



Bennett Valley

VOICE

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 3

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association (BVHA)

MAY, 2004

Bennett Valley Groundwater; Is It Reliable and/or Sustainable?

“Civilization Exists With Geologic Consent, Subject To Change Without Notice.”

Will Durant

Bennett Valley Geology and Groundwater

(Excerpts from write-up prepared for the Bennett Valley Groundwater Forum on 4/21/04, by Jane Nielson, Ph.D., Geologist, Sebastopol Water Information Group, SWiG)

“The history of Bennett Valley settlement suggests that its water-scarce character has been well known for at least a quarter of a century...A broadscale study of Sonoma County groundwater resources was carried out by the State Department of Water Resources in the 1970's and early 1980's, in which the Bennett Valley area was classified as either lacking water supplies, or as having “contiguous or detached groundwater areas outside of boundaries of ground water basins.”

Water that infiltrates below the surface may eventually reach the top of a water-saturated subsurface groundwater zone, called the **water table**. Rocks that store and transmit groundwater are called **aquifers**. The process of adding infiltrated water to groundwater is called **recharge**.

Recharge does not happen everywhere.

...Groundwater will move toward any area of lower pressure, discharging to the surface at a spring, stream, pond, or lake. It will also move toward water table depressions, caused by pumping wells...The amount of fresh water available for use depends on:

- The amount of annual rainfall
- The extent of recharge area that can collect the water so that it doesn't simply run off...
- The capacity (and ability) of a rock to transmit water to wells, which depends on both the texture and structure of the rock or soil.

The locations of recharge areas and aquifers are determined by the geology: **if soils and rocks exposed at or near the surface cannot absorb and hold water, and also transmit water, they cannot recharge underlying aquifers.**

“Overdraft is when the amount of groundwater being extracted is greater than the amount of recharge...” Edward J. Casey, Chief Water Resource Attorney, Walter Benshoof Law Firm)

Bennett Valley is underlain by (rocks, mainly impermeable, called) Sonoma Volcanics and Petaluma Formation. Most of its recharge comes from thin... (surface) sedimentary units, including stream sediments and slope deposits eroded off the mountainsides. Fragmental volcanic rocks may occur at the surface, but there's no known connection between such exposures and deeper rocks with aquifer characteristics. If any recharge comes through the volcanic rocks, it's strictly luck...

The 2003 Kleinfelder report showed that most Bennett Valley well owners with water problems had wells drilled into the Petaluma Formation, in the central and southern part of the area. Anecdotal information from local residents supports that finding—very few local landowners are still using their original wells. Many new wells are very deep... A landowner on Batesole Drive, adjacent to Matanzas Creek, has drilled four wells on his property in the last 31 years. The most recent well reached a depth of 1,005 feet and now produces water that is 88 degrees F.—apparently thermal water related to Sonoma volcanism. *(Continued on Page Two)*

Bennett Valley Geology and Groundwater (con't)

Recent wells as much as 1,200 feet deep have been reported on the southern and western sides of the valley. The landowner indicated several property owners in this same area have drilled multiple wells to depths greater than 700 feet.

A 700-ft. dry hole was drilled for a home site on the Sonoma Mountain Road corridor. That property owner has resorted to capturing stream flow from the creek (which is then) stored in cisterns for use.

Community supply wells for the Woodside Subdivision, Hidden Acres, and Bennett Ridge residential developments, and agricultural irrigation wells, are likely to be deep and pump a lot more water than domestic wells. Regarding agricultural wells, when the Matanzas Creek Winery well, located in the heart of Bennett Valley and adjacent to the north side of the Woodside Subdivision, began irrigating vineyards in the 1980's, Woodside community-supply wells lost pressure (probably in summer, the major stress time for groundwater supplies in our climate). Subsequently the Winery agreed to irrigate at night. Not all competitive water supply issues can be settled so easily.

