

# BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John W. King, BPA President



For the first time ever in the 41-year history of the Barron Park May Fête, we had to postpone the event, moving it to the following weekend, to Monday, May 27, Memorial Day. A very unusual storm came in on Sunday, May 19, forcing the adjustment. Fortunately, Memorial Day turned out to be a great success, and we had a very well-attended afternoon. The spirit of Barron Park is certainly alive and well, and it was a pleasure to see memories created for the children and parents dancing around the Maypole.

Our Spring newsletter was somewhat delayed, but once it hit the mailboxes (physical and online), we have had a surge of membership renewals and new memberships. Thank you all for your contin-

ued support of the BPA. To renew or join, use the membership form and envelope from your Spring newsletter. Even more conveniently, go to: [bpapaloalto.org](http://bpapaloalto.org) Click on "How to Join," and pay with PayPal. We are all volunteers and we have a great need for more participation on the Board and for upcoming events. Please consider becoming an active member.

URGENT! Our annual "Outdoor Movie Night" held in Bol Park is not yet scheduled as we need a volunteer to coordinate the event for late August or early September. If you are interested in coordinating or working on this wonderful event, please let me know and we can get you on board. Write to me (John King, President) at: [president@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:president@bpapaloalto.org)

Have a wonderful summer!

shared pathway came up as a topic of discussion, he ran a civil meeting of interested parties on multiple sides of the pathway discussion that let all parties have a chance to present their side of the issues. That discussion is continuing today.

The Board officially thanks you, Jon, for your sincere and tireless efforts on behalf of the Barron Park Association!

## Fall BPA Newsletter Deadline—September 3, 2019

To All Our Past & Future Contributors: Please submit articles and drafts (preferably in Word) for the Fall issue of the **Barron Park Association Newsletter**, along with photos/illustrations (separate from text), by September 3, 2019, to Myrna Rochester, [newsletter@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:newsletter@bpapaloalto.org) or [mbrbpa@sonic.net](mailto:mbrbpa@sonic.net)

If your Fall idea is a query (for an article, story, report, update, interview, announcement, review, anecdote, or artist's page...), please contact Myrna in advance. The Fall issue will be mailed in early October 2019, to member households of the Barron Park Association.

Announcements should be for events scheduled **after October 15, 2019**. Please keep this in mind, especially for school activities. Thanks!

## Jon Affeld, Past President, Resigns from the Board

It is with great thanks and appreciation, that the Board has regretfully accepted Jon Affeld's resignation from the Barron Park Association Board of Directors. Jon has been a very active member of the BPA Board over the past three years since joining in September 2016. He participated in a number of committees and most

notably was in charge of our August Movie Nights the past couple of years. He also organized the Fall Foodie Festival in 2018 and helped with organizing volunteers for the May Fête festivities. As President of the BPA in 2017-18, Jon expertly guided the Board through monthly Board and annual Community meetings. When the Bol Park

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# MAY FÊTE 2019 ON MEMORIAL

By Silvia Griswold and John King



The weather finally cooperated and we got a crowd! After lots of thought about rescheduling due to rain and thunderstorms, we were able to get our new date into most organizations' calendars, and most importantly, the participation of our volunteers, our musicians, our Maypole caller Alan Winston, and the whole neighborhood for a Memorial Day May Fête!

Rich Elder was once again this year's stage-building mastermind with the amazing help of Dan and Leo Adams. Boy Scout Troop 52 Scoutmaster Andrew Ferguson brought two Scouts to help out and John King brought Ian Belcher. Starting at 8:30 a.m., they diligently moved and built the stage, dismantling it at the end of the day with the help of brother and sister, Sam and Gillian King. A big shout-out to Rich, Dan, Ian, Nikki Verhulp and friend Ronan, Sam, and Gillian for working so hard! Thanks also to Jeff Smith for loaning his truck, so we could transport tables, chairs, and many other items from Barron Park Elementary to and from the park, and to Copy Factory for their donation of printing services.

The Maypole is an art in itself. Lots of thought, math, and craft goes into winding the ribbons into spools that magically unwind as the pole is raised and secured. Gary Breitbard was able to recreate what he learned from Larry Breed, who learned how to operate the intricate, homemade winding system of founder Paul Edwards. Rich Elder, Dan Adams, and Sam King attached the gorgeous flower basket to the Maypole and, with a host of pushers, lifted and anchored it to the ground.

Our donkeys Perry and Jenny, always a big hit, paraded around the park with their handlers, and Jenny Kiratli had a table to share information about the Donkey Project. Sally O'Neil and Stephanie Enos represented Canopy; Melanie Cross, a Master Gardener, displayed a gorgeous bouquet from her own garden to educate others about Native Gardens; Hilary Glann represented Barron Park's Cool Block chapters; Gloria Garcia brought Live Plastic Free; and Eugene Chow represented the Cub Scouts. Thank you all for sharing the passion for your causes with the neighborhood!

With games, spin art, the jumpy house, face painting, hamburgers, hot dogs, and snow cones, everyone enjoyed the day, catching up with neighbors and meeting new ones. Partygoers were hungry and kept John busy at the barbecue with the help of Bruce Watkins, Ian, Sam, Nikki and Gillian.

Gwen Luce and Lisa Landers worked the membership table and displayed information on Emergency Services. Silvia Griswold and Gwen supervised the fundraising raffle. Thank you to Linda and Rich Elder at the guessing jar table; 528 marbles was the correct answer, and Peter Mueller made the closest guess.

Gary Breitbard and Jena Rauti orchestrated a wonderful lineup of musicians and dancers including members of the Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers' Association, Broceliande, and Kitchen Sink Molly Dancers. The musicians, led by a piper, paraded around the park, inviting all to join up at the Maypole. Alan Winston did a fantastic job of calling

the Maypole for the little kids—and for the adults who had as much fun as the little ones. The magic happens when you see the colorful ribbons braiding at the pole as you prance along to the joyful tunes. Thank you, Gary and Jena, for playing and for organizing the music!

As we close this chapter of the 41st Barron Park May Fête, we thank you—everyone—for making it happen!

## Thank you to this year's May Fête Ad Sponsors!

Gwen Luce, Coldwell Banker Real Estate

John King, Keller Williams Realty

Cal Preserving Wood Care Restoration

The Nest, Palo Alto

Creskide Inn

Celia's Mexican Restaurant

Ernie's Wines and Liquors

Great American Framing Company

The Sandwich Bug

Fowl Play Roadside Chicken

Jim Davis Valero Automotive

Stanford Carpets

## Raffle Prizes provided through the generosity of:

Creskide Inn—Gift certificate for one-night weekend stay

The Nest—Two gift certificates for one-night weekend stay

Celia's Mexican Restaurant—Two gift certificates

Great American Framing Company—Three gift certificates

Driftwood Deli and Market—Two gift certificates

The Sandwich Bug—Eight gift certificates

Fowl Play Roadside Chicken—Two gift certificates



# DAY! MUSIC, MAYPOLE, OH MY...!





# Canopy's April Tree Planting in Barron Park

By Sally O'Neil, Canopy Board Chair

On April 20, 2019, Barron Park benefited from the care of Canopy, the Midpeninsula tree organization that has its roots in Palo Alto.

Under Canopy's training and guidance, 37 trees were planted by Canopy members and volunteers at 17 Barron Park homes and at Barron Park Elementary School, including four native Valley Oak trees planted at Bol Park. Another eight trees at Bol Park received tree care, including watering, mulching, and weeding.

