



BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Richard Elder, BPA President



Summer has left us with good memories of Bol Park Movie Night. Jon Affeld, our event chairman, brought in many fun activities you'll read about later in this newsletter. It was a beautiful evening, and the event was well attended by adults, children, donkeys, not to mention robots. A great way to end the Summer!

As we all know, Palo Alto is changing, and it seems that this will become more obvious along our section of El Camino Real in the near future. There are an unusual number of development projects under review by the City right now. The largest is a proposal by Palo Alto Housing to put in a four-story building with 61 affordable-housing apartments at what is currently 3705-3709 El Camino Real, from Treasure Island Stamps and Coins to Euromart. Just down the street at the old Compadres Restaurant site, 3877 El Camino Real, there is a proposal to build 17 condominiums. Seven condominiums are proposed to replace Pizza Chicago at 4115 El Camino Real. These are both planned as three-story buildings. All three developments are proposing ground-floor retail to replace current retail space. There is also a three-story, 21-unit condominium proposal for 4146 El Camino Real, which most of us know as the "billboard lot."

Outside Barron Park in the direction of Downtown there are two apartment building proposals totaling 110 units, and in

the Mountain View direction, a proposal to build a 69-room hotel, along with 8 single-family townhomes on the Su Hong Restaurant site. If you have concerns about these developments or just want to learn more, the City of Palo Alto has an easy-to-use map that links to the proposals of all current projects at: paloalto.buildingeye.com/planning

Another change that will be less visible, but just as important to our community, is the transfer of Buena Vista Mobile Home Park to the Santa Clara Housing Authority. Two representatives of the Housing Authority came to our August BPA board meeting to give us an update on that process. The sale is expected to close by the time you read this, and while that is the successful end of a long hard-fought effort by many in our community to save Buena Vista, for the Housing Authority, it is just the beginning. They will be partnering with Caritas, a non-profit that buys and preserves mobile home parks in California, to assess the condition of the park and develop a plan to bring it up to current code and housing standards. Although the full extent of what is needed is not yet known, they have a considerable budget for what they expect to be a multi-year project to address all of these issues. So, while it may only be obvious to those who actually live there, the work to preserve Buena Vista is still in full swing.

Have a wonderful Fall.

Opening on the Barron Park Association Board of Directors

The members of the Barron Park Association Board of Directors serve our neighbors in many ways and have done so for decades, creating many community and Palo-Alto-wide enhancements. The BPA Board draws on the varied interests, skills, and backgrounds of all Barron Park residents. One member of the BPA Board also serves on the Palo Alto City Council; another is a member of the PAUSD School Board.

Each member of the BPA Board takes on a specific area of responsibility. One extremely important function concerns neighborhood Traffic and Streets. *We need a new Board member to take on that specific job.* While ad hoc volunteers have recently been influential within the community, working with City staff, for example, to create signage enhancing visibility at Whitsell and Matadero and settling safety issues at the Matadero-Bike Path-Laguna intersection, new issues on Los Robles Avenue and in Green Acres II deserve our attention.

It's not a big chore, but an important one. You're in for lots of personal satisfaction, neighborhood improvement, and community interaction fun. Please contact Peter K. Mueller (pklausm@me.com), Richard Elder (president@bpapaloalto.org), or Myrna Rochester (mrbpa@sonic.net), and attend an upcoming BPA Board Meeting (meets every third Tuesday evening). Thanks in advance!

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West Winds Blowing: Outdoor Movie Night and End-of-Summer Party

By Jon Affeld

- Chimney sweeps and Yoga stretches
- Pink panthers and putting greens
- Donkeys and mechanical dunk shots
- Kites and kitchen trucks

What a great way to end the summer! A dark starlit sky, a warm summer evening, a bright screen with big sounds, the smell of the earth and fresh popcorn, surrounded by scores of friends, families, and neighbors, all laughing and having a good time.

The Barron Park community came together on Saturday, August 26, 2017, to celebrate the end of the season with our annual outdoor Movie Night in Bol Park. Sponsored by the Barron Park Association and generously supported by the City of Palo Alto, neighborhood volunteers, and local establishments, several hundred people attended the event which ran from 6:00 to well past 10:30 that evening.

Walt Disney's Academy-Award-winning *Mary Poppins* was the main feature. It was projected on a 20-foot-high screen with a glorious backdrop of surrounding natural beauty. Despite a meandering plot line, the movie is carried pleasantly along by superb character performances, innovative (especially for the time period) special effects, spectacular songs, and tides of sheer delightfulness. It did so well when it was released that it enabled Disney to open Disneyworld in Florida and is consistently listed as one of the greatest films of all time. Our screening was preceded by a compilation of *Pink Panther* animated cartoons. The original cool cat, Pink Panther wanders unfazed through a series of ironic and ridiculous situations, often stalked by an incompetent police inspector who never gives up but also never learns his lesson.

In addition, before the movie, we enjoyed a variety of fun activities for both kids and adults. An instructor from Blossom Birth led us through a Yoga stretch, demonstrating that anyone can benefit from these mental and physical techniques—as well as reminding us that Blossom Birth has expanded community classes at their facility, on Barron Avenue near El Camino: <http://www.blossombirth.org>

The Gunn Robotics Team (GRT) brought two tables of technology to the park, along with a large, competition-winning robot. The Michael Jordan of machines, it im-

pressed audiences with its abilities to catch and shoot basketballs. The members of the GRT impressed everyone with their poise, technical knowledge, and enthusiasm. Creating competition robots is expensive. It can cost the team up to \$60,000 a year for parts and materials. Thus, they are always looking for additional sponsors to donate time and funding: <http://www.gunnrobotics.com>

The Barron Park Donkeys, Perry and Jenny, also stopped by to say hello and to remind the community about the unique history and traditions of Bol Park. A donkey pasture, a railroad company, a neighborhood, and the City came together to create something special. Their legacy is ours to enjoy and also to maintain. Please consider donating to their care: <http://www.barronparkdonkeys.org/home.html>

For the kids, there was also an area filled with fun games and activities, including hula-hoops, a bean-bag toss, and our own miniature golf course built by local residents. Rather than keeping track of the number of strokes, the fun is really measured by the number of crazy and unexpected bounces the golf balls take as they

make their way through the obstacles.

Watching the kids playing, running through the park from place to place, and trailing kites behind them like fluttering butterflies brings a sense of joy, freedom, pride, and connectedness to our community. The vision and spirit of Cornelis Bol and the donkey pasture lives on among us and is passed on through our shared experiences.

