

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lynnne Melena, BPA President



City Tests Restriping Plan on Arastradero Road

Just before school opened last fall, the City paved and re-striped Arastradero Road, implementing a plan that had been in the works for more than seven years. The main feature of the newly striped Arastradero is that there are now two through lanes (plus left turn lanes) rather than four through lanes, for much of its length. The plan is in the middle of a one-year trial, at the end of which the City Council will decide whether to make it permanent, with or without changes.

Under the new striping plan, the number of lanes varies depending on traffic needs, particularly at the entrances to schools. The section from Foothill Expressway to the entrance to Gunn High School remains at two through lanes in each direction, with a left turn lane at the entrance to Gunn. Traveling eastbound from there, the road narrows to one through lane plus left turn lanes at intersections, and then widens again to two lanes plus left turn lanes at Donald Drive/Terman. Traveling westbound from Donald/Terman, there are two lanes all the way to Foothill with a dedicated right turn lane at Gunn. The remainder of Arastradero, from Donald/Terman is one through lane in each direction plus left turn lanes.

The main question from Barron Park residents is: why did the City re-stripe Arastradero? The City had four goals for the entire Charleston-Arastradero corridor (which has 11 schools and hundreds of commuting students):

- Improve school commute safety for K-12 students from pre-trial conditions. Those conditions were:

High speeds. Off-peak 85th percentile speeds were 38 mph with highest speeds of 45-49 mph (170 per day) in 25 mph school zone (85th percentile—a commonly used speed measurement—is the speed at which 85 percent of the vehicles were driving.);

Accidents. 471 accidents in five years (1998-2002);

High rate of accidents. 6.2 accidents/million vehicle miles of travel (VMT) compared to statewide average of 4.9 accidents/million VMT;

Injury accidents. 78 accidents (17 percent of total) were injury accidents;

Bike/ped injuries. Of all injury accidents, 29 percent were bikes and pedestrians;

Rear-end sideswipe accidents. 221 of accidents (47 percent of total) were rear-end sideswipe.

- Enhance the streetscape environment and quality of life in the corridor.

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Join/Renew BPA Today!

This 'Membership' issue of the Barron Park Newsletter is sent to all residents in Barron Park. It marks the start of our Membership campaign for 2011-2012. Members of the Barron Park Association will receive three more issues of our newsletter during the course of the year. You won't want to miss any of these issues, so fill out the membership application in the center of this issue, and send it in along with your membership dues right away. Alternatively you can join/renew online at <http://www.bpaonline.org>, and click on the "HOW to JOIN" button.

Your membership in the Barron Park Association supports our many neighborhood improvement and informational activities. They include BPA sponsored social events such as the upcoming 'May Fete' on May 15 in Bol Park, our popular BPA email lists for sending news and information, and Barron Park's efforts towards Emergency Preparedness that were highlighted at last September's 'Quakeville' tent city community exercise in Briones Park. In addition, only members of the Association are eligible to participate in—and receive—our BPA Babysitting List, and to take advantage of the new BPA-jobpostings email list.

We hope you enjoy reading the "Membership" issue of the Barron Park Newsletter and you will send in your membership. Join/renew today!

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■ Determine the effects of future traffic demand through 2015 (a large number of housing units have been built in the east-end part of the corridor).

■ Minimize traffic shift to adjacent streets.

Immediate neighbors have been strong advocates for these changes. The schools, particularly Gunn High School, Terman Middle School and Juana Briones Elementary School, have been partners in the planning process. The Barron Park Association has been represented on a stakeholders group by myself, and Markus Fromherz, a new Board member, who is the Gunn traffic safety representative. Community meetings have been held throughout the planning process, including last August before the re-striping and in November right after the re-striping.

Paving Began Last Summer

Major street repaving began in mid-August. New roadway striping to define the new lanes which was completed when school started in late August. However, some important elements were just being installed in January and February. Some of these were planned from the beginning and others are modifications based on feedback to date.

One planned element is a modified traffic signal at Coulombe to provide a protected left turn for eastbound Arastradero traffic. The signal upgrade required new traffic poles with arms that extend over the street to make the signals more visible. Also, handicapped ramps that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards were installed.

Raised Islands in Medians

The other more recently installed features are raised islands at two locations. The one at Clemo was planned from the beginning to make it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross Arastradero in the long stretch between El Camino and Coulombe. It includes a striped crosswalk and a pedestrian-activated flashing beacon warning system (not completed at the time this article is being written).

The second island at Hubbard Street was proposed by the City in October in response to community concerns regarding vehicles using the center turn lane in this area to pass illegally on the left. The island also provided a place for a prominently displayed speed limit sign. After the island was installed and new speed signs were activated, there was an immediate and measurable speed reduction from the mid-



30s to the high-20s/low-30s. Further changes in roadway markings are also to be installed between Donald/Terman and King Arthur Court to help improve left turn vehicle access to both streets.

Some Barron Park residents have asked about why the islands were built with concrete if this is a trial project. The reason is that there is no safe way to simulate the safety features being tested at these locations with lines painted on the street. However, the islands were built with very shallow foundations and can be removed.

There were also complaints about the visibility of the islands right after they were installed. However, that was a temporary condition. Reflectors around the islands have been added and the island noses were painted white. There will also be other roadway markings. (These may have been completed by the time this newsletter is published.)

El Camino/Arastradero Intersection

While there have been a number of smaller problems with the roadway design, one problem is very big. That is the congestion at El Camino and Arastradero. Traffic entering Arastradero must quickly merge from two lanes to one. During the heavier morning commute, traffic volumes are too high for cars to merge quickly, causing a back-up to the El Camino intersection. The problem became especially bad with the start of the rainy season when more students began driving to school.

The City is in the process of implementing a fix—which is to move the merge point

further west. Restoring two westbound lanes all the way to Alta Mesa/McKellar will remove parking spaces and the bus stop (as was the case before the re-striping happened). Also, right turns on red, from El Camino to westbound Arastradero, will be prohibited between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m.