The highlight for many participants was the planting of a memorial Valley Oak tree for each of these well-known Barron Park residents: Joan Marx, Lu Bingham, and Marian Cortesi. Family members and friends worked hard to dig large holes and prepare and plant each of these sizable trees, which are sited along the pathway running behind the park. These plantings were followed by family memorials.

A fourth Valley Oak was planted not far from the donkey pasture in honor of Niner, the celebrated Barron Park donkey that died several years ago.

Many volunteers came out to shoulder the work—97 in total! Several local volunteer groups participated, including SEWA International, the Junior League of Palo Alto / Midpeninsula, Silicon Valley Volunteers, Bechtel International Center at Stanford, and Mountain View / Los Altos Service League of Boys.

Gwen Luce, Jon Affeld, and other Barron Park residents worked on planning the



All photos courtesy of Chris Cassell, Pro-Bono Photo





event and the outreach to residents. Canopy Board Chair and Barron Park resident, Sally O'Neil, participated in the plantings.

"Many thanks to Barron Park residents for saying YES to trees, and to our wonderful planting volunteers who showed great effort and excitement as usual," said Elise Willis, Canopy's Community Forestry Program Manager, who organized the large event.

Residents are responsible for watering and caring for the new trees on their property and can contact Canopy ([canopy.org](http://canopy.org)) with questions or problems. Founded in 1996 by several Palo Alto residents, Canopy advocates for trees on the Midpeninsula, and provides local services including tree care for young and mature trees, monthly tree walks in local communities, including Barron Park, events and workshops for adults, and school programs for youth.

## EMAIL LISTS

The Barron Park Association has three email listservs: *bpa-news*, *bpa-issues*, and *bpa-misc*. They are hosted at Google Groups. To join the lists, go to the BPA website, [bpapaloalto.org](http://bpapaloalto.org) and click on the tab near the top of the home page (under the logo): "BPA Email Lists." The link provides information about each list and an easy way to subscribe to one or more of them.

## BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Barron Park Association  
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### PRINTER

Prodigy Press



# Palo Alto Humane Society: Ambassadors of Compassion Story-Telling Contest

By Leonor Delgado, P.A. Humane Society

This short story contest—our first—was aimed at local 7th and 8th graders from Santa Clara, San Mateo, San Francisco, and Alameda County middle schools, with all counties well represented. It was tough to pick a winner, and we decided to honor one first-place writer and three honorable mentions.

Because the winning story, "Snapshot," written by Vandana Ravi, focused on the special bond between the narrator and a

donkey, we decided to hold the award ceremony in Bol Park, home of Barron Park's donkeys, Perry and Jenny. The donkeys were welcomed by all when they made their entrance!

Runners up were: Amara Fernandes, for "Cat's Cradle"; Aaron Huang, for "Never-ending"; and Macy Li, for "Searching for Rainbows."

Special guests, aside from Perry and Jenny, included Jenny Kiratli, who manages the care of the two donkeys; Douglas Moran, who gave a brief history of "donkey lore";

Lydia Kou, Palo Alto City Council Member and resident of Barron Park; Jeness Hobart from Humane Education Network, who gave advice and support; and Heidi Lubin, Art Education Manager at Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose, one of the contest judges.

Read the winning stories at:  
[paloaltohumane.org/ambassadors-of-compassion-s...](http://paloaltohumane.org/ambassadors-of-compassion-s...)

and see a list of all the participants at:  
[paloaltohumane.org/story-contest-winners-by-ci...](http://paloaltohumane.org/story-contest-winners-by-ci...)



Photo by Steven Shpall

**Vandana Ravi, First-place writer in the P.A. Humane Society story contest, with Perry and Jenny.**

## BPA ADDRESS REMINDERS

■ For the **BPA Home Page**, go to:  
[bpapaloalto.org](http://bpapaloalto.org)

■ For the **BPA Newsletter Archive**, visit:  
[bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter](http://bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter)

■ To Join or Renew your **BPA Membership**, go to:  
[bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association](http://bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association)

■ For **Membership Questions**, write to:  
Lisa Berkowitz Landers:  
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■ For information about the three **BPA Mailing Lists (Listservs)**, go to:  
[bpapaloalto.org/bpa-email-lists](http://bpapaloalto.org/bpa-email-lists) or write to  
[listmanager@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:listmanager@bpapaloalto.org)

■ Contact the **BPA President**, John W. King, at: [president@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:president@bpapaloalto.org)

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[newsletter@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:newsletter@bpapaloalto.org)

■ Contact our **BPA Business Liaison**, Paul Yang, at: [pabloyang@yahoo.com](mailto:pabloyang@yahoo.com)

■ Reach our **Welcoming Committee Chair**, Gwen Luce, at: [gluce@cbrnocal.com](mailto:gluce@cbrnocal.com)

■ For information on our **Emergency Services Volunteer Program**, write to Maurice Green: [mauryg3@comcast.net](mailto:mauryg3@comcast.net) or Lydia Kou: [lydiakou@gmail.com](mailto:lydiakou@gmail.com)

■ To download or be listed on the **BPA Babysitter List**, go to:  
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■ To download or be listed on the **BPA Services/Home Business List**, go to:  
[bpapaloalto.org/neighbor-services](http://bpapaloalto.org/neighbor-services)

■ Write to our **BPA Historian**, Douglas L. Graham, at: [dgrahampaca@gmail.com](mailto:dgrahampaca@gmail.com)

■ Reach our **Cool Block Liaison**, Hilary Glann at: [hglann@gmail.com](mailto:hglann@gmail.com)

■ To contact our **Web Manager**, write to Maurice Green: [bpawebman@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:bpawebman@bpapaloalto.org)

■ Donate to the care of **Barron Park donkeys, Perry and Jenny**; visit [barronparkdonkeys.org](http://barronparkdonkeys.org) For information about the donkeys or to volunteer, contact Jenny Kiratli at: [barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com](mailto:barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com)

■ Donate to the **Bol Park Native Plant Restoration Project**: Direct your donation to the "Bol Park Fund" at: [friendsofpaparks.org/donations](http://friendsofpaparks.org/donations) By mail or phone: Payable to "Friends of the Palo Alto Parks (FOPAP), for Bol Park Fund," FOPAP, 425 Grant Ave., Suite 27, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Phone: 650-327-7323

Please consider volunteering time or expertise to the **Bol Park Native Plant Restoration Project**. Contact Rich Elder at [rich.e.elder@gmail.com](mailto:rich.e.elder@gmail.com)

## Senior Lunches!

1:00 p.m. Tuesdays every other month

**August 13, October 8,  
and December 10**

**Corner Bakery Café**  
3375 El Camino Real, Palo Alto

All are welcome to join & enjoy these community get-togethers.

No reservations needed.

Questions: Peter Mueller  
(650) 856-1255 or [pklausm@mac.com](mailto:pklausm@mac.com)

# 2019 BOL PARK PATHWAY SURVEY

By Markus Fromherz

In January 2019, the Barron Park Association conducted a survey on the Bol Park Pathway. In the introduction to the survey, we wrote:

“The Barron Park Association would like to collect data on the Bol Park Pathway. This pathway enjoys increasing usage by commuters, students, and people out on a stroll. The City will soon do a traffic study. As a complement, we would like to collect observations from residents who use the path. By getting responses from the neighborhood, we hope to get concrete observations, understanding usage and highlighting particular trouble spots or common issues along the pathway. For the purpose of this survey, the pathway is the pedestrian and bike path that connects Bol Park with Gunn High School, the Arastradero/Foothill Expressway intersection, and Hanover Street.

