

# BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Markus Fromherz, BPA President



Over the summer the BPA ran a survey of the Barron Park neighborhood about interests and priorities in the community. We got a wonderful response.

172 people filled out the survey. The number does not describe the amount of write-in comments, though. In this column, I'd like to summarize the responses and comments. As I write this, the board still has to meet and discuss them. We will report on the board's response at a future time.

First, there is strong support for the BPA's activities. A great majority of the respondents find the annual meeting, May Fete, and casual/cultural gatherings important. There are good ideas on how to improve some of them and what other events to organize. For example, how about a teen event? There is also near-universal support for and interest in the newsletter, website, and email lists. The responses on general activities and interests were more differentiated and will help us understand where to put our energy and look for help. Emergency preparedness scores very high, while the ratings of the other interests (e.g., babysitter list, senior activities) reflect the local demographics.

We asked about a number of safety, livability, and environmental concerns. All safety issues rate high, with the relative exception of crime. Some people would like to see more sidewalks, others fewer bumps

on their roads. There is strong support for cycling, but it is recognized that there are a good number of unsafe drivers and unsafe cyclists in the neighborhood. All livability concerns score high, especially (and not surprisingly) housing density, building codes, Barron Park's rural character, and traffic. However, respondents have diverse ideas about how to address these concerns. On shuttles: "I want to see much more public transit and shuttles." / "Keep shuttles out." On sidewalks: The desire for more sidewalks comes up repeatedly, but others want to keep the streets unchanged. On CPI: "I really value that we can speak as one voice through the BPA on the CPI site issues." / "The BPA has been noticeably absent in helping Chimalus Drive residents." (Notice that several BPA board members and residents have provided detailed evaluations and recommendations that have clearly influenced city staff dealing with the issue. Some respondents seemed unaware of such valuable contributions.)

People are also divided on the role of the Barron Park Association. Some want the BPA to take an even more active role in addressing these issues, while others think the board is too activist and anti-change and want it to stay out of politics. The comments remind us that not everyone is against increasing housing density, for example, if it can be done in a reasonable way. Yes, many are siding with this senti-

ment: "Population density will destroy this area. Barron Park will be the only quiet, graceful, safe place for families to live in peace. Stop the madness!" But a noticeable number of respondents expressed this opinion: "The number one problem in Palo Alto is the shortage of affordable housing. That should trump all other concerns." As one person wrote, "There are many different points of view in the community." It is an ongoing challenge for the BPA to represent all residents in these matters.

To my delight, there is quite a bit of interest in a Barron Park community center. What would it be like to have a place with meeting rooms, a BBQ patio, perhaps even a swimming pool in Barron Park? A sentiment by more than one respondent was, "This would be AWESOME to have here in the neighborhood! I don't know where we would put it—but I would LOVE it if we had such a place!" While not everyone agrees there is a need, there are many ideas for location and features.

We also got several pages worth of comments on our request for the top five items of priority for the BPA. I can't possibly do them justice here, and many fall into the hot topics mentioned previously. As intended, the responses will help us prioritize our efforts. There are many ideas we will have to pass on to the city or county. Clearly, all residents like this neighborhood and would like the BPA to foster community and preserve livability. One respondent reminds us to "Make Barron Park more friendly AGAIN—know, greet and help your neighbors."

As you have seen in my recent newsletter column, the BPA board has been quite active in many of these concerns. Most of

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the work happens outside board meetings and often out of sight, e.g., when Nancy Hamilton and Patrick Coyne spend countless hours assembling the newsletter, Richard Elder manages the mailing lists daily, Lydia Kou prepares for a multifaceted movie in the park evening, and many board members attend regular housing development, traffic, CPI, and Palo Alto Neighborhoods meetings.

However, it is important to remember that the BPA is not a separate entity with paid staff. You are the BPA. The BPA is a group of neighbors volunteering to get things done, and we are all volunteers with families and day jobs. So if something is important to you, please join the board and contribute. More community services via the BPA are very much needed and appreciated.

Looking for ideas? Emergency preparedness got a 95% importance rating, but we need a new chair! Housing development appears in every other comment, but we just lost our housing chair to the startup life. There are votes to revive social meetings like the holiday party or the welcoming party, but we need those caring people to organize them. The community needs you!

Thanks again for your input to the BPA. Expect to hear more from the board about priorities based on this survey, and in the meantime consider volunteering for the BPA and working on one of those important issues.

# What is happening with Buena Vista?

Winter Dellenbach, Friends of Buena Vista (fobv.org)

A dynamic 3-night, mid-May legal hearing highlighted the competing property rights of the landowner and resident homeowners. The legal issue to be decided was if the property owner's Relocation Plan for residents was adequate to compensate for loss of homes and property, and if it made relocation to a comparable community actually possible. The lawyers cited law and questioned expert witnesses about the cost of replacing mobile homes, housing prices, how the value of residents' property was determined, and the impact on Buena Vista children of losing their good schools. Testimony from residents and the public was given (see link to decision, below).

The Hearing Officer (an east Bay attorney) recently issued a tentative decision, finding the owner's Relocation Plan and compensation adequate (many would disagree). Though some recent news headlines state this decision "paves the way... to closure," it does not – the road to closure is full of potholes and the process will continue to slowly roll on to its unknown conclusion that may or may not result in residents leaving.

At the least, a more reasoned, analytical, and evidence-based decision was anticipated, but the hearing is another stop along the way of a lengthy process that will sometimes hearten and sometimes disappoint.

In the meantime, the huge developer

Prometheus Real Estate Group ended its dream, at least for now, to build 180 apartments, none affordable.

What's next? The Hearing Officer will issue a final decision, probably in the fall. It may be appealed to our City Council - the first and possibly last time the city would formally consider any aspect of Buena Vista. This appeal, if it happens, will be unique in our history. And the appeal may not be the end.

Candidates for November's election should be asked: What will you do if elected to prevent Palo Alto residents being forced from their homes, schools, and jobs by redevelopment? What is your plan to preserve or replace, if lost, existing affordable housing? What value does our economic and ethnic diversity have for Palo Alto and what will you do to preserve and support it?

Hearing Officer's tentative decision:  
<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/43616>

**BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**

Barron Park Association  
724 Barron Avenue  
Palo Alto, California 94306

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## SENIOR LUNCHESES

By Bob Frost

BP Senior Lunches are on the Second Tuesday of Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct. and Dec., i.e. every other month. They start at 1:00 p.m. at a neighborhood restaurant or in Bol Park in June and August. Christmas lunch is also at 1:00 p.m. and so far always at Cibo's where they provide us with a large private room. We also have music that day: either a couple of neighborhood accordion players or a choral group.

Anyone interested please contact Bob Frost: [bobfrost34@gmail.com](mailto:bobfrost34@gmail.com) or phone 493-8272. Provide your email and/or phone number. I will add you either to our email list or phone list as you desire.

**...AND WE'RE BACK**  
Saturday, February 28, 2015



**IT'S SERIOUS FUN**  
...AND STILL BENEFITTING our neighborhood schools: Terman, Gunn, Juana Briones, and Barron Park. For more info, [juanarun2015@gmail.com](mailto:juanarun2015@gmail.com)

## EMAIL LISTS

The BPA has four email lists: bpa-news, bpa-issues, bpa-misc and bpa-jobpostings. They are hosted at Google Groups. To join, go to the BPA Website: [BPAlpaloalto.org](http://BPAlpaloalto.org) and click on the tab "BPA Email Lists." This provides an easy means to subscribe, and information about the lists.

# Barron Park Association's Neighborhood Movie Night under the stars!

Thanks to Lydia Kou and the many volunteers, Movie Night on Friday, August 22, was again a great success! The movie was Disney's "Frozen."

Support for the Donkeys! Photos with the Niner and Perry were exchanged for small donations to them.

Refreshments and desserts supporting good causes were provided by Barron Park neighborhood groups: ice cream sandwiches from CREAM—high school students fundraising for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society; hot chocolate and cupcakes—middle school student fundraising for Breast Cancer Fund; popcorn—Barron Park Association for Donkey Fund.

The Oaxacan Kitchen sold extremely popular Mexican fare.

From Lydia:

I want to give great "Thanks" to the organizers and coordinators for making last night's movie night an amazing success!

My deepest gratitude to:

Don Anderson—for managing the event

Annette Puskarich—for the idea of involving neighborhood groups who wished to

fundraise for a good cause and coordinating the effort.

Gwen Luce—for putting posters on the A-frames and then placing them out in the neighborhood.

Fred Hirsch—for delivering bales of straw for donkey portrait taking.

John King, Chris Purvis, Ken Dauber and Leah—for helping with operating the popcorn machine and providing popcorn to the movie goers.

John St. Clair III—for managing event logistics.

Steven Parkes and Diana Wingfield for bringing the donkeys to the park (they were so feisty last night, it was fun to see).

Bob Frost for arranging and coordinating for the donkeys to come.

To Jim Colton, tremendous thanks for being our photographer, Mary Jo Colton for assisting in all areas and Green Acres II residents! It is so great to have our neighboring neighbors contributing and participating in this event.

What a community...I am very proud to be a part of it.



Photographs by Jim Colton

# GROCERY OUTLET AT ALMA VILLAGE

by Bob Moss

The approval of redevelopment at Alma Village requires that there be a grocery store. None of the 39 townhouses could be occupied until the grocer opened. In November 2012 Miki's Market opened there run by an experienced grocer, but though it was a nice store with helpful staff, prices were high, and customers scarce, so it shut down in April 2013. This year it was replaced by Grocery Outlet. We have been shopping at the Grocery Outlet in Redwood City for many years, so we are familiar with the store.

The Redwood City store is larger, and owned by Grocery Outlet. The Alma Village store is smaller and is run by a franchisee. The size of the store is limited

to 18,000 sq. ft. due to a deed restriction. The Redwood City store has sales every second and fourth Thursday when seniors get 10% off their purchases. The operator at Alma Plaza doesn't participate in this promotion.

Much of the stock is surplus or unsold items from other grocers or food vendors. Prices for almost everything at Grocery Outlet are lower than at other local groceries like Safeway and Piazza's. They have signs on shelves claiming prices for the item elsewhere are far higher than at Grocery Outlet, for example \$1 vs. \$2.99 elsewhere. Take those comparisons with a grain of salt. The comparative prices apparently are at high priced markets, not

stores like Costco. When I have been able to make comparisons I found Grocery Outlet prices tended to be 10% to 25% lower, depending on the item, although occasionally the discount was higher than 35%. Milk was about the same at Grocery Outlet and Costco recently. Some foods are almost always in stock; others come and go, depending on what is available from their suppliers. This has some advantages, as we often find things at Grocery Outlet that weren't there at our last visit. Of course it also means something we got before no longer is there. We usually find the product we are looking for, but maybe it won't be the brand we usually buy.

A neighbor said she has shopped at our

# El Camino Business Update, August 2014

By Bob Moss

There continue to be a few changes in occupancy on El Camino between Adobe Creek and Page Mill since my last report in May. Here are some of the changes in the area this year.

Comfort Keeper at 3229 was replaced by King Hand Acupuncture.

Orthopedic Sports Medicine at 3401 quietly closed early this year and the site is vacant.

The store at 3535 that was called Hair Design modified the name to Lovely Hair Salon.

Also changing its name is the store at 3773 from Kukkiwon Taekwonda to Palo Alto Martial Arts.

The Hair & Nails shop at 3777 now is called Famous Beauty Shop.

The former Stanford Pet Clinic site at 4111 recently opened as Palo Alto Animal Hospital. VCA Hospital, which occupied the site for a while, moved to 3944.

The Avant senior housing at 4041A El Camino Way replaced a small group of shops. They are connected to Palo Alto Commons senior housing next door, and opened May 1.