Public Review Process

The project is an on-going one-year trial with monitoring and adjustments being made all the time. By the end of March/early April, the project will be fully implemented and the City will take traffic counts to compare to the base line counts that were taken before it began. Those counts will be at several points on Arastradero, as well as on Maybell, Donald and Georgia to assess whether traffic is diverting to other streets to avoid Arastradero. Although the City did not take base line counts on Los Robles (which some believe has experienced an increase in traffic), future counts will include that street as well. After the new traffic count data has been collected, there will be another community meeting, which will be announced by various means including the BP-news email list.

Comments may be sent to the City via email transportation@cityofpaloalto.org at any time.

The City Council will not make a decision on whether to approve the project until at least September and perhaps later because of the long phase-in period for the project. At that time there will be more community meetings, followed by hearings at the Planning and Transportation Commission, and then at the City Council. Evaluation of the project will be based on specific performance measures approved at the outset of the project. They include:

- Reduction in crashes;
- Increased bicycle and pedestrian volumes;
- Reduced speeds during non-peak periods;
- No increase in peak and off-peak travel times, and
- No significant increase in delay at signalized intersections.

I hope you will come to the community meetings to learn more and express your views. Staff welcomes feedback that helps them understand what is working well or not working for road users.

JOIN US FOR MAY FETE 2011!



**SUNDAY, MAY 15TH AT BOL PARK
FROM NOON TO 4 PM**

Come and enjoy live musicians and dancers. They will perform all afternoon, with a Maypole dance at 2:30. Bring the family and a blanket and make a picnic of it.

Hamburgers and hot dogs will also be for sale. Wear ribbons. There will also be, games and crafts for the children, donkeys and donkey art, and the history exhibit. Activities will include face painting for children, donkey parade, fire truck and more. Suggestions for other activities from the Barron Park community are welcome.

The fete is a volunteer effort. If you'd like to help, or if you'd like to propose a display or activity, contact the event organizer John King at 650-483-2710.

GROUP DISCOUNT ON SEISMIC RETROFITS

In this area, we don't need the pictures from earthquakes in Christchurch, NZ—where the recent 6.3 quake did more damage than the greater magnitude 7.1 quake the year before—to remind us to be prepared.

Neighbors in Greenacres, along with a few in Barron Park, have banded together to take advantage of a group discount on seismic retrofits from a local contractor who specializes in seismic and foundation work. Our contractor did the same thing for the neighborhood of a friend in Mountain View, where they had eight households do the work together. In groups of 7 or more, the contractor offered a 20% discount on the work, since they can do more work in a shorter period of time if all the houses are located close together.

I wanted to share our experience in case more neighbors in Barron Park would like to pull together for group retrofits, to take advantage of economies of scale, share

experiences, compare notes, and encourage each other. In our home, we have had a seismic retrofit on our To Do list for far too long. Now we can't put it off!

We have similar houses in this area, which is a plus—every house has to be looked at individually, but many of us will have similar retrofits. They can do this kind of work for single-family residences that “qualify for a prescriptive (non-engineered) retrofit”—for simple single-family homes that qualify, instead of hiring an architect or engineer to design a retrofit, we are basically doing work per the Uniform Building Code to anchor our homes to their foundations.

In our neighborhood, we shared information about the group discount through our neighborhood group. One person corresponds with the neighbors who are interested and puts together a list of contacts for the contractor, who takes it from there. Our contractor, Anderson Niswander,

organizes the detailed foundation inspections in groups, discounting their normal inspection fee by half, to \$100, for groups of 4 households. After the individual inspection reports, those who wish to do the work enter into individual contracts. Anderson Niswander calculates the discount based on the number of home that go to contract, with 7 or more at 20% off. Our contractor, Anderson Niswander (650.559.0451, www.andersonniswander.com), was recommended from a number of unrelated sources, so we decided to work with them. They are a small local company, but I hear once things are scheduled, construction proceeds apace.

One of our neighbors mentioned working with another company in the East Bay for a family retrofit, so if Anderson Niswander is booked, there are foundation specialists out there. Just don't put it off! A good seismic retrofit is prevention for the price of two or three years' worth of earthquake insurance.

BARRON PARK AT WAR—1943

(HISTORICAL FICTION—PART THREE OF THREE PARTS)

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

Continued from the last two issues:

A story of the Home Front in World War II, set in Barron Park and Palo Alto. In California, we were far from the fighting but thoroughly involved in the research, manufacturing, food production, shipping and training that went on to make up the greatest logistical war effort ever seen on the planet.

The people who were living in Barron Park at the time all shared in that effort, in their own small ways, and the purpose of this article is to bring home and personalize the story of that time.

In Part Two of this story we met the Bancroft Family, learned about: (1) making paper airplanes from cereal boxes, (2) the meaning of Blue Star and Gold Star Flags, (3) submarine shelling and balloon bombs on the California coast, (4) tire hoarding, and (5) a cannery worker who had the same job in both world wars.



Part Three (in this issue) will conclude with the ripening friendship of three strong women whom you met in Parts One and Two: Anne Stouffer, Meggie Thorpe, and Linda Maguire. The story builds to a climax in a distant land, but the reverberations reach back to Barron Park as the friends are reminded of the underlying tragedy of war, even on the Home Front.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1943

(See Box #3, Palo Alto Times headlines)

The Maguires

The Maguires lived in Barron Park because of Patrick’s military assignment. He was a Signal Corps Captain in the U.S. Army Reserve, and had been on active duty continuously since receiving his commission in 1940. He was the CO (Commanding Officer) of a small signal unit supporting the troop training at “Camp Page Mill.” The camp was in the Stanford Hills along Page Mill Road near Junipero Serra Boulevard.

Patrick was a Boston University (BU) graduate, class of 1940. At BU he had met Linda Kennedy, also a 1940 graduate, and they were married right after graduation. Along with the other ROTC grads, he had been commissioned at graduation, and ordered to active duty two weeks later, giving him and Linda barely time for a honeymoon on Cape Cod. He had been assigned to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, in troop training and staff roles, until a sudden reassignment to the Presidio of San Francisco about eight months ago. Linda was determined

to stay with Patrick as long as possible (they both felt certain that he would be shipped overseas sooner or later). So she had followed him to the Presidio, but he had been immediately sent on “TDY” (temporary duty) to Camp Page Mill.

