

REASONS FOR RETAINING THE SANTA CLARA COUNTY UC AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER

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January 3, 2003

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1. HISTORY OF THE UC AG CENTER

It was sad to walk for the last time on one of the Valley's sacred spaces, the 82 year old Santa Clara County University of California Agricultural Research and Extension Center (hereafter called the Center). This historical space is being sold by the State to partially pay for the State deficit. We will lose 17 acres of open space in a part of the Valley where there are no parks; we will also lose six researchers who have experience with our soil, climate, and community needs and a center to educate us about our land. If the Center closes or is not replaced, it is doubtful if these researchers will return to help us understand the land on which we live.

The Center is adjacent to some of the Valley's largest and most popular shopping malls, Valley Fair and the controversial Santana Row. It is also adjacent to a neighborhood with an abundance of commercial traffic. The Center serves the Bay Area and the Central Coast and will be permanently closed in December. The closest Center will then be Hopland in Mendocino County, which has different climate and soil conditions than ours. Even the rich agriculture lands in Salinas Valley, which is where most of our local food is grown, will need to use either the Visalia Center, which is south of Fresno, or the Hopland Center for its research and education needs. It is unlikely these faraway places will furnish the research our local farmers need, given the different soils, climate, and culture. Also, the farmers around these distant centers will probably not want the research taken away from their needs. The State has no plans for a replacement facility. The original sale date of the property was June 2003, but recently the State has pushed the property's sale back to January 2003, a time when the public is too busy to notice and get involved.

Following are some of the things I saw as I walked on the Center's unique land despite the fact that most of the staff had already left and the State had moved most of the inventory and equipment to other centers; researchers who lived in the community and

loved the land; hundreds of varieties of tomatoes being studied to determine the best ones for our farmers; empty office and research buildings; greenhouses with only a few plants in them; abandoned equipment like tractors; hundreds of bags of seeds saved for future experiments; rows of experimental drought lawns some soft and pleasant to sit on, an attribute currently missing in our drought lawns; varieties of herbs which looked much healthier than anything I've seen in stores including in organic and in farmers' markets; varieties of trees which I'm sure are the largest of their species in the valley and some which are not yet available for our gardens; fields of corn which are being grown for experimental seed; round seedless watermelons which are far superior to the ones sold in grocery stores; experimental Adameni vegetable soy beans, which are uncommon and expensive. The researcher who has been experimenting with them gave me a bag of these Adameni soybeans. He explained that they were high in nutrition and protein, and have been eaten in China for over 4,000 years, although the seed source is not yet available to local farmers. The cooking preparation was easy: I boiled them with salt and ate them with vegetables and in salads. They had a wonderful taste like nothing I'd ever had. What a joy to eat food that should be grown and sold to the public for health and grown with efficient land use. We are allowing the land and people that would have made such ideas happen slip away. Food value and efficient land use will soon be gone.

The superintendent of the Center, Zak Mousli, informed me about some of the many ways the Center has contributed to our lives. In 1928, when the Center was founded, it was called the Deciduous Fruit Field Station. Many studies were conducted before introducing the best possible varieties of fruit trees and grapes to our Valley. The Center was a major stimulus to create one of the most productive commercial orchard valleys in the world, which included being the world's largest grower of prunes. This was the time when the Valley was called "The Valley of Heart's Delight" and San Jose was called "The Garden City." Since this is the only research station on California's north central coast, much research has been done with strawberries, vegetables, and garlic collected from all over the world. The best varieties were selected for farmers from the Bay Area south to Santa Barbara. The varieties of food available in our grocery stores today have likely been selected by this Center. As the Valley became more urbanized, the Center became the leader of the other nine Centers in tackling the rural/urban interface issues. For example, Center researcher Larry Costello was recently working on an unfinished street tree and root zone research project needed by city governments and all urban dwellers to reduce the huge costs of root penetration into streets, sidewalks, utilities, and buildings foundations. And the City of San Jose gave a grant to the Center to work on a compost and vermicompost (worm) project. As the region developed more ethnic diversity, the Center began introducing growers with new ethnic food options. As droughts came, the world-famous scientist, Dr. Ali Harwandi, studied turf varieties that needed less water. Furthermore, the region's weather station has been on this site for more than 70 years. It has been used to keep a history of weather patterns as well as to connect to hundreds of computerized irrigation systems designed to reduce consumption. As the population grew, Master Gardeners trained at the Center to answer the urban homeowner questions. On an educational level, each year the Center organized six field days with lectures and demonstrations for growers and professionals. Also, there was

one annual public open house where the Center's five researchers reported their findings and were available for questions.

