



# Bennett Valley VOICE

www.bennettvalley.org

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 4

BENNETT VALLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (BVCA)

JULY, 2014

## **Can You Help Protect Honey Bees? Why Is It Important? Learn More At Our July 17 BVCA Meeting.**

Scientists say that about half of the worldwide honey bee population has been lost in the last five decades because of pesticides and parasites... This is particularly worrisome for mankind, since honey bees pollinate many of the flowering plants we eat, including broccoli, cucumbers, strawberries, pears, almonds and avocados. You will learn more about honey bees at our next BVCA meeting on Thursday, July 17, 7:00 pm, at Bennett Valley Grange Hall.

Ettamarie Peterson, President of the Sonoma County Beekeepers' Association, will be there with her more than 20 years of experience to explain and answer your questions about the threat to bees and how each of us can help protect this essential species. Ettamarie says the Sonoma County Beekeepers' Association was founded many years ago, as the Sebastopol Beekeepers' Club. Later it changed its name to Sonoma County Beekeepers Club and then a few years ago it was incorporated as a non-profit Association. The goal of the association is to educate the public, including both members and non-members, about the importance of honey bees and how to care for them.

Monthly meetings of the Sonoma County Beekeepers' Association are held on the second Monday of each month, at 7 pm. in the 4-H Foundation building in Rohnert Park. The meetings cover a wide range of topics of interest to beekeepers. Everyone wanting to learn about honeybees is invited to attend. You do not need to be a member or a beekeeper to attend these meetings.

At these meetings they have a variety of speakers and topics. Besides the general meetings, they have smaller meetings with members that live in various areas of the county. They refer to these as cluster groups. Since they have around four hundred (400) members the cluster groups help them to get to

know each other better and help each other with more hands on activities.

Their organization has a very helpful website, <http://www.sonomabees.org>. The website includes their monthly newsletter that has a column by a member and Santa Rosa Jr. College instructor, Serge Labesque, that tells what to expect to see in the hive and what to do with the bees each month. They also have a plant column which includes an extensive list of bee friendly plants to encourage people to plant for the bees. The website also has a swarm section that the public can use to call beekeepers to catch swarms or remove bees from buildings.

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### **Fewer Honeybees Died Over Winter, Report Says**

*New York Times, May 16, 2014*

"Honeybees could be on their way back, according to a new federal report. The collapse of bee populations around the country in recent years has led to warnings of a crisis in foods grown with the help of pollination. Over the past eight years, beekeepers have reported losses over the winter of nearly 30 percent of their bees on average. The new survey... found the loss of managed honeybee colonies from all causes has dropped to 23.2 per cent nationwide over the winter which just ended, down from 30.9 per cent the year before...

'It's better than some of the years we've suffered.' said Dennis vanEngelsdorp, a director of the (*Bee Informed*) Partnership and an entomologist at the University of Maryland. Still, he noted, a 23 percent loss 'is not a good number.' He continued, 'We've gone from horrible to bad. He said there was no way to say at this point why the bees did better this year....'

## **Supervisors Propose Long-Term Plan to Fix County Roads**

By Craig S. Harrison, SOSroads

The supervisors' proposed Long-Term Road Plan is a serious data-driven effort that focuses on realistic ways to rebuild our roads during the next decade. While we wish that the plan included additional road miles, it is an improvement over the status quo and a giant step in the right direction. The plan, which can be found at <http://sosroads.org/>, includes maps that identify many of the roads that are proposed to be improved. It includes the remaining 5.7 miles of Sonoma Mountain Road, as well as Pressley Road, Roberts Road and Warm Springs Road.

The supervisors still need to propose and vote on the specifics of how the plan will be financed. There has been no public discussion about ongoing general fund commitments, which is fundamental to SOSroads support. The plan contemplates a 1/4 cent sales tax increase, which would raise an estimated \$8.6 million. It also contemplates extending Measure M 1/4 cent sales tax in 2018, with a larger portion devoted to local road repairs.

The supervisors will hold a hearing, probably on July 29, to decide on these details and other possible funding sources. This will be the time for the supervisors to show their commitment to roads being "a priority" by allocating adequate county general funds to road repair and pavement preservation. As President Kennedy so eloquently stated, "to govern is to choose."

