



Bennett Valley VOICE

VOLUME 29, NUMBER 6

Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association (BVHA)

NOVEMBER, 2006

Bennett Valley Emergency Preparedness Planning Meeting Report *By Tim Murphy*

On October 28th, a community meeting on emergency preparedness was held at the Bennett Valley Fire Station from 9:00-11:00 am with a crowd of over 50 participants. BVHA Board Directors Craig Harrison and Frank LaCombe coordinated the event to address what Bennett Valley residents should do in an emergency.

Robert Smylie, from Sonoma County Emergency Planning Agency; Karen Sommers, a participant of **CERT (Community Emergency Response Training)**; Paul Hess, City of Santa Rosa's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator; and Brian Campbell, Bennett Valley Fire Captain, all made informative and pertinent presentations and provided handouts and references for emergency preparation.

Some of the highlights included the need to prepare in advance for the "Big" emergency. It is not "if"... just when. Santa Rosa is on a "jelly bowl" of land that is highly susceptible to movement. The last major earthquake in Santa Rosa/Bennett Valley was in 1969, with a 5.7 magnitude that resulted in significant property damage in Santa Rosa, in excess of \$8 million dollars, including one fatality, certain buildings crumbling, sidewalks buckling and underground pipes bursting. The *Press Democrat*, on 8/4/06, stated that the Rodgers Creek Fault, which crosses both Pressley Road and Grange Road in Bennett Valley, "is the fault in the Bay Area with the highest probability of producing a quake of magnitude 6.7 or higher within the next three decades." (A 6.7 earthquake will release approximately 850 times more energy than a 5.7 earthquake.) Bennett Valley is also in a highly susceptible area for wildland fires, and Captain Campbell has said we are ripe for one with all of the brush, fir trees, bay trees, dead branches and dead trees in the area.

Captain Campbell explained that 85% of the BV firefighters are volunteers, only two paid firefighters

are normally at the station, and almost all personnel must come from town or farther away to get to the station, if roads are passable. The Bennett Valley fire station also participates in "mutual aid", so if other areas in the county or state need greater assistance, some of our five fire engines can be deployed away from the area. This means BV residents must be prepared to take steps to take care of themselves in a major emergency.

CERT trained volunteers (a program of the Red Cross) work in teams and assess damage in area, start search and rescue, provide emergency medical assistance, and relay information to the "first responders" so that a proper priority of assistance is established. Twenty-two Bennett Valley residents completed twenty hours of CERT training in October and another BV CERT training program is being considered in the spring. The more BV residents we have CERT trained, the better prepared we'll be. More information about CERT training, disaster kits, and emergency preparedness is available at www.sonomacounty.redcross.org

COPE, Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergencies, was started by residents in the Santa Rosa community of Oakmont, in cooperation with the Santa Rosa Fire Department and American Red Cross. Similar neighborhood preparedness programs have been used around the country following the Loma Prieta Earthquake in 1989. The COPE Leaders in Oakmont, Sue Hattendorf and Al Thomas, now have about 75% of their 2,400 households in the COPE Neighborhood Preparedness Program. COPE program provides a very detailed process for creating neighborhood teams so that the leaders and/or co-leaders of each team can identify the occupants of each residence, any medical condition, contact information, and available resources in that household, such as tools, generator, etc. There is a booklet available providing (*continued on Page Two*)

(BV Emergency Preparedness Meeting, continued)

all the details and a slide presentation of how this all works, available on internet, at Google Search, City of Santa Rosa Emergency Preparedness, "How to COPE With Emergencies (Guide for Setting Up COPE Neighborhood Teams)" and a "COPE Neighborhood Team Census Form."

Paul Hess indicated that the efforts in Oakmont have been spectacular and that COPE neighborhoods are springing up rapidly throughout the City of Santa Rosa. However **INERTIA** is the enemy of being prepared. Bennett Ridge, Hidden Acres, Summit View Ranch, and Woodside are some of the areas of Bennett Valley that could easily set up the COPE program if the residents would volunteer and take action. Being prepared is the critical first step.

