

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John King, BPA President



Welcome to summer, Barron Park! This spring our community enjoyed a series of memorable Sunday afternoon events. Our 44th Barron Park May Fête on May 19 was a rousing success! So much fun to watch kids and adults doing their best to follow Gary Breitbard's Maypole Dance instructions to live, traditional music by the Maypole musicians. Starting off, the ribbons were a little disjointed, but woven together at the end, they looked pretty good!

Thank you to all our volunteers and sponsors. Richard Elder gathered and set up the Maypole. Board member Doug Burns, along with my son Hayden and my daughter Gillian, helped Rich and me transfer tables and chairs from Barron Park Elementary School. Star Teachout lent her truck for the effort. Gary Breitbard and Tom Sanders prepared the Maypole ribbons. Barron Park Florists arranged the flower basket for the Maypole. Copy Factory printed the programs. Oaxacan Kitchen and Island Ice food trucks had long lines all afternoon.

We were never without traditional music and dance (and dance lessons!) thanks to Gary Breitbard and his Maypole musicians, Broceliande Celtic and Early Music Trio, and Mrs. Prunely's Pride and Seabright Dancers!

A big thank you to our generous sponsors and advertisers: CalPreserving, Gwen Luce Realtor, John W. King Realtor, Ernie's Liquors,

United Studios of Self Defense, Palo Alto Lawn Bowling, and Greenmail. Prizes for the raffle drawing came from local businesses Great American Framing, State of Mind Pizza, Driftwood Market, Celia's Restaurant, and United Studios of Self Defense.

The lawn was ringed with interesting tables. Board members Gwen Luce, Lisa Landers, and Myrna Rochester handled the membership table and raffle ticket sales. Neighbor kids did the raffle drawing. The Barron Park Donkey Project, Emergency Prep, Scout Troop 52, and our Native Habitat Committee were available with information and materials. Our BP historian Doug Graham set up the fascinating local history display and answered questions. Even the donkeys dropped by for a while! Thanks again to Hayden and Gillian for running the games (Sack races! Hula hoops! Ring toss!) and helping guide the dancers. Fun was had by all!

We followed up a couple of weeks later with a super-well-attended BPA Sunday Ice Cream Social, thanks to Karen and Amol Saxena, who organized, shopped, and scooped (along with John). The warm afternoon was perfect for the cold treats. Thank you, Gwen, for fielding questions and memberships at the membership table.

Finally, we helped our beloved donkey Perry celebrate his 30th birthday with an event on Sunday, June 9, sponsored by The Donkey Project! It was another big, friendly gathering in Bol Park. Watch the news as Perry and his

companions have landed some national – and international – attention!

Look forward to our events later this year. For sure, an early fall Ice Cream Social, the October Movie Night in Bol Park, and, in December, Holiday Caroling!

We are on the lookout for new Board members and volunteers! Just let me know (johnwadeking@gmail.com) if you are interested in participating in the Barron Park Association, in any capacity. Please consult page 18 for the contact list of useful BPA email addresses and web links. Thank you for continuing your membership in the BPA!

Barron Park Seniors!

Family and Friends of BP Seniors!

Join together for scheduled events, lunches, and gatherings. Reach out socially and for mutual interests and assistance. Get details by joining the **BP Senior Connections** mailing list. Write to Pooja Punn at: barronparkseniorconnections@gmail.com

View the BPA Newsletter in Full Color!

You can read this issue in full color and with live Web links, as soon as it's posted at: bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter/ While you're there, check out our Archive of past Newsletters. You can easily review past activities in the 'hood and catch up on issues you may have missed.

Thanks! The Editors

2

[Little Libraries](#)

5

[Garden Nymph](#)

6

[Buena Vista Update](#)

7

[Robert England](#)

8

[Garden Signs](#)

9

[Butterflies](#)

10

[Fun in the Park](#)

13

[BP Fire Department](#)

17

[Project HumaneKind](#)

Take a Book. Share a Book.

By Greta G. Olbrich



Little Free Library on the Bol Park pathway. All photos by Greta Olbrich.

Hey, Barron Park. Have you seen the homes around town with a book box in front of them? That's a Little Free Library (LFL). Do you know how many there are in our neighborhood? I've tried to find them all, but I may have missed one or two. Created as a way to exchange books for free, with the motto "Take a Book, Share a Book," an LFL is usually a wooden structure in front of someone's residence where passersby can pick up free reading material and/or leave a book they've finished reading and want to pass along. Not long ago, one popped up in Bol Park in the old phone booth on the shared pathway just past the donkey paddock. Festooned with creative and bright decorations, it's been renamed the "phone book."

The first LFL ever in existence (or so we think) was built in 2009 by Todd Bol (we think no relation to Cornelis and Josina) of Hudson, Wisconsin, to promote literacy in his community and as a tribute to his late mother, a former schoolteacher. Todd made a box out of an old garage door, fastened it to a post, stuck it in front of his house, and filled it with books. People noticed it, took some books, left a few, and were inspired to put a library on a stick in front of their

own houses. By 2011, 400 other LFLs had popped up. Within a year, that number had grown to 4,000.

LFL would become a nonprofit organization in 2012. By 2018, there were thousands of LFLs in all 50 U.S. states and in 88 countries, not just in front of homes but in public libraries, prisons, police and subway stations, schoolyards, refugee camps, and hospitals. Read more about LFLs at: littlefreelibrary.org. If you want to follow the LFL groups on social media, there's plenty to choose from: On Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit you can meet some stewards and volunteers who've registered their box with the Little Free Library network and are



LFL on the 700 block of Paul Avenue.

included on the online map.

If you don't happen to have an old garage door lying around, the Little Free Library website sells building kits prepared by Amish craftsmen. If you are a DIY type, you can get blueprints and instructions to make your own box – important to weatherproof it. While the most common design is just a wooden box on a post, designs and styles differ and often reflect residents' interests and personalities.

A few LFLs in Barron Park did just that and went one step beyond the standard box-on-a-post design: Jeanne Cosby's LFL on Chimalus Drive is a roomy foot locker, and the LFL on Josina Avenue is modeled after the mid-century modern home behind it.

Little Free Libraries of Barron Park

3800 block, La Selva Dr.

La Donna Ave. (across from Barron Park Playschool) – Linda's

500 block, Barron Ave.

600 block, Barron Ave.

800 Barron Ave. – Barron Park Elementary School

700 block, Josina Ave. – Kat's

800 block, Chimalus (the foot locker) – Jeannie's

700 block, Paul Ave.

800 block, La Para Ave. – Katie's

Bol Park pathway – the "phone book"

600 block, Maybell Ave. – Mitchell's

Kat Alioshin said of her LFL, "When we remodeled in 2014, we added a Little Free Library that had the same design aesthetic as our house and the same color trim as our front door. We asked our landscaper, Green Thumbs Up, to build a custom one that looked like our house shape. We used the same color paint. We even have a succulent garden growing on the rooftop of the LFL. My daughter and a fellow Girl Scout created a grand opening with a young poet reading from his recently published book. There was food, music, and a ribbon cutting. All the neighbors were welcome."



Kat's LFL on the 700 block of Josina Avenue.

Kat said she was inspired by taking long walks and seeing other libraries all over Palo Alto. "We love books! Our household reads a lot. Take a peek inside our house (from

our large living room windows), and you will see a wall of books. I try to arrange the display by the color of the binding." Alioshin continued, "I like how our LFL will stop people on their walks. They have to come onto our property to open it." When asked what surprised her most about her LFL, she responded, "the constant turnover of books. It is a little low on stock during the rainy season, but I like to see people adding to it. I take a book or two for myself every once in a while." We don't blame you, Kat!



Linda and Abraham's LFL on La Donna near Barron Park Preschool.

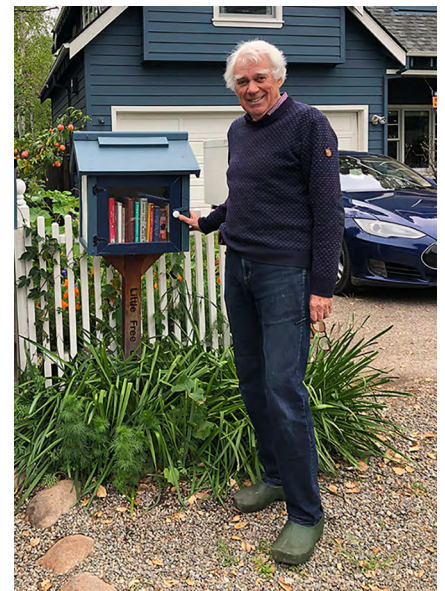
Linda Lui on La Donna Avenue has had her LFL up since April 2020, at the start of Covid. "I found that I enjoyed peeking into the one on the 600 block of Barron Avenue, close to La Donna, and mentioned it to my husband, Abraham. It ended up being my Christmas present, which he installed from a kit. I have always enjoyed the strong sense of community in Barron Park and thought a Little Free Library might support it. No major surprises, but a number of neighbors have thanked us for having it. It has certainly been fun having one."

