

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John King, BPA President



Good Day Sunshine! We're already well into an active and busy Spring 2023. I'm excited to update you on the latest developments here in the 'hood. It was wonderful to see everyone in person—plus those who attended on Zoom—at our Annual Meeting on March 19 at Barron Park Elementary School.

This year's Annual Meeting was informative, engaging, and extremely well attended! We were honored to have Mayor Lydia Kou—a former BPA Board member—and Utilities Director Dean Batchelor as our guest speakers. Mayor Kou provided updates on the City's current initiatives and plans for the coming year. Director Batchelor fielded serious questions about this year's high costs of City utilities and outlined future mitigations. Thank you also to Hilary Glann for her presentation on electric retrofitting, including battery backup for appliances. This is important as we seek to reduce our carbon footprint toward energy efficiency. Check your utility bills and the Palo Alto Utilities website, since residents are encouraged to work closely with the City on guidelines, rebates, and recommended contractors.

Our Annual Meeting was an excellent opportunity to learn how we can work for a more sustainable, inclusive, and livable environment. You'll find a complete recording of the meeting here: bpapaloalto.org/2023/03/28/barron-park-annual-meeting-zoom-recording/

We are grateful for your support and involvement in the Barron Park Association. Together, we can continue to make our community a wonderful place to live, work, study, and play.

Please use the membership information in this issue to renew at: bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/. You can always contact me at: johnwadeking@gmail.com



John King sets up Lydia Kou for her presentation at the Barron Park Annual Meeting. Mayor Kou was joined by Utilities Director Dean Batchelor, who talked about current and future gas and electricity rates. Photo by Jaya Pandey.

JOIN US FOR
MAY FÊTE 2023!
Sunday, May 21
12 to 4 pm Bol Park



This year Barron Park will celebrate our first in-person May Fête in three years! Enjoy live music and dancers performing all afternoon, with a community Maypole Dance at 2:30. Wear ribbons! Bring your family and friends, chairs, and a blanket, and make a picnic of it! You'll find food, soft drinks and snacks for purchase, active games and crafts, visits from our three beloved donkeys—Perry, Buddy, and April—and more!

The May Fête is a volunteer effort. Please join us for the fun prep and set-up! To help out or if you have a display or activity to add to the mix, contact Kellie Stafford at: kellieinbarronpark@gmail.com or John King at: johnwadeking@gmail.com See you there!

P.S. Please bring items of non-perishable food or produce from your garden/fruit trees for the South Palo Alto Food Closet.

2

[Fabulous Pets of Barron Park](#)

3

[Peter Mueller](#)

5

[Disaster Preparedness](#)

7

[Safety Corner](#)

8

[Open Studios](#)

9

[Bol Family Part 1](#)

14

[April the Donkey](#)

Fur, Feathers, or Fins? The Fabulous Pets of Barron Park

By Star Teachout



l to r: Dot, Floyd, Gwrgi, and Angus. Photos by Jenn Silva and Star Teachout.

Pet in the Spotlight	Dot is a 55-lb, 5-yo American Bully with a sweet temperament.	Gwrgi is a 50-lb, 15-yo merle Aussie-border collie with one eye half brown-half blue.
Background & Family	Fostered as a small puppy from the Silicon Valley Humane Society, Dot was soon adopted at 8 weeks by her adoring family—Jenn, Andrew, and Cyrus, and older dog, Floyd.* Dot loves dogs and people, and will stop outside her friends’ houses when on a walk in hopes they’ll come out and say hi, or drop to her belly and refuse to walk in hopes of meeting a passing dog.	Gwrgi’s first adoption in Merced was short lived when his family lost their home, but fortunate for his second adoptive family—Dan, Star, Zander, Leo, and Felix. This 10-mo-old beauty came with issues: He hadn’t been leashed or walked, was jumping up, doing herding nips, and having leash outbursts. Today he’s the best first family dog ever. (The best second dog Angus joined 5 years later.) Who says you can’t have dogs, cats, and kids in a very small house! (The yard is big.)
Stomping Grounds	Dot lives on Matadero and loves walking around the neighborhood, including Bol Park, Chimalus, Josina, and even sometimes to Happy Donuts. She recently enjoyed her first trip to Rossotti’s Alpine Inn.	Gwrgi lives on Whitsell and can be seen walking around La Donna, Los Robles, Laguna, Barron, and Kendall with Angus. He’s a slow, old guy, and his greatest joy is smelling all the bushes. His tired bones prefer night walks when it is cool.
Animal/People Friends	Besides her family, Dot loves <i>many</i> dogs and people, including Bobo, Finley, Lucky, Milo, Pat, Chris, Deb, Martha, Mark, Ashley, and Michelle.	Gwrgi loves his extended family—Ghillie (cat), Olimar (in cat heaven), Angus, Mia, Rizzo, Chris/Steph, Sandy/Baldwin, Gabe, the Ws, Ps, and Fs, and the many dogs his inexperienced owners kept him away from!
Tricks or Special Talents	Dot spins, sits, shakes, lies down, and walks on the telephone pole logs bordering Bol Park.	Before arthritis, loss of sight/hearing, Gwrgi was a frisbee dog, jumped hurdles, shook hands, commando-crawled, spoke/sang on command, and rolled over. He’s still a love!
Goals	Dot is learning to contain her excitement at meeting new people and dogs, and to overcome her fear of brooms, kites, and loud noises!	At his age, Gwrgi gets a “pass” for barking at other dogs and for his fear of vacuum cleaners.
Quirks	Dot almost never barks, only occasionally when she’s dreaming...	He loves light reflecting off sparkly shoes, flashlights, watch faces, or pans. In his heyday he also bit sprinklers with gusto!
Biggest Need	A morning walk and a warm bed at night! A nearby dog park for socializing would be nice, but she’s okay without it.	A nice walk around the block w/o speeding cars :).
True Confessions	Dot occasionally gets human food (yummy salmon skins) and gets to sleep on the bed!	Yes, Gwrgi gets human treats and rests his achy bones on the bed!
Advice	Fostering a puppy or older dog is a great way to get to know their personality and if they’re a good fit for your family.	Some rescue dogs need a couple of trusted dogs/owners in the neighborhood to walk with/greet; start at a distance and get through the awkward stage!

