



Bennett Valley VOICE

www.bennettvalley.org

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BENNETT VALLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (BVCA)

SEPTEMBER, 2014

Bill Dodd (D) and Charlie Schaupp (R), candidates for our 4th State Assembly District representing Bennett Valley, speak at our next BVCA meeting.

By Karen Sommer

We will be conducting a forum for the two candidates running for our 4th State Assembly District, Thursday, September 18, at 7:00 pm, Bennett Valley Grange Hall. Bill Dodd and Charlie Schaupp will answer questions and make a brief presentation on why they are running for office.

This is a great opportunity to meet the candidates and get an idea where they stand on issues affecting Bennett Valley. The BVCA Board will be generating questions for the candidates. If you have questions pertinent to Bennett Valley for the State Legislature, please send your questions right away to Karen Sommer: ksommer11@earthlink.net.

Our 4th State Assembly District has been moved around different parts of the state because of redistricting. The district now consists of some of Sonoma County (14.9%), including Bennett Valley and Rohnert Park, all of Lake County, all of Napa County, more than half of both Yolo County (Davis), and Colusa County (Williams), and a small part of Solano County (7.3%, Dixon). The two candidates speaking at our meeting are from Napa and Yolo counties, as those areas are a part of our 4th State Assembly District. Our current representative, Mariko Yamada, is ineligible to run, due to term limits.

The candidates submitted the following biographies:

Bill Dodd was elected to the Napa County Board of Supervisors in March 2000 and was re-elected in 2004, 2008 and 2012, all three times running unopposed. He represents the cities and county of Napa on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and recently served a two-year term as chairman of this powerful regional body. Bill has also served as Chair of the Local Agency Formation Commission of Napa County, Chair of the Napa County League of Governments, Chair of the Napa County Transportation Planning Agency, and Chair of the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

After graduating from California State University, Chico, he owned and operated one of the largest full-service Culligan Water operations in California. During this time, Bill served as President of these national and state trade associations: the Water Quality Association and the Pacific Water Quality Association. Through the years, he has been a member of the Queen of the Valley Hospital Foundation, the American Canyon Chamber of Commerce, the Napa Rotary Club, and the Queen of the Valley Health Care for the Poor Committee.

Bill was honored in 2014 by the Napa Chamber of Commerce as its Citizen of the Year for his work in raising over \$3 million dollars for local charities to help those individuals who need it most. Bill Dodd was the founder of the Wolfe Center, a youth drug and alcohol rehabilitation center, and founding director of the Napa County Children's Health Initiative. Bill is married to Mary and has five grown children and three grandchildren. His website address is <http://billdodd.com>, including a contact form.

Charlie Schaupp is 4th generation member of a Yolo County farming family (Schaupp Family Joint Venture-Schaupp Farms), a 3,500 acre family farming operation which has been in business since the 1880's. He is also a life long resident of the 4th Assembly District. He graduated from Chico State and Yuba College with agricultural degrees in Soil Science and Agribusiness. He also had additional graduate studies in Hydrology (water resource and development) and Enology (viniculture).

Charlie Schaupp is a retired Lieutenant Colonel, United States Marine Corps Reserve, with 28 years of service (15 years active duty) and mobilization for Desert Storm (Commander of the Stockton reserve unit), Bosnia Peace Enforcement (1997) and 5 years of duty supporting Operation OIF/OEF, the Global War on Terrorism including combat operations in the Battle of Fallujah, Iraq, 2004. Charlie has also been a two-term Commander of his VFW post.

Charlie Schaupp is currently Director, Esparto Community Service District. He is the former Chairman of the Yolo County Republican Party (Yolo County Republican Central Committee). Charlie has also been a former two-term school trustee of the Esparto Unified School District and a member and former director of the Yolo County Taxpayers Association. His email address is Charlie@charlieschaupp.com.