Overall there were some common themes to the event:

- *Residents are going to have to work together to take care of themselves. Emergency assistance from firefighters and other county/state resources may be a long time in coming.*
- *Water is critical and more important than food. As a guideline, each household should have access to a minimum of 1 gallon of water per day, per occupant, for at least a 2-week period. (Stored water should be rotated annually. Water heaters can also be a source of water.)*
- *Most injuries (approximately 75% are broken bones) are from non-structural items (flying objects—computers, books, broken glass, etc.). These "accidents" can only be prevented, in advance, with a personal "Home Safety Survey".*
- *Most people who have been rescued from collapsed buildings were saved by neighbors, not first responders.*
- *Communications and electricity may be very limited. Even if the telephone lines and cell towers are undamaged, which is unlikely, it will be very difficult to reach anyone in the same Area Code, as the phone lines will be jammed. Amateur radio, known as ham radio, is the most effective communication during an emergency.*
- *Plan and prepare to "camp out" for an extended period of time.*
- *After a major earthquake along the Rodgers Creek Fault, Pressley Road, Grange/Crane Canyon Road, and other nearby roads, could be severely disrupted, and the bridge at the S curve on Bennett Valley Road, near the Santa Rosa, City Limits, may collapse.*
- *Preparation now controls your destiny in the event of a disaster. Katrina was a rude awakening of how individuals cannot rely on*

government services to assist them in a matter of hours, days or even months.

The information was very well received by the attendees. It was a great opportunity to gather information resources and ask questions of various government representatives. Craig and Frank are to be commended for a great event. I think Craig captured the idea of this meeting best when he said: **"We can do some real positive things for our community with a little teamwork".**

Action items for our community include beginning COPE programs in your immediate neighborhood, (call Paul Hess, at 543-3711, to explore further) having more residents receive CERT training (call Jim Bray, 577-7610, if you're interested) and assessing the earthquake resistance of our BV Fire Station. It is also very important that each household take time to prepare for an emergency with their own "family disaster plan" and home safety survey as summarized in the article on Page Four.

THANK-YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

TO: Paul Hess, Robert Smylie, Karen Sommer, and Brian Campbell

FROM: Craig Harrison

"On behalf of the Bennett Valley Homeowner's Association and all of Bennett Valley, I want to thank each of you for your excellent presentations and answers to questions from the community at our Emergency Preparedness Planning Meeting on Saturday (*October 28th*). Every response that I have heard was that the meeting was outstanding..."

MegaBRITE SELF-POWERED AM/FM Radio & Super Bright LED Flashlight By DuraPRO:

Paul Hess reports that Santa Rosa COSTCO sells an emergency device which includes a flashlight, a strobe light, a siren and an AM/FM radio, in a relatively small unit, which you hand-crank from time-to-time in order to operate. The cost of the package for two of these units is \$23.79. After hand-cranking, the radio had a surprisingly strong signal!

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FAIR

Bennett Valley Ace Hardware

Saturday, November 11th, 10 am until 3 pm

Come and get a starter emergency preparedness kit with information provided about other supplies you should obtain in advance of a disaster. There will also be information and/or representatives at this event at the BV Ace Hardware store from COPE, CERT, and Bennett Valley Fire District. Sign up to become a COPE leader for your neighborhood and/or explore signing up for Bennett Valley CERT training.

COMMUNICATION IN A MAJOR EMERGENCY

By Marilee Jensen

The following information was obtained in telephone conversations between November 1st and 3rd, with Paul Hess, Bob Smylie, and Ken Harrison, of the Sonoma County Auxiliary Communication Service.

CELL PHONES: They all agreed cell phones are problematic in a major emergency. Will the tower still be working? Will there be sufficient power from back-up generators? But the biggest problem will be overuse of the local lines, with all the lines jammed. Cell phones were useless after Katrina primarily because all of the lines were jammed, except for some text messaging. Another tower in Bennett Valley would not prove useful in increasing cell phone capacity in a major emergency as there is no guarantee the tower would withstand a strong earthquake and if it did, it would only benefit those customers using that particular company. For now, it seems that *Cingular* is the only company that currently has cell phone coverage along Bennett Valley Road and the Bennett Valley Fire Station. Another option is *TracFone* cell phone (www.tracfone.com), which buys coverage through other towers, such as along Bennett Valley Road.