The retail stores at Meadow and El Camino Way that used to be anchored by Su Hong

until they moved out more than four years ago is being modified to housing. Work has been going on since late last year and seems to have progressed significantly. This no longer is a retail site so I deleted it from the overall available building and vacant sites categories, which eliminated vacancies on El Camino Way.

Vacancy rates under 5% are considered essentially full occupancy.

There are only three vacancies on the Barron Park side, totaling less than 4400 sq. ft. They are the former Cross Fit site at 4050, the former liquor store at 3866 and Chale-taco at 3850.

The former Compadres site at 3877 was approved for redevelopment as a mixed

use site with ground floor retail and housing above, wrapping around the rear to Curtner. No work is being done on the site yet. The project isn't likely to be completed until late 2015 or 2016.

The massive PC project proposed for 2785 El Camino at the VTA parking lot was put on hold as the Council now recognizes that the PC process isn't working and needs correction. The Planning & Transportation Commission has had two study sessions on the topic, and agreed that the PC process needs modifications, but specific changes to the ordinance weren't detailed. It is likely that any PC proposals won't be discussed seriously until after the Council election in November and seating of at least two new councilmembers.

## Vacancy rates

	Nov. 2013	May 2014	Aug. 2014
El Camino on Ventura Side	11.79%	10.0%	10.0%
El Camino on Barron Park Side	0.97%	0.97%	0.97%
El Camino Way	16.26%	17.39%	0.0%
Total Vacancy including El Camino Way	6.29%	5.58%	4.56%

Grocery Outlet several times, and some of the food she checked was within a day or two of the sell-by date. The use-by date is later than the sell-by date, so if used quickly it would still be usable. Nevertheless it's a good idea to check expiration and sell-by dates on packages just to be sure.

Apparently our Grocery Outlet isn't very popular. When we shop there it isn't crowded, we can almost always park right in front of the store, and there is only one checker. Lines at that one checker have rarely been very long. Our experience with Grocery Outlet both in Redwood City and Alma Village has been positive. We shop at the Alma Village Grocery Outlet periodically, but when we have a long shopping list we wait until the second or fourth Thursday and shop at the Redwood City Grocery Outlet and get the 10% discount.

If you haven't tried the Grocery Outlet at Alma Village it's worth shopping there a few times to see if they carry what you want, and to compare prices with what you pay now at your current grocer.

## Marjorie Roberson Browning Larsen

Marjorie Roberson Browning Larsen, a 50+ year resident of Barron Park, passed away peacefully on Friday, September 5. She celebrated her 98th birthday on July 25th.

We are so grateful to the many wonderful neighbors and friends that have been so supportive and helpful over the years.

Memorial services are pending. An article about her life will appear in the next issue of the Barron Park Association newsletter.

—Wade Larsen and Susan Larsen Ward

## Help Support the Barron Park Donkeys!



Photo by Bernard Andre

All those who care about Perry and Niner seek to guarantee their proper on-going care and shelter, as well as to ensure that funds will be available for health concerns as the donkeys age. The handlers hope that those generous neighbors who have contributed in the past will consider increasing their support this year. Contributions for the donkeys' care may be sent to: The Palo Alto Donkey Project, ACTERRA (Action for a Sustain-

able Earth), 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303-4303. The check *must* be made out to "ACTERRA-Palo Alto Donkey Fund." All of the above must be included. For further information about making a contribution on behalf of the donkeys, or if you would like information about how to become one of the volunteer donkey handlers, please call Bob Frost, 493-8272 or email at [bobfrost34@yahoo.com](mailto:bobfrost34@yahoo.com), or go to [BarronParkDonkeys.org](http://BarronParkDonkeys.org).

### BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Markus Fromherz, President

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*Membership:* Lisa Berkowitz Landers

*Neighborhood Safety & Preparedness:*

vacant

*Newsletter:* Nancy Hamilton

*Seniors Lunch:* Bob Frost

*Traffic & Streets:* vacant

*Welcoming:* Gwen Luce



BPA meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of most months at 7:15 p.m.

E-mail [President@BPAPaloalto.org](mailto:President@BPAPaloalto.org)  
for location

[www.BPAPaloalto.org](http://www.BPAPaloalto.org)

# GOOD OLDE DAYS

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

## Before Radio and the Movies Got Married

There once was a time, before King Radio and Queen Movies got married, when the electronic and photographic worlds lived next door but the one hardly knew the other. Both worlds were new and not fully developed, mere embryos of what they would be when they matured and came together. In their infancy, they both vied for the attention and the leisure time of the people who rather suddenly had more time on their hands and money to spend than they had ever had before.

## It was 1946 to 1949, after The War

It was after *The War*. Not *The Great War*, much less *The War to End All Wars*. No, this was after World War Two, which for many people and for many years was simply “The War,” as if no other of note had ever taken place. The surviving veterans of *The War* came home, found jobs, married their sweethearts, lit off the Baby Boom, and spread out into burgeoning suburbs like Palo Alto. Here in Barron Park, the apricot, pear and prune orchards came tumbling down and small three-bedroom one-bath homes financed by the G.I. Bill sprang up in their stead. All these young people wanted entertainment, wanted desperately for the world to be fun and amusing once more, after the long, dreary and frightening years of the Great Depression and *The War*.

Photography brought them the Movies, already familiar albeit greatly changed since the silence and simple black and white days of their infancy and adolescence. Sound had completely replaced the silent films, and color had become dominant, but the wide screen and Dolby sound were still in the future. The “talkies” had spawned a new generation of stars who had replaced the mime actors of silent film days. A post-war innovation was the new drive-in theaters that suddenly appeared between the tracts of look-alike homes and strip “shopping centers.”

## A New Habit

Movie-going had become an addiction during the restricted times of gas rationing

and victory gardening. Almost everyone went at least once a week and many, twice or even three times. Theaters routinely ran “double features” (usually one “good” movie with at least one star actor or actress, paired with a “B” film with an unknown cast). You came in whenever it was convenient for you to do so, the ushers with flashlights helped you find empty seats somewhere, and you left when your companion would lean over and whisper in your ear “I think this is where we came in...” Movie-goers were used to the constant interruptions.

The movies usually changed twice a week, on Monday and Friday, except for very popular films that might show at the same theater for a week, or, exceptionally, even longer. There were many theaters but no multiplexes yet, and the distributors made sure that a good film was available somewhere in your area for weeks, so you didn’t have to miss it just because you were otherwise busy on the one weekend when it played at your neighborhood movie house. In 1946, the average theater charged 15 cents for adults, 10 cents for children, 25 cents for “Loge” seats (wider, plusher seats in the last two or three rows against the back wall). By 1949 most prices had crept up to 15, 15 and 50 cents, respectively. Kids could go to Saturday morning shows for a nickel or a dime.

## Lots of Choices

In the immediate post-war period of 1946–49, John and Mary Doe, citizens of Barron Park, had more than a dozen standard and a least two drive-in theaters within easy reach to choose from. Many of our neighboring towns had two theaters each. To the north in San Mateo, there were the Fox San Mateo, the Fox Baywood and the Manor. Then there were the Fox San Carlos, the Laurel (which advertised itself as “The Luxury Theater”), the Peninsula and the Broadway in Burlingame, the Fox Redwood and the Fox Sequoia (both in Redwood City, of course), and the Park in Menlo Park. In Palo Alto there were the Stanford Theater and the Varsity on University Avenue and the Mayfield Theater in the old Mayfield District on California Avenue (the theater was later known as the

Fine Arts). South of us the land was still mostly in farms and orchards, but there was the Mountain View Theater on Castro.

## Drive-In Dating

Drive-in theaters had become wildly popular by 1949. Our local ones included the Starlite in Belmont and the Peninsula in Mountain View (located roughly where the Century Cinema 16 multiplex is now). People really liked the drive-ins for the comfortable seats where you could stretch out, and especially for the semi-privacy provided by your car (especially important for teen- and college-age dating). If you were married with kids, you could bring yours and they could sleep if they were too young to enjoy the movie.

## Movie Hits 1946–49

Some excellent movies came out of Hollywood in this period. In 1946 *The Best Years of Our Lives* won best picture, and also won Oscars for best actor (Fredric March), best supporting actor and best director (see illustration A). It was a story of three veterans of The War who return home and

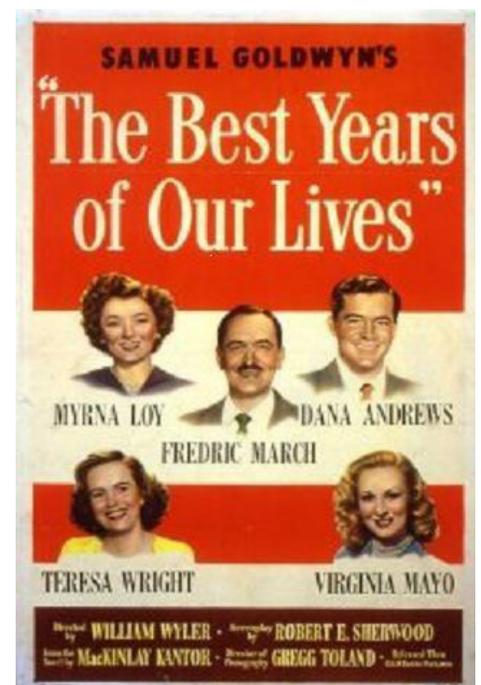


Illustration A: Movie poster for *The Best Years of Our Lives* (Oscar winner—best picture, 1946)



bought one as soon as they could when civilian production controls were lifted and new consoles became available in 1946.

**Advent of the “45s”**

About 1948, smaller vinyl discs designed to be played at 45 rpm made “portable” record players available and greatly increased the sales of popular songs and jazz recordings. The gift of choice for teen-agers, battery operated versions were soon heard even at the beach. But the big use was at home—now Dad could listen to classical or big-band swing in the living room while Mom did handwork, but the teen-ager could listen to popular singers or jazz in the privacy of her own bedroom.

**Hit Songs and Singles of the Period**

And what did both the teen-agers and young adults listen to? Unsurprisingly, many of the top hit records of 1946–1949 are somewhat familiar even to young people today. A few have become classics. Wikipedia lists, for 1946; Perry Como’s *Prisoner of Love*, Frank Sinatra’s *Five Minutes More*, Vaughn Monroe’s *Let it Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow!*, Nat King Cole’s (*I Love You*) for *Sentimental Reasons*, and the Ink Spots’ *To Each His Own*. For 1947 the list was Francis Craig’s *Near You*, James Baskett’s *Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah* (from Walt Disney’s movie *Song of the South*), Vaughn

**Box 1: A Dish of Excitement**

In a time before spacewalks, moonshots and cyberspace, when television was still an unrealized dream, the king of imagination was a piece of furniture about the size of a picnic basket in the living room. Every day shortly after sunset, America would pull her chair up to this little box and spend a delightful evening while magically, fiction was made to come alive on programs such as “Escape,” “The Shadow,” “Suspense,” and “The Whistler.” In this way, those who lived during the Golden Age of Radio received a dish of excitement that they have remembered ALL THEIR LIVES.

— Slightly adapted from a *Brief History of Radio Drama in America*, by Don Kismer, [www.balancepublishing.com/golden.htm](http://www.balancepublishing.com/golden.htm)

Monroe’s *Ballerina*, Ted Weems’ *Heartaches* and Perry Como’s *Chi-Baba, Chi-Baba (My Bambino Go to Sleep)*. In 1948 the top hit singles were; Pee Wee Hunt’s *Twelfth Street Rag*, Art Mooney’s *I’m Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover*, Nat King Cole’s *Nature Boy*, Dinah Shore’s *Buttons and Bows*, and Kay Kyser’s *The Woody Woodpecker Song*. In 1949 the top hits were; Vaughn Monroe’s *Ghost*

**Box 2: The Town Named for a Radio Show**

Truth or Consequences is a spa city and county seat of Sierra County, New Mexico. In 2012, the population was 6,411. It is commonly known within New Mexico as “T or C.” It has frequently been noted on lists of unusual place names.

