

Scott Valley Voice

October 8, 2001

Newsletter of Scott Valley

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR BY FRANCINE MILLMAN

Needless to say, these past few weeks have impacted and changed the lives of most all of us and especially those in NYC and Washington, D.C., forever. Our hearts go out to those who have personal losses due to this tragic event.

Many have said that this was a 'wake up call' and wonder what they can do to help. I do believe that one way we can help is to prepare ourselves for any future natural or unnatural disasters. The goal in reforming the Scott Valley Homeowners' Association Board of Directors is to unify our immediate community like never before. In addition to addressing and resolving community issues, it is also our desire to help each other prepare for potential natural and unnatural disasters. You have all received a flyer announcing Emergency Preparedness (CERT) classes. We strongly encourage you to sign up for the upcoming CERT (Emergency Preparedness) classes being held in November. They won't take much of your time by comparison to the valuable training and information you will receive. You can make the difference in a time when most of us feel helpless to do something. We are all busy these days, but hopefully not busy enough to learn something that could make the difference.

It is our hope to create neighborhood and block captains and other support, so that Scott Valley is as prepared as possible, should that need be necessary. It is only with *your* help that we can achieve a prepared and safer Scott Valley. Now, more than ever, we ask for your assistance in achieving these goals.

United We Stand



AN ALTO TUNNEL PRIMER by John Palmer

This is the second in a series of articles written for the benefit of Scott Valley, Alto-Sutton Manor, and Chapman Meadows homeowners to provide background for evaluation of the proposal to re-construct the Alto Tunnel.

II: THE COLLAPSE OF THE TUNNEL

After relinquishing control of the right-of-way in the mid-seventies, Southern Pacific sealed and abandoned the Alto Tunnel in 1979. Although the railroad plugged the opening on the Corte Madera side with 124 feet of concrete and pea gravel (pebbles) and 139 feet of gunnite, the opening on the Mill Valley side was blocked only by a barrier made of wooden beams with a steel door.

In December of 1981, the tunnel collapsed at its Mill Valley opening just south of Underhill Road, taking with it a section of the roadway and the eastern portion of the adjacent home on Underhill. The collapse left two sinkholes 25 feet in diameter and 20 feet deep; the soil around the house shifted and slid into the sink holes, and the house moved along with the soil. First the nearby deck collapsed, then the garage. Soon afterwards, in a heavy rainstorm, the house had to be evacuated when a natural gas pipe pulled away from the structure.

After a period of study, the contract for repairing the collapse was awarded to Maggiora & Ghillotti, with funds provided by Southern Pacific. The project, which included rebuilding the collapsed home and yard, repairing the underpinning of the roadway and the road itself, stabilizing the hillside and sealing the tunnel, was a major undertaking. Workmen drilled five holes on each side of the cave-in-site, into which were inserted steel pipes 36 inches in diameter. A total of 21 holes were dug to a depth of 30 feet, filled with steel and gravel, and plugged with concrete; additionally, a below-grade pier wall was constructed on the north-east side of the damaged house, parallel to the tunnel, to

prevent it from slipping again.

After the owners moved out, most of the house was demolished and reconstructed; Southern Pacific wound up purchasing the house, which it later sold to one of its executives after the reconstruction. (It has since been re-sold.)

To repair the damage to the land around the home, a double lot, workers hauled 1,500 tons of gravel to the site, then filled and reconstructed the hillside and the lower portions of the yard to the northeast of the house. To protect the property from future erosion, engineers redesigned the drainage around the entire area of the collapse.

In order to seal the tunnel's opening, workers hauled in an additional 2,140 tons of pea gravel and 138 cubic yards of sand, creating a plug approximately 450 feet long. Taking into account the plugs at both the Corte Madera and Mill Valley ends, about 1/3 of the tunnel's length is now filled in with concrete and gravel.

Although no one knows the condition of the remaining unplugged section of the tunnel for certain, the Foreaker study of 1981 predicted that it would collapse; 20 more years of moisture, lack of oxygen, and neglect are certain to have caused further deterioration to the wooden supports of the tunnel and its walls.

Stay tuned for Part III, the final article of The Alto Tunnel Primer, which will discuss the current proposal to reconstruct and rebuild the tunnel – pro and con, as well as the alternative solutions presently being considered.

• ALTO TUNNEL FACTS •

THE ALTO TUNNEL IS:

- a) 2179 feet long
- b) 16 feet wide
- c) 20 feet high

THE TUNNEL'S MY OPENING IS AT THE END OF THE MULTI-USE PATH AFTER IT CROSSES VASCO COURT

BECOME A SVHA MEMBER

As of September, there are 96 paid members of the SVHA. For \$40 a calendar year in dues, your new board is working on your behalf to keep you informed and to represent the interests of Scott Valley. We need both your community and financial support. Please send your check to: Scott Valley Homeowners' Association, P.O. Box 392, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

SV COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Please send any ads for services you require or have to offer those in Scott Valley to the SVV@promptconsulting.com .

CHILDCARE NEEDED

We are in need of occasional childcare for two girls, ages 5 and 8. We are looking for a mature, responsible, fun-loving Scott Valley resident who would be able to provide occasional night-time babysitting for us. Experience a plus. Good, local references required. Call Loryn, 380-9173, evenings.