Katie Lawer, Gunn High Class of 2024 (Congrats, btw!), installed her LFL on La Para Avenue when she was in 6th grade. "We've repainted it a few times, but the actual building has stayed the same. What inspired me was walking around the

neighborhood and seeing other little libraries. I've also always really loved to read, and I wanted to share that love with other people. I had some books to donate, and I also wanted to see what kinds of books would circulate through. We got a kit, but then after that, we painted it ourselves. The thing I like most about it is seeing other people stop and look through it. I love that people enjoy it and can leave and borrow books for free. That makes me really happy. I think what surprised me was how big of an impact the book box ended up having.

I remember at one point, someone left a little thank you note saying 'thank you for the little free library' and some flowers at my house, and that surprised me but made me really happy. I'm glad it's had a positive impact on the community."

Mitchell Zimmerman, on Maybell Avenue in Green Acres, launched his Little Free Library six years ago, in July 2018. "I had come across a couple of them in Berkeley, and I thought, what a great idea, what a great way to celebrate books, encourage people to read books, and encourage people to share books they've loved.



Mitchell's LFL on Maybell Avenue.

That's what I've tried to do with this library." Mitchell bought his kit from the LFL website, but then he personalized it by matching its paint to that of his house. "I neglected, however, when our house was re-roofed last year, to use the same roofing for my Little Free Library. Oh well."

Mitchell also enjoys the fact that his library is a community resource and, in a sense, belongs to the people who live around here. During the pandemic, he also put up a large picture frame on his fence, where he posted poems, changing them once a week or so. He wanted another way to hopefully enrich our neighborhood. He feels that Little Free Library is part of that same way of thinking. He continued, "I've enjoyed being a steward of the library, checking what's there lately, feeding it additional books, sometimes from our own library." Mitchell frequents the Mountain View Library when they set out their free books, and he often buys books at the library book sales. These books also end up in his LFL. "Interestingly, children's books tend to disappear fast, and not too many return! If anyone has children's books that their kids no longer want (and you no longer want to read yourself!), please come by and donate them."

Mitchell points out that his Little Free Library has limited shelf space, though, "so there isn't really room for reference books or other specialized books. That leftover organic chemistry textbook? A German-English dictionary? Tourism guide to somewhere you went in 2010? This might not be the place



Katie's LFL on La Para.



The "Foot Locker" -- Jeanne Cosby's LFL on the 800 block of Chimalus.

for such works." Mitchell is a retired attorney and an author. The blurb on his 2019 thriller is: *By a lawyer who got his real-life client off death row about an attorney who did not.* "I have taken the liberty of putting out copies of my own novel, *Mississippi Reckoning*, a



LFL at Barron Park Elementary School.



LFL at 600 block of Barron Avenue.



LFL on the 500 block of Barron Avenue.

well-reviewed social thriller." You can find it on Amazon or swing by the LFL on Maybell.

A few of our Barron Park/Green Acres libraries are already registered on the LFL site. There are no rules about LFLs; you can have one in front of your home without registering it. You won't go to LFL jail; no one's going to arrest you or throw the book at you – sorry, I had to make a pun there. The LFLs build community and spread the joy of reading to friends and neighbors, all while introducing

people to a new genre, or an author or illustrator they might not have known otherwise. So, on your next walk around Barron Park and Green Acres, look for the LFLs! You never know where your next great read will come from. It might be steps away from your own front door.



LFL on the 3800 block of La Selva.

CALLING LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS!

Do you have a business in Barron Park?
Are you a business owner living in Barron Park?

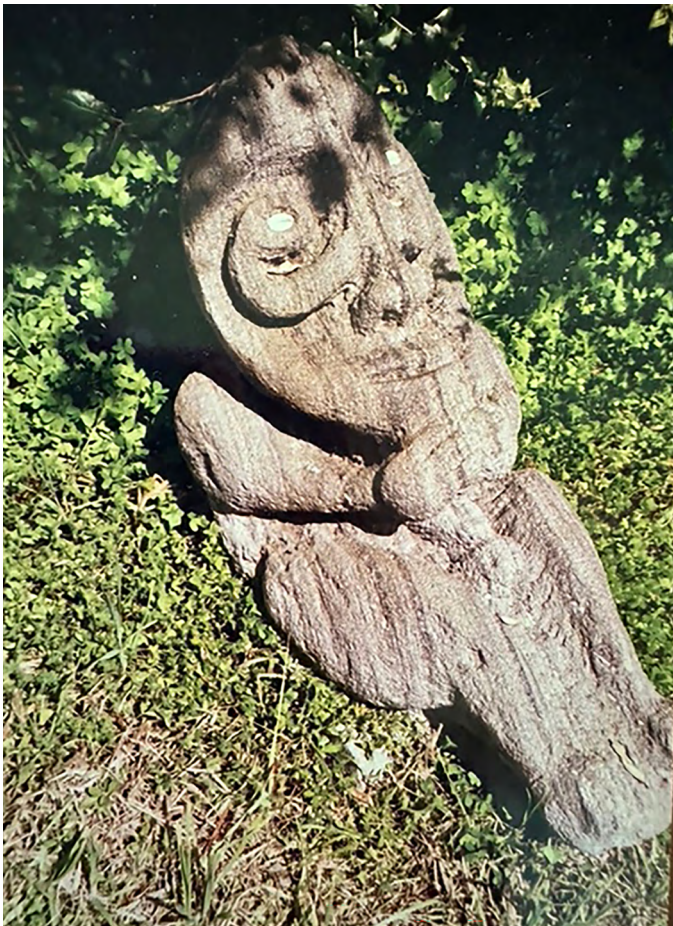
A Barron Park Association Basic Business Membership (\$50/year) gives you one free ad in the Spring, Summer, or Fall edition of the BPA Newsletter. You may also place a full-length "Spotlight" article about you and your business during your first year as a member. Plus, you'll be listed on the home page of the BPA Website.

At another level, **Business Sponsors (\$350/year)** may place four ads per year in the Newsletter.

For more information, contact our BPA Business Liaison, Paul Yang at:
pabloyang@yahoo.com

Our New Guinean Garden Nymph

By Gary Breitbard



"Akiwai," carved by New Guinean sculptor Kwospi Marek in the early 1990s, in Gary Breitbard's yard on San Jude Avenue. Photo by Gary Breitbard.

In the early 1990s, Jim Mason, under the sponsorship and guidance of the Stanford Anthropology Department, did some fund-raising and was able to bring 11 master carvers from two separate areas of the Sepik River in Papua New Guinea to Stanford to engage in a large carving project. They brought their tools and native Papua New Guinean trees to carve.

Stanford dedicated a sizable park to the project on campus, located near Tressid-er Union and the Faculty Club, where, since then, the public can view these

magnificent carvings and read the creation stories from Papua New Guinean mythology. While the carvers were here, we asked Kwospi Marek, tour guide and translator, to carve us a small garden sculpture using local stone. This was new for them: The group had never worked in stone before. Kwospi called this one "Akiwai" and I believe this garden nymph is watching over our yard today on San Jude Avenue.

ARE YOU AN ARTIST OR WRITER?

Do you enjoy the creative work featured in the BPA Newsletter? Would you like to see your art, photography, crafts, music, published (or unpublished) writing, etc., in a future issue? Please send your idea with a draft Artist's Statement and reproducible samples or a description of your work to Myrna Rochester at: mbrbpa@sonic.net

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS SUMMER 2024

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BPA Board Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of most months at 7:15 p.m. Neighbors are welcome.

For schedule and location write to:

johnwadeking@gmail.com



bpapaloalto.org

Update on the Buena Vista Community Update!

By Winter Dellenbach



Rendering of plans for Buena Vista Community as part of Study Session with City of Palo Alto, conducted by Santa Clara County Housing Authority and Van Meter Williams Pollack. All images from scchousingauthority.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/BV_City-Council-Presentation_R2.pdf

The long Buena Vista (BV) Community saga is concluding. If you recall, residents were told in 2012 that BV was going to close and that they had six months to leave. This would have resulted in the biggest displacement of Palo Altans in the City's history. But we – neighbors, friends, officials, agencies, and Buena Vista residents – saved it. Twelve years later, the BV owner, Santa Clara County Housing Authority, will soon begin the upgrade of the property and the homes. During the upgrade, all BV households will be temporarily relocated.