For those who built up an appetite, the Mamacitas food truck provided relief with some of the tastiest tacos in town. Big portions and traditional flavors kept the energy going during an action-packed evening: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Mamacitas-Tacos/635882856497637>

The Movie Night and end-of-summer party brought together all the great things our community has to offer. "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" is one of the more popular songs and themes from *Mary Poppins*. This fun nonsense word means "extraordinarily good" or simply "wonderful." Perhaps it is also a fitting description of the Barron Park neighborhood and our community.

Donkey Dung for Your Garden—Fall Fundraiser!



"Jen and Perry's" brand dried manure fertilizer. Get yours today!

Not only are donkeys great for the spirit, they can help you to grow beautiful flowers and bountiful vegetables. The Barron Park Donkey Project is offering dried manure from Perry and Jenny to add to your Fall / Winter compost and enhance your Spring and Summer harvest. Equine manure is an excellent plant fertilizer, best used when it has been composted—as fresh manure can burn plants

because of high nitrogen content. Composting can reduce the risk of seeds that may pass through the donkeys or be added during field pick-up. The "product" that we are offering has been pasture-dried, some as long as ten months, and is free of non-natural additives, as the donkeys eat a diet primarily of grass.

Please contact Jenny Kiratli for information or to reserve your bag(s) now: [jkiratli at yahoo dot com](mailto:jkiratli@yahoo.com)

If needed, we can deliver to your door!

Reference: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/composting/manures/horse-manure-compost.htm>

In addition to purchasing fertilizer, we all can (and should) support our donkeys' ongoing maintenance with cash donations, either:

- 1) online at www.barronparkdonkeys.org (PayPal)
- 2) online at www.acterra.org—Be sure to indicate "Donkey Project" in the Comment Section.
- 3) or send a check made out to Acterra-Donkey Fund, 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

All photos by Jon Affeld



Everyone enjoyed a Yoga class with a great teacher from Blossom Birth.



Jenny and her handler, Michael Holland, visited with movie-goers.



A food truck from Mamacitas Tacos provided delicious sustenance.



An exciting demo from the Gunn H.S. Robotics team. What else can it do?



Waiting for sunset and the start of the screening.



OUR WILD NEIGHBORS: THE OPOSSUM

By Jeralyn Moran

Origins

Take your pick: in America we may say either “opossum” or “possum.” Native Americans (Proto-Algonquin) called this animal an “opassum” which to them meant “white” + “dog” or “beast.” This describes the whitish, conical face, and white/gray body fur, seen especially at night when they are most active. Opossums came here from South America, with a flexible diet, a strong immune system, and the adaptability to survive in many locations and conditions, including where humans live. The opossum we share Barron Park (and other Western areas) with is called the “Virginia opossum.” It was intentionally introduced into the West by people from farther East during the Great Depression (starting in 1929), probably as a source of food.



Adult opossum. Photo: <http://www.wildliferescuerehab.com>

FUN FACTS

- The opossum has been around since the time of the dinosaurs.
- These mammals are not fast runners, but can climb AND swim.
- The generic name (*Didelphis*) is derived from Ancient Greek: di, “two,” and delphus, “womb.” The female adult really does have two wombs, perhaps an evolutionary advantage because she may have up to 13 babies at a time!
- The American opossum has 50 teeth—more than any other North American mammal!
- They rarely transmit diseases to humans, and are surprisingly resistant to rabies and snake bites (even the rattlesnake), most likely because they have lower body temperatures than most placental mammals and a relatively strong immune system.
- The hind feet have an opposable digit (like a thumb) with no claw. This useful rear foot anatomy allows the opossum to grab and hold branches as we do with our human hands.

Description

When we hear the word “marsupial” (mammals whose babies are born as embryos and are carried and suckled by Mom in a pouch outside her belly), we typically conjure up an Australian kangaroo. But the American or “Virginia” opossum is also a marsupial, about the size of a house cat in adulthood, with a rat-like tail. They are surprisingly short-lived given their size, only about two years in the wild.

Diet, Habitat, and Behavior

Opossums are omnivorous, meaning they eat many different plants and animals: fruits, grains, insects, snails, earthworms, snakes, mice, other small animals, as well as carrion. You might be lucky enough to see one eating, using his/her front paws like we might use our hands when we eat ‘finger foods.’ They will scavenge for pet food or garbage you happen to leave around. Wooded areas are their first choice for a home, but with the ongoing human takeover of habitats, this normally shy animal will make do among us. They are remarkably adaptable!

Considered nocturnal, opossums roam mainly at night. They look for a dark, secluded place to sleep during the day-time, either below ground or above—in a

burrow, a hollow log, a building, actually almost anywhere.

They have a keen sense of smell. Usually solitary and nomadic, they stay in one area as long as food and water are easily available. However, while resting during the day, some possum families will group together in readymade burrows or even under houses. Although they will temporarily occupy abandoned burrows, they don’t dig or put much effort into building their own (a clue here is how they have evolved—with fairly small, fleshy feet and small



Mom carries her babies (anywhere from one to about 13!). Photo: <http://www.wild-life-rehab.com>



An opossum's hind foot. Photo: <http://opossumsocietyus.org>

claws). They don't hibernate, although they may remain sheltered when it's particularly cold. They are good climbers!

Babies are born at the embryonic stage—very tiny and seemingly helpless. Yet they can sense gravity neurologically and have the ability to crawl upward from the birth canal to the pouch without help from Mom. In their Mom's safe pouch they continue to grow. When the youngsters are four or five inches long (tail not included), they start leaving the pouch to ride on their Mom's back. They will cling tightly even when she's climbing or running. When they have reached seven to eight inches long, they leave Mom to make their own way in the world.

The Virginia opossum is known for reacting to threats by feigning death. This behavior is how the term "playing possum" got started, which means pretending to be dead or injured, with the intent to trick

whoever/whatever is threatening them. This reaction seems to be involuntary and triggered by extreme fear. If an opossum is a little scared, it may respond ferociously by hissing, screeching, and showing its teeth. But if it feels really threatened, it will enter a near coma. It lies on its side, mouth and eyes open, tongue hanging out, emitting a green fluid from its anus whose putrid odor repels predators. Its heart rate

drops by half, and its breathing rate is slowed by about 30 per cent. Brain activity stays the same, however, and he/she is fully conscious. Death feigning normally stops when the threat goes away, but this behavior can last up to six hours. Besides discouraging animals that eat live prey, "playing possum" also serves to convince some large animals that the opossum is no threat to their young.

A New Year at Barron Park Elementary School

By Jim Godfrey

School has kicked off in style at Barron Park Elementary with a fashionable new logo for the school and a new video showcasing the amazing teachers and wider school community. In the video—available on the school's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BarronParkElementarySchool> and also on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VD0n-XOI-rk>—parents and students rave about the dedication of the teachers in supporting every child in their learning needs and going that extra mile to help the school succeed. Teachers praised the inclusive environment and the support of parents



**Barron Park
Elementary School**

and the community as being key to the school's unique "family atmosphere." With 260 students, Barron Park may be one of the smallest schools in the district—but it has the biggest heart!