A 2-million gallon water tank (belonging to the Sonoma County Water Agency) is located near Matanzas Creek reservoir (off of Grange Road, which) apparently provides water pressure required for fighting fires in Santa Rosa. A pipeline that parallels Bennett Valley Road conducts the tank-stored water to Santa Rosa.

Suggested Action

- *Form a citizen group to survey wells, water levels and the rate of water withdrawals in the Bennett Valley area. Inquire about monitoring information for the wells supplying the Woodside and Bennett Ridge developments. Inventory the known agricultural wells.*
- *Partner with other groups (SWiG, OWL) for reducing and analyzing the data collected.*
- *Ask Sonoma County for help in obtaining a water supply/water balance study for Bennett Valley's groundwater basin. It's a nicely contained system for such a study. Data needed would include a citizen well survey of all wells of all categories and careful well monitoring program to meet legal standards, citizen rainfall recording for a year to check official input figures, and the annual professional measurements of Matanzas Creek's flow, which are available to the public.*
- *Develop a groundwater management plan for Bennett Valley."*

State of California Department of Water Resources

- "Although many new wells are built in fractured rock areas, insufficient hydrogeologic information is available to ensure the reliability of groundwater supplies...Groundwater management in these areas is beginning, but there is insufficient data to support quantitative conclusions about the long-term sustainable yield...
- Local or regional agencies should develop groundwater management plans if groundwater constitutes part of their water supply. Management objectives should be developed to maintain a sustainable long-term supply for multiple beneficial uses. Management should integrate water quantity and quality, groundwater and surface water, and recharge area protection...
- **Overdraft is the condition of a groundwater basin in which the amount of water withdrawn by pumping over the long term exceeds the amount of water that recharges the basin.** Overdraft is characterized by groundwater levels that decline over a period of years and never fully recover, even in wet years. **Overdraft can lead to increased extraction costs, land subsidence, water quality degradation, and environmental impacts...**
- **Effective groundwater management cannot be achieved without a program of groundwater data collection and evaluation..."**

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Legal Issues Arising From Overdrafted Groundwater Basins, Edward J. Casey, Chief Water Resource Attorney, Weston Benshoof Law Firm

- **"DO-NOTHING APPROACH** – ... Major Problems
 - 1.) Legal Claims For Poor Water Quality, Land Subsidence, Wells Going Dry
 - 2.) Permanent Loss of Water Rights...
- **COURT ADJUDICATION**
Advantage – Fixed Water Right
Disadvantages – Years to Complete, \$\$\$ - Legal Fees, Control Over Resource Abdicated to Judge, No Consensus Building Process, Loss of Water Rights via Judicial Allocation
- **GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN** – *Advantages*
 - o Local Control Over Resource
 - o Stakeholder Consensus (*by everyone impacted*)
 - o Integrated Approach For Multiple Uses Of Multiple Water Sources
 - o Reduced Risk Of Poor Water Quality, Land Subsidence And Loss Of Wells
 - o Long-Term Protection Of Basin
 - o Sustainable Water Supply"

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The Community Needs to Work Together to Start Collecting Data on Our Water Levels, Yield and Quality To Protect The Reliability and Sustainability of Our Groundwater! *Marilee Jensen*
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On Wednesday evening, 4/21/04, Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association sponsored the Groundwater Forum, held at the Bennett Valley Grange. After attending the City of Sebastopol Groundwater Forum, on 3/30/04, we were able to add to our list of excellent panelists, as indicated by the asteriks below: *Valerie Brown, County Supervisor, Pete Parkinson and Dwayne Starnes, Director and Deputy Director, Sonoma County PRMD, Jay Jasperse*, Deputy Chief Engineer, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA), Carl Hauge*, Chief Hydrogeologist, California Dept. of Water Resources (DWR), Jane Nielson*, Ph.D., Geologist, retired from U. S. Geological Survey (USGS), and Steve Carle*, Ph.D., Hydrologist, Lawrence Livermore Lab.* Somewhere between 200 and 300 people attended. It was an excellent meeting with a tremendous amount of information presented on groundwater. The first two pages in this VOICE are brief summaries from just some of the material available at the Forum.