Originally named Hot Springs, the city changed its name to Truth or Consequences, the title of a popular NBC radio program. In 1950, Ralph Edwards, the host of the radio quiz show Truth or Consequences, announced that he would air the program from the first town that renamed itself after the show; Hot Springs won the honor (from Wikipedia).

*Riders in the Sky*, Frankie Laine’s *Mule Train*, Frankie Laine’s *That Lucky Old Sun*, the Andrews Sisters’ *I Can Dream, Can’t I?*, and Gene Autry’s *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*.

**The Main Entertainment**

But, all the 78s and 45s aside, the main form of entertainment at home in those days was listening to the radio. The radio set was usually an integral part of the living room entertainment console (See Illustration D, Box 1, Box 2).

Evening programs were most popular, of course (“prime time” was not a T.V. invention, although the phrase might have been). Most programs were either daily or weekly, and the star actors and actresses were reserved for Friday and Saturday nights—although Sunday nights were big, also. The next several paragraphs of this article present micro-reviews of some top shows in three categories; Drama, Comedy, and a couple of what might be called “Docu-Dramas.”

**Orson Welles as The Shadow**

One of the most famous radio dramas was *The Shadow*, starring Orson Welles as the mysterious crime-stalker (see Illustration E). The show became a mainstay of the Mutual Broadcasting Network for a decade and a half and was one of the most popular programs in radio history. The show’s intro, with its famous catchphrase, “*Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows...*” Historian Frank Brady thought Welles’s voice was perfect for the role. The intro, however, also



Illustration D: 1946 Zenith “The Chippendale” model mahogany radio/turntable console



Illustration E: Orson Welles as The Shadow

called for a sinister chuckle; Welles's effort seemed to Brady "more like an adolescent giggle." You can read the entire article on Wikipedia.

**The Whistler**

According to Wikipedia, *The Whistler* ran from 1942 to 1955. Episodes began with the ominous narration: *I am the Whistler, and I know many things, for I walk by night. I know many strange tales, many secrets hid-*

*den in the hearts of men and women who have stepped into the shadow. I know the nameless terrors of which they dare not speak.*" Those opening words were spoken along with the echo of footsteps and Wilbur Hatch's 13-note theme, whistled weekly by Dorothy Roberts. The stories followed an effective formula in which a person's criminal acts were typically undone by their own stupidity. Ironic twist endings were common, as on the show that most obviously influenced *The Whistler*, *The Shadow*. The Whistler as narrator often commented on the action like a Greek chorus, taunting the criminal from an omniscient perspective. (See Illustration F)

**Other Popular Dramas**

Besides Mutual's *Mercury Theater of the Air* (produced by Orson Welles), there was the *CBS Radio Mystery Theater*. *The Green Hornet* was a popular weekly show, as was *The Fat Man*, *The Cisco Kid*, *Tom Mix*, and *Captain Midnight*. *The Gene Autrey Show* could be classified as either drama or music, since Gene often burst into song during the story. *The Lone Ranger* was an enormously popular weekly with the kids—everyone of that generation in America grew up knowing the rousing "chase" theme from the *William Tell Overture*, which was used as the intro theme. "Hi-Yo Silver, Away, Kemo Sabel!"

**Comedy**

There was an enormous amount of comedy available on network radio. Some of the best shows were *The Jack Benny Show*, *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *Amos 'n' Andy*, *Ozzie and Harriet* and *Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy*. Some of the shows went on to become television hits as well, but many were best only heard, and lost something when seeing was added.

**The Jack Benny Show**

The Jack Benny radio show was enormously popular from 1932 to 1955. Benny's

**Box 3: L.S.M.F.T.**

American Tobacco's Lucky Strike was Jack Benny's longest-lasting radio sponsor, from October, 1944 through the end of his radio series. "Luckies" were the top-selling cigarettes in the U.S. during the 1930s and remained a major brand into the 1960s. Jack's show helped make the Lucky Strike slogan "LSMFT" known to practically all Americans—even the little kids. We all knew it meant "Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco" (NOT "Lord, Save Me From Truman"), nor any of the risqué versions favored by teen-aged boys.



Illustration F: Newspaper Ad for The Whistler



Illustration G: Jack Benny, Mary Livingstone and Eddie Anderson ("Rochester")

**Box 4: The Hooper Ratings**

The C.E.Hooper Company measured radio and television ratings during the "Golden Age" of radio. It was founded in 1935 and provided information on the most popular radio shows of the era. This information was valued by the radio networks NBC, CBS, ABC and Mutual Broadcasting System, as it allowed them to charge advertisers more for a popular show than a less popular one. In 1950 the company was bought by their competitor, A.C. Nielsen, but during the late 1940s "How's your Hooper" was often heard in the industry (modified from Wikipedia).

Here are some of the shows mentioned in this story (and a few others), in the order of their 1948 Hooper ratings;

- 1 - Lux Radio Theater - Drama
- 2 - Fibber McGee and Molly - Comedy
- 3 - Jack Benny - Comedy
- 4 - Walter Winchell - News
- 5 - Bob Hope - Variety
- 6 - Arthur Godfrey - Variety
- 8 - Amos 'n' Andy - Comedy
- 17 - Burns and Allen - Comedy
- 19 - The Fat Man - Drama
- 19 - Bing Crosby (tied) - Music
- 20 - Truth Or Consequences - Game

program evolved from a variety show blending sketch comedy and musical interludes into the situation comedy form we know even now, crafting particular situations and scenarios from the fictionalization of Benny the radio star. Wikipedia states that he was widely recognized as one of the leading American entertainers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (See Box 3 and Box 4).

Benny was assisted by a "straight man" (Mary Livingstone) and by Eddie Anderson, a character actor (as *Rochester*, the Benny's gofer and general factotum). Benny's anguished cry for help with a problem, "*ROCHESTER!*," was one of the traditional laughs. Benny played the role of the penny-pinching miser, insisted on remaining 39 years old on stage despite his actual age, and often (although an accomplished violinist) played the violin—poorly! Benny was known for his comic

timing and ability to get laughs with either a pregnant pause or a single expression, such as his signature exasperated "*WELL!*" (see Illustration G) Benny with Livingstone and Anderson)

In the radio plays, he usually traveled on the (fictional) *Anaheim, Azusa and Cucamonga Railroad*, which occasioned many opportunities for hilarious gags. The conductor's stentorian cry "*All Aboard for ANAHEIM...AZUSA...and CUC... AMONGA!*" was always good for a laugh. I doubt that very many of the radio audience realized that these were real towns in Southern California.

**Fibber McGee and Molly**

*Fibber McGee and Molly* was a radio show that played a major role in determining the full form of what became classic, old-time radio. The series was a pinnacle of American popular culture from its 1935 premiere until its demise in 1959. One of the longest-running comedies in the history of classic radio in the United States, *Fibber McGee and Molly* stood the test of time in many ways, transcending the actual or alleged limitations of its medium, form and concurrent culture (from Wikipedia). The most hilarious gag was when Fibber would go to his closet to get something and Mollie would shout "No, Fibber, No, Don't Open It!, followed by a horrendous crash of booms, bangs, thuds and one final, laugh-provoking tinkle as you imagined Fibber's closet disgorging everything they owned. "Fibber McGee's Closet" became the all-purpose label for any situation where something

was overstuffed beyond common sense.

**Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy**

This show was a Cinderella story. A ventriloquist makes it Big on the Radio?! Try to sell that idea to a network! But Edgar Bergen and his agent did exactly that and his show was a great success almost from the start. Edgar had a smooth, melodious, fairly deep voice and a calm, sensible but mildly sardonic persona. His dummy, Charlie McCarthy, was given a personality at the opposite extreme; loud, brash, rude, sometimes scatter-brained, sometimes pedantic with a sneering attitude toward Edgar. The two made a very effective comic duo (See Illustration H)

Bergen may well have been the all-time best American Ventriloquist until the advent of Terry Fator in the current decade (if you want to catch Terry's act, he has a ten-year, ten million dollar contract with one of the major casinos in Las Vegas).

**"Docu-Dramas"**

This is a sub-category I just made up, to include *You Were There* and *The FBI in Peace and War*; both were popular shows in the late 1940s.

**You Are There**

The radio show *You Are There* ran from 1947 through 1950, then was moved to TV with Walter Cronkite. The episodes of the radio program are dramatic re-enactments of historical events, produced as if a correspondent is there and reporting the news live. The typical episode begins with "live" background coverage of the event as it is unfolding, followed by interviews of the historical figures on the scene. The dialogue is factual and the writers do an excellent job of creating the characters of the historical figures. Creative sound effects, good acting and excellent direction create an exciting and thought-provoking tapestry of history as if YOU ARE THERE.

I personally remember especially the second episode, which was *The Storming of The Bastille*. It seemed astonishingly "real," and was my introduction, at age nine, to the French Revolution. Other notable episodes were *The Assassination of Lincoln*, *Columbus Finds America*, *Sailing of the Mayflower*, *Battle of Gettysburg*, *Philadelphia Declaration of Independence*, and *the Last Day of Pompeii*.

**The FBI in Peace and War**

*The FBI in Peace and War* was a radio crime drama inspired by a book of the same title, and it aired from 1944 through 1958.



**Illustration H: Edgar Bergen and his puppet Charlie McCarthy**

(USA)

# Belmont

## RADIO AM-FM and TELEVISION for 1948

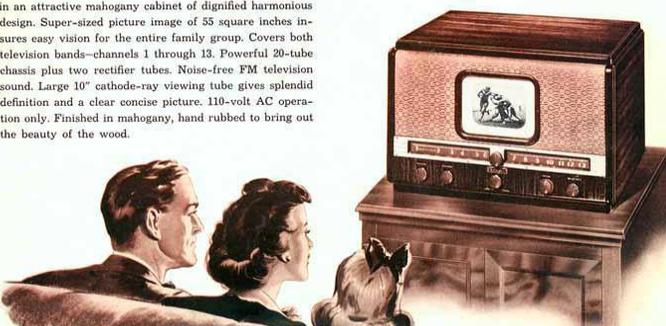


**Model 22A21  
TABLE MODEL TELEVISION RECEIVER**

• This superb table model Television receiver provides the latest developments in Television engineering—brings the joy and pleasure of viewing on-the-spot events to the home. Model 22A21 is a 20-tube (plus two rectifier tubes) Television receiver covering the complete Television band, channels 1 through 13. Noise-free FM television sound. Provides large 7-inch electrostatically deflected picture tube giving exceptionally fine definition and a brilliant, easy-to-view picture. 110-volt AC operation only. Handsome mahogany cabinet. Size: 14½" x 21" x 15".

**Model 22A22 • DELUXE TELEVISION CONSOLE**

• A truly fine television console, bringing the whole world of sports, news events and drama to the home—and housed in an attractive mahogany cabinet of dignified harmonious design. Super-sized picture image of 55 square inches insures easy vision for the entire family group. Covers both television bands—channels 1 through 13. Powerful 20-tube chassis plus two rectifier tubes. Noise-free FM television sound. Large 10" cathode-ray viewing tube gives splendid definition and a clear concise picture. 110-volt AC operation only. Finished in mahogany, hand rubbed to bring out the beauty of the wood.



TVhistory.TV

Illustration I

Its popularity peaked in 1955 (#8 in the Hooper ratings that year), even with the competition from television shows, which was severe by that time. The musical theme was the March from Prokoviev's *The Love for Three Oranges*, followed by a chant of L-A-V-A, L-A-V-A, in reference to the show's sponsor being Lava soap. Lava soap (IMHO) was a dreadful dirty-grey looking concoction made from ground up volcanic pumice and lye soap that was extremely effective in removing ground-in grease and dirt from your hands but felt like it took a layer of skin with it.

