



Bennett Valley **VOICE**

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 6

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association (BVHA)

NOVEMBER, 2004

I firmly believe, from what I have seen, that this is the chosen spot of all this earth as far as nature is concerned."

Luther Burbank, 1849-1926

INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

It has been the goal of the Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association (BVHA) since 1970 to maintain the rural and scenic nature of Bennett Valley. In this newsletter, you will find several articles or agenda items expressing different viewpoints on BVHA activities. Some homeowners are expressing the viewpoint that BVHA should no longer monitor land-use & development changes in Bennett Valley, such as proposed wineries (see article on Page Two). Part of this attitude seems to be related to past activities of the now defunct Bennett Valley Design Review Committee. All BV Design Review functions, which were never handled by BVHA, are being handled by Sonoma Co. Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) since the year 2000. After you read the information on Pages One, Two, Three and Seven, we're asking you to share your **OPINIONS/VIEWPOINT** directly with BVHA by letter, e-mail or telephone prior to November 17th (Contact #'s on Page Six) or by attending our Board meeting on that date. We welcome your ideas and thoughts. Thank-you. *Marilee Jensen*

The Fountaingrove area of Northern Santa Rosa, with numerous houses protruding on surrounding hills, dramatically exemplifies the results of interested people not keeping informed about what land-use changes and development are being proposed for a specific area. This apparently resulted from three self-serving contractors being on the Planning Commission. Bennett Valley has maintained its rural and natural environment over these years at least partially because of the citizen participation and involvement with the Bennett Valley Area Plan, the general plan, zoning conditions and a review of ongoing land-use proposals.

At recent 2004 BVHA Board meetings, the purpose of BVHA has been strongly questioned by certain individuals. Some of this continual criticism of BVHA has created a "chilling effect" which has inhibited discussion and analysis of community issues. These individuals have been bringing up historical instances with which we are not familiar. This Board is powerless to speak for others in the past or to make reparations. In response to this, we are requesting to hear your opinions and viewpoint about our efforts. Do you support our continuing efforts? What other thoughts or concerns might you have about our activities?

Unbeknownst to the BVHA Board, a letter was sent out to a number of select Bennett Valley parcel owners on July 6th, 2004, by Michael Cronin, using the letterhead of a local informal organization, "Home Owners of Bennett Valley." This letter included the following sentence; *"This advisory capacity (of BVHA) includes non-public discussion among Board Members, discussion at BVHA Board meetings, and in numerous cases, members of the Board and members at large, going to the property under discussion and looking around."*

We no longer have a formalized advisory capacity and any decisions about our recommendations to PRMD have been made in public BVHA meetings. We seldom visit property, but when we do, it is always by appointment with both the PRMD representative and the parcel owner. We agree that any parcel owner must be notified by BVHA, prior to the discussion of his/her land-use proposal at an upcoming public meeting or in the VOICE. Most proposed BV land-use changes don't include any visit to the property or even any comments from BVHA to PRMD, because they are so innocuous. We will very much appreciate you sending us your comments, or attending our November 17th Board of Directors' meeting, as requested. Thanks.

By Marilee Jensen

Resolution 94-1042 Was Rescinded

Sept. 14th, 2004. Now What?

By Michael Cronin, Representing the Majority *

We found that the majority of the homeowners' in the Bennett Valley Plan Area do not approve of BVHA Board and it's members discussing, judging, voting on, or recommending to the County of Sonoma PRMD, their thoughts and wishes on homeowners' proposed land use changes, zone changes, use permits, and subdivisions which includes lot line adjustments, 2nd homes, lot splits and granny units.

Any person or organization can go to the County PRMD with an objection to any part of the permit process. But the question is: Should a group of 9 neighbors (Board of BVHA) and it's members sit and judge, vote, recommend, etc., other neighbors?

When you talk to homeowners' that have had to defend their projects, they have felt ganged up on by mean-spirited neighbors. For those who have moved into this area from elsewhere, this is often their first experience with this community.

