes and Treasurer's Report
- Monthly Reports; Sonoma County Public Works (Grange Road Bridge, road maintenance), BV Fire Protection District (meeting, funding issue)
- *Old Business* - BVHA web-site, Bennett Valley 2002 Community Forum, BV 2002 Calendar, Grange Road oak trees update, Hidden Acres Road Visibility update, Number of BVHA Board of Directors (for further consideration and to specify regulatory requirements)
- *New Business* - Board Meeting Dates, 2002; Appointment of BVHA members to review weekly agendas, Board of Supervisors, and monthly agendas, Open Space District: BVHA Nominating Committee, 2002; Bennett Valley Public Relations - ideas, proposed actions; reducing and improving BVHA Articles of Incorporations over next couple of years (Marge Simon's recommendation, BVHA Board, 1994).

Bennett Valley 2002 Community Forum – 02/02/02 BV Grange

- **8:30 Refreshments**
- **9:00 Introductions**
- **9:05 Fire & Emergency Services**
 - Inform community of present situation; discuss alternatives
- **10:00 Disaster Preparedness**
 - Inform community of available resources; clarify preferences
- **10:30 Break**
- **10:45 Water Availability & Quality**
 - Inform community on conservation; panel discussion
 - Matanzas Ck Stewardship Pgm Update
- **11:40 Summarize Community Actions**
- **11:50 Feedback & Surveys**
- **12:00 Close**

Info: Bob Hasenick, 573-1426

Bennett Valley 2002 Fire & Emergency

- **Background**
 - BVFPD provides for our emergency needs
 - Services provided mostly by volunteers
 - Compensation is significantly less than other districts
 - Demand for services is exceeding available funds
- **Potential Alternatives**
 - Continue as is with security not at optimum
 - Disband BVFPD
 - Increase district funding
- **Dialogue On:**
 - Challenges & solutions in other areas
 - Level of services the community desires
 - Range of alternatives
 - Community action

Info: Marilee Jensen, 576-0405

Bennett Valley 2002 Disaster Preparedness

- **Background**
 - BV has no specific plan or services
 - Some communities are well prepared
 - Many resources are available
 - Earthquakes, power outages and other disasters are real threats
- **Potential Alternatives**
 - Continue as is
 - Offer trainings such as CPR/ First Aid
 - Form & train local emergency response teams to perform essential life saving functions while awaiting professional responders
 - Prepare local supply centers
- **Dialogue On:**
 - Challenges & solutions in other areas
 - Level of services the community desires
 - Range of alternatives
 - Community action

Info: Bonnie Rhodes, 525-9372

Bennett Valley 2002 Water Availability & Quality

- **Matanzas Ck Stewardship Pgm Update**
- **Background**
 - Density of users is increasing
 - Sources of supply are uncharted
 - Older wells are drying up
- **Potential Alternatives**
 - Continue as is
 - Significantly increase awareness
 - Inventory well history & present levels
 - Equip community for conservation
- **Dialogue On:**
 - Challenges & solutions in other areas
 - Use & supply of water
 - Level of response the community desires
 - Range of alternatives
 - Community action

Info: Ken Mesches, 545-8684

Diet and the Development of Orthopedic Disease in Dogs

by Gilbert T. Robello, DVM, MS Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons, PetCare Veterinary Hospital

Orthopedic disease in the dog is a common finding. Sometimes the cause is readily evident – major trauma such as being hit by a car. Many times the causes of orthopedic syndromes are more subtle. Because of veterinary research, we have discovered that many of the orthopedic diseases have a genetic component. Genetics, however, account for only a part of the story. Diet and exercise can influence the degree of symptoms.

Hip dysplasia is a common orthopedic disorder that often causes symptoms of pain in the hips, decreased range of motion, exercise intolerance, and progressive inability to get around. It is often thought of as a problem of large breed dogs, but this problem is not limited to the large breeds. We can and do see it in smaller breeds and even in cats. However, because of the size and stress placed upon the hip joints of the large dog, they appear to be more symptomatic. Hip dysplasia is essentially a poor fit of the ball and socket joint of the hip. The severity of the condition covers a broad spectrum. The poorer the fit, the greater the chances the patient will suffer symptoms related to the disease.

