

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Richard Elder, BPA President



Welcome to the Summer edition of the Barron Park Association Newsletter. We started the beautiful Barron Park summer with our annual May Fête on May 21,

described (and pictured!) in this newsletter. Many thanks to John King, BPA Treasurer and May Fête Volunteer Coordinator, and all the other volunteers for a great Sunday in Bol Park! Our next event, Movie Night, will also take place in Bol Park on Saturday evening, August 26. If you are interested in volunteering for Movie Night, please contact *president at bpapaloalto dot org*

If you enjoyed the May Fête, and especially if you have ideas for improvements, we are looking for an individual or a small group of volunteers to chair the May Fête next year. For the past several years the BPA has hired an event coordinator for the Fête, so the role of the Chair is to supervise, liaise with the BPA Board, and make sure no balls get dropped. This is your chance to continue a longstanding Barron Park tradition. We are also still looking for ideas for new cultural events and Meet-and-Learns. If you are interested in any of these or have other suggestions, please send them to *president at bpapaloalto dot org*

If you are reading this newsletter at the Bol Park Kiosk and wondering why you didn't receive one in the mail, you probably forgot to renew your membership in the BPA. Only the Spring newsletter is sent to the entire neighborhood. BPA members receive all four newsletters either by mail or electronically. You can join or renew your membership and choose your delivery method at www.bpapaloalto.org

Have a great summer!

FALL 2017, BPA Newsletter Deadline—Friday, September 1!

To all our Contributors:

Please submit articles and drafts (preferably in a Word file), along with any images, by **Friday, September 1, 2017**, to Myrna Rochester, *newsletter at bpapalto dot org* or *mbrbpa at sonic dot net*

If your Fall idea is still a query, please contact Myrna well in advance to talk about developing it. Note that our Fall 2017 issue is mailed only to households that are members of the BPA.

New BPA Services List and Babysitter List

Lisa Berkowitz Landers,
BPA Membership Chair

The Barron Park Association is starting a new "Services List" for BPA members who wish to offer a service or skill to local residents. Many residents requested a list that might include: tutors, pet care, music lessons, photography, computer services, ride-shares, handyman/woman, gardening, housekeeping, tailoring, event planning and assistance, etc. Childcare and babysitting will remain on the BPA Babysitter List.

The lists will be posted at www.bpapaloalto.org

If you are a current BPA member and want to be on the Services and/or Babysitter List, please send the following info in an email to *barronpark dot paloalto at gmail dot com*

- Service offered
- Name (if under 18, include age/parent contact)
- Contact info: email/phone/text
- Brief description of service/skills/bio
- Fee?/negotiable?/donation or volunteer?
- Availability: days/hours

Barron Park Association membership may be processed online at: <http://bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/>

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Bol Park Pathway Improvements

By Richard Placone, Bol Park Pathway Committee

Greetings Barron Park Neighbors,

Since Fall 2014, a Committee of Barron Park residents and two City staff members have been working together to bring about improvements to the Bol Park shared pathway. The Committee's work initially got underway to address concerns raised by the removal of a large number of mature oaks and other trees on the border of the Veterans Administration Hospital construction project. Several VA staff members have consulted with this Committee in an effort to mitigate the adverse effect the project had on the pathway environment. As a result of meetings with VA staff, their original landscape plans were revised to provide significant relief to the pathway environment when their project is finished. It will take time, but the new plantings will eventually shield the pathway from the hospital campus. Meanwhile, due to the Committee's efforts, the City of Palo Alto has cooperated in increasing the landscaping on the City's side of the path—work that will be ongoing for some time.

The Committee determined that there was a more serious problem in the multiple use of the pathway by cyclists and pedestrians. Traffic has greatly increased since the path was first constructed in 1974. As a result of Committee efforts, the path will be improved in two steps.

The **First Step** is underway with the addition of new signage to warn all users of the pathway to be careful to avoid harmful interactions between cyclists and all those on foot. Since the City removed the original chicanes located at the Matadero crossing, special attention was called for at that location. Resolution was finally reached at the Committee's recent meeting with City staff. (Chris Corrao of the Transportation Division has been most helpful in achieving the results reported here.) The following changes are being installed in the coming month or two:

1. At all entrances to the pathway, a *Shared Path/Bikes and Pedestrians* sign will be installed.

2. A sign prohibiting motorized vehicles and motorcycles will be posted at all entrances.

3. A *Call Out sign* will be placed at strategic locations warning cyclists to announce their approach to pedestrians.

4. A 15 MPH sign will be posted at strategic points along the pathway.

5. At strategic points along the pathway, caution signs such as *Slow* will be painted on the pathway pavement.

6. A four-way stop sign will be placed at the Matadero crossing applicable to all users of the path and Matadero Avenue.

There will be other safety signs as well, but those listed have come about as a result of the Committee's efforts in working with City staff.

The **Second Step** will involve a redesign of the entire pathway, creating a separated section for two-way travel of cyclists, and a section restricted to pedestrians. This Committee will be closely involved in both the design and construction phases. The redesign is scheduled to take place in the coming fiscal year. It is uncertain when the reconstruction will begin, but the committee is pushing for this phase to take place within a year, funding permitting.

As Chair of the Committee, I list with thanks the names of your neighbors who have worked so hard to bring about these improvements, and who will continue working for its completion: Anne Marie Macrae, Art Liberman, Cedric de La Beaujardière, Clair Elliott, David Boxerman, Frank Crossman, Peter Knopf, and Peter Mueller. Former members include Lynnie Melen and Markus Fromherz. City staff includes Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect, and Aliee "Cash" Khashayar, representing the City Manager.

With this phase of our work completed, the Committee is taking a summer recess. In the interim I will continue to keep the Committee and the community up to date on significant matters regarding the pathway.

Contact: [rcplacone at sbcglobal dot net](mailto:rcplacone@sbcglobal.net)

BPA ADDRESS REMINDERS

■ For the **BPA Home Page**, the **BPA Newsletter Archive**, and to join or to renew your **Membership**, go to: www.bpapaloalto.org

■ To confirm your **BPA Membership Status**, write to: barronpark dot paloalto at gmail dot com

■ To contact the **BPA Babysitter List**, as a provider or if you need childcare: barronpark dot paloalto at gmail dot com

■ Contact the **BPA President** at: president at bpapaloalto dot org

■ Contact the **BPA Treasurer** at: johnwadeking at gmail dot com

■ Correspond with the **BPA Newsletter Editors** at: newsletter at bpapaloalto dot org

■ Contact the **BPA "Meet and Learn" Activities Chair** at: frenchrealtor at gmail dot com

■ Reach our **BPA Historian** at: dgrahampaca at gmail dot com

■ Contact our **BPA Business Liaison** at: pabloyang at yahoo dot com

■ Reach our **Welcoming Committee Chair** at: gluce at cbnocal dot com

■ For information on our **Emergency Services Volunteer Program**, write to: mauryg3 at comcast dot net

■ Contact the **Bol Park Future Plan Committee** at: rcplacone at sbcglobal dot net

■ To donate for the care of **Bol Park's donkeys, Perry and Jenny**: Online at www.barronparkdonkeys.org or write a check payable to: "ACTERRA-Palo Alto Donkey Fund," and mail to: ACTERRA, 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303

■ To donate to the **Bol Park Native Plant Restoration Project**: Write a check payable to "Friends of the Palo Alto Parks (FOPAP), for the Bol Park Corner Restoration Project," and mail to: FOPAP, 425 Grant Ave., Suite 27, Palo Alto, CA 94306

Barron Park Association Annual Meeting

By Markus Fromherz

The BPA held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 19, 2017. The Annual Meeting is open to all residents and was attended by more than sixty Barron Park neighbors. This was one of the most interesting meetings in recent years, with informative presentations and many great questions.

