

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Markus Fromherz, BPA President



This Spring issue of the quarterly BPA newsletter goes to all residents of Barron Park. I hope you enjoy this very interesting collection of articles about people, events, and developments in our community.

Are you a member of the Barron Park Association? If yes, you are one of the roughly 450 residents who support the BPA's many activities and receive all four quarterly newsletters, not just this one.

If you are not a member, you are still benefiting from the BPA's various community events, such as the May Fête, Movie in the Park, the Meet and Learns, monthly Community Happy Hours, and our cultural diversity events (like the very popular Lunar New Year and Diwali celebrations). You are also benefiting from the BPA's advocacy on traffic, development, and environmental issues. All of these are just the latest of the continuing activities in the BPA's over 60

years of community engagement. (Did you know that the BPA was instrumental in creating Bol Park, in ensuring flood control for Barron Park, and other community improvements of lasting change?) The BPA is playing a key role in making our neighborhood fun and safe.

So if you are not a member, we would like to invite you to become one. Just use the enclosed form or go online to sign up (bpapaloalto.org). Please support your neighborhood association. Almost 10% more of your neighbors decided to join the BPA last year, but we are missing you!

If you are a member, please drop me a note about what it is that you enjoy about the BPA (email to: president@bpapaloalto.org). And then tell me what more we should be doing as a community. We are one of the most active associations in Palo Alto, but I know there is more that we can do. I hope to hear from you!

JOIN US FOR MAY FÊTE 2016!

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2016
BOL PARK, NOON TO 4 PM



Come and enjoy live musicians and dancers. They will perform all afternoon, with a Maypole Dance at 2:30. Bring the family and a blanket and make a picnic of it. Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, and Snacks will also be for sale. Wear ribbons! There will be games and crafts for the children, donkeys and donkey art, and our Barron Park history exhibit. Activities will include face painting for children, our donkey parade, and more!

The May Fête is a volunteer effort. If you'd like to volunteer, or if you'd like to propose a display or activity, contact the event organizer, Sarah Van Zanten at bpmayfete@gmail.com or the volunteer coordinator, John King at johnwadeking@gmail.com. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Barron Park Association Annual Meeting

By Markus Fromherz

On Sunday, March 6, the Barron Park Association held another successful Annual Meeting. About 60 residents gathered to hear an update on the state of the BPA, meet neighbors, and enjoy a potluck of snacks and drinks. However,

the highlights of the afternoon were our keynote speakers. We chose climate change as our featured topic this year, and we were fortunate to have three experts explain important concepts—such as sea-level [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

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rise—especially as they affect the Bay Area, and what mitigations Palo Alto and its surrounding communities are researching and considering.

First, Matt Brennan, Senior Coastal Engineer at Environmental Science Associates, spoke on adapting the Bay's shoreline to sea-level rise. After a brief primer on causes and projections, he discussed adaptation measures, including the goals of the SAFER Bay project (Strategy to Advance Flood protection, Ecosystems and Recreation), which is developing shoreline protection for Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, and Menlo Park. Our second speaker was Chuck Anderson, a Principal Engineer at Schaaf & Wheeler, who expanded on adaptation measures. He reported from a recent study on stormwater flows and how sea-level rise impacts storm surges in the Palo Alto Flood Basin. Finally, Gil Friend, Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Palo Alto, talked about the city's emerging Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, and how Palo Alto can continue to lead on climate strategies, both to prevent the worst and to adapt to climate change, especially if citizens get involved and take action. (Look for a longer article on these presentations soon, as a blog post on our website BPAlpaloalto.org and in the Summer issue of this newsletter.)

The meeting was rounded out by a Q&A session on neighborhood safety with Palo Alto Police Chief Dennis Burns. Chief Burns discussed a variety of topics: the reasons behind our recent spate of auto burglaries, police plans to improve traffic safety around schools, and strategies for helping the homeless, among others.

The board of the BPA would like to thank the speakers and volunteers for making this another informative and interesting event, and of course all those neighbors who joined us. We are looking forward to an exciting and productive year.

Meet the New Principal at Barron Park School

From the Barron Park Elementary School Newsletter

Anne Brown has been the principal at Barron Park School since August 2015. So to our staff, students, and parents, she's not new anymore. But to the Barron Park neighbors, maybe you haven't had your chance to meet her yet.

Anne comes to us by way of Palo Verde Elementary, where she was principal for 5 years, and before that she was in the Cupertino School Unified. All told, she has over 20 years of experience in education.

Anne has already settled in nicely to principal-ship at Barron Park Elementary and finds it a great school in PAUSD, not unlike Palo Verde. But how Barron Park differs from Palo Verde and most other PAUSD elementary schools is its size: just under 300 students on a 4-acre school site. So each recess and lunchtime, there's a lot of room for students to run around and explore. We have the same classroom curricula as all other PAUSD elementary schools, as well as PE, Music, Art, and Junior Museum and Science visits. Our school garden and planter boxes house our Living Classroom units, where our younger grades get hands-on learning while digging and planting. The Living Classroom is funded by Palo Alto Partners in Education (PiE), which is supported by generous donations from parents and community members.

Barron Park Elementary houses a full-inclusion program, where students with special needs or on the autism spectrum are included in the regular education classroom, anywhere from 30-80% of the day. These students do have a 1-on-1 aide with them the entire time. This helps the special-

needs child learn to collaborate and interact with the regular-needs children. On the other hand, it also helps the regular-needs students to learn empathy, compassion, and patience, as they are in a learning environment with children who have a much different needs-and-skill set.

What else makes Barron Park School a special and fun place are the other programs for all students: the Maker Studio, the 1:1 iPad program (where all students, first through fifth grade, can do learning and class projects on their own assigned iPad), and the school garden. The Maker Studio houses our two 3-D printers, Lego Mindstorm and Storytellers, an HP Sprout, sewing machines... providing so many opportunities for students to come code, create, and explore. The Maker Studio is open most lunchtimes, and is available for teachers to bring their classes weekly for project-based learning.

Jen Harvey is our Mindfulness teacher. She works with all grades, also on a weekly basis, teaching calming techniques, gratitude, and paying closer attention to one's thoughts and the present moment. She also runs a Parent Education Mindfulness class every other Wednesday morning.

If you've been reading the news lately, the website Niche.com has come out with a ranking of the top 100 public elementary schools in California: Barron Park School is so pleased and proud to announce that we are the 24th best public elementary school in California—not too shabby! You can proudly tout that your neighborhood school is in the state's top 1%.

EdCampSVMake to be held at Barron Park Elementary

by Smita Kolhatkar

The concept of Edcamps has been around for a few years now. The Edcamp Foundation <http://www.edcamp.org/> calls it an "organic, participant-driven, professional learning experience created by educators, for educators." Edcamps are free, unconference-style conferences for educators to meet and collaborate. However, edcamps are not restricted to educators. Anyone who is interested in education can and does participate.

The Maker Movement <http://makered.org/> is another such organically growing movement with roots spreading far and wide in K-12 education. Barron Park Elementary pioneered Palo Alto Unified School District's first Makerspace in August 2014. Read the article here: <http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2014/09/06/palo-alto-school-district-gets-its-first-makers-studio> EdcampSVMake will merge both these philosophies—the Edcamp and the Maker

Movement—to target an edcamp focused on Maker Education. This is a first for the area and will be hosted at Barron Park Elementary on April 30, 2016. Details of the event and registration can be found at: bit.ly/edcampsvmake Anyone interested in the way the Maker Movement integrates with K-12 education is welcome to attend. Please be sure to register. For any questions please contact Smita Kolhatkar at skolhatkar@pausd.org

How the Neighborhood Created Bol Park

THE "DONKEY PASTURE" BECOMES A PARK

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

Forty-four years ago Bol Park was a donkey pasture, part of the "Bol Farm" at 925 Roble Ridge. The owner, Cornelis Bol, was a kind and gentle man who enjoyed having the neighborhood children come in and play with the donkeys. He even allowed some to board their own donkeys. See Photo A, Josina and Cornelis Bol in 1964 and Photo B, Negrita, a one-year-old donkey in 1965.

Cornelis Bol, the Inventor

Cornelis Bol was the inventor of the mercury vapor light, still the brightest artificial light source. A Stanford researcher for many years, he also owned and operated the Barron Park Water Company that supplied water to much of Barron Park in the 1930s and 40s. The Bol family emigrated from Holland in 1936, and lived on Roble Ridge for sixty years, until Josina Bol's death in 1996.