No permanent housing was available in the Palo Alto area, but they located a travel trailer for rent and a space for it at the Buena Vista Tourist Camp in Barron Park. Linda, a sociable, attractive, assertive but soft-spoken young woman, immediately plunged into the life of the Barron Park community, trying to meet and get to know as many women as she could. She had soon heard of the “Stitch-and-Gab-Society,” had wangled an invitation, and had been attending meetings faithfully for several months. She had been at, and spoken at, the meeting two days before.

The Buena Vista Tourist Camp

Linda looked up as her kitchen timer went off. “Nine o’clock,” she thought, “time to visit my victory garden and pick some tomatoes. The late crop was good this year, and the sun and soil grew tomatoes like she had never seen in New England. She

went out the trailer door and closed it behind her. It didn’t seem necessary to lock it, unlike her practice in Boston. Barron Park residents all told her that they never locked their doors unless they were leaving for a week or more.

She stood on the stoop for a minute or two, looking around at the bright sunlight streaming down through the foliage of the stately oaks dotting the Buena Vista Tourist Camp (see Illustration G). She never would have thought, since both she and her husband had college degrees, that she’d ever have to live in a travel trailer. For a moment, she pictured in her mind her parents’ stately suburban home in Lexington, Massachusetts, and the corner of her mouth turned up in a wistful smile.

Meggie Thorpe’s home cannery

When Linda got to their victory garden on Chimalus Avenue, she found Meggie Thorpe already hard at work, picking zucchini, some of which had grown too large, almost like small watermelons. She knew Meggie had worked the night shift until 6 a.m. and wondered how she ever got enough sleep during canning season. When she wasn’t canning for Sutter, she was canning for herself from her victory garden (see Illustration H). She even made pickles from her cucumbers, green tomatoes, and peppers. Since Meggie had always gardened and canned, she was better equipped for it than

Box 3: Headlines of the Day

Palo Alto Times

Friday October 8, 1943

Hitler tells aides Germany will lose if morale collapses

Knox expects Nazis to leave Rome in ruins

Japs quitting vital position in Solomons

Bremen battered in rising fury of aerial attack



Illustration G: Woman relaxing by trailer in Buena Vista Tourist Camp, mid-1930s (similar to Linda Maguire in 1943)

anyone else in the neighborhood, according to Anne Stouffer. She had industrial-sized kettles and ladles and a huge restaurant stove with a big oven capable of canning 24 one-quart Mason jars at a time. Linda had been very impressed when Meggie gave her the grand tour one day.

Exploding peaches

Linda had been especially impressed when Meggie told her the story of the exploding peaches. One year, on a hot day in late July, she was canning peaches. She had had a big row with Fred over something to do with their Maybell orchard and she was seething about that. In her anger, she absent-mindedly screwed the caps tight on the Mason jars, instead of leaving them loose so the steam could escape. The inevitable happened, and a jar exploded, setting off most of the other jars in the oven.

As Meggie told it, “my guardian angel must have been watching over me, because I had been standing right in front of the oven when the phone rang in the living room and I stepped in there to answer it. Just then, there was this big bang and then a thunderous blast that shook the house. When I looked at the open door to the kitchen I couldn’t see anything but clouds of steam. The phone only rang two times and then there was nobody on the line. When I could see through the steam I saw that the oven door had been blown open (the hinges were actually bent: it had been forced beyond its usual range of motion). There was this steaming hot paste of peaches all over the kitchen walls, win-

dows, ceiling and floors—everywhere that was in a straight line from any part of that oven door.

“The paste was full of glass shards, which made it some of the nastiest stuff I’ve ever had to clean up. It took me two days, and I was so mad when it happened that I probably would have killed Fred if he had been here!” she had laughed when she said that, so Linda hadn’t worried much about whether or not she really meant it.

Canning plans for the weekend

This morning, Linda was curious about Meggie’s canning plans for the weekend. Meggie said there wasn’t much left to can except more tomatoes, unless she wanted to buy some end-of-season pears. “But they’re all probably too ripe for good canning now anyway—they’d probably just mush up.” But, she said, she might go over to Anne Stouffer’s this afternoon and walk her through how to pickle green tomatoes—Anne had sounded interested in that project.

They walked around the victory garden together. Meggie said, “It’s time to start cleaning up all this trash” (meaning the dead and dying remnants of lettuce plants gone to seed). “It’s also time to harvest the rest of the onions and carrots, especially the carrots before the gophers get any more of them. You know what amuses me? That Victory Garden poster they have at the Post Office, you know the one,

with the family, all in perfectly clean clothes, and the vegetables, all neat and clean like a market display, in a big basket? It’s all so unrealistic, no dirt, no sweat, and no sun in your eyes or flies on your face. I wonder how many people have started these gardens and given up with sore backs, blistered hands and sunburned faces when they found out how much boring work there is to it” (see Illustration I).

Linda picked as many tomatoes as she figured she could use and give away in the Tourist Camp over the next two or three days. She had only grown Beefsteaks, Yellow Pears, and Cherry Tomatoes, but Meggie had grown several other varieties as well. Then Linda straightened up and said, with a hint of tightness in her voice, “I guess I’d better be going now.”

Linda’s fears

Meggie asked her how she was doing—how life was treating her. Suddenly, Linda felt saddened as she thought about the short time together that remained for Patrick and her. “Oh, Meggie”, she blurted out, “he’s going to be assigned to an overseas unit as a replacement; he’s sure it’s going to happen within the next two



Illustration H: Grow Your Own, Can Your Own poster.



Illustration I: Plant a Victory Garden poster

months. Everybody in the states is going to be rotated either to England for the invasion, or else sent out to the Pacific for that god-awful island hopping, fighting those Japanese fanatics on every beach. What should I do? I'm thinking I might join the WACS. I probably could get a commission—but then I might be sent to the war theatre that he doesn't get sent to, so I think I should wait until we know. What do you think? I'd hate to be in New Guinea if he was injured In France!"

