

Scott Valley Voice

March 5, 2010

Newsletter of Beautiful Scott Valley

Vol. VI, Num. 1

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT BY FRANCINE MILLMAN

Dear Scott Valley Residents:

I would like to start off by wishing everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Next, I wish to welcome the new Scott Valley Homeowners Association Board of Directors for 2010.

Your new board appointments are as follows:

Francine Millman, President; **John Palmer**, Vice President; **Ken Campbell**, Treasurer; **Steve Shepard**, Secretary; **Joan Boessenecker**, Director, **Rae Greenlee**, Director and **Matt Harrell**, Director.

We continue our commitment to represent the interests of our Scott Valley neighbors on a variety of local matters impacting our lives. Just some of the topics include: Alto Tunnel/Horse Hill/Camino Alto; the Blithedale Terrace project, (*in this issue*); Edna Maguire building project (*coming next issue*), Emergency Preparedness, CERT and a variety of other topics we believe are important to all of us.

Homeowner Dues Notice: Please consider this a first notice that 2010 Membership dues of \$40 per household are due. Checks should be made out to the **Scott Valley Homeowners' Association** and sent to: **P.O. Box 392, Mill Valley, CA 94942**. If you have not paid your dues for 2010, we ask that you take a moment to send a check. We do need your support in paying for the on-going costs of landscape maintenance, maintaining the Emergency Preparedness box, as well as our communications with residents via "The Voice".

Confidential Email List: In our attempts to keep you notified, we have created a strictly confidential email list. We have used that list to email Scott Valley residents of last minute time-sensitive information we believe you need to know. We currently have approximately 75 email addresses and we would like to reach as many households as possible, when necessary. If you have not received one of the 3 emails we sent this past year, that means you are not on our email list. Please email me with your email address and name at: scottvalleyha@aol.com and your name will be added to our confidential email list.

We look forward to a very productive year and hope that you read and enjoy this very informative edition of The Voice.

Thank you for your continued support. Have a wonderful Spring and Summer.

BLITHEDALE TERRACE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE BY JOHN PALMER

On December 2nd I attended a community meeting regarding the proposed Blithedale Terrace development for 20 homes, including 19 two- and three-bedroom condo units and one detached house, at 575 E. Blithedale, at the bottom of Kite Hill. In case you're not familiar with this site, it is the large (1.2 acre), undeveloped parcel one lot toward downtown from the corner of E. Blithedale and Camino Alto, directly across Blithedale from Ryan Avenue.

Among many disturbing elements of this proposal, perhaps the most significant is that the developer, Philip Richardson, currently has no rights to access the property except from E. Blithedale; he has attempted to gain access onto Camino Alto from neighboring property owners, but so far, understandably, they have been unwilling to assist him. The draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for this project, which was just published on 2/18/10, recommends that there be no left turn east onto Blithedale from the property if it is to be developed, and that Mr. Richardson should continue to seek access to Camino Alto for use as an egress from the site. If he is unable to gain access to Camino Alto, then in order to head east toward the freeway, the 40-plus residents of this development would have to turn right onto Blithedale toward downtown, then attempt to do a u-turn or turn into private driveways to turn around, probably using residential streets such as Nelson, Amicita, etc. In addition, a Traffic Impact Study ordered by the City of Mill Valley released in March, 2005, concluded that "East Blithedale/Camino Alto is operating unacceptably at an LOS (Level of Service) D during the a.m. peak hour.", a finding confirmed in the draft EIR. (A "D" rating means that traffic is moving slowly at times.)

The subject parcel is zoned PA (Professional Administration Office), which allows for significant commercial development; for example, if the developer chose to build a commercial building of up to 22,000 square feet on the property, such a proposal would be within current City guidelines for the site. However, he has chosen to ask the City for an amendment to the General Plan to allow the site to be re-zoned to accommodate a residential use, which is in keeping with the designation of the site in the 2003 Mill Valley Housing Element as suitable for "Lower Density Multi Family" development. Every time this proposal has come before the Planning Commission, however, there has been significant community opposition; it is about to come

before the Planning Commission again (see below).

