

May 7, 2015



YEAGER TO HOST BIKING ENERGIZER STATION ON MAY 14

Thursday, May 14 is National Bike to Work Day. Every Bike to Work Day, I sponsor an energizer station near the main entrance of the County Government Center, located at 70 W. Hedding Street in San Jose. This year, our station will be situated on the corner of W. Hedding Street and N. First Street.

From 6 a.m. until 9:30 a.m., we will be providing water, apples, and bananas to riders passing by. We will also be offering a number of free bike-related goodies, such as Bay Area BikeShare 24-hour passes, VTA BikeWays maps, workout towels, shoe wallets, tote bags, safety materials, bike lights, and mini Clif Bars. I would like to acknowledge the various organizations who have donated materials and resources to our station, including Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, Valley Health Plan, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers Local 21, and Valley Transit Authority.

Energizer stations provide a great opportunity for riders to take a break, pick up healthy snacks and goodies, and meet fellow cyclists. I would love for you stop by my station on your morning commute. For a full map of all the energizer stations in the County, visit www.bikesiliconvalley.org/btwd2015/energizer-stations/.

National Bike to Work Day is a part of Bike Month. Every May, we encourage residents to try bicycling as a fun and sustainable alternative to driving. In celebration of Bike Month, Bay Area BikeShare is offering discount passes, free urban bicycling classes, and more through the end of May. Visit www.bayareabikeshare.com to find your nearest BikeShare station, or to sign up for an upcoming class.

On May 14, join me and thousands of commuters by ditching your car and hopping on your bicycle. I look forward to seeing you out there. As always, I encourage you to contact my office if you have any concerns or are interested in additional information. You can reach me at (408) 299-5040 or via e-mail at Supervisor.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org.



At the May 5th Board of Supervisors meeting, I was happy to present a commendation to Corinne Winter. Corinne is the outgoing Executive Director of Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition. Corinne helped greatly expand the role of cycling in our community during her 10 years with the organization. Among her many accomplishments was helping expand the popularity of Bike to Work Day in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. Under her leadership, the event grew from 3,600 riders and 57 energizer stations in 2004 to 33,000 riders and 123 energizer stations in 2014..

CALTRAIN ADDS EXTRA CARS ON MAY 11

In my 14 years as a member of the Caltrain Board of Directors, I have always strived to maximize ridership while ensuring that passengers have a safe, comfortable ride. Caltrain is now more popular than ever, with more than 61,000 average weekday riders during the peak season. In response to this growing demand, Caltrain is adding an extra car to all Bombardier train sets currently in operation beginning Monday, May 11.

Caltrain has experienced significant increases in monthly ridership over the past four years, putting pressure on the available capacity of its train sets. In response to overcrowding on many of its peak hour trains, the Caltrain Board voted to purchase 16 used rail cars earlier this year. After four of those cars were put into service for testing, the remaining twelve will be deployed on Monday.

The extra cars will each provide an additional 150 seats and increased standing room. The six-car trains will be assigned to the most popular schedules, and will run during all times of the day. These additions will prove particularly valuable during the peak hour commute, when trains are often at or near maximum capacity. More information and a list of schedules can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/Caltrain-Six-Car-Trains>.

Caltrain is also converting a number of the new cars to accommodate onboard bicycle storage. Following the completion of this project, Caltrain will add a third bike car to all the Bombardier train sets. This will provide each train set with space for 72 bikes, allowing more riders to use Caltrain as a means of mixed-mode commuting.

On related note, Caltrain is seeking volunteers for its Citizens Advisory Committee. The Citizens Advisory Committee is composed of nine community members, three residents each from Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco Counties. The Committee advises the Caltrain Board about the needs of current and potential rail customers. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:40 p.m. at the Caltrain headquarters at 1250 San Carlos Avenue, about one block from the San Carlos Caltrain Station. If you are interested, please fill out an application by May 29 at <http://tinyurl.com/caltraincac>.

CAMPBELL BOY BREAKS WORLD RECORD IN HALF MARATHON



At the May 5 Board of Supervisors meeting, I was proud to present a commendation to Elliot Daniels. Elliot is a ten-year-old Campbell native and an avid long-distance runner. Elliot has running in his blood. He comes from a family of accomplished runners, many with medals and records to their name. At the meeting, Elliot was joined by his father, Brian.

Elliot has only been running competitively for one year, but has already ran nearly 30 races and over 1,500 miles. He trains nearly every day, often for more than two hours at time. On March 22, Elliot competed in the Oakland Running Festival. There he ran a half-marathon in 1 hour, 29 minutes, and 14 seconds, setting a new world record for his age group. Elliot shows us that with lots of hard work, dedication, and talent, young people in Santa Clara County can accomplish anything.

NATIONAL URBAN POLICY PUBLICATION COVERS YEAGER INITIATIVE

In February, I put forth a proposal to create an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone in Santa Clara County. Under a recent state law, local governments can offer tax breaks to urban property owners who transform vacant or blighted lots into urban farms or community gardens. Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones have the potential to bring healthy food into neighborhoods where access to fresh produce is often lacking. They can also help reduce blight while expanding economic opportunities.

