

# Graystone of Almaden Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 41112, San Jose, CA 95160-1112

## October 2008 Newsletter

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### Boulder Ridge Event Tent Update – POTENTIAL REAL PROGRESS!

As you are hopefully aware, the Santa Clara County Planning Commissioners held a key review meeting in September on the proposed Event Tent at Boulder Ridge. **Your Board, the Boards of two other neighborhood associations and more than 200 concerned neighbors packed the room.** As a result of our series of presentations, the Commissioners *rejected* the Planning department’s recommendation to proceed with the Event Tent and returned the issue to Planning with lots of questions to be answered.

It is clear that our ability to engage our own professional to “peer review” the County sound study was vital. This review brought numerous issues to light that the original study did not address. To be in a position to fight unwanted developments, we must have solid facts and legal advice. Because we have an on-going neighborhood organization and funds (professional consulting is not free), we have put ourselves in a strong position to be proactive.

The latest *unofficial* word from the County is that Rocke Garcia is “going to propose a permanent building” instead of the “Tent”. This could be very good news. County Planning will update the Commissioners at the November 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. We will certainly have a number of people in attendance to hear first hand the update and will work with Planning prior to that meeting to gain further information. Per the published agenda for the November meeting, no vote will be taken at the November meeting.

Given the probable changes in the Event Tent proposal, it seems likely that this new proposal from Rocke Garcia will not be voted upon until February. Even though we are hopeful that a revised proposal from Rocke will be acceptable to us, we are continuing to explore our legal options in parallel. Should we lose at the Commissioner level, we will appeal to the County Supervisors. At that level, we will have to have our legal arguments firm and our message crisp.



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## **Halloween Parade Plans**

We will be holding our annual Halloween Parade this Friday. The parade will start at Pfeiffer Park at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. We will be walking through the neighborhood and end up in Deer Hollow Court for treats. All “kids” (even the 4 legged ones) are encouraged to join in. We hope to see you this Friday at the Park at 4:30.

## **Social Committee Formation**

**WE NEED YOUR HELP!** “What for?” you may ask. Well, we need your help in *planning and coordinating* neighborhood activities.

As you know, our Homeowner’s Association has a social aspect to it. A few times during the year we get together to meet new neighbors, touch base with ones we already know and keep up to date with what is going on in our neighborhood. Some of these get-togethers are for the kids (Halloween Parade, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade), some are for the adults (Progressive Dinner) and some are for the neighborhood at large (Picnic – cancelled last year due to a lack of volunteers).

These activities help to bring our neighborhood together and make it the special place it is. But, we need help in thinking up creative new ideas and planning these social activities. Your Board cannot do this alone. So, let’s be clear, we are **not** in search for a single someone to do everything, but for a few someone’s who can help plan events, recruit volunteers and coordinate an activity.

So, are you willing to be part of a team that helps maintain this important aspect of our makes neighborhood? Hopefully your answer is yes. Without volunteers to make these events happen, they do not happen. That would be a big disappointment to all in the neighborhood. If you are interested in joining our new Social Committee, please contact Lea Kammerer @ [kammere@pacbell.net](mailto:kammere@pacbell.net) or call her @ 268-1490.



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## Website Plans

We hope that you have found our Graystone of Almaden website. If not, check it out at [www.almadengraystone.org](http://www.almadengraystone.org). This site has proved quite helpful in keeping everyone informed on Boulder Ridge and providing a place to archive all the important documents about our Association. So, it is off to a good start!

But, we can do so much more. We think that we should add a number of features that will help everyone in our neighborhood by providing an information exchange on such topics as:

- Babysitters
- Dog walkers/Pet sitters
- School/study tutors
- Contractor experiences
- Handyman references
- Odd job requests – taking in the trash cans and newspapers

But, we need someone's help. We need a web master to take over our website and evolve it into something really helpful to all of us. Is someone out there capable and interested in helping? Please contact Ron Mak at [ron.mak@almadengraystone.org](mailto:ron.mak@almadengraystone.org) to explore this opportunity.

We think this service could be one of the best things we offer to our neighbors – important information at our fingertips when we really need it.

## Membership Update – Progress Since August

We have received 101 renewals so far for this year, up from 84 in August. But, we still have almost a dozen families that have not renewed and renewals were due in May. We have asked the Board to follow up with each family to understand the reason for non-renewal. If we have an issue that needs to be resolved, we are committed to doing just that. In most cases, the reason for the non-renewal is just an oversight. For us to maintain our core programs and to show strength with the City and County on key issues such as the Event Tent issue, we need to maintain our membership. Our share of the Sound Study (the cost was split with two other neighborhood associations) that made such a positive impact on the County Planning Commissioners was \$639. Without our membership fees, we would not have been able to commit to this expense. We expect more expenses as we continue to fight the “Event Tent”. **So, if you have not yet sent in your renewal check for \$80 payable to Graystone of Almaden please do so today.** Send the check to Graystone of Almaden, P.O. Box 41112, San Jose, CA 95120-1112.



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## **CAP Grant Award**

Two years ago, we were awarded a CAP grant by the City of SJ to help us build the retaining wall on Pfeiffer Ranch Road. Obviously, the wall is now in place thanks to the City and our Association funding. No more dirt and mud on the sidewalk!

At that time, we envisioned planting the hillside with ground cover to stabilize the hill, reduce the weeds and add color. But, we need water to get anything to grow and flower. Late last year we applied for a second CAP grant to help us install a watering system for the hillside. The City has approved our request to split the cost of the watering system and awarded us \$4250 – one of the largest grants made to any organization. Last year we put aside \$2000 in the hopes that we would win this award. We will pay the remaining amount of approximately \$2500 from this year's funds. We hope to install the system this winter in time for spring planting, assuming we can get all the paperwork with the City (it is City property) completed. Having been through this once before, there are a lot of hoops to jump through before installation can start. So, if you see some activity this winter, you will know that we got through the paperwork and that spring color is coming.

## **Financial Update**

Expenses, May 1, 2008 to date:

Boulder Ridge	\$685
Events	
Progressive dinner	396
Christmas decorations	65
Landscaping	800
New Neighbor program	271
Communications	59
Administration	62

