

SCOTTS VALLEY

# SV unveils renovation project

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Nonprofit set up to help add  
lights, bleachers, pool and  
upgrade track and main field

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**SCOTTS VALLEY »** After holding its home football games on Saturday afternoons for more than a decade, Scotts Valley High School has plans to join the Friday night lights party.

Corbett Wright, one of 20 committee members of the Scotts Valley Sports Complex — a nonprofit organization committed to having a state-of-the-art sports stadium and aquatic center built at Scotts Valley High — confirmed fundraising has begun for its proposed \$9.25 million four-phase project, which begins with the installation of stadium lights.

Several committee members said that begin-

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## SCOTTS VALLEY SPORTS COMPLEX

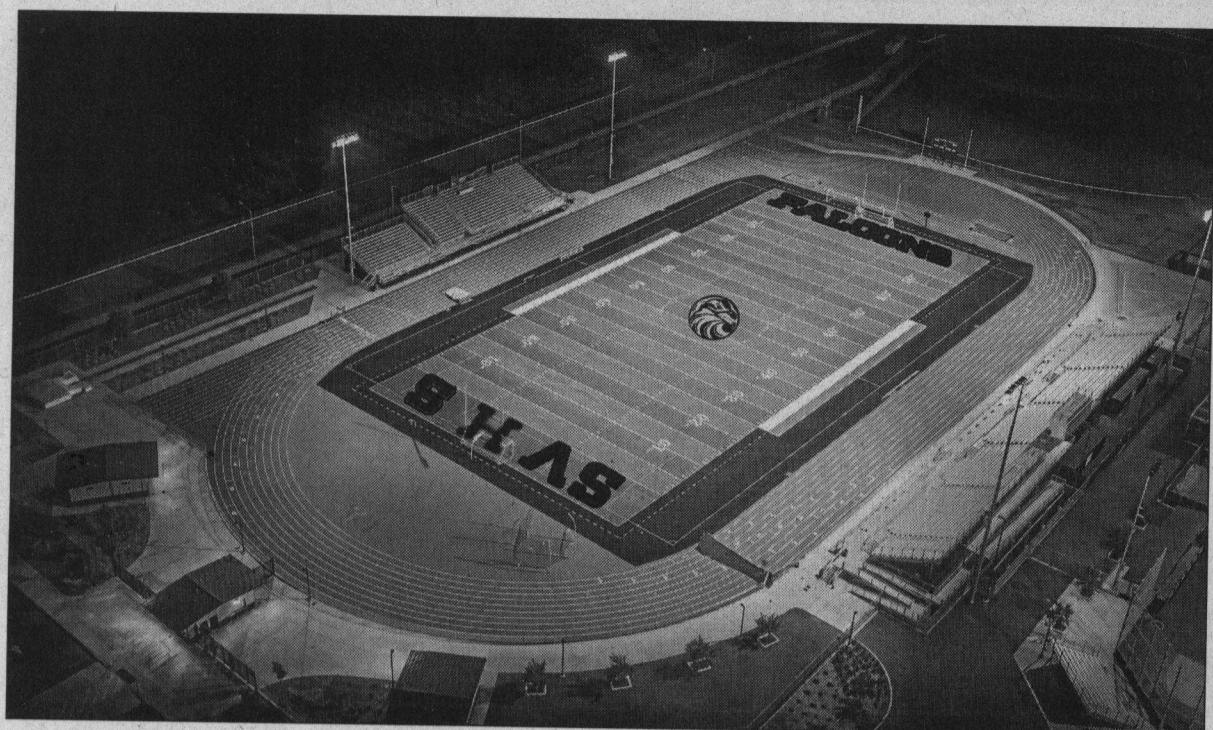
### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

**Phase I:** Stadium lighting, including four candles for the main field and a double mount for the main practice field. Proposed cost: \$750,000.

**Phase II:** Bleacher seating for both home and guest spectators. Proposed cost: \$1.5 million.

**Phase III:** Synthetic turf field, all-weather track with and surrounding features to accommodate all track and field events, outbuildings for ticket sales, food and beverage vending and a press box. Proposed cost: \$2.5 million.

**Phase IV:** An aquatic center that includes a 25-yard, 10-lane lap pool, spectator seating, showers and bathrooms. Proposed cost: \$4.5 million.



CONTRIBUTED BY MUSCO LIGHTING AND DENISE HITZEMAN

A field rendering of Scotts Valley High's proposed \$9.25 million Scotts Valley Sports Complex. First on the list of the four-phase project is the installation of stadium lights.

## Renovation

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ning upgrades with stadium lighting will put the project in the spotlight and let the community know that they're serious about accomplishing the goal.

If things go to plan, the Falcons' football team will be playing under permanent lights this fall.

"It's kind of a done deal," Wright said of the preliminary process. "But we still have to raise money, and there's a lot of money to be raised."

Stadium lighting for the main field and practice field will cost an estimated \$750,000.

Phase II, bleacher seating for both home and guest spectators, will cost \$1.5 million. Phase III renovations include a synthetic turf field, all-weather track and surrounding features to accommodate all track and field events, outbuildings for ticket sales, food and beverage vending and a press box. It carries a \$2.5 million price tag. Phase IV is a \$4.5 million aquatic center that includes a 25-yard, 10-lane lap pool, spectator seating, showers and bathrooms.

"We've had a lot of good athletes on a subpar facility," said Falcons athletic director Louie Walters. "Our student-athletes deserve it. They need it. ... I think the community will rally around it and make it happen."