As in previous years, we invited several speakers to present around a common theme, followed by Q&A. Soft drinks and a snack potluck made it a social afternoon. This year's theme was "The Future of Barron Park." Our first speaker was **Max McGee**, Superintendent of the Palo Alto Unified School District. He gave a general overview of the state of PAUSD and the schools in our neighborhood. Obviously, we are quite lucky with the high quality of our schools, with both Terman and Gunn rated as the top middle and high schools in California (according to the site *niche.com*), with Barron Park and Juana Briones Elementary Schools among the top schools as well. PAUSD's three long-term goals for further improvements are: equity and access, wellness and safety, and, of course, high-quality teaching and learning. PAUSD has been investing in our schools; Barron Park Elementary School (BPES) is becoming a model for the District in both the diversity of its teaching and availability of resources. For example, did you know that BPES has a Maker Studio? Residents are welcome to stop by and take a look.

Our second speaker was **Rob De Geus**, director of the Palo Alto Community Services Department. This department has several divisions, including Arts and Sciences, Human Services, Recreation Services, and Parks and Open Spaces, all with the general goal of engaging individuals and families in our city. Not surprisingly, the current high-profile planning process to upgrade Palo Alto's parks was part of this meeting presentation. Our two neighborhood parks will see improvements, but not significant changes. Juana Briones Park has already had some upgrades. Further renovations in Bol Park are planned for 2020, with improvements in irrigation, benches,

accessibility, and a restroom. (A BPA committee under the leadership of Richard Placone has been providing input to the City on the BP Parks Plan. See elsewhere in this newsletter for Richard's report on our Pathways project.)

Our third speaker was **Doria Summa**, who recently joined the Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission. Doria gave a brief overview of the Commission's goals and work. The primary issues for the Commission are parking and transportation, as well as housing and development. Doria gave as an example the proposal to develop the former Compadres Restaurant site on El Camino Real and Curtner Ave., which was recently reviewed and recommended for approval. (See Dorothy Bender's report in this newsletter.) Please note that the Palo Alto Planning Commission has a public hearing process and wants to hear from residents. It meets twice a month, meetings are broadcast on Government Channel 26, and minutes are available online at <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/boards/ptc/>

In addition to the three speakers, **Lt. James Reifschneider** from the Field Services Division of the Palo Alto Police Department was available for questions. **Todd Collins**, a Barron Park resident recently elected to the School Board, also answered questions on school issues. Of the numerous questions posed, I'd like to highlight one on crime. Lt. Reifschneider confirmed that our city crime rate continues to be very low. Even car burglaries are down in Palo Alto, although Barron Park had relatively more than other neighborhoods in 2016. The police have spent extra time in our neighborhood and also recently made arrests of people believed to have done the lion's share of burglaries, so there's hope for relief. It is recommended that owners lock their cars and not leave items of value in the car in order to reduce the incentives for car burglaries.

The BPA Board would like to thank all our speakers for sharing their valuable insights with us.

Development Proposal for the Compadres Site

By Dorothy Bender

On May 18, 2017, the Palo Alto Architectural Review Board voted to recommend demolition of the former Compadres Restaurant at 3877 El Camino Real (between 9-Minute Oil and Starbucks) and replacing it with:

- 17 residential units, of which two will be below market rate
- a two-story mixed-use building on El Camino
- 61 underground parking spaces; the entrance to the garage will be on El Camino and Curtner; the exit will be on Curtner only.

Many residents in the Barron Park and Ventura neighborhoods are saddened at the loss of this historic building, as they

were at the closing of the restaurant. A plaque will be placed commemorating the historic significance of the former Iron Works business at this site.

Mexican immigrant Gonzalo Silvestre (c. 1898-c. 1988), an artist in ornamental iron work, created all the iron work (gates, window bars, hinges, and hardware) we see today at the Allied Arts complex in Menlo Park. Later Silvestre and his wife purchased the property at 3877 El Camino in three transactions ending in 1944. Between the late 1930s and 1971 his iron works manufactory operated there, followed later by the Iron Works Restaurant and the more recent Compadres Restaurant.

The Compadres project will go to City Council for final approval.

MAY FÊTE 2017—GORGEOUS



Photo: Myrna Rochester



Photo: Leon Rochester



Photo: Beckie McDonald



Photo: Beckie McDonald

DAY FOR THE MAYPOLE DANCE!

By John W. King, Volunteer Coordinator

This thank you goes out to all the volunteers and sponsors who helped create our Barron Park May Fête 2017. This 39th annual event was a big success! We had impressive attendance, the weather cooperated, the music was authentic, the BBQ was busy, and the raffle had some great prizes and new contributors! The bounce house, hula hoop, face painting, and bean bag toss activities were a hit with the kids. The Maypole dance provided great memories for family, friends, and neighbors. This year's music performers included Celtic Rose, Fête Musette Ensemble, and, for the first time this year, the traditional music group, Broceliande.

We extend warm thanks to the following people for their wonderful efforts.

Alana Van Zanten, Event Coordinator, who with her friends, plus four Gunn High students, obtained and organized the crafts and games, the food and soft drinks, the tickets and the raffle,

Larry Breed and his crew, who bought the ribbons, cut and re-spoiled them, assembled the Maypole, attached the ribbons and the floral basket, directed the pole setup, raised the floral basket, and

disassembled the Maypole, long after most people were gone,

Gary Breitbard, who organized the music and the audience folk dancing,

Rich Elder, for stage construction with **Darren Ashworth** and **Sam King**,

Alan Winston, our dance caller,

Hassan Bordbari of Barron Park Florist & Market, who provided the flowers and assembled the Flower Basket,

Doug Graham, Barron Park Historian, who provided the Barron Park History Display,

Lisa Berkowitz Landers, Membership Chair, collected memberships during the event,

Gwen Luce, BPA Board member, distributed May Fête programs,

Paul Yang, BPA Business Liaison for securing Event Sponsors,

Scott Melberg, from the Palo Alto Utilities Home Efficiency "Genie" program, for tips and information,

Our **Barron Park donkeys**—**Perry** and **Jenny**—and their handlers!