H.R. Downs of the O.W.L. Foundation taped the meeting, and has made it available as a DVD, at a cost of \$15. To quote Mr. Downs, "It was, by far, the most interesting and instructive three hours we've ever spent on water issues...My wife, Bonnie, and I have watched it several times already and get a lot more out of it with each viewing." If you want to purchase it, please send a \$15 check to H.R. Downs at P.O. Box 716, Penngrove, 94951. A VHS tape is also available, at \$20 cost.

John King, also of the O.W.L. Foundation, is willing to measure anyone's water level at no cost, even a couple of times a year. He uses an electronic probe on a tape measure, either 300 feet long or 600 feet long. When it touches water down in the well, a buzzer sounds and the depth is noted. He always cleans this device in chlorine after each measurement, in order to avoid any possible cross-contamination between wells. If you'd like to make arrangements for him to measure the water level of your well, please call him - (707) 763-7023.

Carl Hauge from DWR has made three informative publications available, as listed below, for those who are interested in more information on this topic:

- **California's Groundwater**, Bulletin 118, UPDATE 2003, State of California, DWR, October, 2003, website <<http://www.groundwater.water.ca.gov/bulletin118/index.cfm>>
- **Ground-Water-Level Monitoring and the Importance of Long-Term Water-Level Data**, Circular 1217, U.S. Geological Survey, 2001
- **Sustainability of Ground-Water Resources**, Circular 1186, U.S. Geological Survey, 1999

If you are interested in obtaining these publications or being notified of further information about Bennett Valley Groundwater, please call Marilee Jensen at (707) 576-0405. With an apparent computer virus, she is not receiving e-mail at this time.

YOUR HOUSEHOLD WATER LEVEL and HOW TO KEEP YOUR WATER SAFE *By Charlie*

Judson, President of Weeks Drilling and Pump Company Charlie Judson will be the speaker at our next Bennett Valley Homeowner's Board meeting, on Wednesday, May 19th, at 7 pm, at the Bennett Valley Fire Station. Charlie personally has over 25 years of water treatment experience with Sonoma County groundwater. About 75% of Sonoma County non-city families rely on their own water wells and must take personal responsibility for their own water quality. This presentation will tell you how to do that. Charlie says he'll bring a few door prizes for whomever can come to the closest guess on the depth of the deepest wells we have drilled on Sonoma Mountain, Grange or Bennett Valley Roads in the last 50 years!

SONOMA COUNTY WATER GROUPS

One of the suggested actions by Jane Nielson, on Page Two, was to "partner with other groups...for analyzing the data collected." Who are these other groups? Some of them are described below:

Blucher Creek Watershed Council (BCWC) is an all-volunteer grassroots organization dedicated to safeguarding their water resources and natural ecology of the Blucher Creek Watershed. Their goal is to ensure that there is clean life-sustaining water for all who live there,.. not just today, but tomorrow as well. (Blucher Valley Road, is located in southwest Sebastopol.)

O.W.L. Foundation (Open space, Water resource protection and Land use) is a non-profit, tax-exempt grassroots organization made up of Sonoma County volunteers from primarily unincorporated areas. It was formed in 2003 when these volunteers became alarmed about declining groundwater supplies, which emerged during an August 2000 lawsuit to block Rohnert Park's proposed urbanization of state-identified groundwater recharge lands. The suit blocked proposed sprawl in the Penngrove area... O.W.L. is currently focused on a County-wide Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) under Assembly Bill 3030. A GMP is simply a water "budget" which would enable County officials to plan wisely for the future. More at <http://penngrove.info>

Sebastopol Water Information Group (SWiG), a project of the tax-exempt O.W.L. Foundation, was formed in September, 2003 in response to growing local concerns about sustainable groundwater supplies in the Sebastopol area. In the past five to eight years, many domestic water wells located in greater southeastern Sebastopol and Cooper Road have gone dry or have seen significant water level decreases. SWiG has started to look at the location and distribution of impacted domestic wells and for the possible cause of the recent lack of water in an area that should have an abundant supply of water (near the Laguna de Santa Rosa). This includes requesting well driller logs from DWR to determine well construction details and documenting decreasing water levels over time, with ongoing monitoring. (Continued on Page Four)