SOSroads maintains that any long-term plan should include a significant contribution annually from the general fund (adjusted for inflation) before asking citizens to support any new taxes that would be dedicated to roads. We think as a practical matter that without such a commitment it will be difficult for any tax measure to be approved.

The 2013-2014 budget includes \$15.5 million in general funds for roads, similar to the level of general funds (adjusted for inflation) that the supervisors allocated in the late-1980s before county budget cuts starved road maintenance. We think \$15.5 million, adjusted for inflation, should be a minimum.

There is no better time to let Supervisor Susan Gorin or her District Director Pat Gilardi know that roads should be a priority for county general funds and are a key component to a sustainable county road system.

- 565-2241; <mailto:susan.gorin@sonoma-county.org>
- 565-3752; <mailto:pat.gilardi@sonoma-county.org>

## **Bennett Valley Road Report**

By Craig Harrison, BVCA President

County crews worked four days during June to repair and level 2.2 miles of the surface of Sonoma Mountain Road from Bennett Valley Road to Pressley Road. All reports from users have been extremely positive - driving on Sonoma Mountain Road now seems to resemble a "magic carpet" compared to its previous condition. We will continue to urge the county to fix the remaining 5.7 miles of Sonoma Mountain Road and Pressley Road. According to current county records most of the remaining section of Sonoma Mountain Road has a pavement condition index below 10 and has no remaining useful life. Matt Richardon, who has lived on this stretch of road since 1959, notes that this is the first time that he has seen the road paved in 55 years.

The treatment on Sonoma Mountain Road involved a thin lift overlay that is designed to smooth the road surface. To help insure a long life for the new asphalt, the road will be chip sealed with a polymer modified rejuvenating emulsion on Monday, August 18. Shortly before the chip seal, county crews will apply a fog seal that will help the new asphalt properly bind to the surface chip. This treatment is appropriate for Sonoma Mountain Road and other areas where the land is constantly moving. For more stable roads, the county typically uses a full depth reclamation process in which sections with base problems are dug out and reconstructed before being paved. In areas where there is high truck traffic, an asphalt mix that includes recycled roof shingles is sometimes employed.

The 2.54 mile stretch of Bennett Valley Road between Old Bennett Ridge Road and Warm Springs Road will receive a full depth reclamation treatment. That part of Bennett Valley Road will first be injected with foamed asphalt and once it has been reconstructed will be overlaid with additional asphalt. This process will take additional time and add to traffic delays but the resulting road should be in very good condition for a long time. This project is currently out for bid and will likely be undertaken during late September or October. We hope to provide additional information in the September VOICE. Other nearby roads that will receive pavement preservation treatments during autumn are Petaluma Hill Road from Snyder Lane to Rohnert Park Expressway and Arnold Dr. between Glen Ellen and Highway 12.

## Notice Of BVCA Election

By Jean LaCombe, Chair of the BVCA Nominating Committee

The 2014 BVCA election season is upon us. Members of the BVCA Board of Directors serve for three-year terms at the end of which they may choose to run or not run for re-election. There is no limit to the number of terms which they may choose to serve, if re-elected. Terms are ending for three of our current BVCA board members; Larissa Golita, Craig Harrison, and Karen Sommer. They have each stated they are choosing to run again in this BVCA 2014 election, in order to continue being members of the BVCA Board of Directors.

Still, anyone interested in joining the BVCA Board of Directors is encouraged to submit a Candidate's Statement to Jean LaCombe, chair of the BVCA Nominating Committee, no later than Friday, August 29. Statements should be no longer than 250 words.

Minimum qualifications are: 1) candidate must be a member of good standing in BVCA, with paid dues current, and 2) have a strong commitment to "promoting and preserving the rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley." If you are interested but are not yet a member of BVCA, you may join at any time before August 29, by simply submitting your check for \$15 to the BVCA Membership Coordinator, Larissa Goliti. See instructions on Page 7, for both online or mail payments for membership.

Please mail your Candidate's Statement to:

2014 BVCA ELECTION

ATTN: JEAN LACOMBE

P.O. BOX 2666

SANTA ROSA, CA 95404

If you prefer to email your statement, please send it to [jeannielacombe@gmail.com](mailto:jeannielacombe@gmail.com). These Candidate Statements will appear in the September BVCA *VOICE*. All voting members of BVCA will be sent an official ballot 30 days prior to the annual Election Meeting, scheduled for November 20. Should you have questions, please contact any of the current board members whose phone numbers appear, on Page 7, or call Jean LaCombe at 585-3482.