LAND-LINE TELEPHONES: Will the telephone poles and telephone wires withstand a strong earthquake and/or wildland fire? Some telephone units need electricity to operate, such as portables, which make them even more unreliable. But again, the major problem is the jamming of the lines from overuse. If you have access to an operating phone, you have a much better chance of completing a call to another Area Code rather than the 707 Area Code, depending on the location of the emergency.

RADIOS: You can receive information on a **portable radio or a hand-cranked radio** as described on Page Two. To transmit or exchange information, **an amateur radio (ham radio) works best** in an emergency, but you need to have the right equipment as well as a license from FCC. At times, there is a one-day class available to become a licensed ham radio operator. Paul Hess mentioned that all the fire stations are being encouraged to obtain a ham radio, as a part of emergency preparedness. Sonoma County has trained about 125 volunteers to run an **Auxiliary Communication Service (ACS)** using ham radios as a core part of their Emergency Services, on the 2 meter band, frequencies 146.73 and 145.35. As part of this service, they are trying to recruit more ham radio operators, both for ACS and for COPE neighborhood teams, in order to facilitate long-range communication in a major emergency. If you are

possibly interested in becoming a licensed ham radio operator, or if you already have a ham radio license, please contact Ken Harrison, the ACS Radio Officer, at 566-8986 or ken@kenharrison.com. Within your neighborhood, hand-held walkie-talkies with a five or ten mile range or other hand-held radios, such as a CB, would be the most reliable communication, if you don't have access to an operating telephone, cell phone, computer or ham radio.

What is COPE?

Brief Summary, City of Santa Rosa web-site,
(Emergency Preparedness)

The mission of COPE is to help residents, families, and neighborhoods become and remain better prepared to respond to and recover from emergency situations. **This includes developing individual response plans, maintaining individual emergency supply kits, and outreaching to neighborhoods in the community.**

Developing Your Own COPE Neighborhood Team – The following seven steps are guidelines to aid COPE Leaders develop COPE Neighborhood Teams:

- 1. Define the scope of your neighborhood.** Include 10 to 20 homes...
- 2. Build Your Neighborhood Leadership Team.** Enlist one Leader and recruit two to three Co-Leaders, committed to the COPE program and capable of responding to rapidly changing situations.
- 3. Take a census of the Residents in Your Neighborhood.** Following the COPE Census Form, document resident names, contact information, special skills and critical needs.
- 4. Record Information about Each Home.** Record location of gas, water, and electric shut-offs...Note availability of special tools for use in emergencies.
- 5. Identify Meeting Site and Escape Routes.** Choose a central meeting site to congregate when emergency occurs...
- 6. Schedule and Conduct a Meeting of Residents.** Introduce...Leader and Co-Leaders. ..Discuss...team actions in the event of an emergency...Distribute...guide to each residence.
- 7. Maintain Your Plans and Kits with Ongoing Effort.** Every time you change your clocks (every six months), conduct a COPE Neighborhood Team meeting and review and update all COPE material. Update COPE Team Census for new residents in your neighborhood or changes to needs and capabilities

of residents. Review meeting sites, escape routes and any changes.

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS: **NOT IF, BUT WHEN IN Sonoma Co.**

The pictures from New Orleans dramatized to all of us the importance of Disaster Preparedness, which we've all thought about but put off completing. Whether we have a major earthquake or some other serious disaster, the consequences can be greatly reduced if we have developed a Family Disaster Plan. The information in this article is oriented more toward earthquakes, but there are additional important items needed in any Disaster Plan, which are not included here. To obtain further information on disaster preparedness, you can contact the **Sonoma County Office of Emergency Services, 2300 County Center Drive, #221A, Santa Rosa, (707) 565-1152.**

▪ **PREPARE A HOME EARTHQUAKE PLAN:** Choose a safe place in every room—under a sturdy table or desk or against an inside wall where nothing can fall on you (away from windows, bookcases or tall furniture) and practice **DROP, COVER, AND HOLD ON** at least twice a year. Inform babysitters and caregivers of your plan.

▪ **WHEN THE SHAKING BEGINS:** Drop under a sturdy desk or table, hold on, and protect your eyes by pressing your face against your arm.

▪ If you are in bed, when the shaking starts, hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow.

▪ If you are outdoors, find a clear spot away from buildings, trees, and power lines. Drop to the ground.