In the Sept. VOICE, an unsigned commentary entitled: "Bennett Valley Homeowners' (BVHA) and Resolution 94-1042" stated that the BVHA "will continue to pursue its' mission as it has for the last 34 years."

The way this process began in the first place is that a few people had the ear and cooperation of the BVHA Board. The Board suggested to the County that they had the authority for ALL PARCEL OWNERS, and with no opposition, this process was put in place and went from bad to worst. These same people still want to have a say and think it is all right to interfere with the enjoyment of finding a place to buy or build a home and enjoy the country.

This topic will be on the agenda at the November B.V.H.A. meeting, Wednesday, Nov. 17th, at 7:30 p.m., to discuss the BVHA Board's refusal to change course on this issue.

If the majority of homeowners' sit idly by and allow this "TRESPASS" into their lives without speaking out, then this will continue.

This is certainly a very good opportunity to let your opinion be heard and known, at this meeting. The only way to convince the Board of BVHA and it's members that their "Mission", as they call it, to continue their practice of reviewing neighbors projects, is wrong and just unacceptable.

If you feel strongly about this issue, NOW is the time to speak up. The BVHA Board and it's members (less then 1/3 of the parcel owners in the B.V. Plan Area), DOUBT the majority feel this practice should stop----- so show up and be counted.

Thank you.

**Michael Cronin's choice of words.*

Here's What I've Found.

By Eric Burns, BVHA Board of Directors

I started attending the BVHA meetings a little over three years ago after acquiring some land off of Ponderosa Drive. I had heard things about the BVHA Board that didn't sound too good and I was curious to see if the rumors were true. I was pleased to see that things were not as I had heard. The Board meetings were a nice balance of communication about what was going on in the area and concern for protecting our scenic treasure. I learned that BVHA is not the Bennett Valley Design Review Committee and has no intentions of becoming anything like that Committee.

I agreed to being nominated and elected as a director on the BVHA Board in October 2002. I do know what I have seen in the past three years is something positive and I feel it is beneficial to the area. I've seen an organization that of course wants to preserve the rural characteristics of the area, but has not being doing anything intrusive or secretive in this effort. Part of what BVHA is doing includes presenting a forum to share information with the community, such as for the proposed Morley Winery in June, 2003. Most (if not all) of us don't have time to regularly check with Sonoma County PRMD and other county agencies to see what is being proposed in Bennett Valley.

The Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association also works hard to contribute to the area in other ways – such as raising money for the volunteer fire station and organizing road clean ups several times a year. BVHA also regularly host forums to help folks learn about important county issues such as wells, water quality, and septic systems. And of course there are the newsletters sent out to all Bennett Valley parcel owners every other month, regardless of BVHA membership.

Right now there are some homeowners that feel BVHA should not be giving feedback to the County regarding development and changes in the area. Some (but not all) of you have received at least one letter from this group (Michael Cronin, Home Owners of Bennett Valley), dated July 6th, 2004.

The BVHA Board is really interested in hearing your opinion - good, bad or indifferent. Do you support BVHA's efforts or not? Does our keeping up on proposed land-use changes and reporting back to you help you feel that the rural qualities of Bennett Valley are being better maintained? Do you have suggestions for improvements or changes. Please take the time to write us a letter, make a phone call, send one of us an e-mail or attend the next meeting. Thanks.

Relationship Between Homeowners Association and Design Review

Committee by Craig Harrison

Our community seems to have concluded that the Bennett Valley Design Review Committee was a disaster. However, it is clear from statements in the VOICE and at recent BVHA meetings that many do not know the critical role that the Homeowners Association played in selecting the members of the Design Review Committee.

The Board of Supervisors provided me a description of the Design Review Committee which states "Members shall be appointed by resolution of the Board of Supervisors. Prior to making their selections, the Board shall solicit the recommendation of the Bennett Valley Homeowners Association for the names of persons who are qualified and willing to serve."