SWiG (con't) SwiG's mission is to work with Sebastopol officials, County, and State water agencies, and local groups to safeguard water supplies... gather and analyze data on groundwater supplies to maintain sustainability, monitor wells, educate and inform local citizens on groundwater issues, advocate for local and county-wide sustainable groundwater management, and organize community forums on issues of concern.

SONOMA COUNTY WATER CONCERNS

In a recent e-mail message, geologist Jane Nielsen, Ph.D., expressed the following concerns about what is happening in Sonoma County at this time.

"... it's important not to lose sight of what's happening right now—the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) already explored pumping an additional 30,000 acre feet of water out of the Laguna de Santa Rosa, even before the Eel River decision stopped its plan to take additional water from the Eel River. (Explanation: An acre-foot is about 325,900 gallons, which makes 30,000 acre-feet the equivalent of 9.78 billion gallons. Currently, SCWA is taking about 5,600 acre-feet annually out of the Laguna or 1.8 billion gallons. An "average family" is said to use about ½ acre-foot per year, or 162,950 gallons per year.)

Now, SCWA is even more likely to go back to groundwater pumping all over the County to provide water that meets local growth plans. The Water Agency is preparing to get a new agreement signed with all the cities and water districts this coming summer—YEARS before they will have any idea of the County's water budget (from the USGS studies). This should be a big concern for everybody in the County on wells. Pumping the old Santa Rosa wells could be very bad for BV's groundwater."

The following is from "Cooper Road and Sebastopol's Groundwater", recently prepared by David Noren, SWiG "The SCWA (Sonoma County Water Agency) also pumps groundwater from three wells located along the aqueduct alignment near Sebastopol, at Occidental Road...(Sebastopol Road) and Todd Road. The wells were originally installed as emergency standby wells – however in recent years they have been converted by permit and now are used as full production wells, meaning that they pump 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. SCWA data reviewed by SWiG indicate approximately 1.0 to 1.8 million gallons of water per year is being annually pumped by the SCWA from the three wells, mixed with Russian River water, and piped through the aqueduct to SCWA'S water contractors, including most of Sonoma County's incorporated cities (not Sebastopol), and several Marin County cities and water districts."

Vintage 2005 B.V. Calendar;

We Need Your Help!!!

The Bennett Valley Calendar Committee is planning a special vintage calendar for 2005 celebrating, in pictures, some of the history of Bennett Valley. We are searching for old pictures, talking to old timers in the valley, researching libraries, and asking for help from anyone who will share oral history and old photos to be used in the calendar. Please tell neighbors, friends and relatives who might be able to help us. We're interested in pictures of the Grange Bridge (which will soon become history) old houses and barns as well as pictures of the valley in bygone days. We are considering changing the donation of profits from the calendar sales this year from the BV Firefighters to the BV Grange. Call any BVHA Board member with thoughts you have on the calendar donation for 2004 or call Suzanne at 542-1608 or Judy at 544-0234 for more information.

Clean-Up Day Update

We want to thank the 16 people who came out on a beautiful Saturday morning (4/24/04) to help pick up some of the debris that motorists seem to throw all over our area. We were able to pick up on Bennett Valley Road, Sonoma Mountain Road and Grange Road. With approximately 900 households in the Valley, we were disappointed at the small number of participants. We want to give a big special thank-you to *Bobbie Blair, Norm & Eve Boling, Sandra Carr, Suzanne Dougherty, John Fitzpatrick, Patty Gundry, Mike & Patty Hickey, Lucienne Jackson, Tim Murphy, Darryl Roberts, Dave & Sandy Sandine, Lu Schultz and Pat Werth* for all of their enthusiasm with this cleanup. Thanks also to *Lucy Hanson* at Road Maintenance. We will do this again, during the month of October, and hope that more of you will join us to help keep our Valley beautiful.