If you’d like to submit this survey for different people in your household (e.g., an adult commuter and a student), feel free to submit multiple separate entries. We will share the results with the community.”

As we wrote, we wanted to understand usage and get highlights of particular trouble spots or common issues along the pathway. We decided not to ask for solutions to perceived issues, just the issues. We also kept the survey fairly open-ended instead of asking for responses on predefined issues, in order not to bias the responses and to invite a wide variety of observations. The number of responses far exceeded our expectations.

The BPA analyzed the survey responses in two steps, first for an overview and then for detailed data on individual responses, summarized as follows:

## Overview Report

Here are the key results from the report:

- We reached out to about 5,500 households through Nextdoor (Barron Park and immediately adjacent neighborhoods), and

approximately another 1,000 through the BPA mailing lists and a Stanford neighborhood mailing list.

- We collected 524 responses. Of those, 483 were valid (not empty).

- Of those, 242 or 50% were from Barron Park. About 30% were from adjacent neighborhoods and about 20% from areas outside those neighborhoods (Midtown, Mountain View, Menlo Park, Sunnyvale, and others).

- Most respondents use the path for leisure or exercise (both 75%), about 25% to commute, and fewer than 10% for school.

- Most users walk or bike on the path (both, about 70%); about a quarter each run or go with a dog; close to half go with a second person.

- More than half of the respondents use the pathway at least several times a week.

- About 25% each are in their 50s, 60s, and over 70.

- Almost 70% entered either an experience, observation, or other comment. Half of those are from BP residents. 30% had no issues to report.

- Six percent remarked on an accident (27 comments), 23% on a road condition (111 comments). Twenty-three percent mentioned a specific location on the path (109 comments).

- Twenty-two percent mentioned pedestrians, 41% bicyclists, and 17% dogs.

## Detailed Report

In a second, more detailed analysis, the BPA extracted specifics on accidents, road conditions, and named locations. We hope that these findings provide insights into trouble spots and indications where more detailed observation or immediate improvements are warranted. These findings have been shared with the City and the Palo Alto Public Works Department.

The following breakdown reports on accidents, concerns, and conditions. We did not ask for responses from a specific period. Most of these seem to have been

observed in recent years.

We found the following groups of responses.

## Accidents:

- There were 18 comments on observed bike crashes. There was one mention each of crashes with a Matadero crossing barrier, with a car at Matadero, and on one of the bridges. There were seven mentions of hitting a pedestrian and two of hitting a car.

## Concerns:

- There were 131 comments on concerns regarding bikers. Ninety were about bikers riding too fast and 41 about bikers passing pedestrians too close and/or without warning. There were two to four mentions each of Strawberry Hill, areas near Matadero, near Hanover, and the fork in the pathway near the donkey pasture.

- There were 70 comments on concerns regarding dogs. Fifty-six mentioned off-leash dogs and 14 mentioned dogs on long leashes that didn’t sufficiently control the dogs.

- There were 44 comments on concerns regarding pedestrians. All reported observations of pedestrians not paying attention to their surroundings and blocking the pathway.

- There were 10 comments on concerns that the pathway is too crowded.

## Conditions:

- There were 44 comments on pathway surface conditions. Twenty-five mentioned uneven pavement, in particular near Gunn High School and along the fences to Barron Park near Gunn. Nineteen comments mentioned the uneven wood surfaces on the bridges.

- There were 27 comments on lighting. Twenty-four mentioned insufficient lighting, in particular between Matadero and Hanover and along the fences to Barron Park. Three mentioned harsh or bright lights near Georgia and Los Robles.

- There were 18 comments on blind



corners/curves. Most mentioned the one between Hanover and Matadero.

- There were 10 comments on the new warning signs. They were seen as ineffective, dangerous, or too numerous.
- There were seven comments on drainage. The comments mentioned poor drainage and muddy conditions, in particular near Gunn as well as near Laguna Avenue.

#### Various:

- Other, mostly single comments included: barriers near Matadero are in the way; bikers don't stop at Matadero; cars don't stop at Matadero; chickens running loose; children running unsupervised; the dangerous intersection at Hanover; litter; loud people; narrow path; lack of bike lane

when reaching Gunn parking lot; student bikers not yielding; soft shoulder too narrow or missing for running.

We have since shared these results and detailed data from the survey with the neighborhood as well as the Palo Alto Public Works Department.

For questions, please contact Markus Fromherz: [markus@fromherz.us](mailto:markus@fromherz.us)

## Art of the Barron Park Donkeys

**A**rt of the Barron Park Donkeys is now on Instagram! You can catch all the wonderful art on [@Art\\_of\\_the\\_barronparkdonkeys](https://www.instagram.com/Art_of_the_barronparkdonkeys)

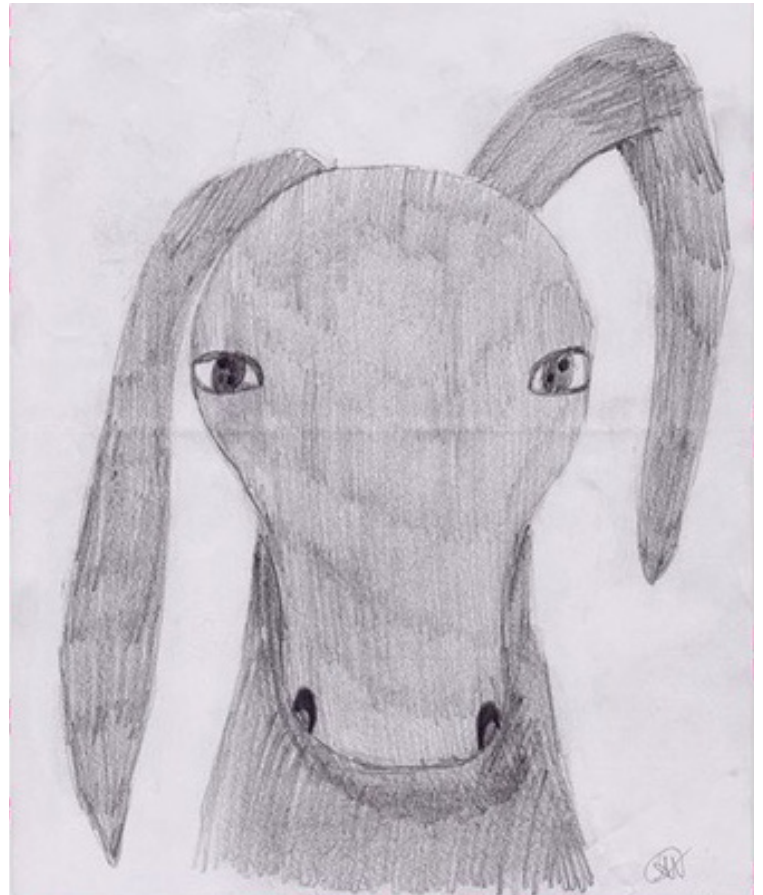
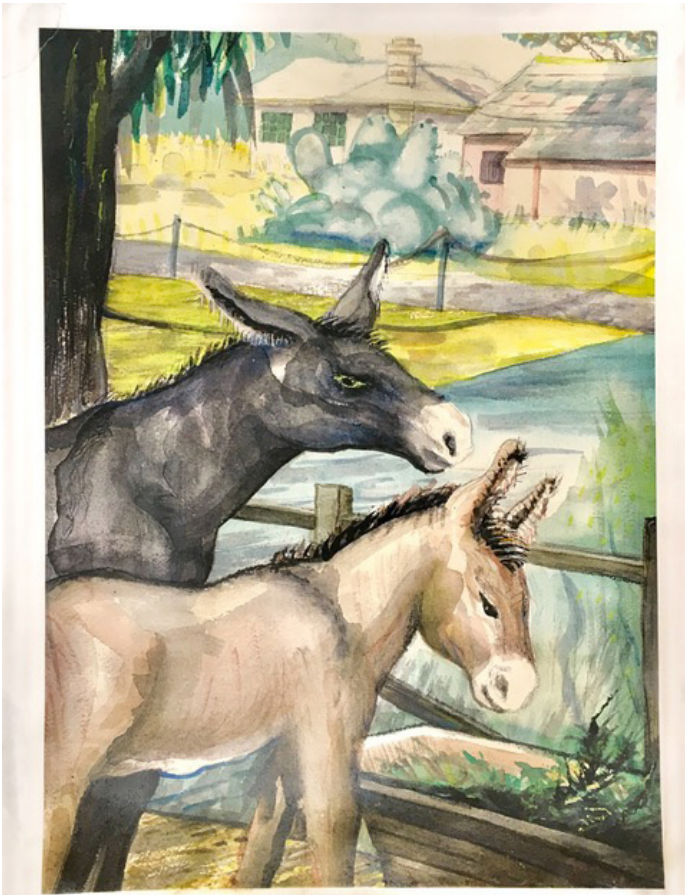
It has been a joy receiving various types of art with Jenny and Perry as inspiration. These graceful animals are simply amazing with just their presence alone. We encour-