Members of the current Board of Directors seemed surprised to learn at the September meeting that the Board recommended those who were appointed to the Design Review Committee. So who made those recommendations? The California non-profit statute, the Brown Act, and the by-laws of the Homeowner's Association each required that such decisions be made openly at public board meetings with an opportunity to discuss each nominee's qualifications. If the recommendations were made secretly, our community deserves to know the names of the individuals involved. Many residents have long contended that the Homeowners Association has historically been run by a small clique. Clearing the air on this issue will help heal our community and ensure that important issues in the future are not decided behind closed doors.

Response by Marilee Jensen, President, BVHA

The Bennett Valley Design Review Committee (BVDRC) was dissolved by Sonoma Co. Board of Supervisors on 9/19/00. Of the present nine Board members, only four of us were on the BVHA Board at that time and none of us ever heard anything about the Board of Supervisors "soliciting a recommendation" for BVDRC appointments. Bill Sullivan was President of BVHA from 1995 to 2000 and he says he doesn't remember the Board of Supervisors ever soliciting BVHA for such a recommendation, either. Lois Brown was President of BVHA from 1992 until 1995, and she does remember that occurring, at least on occasion. Both Mike Biegler & David Phillips, BVDRC members appointed in 1999, report they were directly appointed by our First District County Supervisor at the time, Mike Cale, and not solicited from or recommended by BVHA. Apparently, since at least 1995, the County Supervisors selected their BVDRC appointments independent of BVHA recommendations. For these reasons, the present BVHA Board knew nothing about the above described BVDRC selection process.

Toward Building Community

By Lolly Mesches

We humans, being social animals, look for like-minded friends and colleagues, and seek to form communities for mutual benefit. Yet even when people get together for special interests, events, or causes, there are differences of opinion, personalities, and communication styles. How the differences are dealt with matters greatly and can further the interests of the groups or cause factions that bitterly divide people. In the last issue of the VOICE I wrote about "bringing the best part of oneself to the group". I meant by that the wish to cooperate, to listen and acknowledge the other in order to bridge differences and solve problems together. I believe we have the capacity to do that and it is my hope that we build a community of mutual respect and integrity.

Road Rubbish Creates Visual Vice in Bennett Valley

There have been a number of recent instances of illegal dumping in our neighborhood, and some suggestions have been made that may lead to apprehension of those responsible:

1. Keep records; note when the material was seen and the last time you passed by the area when it was no longer there.
2. Look for anything that may identify where the material came from, such as serial numbers, papers with names, phone numbers, etc. Rubbish may be dumped by someone paid to haul it to the dump, and this person may not be careful about removing identifying material. Report identifying information to the Sheriff's Department. (565-2121)
3. Record vehicle license numbers of suspicious vehicles and a description of the drivers. A pickup truck with a green refrigerator, orange shag carpeting, and an old engine block slowly driving along Pressley Rd. at midnight should be reported to the Sheriff's department. If this cache of 1960s Americana ends up on someone's driveway and is reported, an apprehension may be possible.
4. If you pay someone to haul rubbish, pay dump fees only after being presented with an original correctly dated receipt from the dump. Trash haulers may collect a dump fee in addition to their charge, then do midnight dumping and keep your dump fee. Also, record information about your rubbish hauler; copy of ad, truck license number, etc.

Oon' nah-pi's,

The Miwok name for Sonoma Mountain

By Eve Boling

*Flocks of birds have flown high and away.
A solitary drift of cloud, too, has gone,
And I sit alone with the Ching-Ting Peak
towering beyond.*

*We never grow tired of each other,
the mountain and I. —LiPo*

Sonoma Mountain dominates the landscape in this part of Sonoma Country. On Tuesday, September 28th, the Open Space District and LandPaths sponsored an evening of storytelling by local residents who shared their connection with the mountain landscape. The event took place on the (Bill & Ruth) Jacobs Ranch on the north end of the mountain.

After a walking tour of the property and a picnic dinner, attendees settled down to hear the presentations. The first speakers were Don Myers and Dick Civit who worked on the Jacobs Ranch for many years. Their stories of working on a cattle ranch gave listeners a sense of life on the mountain during the Jacobs' lifetime. They described the redwood grove and a seventy foot waterfall which flows during the rainy season. They described hunting with Bill Jacobs, dealing with "crazy cows", running into mountain lions, and driving cattle down a slope so steep that the horses slid down it on their rumps.

