



# The Grapevine



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>President</b>	Jim Foley
<b>Vice-President</b>	Michael Toback
<b>Secretary</b>	Laurel Smith
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<b>Director</b>	Anna Scicinska
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## VINEYARDS WEBSITE

[www.vineyardsofsaratoga.com](http://www.vineyardsofsaratoga.com)

- Vineyards News
- View monthly newsletter
- HOA Board meeting minutes

Want to receive e-mail alerts? Please e-mail your name and unit number, indicating if you are an owner or tenant to [register@vineyardsofsaratoga.com](mailto:register@vineyardsofsaratoga.com)

## HELPFUL CONTACTS

To report problems with outdoor lights or sprinklers and request repairs please call or e-mail our manager:

**Luis Heredia, Association Manager**

**Community Management Services**

Telephone 408-559-1977

Fax number 408-559-1970

[lheredia@communitymanagement.com](mailto:lheredia@communitymanagement.com)

To report a crime or suspicious behavior to the local Sheriff call 408-299-2311



APR / MAY 2015

## THE NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board meeting is on Thursday May 14th at 7:00pm.

The agenda for all board meetings is posted in advance at the entrance to the Clubhouse. Monthly meetings are open to all homeowners. The 15-20 minute Open Forum session at the start is an opportunity to have any issues heard by the board, association manager, and others present, and to ask questions about any projects or decisions addressed by the board.

Following Open Forum, the meeting is limited to those issues posted on the agenda. Homeowners are welcome and encouraged to stay and observe, but this part of the meeting is closed to owner participation. Minutes of all meetings are posted on the website after they have been approved at the next board meeting.

◆ **SAVE WATER** ◆ **SAVE WATER** ◆ **SAVE WATER** ◆ **SAVE WATER** ◆

See page 2 for updates on Vineyards and statewide water use restrictions.

## OTHER APRIL NEWS

If you have not already done so please fill in and return the occupancy form and parking permit request to CMS. See page 2 for more details.

**Please clean up after yourself when you use our clubhouse, and report any damage, including bad spillages on the carpet, to CMS. Recently the oven door was broken and the carpet tiles near the kitchen were left badly stained – the next users deserve a clean room and fully operational kitchen. Please be neighborly!**

Work will begin shortly on the new fence around the big pool – the installation should take 3 days. Pool heaters will be turned on as soon as the weather warms up sufficiently. Also in April, are scheduled the Spring tree trimming and the second gutter cleaning of the season.

**Reminder to all residents and their guests – skateboarding is not allowed anywhere in the Vineyards. Bicycles should be used on the perimeter road, not on internal pathways.**

Please remember that no new Clubhouse rentals will be accepted for dates after May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The main Clubhouse will be closed during the kitchen renovation scheduled for early June, but poolside bathrooms will be open.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP DUMPSTERS

The large Spring dumpsters have been ordered for 15 – 26<sup>th</sup> May. Please keep all your large unwanted items until then. Twice a year the Vineyards provides larger dumpsters for convenient disposal of unwanted oversized items – old furniture, moving boxes, construction wood, broken plastic toys, picture frames, old closet doors, household items – no paints, oils, computers, tires, toxic or flammable materials please.

## MANDATORY WATER RATIONING

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT STATE OF CALIFORNIA California Governor Jerry Brown recently ordered statewide mandatory water restrictions, to reduce use of potable urban water use by 25%, compared to the amount used in 2013.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT NEWS In February, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced water allocation from the federal system to be half of last year's allocation. Much of the state's water falls as snow in the Sierra Nevada. A full 40% of Santa Clara county's water supply is imported from Sierra Nevada watersheds runoff. This year, according to state surveys the Sierra Nevada snowpack is only 19% of its historical average.

The result of this announcement is that SCVWD will import one third of normal year water supplies. In addition to this the county needs to restore the 80,000 acre-feet of local groundwater reserves used in 2014. There are concerns that groundwater extraction may result in permanent land subsidence and saltwater intrusion, and could impact underground infrastructures, such as sanitary and storm water sewer lines, as well as tidal flooding along the Bay shoreline. Should the groundwater levels continue to decline there will be need for greater conservation.

Each city must pass an ordinance and their goals may not be uniform, but it appears that there is agreement on lawn sprinkling, which will be limited to twice a week throughout Santa Clara County. Further decisions will be taken in May on higher water rates and water use restrictions.