Thanks to this year's ad sponsors:

John W. King, Keller Williams Realty
Gwen Luce, Coldwell Banker Real Estate
Ernie's Wines and Liquors
Jim Davis Automotive
Great American Framing

In-kind donations provided by:

Copy Factory, programs and postcards
Barron Park Florist, flower basket
Hobee's Restaurant, large coffeecake

Raffle prizes provided by:

Creekside Inn, Two-night Weekend Stay
Fish Market Restaurant, \$50 Gift Certificate
Celia's Restaurant, Two \$35 Gift Certificates
The Ace of Sandwiches, Four \$25 Gift Certificates
Pizza Chicago, Two \$20 Gift Certificates
Blossom, Lifetime Membership (\$99 value),
Beanstalk Bucks, Yoga Passes
Animal Hospital of Palo Alto, Gift Basket of Dog Toys
Great American Framing, Two \$25 Gift Certificates
Tiny Treks, Gift Basket

We look forward to seeing you at next year's Grand 40th Annual May Fête!



Photo: Lisa Berkowitz Landers



Photo: Jon Affeld



Photo: Jon Affeld



Photo: Jon Affeld



Photo: Myrna Rochester



Photo: Leon Rochester



Photo: Myrna Rochester

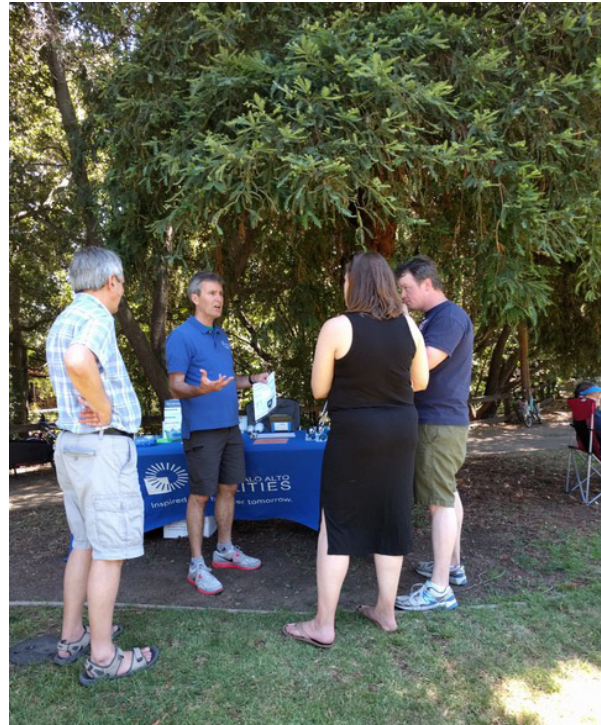


Photo: Myrna Rochester



Photo: Leon Rochester



Photo: Cherrill Spencer

Getting to Know Our Wild Neighbors—The Jackrabbit

By Jeralyn Moran and Jon Affeld

Description and Habitat

Large ears are usually the first thing we notice when we're lucky enough to spot a Jackrabbit in our area.

These large ears are handy for cooling down in hot weather. Jackrabbits are true 'hares' (but still in the rabbit family) because, unlike cottontail rabbits, they do not build nests. The mother simply chooses a place she thinks is safe, and her young are born fully furred, with their eyes wide open. Hares are also generally bigger than rabbits and have longer hind legs.

Named for the similarity between their very large ears and those of the donkey, the Jackrabbit name has an interesting origin. A male donkey is referred to as a *Jack* and a female donkey is called a *Jenny*. Donkeys (*Equus asinus*) are a subspecies of the *Equus* family of single-toed, hoofed mammals that include horses and zebras. So a technically correct, although politically incorrect, term for a donkey is actually a *Jack Ass* or a male *Asinas*.

Because of their common features, Jackrabbits were originally called *Jack Ass Rabbits*. The author Mark Twain popularized the more concise name in his writings by shortening it from *Jack Ass Rabbit* to simply *Jackrabbit*. He colorfully described the animal to his audiences back home as, "swifter than a greyhound, and as meek and harmless as an infant." He also famously suggested that Nevada adopt the Jackrabbit in its State seal and change its original State motto, as its legislature procrastinated in its duties, from "Willing and Able" to "Able enough but not so damned Willing."

There are three types or species (*Lepus*) of Hares native to California. The Black-tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*) is the neighbor you might see locally. Unlike the White-tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus townsendii*) who chooses hilly/mountainous terrain, the Black-tailed Jackrabbit (sometimes called the American Desert Hare) prefers to live on its own or in pairs in flat, open, grassy country with brush/small trees to take shelter in when needed.



An adult Black-tailed Jackrabbit (any time of the year).
<https://en.wikipedia.org>

Their cousin the Snowshoe Hare (*Lepus americanus*) gravitates to higher elevations, in more dense evergreen forest areas. Both the Black- and White-tailed Jackrabbits (as adults) are 18 to 25 inches long, although the White-tailed Jack tends to be the larger one. There is some overlap of habitat and coloration in the summer months between the White- and Black-tailed Jacks. Both are a buff color, peppered with black above and white below. Their namesake tail colors help to differentiate between them. The White-tailed Jack molts (twice each year, like the Snowshoe Hare) and can be mostly or all white in the winter—where the habitats of these two Hares overlap, look for the smaller overall size and shorter ears on the Snowshoe Hare. All three species sport black-tipped ears.

Behavior and Diet

The Black-tailed Jack is by far the most common all over California except in the mountainous areas where the other Hares dominate. These Black-tailed Jackrabbits adapt themselves to our intrusion into their

habitats and thrive even in highly developed areas. They don't migrate or hibernate during the winter, and they use the same habitat of about ½ to 1½ square miles year-round.

In areas where the weather is mild, the Black-tailed Jackrabbit may breed during any season. Usually, several litters are born each year. There may be as many as eight babies in a litter, but the average litter has from two to four. During the initial nursing time, the mom hides her young when she goes out to feed, and, upon returning, mom and young call to find each other. Amazingly, these babies are mobile within minutes of birth and will not stay in one place.

They grow rather rapidly and reach adult size in about seven or eight months. Sexual maturity is attained at about the same time, but young females don't breed until early in the year following their birth.

Black-tailed Jackrabbits, like all Hares, are strict vegetarians. They eat a variety of shrubs, small trees, grasses, and forbs (herbaceous flowering plants). They will rely mainly on shrubs in the fall and winter, grasses and forbs in the spring and early summer. This of course varies by what is available to them where they live (the growth stage and moisture content of individual plants).

Threats

The Jackrabbit, like many smaller mammals, has quite a few natural enemies. It happens to be an important prey species for raptors and other carnivores. Jackrabbit predators include coyotes, bobcats, foxes, great horned owls, hawks, and snakes (preying on both the young and adults).

People hunt Hares. Their flesh is said by

hunters to be excellent eating. We have read that up to two million Jackrabbits are killed by hunters annually in California. As long as the taking of these rabbits by people is sustainable, the other predators noted above and the Jackrabbit populations themselves can carry on into the future.