▪ If you are in a car, slow down and drive to a clear place, away from buildings, trees and power lines. Stay in the car until the shaking stops.

▪ **AFTER THE SHAKING STOPS:** Check yourself for injuries. Protect yourself from further danger by putting on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes and work gloves.

▪ Check others for injuries. Give first aid for serious injuries.

▪ Look for and extinguish small fires. Eliminate fire hazards. Turn off the gas if you smell gas or think it's leaking.

▪ Listen to a portable radio for instructions.

▪ Expect aftershocks. Each time you feel one, **DROP, COVER AND HOLD ON!**

▪ Inspect your home for damage. Get everyone out if your home is unsafe.

▪ If available, use the telephone only to report life-threatening emergencies.

▪ **REDUCE HAZARDS:** Bolt bookcases, china cabinets, and other tall furniture to wall studs, install strong latches on cupboards, strap water heater to wall studs.

▪ **BASICS YOU SHOULD STORE IN YOUR HOME**

INCLUDE: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools, emergency supplies and special items, as described below. **Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container,** such as a large covered trash container (possibly with wheels), a camping backpack or a duffle bag. Store these **basics** in a convenient place known to all family members. **Keep a smaller version in the trunk of your car.**

▪ **Water:** Store water in plastic containers. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day plus two quarts for food preparation/sanitation. Keep a 14-day supply, one gallon per day per person. (*At times, the Dollar Store on Yulupa sells cases of six plastic gallon containers of water in a cardboard box for \$6.00.*)

▪ **Food:** Store non-perishable food, which requires no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water. Select food items that are compact and lightweight, including ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables, canned juices, powdered rice or soy milk, soup, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, power bars, trail mix, and vitamins.

▪ **First Aid Kit:** Assemble a first aid kit for your home and your car (or purchase one from the American Red Cross, at 577-7600) including the following items: Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes, 2-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6), 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6), adhesive tape, triangular bandages (3), 2-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls), 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls), scissors, tweezers, needle, moistened towelettes, antiseptic, thermometer, tongue blades (2), tube of petroleum jelly, assorted sizes of safety pins, cleansing soap, latex gloves (2 pair), sunscreen, aspirin or other pain reliever, anti-diarrhea medication, and antacid (for stomach upset).

▪ **Tools And Supplies:** Paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, Emergency Manual or the USGS *"Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country"*, battery operated radio and extra batteries, flashlight and extra batteries (or See Page Two), cash or traveler's checks, change, non-electric can opener, utility knife, fire extinguisher (small canister, ABC type), tube tent, pliers, tape, compass, matches in a waterproof container, aluminum foil, plastic storage containers, signal flare, paper and pencil, needles, thread, medicine dropper, shut-off wrench (*to turn off household gas and water*), whistle, plastic sheeting, toilet paper, towelettes, soap, liquid detergent, personal hygiene items, plastic garbage bags, ties, plastic bucket with tight lid, disinfectant, and household chlorine bleach.

▪ **Clothing & Bedding: Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person.** Sturdy shoes or work boots, rain gear, blankets or sleeping bags, hat and gloves, thermal underwear, and sunglasses. Leave shoes and flashlight under your bed (to avoid broken glass).

▪ **Special Items:** Remember family members with special needs, such as infants and the elderly as well as your pets and livestock. Possible special items include prescription drugs, sunscreen, extra eyeglasses, a pet supply box, games and books, and important family documents in a waterproof, portable container.

Bennett Valley Fire Protection District

**6161 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa
578-7761 (Non-Emergency Business Phone)**

Board of Directors

Mark Richardson, President
Joseph Mazeau, Vice-President
Marilee Jensen, Secretary

Arnie Tognozzi and Don D'Avanzo, Directors
*The Board meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday 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 823-1085.***

Bennett Valley Paid Firefighting Staff ***24-hour Shift Personnel:***

Captain Brian Campbell, Lieutenant Bryon Reid, and
Lieutenant Gabe Stirnus

Daytime Firefighters, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm:

Engineer Danny Connelly, Firefighter Steve
Gritsch, & Engineer Matt Tognozzi

*Supplemented and supported by 25 to 30 Trained
Firefighting Volunteers; every night at least two of
the volunteers spend the night at the Fire Station.*