Meggie stood there, appalled at her friend's shattered visage. One little question was all it had taken—just like the one jar of peaches setting off the others. Linda began to sob, and tears were flowing down her cheeks. All of a sudden it hit Meggie: I'm her mother. She doesn't have her mother here, and she needs her. She reached out in the unrelenting glare of the October sun and enveloped Linda in her wiry arms, pressing her against her bony chest. "Now, now, sweetheart, just cry it out and I'll hold you." The two of them stood there, in the middle of the Victory Garden, holding each other, until Linda could draw back and wipe her face. "Thank you" was all she said but it seemed enough.

Anne's afternoon coffee break

It was 2 p.m. and Anne Stouffer finally had

some time to herself. She had gotten herself and Annie lunch, then persuaded Annie that she still wasn't such a "big girl" that she could be excused from having a nap. So Annie, cooperative as usual, had taken her favorite Raggedy Ann fabric doll with the silly grinning face and gone off to her room to lie down and dream or do whatever she did when she was being quiet. Napping or pretending to nap—there wasn't much difference.

It meant that Anne could sit, savoring a cup of Folger's Best Coffee from the big roasting plant in San Francisco, and read this morning's *Palo Alto Times*. She didn't find much of interest today. The war news mostly bored her, except when it horrified her. She never spoke out about it, but she thought that what the U.S. was doing in bombing Europe was really not

much better than what the Luftwaffe had done, except that the intended end results would supposedly be better. Did the ends really justify the means? Almost everybody she knew had decided that they did and that fact horrified Anne as much as anything about the war. What will we be like when all this is over, she wondered?

Her thoughts turned to Meggie's not-so-subtle urgings that Anne take part-time work at the cannery and help the war effort directly. But the canning season was almost over—was it worth it? Maybe she should take some employment—any employment for half-time, and in theory, this would free up half a man to go fight. There's something funny about that thought, she realized—usually half-men came back from wars but here was her chance to send a half a man off to one. She turned to the employment ads, and one caught her eye. She won-

dered what it would be like to go to work in a radio vacuum-tube factory every day (see Illustration J).

What's on at the Mayfield Theater?

No, this was getting her nowhere. She turned to the movie ads page. Richard would like to go see a film tonight, she figured. They probably shouldn't go any farther than the Mayfield Theater on California Avenue, she knew, or they might get pulled over by the police for violating the gas rationing regulations—you were not supposed to use your gas ration for pleasure purposes. But the cops would probably look the other way when it was somebody from a rural area like Barron Park going to the nearest movie theatre, which was two miles away. Kind of too far to walk at night, even if it was safe—which it was. There seemed to be little crime nowadays—I guess the military had scarfed up all the loose young men who otherwise might have criminal inclinations, she mused.

She told herself to focus—what film was on at the Mayfield? It turned out to be "Desperate Journey" with Errol Flynn and Ronald Reagan, a not-too-serious war adventure film featuring downed RAF flyers that make their way across occupied Poland and Germany to recapture a British plane and fly to safety in England. Hmm, it sounds OK, she thought. Not what I'd seek but it would probably be entertaining. "OK, that settles that," she said herself aloud (see Illustration K).

To Young Women Interested in War Work

We have a limited number of positions open for capable women up to 40 years of age in our precision manufacturing laboratories making vacuum radio tubes for military purposes.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY, BUT ALL PLACEMENT IS SUBJECT TO SELECTIVE INTERVIEW

Excellent meals at cost in our new plant cafeteria; pleasant and comfortable working conditions. Good transportation from points on the peninsula; 48 hours of work a week. If you are not now employed in an essential industry, apply at

EITEL-McCULLOUGH, INC.
San Bruno

Illustration J: Eitel-McCullough employment advertisement from *Palo Alto Times*, October 8, 1943

Linda interrupts Anne’s reverie

Anne was jarred out of her reverie by the doorbell. It was Linda Maguire, and Anne invited her in. “I’ve just finished a cup of coffee and I’d like another one. Would you join me?” Of course” said Linda, smiling with her mouth but not with her eyes.

Anne took instant notice, but busied herself at the kitchen counter with coffee making.

When she joined Linda at the kitchenette table she looked her in the eyes and said “OK, Linda, what’s wrong?” Linda stared back with a slightly defiant air and said, “Oh, just everything. Every damned thing” Anne said. “Uh-Oh! Is it Patrick?” Linda replied “No, not the way you think. It’s just that he’s going to be ordered overseas and I don’t know what to do next.” Anne thought (but didn’t want to say) OK, honey, didn’t you know all along that this was going to happen? What she actually said was “Has he been told that orders are being cut?” Linda said, “No, he just knows that they almost certainly will be cut sometime in the next two months, and I don’t want to lose him!” The last phrase was a cry of desperation.

Oh, my, Anne thought: here Linda is embarking on her own desperate journey. She said, “Oh, Linda, I’m so sorry. What will you do?” Linda replied, speaking slowly and carefully, “I broke down this morning, Anne. I just came apart right in the middle of Meggie Thorpe’s Victory Garden, in front of God and everybody. This is not how I handle problems, and it scares me. Am I having a nervous breakdown?” She looked a little wild-eyed.

Anne decided it was time for shock therapy. “Do you want to? That’s a good way to run away from the problem.” Linda blushed, looked away and was silent for a minute. Just when Anne was trying to decide what to say next, Linda swiveled around to face her full on and said. “Thanks, I guess I asked for that. Of course I don’t want to run away from it. I’m thinking about going for a commission in the WACS.”