### Turn on the lights

A football stadium with lights, Walters said, was in the initial blueprint for the school when it was built in 1999, but funds were exhausted to complete the plan.

"I've only had one home game under the lights," standout tight end and linebacker Tanner Spence said of last season, when the team brought in portable lights for homecoming. "It's a totally different atmosphere. I'm excited for it."

Walters said the project will benefit more than the athletes.

"I think the goal is for the community to walk the track, to swim in pool. It's for everybody. ... And we want to host some CCS (Central Coast Section) games."

In addition to the foot-

ball program, soccer and lacrosse will play a handful of night games, as well. Several youth sports programs in the community practice on the Falcons' campus, too.

The concept of the project was approved by the Scotts Valley Board of Trustees in January.

"It's a very practical approach," said Penny Weaver, superintendent of Scotts Valley Unified School District, said of the four-phase plan, which will take several years to complete. "Until the Division of State Architecture approves it, it's just a concept."

The next hurdle is raising the money.

When that's done, the lights will go in. Plans call for the main field to be illuminated by four candles, with two 80-foot standards on the visitors' sideline and two 70-foot standards on the home side. One double mount will be used to light the main practice field.

### Raising funds

Scotts Valley Sports Complex has raised close to \$100,000 and has several other donors interested in helping. They have set up a website — supportsvsc.org — as one avenue to procure donations. It is expected to be able to accept donations in a week.

"We have commitments from various sources," Wright said, "some are solid and others are loose commitments."

"We're anticipating we'll be able to raise the money and begin this summer. We're on track still. If we don't, we'll get them the following year."

The Scotts Valley school board also approved hiring a consultant in February. Fees to do so were donated by the Falcon Club, which funds uniforms, coaches, officials and travel expenses for all Scotts Valley High sports.

The stadium lighting plan calls for minimal light spillage to surrounding neighbors and energy efficient bulbs. A meeting was held March 12 to address concerns over the proposed lighting, which will be installed by Musco Lighting, based in Oskaloosa, Iowa, and potential traffic issues. Every residence on Deerfield Drive and Casa Way — the two closest neighborhoods to the hillside campus — received a mailed notification of the meeting

to address their concerns and receive feedback. Another meeting is slated for 6 p.m. April 22.

"I don't have a problem with it, but I'm an ex-coach," said Bill Hotchkiss, who lives across the street from Scotts Valley High on Deerfield Drive and has a direct line of sight of the football field. "I think it'll be a help for the community. A lot of people use that facility other than Scotts Valley athletics. ... But a lot of people have the not-in-my-neighborhood attitude. It was the same way when the school was being built. It's a mixed bag here."

### Not fans of project

Robert and TJ Hull, who also lives on Deerfield and have 10-year-old twins, aren't complete fans of the project.

"We're not happy with it," TJ said.

The couple's concern is excess noise that will prevent their children from falling asleep and light spillage reaching their master bedroom.

"The elevation change puts the light right on us," said Robert, an employee in the tech industry. "Initially, I'm against it."

That said, he hopes the addition of lights will help reduce a number of delinquent activities that take place in the parking lot during early morning hours.

The Hulls contend that they already have light spillage on the front side of their home from Siltanen Park, which is situated on the other side of a 130-acre space preserve that initially featured several endangered native plants and insects, including the Ohlone tiger beetle. Environmental impact reports conducted in 1999, 2000, and '01 showed the beetle to no longer be on the preserve, which has allowed the Falcons to host a handful of night games with portable light fixtures.

Robert attended the first community meeting and said he was comforted by the notion that his home and others in the area won't be affected by light spillage.

"There's very little spillage," said Wright, a real estate developer and broker who is handling state documentation, planning and implementation. "It's not like the old-school floodlights. It's much more focused on the field of play

and 40 percent more efficient than the ones a couple of years ago."

There will be a total of 65 to 70 standard metal-halide lamps on the four standards.

Mike Smith, the appointed representative for the school district, helped put on a power point presentation at the March meeting to ease neighbors' worries.

"One candle is like a full moon," he said of the new lights. "On the field, there are 50 candles per square foot. At the track there are five, at 100 feet off the field it's .20. And at 150 feet it's zip. It's dark. It doesn't even get out of the parking lot."

The Falcons played their first night home game under portable lights in 2004 and continued to do so for its homecoming game every year since. They've held night games twice in a season on two occasions.

The addition of lights will be beneficial for the Falcons Club and, in return, all the sports on campus, Walters said, noting the average gate for a day game is \$2,000, but it increases to \$8,000-\$10,000 for night games, depending on the opponent.

### Money for club

According to the Scotts Valley Sport Complex, lights will boost income for the Falcon Club an estimated \$20,000-\$25,000 annually.

"It's a huge plus for the Falcon Club," Walters said. "They pay for all the sports. You increase the gate and it's gonna help pay the bills."

Of the 10 high school football teams in Santa Cruz County, Scotts Valley is one of four programs without permanent lights for its on-campus field, joining Harbor, San Lorenzo Valley and St. Francis. Pajaro Valley, which doesn't have a football field, plays night games at Watsonville. In recent years, St. Francis has played its home night games at Cabrillo College.

Scotts Valley, which has played nonleague games in Texas four times, hosted Texas' Arlington Heights in a night game at Cabrillo last season.

"It's going to go in increments," Smith said of the project and purposely starting with lights. "We wanted to get the biggest bang out of it. The best way to do it was lights, Friday night lights. And I agree with it."