## California to Award Funds for Wildfire Prevention

Excerpts from *Press Democrat*, June 18, 2014, Added note By Marilee Jensen

"SACRAMENTO - For the first time, California forestry officials intend to give counties and organizations money raised through a contested assessment on property in wildfire-prone areas to be used for fire-prevention projects. The funds will be awarded as part of a one-time grant process after lawmakers included a \$10 million appropriation in the new state budget. The remainder of an accumulated balance of \$48 million raised by the assessment is being held in savings while a lawsuit challenges the legality of this so-called "fire fee". The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association wants the fee to be declared unconstitutional, arguing it is actually a tax. Gov. Jerry Brown sought the one-time \$10 million appropriation from the State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Prevention Fund (*fire fee*) and is expected to sign the budget in coming days... 'The timing of the grants couldn't be better', said Department of Forestry and Fire Protection spokeswoman Janet Upton, noting that California is struggling with an ongoing drought that is creating dangerous fire conditions statewide. 'It will be the highest priority,' she said... The department must solicit bids from counties, local Fire Safe Councils and other organizations for fire prevention projects (*including the Bennett Ridge Firebreak*)... The money is collected from owners of private property within the 31 million rural acres covered by the department or about one-third of the state."

## Upcoming Ham Radio Class, at Grange

By Bill Finkelstein

The Sonoma County Radio Amateurs and Bennett Valley Grange are pleased to announce the next Amateur Radio Technician Licensing Class will be held at the Bennett Valley Grange Hall, 4145 Grange Road, the weekend of August 29.

The Technician level licensing class will be held on Friday, August 29th, 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm; Saturday, August 30th, 8:00 am to 5:30 pm; and Sunday, August 31st 8:00 am to 2:30 pm, with the FCC exams to be administered starting at 3:00 pm. This class gives a more in-depth understanding of Amateur Radio, it's uses, operations, and technology than the "in a day" classes. Fees and exam options: The class is free. The study guide is \$15.00 and the FCC exam is also \$15.00 payable to the FCC examiner on Sunday prior to the exam.

If you pass the license level that you studied for, you may take the next higher license level at no charge. If you should not pass the exam, you may retake it for an additional \$15.00 per exam. More information can be found at: <http://sonomacountyradioamateurs.com/> on the Sonoma County Radio Amateurs website, under "Events" and "Classes". If you would like to enroll in the class or for more information, please contact the class coordinator, Jeff Tonelli, by phone, 707-494-4579, or by email, [jeff.tonelli@gmx.com](mailto:jeff.tonelli@gmx.com).

Please make arrangements to get a study guide at least two weeks prior to the start of class. This Pre-Study Guide is very important – participants should NOT wait until the night before the class to study the guide – it's an integral part of the class. It's also important that participants have the latest study guide as the Technician class question pool was changed on July 1, 2014. Again, please contact Jeff Tonelli for more information.

## **Bennett Valley Fire Protection District**

(BVFPD) 6161 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Phone: 578-7761 [bennettvalleyfire.org](http://bennettvalleyfire.org)

### **Board of Directors:**

Mark Richardson, President; Joseph Mazeau, Vice-President;  
Marilee Jensen, Secretary/Clerk;  
Don D'Avanzo and Arnie Tognozzi, Directors.

### **Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper:**

Kori Lantow, 823-1084 [klantow@comcast.net](mailto:klantow@comcast.net)

Ruth Newman, Administrative Supervisor

Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday each month, 7:00 pm, at the BV Fire Station. Please confirm meeting date ahead of time by calling 823-1084.

### **Bennett Valley Paid Firefighting Staff:**

Fire Chief: Dan George, 481-8105,

Battalion Chiefs: Darrin DeCarli, 823-5502,

Adam Schipper

48-hour Personnel: Lieutenant Matt Tognozzi, Lieutenant

Travis Browne, Engineer Rene Torres

Part-time Firefighters, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm:

Engineers Ly Leng, Andrew Keefer, Andrew Tognozzi

### **Bennett Valley Volunteer Firefighters**

There are approximately 23 BV Firefighters, including the volunteers and interns. Three rotating shifts of three volunteers each are paid a stipend to sleep overnight at the Fire Station, for improved coverage. During the day, interns are used at no cost, when available, allowing the fire station to cover unfilled firefighter positions on those particular days.

