



CONTINUITY

Newsletter of the Preservation Action Council of San José

Volume 3, Number 4, July/August 1992

Bernal-Joice Ranch Project Moves Ahead on Many Fronts

Paul Bernal

Historic Ranch Threatened

One of the most threatened Preservation Action Council of San José projects is the Bernal-Joice Ranch. This collection of houses, barns, blacksmith shop, corrals, and natural spring is all that remains of Rancho de Santa Teresa of 1826.

The County Department of Parks and Recreation recently acquired the Bernal-Joice Ranch as part of Santa Teresa Park. The ranch overlooks a neighborhood of modern homes, just north of the Buck Norred Stables. Unfortunately, 1970-1992 have not been good years for the neglected rancho. Development has taken four adobe houses; arson has destroyed two adobe houses, a milk house, and a barn; and a party of teens accidentally torched the tanning shed from the 1830's.

As recently as February to May, 1992, fires were intentionally set within the main Ranch House, the "dude" house, two cattle barns, and the blacksmith barn. The oldest house still remaining was built in 1860 and, according to PG&E, was the first home to be connected with electricity in the county.

Future plans include re-creating the Ignacio Bernal Adobe upon its site and developing an educational "4-H type" program.

Community Task Force Formed

The Preservation Action Council has established a community task force to save the Bernal-Joice Ranch. Its goals are to secure the premises, bring utilities to the historic structures, provide intruder and fire sensors, establish a security presence, locate a tenant that will be appropriate to the history of the site and to the neighborhood, and promote a living history museum for the enjoyment of school-children and visitors.

The Community Task Force, led by Preservation Action Council vice president Paul Bernal, will work with the Santa Clara Count Department of Parks and Recreation to achieve these goals. To date, the task force includes representatives from the following groups: IBM, Ohlone Indian Tribe, Santa Teresa Golf Course, PG&E, Rancho Santa Teresa Pueblo Association (neighborhood), New Almaden Quicksilver Mining Museum Association, Mexican Heritage Corporation, Sourisseau Academy (SJSU), Los Fundadores, Mission Santa Clara (SCU), Veterans G.I. Forum, Pioneers of Santa Clara County, the National Park Service, archivists, archaeologists, historians, nature lovers, and just plain interested folk.

Tour and Program Set for August 29

Preservation Action Council members and supporters of this project will be given a rare tour of the interior of the vandalized structures on Saturday,

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River Street Project Progresses Quickly

Karita Hummer

This has been a very busy two months in our attempts to save the best and most historic of the River Street area buildings for inclusion in the Guadalupe River Park and to salvage the eligibility status of the district for the National Register.

As a concurring party, we have signed a refined version of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Army Corps of Engineers that calls for an Alternatives Analysis for the buildings. This analysis will study all alternatives for the buildings, including relocating buildings onto nearby vacant parcels to retain the integrity of the district. The Alternatives Analysis will include a market study and market plan for the buildings. The overall study will be put out for bid by the Army Corps of Engineers as soon as the scope of work is defined.

The schedule for all phases of the Army Corps of Engineers flood control project is right on target, and this study in no way will interfere with the planned schedule. The Preservation Action Council will participate in reviewing and commenting on the scope of work for the study, will

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Bernal-Joice

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August 29, 1992, at 11 a.m. sharp. Mark your calendar! Bring your cameras and your hiking shoes for a "before renovation" photo session. The tour will include the hard-to-find Santa Teresa Spring, which has medicinal qualities. Get there early so that you can find parking, and **DO NOT PARK ON MANILA DRIVE**, which is the street running along the front of the ranch. The neighbors object to large amounts of traffic and parked cars, so please honor their wishes and carpool if you can.

The tour time will be short, and children will not be allowed near the spring without very close supervision because there is a large, uncovered, earthen pool surrounded by steep slopes. Bring a picnic or bag lunch so you and your family can enjoy the scenery following the tour.

To get there go south on Highway 101 to the Bernal exit; turn right onto Bernal; turn right at San Ignacio Avenue; continue for awhile into a residential area past a school yard; just as you come upon a second school yard (Bernal Intermediate School) turn right at Curie Drive; park along Curie Drive near its intersection with Camino Verde Drive; walk left (south) down Camino Verde Drive toward the foothills; you will run into the Bernal-Joice Ranch at the intersection of Camino Verde and Manila Drives.