Last month, I was interviewed by a writer from Next City about our efforts. Next City is a nonprofit organization with a mission to inspire social, economic and environmental change in cities. It provides daily online coverage of the leaders, policies and innovations driving progress in metropolitan regions across the world.

I am excited to share Next City's coverage of Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones with you. You can also access the article online at <http://nextcity.org/daily/entry/urban-farming-silicon-valley-california-bill-tax-break>.

Silicon Valley Tech Geeks' Newest Neighbor? The Urban Farmer

By Rachel Kaufman

April 27, 2015

San Jose and Santa Clara County were once part of the "Valley of Heart's Delight," a verdant paradise filled with orchards and flowers.

That all changed as San Jose began to grow (its population increased from under 100,000 in 1950 to over 400,000 in 1970). Not to mention a couple of guys named Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard whose little company started in a garage in Palo Alto. Santa Clara County was never the same.

It's not surprising then that Santa Clara County may be the first county in California to take advantage of a new statewide law allowing counties and cities to encourage urban agriculture through tax incentives to landowners. Two county supervisors, Ken Yeager and Mike Wasserman, passed the proposal on for study in February, but the measure is expected to be a shoo-in, Yeager says.

"This is a great idea, and it doesn't really cost you [the county] much. You lose a little bit of property [tax] revenue, but not anything significant."

The statewide bill, AB 551, allows counties and cities to provide tax breaks for landowners who use vacant lots from .1 acre to three acres in size for agriculture. The end user could be a hobbyist farmer, a for-profit farm, or a nonprofit working to get fruits and vegetables into the hands of low-income community members.

Many of those parcels are vacant simply because a developer has purchased them and is waiting for market conditions or city approval to build whatever is planned for that site. Why not turn them over to farmers in the meantime?

It seems perhaps counterintuitive that a region known mostly for its digital products — Google, Facebook — would spawn a generation that wants to work with its hands, but that's what's happened. "My sense is," Yeager says, "it just brings a lot of personal satisfaction to young people who really want to make this kind of investment in their community."

It could also be a boon for the county's low-income residents. While San Jose has one of the highest median incomes in the U.S. for any large city, there are still thousands of families living in food deserts and/or under the poverty line. "We really have to do better in those areas," Yeager says.

Santa Clara County's ordinance would affect only the unincorporated lands in the county, but Yeager notes that cities within the county would then be free to pass their own version of the ordinance, and city council members from the county's 15 cities have already expressed interest.

One person who's very into the idea is Zach Lewis, executive director of a nonprofit called Garden to Table. Garden to Table, which runs a one-acre farm in downtown San Jose and a number of other projects related to urban food systems, studied what would happen if San Jose — which is now the 10th-largest city in the U.S. — implemented AB 551. The upshot: The city and a few surrounding unincorporated areas have 370 acres of vacant land that could be turned into farms.

"Prior to [this ordinance], there was really no incentive for the developer to give that land up," even for a temporary period of a few years. "Unless they're a nice person," Lewis says. And with the real estate market in Silicon Valley the way it is ("Good lord," is the way Lewis put it), a little financial incentive can't hurt. "If we know [a developer] isn't going to build for five years, why not turn it over to an urban ag organization to do something in the meantime?"

Lewis says one challenge urban farmers will have to overcome is the potential of backlash once a developer really does decide to build — even if that means ripping up the greenhouses and raised beds that neighbors have come to take for granted. "We want to be pretty transparent," he says. "These are temporary projects, but they can do a lot of good in the short term."

He should know. While writing his master's thesis on urban agriculture on vacant lots, he snagged an interview with Barry Swenson, one of the largest real estate owners in the Valley. "He's like, 'I'm not doing anything with that land for the next 10 years. You can have it.' And that's literally why my nonprofit exists."

COUNTY COMMISSIONS RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

The County has a number of commissions on a variety of topics. Each commission is made up of County residents who volunteer their time. The commissions serve as advisory bodies to the Board of Supervisors and link the Board to different communities of interest.

Currently, there are a number of positions open for appointment from District Four, including:

- Advisory Commission on Consumer Affairs
- Airports Commission
- Board of Plumbing Examiners
- Certification Appeals Board
- Citizens' Oversight Committee for Measure A (2008)
- Code Enforcement Appeals Board
- Commission on Equal Access and Employment Opportunity
- County of Santa Clara Moscow Sister-County Commission
- Health Advisory Commission
- Historical Heritage Commission
- Hsinchu County, Taiwan, Republic of China Sister-County Commission
- Human Relations Commission
- Province of Florence, Italy Sister-County Commission
- Senior Care Commission
- Youth Task Force

To learn more about County Commissions and fill out an application, go to <http://www.sccgov.org/sites/bos/bnc/Pages/default.aspx>. To learn more about the required qualifications for vacant positions, take the Quick Link for “Current Vacancies on Boards & Commissions.” If you have any questions, contact Michelle Collins in my office at (408) 299-5040 or michelle.collins@bos.sccgov.org.

