

# BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John King, BPA President



**W**elcome to Fall, Barron Park! It's nice to finally enjoy cooler weather after an unusually hot summer! Not to mention a little rain. With windows still open at night, are you listening to the songs of our tree frogs? No, those sounds aren't made by cicadas or crickets, but by Pacific tree frogs, also known as "chorus" frogs, whose local population has rebounded considerably.

There's lots going on. We're looking forward to seeing you at upcoming events - that is, if we haven't met up already! There was another delightful Ice Cream Social on Sunday, October 2. A Town Hall meeting with the City of Palo Alto is slated for Wednesday, October 12. And please join the colorful Diwali Celebration at Barron Park Elementary on Sunday, October 23. Look out for details!

A current neighborhood concern is a redevelopment proposal for the Creekside Inn property at Matadero and El Camino. The Barron Park Association has drawn up a letter with a list of residents' concerns and submitted it to the City Council in advance of the meeting where the proposal will be pre-screened. At the time of this writing, that City Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 17. To prepare, the BPA Board sponsored several neighborhood Zoom gatherings, one of which included a presentation by repre-

sentatives of the City Planning Department. (A recording of the August 16 meeting is posted on the BPA website: [bpapaloalto.org](http://bpapaloalto.org)) A number of BP residents participated in crafting the letter which has also been shared with the entire BP community. There will be more to report in the Winter issue of this Newsletter.

As a dog owner, I have used the Barron Park Elementary School playgrounds after hours as a dog park, along with numerous others. On a recent weekend, neighbors even spotted a visiting horse... But there are issues: For obvious reasons, the school cannot tolerate

dog waste left behind and has asked for help in keeping the playground clean. Note that BPES has been super accommodating up to now. It's very important to maintain our good relationship. If you are a dog owner and use the school playground, please make sure to pick up all dog waste, even if from someone else's dog.

Thank you to all our renewing BPA members and businesses, as well as to our newest members. As usual, please use the membership information in this issue to renew or join the BPA at: <https://bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/>

You can always reach me at [johnwadeking@gmail.com](mailto:johnwadeking@gmail.com) Thanks and looking forward to seeing you all around the neighborhood!



Children at the Pair Up (Juntos) summer camp at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park learn how to make balloon animals. More fun pictures and the story behind the camp are found on page 4. Photo by Yoonah Park.

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# A Tribute to Louis Olave

By Ann Burrell



Louis Olave on a morning walk in the neighborhood. Photo by Paul Lin.

There are many things to love about living in Barron Park: quiet roads, often without sidewalks, donkeys to visit, Bol Park, the creeks, diverse house styles. I could go on and on, but one thing that impresses me so much are our litter-free streets. And for that we need to thank Louis Olave. You may have seen him, usually wearing shorts and a brightly colored shirt, a grabber in one hand and a bag with handles in the other. Always cheerful, with a ready smile and a friendly “Good morning, ladies,” as he walks by, leaving litter-free streets behind him.

Louis grew up in the East Bay. He started his litter-free lifestyle emptying the trash bag in his family’s car when they stopped at a service station to fill up. This habit slowly changed to picking up trash as he walked his dog in the neighborhood. He now lives on Los Robles with Chip, his partner of 43 years, husband since 2015. While Chip can often be seen walking with Louis, he doesn’t gather trash. Louis says that Chip doesn’t even see

it; his mind is on more weighty issues befitting a retired Stanford professor.

Louis freely admits to having a strong OCD gene; their immaculate house attests to that. But he is quick to tell me that he isn’t the only person responsible for a litter-free Barron Park. Harriet and Bob Moss can be seen on their morning walks up and down Los Robles gathering trash as they go. And I have also encountered Joanne Barnes on my street and on other streets, picking up even tiny scraps of paper and plastic. Prior to these neighborhood benefactors, there were others.

Earlier, there was Eleanor Rhoades, Chip and Louis’s next-door neighbor. Eleanor greeted them upon their arrival in Barron Park in 1991 with two freshly baked loaves of bread. She became a litter gatherer too, and, as she aged, she became one of Louis’s favorite “ladies” (older women

whom he takes care of with rides to doctor’s appointments, shopping, visits, etc.). Other favorites were Barbara Johnson and Sylvia Golub, sadly no longer with us.

My opening paragraph omitted the most valued thing that makes Barron Park special: the people who live here. We have many treasures in our community who make it a better place to live. Thank you, Louis, for all that you do.

## BPA EMAIL LISTS

The Barron Park Association offers three community email lists, hosted on Google Groups, for any resident to post: *bpa-news*, *bpa-misc*, and *bpa-issues*.

To join a list, go to: <https://bpapaloalto.org/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 FALL 2022

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Prodigy Press

## ART IN MY YARD



We know that Barron Park has many examples of outdoor or “yard” art, either made by you or other artists. We’d love to see photos of them in upcoming newsletters.

Please send reproducible photos to Myrna Rochester at: [mrbpa@sonic.net](mailto:mrbpa@sonic.net) Tell us something about the art, but you don’t need to include your street address.



Barron Park, Palo Alto

# Diwali Celebration

Food, Music, Henna, Dance  
Dress code: wear your ethnic outfit!  
Volunteers Needed



**23-OCT-2022, 2-5 PM**  
**BARRON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Sponsors: Barron Park Association  
City of Palo Alto



# Buena Vista Summer Camp Recap

By Yoonha Park



June 2022, Pair Up/Juntos Volunteer Counselors: Top l. to r., Emmett Rodriguez, Krystal Curtiss, Audrey Fan, Ben Xu, Marcela Izaguirre. Bottom l. to r., Yoonha Park, Anna Van Riesen, Victoria Yu, Photo by Karen Ratzlaff.

Working with kids comes naturally to me, but running my own summer camp was a unique experience. The idea of starting the Pair Up (Juntos) summer camp came from a desire to build a stronger sense of community during the pandemic, and create a place for kids at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park (a largely low-income, Hispanic community) to learn new skills that build teamwork, compassion, and creativity. The camp's name—Pair Up—was chosen to reflect its emphasis on kids building relationships with their mentor buddies—student volunteers who would lead and participate in the activities with the kids. (*Juntos* means “together” in Spanish.)