AT THE VINEYARDS Our landscapers are scaling back on watering the lawns and Common Areas. We are continuing to deep water the redwood trees, which have been showing increasing signs of drought related stress. New planting is being done with drought resistant varieties and drip irrigation is being fitted whenever we need to replace any parts of the existing watering infrastructure. As for what individual residents can do, if you see plants near your unit looking a bit wilted, please do give them some water – preferably water that you have saved from washing vegetables or rinsing dishes. Small changes to the way we use domestic water, like taking shorter showers or waiting to run the dishwasher and washing machine with a full load, can save a lot of water daily. We should also look at reprogramming our automated patio watering systems to cut down the frequency of watering.



**More water use reduction programs and conservation tips can be found at [save20gallons.org](http://save20gallons.org).**

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## OCCUPANCY FORMS AND PARKING PERMITS

Under the Davis-Sterling Act HOAs are required to keep a current list of all residents. Every homeowner must complete an Occupancy Form giving names and contact details of household members. Non-resident owners will need to confirm their own details as well as those of their renters and provide a copy of their lease. The form will also register all vehicles so that we can re-introduce parking permit stickers for cars belonging to residents.

This form is available online at the Vineyards of Saratoga website [www.vineyardsofsaratoga.com/forms.htm](http://www.vineyardsofsaratoga.com/forms.htm) where it can be filled in online or printed and filled in by hand. The form will be mailed to those owners who do not obtain it from the website. CMS will issue parking stickers as soon as the relevant information is processed.

**Please bring the completed Occupancy Form to the Board meeting or mail it directly to CMS.**

## WHO NEEDS A PARKING STICKER?

All current residents (owners and renters) need a parking sticker for every vehicle kept at the Vineyards, even if it is usually parked in a garage. Non-resident owners are treated as guests, and not eligible for a parking sticker.

Daytime guests do not require any form of parking sticker. Guests staying overnight or longer should place a card in the windshield with the number of the unit owner's parking permit – to ensure security and privacy **do not** write any names or unit numbers or phone numbers on this card.

Should a car need to be moved for emergency maintenance or access by landscapers, or the owner traced for any other reason, the management company or board need to know whom to contact.

**Please report unauthorized parking (such as HWY 85 car poolers near the main gate) to CMS. Cars parked illegally, in red zones, or generally not in a marked parking space will be ticketed and / or towed at the owners expense.**

## HISTORY OF THE CONDOMINIUM – part 2

Co-operative buildings in the U.S. date back to 1881 in New York, yet they are entirely different to condominiums. Condominium legislation, as it has been adopted in the US, was the brainchild of Keith Romney, a young lawyer in Salt Lake City. Mr. Romney passed away earlier this year, and although you might never have heard of his name, you've certainly heard of his cousin-once-removed Mitt, who ran for President. In 1960 Romney's client was a developer in Salt Lake City who was looking to build a series of apartment buildings in the grounds of an old mansion he had acquired, styled with the tony name Graystone Manor. The development represented a "first" for Salt Lake City, where the only previous option as a homeowner was a single family dwelling, and no legislation existed in the State of Utah to govern such "co-ownership".



*The Jensen Mansion, centerpiece of Graystone Manor*

After studying existing co-op systems in New York and Chicago, Romney presented his client with a different idea; one that would make it possible to subdivide a building into distinct legal parcels within the same structure. In the years that followed, Romney found himself in demand nationally, touring state legislatures as a special consultant to implement similar legislation across the country. The condominium concept that had long been adopted in Europe, starting with Belgium in 1924, was spreading quickly across this continent. Out of the 120 units at Graystone Manor grew a national trend. Following changes to the National Housing Act in 1961, the Federal Housing Administration began insuring mortgages on condominium properties. Growth of condominium buildings continued with 7,000 such individual condo units having been built across the country by the end of 1964. By the end of the decade, that number jumped to 700,000. Today's tally stands at approximately 27-million such units throughout North America and that number is growing.

About one in five Americans live in a Common Interest Development (CID) of some kind. Most condominium and townhome developments, and many newer single-family subdivisions have an HOA. The Homeowners' Association is a formal legal entity, usually created when the development is built. It is created for two main purposes – to maintain common areas and to enforce the CC&Rs. Governing documents, including Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions, are issued to each homeowner. HOAs ensure that the CC&Rs are adhered to, in order to maintain value of the properties involved, and a good quality of life for all residents. Despite the logic behind this, it is not uncommon for residents to find themselves in disputes with other neighbors, or with the HOA, over seemingly minor infractions of the rules. While the HOA's elected board of directors has executive authority over its condominiums, a board will seek frequent legal advice to ensure that it offers a fair solution to matters of discrepancy or dispute, in line with both its own, state and federal rules.

