

VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Public Meeting

August 9, 2005

7:00 p.m.

Four Corners Room/Community Center

INTRODUCTION

VRA Board member Ron Bialkowsky led the meeting. The meeting was very well attended. We started by going around the room and introducing ourselves.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Officer Brian Parsley addressed us:

Parking.

- We currently have a big problem with guest parking. Lots of people have two or more cars, and because they park in other guest spots, there is literally no parking left for any guests. To attempt to deal with this problem UCPD will start towing cars after 72 hours of being parked in a guest spot. If residents do have two cars, they cannot park in guest spots. Families with two cars can park along Jackson for less than 72 hours, and during non-school hours they can park in front of Ocean View for less than 72 hours.
- People without cars can rent out their parking spot. Residents with two cars can make any agreement they would like with residents who are renting out their parking spot. This is a potential solution for families with two cars, and a potential money-making opportunity for families who do not own a car.
- If you do not register your car, you may get a notice placed on it by UCPD. If you do not fix the problem then your car may be towed.
- The parking stickers provided by the Village Office should be placed on the left rear bumper.
- In the future Parking & Transit may come and take over some of the parking issues.

Safety.

- We don't generally have a lot of violent crime in Village, but we do have property crime: stolen bikes, broken-into cars. Please do not let yourself become a victim of property crime. Lock everything.
- The Village seems like a very safe place, but the high density of bikes and cars attracts outsiders who come to steal from residents. In addition, the construction in West Village will bring some potential thieves who come to steal scrap building supplies from the construction site.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Section A Beautification.

- There will be a community project to improve Section A on August 26. Picnic tables will be placed around Section A, and large planters will be filled with flowers and herbs. Residents from Section A, East Village, and West Village are invited to participate. Everyone will meet at 10:00 am on Saturday, September 23, in the Community Center café. Refreshments will be served.

Village Festival.

- The Village Fall Festival will take place this year on September 9th. It will be great fun, especially for children. There will be pony rides, face painting, a petting zoo and more!
- There will be a catered, free lunch for all Village residents from new local restaurant Taxi Brusse.

Parent Discussion Group.

- The Village Parent Discussion Group will meet in the Four Corners room in the Community Center on September 6.

Children's Clothing Exchange.

- There will be a children's clothing exchange from 6:30 to 8:30 pm on Wednesday, August 30th in the Four Corners Room in the Community Center. This is a great opportunity to get gently used children's clothing and donate clothes your children have outgrown.
- Bring clean, washed clothing without holes or stains to exchange for others. Ages newborn through teen.

Family Friday.

- Every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month is Family Friday. On these days a family-friendly video will be shown in the Community Center, with free fruit, drinks, and popcorn. Pizza is also available for \$1 per slice. Bring the kids and have a nice evening together!

Partners and Spouses in Transition.

- Moving to the Village is a transition for everyone, particularly for the spouse who is not in school. There are programs that help with parenting skills, but the spouse needs some support too. Former VRA Secretary Esther Wyss-Flamm is trying to start a program dedicated to inspiring creativity and innovation for spouses of students.
- There will be a \$50 registration fee, but the VRA will fund need-based scholarships. More information will be forthcoming.

Mother & Child Support Group.

- This group is open to everyone in the Village. They meet once a month to discuss child-raising issues. Two lactation consultants come to every meeting to offer advice about nursing.

- If you have questions about pregnancy or child-raising, contact the support group through Pepper Black at the Village Office. Support group contact information will be put in the next Villager Newsletter.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tavie Tipton from the Village Office had the following general announcements.

- West Village is now 95% rented. It will be full within the next 8 weeks.
- The sod has been laid in West Village. Please do not step on in for the next month.
- Section A is scheduled to be closed on June 30, 2007. As of yet, there is no clear plan for what will happen to the units.
- As resident asked if faucets outside could be used for watering plants. Unfortunately, no, they cannot. They are locked to keep residents from using them to wash their cars in the Village.
- Car washing is not allowed in the Village because the water drains into a nearby creek.