Trust Fund Set Up for Renovations and Development

The Preservation Action Council has also created a trust fund for the Bernal-Joice Ranch. Please make your donations by mail, or at the time of the tour, to:

PACSIJ/Bernal-Joice Ranch
P.O. Box 2287
San Jose, CA 95109-2287

A restoration, which is the only appropriate approach to this project, costs more than a rehabilitation/renovation. The county has no funds available for either option.

**River Street**

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provide assistance to develop ideas for uses for the buildings and to identify community resources for the study, and will review the draft report that will come out of the study.

In addition, several of us met at the Redevelopment Agency with Bob Ryan and Ken Talbott to share our ideas and update them on the MOA process. We were joined by the Friends of the Guadalupe River Park officer, Scott Mathieson. In representing the Friends of the Guadalupe River Park, Scott shared his group's interest in seeing how some of the best buildings might feasibly be integrated into the Guadalupe River Park design.

On June 2, Courtney Damkroger of the National Trust for Historic Preservation came to San Jose expressly to tour the River Street district. She expressed her office's support and interest in our River Street efforts; shared information about resources, such as in Pasadena, where another effort, with some similarities, was launched. Damkroger agreed to share our information with the national office of the National Trust, for possible consideration for their newsletter; and shared her belief that our view might prevail because she believed that the Preservation Action Council had "become a real force" to be reckoned with!

Several Preservation Action Council members joined in the River Street walk, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District was also represented by Sally LaMere. Jeanne Huber of the

San José Mercury News was on the walk as well. One of our members, Ren Renzel, will be doing some additional photography work.

Ren drew to our attention how really interesting River Street appeared against the backdrop of the modern buildings of the city, just behind it. Craig Mineweaser, AIA, Preservation Action Council board member, commented on the range of styles represented in the district, and pointed out how precious some of them are becoming, such as a stable in the backyard of one of the buildings.

This last walk made us feel even more attached to the buildings and the district. One of the residents in the district stopped us during the walk and said, "You know the house is a living thing . . . it breathes . . . when I wake in the morning, I can hear all the creaks, and I know it's coming to life." We hope to preserve something of the life of this community, as an attraction for the park and for our city.

To join in and for information,
call April Halberstadt, 293-2860
or Karita Hummer, 971-0940.



You're invited!

Open House
at our new office
40 North First St.
Friday, July 10, 1992
4 to 8 p.m.



From the President

Karita Hummer

We've done it! We've moved into our first office! Downtown on North First Street, in the block between St. James Square on the North, the Historic Commercial District on the south, and a stone's throw from San Pedro Square to the west!

We are at the center of the most historic part of town and at the center of new design developments taking place in the city. This strategic location makes us visible and tangible and professionalizes our image in the community. The location positions us well to continue our work of monitoring historic buildings and promoting their preservation while keeping an eye on new building development to encourage a respect for historic context and a high level of architectural excellence.

Yes, we are excited! The office is at 40 North First Street in the Old Knights of Columbus Building built in 1928—a very distinctive historic building. We are on the first floor of the four-story building, with a lovely central stairway lit by a skylight. The fourth floor has a wonderful large hall with curved windows that look out over the city.

The building is for sale, so we are on a month-to-month lease. We intend to show off the building through our events and activities. We see renting this space at 40 N. First Street as another way of saving and promoting important old buildings. The third floor contains a ballroom.

Already the office in this lovely building has energized our group. Negotiating, planning, and preparing

the office has taken the time and devotion of a great many volunteers and has tapped considerable contributions.

Many thanks are due. To *Greg Casella* for shepherding this through from the beginning, negotiating the lease and being a continued liaison with the owners. To *Theo Van Dyne* for his leadership as Chair of the Operations Subcommittee (for coordinating plans, work schedules, major construction and decorating work, and volunteer recruitment and staffing—he has put in a huge amount of time and work, and accomplished a great deal).