## **Bennett Valley Call Log May/June 2014**

By Lieutenant Matt Tognozzi

Structure Fire – 2	Vehicle Fire – 0
Grass Fire – 0	Medical Aid – 35
Vehicle Accident – 1	Public Assist – 3
Strike Team – 0	Hazardous Condition – 6
Smoke Check – 2	Alarm Sounding – 3

Total - 52

## **Issue: Why Have Sonoma County Supervisors Chosen to Not Share Any "Public Safety" funds from Proposition 172 with Fire Districts?**

By Marilee Jensen,

- 1.) <http://www.californiacityfinance.com/ERAFacts.pdf>, dated 8/13/12;
- 2.) Excerpts from An Official Report Dated January 30, 2004, From Bill Lockyer, Attorney General and Susan Duncan Lee, Deputy Attorney General, "[oag.ca.gov/system/files/opinion/pdfs/03-804.pdf](http://oag.ca.gov/system/files/opinion/pdfs/03-804.pdf)
- 3.) Excerpt from "<http://www.change.org>," dated 5/14/14

1.) "In 1992, the State of California found itself in a serious deficit position. To meet its obligations to fund education at specified levels under Proposition 98, **the state enacted legislation that shifted partial financial responsibility for funding education to local government (cities, counties and special districts.)** The state did this by instructing county auditors to shift the allocation of local property tax revenues from local government to 'education revenue augmentation funds' (ERAF), directing that specified amounts of city, county and other local agency property taxes be deposited into these funds to support schools."

The Bennett Valley Fire Protection District, a relatively small fire district, has had to pay \$582,562 to ERAF since 1992, for "local education revenue augmentation." Prop 172 was considered an ERAF mitigation, and yet the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors has chosen to not allocate any of these funds to fire districts in Sonoma County despite their relatively high required annual contributions to ERAF.

2.) "*The Honorable ... County Counsel... has requested an opinion on the following question: Is an independent fire protection district eligible to receive Proposition 172 monies under the Local Public Safety Protection and Improvement Act of 1993?* **Conclusion: An independent fire protection district is eligible to receive Proposition 172 monies under the Local Public Safety Protection and Improvement Act of 1993.** (January 30, 1994) **ANALYSIS** In 1978, California voters adopted Proposition 13 ... which sharply reduced the amount of property tax revenues available to support local governments and schools. ...Legislature has taken a number of steps to provide additional funding for cities, counties, special districts, and schools. In 1993, the Legislature proposed, and the voters adopted, Proposition 172, a constitutional amendment known as the Local Public Safety Protection and Improvement Act of 1993, imposing a 0.50 percent sales tax to be used exclusively for local public safety services....

'Public safety services' include, but are not limited to, sheriffs, police, fire protection, county district attorneys, county corrections, and ocean lifeguards. We recently examined the language of Proposition 172 and concluded that a county board of supervisors had discretion, in each fiscal year, to change the allocation of Proposition 172 funds among eligible public safety service agencies..."

3.) The following petition for the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, from special fire districts, dated 5/14/14, is currently on "change.org/petitions" as identified above. You will find a similar petition on our website, "www.bennettvalley.org", dated July, 2014. "*We the undersigned are concerned citizens who urge our supervisors to act now to provide assistance from Proposition 172 funds to maintain fire and ambulance services in our community.*" ... *Fire Agencies are underfunded in Sonoma County. The Board of Supervisors has the ability and obligation to support fire agencies within Sonoma County to make the county safer for residents and visitors... To date, not one penny has been given to fire protection in Sonoma County. In (recent years) Sonoma County diverted (up to) \$40 million (a year) to the Sheriff, Police, the District Attorney, and Corrections.*"

## **Equipment Use Safety**

Selected by Lieutenant Matt Tognozzi,  
<http://www.preventwildfireca.org/>

**Are You Doing the Right Thing the Wrong way** - for example, trying to eliminate the fire hazards around your home and in the process starting a wildland fire? Each year CAL FIRE responds to more than 1,000 fires started  
4 by Californians using equipment the wrong way.

Whether working to create defensible space around your home, just mowing the lawn, or pulling your dirt bike over to the side of the road, if you live in a wildland area you need to use all equipment responsibly.