Bennett Valley Road Report

By Craig Harrison, BVCA President

Ghilotti Construction will reconstruct the 2.54 mile stretch of Bennett Valley Road between Old Bennett Ridge Road and Warm Springs Road, as well as Arnold Drive between Glen Ellen and Highway 12, probably commencing the first half of October. The full depth reclamation treatment on Bennett Valley Road will take 2-3 weeks and require road closures and detours depending on the location of the work on a particular day. Detour signs and warning (con't next page)

Bennett Valley Road Report (con't from page 1)

messages will be posted in advance of the project. We will try to provide additional information once a traffic control plan has been approved. The county now has a Facebook page titled "Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works" that is updated daily with current project information. If you have a Facebook account please "like" the page.

County crews chip-sealed the 2.2 miles of the surface of Sonoma Mountain Road from Bennett Valley Road to Pressley Road on August 18, and with the completion of the project this section should remain in very good condition for a long time. Striping should have been completed by the time you receive this edition of the VOICE. We will continue to urge the County to fix the remaining 5.7 miles of Sonoma Mountain Road and Pressley Road, especially now that Jacob's Ranch is scheduled to open in November and non-local traffic will increase.

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.

Call the county's Road Maintenance office (565-5100) to report any safety issues such as potholes or downed trees blocking a road. You can also call the Sonoma County Sheriff Dispatch for after-hour and weekend emergencies or to report a road hazard, at 565-2121.

SOSroads Supports Long-Term Road Plan

Craig S. Harrison, SOSroads Co-President

Save Our Sonoma Roads supports the supervisors' proposed Long-Term Road Plan. Since 2011 we have been asking our supervisors to adequately fund the restoration of our county roads. SOSroads has made progress in the past three budget cycles when the supervisors added \$8 million in "one time" funds each year to begin to address the problem. Together with federal and state funds, this will result in 150 miles of the county's 1,382 mile road system being improved by the end of summer 2014.

The Long-Term Road Plan proposes that at least 850 miles of county roads will be in good condition within a decade. This is desperately needed because our residential roads, two-thirds of the county road system, are rated as poor with a pavement condition index of only 34. The Long-Term Road Plan employs improved data about the condition of each segment of our road system and proposes realistic ways to rebuild it. It is a vast improvement over the status quo for those who use county roads.

The centerpiece of the plan is a ¼ cent county-wide sales tax increase. This will provide an additional \$8.7 million per year to rehabilitate virtually all county roads over the next 20 years. In addition, the nine cities in Sonoma County would receive an additional \$11 million per year to be used for street repairs. For example, the new revenue would double the amount of funds available to fix roads in Santa Rosa. Ten percent of the sales tax funds will be spent on transit projects such as buses. A "Maintenance of Effort" provision will require the county and the cities to retain their current levels of general funds for roads.

The county will match the \$8.7 million in expected sales tax revenue with an equal amount in general fund money for pavement preservation and will continue another \$2.2 million from a waste haulers' franchise tax. Altogether the county will devote over \$20 million per year to rehabilitate long-neglected roads, and this amount will rise with inflation.

We understand the concerns of those who would prefer a larger commitment from the general fund before agreeing to a new tax. However residents using poor roads, including many here in Bennett Valley, should not be condemned to road purgatory while awaiting a perfect plan. SOSroads is committed to continuing to find opportunities to fix additional road miles while seizing this opportunity. There are very few other funding options available that will make a dent in our road crisis. While significant and comprehensive pension reform for county employees (beyond the reforms recently adopted) would make more local tax dollars available for roads, it is not likely to happen for years.

Therefore, SOSroads believes that a voter-approved ¼ cent sales tax, combined with an ongoing commitment of county general funds, is the best means for the majority of Sonoma County citizens to have their roads fixed. We urge you to approve the sales tax increase in March 2015.

"Annual Grange Fall Feast!