On June 18, 2024, the Palo Alto City Council considered approval of plans for a three-story apartment building on the west one-third of the property. The State Housing and Community Development Office has approval authority over most of the mobile home park component, which covers about two-thirds of the total 4.5 acres. Assuming approval is granted by our Council on August 5, 2024, preliminary utility work will commence later this year.

The temporary two-phased relocation of all households is necessary, with the first-phase residents leaving BV in February 2025, returning ten months later to new homes in a greatly upgraded mobile home park. The

other two relocation phases will commence in tandem in May 2025, and will include more mobile homeowners who will return to BV in a mere six months, toward the end of 2025. All the BV renters (not everyone at BV owns their home) will return to a new three-story apartment building in late 2026, after 18 months of construction.

Households with elderly or disabled members, or with PAUSD students, will be relocated as close as possible in town. The intention is that students continue in their

same schools. Other households may be relocated elsewhere in Palo Alto or in Mountain View.

New screening trees will be planted along adjoining properties and elsewhere for heat island cooling, natural beauty, and well-being. Amenities for renters and mobile homeowners will include a community meeting room, a teen room, bike and laundry rooms, and a space for the popular Homework Club. Plans for the outdoor areas include a playground and green areas for outdoor small or larger gatherings and activities. New pedestrian lanes, more parking, and lighting, etc., are in the plans. BV will go all-electric, doing its part to address climate change.

Along the Buena Vista stretch on Los Robles, there will be new fences and a sidewalk added in the public right-of-way, with new parallel parking curbside.

After completion, there will be 104 BV households, slightly fewer than at the time of purchase in 2017. The 75-year affordable housing deed restriction will remain for the entire 4.5 acre property, allowing this unique community of Barron Park to flourish in a healthy and pleasant environment.

I know we all hope the upgrade goes as smoothly as possible for Buena Vista residents, neighbors, and the Housing Authority. I can hardly wait for the gala opening!



Rendering of Buena Vista Commons, a three-story apartment building which will house community members who do not own a mobile home.

Robert L. England (1927-2024)

By the Family of Bob England



Robert L. England (1927-2024). Photo courtesy of the England family.

Our dear Robert Leonard (Bob) England passed away peacefully at home in Eugene, Oregon, on April 21 after a short illness. He had been a very active Barron Park resident from the mid-1950s to around 1990. Born in 1927 in Washington State, Bob enjoyed most of his childhood in Palo Alto, playing in the local creeks with his brother Ken and beloved family dog Patty. Eventually the Great Depression struck hard, and Bob was taken out of school to help with the family finances. At 17, he went to work for Hammond Aircraft. Toward the end of WW II, Bob was drafted into the Army Air Corps and served with the occupation army in Germany. His commanding officer often told him, "Corporal, take good care of those aircraft because you will be flying in them yourself one day!" During leave time, Bob traveled in Switzerland and in the UK, back when European travel was still quite exotic for Americans.

After his tour of duty, Bob returned to Palo Alto, where he married, bought a house in Barron Park, and started a family. He worked for Hammond Aircraft, then joined United Airlines, where he remained for 45 years in a long and successful career as a flight controls maintenance supervisor. Bob was a master mechanic full of creative ideas, making him

the star of the "Suggestion Awards" program at United. At home, he loved fixing and building all sorts of things, even using the wood from a fallen cherry tree in his yard to create beautiful furniture.

In the 1970s Bob served as vice president of the Barron Park Association. He was very involved in the development of Bol Park, which remains a hallmark of the Palo Alto park system. He was for many years Scout leader for the local Boy Scout Troop 52, organizing pancake breakfasts in brand-new Bol Park on the weekends, for small donations to the Scouts.

In retirement, Bob and his wife Helene moved to Eugene, where Bob enjoyed a busy life doing innumerable craft projects, caring for the various family pets, and creating a spectacular backyard garden that was the pride of the neighborhood. Bob and Helene were active volunteers with Friends of Eugene Public Library, helping to prepare the annual spring book sale. At these volunteer events, Bob was known for his sharp sense of humor and infectious laugh. He could be quite the comedian!

Bob is survived by his wife Helene, his daughter Joyce, his son Bruce, his grandson John, and his great-granddaughters Roxie and Gianna. Bob was a wonderful guy, he is missed.

Please consider donating to Greenhill Humane Society (green-hill.org) in honor of Bob.

ART IN MY YARD

We know Barron Park has many examples of outdoor or "yard" art, either made by you or other artists. We'd love to see photos of them in upcoming newsletters. Please send reproducible photos to Myrna Rochester at: mrbpa@sonic.net Tell us something about the art, but you don't need to include a numbered street address.



BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2024

Barron Park Association

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PRINTER

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Welcome to the Bol Park Native Habitat Garden!

By Linda Elder, Native Habitat Committee

We invite you to visit the Native Habitat Garden at Bol Park to enjoy its unique beauty! Our goal is to promote the development of native habitat within Barron Park through example, education, and volunteer activities in a public-facing garden. We hope both adults and children will enjoy strolling through the paths, learning from the signs, and observing nature, perhaps while relaxing on one of the three benches. You will surely spot a Western Fence Lizard or a Red-Tailed Hawk!

We recently compiled a plant list and were delighted to find that our garden contains more than 122 different kinds of California native plants! Each type of plant is labeled, so visitors can learn about what they may want

to plant in their own gardens.

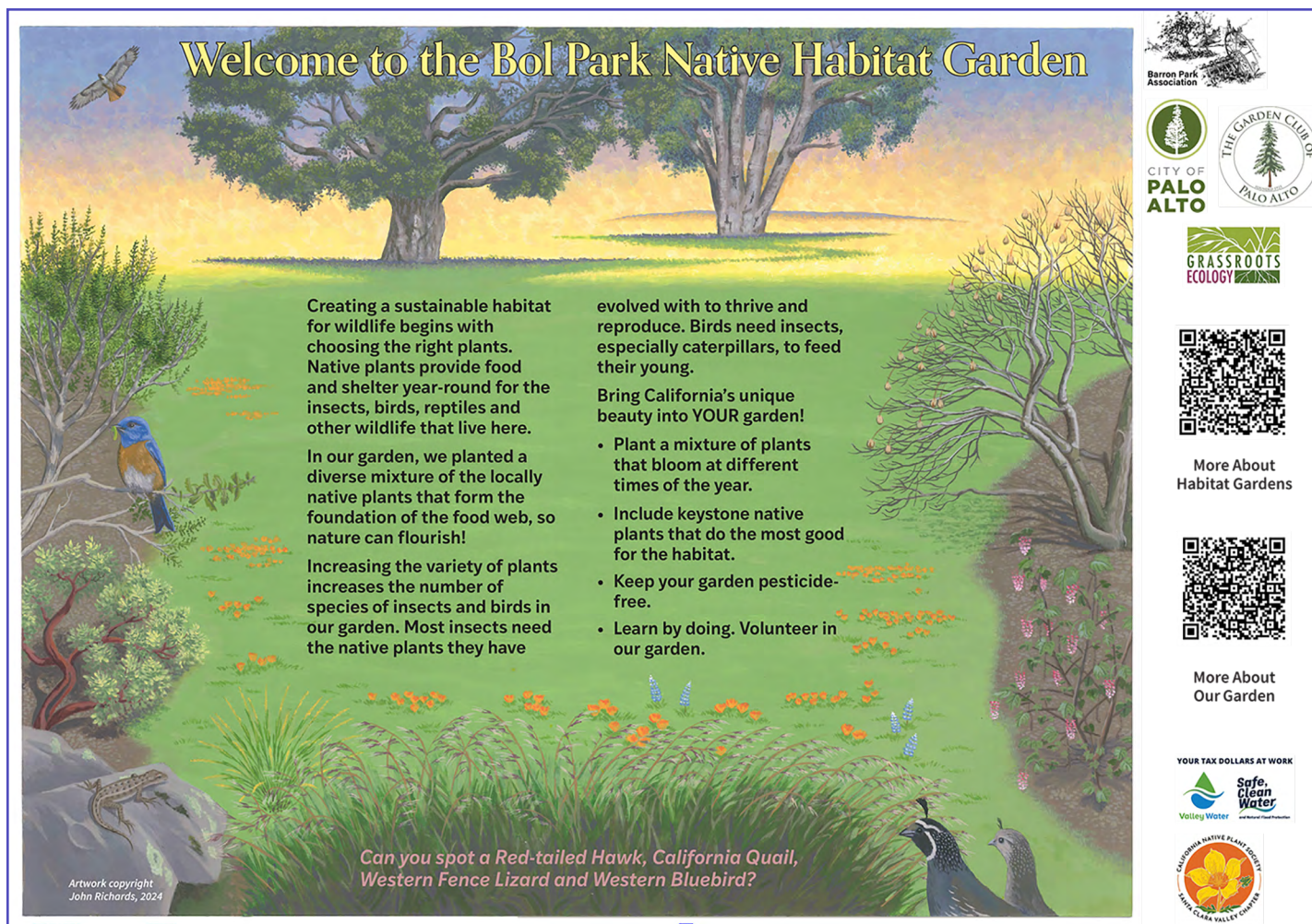
We've recently added two more educational signs: One depicts the various pollinators to look for in the garden, such as the Yellow-Faced Bumblebee. The other new sign welcomes visitors and describes our ongoing strategies to create habitat. Use the two QR codes provided on the welcome sign to learn more about our garden, including our plant list, and generally about habitat gardens. You'll find links to a number of interesting resources, including the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and the California Native Plant Society.