The school itself has had a makeover with some beautiful new murals completed and a new interactive rock garden outside the 4th and 5th grade classrooms. Plans for this school year include the continued development of the BPES working gardens to provide an ample source of learning activities, including planting fruits and vegetables, and a proposed new digital billboard at the front of the school.



Mural artist: Ivy S., Gunn alum and daughter of BPES 4th grade teacher, Sylvia S.

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: BPAlalto.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.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MY HAIR

By Janet Negley, Maybell Way Writers Collective

My first memory about my hair has much less to do with a particular hairstyle than with the distinct smell of a Toni permanent, done at home, around age four, by my mother who favored straight bangs and a curly two-inch swath of pin curled fringe around the bottom of my hair. It required quite a long time of sitting on the stool, although I don't remember having an opinion about how it looked. My mother stuck with this hairstyle for me, occasionally making a double row of pin curls before church or a photo until about age nine when I insisted on having a real haircut, a pixie. All the pictures of me holding my brother as a baby, ten years younger than me, show a smiling brown-haired young girl, cute, with short and layered hair framing my increasingly narrow face as I moved from my baby fat years into a gawky and gangly preteen. Then, approaching the tween years, I became determined to grow my hair out, going through one particularly horrible stage where my bangs weren't long enough to stay to the side but covered my eyes if left straight down. There I am, about 12, bare midriff, short jeans, hip stuck out to the right, staring down the camera through hair draped across one eye.

In junior high, the flip became the hairstyle to try and I assiduously rolled my hair each night with prickly curlers, sleeping with the pillow just so, to protect my ears and head. In the morning, having removed the pink plastic roller picks and pulled out the rollers, I shuddered to see if my hairs all made the correct flipped curl. On one particular morning, early in the flip stage, on one side the front of my hair stuck out at an odd angle. It seemed to me that I had a huge ten-foot red sign above my head pointing to the failed hairstyle, and I begged to stay home. My mother prevailed and so, off to school and the anticipated smirking looks I went. In lunch line, standing in front of Dianne Saperstein, I was shocked to feel her running her hands through the curve of the flip at the back of my head as she commented how shiny and pretty my hair was. She didn't notice or care about the failed front, a moment of warmth and kindness staying in my memory throughout my life.

After one more haircut to a just-past-the-ears page boy, and still styling with nightly rollers, I entered high school. The next years saw little shortening of the length of my hair as the long, straight, middle-parted hair from the 60s took hold in the heartland. I refused to get any haircuts for a long time, which, after summers in the sun and year-round exposure to chlorine in my competitive diving years, thinned the ends of my hair out to wispy, brassy, sun-streaked strings, further lightened by daily doses of "Sun In," "guaranteed" to bring out the blond in an otherwise brunette head.

In high school, I tried the small orange juice cans to rid my hair of the few waves ruining the completely straight look, but the longer it grew, the straighter it became. Bad hair days became a thing of the past, as long hair could always be pulled back into a ponytail. By the time I graduated, my hair was long, shiny, and straight, parted in the middle and held back by my shoulders most of the time. Colored, patterned, and flowered hair scarves became a fashion trend, so dirty hair could be easily hidden, a bonus in those busy nonstop years.

Not much changed in college in terms of my hair. Long, uncut, occasionally trimmed, occasionally pulled back in a ponytail, I kept with the times, looking like a female folk singer.

One of the greater mistakes of my life involved my hair during a stint as a psychology teacher-slash-wilderness instructor at Phillips Andover academy, between sophomore and junior year. I taught psychology to the summer high school students and an elective course on rock climbing, including rappelling from the school clock tower and, on an all-day field trip, rappelling down an 80-foot sheer granite wall in a nearby state park. After safety-checking each kid at the top of the wall, tucking their hair in their collars, and clicking their safety lines in place, I failed to safety-check myself and took off, bouncing freely down the wall. Flying up, in one large bounce off the granite wall, the end of my long braid perfectly lined up with the rope, snaking through the carabiner and, in a second,

wound into the descending mechanism. I noticed quickly and yanked the break rope up to stop my fall, but not before my braid was caught, preventing any movement up or down the main line. Fellow climbers, hearing my screams, tried to pull the lead line up, but I couldn't free my hair. I was hanging, head pulled toward my knees, from a sheer granite face.

Eventually, another climber got the brilliant idea to lower a new rope with a knife attached and after several tries, flung it to my free hand. I sawed my ponytail off, freeing my head and allowing me to rappel down to the ground. Later, the wife of the jazz instructor volunteered to trim my hair to the shortest length, but I couldn't do it. I lived with a chunk out of the back of my head for many months before I could stomach cutting it all off to match the shortened section. By the time I graduated, the pictures show the same long brown hair, so it must have grown quickly.

In my twenties, my hair was not an issue. I kept it long, sometimes worn up, usually down and straight, but I moved my part to the side. I developed quick methods for dealing with my hair, often washing it at night and then putting it in a bun so I could blow dry it in the morning. Other nights, I would make a high ponytail, wind the ends into a scarf and tie it off, soft, no curlers, but I woke with a cascade of curls. If all else failed, I pulled a ponytail on the top of my head, clipped four hot rollers around the ends, and jumped into the car, oatmeal in hand, for my morning commute. Breakfast, make-up, and then, a few blocks from arrival, I pulled out the rollers, shook out my hair, and was ready for work.

Much of the 80s fell in my thirties, a particularly bad decade for hair. The perm came back with a vengeance, and I fell prey to mid-length, wavy, mostly frizzy hair, washed and left to dry with a quick scrunch of the fingers. My hair has some natural wave and so it took a few stylists before I found one who believed me when I said, shorten the processing time. By the end of that decade, I was ready for a change. Swinging from curly and frizzy to a desire for the new smooth bob,

I got hooked up with "Jack" by my tennis partner who insisted he was the best in the area for this kind of cut. Jack was quite a character, a high-society player with many interesting stories. A one-sided conversationalist, he became one of my longer-term associates anyway, as I followed him from city to city for over 15 years. Finally, after one too many of his four-month breaks playing polo in Brazil, I found CJ, a colorist who works close to my home and is generous with conversation and a good listener.