Ginnie Walsh Arrives

Anne was dumbfounded. Before she could think of a sensible response, Annie came wandering into the kitchen, dragging her doll behind her and rubbing her eyes. Glad

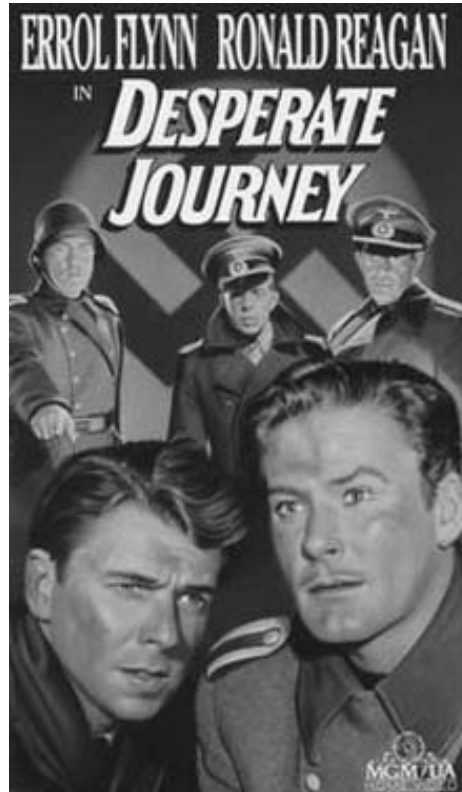


Illustration K: Movie ad poster for “Dangerous Journey”, which played at the Mayfield Theatre October 8, 1943

for the interruption, Anne told Annie “I’m glad you woke up: it’s almost time for Ginnie to be here.”

Ginnie Walsh had been spending most afternoons at the Stouffers because her mother was working part-time at the cannery, and her older sister and brother had after-school jobs picking beans and tomatoes in Mountain View. As soon as Anne had gotten some cookies out of the jar for the girls, the doorbell rang. Then, when Anne opened the door to greet Mrs. Walsh, the phone rang.

The girls grabbed cookies and went to Annie’s room, Ginnie carrying a paper doll book. The phone caller was Meggie, who asked, “Is Linda there?” Anne said, “Yes...why do you ask?” Meggie asked if she could join them and Anne invited her to come right over. Before Meggie rang off, she said, “I’m a little worried about that girl.” Anne let Linda know Meggie was joining them, and Linda changed the subject to canning. She told Anne the story of the exploding peaches and Anne said, “Yes, I remember that. Two summers ago, wasn’t it? She was lucky she wasn’t burned...or worse.”

The WACS?

When Meggie arrived, the girls were playing quietly in Annie’s room. The three women sat around the kitchen table, and Anne broke the ice: “The WACS? Are you sure you want to do that?” Linda looked at both of them, her eyes searching their faces. “Yes, I think I am. I’ve been thinking about it for more than a year. I can’t follow Patrick where he is going to have to go. I should do something meaningful on my own. Right now I can’t think of any career I want to start. We need everyone we can get for the war effort. I have no dependents. Why not me? When I started to come apart this morning, it was a signal it was time to stop dithering and make the decision.” There was a pause in the conversation, then Meggie said, “Well...do we wave flags and sound bugles now?” The three women looked at each other and Linda started to giggle. It was infectious. They all got started and couldn’t stop. The girls came out to see what was going on and stood there looking puzzled until they found it boring and went back to Annie’s room.

The Three Musketeers

“Are we crazy, or what?” Anne said, between hiccups. “You know what we are? We’re like the three Musketeers. The three female Musketeers of Barron Park!” Meggie said, “One for All and All for One.” Spontaneously, the three stood and formed a circle, hugging each other.

“So, how do we go about musketeering?” said Anne. Meggie said, “Well, first I think you should start knitting brown wool stockings for this girl. “What if I get sent to the South Pacific?” asked Linda. “Then you can hang them from the rafters of your grass-roofed shack and keep your medals and grenades and things in them,” said Meggie. “We will write you, wherever you go, and keep you up-to-date on all the Barron Park happenings, like exploding peaches and whose kid gets caught joy-riding in Santa Cruz on gasoline diluted with dry-cleaning fluid, and other major events.” “Seriously,” Meggie said, “are you going to tell Patrick now?” Linda looked thoughtful. “Maybe not yet. He’s not going to like the idea. He thinks I’m going home to my parents and enter the Master’s Degree program at B.U. I need to see a WAC recruiter and find out if I can get a

commission, and where I would go for training, and all that kind of thing.”

Anne said “Well, I guess you’d be leaving here, anyway, once he’s reassigned. We will miss you a lot, Linda. The neighborhood will seem a little emptier without you. So many of our people are gone to war, or are too busy to ever stop and talk with anyone...” Her thought dwindled off, and they looked at each other again. They all grinned, and Anne said, “The Three Musketeers forever!” and they all shouted it together.

EPILOGUE: 1943–44

Barron Park Forever!

Canning season came to a close the first of November when the tomato crop was finished. Meggie had time to relax, sleep more and enjoy times with Linda, Anne, and her many Barron Park friends. The first fall rains started. Anne decided to start a book group with some of the Stitch-and-Gab ladies, including Linda. Linda did research on the WACS.

Then, in mid-November, Patrick was reassigned to duty with an Armored Division in England. Linda turned the Oldsmobile Coupe over to Meggie, giving her power of attorney to sell it. She and Patrick closed out the trailer and celebrated Thanksgiving at the Stouffer’s. The next day, Linda and Patrick took the train from the Palo Alto Depot to San Francisco. At the depot, Anne, Meggie and several other Barron Park women were there to see them off. Bystanders were puzzled when the three women hugged each other and chanted “Three Musketeers! One for all, all for one! Barron Park Forever!”

Patrick Ships Out

In San Francisco, the Maguires caught their train to New York, where Patrick would be shipping out. He dumped his duffle bag at a reception station in Brooklyn, and took a week’s leave. They spent it together, mostly in Boston and Lexington, visiting their parents in turn. Then it was December 5, 1943, and Patrick was on the troop transport, just a tiny face high above Linda, almost lost among hundreds of uniforms lining the rail and waving as the transport edged astern to clear the dock. The ship’s whistle was roaring, the crowd cheering, but Linda could hardly see a thing for the

tears filling her eyes. Would she ever see him again?

A Musketeer Goes to War

Linda was accepted into the WAC Officer Training Program at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, and her class began January 4, 1944. She was commissioned in late March, spent a brief leave in Boston and was shipped out on a troop transport from Norfolk, Virginia to England, arriving in mid-April. She continued to write every week to Meggie and Anne, although she missed some weeks as the gigantic buildup in England rose to a crescendo in the late spring.