Our native garden in Bol Park is 100% powered by volunteers. Special thanks go to

Melanie Cross, who selected and placed all the new plants and has spent countless hours hand-watering them until established. We also thank all the volunteers who helped to create the new signs. Special thanks go to John Richards, a local artist and keen observer of nature, who beautifully illustrated the signs, Hilary Glann who did the sign layout, and The Garden Club of Palo Alto which provided a generous grant to complete these projects.

We welcome new or experienced gardeners to help with garden maintenance. There is always something new to learn! To join our work parties, please complete a volunteer form or email bpnativegarden@gmail.com to sign up.

Continued on page 12



New welcome sign for the Native Habitat Garden features artwork by local artist John Richards.

Bay Checkerspot Butterfly (*Euphydryas editha bayensis*)

By Jeralyn Moran



Bay Checkerspot Butterfly (*Euphydryas editha bayensis*). Photo by Josh Hull, USFWS Public Domain, fws.gov/media/bay-checkerspot-butterfly

Many of us encounter insects that we may recognize generally (an ant, a beetle, a butterfly), but thinking a bit deeper is an amazing thing. There are over one million insects identified (by humans) in our world so far – we put labels on them (almost 7,000 additional each year!). There are also many species of Checkerspot butterflies. This is a steep learning curve if we are to keep up.

So, in the moment, let's focus on one species that we may see locally if we pay attention. The Bay Checkerspot butterfly's range is specific to Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. You might see one at any time of the year, as they do not migrate. Long ago, its range included the entire Bay Area, and south to Hollister. Why? Because the specific plants it feeds on grow in the serpentine soils in these areas; today, this habitat type is very patchy. "Serpentine" soils are high in mineral content, low in (biological) fertility.

The Bay Checkerspot larvae prefer the Dwarf Plantain plant (*Plantago erecta*), and secondarily, the Purple Owl's Clover (*Castilleja exserta*), the Giant Red Paintbrush (*Castilleja miniata*), and Denseflower owllover (*Castilleja densiflora*). Adult Checkerspots gravitate to the nectar of many grassland plants. As far as breeding goes, adults emerge in early spring from their "winter sleep"; they mate, and

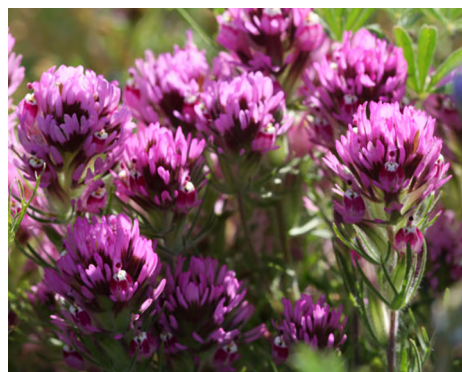
eggs are laid at the base of a Dwarf Plantain plant. The larvae hatch in 10 days or so; they eat and grow for 14 days, shedding their skin three times, and then go into a summer dormancy under a rock or split in the soil. When the rain returns, the Dwarf Plantain

germinates, providing food. The larvae continue feeding and growing until they pupate in late winter. The adult lives only about 10 days.

Inevitably, development, overgrazing, and climate change are the main enemies of this butterfly's original habitat/feeding grounds. The main message here: When planting on your property, please consider native plants that attract native insects, that later attract native birds and mammals!

We can all be part of the answer!

- entomology.unl.edu/scilit/insect-diversity
- biologicaldiversity.org/species/invertebrates/Bay_checkerspot_butterfly/natural_history.html



Purple Owl's Clover (*Castilleja exserta*). yosemitemhikes.com/wildflowers/purple-owls-clover/purple-owls-clover.htm



Dwarf Plantain plant (*Plantago erecta*). en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plantago_erecta

Barron Park Association Newsletter, Fall Deadline:

Sunday, September 1, 2024

Please submit articles (in Word if possible) for the Fall 2024 issue of the BPA Newsletter, with photos/images separate from text, by **Sunday, September 1, 2024** to Myrna Rochester at: mbrbpa@sonic.net

Make sure your BPA membership is current at: barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com. You may want to send a query in advance with your ideas – for an article, story, report, update, interview, profile, announcement, review, anecdote, or artist's page – to mbrbpa@sonic.net

Announcements for activities should be for events scheduled *after* October 15, 2024. The Fall issue will be available in October 2024, online to requesting members and print copies by U.S. mail

Barron Park Shows Up for Outdoor Fun!

May Fête 2024



Led by Gary Breitbard, children and adults enjoy the Maypole Dance on Sunday, May 19, 2024, at Bol Park. Photos by Myrna Rochester except where indicated.



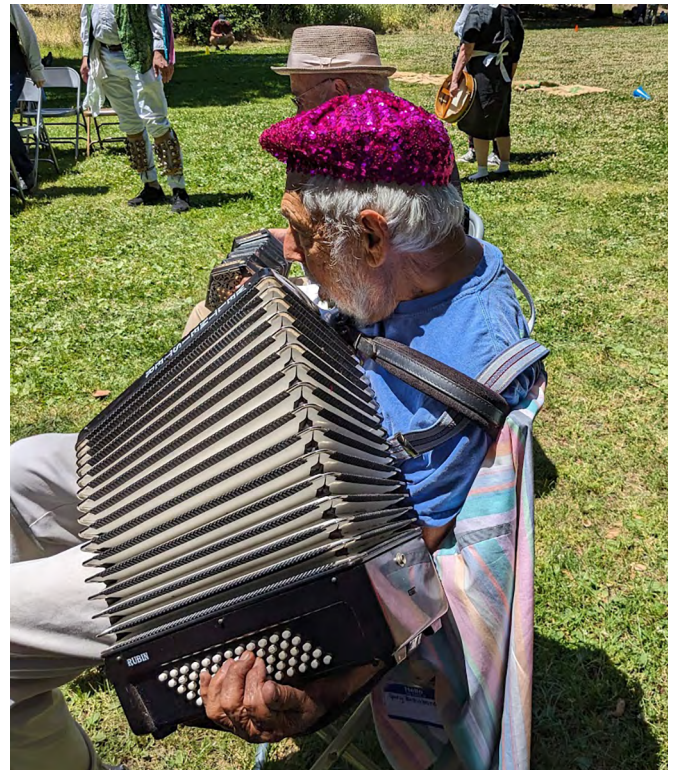
Buddy gets a hug at the May Fête.



Premium, hand-sifted, low carbon footprint donkey manure was offered for sale by the Donkey Project. Photo by Hilary Glann.



Neighbors line up for shave ice treats.



In addition to directing the Maypole Dance, Gary Breitbard entertained residents on his accordion.

Perry's 30th Birthday Party!



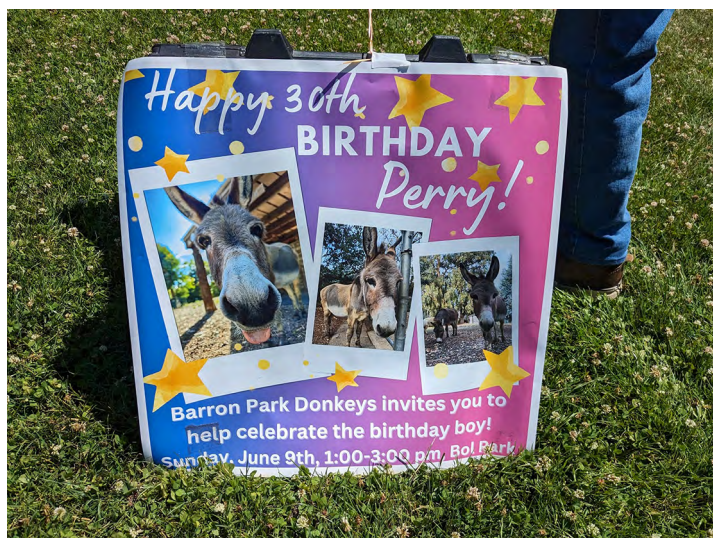
Fans surround Perry, April, and Buddy at Perry's 30th birthday party on Sunday, June 9. Photos by the Barron Park Donkey Project unless otherwise indicated.