Although I started with a short bob with Jack, after which my husband said I looked like my eccentric Midwestern Aunt Helen (not a compliment), I gradually went longer and longer, and by the time we adopted our first child, Gavin, I was back to long straight hair, parted on the side, but now with the left side pulled up in a barrette. As is the custom in open adoptions, our birth mother chose us to interview out of hundreds of files provided to her from our adoption lawyer. We talked on the phone and then planned to meet at the San Francisco Hilton. At the appointed hour, we walked through the elegant lobby, looking for a young pregnant girl. I immediately saw our pregnant interviewer and walked straight for her, a beautiful, long-haired brunette, one side of her hair pulled up in a barrette, mirroring my hairstyle exactly. There was an instant connection. As it turns out, she has extraordinary hair, adorable at any length and able to grow at a remarkable rate. My son has her hair and after wearing it unfashionably down to his elbows for years, has finally cut it short.

Somewhere around 40, my focus on hair shifted from the cut to the color. I developed a lovely faint gray streak on one temple in my late thirties, having inherited the hair of my mother and her father. In most lights, the streak looked like an expensive highlighting job, tinted yellow by numerous hours playing tennis in the sun. Gradually, though, gray sprinkled throughout my head. The trajectory was steep. Four years after Gavin, we adopted Mikaela, securing my spot as "oldest mother" in our local grade school. Having kids later in life has been a blessing in most ways, but the look of gray hair has not been a match to my numerous mommy friends who are ten to twenty years younger than me. I promised myself that I would color my hair until Mikaela went to middle school, at which time I would go gray and look my age. Mikaela entered high school

three years ago, and I am still not there: my hair color is no longer about how the kids and their parents will perceive me, but how I perceive myself. So now, I spend my hair budget on the best colorist in the area, touching up roots in between visits. I am somehow surprised every month when the hair grows out gray, requiring a little attention. I just don't feel gray yet. I no longer worry about the cut, having found a consistent and cheap Super Cuts gal who does a good enough job. Occasionally, though, I wonder if I should pay the big bucks to get a haircut with some distinction, but I just don't care. Last summer, after returning from a particularly relaxing family camp, punctuated by numerous inspiring conversations, I had the sudden urge to weave a blue streak through my hair, bright colors being all the current rage. I remembered that last week. Maybe time to tell my colorist.

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

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

■ To join the **BPA Services List**, or to find a service, write to: *barronpark dot paloalto at gmail dot com*

■ You will also find a link to the **BPA Services List** on our BPA Website at *http://bpapaloalto.org/2017/09/01/barron-park-area-service-list-september-2017*

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■ 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

BIKE PALO ALTO!

By David Coale

Come explore bike-friendly routes around town and find bicycling resources at Bike Palo Alto, Sunday afternoon, October 1—a FREE event!

Start by signing in at El Carmelo Elementary School (Bryant and Loma Verde), October 1, from 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. Choose among three marked routes with shorter and longer options—or ride them all! Get maps, route and safety guidance, helmet fitting, and a pre-ride bike check. There will be giveaways!

Then go for a ride! You'll discover great ways to get to City parks, libraries, shopping or school in Palo Alto and connect safely to neighboring cities. Treat stations along the bike routes will stay open until 4:00 p.m.

Inside tips: Bring a small backpack and a

water bottle. Save time the day of event by preregistering at *bikepaloalto.org*

Bike Palo Alto has been hosted by Palo Alto bike enthusiasts since 2010, to encourage more people to bike more often, safely and confidently. It also serves as a kickoff for Walk and Roll events in the PAUSD schools the first week of October.

Volunteers always needed

Bike Palo Alto is a fresh-air, green event and runs on 100% volunteer power. We'd love your help for three hours on October 1 at El Carmelo School, at a treat stop, or posting street signs for two hours on September 23-25. Sign up on the event page above or email Robert Neff for more information: *bpa2017 at neffs dot net*. Don't forget to keep it in mind for 2018!



FIFTY YEARS ON THE BLOCK

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian



L. to R., Patrick Muffler, Pat Muffler, Tisa Walker, Ed Walker, Pat Sanders, Tom Sanders. August 2017. Photo: Shirley Finrock

A Golden Anniversary

On July 16, 2017, about 20 guests joined three anniversary couples to celebrate completion of their fiftieth year as neighbors on their Barron Park block. It was a golden California summer evening, and life on the deck in the garden by the hot tub was good. “Potluck” contributions by each of the three couples could have passed for gourmet catering. Pat and Patrick Muffler were the hosts. The Mufflers and Tisa and Ed Walker live on Ilima Way, and Pat and Tom Sanders on McGregor Way. Other Ilima Way guests with longevities on the block ranging from two years up to Iris Chen’s 51 rounded out the party.

The Sanderses had moved into their house in January 1967, the Mufflers in July, and the Walkers in August. Then the friendships ripened for a half-century. The couples had children who played together, went to the same schools, and grew up on the block. The children have since moved away, but frequently return to visit their parents and renew their own friendships on the block and more widely in Barron Park.

McGregor Glen

Ilima Way is only one block long. It runs off Laguna Avenue, parallel to Paradise Way, with McGregor Way connecting Paradise and Ilima to make a “U” that, in effect, is a large cul-de-sac. McGregor Glen was a development built by Doug Couch in 1960-62 on what had been two large properties: (1) Colonel Duggan’s lot, a strip of about 3½ acres running west from

Laguna Avenue between Matadero Creek and a line approximately at the south edge of today’s Ilima Way, and (2) John Babick’s strip, about 2½ acres, paralleling Duggan’s. Duggan’s was a hay field, mowed occasionally by the Cornelius Bol family from across the creek. Babick’s was planted to pear trees and was picked commercially.

Duggan’s house facing Laguna Avenue has been extensively redesigned and now has an Ilima Way address. Babick’s house was removed and replaced by a two-story house with a Laguna address. McGregor Glen included 19 properties on Ilima Way and four with McGregor Way addresses (including the Sanders’s house). This story covers these 23 houses, plus the rebuilt former Duggan residence, for a total of 24.

Who Lived Here in 1967?

When the anniversary couples moved into their houses in 1967, Ilima Way was still populated mostly by the original owners, who had bought their houses soon after they were built in 1960, 1961, and 1962. None of the original owners remain here in 2017. However, two owners who moved in prior to the six who celebrated on July 16 were living here in 1967 and are still here today: Iris Chen and Millie Robinson (who was 100 years old in 2017). Also, Mrs. Duggan was already living here in 1967, as well as Nick and Sally Babick, who have been in their house since Nick built it on his dad’s property in 1955.