She got to see Patrick once—in Portsmouth on a cold, foggy, rainy day in late May, when their respective divisions were camped near each other as they prepared to load the landing ships and small craft for the cross-channel invasion of France. Barron Park, and the California Home Front, felt a million light-years away, as if it was on a distant planet, but when she wrote to her Anne or Meggie, the Three Musketeers seemed to live still, glowing in the bright California sunshine. Then the letters stopped.

The last letter

One hot afternoon in late June, 1944, Meggie showed up on Anne’s doorstep with a long face. “Come on in, Meggie, and have a cup of Folger’s Best,” Anne said, wondering what was wrong. In silence, Meggie handed her a letter addressed in Linda’s handwriting and postmarked Boston, June 20th. Meggie had obviously already read it, as it had been opened. As they sat down, Anne had a sinking feeling—had Patrick been killed in the invasion? Was Linda home in Boston? She pulled the letter—one page—and started to read it. It was dated March 20, 1944, and read;

Dear Meggie and Anne

If you are reading this, I am dead. I am writing this in my room at my parents’ home near Boston. I will be shipping out to Europe in a few days, to the administrative staff of a combat division. I can’t say anything more about that.

I am leaving this letter with my mother, who has sworn to keep it for me until I can retrieve and destroy it after the war is over.

We will have a joyous reunion of the Three Musketeers then, in Barron Park, and I will tell you all my war stories.

But now you know that will never happen, since you are reading this letter. My mother was further sworn to send it to you, Meggie, if my parents received official word of my death from the War Department. I know she will do this for me, although I did not, of course, have her read it, but gave it to her sealed.

Please know that, wherever I have gone since leaving you, and wherever I will go next, I treasure the memories of true friendship with both of you. You helped make my brief stay in Barron Park a joyful, stimulating, memorable time—one of the best times of my life. I commend you for all the little things that you, and the others, have done and continue to do, to make your neighborhood a better place to live. Live long, and have fun! Get yourselves a D’Artagnan!

Your true friend, the Third Musketeer

Linda Kennedy Maguire

AUTHOR’S NOTE

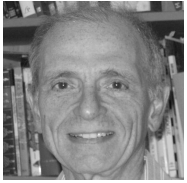
There is precious little documentation of the lives of Barron Parkers on the Home Front in World War II—almost nothing, really. To imagine the lives of people in those times as accurately as possible, I have researched the U.S. Home Front extensively on the Internet, in books, in contemporary issues of the Palo Alto Times, and even in two issues of Palo Alto High School’s newspaper, The Campanile, published in 1944 and 2005. I have also drawn on personal memories from the period 1943-45 on the Home Front in Rochester, NY.

The characters in this concluding episode of the story, the Stouffers, Thorpes and Maguire are fictional and are not intended to resemble anyone, alive or dead, that I have ever known or heard about. Locations of the friends’ Victory Gardens are purely speculative. The great peach explosion happened elsewhere and in a different year.

I hope you enjoyed this story; it was a labor of love for me. If you wish to provide feedback or information concerning our neighborhood during the Home Front years, please contact me at; Douglas L. Graham, 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto CA 94306, 650-493-0689, or dgrahampaca@gmail.com.

Fire Department Study Recommends Closing Fire Stations Serving Barron Park

By Art Liberman



Consultants hired by the City to study the Palo Alto Fire Department recommended the closure of the Fire Stations on Arastradero and

Hanover Street in the Research Park, which are the primary responding stations for emergencies in Barron Park. In place of these stations, the consultants urged the City to construct a new station in the foothills area of the Research Park. This was one of 48 recommendations the consultants presented to the City Council at a Study Session on February 7th.

Many of their suggestions on personnel deployment and improving organizational efficiency were well received by the Council. These included eliminating the minimum staffing standards at each of the Fire Stations that have been in place for many years, resulting in large overtime costs for the City and causing cutbacks in other areas, and also combining many of the administrative functions of the Fire Department with those of the Police Department, with both Departments operating under a single Public Safety Director.

However the recommendation to replace the two stations currently serving Barron Park with a new Fire station above Foothill Expressway was greeted with some skepticism during the Council comment and question period. Both Council member Greg Schmid and Vice-Mayor Yahweh Yeh, who both live in south Palo Alto, mentioned that access from a station in the foothills area to an emergency in Barron Park would be difficult because of the intricacies of our local street network and would increase the emergency response time. Council member Pat Burt also noted that the Hanover Street station is located on Stanford lands and before making any recommendation to close that station, Stanford should have been consulted since Stanford pays 30% of the Palo Alto Fire

Department budget, and their priorities may be different than the City's.

The consultants noted a significant imbalance in the Fire Department's emergency resources, which affects the proposal to close the stations serving Barron Park residents. The preponderance of the calls to the Fire Department in the past decade have been in response to medical emergencies and not fire suppression, and this trend is expected to continue. Barron Park resident Bob Moss told the Council during the public discussion phase of the Study Session that this was another reason not to move stations away from Barron Park, because this would put the fire department personnel further away from residents from whom they would receive most of their emergency calls.

The consultants also recommended phasing out the Fire Department's hazardous material response unit, now based at the Hanover Street station. It was puzzling how they arrived at this recommendation because there was no mention of hazardous material issues at all in their 185 page report. Maybe this was due to the consultants' unfamiliarity with Palo Alto, and so they were simply not aware that many companies in the Stanford Research Park use a variety of hazardous materials, that significant quantities of extremely hazardous materials are located at the interface of the Research Park and our residen-

tial area, in particular at CPI, and did not know about the toxic fume release in 2005 from CPI that sent nitric acid vapors into Barron Park. Phasing out the local Fire Department's hazardous material response would put residents (and workers) health and safety at great risk in the event of another accident or natural disaster, something Mayor Sid Espinosa said were the types of recommendations the Council would not accept.