Donkey handler Tjasa Rihar holds on tight as Buddy and Perry tussle over a 30th birthday cake made of grass pellets. April looks on skeptically.



Children enjoy pinning the tale on a Perry poster.



Sign celebrates Perry's big birthday celebration. Photo by Myrna Rochester.

Ice Cream Social - June 2!



The line quickly grew for the ice cream social on June 2, 2024. All ice cream was consumed in 20 minutes! Photo by Myrna Rochester.



Children enjoy a Lego learning project organized by local business Kidizens. Photo by Hilary Glann.

New native garden signs, continued
from page 8

Who Lives Here?

Pollinators! While feeding on pollen and nectar they help plants produce seeds by carrying pollen from flower to flower. Some pollinators are specialists. If we lose them, we also lose the plants they pollinate. Our garden supports a variety of pollinators, which enhances the biodiversity needed for a healthy ecosystem.



The clarkia evening bee is a specialist and feeds only on the plant genus *Clarkia*. About a third of native bees are specialists.



Hoverflies resemble bees but are flies. They pollinate many plants like this coyote mint and are also important in pest control. A single larva can feed on dozens of aphids a day.



A yellow-faced bumblebee, one of California's 1600 native species of bees, feeding on sage pollen. Pollen is the primary source of protein for bees.



A checkerspot butterfly feeding on a monkeyflower. Native pollinators are at risk from pesticide use, habitat loss and introduced diseases.



Often mistaken for a hummingbird, the white-lined sphinx moth has a wingspan of 2 to 3 inches! It hovers while sipping nectar through its long feeding tube or proboscis.



A great golden digger wasp, a solitary wasp, feeding on milkweed nectar. It looks fierce but is not aggressive. They also hunt insects we consider garden pests to feed their young.



An Anna's hummingbird feeding on nectar from a California fuchsia. Hummingbirds supplement their nectar diet by feeding on insects.

Artwork copyright John Richards, 2024



The new Native Habitat Garden pollinator sign includes native bees, wasps, moths, hoverflies, and hummingbirds. Artwork by John Richards.



Celebrating the completion of the two new Native Habitat Garden signs (left to right) are Peter Cross, Jeff Burch, Linda Elder, Angela Dellaporta, Melanie Cross, Doug Kent, Hilary Glann, Sharon Erickson, Claire Elliott, John Richards, and Richard Elder. Photo by Sky Runser.

BPA EMAIL LISTS

The Barron Park Association offers three Email Lists for any resident to post: (1) *bpa-news* for news, information, and announcements; *bpa-misc* for neighbor requests, queries, recommendations, freebies, etc.; and (3) *bpa-issues* to express opinions or initiate discussion on topics of interest. They are hosted on Google Groups. To join a list, go to: bpapaloalto.org/bpa-email-lists/ The link provides information about each list and an easy way to subscribe to one or more of them.

Our Own Fire Department

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian



A - Badge worn by Volunteer Fireman Skip Berryessa of Verdosa Drive in the late 1960s/early 1970s. Photo by Mollie Graham, 1996.

Once upon a time, Barron Park had its own fire department. For 26 years, from 1949 through 1975, a cadre of volunteer firemen was recruited from and maintained by the neighborhood, which had been organized as a Fire Protection District under Santa Clara County supervision. The District was governed by a Commission, initially appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. Later on, Commissioners were elected by the residents of Barron Park.

The Barron Park Fire Protection District authorized the formation and organization of a Volunteer Fire Department, which it then supervised. This was an all-male group – there were no female firefighters in those days. The firemen soon developed an esprit de corps and camaraderie; their wives turned out to provide snacks and sandwiches whenever there was a fire. Stories about each fire circulated throughout the neighborhood and helped build the feeling of community that later became a hallmark of Barron Park. Some of these incidents are told later in this story.

Fire Protection Dilemma in 1946

A crisis in fire protection of the Barron Park area arose immediately following World War II. Fire insurance rates for homes and businesses in the neighborhood were very high because of the poor service provided by the State Forestry Division from its fire stations in the relatively distant Santa Cruz Mountains. In 1946, the Forestry Division announced it would no longer provide service to

unincorporated County areas in the flatlands, such as Barron Park.

The County staff suggested forming a local fire protection district, but insurance industry fire underwriters advised that it would be too small to be economical. Another option was foreclosed when the City of Palo Alto refused to consider contracting with Barron Park to provide fire protection service. Faced with this dilemma, a group of residents organized by Cornelis Bol pushed a proposal to establish a fire protection district in spite of the discouraging advice. But in an election held January 21, 1947, the proposal was turned down by a vote of 148 to 145.

The Neighborhood Considers Annexation

This fire protection crisis stimulated the first attempt by Barron Park residents to annex to Palo Alto. A group headed by real estate developer Kendall Bowers (for whom Kendall Avenue was named) circulated a petition. However, when the issue was brought to the City Council for a vote on April 15, 1947, it was turned down. This was largely at the instigation of the Palo Alto branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which was then politically powerful. Palo Alto was a "dry" town, and the WCTU did not want to see Barron Park's liquor stores and roadhouses in the City.

The pro-annexation forces were then joined by Barron Park resident David Packard, co-founder of Hewlett Packard. David was a Palo Alto Unified School District Trustee and rallied the School Board behind the annexation movement. This was already supported by the City staff, who brought a measure to the City Council on December 8, 1947. However, the WCTU again axed the annexation. Although the City Council voted in favor of another election, it was without enthusiasm, and the neighborhood felt snubbed. When it finally came to an election in Barron Park on November 17, 1948, the annexation went down to defeat, 338 votes to 261.

Our Own Fire Department Established in 1949

After the annexation ballot defeat, Barron Park residents, again under the leadership of Kendall Bowers, concentrated on establishing

a fire department. On January 11, 1949, the voters went back to the polls and approved the formation of a Barron Park Fire Protection District by a nearly four-to-one majority (225 ayes, 60 nays). Chester F. (Chet) Slinger was elected a Commissioner and then President.

The District was funded by allocation from the property taxes collected from the area it covered. The area was larger than today's Barron Park: It included what is now the Ventura neighborhood, plus Greenacres I, Monroe Park, and parts of today's Los Altos and Mountain View along El Camino Real.

The new District inquired about contract protection from Palo Alto, but the City Council, following recommendations by the Public Safety Committee and the Board of Safety, again turned it down on May 9, 1949, citing costs and legal issues.



B - Barron Park Volunteer Fire Department helmet worn by Volunteer Fireman Skip Berryessa in the late 1960s/early 1970s. Photo by Mollie Graham, 1996.

Formation of the Volunteer Fire Department

The new District then proceeded to authorize the formation and organization of a Volunteer Fire Department, which it would then supervise. Volunteers were recruited from the neighborhood, and the Department was organized and operating by the autumn of 1949. The Fire Chief was Chet Slinger, who resigned as Commissioner and President to take the Chief's part-time paid job.

By October, a firehouse had been leased. It was located in an aluminum-clad shed behind the former Lanai Flower stand at 4050 El Camino Real. (In 1949, this property was assigned a separate street address: 4042 El Camino Real.) The Department acquired its

first fire truck, a 1949 Van Pelt 600 gallon-per-minute pumper. This truck was designated "Unit #91" by the County. It was displayed at a neighborhood "open house" at Barron Park School on October 23, 1949.

At 1:30 a.m. on November 21, 1949, the Department had its first call when a fire broke out at 891 Jude (now San Jude) Avenue. The fire was caused by flooding of a floor furnace and was quickly put out with "no damage to property."

By January 1950, when the Board of Fire Underwriters of the Pacific published a Municipal Fire Protection Report on Barron Park, the company totaled 17 men, all volunteers except for the Chief. At some point, the District acquired its second major piece of equipment, a 1951 GMC 40-gallon-per-minute High-Pressure Pumper, designated "Unit #90" by the County. Drills were held twice weekly since everyone was new on the job. Training included practice on the resuscitator and inhalator. There were no paramedics or Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) in those days, so the volunteer firemen were the first-line emergency medical response team. According to Joe Weiler's 1977 oral history, most of the calls in later years were medical emergencies.