"Polenta Palooza"

By Bill Finkelstein

Join us for a good time and a great meal, for only \$15, as a fundraiser for the upkeep and restoration of Bennett Valley's historic Grange building. All are invited! If you've never had Polenta before, a dish made with ground corn meal, you're in for a special taste treat, especially with our special sauces !

Saturday, September 20, 5:00 PM, Live Music!
Donation is \$15 for adults and \$10 for children 11 to 16. Children under 10 are free with a paying adult.

This year's Bennett Valley Grange annual end-of-summer dinner feast will feature Gluten Free GMO Free, Organic Polenta with your choice of homemade sauces and sides. Artisanal sauce choices include: Chicken, Beef Bolognese, and/or Vegetarian.

Plus there will be a salad bar, French bread, dessert, and juice or water. You can also bring your own wine or beer, with no corkage fee.

Results; Whole Foods Nickels for Non-Profit Programs

By Bill Finkelstein

The results are in! The Yulupa Avenue Whole Foods Market "Nickels for Non-Profits" Program that ended on July 1st raised \$1,214.57 for the Grange Restoration Fund! We would like to send out a special thanks to those individuals who shopped at Whole Foods and donated their reusable bag credits to the Grange! That was a LOT of bags! And, of course, huge thanks to Whole Foods Markets for all they do in support of the Grange.

Bennett Valley Beginnings For
Canine Companions for Independence (CCI)
Two Bennett Valley Families' Personal CCI Stories

First Story: Connie Montague

Our Bennett Valley community and Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) have a shared history. The Montague family has lived in Bennett Valley since 1971, for 43 years. CCI was founded in Santa Rosa in 1975 by Dr. Bonnie Bergin, a resident of Bennett Valley off Grange Road. Bonnie is president of the Assistance Dog Institute in Rohnert Park.

In the beginning, CCI had no facility, and the first dog, Abdul, was trained with his CCI graduate-to-be, Kerrie Knaus. The first puppy raising family for CCI was Ed and Connie Montague, residents of Bennett Valley, off Sonoma Mountain Road. Their 8 year old daughter, Cherie, first raised a German Sheppard named Happy. Their son, Emory, was the youngest puppy raiser for CCI when he raised a Welsh Corgi named Alexis (a hearing dog) during his kindergarten school year at Yulupa Elementary.

The children cared for a total of eight puppies over a decade, went to puppy training classes, socialized the puppies, and marched in parades. Cherie talked on local radio and interviewed for a *Readers Digest* article. The children turned in their puppies to CCI for advanced training, and finally presented their dogs to CCI graduates. The Montagues' also housed several "CCI boot camp" students, to stay with them for two weeks, while the students were in training to receive their new dogs.

The Montagues' final CCI dogs were two breeders; a male Welsh Corgi named Nuts and Bolts and a black lab named Marin who whelped four litters at the Montague home. Many interesting stories abound from these wonderful and educational experiences.

Second Story: Anne Giles

Our family, residents of Bennett Valley's Hidden Acres for 41 years, first learned about Canine Companions for Independence through our daughter Yvonne's friendship with Cherie Montague (*first story, above*). Yvonne and her sister, Phuong Elizabeth, were CCI puppy raisers for a large black poodle named Laura. When they took Laura to march in the Rose Parade a CCI staffer posed her looking as if she were pushing a wheelchair. The photo of this was published and ended up in *The National Enquirer*.

Another of our daughters, Lynn, has cerebral palsy, which limits her movement and speech. She was 10 years old and wanted to have a service dog to help her. Bonnie Bergin, the founder of CCI, said that CCI had never placed a dog with a child of Lynn's age and disability, and she did not know if it would work. But Bonnie really wanted to try it. She also told Lynn that the trained dog was too valuable to leave with her as a pet, so if she could not control the dog, it would have to return to CCI. Lynn received a beautiful very young golden retriever puppy named Sky. Bonnie hoped that with Lynn as his puppy raiser

(with our assistance), Sky would bond to her even though Lynn could only talk to him mainly with her computer voice and could not play with and discipline him in the way that puppy raisers usually did. Sky slept with Lynn, thought his food was given to him by her, and totally bonded.