Children and Neighborliness

Twenty-one of the 24 homeowners on the block had children living with them in the

late 1960s, and the sound of children playing in the street was probably the dominant characteristic of the neighborhood. Pat Sanders pointed out that the anniversary couples brought five children into the neighborhood: Bry and Tal Sanders, Hal and Lauren Walker, and Kasey Muffler. They all grew up on the block. Everyone’s kids were watched over by the neighbors; everybody looked out for them. Kids and parents knew each other. Almost everyone spent more time outside than people do now—because of the kids, and because everyone was doing their own gardening. Do-it-yourself (DIY) was the governing mode in home improvements, partly because the new homeowners were trying to save money and had none for contractors. Neighbors frequently borrowed tools back and forth. Kids were eager to get paid for doing jobs, such as babysitting, lawn-mowing, and leaf-raking.

Neighbors Julie Schreiner and Bea Piggott were leaders in fostering neighborliness. Julie and at least one other resident worked with County staff to get street trees planted on the block. Pat Sanders said they chose camphor trees (that we still have) partly to avoid major leaf drops and to emulate the City of Palo Alto (in 1967, Barron Park was still almost ten years away from joining the City), which was planting them widely in South Palo Alto. Julie and Bea also organized welcoming parties for new residents and may have been the originators of the “block list” in map format, with names (including children) and phone numbers for each house. The earliest one we have a copy of was dated June 1967. The block diagram was later maintained for many years by Pat Sanders. It has now become a solid tradition and is currently maintained by Sky Runser.

The Flag Was Up

Pat Sanders remembered that the Brooks family next door had a swimming pool, and liked to share it with the neighborhood kids. When John Brooks put up a flag, all the kids would know the pool was “open.”

Block Parties, Wine, and Fireworks

Fourth of July was celebrated with a block party in the street, complete with fireworks. “Fountains” and similar fireworks



Tom and Pat Sanders. Late 1960s. Courtesy of the Sanders family

would be set off on ladders (for visibility), and the kids had sparklers. The Bicentennial Fourth in 1976 was the first where residents weren't allowed to have fireworks in the street. Less formal occasions included "The Four 4-O'Clock Jug" (of wine) that Gay Stafford and other hostesses would set up in their front yards. Neighbor women attended on a drop-in basis, some arriving after work. Everyone had a lawn to sit on. Pat Sanders remembered that "When newcomers moved in, someone threw a coffee."

The Sanderses Arrive

In March 1967, Tom Sanders, a physicist, and Pat Sanders, a teacher, were the first of the three couples to arrive on the block. They moved from a rented house in the Los Trancos Woods area of Portola Valley. Pat remembered that their McGregor Way house "was going to be the five-year house, before moving up, perhaps to Los Altos Hills." They chose McGregor Glen for the school system (Barron Park Elementary, Wilbur or Terman Junior High, and Gunn High). All five of the anniversary couples' children graduated from Gunn.

A major draw for Tom Sanders was proximity to work—he could (and did) ride his bike to Lockheed, where he worked for 34 years. In the day, Barron Park as a neighborhood was not especially appealing, but at least you had a Palo Alto address, so that made it alright. In McGregor Glen, the sidewalks were a draw. So was the "no-through-traffic" aspect. Tom liked having

the donkeys, the other farm animals, and the creek nearby.

The Sanders's lot was interesting, as it was pie-shaped and came almost to a point at the street. It backed onto the creek and the donkey pasture (now Bol Park). The rural aspects appealed a lot to Tom, who had grown up on a big property with a stream that ran in the winter, and where his family had horses.

The First Few Years

Tom and Pat Sanders were busy fixing up their house. With several major projects, they eventually changed everything. They also became involved in community affairs. Tom helped build both of the original play structures at Bol Park and at Barron Park Elementary School. Pat and Tom supported the Palo Alto annexation movement led by Dick Placone and the Barron Park Association. Pat remembers one public meeting where a Barron Park resident was asked to explain why he didn't want to join the City. He said, "My father and grandfather didn't want to go into the City and neither do I." The questioner asked, "Well, yes, but WHY?" The resident answered, "My father and grandfather didn't want to go into the City and neither do I!"

The Mufflers Arrive

On July 1, 1967, Pat and Patrick Muffler moved into their Ilima Way house. Patrick Muffler was a geologist at the USGS and Pat Muffler did financial setups for Silicon Valley startup companies. They moved from an apartment on O'Keefe Street, in a wedge-shaped sliver of East Palo Alto west of 101. Like the Sanderses, this was the first house the Mufflers ever bought. Pat Muffler said she looked in many neighborhoods in Palo Alto and Menlo Park for the right house. Perhaps her realtor was Professor Harold Hill, for she "considered 76 houses, looking for the one that clicked." A good friend bought a house nearby on Paradise Way, just before Pat spotted an open house ad for the Ilima Way place. Patrick was doing geological field work in Yellowstone National Park at the time. Pat Muffler knew a good thing

when she saw it and bid on the house. The deal was made for \$33,500 before Patrick ever saw the house. They had been paying \$150 a month for their apartment, and the house payments were \$156. Pat said she thought their budget could handle another \$6 per month with no trouble. They, like the Sanderses, thought of it as a starter house: their plan was to trade up in three or four years.

"Rustic Barron Park"

Pat Muffler liked Barron Park's rustic ambience, but was especially delighted with Ilima Way's sidewalks: "They were a plus," she said. The street looked private, with no traffic. The block had street trees, still very young. The power lines looked bad (they still do). The social possibilities looked good: Bea Piggott, her next-door neighbor, held a party, inviting the neighborhood women to welcome her and Tisa Walker, who was also just moving in. Pat was impressed that "everyone knew each other." She was glad there were others who didn't yet have children.

"How Can I Make the House Mine?"

Pat Muffler started with "the horrible red carpet," which she got rid of immediately. Then she and Patrick began replacing paint and wallpaper and fixing things up until "nothing was left that was original." Twenty years later they installed a hot tub in the backyard, which has been in almost daily use for 30 years.