2. CURRENT POLITICAL STATUS OF THE CENTER

The State of California has a 21 billion dollar deficit and needs money to reduce this deficit. The University of California, which operates ten (soon to be nine) Agricultural Research and Extension Centers, as well as the many university campuses, must moderate its budget. Without the taxpayers' approval, the State has opted to sell the seventeen acres to help pay for its deficits. This decision will reduce the quality of life for all. The sale of the land will bring about \$50 million to the State and return almost nothing to the community. To put this amount in perspective, this \$50 million is the cost of the recent fire damage in Santana Row just one block away. The State's "deal" with the University of California, which manages the Center, is that U.C. will receive an additional two million dollars per year in exchange for losing the Center. Since the land is in the City of Santa Clara, Santa Clara will receive annual property tax revenues when the land is developed. One staff person, a farm advisor, remains in the region. The region will lose seventeen acres of open space; six fewer research staff which totals \$600,000 annually; buildings and equipment; a center to educate professionals and the public about urban sustainability issues; the health and diversity of our food; and research and demonstration areas for our specific agricultural/horticultural community needs. We, and the scientific community as a whole, will lose the specialized research carried out by the Center's valuable staff. Without a local Center, farmers must do their own research. This lack will continue to erode the quality and health of our lives and the lives of our children and grandchildren. The other centers are beginning to face the same urbanization problems as ours. However, our Center has broken new ground in dealing with California's compelling urban needs because it has the longest history with adjacent urbanization. It is distressing to contemplate the state of our indifference and blindness as we silently allow this historically significant public land to slip away into housing and/or commercial use.

3. WHAT THE CENTER COULD DO (AND IS NOT YET DOING)

The Center has the potential to lift our community into one of the most progressive and environmentally healthy communities in the country. The following are research, ideas, and demonstrations that the Center could provide in addition to the work it is already doing. No place is doing these things for our specific microclimate. Read it with the perspective that the number one leisure activity in the U.S. is gardening, California feeds one-quarter of the nation, and agriculture is California's largest industry.

1. Native and drought plants for small gardens and housing developments with examples of their combinations and uses.
2. Best plants to grow in small spaces for healthy food, including dwarf fruit trees.
3. Soil health, micro-organism activity in soil and how these organisms can create a system for healthy plants and food
4. Plants that attract native birds and butterflies. Encourage their use in public and private outdoor spaces.

5. Native plants that grew in the valley and along streambeds before white men arrived. How to eliminate the weed species that have eliminated most of our native grass and wildflower fields.
6. Protect and understand our heritage gardens and orchards. Work with the San Jose Historical Society and the Historic American Landscapes Organization so that our historic gardens and orchards will have a permanent historical status and the protection that comes with this status. Research the unique contributions made by this Valley regarding plants (e.g., the world's largest prune grower was Santa Clara Valley).
7. Develop curriculum on gardens for schools with a particular emphasis on the Kindergarten (which literally means "children's garden"). Continue to develop the California State Department of Education theme "a garden for every school."
8. Develop garden programs for the handicapped, prisons, the blind, the mentally disabled, after-school programs, senior citizens, college campuses, and help organizations and community centers create gardens for such people.
9. Encourage by example sustainable and ecological landscape ideas for the community including the governmental programs that relate to the land. Some ideas would include perforated paving, on-site drainage retention, rainwater holding tanks, solar ideas, composting, least toxic approaches to maintenance, and "deer-proofing" ideas for farms and gardens.
10. Street and parking lot trees recommended for various needs and a place to show people all street tree possibilities. Studies on their root systems and pruning techniques are necessary.
11. Collections of trees and shrubs that would be good garden plants with examples of how to use them in various styles of gardens.
12. Cultural plant collections and garden styles so that people from different cultures can experience and then purchase the plants they need for food and enjoyment.
13. Freeway and public median strip planting suggestions.
14. Quiet, peaceful, and intimate garden spaces so people who don't have such a space can experience them and calm their life. Others can use them as an example to emulate.
15. Examples of plants which should not be used, such as poisonous plants, heavy pollinator plants not good for people with asthma, trees too large for small gardens, invasive plants, and plants with massive root systems which break up paving or take over an area so no other plants can grow.
16. Varieties of good cut flower plants for gardens. Colorful flowers that need little water and maintenance to embellish our public spaces. Good examples of pot and window box plantings for those who have no garden space.
17. Develop a horticulture, garden design, and agricultural library for private and public urban gardens and farms to be used by homeowners, professionals, and governmental organizations. As part of the library there should be an auditorium where talks can be given on urban subjects relating to plants, design and sustainable/ecological coordination. At least one full-time librarian and one full-time community outreach coordinator is necessary for this.
18. A permanent facility for the training and continuing education for the region's Master Gardeners, and the FFA programs for young people and their teachers.