When he was old enough, he went to CCI for the months of his formal training, followed by the "boot camp" time in training with Lynn at CCI. They were successful except that by graduation day Sky still did not acknowledge Lynn as "in charge". Lynn worked with Sky a difficult 3 hours until he acknowledged her dominance. They then sped to join the ceremony that was starting.

Sky made a big difference in Lynn's life, but not in the expected way. Because she was always with family and friends she did not need him so much for the usual physical things, such a turning off a light. But with Sky there, strangers would ignore us and talk with Lynn about her dog, helping her learn to interact with others and gain confidence. In learning to train and control her dog, she gained the ability to be assertive and to be responsible for someone else-Sky the "fur person".

He stayed with Lynn through high school and as she moved out to live with Yvonne. When he was 11-½ years old, age and arthritis caught up with him and he retired to our home. He lived for two more years, continuing to prove his extraordinary intelligence by teaching himself creative new stunts, such as opening drawers to use as stepping stools to reach counter tops.

We are sure that other Bennett Valley families have volunteered for CCI. Please let the VOICE editor know if you have CCI stories you'd like to share with others. See Page 7 for contact information.

Application for Cell Tower Withdrawn

By Ken and Karen Adelson

As reported in the January 2014 issue of the VOICE, Verizon had submitted an application to the County for a Use Permit to install a wireless facility at 6565 Sonoma Mountain Road. A large group of neighbors opposed this cell phone facility being installed on property subject to the Bennett Valley Area Plan. These neighbors felt that the proposed wireless cell phone facility was at odds with the quiet, rural, scenic, residential/agricultural Sonoma Mountain Road environment. Verizon advised us in late August that it had decided to withdraw its application. We are delighted with this outcome and grateful for the support of so many neighbors.

BV Grange Day at Ricardo's Bar & Grill!

By Bill Finkelstein

Ricardo's Bar & Grill, 2700 Yulupa, Santa Rosa, CA, (707) 545-7696 will be donating 25% of the proceeds on **Sunday, Oct. 12th** to the Bennett Valley Grange Restoration Fund. Their hours for meals are from 11:00 am until 9:00 pm. Come, enjoy their great food and drinks and help support our efforts to restore the oldest Grange Hall in continuous operation in the US!

15TH ANNUAL ART ON THE RIDGE

RIGHT NOW!, September 13 and 14, 12:00-5:00 pm

The 15th Annual Bennett Ridge Open Studios are this very week-end!

You might be able to catch part of Saturday, but if not, Sunday will be your must-do-day. There are two new artists this year, totaling 14 artists in eight (8) locations, along Bardy, Rollo and Bennett Ridge roads, with exciting art, lovely scenery, food, drink, and camaraderie. Watch for the Yellow Signs.

Exhibiting artists and description of what they are showing follows:

Iris Berto, hand-knit scarves, hats & gloves

Tom Berto, airbrushed acrylic paintings, Giclee prints

Monica Boettcher, glass drawings and cast vessels

Coleen Cotten, kiln formed glass

Jeremy Ehling, paintings and sculptures

Heartfire, beaded jewelry and kiln-formed glass

Katy Mangan, storytelling, Sat-Sun 1:00 2:00,3:00,4:00

Sherry Parker, mixed media collage,

Chuck Quibell, native wood-turned vessels

Karen & Stan Sommer, monoprints, paintings, sculpted paper

Tina Vaughn, watercolors

Sally Weare, works on paper

Shane Weare, etchings, demonstration, Sunday:3:00 pm

Patti Zimmer, silk scarves

Artwork in a variety of price ranges will be available for sale. For more information, a studio tour map, or the artists' individual websites, please visit ***ArtontheRidge.blogspot.com*** or call Sherry Parker, at 528-6176.

