



# Bennett Valley VOICE

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 5

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association (BVHA)

SEPTEMBER, 2004

## Bennett Valley School Districts' History

*Reference: Major source of information taken from History of Bennett Valley Unified School District 1853-1977, Veronica and Ron Schultz, edited by Ann Hodder and Suzanne Dougherty*

In the mid-1800's Bennett Valley (BV) had two completely separate school districts; the Santa Rosa School District, started in 1852, served students north of Grange Road (toward town) and the Strawberry School District, started in 1857, served the students south of Grange Road (toward Sonoma Mountain).

Bennett Valley children were first taught in 1852 in one of the farm buildings on the Glen Cook Place at 4909 Bennett Valley Road. This is near the BV Road Bridge over Matanzas Creek, about ½ mile east of the stoplight at BV Road and Yulupa Road. Then one year later, thirteen settlers erected the original one-room Santa Rosa School across from the Cook farm where thirty pupils were enrolled. Because of winter flooding along Matanzas Creek, though, a new school was needed and completed 25 years later, in 1878, on one acre of land donated by John van Doren. This property, located at 4710 BV Road, was steep and rocky, up the driveway across from Galvin Park, in the vicinity of the Bennett Valley Cemetery. This schoolhouse was used for 76 years, until 1954, when it was finally condemned and torn down. In 1888, there were 25 students at this school; the yearly salary for the teacher was \$441.75 and the annual maintenance cost was \$93.72. Prompted by complaints from the students, a door was cut in the rear of the schoolhouse to make trips to the outhouse shorter and easier.

Santa Rosa City built their first schoolhouse in 1854, but the school in BV had already used the name "Santa Rosa School District". The citizens' of BV stubbornly refused to relinquish that name for 88 years, so the Santa Rosa City school had to use the name "Courthouse School". We kept the "Santa Rosa" name until 1942, when the school district was finally renamed the Bennett Valley School District.

The Strawberry School District continued to exist as a separate school district. Its name came from the abundance of wild strawberries found in BV,

before cows and horses were introduced to the area. Beginning in 1857, the first Strawberry school was located on the southeast corner of Grange and Guenza Roads. Local farmers met at that school house in May, 1873 to form the BV Grange, prior to building their own Grange Hall, still on Grange Road. There is no record as to why this school house was no longer used after 1879. In 1880, across from 4550 Sonoma Mountain Road (near Bottaso Court, before Hidden Acres Rd.) the second Strawberry School was built on land donated by Steve Story. In 1888 there were twenty students at this school. It also included a small barn for the children's horses. With an increased enrollment in the 1920's, the classroom was partitioned into two classrooms. Fire destroyed the school in 1952, after 72 years, and the children were taught in the BV Grange Hall for two years, until 1954.

Unable to financially support both schools, BV residents voted to unify the districts, thus creating the Bennett Valley Union School District in 1952. Bond issues for a new BV school house were voted down in July 1953 and May 1954. After the BV School at 4710 BV Road was condemned in 1954, the residents did pass a bond for \$98,879 on 9/21/54. While the new school was being built, the sixty pupils from BV were taught in two rented classrooms at Herbert Slater Junior High School. The new school with 4 classrooms at 4580 Bennett View Drive was completed in 1956. Additions were added on to this school site in 1958 and 1965. In October 1976, Yulupa School on Mesquite Drive was opened as part of the BV School District, followed by the Strawberry School on Horseshoe Drive in 1977. When faced with dwindling enrollment, BV School District decided to consolidate into these two newer sites, Yulupa and Strawberry Schools, in September of 1993, where they still are today.

**The Vintage BV 2005 Calendar will have photos of these one-room schoolhouses.**

## **FALL BENNETT VALLEY CLEAN-UP**

Fall clean-up day for Bennett Valley roads is scheduled for **Sunday, September 19th**. Coffee and donuts will be served at the BV Fire Station beginning at **8:30 am**.

Once again, we are asking for volunteers to spend one or two hours to pick up litter on the roads in our community. Our focus is on the main roads throughout the valley; that is Bennett Valley and Grange Road. But please feel free to volunteer to pick-up trash on any road you wish. Some volunteers like to concentrate in their neighborhood.

Remember to wear sturdy shoes, gloves, and hats. BVHA will provide vests for safety and pick-up sticks for easing the job of picking up the trash.