This past June, with the support of nearly 15 student and adult volunteers, including co-student leaders Audrey Fann (rising high school senior) and myself (rising college freshman), along with our adult adviser, Julie Young, the camp served 14 kids for three hours each day. We provided the kids with a free lunch followed by a series of fun

activities that ranged from making origami, oobleck, slime, and balloon animals (with a professional!!) to creating watercolor butterflies and constructing towers from



The kids enjoyed a number of craft activities, including creating watercolor butterflies. Photo by Yoonha Park.

## View this Newsletter in Full Color!

Read this issue in full color and with live web links at <https://bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter/> as soon as it's posted.

While you're there, check out our Archive of past Newsletters.

Thanks! The Editors

toothpicks and marshmallows, and making ice cream from scratch. My personal favorite was watching the kids play a hula hoop passing game.

Though the camp only ran for a week, the impact it made on the kids showed through their smiles and screams of excitement. The camp also helped create positive memories for the children and reminded them that they matter.

But if it weren't for the generous donations from many people in Barron Park and beyond, from funding the camp to providing supplies and purchasing Amazon list items, the camp would not have happened—let alone run at no cost to the families. So, thank you. And special thanks to the Barron Park Association for being one of our sponsors. Everyone's support gave our team the means to bless the Buena Vista community through running the Pair Up (Juntos) summer camp.



Making slime at camp was a highlight for these campers. Photo by Yoonha Park.

# Buena Vista Partners Update

By Karen Ratzlaff, Board Member, Buena Vista Partners

**B**uena Vista Partners (BVP) was delighted to serve as one of the sponsors for the summer camp—Pair Up (Juntos)—in June at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. (We are proud of the excellent work done by the teen leaders and volunteers.) Along with financial assistance, BVP helped coordinate craft donations, lunches, and publicity and provided the necessary mandatory reporter supervision.

The BV Food Pantry, which was open for over two years during the pandemic and served many in the community, officially closed this June. (A small amount of emergency goods are still kept onsite.) The long-running BV after-school Youth Scholars Program (Homework Club) resumed in September, and BVP is looking to provide some furnishings to make Space 22 a cozy and inviting spot for these young scholars. You can contact me for details.

Moving forward, promoting education for adult community members and related financial assistance will be a bigger focus for BVP.

Thanks to so many in Barron Park who have come alongside us to help our neighbors who live at Buena Vista. Please contact me with



Karen Ratzlaff, with fellow board member and Stanford Professor Amado Padilla, enjoy the Pair Up (Juntos) summer camp at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. Photo by Yoonha Park.

your questions or ideas at: [karen\\_ratzlaff@hotmail.com](mailto:karen_ratzlaff@hotmail.com)

*Buena Vista Partners of Palo Alto*

*([buenavistapartners.org](http://buenavistapartners.org)) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit benefiting our neighbors who live at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park at Los Robles and El Camino.*

## BPA EMAILS AND WEB LINKS FALL 2022

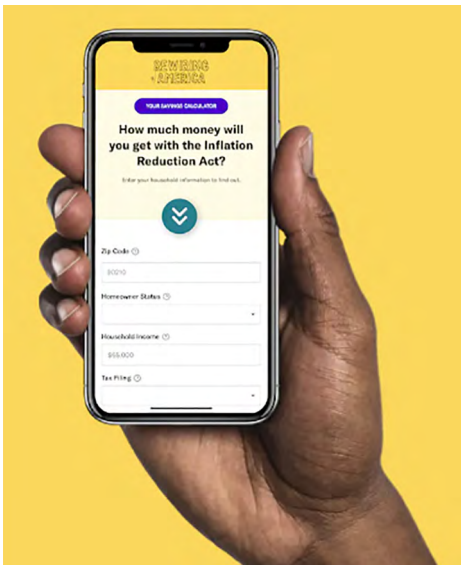
- **BPA Website:** <https://bpapaloalto.org/>
- **BPA Newsletter Archive:** <https://bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter/>
- **BPA Membership (Join/Renew):** <https://bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/>
- **Membership Questions:** Lisa Berkowitz Landers at: [barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com](mailto:barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com)
- **BPA Email Lists:** Join at: <https://bpapaloalto.org/bpa-email-lists/> or write to: [listmanager@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:listmanager@bpapaloalto.org)
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- **BPA Webmaster:** Maurice Green at: [bpawebman@bpapaloalto.org](mailto:bpawebman@bpapaloalto.org)
- **Barron Park Donkeys:** To volunteer, donate, or purchase merchandise, go to: <http://barronparkdonkeys.org> or contact Jenny Kiratli at: [barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com](mailto:barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com)
- **Bol Park Native Habitat:** Donate to the Native Garden via the Bol Park Fund at: <https://friendsofpaparks.org/donations2> Or by mail or phone: Friends of the Palo Alto Parks (FOPAP), Bol Park Fund, 425 Grant Ave., Suite 27, Palo Alto, CA 94306; 650-327-7323. To volunteer, contact Rich Elder at: [rich.e.elder@gmail.com](mailto:rich.e.elder@gmail.com)

# Time to Start Switching Away from Gas

## Smart Technology and Federal Funds Now Available

By David Coale and Hilary Glann

Polls show that 70% of Americans are concerned about climate change, but many of them haven't had the information or the means to take action to address it. That changed with the recent passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA): The Federal government has finally committed significant funds to fight climate change by providing financial assistance to help Americans transition off fossil fuels. The IRA helps Americans of all income levels, both homeowners and renters, to start switching their gas-powered cars, furnaces, water heaters, dryers, and stoves to safer, smarter, and healthier electric alternatives.