How the Alarm and Response System Worked

To report a fire, you dialed DA 3-2400. The phone rang in three houses, as well as at the fire station. The Chief had one phone and there were two others at firemen's homes. By arrangement, the three families made sure there was always at least one fireman available to respond. The three homes were connected to the fire station with a buzzer that set off the alarm – a siren. It cycled up and down eight times with a wailing that could be heard throughout the District and adjoining areas. Every fireman who heard it would drop what he was doing and drive or run to the firehouse. The first two obtained the address and drove the truck to the fire, sometimes stopping to pick up other firemen on the way.

Fighting the Fire

Usually the "High Pressure 90" truck was taken to the fire first, as it was capable of putting out most fires by itself. Joe Weiler said its water capacity was 250-280 gallons (the bigger truck carried 600). The "90" could throw a straight stream strong enough to dig holes in asphalt pavement, and it could throw

Barron Park Fire District

To Report a FIRE

Dial DA 3-2400

FOR BUSINESS CALLS—DIAL DA 3-9863

For FIRE PERMITS:

3785 EL CENTRO or
3980 EL CAMINO REAL

Between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
(IT'S UNLAWFUL TO BURN WITHOUT FIRE PERMIT)

Effective January 1, 1955

NEWS PRINT SHOP, 546 COLLEGE AVENUE, PALO ALTO

C - Placard distributed to all residents and businesses in the Barron Park Fire Protection District, 1949-1975.

a five-foot-wide stream of water for a distance of 100-150 feet.

Building a Sense of Community

The Fire District Board of Directors provided a forum for community action. Much neighborhood political energy was expended in arguing over various fire-related issues. The District was viewed by many Barron Park residents as a surrogate local government: a sort of local and personal stand-in for the distant and faceless County government. It also became one of the main rallying points in the ongoing annexation battles with the City of Palo Alto.

Water Difficulties

One of the difficulties facing the new District was the inadequate water supply. Rapid growth in the neighborhood in 1947-49 had stretched the capacity of the two private water companies serving the bulk of Barron Park. The Fire Underwriters had noted this, and their assessment resulted in higher insurance rates. One water company sold out to Palo Alto in 1950, but the other, the Bol Water Company, hung on until 1953.

From then on, the District was entirely dependent upon Palo Alto to supply water. The mains were inadequate; the connections with the City were too small; and hydrants were not always located where the District wanted them. Friction between the City and the District was not helped by the failure of

two more annexation initiatives, in 1951 and 1954.

The 1954 annexation failure led directly to the successful annexation by Palo Alto of the Ventura area on December 29, 1954, and the consequent removal of that area from the Barron Park Fire Protection District. The lost area included the tax-lucrative commercial strip on the east side of El Camino. This was the beginning of the piecemeal nibbling away of the neighborhood that eventually made the shrunken Fire District uneconomic by eroding its tax base.

A Reform Movement Takes Over in the District

During this time, a reform movement was building up within the District. After five years of existence, Commissioners were still being appointed by the County

Board of Supervisors, even though the original intent had been to make the office elective within the first four months. On August 17, 1954, 527 Barron Park residents petitioned the Board of Supervisors for an elective board of fire commissioners. The election date was twice established and twice set aside by subsequent vote of the Supervisors, but finally an election was arranged for July 12, 1955. At the election, three incumbents, including Chairman Nick Sharko, were ousted. Most of the reform slate, headed by incumbent Dan Baker, were also anti-annexation. Baker was elected Chairman.

The Fire Commissioners Join the Annexation Battle in 1955

Finally everything came to a head in 1955, with a major pro-annexation movement countered by a slightly stronger backlash anti-annexation movement. Both sides actually gained majorities in successive petition drives. However, the "antis" spoke last and loudest. The Barron Park Fire Protection District got into the fight when Commissioners Hughes Brewster, Duane Lyle, and Raymond Schumann (a majority of the Commission) announced support for annexation on November 17, 1954. This created a rift in the Commission, with Chair Dan Baker joining the opponents. Barron Park civic leaders Jack Silvey and William Faulkerson called for the pro-annexation Commissioners to resign, Silvey saying that it seemed paradoxical to



OLD-TIMERS—Anthony Musachia, Barron Park's first and only volunteer fire chief, warms up his department's 1949 Van Pelt pumper in front of aluminum-walled fire station tucked behind a flower stand on El Camino Real. —Staff Photos

consisted of the 1949 Van Pelt 600-gallon-per-minute (600-gpm) pumper and the 1951 GMC 40-gpm high pressure engine. Both fire trucks needed replacing and could no longer be maintained because spare parts were not readily available for the obsolete equipment. The hose also needed to be replaced. In order to replace this equipment, the local tax rate would have to be raised from \$0.137/100 to more than the maximum 0.239 allowed by law. Citizens would have to authorize a higher rate through a tax override election. As the Barron Park Association said, "It would be impossible for a community of this size to support a fire department that

D – Anthony Musachia, Volunteer Fire Chief, with the 1948 Van Pelt Pumper. Photo: San Jose Mercury News, 1972.

him that "some Commissioners are trying to put the District out of business." The 1955 annexation movement ultimately failed, but the fight nearly tore Barron Park apart. Friends fell out, and neighbors vowed never to speak to each other again. The animosities that were stirred up continued to reverberate down into the 1970s.

However, the immediate future (the late 1950s and early 1960s) turned out to be a relatively peaceful period for the Fire Protection District Commission, as the "reform" (and anti-annexation) Commissioners dominated neighborhood politics and dealt effectively with the City on hydrant and water supply issues. In 1956, the Commission cut the Fire Department salary budget and reduced the tax rate. The Chief's position, which had been paid, became volunteer. Anthony Musachia was appointed the first and only volunteer Chief.

The Fire Protection Issue Flares up Again

It is ironic that the annexation story ended exactly where it began 29 years earlier – with Barron Park facing a serious crisis in fire protection. This was the premier topic at the final public meeting held by the Barron Park Association before the 1975 annexation election. Dan Baker, still the Fire Protection District Commission Chair, was present to answer questions. The attachment to the meeting notice explained the essence of the problem. The major firefighting equipment

would give service like [what would be] available upon annexation."

If annexation succeeded, the proponents expected that Barron Park would be upgraded from a fire rating of six to the Palo Alto rating of three, resulting in a \$30/year savings in premiums for a \$60,000 house (which was probably about the average Barron Park home value in 1975). Some annexation opponents were dismayed that they had not known of the Volunteer Fire Department's serious equipment problems and financial limitations. Many of the newer homeowners in Barron Park were more concerned about the fire protection level than the insurance cost: To them, better fire protection was the

single most compelling reason to be in favor of annexation.

Annexation Ends the Fire Protection District

On November 4, 1975, the 28-year-long "Cold War on the Peninsula" (between Barron Park and Palo Alto) ended with a two-to-one vote by Barron Park homeowners to annex to the City of Palo Alto. An immediate result was the assumption of fire protection service by the City, effective November 5. Annexation became officially effective December 8, and the Barron Park Fire Protection District and Volunteer Fire Department passed into history.

The Traveling Fire Truck

The District's property was taken over by the City and the trucks were sold. One of them (the 1951 GMC Pumper) was purchased by a former BP volunteer fireman and taken to Grass Valley where it remained for years. In 2002, it was returned to Barron Park, now owned by Al Larson on Paradise Way. Al gave it a new paint job and a partial renovation, and it was exhibited at the Barron Park May Fête in 2004.

After Al Larson's untimely death in 2009, it was sold again. The new buyer took it back to the Gold Country, and the neighborhood believed it was finally lost forever. However, James Witt on Roble Ridge purchased it and parked it in the donkey pasture where it is effectively on display every day. Unfortunately, it has lost the "sparkle" that Al Larson gave it. Hopefully, it could be restored again.

Stories of Firefighting

Three stories of the volunteers' efforts in fighting particular fires may help give you a

deeper understanding of the Fire Department and how it helped shape the ongoing history of our neighborhood: the Bol fire in the 1950s; the Cameo Club fire in the 1960s; and the day the Bol barn burned in 1974. The Department tackled many other fires during its 26-year history, but these three are illustrative of the problems it encountered.

The Bol Fire

Joe Weiler told, in his oral history, of the big fire at the Bol residence on Roble Ridge: "I was on the Bols' fire, the day they had it. We couldn't get water." (The



E – 1951 GMC High-Pressure Pumper, undergoing restoration by Al Larson on Paradise Way in the 1990s. Photo courtesy of the Larson family.