## **ART ON THE RIDGE, September 25th and 26th, Noon to 5PM**

*There will be 12 open Artist Studios with 32 artists on Bennett Ridge, on Saturday, 9/25 and Sunday, 9/26, noon to 5pm. Watch for the yellow balloons at the 12 different homes. .*

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MATANZAS CREEK WINERY?**

There are 90 acres of vineyards at Matanzas Creek Winery, with Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Merlot planted on over 40 of those acres. On another 39 acres, the vineyards were torn out and will be replanted with Chardonnay in the spring of 2005. They are planning to use these grapes in estate bottles of wine labeled with the Bennett Valley Appellation.

In preparation for the spring replanting, the winery is setting up a trellis system. An anchor trellis is put in to mark the row, followed by one support trellis for each grape plant. The trellis system is controlled farming, and is used to determine whether the grape leaves will need to shade the fruit or expose the fruit, depending on the wind and sun exposure, the undulations of the terrain and the drainage of each particular vineyard or vineyard block. Patrick Connelly, the General Manager of the Matanzas Creek Winery, explained it is similar to putting up an erector set. The winery has also done some soil treatment to help create the best Chardonnay grapes possible in this recently recognized Bennett Valley Appellation.

## **WELL MEASUREMENTS AT NO COST**

As mentioned in May, 2004, anyone interested in having the water depth of their well measured, even a couple of times a year, can do so at no cost by calling John King, at 763-7023.

## **THE WAIT IS OVER! THE 2005 BV CALENDAR IS COMING.**

Look for the special vintage 2005 calendar at these locations, beginning in November:

BV Ace Hardware  
Yulupa Longs Drug Store  
Paterson's Nursery  
BV Fire Station

Calendars will also be available at the polls, November 2nd. For information, call Judy at 544-0234 or Suzanne at 542-1608.

## **CHANGES AT THE GRANGE ROAD BRIDGE!**

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors is planning to award a bid for the proposed new Grange Road Bridge on September 14th, 2004. There were four bidders and the apparent low bidder is MCM Constructors, a company having a great deal of experience building bridges.

If awarded this bid, MCM wants to work quickly to be out of the creek by the end of October. That means they will be putting up the temporary bridge, removing the old bridge and ripping out the old abutments almost immediately. Then they can take their time working on the new abutments high on the banks of the creek as well as the new bridge. Their plan apparently is to use a multi-span bridge for the temporary bridge and the building process, with the final bridge being a clear span bridge with no piles in the creek.

## **TOWARD A COMMON GROUND**

By Leanore Mesches (Lolly)

Recently at a BVHA meeting, I was struck with the fact that while Board members and guests are all speaking the same language, we often mishear each other, or assign different meanings to the words, thus misunderstanding each other. Such problems in communication can lead to distrust and anger.

I believe people can be counted on to bring the best parts of themselves to join together for our common good. If we define our common good in Bennett Valley as promoting and preserving the rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley, as described in the Bennett Valley Area Plan, then we have some guidelines to make it work. We have the conditions and the tools to be successful if we work together. We've done it in the past and we can do it again.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OF  
BENNETT VALLEY (BV) AREA PLAN  
FOR DRAFT GENERAL PLAN 2020**

Sonoma County has eight Area Plans and the Windsor Specific Plan, all of which were last revised in 1993, to be consistent with the 1989 General Plan. When there appears to be a conflict between the General Plan and an Area Plan, the more restrictive of those policies or standards shall apply. Now these Plans must be reviewed for consistency with draft General Plan 2020, and be amended accordingly. One of these Area Plans is Bennett Valley's. The BV study area consists of about 15,500 acres at the southeastern border of the City of Santa Rosa.

1.) The "Bennett Valley Development Guidelines" of the Area Plan are more restrictive than draft General Plan 2020 with the exception of **outdoor lighting**, which is not in the Area Plan. It is being recommended that the Area Plan include and comply with the proposed Outdoor Lighting Policy of the General Plan Open Space and Resources Conservation Element. Some excerpts from this element related to outdoor lighting follow:

*Policy for Outdoor Lighting*

*4: Preserve and maintain views of the night-time skies and visual character of urban, rural and natural areas, while allowing for night-time lighting levels appropriate to the use and location.*

*4.1: Maintain night-time lighting levels at the minimum necessary to provide for security and safety of the use and users to preserve night-time skies and the night-time character of urban, rural and natural areas.*