These are outreach programs that have no central facility to support their valuable contributions to our region. Current facilities are scattered and, therefore, weak.

4. THE SAN JOSE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY'S LACK OF ECOLOGICAL PLANNING

The same week, one mile away from the Center at the downtown San Jose Convention Center, I attended tours and lectures on San Jose's new development. The program was part of the American Society of Landscape Architects' (ASLA) Annual Meeting. There I was able to see how the Agency's staff wants the nation's professionals to perceive their work. I also observed that most of the Agency staff and their consultants are from other parts of the country and are very young. They appear to be attempting to give San Jose residents a more correct understanding of "City" without understanding San Jose's natural and cultural history. They also come here because, unlike many other cities, San Jose has opportunities not found in most other American cities... money, growth, and size. San Jose is the nation's 10th largest city and the second largest in California. It has a one billion dollar annual budget, 7,000 employees and includes 180 square miles with a very irregularly shaped perimeter. The Agency for the past 20 years has had a budget of two billion dollars, one of the largest redevelopment budgets in the country. The Agency prides itself on its ability "to act autonomously" and "eliminate delays so they can move quickly." Its two priorities appear to be building new housing and revitalizing downtown San Jose.

After spending two days touring their projects and one day listening to several of their lecturers, I came to the conclusion that the Agency's current consultants and staff could benefit greatly by the urban horticulture/sustainable research, education and demonstrations which the Center has been providing for 82 years. Consultants for the Guadalupe River Parkway's (hereafter called the River) downtown plans and plazas read like a Who's Who of the most prestigious San Francisco landscape architecture firms. Four of these firms did four different Master Plans for the River and most of these plans have not been used. Despite the huge consulting fees for these four plans, it was clear as I walked along the completed portions of the River that its parks and plazas have not incorporated any of our valuable native vegetation and historical landscape traditions. The only native plant along the River's edge is the Cottonwood tree, whose roots have invaded everywhere. Consequently, other native trees and shrubs such as Sycamore, Box Elder, Oaks, Bigleaf Maple, Elderberry and many native shrubs that should be growing along the River are not. The Honeylocust tree, a major East Coast urban tree that dominates eastern plazas and streets, has been planted by the Agency on the top flat portions of the River bank. These two trees are not the native plant combinations that should be planted along the River to bring back the natural history of the River. Also, each River open space has different combinations of non-native plants that create an artificial and inconsistent feeling. It is strange not to have birds and butterflies along the River but, because native plants are not being planted, they will not come. The River's plazas and parks have different styles to reflect each designer's style and don't appear to have unifying themes in planting, paving, or materials.

No space included sustainable and indigenous materials. For example, along the River one can see stones from Montana, cobblestone paving from New England, playgrounds from Germany and Minnesota, and a bridge copied from one in Portugal. There appears to be different playgrounds and fountains styles in each mini park. Budgets for the River edge designs and hardscape materials are lavish. It is a sad commentary that none of these funds would be available to San Jose's existing neighborhoods for their public open spaces or remodeled shopping areas. Utilizing indigenous materials will reduce fossil fuel, traffic, pollution, and road maintenance expenses, bring more business to the local economy, and harmonize better with our native landscape. Sustainable designs that incorporate elements such as solar and wind power, perforated paving, on-site water retention, and rainwater holding tanks will achieve similar goals by reducing our need for the power grid and utility/sewer installation and maintenance costs.