Lawn mowers, weed eaters, chain saws, grinders, welders, tractors, and trimmers can all spark a wildland fire. Do your part, the right way, to keep your community fire safe.

**Here's how to do it the *Right* way:**

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**Mowing**

Mow before 10 a.m. **Not in the heat of the day, or when the wind is blowing or it's excessively dry!** Lawn mowers are designed to mow lawns, not weeds or dry grass.

- Metal blades striking rocks can create sparks and start fires. Use caution.
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**Spark Arresters**

In wildland areas, spark arresters are required on all portable gasoline-powered equipment. This includes tractors, harvesters, chainsaws, weed eaters and mowers.

- Keep the exhaust system, spark arresters and mower in proper working order and free of carbon buildup.
  - Use the recommended grade of fuel and don't top it off.
- 

**Equipment Use**

In wildland areas, grinding and welding operations require a permit and 10 feet of clearance. Keep a shovel and a fire extinguisher ready to use.

- **Don't drive your vehicle onto dry grass or brush.** Hot exhaust pipes and mufflers can start fires that you won't even see - until it's too late!
  - Keep a cell phone nearby and **call 911 immediately in case of fire.**
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**Environment**

To protect water quality, do not clear vegetation near waterways to bare soil. Vegetation removal can cause soil erosion especially on steep slopes.

- Always keep soil disturbance to a minimum.
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**Access to Approved Minutes For  
Bennett Valley Fire Protection District**

Members of the public can request the meeting agenda be emailed to them, 72 hours before the board meeting or they may pick up a copy of the agenda at the BV Fire Station 72 hours before the meeting. Complete minutes from the previous month's meeting will be available to the public after board approval, either by picking them up at the next Board meeting, or requesting a copy be mailed to them. Please make these requests to the Bennett Valley Fire District Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper, Kori Lantow, by email, [klantow@comcast.net](mailto:klantow@comcast.net), at the BV Fire Board of Directors' meeting, or by telephone, 823-1084. What follows are highlights selected by the VOICE Editor from the approved minutes for two meetings, April and May, 2014. The minutes for the June, 2014 meeting will not be approved until the July8 meeting.

**Brief Highlights of BV Fire Board Meeting,  
April 8, 2014**

- Public Input - Karen Sommer read her draft of a letter to the donors who contributed to an Emergency Communication Center at the Fire Station. Since this will no longer be at the Fire Station, the Bennett Valley Emergency Preparedness Committee (BVEP) wants to now use these funds for a generator and communication equipment for Bennett Valley emergencies, at the BV Grange. Once corrected and approved, the letter will be sent to donors, giving them the option to have donations transferred to the Bennett Valley Community Association, for emergency equipment at the BV Grange, or returned .
- We received a copy of the AT&T lease. Bechtel is now the construction company for the new cell phone tower.
- We need additional volunteer firefighting sleepers at the BV Fire Station, so we're in the process of recruiting additional sleepers. Their stipend is \$40 a night for firefighters and \$50 a night for engineers.
- Explorer Post- We have received three or four new applications. Trevor Galeazzi is taking the lead in training the Explorers.
- Several fire districts, including Bennett Valley and Gold Ridge are independently separating their funds from the County Treasury. BV Fire District is using Summit Bank, instead. Each district is sharing information and the attorney fees to have the documents and procedures reviewed. Chief Dan George shared these details with the Board; the Board then approved these changes unanimously.
- Brian M. Burns, CPA, submitted his bid to be our potential auditor; he was interviewed by both Chief Dan George and Administrative Supervisor, Ruth Newman. The two of them decided to approve hiring him. The Board unanimously agreed. He has been the auditor for the Kenwood Fire District for two years now, and performed satisfactorily. We were unable to recruit additional applicants for this auditor position.
- Chief Dan George has changed the vacation policy for fulltime BV firefighters, so there is now a cap on how much vacation time they can accumulate. The motion was passed by the Board, unanimously.