*4.2: Ensure that night-time lighting levels for new development is designed to avoid light spillage offsite or upward into the sky.*

2.) The **Roadway Classification System** used in draft General Plan 2020 is different than used in the BV Area Plan. Three significant proposed changes to the Circulation and Transportation section of our Area Plan follow:

*(Being deleted) "All five of these roads are classified as minor system roads and are not anticipated in the General Plan... to have capacity deficiencies."*

*(New Text in Bold) "Petaluma Hill Road is classified as a rural Minor Arterial; Bennett Valley Road and Grange/Crane Canyon Roads as Rural Major Collectors; and Sonoma Mountain, Pressley and Enterprise Roads as Local Roads. The guiding priority is to retain their basic rural character...Improvements to roads other than safety and maintenance will occur if (deleting "and only if") supported by the local residents, and if designated by the General Plan Circulation and Transit element.*

3.) **Open Space Maps** – Throughout Sonoma County the General Plan 2020 update is proposing to extend some Scenic Landscape Units (SLU) to parcels of land which are now only partially classified as SLU. This change impacts only three relatively small areas in Bennett Valley and seems to be an insignificant change.

**BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNER'S (BVHA)  
AND RESOLUTION 94-1042**

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association was first formed in 1970, with the mission to "promote and preserve the rural, residential character and natural environment of Bennett Valley." (BVHA original Articles of Incorporation, 1971) "The occasion was a proposed mobile home park on the site of what is now Woodside. It was stopped!" (BENNETT VALLEY VOICE, Volume 1, Number 1, January, 1978)

To quote Sonoma County Resolution 94-1042, "The homeowners in Bennett Valley formed the Bennett Valley Homeowners' Association in 1970 and since its formation, BVHA has informally commented on proposed development projects within the Bennett Valley Study Area, including...general plan and specific plan amendments, zone changes,...and subdivisions;..." That describes what BVHA has been doing from 1970 through 2004, with or without this Resolution. While this Resolution provided a more formal status to BVHA's role in the Bennett Valley Study area, as an "advisory body to the County of Sonoma", it didn't change BVHA's mission or activities. The County sends copies of applications for proposed land-use changes to all those who've expressed an interest in receiving them. For thirty-four years, BVHA has received copies of these applications for the Bennett Valley Study Area, prior to the Bennett Valley Area Plan (1978), the Bennett Valley Design Review Committee (1978-2000), and Resolution 94-1042 (passed 7/12/94).

At the July BVHA Board meeting, in response to questions, Michael Friedenbergh explained that BVHA does not at all serve in the same capacity as Design Review. The Design Review process has been handled completely by PRMD since 2000. BVHA does continue to review proposed land-use changes, as described above. When one of these applications is received, a BVHA Board member reviews the information. If there are some concerns or questions, this Board member may talk to the County planner and/or arrange an appointment at the parcel with both the planner and the owner or the owner's representative. This very seldom happens (once every other year or less) and in no instance does a group of the "Board of Directors" or "members at large" go to the parcel in question. Using the Bennett Valley Area Plan as a guide, the Board member brings his/her findings to the next BVHA meeting for discussion. This is posted in the VOICE so that anyone can speak at the Board meeting to give input. Membership is not required to give input to the BVHA Board. BVHA may then send some comments to the County.

The last time this happened was with the proposed Morley Winery, west of Bennett Ridge. BVHA had a special meeting on 6/18/03, with a large crowd of BV residents, both members and non-members, there to discuss it, including the owner's representative and a County planner. BVHA followed up with a letter to Sonoma County recommending approval of this winery with certain conditions agreed to in advance by the owner.

In response to concerns expressed by some Bennett Valley residents, Valerie Brown, the 1st District Supervisor, is now having Resolution 94-1042 rescinded. BVHA is not opposing this change, but will continue to pursue its mission as it has for the last 34 years.

**BENNETT RIDGE FIRE PREVENTION and  
ANNADEL STATE PARK'S RESPONSE**

In July, the Bennett Ridge Firebreak was completed by Cary Gloeckner, of FIRESCAPE, even before enough money had been contributed to pay for it all. As Cary Gloeckner said, he could not in good conscience leave part of the firebreak undone. After it was completed, Bennett Ridge residents continued sending in their donations, so the full amount of \$13,776 was received and paid in full.