Despite what the Agency staff and its consultants think, the Valley does have an open space style of its own. Following are some of the Valley's historical gardens and open spaces which the Agency should use to inspire their work: Santa Clara Mission, Winchester Mystery House, the Rosicrucian Park, Villa Montalvo, the Rose Garden and adjacent Hanchett/Alameda Park historical neighborhood, Hakone Gardens, our native rivers and forests and meadows, and our orchards and farm buildings including the U.C. Agricultural Center. The ASLA's 30 tours did not even mention these places let alone include them on the itineraries because many of San Jose's staff professionals and the San Francisco landscape architectural professionals do not see them as significant, or, perhaps, even know that they exist. As the Agency is building our open spaces, it is clear that none of our historically significant open spaces are being used for inspiration and as examples. Part of the problem is that the City has a policy of hiring staff and consultants from other parts of the country and from San Francisco. This policy brings people who are furthering their career by bringing ideas from other places and not by understanding the good we have. It is a policy that increases traffic, community instability, and taxes. We need a policy which first hires people who love and care about our community and are also long term residents.

Another example of a poor ecological choice is the palm, a city "theme" street tree that was selected by the recent past Agency Director, Frank Taylor. Because it is a tropical plant and doesn't like our cold weather it constantly has dead fronds, which require pruning 3 to 4 times per year. However, it will receive pruning only once a year because the City budget doesn't allow for more. The Agency doesn't adequately consider maintenance in its plans. Therefore, the City's street tree palms always look partially dead. Also, the root systems of palm trees are so invasive that it is difficult to grow plants under them. Therefore, planting with biodiversity or putting natives under the palms will be nearly impossible. Street and park trees from similar climates as ours require much less pruning (every five to ten years) and give shade, thus reducing summertime heat and the need for fossil fuel-based air conditioning. For all these reasons, the palm tree is not an environmentally acceptable street tree for our region. The expense to plant these instant tall trees must have been tremendous and is the major reason the Agency gives as to why they will not be removed.

5. THE GOVERNMENT OF SAN JOSE'S LACK OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

At the ASLA meeting San Jose's Environmental Services Department Supervisor, Mary Tucker, lectured about San Jose's progressive environmental and sustainable initiatives. Based on my analysis of what was said and what I saw, there are many ecological and sustainable ideas missing in current City projects. The following are some ideas for new developments (both private and public), which, if required and implemented, could make San Jose a true environmental leader. Design and plant native plants, drought plants native to similar climates, or plants, which are connected to the valley's cultural history such as fruit trees, or plants from the early mission days. Collect storm water on site as is done in most parts of the country. This would put storm water back into our groundwater, create less flooding downstream, reduce maintenance to our already overburdened City, and, therefore, decrease our taxes. Use paving materials that are permeable and allow water to go directly into the groundwater. Such materials would include permeable concrete, decomposed granite, gravel, and interlocking pavers. Use indigenous materials for stones and paving, and sustainable designs such as solar energy and rainwater collection tanks for irrigation. As we build our community, the Center could act as an education and research nucleus and make it easy for our governmental employees, professionals, and homeowners to find environmentally progressive places, materials, and people.

I took the all-day ASLA bus tour of the "Smart Growth" developments around the Valley with Laurel Prevetti, a city planner with a degree in Forestry who has worked with the City for 16 years. My first impression of these developments was "anywhere USA". San Jose's Smart Growth plan is supposed to "preserve open space, hillsides, and natural resources." The huge amount of money being spent on the Guadalupe River Storm Drain System could be reduced if City staff would think more ecologically about watersheds and winter rains. If they would require new developments and parking lots to have on-site storm water basins and perforated paving there would be less water going into the River's storm drain. As a child growing up in San Jose, I do not remember such heavy flooding along the River. I'm certain the increased flooding is due to development and paving run-off.

Nowhere did I see a native plant and everywhere I saw poor plant selections with the same few varieties of plants planted in beds too small for the plants (for example 30 ft. wide subtropical Photinias in beds three feet wide). Because the City's developments do not plant native plants that attract wildlife, I did not see birds and butterflies in any new development. I asked why these kinds of ideas were missing in the planning and implementation process. The answer was that it would too expensive to change. The staff and consultants are young and so inexperienced that they don't understand the long-term results of their decisions. At a program where four staff spoke I asked why all the consultants and staff came from other parts of the country. They would not answer the question and immediately stopped the program early.