But most of all, they gave us an affectionate portrait of the man for whom they worked. There is a sign in the redwood grove which reads; *A great man rode through this redwood grove. His name was Bill Jacobs.* Don and Dick defined Bill Jacobs as an "ecology buff." There were no wells on the property, and all the water came from three springs. This meant a great deal of time had to be spent cleaning the springs. Their employer wanted everything well kept, and it is evident that this spirit motivates workers and volunteers to keep the ranch well-maintained.

Marge Mowbry has lived on the mountain long enough to remember the ranch when a Dr. Anderson lived there. She still refers to it as the "Anderson place." Other speakers spoke of Ruth Jacobs who was famous for her apple pies and how she met Bill Jacobs at a Grange dance. (*Ruth attended a BVHA Community Forum at the age of 88, at the Grange Hall with Deborah Haarstad, just weeks before she died, on 3/7/02.*)

Pat Eliot spoke of her experiences not with the Jacob's family but another important presence on the mountain. As a young girl, she worked at the Jack London Ranch when it was a guest house and when Charmien London was still alive. Finally, Arthur Dawson from Sonoma Ecology Center, told us how Sonoma Mountain figures in the creation story of the Coastal Miwok People. The mountain was part of the ancestral homeland of the Coastal Miwoks. In their lore the earth was covered with water. O' ye, the Coyote-man, came here on a canoe of tules from out of the west. **All that showed above water was the top of Oon' nah-pi's, the Miwok name for Sonoma Mountain.**

This event was indeed one that gave attendees an appreciation for the history of this area, and admiration for those working so hard to preserve those places where the spirit of this history resides.

Sonoma County Open Space Authority Purchase of Cooper's Grove

On November 4th, Sonoma Co. Open Space District approved a Resolution for the lease-purchase of the Cooper's Grove property. This 226-acre property is located on Sonoma Mountain Road, adjacent to Jacobs Ranch. The most significant feature of this property is an approximately 48-acre redwood forest grove. The remainder of the property is a mix of oak-woodland and open meadows. The headwaters of Matanzas Creek flow from the eastern portion of the property. Burns Canyon, the headwaters for the South Fork of Matanzas Creek, is located in the westerly portion of the property. The southerly portion of the property provides a view over Bennett Valley toward Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. This parcel also provides trail connectivity between Crane Creek Regional Park and Jack London State Park.

"2005" CALENDARS NOW AVAILABLE

The Bennett Valley 2005 calendar made its debut at the polls on November 2nd and 170 calendars went home with valley residents. Supplies are now limited, so buy early. Cost remains \$15 and profits this year will be donated to the Bennett Valley Grange. For questions, you may call Judy at 544-0234 or Suzanne at 542-1608. We're sure you'll enjoy this special vintage edition of the calendar, which celebrates our unique valley by remembering and displaying its past.

Bennett Valley Fire District Information

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, Danny Connelly, Matt Tognozzi

An Excellent Evaluation of Our BV Fire Chief

By Matt Phillips, Captain, BVFPD

In today's fire service, there are rising costs, declining revenues, higher expectations and ever-changing ways of doing business. Bennett Valley Fire District made a decision to join administrations with Gold Ridge Fire District a few years back. This move gave some of our residents an uneasy feeling about losing control of their Fire District. When that move was made, Kent Reynolds was the Chief for both districts. He has since retired and now our Chief is Andy Pforsich. Andy is a full-time Battalion Chief for the City of Santa Rosa and a part-time Chief for both Bennett Valley and Gold Ridge Fire Districts. Andy brings to us 32 years of experience in the fire service. He has a wealth of knowledge and a personality that inspires his subordinates to be professional, hard working and dedicated.