"Getting into the Neighborhood Mode"

Apparently it didn't take too long for the newcomers to get into the "Ilima Way mode" (that is, having babies): Pat and

Mort No. 1649H		HOME LISTING 2-28-67		UP DN	
Location 1004 McGregor Way		City Palo Alto		3 Bdrms	
Occupant		Ph 326-4700		2 Baths	
Owner sole owner		Ph 383-3475		2 Showers	
Listing Off LEDFORD REALTY		Ph 326-7270		1 Fire Pl	
Listing Slsm		Res Ph 326-8248		fam. Brk Rm	
Shown Phone first or L/B		Lok Box <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		kitchen Din Rm	
Poss Date To be arranged		Key Location		yes Fam Rm	
Taxes 833, Assmnt no		Vet Ex no Ex 041367		garage Ser Rm	
Existing Loan 27,000 mol		% Int 6 Mo, Pmt 175 T & I Incl no		no Den	
Loan Held By Bank of America		Cash to loan; second D of T considered		no Basement	
Sales Terms		none		F/A Heat	
Loan Com'ts		carpets and draperies		hdwd Floors	
Price Incl's		shake Roof		shake Kitchen	
Reason for Selling		AEK		2 c at Garage	
Remarks Many extra features. No paint exterior. Insulated.		Large bedrooms. Dressing room. Inter-com. Built-in vacuum.		ranch Style	
Ideal neighborhood. 220 for dryer.		wood Ext		Years Age	
Pool no Size X Heated		Patio yes Lot Size Fan shaped		Price	
SCHOOLS Elem Barron Jr Hi Terman Hi Gunn		CROSS St Laguna		35,950	
Location 1004 McGregor		City Palo Alto		3 Bdrms 2 Baths F/R D/R 1 FK	

Home Listing for the Sanders's house on McGregor Way. February 1967. Courtesy of the Sanders family



Tisa and Ed Walker. February 1969. Courtesy of the Walker family

Tom Sanders's son was born in 1968, and both Tisa Walker and Pat Muffler were pregnant by 1970. There may have been other influences at work too, because the Mufflers spent 1970 in New Zealand (in case you haven't already guessed, Patrick is a volcanologist).

144 Boxes of Cheerios??

In the early 1970s, Pat Sanders organized a grocery-buying co-op on our block. The Sanderses, the Mufflers, and the Walkers were members (full disclosure requires me to mention that my wife Verna and I were also members). But many McGregor Glen neighbors shopped at the Co-op Market at San Antonio Shopping Center, which provided free child care for its customers. (The neighbors often took groups of kids from the block along, giving other families some child-free time.) With this background, it was natural to have the Sanders Buying Club deal with the Co-op Market. The most vivid memory Pat Muffler has of the buying club was receiving her order for "a case" of Cheerios. Pat had envisioned this as being a dozen boxes, which she thought would be sufficient for the three-person-one-kid Muffler family. However, to the Co-op, "one case" meant a pallet containing a gross (that is, 12 dozen). Pat does not have a clear memory of exactly how she disposed of them, but she remembers begging several neighbors to take some.

Earthquake Parties

Fast-forward ahead about two decades to October 1989 and the Loma Prieta earthquake. It shook up Barron Park, but luckily caused only minor damage. Pat Muffler was at home when it hit, and the thing she remembers most vividly is the sense of community togetherness, when everyone came out to greet each other in the street, check up on elderly neighbors, and offer

help to anyone who looked anxious or confused. One neighbor, Hanna Kapitulnik, brought out a battery-powered black-and-white TV and set it up on the sidewalk so that we could watch the news. People kept showing up at the Walkers' house to make sure Tisa and Lauren were O.K. So Tisa started feeding the visitors, and it turned into a come-as-you-are, spur-of-the-moment potluck supper.

The Walkers Arrive

Last in of the three anniversary couples were Ed and Tisa Walker, who bought their Ilima Way house in July and moved in during August 1967. They had become interested in Barron Park through a friend who lived on Los Robles Avenue, and Ed also played ball with a local realtor. They negotiated a sale directly with the owner and paid the asking price, which was \$35,000.

The Walkers had also looked at the neighboring house. It had four bedrooms, but was no bigger, which made the bedrooms too small. Tisa liked the layout and size of the bedrooms in the house they bought. Other important features were the "galley kitchen" (they weren't quite as fond of the 1950s-pink tile, the oven, or the dishwasher) and the indoor laundry, which they ended up using as a mud room. She also liked the cupboards finished in Philippine mahogany. They had no blueprints for the house, but later contacted Doug Couch's son. He told Ed that Doug Couch had built the houses strong enough to support a second floor.

Tisa and Ed had also looked at houses in other Palo Alto neighborhoods, includ-

ing one place on Guinda Avenue with a sauna and also an Eichler on Ross Road. Tisa liked the open plan of the Eichler, but was somewhat taken aback when a friend asked her "was it a three-minute or a five-minute Eichler?" (referring to a widely-circulated urban myth concerning the speed with which Eichlers burned to the ground).

When the Walkers moved in, it was the first time Tisa had ever lived in a house. When she was growing up in St. Louis, Missouri, with summers in Taos, New Mexico, Tisa's parents had apartments. Tisa also had an apartment when she went to Stanford, where she met Ed (and married him in her senior year). After earning an MA in Anthropology in 1966, she got a teaching job at Foothill College. Ed went to work as an engineer at Hewlett Packard "on the hill." He too rode his bike to work.

Evaluation of the Neighborhood

Tisa Walker found Barron Park "unexpectedly rural." The rural aspects appealed to both Tisa and Ed, whose grandparents had had a farm. Tisa particularly remembered the donkeys in the pasture coming down to the fence along Laguna Avenue to be petted by the neighborhood children. There was a path across the creek, dug down into the banks. On the Ilima Way side the path came up from the creek along a utilities easement between the Walkers' lot and that of the neighbor to the west. One of the neighborhood teenagers had permission from the Bol family to occasionally borrow one of the donkeys—Mickey—and bring him on this path over to Ilima Way for the kids to play with.

Ed Walker said that he wasn't sure if he



Ed and Tisa Walker's house on Ilima Way. October 1968. Courtesy of the Walker family

and Tisa even knew that Barron Park wasn't part of Palo Alto, but was under County jurisdiction. They liked the sidewalks on their block and were intrigued by the creek. Barron Park was cheaper than comparable neighborhoods in Palo Alto. At first they didn't know anyone on Ilima Way, but it looked like a nice place to live, and the houses seemed well built and maintained. He and Tisa, having lived at Stanford or in Palo Alto for about eight years, were already familiar with Barron Park's El Camino strip, especially the restaurants. Favorites included Horky's on El Camino Way (it later became the Prime Rib), Rudolfo's at Los Robles, L'Omelette (where Walgreen's is now), Ming's (at Vista), the Iron Works, and The Plantation (at San Antonio Road).

Ilima Way in '67

The camphor trees were nice, but small (having just been planted in 1963-64). The Fourth of July party showed the block's sociability: it was attended by nearly everyone, from the DeJeongs at one end to the Sanderses at the other. The neighbors all had kids of about the same age (including teenage babysitters). There were 15 to 20 kids under 16 on the street; they could and did drop into any house where they knew somebody. No one worried about traffic. Holly Piggott and Martha Burford both babysat for the Walkers' son Hal. Within the first few years, the Walkers became friends with the Sanderses, Iris Chen, Honey Howe, the Mackeys next door, and, of course, the Mufflers across the street.