*Dot recently lost her best friend Floyd, an 11-yo 5-breed terrier-Chihuahua-cattle dog-miniature pinscher mix who, despite his small stature, was the leader of their Squirrel Patrol. He is greatly missed by everyone, except the squirrels.

To have your favorite animal featured in the BPA Newsletter please send a message to teachout@sonic.net for an exclusive interview.

Art In My Yard

By Shirley Gaines



Yard art by Josh Golden and Shirley Gaines: *La Cabra Roja*. Photos courtesy of the Gaines family.



Rogelio (*Sík'em*).

This yard art was made by my son-in-law, Josh Golden, from wood scraps in our backyard. I gave them their names: *La Cabra Roja* (The Red Goat) and his companion, Rogelio. I sometimes call Rogelio *Sík'em*; that's Nez Percé for "horse." He's an Appaloosa. As far as horses are concerned, Appaloosas are my favorite. He and *La Cabra*

Roja are great friends.

Josh has made other large animal sculptures using rebar and cement, as well as wood. Originally, I'd asked Josh to teach me how to use my new drill. I'm trepidatious about using power tools—something an artist should have quickly gotten over. But he ended up

constructing the creatures, and I painted them.

As a note: I write theater pieces for a community theater in Garberville, CA—The Random People Theatre Project (randompeopletheatre.org). Two of my recent plays feature horses. "Horse with No Name" will be performed in early April.

Education in the Native Garden

By Linda Elder



The Western Monarch Butterfly: Newly installed educational sign along the Bol Park Native Garden path. Photo by Richard Elder.

The BPA Native Habitat Committee recently added a colorful educational sign in the garden, funded by a grant from The Garden Club of Palo Alto. The sign depicts the life stages of the Western Monarch Butterfly and provides tips to help protect monarchs. Melanie Cross, Claire Elliot, and Linda Elder developed the sign content. The beautiful artwork is by local artist John Richards. Hilary Glann did the graphic design layout. A big thank you to everyone who helped create it!

The sign is located in the garden

bed between the two benches closest to the children's playground. We hope its educational content will enhance your experience of the garden and inspire adults and children to learn about native plants and the creatures they support. Now is a good time to check out the new sign and the spring blooms!

View BPA Newsletters in Full Color!

Read this issue in full color and with live Web links at bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter/ as soon as it's posted. While you're there, check out our Archive of past Newsletters. Your small screen is an easy way to review past activities in the 'hood and catch up on issues you may have missed.

Thanks! The Editors

Peter Klaus Mueller

1926-2023

We are saddened to learn of the passing of our beloved longtime BPA Board member Peter K. Mueller. Peter moved to Barron Park in 1980 after starting what was to be a two-decade career at EPRI on Hillview Avenue. It was his first job within easy biking distance from home. He remained active as an environmental research scientist for 63 years. For 50 of these years Peter's research involved large groups that included local, state, national and international government and private sector entities. He used to remark how great it was to be able to apply such experience in the service of his local community. Peter was a regular cyclist in his biking group

up until quite recently. He was an active, contributing member of the Barron Park Association Board for several decades. He was also an organizer of Barron Park Senior Connections, that helps connect Barron Park seniors for get-togethers, lunches, and other activities.

Here, from the archives of the Washington DC Holocaust Museum Collection, is a link to a two-part oral history interview that Peter made in 2000: collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn508203

Peter passed away February 16, 2023, at age 96. Please keep his wife Judith Ann and the family in your thoughts and prayers.



Neighbor and BPA Board Member Peter K. Mueller (1926-2023). Photo courtesy of the Mueller family.

Upcoming Gathering in Memory of Lilian Marcus

On May 16, 2023, the family of longtime Barron Park resident Lilian Marcus will be hosting a celebration of her life near Palo Alto. Lilian passed away in May 2020. (See the Fall 2020 BPA newslet-

ter [p.13] in the Archive: bpapaloalto.org/bpa-newsletter/) For more information, or if you're interested in joining us, please reach out to remember.Lilian@gmail.com

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



Barron Park Senior Club members Peter Mueller and Lilian Marcus talk following lunch at Cibo restaurant during the club's monthly meeting on Dec. 14, 2017. Photo from paloaltoonline.com

CALLING LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS!

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

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

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

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

Disaster Preparedness in an Electric Future

By Hilary Glann

One of the major concerns that residents have about giving up their gas appliances is: *What happens when the electricity goes out?* With windstorms causing power outages and a reminder that, at any time, our natural gas and electric lines could be shut down due to a major earthquake, now is a good time to plan for emergency power solutions.

What Not to Do When the Lights Go Out

First of all, gasoline-powered generators are dangerous and unsustainable to use in your home. The danger comes from the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning if the generator is used incorrectly. Gas generators are unsustainable because in a widespread power outage, gas stations will not have electric power to refill your gas can. There are a number of natural gas-powered generators on the market, with their own pros and cons: saphiregassolutions.com/blog/power-generation/what-are-the-pros-and-cons-of-natural-gas-generators/

Secondly, remember that if the electricity is out, your gas-powered home furnace won't work. It needs the fan to blow the hot air around and to prevent carbon monoxide from entering your living space. Your tankless gas water heater won't work either, because it needs an electric spark. However, natural gas and electric water heaters with tanks, including heat pump water heaters, will provide hot water for a day or two, mostly depending on how meticulous you are about rationing the hot water. A heat pump water heater can last the longest because these water heaters can be super heated to up to 150 degrees, then mixed to 120 degrees upon exiting the tank.

Also remember that your carbon monoxide detector(s) won't work unless they are battery-powered standalone. Note that new construction and many remodels in California and other states require the installation of modern wired-in detectors *with battery back-up*. Carbon monoxide is a silent and odorless danger, so using your gas-powered stove, grill, or oven to heat your home is a deadly idea. If you want to cook on your natural gas-powered stove, you won't be able to run a fan or range hood, so be sure you have good ventilation to reduce both carbon monoxide

risks and the lung-damaging nitrogen dioxide that is emitted indoors from your gas stove.