Recently, at the September 14th Bennett Valley Fire Board of Directors meeting, Chief Andy Pforsich asked the Board to evaluate whether or not he was meeting their expectations and if he had been meeting the written goals when he took over as Bennett Valley Fire Chief in 2003. Each member of the Board expressed their opinion that Andy is doing exactly what he said he would do, and then some. They noted that the morale of the Firefighters, career and volunteer, is obviously high and that the overall performance of the fire district is excellent.

I have been with Bennett Valley Fire District for almost fourteen years. I have seen three fire chiefs come and go. I can tell the residents of Bennett Valley without hesitation, that today's BVFPD is better than it has ever been in my time. There is no question in my mind that the residents are receiving an outstanding service for a fair cost. Andy's professionalism is obvious. His ability to create and stay within a budget is excellent as exemplified by our recent special tax reduction. He has the absolute, unquestionable respect and following of the district firefighters, staff and Board members.

The residents of Bennett Valley are in very good hands. We have not lost control of our fire district. Rather we have gained a professional, fiscally responsible administration that has the needs of the valley constantly in mind.

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.*

FIREFIGHTER ACTIVITIES, September & October

By Bryon Reid, A-Shift Engineer

Medical Aids-9

Mutual Aid-4

Vegetation Fires-6

Vehicle Accidents-7

Structure Fires-4

Alarms Soundings-2

Downed Trees-4

Other - 9

On September 4, 2004, Bennett Valley sent a fire engine to the large vegetation fire in the "Geysers" which burned over 13,000 acres. While at the incident, the BV crew created defensible space around structures in imminent danger from the fire and secured containment lines in attempts to corral the fire. The crew was committed to the incident for 4 days of exhausting work. While on their off hours, the engine was released back to BV Fire Station for a few hours of rest and replenishment of supplies. The crew performed excellently with only minor injuries.

On September 30th, firefighters at Bennett Valley were training in front of the firehouse when they witnessed a vehicle roll over just down the road. One person was trapped in this car, upside down. Firefighter Gritsch, using the "Jaws of Life" cut away the exterior of the car and gained access to the patient, who was freed and taken to the hospital.

On October 12th, one of our fire engines responded to a fire in Annadel, which was contained to less than 2 acres.

As a reminder, Burn Season has officially arrived. Burn Permits and Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) notification forms are available at the Fire Station from 8 am to 5 pm. In these BAAQMD packets, there are rules and regulations pertaining to control burns. You need to read this information and **ensure that you qualify to burn.** Even though we've had some rain already this year, there is still a threat of vegetation fires resulting from escaped "control burns." It is important to exercise caution and common sense when conducting a burn. Burn permits are still \$10 and any technical questions on BAAQMD regulations can be forwarded to Jeremy Kimball at www.baaqmd.gov.

Grange Road Bridge

By James Alfieri, Sonoma County Bridge Engineer

On the afternoon of Monday, October 11th, the Grange Road Bridge, as we knew it, ceased to exist. The 3-span concrete structure built in 1924 and many times bandaged and nurtured over the years was "laid to rest" by demolition subcontractor W. Maloney Co. The removal was actually the second phase of a \$2.3 million Sonoma County contract to construct a new bridge over Matanzas Creek on Grange Road.

MCM Construction Company of Sacramento was the lowest of four bidders for this contract. MCM has been one of California's more experienced contractors. Their present projects include the construction of the high level structure over Noyo Harbor on Route 1 in Mendocino County and the Highway 29/37 interchange in Solano County.

The first phase of the Grange Road project was to construct a temporary detour bridge along side and slightly upstream from the old and future Grange Road structures. This detour bridge work commenced on September 12th and was opened to traffic on Saturday afternoon, October 9th. The temporary structure is 2 lanes wide, 180 feet in length and sits about 12 feet above the old bridge. Its main features are that the structure consists of six spans supported on steel pilings driven through the stream bed, extending upward and supporting a steel beam superstructure and a 12-inch deep timber deck making for a "rumbling riding surface". This surface will serve us best during the wet winter months...keeping traffic at slower speeds and giving vehicles the best of traction.