The City Planner said that they didn't concern themselves with maintenance because that was someone else's job. Such thinking is creating a future maintenance nightmare. The City should have someone who understands plant maintenance, ecology, and design to review their plans and installations. They have plenty of money to do expensive plans and hardscaping details. However, when it comes to site details such as soil amending and plant selections, they have no money. The minerals in the Valley's rich soil help to make it among the world's best for growing fruit trees and vegetables. Yet, I saw not one edible plant anywhere in the thousands of acres of newly developed land we passed. When I asked the City Planner what the Agency and Planning Department thought about orchards and community gardens for growing food in their developments, she said this was not an option for their city developments. Clearly the City is on a fast track to build housing at the expense of our land's future. Our taxes are being used to pay planners who are making this Valley into a densely populated Northern California "Los Angeles." When the Center is sold, the problem will increase. With no agricultural research center these planners will have no place to learn about the Valley's historically positive precedents and to understand how they relate to their work.

During the "Smart Growth" tour we had lunch on Communication Hill with a marvelous view overlooking the Valley and downtown. The hill is planned for housing with open spaces around it. When I asked what these open spaces would look like, the City Planner didn't know. Turning the hill back to its original native grassland and oak trees was my suggestion. I tried to explain what this would look like and how best to achieve the idea but I sense this idea could not happen given the current staff. When we passed Valley Fair I asked if the City was doing anything about the heavy traffic lines on the adjacent freeway exit before the Santana Row development opened. The City's Planner said only "it will be worse." Even San Jose's City Fire Department head engineer, Patrick Chew, describes Santana Row's entrance as follows: "The street has the appearance of a wide alley rather than a public street since a public street would have a curb and sidewalk." I add that a major entrance/street should have street trees, which it doesn't. Since the Center is just one block from this high-density area, should we expect the same for our historical agricultural center? What a huge contrast in attitudes and financial support between the Center and the Agency! Shouldn't the two be blended instead of allowing only the Agency to survive?

6. THE VALLEY'S POOR URBAN PARK POLICIES AND LAND THEFT ISSUES

Every American city larger than San Jose and many smaller cities have a place for the education, research, and demonstration of plants and the ideas listed in this essay. Many centers take the form of botanical gardens or are attached to universities as urban horticultural institutes. Ours can take its own unique form, but we must believe that such a place can transform and give balance to our high technology valley. Without such a nucleus there will be no place to represent the dream of a better future for our natural environment, and without it, we will become isolated from our natural and cultural history.

Many will say that the City's largest new public park, the 220 acres at Guadalupe Gardens south of the airport flyway, should be this horticultural center. Although it provides a lovely open space opportunity for green lawns and low trees, the airport restrictions on plants (no plants with flowers or fruit that attract birds and no tall trees) and the constant airplane noise overhead (creating a place which is not peaceful and not easy to hear people speaking outdoors) make it an unlikely candidate for the urban needs we have outlined.

If the Center's land is taken from us and becomes housing/commercial usage it will be the third time a Valley government will have stolen public agricultural land from its citizens, spent the land sale money for governmental purposes other than agriculture, and left nothing in return. Because I went to Lincoln High School and live three blocks from the school, I am most intimately aware of the approximately 10 acres given to the school for Future Farmers of America programs. About ten years ago the San Jose Unified School District sold this land illegally and used the money to build administration buildings. The school district would say that students didn't want to study farming but they failed to be progressive enough to understand that nationally Future Farmers of America had changed its name to FFA. The name change represented the approximately 350 urban and rural professions that relate to plants and animals.

Following are other additional incidents where Valley governments took land that had been specifically given to them by citizens for agricultural/horticultural purposes. In 1958 when the San Jose City Hall moved from downtown to its present location, the land for the new City Hall was a botanical garden, donated to the City for that purpose. The botanical garden disappeared when City Hall was built and no effort was made to find a new location. It seems strange that the land around these government buildings did not reflect the horticultural history of the site.