Safer Ways to Operate When the Electricity is Out

Take your cooking outside: Use your backyard barbecue or a camp stove to heat up your food. Keep an extra cannister/tank of propane on hand to ensure you have enough emergency fuel. This setup guarantees that you'll have a way to cook food even if you have damage to your home that prevents you from using your kitchen.

Invest in some low-tech solutions: Small power packs/power banks will keep your cell phone and other electronics working. These devices can cost as little as \$20-\$30.



This Feeko power bank can be charged via a wall outlet, and recharged by putting it in the sunshine. Photo from Amazon.

Rechargeable flashlights stay plugged in until the power goes out, and then turn on so you can find them.

Luci lights from MPowered are great for camping and during power outages because they recharge using a solar panel. Some models can also recharge your cell phone.



An Energizer plug in emergency flashlight and a Luci solar camping light. Images from Amazon.

Buy a portable "smart" power station, or a couple of them: I bought a 1 kilowatt



This battered outdoor barbecue with 2 propane tanks is our emergency cooking solution. All photos by Hilary Glann except where indicated.

hour (KWh) Jackery power station for around \$1000 that can power my fridge/freezer for at least 16 hours, or more if you don't open your fridge very often. It can be recharged in an hour or so using a wall outlet; it can also be recharged using optional standalone solar panels, or the 12V cigarette lighter plug on a car, or your EV if it has a 120V outlet. Search on "portable power stations" to learn more about these new devices from a variety of companies.



Our 1 KWh home power station, fully charged and ready before a recent severe weather warning.

Buy an electric vehicle that allows you to use its electric battery for appliances: Electric vehicles are increasingly supporting the ability to power home appliances in case of emergency. Hyundai Ioniq 5, Kia EV, and Rivian trucks all support "vehicle to load," in which the car offers one or two 120V outlets for running key appliances in an emergency, such as lights, refrigerator, internet, or critical home medical equipment. The Ioniq has an internal 120V 16 amp outlet between the two rear seats that can be used in any weather.

If you purchase an optional converter, you create a second power outlet using your Ioniq's charging port. The car can supply up to 3,600 watts of power via the two ports; the car's battery capacity is 77.4 KWh.



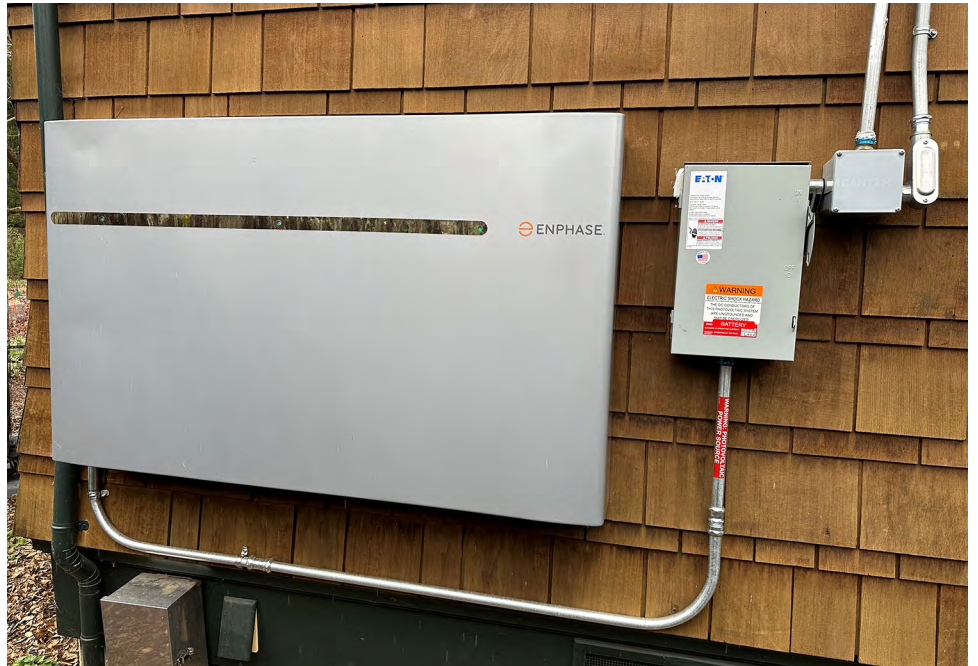
Using this 120V outlet in the Ioniq, we can either run an extension cord to our home, or we can plug our portable power station into this outlet to recharge it.



This optional converter plugs into the car's charging port, creating a second 120V outlet supporting 15 amp appliances. It should not be used unsheltered in wet weather.

The Nissan Leaf, Mitsubishi Outlander electric-gas hybrid, Ford F-150 Lightning, and VW ID4 all support bi-directional charging—the ability to power your home using the EV's battery. GM, Ford, and Hyundai are currently conducting bi-directional charging pilots.

Install a home battery backup system: Even if you don't (yet) have an electric car, you can install solar panels and home batteries that can keep key parts of your home functioning during a power outage. The Federal Residential Clean Energy credit enables households that install solar and residential battery storage to deduct 30 percent of the cost of the project from their taxes. If your home isn't suitable for solar, you can still buy the home



10 KWh battery wall installed by Rich and Linda Elder. Photo by Rich Elder.

battery and use the grid to keep it charged for emergencies. Energy Sage is a helpful site for both information and contractor referrals: news.energysage.com/best-batteries-for-whole-home-backup/

Reducing our use of natural gas in our homes

will save us money over the mid to long term, and will also improve our health and safety. So, take the time now to make a plan for staying safe during a power outage using available, and increasingly affordable, backup batteries.

Signs of Spring in the Bol Park Native Garden



Western Redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) blooms in the Bol Park Native Garden. Photo by Hilary Glann. *Continues on page 15.*

Safety Corner: The Anatomy of a Sign

By Kellie Stafford

Welcome to the second edition of the Safety Corner. This one is about signs—more specifically, stop signs and how they help keep everyone safe. But first, a recap of last quarter’s tips:

1. On roads, walk left, ride right. (It’s the law.)
2. Pick up dog poop. (Another law.)
3. Too much fruit? Leave it in a give-away box. (A nice gesture.)