It appears the consultants had also not studied the roadways in Palo Alto very carefully, asserting at one point that traffic calming measures were the cause of some long response times they couldn't otherwise explain. But when asked, they were unable to provide any specific examples. And their unfamiliarity with the physical layout of the city was evident by their proposal of locating the merged station at the intersection of Arastradero and Hillview Avenue, which is actually on the border of Palo Alto and Los Altos Hills.

The Consultants had not prioritized their recommendations, nor had they estimated the cost savings to the City, nor determined how difficult each would be to implement. At the end of the Study Session, the City Manager Keene said that the city staff would work with the consultants and talk with the Fire Union representatives and report back to the Council in a month. At publication time for this BPA newsletter (early March), the Staff report had not yet become available. However, it is expected to put the recommendations into three categories; those the City can implement right away, those they need to work on, and those that would take much longer to implement. The latter would likely include the possible closing of the Arastradero and Hanover Street stations and the opening a new one. Still, while any action would happen in the future, this is an issue that all Barron Park residents would be wise to pay attention to and follow closely.



Illegitimate Door-to-Door Solicitors

By Douglas Moran

Illegitimate door-to-door solicitors and fund-raisers are a persistent problem in Palo Alto. Some are burglars posing as such as a cover to case the neighborhood. Some pressure vulnerable residents to let them into their houses. Some are con artists who are very good at gleaning tidbits of information from neighbors to make themselves seem trustworthy to people they subsequently visit. Others are exploited teenagers who are modern-day variants of migrant workers: recruited from poverty, kept in tightly controlled and unpleasant living conditions while being moved from town to town, with their low pay eroded by outrageous charges for "expenses."

The way to reduce these problems is to immediately report suspects to the police—they not only take this seriously but in their crime-alerts to residents have encouraged such calls. Just sending them away still leaves your neighbors vulnerable.

With the exception of registered non-profit charities and political organizations, door-to-door solicitors are required to have a permit from the City of Palo Alto (link below). However, recognize that just because the solicitor has a seemingly valid permit doesn't mean that s/he doesn't have nefarious purposes: legitimate companies can have bad employees and computers have made forgery much easier.

For the typical solicitor without a permit, call the Police Non-emergency number (below). Report their description so that the patrol officer can spot them. Note and report the direction they were going in case there is a delay in the police responding. If there is a vehicle that seems to be associated with them, try to get a description and a license plate.



In certain situations, calling 9-1-1 is encouraged. For example, someone who appears to be casing houses—his vehicle is close by and he didn't just use the doorbell but tested your door knob. Use your judgment: if it seems threatening, highly suspicious, or the suspect is likely to be hard to locate, call 9-1-1 for a faster response.

If the police do not observe these people in the act, they can't press charges directly, but will need to get a resident to make a "citizen's arrest" which involves filling out a form and possibly testifying in court. It does not involve you in making the actual arrest.

If the police have problems finding the solicitors, or finding someone to sign the citizen's arrest form, remember that we have email lists that can reach a range of people.

Should you try to take a picture of the solicitors or their vehicle? This requires your judgment of the situation. Might it provoke a confrontation? Might it cause the suspect to leave the area before the police arrive?

Finally, remember that the various types of illegitimate solicitors are working your

neighborhood to find vulnerable people and houses. You need to report them to protect your neighbors.

Permit example: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/filebank/blobdownload.asp?BlobID=8012>: The City's seal should be prominent (it is faint in this exemplar).

Advice: http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pol/crime_prevention.asp

Police non-emergency number: 650-329-2413

2011 Barron Park Solar, Lunar and Vegetable Planting Guide

By Nancy Lewis



On the next page after the membership and emergency forms, you will find a foldable booklet with instructions on how to fold it. You will need a straightedge and a razor blade or X-Acto knife to cut it away from the newsletter, and to finish the booklet.

Directions on the back explain how to fold and cut to make the booklet. Construction Tips: Fold very carefully and crisply like you were folding origami, using your fingernail to sharpen the folds. Make the slit cut (explained in the directions) exactly.

If you have questions, call me at 743-6715.

EMAIL LISTS

The BPA has four email lists: bpa-news, bpa-issues, bpa-misc and bpa-jobpostings. They are hosted at Google Groups (moved last January). To join bpa-news, go to <http://groups.google.com/group/bpa-news> and click on "Join this group." Similarly for the other lists.

For more information on these email lists, go to the BPA home page—<http://www.bpaonline.org> and click on the button "BPA Email Lists."

MOONS and SEASONS

	● NEW	○ FULL
january	4th	19th
february	2nd	18th
mid Winter - February 4		
march	4th	19th
first day of Spring - March 20		
april	3rd	17th
may	2nd	17th
mid Spring - May 6		
june	1st	15th
first day of Summer - June 21		
july	30th	14th
mid Summer - August 7		
august	28th	13th
first day of Autumn - September 23		
september	27th	12th
october	26th	11th
mid Autumn - November 7		
november	24th	10th
first day of Winter - December 22		
december	24th	10th

NEW MOON SOWINGS seeds outdoors

january
corn salad (mâche)
Indoors:
broccoli, cauliflower,
leaf lettuce, peas

february
(depending on weather) carrots,
corn salad, parsnip, spinach, beets
(through August), arugula, kales,
broccoli, radishes (Feb through Oct)

march
carrots, collards, cilantro, Jerusalem
artichoke tubers, potato sets (through
June), scallions (monthly through
October), spinach, leeks, lettuce
Indoors: tomatoes

april
bush, pole, snap beans (through June),
carrots, dill, cucumber, basil, lettuce,
melons

NEW MOON SOWINGS seeds outdoors

may
bush-lima-pole-runner-snap beans,
carrots, eggplant, basil, leek, melons

june
beans, beets, melons, corn, cucumber,
eggplant, okra, summer and winter
squash

july
clover cover crop for brassicats,
corn, summer squash

august
corn salad, fall peas,
red onions, turnips, collards, kale,
kohlrabi, bulb onions, shallot sets,
turnips