To *Craig Mineweaser* for his excellent design/architectural consultation and plans, major construction, and decoration work, and his successful solicitation of donations and assistance. To *Jim Salata*, for making the contact with the owners, and for his donation of two new front doors. To *Nancy Newlin* for major construction work and great design and implementation of our window display (with photos by our own Scott Hinrichs). To *Fred Gardner* for his major contribution of construction work and large donation of \$100.

To *Clyde Beck* for his construction efforts. To *Sharon Heinrichs* for a telephone answering machine and wall preparation and other efforts. To *Hank Lutz* for picking up and moving furniture and plans to help us install new carpet. To *David Stypul* for light fixtures. To *Macanan Marketing* for carpeting. To *G.T. Jordan* for electrical work. To *Kelly Paint & Equipment* for paint. To *Master Protection Enterprises* for a fire extinguisher.

To *FMC* for furniture. To *Dura Enterprises* for storing our furniture. To *FXC Communications* for two telephones. To *Dale Majors* for installing our phone line. To *Ed*

Massey for installing our new doors. And to many more—*Jim Arbuckle, Paul Bernal, Flo Boss, Elizabeth Cooney, Shirley Dunn, Eric Fischerr, April Halberstadt, Scott Hinrichs, Tom King, John Mitchell, Dave Wall, Keith Watt* and others.

The work effort has been phenomenal, and we are really quite proud of the results. We still have some finishing work to do, but we have come a long way toward our goal of having a distinctive office. We are eager now to conduct business there:

- To sponsor exhibits
- To have a resource center and library
- To meet the public and explain our goals
- To hold small meetings
- To manage all our business operations
- To attract interns and volunteers who will have a place to work on all our projects.

Productive before, we know we will become even more so now with the office! Come visit. All are welcome. (We will have an open house to showcase our new office on Friday, July 10. See the Calendar for details.)

There are still ways to help to make the office all it promises to become. We need volunteer help to manage and coordinate operations in the office. We need an office manager, volunteer coordinator, librarian, clerical help, and display designers.

We most definitely need funds to operate the space. Donations specifically targeted for office operations would be greatly appreciated. Send donations the *Preservation Action Council of San José, P.O. Box 2287, San José, CA 95109-2287.*

See the list of equipment and supplies that we need to complete furnishing the office on the next page.

Preservation Action Council to Recommend Architecture Books for Museum of Art Bookstore

The Preservation Action Council of San José has formed a committee to recommend books on architecture and historic preservation to the San José Museum of Art bookstore. Chuck Volwiler is chairing this committee. An architecture buff, Chuck has an impassioned interest in this subject.

The opportunity to form this committee resulted from a meeting between our president, Karita Hummer, and Josie Callan, director of the Art Museum. Chuck and Karita Hummer will meet soon with the director of the museum bookstore to work on the guidelines for this project.

The committee will be advised by the architect members of the Preservation Action Council. The ongoing list of recommendations will be created from bibliographies and resource lists from various sources. The recommendations will include books covering all periods of architecture up to the present, and will cover a variety of topics pertinent to the field.

This effort is part of our goals to educate the public about issues pertaining to historic preservation and architecture.

To become involved or to make suggestions, call Chuck Volwiler at (408) 297-5970.

San Pedro Square Open House
Saturday, October 17
1 to 5 p.m.
See details in future issues of
CONTINUITY.

How to Reach Us

Bernal/Joice Ranch Task Force: Paul Bernal, (408) 299-7438

CONTINUITY newsletter: Nancy Newlin, (408) 297-4084

First Church of Christ, Scientist Task Force: Sharon Heinrichs, (408) 298-7810

José Theatre Task Force: Gary Parks, (408) 371-9103

River Street Task Force: Karita Hummer, 971-0940 or April Halberstadt, (408) 293-2860

San Pedro Square Open House: Nancy Newlin, 297-4084, or Sharon Heinrichs, 298-7810

Transportation Law Task Force: Karita Hummer, (408) 971-0940

URM/Seismic Retrofit Task Force: Peter Fenerin, (415) 322-7440

Watchdog Committee: April Halberstadt, (408) 293-2860

Our new office: (408) 947-8025.