Who remembers the song “Signs” by Five Man Electrical Band? I’m from the era of Tesla’s version (not Musk’s). Anyway, if you don’t know it, the part that always gets stuck in my head is:

Sign, sign
 Everywhere a sign
 Blockin’ out the scenery
 Breakin’ my mind
 Do this, don’t do that
 Can’t you read the sign?

Interestingly, most signs are put in the scenery for a reason. And since I’ve seen my fair share of near-misses at the stop signs in Barron Park, I’d like to recap the meaning of the sign for scooters, skateboarders, walkers, bikers, and motorists.



The Stop Sign: the most important one in my book, right next to the **Red Light**. The DMV states: “Make a full stop before entering the crosswalk or at the limit line. If there is no limit line or crosswalk, stop before entering the intersection. Check traffic in all directions before proceeding.”

It’s worth noting that the signs here at the left also require a full stop by pedestrians, bikers, scooters, cars, etc. I’ve seen too many accidents in Barron Park involving vehicles and bikes. Some of the most notorious for being run are at Josina, Matadero and Tippawingo; Los Robles and Amaranta; and the 4-way stop at Barron and La Donna. I was almost hit by a teen biker who cycled right though that stop sign never looking up. If it’s red: **STOP**. Bikes, cars, scooters, skateboards . . . **STOP**.



Next sign: Loosely put, the **Yield Sign** means slow your roll . . . aka, slow down and be ready to stop. You don’t have the right of way.

And for all our Mr. and Ms. Mario Andrettis out there, this is the speed limit in Barron Park:



Well, dear neighbors, I hope we all obey the traffic signs that are “blocking our scenery.” Isn’t taking a few extra seconds and following the signs worth your life and the lives of others? Or at least, to save you the headache of a ticket or accident? Questions? Photos and info are available at www.dmv.ca.gov

Take care, stay safe and stay kind! Oh, and please use your turn signal.
 Kellie

Silicon Valley Open Studios Return!

By Rona Foster

The 36th Annual Silicon Valley Open Studios (svos.org) provide a chance to connect with artists from San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Over 300 artists will show their work at this free event the first three weekends in May – Saturdays and Sundays from 11 to 5. Art lovers meet with artists – in their own studios or at group venues – to view original work, watch demonstrations, and buy fine art and crafts from the source. You can get to know new artists and visit with your favorites. Find the perfect work of art for your home or office or arrange for a commission.

I am a painter, mixed media, and clay artist. In May, for the sixteenth season, I'll be hosting Silicon Valley Open Studios at my studio in Barron Park. My dates are the weekends of May 13-14 and May 20-21, from 11 to 5. Works by "my" artists range from painting and drawing to mixed media, pottery, original cards, photography, collage, jewelry, and glass.

My address is 3858 Timlott Court; LL: 650-858-0589; Website: RonaFoster.com



"Birch Trees in Autumn" by Rona Foster. Photo courtesy of the artist.

BPA EMAILS AND WEB LINKS SPRING 2023

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

The Bol Family, Part 1

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

A Family with Major Impact

The Bols—Cornelis and Josina Bol and their six sons—have probably had more lasting impact on the Barron Park neighborhood than any other family, especially during the sixty-year period when they lived here. Previous BPA Newsletter articles have described their activities, but none has covered them as a family and outlined all their contributions. This article contains direct quotes and much information from an extensive oral history given by Josina Bol to Barron Park resident Ann Knopf in 1977. Part 1 in this issue and Part 2 in Summer 2023 will attempt to give a more complete account of the Bols.

Who Were the Bols?

Cornelis Bol was a research chemist at Stanford University. He was also a landowner in Barron Park and an entrepreneur who owned the Barron Park Water Company that served the north end of the neighborhood. He acted as the Chairman of the Board and President of the company (in today's business parlance he would be the Chief Executive Officer [CEO]). Cornelis was also an activist involved in improving fire protection of the neighborhood and in other neighborhood issues.

Josina Bol was Cornelis's wife and mother of their children. She also ran the day-to-day business of the family farm and the private water company. Late in the company's life, she in effect became the Chief Operating Officer (COO), and she also continued to carry the main burden of managing the family farm. But Barron Park remembers her as its foremost benefactor who carried out Cornelis's wish that the original Bol donkey pasture become a public park.

The six Bol sons were key participants in working the farm and running the water company. Until they left, one by one, for college or employment elsewhere, they were an essential part of the Bol enterprises. Finally, when Josina was widowed, her sons were a constant support, backing her fully in her decision to make the park project possible.

The Bols Emigrated from Holland

Josina had met Cornelis Bol while he was working as an electrical engineer at the giant Phillips Laboratories in Eindhoven, Holland. They were married in 1924 and eventually had six children, all sons. Not liking the way things were going politically in Europe, they decided in 1936 to emigrate to the U.S. to get away from Hitler and his Nazis. They were prescient in getting out "while the getting was still good." By spring 1940, Germany had invaded and conquered the Netherlands, including Holland, after which escape was illegal and extremely dangerous.

The Family

Cornelis and Josina emigrated to the U.S. with their five sons who were born in Holland. Klaas had been born in 1925 (he is called Claus or Klaus in some references), Kees (pronounced "Case") was born in 1927, Joor in 1928, and Lars in 1930 (in interviews, Josina mentioned the birth years of only four of her sons). One of the older sons was nicknamed "Pete," but it is not clear which one. A fifth son, Morris, was also born while they were still in Holland. The sixth son, Gerald, was born in California in 1940. When Josina died in February 1996, she left six sons, twenty-three grandchildren, and twenty-four great-grandchildren.

Cornelis Was a Student at Princeton

Josina Bol said that Cornelis was already familiar with life in America: He had been a student at Princeton University. However, after a couple of years, suffering from ear trouble, Cornelis left Princeton. Still, he considered other colleges. The Princeton professor who had been mentoring Cornelis "had a brother who had a big orchard near Missoula, Montana, and Cornelis was invited to visit. He liked it there so much that instead of going back to Princeton, he finished his degree in Missoula" (presumably at the University of Montana).

