

Graystone of Almaden Neighborhood Association

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

July 2009 Newsletter

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Goals For This Year

Membership Renewals & New Board

Membership is going well. 96 of your neighbors have already joined the Association for the 2009- 2010 fiscal year. Last year we had 102 members. This year we have set a goal of 113 members. We have a list of 26 neighbors that have been members in the past two years that have not yet renewed. Board members will be following up on those 26 potential members. Wouldn't it be great if all 26 renewed! We would then have 122 members – a new record level of support. Help us get there. Strength is in numbers.

Your new Board

President	Scott Sherwood
Vice President	Julia Alloggiamento
Treasurer	Ron Mak
Secretary	Jeanine Smith
Activities Chair	Janice Rose
Member at Large	Lea Kammerer
Member at Large	Leo Hecke



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Survey Results

More than two-thirds of you filled out the short survey attached to your ballot, giving the Board valuable feedback on the Association's activities and projects. Overall, you like the services and activities, with comment after comment suggesting we are "doing a great job". Thanks for that support.

Here are the specifics of your collective feedback, with the results in Red, followed by our preliminary analysis:

1. Rate the services we perform in terms of value received.
(3 for high value, 2 for medium value and 1 for low value)

Community action (zoning, development, City & County politics)	<u>2.95</u>
Landscape maintenance (trim common areas and trees)	<u>2.93</u>
Major projects (trim street trees, retaining wall, front entrance planting)	<u>2.85</u>
Social activities (picnic, parades, dinners, socials)	<u>2.25</u>
Services (dumpster day, haz-mat recycle, directory)	<u>2.62</u>
Communications (new neighbor greeting, newsletters, emails, website)	<u>2.57</u>

2. What activities/services should we consider adding?

Additional dumpster day
Neighborhood garage sale
Neighborhood clean-up day
Group discounts – trees trimming, solar, etc
Street tree trimming
Enforce blight control – poor/non-existent landscaping of some yards
Plant additional trees at the end of Pfeiffer Ranch
Earthquake preparedness seminar
Web blogging – best contractors, etc

3. What services/activities should we consider stopping?

Progressive dinner (1)

4. What are the best ways for us to communicate with you throughout the year?
(Choose two)

Email updates	<u>93%</u>
PDF newsletter	<u>48%</u>
Printed newsletter	<u>13%</u>



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Quarterly meetings 02%
Website 32%

5. Do you have any concerns that we need to address? If so, please tell us more.

Comment	# of times
More common area landscape maintenance	1
Park/open space loitering – kids/drugs?/litter	3
Open space brush – fire hazard?	2
CC&R enforcement – house colors	1
House landscaping – poor and non-existent	4
Speeding – especially Pfeiffer Ranch	3
Street tree trimming – do it again	1
Parking on Pfeiffer Ranch – too narrow if on both sides	1
Flooding @ entrance (Camden & Graytone)	1
Directory – need a new one	1

Our preliminary analysis:

Many of you said the Association Board is on track and “doing a great job”. It is always good to revisit if what we are working on is what is valuable to you. Five out of the six categories of services scored greater than 2.5 on a 3.0 scale. Based upon this feedback, we believe we are doing mostly the right things and will continue our direction.

Almost all of you see high value in our community action work, such as Boulder Ridge, common area maintenance and the special projects that we tackle on a periodic basis. These three areas also represent the largest expense areas with over 70% of our funds going to support these core services. Additionally, while a bit lower in value, the services such as dumpster day and our efforts in communications (website, directory & flyers) are solidly rated. Social activities got the lowest score and got the most 1’s, for low value. Given the fairly modest attendance at events, this is not surprising. Seemingly, those that participate in events like them and rate them a 2 or a 3. Those that do not see much value, choose not to attend. Accordingly, we will keep our expenses for events modest.

In response to the survey, we will once again coordinate a garage sale, prior to dumpster day. See the article in this newsletter for details. The remaining suggestions will be discussed at our next Board meeting.

Communications of Association news will continue to be primarily “electronic”, as electronic transfer was the big winner. Email, PDF newsletters and the website are far



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out ahead of hardcopy and face-to-face meetings. Accordingly, we will continue our current efforts, only using hardcopy and meetings when they are absolutely necessary.

Finally, let's look at some of your comments. The problem of kids loitering, drinking and/or "doing drugs" in the open space is an issue. **We have talked with the police and they request that we call 311 when we see a potential problem and ask for a dispatcher. The police will send a patrol car and ask the kids to leave. They are trespassing and are not allowed to congregate.** They believe that if the trespassers are frequently asked to leave, they will find a new place to gather. It will be our win and somebody else's loss.

The other major issue seems to be that some homeowners are not keeping up their yards and houses. Some houses need painting and several yards are mostly dirt and/or overgrown. Not only are the properties unsightly, people worry that property values are negatively affected. In the past, we, the Board, have contacted the offenders and asked the owners to fix up their property. While we will still do this, we also ask you to talk with your neighbors. We will continue to look into enforcement options, but for now, we ask you to continue to seek change through encouragement and peer pressure.