**The Inflation Reduction Act helps you switch out your gas-powered appliances for next generation electric alternatives. To find out what financial benefits are available for you, visit the Rewiring America calculator: <https://www.rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator>**

### Is There Enough Power in the Grid for All These New Electric Devices?

Our record heat waves, made worse by climate change, have increased afternoon/early evening energy demands. At the same time, climate change has caused droughts that have cut California's hydroelectric power generation almost in half. This causes many residents to worry that we don't have enough energy to power all these new electric vehicles and appliances.

Our problem is a demand-supply imbalance: too much energy when the sun shines, and not enough supply when the sun goes down. To address this imbalance, utilities encourage us to set our air conditioners to 72 degrees at 1 p.m. on very hot days, and then raise the thermostat to 78 degrees at 4 p.m. If you follow this recommendation, along with shifting major appliance use (washers, dryers, etc.) to the middle of the day, you help solve the demand-supply imbalance by using the extra solar generated electricity in the daytime and using less electricity during the late afternoon/evening hours.

Electric vehicles and appliances can also store excess energy generated during the day. Charging EVs during the peak solar hours whenever possible means they don't need to be charged between 4 and 9 p.m. Similarly, new electric heat pump water heaters, with mixing valves to prevent scalding, can be 'super-heated' to 140 degrees during the day and then offer hot water throughout the evening, thus avoiding peak demand times. Our electricity rates will be changing across the state to give residents a financial incentive to shift their heavy electricity uses to peak solar hours. Additionally, California is investing aggressively in offshore wind farms, geothermal power plants, and utility level battery storage, so we will have more power sources after the sun goes down.

### Fans, Compressors, Magnets, and Microprocessors Instead of Fossil Fuels

New electric water heaters, space heaters/coolers, and stoves are much smarter and more efficient than the gas units they replace. For example, instead of burning natural gas to create heat, "heat pump" furnaces and water heaters use fans and compressors, managed by microprocessors, to pull heat out of the air. Induction cooktops use electric currents and magnetic induction to directly heat the pan and are 90% efficient. Gas stoves and electric coil stoves work by transferring heat from the



**Induction cooktops are healthier, safer, faster, and easier to clean. They keep your kitchen cooler and are better for the planet. To learn more, watch this short video with Chef Jon Kung talking about his experiences with induction cooking. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooNzRrHA9VY> Photo by [Conscious Design](#) on [Unsplash](#)**

burner to the pan. As a result, 40% to 60% of the heat is lost to the surrounding air, which heats up the kitchen.

### Smart Choices Save You Money

Some contractors and appliance vendors will encourage you to spend a lot of money to switch to electric. But by making smart choices in the appliances and contractors you select, you can avoid unnecessary costs and delays.

For example, you may be told you need to upgrade your electric service to power new electric devices. However, if you have at least a 100-amp electric service, and you purchase appliances that need fewer amps to do their jobs, you should be able to electrify up to a 3,000 square foot house without an electric service upgrade.

Choosing lower amp devices will also put less demand on the Palo Alto electric grid, which will save everyone from paying for unnecessary grid updates. Redwood Energy developed the "Watt Diet" which provides strategies for avoiding an electric service upgrade to power your new appliances: <https://redwoodenergy.net/watt-diet-calculator/> Plus, you can always call Palo Alto's Home Efficiency Genie at 650-713-3411. Phone calls are free, or you can schedule a virtual

Home Electrification Readiness Assessment for \$49.

**New Electric Water Heater Turnkey Installation Program in Palo Alto**

On October 3, 2022, Palo Alto approved a new program to help residents replace their old gas water heaters with new electric “heat pump” water heaters. With the new turnkey installation program, City-selected contractors will install a heat pump water heater for a single flat price, sparing residents from contractor selection and permitting hassles.

Residents can either pay the entire equipment and installation fee up front, or pay half the cost up front, then pay the remainder as a monthly fee on their utility bill over five years. Residents who want to manage their own electric water heater installation will also be eligible for a rebate.

If you are interested in participating in this program, please complete a short survey provided by the 350 Palo Alto Climate Team.



The City of Palo Alto will offer new “heat pump” electric water heaters via a turnkey purchase and installation program starting in early 2023. These new water heaters are over 300% more efficient, smarter, safer, and less expensive to own than gas water heaters. With a mixing valve, they can also “store” excess solar energy in the form of very hot water that can be used when the sun goes down. Photo by Hilary Glenn.

We will provide your contact information to the right City employee when the program officially launches in the next 4-6 weeks: <https://forms.gle/myCjcQGgu9JhYTgC9>

The time is right to start planning your switch from gas to electric, especially as your old gas appliances reach their end of life. The technology, funding, and know-how are now all available to help you make the switch.

**Resources**

- How much financial assistance will you receive when you electrify: <https://www.rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator>
- Save money and hassles when you electrify with the Watt Diet: <https://redwood-energy.net/watt-diet-calculator/>
- More information on electric replacements for gas appliances: <https://switchison.org/how-it-works>
- Why and how to switch to electric resource page <https://350siliconvalley.org/switch2electric>
- Talk to a neighbor who has switched to electric for product and contractor recommendations <https://fossilfreebuildings.org/electrichome-ambassador-program/>

**Winter BPA Newsletter Deadline**

**Thursday, December 1, 2022**

To All Our Past and Future Contributors: Please submit articles (Microsoft Word is best) for the Winter 2022-23 issue of the Barron Park Association Newsletter, along with photos/illustrations (separate from text), by **Thursday, December 1, 2022**, to Myrna Rochester at [mbrbpa@sonic.net](mailto:mbrbpa@sonic.net)

Make sure your BPA membership is current. If your idea is a query (for an article, story, report, update, interview, announcement, review, anecdote, or artist’s page . . . ), please contact us in advance.

The Winter issue will be available in early January 2023, online to requesting members and print copies by U.S. mail.

Announcements should be for events scheduled *after* January 15, 2023. Please keep this in mind, especially for neighborhood and school activities. Thanks!

**BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS FALL 2022**

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- Richard Elder
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- Senior Connections:* Pooja Punn
- Traffic & Streets:* Doug Burns
- Webmaster:* Maurice Green
- Welcoming:* Gwen Luce
- Zoning & Land Use:* Vacant
- P.A. Neighborhood (PAN) Liaison:* Doug Burns

**BPA Board Meetings** are held the 3rd Tuesday of most months at 7:15 p.m. Neighbors are welcome.

For Board Meeting Schedule write to: [johnwadeking@gmail.com](mailto:johnwadeking@gmail.com)

<https://bpapaloalto.org>

# How Did Our Street Get Its Name?

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

## A Brief Introduction: “Street Naming 101”

By the beginning of this century, street naming in Palo Alto had slowed almost to a standstill since the city was almost totally “built out.” However, there is still potential for new streets, almost always only short cul-de-sacs in new condominium or apartment complexes, or developments of detached single-family homes. Sometimes these are private “driveways” and are not named, but there are exceptions, particularly when small clusters of new R-1 homes are built on large lots that become available for development.

The street naming process in Palo Alto begins when a development project is approved by the City Council. The City staff then asks for name proposals from the public, including the Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA). Anyone can play the game, but often the only suggestions come from the developer and/or PAHA. Any proposed name must be approved by the local U.S. Post Office and by the City Fire and Communications Departments (to avoid names similar to those of existing streets, too difficult to spell or pronounce, or just too long). The City Council is then advised by its Public Facilities Naming Committee, and the Council makes the final naming decision.

## Terms for Describing the Street Type

Like most cities in the United States, Palo Alto uses a binomial naming convention: A unique identifier is followed by a street type descriptor, such as, “street” or “avenue.” At least twelve descriptors are used in Palo Alto: expressway, boulevard, road, street, avenue, drive, way, court, place, circle, terrace, and lane.

Some specific conventions apply: “Ways” are usually only one block long; “courts” and “places” are usually cul-de-sacs; and “lanes” are usually alleys behind businesses. In Palo Alto, behind rows of houses built before 1910, several lanes provided access to horse stables. Palo Alto has only three “expressways” (Foothill, Page Mill, and Oregon), one “boulevard” (Park), and one “terrace” (Chabot).

## Neighborhood Variations

Many neighborhoods in Palo Alto have

streets named for a category of people or objects. For example, when the city was first laid out, Timothy Hopkins and William Mills chose to name many streets after famous poets and authors, such as Chaucer, Homer, Kipling, Milton, and Poe (plus at least 19 others). In old Mayfield, which included the present California Avenue business district, famous generals and politicians were honored (Lincoln, Sherman, and Grant). Other tracts focused on trees and flowers, geography, and numerous other categories. Throughout the city, perhaps the most common categories were the names of developers, local landowners, and their family members.

In Barron Park, the notable categories were Spanish names (at times mistranslated from English). Most common were the names of landowners, trees, flowers, and developers’ wives and children.

## Amaranta Avenue and Court



Illustration A: Amaranthus plant in Barron Park. Photo by Leon Rochester.

The booklet *Streets of Palo Alto*, revised and republished by the Palo Alto Historical Association in 1991, says that Amaranta Avenue and its attached Amaranta Court were named for the strikingly colored ornamental and edible plant, *Amaranthus*. The Spanish name Amaranta was chosen during the Hispanicization fashion of the 1940s and ‘50s. (See Illustration A: Amaranth flowers.)

Varieties of amaranths have eye-catching names, such as Love-Lies-Bleeding, Tassel Flower, Prince’s Feather, and Joseph’s Coat. Amaranthus stems and leaves can be eaten

as a spinach substitute; its seed is used in cereals.

The street was laid out in 1941 as Amaranta Way and ran south off Los Robles Avenue. It divided the property of the Buckley brothers who sold the land to the developers of Encina Gardens and Encina Grande Park. In 1952, the street was opened through to Maybell Avenue, creating the first (and still the only) north-south connection between the Barron and Maybell Tracts west of El Camino Real.

## Encina Grande Drive

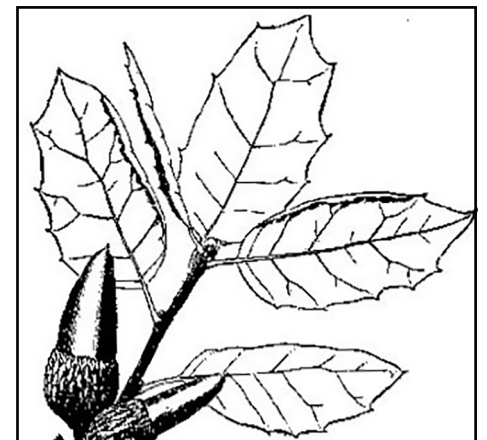


Illustration B: Coast Live Oak foliage and acorn. From *Western Forest Trees* by James Berthold Berry, 1966.

This street was laid out in 1946 as part of the Encina Grande tract. The Spanish word *Encina* refers to large live oaks. In coastal California it is assumed to mean the California Live Oak or Coast Live Oak. Both common names are used for *Quercus agrifolia*. According to *Oaks of California*, the Coast Live Oak is an evergreen tree with a dense, hemispherical crown. It commonly lives for more than 250 years. The largest trees have trunks 8 to 12 feet in diameter and crowns that spread nearly 130 feet across. The leaves are small (one to three inches long), oval, and convex, with spiny margins like holly leaves. (See Illustration B: Drawing of Coast Live Oak foliage.)

The Encina Grande tract and street were both named after a specific, individual tree—the enormous Coast Live Oak which was located at the current intersection of Encina Grande Drive and Arbol Drive (*arbol* is Spanish for “tree”). Its canopy was larger than any other in Barron Park and covered about six to



seven thousand square feet (equivalent to the minimum R-1 lot size). It shows up as a spectacular dark blob on both the 1941 and 1948 aerial photos of Barron Park.