**Brief Highlights of BV Fire Board Meeting,  
May 13, 2014**

- There are now currently 10 to 11 interns at BV Fire Station.
- A discussion was held regarding a fire break on Bennett Ridge, which will be paid for with the State Responsibility Area (SRA) fees, also known as the "Fire Fee. (See article on Page 3, "California to Award Funds for Wildfire Prevention.")
- Explorer Post - Trevor Galeazzi's schedule has changed so Andrew Tognozzi is now leading the Explorer training.
- The Board unanimously approved all the necessary documents for the separation of the Bennett Valley Fire District from Sonoma County Accounting and Treasury Services. All our funds are now deposited in different accounts in Summit Bank, insured by FDIC, as required. Fire Chief Dan George is now also our district treasurer, bonded through our insurance company, with no additional compensation for that position. The Bennett Valley Fire District Finance Committee will be comprised of the five members of the Bennett Valley Fire District Board.
- The Board of Directors appointed a preliminary budget committee for the 2014/2015 fiscal year; both Directors Tognozzi and Jensen volunteered to be the budget committee, for the third year in a row.

## **Bill Pisenti, One of BV Fire District Founders, Dies at 96 Years**

*Press Democrat, 6/12/14, Excerpts, Chris Smith's Column*  
By Marilee Jensen

Bill Pisenti moved to Bennett Valley, with his wife, Perina, in 1948. In the first year he lived here, he was concerned about the lack of fire protection in Bennett Valley, being so far from the nearest fire station, so he responded by helping to found the "Bennett Valley Volunteer Fire District". He served as a volunteer at the BV Fire Station for many years and then for at least 50 years he regularly attended the Bennett Valley Fire District's monthly meetings, with his "gravelly, impolitic demand for fiscal restraint", as he also did with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, the Santa Rosa City Council, and the Bennett Valley School District. "Despite his stony views on taxation and government spending, he wore a ready smile and swapped stories even with his most extreme adversaries," his daughter, Gloria Anderson, added. "He had his opinions and his ideas and he stood up for them. He didn't care who was against him. And he did have a good heart. I can tell you that." As he wrote 'in a guest editorial in the Press Democrat in 2003, 'it is simply to inform people that it does pay to stand up and fight for what you believe is fair."

"William Woodrow Pisenti was born ... in 1917, as the ninth of 14 children. He was five years old when 'he moved to Santa Rosa,' in 1922. He quit Santa Rosa High School to help his family during the depression. 'He praised his parents for teaching him many valuable lessons, among them 'to live with gusto--yet to be content with the little things."

Bill Pisenti met his wife-to-be, Perina Mazzetta, at a Bennett Valley Grange dance in 1934 and they married in 1938. "Shortly after the war, in 1948, he and Perina bought a piece of land on a bend on rural Bennett Valley Road and called it 'Rock Hill Ranch'. They reared three children there...Perina Pisenti died in 1987" after 49 years of marriage. Bill continued to live at the same 'Rock Hill Ranch' until about a year ago, when he moved because of his failing health. He added a great deal to our Bennett Valley community, over the years, in his unique style. His survivors are his son and daughter plus three of his 14 siblings, including his sister, Ann Burow.

## **Another Visit with Ann Burow, Santa Rosa**

By Marilee Jensen

In the September 2013 VOICE, I wrote a long article about my visit with Ann Burow, as she was approaching her 108th birthday, including a number of her Bennett Valley experiences. I visited her again a little over a month ago. Now, at 108, she is as charming and sharp as ever. She hadn't received the message that I would be visiting with her that day, yet she still looked lovely and was very responsive to me. She had to leave a class, so we could visit in the living room area, and yet she handled it so graciously, as usual. I have known both Ann Burow and her brother, Bill Pisenti, for a number of years, primarily through the Bennett Valley Grange. I'm looking forward to my next visit with Ann Burow, as soon as possible.

## **Budget Decisions Leave Sonoma Development Center Future Murky**

Excerpts *Kenwood Press*, June 15, 2014 By Jay Gamel  
(*Italicized personal note added by Marilee Jensen*)

"There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) will be undergoing profound changes over the next few years. Gov. Brown's May Revision of the 2014-2015 State Budget requests funding to begin implementing changes in care for the developmentally disabled that were recommended by a special task force following a year-long study...