### 1948—The Year Everything Started to Change

All of a sudden, in 1948, you began to see Television in storefronts in every town and shopping center—hardware stores, radio stores, furniture stores all saw the sales potential in placing a TV set in their front window and turning it on during broadcasting hours (see Illustration I).

Of course, this only happened in cities

where there was at least one functioning TV station. In 1948, if I remember right, Los Angeles had two stations and New York may have had three. The menu was fairly limited at first—some popular shows jumped over from radio at the first opportunity, but others, frankly, were funnier (or scarier) if you couldn't see the actors. It was analogous to the earlier conversion from silent films to the "talkies." There was a lot of wrestling—at first, this was the only sport televised. Wikipedia says that the Texaco Star Theater starring Milton Berle "was largely credited with driving American television set sales heavily." Children's puppet programs like *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* had instant popularity (See Box 5)

### A Quiet Revolution

There was another new entertainment product that hit the stores in 1948—the



**GENERAL ELECTRIC**

General Electric Battery Set C8L. Gracefully styled Plastic Cabinet with five tubes. Two band reception. Tuning range 50 to 1700 kilocycles. Short wave includes 16, 19, 25, 31, 40 and 49 metre bands. Five-inch permanent magnet speaker. Easy-to-read clock-like dial. Equipped with phonograph connection. Size of cabinet about 7-3/16 inches high by 10-5/16 inches wide by 7-3/8 inches deep.

95-405. Price, delivered. (without batteries)..... **65.00**  
95-407. Price, with Viking A and B Battery, delivered.... **72.95**

Illustration J: 1948 General Electric portable battery-operated radio

### Box 5: Local T.V. Schedule March 3, 1949

Television programming for the day began about 6:45 pm and ran until 10:00 pm;

6:45 - Test pattern and announcements

7:00 - NBC: *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* (children's puppet show)

7:30 - To be arranged

7:45 - Tele Newsreel (presumably like the MovieTone newsreels in the movie theaters)

8:00 - NBC Star Theater - Milton Berle (a variety and comedy show)

9:00 - Washington, The Evergreen State (a travelogue??)

9:30 - NBC: Ripley's "Believe It or Not"

Believe it or not, there were no news-casts or sports.

It was a different world.

(From the *Palo Alto Times*)

portable radio (See Illustration J). General Electric offered a radio in a "Gracefully styled Plastic Cabinet with live tubes." Both "regular" radio and shortwave broadcasts could be received. It had a five-inch speaker, and easy-to-read clock-like (analog) dial for tuning and was equipped with a phonograph connection. It was 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches high by 10<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches wide and 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches deep—a convenient size to take to the park or beach. It was powered by Vice-roy A and B batteries, for only \$72.95 delivered (about \$150–200 in today's money). This was the precursor of the transistor radio and all its progeny since.

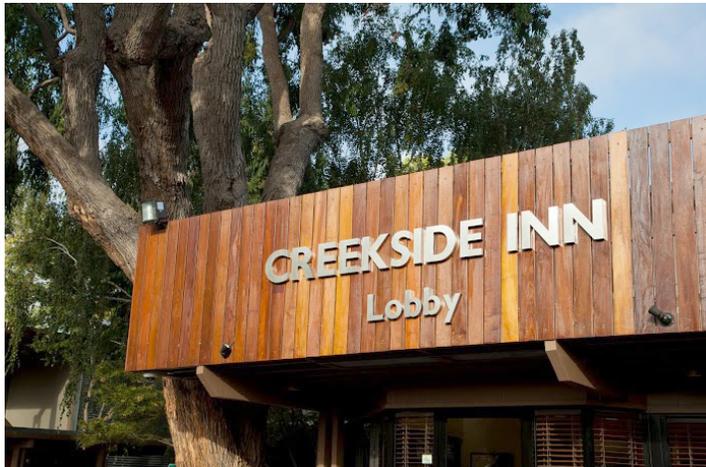
### A Trip Down Memory Lane

Researching and writing this story has been a trip down memory lane for me—as I am certain it will be for some of the readers. For the bulk of the readers, I hope this gave you a sense of how your parents and grandparents were entertained, whether they lived in Barron Park or elsewhere.

Maybe you will look at your iPad in a new light. If you have questions, or want to tell us about your favorite radio show, contact me at: Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian, 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto CA 94306, 650-493-0689, or [dgrahampaca@gmail.com](mailto:dgrahampaca@gmail.com).

# C R E E K S I D E I N N

BPA's Markus Fromherz interviews Tiffany Mah, Creekside Inn Sales Manager



We have a diverse clientele ranging from families, sports teams, and tech employees. The changes we have seen over the years are mostly in demand. The local companies bringing jobs and travel to the area have not let up, which we are grateful for.

**What are some of your most interesting features or offers?**

We pride ourselves on our green certifications. We are a participant in the CA Green Lodging Program. We also purchase 36,000 kilowatt hours of renewable energy annually through Palo Alto Green, the nation's #1 municipal renewable energy program. We also feature electric car charging stations. Our hotel shuttles are hybrid vehicles.

**Do you have any special offers for the neighborhood?**

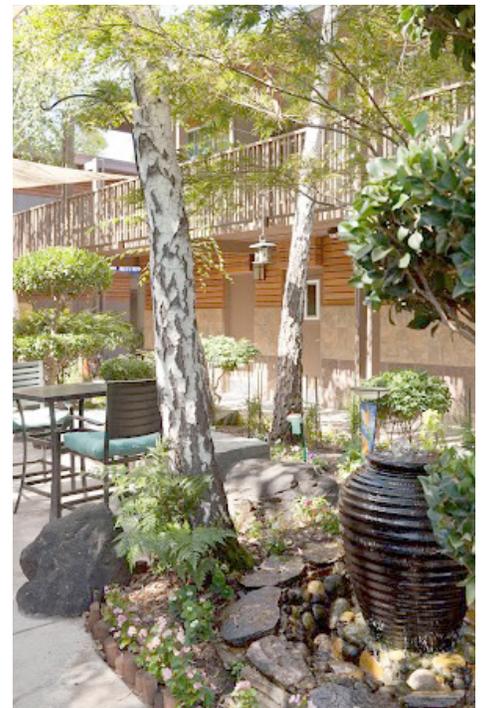
Not currently, but perhaps around the holidays we will run a promotion. Please feel free to contact the Sales office for any groups of 10 rooms or more.

**What else do you want Barron Park to know about your business?**

That we are happy to host their visiting families and friends. We also have newly renovated meeting space for any events or business meetings they have a need for.

**How can neighbors find out more about you?**

Please visit our website [creekside-inn.com](http://creekside-inn.com), our Facebook page or just stop by to see the property.



**Please tell us a bit about the Creekside Inn and its history.**

Our hotel was built in 1955 and at one point was a Flamingo Motor Lodge and then Best Western before becoming a part of Greystone Hotels. Guests constantly come back with memories of how it was before.

**What services do you offer?**

We offer complimentary Wi-Fi, parking, heated outdoor pool, 24-hour fitness center, and a business center to stay connected. You can also hop on the free shuttle to Stanford University and Palo Alto destinations.

**Who is your clientele and what changes have you seen over the years?**



# BPA GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS

In July the BPA conducted a newsletter and online survey asking the questions below. The cutoff date was July 30th. Here is a portion of the final results.

We don't have room in this newsletter to publish all comments. To view all unedited replies and comments, please see our website: [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)—while you're

at it, you might visit some of our archived newsletters and "search" the topics about which you are interested or concerned.  
—Editor: [njh.bpa@gmail.com](mailto:njh.bpa@gmail.com)

## 1. Barron Park Community Activities

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
Movie Night in Bol Park	15.43% (25 responses)	42.59% (69)	30.86% (50)	11.11% (18)	162
May Fete	43.03% (71)	41.82% (69)	10.91% (18)	4.24% (7)	165
Annual Meeting	31.33% (52)	46.99% (78)	13.86% (23)	7.83% (13)	166
Casual/Cultural Gatherings	27.16% (44)	55.56% (90)	8.02% (13)	9.26% (15)	162

**Sampling of Comments:** To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

Some focus on gatherings for adults without children e.g., food gatherings, wine tastings, poetry readings by local authors etc. ■ I only put moderately important for the community activities in that I am not attached to one particular activity. However, I think having a few annual fun events—be it movie nights, BBQs, or gatherings are very important to fostering a positive relationships, spirit, and sense of belonging and connectedness within the neighborhood. I don't often attend, but I love that they exist. ■ Advocacy for preserving neighborhood character and environmental protection, as well as advocacy for residents such as at Buena Vista. ■ More social gatherings would help bring the community together, allow the many new residents to meet old timers. ■ May Fete has become boring. Need to revive other social meetings...Holiday Party, Welcoming Party. ■ Whatever activities garner the most volunteers to run them—those are the most important ones. A few each year are nice, but it's not so critical which ones. I did like carolling with the donkeys when there was a volunteer to run that. ■ My teenagers don't tend to participate in BPA activities. Would be nice to have a teen specific event perhaps? ■ We love family-friendly events in Barron Park—our kids are 12 & 15—so not the super-young kind of things (like face painting) but movie nights are a GREAT idea, or even block parties would be great. I wish Barron Park would have more block parties. ■ I don't go to any of these, so they're not important to me, but I can see how they would promote a sense of community. ■ I don't attend any of these other than the annual meeting. To help us be better prepared in an emergency, have "casual" gatherings of the emergency preparedness/neighborhood watch that the Office of Emergency Services provides in many of our regions of Barron Park. OES could use help from the BPA to help find more Block Preparedness Coordinator volunteers. ■ All the items mentioned started or done pre-2000. Yes, even Emergency Preparedness started 1987, first drill was just after that and then again 1999–2000. You forget a member of BPA Board actively helped write the original State policy 1987–1992. Please consider how the BPA Board can work less and again produce effective results. ■ May Fete is so unique, its very special for Barron Park.

## 2. Communication for Residents

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
Newsletter	63.10% (106)	32.74% (55)	2.38% (4)	1.79% (3)	168
Website	46.11% (77)	40.12% (67)	8.98% (15)	4.79% (8)	167
Email Lists	69.70% (115)	24.85% (41)	2.42% (4)	3.03% (5)	165

**Sampling of Comments:** To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

I don't often read the newsletter, but that doesn't mean it's not valuable. ■ Paper newsletter once/yr ■ The (?) is the form of communication, may I suggest that good information that Doug Moran used to disburse is also necessary? ■ Send the newsletter by email. ■ Communication is all-important in binding the BPA together. ■ At this point the only communication comes via mailed newsletter. In contrast, for all other communities/organizations I am part of I use email. I prefer email. ■ Love communications—I don't need a physical newsletter—electronic is fine ■ I don't check the website but look forward to the newsletter. Somehow I have been dropped off the email list, but I'd like to be added again. ■ The email lists are the MOST valuable thing to me. I'm glad the newsletter & website exist as well, but I use those much less often than the email lists. The lists are VERY well run in my opinion. ■ Newsletter is interesting to read, but knowing the information is on a website to read saves paper. Where does one find the website? How about a Facebook presence? ■ Newsletter is great!