The history of HOAs goes back to the 1960s, when planned communities started popping up everywhere. Several factors contributed to this sudden growth, including a push for more residential development, as well as rising construction costs and less available land. Local governments liked the new planned communities because the developers of a planned community bore the cost of building the cost of streets, parks, and community buildings, and the HOAs took over the cost of maintaining them. Keeping buildings well maintained and neighborhoods well cared for also ensured overall higher property values, which in turn lead to increased revenue from property taxes for local governments. From the point of view of the homeowner, the benefits were as obvious then as they are now: the neighborhood remained clean, every house was properly maintained, and owners had access to well-kept common areas such enticing features such as community pools or parks.

As HOAs have become more common, their CC&Rs have grown more complex. Typically an HOA is incorporated by the developer during the development and sales process, and gradually control and ownership are transferred to the home purchasers upon completion of the project. The original developer then quits membership in the association and has nothing more to do with it. Anyone purchasing a home in an existing housing development with an HOA must become a member – there is no other option. The overall purpose of the HOA is to represent its homeowners. HOAs can be very effective in providing forums for homeowner representation and needs.

HOAs can promote neighborhood harmony and uniformity, offer many benefits to the homeowner, and collectively represents the homeowners for whatever purposes assigned. For example, stipulating what changes, if any, are permitted for the exterior of the buildings. Sometimes the HOA can determine acceptable noise levels. If there are common areas, such as gardens and pools, the members can elect to bring in an outside maintenance company. Conversely, HOAs can sometimes seem to be restrictive and a financial drain. If you want to change the color of your

house or even add a new tree, you may run afoul of association rules. When the HOA undertakes a major capital improvement project, and the membership votes to approve a special assessment, you are left with no choice but to pay your share. If you disagree with some of the rules, it can be very hard to get them changed.

In effect, condo communities are like small towns and the HOA governs the development like a small town. The HOA's powers include imposing fines, organizing activities and providing certain services. It can also levy assessments and force homeowners to pay them. Most HOAs have yearly dues, and can legally impose monetary fines to enforce its decisions. The groups usually appoint a board of directors, which may then elect an association president and other officers. Meetings are typically monthly but can be quarterly, depending on the size of the group.

Overall, most people see their HOA as a positive. According to the Foundation for Community Association Research (FCAR), 70% of residents in CID communities say they are satisfied with their experience. The FCAR's research also found that 76% believe their own HOA rules "protect and enhance" property values. We hope that you are pleased with the general level of maintenance and the improvements that the Vineyards HOA has accomplished in the past few years – please come to monthly meetings, social events, volunteer for a committee – take an active part in OUR community!

Sources: [realtor.com](http://realtor.com), [hoainstitute.com](http://hoainstitute.com), [realestate.findlaw.com](http://realestate.findlaw.com), [condopedia.com](http://condopedia.com), [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org), [real-estate.laws.com](http://real-estate.laws.com)

## SPEED LIMIT

Please SLOW DOWN and drive with caution for your own safety and that of others. The Vineyards is a residential neighborhood – car drivers share use of the perimeter road with cyclists, pedestrians, joggers, children, and pets. Drivers take great care around blind corners! Walkers and joggers have right of way.



## *For a better world, only wash full loads.*

*Who knew that waiting for a full load to do laundry could save 20 gallons of water? Putting off your chores has never been so productive! But the savings don't stop there.*

- Shorten your shower by just 5 minutes and you'll save 15 gallons – every time.
- Fix leaks and save more than 15 gallons a day, per leak.
- Install high efficiency toilets and save 25 gallons a day.

*Small actions can add up to huge water savings. If everyone in your household saved 20 gallons a day we'd save more than 13 billion gallons in Santa Clara County alone.*

*Find more tips and tools at [save20gallons.org](http://save20gallons.org)*



## THE NEWSLETTER AT A GLANCE

### LAST MONTH

#### **Owners complete Vineyards Occupancy Form**

Drivers please observe the speed limit

Big pool railing replacement project

No Clubhouse bookings after May 22nd (kitchen remodel)

### NEXT MONTH

Board meeting – Thursday May 14<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00pm

**Monthly dues increase to \$450 from April 1st**

Pool heating will be turned on in April

Spring dumpsters scheduled May 15<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>

## NEWSLETTER

We welcome all input into our Vineyards newsletter. If you are interested in joining the newsletter committee or contributing to future newsletters please contact Anna Scicinska at [newsletter@vineyardlane.org](mailto:newsletter@vineyardlane.org). Letters and articles from residents will be published in the next newsletter to go to print.

Anna Scicinska, Dave Kadleman, Linda George and Paula Camporaso