F - 1951 GMC High-Pressure Pumper, returned to Barron Park by James Witt, sheltered and displayed in the donkey pasture. It deserves new restoration. Photo by Michael Holland.

mains on Roble Ridge had only two-inch pipes.) "We finally backed that big pumper up to the swimming pool. I remember Pete Musachia, who was one of our firemen, and myself . . . we couldn't get close enough. We dropped our bundle off. And then we had to move it because we had to get to the hydrant. You have a bundle of 150 feet or so [of hose] and you drop it from the big tanker, near the fire. Then you drive the truck and that unloads the rest of the line, one hundred, two hundred feet or whatever is necessary to [reach] the hydrant itself. So, we did that. Then we pumped for a few minutes, and we sucked those lines dry. Sucking mud. When you do that you can collapse the line itself. So, we had to shut down.

"With this fire raging in the Bols' home [actually Cornelis's studio by the creek], and [with] all his acetylene bottles blowing up in the basement, we had a hot one. We had to turn the truck around and unhook and get the hose back to where [the swimming pool was] about two hundred or three hundred feet away. Pete and I were trying to hump this hose on our shoulders, up far enough to where we could drop it in the pool. It was quite a chore. Anyhow, we did get it up there and stuck it in the pool and were sucking water from the pool and we finally got our fire out. So that was the Bols' fire." Mike Slinger later explained to me that they would have used ten-foot hard rubber siphon sections to avoid hose collapse in the pool itself.

The Cameo Club Fire

According to Joe Weiler, the worst fire that the Barron Park Volunteer Fire Department ever had to fight was in the Cameo Club on El Camino Real. It was called in at around four o'clock in the morning, and the temperature was down around 26 to 28 degrees Fahrenheit. Joe said when they got hooked up to the hydrant and started putting water on the fire, " . . . the water froze and came down

on the driveways and froze, and we couldn't stand up, and we'd never fought a fire like this before. Someone should have taken photos because it was pretty comical."

It was a very hot fire, and difficult to put out because of the way the Cameo Club was constructed. Joe said that the Cameo Club was then called Congers and featured a 16-ounce beer they called the "fishbowl" that sold for a quarter. He related that the place had been renovated several times. One of the problems with that fire was that a wall would have two or three layers. "When they would refurbish it, they wouldn't just paint the wall and put [a] little paper on it, they wanted another look. So, one wall would be here, then a little air space and another wall and another wall. The ceiling was the same way. It was a terrible thing to put out because it was burning inside [the walls]. You'd get the fire out and [then find] it was burning BEHIND this wall. It was freezing, it was cold, and it was a mess."

The Day the Bols' Barn Burned

It was on Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1974, when the Bols' old barn burned down. The barn, which had been used by transients for years, had somehow caught fire on that wintry Sunday afternoon.

This story is told by Doug Graham who had been away that day and returned home just as the fire reached its spectacular climax. The Bol barn was located directly across the creek from Doug's house. When he reached home, the immediate neighborhood was obscured

by low-lying smoke. Doug's neighbors were on his roof and in the yards of both adjoining neighbors' houses, wetting them down with garden hoses. Doug tells the story of the fire as he remembered his neighbors relating it to him after the blaze was safely suppressed. He first wrote it up for the BPA Newsletter about five years later. The basic facts were reconfirmed in an interview with Mike Slinger, Chet Slinger's son, on June 1, 2006.

"The Fire Department was called promptly on that holiday in 1974, but they had every trouble they could have had. When the truck first came, no one had remembered to bring the key to unlock the gate to the donkey pasture. So, back to the firehouse, get the key. Back to the pasture, unlock the gate. The truck drove into the pasture and promptly bogged down in mud (it had been a wet winter and an especially wet February). While the pumper truck was stuck in the mud, they hooked up the hose to a hydrant on Laguna, but they didn't have enough hose with them to reach the barn, and there was no way to go back to the firehouse to get more. By this time, the barn was burning merrily, but there was absolutely nothing anyone could do except stand back and watch it.

"After the barn roof collapsed, there was no longer any danger to the houses on Ilima Way. We all hopped over the creek and stood around admiring the fire. Finally, a tow truck arrived, but it got stuck in the mud also. Eventually the Department managed to get a hose on the coals and ash and cooled it down. A second tow truck rescued the first one, and together they got the fire truck extricated. All in all, it wasn't the fire company's finest hour."

Impact on the Neighborhood

The Volunteer Fire Department played a major role in shaping the community feeling still preserved in Barron Park today. Especially those of us who lived here before annexation should occasionally stop for a moment to remember those men who sacrificed much of their free time and risked their own safety to fight fires and answer medical emergency calls from their neighbors. We all honor their memory.

To Reach the Historian

If you have questions, comments, or corrections to the story, please contact me at dgrahampaca@gmail.com; landline: (650) 493-0689; street address: 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto CA 94306. I am not reachable by texting.

Planting Kindness in Barron Park and Beyond!

By Leonor Delgado, Project HumaneKind



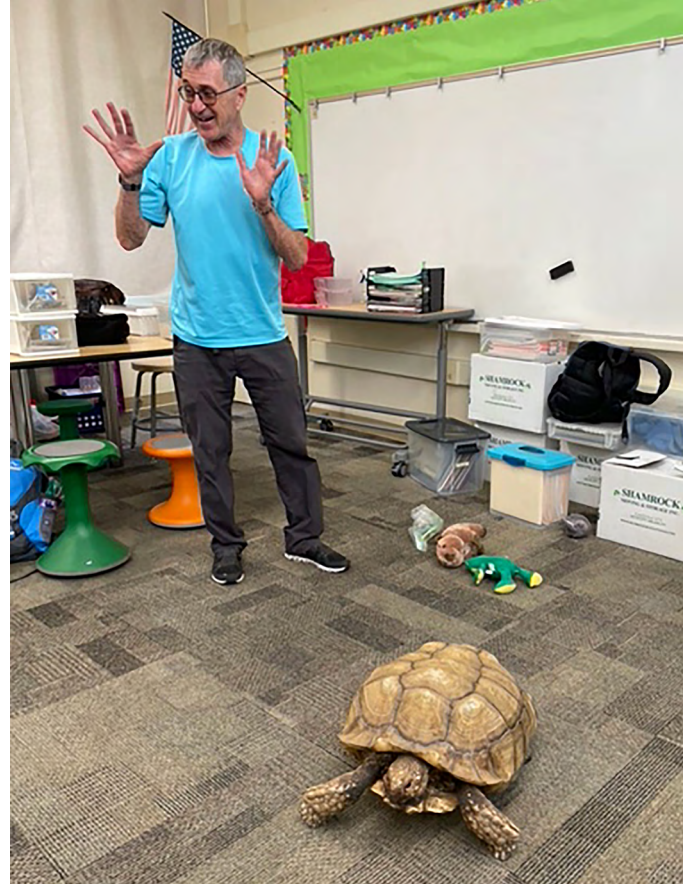
Palo Alto Mayor Stone with Carole Hyde, President of Project HumaneKind, at "Plant Kindness." Photo by Gerard Lum.

Project HumaneKind, a new Midpeninsula humane education nonprofit, held its inaugural event, "Plant Kindness," this past April 25, hosted by the Sheraton Palo Alto. Kindness truly bloomed at this filled-to-capacity event! Attendees enjoyed vegan and vegetarian hors-d'œuvres and sweet treats, as well as unique items presented in a silent auction. Among the guests of honor was Palo Alto Mayor Greer Stone, who officiated to honor local humane champions and animal welfare advocates. Other speakers were names familiar to us in Palo Alto and beyond: Verlyn Klinkenborg, Yale professor and New York Times columnist, spoke about the need for sustainability. Stanford University Professor Emeritus Virginia Walbot addressed the audience regarding the importance of humane education. In attendance as sponsors and honorees were representatives from Youth Community Service (YCS), SolPods, Clorofil, Acterra, Pets In Need Palo Alto, Pink Paws For The Cause, and Muttville.

Although "Plant Kindness" was Project HumaneKind's "big splash," so to speak, the nonprofit has been treading the waters at different local educational and community-based venues since summer 2023, including, recently, at our Barron Park

schools. In partnership with YCS, Project HumaneKind offered a series of lunchtime discussion sessions at Ellen Fletcher Middle School. The featured speaker was Jennifer Ott Cameron, Project HumaneKind's clinical animal behaviorist, who shared information about human and dog interaction, with an emphasis on safety around dogs. Students learned that, just like we humans, dogs are individuals with individual reactions to different situations and stimuli. As a follow-up activity, the students crafted toys and assembled goodie bags for cats and dogs at San Jose Animal Care and Services.