**3. General Activities and Interests**

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
Emergency Preparedness	61.08% (102)	33.53% (56)	4.19% (7)	1.20% (2)	167
BPA Babysitting/Sitter List	11.80% (19)	36.02% (58)	40.99% (66)	11.18% (18)	161
BPA Job postings Email List	14.20% (23)	35.80% (58)	38.27% (62)	11.73% (19)	162
Senior Activities	23.64% (39)	47.27% (78)	20.61% (34)	8.48% (14)	165
Neighborhood School Support	36.75% (61)	43.98% (73)	13.25% (22)	6.02% (10)	166

**Sampling of Comments:** To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

All of the above target different groups that make up our neighborhood. I'm not a mom, but if I were, I would REALLY want a babysitting list. Emergency preparedness. I don't think about it often, but I am so glad that we have a point person and education around it, because when the unexpected disaster happens, we will be in better shape for it. ■ Barron Park elementary could always use classroom aids. So, BPA's encouragement of that volunteer activity, for residents looking for some way to contribute to their community, would be great. ■ I recall that some years ago there were notifications (or ads) for older single people to meet other older singles within our beloved neighborhood...What are your thoughts on this? So many of us don't want to leave Barron Park. ■ We don't use or participate in the babysitter list (yet). I've never seen the job postings list or senior activities, so can't comment on those. Neighborhood school support is also very important to me—though I get most of that info from the PTAs & the school district directly. ■ PTA is very active so I don't know if Barron Park Association needs to focus on supporting schools. BPA email lists are used to announce school fund raisers, don't know if anything more would be expected.

**4. Safety Issues**

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
Bicycle	78.11% (132)	18.34% (31)	1.78% (3)	1.78% (3)	169
Automobile	56.29% (94)	37.72% (63)	4.19% (7)	1.80% (3)	167
Pedestrian	79.29% (134)	18.34% (31)	1.18% (2)	1.18% (2)	169
Crime	63.64% (105)	27.27% (45)	7.27% (12)	1.82% (3)	165

**Sampling of Comments:** To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

These issues are important but the city has been unwilling to consider the community's preferences. Perhaps a different city council might make a difference. ■ Lots of problems near Gunn high school with kids not wearing helmets on bikes, riding on left side, disobeying stop signs, etc. ■ I like sidewalks. ■ A unified community has much more influence and power than individuals concerning safety. ■ Emergency disaster preparedness, advocacy for city safety priorities, environmental health and safety. ■ It is hard to navigate the streets safely in this neighborhood. The parking situation is dangerous in the density and locations (e.g., along Vista, around corners and intersections) and there is not good visibility around intersections. I see a lot of accidents and potential accidents that could be avoided with better policies. ■ Automobile and bike/pedestrian traffic on Barron Ave present real safety concerns. This is a "school" street. Why not speed dampening measures there? ■ It's sad that we don't have sidewalks. My kids are forced to drive every including to Bol park. Barron park should do something ESP after the mom got hit by a car. I would be happy to donate 6 feet of my front yard to insure kids are safe in the neighborhood. ■ Lots of concern about the traffic and children on bikes, Maybell is a mess and so is Arastradero. Needs to be put back to 4 lanes. ■ Obviously no one wants crime, but I don't see it as an issue of concern - it seems very adequately addressed. ■ Happy to see more bicyclists on roads, but need to have more SAFE bicycle riding or an accident will happen. Bicyclists ignore stops, ride in parallel groups, ignore even cars. ■ Neighbors who violate city code by planting out to the street forcing pedestrians into the street and endangering bicyclists and those on foot. ■ Why don't we have bus service? ■ Bike & pedestrian safety is of higher importance, purely because cars are bigger/heavier, therefore bikes & pedestrians are more at risk if safety issues are not followed. I need my kids to be safe on bike & on foot—I'm not worried about cars. Other than drivers need to obey speed limits, and stop & yield signs, which they don't always do... this is particularly concerning on bigger roads, such as Los Robles & Amaranta. We are lucky not to have seen much crime here in Barron Park—so safety is important, but we haven't had any real crime issues to deal with. ■ WAY TOO MANY bumps on Matadero. We need some, yes; three would do, five is terrible. Local residents will be bothered and kill the suspensions on their cars if they are bad bumps. ■ Crime seems out of the control of Barron Park, other than emails residents send informing others of issues. Does Barron Park or city of Palo Alto organize neighborhood watch? ■ When 2 or 3 cyclists ride together they should ride single file on roadways and above all stop at stop signs & stoplights! Automobile drivers need to use their turn signals ■ I am very worried about the Margarita/Matadero efforts that will bring together bikes, autos and walkers. Adult bikers are one thing but young kids on bikes are part of the mix and sometimes have neither judgment nor physical control. Without eliminating parking in Ventura on Margarita I doubt there is room. ■ Living here over 50 years, have rarely heard of any crimes.

**5. Barron Park Community Center. Barron Park is one of the few Palo Alto communities without a library or community center. Community Centers in Greenmeadow and Midtown have been supported by the neighborhoods.**

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
A Barron Park Community Center to Enhance Livability	35.93% (60)	30.54% (51)	26.35% (44)	7.19% (12)	167

**Sampling of Comments: To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)**

This is the only issue that is important to me. The intermittent activities are too far and few between to be important in the life of the neighborhood. All the other stuff (including safety issues and events) bike, auto, pedestrian, and crime) could be better processed with a community center. ■ Where? PAHS might have “given” us one, but with Maybells attached. ■ Need further info—like a list of the “communities” that have a center with the name of their center and perhaps the address so we know where it is. I only know of Lucie Stern and Cubberly. So there must be many more, eh? ■ I happen to believe that housing developers should be required to include community spaces in their developments. So this is a no brainer for me. YES! We will all be better off for having it. ■ Where would it even be located? How do you intend to make room for one, or pay for one (is green meadow paid for by membership?) ■ The Maybell Orchard would be a perfect place for this, and so centrally located to the schools and OH. ■ There are enough resources surrounding the area. Those who live in Barron Park can easily get out of the neighbor to use these other resources. ■ I’m particularly interested in supporting our teens and other youth. ■ If we had been able to save the orchard it could have gone there. ■ We will soon have a new Community Center at Mitchell Park—and a great new library. Surely we don’t think the city should build us a comm center here in BP. ■ Pursuing this is a fool’s errand given other issues facing the community and the city. ■ I see our teens hanging out in front of Walgreens. It would be great if they had a Community Center! It would be interesting to survey the Gunn and Terman students—what would they like to see in a Community Center? Obviously would not want it located near any liquor stores on El Camino. And survey BP adult residents—what would encourage them to hang out at a community center? BP Elementary is available for hosting events, so what would everyone like to have at a community center? A coffee bar would be a draw! ■ Mitchell Park and College Terrace libraries are plenty close enough to bike to (though a public transit option sure would be nice.) It’s just not cost effective to have lots of little libraries so I wouldn’t want to put our resources behind fighting for that. I \*do\* think there is a shortage of community meeting spaces throughout Palo Alto, so it would be awesome if we could have a community meeting center. (And if it had a “library holds pick-up kiosk/ machine” that would be even better.) ■ Clubhouse to be rented out for special occasions, swimming pool ■ Maybe a social night with music and dancing (I know not where??) ■ How about the old Dianetics site? Or the “My Secret” dress shop location? Call it the Chat and Chew. ■ Assume it would be in Bol Park. Intrigued. Costly though and wonder how we’d raise the \$... ■ BPA might consider working with the PAUSD as well as the city to design or set aside such a location on the school grounds. PA does not need another library. Terman library is very close. Do not even think of establishing such a center on Bol Park property. The HUD grant that financed part of the park probably does not allow it in any event. Richard Placone ■ This is definitely worth exploring. What would the center include - pool, library, fusbball, emergency center? What would it cost? Where could it be located? ■ I would like to see more advocacy around another pedestrian/bike throughway closer to Barron park that connects us better to the rest of Palo Alto. Right now the crossings are at Calif. Ave and Meadow—I know that they are thinking to add another and I feel the board should support that to the extent they can. ■ I have spoken to a number of moms, and we thought this would be a GREAT idea. Nobody, including myself, even realized this could be a possibility. But I suppose there is the land available at Bol Park. ■ This would be AWESOME to have here in the neighborhood! I don’t know where we would put it—but I would LOVE it if we had such a place! ■ If we had a neighborhood coffee shop, where the AA Market was, with a slightly bigger footprint than Happy Donuts, people would likely have more casual encounters there. ■ I don’t know what this means—It appears that there is going to be a real loss when the Page Mill YMCA closes in the fall so some community center that offers low key fitness programs that mirrors what the Page Mill Y offered would be more valuable in my opinion. ■ We would love a library and pool.

**6. Barron Park Livability Concerns**

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
Retail Services on El Camino	49.69% (81)	43.56% (71)	5.52% (9)	1.23% (2)	163
Public Transit/Shuttle Options	48.17% (79)	36.59% (60)	14.02% (23)	1.22% (2)	164
Overflow Parking Concerns with New Developments	58.54% (96)	24.39% (40)	13.41% (22)	3.66% (6)	164
Traffic Flow from New Business/ Housing Developments	65.45% (108)	21.82% (36)	10.30% (17)	2.42% (4)	165
Maintaining Barron Park’s Rural Character in Designs of New Developments	62.42% (103)	24.24% (40)	12.12% (20)	1.21% (2)	165
Upholding Building Codes (ex. setbacks, square foot limits, building heights)	73.94% (122)	17.58% (29)	6.06% (10)	2.42% (4)	165
Housing Density	73.94% (122)	18.18% (30)	5.45% (9)	2.42% (4)	165