**Josina Avenue**



**Illustration C: Josina Bol with Mickey the donkey. Snapshot by unrecorded photographer, early 1990s.**

Josina Avenue was named for Barron Park’s most significant benefactor, Josina Bol. (See Illustration C: Photo of Josina Bol with Mickey the donkey.) Josina Bol left Holland for the U.S. in 1936 with her husband Cornelis and their five sons. Cornelis was a research scientist in the Engineering School at Stanford and the inventor of the mercury vapor light, while Josina ran the family “farm” in Barron Park from their home lot on Roble Ridge. She also helped manage the private water company supplying the north end of Barron Park with domestic water. After Cornelis’s death, her greatest gift to the neighborhood was the sale of land comprising the major portion of today’s Bol Park to the County at well below market value, in effect a partial gift to the neighborhood to form the park. Josina was also well known for nurturing the Bol donkeys, who became beloved symbols of Barron Park.

**Los Robles Avenue**

This avenue was named for the Valley Oak, *Quercus lobata*. *Roble* is the Spanish word for oaks of the White Oak evolutionary lineage. This is the monarch of California Oaks by virtue of its size, age, and beauty (according to *Oaks of California*). The largest trees may reach six or seven feet in diameter and more than 100 feet tall, reaching ages of 400 to

600 years. Valley Oaks are deciduous, with lobed leaves. (See Illustration D: Drawing of Valley Oak foliage.)

Los Robles (“the Oaks”) was the first lane cut through the native vegetation in Mayfield

the avenue and the tract were named for are steadily disappearing. Most have fallen victim to root rot caused by overwatering, but a few of the old giants still remain in 2022.

**Pena (pronounced “PAIN-yah”) Court**

This cul-de-sac with eight houses runs north off Maybell Avenue about midway between Thain Way to the east and Baker Avenue to the west. It was laid out in 1992. I was the proponent of the name and was at that time a member of the Street Naming Committee of the Palo Alto Historical Association, which recommended the name to the City Council. This is the only public memorialization of José Peña in Palo Alto.

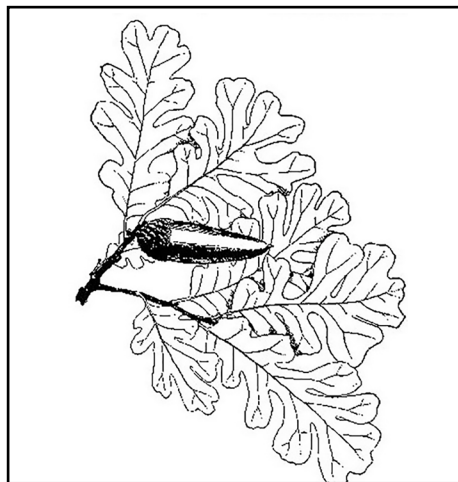
As a young man, José Peña was an artilleryman at the Presidio of San Francisco. He left the Mexican Army and relocated to the Santa Clara Mission area where he taught school for many years. His ambition was to become a landowner. He started by requesting the mission to grant him permission to occupy 4,400 acres of its pastureland near the Arroyo de las Yeguas (“Mares’ Creek,” now known as Adobe Creek) in Palo Alto. The permission was received in 1822. I do not know whether he ran cattle there. He may have operated the pastureland alone, so sheep were more likely.

After the secularization of the missions by the Mexican government in the 1830s, the Governor of California formally granted Peña 8,500 acres in 1841, making him the original grantee of Rancho Rincón de San Francisquito (informally known as Rancho Santa Rita). All the land of Barron Park was part of this Rancho. Peña then sold the rancho to Secundino and Teodoro Robles in 1847. In 1853, the Robles family sold 250 acres of their land to their lawyer, Elisha Crosby. He named the property “Mayfield Farm” and built a substantial two-story farmhouse. Crosby then lost his fortune in the 1856-7 depression, selling the farm to Sarah Wallis in 1857.

**Wallis Court**

Alphabetization led me to end this partial list of Barron Park streets with Wallis Court. If the importance of the namesake person had been the criterion, Sarah Wallis would have come first. She was, in many ways, the most interesting and historically important person to have lived on the land that became the “core” of our neighborhood. She was

*Continued on page 10*



**Illustration D: Valley Oak foliage and acorn. From *Western Forest Trees* by James Berthold Berry, 1966.**

Farm, probably by Sarah Wallis in the mid-nineteenth century. The lane was a straight line through a “park” of large, mature Valley Oaks. After the sale of the Barron Estate in 1919, it was designated “Los Robles Road” in the Barron Tract. When the housing tract bounded by La Para and Los Robles was laid out in 1927, it was named “the Oak Subdivision.” By 1938 Los Robles Road was renamed as an “avenue” (this might have been approximately when it was first paved). The trees that

# Fewer Insects. Fewer Birds. Declining Biodiversity What to Do?

By Linda Elder, BPA Native Habitat Committee



Springtime in the Rain Garden. Photos by Myrna Rochester.



Fall 2018: Volunteers installing the Rain Garden at the Bol Park Native Garden.

Every one of us can act to save nature by growing and maintaining plants that support local food webs, help manage the local watershed, and supply a year-round community of native pollinators. That is what we are doing in the Bol Park Native Garden. Happily, we are seeing many more lizards this year. And birders say that they are seeing more birds!

Our Bol Park Native Garden was created and is cared for by volunteers. Whether you want to see more birds or simply enjoy gardening, come help us! Spend just a few hours; these small acts save nature. Then take what you learn home to create your own garden that includes locally native plants and plays a critical role in the local ecology.

Melanie Cross, an experienced gardener,

coordinates our scheduled workdays and can guide gardeners at every level. Please contact [bpnativegarden@gmail.com](mailto:bpnativegarden@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering. Melanie will add you to the list and let you know when workdays are scheduled.

“Garden as if your life depends upon it.”

— Dr. Doug Tallamy, Entomologist, University of Delaware

## Street Names -- continued from page 9

also the most locally prominent person in the Mayfield area during the 1850s, '60s, and '70s.

Sarah built a very large “gingerbread”-type Victorian mansion onto the front of Elisha Crosby’s already large farmhouse, which she used as servants’ quarters, kitchen, and work areas. (See Illustration E: Lithograph of the Wallis Mansion and grounds in 1876.)