To recap a little, the California Department of Forestry (CDF) has identified Bennett Ridge as one of the higher fire risks area in Sonoma County because of the closeness of Bennett Valley Road to the bottom of the hills, with the wind generally coming from the west and the houses located along the ridge. With most fires started along roadways and the fact that fires rush up hills at great speeds, the fire danger is obvious. To help reduce this danger, CDF had been putting in a Bennett Ridge fire break along the bottom of these hills adjacent to Bennett Valley Road off and on for at least thirty years using inmate labor. For liability reasons, this can no longer be done. The Bennett Ridge residents were so concerned they decided to pay a private company, FIRESCAPE, to once again put in the fire break, using individual contributions. Options are now being explored to maintain this firebreak, using pre-emergent non-toxic methods to prevent the grasses and weeds from growing back.

As part of this fire prevention effort in Bennett Ridge, a letter was written to the Department of Parks and Recreation regarding **“the amount of dead wood and low hanging foliage in Annadel State Park in the areas bordering the homes in Bennett Ridge...request(ing) that Annadel State Park take some action to improve the fire safety of that area immediately adjacent to Bennett Ridge homes...”** The following response dated 7/14/04 was received:

*"Thank you for the recent Fire Alert Update and letter. We appreciate your diligence in public awareness for the Bennett Ridge community.*

***It is the position of the State Parks to place responsibility for fuel modification zones on private property. This protects both the residences on private property, and the park. This practice is in place because of the significance of these park lands, the impact that a fuel break imposes on the natural environment, and the immense cost that would be incurred to install and maintain such a fuelbreak.***

*As you are aware, Annadel State Park has undertaken many projects in the past that, as an additional benefit for the adjacent properties, have also reduced fuels. These projects were initiated in 1985 when 90 acres of eucalyptus trees were removed from the immediate Bennett Ridge boundary and Ledson Marsh, and the removal of 155 very large eucalyptus trees from the Lawndale area in 2001. Removal of these very flammable trees satisfies the park's goals for natural system restoration. Other, more recent endeavors include the necessary PGE fuelbreak under the transmission lines, and ongoing oak woodland enhancement work. We will continue with these efforts to restore natural systems, but we are unable to install or maintain a fuelbreak or firebreak on DPR (Department of Parks and Recreation) lands within Annadel along Bennett Ridge.*

*Sincerely,*

*Donald Monahan, District Superintendent*

*Cc: Carol Rice, Wildland Resource Management*

*Dd: James Leddy"*

*(District Director in State Senator Wes Chesbro's office)*

**Bennett Valley Fire Protection District**

**6161 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa**

**(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. If you have any questions or concerns, you can leave a message for the Bennett Valley Fire Chief, Andy Pforsich , at 823-1084.*

**BV FIRE DISTRICT TAX REDUCTION!**

**After carefully reviewing all of the necessary costs of maintaining excellent fire protection in Bennett Valley, on June 15th, 2004 the Bennett Valley Fire Protection District Board of Directors held a public hearing and approved a tax reduction from \$45 per unit to \$37.50 per unit, a reduction for a single family residence of \$180 to \$150 annually, for 2004-2005. Along with good fire protection, fiscal prudence is very important to this administration and this Board.**

## **Bennett Valley Fire District Information**

- **Bennett Valley Firefighting Staff**

*Firefighting Engineers, 24-hour shifts:*

Brian Campbell, Mike Musgrove and Bryon Reid

*Part-time Firefighters, 8am to 5 pm:*

Kevin Burris, Danny Connelly, Matt Tognozzi

- **EMERGENCY CALLS** - In the event of an emergency the best, and fastest way to get help is to dial 911, ***unless you're using a cell phone!*** Calling 911 from a cell phone in an emergency can result in significant and damaging delays. Be sure to put local emergency numbers in your cell phone's speed dial. For this area, the recommended emergency numbers would be (707) 565-1700 for fire or medical emergencies, and (707) 565-2121 for the sheriff's office. Also, be ready to identify your cell phone # and your exact location in these calls.

- **FIREFIGHTER ACTIVITIES, July & August**

*By Bryon Reid, A-Shift Engineer*

Medical Aids-18	Mutual Aid-6
Vegetation Fires-10	Vehicle Accidents-4
Structure Fires-3	Alarms Soundings-2
Other-7	

Fortunately, the 4th of July was fairly uneventful. There was some usage of fireworks in the valley but these people, for the most part, were fairly cooperative when advised of the high fire danger in the area and stopped. This year certainly had a different feeling to it with fireworks banned in the County and also being newly banned in the City of Santa Rosa.