**Sampling of Comments:** To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

I fear this neighborhood will become trapped by traffic if the El Camino Corridor and Arastradero is developed a la Plan Bay Area, and that the high density creep being envisioned will create a more tense environment. Maybe that's the plan? Drive out the single family neighborhoods in order to densify the south side of town? While the schools keep our property values high for the moment, this will likely not last if the school populations have to expand drastically. I often consider moving away while the property values are spiking, although I prefer staying here where my community and friends are. But if the high density developments start to make more headway...well, let's not allow that. OK? This is not Paris (where Houssmann designed the boulevards Napoleon III commanded), not Tokyo (mass transit developed prior to city development), not Peking (where whole communities were also razed by command) nor New York (rags to riches immigrants). This is an arid climate with limited water, and an inflated self-image. Why not spread the jobs into places that need them, rather than enabling further concentration in California? I think the Plan Bay Area is based on an ideology that does not account for the fact that we supposedly have a democracy, and that communities are not created to supply "workforces." ■ I want to see much more public transit and shuttles to lessen dependence on cars. Our bike lanes citywide are so important. ■ If I was a house being affected by traffic overflow or parking overflow from development, I would want my neighborhood to help me have a voice. ■ I feel the mobile home park owner should be allowed to sell his property to anyone he wishes. Then that person can build within zoning laws and codes. If you want to update Barron park, then let's do that. ■ Not to be ambiguous, I think it is important for BPA to oppose artificial housing density, especially without adequate attention to impacts on infrastructure and natural resources. ■ Renew and broaden the retail opportunities along the stretch of ECR [for] neighbors [in] Barron Park. We need more opportunities to meet our retail needs without having to drive ■ Keep shuttles out! Keep Barron Park RURAL! We don't want to be like Old Palo Alto. ■ Affordable housing is more important than anything listed above. ■ We are at a crossroads, how do we want to live? The traffic is already bad, Smart Growth is not smart. It is time to question ABAG and Sacramento, we do not have to accept this top down, lack of seeing the whole picture management. ■ Support height and zoning generally but with flexibility. Absolutism will serve us poorly. More density is good if we get something good in return such as affordable housing. ■ Robust response from BPA is required in face of increased development and to insure what is happening is supported by our community. Is anyone watching the store? Bus and shuttle will be increasingly important as our community ages. ■ I'm in the minority, but I prefer sidewalks for the safety of parents and children walking to our schools. So, that's why I marked "maintaining rural character" as not important. Otherwise, I very much enjoy the feel of Barron Park. But from a safety perspective, the lack of sidewalks is scary during the commute hours to and from school for parents walking their kids to and from school. ■ El Camino retail in Barron Park looks shabby. OK to buy a beer or a coffee, but not much else. Copy Factory is great. BPA doesn't seem to be doing anything about city planning, or comp plan, or traffic issues. Barron Park's rural character is not connected with designs of new developments. Support mixed use developments along El Camino to replace dreary retail and dilapidated buildings—would help housing, improve retail—provided not too dense. ■ Re housing density, I support higher density housing in some locations. ■ What shuttle? I have not seen the Palo Alto Shuttle in BP. It must run in both directions so that one does not need to tour the city to go from BP to Caltrain and shopping. Are you sure that all our traffic woes come from new business and housing. I think most of it comes from individuals driving their children to our schools, including Gunn. By High School students are old enough to bike or walk to school. We must keep the single family residence, rural atmosphere in BP. No more exceeding current zoning regulations and no more attempts to gentrify BP. We like the donkeys. I miss Mickey's braying. Housing density is getting too high in BP. No more multifamily housing. EPA actually wants more housing, therefore the place for multifamily housing is along the eastern edge of PA, not in BP. We have no transit that goes anywhere useful and no grocery store within 0.5 mile of homes. ■ Too much building in the vicinity - We older residents liked the quiet Barron Park and the local grocery's stores etc. that we had. ■ We have building codes, but the City Council (or whomever) seems always willing to cave in to developers who want waivers. I HATE that. How about re-paving our streets as soon as the utility work gets out of the way...? They've made a mess of our already dangerous streets. ■ Building Codes are important for safety. The aesthetics should be left to the building owners. ■ 1) 39 years ago when BP annexed to PA it was proposed that in 20 years the strip mall along ECR would be cleaned up. In 20 years it has only gotten worse. This should be revisited. 2) Having the Stanford free shuttle make a circuit through BP might encourage more people to use it. Possible good route—West on Matadero to Laguna; Laguna to Los Robles; Los Robles to ECR. 3) Rural Character/Bol Park: Upon annexation the city promised to maintain both as is. The city has done a pretty good job of living up to this promise. Don't let the city get away with violations of this promise. If they try, call me. Richard Placone. Email: [rcplacone@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rcplacone@sbcglobal.net) ■ I like the character of the neighborhood—that's why we chose it so many years ago. Preserving this while allowing for sensible growth is very important to me! ■ I love everything about the rural & livable nature of Barron Park—with one exception. The lack of sidewalks is a huge safety concern—especially for kids & elderly people. If we were really a rural neighborhood, our housing would be even less dense than it is, and we would be fine without sidewalks. But we have so many cars in the neighborhood already, due to the housing, schools, business, etc. around here—that I don't feel safe for my kids & elderly parents to walk around here very much without sidewalks. ■ I hesitated on each of these answers, because I think the leadership of BPA is very anti-change and NIMBY. The Maybell development was very polarizing to the community, as is the Buena Vista proposal. I think that the BPA should serve as a source of information, but not pretend that it speaks for Barron Park as a community. There are many different points of view in the community. ■ Make sure the city does not stretch codes and increase density. Reduce it if anything. ■ I do not want El Camino to become a canyon. Restrict all neighborhood buildings to 2 stories. ■ All new construction/remodel should have underground services. Overhead wires DO NOT contribute to the rural character of the neighborhood in a positive way! ■ Shuttle options are "very important." Shuttles have room for great improvement and this is controllable by Palo Alto. Palo Alto has little control over public transit so I find this not important for Barron Park. ■ Housing density would be fine if we had more public transportation. My main concern with housing is that it's getting impossible to get out of Barron Park on El Camino. ■ Buildings heights are getting out of control and apt buildings are being built too close to sidewalks, need better setbacks.

**7. Environment**

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
Hazardous Chemical Issues in the Barron Park Community (CPI site)	74.10% (123)	21.08% (35)	3.01% (5)	1.81% (3)	166
Recycling	52.73% (87)	40.61% (67)	5.45% (9)	1.21% (2)	165
Water Conservation	57.67% (94)	36.81% (60)	4.29% (7)	1.23% (2)	163

**Sampling of Comments:** To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

I think of recycling and water conservation as individual responsibilities, unless the topic is getting more information out to everyone and perhaps programs (technology) that can be implemented en masse at a reduced cost. ■ Composting, too. ■ Palo Alto has hazardous waste resources. All or most Barron Park residents are fully aware of chemical issues. ■ We in BP need a community meeting about water. The elephant in the room is the excess building, office space, as well as increased density, why isn't this being taken into account? ■ Recycling and Water Conservation (and reducing car trips and overall energy use) are very important issues but I don't know that they're neighborhood issues. I very much like the idea of neighbors helping neighbors with ideas for improving in these areas (e.g., David Coale's workshops were awesome) but again—if we're limited on volunteers, these aren't highest priority at a \*neighborhood\* level. ■ The BPA has been noticeably absent in helping Chimalus Drive residents fight the "accident waiting to happen" hazardous chemicals situation at CPI. The city has managed to drag out a resolution for over 6 years. BPA should take a strong proactive position on this subject as it effects all of BP. See Art Liberman for details. Richard Placone Chimalus Drive ■ I really value that we can speak as one voice through the BPA on the CPI site issues. ■ Where is our composting capacity city wide? We NEED this. ■ City must have better control over CPI's chemicals, CPI should be made to move the plating shop. ■ I am shocked by how many people and buildings act as if there is no drought. Sprinklers in the middle of the day. Power washing a driveway for a half an hour? What is up with that????

**8. Proposed Projects/City Related Issues**

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not Important	Undecided	Total
El Camino/ Thain Way: New housing development with rezoning proposed	55.56% (90)	32.72% (53)	4.32% (7)	7.41% (12)	162
Buena Vista Development: Proposed sale and redevelopment	73.01% (119)	20.86% (34)	4.29% (7)	1.84% (3)	163
Fry's Site Development: City is considering changes that may occur in 2019	51.55% (83)	36.02% (58)	6.21% (10)	6.21% (10)	161
Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan: City is currently proposing plans that will guide development through 2023	73.91% (119)	20.50% (33)	0.00% (0)	5.59% (9)	161
State Housing Mandates: Housing sites have been identified in Barron Park along El Camino	69.33% (113)	20.25% (33)	4.29% (7)	6.13% (10)	163

[No comments given in this newsletter, there are too many good ones to choose samples. People who are interested and in a position to become more involved need access to a computer. –Editor]—see our website: [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

**9. List the top 5 items/topics you consider a priority for the Barron Park Association.**

**Sampling of Comments:** To see all comments, please see [www.BPApaloalto.org](http://www.BPApaloalto.org)

Preservation of the quasi-rural character of BP; Awareness of commercial development along El Camino; Awareness of office space/ business development in and adjacent to BP; Advocacy on behalf of BP and its residents; Awareness of school and municipal decision-making processes which could impact BP and its residents ■ 1. Traffic 2. Housing density 3. Retaining rural aspect 4. Resisting zoning changes 5. All of the above mean keeping the livability of Palo Alto as well as Barron Park. ■ Electing a different set of city council members who have residents' interests in mind. Isn't the BPA supposed to make sure that the city respects and acts on the concerns of our neighborhood? ■ Maintain emergency and routine communication to all residents. Timely reporting on developing issues from City Developing a current

and possibly chronological list to identify changes in neighborhood residents e.g. rental vs. own, extended family vs. single family. Development of an accurate address, phone, email listing of all neighbors composition, including % rentals occurring ■ Support affordable housing support more public transit and bike lanes cultural and fun neighborhood gatherings ■ No more housing. Enough is enough No more office space. Enough built in last few years to handle the demand. No more low income housing. We have quite a bit now and we live within a very few miles of plenty of lower and below market housing. An outspoken political group wants to homogenize all these communities. ■ No rezoning -- haven't we learned something from what replaced Ricky's Hyatt? Ignore ABAG in plans for the future of Palo Alto Take all 1000+ employees off the Calpers defined benefits plan—only use defined contributions (e.g., 401K) from now on. Put the money saved into infrastructure (e.g., new public safety building) ■ 1. Building a connected resilient community. (Getting to know neighbors, sharing events, support youth and seniors, etc.) 2. Re-educate about landscape—eliminating lawns (use Bol Park for games, play, etc.), establish low water landscapes, grow some of our own food. (How about fruit trees in the park and along streets where practical?) 3. Eliminate the toxic plating shop at CPI. And other toxics affecting our neighborhood. 4. Fix streets (the irregularities are hard for disabled persons even in cars.) 5. Create a walkable shopping area (food, pharmacy, other essentials close at hand.) ■ Environmental concerns, density/over-development, water conservation, newsletters and communication, emergency preparedness. ■ Hazardous Chemicals Affordable housing Recycling and Composting Traffic and bike and pedestrian safety Schools support ■ 1. Housing Price Bubble; Lack of Affordable Housing; Loss of Middle Class 2. Overdevelopment: Large Houses on Small Lots and Large Housing Developments near the Neighborhood 3. Contemptible City Council with No Concern for the Neighborhood; Maybell Scandal 4. Destruction of Existing Housing Stock and the Endangering Character of the Neighborhood 5. Rapid Changing of the Demographics of the Neighborhood ■ School quality, traffic safety/management, high speed internet/fiber optic system ■ BV overdevelopment all safety issues ■ Alerting us when we need to speak up. I count on the ASSN to monitor external events and alert me because I do not have time to monitor. ■ DEVELOPMENT TRAFFIC GETTING PALO ALTO TO BE SUBSTANTIVELY RESPONSIVE MAKING BICYCLISTS OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS—PARTICULARLY GUNN AND TERMAN KIDS ■ Overflow parking, density of new developments, bike safety, retail on El Camino (not in order) ■ Neighborhood communications (email lists), equal/fair access to city services for South Palo Alto (libraries, transit, grocery stores), maintain character of our neighborhood & city (street trees, building setbacks, bike paths, etc.). ■ 1. Risk of losing neighborhood character 2. Overdevelopment 3. Crime 4. Safety and preparedness 5. Neighborhood activities ■ Various development proposals like Buena Vista & Fry's, traffic, housing mandates, El Camino retail vitality, emergency preparedness ■ Supporting dialogue among neighbors whether it be around jobs, babysitting, crime alerts, or lost turtles, etc ■ Being a forum and a point of advocacy for issues around housing/business development ■ Supporting community relationships through activities that target different audiences...kids, seniors, moms, and the general public. ■ Supporting education around topics such as the environment (drought friendly gardens, gray water recycling, hazardous chemical disposal), crime, and disaster awareness, and perhaps health (exercise, stretching, nutrition) ■ Advocating for a community center ■ Creating an image of inclusiveness and being the "friendliest neighborhood in PA" ■ Maintaining, if not improving, the livability in Barron Park ■ Challenging the San Jose-ification of Palo Alto, esp Barron Park Comprehensive Plan revision ■ Projecting character of the area Community center/save orchard/save and bring in more retail ■ Save Buena Vista for the residents (and find a way to upgrade) Support school and student wellbeing ■ Traffic safety Zoning/housing density/PA building projects Community events such as movie night. Communication such as email lists ■ Stop housing development in BP and along El Camuno. Veto power against all proposed development. Keep cut thru traffic out of neighborhoods. Put up brick entrances to BP to delineate it as a neighborhood. Menlo park did this with great success in cutting down cut thru traffic. ■ Protect the residential integrity of BP in the face of state mandates and Palo Alto's building frenzy. Do not let the Thain Way Project get higher density zoning as it sets a dangerous precedent, and is just wrong to begin with. In general be ever vigilant and extremely proactive in fighting any higher density housing and changes in residential zoning that supports it. It is not all wrong and we can't completely stop growth, but we must be a mitigating force or it will over run us. Town hall type meetings with all the candidates for City Council to give us a chance to fully vet each and everyone of them. Then get out the vote ■ Stop urbanization and high density development. Promote environment and open space. ■ Maintaining a rural character for the area, safe biking without painting hideous lines on the streets, keeping a strong sense of community with events, maintaining overall safety. ■ Side walks, bike lane, community center, keep Buena Vista Mobile. ■ 1. Pedestrian and cycling safety 2. Providing support for teens through activities and resources (e.g., teen center, open gym). 3. Strengthening our community relationships. 4. Maintaining the rural character as much as possible. 5. Maintaining a strong environmental presence and sustaining sound practices. ■ Help Buena Vista residents, Need for low-income and affordable housing, Emergency prep, BPA email lists ■ Proposed closure of Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. Need for affordable housing. Need for better public transit. Improving bicycle routes. Water conservation ■ Sidewalks ■ Keep our rural quality, and join PASZ to support the residential qualities of P. A. Stop the high density and somehow help the Buena Vista residents to keep their homes here. Our neighborhood quality and the increased El Camino traffic does not need or want a high density apartment house there. ■ Involvement and participation by BPA Board members in City policies that affect our neighborhood—developments, traffic, comprehensive plan. Increase the interest of Barron Park residents in City and community issues. Find ways to provide more interactions between residents. Board seems to be standing back and letting things happen, whereas they should be leading them. Surveys are good—but they should have options for how to go forward, not just asking whether issue is important or not. ■ 1) Participate in City Council and PTC meetings, to express Barron Park views on developments and other proposals. 2) Get new residents involved in Barron Park affairs and activities 3) Streets and traffic in Barron