It became known as the “Barron Mansion” after Edward Barron bought it in 1878 and added a large wing and a third-floor cupola. The mansion was the most splendid residence in the northern part of Santa Clara County from 1857 until it burned down in 1936.

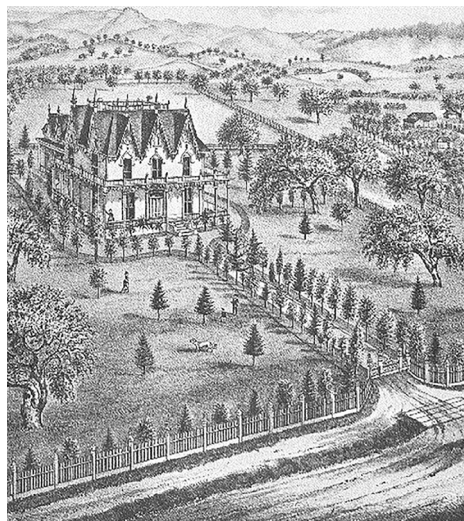


Illustration E - Sarah Wallis's Mansion in Mayfield. Lithograph in *Historical Atlas of Santa Clara County*, by Thompson and West, 1876, p. 90.

## Musings

It is unfortunate that *Streets of Palo Alto*, the Palo Alto Historical Association’s informative and easy-to-read 70-page booklet, is out of print and unavailable except as occasional copies come up in used book sales. If another revision is made and becomes available, I most strongly urge readers to buy a copy—and then buy another to give to a friend!

## Corrections, questions, comments?

I welcome readers to contact me at any time by email at [dgrahampaca@gmail.com](mailto:dgrahampaca@gmail.com), or phone me at 650-493-0689 (landline) or reach me by snail mail at 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Sorry, texting me will get you nowhere since I don’t have a cell phone.

# Updates from Barron Park Senior Connections!

By Pooja Punn, Coordinator

The Barron Park Senior Connections group is excited to announce that this past summer we hosted our first in-person lunch in a very long time! The lunch was held at Bol Park on July 16. We served sandwiches from the Driftwood Deli and Market. An excellent time was had by all! We hope to continue these in-person lunches on a regular basis as long as it remains safe to do so.

We will host another lunch within the next couple of months. It will most likely be around Thanksgiving, and we plan on celebrating with seasonal food and decorations.

Additionally, we've noticed how many senior musicians we have in the community, and are currently working on hosting a Barron Park Senior Connections Concert, most likely sometime this winter.

More updates pending! Please contact me with your questions and ideas – Pooja Punn at [barronparkseniorconnections@gmail.com](mailto:barronparkseniorconnections@gmail.com)



At lunch, July 16: Standing, *l. to r.*, Alan Bien, Annie Liberman, Peter Mueller, Art Liberman; Seated, *l. to r.*, Gee-Gee Lenhart, Darryl Thomander, Nanci Thomander; At back, *l. to r.*, Pooja Punn, Gwen Luce (on Zoom!), Shanti Punn. Photos by the Punn family.



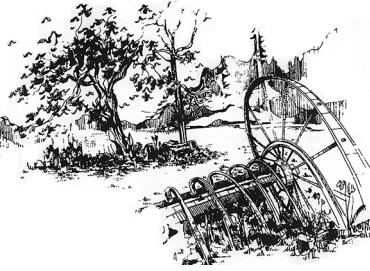
The July 16 lunch group chatting after the meal.

## Barron Park Senior Connections

Barron Park Seniors! Family and Friends of BP Seniors!

Join together for scheduled events, lunches, and gatherings. Reach out socially and for mutual interests and assistance. Join the **Senior Connections** mailing list and write the coordinator Pooja Punn with your ideas, requests, and questions at:

[barronparkseniorconnections@gmail.com](mailto:barronparkseniorconnections@gmail.com)



# 2023 Barron Park Association Membership

Thanks to all BPA members who joined for 2022!

**2023 Membership Renewals begin January 1, 2023. It's fine to renew early!**

Your membership can be renewed online with PayPal at:  
<https://bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/>

To pay by personal check, mail this membership form and your check to:  
**BPA Treasurer, 724 Barron Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306**

*Memberships renewed after October 1, 2022, are valid through 2023.*

*To check your membership status please email: [barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com](mailto:barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com)*

Name(s):	Primary email address:
Address:	Secondary email address:
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Newsletter:</b> I want the <b>online edition</b> instead of a mailed copy for Summer, Fall, and Winter.	Phone:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fellow</b> \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Member</b> \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Business</b> \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Patron</b> \$50  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Senior</b> \$15 |   |

- Additional Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ If sending a personal check, pay to: Barron Park Association.  
 Total Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Note: Membership and contributions are not tax deductible.

## BPA Neighborhood Committees: Please check your volunteer interests

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Newsletter:</b> Contribute photos, articles, creative works; interview Barron Park neighbors/businesses for articles; proofread. | with the Emergency Preparedness Chairperson to prepare the neighborhood to handle major emergencies.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>May Fête:</b> Help with the annual Spring neighborhood event in Bol Park.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Traffic and Streets:</b> Work with City and neighborhood to review traffic issues, present plans for traffic calming and other safety-related changes within Barron Park and on adjacent streets.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Social/Cultural Events:</b> Organize volunteers, coordinate neighborhood events, assist with planning.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Environmental Issues:</b> Work on a specific neighborhood environmental issue or identify, create and implement sustainable environmental solutions in our neighborhood.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Welcoming:</b> Greet new residents with an informational packet to introduce them to our caring community.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoning and Land Use:</b> Be informed about urban design studies or multi-family, commercial, or mixed-use developments proposed in and near our neighborhood; attend meetings and provide input to project sponsors. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parks and Creeks:</b> Work with City and neighborhood to review park and creek issues, maintenance and improvement projects.     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>School Liaison:</b> Coordinate BPA affairs and news with neighborhood school issues and activities.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Seniors:</b> Join us for lunch and other activities, or serve as a volunteer to help other Barron Park Seniors.                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Neighborhood Safety and Emergency Preparedness:</b> Work   |  |

The BPA encourages all residents and businesses in Barron Park/Green Acres 2 to join our volunteer neighborhood association. Our BPA events are slowly starting up again. Your membership dues support them, as well as the BPA quarterly Newsletters and community programs that include the Bol Park Native Habitat Garden, Welcoming New Residents, Senior Lunches, the Bol Park Donkey Project, Buena Vista Scholars, Summer Camp, and Food Drive, and Emergency Preparedness efforts.