Matanzas Creek Winery Changes

Why does there appear to be row after row of "seagulls" in the Matanzas Creek Winery fields now? Patrick Connelly, the General Manager, explains that these are simply "row markings". The soil treatment for these upcoming vineyards has been pretty much completed and these row markers will be used to determine the location of the trellises and irrigation. By the Spring of 2005, these same row markers will be used to determine where the grape vines will be planted.

Patrick Connelly explains that the decision to replant this 40-acre vineyard to Chardonnay reinforces their commitment to sourcing the majority of their fruit from within the Bennett Valley. *Patrick R. Connelly, Matanzas Creek General Manager, <patrick.connelly@matanzascreek.com> (707) 528-6464, ext. 20 office, (707) 529-3450 cell*

Bennett Valley Fire Prevention Workshop

"Firefighters struggle to overcome low humidity, heat, winds – "it's like gasoline burning up there."

(Press Democrat, Wednesday, May 5th, 2004, PAGE A1)

In a workshop on **Reducing Fire Risks**, on 4/17/04, attended by interested residents, Andy Pforsich, the Bennett Valley Fire Chief, discussed the important steps to be taken to achieve this goal, protecting your property and yourself, as summarized below:

Maintain Adequate Clearances of Fuels from Structures. *If your home is on flat or gently sloping ground, then you need a 30' to 50' clearance for defensible space. If your home is on moderately steep or very steep ground, then this space should be 100 to 150 feet around your home. Grasses and weeds need to be cut back close to the ground in this defensible space. (In a major wildfire, when firefighting resources can't save everyone, firefighters will select homes they can most safely and effectively protect.)*

- **Maintain Clearance At Least 15 Feet From Your Property Lines.** *You don't want fires to either come from your neighbors or to your neighbors. Legal cases have now established "fire liability" when fires have spread from neighbors who didn't take "reasonable" steps to prevent fire.*

- **Maintain Clearance Near Roadways.** *Most Vegetation Fires Are The Result Of Hot Objects Being Disposed Of By Passerbys on the Roadways.*

- **Minimize Or Reduce Fuel Load In Open Areas By Removing Trees Limbs At Least 6' To 8' Above Ground Fuels.**

- **Remove Dead Tree Limbs And Dead Brush From Your Property .**

- **Remove Highly Combustible Vegetation And Replace With More Fire Resistive Vegetation Or Trees.** *The California Department of Forestry (CDF) has a list of Fire Resistive Plants.*

- **Structures With Wood Shake Roofs Should Be Replaced With Fire Resistive Roof Materials.**

- **Remove Dry Vegetation From Roofs, Gutters And Away From Structures.** *Don't have trees or branches hanging over or immediately adjacent to any of the structures on your property.*

- **Maintain Fireplaces And Clean Chimneys, Annually.** *Maintain Spark Arrestors In Operational Condition And Be Sure To Burn Seasoned Wood, With Less Pitch Content.*

- **Maintain Adequate Clearances for Responding Fire Engines; Recommend 15' Wide By 15' High.**

- **Other Important Comments From This Workshop or Found In "Living With Fire In Sonoma County, A Guide For The Homeowner"**

- *When the humidity is less than 20%, there are significantly more wildland fires.*

- *Be wary of shredded bark for landscaping and mulch, as it is highly flammable.*

- *Do not cut your grass/ weeds in the afternoon during the summer months, because resultant sparks from mower blades striking rocks can easily ignite fires.*

- *If fire is surrounding you near your home, one safe alternative is to get in your car, shut the doors and windows and turn on your air conditioner. Be very careful about driving away as the smoke and chaotic conditions can be overwhelming and threatening.*

- *If a fire is in the vicinity of your home, turn off your propane tank and your electricity, unless you're using well water. Close your windows and drapes, to reduce the heat coming into your home (which can actually ignite a fire.) Move your deck furniture off your deck.*