Also, in 1962 Mrs. Prusch gave the City 82½ acres for an agricultural museum with the specific idea of teaching children about their food. Today Prusch Farm has been reduced to one-third the acreage donated, is adjacent to one of the largest freeway intersections in the Bay Area, #280/#680/#101, and has high freeway and airport noise making it difficult to hear. The City's planners don't seem to realize that the sound of freeway traffic in an open space destroys the tranquility that nature can bring. Most people and birds will not visit such noisy parks. For this reason, both Prusch Farm and Guadalupe Gardens, however good intentioned, will never be popular places.

The reason Cal Trans could create such a monumental freeway intersection was because Prusch Farm, the 82½ acres of publicly owned land, was nearby. The history of the Valley has shown public indifference to its open spaces so Cal Trans had no problem doing what it wanted. Even Oakland's poor Black community was able to get the State to redirect the freeway outside their neighborhood after the Earthquake. Are we going to continue to let governments thoughtlessly take our open spaces and give us nothing in return? Are we going to allow planners to place valuable open spaces like Guadalupe Gardens and Prusch Farm under the airport flyway or adjacent to major freeways so we cannot have peaceful natural experiences in our City? Such open spaces should not be included in planners' open space statistics because they lack quality. These are only a

few incidents where our Valley's natural and cultural heritage have been and are being eroded before our indifferent eyes. These are also reasons why the public's generosity in giving land and items of historical significance to our parks and museums has and will continue to diminish.

7. WHAT WE CAN DO

It is not too late to stop the Center's sale. The land will be executed in early February, 2003 just as if it were a prisoner. The governor has the power to stop the execution and our first efforts must be to write the governor immediately.

Governor Gray Davis

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Send letters first and then emails as a back up. He must receive thousands of letters so have your entire California friends and neighbors write the governor. This is the most effective way to let elected government officials know what the public wants. Do not write the UC Regents as they are appointed officials.

The letter to the governor can be short. Include the following:

The sale of the 17 acre UC Agriculture Research Center in Santa Clara County scheduled for early February should be stopped. We need this center for our Central Coast urban agricultural/horticultural research and education.

Include two or more points drawn from this essay such as

--The Center can help create new jobs, prevent disease (which is costly to our health care system), create healthier communities and citizens, and reduce the costs of maintaining and building our communities.

--The Center has been helping us understand our land for 82 years. The State should not be taking things from its citizens that have such a long and successful history creating healthy food and communities just because there are short-term monetary problems. It will be difficult to impossible to recreate this Center.

--The Center can create new jobs in a place where many technology jobs have disappeared and the economy is failing. Biotechnology, the revolution for the 21st century, needs a new definition. It includes not only the study of gene manipulations but also the use of microorganisms to clean up the environment and to create healthier food. It can help us learn to live with nature more harmoniously and less expensively. The Center is needed for this work.

--Today there are many urban agricultural research and educational programs. Our Center is the most urban one and, therefore, can meet the region's urban needs better than the other centers. Currently other centers use the word urban in their research and educational programs but, because they are in rural areas, their work is meaningless to the Bay Area Metropolitan Region.

- If the Center is sold, we will lose our federal and state grant money and our researchers to meet our region's needs. We will be discriminated against because the State's other regions will be represented and we will have no representation.
- It is the only research center that exists for our climate and urban community needs (the two nearest are in rural Mendocino and semi-desert Ventura)
- It has been doing important research on urban tree and root care that will help stop the expensive damage to foundations, streets, and walks, and research on microorganisms for healthier food and cleaning up environmental pollution.
- It has produced new varieties of drought-tolerant lawn grasses that preserve water resources and, in the future, can do more similar drought work
- The Center will continue helping our cultural heritage by developing ethnic foods appropriate for our ecology and save our historically important plants with its seed bank. Growing food locally will reduce fossil fuel use and state freeway maintenance costs.
- It carries out research on soil health and erosion prevention measures
- It helps train master gardeners who work with childrens' school gardens and the public's garden problems
- It keeps track of weather patterns and its weather station is wired to hundreds of automatic irrigation systems, thus conserving precious water
- It encourages and researches the planting of appropriate habitats for endangered species
- Our region's local governmental organizations and businesses need education and help to understand the ecological implications of their work. If the Center is closed we will have no biotech/ecological research experts in the community and no high-level educational programs which meet community and ecological needs.