URM Update

A recent update on the unreinforced masonry (URM) building retrofit program sponsored by the City of San José indicated that the May 17, 1992 deadline for submitting plans or requests to demolish buildings resulted in: 63 plans submitted (31 approved, 15 permits issued, 7 buildings completed); 66 letters of intent; and 13 requests to demolish.

Responses were not received from owners of only four of the 150 total number of buildings.

Preservation Action Council's New Office Takes Shape

Theo Van Dyne

Over the course of three weekends, over 20 people gave their time and effort to pitch in and make improvements to our new office. (See *From the President* for a complete list of contributors.) Overall, more than \$2,500 in materials and labor was donated.

The nearly 500 square foot office has two rooms. The front space, larger of the two, is a space for public reception and includes a display wall lit by track lighting. We also intend to have our preservation/design resource center in this area. The second room will serve as our operations area for daily activities and small meetings.

To complete our office, we still need the following items: four to six four-drawer filing cabinets, full-height book shelves, sofa and loveseat, end table with table lamp, laser quality printer, and a photocopy machine.

Have something on this list to donate? Contact Theo Van Dyne at (408) 292-0756.

José Theatre Update

Gary Parks

The owner of the José Theatre has applied to the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San José for seismic retrofit funding. Structural analysis has begun, and potential problems are being identified that need to be solved to prepare the structure for future reuse.

For more information on the José Theatre Task Force, contact Gary Parks at (408) 946-4333.

New Federal Transportation Law Can be a Boost for Local Historic Preservation

Karita Hummer

The Preservation Action Council of San José convened a meeting of preservationists and officials from the Santa Clara Valley and the State of California to brainstorm on applications of the new transportation law for preservation projects in the area. The meeting was held in the offices of the Trinity Church on Thursday, June 25.

The new Federal transportation law, officially called the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, promises to be a great resource for our area. Signed into law in December, 1991, the act provides \$155 billion in transportation funds for a six-year period. At least ten percent of these funds will be set aside for transportation enhancements. For California this means the possibility of receiving over \$300 million for enhancements over the six-year life of the law.

Historic preservation is a specific category of enhancements. These enhancements can be for past or future transportation projects and the guidelines are quite open and broad. In fact, the whole law is designed to generate ideas for projects at a grassroots level. Ultimately projects will need to be approved through metropolitan planning organizations and will be administered through CalTrans in California.

This is our chance to have some of our most important projects considered for inclusion in a plan for preservation enhancements under the Transportation Law. Just think about it! The light rail goes through two historic districts; the former First Church of Christ, Scientist is almost encircled by light rail; Route 87 overlooks the River Street historic area (eligible for the National Register) (in fact, it took out some great buildings

when it was first built); the historic buildings in the Lincoln-Auzerais area are there because of the railroad (and what about the roundhouse up the way?); The Alameda is a very historic old road, designated so by the City of San José. The possibilities for "transportation enhancements" are endless.

Maybe one, or several, or all of these historic areas could be considered for enhancement funds. Part of a process will be to identify target areas. By taking a lead, we hope to be an important part of the public planning process—in the spirit of the law. Just what form that involvement might take will become clear over time.

The possibilities for funding historic preservation projects in our area through this law are almost endless.

A publication produced by the National Trust for Historic Preservation called *On the Move* (March, 1992), describes the "historic preservation" category this way: "Expenditures under this category must enhance the project by improving the ability of the public to appreciate the historic significance of the project itself or the area to be served by the project." There is just so much that qualifies under that definition! Jump on board and join us in our efforts to bring the resources available in this law to historic preservation in San José and the Santa Clara Valley.

To get involved, or for more information, call Karita Hummer at (408) 971-0940.

The '92 Quake in Eureka: a Firsthand Report

Craig Mineweaser, A.I.A.

The California Preservation Foundation's annual conference was held April 23 through 26 in Eureka. Friday night, over 300 conferees enjoyed dinner at the Scotia Inn, followed by the annual "three-minute success stories"—a lively presentation of preservation "wins" which took place in the historic Scotia Theater half a block away.

Thirty-six hours later, Wayne Donaldson, A.I.A., head of the State Historic Building Safety Board, stood in front of the smoldering ruins of the now famous shopping center sited between that same hotel and theater for a post-earthquake interview by Sacramento's channel 3 television station.