HELP WANTED

Position: Member, Board of Directors
Scott Valley Swimming & Tennis Club

Requirements: Proprietary Member of Club

Term: 2 years starting March, 2002

Pay: Free Coffee at the Meetings

Under the Scott Valley Swimming and Tennis Club by-laws, the Homeowners' Association appoints two people to the board of directors. This is to ensure that the neighborhood's concerns are heard in the planning and running of the club. The only requirement is that the person be a proprietary member of the club.

Jon Stern is now in his second year and we will be looking for a replacement by the end of the year. Tom Geidt is now in his first year. The Association would like to thank them both for

taking on this task.

The time commitment is limited. The board meets monthly in the evening for a couple of hours. If you are interested, or have any questions, please call Tom Ashley 388-0109. This is a great way for neighborhood members not only to get involved in their club, but ensure that local issues are heard.

YOUTH CORNER

Kids, Teens and Young Adults – Do you have a service you would like to provide to those in the Scott Valley area? Baby-sitting? Dog walking? Need a place to advertise for free? Your ad will display in the next issue of the Scott Valley Voice! Submit your ad for consideration to: SVV@promptconsulting.com

REMINDER

**SIGN UP FOR CERT CLASSES
(EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS)**

NOVEMBER 3RD AND 10TH, 2001

CONTACT:

**BARBARA JENNINGS: 381-2624
ANN DYE: 388-4980**

ITEMS FOR SALE

If you have items you would like to sell, give away or if you are planning to have a garage sale and would like to advertise in the next issue of the *Voice*, please submit your ad, including your name, phone number, brief description of the item and the amount you are asking to: SVV@promptconsulting.com.

Scott Valley Voice

This is a collaborative effort of the
Scott Valley Board of Directors

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COMPUTER TIP OF THE MONTH BY FRANCINE MILLMAN

In this age of technology, sometimes I feel much like a doctor. At parties, when someone learns I am a computer consultant specializing in software training and support for law firms and corporations, I am immediately asked if it would be OK to ask a few questions about some annoying feature in a program – whether it be the internet, AOL, Word, Outlook, WordPerfect or any number of other software. I fill my glass and am usually happy to help get the person out of trouble. Most questions take a few minutes and the issue is usually resolved quickly. Most people have learned how to use their software in a ‘trial-by-fire’ approach and are still often performing tasks in a ‘survival’ manner rather than using the multitude of features designed to resolve certain tasks. If you would like to ask a “How to” question about your computer software, please send your question to: SVV@promptconsulting.com. I will answer most questions in upcoming *Voice* issues. Please specify the program, the version (found in Help/About in your program) and whether it is Mac or Windows. I will not be able to respond to all questions, but will do my best to get to as many questions as possible.

THIS MONTH’S QUESTION: I hear a lot about computer viruses and “worms” on the news. Is this real or is it hype? What are they and should I be concerned?

ANSWER: Computer viruses and worms, the newest in the world of unwanted computer intrusions, ARE VERY REAL. They appear to be innocent documents or attachments in emails and then WHAMMO, one day you either start losing files you have saved or your entire computer will not boot up (start). They can be potentially crippling if you do not take the proper steps to prevent them from infecting your computer.

From where do viruses come? In one word - **People**. From those who are jokesters to those who are mean, destructive and malicious,

wanting to wreak havoc on the lives of innocent computer users.

WHAT TO DO: Make sure you have **current** virus protection software. The two most popular are McAfee VirusScan (www.mcafee.com) and Norton AntiVirus (www.norton.com). Whichever you choose, make sure your computer has virus protection software loaded *and running* at all times your computer is turned on. In addition, if you use an email program such as Microsoft Outlook, make sure you visit their website frequently and download security patches that will help prevent further viruses and worms from gaining access to your computer. However, you must update these, as well as virus protection files at least monthly. It's fast and easy to update once the software is initially installed. Put it on your calendar to do. It's a small price to pay for peace-of-mind.

Viruses are most often received via email attachments or documents. Opening the email itself doesn't launch the virus. Downloading and/or launching the attachment (if it is an infected exe file, for example) to the email or opening the document is what activates most viruses and worms. So, how do you protect yourself? Be aware. If you receive an email from someone you do not know and it contains an attachment, do not download and/or open it. Just delete that file. And, even if you do know the person, be aware that many of the new viruses and worms attach an additional extension to a document. For example, the document may be called Document1.doc.pf. Microsoft Word names all of its documents with a '.doc' extension. The '.pf' or anything after the '.doc' should be a sign that there is a problem with this document.

Sophisticated "worms" are now able to grab email addresses from your online address book and send files with you as the sender! Once again, UPDATE your virus protection software. Many people think that once you install the software, you are good to go forever. WRONG! You must update your software *at least* once a month, to ensure that current remedies to new viruses are available on your computer. Given that there are approximately 300-400 NEW viruses detected A MONTH, it is an on-going problem that can easily be prevented, if you are proactive about it. Being proactive about protecting your computer will prevent hours of frustration and probable loss of data, later.

For those who are connected via DSL or cable modem, remember, you are always "connected" to an outside source if your computer is turned on. Make sure you also have "firewall" software. This software prevents hackers and lurkers from having access to your computer while you are connected. While I make no recommendations, I personally use Norton Personal Firewall and it is amazing to see how many times a day an internet site attempts to gain access to my system. This usually happens when being connected to the internet. It doesn't mean they are attempting to do anything malicious, I just prefer not having anyone access anything on my computer without my knowledge and approval.

Hope this helps! I look forward to more questions over the months to come.