The disposition of any surplus land at SDC has been a major concern of valley residents who fear it might be extensively developed. First District Supervisor Susan Gorin has been working with the county parks department, open space district and organizations like the Sonoma Ecology Center and Sonoma Mountain Preservation Group to advocate for alternative uses, including adding to Jack London State Park or to the county's Regional Park. (*Additional comments by Susan Gorin; "The coalition of groups with which I have been working in regards to SDC includes the Parent Hospital Association. Our collective goal is to advocate for continuing services, complementary services and protecting the land for stewardship and public access. Lot more to come."*)

...Any property the state puts up for sale is subject to state law that requires it to be first offered to any other state agency that needs it, then to local government agencies, and finally to the public. And while the state must determine and get a fair market value, there are instances in which local governments have gotten property at below market rates...'Local governmental agencies must pay fair market value as determined by ... approved appraisal with the exception of an acquisition for parks, open space or affordable housing. In those cases... a discount is negotiated on a case by case basis'.

...(State Senator Noreen) Evans is philosophical about the recent turn of events...'No final decision is going to be made with respect to land use anytime soon. We have a lot of time to work out solutions'... (*Assemblywoman Mariko*) Yamada is looking forward, also... 'The Governor's budget proposal to address recommendations of the future of the Developmental Centers Task Force is a positive step,' she said...

The revised budget sets aside over \$11.7 million to begin work on two acute care facilities, one in Fairview and the other in Sonoma, considered by the task force to be a first step in realigning California's developmentally disabled care paradigm. 'An existing stand-alone housing unit will be modified and staffed at Sonoma Developmental Center to provide crisis services for five residents,' the budget report noted. It should be up and running by January 1, 2015."

## **Bennett Valley Community Association**

### **(BVCA) Board Of Directors**

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[www.bennettvalley.org](http://www.bennettvalley.org)

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### **BVCA MEMBERSHIP DUES, 2014**

If you haven't yet paid your dues for 2014, the annual dues are \$15 plus any additional contribution you want to make. These contributions to BVCA may now be tax-deductible. You may either send in your check to BVCA, P.O. Box 2666, Santa Rosa, CA 95405, or pay online with a credit card or PayPal account. To pay online, go to [www.bennettvalley.org](http://www.bennettvalley.org) (our BVCA website), then choose from the menu on the left side of the first page "Join/Renew: BVCA Membership", and follow the instructions. If you have any questions, about your membership dues, please call Larissa Goliti, 578-3453. If you have any questions about paying online, please call Bill Finkelstein, 536-1026.

### **BVCA MEMBERSHIP AND THE VOICE**

We currently mail the VOICE out to about 600 households, many of them not BVCA members, at a cost of about \$1.00 for each VOICE, when you consider the cost of the paper, the printing and postage. (Any labor for the VOICE is done by volunteers at no cost.) As mentioned in both the March and May VOICE's, the BVCA Board of Directors has approved a change to no longer mail the VOICE out to non-members. The VOICE is sent out by email to about 300 households, which costs practically nothing. We will continue to send out the VOICE by email to any household requesting it, whether they are members or not. We also have each VOICE available on "www.bennettvalley.org", our website, which anyone is free to read at no cost. When BVCA non-members stop receiving the VOICE, they are

encouraged to contact our membership coordinator, Larissa Goliti, to either request to receive the VOICE by email and/or to pay the \$15 for the BVCA membership. Then, once again, they will be receiving the VOICE.

Along with these cost-saving changes, we do encourage Bennett Valley property owners and/or residents to join the Bennett Valley Community Association (BVCA), at a cost of \$15.00 per year, plus any donation you are willing to make. These funds enable us to accomplish the important purposes of BVCA, as described on the last page of the VOICE, including to better prepare the Bennett Valley community for possible emergencies, through education, training, the availability of emergency supplies and even a donated emergency shelter, at the Bennett Valley Grange.

### **Highlights, BVCA Minutes**

May 15, 2014

The main highlight of these minutes related to our discussion on possible speakers for future meetings, including the possibility of run-off candidates for local elections in September.