Black-tailed Jackrabbits in action.
www.JeffParkerImages.com

FUN FACTS

- The collective noun for a group of hares is a "drove."
- "Ectoparasites" (a group including fleas, ticks, lice, and mites) are happy to live on a Jackrabbit. This might explain why (human) hunters sometimes avoid them. Great Jacks indulge in dust baths to get rid of these pests.
- Instead of drinking water, the Black-Tailed Jackrabbit relies on water-rich plants to meet its water needs. This means the plant's water weight must be at least five times its dry weight. In dryer times, "phreatic" (deep-rooted) shrubs are targeted by the Jackrabbits.
- The "Snowshoe" Hare got its name because of the thick mat of long hair that covers its large feet, to help in running over soft snow.
- Despite being found at truck stops and souvenir stands across the United States, the Jackelope is not a real animal.

Palo Alto Emergency Service Volunteer Classes

Submitted by Maury Green, BPA Emergency Preparedness

Here is a listing of the Palo Alto Emergency Service Volunteers Training Courses and Drills, with dates and locations, for the rest of 2017. If you're ready to get involved for the first time, please confirm dates, times, and registration policies at the website below. If you are already an Emergency Services Volunteer (ESV) or a member of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), note the refresher courses and another aspects of the program.

A descriptive catalogue and registration instructions can be found at:

<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/38615>

ESV Training Courses, July-November 2017

- July 22, 2017 10:30 AM-12:30 PM
CERT: Cribbing and Fire Suppression, Fire Station 6, Stanford University, 711 Serra
- August 8, 2017 6:00 PM-9:00 PM
Block Preparedness Coordinator (BPC) Certification, Mitchell Park Community Center (MPCC), 3700 Middlefield, Adobe South
- August 12 and 13, 2017 9:00 AM-3:30 PM
American Red Cross (ARC): Wilderness First Aid/CPR/AED, Day 1: Room H-1, Cubberley Community Center (CCC), 4000 Middlefield; Day 2: Location to be decided (TBD)

- August 22, 2017 6:30 PM-8:30 PM
Family Radio Services Training (FRS), Room A-7, Cubberley (CCC)
- September 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28, 2017 6:30 PM-9:30 PM; September 30, 2017 12:00 Noon-5:00 PM
CERT Basic Training Begins, Room H-5, Cubberley (CCC). The complete CERT course schedule is available at:
http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/services/public_safety/get_involved/cert.asp
Send an email to: paloaltocert@cityofpaloalto.org or call (650) 617-3197 for CERT information and registration.
- October 15, 2017 7:00 PM-8:00 PM
Citywide ESV Communications Drill
- October 22, 2017 2:00 PM-4:00 PM
Winter Storm Training, TBD
- October 28, 2017 1:00 PM-4:00 PM
BPC Certification, Lucie Stern Community Room, 1305 Middlefield
- November 5, 2017 2:00 PM-4:00 PM
Citywide Fall Drill TBD
- November 9, 2017 6:30 PM-8:30 PM
FRS Radio Training, Lucie Stern Community Room
- November 20, 2017 6:30 PM-9:30 PM
Light Search and Rescue, TBD

NOTICE TO BARRON PARKERS

By Bern King

Do you or someone you know need help getting to the grocery store? In the past there was an Avenidas minibus service that picked up people in Barron Park and arranged round trips to a local grocery store. Do you know anyone who misses that service or would find it useful?

If so, please let me know. If there's sufficient interest, perhaps Avenidas would consider restarting this service. Or maybe this is a need that we could meet within the neighborhood. I will try to arrange that too.

You can contact me at bernkingbpa@gmail.com or leave me a phone message at (650) 352-3854.

¡Viva Buena Vista!

The 91-Year-Old Buena Vista Mobile Home Park is Saved!

By Winter Dellenbach, Friends of Buena Vista

On May 18, 2017, after five years of community effort, the Housing Authority of Santa Clara County announced that it had purchased the four-acre Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. It committed to keeping it affordable in perpetuity and allowing its nearly 400 residents to remain. As Supervisor Joe Simitian said, "It's a great day."

That afternoon, English and Spanish print and TV media flowed into Buena Vista (BV) for interviews broadcast all over the Bay Area, followed that evening by a last-minute gathering at Barron Park Elementary School for a glowing, happy, hugging celebration involving cake.

The Jisser family, who bought the property in 1986, is now selling it for \$40.4 million. The Housing Authority paid \$11.4 million with Federal HUD money. The other \$29 million was split evenly between the City of Palo Alto and Santa Clara County from respective Affordable Housing Funds that

developers are required to pay into—this is not taxpayer money. The amounts from City and County are capped, and neither will have an ownership interest in Buena Vista nor manage it. The Jisser family will retain its ownership of the adjacent commercial strip and gas station along El Camino, which will be subdivided from BV.

Nearly \$15 million in additional funds will be provided by the Housing Authority for internal infrastructure upgrades to BV roadways, curbs, electricity, drainage, sewer, gas, etc. These improvements will be done in stages to minimize disruption within BV.

The Housing Authority has entered into an agreement with the non-profit Caritas to operate and manage Buena Vista day to day. Caritas is an experienced mobile home park owner and manager of 20 affordable parks in California. A transition period of a few months will be needed for the Housing

Authority to take possession and Caritas to assume management.

June marks exactly five years since Prometheus, the largest residential builder in California, began talks with the City about replacing our BV neighbors with "180 units of upscale housing for young tech workers." This would have resulted in the greatest displacement of Palo Altans in our history, while greatly impacting our town's economic and ethnic diversity and converting a privately owned affordable housing site into luxury housing. It was termed "a slow moving catastrophe."

For the first time in five years, BV residents are safe and secure. We supported them, and they defended their homes with intelligence and dignity. It's very rare that a mobile home park is saved from closure. We did it together or we couldn't have done it at all. So many in Barron Park deserve thanks. Well done. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.



Photo: Courtesy of Friends of Buena Vista

CINCO DE MAYO & CHILI COOK-OFF! AT BARRON PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By Greta Gize Olbrich

Barron Park Elementary School held its Cinco de Mayo & Chili Cook Off on Friday, May 5, and what a delicious success it was! Thank you to BPES parents Laurie Beyer and Melissa Racz, who did the lion's share of planning and setting up/cleaning up. Big Ruub's & Zach's Taco Catering of Campbell was on hand to feed everyone. There were eight chili entries, prepared and submitted by BPES families. Scott Anderson (first-grade dad) was the Grand Prize winner!

Thank you to our "celebrity" judges for taking time out of their Friday to come over, taste, and be

all judgey: Lydia Kou (Palo Alto City Council member and Barron Park resident), Todd Collins (PAUSD School Board Trustee and BP resident), Ken Dauber (PAUSD

School Board Trustee and BP resident), Lars Smith (past winner of the Mitchell Park 4th of July Chili Cook-off and future BPES Kindergarten parent), and Ron and Wendy Smith (parents of next year's PTA co-President). It was wonderful to have them all as honored guests at our neighborhood school.