Photo A: Josina and Cornelis Bol, from their 1964 family Christmas card.

Dr. Bol's Idea of a Park

In the early 1960s, the idea of a park first came up in a conversation between Dr. Bol and Barron Park resident Sam Elster, while they were watching the neighborhood kids playing in the Bol family pool. Dr. Bol wanted very much to preserve the area as a park for the children.

Elster, Dick Placone, and other leaders of the Barron Park Improvement Association, as it was then known, were involved in the



Photo B: Negrita in 1965, one of the first donkeys born on the Bol Farm in 1964, Bol family photo.

early 1960s in developing a general plan for the community. The purpose was to resist undesirable development, particularly large apartment blocks along El Camino. When they produced the first general plan in cooperation with the County Board of Supervisors in 1966, it contained provisions for all the vacant lands along the then just-abandoned Southern Pacific RR right of way to become a 30-acre neighborhood park. The biggest and most valuable piece was the Bol donkey pasture, between the railroad and Matadero Creek.



Photo C: BPA community leaders Dick Placone (President) and Paul Wolff in the Bol Donkey Pasture near Laguna Avenue, *Palo Alto Times* 9/18/1969.

In the meantime, Dr. Bol died in July 1965. The family indicated that decisions must be made soon, or rising tax pressures would force sale to a developer. There was then the last remaining undeveloped parcel of its size in Barron Park. The Barron Park Association, led by Dick Placone, worked with the County government to develop a way to fund a park. Negotiations led to a very generous offer by the Bol family in November 1967 to sell approximately 5 acres at half of the market value if its status as a parkland could be guaranteed in perpetuity.

Photos of the Donkey Pasture about 1970

See Photo C, Dick Placone and Paul Wolff discussing the park concept with one of the donkeys. Photo D shows the "Bol Barn," which was located in the middle of the "undeveloped" part of today's Bol Park, near the bike path bridge over Matadero Creek. Near the barn was a rustic ornamental gate and a line of weathered wooden rail fencing (see Photo E). Photo F provides a sweeping view of the pasture from a vantage point near the barn, looking north toward Laguna Avenue.

Barron Park Taxes Itself



Photo D: The Bol Barn, about 1970, by Larry Stafford.



Photo E: Gate to the barn area, about 1970, by Larry Stafford.



Photo F: Bol Donkey Pasture, looking north toward Laguna Avenue, about 1970, by Larry Stafford.

The BPA set out to raise money within the community, and over \$11,000 was pledged, but it became clear that private donations would not meet the funding goal. So the

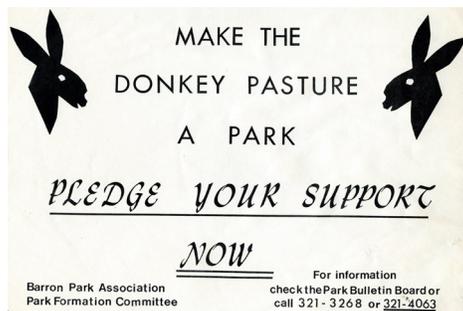


Photo G: Poster used by the BPA to promote the tax election, 1970, by Sam Elster.



Photo H: Sam (r.) and Susan (l.) Elster with a Bol donkey, 1970, Palo Alto Times, 7/10/1970.

BPA decided to seek public funding. In the spring of 1968, the BPA and the County agreed to set up a “County Special Service Area #1” to acquire land, develop, and maintain a neighborhood park for Barron Park. An election was held in July 1970 to approve a \$0.32 tax rate, which passed 2 to 1. Photo G shows a copy of the poster used by the BPA to promote “yes” votes in the tax election, and Photo H shows Sam Elster, the BPA Park Committee Chairman, who led the election campaign. In the photo, Sam and his daughter Susan are decorating one of the donkeys for a parade through the neighborhood.

Additional Funding Sources

Although the major funding was to come from the local tax, additional funding came



Photo J: Bol Park, 1974, looking south from near Laguna Avenue, by Bob England.



Photo I: Ken Arutunian and County officials, by Larry Stafford, 1973.

from the Water District, to perform necessary erosion control and landscaping work on Matadero Creek. A federal government matching grant was also approved. In May 1971 the County acquired the land for \$68,750, and detailed planning began.

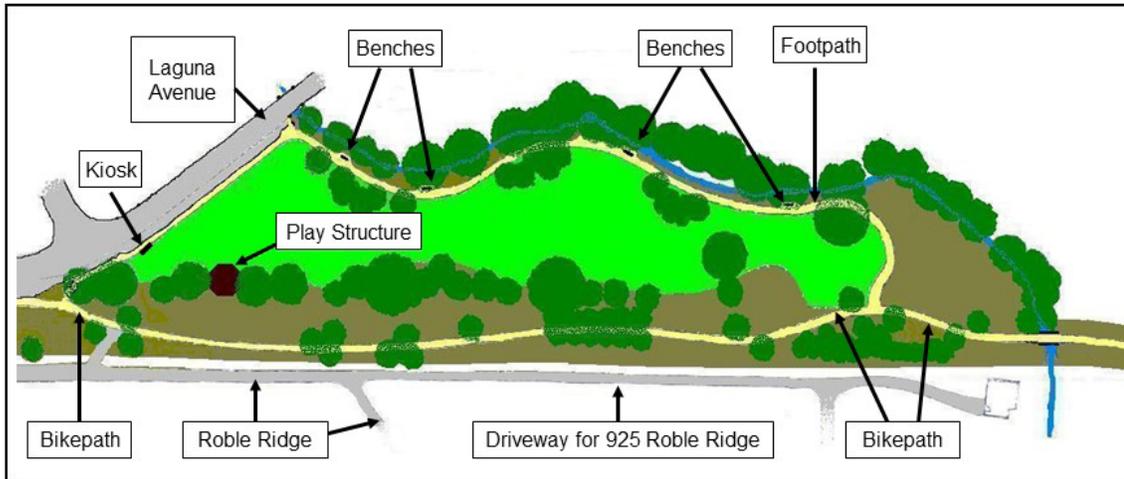
The Barn Burns Down

Initially there were plans to incorporate the Bol Barn into the park as a 4-H club demonstration project and domestic animal “petting zoo.” However, the barn caught fire on Washington’s Birthday weekend in 1973. The Barron Park Volunteer Fire Department made a spectacularly inept attempt to put out the flames, nevertheless it burned to the ground.

Design and Construction

Long-term Barron Park resident Ken Arutunian did the landscape design. Native Northern California plants were used, and existing vegetation was disturbed as little as possible (see Photo I, Ken Arutunian and County officials discussing final design details in the park). Park design was completed and construction began in the fall of 1973. This was Phase I of the park

and included only the creek bank, the irrigated turf, the play structure, and the pedestrian walk. The completed park is shown in Photo J, looking south from a point near Laguna Avenue. The upper end of the park where the barn had been was to remain undeveloped, and still is, in order to retain a little of the rural feeling of the donkey pasture (see Map K, Details of the “Phase I Park” in 1974).



Key

- Irrigated Turf
- Trees
- Bikepath and Footpaths
- Semi-Natural Vegetation Areas
- Matadero Creek
- Roads and Driveways

Map K: based on the original park diagram by architect Ken Arutunian, 1973, by Doug Graham (© 2008). Note: Bikepath was actually part of Phase II, 1978-1979.

Community Picnic and Park Dedication

Hundreds of people turned out for a community picnic and dedication of Cornelis Bol Park on April 28, 1974. Mrs. Josina Bol was present to accept the thanks and congratulations of the grateful citizens. See Photo L, Josina Bol and Dick Placone at the dedication. It would be most appropriate if the park were to be renamed “Josina and Cornelis Bol Park” because it would not have happened without Josina’s leadership of the Bol heirs. This was proposed by several of the Bol heirs a few years ago.

The Job Wasn’t Done Yet

The Bol Park Advisory Committee had already been working on Phase II: the acquisition and development of the old Southern Pacific Railroad right of way, where the regional bike path runs today. This was a more complicated task, because the railroad owned only the part of the land that had



Photo L: Josina Bol and Dick Placone at the Park Dedication, 4/28/1974, by Bob England.

originally been part of the old Barron Estate, from the Varian plant to the VA Hospital at the current donkey pasture. The remainder, past Gunn High School to Arastradero Road, belonged to Stanford with a long-term lease to the railroad.