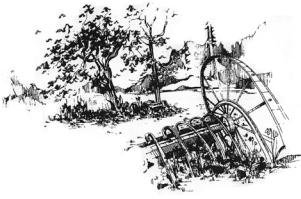
In May, Barron Park Elementary School hosted an exciting presentation about reptiles by local rescuer John Hale, familiar to science teachers and humane clubs throughout the Peninsula and a favorite Project HumaneKind speaker. The all-girl audience, members of a YCS after-school club, warmly welcomed Mr. Hale and his tortoises, snakes, and other reptiles. The star of the show was "Coco Chanel," a 50-plus-pound tortoise who had just



John Hale and big tortoise Coco Chanel at Barron Park Elementary School. Photo by Leonor Delgado, Project HumaneKind.

awakened from her annual winter nap and was more than eager to explore her new surroundings. The students were thrilled to meet some of John's rescues up close and personal. Students are looking forward to another visit during the upcoming school year. Barron Park neighbors also attended presentations, both live and online, at the Palo Alto Children's Library and Mitchell Park Library, provided by Project HumaneKind. These included readings of stories and discussions of humane-related topics focusing on animal rescue, care of family pets, and issues in factory farming.

If you're interested in collaborating with Project HumaneKind or scheduling a presentation, please visit the website at projecthumanekind.org or send us a message at info@projecthumanekind.org



2024 Barron Park Association Membership

bpapaloalto.org

2024 Membership Renewals started January 1, 2024.

(Memberships renewed after October 1, 2023, are valid through 2024.)

You may join or renew your membership online with a credit card or PayPal at:

bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/

To pay by personal check, mail this membership form and your check to:

BPA Treasurer, 724 Barron Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306

Name(s):	Primary email address:
Address:	Secondary email address:
☐ Newsletter: I'd like the online edition (<i>instead of a print copy for Spring, Summer, and Fall</i>) ☐ Email lists: I'd like to join the BPA Email lists.	Phone:

☐ **Fellow** \$100

☐ **Patron** \$50

☐ Additional Contribution: \$ _____

Total Contribution: \$ _____

☐ **Member** \$30

☐ **Senior** \$15

If sending a personal check, please pay to: Barron Park Association.

☐ **Business** \$50

The Barron Park Association is your volunteer neighborhood group that serves the interests of our very special community. All residents of Barron Park and Green Acres II are encouraged to join. If you have questions about the BPA or need to check your membership status, please email: barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com. Your BPA membership supports many Barron Park community events and interests including: May Fête, Movie Night in Bol Park, Ice Cream Socials, holiday celebrations to mark the year, Senior Connections, Emergency Preparedness, Quarterly Newsletters, and Email lists.

BPA EMAILS AND WEB LINKS

SUMMER 2024

- **BPA Website:** bpapaloalto.org/
- **BPA Newsletter Archive:** bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter/
- **BPA Membership (Join/Renew):** bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/
- **Membership Questions:** Lisa Berkowitz Landers at: barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com
- **BPA Email Lists:** Join at: bpapaloalto.org/bpa-email-lists/ or write to: listmanager@bpapaloalto.org
- **BPA President:** John W. King at: johnwadeking@gmail.com
- **BPA Treasurer:** John W. King at: johnwadeking@gmail.com
- **BPA Newsletter Editor:** Myrna Rochester at: mbrbpa@sonic.net
- **BPA Business Liaison:** Paul Yang at: pabloyang@yahoo.com
- **Support for Buena Vista Neighbors:** Karen Ratzlaff at: karen.ratzlaff@hotmail.com
Buena Vista Partners (non-profit) at: buenavistapartners.org
- **Welcoming Committee Chair:** Gwen Luce at: gluce@cbnocal.com
- **Emergency Services Volunteer Program:** Maurice Green at: mauryg3@comcast.net
- **Barron Park Historian:** Douglas L. Graham at: dgrahampaca@gmail.com
- **Senior Connections:** Pooja Punn at: barronparkseniorconnections@gmail.com
- **BPA Webmaster:** Maurice Green at: bpawebman@bpapaloalto.org
- **Barron Park Donkeys:** To volunteer, donate, or purchase merchandise, go to: barronparkdonkeys.org or contact Jenny Kiratli at: barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com
- **Bol Park Native Habitat:** To volunteer, contact Rich Elder at: rich.e.elder@gmail.com Donate to the Bol Park Native Garden through the "Bol Park Fund" at: friendsofpaparks.org/donations2
By mail or phone: Friends of the Palo Alto Parks (FOPAP), Bol Park Fund, 425 Grant Ave., Suite 27, Palo Alto, CA 94306; 650-327-7323.

Make Your Home Cooler and Safer this Summer

By Hilary Glann

Our summers are getting longer and hotter. Here are some practical actions you can take to make your home more safe and comfortable.

Cooling Off Your Home at Night

- Open your doors and windows in the evening when the air temperature is at the same temperature or cooler outside than inside. Open all curtains and blinds. Use indoor and outdoor thermometers to figure out when to open or close your doors and windows.
- Use standalone electric fans to cool down your home. You can use one fan in an open window, or one fan to pull cool air in, and another at the opposite side of the house to push out the hot air. Read more fan tips at: thespruce.com/do-fans-cool-a-room-5271790
- A whole house fan is a more expensive, but a very speedy way to vent and cool your home: energy.gov/energysaver/cooling-whole-house-fan

Staying Cool During the Day

- Close all windows and doors in your home in the morning when you see the temperature rising indoors. Indoor thermometers help track temperature changes in different parts of your home. Some windows and doors may be able to stay open longer than apertures that receive direct sunlight in the morning.
- Close your blinds or curtains on sun-facing windows to cut down on incoming heat.
- You – or your favorite home improvement contractor – can apply heat-blocking window films to your west and southwest facing windows, which can block up to 80% of the sun's heat while still letting light into the house. Learn more at: architectmagazine.com/technology/products/the-pros-and-cons-of-window-films_o
- Outdoor awnings and shades on your southwest and western-facing windows can make your home much more comfortable and reduce AC usage (if you have AC). Quality outdoor shades can block up to 90% of UV rays and reduce ambient

air temperatures by up to 33%. Since we installed Coolaroo outdoor shades, our AC only kicks in after two or three days of temperatures in the high 80s or above. "Cool roofs" and "cool wall thermal barrier paint" reflect more sunlight than conventional roofs and walls, lowering the overall temperature of your home. Find more at energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver

- Use your stove and oven as little as possible during a heat wave, especially if you have a gas stove. Gas stoves are only 32% efficient at transferring heat into your food – most of the heat goes into the kitchen. An induction burner or cooktop is 85% efficient at transferring heat to your food and generates little heat, since it uses magnets to cook your food. You can buy a simple induction countertop burner for as little as \$50. Or you can buy an electric multi-cooker pot that can steam, bake, or 'air fry' your food while generating little heat in your kitchen. Reducing use of your gas stove also dramatically improves your indoor air quality and reduces the quantity of carcinogenic gases released during natural gas combustion.
- Install a few ceiling fans in your home to



Duxtop Portable Induction Countertop Burner currently retails for \$63. Photo from Amazon.



The Ninja Speedi Rapid Cooker & Air Fryer currently retails for \$129. Photo from Ninjakitchen.com.

keep you cool without needing to lower your (AC) thermostat.

- If you have AC, you can pre-cool your house, taking advantage of plentiful solar power on the grid. At 1 or 2 p.m., set your thermostat to 72 degrees, and then set it to 78 degrees at 4 p.m. You'll thus be using your house as a 'battery' to save cool air that you'll enjoy later in the day. This is the best strategy to use when a Flex Alert is called. Learn more at: caiso.com/about/news/californians-do-conserve-when-asked-flex-alerts-are-vital
- If you're thinking about getting AC installed this summer, consider installing a new 'heat pump' combination furnace AC system. These highly efficient devices will save you money on energy and will reduce air pollution in our community. You'll also get local and federal rebates when you install one. Here's more information on heat pumps: homeinspector.org/consumers/hvac/heat-pump-installation-cost
- If you aren't ready to replace your furnace, consider purchasing a portable heat pump heater/air conditioner that keeps a room very comfortable in either the summer or the winter. This solution also works for renters who can take the portable heater/cooler with them when they move: canarymedia.com/articles/heat-pumps/renters-you-too-can-get-a-heat-pump-a-micro-one-at-least

Be safe and save money by taking smart steps to keep yourself comfortable this summer.



Frigidaire portable heat pump heater/cooler retails for \$553. Photo from Canary Media.

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