



HOME

Association of North Central San Mateo

HANCSM - Our Organization Welcomes Home Owners, Renters, Property and Business Owners

Summer 2009

President's Letter

Powerful

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel." (Maya Angelou)

Our neighborhood organization, HANCSM, wants to make us feel powerful, capable of transforming our neighborhood into what we want it to be. Our neighborhood organization reminds us where our strengths lie; our organization encourages us to never, ever, ever give up. With HANCSM we are not a lone voice crying in the dark, but a cohesive group moving toward a defined goal. What is more important to you? Is it the trash and abandoned items on the street? Is it the cars parked on sidewalks that block us from passing? We, those of us who live here, get to decide.

The city, the country, the world---all are going through difficult times right now. Money is tight and citizens are being asked to sacrifice. When our city is facing an \$8 million shortfall, what can one neighborhood like ours do? When there is talk of raising sales and hotel taxes, what can one neighborhood do to help?

Here is the answer. We can stay focused. We can keep our sights on the important things that keep a neighborhood, as well as a city, strong. **Quality of life** is always important, and the time to pursue it is always **RIGHT NOW**. This is not the time to stop calling about blight, noise, public intoxication and overflowing trashcans. If anything, this is the time to intensify. As a city and a nation, we have to know that HOME is a precious concept worth preserving. When the financial emergencies are over, North Central will still be OUR HOME. When the war is over and unemployment returns to normal, North Central will still be our home. When the \$8 million city budget shortfall goes down to zero, we will still be here. We cannot lose focus or set aside our efforts to improve our

PENINSULA



neighborhood because we are distracted. Our neighborhood is here for the long term and it deserves our attention and protection. Along with our phoning, watching and staying informed, we must vote on Nov 3, 2009. We must look for those candidates most likely to support neighborhoods, most likely to help us improve North Central, and vote for them. Misguided candidates that vote for policies that increase the stress on our neighborhood, even by neglect and ignorance, should be avoided. We, more than any one else, know what we need. We, more than anyone else, know what should be eliminated. When we focus on the important community elements: family, home, livability, we are powerful, powerful beyond measure.

Jane Williams

Police Report

Summer has arrived, which means vacations begin, kids are out of school and summer events are in full swing. As a quick reminder, if you are going on vacation please notify your neighbors so they can keep an eye on your residence. Additionally, our volunteer cadets (when they are available and volunteering) will do "safety checks" on the perimeter of your residence while you are away. You can call 522-7710 to request the service, or you can go on line to the City of San Mateo website (www.cityofsanmateo.org) click **departments**; locate **police** and then click on **public downloads** (the form will say "vacation house checks"). You can complete the form online and either mail it back to the police department or drop it off. John Rink (retired police officer) has been brought back on as our Neighborhood Watch Coordinator. He is an excellent resource and has been involved in neighborhood watch for some time. Should you have any questions or requests of the program please call him at 522-7522 x5102. Remember August 4th is National Night Out!! Have a great summer.

*Lt. Ted Gonzales, SMPD
San Mateo Police Department (650) 522-7687
Tgonzales@cityofsanmateo.org*



Blight: Illegal Dumping, Graffiti, Litter

BLIGHT: *The state or result of being blighted or deteriorated; dilapidation; decay; urban blight. Something that impairs growth, withers hopes and ambitions, or impedes progress and prosperity. To have a deleterious effect on; ruin.*

Illegal dumping and litter pose risks to human health and the environment. Litter finds its way into our drains and ends up in our creeks and the bay. Illegally dumped waste can leach into our soil and groundwater.

Illegal dumping and litter not only signals a lack of pride in our neighborhood, but may also be a sign of larger problems in our community, such as overcrowding or illegal housing. Cleaning up illegal dumping and littering also poses a challenge to our city in these days of our current budget crisis and economic distress.

Nationwide, taxpayers are unnecessarily spending over \$200 million dollars each year to pick up litter and illegally dumped waste, which could be properly disposed of and managed in our current waste system. Tax dollars which could be spent elsewhere on either programs for our youth or the elderly.

Why do people litter and illegally dump? Keep America Beautiful, a national litter education and prevention organization has found that people litter for three reasons: 1) They lack a sense of ownership in the community, 2) They believe that someone else in the community will pick up their litter, or 3) The area is already littered.