Cornelis Was Offered a Job at Stanford

Stanford offered Cornelis a position as a scientific assistant in the Engineering Department, but he deferred his acceptance. He wanted to be sure Josina was willing to leave Holland. He told Josina: "You never have

been in America. I want you to see it first and decide if you would really like us to move there with the whole family." So, Josina and Cornelis embarked on a visit to the United States, arriving in the Palo Alto area in February 1936.

On an earlier visit to Stanford, Cornelis had met several faculty members, including Dr. William H. Carruth, the English Department Chair, an early homeowner on Roble Ridge. According to Josina, Carruth had moved to Roble Ridge in "1927, or something like that . . . perhaps a little earlier, but that's when this house (the Bol house) was built." County records corroborate the date.

Shortly after Cornelis and Josina arrived in California on their 1936 visit, they had occasion to come to Barron Park. Josina explained that they planned to see a Stanford-connected woman who lived on Roble Ridge. "We wanted to visit Mrs. Gough, now our next-door neighbor, whom Cornelis had known at Stanford. The one who (drove) us there was also a professor from Stanford. He did not know exactly where Mrs. Gough lived, so he drove up to Roble Ridge and they looked at all the houses there." (There were nine in 1936.)

Serendipity Strikes

They didn't find the Gough place, but when they looked at the house at 925 Roble Ridge, Josina said, "The view of the Stanford land was just beautiful, and I said, 'Here, I would love to live here.'" After they returned to Stanford, they called Mrs. Gough to explain and apologize. Josina told her, "We already know where we want to live." She identified the house, and Mrs. Gough replied, "Well, that could be done, for it belongs to my nephew and he wants to sell." So, we took an option on it since we were just on a visit. Everything about the sale was arranged in Holland, and we came here (immigrated) in October of the same year, 1936."

The Details of Immigration

Josina then spoke of the move: "We left a lot (of our things) in Holland, and then (our goods) came by boat directly from Holland to San Francisco, whereas we went with the

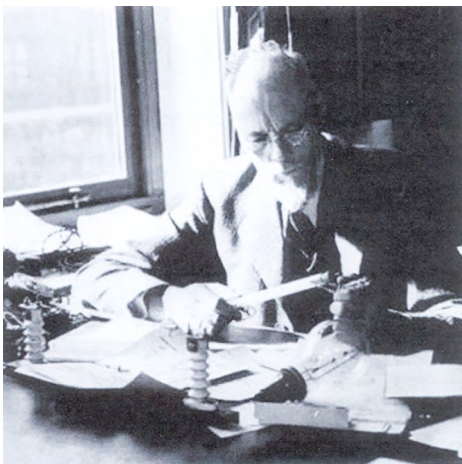
boat to New York, and then took the train (across the continent). When the household goods arrived in San Francisco, they arrived by truck and the customs officer was with them. They came to the house to inspect the crates and so on, and then soon he gave up. He said we really only had our furnishings from Holland and had not tried to bring in new things (for resale)."

A Man of Many Facets

Although Cornelis was never a professor, and never earned a doctorate, he was a good scientist and an eminent electrical engineer, producing at least one significant invention. He was highly respected in the neighborhood, known by many as "Dr. Bol." He was also a successful small business entrepreneur, having built half of Barron Park's original water system. He was a leader in the effort to obtain better fire protection. Above all, Cornelis was a good husband and father, and friend to many neighbors and their children.

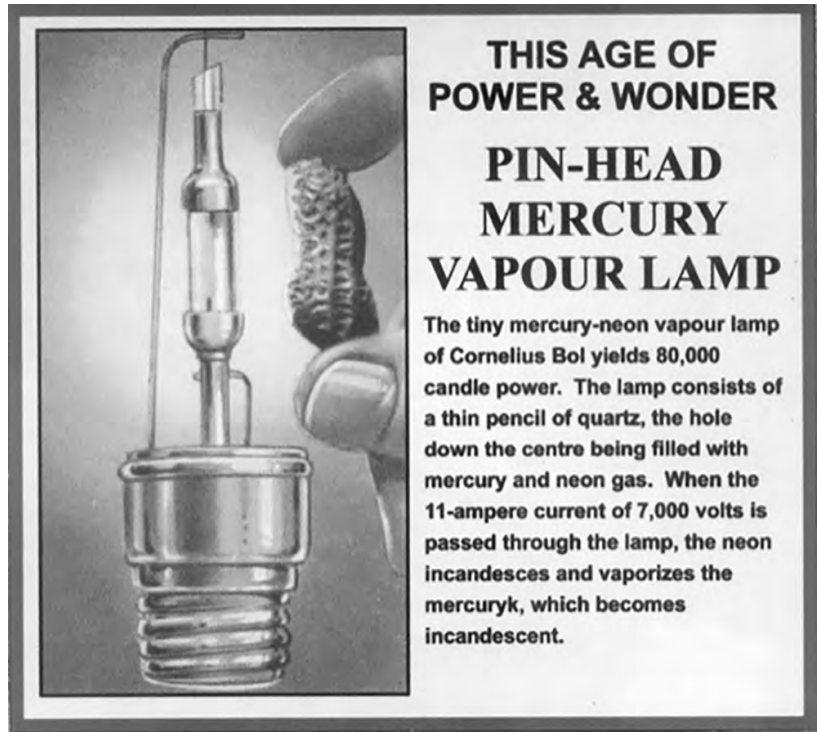
Scientist and Inventor

As detailed above, Cornelis had planned his immigration in advance and had a position as a scientific assistant waiting for him at Stanford. He worked there as a scientist with a growing reputation for the entire remainder of his career. He became well known in the engineering community following his invention, at Stanford, of a greatly improved version of the mercury vapor lamp. It was for many decades the brightest artificial light source existing. (See Illustration A—Cornelis Bol working on the improved lamp he invented. See also Illustration B – the mercury vapor lamp.)



A - Cornelis Bol working on the improved mercury vapor lamp he invented. Photo from Life Magazine, April 3, 1939.

Cornelis was a shrewd investor and quickly acquired some prime Barron Park land at



B - The improved mercury vapor lamp. Photo from a "trading card" in a 1930s cigarette promotion.