The purpose of the meeting on 12/2 was to organize and unite the various homeowners' associations and neighbors who would be affected by the project as it is currently proposed. We also heard an interesting presentation about creating a "teaching farm" on the property, a possible use of the land if the developer could be persuaded to sell it. Those of us who attended the meeting discussed how to respond to the project as proposed, and came to the following conclusions:

- 1) That it would be in the best interest of the overall community if the lot were not to be developed at all, although we recognize that the developer has certain rights which may ultimately lead to the property's development. There is precedent in Mill Valley for neighborhood groups to negotiate the purchase of developable parcels and designate them as permanent open space;
- 2) That if it were to be developed, the scale of the project should be much smaller than currently proposed;
- 3) That in no event should the developer be allowed access to Camino Alto unless the project is scaled down dramatically;
- 4) That it would be in the best interest of the neighboring homeowners' groups to have a plan of action in the event that the conclusions of the EIR were to benefit the developer, which unfortunately has turned out to be the case.

We also concluded (although not unanimously) that it would be wise, absent a community movement to purchase the parcel and dedicate it as open space, for all of us to agree on a scale of development that would be acceptable to the neighboring interests, rather than saying no to all development. Those of us who attended representing larger groups agreed to take a proposal back to our members to gauge their reactions.

Here are three proposals which met with general approval at the meeting:

- 1) Since the property is 1.2 acres, 3 to 4 lots of .4 to .3 acres each could be created from the parcel, which would permit 3 or 4 single-family homes to be built on the site (my personal preference, based on impacts); or
- 2) A small commercial building (not the 22,000 sq. ft. permitted by its current zoning), with uses such as business offices, medical or dental offices, medical service offices such as physical therapy, etc., which would have limited hours of operation so as not to interfere with school drop off hours and the early morning commute; or

- 3) The teaching farm (an idea which would maintain the majority of the open space, and benefit the community). This idea initially sounded far-fetched to me and is frankly a long-shot, but after listening to the presentation by the would-be operators, I was convinced that if the developer could be talked into abandoning his project because of effective community opposition, it was actually an interesting idea. This use would require establishing a nonprofit to purchase the land, and to develop and operate the farm.

Please respond by letting us know if you approve or disapprove of the limitations we came up with to present to the developer and to the Planning Commission (a maximum of 3 or 4 houses, a small office building, or a teaching farm with preserved open space). Of course, we would welcome and support anyone who wants to organize a group to purchase the property and dedicate it to open space!

STATUS OF THE PROJECT

The draft of the Blithedale Terrace EIR was released for public review on Thursday, February 18th, which marked the official start of the public comment period. The City has posted a copy of the draft EIR on its website. Type the following link information into your browser to get directly to that page:

www.cityofmillvalley.org/index.aspx?page=1072. Hard copies are also available at the Library and at City Hall.

Because the timing of the release of the draft EIR nearly coincides with the replacement of two members of the Planning Commission in March, City staff has authorized an extended public comment period. CEQA requires a minimum 30-day comment period, but in order to give the new Planning Commission time to work together on this matter, and because of other scheduling issues, the Planning Director states that there will not be a public hearing on the draft EIR until May 10 at the earliest. The public comment period would then remain open until May 12, according to the current schedule; the City will accept all written comments, including electronic comments through its web site, on the draft EIR until 5 pm on May 12th. All written comments, plus any verbal comments given at the scheduled May 10 public hearing, will then be addressed by the City's environmental consultant prior to the next stage in the process. We at the Scott Valley Homeowners Association intend to present a formal letter on this matter to the Planning Commission and City Council before May 12th, and may join with our neighboring associations in sponsoring a petition on it as well.

When the public comment period closes, the consultant will then prepare the final form of the EIR, which may

result in modifications to the draft based on comments by the Planning Commission and the public. The Planning Commission will then be responsible for taking action on the adequacy of the final EIR. Once that action is completed, the Planning Commission will conduct its review of the merits of the project itself.

Although the draft EIR inexplicably concludes otherwise, this project has the potential to be extremely disruptive to traffic flows on East Blithedale, and on Camino Alto as well if the developer is successful in his effort to obtain access onto that road. Even more startling is the finding in Appendix H of the EIR that this project, together with the proposed convenience store on the southeast corner of Blithedale and Camino Alto, together with the opening of the new Whole Foods Store in the Alto Center a couple of blocks away, *cumulatively* will permit traffic circulation in the five intersections of the surrounding area to “continue operating at the same levels of service as under existing conditions”.