Park - and along El Camino: safety, biking, and roadway improvements 4) More social events. What are my dues paying for? 5) Support and cooperate with the Donkey Project - with more fundraising and other activities ■ 1) Keeping the streets safe for pedestrians and cyclists by encouraging reduced auto speeds and working with the city in its safe routes to schools and bike initiatives. 2) Working with the city and/or county and/or Stanford to improve public transportation options to shopping, libraries, etc. 3) Maintaining as many community traditions as possible (e.g., May Fete) while encouraging volunteers to organize other community-building events (e.g., Posada, caroling with donkeys, water-wise workshops, garden-bounty exchanges) 4) Maintaining the e-mail lists 5) Encouraging, and including on the web-site information and contact information about, local clubs and groups. E.g., book club, gardening club, green team, senior lunches, babysitting network, etc. ■ I feel a strong sense of entitlement among long-time residents who are protected by Proposition 13. Many sit on their large properties, paying very low taxes, and complain about all the development, not appreciating that purchasers of dense housing are paying WAY more in taxes than they are. If laws won't be changed to make things more equitable, I would at least like to see more consideration of this disparity, more gratitude, and greater acceptance of the economic realities that keep pushing home values through the roof. So, 5 items: inequitable taxes, self-entitlement, lack of gratitude, lack of affordable housing, lack of senior housing. ■ 1. Critical evaluation of business developments that will progressively march southward down El Camino, esp. associated traffic and parking. 2. Traffic on El Camino. 3. How will we pay for road undercrossings under Caltrain/HSR? HSR won't pay for these, at \$150 million plus each. 4. Neighborhood crime, esp. home burglaries and car break-ins. ■ BICYCLE SAFETY, HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL DENSITY, (ZONING RESPECTED,) RECREATION DEVELOPMENTS, SENIOR AIDS AND THE WONDERFUL NEWSLETTER. ■ More housing in Barron Park with below market rate purchase options ■ 1. CPI site 2. Better connections across the railroad tracks which currently cuts us off from the rest of Palo Alto 3. Continuing to sponsor events that foster community ■ Community Center Street walking/biking safety ■ Awareness of history; rural character; support for school and BMR housing; seniors; traffic, including posting signage; ■ 1. Issues re. development/zoning, 2. Traffic issues as they relate to development, 3. Environmental improvements, such as developing a composting program, 4. Increase/formalize presence at city hall meetings re. Barron Park developments, 5. Not expand house dimensions to return to a more harmonious standard (vs. expansions of standards, see 'oversized MacMansion currently under construction on Coulombe. Yuck.) ■ 1. Connecting neighbors to each other to help with questions, organize social events, etc. 2. Connecting w/ the city on issues such as policy, safety, and livability. 3. Connecting w/ other neighborhood associations on issues of common concern (eg. policy, safety & livability) 4. Keep doing what BPA is doing—I love our neighborhood & BPA! 5. See # 4 :-)

■ 1. Defense against over-development (over-large projects) 2. Repaving of our inadequate and mutilated streets 3. A Community Center for Barron Park (how could this be funded?) 4. Valley gutters for collector streets still not modernized 5. Street safety campaign to target pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists ■ Traffic Re-Zoning Housing Density Community services such as libraries Bike safety and paths ■ CPI Hazard concern Bike/pedestrian safety Crime kept a priority Keeping BPA connected Buena Vista ■ Traffic safety, safety from chemical toxins ■ Maintain the unique character of Barron Park in new developments. Limit high density zoning changes along El Camino and in Barron Park. Community gatherings for residents to meet and discuss topics. ■ 1. Getting toxics away from our neighborhood 2. Traffic on El Camino—we need some creative options. How to increase public transport overall. In a way, increased housing might help with this. Would be great to have a shuttle like Stanford's Marguerite, that went often enough to be useful. Would be great to easily go to CA Ave, University Ave, or San Antonio Ave with a neighborhood shuttle. These would help us get to the trains as well. Not just something that went past on El Camino but a shuttle through the neighborhood. 3. Activities for community so people get to know each other and have sense of community. 4. Emergency preparedness ■ 1. CPI's chemicals! 2. Better bus service 3. Speeding on Chimalus, actually we need speed humps on this street, 4. Children need to be controlled on their go-carts and skateboards. 5. Young children need to be controlled on their bikes & be taught safe riding. ■ The primary item pertains to the trailer home area. It needs to be addressed equitably for those residents that are going to be displaced. Those kids need to be allowed to attend the Palo Alto schools if they are relocated outside of PA in the very least. The "luxury apartments" to be built need to include a fair amount designated for low income also. ■ Housing density, school support, creek conservation, donkey support (for these guys I don't know about replacements if/when they die) ■ Keep the Newsletter going; May Fete; Keep Donkeys happy; Be our go-between P A and Barron Park; Keep us up on things as they change, as they will, and we need to be flexible. ■ Traffic/parking blocking driveway/access to my home. Enforce zoning. Control high density development. ■ No upzoning. Save Buena Vista. Stop catering to developers. Elect city council members who will support a moratorium on new development citywide. ■ Hazardous chemicals from CPI, toxic plume clean up, Palo Alto over development which directly impacts Barron Park residents ■ Safety, maintaining good quality of life ie carefully planned development at all levels, conservation of precious resources, local representation at city level, education. ■ (1) ground floor retail, (2) bicycle paths, (3) traffic, (4) low-cost housing ■ Like the idea of a community center for Barron Park ■ Priorities for Barron Park itself: \*Fewer spas, "learning centers," etc., and more common, everyday services. \*Stop development! We have enough density as it is. \*Fewer "traffic slowing" measures (if it ain't broke, don't fix it). \*A longer green light when turning left off Matadero onto El Camino! \*Keep Strawberry Hill undeveloped (and always support the donkeys!) ■ Emails, Newsletter with emphasis on history of BP, business development on ECR, rezoning issues. ■ Road surfaces, emergency preparedness, water supply, community activities ranging across our various population groups, parks. ■ Resisting "downtown" attempts to increase housing density in BP and downtown policies affecting Barron Park. ■ 1. Overnight on-street parking ■ 2. Road repair ■ 3. Emergency preparedness—who has possible need assignment (power saws, tall ladders. Who has first-aid training, location of handicapped people.

# AN ANNIVERSARY STORY

By Richard Placone, Chimalus Drive



asked if he knew who that girl was. "Sure, she's a neighbor" he told me, "Jeanne Meradith." "You've got to introduce me," was my reply. And so began a 64-year adventure that hasn't slowed down to this day.

I was 17 at the time. Our first date was some months later on Jeanne's 16th birthday. The occasion was a school dance, as I recall. After that slow start, we were inseparable, going to shows, concerts, to our favorite restaurant for a cheap dinner and with our large gang of friends to beach parties and picnics. In today's parlance, Jeanne and I were "an item."

This went on through my first year at college. Then one summer, which turned out to be a fateful one, a close female friend who was like a sister to me, asked if I could act as escort to her cousin from New York City who would be visiting her for a month. I agreed, and spent that month squiring the two young women all around

Southern California. Thoughtless me, I sort of forgot about Jeanne. Besides, the New Yorker turned out to be a knock-out girl about two years older than I and very sophisticated. Well, the long and short of it was that by the end of the month, I thought I was in love with her. She left for home at the end of the month, giving me a really big kiss in thanks for a fun time.

(There is an aside to this story. I leaned after she left for home that she was in fact engaged to a young air force test pilot. About a month after her return and just before their wedding, he was killed in a crash on an experimental flight. A truly sad turn of events.)

So of course, I returned to Jeanne. I mean, come on, it was all innocent (this was the '50's for God's

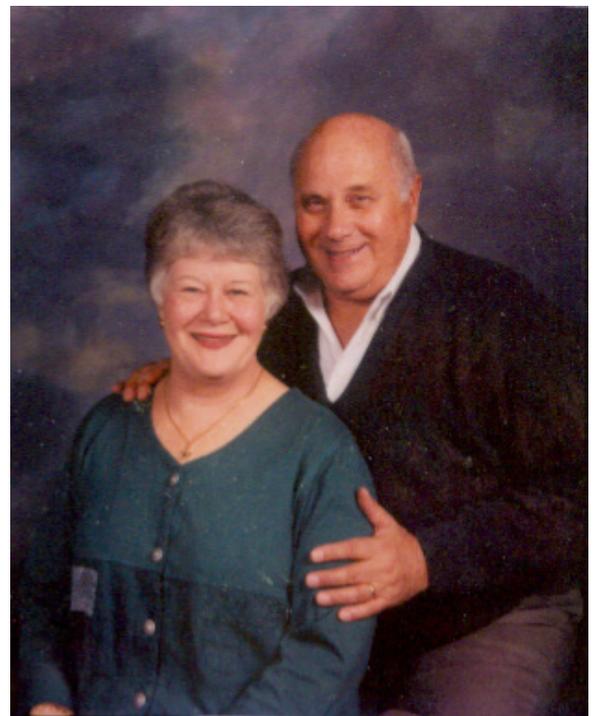
sake!) And I was doing a friend a favor. Jeanne had a different perspective, and refused to see me again. It got to be really embarrassing. We had been so close that our mutual friends began to make plans that either excluded us, or included only one of us. If we both happened to show up at a gathering, that about killed the evening. If Jeanne even saw me coming down the street she would cross to the other side. I was just flummoxed. I didn't know what to do. I began to halfheartedly date other girls I met at college. Still no Jeanne. I don't know if she dated other guys or not, but if I had known, well,.....!

By now two years had gone by and in September, 1953, I transferred to begin my junior year at UC Berkeley and to complete my education. I lived in one of the university's dorms for men. It was on Valentine's Day, 1954, when I received a very large, gift-wrapped box from Jeanne Meradith. I rushed up to my room and opened the box, which was filled to the brim with homemade cookies. Some of the cookies were individually wrapped, but I never got the chance to unwrap any, for at that moment one of my dorm mates came in the room,

1956 was a great year. On September 1, 1956, Jeanne and I were married. Fifty eight years ago! But our story began six years earlier in 1950.

My three buddies, Wally, Roger and Albert and I were playing toss the penny against the Bank of America wall at the corner of Las Tunas Drive and Garfield Avenue in Alhambra, California. We were waiting for the school bus to take us over the hills to the Catholic boy's school in Montabello. Coming down the street were three girls, obviously on their way to the local Alhambra public high school. We all stopped to watch, of course, as they would pass us by in a few minutes. Once they crossed Garfield, one of the girls peeled away from her group, marched right up to Roger, slapped him across the face, saying "Take that, Roger N.," and marched off with her two friends.

