



The Saratogan

Summer/Fall 2013

Traffic Safety Commission Paves Way Toward Safer Streets

Saratoga residents expect a safe community, and that includes the City's streets. But where are residents supposed to turn when they have an idea of how to make Saratoga's streets safer? All roads lead to the Traffic Safety Commission.

With a mission to create safer streets and promote education regarding traffic, bicycle and pedestrian safety, the Commission provides a venue for the public to express concerns regarding traffic safety issues.

Whether it's a concern with drivers speeding down a neighborhood road or a dangerous intersection, the Commission finds solutions to the problems Saratoga residents face in order to create a better quality of life in the City.

Sometimes the solutions are simple and straightforward, such as the call for the construction of a speed hump, the placement of a radar feedback sign or direct enforcement by Sheriff's deputies.

But there are times when the situation calls for deeper study and larger projects to remedy a situation. Such was the case with the improved pedestrian crosswalk at Cox Avenue near the Quito Village Shopping Center.

The project replaced a standard, painted crosswalk with in-pavement warning lights intended to increase pedestrian safety. A speed table was installed, raising the height of the street, making pedestrians more visible to drivers and creating a speed bump.

The seven Commissioners, all appointed to their positions by the City Council, meet every other month to review and assess traffic concerns raised by residents. For more information on the Traffic Safety Commission, visit www.saratoga.ca.us/tsc.



New Raised Crosswalk Near Cox Avenue

Reporting Traffic Safety Concerns

1. Send a detailed letter or email outlining your concerns to the Public Works Department. Send a letter to: City of Saratoga, Public Works, 13777 Fruitvale Ave., Saratoga, CA 95070. You can also email Mainini Cabute at mcabute@saratoga.ca.us.
2. If the safety concern is to be reviewed by the Traffic Safety Commission, it will be placed on the next available agenda and you will be notified as to the date, time and place.
3. Commissioners and a traffic engineer will review the submitted letter or email, visit the site and perform any studies needed. The traffic engineer will explain the review's findings at the scheduled meeting.
4. If immediate action is required, or the Commission recommends a simple solution, City staff will act on the request and the process will be concluded. If a solution is proposed that will affect a neighborhood, you may be asked to gather neighborhood support in order to continue the process. Additional time may be needed if it is determined that a larger project needs to go through the City's Capital Improvement Project process.

What To Do When Ants Attack? Fight Back Without Harsh Chemicals

Have you ever woken up to find that ants have invaded your kitchen? Studies show that West Valley residents have trouble with ants during summer droughts and winter rainstorms. When this happens, people often end up using strong pesticides.

Although some of the stronger pesticides have been banned, substitute pesticides are still showing up in waterways at levels that can harm aquatic life. The good news is that there are ways to control ants without using these toxic chemicals. Here's a quick and safe fix for your next ant emergency:

- Find out what the ants are after (usually food) and where they're getting into the house.
- Before removing food that's attracting the ants, clean up lines of ants with soapy water, vinegar or cleaning spray. Wipe the area well to destroy the "scent trails" that ants leave for their nest-mates to follow.
- Block their entry point temporarily with a smear of petroleum jelly or piece of tape. Use silicon caulk to permanently close entry points.
- Place a bait station along the ant trail. Remove the bait station when the ants have disappeared so you don't attract more ants into the house.



"Shelf Talker" Fact Sheets

For more information, and fact sheets on ants and other pests, visit www.mywatershedwatch.org. Fact sheets can also be picked up at local garden and hardware stores participating in the "Our Water, Our World" program. While visiting the stores, look for a "shelf talker" label, which highlights less toxic products.

Local participating stores include: Orchard Supply Hardware, 5365 Prospect Road in San Jose; Summer Winds Nursery, 1491 S. DeAnza Blvd., and Yamagami's Nursery, 1361 S. DeAnza Blvd., in Cupertino; and Ace Hardware, 15300 Los Gatos Blvd. in Los Gatos.

Keep Your Identity Safe With These Tips from Captain Ken Binder

Saratoga is one of the safest cities in the Bay Area and residents are very good at doing their part to keep trouble at bay. Although identity theft statistics are relatively low in Saratoga compared to national numbers, below are some tips for residents from the Sheriff's Office to further prevent identity theft:

- Don't carry your social security card in your wallet.
 - Don't give out personal information to banks, stores or government agencies—or those pretending to be—over the phone or through email unless you've made contact first.
 - Shred or tear up papers with personal information before you throw them away.
 - Protect your personal information on your home computer by using strong passwords with at least eight characters, including a combination of letters, numbers and symbols. Use firewall, virus and spyware protection software that you update regularly.
 - Open your credit card bills and bank statements right away, and check carefully for any unauthorized charges or withdrawals and report them immediately.
 - Ask questions whenever you are asked for personal information that seems inappropriate for the transaction. Ask how the information will be used, if it will be shared and how it will be protected. If you're not satisfied with the answers, consider going somewhere else.
 - Monitor your credit history by requesting one free credit report each year from each of the three national credit bureaus: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion.
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Former Saratoga Mayor Don Wolfe

Giving Back to His Community

Former Saratoga Mayor and longtime resident Don Wolfe spent much of his time giving back to the community that he loved. He volunteered for non-profits, was an elected official and lectured at local schools. Don passed away on June 18. He was 79.