Please take the time to look at the draft EIR, particularly the Executive Summary (section 2), the Transportation and Circulation section (14), and Appendix H, and to send your comments to City staff and to members of the Planning Commission and the City Council either by email at the link referenced above or by sending your comments directly to: Planning and Building Department, Mill Valley City Hall, 26 Corte Madera Avenue, Mill Valley, CA 94941.

BECOME A SVHA MEMBER FOR ONLY \$40/YEAR

It's that time again! **Expenses have INCREASED!**

For only \$40 a year, the Homeowners' Association can continue to **maintain the landscape** and **emergency preparedness box**, as well as send you The Voice to keep you informed. **Without your support, these projects cannot be maintained!**

Your membership also gives you the ability to vote for board members, each year. Please send your check to: **Scott Valley Homeowners' Association, P.O. Box 392, Mill Valley, CA 94942.**

PETITION TO SIGN SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS TO CAMINO ALTO AND HORSE HILL MULTI-USE PATH

If you are not on the SVHA email list, you might not have signed the very important petition supporting both the Horse Hill and Camino Alto multi-use path improvement options. (See *Letter from the President to get on the SVHA email list*).

Here is your chance to view and sign the petition.

Visit the following website: www.ipetitions.com/petition/improvehorsehillcaminoalto/, read the petition text, then scroll down to the bottom and “sign” the petition, if you agree. We have already submitted the first round of signatures to the Marin County Board of Supervisors, but we still need YOUR signature for additional information we will be providing the County Board of Supervisors as this issue continues to be addressed.

We also encourage each PERSON in your household to sign – adults, teens, kids.

SCOTT VALLEY SWIM & TENNIS CLUB UPDATE BY TOM ASHLEY

Work on the renovation and expansion of the pool and pool area continues pretty much as planned.

With the rain to date, opening of the project, which began in September, completion is currently projected for mid to late April.

As a reminder, the key elements of the work consists of:

- Renovating the pool and updating the pool equipment to bring it up to current code;
- Replacement and expansion of the pool deck;
- Relocation and expansion of the hot tub;
- Expansion of the exercise facility; and
- Construction of a commercial kitchen and café area.

Due to the construction, the swim team will be using other facilities until the pool re-opens.

While the club has attempted to minimize the impact of the project on the neighborhood, please call the General Manager, Patsy Love @383-3483 or me @ 388-0109 if you have any problems, questions, or concerns.

**LOCAL EMERGENCY & CITY
PHONE NUMBERS
BY STEVE SHEPARD**

As some of you may already know, dialing 911 from your cell phone sends your call to the Vallejo Call Center rather than to the Mill Valley. We are providing you with local City emergency and non-emergency telephone numbers for your easy access.

We recommend that you cut this out and post it in a place those in your home can easily access. We also suggest that you enter the Cell Phone Emergency, Mill Valley Police and Fire Department numbers in your cell phone(s).

Emergency Services	Phone
CELL PHONE EMERGENCY	(415) 472-0911 (dial the entire number)
Fire Department	(415) 389-4130
Police	(415) 389-4100
Boards and Commissions	Phone
Art Commission	(415) 721-1856
Emergency Preparedness Commission	(415) 389-4138
Library Board of Trustees	(415) 389-4292
Mill Valley City Council	(415) 388-4033
Parks and Recreation Commission	(415) 383-1370
Planning Commission	(415) 388-4033
SASM Board of Commissioners	(415) 388-2402
City Departments	Phone
City Clerk	(415) 388-4033
City Manager	(415) 388-4033
Community Development	(415) 388-4033
Finance and Human Resources	(415) 388-4033
Fire Department	(415) 389-4130
Mill Valley Public Library	(415) 389-4292
Parks and Recreation	(415) 383-1370
Police	(415) 389-4100
Public Works	(415) 388-4033
SASM Wastewater Treatment Plant	(415) 388-2402
Community Resources	Phone
Chamber of Commerce	(415) 388-9700
Dog Licenses - Marin Humane Society	(415) 883-4621
Trash Service - Mill Valley Refuse	(415) 457-9760

**CERT PROGRAM
BE PREPARED!
BY KEN CAMPBELL**



**BE A LOCAL
HERO!!**

**✳ GET READY ✳
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING**

Spring, 2010 Classes

ARE YOU READY?