The SPRR Deeds Land for Phase II

However, negotiations were successful and Dick Placone was able to announce the railroad company’s gift, in April 1974, of approximately three acres of land in an 80-foot wide strip. Shortly thereafter, the University was persuaded to re-lease their portion to the County and plans for Phase II were in full swing.

The People Approve

At a community meeting in November 1974 attended by 300 residents, overwhelming approval was voiced for a tax period extension to pay for development of Phase II. The long-awaited federal funds became available then and provided up-front funding. The following March, Santa Clara County approved the Phase II expansion.

The Park Advisory Committee held many meetings to solicit and weigh community input. Design was done by another Barron Park landscape architect, Jack Buktenica. Money was forthcoming from the city because the bike path was needed to complete the overall Palo Alto plan. Then on November 4, 1975, the citizens of Barron Park voted 936-478 to join Palo Alto, ending nearly 40 years of political antagonism between the neighborhood and the city. On November

25, the formal transfer of responsibility for Bol Park, including the development of Phase II, took place. Bol Park in Barron Park became Palo Alto’s latest city park. Barron Park can be forever proud that we are the only neighborhood that has created our own public park and brought it into the city with us.

Phase II Reaches Completion

Meanwhile, Phase II planning continued and construction began in 1979. Finally, in May 1980, Phase II was dedicated at a ceremony in the park. Thus was added the regional bike path running from Arastradero Road to the Varian plant, 9 acres, bringing the total acreage of the park complex to 13.8.

The Bicentennial Celebration

During the late 1970s, a new community tradition was born: fêtes in the park. The BPA organized a bicentennial celebration and community picnic on July 4, 1976. Many people who turned out were enjoying the park for their first time. Jeff and Janet Rulifson assembled a Barron Park history display that became the inspiration for Doug Graham’s development of the portable Barron Park History Exhibit.

The May Fêtes

Paul and Patty Edwards began the May Fêtes in the mid-1970s on a small scale, but the first large fête sponsored by the BPA was held in May 1978. There were three maypoles, various musical groups, and Paul arranged for the Los Trancos Woods Community Marching Band to put on a show (see Photo M, Los Trancos Woods Band at the 1985 May Fête). There were craft displays and face painting, and Ken Arutunian began a ten-year tradition of Armenian-

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: BPApaloalto.org and click on the tab “BPA Email Lists.” This provides an easy means to subscribe, and information about the lists.



Photo N: Will Beckett's gazebo and performers at the 1982 Fourth Fête, by Sam Elster.



Photo M: Los Trancos Woods Community Marching Band at the 1985 Bol Park May Fête, by Paul Edwards.

style barbecued shish kebabs. There were very successful May Fêtes both of the next two years.

After the rainy 1981 May Fête, the BPA decided to try an old-fashioned Fourth of July picnic, like the Bicentennial. It was a rousing success. Will Beckett built a gazebo that could be assembled and disassembled in two hours' time, and which has been used for many fêtes since (the platform floor is still used as the stage for musical performances and speeches). See Photo N, Gazebo and performers at the 1982 Fourth Fête. There was a program of political speeches, concluding with Congressman Tom Lantos. The Fourth Fêtes were repeated in 1983, with Mayor Betsy Bechtel, and in 1984, with State Assemblyman Byron Sher. Also in 1984, BPA President Doug Graham organized a Bol Park Tenth Anniversary presentation including and honoring Josina Bol, Dick Placone, and others who had made the park possible. After 1984, it was decided to bring back the May Fêtes and maypole dancing, which have been the main focus since 1985. See Photo O, the 2003 Maypole dance.

Memorial Redwoods

A sentimental tradition was inaugurated in the park during 1985 and 1986 by BPA President John Joynt: the planting of redwood trees in memory of the loved ones of several Barron Park residents.

Ongoing Citizen Involvement—Good and Bad

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the BPA and many individuals remained interested in and involved with maintenance and small improvement projects in the park. Some follow-up anti-erosion work was necessary on the Matadero Creek bank. A huge valley oak was knocked down in a violent storm during the big El Niño year 1981–82. Vandalism resulted in several recycled telephone poles installed as parking edges along Laguna Avenue being thrown into the flooding creek, endangering retaining walls and terraces downstream, and a Water District "Bobcat" front-loader was driven into the creek just below Mickey's (the donkey) Pasture. Street lights were broken and the BPA Kiosk on Laguna severely damaged.

However, the bulk of citizen involvement was highly positive. Campaigns for native plants and eradication of invasive non-natives were launched and, little by little, began to make a difference. Citizens reported problems to City staff and sometimes met with them to work out solutions that did not require significant funding. The BPA and its Park Committee continued to work with the City and the Water District to ensure that Bol Park was protected and maintained. Leaders in these efforts included Christian Kalar, Doug Moran, Will and Jill Beckett, Doug Graham, Inge Harding-Barlow, Sam

Elster, Shirley Finrock, and many more.

Later on, in the late 1990s, 2000s, and in this decade, the list would include many of the same people, plus Lynnne Melena and Art Liberman.

Tearing Up the Bike Path, 1994

The big story in the 1990s, though, was the necessary destruction of the bike path from Matadero Avenue through Bol Park and past the Gunn High School playing fields to make possible the excavation for and construction of a very large underground flood control culvert to protect Barron Park from flooding by either Barron or Matadero Creeks. For details on this project, read my article in the Winter 2015 issue of this newsletter.

After the bike path was removed and the underground culvert installed, the right of way was used as a temporary haul road for removal of some of the excess dirt from the excavation. See Photo P for a look at the Bol Park segment in 1995. This photo, taken by my daughter Mollie Graham, fascinates me because it looks like a lonely road somewhere in a rural area.

In 1996 the Water District rebuilt our beautiful bike path, even restoring the gradients to a very close match of Jack Buktenica's 1978 design, with graceful curves and interesting grades.

Bol Park Renovation, 2002

In 2002, the City undertook an equally vital, but less dramatic project to renovate many deteriorating aspects of the original Bol Park. Under the leadership of Barron Park native and resident Kate Rooney, the City staff worked with Christian Kalar and other members of the BPA Parks Committee to replace the watering system and the turf, trim trees along the bike path, resurface the pedestrian walk, and most important, to replace the worn-out play structure with a much larger area. Kate's sensitivity to local feelings was shown in her choice



Photo O: 2003 Maypole dance, by unknown photographer.



Photo P: The torn-up bike path used as a haul road in 1996, for the underground flood culvert construction, by Mollie Graham.

of a donkey theme to exemplify the park, both in the new signage and with “rocking-horse” donkeys for kids to ride. The main play structure is an evocation of a railroad locomotive, very appropriate considering the history of the right of way.

Bike Path Revegetation, 2015–16

The most recent example of assertive citizen involvement in park matters is the story of the new Bol Park Bike Path Committee that is working with the Veterans Administration Hospital construction staff to mitigate the esthetic damage done by the VA in removing vegetation on their property, but very close to the bike path. As Dick Placone wrote in his Brief History published in the Winter 2015 issue, trees and shrubbery were “...bulldozed and ripped out, leaving vast



Photo Q: Bol Park Bike Path Committee volunteers planting native shrubs near Strawberry Hill, 2016, by Frank Crossman. (Note: this photo also appeared in the Winter 2015 issue of this newsletter.)

areas along the bike path open for the first time to vistas of the VA campus. Within a few hours, what was once an idyllic and bucolic environment surrounding the pathway became a glaring scar.”

Dick Placone, Art Liberman, and David Boxerman are leading a sizeable group of Barron Park neighbors and other interested citizens in working with the VA and City staffs to mitigate the damage as much as possible. See Photo Q, Bike path volunteers planting native shrubs.

Dick Placone is perhaps unique in being a community leader of the 1960s and 70s who has returned in this past decade to provide leadership for the Matadero Well Site mini-park project of several years ago, and now the bike path revegetation project.

The Future of Bol Park

The future of the park lies in the same hands as its past: the capable hands of the self-motivated citizens of Barron Park. The original plan for Bol Park is not yet complete. There were three additional parcels originally planned to be added to the park. One parcel (Matadero Court) was lost to development in the 1970s. Another is the privately-owned donkey pasture which is part of the residential parcel at 925 Roble Ridge, and must be considered to be permanently non-available. The third is still (theoretically) available: the unused triangle of Gunn High School property that includes “Strawberry Hill.” If revegetated with appropriate native plantings, this could be a beautiful addition to the park.