- *Some especially flammable vegetation includes chaparral, scotch broom, last year's brown grass, rosemary, manzanita, bay trees, fir trees and other conifers. Flames can reach 9 feet in length when burning the understory of thick stands of mature pines, firs or other conifers; 19 feet in length when burning chapparral, (dense tall brush more than 4 feet tall)... containing disproportionate amounts of dead material; 100 feet in length in crown fires where a ladder of vegetation allows fire to climb to the tops of pine, fir, or other trees. In crown fires, burning embers can travel more than a mile away, to spread the fire even further.*

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT CONTRACTORS

Below are listed some companies which you might want to hire to help you improve the fire safety of your property. Getting estimates and clear job descriptions in advance is always recommended. It may be wise to also ask for references for any company you're considering using.

- Atlas Tree Service, Rich Kingsborough, 523-4399
- Doug Batt's Tip Top Service, 823-2971
- Firescape, Cary Gloeckner, 829-8171
- Pham Landscaping, Hau Pham, 570-0668
- Petrucci Tractor, Kris Petrucci, 291-4285 (Weeds)

Bennett Valley Fire Protection District

6161 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa

(707) 578-7761 or (707) 578-8471

Board of Directors

Matt Phillips, Chairman, Dan Felciano, Vice-President,
Deborah Haarstad, Secretary,
Marilee Jensen, Mark Richardson

*The Board meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm. at the BV Fire Station. **You're welcome to attend**, but please confirm the meeting date first. You can leave a message for the Bennett Valley Fire Chief, Andy Pforsich , at 823-1084.*

Bennett Valley Firefighting Staff

Firefighting Engineers, 24-hour shifts:

Brian Campbell, Mike Musgrove and Bryon Reid

Part-time Firefighters, 8 am to 5 pm:

Kevin Burris, Matt Tognozzi, Danny Connelly

Business Phone # is 578-8471.

Bennett Valley Firefighter Activities

March and April, 2004, by Bryon Reid,
C-Shift Firefighting Engineer

Vehicle Accidents-12 Medical Aids-10
Structure Fire-1 Vegetation Fires-3
Mutual Aid-2 Other Emergency Calls-6

The start of fire season is just a few weeks away and this has been illustrated by two small vegetation fires to which the Bennett Valley Firefighters have recently responded.

- On 4/25/04, newly promoted Engineer Matt Tognozzi and the other firefighters responded to a small fire off of Bennett Valley Road with three units (fire vehicles). When the first unit arrived, it was a ½ acre of vegetation in light flashy fuel burning at a moderate pace. The firefighters had it contained and controlled in 10 minutes.
- A second vegetation fire occurred on 4/28/04. The column of smoke in the Sonoma Mountain Road/Mary Paige Lane area could be seen from the fire station. Staff, volunteers and interns at the station headed to the area to investigate. While enroute, someone also called 911. CDF assisted in the suppression efforts. The fire was stopped at 2 acres with no structures lost.

The lush green hills of Bennett Valley will be turning brown in the weeks to come. We at the fire station cannot stress enough the importance of proper clearance around property lines and structures. Literature about vegetation clearances is available at the station during normal business hours. Also CDF offers helpful information regarding vegetation clearance on their web site, <www.fire.ca.gov>. One final note is that ALL BURN PERMITS EXPIRED ON 4/30/04. This means that no more permissive burning will be allowed until next fall when the 2004/2005 burn season opens.

Bennett Valley Firefighting Training

By Brian Campbell, B-Shift Firefighting Engineer
The pancake breakfast was a great success, thanks to everyone who came.