age anyone and everyone to contribute any kind of artwork. We receive not only hand-drawn art, but also letters of admiration. Leave us your artwork and/or love letters in the D-mailbox right outside of Jenny and Perry's gate, and you may see it showcased on our Instagram page!

*Thanks, from Sarah Vue and James Witt.*

### CALL FOR ARTISTS!

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 a future BPA Newsletter. Please send us your idea with a draft artist's statement and reproducible samples or a description of your work to [mbrbpa@sonic.net](mailto:mbrbpa@sonic.net) or [newsletter@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:newsletter@bpapaloalto.org)





# OUR WILD NEIGHBORS: THE DARK-EYED JUNCO

By Jeralyn Moran



This parent is feeding its youngster. Source: [reddit.com/r/birding](https://www.reddit.com/r/birding)

## Description and Habitat

Wow, what type of song bird has that dark head...? My mother used to call them the “little executioners” because of their black hoods. These Barron Park neighbors also sport white feathers on the outer edges of their tails (notice this when they take flight), a light-colored belly, and a pale bill. And yes, they do have dark eyes.

The female has more subdued coloring to blend with her environment, better to avoid notice from a predator – especially when she has babies nearby to care for.

It turns out there is a huge range of color variation in the Junco species, depending on where this bird lives geographically. Considered to be in the Sparrow family, you might see one anywhere from Alaska down through lower Canada, and in most of the continental United States. The Junco is found from sea level to more than 11,000 feet! Fifteen different “races” have been described by ornithologists (scientists who

study birds). A “race” in the taxonomy of living things is an informal rank, just below the level of subspecies in the naming hierarchy. The Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) is the subspecies you’ll most often see in our neighborhood.

## Diet and Behavior

Dark-eyed Juncos tend to *hop* along the ground, not walk, typically hunting for seeds (their favorite food). But they’ll also eat caterpillars, ants, moths, flies, beetles, and berries during the summer.

Males set up a territory of two to three acres at the beginning of the Spring; they sing to deter competition and to attract the ladies. Males also spread their wings and tails to display their beautiful white tail feathers, which the females are attracted to. These birds form monogamous pairs, mating for a lifetime, and produce two to three broods per season.

The female chooses a nesting site, and she is in charge of building a cup-shaped nest

on the ground, hidden under logs, roots, or large plants, rarely up in a tree. In an urban situation, Juncos might choose a nest site against a building, on a window ledge, or in a hanging flower pot or a light fixture. The male collects sticks, moss, leaves, and other building material which the female uses for constructing the family’s nest.

When Winter arrives, Dark-eyed Juncos flock together; these flocks typically have a hierarchy or “pecking order,” and earlier arrivals to the group tend to rank higher in the group than those who show up later.

## Help this bird, and all our birds!

- Keep your pet cat indoors.
- Stop birds from hitting windows by putting stickers on the glass, drawing lines 4” or less apart vertically on the glass. Find more tips at: [humanesociety.org/resources/make-your-windows-bird-safe](https://humanesociety.org/resources/make-your-windows-bird-safe)
- Buy bird-friendly (shade-grown) coffee.

## FUN FACTS

- The Dark-eyed Junco can survive 3 to 11 years in the wild.
- The Brown-headed Cowbird often lays eggs in the nest of Dark-eyed Juncos; the Juncos are not able to recognize parasitic eggs, and they raise Brown-headed Cowbirds like their own chicks.
- “There is not an individual in the Union who does not know the little Snow-bird,” declared John James Audubon, writing about the Dark-eyed Junco almost 200 years ago.



# NEWS FROM THE PASTURE

By Jenny Kiratli

## Canopy Donates Donkey Tree

There is a new tree in Bol Park in honor of Niner (Miner 49-er), our beloved donkey who died in September 2016. The native Valley Oak was planted in conjunction with the Canopy Barron Park tree planting event on April 20, 2019, and spearheaded by Michael Holland, one of our principal donkey handlers. The Niner tree is located on the south end of the park near the juncture of the bike path with Matadero Creek and, despite early distress, is doing well and showing much new growth.

## Donkey Visits

The donkeys have been busy the past few months. Perry and Jenny visited Barron Park Elementary School on April 25, an annual tradition in honor of Earth Day, and greeted all the children and teachers during recess and lunch. Many of the children opted for donkeys first before the pizza lunch.

Perry and Jenny were also front and center at our 41st Annual May Fête on May 27, quietly ambling through Bol Park, winding through the Morris dancers and by the jumpy house, and as always, munching grass and embodying tranquility, surrounded by flocks of children. A lucky few of us were treated to the very rare occurrence of a Perry bray. Jenny brays are of course a common occurrence.

The following day, Tuesday, May 28, the donkeys made a guest appearance at the very special Palo Alto Humane Society Middle School Short Story Writing Contest Celebration. This inaugural event was scheduled in Bol Park because the winning essay featured a donkey! Although the fictional story was not about our dynamic duo, its essence was derived from visits at the pasture by the very talented young writer, Vandana Ravi, focusing on how a connection between a girl and a donkey contributed to self-confidence and growth.

## Community Connections

The Barron Park Donkey Project would like to acknowledge Derek Sproat, City of Palo Alto Project Manager, Urban Forest Section, for delivery of wood chips to the pasture. The first delivery of wood chips was tremendously useful during the muddy winter months to protect the donkeys' hooves, and the second delivery has been used to rebuild paths once the mud dried.

We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Boy Scout Troop 52 for their help with compost management. A huge Thank You to Michael, Jerry, Kenneth, and Jacob, as well as Scoutmaster Andrew Ferguson, for your help in turning, sifting, and filling 10 bags of Donkey Compost!