Many of you may have noticed the mammoth 90-ton crane used to build the detour structure. The structure was designed mostly to support this crane and any other construction loads imposed on it. These loads exceed any actual traffic loadings and give the structure a good confirmation of its design before public use. The temporary structure construction sequence started with the crane building the northern most span, then occupying the completed span and driving the piling and constructing the next span going southward. This was done repeatedly until the structure was completed.

This brings us to the next phase of the contract to now construct the new Grange Road Bridge. The new bridge will be a single span pre-stressed concrete structure, occupying an alignment similar to the old bridge, spanning 150 feet in length over Matanzas Creek and about 15 feet above the old structure. The bridge will accommodate two twelve-foot traffic lanes with two seven-foot shoulders, actually measured in meters. Work commenced on

the new structure on October 14th, by driving temporary shoring piles again into Matanzas Creek to support the forms and supports that will hold the newly poured concrete of the new structure. Excavation for the abutment supports has also started. It's expected the permanent bridge will be completed by late winter or early spring of 2005.

Along with building the new structure, retaining walls extending beyond the structure and accommodating the roadway embankments will also be built. Pavement construction will then follow the embankment placement. **It's expected the entire project will be completed and turned over to public traffic by late spring or early summer of 2005.**

Then... alas... another structure will be placed out of use; that is the temporary detour structure, which will be completely dismantled. But unlike the old Grange Road Bridge, its members will live to serve another day, in another place and another time.

And did I hear a few paragraphs back someone ask what does "pre-stressed concrete" mean? Well after the concrete for the new bridge gains the required strength, high strength steel strands will be placed lengthwise into and throughout the structure and "stretched" in place at both abutments to a high level of forces, then released and anchored into the structure, which transfers these forces into the new structure. Hey think of carrying a horizontal stack of books across a room by squeezing hard with both hands against the outer books. It works!

Hope you'll find this technical information both interesting and enlightening. We do appreciate the positive cooperation and interest you have provided the bridge building project. And, please as always drive carefully over these bridges.

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association

(BVHA) Board Of Directors

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BVHA Board Of Directors' Tentative Agenda For November 17th Meeting, 7:30 pm, BV Fire Station

- 1.) Update on BVHA Web Page and Calendars
- 2.) Proposed General Plan 2020,
Some Questions & Answers
- 3.) Sonoma Co. Water Coalition Meetings, 2ND &
4TH Wednesdays, 7 to 9 pm, 874-2821
- 4.) BVHA Meeting Dates for 2005, 3rd Tuesday,
Every Other Month plus October; January 18th, March 15th, May 17th, July 19th, September 20th, October 18th, and November 15th (7:00 pm or 7:30 pm, BV Fire Station)
- 5.) Written Requests to Be On Agenda:
 - o *Why is there no formal notice sent to an owner about their project that will be up for discussion at an upcoming public meeting?*
 - o *They should be sent a notice by registered mail.*
 - o *Only members of the BVHA properties should be reviewed.*
 - o *Does the Board review other Board member's projects?*
 - o *There should be a committee that checks the BVHA Board member's property to see if they are in compliance with the General and Bennett Valley Plan.*
- 6.) Tabulation of BV Parcel Owners' Opinions
By e-mail, letter, telephone or in person. See Pages One & Two, for Opinions Request.
7. After Adjournment, Selection of the BVHA Vice-President for the year by the BVHA Board.

Brief Summary, BVHA Board Meetings September 15th, 2004

- One BV resident questioned why the information on the BVHA website was so outdated. Director Eric Burns assumed full responsibility for this and said he would get it updated, soon.
- Another BV resident reported that junk was being dumped on his property more than ever. See the article on Page Three for suggestions which may lead to possible apprehension of those responsible.
- Michael Cronin read five questions/comments which he identified as being from various parcel owners. He requested to have these put on the agenda for the next meeting, but he agreed to wait until the November meeting. Per his written request, these comments are listed above on the Tentative Agenda, for the November meeting.
- Marie Nottingham expressed concern that "statements by all sides of the issue are very divisive, argumentative, nit picky and not helpful." She was also upset that the current BVHA ballot was not a secret ballot and she said some of her neighbors were not willing to send in their votes for that reason. The Board agreed the ballot problem should be remedied in the future.
- Craig Harrison insisted that "the BVHA Board of Directors appointed or nominated persons for the BV

Design Review Committee." See his article and Marilee's response on Page Three.