Even though summer is coming to an end, these next couple of months are typically the busiest for fires due to the grass and vegetation drying out all summer long. If you have concerns about fire hazards not cleared out on a nearby piece of property, notify (complain to) the BV Firefighting Engineer on duty. Just to be safe, it is a good idea to limit the usage of gas-powered equipment to the early morning hours and to even think twice about using such tools on high fire danger/Red Flag Days

On August 14th, units from Bennett Valley, American Medical Response (AMR), and Santa Rosa responded to a call for medical aid in Annadel State Park. Responding crews had limited access to the patient and equipment had to be hiked in to the patient's location. Due to the remoteness, extent of injury, and concerns about a long turnaround time to the hospital, the patient was airlifted out of the park by helicopter.

On August 19th, there was a vegetation fire off of Warrington Rd. at around 4:30 pm. Units from Bennett Valley, CDF, Rancho Adobe, Rincon Valley and Rohnert Park all helped in keeping the fire under

five acres. Units responding to the call were met with a large column of black smoke that was visible throughout the surrounding areas. Due to the terrain and fuels burning, a number of tactics were implemented in suppressing the blaze, such as progressive hose lays, mobile attack methods, and CDF aircraft. All contributed to no structures being lost and the fire being put out with no injuries. All units returned to their respective stations at approximately 10:00 pm.

On August 28th, at around 8:30 pm, a fire was reported in Annadel State Park. Units were dispatched to an intersection of two trails well within the park. Once responding units arrived at the dispatched location, it was found to be incorrect and the fire was still a few ridges to the southwest. At this time, engines from Bennett Valley, CDF, Marin County Fire, Rincon Valley and Santa Rosa were all assigned to the incident. Bennett Valley Battalion Chief Dan George was the first one to access the fire in a small four-wheel drive pickup truck. Those trails were not passable by regular fire engines until bulldozers from CDF were brought in to make access possible. Even then, only four-wheel drive firefighting apparatus were actually able to get to the fire. Once at scene, firefighters from Bennett Valley and CDF halted the fire and kept it under 4 acres.

- **BENNETT VALLEY FIREFIGHTER TRAINING**

*By Captain Brian Campbell, B-Shift Engineer*

**In July, the firefighters had three weeks of ventilation training.** This is cutting holes in the roof to let the fire gases and smoke out. It can be useful to create a free-burning active flame in order to more easily identify and extinguish the source of the fire. If the structure is full of dense smoke with only four to six feet of visibility and the windows are even beginning to crack from the heat, the exact location of the fire may not be evident. By letting the smoke escape and increasing the oxygen, an active flame is more likely to be visible, which is where the firefighting activities can be most effectively directed.

**In August the firefighting training has been focused on auto extrication, using the "jaws of life".** The firefighters spent two full nights on this and have used 12 older donated cars. One unusual facet of this training is that it is more difficult to extricate people from the safer cars. You need to try to carefully examine the potential air bags in the vehicle and determine which ones might not have been released yet, as you don't want the full force of an air bag hitting you unexpectedly. The firefighters do have a 600-page book describing the safety features for all of the automobiles made through 2003, but this is not an easy quick reference to use.

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

**P.O. Box 2666, Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
BVHA Web-Page**

**<[bennettvalleyhomeowners.org](http://bennettvalleyhomeowners.org)>**

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

Michael Friedenber, *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)

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***It is still not too late to join BVHA for 2004.*** Send \$15, made out to BVHA, to Blair/Dougherty, 7373 Bennett Valley Rd., Santa Rosa, CA 95404. ***MISSING VOICES:*** Please let us know if you can find copies of the following VOICE's; Volume 14, #1, (1991) Volume 15, #'s 3 & 4 (1992), Volume 17, #3 (1994). Thanks!