Also, write letters to the newspaper editor and to radio and television shows which might be interested in this subject, to your neighborhood newsletters. Contact me if you want to help (kmathewson@secretgardens.com, (408) 292-9595). Also, attend the Santa Clara City meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 15, 7-9 p.m., at Valley Village, 390 North Winchester Bldg. 18 (2 blocks north of the Ag Center). This meeting will discuss the land's future.

8. CONCLUSION

Thomas Jefferson once said: "The greatest service a government can give to its people is to add a plant to its culture." Such a service is an indicator that the government cares about the future health of the land and of its citizens. If the Center disappears, is this an indication that we have allowed our government not to care about us? The Center has given us so much good, and our government is not even giving us the opportunity to come together to celebrate and say thank-you to this treasured land. Jefferson never could have conceived what a crazy and hectic pace of life would be created in a Valley that is the center of the computer revolution. I'm sure he would agree with me that an equally important gift is to help its citizens touch the natural world in their daily lives. This will lift them into a spiritual world of wonderment, which can heal many of the problems they face. Our nation's great cities all have an enriching outdoor place that includes many of the ideas discussed in this essay. To be great, San Jose must rise up and be counted as a city that has created such a place. Let the Valley's residents come

together to create this dream, and may we not continue to allow outsiders create our sense of community. The problems outlined are in all communities. The solutions I've set forth are needed everywhere. Many will say it is too late and that the Valley has already been destroyed. I disagree. I have seen cities with much less nature turn into garden cities. It takes leaders with vision to know that a Garden City and a Valley of Hearts Delight are once again possible. Let us take the steps necessary to be an example to other communities. My prayer is that our indifference turns to caring about our community and all of life.

9. AUTHOR'S RESUME

Kathryn Mathewson has an undergraduate degree in Ecology/Botany from Principia College in Illinois and a Masters Degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of California, Berkeley. With her unique combination of work experiences and her education she has designed and built gardens which have a strong overall design, a deep understanding of plants and environmental issues, rich details and craftsmanship— combinations which are all too rare today.

Although raised in the San Francisco Bay area, she has had many national and international experiences before starting her garden design company. She worked for various governmental organizations including the National and California State Parks Departments, HUD, and the Oakland Housing Authority. She developed curricula and taught in the Landscape Architecture Department at City College in New York City. She worked in Singapore in various landscape design capacities for the Singapore government and private architects. She designed the American Singapore Embassy garden. She has also worked with many private landscape architects, architects, and engineers. She was the construction coordinator for San Francisco's Pier 39, a complex with restaurants, specialty shops, a marina, a park, and an amusement center. In 1979 she began Secret Gardens, a design/build garden company in San Francisco. Several years later she opened a garden store on San Francisco's historical South Park. In 2001 she moved her garden design company to the San Jose garden and orchard where she has gardened all her life.

Her clients include George Lucas, Monrovia Nursery, various Napa Valley vineyards, several Nobel Prize winners, several U.S. Ambassadors, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, a convent, a houseboat complex, several shopping centers, the Kindergarten Forum, and gardens in Santa Barbara, Fresno, Napa Valley, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Her gardens have been published in Ortho and Sunset books, American Nurseryman, Flower and Garden Magazine, Garden Design, Women's Day, Landscape Architecture, Designer's Illustrated, and The San Jose Mercury News West Magazine as well as many Bay Area newspapers. She did a nationally televised environmental gardening special for "Good Morning America." She has written articles for American Horticulturist and Landscape News, and lectured widely including for the Perennial Association, the Rodale Institute, the Ecological Farm Conference, the Colonial Farm, the California Horticultural Society, Mississippi State's annual garden design seminar, the University of California at Berkeley, Principia College, Ten Acres in Princeton, New Jersey, the American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA), and many garden

clubs and public libraries. Her awards include two National Landscape Association's Superior Garden Awards, the Northern California Xeriscape Conference Residential Garden Award, and a National Endowment for the Arts Grant. In 1997 she was the first woman president of the National Landscape Association, the landscape division of ANLA, and in that same year the one hundred twenty-five-year-old American Association of Nurserymen (AAN) changed its name to the American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA).

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