## Donkey Volunteers

Perry and Jenny's care and feeding is provided entirely by volunteer handlers who serve breakfast and dinner daily and take walks with

them on most days. We are a dedicated group of Palo Alto (mostly Barron Park) and nearby Los Altos residents who share a love for donkeys:

Barbara Adams, Carolyn and Tim Biglow, Susan Carsen, the Dauber family, Margaret and Les Fisher, Paloma Gifford, Mike Holland, Stephanie Kaplan, me (Jenny Kiratli), Kim Lemmer, Doug Moran, Jeralyn Moran, Larry Reeves, Rick Salazar, Denise and Mark Sanders, Chris Steck, Eric Struck, and several folks who prefer to be anonymous. We also thank Inge Harding-Barlow, donkey handler emeritus, for decades of loving care, and James Witt, honorary donkey handler, who regularly provides needed maintenance and other support around the pasture on his property.

Perry and Jenny offer Congratulations and Farewell to graduating senior Elliot Dauber, who has been a donkey handler for six years, starting in middle school. Elliot is headed to Stanford with an interest in music technology. He is known as "the farmer" by his friends, who don't really understand his weekly dinner appointment (for Tuesday evening feeding), but he bears this moniker proudly and enjoys the peace and calm that comes from spending time with Perry and Jenny. He will be greatly missed and promises to



Jenny "speaks" at the May 28 P.A. Humane Society event.

Photo: Denise Sanders



Elliot Dauber says goodbye after six years of volunteering.

Photo: Jenny Kiratli



visit often.

### Donkey Products and Fundraising!

Care and feeding of the donkeys is 100% supported by community financial contributions. In addition to donations, we have several options for donkey support: You may purchase donkey compost for your yard, donkey notecards (New!), and donkey canvas tote bags (Newest!). Information about these products as well as how to order is available on our website:

### **barronparkdonkeys.org**

Starting in July, we will launch a Street Competition for Fundraising. Over the next nine months (through March 2020), we will track donations by street. Winners will be determined based on total amount raised as well as number of contributors on that street. As a challenge, Orme Street raised \$3,000 in 2017, with 11 of 22 households (50%) contributing. This will be the "Street to Beat!" Winners will be invited for a group photo opp with Perry and Jenny! Watch for more information in upcoming BPA and Nextdoor E-news. We have set a goal to raise \$25,000 in fiscal year 2019-2020 for sustaining donkey care. Please help us meet this goal by going to the website [barronparkdonkeys.org](http://barronparkdonkeys.org) or scanning our QR code (here).



We are seeking one or two volunteers who are available on weekends, especially Sunday mornings. Information and application are found on our website: [barronparkdonkeys.org](http://barronparkdonkeys.org) (under the Contact tab) or by email to: [barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com](mailto:barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com)

### Donkey History Project!

Working with Douglas Graham, our Barron Park historian, we are collecting stories, photos, documents, and other information about the Barron Park donkeys going back to the early days of Cornelis and Josina Bol, and later, Edith and Leland Smith. Please contact us by email if you have any memorabilia or remembrances to share: [barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com](mailto:barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com)

# Simple Steps to Reduce Our Carbon Footprint: Start with Food

By Hilary Glann, BP Cool Block Liaison

With increasingly alarming messages about the impending impacts of climate change, many Barron Park residents are looking for things they can do to reduce their impact on the planet. Here are some simple tips from the Cool Block Palo Alto program about food choices and food management that can reduce your carbon footprint AND save you money.

1. Reduce your food waste. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, the average American throws out approximately 25% of the food and beverages they buy, which translates to 300 pounds of food and \$2,200 wasted per person per year.<sup>1</sup> If food waste were a country, it would come in third after the United States and China in terms of impact on climate change.<sup>2</sup> The carbon footprint of food increases as it is transported from farm to plate, so food wasted at home or in restaurants has the biggest carbon impact. You can reduce your food waste by:

- Planning your meals before you go shopping
- Storing your food properly so it doesn't spoil
- Rotating food in your pantry and fridge to make perishable/expiring food more visible
- Shopping wisely: Don't buy more than you can cook or eat
- Celebrating your leftovers: You get a second tasty meal with only minimal effort!
- Asking for a to-go container at restaurants—or bring your own—at the end of a meal
- Using your eyes and nose to judge food safety—a "Best by" date doesn't mean you need to throw the item away nor does it necessarily mean it is unsafe
- Buying foods that are in season—in-season produce hasn't spent as much time traveling from a distant farm to your plate, so it has had less time to spoil in transit

2. Reduce your meat consumption. The science is clear—for the health of the planet and for our own health, we need to eat more greens and less meat, particularly beef, lamb, and pork. People in North America eat more than six times the recommended amount of red meat.<sup>3</sup> Meat products have larger carbon footprints per calorie than grain or vegetable products because of the inefficient transformation of plant energy to animal energy.<sup>4</sup> In Barron Park, you can join the Bay Area Plant-Based Nutrition and Support group run by Katy Mast to learn more about embracing a plant-based diet. Interested? Write to me ([hglann@gmail.com](mailto:hglann@gmail.com)) and I'll forward your message. For those who want to reduce the amount of meat they eat, but not eliminate meat completely, join the "Meatless Monday" movement and cut out meat one day a week.<sup>5</sup>

3. Throw your food waste, especially meat scraps, into your green bin. The decomposition of uneaten food in landfill accounts for 34% of all methane emissions in the United States.<sup>6</sup> Methane is 23 times more potent as a heat-trapping gas than CO<sub>2</sub>. Fortunately, Palo Alto's GreenWaste composting facility captures methane gas and utilizes it to power the facility, which then turns the methane into carbon dioxide.

So, take a few minutes to think about what you eat, how you reduce your waste, and how you responsibly dispose of food waste in your green bin. Your health and the health of the planet could both benefit!

#### Footnotes:

1. <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/wasted-food-IP.pdf>
2. <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/plugged-in/un-says-that-if-food-waste-was-a-country-ite28099d-be-the-3-global-greenhouse-gas-emitter/>
3. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/16/climate/meat-environment-climate-change.html>
4. <http://css.umich.edu/factsheets/carbon-footprint-factsheet>
5. <https://www.meatlessmonday.com/about-us/>
6. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/earth-talk-waste-land/>



# The Barron Park Association—Part One of a Short History

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

## Barron Park—An Unusual Neighborhood

How did it happen that the Barron Park community has evolved the way it did—to become the most unusual, if not unique neighborhood in Palo Alto and one of the best organized in our County? To understand this requires a better-than-superficial understanding of the physical neighborhood and how it grew for 100 years. But to know only this much is inadequate. One must also investigate the roots, growth, and flowering of the Barron Park Association—the glue that has helped hold the neighborhood together and guide its growth for the past 66 years.

## A Lack of Community Action at First

When the neighborhood began in 1919-20, the Barron Estate was subdivided into farm plots of two to five acres each by the owners of the Driscoll strawberry packing company in Watsonville. Their aim was to increase the supply of berries for sale to San Francisco and, by refrigerated railroad cars, to Eastern cities. The motives of those purchasing the plots were sometimes at odds with this goal; many buyers had full-time or part-time jobs in Palo Alto or nearby that would limit their abilities to be serious berry growers. As a boy, I helped my parents weed and pick an acre of strawberries and can testify to the daily back-breaking labor required. Some of the new residents only wanted a home “in the country.” Development of the properties was slow and halting during the 1920s, and there appears to have been little sense of community cohesiveness. The emphasis would have been on individualism—almost a “frontier” sort of attitude, since almost everyone was having to “break ground” that had never been cultivated except in a few spots.