**Brief Summary of BVHA Board Meeting**

(For a copy of the minutes, please call Bobbie Blair, 542-1608.)  
July 21st, 2004

- Laurel Marcus, ecologist and watershed scientist, spoke on "Water Conservation and Household Audit". She also has a book available on these topics. You can call (510) 832-3101 for the book.
- Copies of the amended BVHA Articles of Incorporation were distributed to the Board and will be placed on the BVHA web-page.
- It was suggested that at the BVHA meetings in 2005, we have a speaker on both solar energy and the need for and definition of wildlife corridors.
- Michael Friedenber and Helen Bates reported on a CAC General Plan Update Circulation Sub-Committee meeting they had both attended. Categorizing roads is very important, as this label may be hard to remove in the future and may lead to increased development of the area. Upcoming meetings can be found on [www.sonomacounty.org](http://www.sonomacounty.org).
- In regards to the Sonoma County Water Coalition and having a requirement for groundwater management placed into the Water Resources Element of the draft General Plan 2020, the Board decided they wanted representatives to attend the meetings and find out more about the Coalition and the issues before becoming officially involved. Water conservation is a very vital issue and we want to stay informed.

- A lengthy discussion ensued between the Board and the audience regarding BVHA's role with Sonoma County, County Resolution 94-1042 (see page 3) and the voting criteria for BVHA elections. Michael Friedenber presided over this agenda item and was very careful to make sure that everyone in the audience was able to express his/her feelings about these matters. BVHA has a goal of acting as a community forum and therefore asks for input and gives information to all property owners, regardless of membership. In response to a question, it was explained that Bobbie Blair, the BVHA Mailing List Coordinator, is very diligent about seeing that the VOICE is sent to every parcel owner in the BV Study Area, again, regardless of membership. In regards to voting for directors, BVHA is a membership organization, so only members can vote for the Board. (Annual membership dues are \$15.) People who choose to join BVHA support the mission. Making everyone members could easily result in people who do not support the BVHA mission being members. The motion was made that "All parcel owners will be members and be able to vote for the Board." The vote was 5 voting no and 1 abstaining. The discussion then turned to the County Resolution #94-1042 in which BVHA was named as an advisory body to the County, beginning in 1994, regarding proposed land use changes in Bennett Valley. Again a lengthy discussion ensued. It was moved that we ask the County to dissolve Resolution 94-1042. The motion received no second and therefore the motion was not accepted. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45pm.

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**BVHA Board Of Directors  
Tentative Agenda For Meetings**

- o **September 15th, 2004, 7:30 PM, Fire Station**
  - Monthly Reports; Public Works; Grange Road Bridge PRMD; Proposed land-use changes for Wells & Mary Wagner, Eric Burns, and Myron (Mike) Biegler
  - Updates on BV 2005 Calendar and BVHA Web-Page
  - General Plan Update and proposed impacts on the Bennett Valley Area Plan
  - BVHA and the Sonoma County Resolution 94-1942, which is to be rescinded this month.
  - BVHA Elections for Board of Directors
- o **October 20th, 2004, 7:30 pm, BV Fire Station**
  - At this meeting, we will count ballots, announce election results and take up any new business which is of special concern. After the meeting is adjourned, then the newly-elected BVHA Board will select their officers for the following year.

## **Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association Ballot, September, 2004**

To qualify as a BVHA voting member, you must be a dues-paying member of BVHA, as indicated by the check-mark in the "2004 member" box on your mailing label, found on the reverse side of this ballot. You must also hold recorded title to any real property located within the unincorporated area of the "Bennett Valley Study Area."

Please vote for your choices by placing check marks on the lines next to your choice for the three candidates for the Board of Directors. (The individual statements of the three candidates can be found below the ballot.) After you have voted, mail the ballot (or the whole page) to BVHA, P.O. Box 2666, Santa Rosa, CA 95405, so it is received by October 20th or you may bring it to the BV Fire Station on Wednesday, October 20th, by 7:30 pm, to the BVHA Board of Directors' meeting. Your ballot will be disqualified if it is not received by this date and time. The BVHA nominating committee will pick up all the mail sent to the P.O. Box 2666, between September 10th and October 20th. They will also count the ballots and report the election results at that meeting.

### **Candidates for the BVHA Board of Directors. Three-Year Terms. Vote for Three Candidates:**

(See their individual statements down below.)

- 1.) \_\_\_\_\_ **Helen Bates**
- 2.) \_\_\_\_\_ **Frank K. LaCombe**
- 3.) \_\_\_\_\_ **Timothy J. Murphy**
- 4.) \_\_\_\_\_ **Write-in Candidate (Qualified and Willing)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(name)**

### **Statements of The Three Candidates for the BVHA Board of Directors (Limited to 250 words)**

(NOTE: In the interest of space, all paragraph separations were eliminated from these statements by the Editor.)