BV Firefighter Activities: September/October 2006

By Lieutenant Bryon Reid

Medical Aids- 16; Vehicle Accidents-9;
Structure Fires-4; Smoke Investigations-1;
Hazardous Conditions-6; Alarm Soundings 4;
Wildland Fire-6; Public Assists 3;

Total Runs: 49 (Increase of 5 from July/August)

September and October have brought an end to the wildland fire season. The rainy season is soon to be upon us. This means that the burn season will soon be here as well. As of 11/01/06 there is still a burn ban in State Responsibility Areas (SRA), which include all of Bennett Valley. Once this burn ban gets lifted, residents who qualify to burn will be able to after obtaining a Bennett Valley Fire District Burn Permit *and* a Bay Area Air Quality Management District Burn Notification form. Luckily, we escaped the fire season this year without a major incident. We can't stress enough the use of common sense and good judgment while conducting legal controlled burns this year to avoid a post fire season catastrophe.

Weather is changing so please, please exercise caution while driving on the newly-wet roads as the first rains of the year tend to be the most dangerous driving conditions. Check your wiper blades and be reminded that it is state law that your headlights

must be illuminated during continuous operation of your wiper blades.

The Bennett Valley Firefighters hosted the Bennett Valley Community Day at the firehouse in October. We served about 200 people at the fire station and raised \$11,000. The community has always been supportive of the Bennett Valley firefighters and that support is immensely appreciated on a daily basis by all of us here at the fire station. Thank you for your continued support!

EMERGENCY CALLS FROM CELL PHONES

By Marilee Jensen

I contacted the Bennett Valley Fire Station to verify the best telephone number to call when you need to report an emergency from a cell phone, as discussed in our CERT training. They provided me with the Dispatch number, but suggested I call that number and ask them for the best number to call. In the past, when people have called 911 from cell phones, the calls were transferred to a California Highway Patrol phone number in Vallejo, with possible long delays and limited responses.

When I called the Dispatch number for Bennett Valley Fire, they informed me **that calling 911 from cell phones is improving, and you should call 911 first when reporting an emergency from a cell phone.** More frequently now, the cell phone you're using has a Global Positioning System (GPS) which will transmit the longitude and latitude from where you're located when calling 911. Also the 911 calls are more often being transferred to local police numbers, which is the sheriff's phone number for us. If the 911 number is not producing any results, a secondary number you can call, from Sonoma County only, is 576-1371. This is an emergency dispatch number. Do NOT call 568-5933, as previously suggested. It is the dispatch number for the fire and ambulance services, but Redcom Dispatch says it is not an emergency number, so it would be answered last.

Morley Winery's Application to Sell Alcohol

Eric Flanagan, the owner of Morley Winery, has explained that Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) says they need to obtain a license to sell alcohol in order to sell any of their wine at all. He goes on to say, *"We will NOT be selling wine on the site at all except over the phone...There will be NO TOURIST VISITS at the site and NO PUBLIC TASTING ROOM...Please be assured that we are sticking to the terms of the proposal exactly...If ...any of (the) neighbors have any questions, please (have them) contact me at 303-442-1145 or eflanagan@emffp.com."*

Prevention of Septic System Failure

by Rebecca Ng, Well & Septic System Supervisor, Sonoma Co. PRMD, (707) 565-1900

Septic systems are generally an out-of-sight, out-of-mind part of the house operations. Most homeowners do not think about the septic system until something goes wrong. The information below was taken from a PRMD/industry workshop supplemented with information from the National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association, Inc. The information should be useful to homeowners.

BEFORE THE SEPTIC SYSTEM IS INSTALLED:

The success of the septic system is dependent on factors before the system is built. Were all potential uses and the resulting wastes planned for with the design of the septic system? Excessive wastewater flows and the types and/or strengths of wastewater going into the septic system could disrupt, if not destroy, your system.

Wastewater from floor drains, gutters, soak tubs, sump pumps, water treatment systems, etc. can result in excessive flows. Additionally, if the regular number of people using the septic system exceeds the system design flow, that could result in premature system failure.