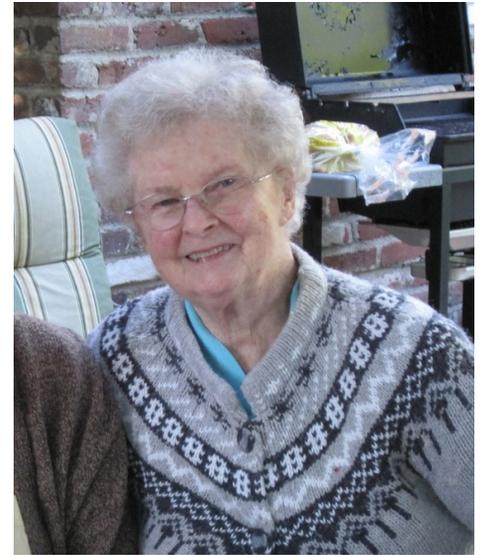
In the spirit of journalistic candor, I would like to inform you that this article is a rewrite and update of similar articles previously published in this Newsletter in the issues of June 1987, Spring 1997, and Winter 2007. However, about 30% of the material

in this story is new, and only 4 of the 16 photographs have ever been published before.

I hope you have enjoyed this history of how the neighborhood created Bol Park and has remained involved in its maintenance and renewal ever since. If you have questions, or have discovered errors in this account, please contact me at *dgrahampaca@gmail.com*, snail mail at 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto, 94306, or phone me at 650-493-0689.

Therese Ann Knight

September 23, 1925–January 21, 2016



Therese Knight, a 65-year Barron Park resident, passed away peacefully with her family at her bedside on January 21, 2016.

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, Therese would later marry Robert Knight and go on to celebrate over 71 years of marriage. An avid baker and gardener, Therese kept neighbors and family members stocked with fresh batches of homemade strawberry, rhubarb and apricot jam, dried apples, pies, and bags of Meyer lemons. A visitor at the holidays was always sent home with boxes of homemade cookies and a collection of blue, red, yellow, and green popcorn balls handmade by the couple. Therese enjoyed caring for her garden, and the 7 hummingbird feeders that were lovingly refilled every few days for decades, so as to never run dry. Bob and Therese enjoyed vacationing in Donner Lake, CA, where the couple built the family cabin in the 1960s.

Therese is survived by her husband, Bob, and their six children; Bob Knight, Dennis Knight, Rick Knight, Margaret Olivier, Terry Knight, and Mary Dandridge; 10 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. She is preceded in death by three grandchildren, Ken Knight, Caroline Dandridge, and Christine Dandridge.

A memorial mass was held on February 20, 2016, at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Palo Alto.

Buena Vista News: Courts, Kids, and Schools

By Winter Dellenbach

Stanford Research Survey of Buena Vista Teens, Youth, and School—Hot off the Presses

How often do we get to read what teens are really thinking? As any parent knows, never enough. But now, thanks to Dr. Amado Padilla of the Stanford Graduate School of Education (once a PAUSD board member) and grad student Juan Arias, we know more about the 58 adolescents and young adults, ages 12–24, living at Buena Vista. At the time of this writing, their 36-page study is about to be released, so here is a preview.

- There are about 130 children and youth at Buena Vista, most of whom likely have lived a majority of their lives there.
- 90% of all ages of PAUSD students at BV feel they receive a high level of social support from their school, teachers, and classmates, and are encouraged to do their best. This is about double the number for other PAUSD students, taken from a 2010 developmental assets survey done in the District.
- 90% of the BV adolescents express having a strong bond with their school.
- 80% of girls and boys hope to attend at least 2 years of college; 58% of girls and 75% of boys at BV aspire to attend 4 or more years of college.
- Current worry levels are relatively high for BV students of all ages, especially for the younger kids. Nevertheless, it seems the youth remain largely optimistic and able to look beyond the immediate chaos of possible loss of their homes.
- Findings show that though BV students are a marginalized population because of their low-income status, the adolescents nevertheless have a strong sense of belonging to their school community, known to correlate highly with future academic achievement.

Other News Affecting Barron Park Elementary Students

Most BV youngsters attend Barron Park Elementary School. The school was just rated the 24th best elementary school in California by Niche.com. The current District focus on BPE, supporting staff teaching and student learning, is inspiring. Congratulations to BPE staff and students!

Here Comes the Judge

Remember the famous 1960s musical, “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the

Forum”? The same could be said of the community effort to buy Buena Vista from its owners. Just as it seemed that BV might be purchased by a non-profit, allowing residents to remain, a “funny thing” happened, and the focus shifted to the courts. There are currently two lawsuits concerning Buena Vista.

The first suit was brought by BV residents’ lawyers to preserve and protect their clients’ access to the courts if ever needed. The lawyers tried to postpone the deadline for filing suit, in order to allow purchase negotiations to go forward without the complication of a pending lawsuit. The owner, ignoring his own lawyer’s advice, wouldn’t agree. This lawsuit was filed in State Superior Court just before the deadline that would have prevented BV residents from having any future recourse to protecting their rights in court.

The second lawsuit, filed in Federal Court against the City by Buena Vista’s owner, is “impact litigation” (a case with potential to broadly impact laws and conditions for all similar situations). The Federal Court case could lead to the U.S. Supreme Court and a decision that applies nationwide. An outcome favorable to BV’s owner could possibly strip relocation rights from the 20 million mobile home residents in the U.S. Most are low-income homeowners with some protection of their property rights under current state and local laws—all of which could be lost.

The image of BV residents packing up whatever they can carry in their cars and simply driving off to the Central Valley with no compensation for the homes they own, or the schools, community, and jobs they would lose, is harsh beyond belief. And if multiplied by 20 million—that is more than the population of some 140 countries.

In May, lawyers will argue the City’s Motion to Dismiss the second lawsuit. Yet to be determined is the status of the State suit brought in Superior Court by the residents.

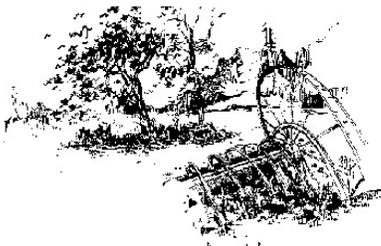
The immediate result, particularly of the owner’s lawsuit, is that residents will likely reside at Buena Vista for the foreseeable future. In the end we hope that the non-profit Caritas will succeed in buying BV with the best offer to the owners while enabling residents and their children to remain part of our Barron Park neighborhood.

Winter Dellenbach lives on La Para. She formed Friends of Buena Vista in 2012.

BPA Membership: What’s New for 2016-2017?

By Lisa Berkowitz Landers,
BPA Membership Chair

- You may notice more reminders to join the Barron Park Association this year. If you are new to Barron Park, we look forward to your membership and participation. The BPA is also encouraging long-term residents to join! For whatever reason you may not have joined, we ask you to share your concerns with us and/or to contribute to the community supported by the BPA.
- If you are not sure if your membership is current, please verify your membership by sending an email to barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com.
- Membership can now be paid by credit card at some Barron Park events, in addition to previous payment methods: checks, cash, or online through PayPal.
- All members (online and mail-in) will receive an email confirmation when their membership has been renewed. Membership confirmations will be sent out approximately once a month. Notices on the BPA email lists and NextDoor will announce when confirmations are sent out, so if you do not receive your expected confirmation please notify the BPA at barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com.
- Last year 450 households joined the BPA, and this record number permitted the Association to sponsor activities that attracted members of our community across generations and cultures.
- Membership renewal forms are sent to approximately 1,500 households in Barron Park. We are hoping to double our membership and reach a goal of 900 household members.
- This year, a few events organized by the BPA will require a small fee for non-member participation. These fees will help support expenses such as May Fête, Newsletter production, and room fees at Barron Park Elementary School.
- Volunteers are welcome to advise and set up a new membership database. We would like to offer multi-year memberships, but we need volunteers to evaluate and implement a new database.
- The Barron Park Association is dedicated to maintaining the quality of life in Barron Park and continuing to foster a sense of community. Please join!