Littering, dumping and graffiti can also go hand in hand with crime and gang activity. Residents of our neighborhood often wonder how they can effectively combat crime and gangs. Even though law enforcement should be left to our police, vigilant residents are still the most important link in keeping their community safe. When community members notice problems and contact the right community agency, chances of solving that problem are the highest. The most important role you can perform is caring about where you live and making sure blight does not take over. You can do that by being alert, communicating with your neighbors about problems and being aware of which community agency is the best to contact.

When residents stop caring about their communities or are just afraid to do anything about it, blight can overrun a neighborhood like a cancer. When criminals see that a neighborhood has been neglected, they're encouraged to move in and set up shop. If these neglected properties go unreported, they become much more than just eyesores. Rundown vacant buildings give shelter to vagrants, drug dealers and criminals. Likewise, abandoned cars, neglected yards and illegal dumping in the streets gives the impression that residents neglect deteriorates our neighborhood, causing residents to lose faith in their own ability to help.

Simple attention and care on the part of ALL residents can make sure that blight is stopped and doesn't grow to encourage criminal activity. By reporting problems and crimes where you live, you can help prevent crime and improve quality of life.

Our city and police cannot do this alone, we all have to do our part in changing the scenery of North Central.



Illegal Dumping---call Public Works (522-7300)

Graffiti Abatement (522-7161)

Abandoned Vehicles (on Private Property)

Code Enforcement (522-7150)

Abandoned Vehicles (Public Property – on the street)

Police (522-7766)

Zoning Questions (522-7202)

Joanne Bennett

CalTrain Upgrade of Rail Bridges

At the April HANCSM meeting, CalTrain presented plans to upgrade the train bridges at four streets in our neighborhood, and to broaden and raise the train bed between Poplar Street and downtown. Community members were concerned and went to work. As a result, the project has been significantly reworked and will be a better one for our neighborhood and for Caltrain.

Our first concern was the noise from a project that is basically in our back yards (especially at night and on the holiday weekends some work was scheduled on). A second concern was about the proposed removal of screen trees and other plants along the train right of way. It wasn't clear to us exactly which trees and vegetation would be removed, and we weren't clear about the pest (rat) management prior to removal of plants. Third, we were concerned about our safety and street access while all this work was occurring. Last, we wondered if CalTrain had considered whether their plans would work with the newly planned High Speed Rail line destined to run along those same tracks.

Even though CalTrain representatives made an effort to answer our concerns, their answers left us unsatisfied. So two HANCSM board members and others from the community went into action. We pursued issues with CalTrain and the City of San Mateo with the assistance of Carole Groom. We set up a Yahoo group to help get out information. We met with CalTrain representatives to explain our concerns and show them the effect the project would have on us.

We made progress with most of the issues of concern to us, but the High Speed Rail (HSR) turned out to be the one mattered most. With planning in the very early stages, it will be years before requirements for HSR are known. So with its tight budget in mind, CalTrain decided to scale back the project and do only

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Joshua Hugg - Board Member: 579-7369

Karen Jensen - Board Member: 375-8191

Ben Toy - Board Member: (415) 370-8491

Dianne Whitaker - Bd Member: 343-4340

HANCSM E-mail address:
HANCSM@yahoo.com



what is required to reinforce the four bridges for safety. In a May 27 press release CalTrain said, 1) "New foundations will be built under the supports and the bridges will be maintained..."; 2) "The retrofit project does not require the removal of any trees..." 3) "It is anticipated that work on the retrofit project will begin in early 2010. All of the work will be done at the street level, in and around the bridge foundations. The construction will require some partial lane closures."

Stay tuned for more on the bridge project and High Speed Rail.

Karen Jensen

Annual Bayfront Coastal Cleanup Day

Summer is here and that means families and friends are going to be playing along some of the most beautiful spots in our state in larger and larger numbers. **September 19** is the 25th Annual Bayfront Coastal Cleanup Day. The movement towards real solutions to the effects of litter in the environment has begun, and this day is one of the foundations for that movement.

Last year, we set records. Over 73,000 people throughout the State helped out on Coastal Cleanup Day! Those volunteers cleaned over 2,800 miles of California ocean, bay, and creek coastline and removed over 1.6 million pounds of trash---an all-time record for the event! San Mateo County saw an increase of over 1,600 new volunteers, for a total of 3,802 volunteers who helped remove over 41,000 pounds of trash. The City of San Mateo had close to 400 people clean up San Mateo Creek and the Bayfront. We picked up over 2,500 pounds of garbage and recycling.