## Activism Began in the Late 1920s

Eventually, individual owners began to work with the County Board of Supervisors to improve the infrastructure, which

was almost non-existent. The first roads were limited to the Mayfield Farm lanes laid out by Edward Barron and his predecessors. One became Los Robles Avenue, and another Matadero Avenue. The first bridges over both creeks were built in 1929, and Laguna Avenue was laid out to connect the two. At some time (not known to me) electricity and telephone lines were brought in, but not street lighting. Water was supplied by wells, and in 1928, five homeowners formed the Emway Mutual Water Company in the Matadero Avenue area as a successor to the Matadero Water Company. The Emway was later purchased by Cornelis Bol and became the Barron Park Water Company, serving the entire north end of the neighborhood. The Los Robles Water Company, run by Ernest Johnson, supplied the south end from a well on Laguna Avenue. Both water companies were taken over by the City of Palo Alto in 1953.

## The State “Borrow Pit” Uproar

Meanwhile, in 1932 the Maybell area neighbors were up in arms over the actions of the State Highway Department which had excavated an enormous “borrow pit” where two subdivisions—Maybell Way and the 600 block of Georgia Avenue—are today. The pit was astonishingly big—760 feet long, 280 feet wide, and up to 20 feet deep (about 10 feet on the average), yielding almost 780,000 yards of fill material to help build the “Bayshore Highway” (a U.S. 101 “bypass” that preceded the present full freeway). The neighbors got nowhere with local highway officials so decided to go right to the top—Governor Rolph in Sacramento. This didn’t work, either. However, the controversy was the first documented instance in the greater Barron Park area of organized community reaction to a perceived threat to property values and quality of life by the actions of a governmental agency. Although in the short run it was unsuccessful, it did plant the seeds for the later formation of the Maybelle (sic) Improvement Association, which morphed

into the Barron Park Maybelle Improvement Association, and then in 1953 into the Barron Park Neighborhood Association.

## A 30-Year “Cold War” with the City

As soon as the Barron Park neighborhood grew beyond about 100 houses (120 in 1935) there began to be interest in annexing to Palo Alto. At that point, Mayfield (now roughly the California Ave. area) had been in the City for 10 years and, although there were plenty of gripes by Mayfield residents, on the whole it seemed satisfactory. Barron Park needed a better water supply and every other kind of infrastructure to serve the burgeoning population. “Rural” wasn’t going to cut it much longer, and the County was not very helpful with problems. The City, however, made a terrible impression on Barron Park residents in 1936 when it forbade the Palo Alto Fire Department to fight the fire in the Barron Mansion, even though the cities of Mountain View and Menlo Park sent their trucks. The lovely old three-story, 40-room Victorian “gingerbread” house burned to the ground while a Palo Alto fire truck watched from less than a thousand feet away. This was not encouraging to annexation enthusiasts and was not to be forgotten for two generations. This began a “cold war” between the neighborhood and the City that lasted through eight unsuccessful annexation movements from 1946 to 1975. During this time, several single-issue (pro- or anti-annexation) residents’ organizations arose in opposition to the BPA, but withered away after the failure of each attempted annexation.

## The Fire Protection Problem

A crisis arose in fire protection for Barron Park in 1946 when the State Forestry Division withdrew service to unincorporated County areas in the flatlands. Insurance rates were already very high because the State provided poor service. In 1947 the attempt to create a fire protection district was led by Cornelis Bol (for whom Bol Park is named); it failed in the annexation election 148-145.



**Illustration A: Slinger's Boat Works at 3720 El Camino Real was the informal "City Hall" for Barron Park in the 1940s. Palo Alto Historical Association**

### **Barron Park Tries to Annex**

This stimulated the first attempt by Barron Park to annex, led by Kendall Bowers (for whom Kendall Avenue is named), which failed when the WCTU (Women's Christian Temperance Union) pressured the City Council to vote "no." A second annexation movement was organized by Matadero Avenue resident David Packard (co-founder of Hewlett-Packard) and again axed by the WCTU. Alcohol was being sold in the Barron Park area.

### **"Do-It-Yourself Government"**

Following these two humiliating experiences with Palo Alto and consistent with the Barron Park attitude of "do-it-yourself government," Barron Park residents then voted 225-60 to establish the Barron Park Fire Protection District. Chet Slinger was elected a Commissioner and then Commission President. The District formed and organized a Volunteer Fire Department, which it was to supervise. The Department was set up and was in operation by the autumn of 1949, with Chet Slinger resigning as Commission president and taking the part-time paid job of fire chief. A "firehouse" had been established in a shed behind the (former) Lanai Flower Stand at 4050 El Camino Real. The all-male firefigh-

ters soon developed an esprit de corps and camaraderie, proven by the fact that their wives always turned out to provide snacks and sandwiches whenever there was a fire... Stories about each fire circulated through the neighborhood and helped build the feeling of community that later became the hallmark of Barron Park.

### **The Unofficial "Government" of Barron Park**

In addition to overseeing the volunteer fire department, the District provided a focus for community action. Much neighborhood political energy was expended in fighting over various District-related issues. The District was viewed by many Barron Parkers as a sort of local and personal stand-in for the distant and faceless County government. For a few years, Slinger's Boat Works on El Camino Real became a gathering place and informal "city hall." (See Illustration A.) Then, during and following the District election in 1955, real issues and interpersonal difficulties led to a "reform movement" that almost tore the neighborhood apart.

### **Fears for the Future**

The neighborhood may never have been as divided and nervous about the future as it

was in the early 1950s. Not only were the competing citizens' groups antagonistic over annexation, they were also attacking each other about other issues. The blocks closest to El Camino Real were being converted from R-1 to multiple-family zoning at a rapid rate, and apartment buildings were going up on Matadero, Kendall, and Los Robles Avenues. The creeks had overflowed at every chokepoint and made a mess of much of the neighborhood during the "flood of the century" in December 1955. New streets being laid out followed new County guidelines and had curbs, gutters, and sidewalks; and many residents felt that Barron Park was losing its "rural feeling" and would never be as nice again. Developments were going in everywhere; the housing stock more than tripled in the 1940s and doubled again in the 1950s. Traffic had greatly increased. The feelings towards local government were confused and hostile: The City spurned us, it seemed as if the County increasingly didn't want to be bothered by us, and our own local efforts seemed inadequate to control the rapidly changing environment. These feelings were probably exacerbated by the misguided efforts of the right-wing group then running the Barron Park—Maybelle Improvement Association under the lead-





**Illustration B: Dick Placone.**

ership of Jack Silvey of Maybell Avenue. Silvey attacked the City as a hotbed of communism, claimed annexation would double our taxes, make us slaves to a dictatorial City staff, and made other wild claims in leaflets that turned off many Barron Parkers.

### **The Foothills II Annexation in 1959**

The “final straw” came in 1959 when several parts of the neighborhood decided to join Green Acres I and other developments beyond Arastradero Road in annexing to Palo Alto: the “Foothills II” annexation. Green Acres II and smaller developments on the Barron Park side of Arastradero Road, and several older mini-neighborhoods along Los Robles Avenue west of Amaranta went into the City along with the Green Acres developments, splitting the neighborhood almost in half for 16 years.

### **Birth of the New Barron Park Association—1964**

Into this conflicted situation came a renovated and activated neighborhood group that stepped forward to negotiate with the County over land use issues and rally the citizens around some positive causes. Aided by the retirement of Silvey and several of his negative-minded supporters, the association came under the control of a

positive-oriented group of board members led by a young manager at Stanford—a resident of Chimalus Drive, Richard Placone. Placone had been asked by the group to take the job of President and reform the organization. He and his associates had a vision of the neighborhood working together on some of the worst problems. Placone was asked to be President partly because of his success in convincing County Supervisors to turn down a proposal to build an over-large apartment project on Matadero Avenue. (See Illustration B, Dick Placone.)