2016-2017 Barron Park Association Membership

Your membership supports BPA-sponsored community events, the BPApaloalto.org website, committee activities, and our BPA email lists. Barron Park events include: Community Happy Hours, May Fête in Bol Park, Movie Night, Annual Meeting and Potluck, Cultural Events, and Meet/Learn activities. Members also receive our BPA quarterly newsletter and access to the BPA Babysitting List. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Membership is for one year: April 2016 – March 2017

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Name(s): | Primary Email: |
| Address: | Alternate Email: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter: I want the online edition instead of mailed copy | Phone: |

...or join online at <http://www.BPApaloalto.org> and click on

[How to Join](#)

Please select a Membership Category (per household)

- | | | | |
|---|-------|---------------------------------------|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fellow | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Member | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$ 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (65+) | \$10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor | \$ 35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Contribution: | _____ | | |

Total Enclosed: _____

Make check payable to: Barron Park Association
Membership and contributions are not tax deductible

*BPA needs volunteers for the committees and activities that support our neighborhood!
See the reverse for descriptions and sign-up boxes. If you would like to organize a new event, contact the BPA President at president@BPApaloalto.org*

Mail this completed form & your check to:

Barron Park Association
724 Barron Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94306

BPA Email Lists: Sign up to **BPA-misc**, **BPA-issues** and **BPA-news**

Go to: <http://www.BPApaloalto.org> and click on

[BPA Email Lists](#)

See Reverse to sign up for:

- **BPA Babysitting List**
- **BPA Neighborhood Committees**

BPA Babysitting List:

The BPA provides a list of those available for babysitting. **See important note below.** * A new list is compiled each year, so please complete this section, even if you signed up last year. The list is distributed to BPA members by email only, so be sure to complete your email address above.

I would like to receive the list.

I would like to be included on the list of babysitters.

My name is _____

Age (if under 21) _____ Contact info _____

***By signing up for this service, parents, babysitters, and their families acknowledge that the Barron Park Association is not responsible for, and will be held harmless against, any injury, loss, claim, lawsuit, or other damage arising from, or related in any manner to, the parents' and babysitter's use of this resource list or the individuals appearing on it.**

BPA Neighborhood Committees: Volunteers are the key to a vibrant community!

Newsletter

Contribute articles, photos, interview Barron Park neighbors/businesses for articles, proofread

May Fête

Help with the annual Spring neighborhood event in Bol Park

Social/Cultural Events

Organize volunteers, coordinate neighborhood events, assist with planning

Welcoming

Greet new residents with an informational packet to introduce them to our caring community

Parks and Creeks

Work with City and neighborhood to review park and creek issues, maintenance, and improvement projects

Seniors

Join us for occasional lunches or serve as a volunteer to help other Barron Park Seniors

Neighborhood Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Work with the Emergency Preparedness Chairperson to prepare the neighborhood to handle major emergencies

Traffic and Streets

Work with the City and neighborhood to review traffic issues, present plans for traffic calming and other safety-related changes within Barron Park and on adjacent major streets

Environmental Issues

Work on a specific neighborhood environmental issue or identify, create, and implement sustainable environmental solutions in our neighborhood

Zoning and Land Use

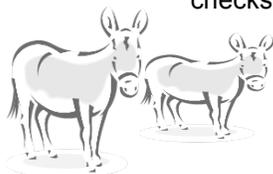
Be informed about urban design studies or multi-family, commercial, or mixed-use developments proposed in our neighborhood – attend meetings and provide input to project sponsors

School Liaison

Coordinate BPA affairs and news with neighborhood school issues and activities

Willing to help out with one-time activity

The donkeys and their care are supported by voluntary contributions to a separate organization. Write your checks to: *ACTERRA- Palo Alto Donkey Fund* and mail them to:



The Palo Alto Donkey Project ACTERRA

3921 E. Bayshore Rd.
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Barron Park Emergency Preparedness Survey

v2.22.2016

All information kept strictly confidential and used only for emergency purposes (Please be sure to fill out contact information)

I agree that this information may be shared with the BPA Board and the Emergency Preparedness & Safety Committee.

Printed name(s): _____ / _____ Signature: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Someone in my household will need "special help" in an emergency owing to age, handicaps, critical medical devices, etc.

Name of Person with Special Need _____

Nature of Special Need: Physical Handicap Critical Medical Needs Age

Name of Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact Telephone: _____ Email: _____

These skills are available in my household:

- Physician Nurse EMT Paramedic First Aid CPR
- Crisis counseling (psychologist, therapist, etc.) Interpreting of _____ language
- Police Fire BPC CERT HAZMAT training
- Ham radio (equipment and license) GMRS radio (equipment and skill) FRS radio (equipment and skill)
- Bicycle and willingness to carry messages in emergency Plumbing, electrical, or construction skills

Other emergency skills (specify) _____

I have the following supplies available for an emergency:

- Major first-aid supplies (more than band aids) Medical Equipment (AED, crutches, wheel chairs, etc.)
- Emergency water supply (specify well, swimming pool, hot tub, etc.) _____
- Electrical generator Hoist Winch (gasoline- or vehicle-powered)
- Gasoline chain saw Electrical chain saw Water pump (gasoline powered)
- Other useful equipment _____

I am willing to be a Block Preparedness Coordinator (BPC) for my street.

- Prerequisite: attend free BPC Certification training, 3 modules – approximately 3.5 hours (date, time, and location TBA)
- Day-to-day activities involve helping neighbors mitigate and take preventive measures against emergencies, getting prepared, and keeping aware and informed of what to expect from the city and neighborhood for response and recovery.
- BPCs fulfill their Emergency & Safety duties remaining on their street and in their neighborhood and perform "eyes and ears" functions.

I am willing to be a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) member.

- Prerequisite: attend CERT Basic Training, 6 classes, 20+ hours (date, time, and location TBA)
- Day-to-day activities involve helping neighbors mitigate and take preventive measures against emergencies, getting prepared, and keeping aware and informed of what to expect from the city and neighborhood for response and recovery.
- CERTs perform light responder duties as trained during emergencies.

I would like information on upcoming CPR/First Aid classes.

Comments you wish to share with us:

Barron Park Association Emergency Preparedness & Safety Committee

v2.22.2016

In the event of a natural disaster (earthquake, flood, etc.), trained volunteers will be critical to survival. The mission of the Palo Alto Emergency Services Volunteers (ESV) is to: (1) provide supplemental resources to the professional first responders of the City and surrounding communities, and (2) facilitate means for neighbors to help neighbors. You are invited to join your neighbors in the Barron Park volunteer group.

I would like more information

I would like to sign up

For the following position(s) (see reverse side for details)

BPC (Block Preparedness Coordinator)

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team)

Contact Information

First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Home Address (not a P.O. Box): _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____ Email alternate: _____

Return this form along with your BPA Membership form and check.

Barron Park Association

724 Barron Avenue

Palo Alto, CA 94306

BUSINESS BEAT: ELLEN GOLD (PAULA DRAKE INVESTIGATIONS)

By Markus Fromherz

Please tell us a bit about your business and its history.

I founded Paula Drake Investigations in 1994 after qualifying for and receiving my private investigator license from the California Department of Consumer Affairs. I have a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, as well as a Master's degree in Educational

Psychology, both from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. I initially pursued a career in community mental health services. In 1982, I moved to Palo Alto. After working for Foothill College at the VA hospitals in Palo Alto and Menlo Park, providing transitional skills to patients on the locked and unlocked psychiatric units, I accepted a position with the San Mateo County Children's Protective

Services. During my tenure in San Mateo County I also served as an adult probation officer in East Palo Alto. Due to my high-profile experiences allied with law enforcement, I chose not to name my business with my own name; instead, I chose "Paula Drake" to reflect a woman-owned business and as an homage to the fictional character Paul Drake, Perry Mason's private investigator.

What services do you offer?

Paula Drake Investigations is a full-service detective agency. PDI offers a wide range of investigative services, specializing in child custody investigations, missing persons and witness locates, background investigations, criminal defense, civil trial preparation, and difficult and high-profile process service. I also operate a sideline business, Supervised Visitation Services, where I offer private visitation monitoring for parents and children.

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

Our clientele varies widely and is international in breadth. PDI serves private individuals and businesses. The most marked changes I've seen are the Great Recession (of 2008), which resulted in many law enforcement retirements and these retirees entering the private investigation industry, and the advent of universal internet usage, with "services" purporting to offer investigations to the general public. Let me stress that the information available for sale on the internet is not the same information that a licensed private investigator has access to.

How can neighbors find out more about you?

More detail about my businesses is available at these sites:

- www.SiliconValleyPI.com
- www.PaulaDrakePI.com
- www.ChildCustodyCop.com
- www.SupervisedVisitationServices.com

or by calling 650-857-9465 for a free telephone consultation.

El Camino Business Update

By Bob Moss

There continue to be changes in occupancy on El Camino between Adobe Creek and Page Mill since my last report in August, but not very many.