Training for the months of April and May is *Wildland Firefighting, Wildland Hoselays And Protecting Structures*. We are also attending a drill at Sonoma's Infineon Raceway regarding *Weapons of Mass Destruction*. "Sonoma County Sheriff's Capt. Dave Sederhom said the drill offered Sonoma and Marin emergency personnel an opportunity to work together and test new equipment. He said Sonoma County has received grants of \$1 million from the U.S. Homeland Security Department." (Press Democrat, PAGE B1, 5/9/04)

Bennett Valley Tidbits

- The project across from the BV Fire Station is horse-related, to see that rain water runs off the pasture year-round, rather than puddling.
- Jennifer Combs, BVHA Board of Directors, did a wonderful job at making all the signs and the postcard for our April workshops. Thanks so much to Jennifer!

High Speed Internet Access

By Mandeep S. Sandhu

We all like the rural character of Bennett Valley, but the high speed internet access is not available in most areas of the Valley, other than Bennett Ridge. Major access providers like SBC and Comcast don't seem to be in a hurry to provide high speed access. This is a problem for those of us who desire such access. This note is to find out a couple of things. First, to see how many people are desirous of high speed internet access. For this purpose people can contact me at the information given below. Secondly, in case there are enough people, what I had in mind was a co-operative society that provides high speed wireless internet access. The co-operative could either set it up and run it, if we have enough qualified people, or contract it out to a provider. My preliminary research indicates that with about 25 subscribers, a monthly subscription of about \$50 to \$70 per month could be sustainable. I would like to hear from Bennett Valley residents who are interested in this. Contact info in order of preference: E-mail: waris12@yahoo.com Phone: (707) 542-3997

Bennett Valley Community Activities

Remember to note these dates on your calendar!

- 1.) Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association** -The BVHA Board meets on the third Wednesday of every other month. The next meeting is on May 19th, 7:00 pm at the BV Fire Station. **Join us to hear Charlie Judson discuss care of your individual wells, as described on Page Three.** You can check our web-page at <bennettvalleyhomeowners.org> for more information about BVHA meetings. Everyone is encouraged to attend these Board meetings.
- 2.) Bennett Valley Fire Protection District** -The Board of Directors meets the second Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm, at the Bennett Valley Fire Station. Call 578-7761 to confirm the meeting date and time in advance. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- 3.) Bennett Valley Grange #16** - Everyone is invited on Sunday afternoon, June 6th, to the Bennett Valley Grange's 131st Annual Barbecue and Picnic. You can get a lot of delicious food at a very reasonable price. Watch for the signs with more details!
- 4.) Sonoma County Board Of Supervisors** meets every Tuesday (except on weeks when there is a holiday) at 575 Administration Drive, Santa Rosa. Valerie Brown is the Supervisor for our First District. You may call her or Lynn Morton-Weil, her Aide, at 565-2241, if you have any questions or concerns.

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association
(BVHA) Board Of Directors

P.O. Box 2666, Santa Rosa, CA 95405

BVHA Web-Page

<bennettvalleyhomeowners.org>

Marilee Jensen, *President & VOICE Editor*
(576-0405; phone and FAX)

Michael Friedenberg, *Vice-President* (579-5310)

Helen Bates, *Treasurer* (695-8760)

Bobbie Blair, *Recording Secretary & Mailing
List/Membership Coordinator* (542-1608)

Leanore (Lolly) Mesches, *Corresponding
Secretary* (545-8684)

Eric Burns, *Web-Page Coordinator* (584-7531)

Jennifer Combs, *Director* (546-1190)

Tim Murphy, *Director* (542-7114)

Marilyn Stocks, *Director* (528-2458)

For BVHA membership for 2004, please send \$15 plus any donations to Blair/Dougherty, 7373 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. Join the 335 other membership households, supporting BVHA and the distribution of this newsletter to the 900 parcel owners in Bennett Valley. Also send us your e-mail address, so we can send you the VOICE electronically, at a great savings!

Brief Summary of BVHA Board Meeting

(For a copy of the minutes, please call Bobbie Blair, 542-1608.)