We were stunned. Roger was speechless, for once. None of us dared to ask what that was all about, but I took Wally aside, and



saw the cookies, grabbed the box, and in a few minutes they were all over the dorm being consumed by guys who acted like they hadn't had a meal in days. Later that afternoon, some came sheepishly to my room with notes in hand. "Here, I found these with the cookies" they all said.

Well, they were little affectionate notes, not really love notes, but the message was clear. The long fast was finally over. Later that year, Jeanne came to Berkeley to visit me. She stayed in one of girls' dorms, (it was still the 50's!). I actually had a car by then and so we toured The City. I learned on her visit that it was Jeanne's mother who put an end to the hiatus in our relationship. (She knew a good catch when she saw one!) I loved that woman. It turned out that Jeanne's mother, Janice, and my old friend Roger, were the two people on earth responsible for the 58 years Jeanne and I have spent together.

The next year, early 1956, Jeanne paid another visit to Berkeley. I was in grad school by then. We went to dinner at the Sea Wolf in Jack London Square in Oakland (now Scott's Seafood Restaurant) where I proposed marriage to Jeanne, which she accepted. We were married in September of that year, 1956, honeymooned in Carmel By the Sea, and so the real adventure began.

Since I had another year to go in grad school, we took our first apartment in Berkeley. After receiving my MA, we eventually ended up in Barron Park/Palo Alto as I took a position at Stanford University. This location eventually led to my 10-year involvement as the president of the Barron Park Association. Bol Park and annexation to Palo Alto were just two of the accomplishments of the BPA during this time.

Three kids and four grandchildren later, we are still going strong. Thanks, Roger. Thanks, Janice. And thanks most of all to my beloved Jeanne. Happy Anniversary, dear one. —Dick

*[Editor's note: we still don't know why Jeanne slapped Roger! We need more stories like this one, especially stories about Barron Park in the early days. Did you know a train used to come through Barron Park up by the donkey pasture? Does anyone have stories about that train? Or more anniversary stories? Articles about interesting people in our community are welcome, as well as stories from people new to our community. Don't worry about your writing ability, we edit things. Contact Nancy Hamilton: njh.bpa at gmail.com]*

## Thanks to Labor Day—No Gas Tools

By Stephanie Enos, a Barron Park neighbor

**L**abor/Labour Day is now my favorite holiday here in the U.S. and this is why: For once in my neighborhood I can hear no mechanical noise. Nothing—zilch; no gas leaf blowers, no electric leaf blowers, no whining hedge trimmers, no fumes from gas lawn mowers, just the gentle voices and tones of my different neighbors chatting to one another and laughing, and of course the birds are visiting because no gardeners are hoovering the ground and hedges. Thanks to Labor Day.

We could enjoy some respite from mechanical noise and experience peacefulness like this every day if we wanted, and if we valued that peace more than leaf-free pathways and immaculate hedges. As far as gas leaf blowers go, "Cleanliness is not next to Godliness."

Way back on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005 (nearly 10 years ago), the Palo Alto City Council passed an ordinance prohibiting the use of gas leaf blowers in residential zones of the city. Electric blowers were permitted Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 am to 5 pm., and on Saturdays.

In non-residential zones the rules were different: Both electric and gas blowers were permitted Monday through Friday from 8 am to 6 pm and Saturday 10 am to 4 pm. None were allowed to operate on Sundays in both zones.

What a relief I remember thinking at the time. Finally that on and off mechanical sound would be reduced and not impinge quite so much on the daily lives of those of us who work from home, or so I thought.

When the ordinance was first passed, someone at the city or police was assigned to ensure that it was observed. Not for very long. Now, nothing is done. I have made two recent visits to the police station on Ramona to clarify the status, and both times it was explained to me that there is no funding for a person to enforce it. The employees at City Hall say the same thing. Strangely, the police do find time to cite homeless people walking away with shopping carts or people having a cigarette in the park. Everywhere and every day of the week I see gardeners furiously hoovering hedges or standing out in the middle of the road blowing dust [and road particles] all over the area, but nobody out there giving them a citation. It has become a scofflaw that is clear to see.

This is not sensible and I would go further

and say leaf blowing as it is practiced daily in Palo Alto is positively harmful.

Here are my reasons.

When an ordinance is passed by local government but after a while, ceases to be enforced, it becomes a scofflaw. People don't respect it and others who have worked hard on this issue, spent many hours on helping to get it passed, and see their efforts undermined, become cynical about the effectiveness of the city.

Environmentally it is harmful in a number of ways: for the people who are using the equipment, they need to wear masks to protect themselves from the fumes (a byproduct of their blowers.) They would also be well advised to wear ear muffs to block the noise. The harm to their health will probably show up years later with cumulative use of this equipment.

Children and adults too are becoming increasingly prone to allergies. The combination of grime, dust and gas fumes that are blown about by the gardeners is not a healthy combination and on the scale that this is occurring everywhere in Palo Alto, it could well be a contributing factor in all kinds of health issues. Again, this may not be apparent until there have been studies.

As far as air quality goes, adding extra gas fumes is obviously detrimental.

Noise is a big issue and I would be surprised if the decibel level isn't exceeded in most cases.

The land is suffering: Since when has it been thought to be beneficial to blow away all the topsoil? We need some leaves to decompose and form humus to feed the soil and encourage beneficial organisms.

The birds need to scratch around in the leaves where they find tiny bugs and acorns for their food: the California thrasher does this with his long curved beak, as does the spotted towhee. Gas blowers disturb their habitat. Certainly in the spring at nesting time they are scared off. Who wouldn't be?

The city will only look into instances of this ordinance being flaunted if you are prepared to take down all the details and give your own. In other words local government has passed the buck; the onus is on you, the citizen, to provide the evidence and by the way, for you to act as an informer. This cannot be a healthy way to govern a city. [stephanie.enos324 at gmail.com](mailto:stephanie.enos324@gmail.com)

# ART IN THE PARK—PAIGE K. PARSONS

Paige K. Parsons is an internationally published photographer specializing in live concert photography and musician portraits.

Her work has appeared in publications such as *Rolling Stone*, *7x7*, *Keyboard Player* and *SPIN*. She has photographed over 500 bands over the past 20 years. She graduated from M.I.T. with a BSAD in Architectural Design and a minor in Visual Design.

Her work has been exhibited at The Royal College of Art in London, as well as several galleries here in California. She has won numerous awards including 1st prize in the “Bay Area Images” and “Portraits” categories in the *Palo Alto Weekly* 2012 photo contest. Her first solo exhibition took place in January 2013 at Keeble and Shuchat Photography.

See more of Paige K. Parsons’s work at [www.parsons.org](http://www.parsons.org).



# LYDIA KOU'S YEARS ON THE BPA BOARD

By Douglas Moran

Lydia joined the BPA Board in early 2007, recruited by Patrick Muffler to take over leadership of the BPA Emergency Preparedness (E-Prep) activities. Please read more about this under "Emergency Preparation" below:

## Cultural Events

Lydia worked on social events to help maintain and build community. She created Movie Night in the Park: *Frozen* this year, *WALL-E* last year. She organized the Lion Dance celebration for Chinese New Year, and co-organized the broader neighborhood participation in the Holiday Posada in Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. She learned about running BPA events from serving on the May Fete Committee shortly after joining the Board.

## Neighborhood Issues

One of the important roles of the BPA Board is informing residents of proposals and meetings that could affect them. With the proposed upzoning of the Maybell/Clemo property, Lydia moved up from a participant to a leader. When the official announcement of the second public outreach meeting failed to include many of the issues that had arisen as resident concerns at the first meeting, she advocated that the Board provide supplementary information to residents. When City Hall ignored residents' legitimate concerns, she became a leader of the opposition to the proposed PC zoning.

## Resigned from the Board

Earlier this summer, Lydia announced her resignation from the Board but stayed on to complete her commitments and activities (such as Movie Night). Her energy and willingness to take on leadership of new activities is going to be hard to replace.

However, you don't need to wonder what she is planning to do next. She is running for City Council, as if you haven't seen her campaign lawn signs dotting the neighborhood. As part of the campaign, I learned that she had a very interesting early life, born in Hong Kong, growing up in Sudan and Guam and then moving here (more details under "About Me" on her website <http://LydiaKou.com>).

## Emergency Preparation

At the time of Lydia's recruitment to lead BPA E-prep activities, there were multiple

groups of Emergency Service Volunteers with some overlapping membership (acronyms decoded below). There were the traditional groups such as the American Red Cross and ARES/RACES (amateur radio). Then there was the city's group, now called CERT, but then called PANDA, whose primary purpose was to supplement the police and fire departments. And the BPC program created by Palo Alto Neighborhoods (PAN), the umbrella group of neighborhood associations, and of which Patrick was a co-founder. Based on Lydia's contributions to the CERT program, Patrick saw her as someone having the energy and dedication to get the BPC program implemented in Barron Park.

The situation that Lydia stepped into could be described politely as "spinning wheels, going nowhere." I was going to these E-prep meetings as Patrick's backup or as the BPA President. I identified three basic categories. The first was the "coordination meeting" which gives bureaucracy a bad name: The various groups would explain what they planned to do, with the attitude that it was up to other groups to adapt to them. The second was what I would label "delusional planning," because it assumed that during a disaster the group would have tight control over events and have all the resources it needed. The third category was "turtle/silo planning," which started with the recognition that resources would be limited and that each group would be overwhelmed. Organizations were encouraged to think within their own "silos," and prioritize what they could do (retrenching; turtle pulling into its shell). It was impossible to get a discussion of shifting resourcing between the silos (fiefdoms) or thinking about how to get more resources. For example, medical units deploying to a disaster rejected the idea of recruiting health-care workers from among the victims to increase their capacity. The impolite way of describing this was that the disaster planning was itself a disaster.

What Lydia did was get impatient with all the meetings and take the core of the BPC program and implement it in Barron Park. The core idea of the BPC program was that there was strength in community, and experience during many disasters had shown the benefit of immediately having (interim) leaders rather than waiting for leadership to emerge. BPC stands for "Block Pre-

paredness Coordinator" for these leaders, who would be spread throughout the neighborhood.

Lydia recruited BPCs within Barron Park and played a major role in creating the training materials and programs. Her success got her invited to other neighborhoods to help them get their programs up and running and she became a leader of the city-wide effort. She created exercises, partly for training of the BPCs and partly to find out what actually worked in practice. For example, the dense tree cover in Barron Park caused many more problems for radio communication than predicted. The most prominent of these exercises were the "Quakevilles," probably because of the name and being photogenic.

The number of active BPCs and the exercises changed the dynamic of cooperation between the various E-prep groups—the advantages of being part of this motivated them to be willing to adapt and coordinate. The city switched from seeing the BPC program as competition to the CERT program to seeing it as a valuable companion. And the city officially adopted the Quakeville exercise.

This was accompanied by a radical change in the city's philosophy on E-prep. The long-standing one was labeled "You're On Your Own" (YOYO) and told residents that each family needed to make its own preparations and expect no help from the city. A core justification for government is the safety and welfare of citizens, but here was a deliberate policy of effectively abandoning them in a time of great need. The city now has a philosophy of recognizing the importance of residents, both as deserving help and being a source of help. In a disaster, police and fire are not "first responders," your neighbors are.

## Acronyms and Initials Decoded:

ARES/RACES: Amateur Radio Emergency Services/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services

BPC: Block Preparedness Coordinator (under PAN E-prep)

CERT: Community Emergency Response Team (PAFD, formerly PANDA)

E-prep: Emergency Preparedness

ESV: Emergency Service Volunteers

PAN: Palo Alto Neighborhoods

PANDA: Palo Alto Neighborhood Disaster Activity (PAFD, became CERT)

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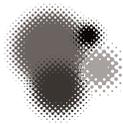
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