Depression prices. First, the Bols bought the lot across the creek to the south, site of the current donkey pasture. Then they acquired the large "next-door" property between the railroad and Matadero Creek, which became known in the 1960s as "the donkey pasture."

Next, they bought the "Strain Ranch," when that dairy closed in 1939. It included the land now occupied by Barron Park Elementary School, built in 1948, and by the University Park Tract along Josina, Kendall, and Barron Avenues, which was developed in 1948 by Joseph Eichler.

Entrepreneur and Community Leader

After a few years living on Roble Ridge, Cornelis became quite frustrated by the water situation. Although his property was served by the EMWAY Water Company, its line from Matadero Avenue to Roble Ridge was inadequate to manage the domestic needs of seven people, plus a sizable vegetable garden and small orchard. The water pressure was too low and sometimes failed entirely. Josina said that several of the five EMWAY owners "moved out (in the late 1930s) . . . and they wanted to get rid of their shares. If you were a shareholder, you did not have to pay for your water . . . you had your water free." Cornelis was interested in investing in the company, and thought if

**THIS AGE OF
POWER & WONDER
PIN-HEAD
MERCURY
VAPOUR LAMP**

The tiny mercury-neon vapour lamp of Cornelius Bol yields 80,000 candle power. The lamp consists of a thin pencil of quartz, the hole down the centre being filled with mercury and neon gas. When the 11-ampere current of 7,000 volts is passed through the lamp, the neon incandesces and vaporizes the mercury, which becomes incandescent.

he was on the board, he could get the service to Roble Ridge improved. Josina said, "That was the beginning, really, of our investment in that water company."

Cornelis bought an equal share in the company in 1939, which made him a director with a seat on the board. He soon began trying to convince the other owners to install a larger line to Roble Ridge. However, the company was small and starting to feel the pinch of the investment needed to keep up with the neighborhood's growth. He convinced some board members, but others initially blocked him. Then he began political maneuvers aimed at controlling the company. After several contentious years, he won control by buying out the recalcitrant directors in May 1942.

Modernizing the Water Company

Cornelis set about to expand and modernize the company's operations. He changed the name to the Barron Park Water Company, but most people referred to it as the "Bol Water Company." The Bols ran the enterprise as a family affair, like everything else they did. The Bol sons were kept busy reading meters and responding to complaints of low pressure, leaks, or muddy water. At first, Cornelis managed customer and financial affairs and handled major repair and maintenance jobs – like when the well casing collapsed in one

of the deep wells, or when the 60,000-gallon steel storage tank fell off its tower and was partially crushed. (The company rebuilt it as a horizontal tank on a concrete pad. The pad is still there in 2023, at the Matadero Well Site mini-park in the 600 block of Matadero Avenue.)

After World War Two, the anticipated residential development of Barron Park exploded, inundating the water company with recurring requests for new mains, hydrants, and connections. The Bols were also constantly harassed by middle-of-the-night emergencies as the existing but rapidly aging mains, connections, pumps, and valves were strained in keeping up with the burgeoning growth. By the early 1950s, the company delivered water to most of the old “core” of the neighborhood, from La Para Avenue to the Stanford lands boundary on the north, and from El Camino Real to the Stanford boundary on the west (now Gunn High School and the VA Hospital complex). This was about 35 to 40 percent of the current area of Barron Park.

Running the Water Company

Josina was asked what was involved in the day-to-day running of the company. She said that meter-reading was not a problem. “But I remember, for instance, that sometimes there were leaks. Once I got a telephone call, complaining that they did not have water. I said I haven’t had anyone else complaining about not having water, and she said ‘their neighbor’s was on’ . . . and suddenly I thought ‘Is it perhaps a valve turned (closed) that you don’t know about?’ And she said, ‘Oh, let me check.’ It turned out that their child had been playing around, and he had cut the water, turned the valve that closed it off; so everything was fine. But there was another occasion when a customer called about one-thirty in the morning, and it turned out that a car had hit a hydrant. So, we had to do that at night, fix it right away. One of the boys went out – they were the night maintenance crew.”

Selling to Palo Alto

Klaas Bol, the oldest son, managed the company briefly, from 1949 until he left the state in 1951. The entire burden then fell back on Cornelis and Josina. In the early 1950s, in addition to customer-caused aggravation and random wear-and-tear, there were tax problems and corporate registration issues. The boys grew up, went to college,



C - The Bol boys and the family tractor in the early 1940s. Snapshot from the Bol family photo collection.

graduated, and moved away. Eventually the responsibility got to be too much for the family, and Cornelis sold the company to the City of Palo Alto in 1953. This was 22 years prior to the annexation of Barron Park to Palo Alto in 1975, but the city was already buying up all the private water companies.

Daily Life on the Family Farm

Cornelis, Josina, and their two oldest sons managed and worked the family farm until they sold the larger properties. The boys mostly worked after school, in the house, in the kitchen garden, and on the farm. In the spring, they cut hay on the pastures and had horses and a tractor to pull the hay mower and hay rake (still in Bol Park in 2023, although partially obscured by weeds and tree limbs). They also cut hay for at least one neighbor, Colonel Duggan at 3769 Laguna, who had a large property extending from Laguna to the railroad. (See Illustration C – Photo of Bol boys and tractor.) Josina said, “If there was time left over, they could ride. But riding did not come first. During school vacations, they could ride.”

Josina’s oral history tells many stories of daily life on the farm. She talked about the difficulties of getting around, for example, to do the regular shopping. In Holland they had ridden bicycles everywhere, even though by 1934 they had a car. But in California they learned they had to buy a car. “Women did not ride bikes here: It was ‘just not done.’”

When they bought the Strain Dairy farm, one appealing factor was its pear orchard. Josina related that “later, the children would sell pears on El Camino Real.” Apparently, they kept the pears in a tub of water to keep them fresh, and the buyers really liked that.

Josina remembered that “when we were standing on the highest point of (our) property you could see a small part of the (San Francisco) Bay.” Now, “with all the trees grown up . . . nothing can be seen anymore.”

