Tree #13 - Alive and Well and Saved from the Ax!

by Dick Stevens

The venerable and beloved native Coast Live Oak continues to live in Jeffrey Fontana Park! Thanks to the efforts of the Association to get an independent arborist's review, followed by letters to PG&E's Vice Presidents of the Environment and Operations, Tree #13 was not only spared from the July 1 cut, we have also received written assurances from PG&E VP Mark Johnson. He said that going forward, PG&E would continue to prune Tree 13 and they would do their best to keep the tree within safe distance from the power lines. That way Tree #13 can continue to live where it planted itself over 40 years ago.

As evidence that PG&E is keeping their word, the tree was pruned in October to shape the tree and remove some growth spikes. The Association has also begun discussions with San Jose Parks Manager, Don Zonic to redirect water away from the tree. This action is intended to slow the tree's rate of growth. We are also asking the city to add mulch around the tree to preserve the moisture it does get. Both of these actions were recommended by an arborist as a means to improve the viability of the tree.

We will continue to monitor the tree each year. We will take measurements and track the tree's growth rate to insure that the tree will not interfere with the power line while allowing the tree to continue to thrive!