Wastewater types such as garbage disposals, water softening treatment systems, and home wine making can adversely affect the septic system. Water softeners increase the saline content and kill the bacteria in the septic system. Garbage disposals and home wine making increase the biological oxygen demand (BOD) and add total suspended solids (TSS) to the wastewater. High BOD and TSS in the wastewater can result in clogging the disposal lines. Home wine making waste also typically contains chemicals such as sulfur and flocculants that kill or bind the bacteria in the system.

The conditions when the septic system is installed are very important. Many times, people are in a hurry to get their septic system installed so they can move into their house. They may ignore that it is January and the ground is saturated from weeks of rain and has not dried out. Construction of the septic system in wet soil can cause smearing and compaction of the soil. This results in the wastewater "ponding" in the system rather than percolating through the system (resulting in septic system failure).

AFTER THE SEPTIC SYSTEM IS INSTALLED:

Septic systems must be maintained for effective results and longevity. This is especially true for the more complicated non-standard systems that usually include pump systems and other working parts. For good maintenance:

- The septic tank typically should be pumped once every 3 – 5 years.
- If the septic tank has an effluent filter, it must be cleaned at least once a year.
- For non-standard systems, the disposal lines should be purged 1 – 2 times a year.

- If there is a dual disposal field, the diversion valve should be switched every six months.
- If there are shrubs and/or trees close to the septic system, roots can invade the disposal fields. Contain or trim the roots and branches away from the septic system.
- Do not allow surface water to pond around the septic tank or sump and in disposal fields.

The following items should be kept out of the septic system. They increase the amount of solids in the septic tank which eventually leads to clogging in the disposal lines.

- Inert Materials: Plastic; rubber; scouring pads, dental floss; kitty litter; cigarette filters; bandages; hair; mop strings; lint; rags; cloth and towels.
- Paper Products: Disposable diapers; paper towels; facial tissues; baby wipes; lotioned, scented or quilted toilet tissue; and moist toilet tissue. They do not dissolve readily in a septic system.
- Food Wastes: Animal fats and bones; grease; coffee grounds; citrus and melon rinds; corn cobs; and egg shells. Spoiled dairy products and yeasts may cause excessive microbe growth that interferes with wastewater degradation.
- Household Products: Female sanitary products; cotton balls or swabs; or condoms. Antimicrobial soaps and automatic disinfection tablets may kill the bacteria in the system.

The following items may harm or kill the bacteria in the septic system needed for wastewater degradation.

- Medications/Ailments: Normal use of over the counter medications will not affect the septic system. However, do not flush expired medicines or antibiotics into the system. Some prescription medications and oral or intravenous chemotherapy are known to cause disruption to the system.
- Commercial Additives: There is no evidence to support the use of additives with a normal functioning septic system. Some additives may do more harm than good.
- Chemicals and Toxins: Paint; paint thinner; solvents; volatile substances; drain cleaners; automotive fluids; fuels; pesticides; herbicides; fertilizers; metals; disinfectants, sanitizers; bleach mop water; floor stripping wastes; excessive use of household chemicals.
- Laundry Practices: Laundry should be spread out over the week so the water entering the system is spread out. Liquid detergents are recommended over powders and fabric softener sheets are recommended over liquid softeners. Excessive use of detergents, especially those containing bleach can disrupt the system. Bleach should be used sparingly and less than indicated on container.

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COME JOIN BVHA

And Support Your Rural Community

by Bobbie Blair, BVHA Membership Coordinator

If you haven't already joined BVHA, don't forget to send your check in now. The goal is to preserve and protect our lovely valley, and your continued support is the one way it can be done. Just send your check made out to "BVHA" to Blair/Dougherty, 7373 Bennett Valley Rd., Santa Rosa, CA 95404, for the annual dues of \$15, plus any donation you're willing to make. If you have any questions, please call Bobbie at 542-1608 or email her at dreams7373@sbcglobal.net.

BVHA Board Transition *by Tim Murphy*

In this recent election in September, 2006, there were three openings on the Board. Paul Hamilton (on the original BVHA Board in 1970), Dan McCaskle and Connie Montague were newly elected to the Board, as of October 18th, 2006. Leaving the Board are Marilee Jensen (who is continuing as VOICE editor), Leonore Mesches and Marilyn Stocks. We would like to thank the three of them for many long years of service on the BVHA Board, while enthusiastically welcoming the new Board members.