She mentioned that Matadero Avenue was paved when they arrived in 1936, but not Roble Ridge, which was a dirt road, like the Bols’ driveway. She also related that they had electric, gas, and telephone service, as well as daily newspaper and mail deliveries.

There was a milkman and also a vegetable man who came to the door about twice a week. The milk came from the Freund Dairy (on the Strain property) until it shut down in 1948. The milk deliveries continued, perhaps from the Piers Dairy in South Palo Alto. Grocery shopping was mostly at the Safeway on California Avenue, in the area still known then as “Mayfield.” (It had been called Lincoln Avenue, the main street of the independent town of Mayfield from the mid-1850s until annexation to Palo Alto in 1925.)

Fire Protection

Fire protection was a major problem. Josina recalled that “Palo Alto wouldn’t come to fires in Barron Park because it was under

county (jurisdiction).” Even more trouble was the low water pressure on Roble Ridge. “When we had a fire in the studio . . . they had a hard time doing anything on account of the water situation. We had water in the swimming pool, but somehow, they did not use it.”

When the Train Stopped for Goats

The railroad was not a problem, even though it ran right by the house, separating it from the main pasture. The trains were . . . “special for the younger children, they would be waiting for the train to go by, and the engineer often would special toot the horn . . . kind of as a recognition. And then one day the train stopped, right here at home, and I never was so scared to go and have a look what had happened, for since Lars, the oldest one (at home) then, was always looking for the train, I was so afraid, but then he came running towards me, so I knew it was safe, but still did not know what had been happening, and all the people looking, of course, and the conductor had come out.” It turned out to be two of the Bols’ little goats, and “one of them . . . had gone under the train, but he came out alive. They waited there until they had them out from underneath, and then the train continued. He was between the rails, but just so that he had been free of being hit. The train was always going pretty slow here . . . (because they) . . . all stopped at Neal Station” (which was only about three hundred yards down the track from the house).

Continued in the Next Issue

This story of the Bol Family and their impact and influence on our neighborhood will be continued in the Summer 2023 issue. Topics to be covered include: the Original Donkey Pasture; the Beginning of the Donkeys; the Bol Barn; Before the Donkeys There Were Cows; Social Events on the Ridge; the Portuguese Farmer; Hoboes on the Tracks; the Creation of Bol Park; Josina Bol, Community Benefactor, and her Feelings After Three Years Next Door to Bol Park.

More Information Available on the Website

I can be reached by snail mail at 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto 94306, by email at dgrahampaca@gmail.com, or by landline phone at 650-493-0689. If you want to go deeper into the history of Cornelis Bol’s invention or the Barron Park Water Company, please visit the BPA website (bpapaloalto.org) and click on “BPA

Newsletter” for the Archive. There, you’ll find the following stories (some of which include illustrations not repeated in this article):

- Fall 2012, pp. 6-8, Potpourri #2, second section: The Mercury Vapor Lamp
- Fall 2013, pp. 4-10, A New Pocket Park: The Matadero Well Site
- Summer 2015, pp. 5-8, When the Water Tower Fell
- Winter 2017, pp. 8-9, The Old Barron Park Water Company (reprint from Fall 2005).

**BPA Newsletter
Summer Deadline:
Thursday, June 1, 2023**

Dear Newsletter Contributors:

Please submit articles (Microsoft Word is best) for the Summer 2023 issue of the BPA Newsletter, with photos/images separate from text, by **Thursday, June 1, 2023**, to Myrna Rochester at: mbrbpa@sonic.net

Make sure your BPA membership is current at: barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com 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 (mbrbpa@sonic.net). The Summer issue will be available in July 2023, online to requesting members and print copies by US mail.

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

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 newslet-

ters. Please send reproducible photos to Myrna Rochester at: mbrbpa@sonic.net Tell us something about the art, but you don’t need to include your street address.

**BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPRING 2023**

- President, John W. King
- Secretary, Jaya Pandey
- Treasurer, John W. King
- Doug Burns
- Todd Collins
- Richard Elder
- Maurice Green
- Christian Kalar
- John W. King
- Lisa Berkowitz Landers
- Gwen Luce
- Jaya Pandey
- Myrna Rochester
- Kellie Stafford
- Paul Yang

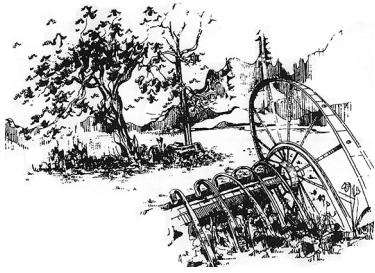
■
Committee /Activity Chairs

- Business Liaison:* Paul Yang
- Communications:* Myrna Rochester
- Email Lists:* Richard Elder
- Environment:* Jaya Pandey
- Events:* Kellie Stafford
- Barron Park History:* Douglas L. Graham
- Membership:* Lisa Berkowitz Landers
- Neighborhood Safety & Emergency Preparedness:* Maurice Green
- Parks & Creeks:* Christian Kalar
- Native Habitat:* Richard Elder
- Shared Pathway:* Doug Burns
- Schools Liaison:* Todd Collins
- 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 schedule and location write to: johnwadeking@gmail.com

■
bpapaloalto.org



2023 Barron Park Association Membership

bpapaloalto.org

Thanks to all our current BPA members!

2023 Membership Renewals began January 1, 2023.

You may join or renew your membership online with credit card or PayPal at: bpapaloalto.org/join-the-barron-park-association/

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

If you renewed after October 1, 2022, your membership is valid through 2023.