# El Camino Business Update, Fall 2022

By Bob Moss

There continue to be changes in occupancy on El Camino Real between Adobe Creek and Page Mill Road, plus an increase in vacancies. Vacancy rates on the Barron Park side are still relatively low. However, the coronavirus lockdown and stay-at-home orders starting in 2020 did have a negative impact, especially on the Ventura side.

### On the Barron Park side:

The former Jewish Study Network offices at **3626** and **3628** El Camino have been vacant for years. Needles Studio at **3666A** has been replaced by Home Remodel, Inc. Family Fashion Cuts at **3666D** has been replaced by The Strength Collective (personal training). Palo Alto Tailoring at **3700**, corner of Barron Avenue, is vacant, although some equipment remains. At **3850**, State of Mind Slice House (handmade pizza) replaced Roadside Chicken.

French Cabinetry opened at **3960** (formerly Olive O' Life). The Thain lot at **4160** has been vacant for more than 45 years; although several townhouse projects were approved for the site, nothing is under construction. The Montessori pre-school at **4232** is now called Palo Alto Academy.

### On the Ventura side:

Chicago Title Company replaced Flagstar Bank at **2875**. The site at **2905** has been vacant for more than 40 years with no applications for redevelopment. A proposal to redevelop the former Mikes Bikes at **3001** with 19,800 sq. ft. of ground floor retail and 30 apartments plus 20 apartments in a building behind the retail was approved years ago, but is still not under construction.

The former Foot Locker site at **3225** at Portage is under construction for a mixed-use project with a 4-story building that will have 6,513 sq. ft. of ground floor retail and 6 housing units, plus a 2-story rear building with 2,061 sq. ft. of ground floor retail and 1,826 sq. ft. of second-floor offices.

Almost all the sites from **3503** to **3585**, between Margarita and Matadero (on the Ventura side), are now vacant. Former occupants were Sandbox Co-working, Monsoon Dance, Re-weaving Studio, Lovely

Hair, and Kraft Furniture. Redevelopment here is likely. The Combes lot at **3585** has been vacant for more than 40 years. Redevelopment of **3703-3709** as Wilton Court, a project of Palo Alto Housing, to a 4-story, 61-unit apartment building is nearly complete.

At the former Compadres site at **3877**, construction of a project with 4,027 sq. ft. of retail and 17 condos/townhouses is nearly complete, but not occupied as of this writing. The former Chicago Pizza building at **4115** was demolished, to be replaced by an approved 3-story mixed used building with 7 apartments, ground floor retail, and offices. However, construction has not yet started. The former Curves site at **4117** has long been vacant. At **4131**, Subway closed last year, and the retail site remains vacant.

On El Camino Way, Annual Reviews at **4139** has been replaced by La Selva Group Behavioral Health. Palo Alto School of Hypnotherapy at **4149A**, Wu Family Dental at **4153B**, and Ashford Design at **4155A** are currently not in operation.

Vacancy rates under 5% are basically considered full occupancy, so the Barron Park side as well as El Camino Way, can be considered fully occupied. El Camino Real vacancies did increase, but less than anticipated. Closing the businesses in the 3500 block on the Ventura side caused significant vacancy increase.

On the Ventura side **2905, 3001, 3011, 3127, 3159, 3505, 3527, 3533, 3535, 3585, 3903, 4117**, and **4131** remain vacant. On the Barron Park side, **3516, 3626, 3628, 3630, 3632, 3666B, 3990C**, and **4050** are vacant.

ECR Vacancy rates	Feb. '19	Nov. '19	Feb. '21	Dec. '21	Aug '22
Ventura (East) Side	5.3%	5.5%	10.8%	13%	14.4%
Barron Park (West) Side:	2.8%	3.8%	4.4%	5.3%	4.5%
El Camino Way	4.8%	4.6%	2.4%	0%	3.2%
Total Vacancy:	3.8%	3.9%	6.7%	7.6%	7.3%

## CALLING LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS!

Do you have a business in Barron Park? Are you a business owner living in Barron Park? A **Barron Park Association Basic Business Membership (\$50/year)** gives you one free ad in the Summer, Fall, or Winter edition of the BPA Newsletter. You may also place a "Spotlight" article about you and your business during your first year as a member. Plus, you'll be listed on the home page of the BPA website.

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

For more information, contact our BPA Business Liaison, Paul Yang at: [pabloyang@yahoo.com](mailto:pabloyang@yahoo.com)

## ARE YOU AN ARTIST OR WRITER?



Do you enjoy the creative work in the BPA Newsletter? Would you like to see your art, photography, crafts, writing, published (or unpublished) book, etc., featured in a future issue? Please send your idea with a draft Artist's Statement and reproducible samples or a

description of your work to Myrna Rochester at: [mbrbpa@sonic.net](mailto:mbrbpa@sonic.net)

# Everything You Always Wanted To Know About the Barron Park Donkeys and Weren't Afraid to Ask!

By Jenny Kiratli

*What do they eat? Where do they sleep? Why are they wearing socks? Do they wear shoes? How long do donkeys live? Which one is the Shrek donkey?*

Many of you are very familiar with the Barron Park Donkeys and their history, but there are also many new neighbors who do not know them, and so I would like to provide a brief introduction to our beloved donkeys for those who are just joining our community as well as give some general updates for all.