Help us achieve even more this year. Please join our team. Tell your friends and neighbors to help keep our shorelines clean and safe. The rewards are many. Registration is from 7:30 to 9:00 am and the event is from 9:00 am to Noon at Ryder Park on East 3rd Avenue. There will be a thank you BBQ at noon.

Call 650-522-7346 if you have any questions.

Roxanne Murray

HANCSM AOD Prevention/Building Bridges Update

Recently a couple of new initiatives that target communities in North Central have been gaining steam. Facilitated by the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC), these efforts are intended to promote a safer, healthier community here in North Central San Mateo.

Building Bridges: Headed by Police Chief Susan Manheimer, this program's goal is to work with groups throughout North Central to promote a safe community in San Mateo through better police-public engagement.

Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Prevention Collaborative:

This community-wide collaboration between the City of San Mateo, the County of San Mateo, area nonprofits and motivated members of the public are targeting three areas to promote health and safety for our youth in North Central San Mateo.

Community Capacity for a Healthy Neighborhood –

Youth and families need to feel connected and engaged in their neighborhoods to increase safety, decrease isolation/separation, access community resources, and mobilize for prevention efforts.

Access/Availability – Decreasing access to drugs and alcohol through prevention efforts and policy changes.

Decrease Risk Factors and Increase Protective Factors – Provide increased support (safe places, positive connections, skills and opportunities) for targeted populations of youth and young adults who are at risk.

Both efforts will depend on help from members of North Central in order to be a success. If you are interested in helping with either of these efforts, or know someone who might be, please contact Michelle Vilchez, PCRC, Associate Director at 650-513-0330 or mvilchez@pcrcweb.org

Joshua Hugg

**Please Join HANCSM
Your Membership Counts**

Home Association of North Central San Mateo

JOIN NOW! In issues that affect our area, HANCSM acts as a powerful and unified voice. As a member, you will receive a newsletter, attend informative meetings, and be represented at City and County meetings. You will also have the opportunity to meet your neighbors in a spirit of cooperation and shared interest.

Name: Mr. Ms. Mrs. _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ email: _____ Occupation/Interest: _____

Circle one: Homeowner - Renter - Business Property Owner - Associate Member (outside of North Central)

Do you want to be called prior to each meeting? YES NO

Basic Dues (\$10.00/year/voting member or \$20.00/household; \$25/business) Dues: _____

Donation: _____

Make check payable to **HANCSM**

Mail to: HANCSM, c/o King Center

725 Monte Diablo Ave., San Mateo, CA 94401

TOTAL: _____



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PUBLIC MEETING

**Thursday, July 30, 2009
6:30 - 9 pm**

Gang Activities and Symbols by SM Police Dept.

Update on: City Budget

Ballot proposal to increase taxes
CalTrain, and other projects.

**King Center
Monte Diablo and Fremont**

Light refreshments served.

Your opinions count.

Please be prompt so we can start on time.



HOME

Association of North Central San Mateo
Martin Luther King Center
725 Monte Diablo Ave.
San Mateo, CA 94401

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Community Calendar

July 23 6-8pm	Thursday Music Series at Central Park
July 26 9am-6pm	Festa Italiana
July 30 6:45-9pm	HANCSM General Meeting King Center
July 30 6-8pm	Thursday Music Series at Central Park
Aug. 4	National Night Out
Aug. 6 6-8pm	Last of Music Series at Central Park
Sept. 19, 7:30-Noon	Bay Front/SM Creek cleanup—Ryder Park

Festa

Italiana is an
annual com-
munity fair

benefiting disabled youth and adults. This event raises over \$100,000 annually. Food, crafts (including sidewalk chalk art), music, vintage cars, etc., and a short parade at 9 AM. Location: B St. between Tilton and 2nd Ave. Time: 9 AM to 6 PM. FUN for all ages. Support our community fair.

Public Works: Street resurfacing from August to October: Woodside Way from Peninsula Ave. to Grand Blvd.; Monte Diablo from Humboldt to Grant St.; Claremont Street from 3rd Ave. to 9th Ave.

Tax Increase on November Ballot

Because of a 8 million dollar shortfall, our city council members have recommended a 1/4 % increase in sales tax and 2% increase in hotel occupancy tax to be voted on during the November 3, 2009, election. If approved by voters, the sales tax and hotel occupancy increases for a specific period of time will raise about 4 million dollars. The other 4 million dollar deficit will be eliminated through job attrition, department cuts, and employee give backs.