SONOMA COUNTY ART TRAILS 2014

OPEN STUDIO October 11-12, 18-19

Sonoma County Art Trails Open Studios 2014, 28th annual program of over 100 artists' studios open and free for the public.

Weekends, October 11-12, 18-19,

from 10:00 am-5:00 pm. For directory of artists and locations, www.sonomacountyarttrails.org.

Bennett Valley Participating Artists

Donna De La Briandais - 2927 Old Bennett Ridge Rd., Studio # 140, oil, watercolor paintings: plein air and studio, www.donnasfineart.com

Monica Schwalbenberg-Pena – 6136 Batesole Dr., Studio #141, pastel, watercolor, www.mspart.com

Tamra Sanchez - 4520 Mount Taylor Dr. Studio #131, pastel, still life and landscapes, www.tamrasanchez.com

Peter Crompton - 4367 Raymonde Way, Studio #130, sculptures, www.cromptondesign.com

Over 700 Acres of Sonoma Mountain To

Become New County Regional Park

Editor compiled excerpts from feature articles by Angela Hart, of the *Press Democrat* (8/20/14) and Sarah C. Phelps of the *Kenwood Press* (9/1/14)

Come November, Sonoma County residents and visitors will have access to another vast swath of county park land on Sonoma Mountain with more than four miles of new hiking, biking and equestrian trails, opening up vistas in the Sonoma Valley to the public for the first time.

The county Board of Supervisors transferred more than 700 acres of property... from the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to the Regional Parks system, which is required when the county opens newly-acquired park land to the public.

Since 2005, the county has spent more than \$20 million to acquire the five parcels near Sonoma Mountain Road — Jacobs Ranch, Skiles Ranch and the properties of Wilroth, Cooper's Grove and Walsh — and built 4.25 miles of new trails to connect the land with Jack London State Park. The park also has newly-constructed restrooms and ample parking accessible near the intersection of Pressley and Sonoma Mountain roads. "This includes the top of Sonoma Mountain, so there's unbelievable views right from the beginning when you drive in," said parks director Caryl Hart. "As soon as you start hiking you can start seeing the whole county, and you're surrounded by beautiful woodlands, redwood groves and incredible wildlife."

"This property on Sonoma Mountain moving into the regional parks family is not only important for Sonoma County, but for the entire Bay Area," said Supervisor Susan Gorin, whose district encompasses the new park. "The trail will provide access to a beautiful mountaintop. This is the first time that the public will have access to the top of Sonoma Mountain. It is also very central in terms of where people live; via trail from Jack London Park, as well as entry from the Santa Rosa side."

(*This*) comes just two months after the opening of another Sonoma Valley ridgeline at the former Lawson Ranch. The county officially turned that 247-acre property adjacent to Hood Mountain Regional Park into parkland in June.

And work kicked off earlier this month to construct trails at Taylor Mountain Regional Park and Open Space Preserve, a 1,100-acre property acquired between 1995 and 2005 for \$21 million, which was turned over to the county parks agency for general use last year...

Altogether, the open space district has spent roughly \$367 million to protect about 110,000 acres of mostly undeveloped county lands since 1990, when voters approved a quarter-cent sales tax creating the district and authorizing these purchases. Voters reaffirmed such activities in 2006.

The funds are largely used for so-called conservation easements, when a landowner is paid a portion of the value of the property in return for permanently limiting development. In other cases, the district has purchased the land outright, then sold it or given it to another owner — at either the city, county or state level — who promises never to develop the property.

Hart called the Sonoma Mountain addition a "big deal" in the county's recent efforts to fast-track public access to new open space.

"It's been a priority of mine, and of the district's, and of the supervisors' to get these properties moved into the parks system," Hart said. "They're huge assets for the county, for recreational activities, for driving tourism here and helping people get healthy..." "Public access is a big deal to the people who approved this," Supervisor Shirlee Zane said. "We still have a lot of work to do."