### **Board of Directors' Tentative Agenda**

Thursday, July 17, 7:00 pm, BV Grange Hall

- 7:00 pm, Speaker, Ettamarie Peterson, President, Sonoma County Beekeepers' Association
- Report from BV Emergency Preparedness Committee
- County road issues
- VOICE Issues, including implementation of policy of restricting mailed copies to paid members
- Board Election
- Speakers for Upcoming Meetings
- New Business, as determined by board

### **Push For Public-Private (Park) Partnerships ..**

Excerpts from *Press Democrat* article, by Derek Moore, June 23, 2014

"...*Parks Forward*, a commission that is considering the future of California's natural and historical treasures, is tentatively recommending the California Department of Parks and Recreation work more cooperatively with outside organizations to bring stability and generate revenue. Such proposals resonate in Sonoma County, where several state parks are being managed by nonprofit groups, a situation stemming from California's budget crisis when parks were threatened with closure. These parks include Jack London State Historic Park in Glen Ellen, Sugarloaf Ridge State Park, near Kenwood and Armstrong Redwoods and Austin Creek State Recreation Area in Guerneville. *Parks Forward* is recommending creation of a new nonprofit to support the parks department statewide, assisting with everything from designing state of the art fee collection machines ... and hosting special events in parks... "We want to make sure there's not a duplication of effort, or a weakening of the effort of the nonprofits that are fulfilling roles with state parks right now," said Michele Luna, Executive Director of Stewards of the Coast and Redwood, which operates Armstrong Redwoods and Austin Creek... Caryl Hart, a member of *Parks Forward* and Sonoma County Regional Parks director, said commission members are "united in their opposition" to privatizing state parks. "There's no pressure for that," she said."

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

**[www.bennettvalley.org](http://www.bennettvalley.org)**

**PURPOSES OF BVCA:** *To promote and preserve the residential rural character and natural environment of Bennett Valley; to educate, instruct, train and inform the local residents on disaster preparedness and emergency response as well as local land use and environmental issues; to serve as an open forum for Bennett Valley community participation; and to provide a bridge for communication between government agencies and the Bennett Valley community.*

### **Return Service Requested**

## **Bennett Valley Community Calendar**

*Mark your calendars now!!*

- **Bennett Valley Community Association:** The next meeting is Thursday, July 17, 7:00 pm, BV Grange Hall. See agenda on front page and Page 7.
- **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. Please call 823-1084 ahead of time to confirm meeting date.
- **Bennett Valley Grange #16,** BV Grange Hall is serving as our Disaster Preparedness Center and a meeting place for community activities. Go to <http://bvgrange.org> or see Page 3, to learn more about the Grange and scheduled activities. If you have any questions, please call Bill or Patty Allen, 544-3721.
- **(An Alternative) Ham Radio Licensing, In Just One Day:** (From website [smrs](http://smrs)) The next scheduled one-day licensing class and exam is Saturday, August 9, Petaluma Senior Center. Cram session, 9:00 am, \$10, Exam session, 1:00 pm, \$15. Total \$25. Reservations required. Contact Dale, 762-0414 (leave message) or [wb6tms@arrl.net](mailto:wb6tms@arrl.net), to get help with obtaining your Federal Registration Number.
- **Sonoma County Board Of Supervisors:** Meets every Tuesday (except weeks when there is a legal holiday), at varying times, 575 Administration Drive, Santa Rosa. Susan Gorin is the elected Supervisor for our 1st District. If you have any concerns or questions, you may contact her District Director, Pat Gilardi, 565-3752, [pat.gilardi@sonoma-county.org](mailto:pat.gilardi@sonoma-county.org). Or you can contact Susan Gorin at 565-3752, [susan.gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:susan.gorin@sonoma-county.org).

### **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

- For emergencies, use your landline or your cell phone to call **911**. Or you can also report emergencies to Dispatch, 576-1365.
- To talk to someone at the Sheriff's office 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to either report concerns that may be an emergency or to discuss a situation that may require a law enforcement response, call 565-2121.
- Call Sonoma County Road Maintenance (Public Works), 565-5100 to report dangerous potholes, fallen trees or landslides and to request possible help with litter control and bulk trash in the road. After hours, call 565-2121, for help from Sheriff's office.
- Call Sonoma County Animal Control, 565-7100, regarding the removal of dead animals along the road.
- Call California Highway Patrol, 588-1400, as another resource if debris is causing imminent traffic hazards on county.

### **TO UNSUBSCRIBE**

If you do not want to continue receiving email copies of the VOICE, please click the link in the cover email on this distribution, or you may contact Larissa Goliti, at [lgoliti@hotmail.com](mailto:lgoliti@hotmail.com), or 578-3453, to let her know. You may choose to no longer receive the VOICE, or if you're a member of Bennett Valley Community Association, you may choose to receive a paper copy of the VOICE, by mail.