COUNTY HOSTS SMALL BUSINESS SUMMIT

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors have proclaimed the week of May 25-29 as Small Business Week. This proclamation honors the entrepreneurial spirit of residents, and the vital role that small businesses play in our communities and our economy. In conjunction with Small Business Week, the County is encouraging small business owners and employees to attend the Second Annual Small Business Summit.

This year’s Small Business Summit is sponsored by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the State Board of Equalization. This free half-day workshop offers panel discussions, tools and resources, access to business capital, and networking opportunities for motivated residents involved in small businesses. This is a great opportunity for prospective owners to gain valuable insight on starting a small business, and for current owners to keep their businesses growing and thriving in today’s economic environment.

The Small Business Summit will take place on Tuesday, May 26 from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the County Government Center, located at 70 W. Hedding in San Jose. To register or for more information, visit www.eventbrite.com/e/2nd-annual-santa-clara-county-small-business-summit-tickets-16708734274.

STARTUP CUP OFFERS HELP TO ASPIRING NEW BUSINESSES

The County’s Asset and Economic Development Office is supporting an innovative competition called the Silicon Valley StartUp Cup. The StartUp Cup is a business model competition designed to mentor local entrepreneurs with new business ideas. It is open to all local residents with any type of business idea.

There is a significant difference between the StartUp Cup and other business-plan competitions. The StartUp Cup is designed to help the entrepreneurs with the best ideas get their businesses launched. The program includes hours of coaching and feedback from judges at no cost to the participants.

Entrepreneurs who compete in the StartUp Cup are rewarded for turning their idea into a viable business model, going to market quickly, testing assumptions, and modifying their business model as they learn what drives customers and revenue. Participating entrepreneurs do not have to be accounting wizards or experts at creating polished documents. Instead, what they lack in experience, they make up for in passion and dedication to achieve their dream.

The competition is open to all participants who have an original idea for a business model that is in the conception phase up to being in operation for five years. Applicants need not be based in, but they must agree to establish or expand business operations in, Santa Clara County if they win.

Judges will review submitted business models and select those eligible for entrance to the competition. The winning business model may receive strategic partner support, prize money, and introductions to additional funding sources. Additional prizes may be awarded to other entrants.

Entries for the contest will be accepted through Friday, May 15. To learn more about the contest, visit <http://siliconvalley.startupcup.com/>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Stamp Out Hunger

What: The National Association of Letter Carriers encourages residents to participate in its annual national food drive. Participants are asked to leave food donations in a bag in front of their residences for mail carriers to pick up. All donations will help provide assistance to Americans who are struggling with hunger.

When: Saturday, May 9

Where: Various Locations

More Information: Call 408-357-7452.

Friends of the Library Book Sale

What: Thousands of new, near-new, used, and discarded books are for sale at bargain prices. All proceeds benefit the Campbell Library.

When: Saturday, May 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: Campbell Library, 77 Harrison Avenue

More Information: Call 408-866-1991.

Armed Forces Day Run/Walk and Fun Fest

What: The Veterans Support Services Agency presents a day of family fun in honor of Armed Forces Day. In the morning there will be a 5K run as well as a 1 mile walk, with award categories for each. After the race, the Family Fun Fest will begin, offering live music, a classic car display, local artists, food, and more. Pre-registration is required. Organizers are offering \$5 off the registration price with the code "newsletter."

When: Saturday, May 16 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Where: Lake Cunningham Park, 2305 S. White Road, San Jose

More information: Visit www.vssainc.org/afd/.

Prevent Obesity 5k Run/Walk

What: MED-X Sports and Fitness Center in Campbell is hosting the Fourth Annual Prevent Obesity 5k Run and Walk. This event is a fun, healthy way to engage with the community. All proceeds will benefit the Campbell Union School District and the Child Obesity Prevention Association. The cost is \$30 for teens, \$40 for adults, and \$150 for teams of five people. Children ages 12 and under are free. Online signups are recommended, as the prices go up on the day of the event. Pre-registration begins at 7 a.m. on the morning of the event.

When: Sunday, May 17 at 9 a.m.

Where: Campbell Park, Gilman Avenue at Campbell Ave, Campbell

More Information: Visit www.preventobesity5k.org or email info@fitmedx.com.

Drought Survival 101: Keeping Your Garden Alive

What: The Campbell Library invites residents to learn how to maintain a healthy garden under increasingly severe drought conditions. Join Master Gardener Lisa Strand for a talk on getting the most out of the water you use in the garden. Topics include water-wise cultural practices, irrigation techniques, and sheet mulching.

When: Tuesday, May 26 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Where: Campbell Library, 77 Harrison Ave.

More Information: Call 408-866-1991.

This is an informative newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on issues that I am working on, local updates, events in District 4, and County resources. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and put the word "remove" in the body of the email. To receive a text-only version of the newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and put the words "text only" in the body of the email. To change the email address where you receive your newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and indicate the old and new email addresses in the body of the email. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send an e-mail to supervisor.yeager@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: "Add."