

Willow Glen Resident

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Around the Glen

Horseman passes by Utah on historic trek

Former short-term Willow Glen resident Matt Parker and his Tennessee walking horse, Smokey, have crossed the state of Nevada and are almost through Utah. Parker left California in late May to become the first person to attempt to cross the United States on horseback along the American Discovery Trail.

The Willow Glen Resident profiled Parker in its May 14 issue. Parker, a 23-year-old Michigan native, plans to traverse the trail's northern route—4,883 miles—to eventually arrive in New Haven, Conn., next spring.

Traversing Nevada's deserts was haphazard for Parker, says his publicist, Loretta Shows. The trail meandered through Nevada's arid deserts where water and vegetation are scarce. Also, Parker said, his Nevada maps were inaccurate, which caused him to backtrack several times. He is now heading eastward through Utah's Ferguson and Wah Wah deserts, which will be just as grueling as the ride through Nevada.

For more information, visit <http://www.mattandsmokey.com/>.

—William Jeske

Council mulls over land-auction option

There are 13 city-owned parcels of land in San Jose that the city can't use and developers aren't interested in. Two of these parcels are located in Willow Glen.

One parcel runs along Fuller Avenue between Delmas and Bird avenues, and

another is on the west side of Bird Avenue, between Fuller and West Virginia streets.

As required by state law, the parcels were offered to 115 developers who would be required to develop the land for some civic benefit.

The city council is scheduled to vote at its Aug. 19 meeting on whether to deem the parcels as surplus and arrange to auction them off on Oct. 20.

The parcel on Fuller Avenue between Bird and Delmas Avenues runs along train tracks that are adjacent to houses, which is the reason Fuller Avenue homeowner Tim Gallagher thinks no one is interested.

He understands why there is reluctance to build on the half-acre parcel. Its proximity to the railroad tracks makes it infeasible as a park and too noisy for more housing, he said.

Gallagher's neighbor Lloyd Schaber fears that whoever buys the land will build something that's not in keeping with the neighborhood.

For the past 20 years, according to Schaber, the neighborhood has enjoyed the parcel's redwood trees and horseshoe pits.

—William Jeske

Firefighters ask the community for help

Drivers waiting at the corners of Meridian and Hamilton avenues may have wondered where the fire was as San Jose Firefighters walked up and down the busy intersection between 8 a.m. and noon on Aug. 13. But it soon became clear that they weren't out there fighting fires but fighting another important battle—a cure for Muscular Dystrophy—through the "Fill the Boot" campaign. At least 12 firefighters, many just coming off a 24-hour shift, volunteered their time and their boots, which drivers filled with dollars, to help reach a local goal of \$7,500, said San Jose Firefighters President Randy Sekany.

Sekany said this is the first year the San Jose Firefighters participated in the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, which has been supported by the International Association of Firefighters for 50 years.

He added that San Jose Acting Fire Chief Dale Foster was instrumental in making the event happen, authorizing the use of the Blue Sharks fire rig and the firefighters working in their gear.

After the morning drive, firefighters in San Jose Station No. 6—on Minnesota

Avenue—counted up the contributions and discovered that even in tough times people care.

"We took in \$3,200. The people were very generous," Sekany said. "We have collected \$5,800 in two days and with one more day and location to go we should reach our target." The San Jose Firefighters hope to make the drive an annual event.

—Moryt Milo

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