**Bennett Valley Fire Protection District
(BVFPD) 6161 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404**

Phone: 578-7761 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

Ruth Newman, Administrative Supervisor

Board meetings are generally held on the second Tuesday
each month, 7:00 pm, at the BV Fire Station. Please confirm
meeting date in advance 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, from time
to time, firefighter interns are available, at no cost.

Bennett Valley Call Log July/August 2014

By Lieutenant Matt Tognozzi

Structure Fire – 3	Vehicle Fire – 0
Grass Fire – 0	Medical Aid – 30
Vehicle Accident – 2	Public Assist – 4
Strike Team – 3	Hazardous Condition – 3
Smoke Check – 3	Alarm Sounding – 1
Total - 49	

**Bennett Valley Fire District;
Recent Strike Team Activity**

By Lieutenant Matt Tognozzi

1.) 7861 (*The number for one of the Bennett Valley Fire Engines, primarily used for wildland fires or strike teams.*) responded to the Butts Fire in Lake County, located off of Butts Canyon Rd. in Pope Valley. Along with the Sonoma County strike team, 7861 was committed to the incident from July 1 through July 4. The total size of the fire was 4,300 acres and it destroyed 2 homes and 7 outbuildings.

2.) 7861 responded to the Lodge Lightning Complex located Southwest of Laytonville in the Elk Horn Wilderness/Eel River Canyon area. In a rare case, Sonoma County provided 7861 to Lake County to fill in on their strike team. 7861 was committed to the incident from August 1 through August 17. The total size of the fire was 12,535 acres situated in steep terrain with limited access.

3.) 7881 (*The number for another one of BV Fire Engines, used primarily for structure fires.*) responded to Napa City to assist with the earthquake damage as part of a Sonoma County strike team. 7881 was

committed to the incident for 1 day, August 24. The earthquake was a magnitude 6.0 and current Napa County records show 49 buildings have significant damage, 207 people were sent to the hospital and over 90 water main breaks. Projected property damage sits at 300 million dollars. Economic losses are expected to be several times that amount.

[Editor's Note: Strike team activities by the Bennett Valley Fire District are another source of additional revenue, for the district, with reimbursement to be received from the State of California, for both the paid time for our firefighters and the use of our fire engines.]

**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, 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, June and July, 2014. The minutes for the August 19, 2014 meeting will not be approved until the September 9 meeting.

Brief Highlights of BV Fire Board Meeting, June 10

- Chief Dan George reported on Prop. 172 funds and a petition for fire districts to start receiving their share of these "public safety" funds, that was designed to help make up for all the money fire districts have to give to the "educational revenue augmentation funds", or ERAF, every year.
- It was the Board's decision to continue at the maximum special tax rate for the 2014/2015 fiscal year, with the intention of dropping it back the following year.
- A discussion was held regarding the rate of the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Bennett Valley and Gold Ridge. Chief George suggested that a Bennett Valley committee sit down with a Gold Ridge committee again to negotiate the MOU increases. Director Tognozzi would like the increases to be tied to the cost of living.

Brief Highlights of BV Fire Board Meeting, July 8

- Explorer Post - Andrew Tognozzi is doing a great job with the 6-7 Explorers.
- It has been a busy fire season.
- Recently, there was a burn training session with Rancho Adobe Fire District. and BV Fire District
- Resolution 13-14-05, from administration: This year end resolution makes budgetary transfers to comply with the law and adjust for actual revenues and expenses.

Chief Dan George, On Deteriorating Roads

Message from Craig Harrison, SOSroads Co-President

I spent most of yesterday at the Board of Supervisor's hearing on the long-term road plan (*July 29*). Dan George (who introduced himself as the chief of Gold Ridge and Bennett Valley Fire) spoke during the "public comment" period. He was very eloquent about the fact that if roads turn to gravel that the response times will get much longer and that "bad things will happen" - whether putting out a home fire or responding to a medical emergency...