We know that genetics play a significant role in the development of hip dysplasia, but we have also seen that there are important dietary influences. There is a lot of controversy surrounding the best diet. Currently there are many dog food manufacturers, various formulations, and various supplements that are recommended as the best. In an attempt to provide the best level of nutrition, dog food makers developed “high-octane” growth formulas especially for puppies. Many dog owners tended to overfeed their dogs – providing plenty of high-quality food in an attempt to get their dog to reach its largest potential, with both rapid growth and rapid weight gain. An undesirable effect was the aggravation of symptoms of the orthopedic diseases. Several studies have documented that diet plays an important role in the symptoms of dysplasia, by making the symptoms worse. Overfeeding (both in amount of calories and nutritional content) increases the severity of the condition in genetically predisposed dogs. Excess dietary supplements such as calcium and Vitamin D

can also contribute to a worsening of the syndrome.

The dog food manufacturers have realized this and now make variations of the growth formulas for different size dogs. They have tried to lower the plane of nutrition in an attempt to slow the growth of the puppies. It is important to realize that these animals will still reach their full adult body size and weight, but they will grow at a slightly slower rate, giving the body’s skeletal structures a chance to “keep up” with growth.

General recommendations are to feed a balanced, high-quality diet formulated for your size dog (small, medium, large or giant). Avoid supplements unless recommended by your veterinarian. Many animals that are free-fed are overweight. Feeding a puppy two to three times a day is adequate. Feed an amount that results in a slender dog. One should easily be able to feel (not necessarily see) the ribs and backbone. Exercise in moderation is important. Similar to excess nutrition aggravating the condition, over-exercise can also make the symptoms worse. Young puppies (less than 8-12 months) are not designed to run on pavement for 5 miles.

The popularity of the raw food diets is alarming to most veterinarians. This practice, while possible to achieve an adequate level of nutrition, is very risky. There is significant risk of malnutrition, food born illness, and parasites. The risk is not only to the pet, but also to the person handling the raw food. There is a reason man has evolved cooking most of his foods.

While this article has focused on hip dysplasia, there are many similarities with other orthopedic diseases that affect the young dog. Elbow dysplasia, osteochondrosis, and panosteitis are other syndromes that are affected by diet. Few would argue that quality of life is a top priority for our pets. Managing their diet appropriately throughout their lives is a relatively easy, but extremely important part of achieving this goal.

We want to very much thank Dr. Robello for writing this informative article about the importance of diet. Last year a number of Bennett Valley residents voted to have veterinary articles included in the BVHA VOICE. If you know of any veterinarian who would be interested in writing articles, please be sure to let the Editor know at 576-0405.

*Don't forget BV 2002 Community Forum!
Saturday, Feb. 2nd, 2002, BV Grange Hall, 8:30 am*

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 95404**

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association (BVHA) Meetings

- The BVHA Board meets the third Wednesday of each month, 7:30 pm, at the Bennett Valley Fire Station, unless there is prior notification. The meetings for the next two months are on 1/16/02 and 2/20/02. This next month there will also be the Bennett Valley 2002 Community Forum meeting on Saturday, 2/02/02, 8:30 am until 12 noon, at Bennett Valley Grange Hall. Agenda & discussion items are described herein. *Bennett Valley residents are encouraged to attend and participate.*
- Report on the last BVHA Board Meeting on November 14th, 2001: Seven Board directors and twelve other BV residents attended this meeting. Acknowledgement was made during public input of the twenty-one people who helped on Bennett Valley Clean-Up Day (10/27/01). The Matanzas Creek Stewardship Group held a meeting on 11/8/01. Speakers described what indicators are used to determine water quality and passed out rain gauges. Residents of Hidden Acres asked the County to remove some trees at the junction of Sonoma Mtn. Rd. and Hidden Acres to improve visibility & reduce possible vehicle accidents. BVHA was asked for input and recommended that the brush and smaller trees be removed first, to see if that improved the visibility sufficiently so that the bigger oak tree could remain. Under *Old Business*, there were discussions about BV 2002 Community Forum (pgs. 3,4,5 and 6), BV 2002 Calendars (pg. 2), Grange Road oak trees (pg. 2), and the number of Directors on the BVHA Board. (This issue will be evaluated further during the year.) Under *New Business* the annual Board orientation was made and Conflict of Interest forms were signed. The Board approved the purchase of 20 pick-up sticks for Bennett Valley Clean-Up, at a cost of \$500. With 4 ayes, 1 nay and 1 abstention the Board voted to continue to distribute the VOICE to all the parcel owners in Bennett Valley during the year 2002, as long as BVHA finances were adequate and people were offered the option of receiving the VOICE electronically, rather than by mail. Meeting Adjourned. There was no December meeting.