Brief Summary of BVHA Meetings,
September 20th, 2006 Meeting

- Randy Leach and Rebecca Ng of Sonoma County PRMD Well and Septic Division discussed septic systems to an audience of about 50 people. One of the speakers, Rebecca Ng, has since submitted a

very informative article on "Prevention of Septic System Failure" on Page Six. They also discussed current pending legislation on septic systems which is not yet finalized.

- Under Public Input, the poor conditions of the roads in Bennett Valley were discussed and it was agreed by the Board that BVHA would send a letter to Ken Giovannetti, Supervisor of Road Maintenance, for Sonoma County, requesting improved road conditions and improved safety.
- The 2007 BV Calendars will be on sale on October 1st and November 7th, at the BV fire station. They can also be obtained at BV Fire Station, BV Long's and BV Ace Hardware.
- The 6400 section of Sonoma Mountain Road continues to be closed, after almost a year. The geologists are now doing further drilling to better determine what options are possible. Hopefully the road can be re-opened next spring.

October 18th, 2006 Meeting

- The letter was sent from BVHA to Ken Giovannetti, dated October 11th, 2006, regarding **Condition of Roads in Bennett Valley.** As noted in the letter, "The closure on Sonoma Mountain Road has changed traffic patterns and the surfaces of all the surrounding roads have deteriorated dramatically during the past 9 months...We hope you can be responsive to our public safety concerns..."
- The issues regarding the role of the BVHA in regard to the Bennett Valley Area Plan were presented and discussed with the new Board. Different opinions were expressed in the discussion which followed.
- After the adjournment of the meeting the new Board selected Tim Murphy as President, Craig Harrison as Vice-President and Connie Montague as Secretary. Helen Bates agreed to continue as Treasurer.

Board of Directors' Tentative Agenda

By Tim Murphy, BVHA President

INFORMATION: BV Emergency Preparedness Meeting; BVHA Website

DISCUSSION: 2007 BV Calendar; Sonoma Mountain Road Closure

NEW BUSINESS: Set goals and plans for the coming year including topics for discussion, speakers, calendar of events, meeting times, other open matters.

BENNETT VALLEY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

(Remember to mark these dates on your calendar.)

1.) BENNETT VALLEY HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION (BVHA): The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, November 15th, 7:00 pm at the BV Grange.

2.) BENNETT VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT: (BVFPD) The Board of Directors is scheduled to meet the second Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm, at the Bennett Valley Fire Station. Please confirm the meeting date and time in advance, by calling 578-7761.

3.) LANDPATHS FALL OUTINGS: Friday, November 17, Stewardship at Taylor Mountain. *Lend a hand at the District's new Taylor Mountain Open Space Preserve, from maintaining the pathways to cleaning up the old home site. Moderate work and fun. Refreshments provided.*; Saturday, November 18, *Estero Americano, Bring your own kayak or canoe; easy flat-water paddling: 3-4 miles roundtrip*; Saturday, December 2, *from the District's Taylor Mountain Preserve to Annadel State park & beyond, full day, 11-13 miles; strenuous hike.* For further information about these and other outings, call the Landpaths Event Phone # 524-9318, or go to their web-page, landpaths-outings@sonic.net.

4.) EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FAIR: At the Bennett Valley Ace Hardware Store, 2738 Yulupa Road, on Saturday, November 11th, from 10 am until 3 pm. Come to get a starter emergency preparedness kit and obtain information about COPE, CERT and other details about emergency preparedness.

5.) SONOMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS meets every Tuesday (except on weeks when there is a holiday) at varying times at 575 Administration Drive, Santa Rosa. Valerie Brown is the County Supervisor for our First District. You may call her or Lynn Morton-Weil, her Aide, at 565-2241, with questions or concerns.

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Morley Winery & the ABC
Septic System Success
BVHA Board/Meetings

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

BVHA webpage: bennettvalleyhomeowners.org

SPECIFIC PURPOSES OF BVHA: *“To promote and preserve the rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley, serve as an open forum for Bennett Valley community participation and provide a bridge for communication between government agencies and the Bennett Valley community.”*

Return Service Requested

**Thanks To Those Who Helped
Remove the Litter From
Our BV Roads!**