Firearms Safety Fact Sheet Being Distributed At Schools

By Gina Cuclis, Area One Trustee
Sonoma County Board of Education (SCOE)

(Gina Cuclis is the Bennett Valley representative to the Sonoma County Board of Education, which is the governing body for the Sonoma County Office of Education. SCOE provides services to Sonoma County's forty school districts to help them meet legal mandates, operate cost-effectively and raise student achievement.)

It's back to school time and that means children are bringing home to their parents and guardians various handouts. Unique among the handouts this year is a new "Firearms Safety Fact Sheet" created by the Sonoma County Board of Education.

The County Board of Education and the County Office of Education believe that firearm safety is of critical importance for our students, families, schools and communities. Between 1991 and 2011, Sonoma County lost 58 children and teens to firearm homicides, suicides and accidents. Our board president Kathleen Willbanks proposed developing the fact sheet after a constituent suggested to her we distribute a gun safety guide just like we do other childhood health information. The Board unanimously embraced the idea, believing that if we save one life, we've made a difference.

I serve on the committee that was tasked with drafting the fact sheet. We were assisted by our staff attorney and a firearms safety expert, who volunteered her time. The draft was shown to school district superintendents for input. The final fact sheet contains information on safe storage of firearms, explains legal risks associated with keeping a loaded firearm, and offers suggestions for talking to children about firearms. It also provides recommendations regarding imitation firearms, which may be viewed as less dangerous than firearms, but can cause serious injury and death. The fact sheet also contains links for additional information.

All 40 school districts were provided with the fact sheet. It's the decision of each district whether to distribute it to their families. Bennett Valley Union Superintendent Sue Fields said they would be distributing the one-page sheet at Bennett Valley elementary schools. Some school districts are posting it on their websites. You can download a copy from the Sonoma County Office of Education website at scoe.org/files/firearm-safety-fact-sheet.pdf, or e-mail me and I will send you a copy, at ginaacuclis@gmail.com.

Fire Prevention Week is October 5 - 11

By Lieutenant Matt Tognozzi

Here are a few fast facts about fires from National Fire Prevention Association at www.nfpa.org/safety-information/fire-prevention-week.

- In 2011, U.S. fire departments responded to 370,000 homes structure fires. These fires caused 2,520 civilian deaths, 13,910 civilian injuries, \$6.9 billion in direct damage.
- Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries, followed by heating equipment.
- Almost three of five (60%) of reported home fire deaths in 2007 to 2011 resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.
- Two out of every five home fires started in the kitchen.
- Ranges accounted for 57% of the home cooking fire incidents. Ovens accounted for 16%.
- The leading factor contributing to heating equipment fires was failure to clean, principally creosote, from ... heating equipment, primarily chimneys.
- Electrical failure or malfunctions caused an average of almost 48,000 home fires per year, resulting in roughly 450 deaths and nearly \$1.5 billion in direct property damage.
- On average, there are 32 home candle fires reported per day.
- Nearly three of five candle fires (56%) start when things that can burn are left too close to the candles.

Bennett Valley 2014 Grape Crop

By Joe Judge, President, BV Grape Growers

The grape crop in Bennett Valley and in other areas of Sonoma County is certainly one to two weeks ahead of last year. This was caused by the very light winter and spring rains which caused the soil to be dryer and warmer than usual in the root zone. The warm roots sent signals to the upper plant to begin growth ahead of usual. We have had very nice warm days without too many foggy mornings or hot days in excess of 95 degrees (which will cause the leaves to stop photosynthesis for the rest of the day) and these conditions have continued through the growing season.

Most varieties of grapes appear to be a bit lighter in tonnage than last year, although there are always variables as to where in the county the grapes are grown or how they are farmed on different vineyards. The quality of most grapes is currently looking very good and we certainly hope this situation lasts until harvest. All farmers know that "Mother Nature Bats Last" and a few weeks of cold foggy mornings or a day or two of rain can change the whole ballgame.

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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 (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.