Most of the conference took place in and around the Eureka Inn. Saturday morning about 60 of us were engrossed in a lecture held in a large old house not far away. For the first time ever, the most knowledgeable experts had been assembled to discuss the Newsom Brothers—designers of Eureka's famous Carson Mansion (their masterpiece) and other great Victorians. Suddenly I found myself thinking: "I know I didn't see any train tracks next to this house. Why do I hear. . .what? I feel the train vibrations! Oh-oh, everything is starting to shake and creak! Earthquake!! Big one!"

Everyone immediately got down on the floor, and the crashing of folding metal chairs accompanied the roar of the building. When the vibrations stopped, someone in the back hollered, "Is everyone all right?" Quietly, still shaking, we got up and filed out—no mindless panic, just weak knees—

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Eureka Quake

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sort of thing. I was sure this quake was at least a 7.0.

The lecture continued outside, without slides, but to the accompaniment of an occasional roll of the sidewalk. As the intermittent sirens went off, we glanced furtively over our shoulders, looking for signs of real damage and aware that perhaps we should be elsewhere.

It was obviously a good sized quake, yet we could see no damage. Our senses still reeled from the absurdity of *terra firma* behaving as if it were the rolling sea. People began drifting away in ones and twos, trying to regain some sense of reality.

The town of Eureka was fortunately in pretty good shape. The news reported that "a group of preservationists were in town for a conference." In fact, Wayne and others had been about to give a workshop on the State Historic Building Code. Instead, they sent teams out to check buildings—and fortunately found only minor damage in Eureka.

We got through the rest of the day, but Saturday night few of us slept. Aftershocks and two 6+ quakes rolled through. Would the furniture never stop moving?

Sunday, while waiting for the Office of Emergency Services (OES) representatives to appear, we met with Eureka officials. Having worked with other communities in the aftermath of a quake, we shared our experiences with them—what to expect from the media. OES and other organizations.

Then we were off to recheck nearby Ferndale and Scotia to see what damage was caused by the additional quakes. Both towns suffered some damage to their historic buildings. Due to unbraced cripple walls,

Victorian houses had twisted and squatted onto the ground. In Ferndale, the glass storefronts of the wood framed commercial Victorians showered the street with glass. The only brick parapet in the area spewed large sections of wall over the street, crushing two cars. Dramatic footage for the film crews, but the damage wasn't serious. A quick look at the windows below revealed steel cross-bracing, probably added after a previous quake, which held the rest of the building in place. In Scotia the theater had some damage and as I mentioned the non-historic retail center was lost.

To add to the confusion, the emergency radio broadcast system once again failed and the local governments and emergency services were virtually paralyzed, unable to keep track of what was happening regionally. Phones didn't function, rumors flew. In the midst of all this, roving camera crews approached anyone to see if they were newsworthy. One entire parking lot in Ferndale was devoted to the media, being served by a Salvation Army emergency provisions truck.

But the *big* news you never saw reported was actually the minor amount of damage and injuries. This is earthquake country. Strong seismic activity is common, and over the years the local people had strengthened their buildings. Despite three quakes in the 6 to 7 range plus numerous aftershocks as strong as 4, there was little damage. In many cases, people living in their front yards were wisely doing so not knowing how many more, nor what strength quakes might be coming.

All of these events are similar to our own Loma Prieta quake. What keeps us from learning from others is the lack of immediacy. It was fortunate that "a group of preservationists were in town" but most government officials were cool towards our offers of help. Lessons we can learn from this event include:

1. We must continue educating the public that old buildings don't have to be unsafe. This must be a crusade! We must change people's (and the media's) perception of this before a



Wayne Donaldson, A.I.A. is interviewed by the media in front of Scotia's burned out shopping center.
Craig Mineweaser photo

catastrophic event—it is fruitless to try to argue during the event.