## Very Brief History

Barron Park has been home to donkeys since the 1930s when Cornelis and Josina Bol moved here from the Netherlands and developed a farm on the land that is now Bol Park. And they had donkeys. When the farm property was converted into a park in the mid-1970s, the donkeys were relocated to their current location, a pasture that was also owned by the Bols and across the creek from their homestead. The last Bol-owned donkey was Mickey, born July 1, 1967.

In the 1990s, five neighbors took over his care as Mrs. Bol was elderly and unable to provide the level of care that he needed, especially in his later years. Three-year-old Perry arrived in 1997, and Miner 49er ("Niner") joined in 1998. Shortly thereafter, Mickey died, one month after his 31st birthday. During that time, the group expanded to more handlers and the Barron Park Donkey Project was born.

Niner died in 2016 and the lovely Jenny joined us from Southern California, but she died a mere four years later, almost to the day; those of us who knew her still miss her calm presence and soulful eyes. In December, 2020, a donkey-owner from Woodside offered us our pandemic donkey, Buddy, knowing that Perry would be lonely having lost another companion. And so, the current Barron Park Donkeys are Perry, age 28, and Buddy, age 22.

There are about two dozen of us ("donkey handlers") who volunteer to provide food, care, and love to our charges, and the community generously donates to support them. Perry and Buddy visit Bol Park every



Buddy and Perry are ready to take your questions. Photos by Jenny Kiratli.

Sunday between 10 and 11 a.m. where you are welcome to pet them, take photos, and ask us your questions. Another opportunity for close encounters occurs every Sunday evening when they are fed at the pasture gate, 5:00 p.m. during Daylight Savings Time, and 4:00 p.m. during Standard Time. You can also visit the pasture at any time to view them, but we cannot guarantee whether they will come to the gate to greet you.

## Feeding

This is a good time to remind everyone to never feed our donkeys anything! We provide them food (dried grass), added nutrients, and medicines on the advice of our vets. This is to treat Perry's Cushing's Disease (a pituitary gland disorder) and maintain a healthy weight.

It is very important that they are not given extra food at the gate including carrots, apples, and fresh grass. Donkeys are adapted to the desert and their gut metabolism is designed to extract the nutrients they need from limited food sources. High sugar foods like carrots and apples provide a sugar load and contribute to their risk for overweight and diabetes which puts them at risk for

laminitis, a painful and debilitating hoof disease.

## Medical Update

The donkeys' vet visited just this week and was very impressed with both donkeys' health! We have worked hard to achieve a necessary weight loss since the Winter, and she gave us high marks on our success—although Buddy still has a ways to go to reach his "ideal" donkey weight. Perry's blood level remains a bit low (symptom of Cushing's) but seems to be stable which is excellent news. This is especially good to hear because of the tremendous health scare that we had in early July when we had to send Perry off to UC Davis Veterinary Hospital on an emergency basis because he was significantly lethargic and had a very low blood volume reading; and he wasn't eating – definitely a sign that he was not well!

The UC Davis vets provided excellent care including intravenous fluids and nutrition. They deemed him a wonderful patient, accommodating and agreeable, and very handsome. However, they alerted me that he would not be quite so handsome when

he returned because they had to shave his entire midsection for an abdominal ultrasound. Luckily, they found no tumors and no internal bleeding – both of which we feared as causes of his low blood count. They were not able to identify the cause of his illness that led to the emergency visit, but when he returned, he was in excellent shape and has seemed back to normal ever since. And his hair is slowly growing back although you can still see a distinct hairline encircling his belly from side to side. When he first returned, we dressed him in a towel to protect from sun and fly bites as the hair was very short and his skin was exposed.

**Summer Fly Season**

As to the boots and socks... Biting flies are the banes of all equines' existence in the summer months. These flies can be extremely aggressive and open up the donkeys' legs with bloody wounds, so we go to great lengths to protect Perry and Buddy from this malady.

We have a six-prong prevention approach including: 1) two kinds of fly traps, one of which targets biting flies, 2) a feed-through treatment that is active in their manure to interfere with fly larvae development. Note that flies lay eggs in manure; 3) every month we release 5000 predatory wasps that eat fly larvae in the manure piles; 4) we spray daily with a natural insect repellent spray; and 5) we put on fly boots (front legs), and Bombas sock (back legs) every morning and take them off every night. We have been very successful in preventing any fly damage this year, and will continue our practices for a few more weeks until the temperatures drop and the flies recede. Until next summer!!

**Questions Answered**

You can find the answers to questions at the beginning of this article and many more on our website, [barronparkdonkeys.org](http://barronparkdonkeys.org) but here goes:

- They eat dry grass and supplemented feed prescribed by our vets.
- They sleep outside, under tree bowers, and sometime in the shelter if the weather is inclement; they only need about 3 hours' sleep per day and only about one hour lying down in REM (however, Buddy lies down a lot throughout the day!!).
- They wear socks to protect from fly bites.
- They do not wear horseshoes, although they are cared for by a farrier for regular hoof cleaning and shaving.



Perry wears his towel-sheet to protect from the sun and fly bites.

- Standard donkeys (like Mickey, Niner, and Jenny) live to about 30-31 years, and the miniature donkeys (like Perry and Buddy) have an average life span of 35-36 years, although both standard and miniature donkeys have been known to live into their 40s.
- Perry is our celebrity, the model for "Donkey" in the Shrek movies—no, it's not an urban legend!! But he takes his fame in stride.

**Community Support**

The donkeys are completely supported by the community for food, veterinary and farrier care, general supplies, and pasture lease. Their care is provided by volunteer handlers from Palo Alto and Los Altos. Contact [barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com](mailto:barronparkdonkeys@gmail.com) with any questions. Starting in mid-October, we will debut a new Instagram account for more frequent updates and donkey information. Visit [barronparkdonkeys.org](http://barronparkdonkeys.org) and on Instagram at [bpdonkeys](https://www.instagram.com/bpdonkeys).



Perry after his return from UC Davis. Poor baby!

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION  
724 Barron Avenue  
Palo Alto, California 94306  
<https://bpapaloalto.org>



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