Don was sworn in as a Councilman on June 28, 1994, alongside fellow residents Paul Jacobs and Gillian Moran. All would become Mayors, with Don taking his seat as Mayor on December 3, 1997. His term as a Councilman and Mayor ended on December 1, 1998.

He was appointed to the City's Planning Commission before being elected to the Council. After serving his term as Mayor, Don was then elected to the West Valley-Mission Community College District's Board of Trustees. He also served on Goodwill Industries of Silicon Valley's Board of Directors, co-hosted the community television program *Issues Today* and served as president of his parish's council.

More Safety and Beautification Upgrades Coming To The Village

The City of Saratoga is always attempting to improve its infrastructure in order to create a safer, more aesthetically pleasing and healthier community. And that's just what the current Village Pedestrian Enhancement Plan project aims to bring to Saratoga.

The first phase of construction began in June 2010 and added pedestrian bulb-outs, enhanced crosswalks, bicycle racks and benches near Third and Fourth Streets. This phase will include similar improvements near the Highway 9 Spur and Fifth Street. Construction for the second phase is expected to begin this fall with a break during the holiday season. This phase also includes the addition of way-finding signs, which will point visitors to some of Saratoga's most note-worthy destinations, such as the History Museum, Hakone Gardens and Villa Montalvo.



Additionally, the project will upgrade Blaney Plaza. There will be a new parking stall put in at the plaza, decorative concrete paving at the street, landscaping, wood-split rail fence at the north section of the plaza, new enhanced light poles and upgraded the electrical infrastructure. Funding will come from a \$776,100 Federal grant and \$315,666 in matching funds from the City.

These improvements make pedestrians more visible to drivers and consequently make the Village a safer place to walk. The upgrades also enhance a guest's experience, with the addition of directional signage, benches and other visual improvements. Overall, the project will increase the walkability of the Village.

Upcoming Community Events

- Sun., Aug. 11th Foodie Fun on the Run 4 p.m. at Alameda Family Funeral
- Fri., Aug. 16th Saratoga at the Movies 8 p.m. at El Quito Park
- Sun., Aug. 18th Bollywood Dance Party 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Big Basin Way
- Sat., Sept. 28th Heritage Day 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Big Basin Way

Recycle Used Household Alkaline Batteries and “Pre-Kitchen” Fruits and Vegetables

Recycling has become second nature to Saratoga residents. Plastics, paper, glass and yard clippings are just a few examples of what no longer need to be sent to landfills.

Now residents have the option to recycle household batteries curbside through West Valley Collection and Recycling. Residents are asked to place used household alkaline batteries in a clear, sealed plastic bag on the top of their recycling carts.

“Pre-kitchen” fruits and vegetables, meaning those from your garden or orchard, can now be placed in the yard trimmings carts. Examples of pre-kitchen items include apples that drop on the ground from a tree in or tomatoes that are still on the plant when they’re pulled out of the ground.

For more information, visit www.westvalleyrecycles.com.



Ask Our Staff

Have a question? Send your question(s) to bbabcock@saratoga.ca.us or (408) 868-1275.

Dear City Staff,

I heard that the City is in the process of creating a vision for the Saratoga Quarry Park. I was wondering how I could get involved?

Quarry Loving Quincy



Dear Quincy,

Thank you for your interest. The City is working on a Master Plan for the property and is seeking resident input. The first community workshop was held in July. There will be a second workshop in September. Visit www.saratoga.ca.us/quarry for more information.

Iveta Harvancik, Senior Engineer

Dear City Staff,

I’ve noticed some people allowing their dogs to roam off-leash in Saratoga. Are dogs allowed off-leash in the City?

Barking Mad Bobby



Dear Bobby,

No, dogs are not allowed off-leash in the City. Dogs must be kept on a leash that is no more than 6 feet in length. The City contracts its animal control services with San Jose Animal Care and Services. If you see a dog off-leash, contact them at 408.794.7297.

James Lindsay, Community Development Director



To learn more about *The Saratogan*, make comments, suggest story ideas, or include events in the Events section, contact Brian Babcock at bbabcock@saratoga.ca.us or 408.868.1275. You can also find *The Saratogan* online and sign up for email alerts at www.saratoga.ca.us/saratogan.