2. Contrary to popular belief, a “red tag” on a building does not mean it should or must be torn down. It simply means it is not safe at the moment and something must be done (repairs and so forth) before people are allowed back in. We must educate the public, the press, city officials, planners, and others about the procedures of inspecting, tagging, repair and review before demolishing buildings after a catastrophe.
3. Lack of technical knowledge is not the problem. Much has been gained from studying earthquakes worldwide. We know how to strengthen all types of construction, including unreinforced masonry. We know how to arrest the deterioration of historic buildings. But where we as preservationists fall on our faces is in effecting a real change in the values of the public. American culture does not yet recognize the need to preserve evidence of our past. We need to teach reverence for our cultural/architectural heritage. Until we get this message across—I’m talking about a fundamental change in cultural values—when catastrophe strikes, government will continue to act in fear and ignorance. That’s what happened to the City of Santa Cruz after the ’89 quake—that’s what could have happened here.



April Halberstadt

The Watchdog Committee of the Preservation Action Council of San José keeps an eye on historic buildings that are threatened by insensitive rehabilitation, demolition, or neglect.

Here are some of the historic properties we are watching:

- Five Wounds Church and the old Saint Patrick’s gymnasium, proposed for San José landmark designation were deferred from the Historic Landmarks Commission agenda at the request of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San José. The Archdiocese wants further study and consultation.
- The Midtown Plan still has no specific proposal for the Del Monte cannery buildings on Santa Clara Street. These buildings bear close watching.

- The Schellar House still sits on the San José State University campus, ready for moving. The university would like to see it removed by August; the site is planned for open space and a nearby academic building. Shouldn’t the state budget cutbacks warrant another look at those plans?
- We continue to watch the process of “demolition by encroachment” of the remnants of the Autumn Street neighborhoods adjacent to the new Sharks arena. Also on our list are Wool Ranch and the proposed redevelopment of the Naglee Park site by the San José Medical Clinic.
- Rest in peace: a house in the historic area of River Street, two small residences on Julian, and the old Hotel San Carlos on Second Street across from the transit mall, all recent arson victims.

For information on watchdog activities, contact April Halberstadt, (408) 293-2860.



The Preservation Action Council of San José is a non-profit membership organization providing information to property owners and education to the public, and promoting programs and policies for historic preservation and compatible new architectural design.

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Bernal-Joice Ranch Tour
Saturday, August 29
11 a.m.

Calendar

July

- 8 (Wednesday) Community relations committee meeting at our office, 40 N. First St., 7:00 p.m. Patti Massey, (408) 297-9478.
- 10 (Friday) Open house at our new office, 40 N. First St., 4 to 8 p.m.
- 13 (Monday) Executive committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 7:00 p.m., (408) 971-0940.
- 14 (Tuesday) Hazardous Materials in Older Buildings workshop, San Francisco. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sponsored by the California Preservation Foundation. For information call (510) 763-0972.
- 20 (Monday) Open board of directors meeting. Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., 7:00 p.m., (408) 971-0940.
- 22 (Wednesday) Book signing by Harry Farrell, author of *Swift Justice*. Fairmont Hotel, Lobby Lounge. Sponsored by the San José Historical Museum Association and the Fairmont Hotel. 5 - 7 p.m. For more information contact Kathy Muller, San José Historical Museum Association, (408) 287-2290.
- 27 (Monday) Finance and operations committee meeting at our office, 40 N. First St., 8 p.m. Greg Casella, (408) 998-5034.

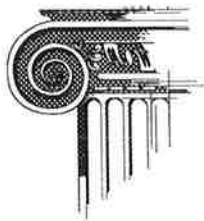
August

- 10 (Monday) Executive committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 7:00 p.m., 971-0940.
Summer break. No open board of directors meeting this month.
- 12 (Wednesday) Community relations committee meeting at our office, 40 N. First St., 7:00 p.m. Patti Massey, (408) 297-9478.
- 24 (Monday) Finance and operations committee meeting at our office, 40 N. First St., 8 p.m. Greg Casella, (408) 998-5034.
- 29 (Saturday) Tour of Bernal/Joice Ranch, Santa Teresa area. 11 a.m. (See article on the front page for details.)

September

- 20 (Sunday) Grand opening of the St. Claire Hotel, benefit for the San José Historical Museum Association.
- 27 (Sunday) SoFA (South First Association) Street Fair.

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