We await more fun community events at BPES—the 12th ranked public elementary school in California (according to the online site *niche.com*). Yes, you read that correctly, that website ranks BPES the 12th best public elementary school in the state of California. Our children are so lucky to have this gem right in our own neighborhood. Till next year!



Photo: Greta Gize Olbrich



Photo: Myrna Rochester



Photo: Myrna Rochester

The California Military Academy and the Barron Mansion

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

The Military Academy

Colonel Sebastian Jones opened the California Military Academy in the Barron Mansion in 1925. The school was located in the present-day Woodland Park tract, on La Selva Drive, Magnolia Drive, and Military Way (see map).

Colonel Jones had previously operated a successful military academy at Geneseo, south of Rochester, New York. He emigrated to California with the intent of starting a new academy. He found a good property that he liked, south of the town of Mayfield. Driscoll and Reiter had purchased the Barron Estate in 1919 for subdivision and development into small strawberry farms. They were offering, through Hare, Brewer and Clark, Palo Alto Realtors, the old, but gorgeous Barron Mansion and its 50 acres of surrounding ornamental park for a reasonable price. Doubtless it was a "white elephant" as far as the Driscoll interests were concerned.

According to Col. Jones's grandson Chatham Forbes, Jones really liked the Palo Alto-Mayfield area. He bought the mansion and park property in 1923, and immediately wrote Major Forbes (Chatham's father),



Colonel Sebastian Jones

who had married his eldest daughter, and asked him to come out from the East to teach at the school. Jones built the Military Academy buildings in 1924 and early 1925. He also decided to split off the northwest portion and the strip along the State Highway (El Camino Real) and subdivide it into small roadside commercial lots and small residential lots. This he did in 1925, naming the tract "Barron Park."

The Academy Buildings and Grounds

During the Military Academy time, the old Barron Mansion was the Jones family residence. The cadets (4th through 12th grades) did not normally enter it except to take their meals in the "West" wing. The older cadets lived in the Main Barracks (see map, at #35), built where Barron had had his stables, and the younger ones in the Junior Barracks (at #34). They took their classes on the ground floor, with dormitory rooms above.

Besides the buildings, Jones provided athletic facilities for the cadets. The swimming pool was a popular feature, open to the general public during summer vacations (see photograph and map; the pool is at #28). In the 1980s some Barron Park old-timers still remembered swimming in the Academy pool during the 1920s and '30s. The pool later served as the foundation for the modern house built at 3878 Magnolia. Tennis courts were built (#26), as well as basketball courts (#39). A parade ground was laid out (#32 and #33) with a flagpole for ceremonies (#31) near the east end.

A water tower was located where the house at 3870 Magnolia now stands (see photograph). Chatham Forbes says it "was the tallest thing in the entire area. It was like a four-sided building, very ornamental. We always had a lot of trouble with boys trying to climb it; as a matter of fact, I climbed it myself." It was built by Edward Barron, with a "Victorian" design. The water table in Palo Alto was falling due to overpumping for orchards, which took "huge quantities of water." Colonel Jones had to drill a new well, very deep, "I remember constantly having to go farther



Barron Mansion, mid-1920s

and farther. I remember my mother and father saying 'Oh my goodness, we have to go down farther.' We kept drilling deeper and deeper. We had a pump house, just to pump water for the school: we didn't irrigate anything except for the gardens and lawns" (see map; the water tower was at #38 and the well at #40).

The grounds were very extensively landscaped. The twin palms facing the front steps could be seen from the State Highway (El Camino Real). There was a rose garden on the left as you faced the house. Sarah Wallis had planted an orchard and many ornamental trees in the 1850s, '60s, and '70s. When Barron took over in 1878, he laid out curved driveways from the then County Road (El Camino Real) to replace Sarah's straight-in entrance. He also planted more ornamentals. On the south side of the property there was a large raspberry patch (#25) and an untamed area the cadets called "the jungle" (#27). On the northwest side was a row of lilac bushes (#14) and a meadow (#15). Here and there were large heritage oaks such as the two



California Military Academy 1925. Roads and property lines existing in 1925 are shown in black. The gray lines show current streets and lots. The actual locations of some of the plantings and buildings have been corroborated by physical evidence still in existence in the 1980s. The remaining items have been located as close as possible by memory and limited historical map evidence. The exact location of the mansion was determined to within ten feet when one of the twin palms was removed c. 1995. Please see the key to the numbers below.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1. The "Barron Mansion," actually built by Sarah Wallis in 1857. | 9. Broom tree. | 21. Roses along "The Lane" (now the 3800 block of La Selva Drive). | 30. The Cadet Store. |
| 2. The west wing, added by Edward Barron in 1891 to house his son's family, contained the cadet dining room during the Academy times. | 10. Heating plant. | 22. The twin palms—visible in photographs of the front of the mansion. The westernmost one was removed in 1995, and from its stump we were able to determine almost exactly where the mansion had been located. | 31. Flagpole. |
| 3. Original farmhouse, built by Elisha Crosby in 1853. Also called the south wing. | 11. Path from the west wing cadet dining room to the cadet barracks. | 23. Large cedar tree. | 32. The Parade Ground, as located by Forbes. |
| 4. Rose garden. | 12. Rose arbor and path to Mrs. Willem's House. | 24. Two magnolia trees. | 33. Probable Parade Ground extension (extrapolated from the photograph showing a very extensive field). |
| 5. Twin yew trees, which were later dug up and transported to be part of the landscaping for the World's Fair in San Francisco in 1939. | 13. Garage. | 25. Raspberry patch. | 34. The Junior Barracks. |
| 6. The "Class Bench." | 14. Lilac bushes. | 26. Tennis courts. | 35. The Main Barracks. |
| 7. Royal palm tree. | 15. "The meadow." | 27. "The jungle." | 36. "Walking the Track" area where cadets marched to work off demerits. |
| 8. Date palm tree. | 16. Hedge. | 28. Showers and a pump house for the pool. | 37. Two large heritage oak trees. |
| | 17. Cesspool (approximate location). | 29. Swimming pool (known then as the "swimming tank"). | 38. Water tower. |
| | 18. Mrs. Willem's House. | | 39. Basketball courts. |
| | 19. Mr. Brother's House. | | 40. Main well and pump station. |
| | 20. Large oak tree (still there in 2008). | | 41. Barbeque area. |

standing where Magnolia Drive now bends around (#37), and another large one at the corner of Military Way and La Selva Drive.

The old "Barron Mansion"

Although in the 1920s the property was known as the Barron Estate and the house as the Barron Mansion, it was actually built in 1857 by Sarah Wallis, the first women's suffrage leader on the West coast. The property was purchased and held by Sarah, not by her husband, Judge Joseph Wallis. There she entertained suffrage leaders, including Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as well as former U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant.