Again, the Board will discuss all of your feedback at our upcoming meeting. Thanks for the input and the overall vote of confidence. We will report back.

Boulder Ridge Event Tent – Final Update

As we have noted in past communications, this was a big win for our neighborhood. Silence is golden! Our collective actions made the difference. In case you missed the article in the Almaden Resident, construction of the Event **Building** is expected to begin this summer. Rob Eastwood is quoted in the article as saying "The process worked. People actually clapped after the Planning Commission's decision." We agree! Now, the only issue seems to be compliance with the noise restrictions placed upon the facility. It will be our job to monitor noise and report any non-compliance. Loud music anytime or music after 10 pm is prohibited. The Planning Commission will monitor complaints and do their own periodic, unannounced, sound level checks.

We can make noise complaints from 9 am to 5 pm on weekdays by calling the Department of Environmental Health at 408 918 3400. Past 5 pm, we are asked to call the Santa Clara County Office of the Sheriff at 408 686 3650.

Once the building is operational, we will update everyone on the status and remind you of the numbers for noise complaints. Again, thanks for your support. It made a real



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difference in our neighborhood.

Garage Sale/Dumpster Day/Hazardous Materials Disposal

Get set to rid yourself of all that stuff that clutters your garage, house and storage areas. As we have in the past, we will sequence the events to facilitate your disposal – first try to sell it and if it doesn't sell, dump it! We will see if we can get a Goodwill truck or similar service to participate too. So mark your calendar as follows:

Garage Sale **August 29th**
Dumpster Day **September 12th**

If you plan to participate in the garage sale (so we can make it a neighborhood day), please e-mail Julia Alloggiamento at jalloggia@hotmail.com. Also, please contact Julia if you can help with making and posting signs and doing other advertising for the garage sale. The more participants and publicity we have, the more we can sell!

Hillside Improvement Project – Final Update

Phase 1 was the construction of the wall to stabilize the hillside. Phase 2 is to improve the look of the hillside. We think we accomplished that goal. Many of you have commented on the improved look. We agree!



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New Landscaping Project – Improve Stonehill and Boulder Mountain

We plan to aggressively trim back the brush covering the rock formations, trim the trees and do a general clean up on Stonehill and Boulder Mountain Way. Then, probably next year given budget constraints, we hope to re-do the rocks between the sidewalk and the street. We plan to remove the old stones and replace them with larger stones like the ones in front of the wall on Pfeiffer Ranch and embed the larger stones in a thin layer of cement to permanently stop the weeds from coming back.

Fourth of July Parade

Families marched down Pfeiffer Ranch to celebrate the 4th of July on bicycles, tricycles, scooters, or just feet with Americana music blaring. After the parade, everyone met back



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at the park for donut eating contests, balloon toss (fight!), and awards for best dessert, best dressed (kid and dog!), and best-decorated bike. If you missed it, be sure to mark your calendars for next year. Thanks to Janice Rose and Jeanine Smith for making this event a success.

Fall Social – Combined Picnic and Movie Night

The board has been discussing the possibility of a neighborhood picnic/BBQ and movie night. We are investigating hiring “Big Daddy BBQ” or a similar group to provide the food. We would end the evening with an outdoor movie at the top of Stonehill. If you are interested in this idea, please volunteer and/or offer your input. It will take some planning and coordination to pull this off. Please email Janice Rose @ janrose4@hotmail.com to give your input, express your thoughts or volunteer to help.

2009- 2010 Goals/Budget

Prior to receiving the survey feedback, we adopted new goals and budget for this year. We may adjust them based upon your input. They are listed below for your reference.

1. Fiscal management – Revenue & Expenses
 - a. Increase membership to 113 from 102. Revenue goal of \$9040
 - b. Expense budget of \$9500
 - c. Cash reserves targeted at \$5000
 - d. Surplus at \$854 (No surplus with 103 members)

2. Continue to reinvigorate the social activities/ \$2000
 - a. Hold annual social organizing event
 - b. Continue strong leadership – planning, advice, budget, administration
 - c. Events
 - i. Progressive dinner
 - ii. Family event – picnic & movie night?
 - iii. 4th of July parade & Halloween parade

3. Maintain core services



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- a. Dumpster day/ \$1000
 - b. Landscaping/ \$2500
 - c. Directory/ \$500
 - d. Newsletters
 - e. New neighbor greeting/ \$500
4. Community
- a. Monitor the Boulder Ridge Event Building progress – react accordingly
 - b. Stay connected with the City of SJ on the General Plan update and open space issues
5. Investigate and develop a pro-active website program/ \$500
- a. Blogging & recommended services
 - b. Renewal process/credit card payment
6. Complete landscaping upgrades on Stonehill and Boulder Mountain Way / \$2500