Changes since 1967

Tisa Walker reminisced about the changes that have happened on the block since 1967. She said the trees were a big change. The feeling was much more open and sunny when they were small; now they overhang the street and (to some extent) hide the wires. Although the block has seen many renovations and additions to the houses, especially going up (second stories) and at the front (toward the street) there has been only one tear-down. Patrick Muffler pointed out that we've all replaced our shake or shingle roofs with more fire-resistant materials. The front yards are being converted, one by one, to native and drought-resistant plantings (all the front yards were lawns in 1967). The asphalt or concrete driveways are gradually being widened and replaced with pavers. Today there is much more turnover. In 1967, the houses were all owner-occupied. Now several are rentals.

Changes in Barron Park

Ed Walker felt that one of the big changes in the wider neighborhood was the creation of Bol Park. Its existence and the fact that the neighborhood had created it had a major impact on most residents. The work done by the Water District on Matadero Creek, to minimize bank erosion and stop the down-cutting of the creek bed, was very positive. The underground bypass channel has saved the neighborhood from much erosion and possible floods. Another positive change has been the development of the bike and walking paths in the area. But traffic on collector streets in Barron Park is much more intense today (we have at least doubled the number of resident drivers).

What a COOL Block!

Not necessarily related to the history above, but involving the same people and aiming for similar results, is the "Cool Block" program, launched in 2017. Sponsored locally by Palo Alto, Cool Block is a world-wide effort to "reinvent cities from the bottom up in the age of climate change." Our neighbor Hilary Glann, a volunteer Cool Block Leader, recruited most of the Ilima Way neighbors to join the effort. We were selected to be one of the "Beta test" blocks in Palo Alto. From January to June of this year, these groups successfully ran through an intensive program, although they did encounter a number of problems. A second "Beta test" is currently being planned.

We met about ten times, rotating the meeting leadership and hosting. Twelve families were represented, and about 20 people participated. Topics included lifestyle actions (reducing household waste, using less hot water, etc.), making your home and car more efficient, creating sustainable landscaping, creating a disaster-resistant household and block, and in general, creating a better life on the street where you live.

Besides these familiar actions by individuals, we discussed how to create a more cohesive social group (how to get to know each other better, engage in cooperative actions, etc.). Much of this was already very familiar to our three anniversary couples, as the McGregor Glen of the 1960s had many of these characteristics. We all realized that the people living here in the 1960s had already achieved many of the socialization goals of the Cool Block program.

But we now need to get there without the presence of all the kids, who once made it easier for the adults to get acquainted. What will be our substitute for kids?

Interested in Becoming a "Cool Block"?

If you are interested in starting a Cool Block program on your street, give Hilary Glann a call at 650-858-8328. Hilary says the City has just green-lighted its support for a second Beta test, and Hilary is assisting them in finding groups that want to get started. There are at least two in Barron Park already underway.

Special thanks to Jim Colton for creating the usable photographic images for this article.

New BPA Services List and Babysitter List

Lisa Berkowitz Landers,
BPA Membership Chair

The Barron Park Association has recently organized a Services List where Barron Park Association members/neighbors can offer their expertise and skills to local residents. Babysitters/childcare services will remain on a separate list which requires a password. Both the Services List and Babysitter List are posted on the BPA website: bpapaloalto.org

If you would like to offer a service, please email the following information to: barron-park-dot-paloalto-at-gmail-dot-com

- Service offered, for ex., Babysitter/Childcare, Computer expertise, Pet care, Tutor, Repairs, etc.
- Name (if under 18, include age and parent consent)
- Contact info: email/phone/text
- Brief description of service/skills/bio
- Fee / negotiable / exchange / volunteer
- Availability: days/hours

Reminder: Not sure if you are a current BPA member? To confirm membership status, just email: barronpark-dot-paloalto-at-gmail-dot-com

Our Barron Park Yards (OBPY)—Fall 2017

By Romola Georgia

Ornamentals That Benefit the Whole Garden

Autumn is the perfect season to set in new perennial plants in our Barron Park yards. The eagerly awaited fall rains will welcome the roots to the soil and help the plant get a good start. But why limit our palette to those fussy, thirsty, magazine-pretty plants better suited to Minnesota or Massachusetts? There are many benefits to choosing California Natives or Mediterranean plants that are well adapted to our unique summer-dry climate.

Beauty. Introducing California Natives and Mediterranean plants to the garden is a wonderful adventure in color, shape, and form. Within each plant type, there is great diversity. You can choose plants that are low-growing, bushy and spreading, or upright and tree-like. Beautiful color comes not only in flowers, but also in leaves that range from silver to the deepest green. Bark of a brilliant mahogany red can offer a stunning focal point. I particularly enjoy the various leaf textures—smooth and shiny or dark and deeply grooved. Some are perennial and some deciduous.

Aroma. Herbs and scented plants add a subtle pleasure to the garden. Good smells can encourage you to get out and do that cleanup or dead-heading chore or urge you to simply sit outside and enjoy the peacefulness.

Habitat for beneficial insects (including bees) and pollinators. The plight of the honeybee in our highly toxic outdoor environment is well publicized. But some gardeners have never seen the hundreds of other beneficial insects and pollinators that do important work in our gardens. You may be able to observe native bees, tiny non-stinging wasps, and many other beneficial insects if you stand near your flowering *Ceanothus* or *Rosemary* plant. I've been mesmerized for an entire morning at this joyous spectacle.

Ease. Many Native and Mediterranean plants are much less prone to disease or insect pests than the fussier introduced species.

Water-thrifty. Even with last season's abundant rain, California is always prone to drought. Any way to minimize water



***Ceanothus* (California Wild Lilac), espaliered on a fence. Photo by Shirley Finrock**

use in our Barron Park gardens is a good step forward. Once established, the plants mentioned here use very little, and in some cases, no water at all.

Some of my favorite California Native Plants for you to consider:

***Arctostaphylos* (Manzanita)** is attractive to bees, butterflies, and birds. Comes in many forms from prostrate mats to tree-like shrubs with smooth, reddish-brown bark, leathery leaves, and clusters of pale pink to white flowers in late winter or early spring. Over fifty species to choose from.

***Ceanothus* (California Wild Lilac)** is a spring-blooming evergreen shrub. Many forms from ground-huggers to tall, tree-like specimens. Tiny flowers range from pale to brilliant blue, lavender and white. Little to no summer water.

***Eriogonum* (Wild Buckwheat)** is a good wildlife plant, attractive to butterflies and bees. Flowers can be rosy red, bright yellow, or white and are good in dried arrangements.

***Mimulus aurantiacus* (Sticky Monkeyflower)** may be familiar to you from its roadside version which has an orangey-yellow flower. It is attractive to hummingbirds. Now landscape versions come in compact size and a variety of beautiful colors. Little to no water.