- Eric Burns, also a BVHA Board member, has submitted an application to subdivide two parcels totaling 220.53 acres into four parcels, each between 41 and 78 acres, above Woodside. He is working with the Woodside Water Co. (known as the Yulupa Water Co.) to clarify problems and concerns. Per PRMD, this proposal is "consistent with existing zoning." The BVHA Board had no objections to this proposal and agreed to write PRMD, if that was requested.

- Marilee stated that Lynn Morton-Weil, in Valerie Brown's office, told her that per a spontaneous statement from an attorney in the County Counsel's office, BVHA would no longer be subject to the Brown Act, since once Resolution 94-1042 was rescinded, BVHA no longer had a formal connection to any government entity.

October 20th, 2004

- During public input, Bill Pisenti talked about the 80 old homes in Bennett Valley which he has recently photographed. Gaye LeBaron and Bill's older sister, Ann Burrow, will make an album from these photographs which will be presented on December 3rd, at the BV Grange. Please call Bill, at 545-6045, if you know of old homes in the area which he might have missed.

- The Board approved a motion that BV parcel owners will always be contacted personally by a BVHA director, either by telephone or letter, before their proposed application for a land-use change, as forwarded from PRMD, is discussed at a BVHA Board meeting or mentioned in the VOICE. If there is some problem in completing this personal notification, then BVHA will send a registered letter to this parcel owner(s).

- The Board approved a motion that all ballots for BVHA elections will be organized so that the ballots will be secret and that the name of the voting member will not be on the ballot. Membership verification will be done in some other way.

- A possible BVHA name change was discussed, to something more applicable to the mission and function of the organization. "Homeowners Association" does not adequately describe who's being represented (parcel owners who may or may not have a home in Bennett Valley) and it also connotes rules and controls which are not applicable to BVHA. It was agreed to put this consideration off to a later date.

- Results of the 2004 BVHA Board of Directors elections: Helen Bates, Tim Murphy and Frank LaCombe were elected to serve for the next three years.

- After the meeting was adjourned, the BVHA Board of Directors elected the following officers:

- President – *Marilee Jensen*, Recording Secretary – *Bobbie Blair*, Corresponding Secretary – *Lolly Mesches*, Treasurer – *Helen Bates*. The office of Vice President will be decided after the November Board meeting, when the current Vice President will be back from vacation.

Bennett Valley Community Calendar

Remember to note these dates on your calendar!

- 1.) **Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association**: The next BVHA Board meeting will be on Wednesday, November 17th, 7:30 pm at the BV Fire Station. At the request of the BV Firefighters, BVHA is changing their meetings in 2005 to the third Tuesday, every other month, plus October instead of the third Wednesday. The Tentative Agenda for the November meeting on Page Seven includes the 2005 BVHA meeting dates.
- 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 welcome to attend these Board meetings.
- 3.) **Bennett Valley "Clean-Up Roads" Day**: The last two scheduled Clean-Up days, September 19th and October 23rd, have been rained out. We are now working on a more spontaneous method with phone calls to particular individuals on what is predicted as a dry day, at least for the fall of 2004. Presumably this will be accomplished before winter arrives. If you think you might be interested in clean-up on your own flexible schedule, please let one of the Board members know. (Contact information on Page Six.)
- 4.) **Bennett Valley Grange #16**: **Come to the Grange History Night, open to the public, at the Grange Hall on Friday, December 3rd, 7 pm. Refreshments to be served.** It is there that you'll be able to see Bill Pisenti's album of the historical homes in the area. Watch for the announcement sign along Bennett Valley Road. Your support for the local Grange is welcomed and appreciated!
- 5.) **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>

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

Return Service Requested

***Get Your 2005 BV Vintage Calendars;
BV Longs, Ace Hardware, Fire Station,
or Paterson's Nursery!***