The mansion was later expanded twice by Edward Barron, who added the fourth-floor cupola in 1879 and the west wing to house his son's family in 1891. If it still existed today it would rate among the finest examples of Victorian architecture in the Bay Area.

Envisioning the Mansion Built by Sarah Wallis

If you stand today on the edge of La Selva Drive, facing the State Historical Monument marking Sarah Wallis's home site, and if you look southwest, right along the lot line between 525 Military Way and 3899 Magnolia Drive, you can envision the front steps of the mansion about 150 feet in front of you.

In the 1920s and '30s there was a pair of tall palm trees between the mansion's driveway (which no longer exists) and "The Lane" (now the 3800 block of La Selva). In 1923, you would have seen, looming among the mature palms, magnolias, and cedars, a magnificent three-story mansion with an octagonal fourth-floor cupola (see photograph). There were at least 26 rooms. Chatham Forbes lived



Water Tower with Pool in Background



Pool with Main Barracks in Background

there as a boy from 1923 to 1930 during the time of the Military Academy. He stated that there were about 40 rooms; he listed them and drew rough plans of each floor in an interview with me in 1986. Mr. Forbes was a local historian, who lived in Saratoga and taught California and local history at De Anza College and the Mountain View Los Altos Adult Education program. He passed away in February 2016. The following descriptions are based on my interview with Mr. Forbes on October 18, 1986, as well as an oral history he gave to Ann Knopf in the Fall of 1977.

A Wisteria-Covered Veranda

On the first floor, there was a veranda clear around the front and sides. By the 1920s the wisteria vine had become "wonderfully established"; it had thick trunks, and it was just beautiful around the entire veranda. It was almost obscured by the luxuriant foliage of the vine, loaded with heavy purple blossoms. Above, the second- and third-floor façade was dominated by great, two-story high gables fringed with Victorian gingerbread woodwork.

Eighteen Rooms on the Ground Floor

There was a Victorian-style entrance, with wide front steps and lampposts on either side. Inside, there were 18 rooms on the ground floor, including the main hall which extended from the front entrance back about three-quarters of the depth of the main building. Just inside the front door, there was a large vestibule with gilt-framed mirrors from Paris. The hall also

contained a large staircase that went up the center of the house to the octagonal fourth-floor tower playroom. As you faced into the house, to the right there was a large drawing room or reception room, while to the left there was an equally large living room-library; both rooms had wonderful Italian marble fireplaces. Behind the library was the billiards room and behind it was the "front pantry" with many cabinets full of preserves. Chatham said that "... the floors were parquet floors, typical of the California Gold Rush opulent era. Right after the Gold Rush was the silver boom and so on ... the walls were all wallpapered, with some paneling in the billiard room, which was very well lit. There were lots of pantries and cabinetry and glass and it was very well done. The carpentry was Victorian gothic: Eastlake." On the right side, behind the reception room was a passageway to the west wing, then a family dining room. In the center, alongside the staircase was the "back hall," with dark paneling, where the telephone was installed.

Sarah Wallis had spent a small fortune furnishing the house, and Edward Barron didn't stint either. According to Forbes, there were many "very typical 'California Nabob' pieces around the house, still there. There was no point in moving them out; they had been bought for the house. There were the mirrors from Paris ... very typical of the period. You can go to the Ralston House, any of those, and see those mirrors from Paris, with gold leaf, very tall. They used them above mantelpieces, at the end of hallways, and so on."

The Ground Floor West Wing

The west wing had been added by Edward Barron about 1891 to house his son's family. The west wing ground floor had four rooms. First, adjacent to the main house, was a large dining room where the cadets ate; it extended the full width of the wing. Beyond it, toward the front, was a second large dining room, which extended clear to the end of the wing. Toward the rear, there was an entrance hall inside the steps that led up from the back lawn, off which was a small toilet and lavatory.

The Ground Floor South Wing

The back wing apparently was the original Mayfield Farm house built by Elisha Crosby in 1853 or 1854. This wing included the kitchen and various utility rooms, with servants' quarters upstairs. As you entered the south wing from the front pantry, the back hall or the family dining room, you found yourself in the large kitchen, which, like the other three ground-floor rooms, extended the full width of the wing. Next was the main pantry, where ice cream making and other kitchen-related operations took place. Then there was a narrow icebox room. Along the east side of this wing ran a wide porch like the verandas around the main section of the mansion. The last ground-floor room at the rear of the south wing was a large laundry room with access from the porch only. Underneath the main pantry was the cadet laundry, and underneath the kitchen were two rooms, a basement workshop, and a wine cellar.

The Second Floor

The staircase opened into a second-floor hall, which led into two very large bedrooms that, together with the staircase, spanned the width of the building. Col. Jones's bedroom was above the reception room, and Forbes's grandmother's room was directly to the rear of it. His parents' room was across the staircase, above the library. Chatham shared a bedroom with his brother, above the billiard room and front pantry, which had an adjacent sleeping porch above the veranda. The main bathroom opened off the hall, and was above the back hall. Between it and the west wing there was a small ladies' sitting room for Chatham's aunts that earlier may have served as a private parlor for Barron's son and his wife. Chatham said that he believed his grandfather had done some



Water Tower

refurbishing, because "... they modernized things a bit. Every room had a little half-bath."

In the west wing, there was a bedroom adjacent to the main house and his cousin's bedroom and playroom at the west end. In the south wing there was a long hall to the right, with rooms opening onto it from the left. Going towards the rear, first there was a servants' bathroom, then two bedrooms, and finally the cook Gee Wing's bedroom, which stretched the width of the house (this was probably the master bedroom of Elisha Crosby's farmhouse).

The Third Floor

The third floor had two bedrooms in the front corners and a "top hall" in the center where the staircase came up. The rest of the space was taken up by various attics. There were two levels of attics, and Chatham said that "... we were up there all the time. You know kids can't resist creeping around in attics. There were all sorts of things and most of them were from our own family."

Colonel Jones's Extended Family

"We were larger than Barron's family: there were 12 of us in that house. There was my grandfather and grandmother on my mother's side: My grandfather was Sebastian Chatham Jones and my grandmother

was Mary Hale Jones." There were "... my mother and my father ... Major Francis Henry Forbes Senior and Eleanor Forbes. Then there were her two sisters, Isabel and Ethel ... and their two children."

The Fourth-Floor Cupola

Chatham Forbes related that "The Jones family referred to the cupola room as 'The Playroom,' because the children of the family used that eight-sided tower room as a playroom. I used to climb every one of those roofs [the gables on the third floor]: my parents would have gone stiff [if they had known]. We used to watch the Big Game bonfire from there. It's only four miles and we could easily see it."