In case of an earthquake, public safety officials recommend having enough food and water to last up to 7 days. If we have a catastrophic fire, you may need to evacuate in 10 minutes or less.

GET READY is a free 1½ hour class, sponsored by the Mill Valley and Southern Marin Fire Departments, that teaches you how to prepare your home and family for an emergency. This class is again being given on a variety of dates this Spring at both the Mill Valley Community Center and Strawberry Recreation Center.

Sign up now. Pre-registration encouraged.

Send an email to: getready@smfd.org or call 380-1105 and leave your name, phone, email & date you want to attend.

DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION*
March 23 rd	Tues	7pm-9pm	SBRC
April 7	Wed	7pm-9pm	MVCC
April 24	Sat	10am-12noon	MVCC
May 6	Thurs.	7pm-9pm	MVCC
May 13	Thurs	10am-12noon	SBRC

***LOCATION ADDRESSES**

MVCC - Mill Valley Community Center, 180 Camino Alto, Mill Valley

SBRC -Strawberry Recreation Center, 118 E. Strawberry Dr., Mill Valley

DO YOU HAVE A SCOTT VALLEY ISSUE FOR THE BOARD?

If you have any concerns or issues that you would like the SVHA Board of Directors to address, please feel free to email us at ScottValleyHA@aol.com. The board will review the topic and reply as to whether it is a Board issue or direct you to the proper agency responsible for addressing your concern.

We are continually addressing such topics as coyote and wildlife issues, Emergency Preparedness, landscape maintenance and general safety issues effecting Scott Valley. Please email scottvalleyha@aol.com with any topics you would like to see us address.

SCOTT VALLEY BABY/CHILD SITTERS

As a community service, the following is a list of Scott Valley baby/child sitters. The SVHA has not met, nor screened any of these individuals and encourage you to do so before hiring.

Jason Yanowitz: I am a 16-year-old sophomore at Tam High. I am an experienced babysitter and love to have fun, play games and also cook and clean. I play football, baseball, and basketball at Tam High. I babysit weekday evenings, weekend days and evenings. Please email me at jrithere1304@aol.com or call me at 415-497-9715 and I will be sure to get right back to you. Thank you.

Allie Grady: I am an experienced, CPR-trained babysitter and a Scott Valley resident. Please contact me at: Email: alliegrady23@yahoo.com Cell: 415-971-1452

Claire Anderson: I am a 9th grader at Tam High looking for part time work. If you need babysitting or pet setting, please give me a call. I have completed the American Red Cross Babysitting course, and have also been a counselor at Miwok Stables working with young children, as well as many horses, cats and dogs. Contact: Claire Anderson at 388-7455.

Heidi Williams (freshman at Tam High)
415-381-1131 home 415-601-1131 cell

Jean McMillen: I am a stay at home mom with time on my hands, and I love children. Cell: 415-381-1131 or home: 415-601-1131

Want to place a babysitting ad? If you baby sit in the Scott Valley area and wish to have your name and phone number and/or email address listed in The Voice, please email scottvalleyha@aol.com. We will make sure to include your information in our next issue.

ITEMS FOR SALE

Do you have items you would like to sell? Sure, we have Craig's List for that, but how about listing some of your items locally in The Voice? If you have any items you would like to sell, please email scottvalleyha@aol.com. Provide information about the item, the price and contact information.

Scott Valley Voice
This is a collaborative effort of the
Scott Valley Board of Directors & Friends

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<i>Emergency Preparedness</i>	Ken Campbell
<i>Emergency Phone List</i>	Steve Shepard
<i>Tennis Club Info</i>	Tom Ashley
 <i>Layout & Design</i>	 Francine Millman

**WHAT YOU WILL LEARN FROM
THIS EDITION OF THE SCOTT VALLEY VOICE??**

- **BLITHEDALE TERRACE PROJECT UPDATE**
- **CALLING LOCAL EMERGENCY NUMBERS FROM YOUR CELL PHONE
(HINT: IT'S NOT BY CALLING 911)**
- **CERT EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP DATES**
- **DO YOU NEED A SCOTT VALLEY BABY/CHILD SITTER?**
- **2010 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE!**

**SCOTT VALLEY
HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION
PO Box 392
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