**1.) Helen Bates** I would be happy to continue to serve as a Board Member of the Bennett Valley Homeowners Association for a three year term. I joined the Board in 2001 and have served as Treasurer since 2002. I am a strong supporter of the Bennett Valley Area Plan because I value the beauty of the area and believe that it is necessary to have a forum for public input into development proposals in order to preserve the rural character and natural resources of Bennett Valley. My qualifications include experience as a volunteer in organizations that work to preserve historic and natural resources; first on the Board of the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage in the 1970's, then as a member of the BV Design Review Committee from 1987 to 1993, and now as Chair of Sonoma Mountain Preservation. Professionally I have been Financial Manager of several non-profit organizations and am currently working as a financial consultant to the Marin Agricultural Land Trust and the Sonoma Land Trust. Michael and I have lived on Sonoma Mountain Road, the south-eastern corner of the BV area, since 1982.

**2.) Frank K. LaCombe** I am a Sonoma County resident of 30 years and a resident of Bennett Valley since 1978. As such, I am committed to promoting and preserving the rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley. I served on the Common Ground Committee that evolved from the Town Hall meetings a few years ago, working to validate all groups and concerns in the Valley. I am proud to have been a contributor to the Bennett Valley Brochure that is now presented to new residents and potential builders in Bennett Valley. As a paying member of the Bennett Valley Homeowners Association, I will continue to work with the Board towards inclusion of all homeowners in Bennett Valley in matters affecting the entire Valley. I will provide a varied approach on the Board for the diverse interests of this community.

**3.) Timothy J. Murphy,** I appreciate the opportunity to be considered as a continuing Board Member of the Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association. My spouse and I moved to the Woodside area of Bennett Valley from San Francisco in 1980. Over the years, we have participated in the local activities such as Community Day held by the Volunteer Fire department; I helped establish the non-profit status for the firefighters and was twice President of Woodside's Yulupa Mutual Water Company. Each day we look at Bennett Mountain, walk Matanzas Creek winery or drive the tree studded roads of Bennett Valley, Grange or Sonoma Mountain; we appreciate the special place that we live. Accordingly, when the opportunity to be active on the Homeowner's Association Board is available, I feel that it is an opportunity to represent all the residents of Bennett Valley in maintaining and preserving our special bucolic environment. My formal background includes many years of public accounting and several years in the practice of law and real estate. Currently, I am a full-time Accounting and Real Estate Instructor at Diablo Valley College (DVC), Chair of DVC's Instruction Committee, and a current Board member of BVHA. These, and other prior group/Board experiences, give me some background and training in working on an active Board and in representing the interests of others.

## **Bennett Valley Community Calendar**

*Remember to note these dates on your calendar!*

- 1.) **Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association**: The BVHA Board will be meeting on the following Wednesdays at 7:30 pm at the BV Fire Station during the next few months: September 15th, October 20th and November 17th. You may check our web-page at <[bennettvalleyhomeowners.org](http://bennettvalleyhomeowners.org)> for more information about BVHA meetings and you are invited 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. You are invited to attend these Board meetings.
- 3.) **Bennett Valley "Clean-Up Roads" Day**: Sunday, September 19th, 8:30 am, BV Fire Station. See Page Two for more detail and please join us.
- 4.) **Jacobs Ranch, "Stories About This Place"**: On Tuesday evening, September 28th, Sonoma County Open Space District and LandPaths will be hosting this event at Jacobs Ranch. Presenting will be a number of local residents who have deep connections with the Jacobs' family, Sonoma Mountain and Bennett Valley. If you are interested in attending this event or participating as a presenter, please contact LandPaths event line at 524-9318, or e-mail Jonathan at [outings@landpaths.org](mailto:outings@landpaths.org).
- 5.) **Bennett Valley Grange #16: Come to the Spaghetti Dinner, open to the public, at the Grange Hall on Saturday, October 9th, 5 pm to 8 pm.** Watch for the announcement sign at the corner of Grange Road and Bennett Valley Road. Your support for the local Grange is welcomed and appreciated!
- 6.) **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.

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

BVHA web-page <[bennettvalleyhomeowners.org](http://bennettvalleyhomeowners.org)>

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

**Return Service Requested**

**HELP CLEAN-UP BV ROADS!  
Sunday, September 19th, 8:30 am  
BV Fire Station**