A Vanderbilt Wanted the Weathervane

Forbes also told me about the beautiful weathervane mounted on the top of the tower room. "One day, somebody arrived and very grandly drew up in front of the house in a chauffeur-driven car. A man got out and came to the door. My father (Major Forbes) was working in the library, and so he came to the door and this man announced himself as somebody named Vanderbilt. Just like in a W.C. Fields comedy. That didn't impress my father: as a matter of fact, my grandfather's family was related to the Vanderbilts. This man thought my father would be greatly impressed. My father said 'May I help you?' and the man said, 'Well, I really admire your weathervane.' My father (who was an army officer ... voice of command and all that) said 'Thank you.' The man then said 'Would you like to sell it?' and my father said 'Would you please go ...?' It was incredible. My father was very much annoyed with him, for suggesting he buy the weathervane right off the top of the house. It was very funny."

Major Forbes Confronts the Road Gang

I'm going to end this article with a little story Chatham Forbes told me about his father. It was shortly after the original Barron Park subdivision was laid out along the State Highway. In order to widen El Camino Real to help carry the U.S. Highway 101 traffic, the state determined it would have to take 20 feet off the front of all the lots. For some reason, they did this without paying for it. Forbes recounted that "... I can remember my father down there with a .45-caliber pistol, holding it on a gang of men that had been sent by

the highway people. They were knocking down trees that were 60 years old. [the eucalyptus trees that ran between the alley—now Cypress Lane—and El Camino]. They accepted the dedication (for the Barron Park subdivision in 1925), but they didn't pay us for it."

Colonel Jones's Untimely Death

Unfortunately, Col. Jones died suddenly in 1929. Simultaneously, the Great Depression hit. For a year, Major Forbes acted as superintendent and owned the school along with his wife and her two sisters. They decided to relocate the school to Marin County, but investors backed out and they ended up selling out to a Mrs. Hurley, who unsuccessfully ran a boarding school for several years.

What Happened to the Mansion?

The Barron Mansion burned to the ground in a spectacular blaze on Thanksgiving weekend, November 29, 1936. The students were all gone and no one was hurt. It was an accidental fire. Because the Palo Alto Fire Department would not fight the fire, even though other nearby fire departments sent help, it became one of the principal sore points in Barron Park annexation negotiations with the City during the eight annexation movements from 1947 to 1975. The mansion and other school buildings were replaced by the current neighborhood, the Woodland Park tract, starting in 1937.

All images Courtesy of the Barron Park Archive.

A version of this article first appeared in the Spring 2008 issue of the Barron Park Newsletter.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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BPA Board meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of most months at 7:15 P.M.

Neighbors are welcome.

BPA Community Happy Hours are held the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 5:30 P.M. For Meeting and Happy Hour locations write to *president at bpapaloalto dot org* www.bpapaloalto.org

Our Bol Park California Native Plot: Dollars Needed!

By Shirley Finfrock

In 2007 the City of Palo Alto officially gave the residents of Barron Park the responsibility for the restoration and maintenance of the California Native Plot at Bol Park. This spring the paths have been renewed with wood chips, debris from the gum tree removed, and heavy-duty maintenance completed. The 2016-17 winter rains have rejuvenated all the plants and improved the appearance of the corner plot. Monetary contributions are needed to continue annual maintenance. Please send

your tax-deductible donations to:

Payee: Friends of the Palo Alto Parks (FO-PAP) *Designate:* Bol Park Corner Restoration Project

Mail to: FOPAP, Suite 27, 425 Grant Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306

If you have questions about contributing or volunteering to manage or work in the plot, please contact: Richard Elder, President, Barron Park Association at: *president at bpapaloalto dot org*

ART IN THE PARK

Perry, Niner, and Jenny – Our Barron Park Donkeys

We are pleased to share a sampling of Donkey Art contributed by children visiting the Barron Park Donkeys. You may leave mail and art for Perry and Jenny any time you visit—there is a Donkey Mailbox for that very purpose. Adults are encouraged to leave letters and art as well!

Please Donate for Donkey Care!

Thanks to the Palo Alto non-profit Acterra for managing our Donkey Project funds. There are three easy ways to donate:

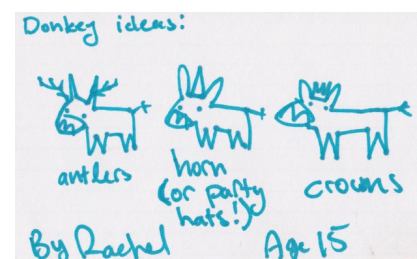
- 1) Online at www.barronparkdonkeys.org (PayPal)
- 2) Online at www.acterra.org—Be sure to indicate “Donkey Project” in the Comment Section.
- 3) Send a check to Acterra-Donkey Fund, 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

If you have questions about Perry, Jenny, or our dear, late Niner, about the Barron Park Donkey Project, or about volunteering, write to Jenny Kiratli: jkiratli@yahoo.com

Please check back at the end of the summer when we will begin posting donkey art and mail on Perry and Jenny’s own website: www.barronparkdonkeys.org

Thanks to James Witt, who gathered and submitted these art samples.

Are you a Barron Park artist, photographer, artisan, craftsperson, sculptor, designer, musician, writer, poet...? Do you know one? You and your work can be featured in an upcoming BPA Newsletter. Please send us your idea with a draft artist’s statement and reproducible samples of your work to newsletter@bpapaloalto.org



Getting to Know Winter Dellenbach

Interview by Lydia Kou

I met with Winter Dellenbach, Barron Park resident and a recent Palo Alto Tall Tree Award winner, honored for her longtime activism. Our meeting evolved into questions from me and thoughtful and reminiscent responses from Winter.

Lydia: Are you a Californian?

Winter: Yes, I was born in Pomona, California.

Lydia: What brought you to Palo Alto?

Winter: I was invited to help tend a garden at The Land Commune where the Institute for the Study of Non-Violence, started by Joan Baez, held its seminars on non-violent social change. It's now part of the Montebello Open Space Preserve.

This is what brought me to Palo Alto in 1970. I lived communally near Skyline in the Palo Alto foothills for 23 years, and felt I was living in paradise. I moved to Barron Park in 1993, and took to its rural feel and neighborliness. I continuously find myself lucky to be living in Palo Alto.

Lydia: What are three adjectives to describe yourself?

Winter: Energetic. Curious. Tenacious.

Lydia: What inspires you?

Winter: I grew up in a family, a church, and a town that gave me common good values that I have acted on all of my life, and I was born into an era that nurtured my generation's activism. I grew up in a family that considered the Golden Rule to be a call to action. My peace church taught about love and caring for the least among us. My town was safe, and everyone knew each other.

I was born in 1945 within a few days of when the first atomic bomb was dropped, and was raised in a dangerous time when kids had to stupidly crawl under school desks in the fear we could be A-bombed on any given day. Is it any wonder my generation became activists by the hundreds of thousands, going on to help stop a terrible war, expand civil rights for women, gays, those with disabilities, and fight for envi-



Photo: Courtesy of Winter Dellenbach

ronmental protections? Oh, and we had a cultural revolution too. That's where, 50 years ago, my activism began and continued here in town.

Lydia: Are you more of a hunter or gatherer?