### **Beginnings of the General Plan**

The new BPA leadership group simplified the name to the Barron Park Association (BPA). They began with a vision of a master plan for the neighborhood, analogous to the General Plans then being developed by the County, Palo Alto, and many of the surrounding cities. They worked with the County Board of Supervisors to develop a General Plan for Barron Park that they felt would ensure retention of the semi-rural appearance of the neighborhood, discourage ill-considered land use proposals and protect the future of R-1 housing. The General Plan included the BPA’s hopes for a neighborhood park. The most lasting innovation in the plan was the develop-

ment of CN (Neighborhood Commercial) and CS (Service Commercial) zones for our businesses on the El Camino Strip. It was felt this would help retain retail stores that would primarily serve our residents, rather than favoring businesses catering to a widespread regional clientele. The new BPA opposed muffler shops, massage parlors, and bars that were seen to be frequented by raucous and pugnacious male groups from outside Palo Alto.

### **But It Wasn’t All Bad Before**

Some things had been improving in the late 1940s and the 1950s. David Packard had become the President of the Palo Alto Unified School District’s Board of Trustees and pushed hard for a school in Barron Park, which was achieved in 1948 on land purchased from the Bol family. In 1951, a second school, Loma Vista, was built between Maybell and Orme Avenues (later renamed for the early settler Juana Briones). The City had purchased land across Maybell from the new school and prepared to install a new park, Juana Briones.

### **The Barron Park Donkeys**

The first donkeys we have a record of came to Barron Park unheralded, as “pets” of the Bol family in 1962 or early 1963. We do not know when the first horses came



**Illustration C: Josina Bol with Mickey in the new (current) donkey pasture after completion of the flood control project—mid-1990s. Bol Family photo.**





Photo: Al Larson

**Illustration D: Barron Park Volunteer Fire Department 1951 GMC pumper truck, used until 1975.**

to the farm, but it was probably before the first donkeys. There may have been some donkeys before 1962, possibly even before World War II, according to what several long-term residents have told Inge Harding-Barlow. The Bols also had horses that drew a mower and rake used in haying operations, not only on their properties, but at least on one neighbor's land. As the horses got older, the family switched to a tractor. After all the horses except one had grown old and died, several donkeys were acquired to provide company for the remaining horse. These first donkeys of record were Chris, the father of Chico (born to Jennifer in 1963) and Negrita (born to Rosita in 1964). The donkeys immediately became neighborhood pets, because Cornelis and Josina Bol encouraged kids to come and pet them through the fence that ran along Laguna Avenue where Bol Park is today. The Bols also sold donkeys to three neighborhood children, who petted and rode them throughout the neighborhood and generally took care of them (however, they were still pastured on the Bols' property). Negrita went to Teresa Smith, Chico to Colleen Gilmer and Michi to Dina Mandoli. Michi (pronounced "mee-shee")

should not be confused with Mickey, born July 1, 1967. (See Illustration C, Josina Bol with Mickey.) There was another donkey, that died shortly after its birth; thus there was a total of seven during this period. During the 1960s, "the Donkey Pasture" became an accepted feature and popular attraction in the neighborhood, and it wasn't long before the new Barron Park Association had its eye on the property as a possible future neighborhood park. (The later history of the donkeys will be covered in Part Two of this article.)

### **How the Neighborhood Created Bol Park**

Creating Bol Park was one of the two finest achievements of the BPA since its founding—the other being the eventual smooth annexation to the City, ending the "Cold War" with Palo Alto (covered in the next section). The park was conceived, politically negotiated, planned, funded designed, and built through the efforts of the neighborhood. It was partly a gift from the Bol family and partly paid for by taxes the neighborhood levied on itself through a special district established under County auspices. Ultimately some funding was supplied by a federal government grant.

However, it is unlikely that this complex project would have ever happened without the BPA and its leadership, especially BPA President Richard Placone, Park Committee Chair Sam Elster, and Landscape Architect Ken Arutunian. The BPA board worked hard on Phase One of the park project (the original five acres) from 1967 through 1974. Phase Two (the pathway) was also conceived and organized by the BPA and completed under the aegis of the City from 1976 through dedication in 1980. The pathway became public property through a gift from the Southern Pacific Railroad Company of one mile of abandoned right of way. The gift was personally negotiated by Dick Placone with the SP Board Chairman. A complete story of the park's founding was published in the Spring 1997 issue of this newsletter and republished in the Winter 2007 issue. Space does not permit me to repeat all the details here. Suffice it to say that we, the people of Barron Park are the only Palo Alto neighborhood to have created our own park—and a beautiful one it is.

### **Annexation Finally Succeeds in 1975**



**Illustration E: The sentiment on the firehouse reflected a widespread attitude and does not have to be interpreted as merely "anti-annexation." It is the spirit of Barron Park to this day. *Palo Alto Times*, November 5, 1975.**



Ironically, the end of the annexation conflict was precipitated by the same issue that had started it 30 years before—fire protection. Dick Placone had been quietly and diplomatically nudging the BPA and the neighborhood towards acceptance of the inevitable—annexation to the City—for a half-dozen years, but the key issue became the need to replace the Volunteer Fire Department's 1951 GMC pumper truck. (See Illustration D.) The Fire Protection District, hampered by Proposition 13 tax rate controls and the loss of much of its taxing base in the businesses along El Camino Real (due to the Ventura and Foothills II piecemeal annexations), could not afford to replace the truck and other equipment at 1975 prices. The neighborhood was forced to make painful decisions. A proposal to incorporate Barron Park as a city was shown to be financially infeasible, and that short-lived movement quickly fell apart. State law and policy was forcing unincorporated areas like Barron Park (which was almost surrounded by the City of Palo Alto) to undergo annexation by State mandate, even if the affected homeowners were unwilling to vote for it. In a battle of pamphlets, the BPA, using well-presented public information, was able to convince enough Barron Park voters so that the final tally at the November election was about 2-1 in favor (specifically, 936-478), and the annexation was a "done deal" by December 8, 1975. The Palo Alto Fire Department took responsibility for fire protection the day after the November election, and the Barron Park Fire Protection District became

history. But many people felt the same as those who inscribed their feelings on the front of the firehouse the day after the election. (See Illustration E, Firehouse photo.)

If you are interested in reading this history in more depth, here are references to previously published and archived articles in the BPA Newsletter. Go to: [bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter](http://bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter)

- The State "Borrow Pit"—Winter, 2014
- Annexation fights, in five parts—Spring, Summer, and Fall 2000, and Spring and Summer 2001
- The Volunteer Fire Department—Summer 2012
- How the Neighborhood Created Bol Park—Spring 2016

### Part Two of the Story Will Cover the Years 1975–2019

I hope you have enjoyed this short summary of the founding and early growth of the BPA. In Part Two of this article, planned for the Fall 2019 issue of this newsletter, I will cover the years following annexation to Palo Alto: 1975–2019. This will cover the flood control project, toxins from the Stanford Industrial Park in the groundwater and air, ongoing issues with development along El Camino Real, traffic problems, the valley gutters that have so greatly improved our streets, and the many social events sponsored by the BPA. If you have any questions about anything in Part One, please contact me: Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian, [dgrahampaca@gmail.com](mailto:dgrahampaca@gmail.com), 650-493-0689, or mail to 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto CA 94306.