To check your membership status please email: barronpark.paloalto@gmail.com

Name(s):	Primary email address:
Address:	Secondary email address:
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter: I prefer the online edition rather than a print copy. <input type="checkbox"/> Email lists: I want to join the BPA email lists.	Phone:

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter: Contribute photos, articles, creative works; interview Barron Park neighbors/businesses for articles; proofread. <input type="checkbox"/> May Fête: Help with the annual Spring neighborhood event in Bol Park. <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Cultural Events: Organize volunteers, coordinate neighborhood events, assist with planning. <input type="checkbox"/> Welcoming: Greet new residents with information to introduce them to our caring community. <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and Creeks: Work with City and neighborhood to review park and creek issues, maintenance and improvement projects. <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors: Join us for lunch and other activities and/or serve as a volunteer to help other Barron Park Seniors. <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Safety and Emergency Preparedness: Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> with Emergency Preparedness Volunteers to prepare the neighborhood to handle major emergencies. <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic and Streets: Work with the 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"/> Environmental Issues: Work on a specific neighborhood environmental issue or identify, create and implement sustainable environmental solutions in our neighborhood. <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning and Land Use: 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"/> School Liaison: Coordinate BPA affairs and news with neighborhood school issues and activities. |
|---|---|

The BPA encourages all residents and businesses in Barron Park/Green Acres 2 to join our volunteer neighborhood association. May Fête and other events are happening! Look out for announcements. 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 Activities, the Donkey Project, Buena Vista Homework Club and Summer Camp, the Karat School Project, and Emergency Preparedness efforts.

April Joins the Herd!

By The Editors

The new donkey in our Bol Park pasture is April, a 14-year old rescue from Salinas. She's a white miniature from hard-working Moroccan stock. Please come around to meet her (and of course Perry and Buddy) on one of these beautiful afternoons.

Just remember - NO TREATS for any of the donkeys. Our Barron Park donkeys are on a special, vet-prescribed diet. They are forbidden to eat anything offered by visitors.

More details to come about April's origin and her vet care needs.



April, the "princess of Barron Park," returns from 2 weeks at UC Davis to rejoin her herd. Photo by Jenny Kiratli.



April, with Jenny Kiratli and James Witt. Photo by Myrna Rochester.



April enjoys the sunshine and the pasture with Buddy and Perry. Photo by Jenny Kiratli.

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

Thoughts on Blooming

By Ted Feng



I've lived in Barron Park for more than three decades and took up painting about seven years ago. I like doing landscapes, portraits, flowers, and horses. The process usually starts with phenomena or subjects that inspire me. I then proceed to transcribe what I perceive into the forms and colors of a picture. I, my subject, and the emerging image are in constant dialogue. For me, the art experience is more than joyous. One of my instructors called me a Romantic, and I think he was right. I love beauty and want to create artworks that are beautiful. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." See the BPA Newsletter Archive, Fall 2017, for more of my paintings.

Signs of Spring (continued from page 6)



A sea of purple "Bee's Bliss" salvia blooms in the Bol Park Native Garden. Photo by Hilary Glann.

BPA EMAIL LISTS

The Barron Park Association offers three Email Lists for any resident to post: *bpa-news*, *bpa-misc*, and *bpa-issues*. They are hosted on Google

Groups. To join a list, go to:

bpapaloalto.org/bpa-email-lists/

The link provides information about each list and an easy way to subscribe to one or more of them.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER

Barron Park Association

724 Barron Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94306

EDITOR

Myrna Rochester

LAYOUT

Hilary Glann

PROOFREADERS

Christina Luce, Gwen Luce

CONTRIBUTORS

Linda Elder, Ted Feng,
Rona Foster, Shirley Gaines,
Hilary Glann, Douglas L. Graham,
John W. King, Jenny Kiratli,
Kellie Stafford, Star Teachout

PHOTO/ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

Amazon.com, The Bol Family,
Susan Breitbard, Richard Elder, Ted Feng,
Rona Foster, Shirley Gaines, Hilary Glann,
Jenny Kiratli, *Life Magazine*,
The Mueller Family, *Palo Alto Online*,
Jaya Pandey, John Richards,
Myrna Rochester, Jenn Silva, Star Teachout

PRINTER

Prodigy Press

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION
724 Barron Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94306
bpaloalto.org



ADELE GERSHATER
TAX PREPARATION, PLANNING,
AND AUDIT DEFENSE,
ACCOUNTING AND BOOKKEEPING
ADELEGERSHATERCPA.COM
650-382-3259
FRENCH AND SPANISH SPEAKER

JIMMY'S CAFE

TASTY MEDITERRANEAN FOOD
CHICKEN SHAWARMA - GYRO - FALAFEL
4131 EL CAMINO REAL #100
PALO ALTO, CA 94306
OPEN MON-SAT 11:00 AM - 8:00 PM
650-394-5514

SCAN THE QR CODE
FOR OUR YELP PAGE

GET DELIVERY WITH

- DOORDASH
- UBEREATS
- GRUBHUB



Playing in
Barron Park
since 1985.

A joyful and creative
community of explorers
and learners.

BarronParkPreschool.com



BARRON PARK'S LOCAL COPY SHOP

DESKTOP PUBLISHING • LARGE FORMAT
SELF SERVICE ON 100% RECYCLED PAPER
LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED

Professional • Friendly • Reliable
Affordable • Convenient



650.856.2020 • copyfactory.com
3929 El Camino Real, Palo Alto

Between Los Robles and Ventura

B&W • COLOR COPIES • FULL BINDERY

GEDDES ULINSKAS ARCHITECTS



Local Architects Serving the Silicon
Valley Community for 20 Years.

www.ularch.com
415.904.0483



Creekside Inn

Thank you Creekside Inn for graciously
providing well-equipped rooms for our
Barron Park Association meetings!

3400 El Camino Real, Palo Alto
650-493-2411

creekside-inn.com

GREENMAIL

Products & Services

- Shipping: FedEx, UPS, USPS
- Packaging/Shipping Supplies
- Private & Virtual Mailbox Rentals
- Passport Photos (US/International)
- Notary Public
- Certifix Live Scan
- Fax & Scan
- Color & B/W Copy
- Rubber Stamps
- Western Union
- Greeting Cards
- Fingerprint Cards
- Key Duplication
- Office Supplies
- Secure Shredding
- Money Orders

3790 El Camino Real, Palo Alto
Phone: (650) 494-2660 Fax: (650) 494-3539

Outstanding Carpet & Floor Solutions



Stanford Carpets

3780 El Camino Real
Palo Alto
(650) 424-1494

<http://stanfordcarpets.com>

Carpet~Vinyl~Hardwood Floors~Laminate