Hunan Garden Restaurant at 3345 is now Mandarin Roots.

The vacated site for Quality Discount Tile at 3457 is now occupied by Restaurant Supplies & Fixtures.

3489 is still a shoe dealer, with SNEAKER-PAWNSF replacing Walk Rite for Life.

We Fix Laptops at 3491 was replaced by Smokes & Vapes. We Fix Laptops is now on the second floor.

Palo Alto Dental Care returned to 3737, and the space now appears occupied.

El Rancho Motel at 3901 is now The Nest Motel.

An office space was split from some of the space occupied by Inhabiture at 3630 and is currently for rent.

Part of Great American Framing at 3866 was split off for the new Tranquil Spa at 3866B.

Stanford Driving School at 3960 was replaced by N M Real Estate and Olive O Life, selling olive oils.

The gas station at 3972 is now Valero, not Gas N Go.

Carlsen Volvo at 4190 was renamed Palo Alto Volvo.

Midas Muffler, later Meineke Automotive, at 4200 El Camino, closed in 2014, and the site is still vacant; currently no tenants are indicating interest in leasing the site.

Juniper Integrative Care at 4149B El Camino Way has closed, and the site is vacant.

Vacancy rates under 5% are basically

considered full occupancy. Vacancy rates continue to drop on El Camino.

There are only three vacancies on the Barron Park side, totaling 11,360 sq. ft. They are the former Midas site at 4200, the former Cross-fit site at 4050, and a small space at 3866.

The lots at 3710 and 4146 have been vacant for decades. Each had several developments approved, but nothing was built.

There are six vacancies on the Ventura Side. No occupants are shown for 2951, 3011, 3527, 3585, 3877, and 4117. The Combes site at 3585 has been vacant for more than 40 years.

The former Compadres site at 3877, closed in October 2010, was approved for redevelopment as a mixed-use site with ground floor retail and housing above early in 2015. No work is being done at the site.

The former Curves site at 4117 has also been vacant for years with nothing proposed.

The project originally proposed for 2755 El Camino at the VTA parking lot was replaced with a proposed 32,550 sq. ft. building that requires rezoning the site to CC. The project was strongly rejected by the City Council in September 2015. The developer was told to reduce offices and scale it down.

| Vacancy rates | Feb. 2015 | Aug. 2015 | Feb. 2016 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| El Camino on Ventura Side | 5.14% | 5.14% | 4.63% |
| El Camino on Barron Park Side | 2.88% | 1.78% | 2.05% |
| El Camino Way | 0.00% | 0.00% | 2.28% |
| Total Vacancy including El Camino Way | 3.63% | 2.90% | 2.99% |

What Can Barron Park Residents Do About Climate Change?

By David Coale

In 2013, the Palo Alto City Council, at the urging of concerned residents and with no rate increases, decided to go 100% carbon neutral for our electricity supply for all residents and businesses¹. This one action reduced the carbon footprint of all residents by about 20% with no other changes required.

Now with a clean energy source in place, our next opportunity is to switch to using this clean energy for as much as possible as we go about our daily lives. With the recent advances in technology, switching to electricity to meet our daily needs is now more available than ever before and cost effective as well. As we look at our remaining carbon footprint, we find that transportation accounts for about 45% of the remaining carbon emissions for most residents.

For most of us, getting around town requires a car. With the purchase of an electric vehicle (EV) our daily trips can now be carbon free. Most EVs have a range of 90 to 100 miles, which is about twice the daily average of 40 miles that most Americans drive each day. If you look at the total cost of the EV over 10 years, it is actually cheaper to drive one of the more affordable EVs when compared to an equivalent-sized gas car. The economics are even better with some of the lease options now available. Walt Hays, a longtime Palo Alto resident and member of Carbon Free Palo Alto, wrote a great piece on all the advantages of driving an EV: <http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2016/01/23/guest-opinion-do-your-part-to-combat-climate-change-151-get-an-ev>

Of course, riding your bike for the short trips around town, with the multiple benefits of no congestion, no parking problems, exercise, and better health, can beat an EV anytime. With our good weather, flat terrain, and good bike paths, the bike should be our first choice for many of our shorter local trips. One of my favorite bike trips is to the Cal Ave Farmers' Market on Sunday mornings.

The next item to look at is natural gas use in the home. While natural gas was once thought to be a cleaner transition fuel as we move away from coal-fired power plants, we are now finding out that although natural gas is clean burning, leakage during the extraction and transmission means the effects of natural gas are on par with coal use. The recent natural gas leak in Southern California has brought this to our attention. One estimate is that this leak was equal to the emissions of 4.5 million cars each day. Natural gas is 20 times stronger than CO₂ in its greenhouse gas effect in our atmosphere and over 80 times stronger in the time frame we have left to really address climate change². So reducing our natural gas use in the home is an important step we can take to address climate change.

The first and most cost effective way to do this is to replace the hot water heater, when it fails, with an electric heat-pump-based water heater (HPWH). The HPWH is three times more efficient than a gas or regular electric water heater and will pay for itself in about 4 to 9 years depending on the installation costs. It takes much less energy to move heat (heat pump) from one place

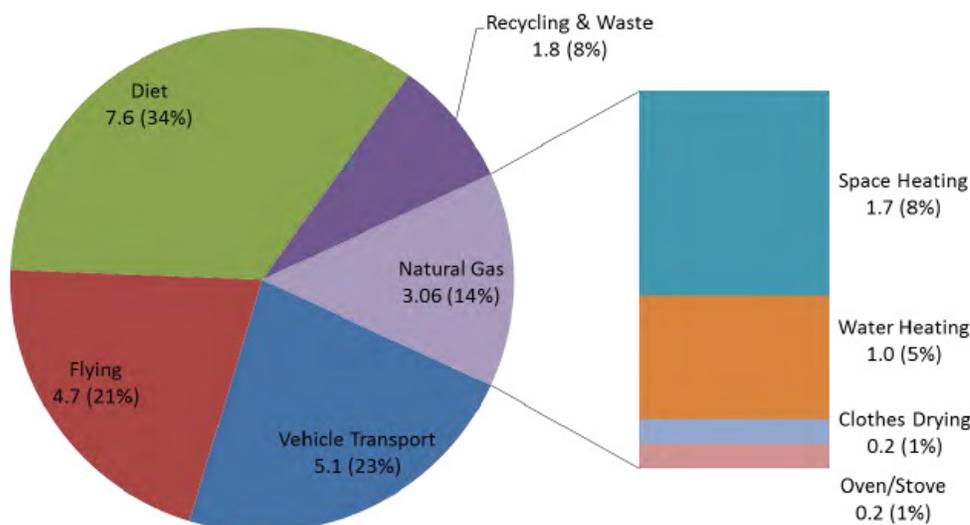
to another than to create heat. The HPWH works in a similar manner as your refrigerator, but in the opposite direction, moving heat from the air to the water in a tank. The City of Palo Alto will soon have a rebate program that will make it even more attractive. What you need to do now is to plan for this, so that when your water heater goes out, or hopefully just before that, you are ready with this cost-effective, cleaner option, instead of buying a gas replacement in a panic when you don't have any hot water.

The next item to consider is the gas furnace when it needs replacing. With a forced-air unit, you will get air conditioning as well. These heating systems will require an outside fan coil unit as part of the heat pump installation. This is definitely a larger project/expense, but worth looking at when your old furnace needs replacing.

The last item to think about is replacing your gas cooktop with an electric induction cooktop. For many, this change appears non-negotiable, but when you talk to people who have made the switch, they all say they would never switch back. The induction cooktop heats the pans directly, without a lot of extra heating of the area around the cooking surface, and is as quick to heat and cool off as a gas stove.

With all these appliances, the best time to switch is when the old unit is at the end of life or if you are planning on a remodel. Do your homework ahead of time, so that if your appliance should suddenly fail, you will have a plan in place and not make a less informed panic purchase of older technology that will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions and is less efficient.

Greenhouse gas emissions from City of Palo Alto Utilities



What about conservation and efficiency?

Yes, conservation and efficiency are still the best and most cost effective ways to reduce your utility bill. As we switch to electric appliances, we will be putting a greater load on the electricity grid, so that our other conservation efforts, such as lighting with CFLs and LED bulbs and turning off other appliances when not needed, will play a large role in reducing our energy loads. The city has rebates for many energy-saving appliances and a free energy advisor program to help you with energy efficiency in the home. Call 650-713-3411 to access this, or you can have a more complete energy audit done for a modest cost. See: http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/util/residents/programs/home_efficiency_genie.asp

What about solar?