Highlights, BVCA Minutes, July 17

- At 7:00 pm, Ettamarie Peterson, President of the Sonoma County Beekeepers' Association, began her informative presentation. She explained that honey bees are an important part of American agriculture, pollinating many crops such as almonds, alfalfa, cotton, melons, cranberries, peaches, pears, apples, sunflowers, cucumbers and other foods and flowers we love. They pollinate by collecting the pollen to mix with honey to make bee bread after eating lots of honey. When we use any products that end in "icides" we endanger these and other pollinators. Insecticides, herbicides and fungicides are all bad for them and mixed together are even worse. They pick these up from pollen and water they bring back to the hives.
(Ettamarie Peterson www.liberty4Hbees.com)
- Information was discussed about the BVCA Emergency Preparedness Committee, the county road issues, the implementation of the policy of restricting mailed copies of the VOICE only to paid BVCA

members, as each VOICE costs \$1.00 to mail out, the Board election, and the speakers for the upcoming meetings.

Board of Directors' Tentative Agenda

Thursday, November 18, 7:00 pm, BV Grange Hall

- Forum; Two Candidates for the California Fourth State Assembly District, Bill Dodd and Charlie Schaupp, will be making a presentation and answering questions.
- Treasurer's Report, spending requests
- Report from BV Emergency Preparedness Committee
- County Road Issues
- VOICE Issues
- Speakers for Upcoming Meetings
- New Business as determined by Board
- Adjourn

BVCA Election for 2015 Board of Directors

By Jean LaCombe

The three sitting Board members up for re-election this year are Craig Harrison, Karen Sommer and Larissa Goliti, all of whom have consented to serve another three year term. No challengers submitted Candidate Statements by the August 29, 2014 deadline which results in the three available positions being retained by the current Board members. No Official Ballot will be mailed to the BVCA members, and our three Directors will be **Appointed as if Elected** for the term beginning January 2015. The Certification of Election Results will be prepared and submitted to the BVCA Board of Directors in December, 2014.

Who Are the Beck Brothers? By Marilee Jensen

Recently, a few people asked me about the Beck Brothers, so I've been doing some research. What I've been able to find is that they lived at 4300 Grange Road as early as possibly 1910. Their mother sold their house in 1971, which included a life estate for the brothers to live there until they died. There was either three or four "Beck Brothers", plus a sister, who lived elsewhere. So far, no one I've talked to has been able to recollect any of their first names. Evelyn McClure didn't have any information on them, in her book on Bennett Valley history or in a recent conversation. The research continues, so if you know anything about them, please let me know. Thanks.

Visit with Ann Burows, By Marilee Jensen

I had another lovely visit with Ann Burows, with the purpose of finding out more about the Beck Brothers, described above. Ann remembered them, but didn't remember their first names. As she approaches her 109th birthday next month, she remembers so much and is as charming as ever. I'm always looking forward to my next visit with her.

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

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, November 18, 7:00 pm, BV Grange Hall. See agenda on front page and Page 7.
- **Bennett Valley Fire Protection District:** The Board of Directors generally meets the second Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm, at the Bennett Valley Fire Station. Please call 823-1084 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> for more information. Join us for the Annual Grange Fall Festival and delicious dinner, (only \$15) September 20, starting at 5:00 pm. (See Page 2.) Then on October 12, 11:00 am until 9:00 pm, you can get 25% of the proceeds at Ricardo's Bar and Grill donated to the BV Grange Restoration. If you have any questions, please call Bill or Patty Allen, 544-3721.
- **Ham Radio Licensing, In Just One Day:** (From website [smrs](http://smrs.org)) The next scheduled one-day licensing class and exam is Saturday, October 25, Petaluma Senior Center, 1310 Redwood Way. 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, 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. Or you can contact Susan Gorin at 565-3752, susan.gorin@sonoma-county.org.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- For emergencies, use your landline or your cell phone to call **911**.
- 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 roads.