## BPA Neighborhood Services/Home Business List

Look for this Link for Neighborhood Services at the BPA website: [bpapaloalto.org](http://bpapaloalto.org)

To list your service or home business, please send your information to:

[listmanager@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:listmanager@bpapaloalto.org)

The service provider or his/her household must be a current member of the BPA. If under 18, please include contact information for a parent or guardian.

### NEW! Neighbor Services

#### Neighbor Services

Various services offered by residents of Barron Park

## BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS SUMMER 2019

John W. King, President  
Markus Fromherz, Secretary  
John W. King, Treasurer  
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Todd Collins  
Richard Elder  
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Christian Kalar  
Lydia Kou  
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Gwen Luce  
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Jaya Pandey  
Myrna Rochester  
Mircea Voskerician  
Paul Yang

Committee/Activity Chairs

Business Liaison: Paul Yang

Communications: Myrna Rochester

Email Lists: Richard Elder

Environment: Jaya Pandey

Events: Vacant

Barron Park History: Douglas L. Graham

May Fête: John W. King

Membership: Lisa Berkowitz Landers

Neighborhood Safety & Emergency Preparedness: Maurice Green, Lydia Kou

Parks & Creeks: Christian Kalar

Bol Park California Native Plot:  
Richard Elder

Shared Pathway: Doug Burns

Schools Liaison: Todd Collins

Seniors Liaison: Peter K. Mueller

Traffic & Streets: Vacant

Zoning & Land Use: Lydia Kou

Welcoming: Gwen Luce

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 6:00 P.M.

For Meeting and Happy Hour locations write to [president@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:president@bpapaloalto.org)  
[bpapaloalto.org](http://bpapaloalto.org)

# Art in the Park: Touring the Eight National Parks of Alaska

By Jim Colton



**Denali at Dawn.**



**Glacier off Denali.**



**Denali up close.**



**Breaching humpback whale near Glacier Bay National Park.**

In our quest to visit all the U.S. National Parks, my wife Mary Jo and I visited all eight national parks in Alaska in 2018. We traveled by boat, train, car, and mostly by bush plane. Here are some of the photos from our trip.

Jim and Mary Jo Colton are 45-year residents of Green Acres II. Jim is a recognized travel photographer.

You may contact Jim at: [james.colton10@gmail.com](mailto:james.colton10@gmail.com)





Sheet mulching in progress and overhanging eucalyptus trees.



Raingarden blooms include California Poppies, Tansy-leaf Phacelia, Farewell to Spring, and Yarrow.



Volunteers at our Fall planting day.



# Bol Park Native Garden Developments!

By Melanie Cross and Richard Elder

**Y**ou may have questions as you pass along the pathway from Bol Park to Matadero Avenue:

What are those big piles of mulch along the pathway in the park?

And what are those plants sticking up from the mulched areas?

What are all the sticks next to the little plants doing there?

As you pass by, you may be saying, "Wow! Now there are pretty blooming plants instead of ugly weeds! Now we have a cool new Raingarden instead of a sadly neglected "lawn" at the corner of Matadero and Laguna!"

All this is the result of work done this year by neighborhood volunteers who are members of the Bol Park Nature Nurturers, along with Grassroots Ecology, a local nonprofit vegetation restoration group. Together they are working to smother out the weeds and replace them with California Native plants. Why Natives? Natives are at the base of the food chain for our insects. The insect larvae are the food that local birds need to raise their chicks; the system goes on up the food chain to the fox and the hawk. Our planting efforts this year were wildly successful due to the unusually generous rainfall pattern this winter and late into spring. Even though the perennial plants look small, they are thriving, and many are blooming! The annuals planted by Grassroots Ecology in the Raingarden along Laguna Avenue took off in just a few months to their full glory of bloom and will reseed themselves for next year's growth.

Many volunteers made this happen, from laying cardboard and shoveling mulch for sheet mulching to suppress weeds, to the work of planting and watering and subsequent weeding of the planted areas. A number of neighbors, including the main team of Jefferson Birch, Richard Elder, Melanie Cross, and Jeralyn Moran worked on the Native Garden extension, planting in late Fall and marking each plant with a

small stake to aid with later irrigation and identification. We have also begun sheet mulching another section, hence the ongoing piles of mulch and cardboard.

The Raingarden is the result of Grassroots Ecology Senior Ecologist Claire Elliott's perseverance and supervision of high school volunteers. Jeff Birch is the enthusiasm and hard work behind the well mulched and watered plots of milkweed you see along the pathway up to the bridge. He and Richard Elder have been busy, recently installing an elaborate drip irrigation system to water the new plants. In a few years, after the plants are established, they will require little watering beyond rainfall, but monthly irrigation will keep them looking good all summer. Rich is using his new electric tools to weed whack around some of the existing Native grasses and small shrubs along the pathway and near the creek to save them from being inadvertently mowed down by the City's annual weed abatement work. Now these Native grasses and small shrubs will be able to grow and reseed, hopefully reestablishing the area.

The City of Palo Alto provides irrigation to establish the plants and for their subsequent needs. However, all maintenance is expected to be done by volunteer effort. The Santa Clara Valley Water District gave a grant to Grassroots Ecology for the expenses of the Raingarden. The Palo Alto Garden Club, through the efforts of Shirley Finrock and Jeanne Cosby, is providing a grant for irrigation supplies and other expenses of putting in the new sections of the Native Garden. Individual donors have provided funds for the rest of the expenses, such as the cost of plants, identification labels, and miscellaneous needs. Volunteers have stepped up to do all of the work so far. However, pruning the overhanging eucalyptus trees will require a professional team. Residents of Roble Ridge generally arrange for the eucalyptus to be pruned above the street to keep branches from damaging the power lines. As a result, the

trees' growth is unbalanced, and some of them have most of their mass hanging over the park land. We hope to address this problem which will also facilitate planting under the trees.

## Interested?

If you are interested in learning more about what we are doing and our future plans, joining in the fun of planning and workdays, or donating to help with expenses, please contact:

Melanie Cross: [melanie@pcross.com](mailto:melanie@pcross.com) or  
Richard Elder: [rich.e.elder@gmail.com](mailto:rich.e.elder@gmail.com)

You can donate to our Bol Park Native Garden through "Friends of the Palo Alto Parks." Direct your donation to the "Bol Park Fund" at [friendsofpaparks.org/donations](http://friendsofpaparks.org/donations) Or by mail or phone to "Friends of the Palo Alto Parks (FOPAP), for the Bol Park Fund," FOPAP, 425 Grant Ave., Suite 27, Palo Alto, CA 94306; Phone: 650-327-7323.

There are great online resources to learn more about growing California Native plants to aid biodiversity and learn different approaches. Here are two links:

1) Video of an excellent presentation last fall at the California Native Plant Society Conservation Conference by noted biodiversity author, Douglas Tallamy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yo4ZJ-ryTaE>

It is of course better to watch an hour-long video with others and have a chance for discussion... so, please let Melanie (email above) know if you would like to join a group for an evening of biodiversity videos, discussion, and refreshments.

2) Juanita Salisbury, a local garden designer who creates pollinator gardens elsewhere in Palo Alto, has posted a PowerPoint presentation online:

<http://www.cnps-scv.org/images/stories/presentations/Native-Plants-for-pollinator-gardens-Saratoga-20190528.pdf>



BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION  
724 Barron Avenue  
Palo Alto, California 94306  
[www.bpapaloalto.org](http://www.bpapaloalto.org)

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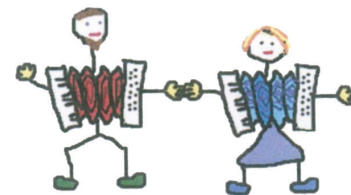
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