There are many reasons one might consider installing a solar photovoltaic (PV) system. The current payback for a solar PV system in Palo Alto is about 10 to 12 years based on avoided cost and does not account for return on investment or electricity rate increases, both of which would make solar PV even more favorable. Since our electricity is already carbon neutral, solar PV will not really change your carbon footprint. That said, any addition of renewable energy to the grid will displace other brown power someplace else, and when you see the meter running backwards, that is priceless!

Solar hot water systems are more expensive in terms of avoided cost and will not completely cover your hot water needs; you will still need a backup water heater. In this case you are better off going with a HPWH in the first place, or, if you are installing solar PV, just add a few more panels to cover your HPWH electricity usage.

Other emissions

Not shown on the Palo Alto carbon pie are the emissions associated with goods and services and other indirect emissions, to name a few. This can be as much as 50% of our personal carbon footprint depending on our activities. For food, it is best to shop local and eat organic and lower on the food chain – more fruits and vegetables. Like many solutions to climate change, this one also has multiple benefits. Eating less meat is better for you, reduces water use (2500 gallons required to produce just one pound of beef) and is easier on the planet. For a complete carbon calculator see: <http://www.coolcalifornia.org/calculator>

Summary

So the answer to “What can Barron Park residents do about climate change?” is: A lot! For fuel switching, conservation, and efficiency, the city has many rebate programs to help. Will this really make a difference? I think so, as what we do here in Palo Alto is an example to other cities of what they can do. For me, it is a better way of life; the more I ride my bike and eat less meat, the happier and healthier I am. I am doing my part to address climate change and improve local air quality too, and that feels good. So I invite you to take a look at your own daily life and see if there are opportunities that will save you money, address climate change, and improve your quality of life as well, so that you can realize these multiple benefits!

David Coale is a member of the Barron Park Green Teams, longtime Acterra Member, and member of Carbon Free Palo Alto.

Notes

¹ The recent rate increase for electricity is due to drought more than anything else, as Palo Alto gets most of its electricity from large hydro projects in the Northwest. So when there is less water, Palo Alto has to buy power from other sources at higher prices: <http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2016/02/05/utility-rates-set-to-rise-in-palo-alto>

² <https://www.edf.org/methane-other-important-greenhouse-gas>

For more information, please look at the following websites:

City of Palo Alto Sustainability website: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/services/sustainability/>

Fighting Climate Change in Palo Alto: <http://www.paloaltoonline.com/print/story/2014/10/31/guest-opinion-fighting-climate-change-8212-if-not-palo-alto-then-who>

Carbon Free Palo Alto: <http://carbonfreepaloalto.org>

WANTED:

BPA Newsletter Articles on Local Topics

We are always on the lookout for BPA newsletter articles on neighborhood topics. Do you have news of local interest? An event to announce? A new business to introduce? Would you like to tell us what your book club is reading, what designs your quilt club is quilting, where your cycling club is going, and how to join up? Do you have some BP history to share? Is one of your neighbors willing to be interviewed (by you)? If you’re in the arts, would you like to showcase your work? Any subject of potential interest to your neighbors could be the germ of a newsletter article! You can reach hundreds of neighbors who are members of the Association (and roughly 2,000 Barron Park households through our Spring issue).

Here’s how it works: Send your idea for a newsletter article to Myrna Rochester, [news-letter at BPapaloalto.org](mailto:news-letter@BPapaloalto.org) If your idea matches our criteria (topic of local interest, timeliness, objectivity), we’ll invite you to write it up for either the upcoming or a future issue, depending on available space. Then you put pen to paper and send us your write-up (in an email or Word file).

The BPA newsletter is issued quarterly. Deadlines are March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1. Please send us your proposal about a month before those dates and your completed article before the deadline. (Articles are subject to editing and condensation by our editors.) We’ll let you know the probable publication date.

Don’t be shy; tell us what you’d like to write about. Barron Park will benefit from your contribution!

Mosquito Control

Do your part to eliminate mosquitoes!

By Nancy Hamilton

It’s time to dump any standing water in which mosquitoes can breed—including rain gutters (see below, for ponds and pools). The mosquitoes have already been laying eggs, but it’s never too late to do your part. Please keep it up until the rains are over, and beyond.

Mosquitoes need stagnant water in order to lay their eggs. What most people don’t realize is the surprising number of areas around their own home or apartment where mosquitoes can find the stagnant water they need. The main rule: If it can hold water for more than a few days, it can breed mosquitoes. This web page will help you identify sources around your house.

See: <http://www.mosquitoes.org/backyard-checklist>

Scientific name: Culicidae

Lifespan: Male: 10 days (Adult)

Higher classification: Culicoidea

Clutch size: 100–200

Rank: Family

For Ponds and Pools: Free Mosquitofish

Go to: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/vector/Pages/mosquitofish.aspx>

If you would like help eliminating mosquitoes in your pond or pool, a form for Santa Clara residents only can be found at: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/vector/Pages/service.aspx>

Do your own search on the Zika virus. For instance, from CNN, on 2/3/16: the CDC reported a sexually transmitted case in Texas: www.cnn.com/2016/02/02/health/zika-virus-sexual-contact-texas/index.html

Non-pesticide solutions:

Go to: http://www.beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/mosquito/documents/backyard_mosquito_management.pdf

ART IN THE PARK—JO HAMILTON

Jo Hamilton (past newsletter editor Nancy Jo) has lived in Barron Park since 1980, first running a large publishing house, Nowels Publications in Menlo Park, then focusing on website design since 1994.

Jo was a pianist in her youth, but found that although painting gave her about 60% of the satisfaction of making music, unless it was recorded, the music was gone when she walked away. She says, "Sometimes one plays something, and it's perfect. But paintings last."

Working mainly in oil, Jo sold almost everything she did in the late '70s, and was so hungry to paint that if a painting didn't sell in three months, it was painted over. She says she could barely afford paint and canvases back then, but before a show her walls were full of paintings.

Jo says that when she paints she's sometimes "in the zone." Lots of sports pros, writers, musicians—anyone who creates—knows what the "zone" is all about: it's a state of balance where you're tuned in to the universe. It's a dance between the paint, the canvas and you.

Someday she'd like to offer the painting experience to others—set them up with an easel, oil paint, a canvas, and give them a sponge instead of a brush! Jo says, "It's hard to have any expectations with a sponge. A glass of wine and some music, and I'll bet everyone could produce, if not something fulfilling, at least a portion that could be cut out and framed. The idea is not to judge what you're doing. If you're judging it, you're not 'doing' it. That applies to other areas of life...."

Her son Michael Hamilton is also an artist and musician. (Visit: www.dadamike.com for examples of his work.)

Jo's paintings can be found at: www.cyberstars.com/johamilton



Are you a Barron Park artist, photographer, artisan, craftsperson, sculptor, designer, musician, writer, poet...? You and your work can be featured on this page in an upcoming BPA Newsletter. Please send us your idea with a draft artist's statement and samples of your work to newsletter@BPAlaolto.org



CREEKSIDE INN

Your home away from home

(650) 493-2411



The Creekside Inn welcomes Barron Park residents and their guests! Perfect for visiting relatives. Preparing to renovate your home? Reserve the Creekside Inn's Renovation Package (call us). Stay in the neighborhood until renovations are complete—your home away from home!

Complimentary amenities included in our rates:

Room Amenities

- Complimentary Wireless (Wi-Fi) high-speed internet access throughout the property
- All 136 rooms offer a patio or balcony
- Refrigerators in all rooms
- Complimentary bottled water
- Complimentary local and toll-free calls
- Complimentary in-room safes for the largest of laptop computers (17 inch size)

- In-room coffee & tea
- Hair dryer
- Make-up mirror
- 50+ television stations including HBO, CNN, and ESPN
- Voicemail
- Bathrobes in room
- Iron & ironing board
- Air conditioned rooms

Reception Services

- Complimentary Wall Street Journal & USA Today available weekdays at reception
- Complimentary morning pastries, coffee & tea served daily in lobby
- Guests are invited to join complimentary evening wine hour at Cibo's Lounge Sunday through Thursday 5 pm to 7pm

The Barron Park Association thanks the Creekside Inn for graciously providing rooms for our monthly meetings.