March 17th, 2004

- Bonnie Castelli, from the Master Gardener Program, presented information on "Bennett Valley Native Plants" and how to best care for them.
- John Maitland and Levi Gurule from Sonoma County Public Works presented the latest information on the Grange Road Bridge. Depending on a number of variables, they are hoping the temporary bridge can be put up this year.
- Land Paths is working on volunteer patrols for the Jacobs Ranch. Call Helen Bates if you want information or want to volunteer.
- \$500 was donated to the Volunteer Firefighters from the 2004 calendar. It has been recommended that the profits from the 2005 calendar be donated to the Bennett Valley Grange. We are asking for community input on this recommendation.
- Michael Friedenberg presented information on community action re: groundwater, in anticipation of our BV Groundwater Forum on 4/21/04.
- The Board discussed Michael Cronin's issue re: BVHA voting. His reference was Resolution #94-1042, but no one had a copy of this resolution at this meeting. This matter will be discussed further at the next meeting, with this Resolution in hand.

BVHA Board Of Directors
Tentative Agenda For Meeting

May 19th, 2004, 7:00 Pm, BV Fire Station

- Call to Order, 7:00 pm
- Speaker, Charlie Judson, on individual wells; your water level and keeping your water safe.
- Further discussion on Michael Cronin's idea re: BV residents voting regardless of BVHA membership.
- Shall BVHA change their donation of profits from the 2005 Calendar to the BV Grange?
- Updates on BVHA Web-Page, Amended Articles of Incorporation & Bennett Valley Calendar
- Information on Proposed General Plan Water Resources Element and CAC Circulation Sub-Committee May Meetings
- Appoint Nominating Committee for BVHA Board of Director Elections for three candidates in July and August, 2004.

**Some Comments From BV Residents Sent In
With Their BVHA Annual Dues & Donations**

- Thank you for your thoughtful articles.
- Concern: Speeding and reckless driving on Grange and Bennett Valley Rd.
- Thank you for taking the time all year to keep us informed about our gorgeous community.
- Environmental good quality & minimal traffic and traffic speeds are my biggest concerns.
- Our appreciation to the BVHA volunteers for their time & effort.
- Would like to see more police patrol on Sonoma Mountain Road. Lots of speeders and vandalism to mail boxes. Thanks.
- Enclosing an extra \$35 for postage since we don't have e-mail and appreciate the VOICE.
- We would like to see more BV litter removal days (which includes all of the local roadways.)
- I enjoy the newsletter very much. Thank-you.
- Calendar was a bit disappointing this year. I like the photos in preference to paintings.
- Suzanne, I think you did a great job with this year's calendar and I really appreciate all your high quality volunteer projects.
- Thanks for the great work!

MORE BENNETT VALLEY TIDBITS

- **BVHA and BRCA Files, from 1986**
If you're interested in these files, please call Weldon Jackson at 544-9520. He is ready to dispose of them but thought someone might be interested.
- **Looking for a Great Place To Keep Your Horse?**
Bennett Ridge pasture and barn to share. Please call Sally Weare if you're interested, at 527-6002 or her cell phone, (707) 888-8076.

CALENDAR PHOTO ENTRY FORM

2005

Deadline: August 1st, 2004

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ NUMBER OF ENTRIES: _____

PLEASE IDENTIFY THE SUBJECT OF YOUR PHOTO WITH A NAME OR LOCATION OF THE BUILDING.

- Please do not put your name on the back of the photographs.
- If you want your pictures mailed back to you, please include a SASE.

Mail this form and photos to: Stephanie Zaborowski
 4184 Sonoma Mountain Rd.
 Santa Rosa, 95404

We are happy to answer questions. Call: Judy @ 544-0234 or Suzanne @ 542-1608

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Bennett Valley Homeowners' Association
P.O. Box 2666
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

BVHA web-page <bennettvalleyhomeowners.org>

BVHA Mission Statement: *"Committed to promoting & preserving the rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley."*

Return Service Requested

WANTED: Vintage Photos of Bennett Valley
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SPEAKER, WELL WATER SAFETY & LEVEL!
Wednesday, May 21st, 7:00 pm
BV GRANGE 131st BARBECUE & PICNIC!
Sunday Afternoon, June 6th