***Salvia* (Sage).** Choose one of the numerous drought-tolerant varieties, such as White sage, Cleveland sage, or Autumn sage.

Note that some of the nursery trade varieties require regular water.

Two Perennial Herbs to consider:

Lavender is a mounding shrub with green to silver-gray leaves and spikes of lavender or purple flowers. Wonderfully aromatic.

Rosemary can be prostrate, upright, or spreading. It has narrow, needlelike leaves and masses of tiny blue flowers. Attractive to butterflies and bees. A plus: You can use it in cooking and in your closets.

Bibliography

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Popper, Helen. *California Native Gardening: A Month-by-Month Guide* (University of California Press)

Plants and Landscapes for Summer-Dry Climates of the San Francisco Bay Region (East Bay Municipal Utility District)



***Eriogonum* (Wild Buckwheat). Photo by Shirley Finrock**

California Native Plant Society

Saturday, October 7, 2017

8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Evergreen Valley College, San Jose
Sequoia Lecture Hall

A CNPS Seminar on how to make your garden:

- Beautiful
- Water-wise
- Habitat-rich
- Low-maintenance

Register at: <https://goo.gl/VcfjHk>

ART IN THE PARK—TED FENG



I developed an interest in drawing at a young age in Shanghai. I still remember my first set of colored drawing pencils and draft paper. I began studying painting and drawing at Harding Studio in Shanghai after graduating high school. I then studied painting under the late Roy Kiyooka and sculpture under Orson Wheeler at Sir George Williams University (now Concordia) in Montreal. Both of my teachers were accomplished artists, and their works were collected at various esteemed art galleries and museums, including the Tate Gallery of London. I also taught art lessons myself in Hong Kong and Montreal. My artwork has been exhibited in Montreal and more recently in the Bay Area. I followed a career in educational technology and computer-related fields (hardware, software, and internet). After retiring from the tech sector,

I resumed painting, thus pursuing my lifelong passion.

I have lived and worked in Hong Kong, Montreal, Brussels, Honolulu, Beijing, and the California Bay Area. I have had the opportunity of visiting most of the major galleries and museums of fine arts in Europe, the U.S., and Asia, and developed some theories of art in general and, more specifically, about painting. I especially appreciate art that is personal and aesthetically pleasing. I believe that the merit of a piece of art does not have much to do with its commercial value, and vice versa.

My favorite painters are Rembrandt and Monet. I am in awe every time I look at Rembrandt's self-portraits. The light in Monet's painting makes me feel so elated. I love his 1869 painting, "The Magpie." You can search for it online.

I can be reached at *tedfeng at aol dot com*

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 at bpapaloalto dot org*



El Camino Business Update, August 2017

By Bob Moss

There continue to be changes in occupancy on El Camino Real between Adobe Creek and Page Mill since my last report in February 2017, in addition to an increase in vacancies. However, overall vacancy rates are still low.

Mike's Bikes at 3001 El Camino moved to Middlefield at Charleston early this year. There is a proposal to redevelop the El Camino site with 19,800 sq. ft. of ground floor retail and 30 apartments, plus 20 apartments in a building behind the retail. The Palo Alto Architectural Review Board (ARB) had issues with proposed garage access, landscaping, and some design details. It will return to the ARB for final approval, but no major changes are likely to be required.

Orthopedic Sports Medicine at 3401 El Camino is now closed, and the site is renting space for limited office users.

Valencia Asian Market (VAM) at 3487 El Camino is now Dumping City.

Preliminary review of a 4-story, 61-unit affordable housing project with a small amount of ground floor retail at 3701-3709 El Camino has been done by the ARB. This is a Palo Alto Housing proposal. The ARB asked for the entire ground floor to be retail and that parking be increased and made easier to access. The alley behind the retail might be used for open space and lawn.

Palo Alto Dental Care at 3737 El Camino was replaced by InstantUrgent.

The former Compadres site at 3877 El

Camino has been vacant since they closed in October 2010. A project for 4,027 sq. ft. of retail and 17 condos has been proposed. Final action was postponed until Fall, but it will likely be approved. Some problems with garage access and appearance were addressed during the hearings.

At 4131 El Camino, next to Subway (Unit #100), Unit #102, formerly Think Tank Learning, is now vacant. Opus 1 Music is in suite #200 (above Starbucks at #101).

The former 4141 (El Camino) Bar is now the BPC Art Studio.

4153A on El Camino Way is now vacant. Product development company Instrumental has moved to Los Altos.

The former Jewish Study Network offices at 3626 and 3628 and Papa Murphy's at 3950 El Camino are still vacant.

3892 El Camino, vacant after Shaoling Kung Fu left, is now an extension of L&L Hawaiian BBQ.

4200 El Camino was converted to American Tire which is opening there soon.

There is a proposal to replace Su Hong Restaurant at 4256 El Camino with a 5-story hotel and 8 townhouses. Residents of the adjoining Palo Alto Redwoods complex have strongly objected to the plans, and the ARB was also very negative about them. They want it scaled down, with additional parking, more landscaping, greater setbacks, and an overall reduction in size and bulk.

Vacancy rates under 5% are basically considered full occupancy. On El Camino

vacancies have increased slightly since November.

There are only six vacancies on the Barron Park side, totaling 20,060 sq. ft. They are: the former Jewish Study Network at 3626 and 3628; an office for rent at 3632; the former Papa Murphy's at 3850; American Tire opening at 4200; and the former CrossFit site at 4050. The lots at 3710 and 4146 El Camino have been vacant for decades. Each has had several developments approved, but nothing was built.

There are 11 vacancies on the Ventura side. No occupants are shown for 2951, 2951A, 3001, 3011, 3527, 3585 lot, 3877, 4117, and 4131 (102, 103, and 104). The Combes site at 3585 has been vacant for more than 40 years. The former Compadres site at 3877 that closed in October 2010 is coming up for approval of a mixed retail and 17 condos later this year (see above). The former Curves site at 4117 has also been vacant for years with nothing proposed for it.

The site at 2755 El Camino, the VTA parking lot, is now being proposed for 60 small rental units with little parking. The developer was asked to scale it down and add parking.

WINTER 2017, BPA Newsletter Deadline—Friday, December 1!

To all our Contributors:

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

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

Vacancy rates

	Aug.'15	Feb.'16	Nov.'16	Aug.'17
El Camino, Ventura Side	5.14%	5.51%	6.90%	6.73%
El Camino, Barron Park Side	1.78%	2.05%	3.14%	3.60%
El Camino Way	0.00%	2.28%	7.04%	9.32%
Total Vacancy incl. El Camino Way	3.63%	2.99%	4.46%	5.04%

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