FINALE COMING TO THE CPI PLATING SHOP

By Art Liberman

For the past ten years, the residents on Chimalus and Tippawingo, at the northwest end of Barron Park near the Communications and Power Industries (CPI), have been trying to find some way to move or otherwise shut down that company's plating shop located just behind their homes. It now appears this will come to pass. On a motion from Vice-Mayor Scharff at their February 29 meeting, the City Council voted unanimously for two ordinances that set the stage for the final act of this decade-long drama.

Background

The saga with the CPI plating shop began in February 2006, when a release of nitric acid fumes drifted over the neighborhood.¹ This event alerted the residents who, with a little digging, realized that CPI had just rebuilt its plating shop and consolidated the associated hazardous materials operation in Palo Alto, having sold a second site they owned in an industrial zone in San Carlos. This was allowed by the Palo Alto zoning ordinances at the time, though the City did not hold any hearings, consultations, or notifications of residents about this project.

The hazardous materials at CPI, residents also found out, were both extremely toxic – including nitric, hydrochloric and sulfuric acids, and cyanide compounds – and in such large amounts that CPI was subject to the Title 19 regulations (also referred to as CalARP), the only company in Palo Alto in that category.

After the accident in 2006, CPI steadfastly maintained that health-endangering consequences of an accident could not extend beyond its site boundary, and they disparaged residents' concerns about the hazardous materials in its plating shop.

Residents, wary of the credibility of CPI statements, began appealing to City officials for increased oversight of its operation, unannounced Fire Department inspections, rigorous enforcement of the Fire Code, the placement of additional fume monitors, and independent review of CPI's reports.

¹This is just the most recent significant event involving release of toxic fumes from this facility. In November 1985, a fire in a hydrochloric acid bath in their plating shop sent plumes of thick, acrid smoke into the air, and required a significant Fire Department response (*San Jose Mercury News*, November 25, 1985, page 1B). The BPA subsequently organized and staged a mock event in which residents evacuated to Gunn High School.

The City made one substantive change: In 2007 it approved a modification to the zoning of industrial areas that would require new facilities with hazardous materials above Title 19 thresholds to be located at least 300 feet from residences. CPI's plating shop and associated chemical storage areas then were in violation of the zoning code (termed 'non-conforming'), but CPI was allowed to continue as before—its operation was 'grandfathered.'

2010–2012: Change in Palo Alto City Government & Amortization Study

The tone of City government regarding the CPI issue changed after City Manager Jim Keene took office. The City became receptive to the residents' view that the proximity of CPI's plating shop to residential properties was an ongoing safety concern that came about through a zoning loophole and began to investigate amortization, a remedy that would be reasonable, equitable, and legal.

In land use and zoning, amortization refers to the phasing out of a non-conforming use over time. The amortization time period is the length of time that would allow the user to recoup the economic value of their investment. Since CPI had been granted permission to use these hazardous materials and build its plating shop at that location, this 'right' could not be removed without due process, either by providing compensation to CPI or through amortization.

The City hired CB Richard Ellis, an independent real estate company, to determine how long it would take for CPI to have a return on its investment. The study concluded that CPI would recoup their investment by 2026, or 20 years from 2006, the year they had made their investment to rebuild it.

2012–2015: Independent Risk Study

In the April 2012 Council meeting at which amortization was discussed, CPI announced that they had reduced their hazardous materials to below Title 19 thresholds, and thus they were now in compliance with existing zoning codes. Thus the amortization would not apply.

While CPI had indeed reduced their hazardous materials to levels (just) below Title 19 thresholds, residents argued that this did not eliminate the risk to them from another accident. While the Title 19 threshold levels

are important, ultimately these are arbitrary values enacted in statutes. The real risk also involves other factors such as delivery procedures, chemical storage locations, employee training, and company policies. For example, while CPI reduced the amount in its nitric acid storage tanks, the company's operation required more frequent deliveries via a truck driving in the narrow alleyway at the rear of their building, the same place where a spill during delivery of hydrochloric acid had occurred a few years earlier.

To determine if the residents were at risk, the Council authorized an independent study of potential toxic-fume-release scenarios. The study revealed several circumstances, one of them being a spill of nitric acid during delivery, in which the amount of toxic fumes released could impact the neighborhood. As a consequence, momentum returned to the effort to change the zoning ordinances for sites with these sorts of hazardous materials located near residences, to make the uses non-conforming, and to begin the amortization of their use.

The Staff (with new Planning Director Hillary Gitelman) proposed a zoning ordinance that would prohibit plating shops within 300 feet of residences, schools, and other 'sensitive receptors.' However, at a Council session at the end of 2014, Councilmember (now Mayor) Pat Burt raised objections, supported in his motion by others on the Council, to enacting an ordinance that specified a use: plating, rather than one that focused on the hazardous materials.

This meant going back to the drawing board. Working with the AECOM consultant, the Staff came up with a different proposal: to create a new 'tier' in the zoning code addressing the types of hazardous materials. It would restrict the location of sites using reportable quantities of hazardous materials that are considered 'toxic' or 'highly toxic' by the State's Health and Safety Code. Sites like CPI would be required to be at least 300 feet from sensitive receptors.

In November 2015, the Council embraced this approach and voted to authorize staff to draft two ordinances. This was a turning point. The ordinances were drafted and approved by the Planning and Transportation Commission in January 2016.

2016: The Ordinances

The first of the ordinances is a new Hazardous Material Ordinance. Because CPI's cur-

rent plating shop has significant amounts of both toxic and highly toxic materials and is closer than 300 feet from the property line of residences, the new hazardous material ordinance now makes CPI's plating shop and associated storage area a 'non-conforming' use, subject to amortization.

The second ordinance would initiate the amortization. There are two options in the Staff's Amortization Ordinance. The first option requires CPI to terminate its plating shop operation by 2026. If it chose to do so, CPI would be allowed to rebuild its plating shop on the other side of its property, in the parking lot in front of Building #2 on Hansen Way, 300 feet from the property line of residences.

However, the Staff also devised a second amortization option in response to the Council's urging last November, when CPI voiced their strong objections to amortization, to find an agreement that would be acceptable both to residents and to CPI. This second option is complicated: CPI would be given an incentive – to be allowed to continue operating their plating shop for 5 more years (after 2026), until 2031. In addition, they would have until 2021 to decide whether to take the incentive, but they would also be required to sign a settlement agreement soon, before the ordinances become effective (the ordinances must come back to Council for a second reading and will become effective 30 days afterward).

A small group of residents met several times with Planning Director Hillary Gitelman and City Attorney Molly Stump to discuss the amortization incentive option and to give input for the settlement agreement. We've made some suggestions and relayed the concerns we've heard from others in our community. It would include strengthened oversight and enforcement provisions. At the time of this writing (early March), the settlement agreement is still being negotiated between the City Attorney and CPI's lawyers.

Most residents, like me, prefer the first amortization proposal. It would give CPI another decade to operate its plating shop... but there still remains the risk that CPI might take legal action and sue the City, which could stretch out the dispute and create uncertainty of the eventual outcome. No one is thrilled with the alternative, that is, allowing CPI an additional five years to operate its plating shop. On the other hand, the latter proposal does require CPI to agree not to rebuild their plating shop on the site, nor would CPI be allowed to sue the City. We realize that having certainty in this situation and a definite endpoint to the

plating shop in our neighborhood is worth some sacrifice.

CPI company representatives attended the February 29 Council meeting, but chose not to make any statements. In approving both ordinances, Council members lauded the residents for their conciliatory stance. Whether CPI shares that sense of cooperation and willingness to compromise remains to be seen.

Conclusion

Each step forward on the CPI plating shop issue has taken an unexpectedly long amount of time. But due to the persistence of residents, the City Staff and City Council have finally updated the zoning regulations that had allowed the CPI plating shop and its toxic and highly toxic materials to be located so close to Chimalus residents and created a policy that deals with the future siting of similar hazardous material sites in Palo Alto. Barring legal action and a hostile judicial ruling, the clock is now ticking on the remaining operating time of the CPI plating shop.

It is important to acknowledge the significant contributions of several individuals —Samir Tuma, Romola Georgia, and Jeff Dean—community residents who have shown true leadership and worked very hard on this issue for many years. This has been a long struggle, but because of their work and the strong support of the Barron Park community and the Barron Park Association, I think there is now light at the end of the tunnel.

**BARRON PARK
ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**

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BPA meetings are held the 3rd

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Neighbors are welcome.

BPA Community Happy Hours are held

the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 5 pm

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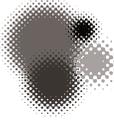
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