Walter Baum from the Community Garden had several announcements.

- The Garden is no longer accessible from within the Village – resident gardeners need to walk around the Village and enter the Garden from the soccer fields to the south.
- Any resident who is interested in obtaining a plot in the Community Garden may call Walter at 526-3251. Flyers about the Garden will be circulated to the new units in the next month or two.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Village Family Assistance specialist Dr. Dianne Rush-Woods handed out packets of information about resources available to families in the Village. She explained the packets and answered questions. [These minutes contain links to the information included in the packets.] This information and more can be viewed on the Berkeley Student Parent Association: www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~spa and the Berkeley Parents Network: <http://parents.berkeley.edu>.

Health Insurance

- Insurance is not available through University Health Services for spouses, partners, and children of students.
- U.S. Citizens may qualify for certain services aimed at helping low-income families, such as MediCal and Healthy Families. Only children may become a member of Healthy Families – no adults are covered except for pregnant women. MediCal also does not cover international families except for pregnancies and emergencies for kids.
- Dental care is possible through Student Health Insurance Plans for students, and free dental service is available for families who qualify for MediCal or Healthy Families.

Health Care

- Children's Hospital in Oakland is the best place for emergency treatment of children.

- West Berkeley Family Practice on 6th Street do well-baby care.
- Kiwi Pediatrics is a good pediatrics facility, and is located right next to the Village on San Pablo.
- University Dental on Solano and San Pablo also comes recommended.
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides support for pregnant women, women who are lactating, and kids under 5 years. See <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/> for more information.
- Psychological counseling for children (depression, hyperactivity, etc.) is available at the Tolman Clinic at Tolman Hall. It is staffed by senior faculty and interns and charges according to a sliding pay scale.
- Anne Martin is the contact for Berkeley Mental Health.
- There is much more information about recommended health care providers on the Berkeley Family Network. See <http://parents.berkeley.edu> for more information.

Child care

- *Wheezles and Sneezles* in Building 2 of Section A offer emergency child care for sick children. You can take your sick children there when you have to go to school or work but cannot take your child to a normal child care facility. They have licensed health care practitioners. Fees are paid on a sliding scale according to income. Call (510) 526-7425 for more information.
- *Early Childhood Education Programs* near UC Berkeley campus offers infancy and toddler child care. They are opening a new center, so apply now and get on the waiting list. See <http://www.housing.berkeley.edu/child/families> for more information.
- *Bananas!* is a nonprofit child care referral service that can provide information about child care centers, preschools, nannies, and playgroups. Go to www.bananasinc.org or call (510) 658-7353.

School

- For those who have to enroll children in school, take your Village rental contract to the Albany Unified School District office at 904 Solano Ave. There are three elementary schools in our district. Students are not automatically assigned to Ocean View.
- There is an after school program in the Village for older kids through Albany Unified School District.

Finances

- If you find you have no money or if there is a change in your family status (due to pregnancy, for example), you have the right to go back to the financial aid office and petition for a change in your grant. Go to the undergraduate financial aid office (located in 210 Sproul Hall) and ask to fill out a budget appeal form.
- If you have an emergency, you can apply through the financial aid office for a \$400 loan and then pay it back over the next 3 months.

Safety

- According to law, infants under 20 pounds must ride in rear-facing car seats. Children under 40 pounds must also use a car seat (rear or forward facing). Children under 60 pounds must use a booster seat.

- It is very important that children under 10 years old not be left alone. The Village seems like a very safe place, but there are still dangers here. There was an attempted kidnapping last year. There is also a lot of traffic in the Village, posing dangers for children who may run into the street. Watch out for your own kids and for other kids, and report negligence if you see it occurring. Very young children (ages 9 to 11) should not be the primary babysitters for other kids.

Prepared by:
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