Winter: Gatherer literally. I lived in the woods in what is now Los Trancos Open Space Preserve and gathered all kinds of plants for food, and my husband still forages edible mushrooms from the Santa Cruz Mountains. Figuratively, I gather people in; not losing each other—that is what community is all about. It's a desire to hold each other close.

Lydia: Winter, what are you known for?

Winter: I'm not sure. I think I am known by different people for different causes. For example, I led the effort to stop herbicide and pesticide use in and around our schools after Strawberry Hill was defoliated, so PAUSD personnel got to know me. I have advocated about below-market-rate housing for decades and therefore I'm known by housing advocates and city officials. And then I have sometimes simply been known to be annoying. There is no way to be an activist and not do that. To my family and many friends, I am well known as a lover of great food and wine!

Lydia: What things in life are still mysteries to you?

Winter: Almost everything! I am reading Neil deGrasse Tyson's book on astrophysics, which makes me realize that what annoys me is not dying per se, but that I won't know how it all turns out or understand how everything works in the universe or multiverse, what have you. I always want to be in the thick of it, know all the news, and not miss a thing.

Lydia: Can you tell me a time when you almost gave up, how you felt about that, and what you did instead of giving up?

Winter: My weakness is that I cannot stand getting bored. If I am involved in something, I would have to think of a way to shake it up, or else I would have to walk away.

Lydia: What do you think about when you're alone in your car?

Winter: Listening to the radio—usually politics, national or local, or cultural interviews. What I would like to be listening to more of is music, but I get distracted.

Lydia: What are your favorite jams?

Winter: I am stuck mostly back there: I like old country music, Chicago blues, folk, Dylan, Patti Smith, I just downloaded some Edith Piaf for my birthday. Beyoncé, Adele, John Legend, Aretha, Sam Cook, Beatles, Bob Marley, Springsteen, old Rock & Roll, R&B.

Lydia: What do you do in your free time?

Winter: See good films, go to museums and restaurants, hang out with family—our grandkids live here in town. Read, read, read. I'm a news hound, local and otherwise. Follow city politics. Cook.

Lydia: What is on your bucket list?

Winter: I still need to get to my mom and dad's home villages in Switzerland that my ancestors left in the 1600s, running for their lives.

Lydia: You're Swiss.

Winter: Yes, I am a Swiss Miss on all sides of my family but for one dollop of Irish.

Lydia: What is your beauty secret?

Winter: Gee, there's something I don't think about. I like to look nice, but I didn't get the vanity gene. I have other things I want to think about more.

Lydia: What is on your nightstand?

Winter: Stack of books—always. The astrophysics book. Elizabeth Strout's *Anything is Possible*, the Matisse/Diebenkorn catalogue from the SFMOMA exhibit, and a Winnie the Pooh book.

Lydia: What thing have you learned about yourself through the years? Being an activist, a mom, a wife, a public interest attorney?

Winter: (Silence) ... I don't think I would have been successful with my work on Buena Vista if I were much younger. Our experience informs us along the way if we pay attention. When I was younger I was more hotheaded and opinionated and wouldn't have been smart enough to know how to get the broad support needed to help save BV.

Lydia: What kind of tree are you?

Winter: LOL ... Tall tree. Lydia, so, I was born in Pomona, an orange-growing town, where I grew up among orange groves. The name Pomona is for the goddess of fruit and orchards. Then I moved to a town named for a tree, El Palo Alto. I lived in a treehouse for two years. We named our son for the tree, Oak. Trees seem to be important and lucky for me.

Lydia: What quote do you live by?

Winter: The same quote that I grew up with ... treat others as you want to be treated.

EMAIL LISTS

The BPA has four email listserves: *bpa-news*, *bpa-issues*, *bpa-misc* and *bpa-jobpostings*. They are hosted at Google Groups. To join the lists, go to the BPA Website: BPApaloalto.org and click on the tab near the top of the web page (under the logo): "BPA Email Lists." This link provides information about each list and an easy way to subscribe to one or more of them.

Our Barron Park Yards—OBPY

By Romola Georgia

Our Garden Soil—a Living Organism

Clay soil gets a bad rap. You've probably heard Barron Parkers complain that their clay soil is hard as a rock in the summer, and then when the rain finally comes, is slippery and hard to work. Well, that's clay! But clay soil is also very fertile and retains water and nutrients well. The secret is to respect the soil by working it when it is neither too wet nor too dry.

We gardeners have an important role in protecting and nurturing the **soil ecosystem**. In addition to the visible earthworms and sow bugs that decompose and shred the soil, we can learn to be mindful of the bacteria, fungi, and other organisms that we do not see, but are also hard at work improving the soil texture and nutrient availability. For growing vegetables in our area:

1. Use **compost** to improve the soil structure and increase the availability of nutrients and water.
2. Use **fertilizer** to provide essential plant nutrients. Our gardens usually need nitrogen. Examples are alfalfa meal, pellets, or composted manures which are mixed into the soil at planting time.
3. Use **mulch** on your vegetable beds to conserve water, suppress weeds, and encourage that biotic life in the soil as it heats up this month. Straw or unsifted compost works well to protect the soil from the hot sun.

For low-water native and ornamental plants, no amendments are usually needed. To protect the soil ecosystem, avoid pesticides and herbicides.

Summer in the Barron Park Garden

1. Regular water for your plants is important in the dry months of July and August. Check your plants and your irrigation system regularly to prevent drying out and disappointment.

2. You can still directly seed **bush beans, beets, carrots, arugula, and summer squash**.
3. Set up shade netting over tender greens.
4. Can, dry, freeze, and give away your surplus fruit and vegetables. Our food banks accept garden produce, and you can share with neighbors too.

Summer Pruning for Fruit Trees

Do you still have fruit on your trees? Don't forget to thin your fruit. Thinning is an important aspect of fruit tree care, promoting not only healthier fruit, but also avoiding alternate-bearing syndrome (a lot of fruit one year and very little fruit the following year.) Apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, plums, and apricots will benefit from reducing to one fruit per cluster or making sure that no two fruits touch each other. Stone fruit can be twisted off, but apples and pears should be clipped with your pruners.

While thinning or after your crop is finished, it's time to think about summer pruning. Had you heard that fruit tree pruning only happens in January (the dormant season)? Master Gardeners now recommend doing a lot of the pruning in the summer. The pruning you do in the summer will work towards limiting the height and size of your tree. Keeping the trees to a reachable height is a great strategy in the home yard. So go ahead and try.

- Cut back inward and downward facing branches.
- Remove vertical "suckers" and any dead wood.
- Reduce the length of branches up to one-third of their length.

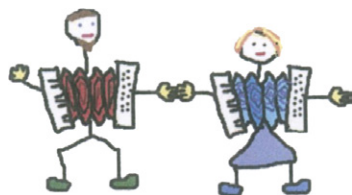
If you expect a large harvest or cannot use all your fruit, consider contacting Village Harvest <http://www.villageharvest.org/> They will harvest your trees and donate a portion to the needy. They also have tips on managing your trees.

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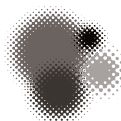
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