NEW MOON SOWINGS seeds outdoors

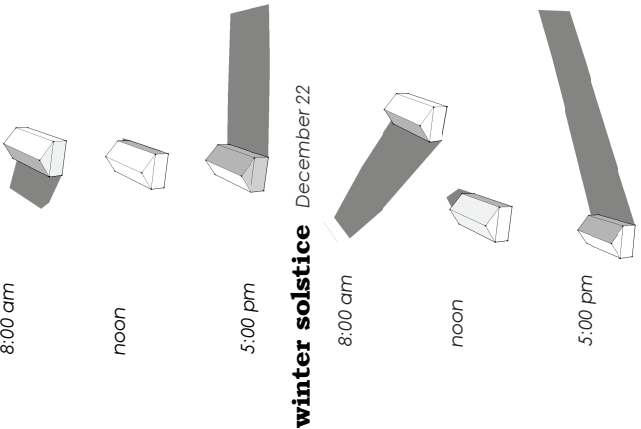
september
carrots, chervil, corn salad,
cover crops, spinach, turnips, swiss
chard, shallot sets, lettuce, kale,
collards, fava beans

october
chervil, corn salad, cover crops,
fava beans, garlic sets,
shallots, native wildflowers

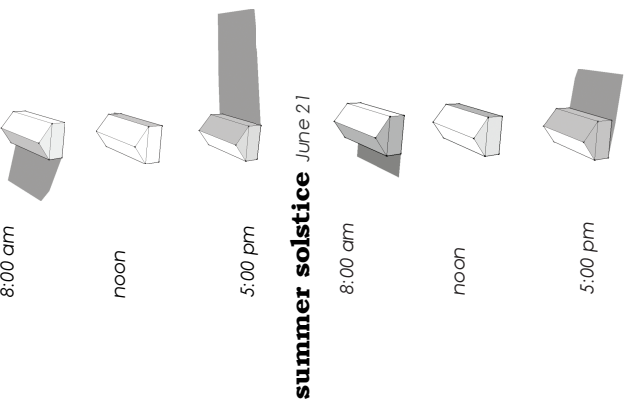
november
garlic sets, shallots, lettuce, onion sets

december
in flats only:
chard, lettuce, spinach,
yellow and white onions

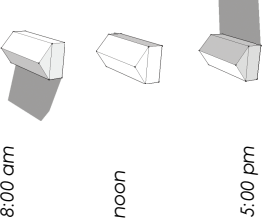
above-ground vegetables at new moon, below-ground vegetables before full moon



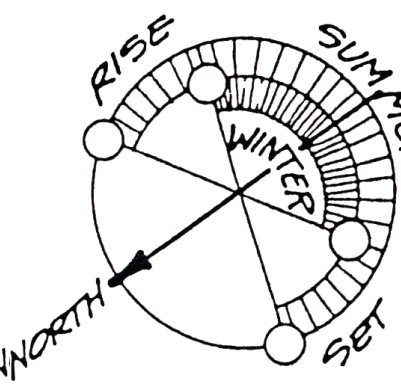
December 22
winter solstice



June 21
summer solstice



March 20
vernal equinox



drawing courtesy of Dan Svenson,
Foothill College

S E N D E R D A N G N A R B A N U M E N

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2011 SOLAR & LUNAR PLANTING GUIDE

September 23
autumnal equinox

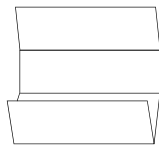
SEASON SHADOWS

SUN POSITIONS AT SOLSTICE/EQUINOX

- 1. Fold in half width wise with these directions on the INSIDE.



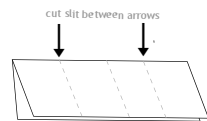
- 2. Fold into quarters toward center fold.



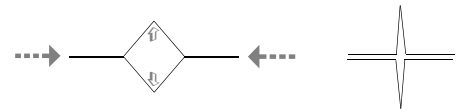
- 3. Then fold in half lengthwise.



- 4. Cut a slit between folds as shown, using the dotted line as a guide.



- 5. Push the side panels toward the center.



- 6. Flatten, then press creases with your fingernail.

- 7. Secure spine with a tiny drop of glue at mark if desired.

- 8. Fold into a book.



BE SAFE — BE PREPARED

By Lydia Kou, Chair - Emergency Preparedness & Safety Committee



Recently coming home from Florida, as my plane was approaching San Jose airport, the view of the San Jose area landscape was quite beautiful.

There was the flat area with many homes and buildings and then, there are the mountains with its many curves, ridges and layers. Then, it hits me, these beautiful curves, ridges and layers are formed by earthquakes. What did the residents have to endure in the past during the formation of our beautiful landscape for today from the air?

Last year I attended a presentation given by a USGS Scientist. After the presentation, I was able to ask the presenter if we, here at the Bay Area, are safe, since we have had many little tremors. He said, No...as a matter of fact, it only indicates stress, which means we are due ...

I panic every time I think about what happened at Christchurch, New Zealand, a city much like ours, yet devastated with approximately 240 dead or missing. My daughter visited New Zealand last year April, she took a picture in front of the cathedral which is today, no longer, gone, just like that. So, they had an earthquake 6 months ago higher on the Richter scale, 7.1MAG and there was not that much of damage. So, why is it that this last one on February 22nd caused so much more destruction at only a 6.3MAG? What does it matter... Mother Nature rarely announces what it

will do, hence, the need for preparation. No matter how prepared you are, there will be some unknowns. However, can you imagine if you are not prepared at all?

To date since 2/23/2011, in our California there has been 426 trembles, some small and some not so little. There has been some in our very own backyards, in Los Altos, Half Moon Bay, Alum Rock, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, Pinnacles. With the major faults running the full length between the south to/from the north of California, we will not know which portion of it will cause the major shake. So, what do you do?

Let's first face some facts:

FACT – Palo Alto is a town consisting of 61,200+ residents living in ~27,000 single and/or multi-family dwellings.

FACT – Palo Alto is a town consisting of ~6,000 businesses with ~100,000 employees.

FACT – Palo Alto has a daytime population of over 100,000.

FACT – Palo Alto has 32 Fire-fighters on duty at any given time.

FACT – It takes ~15-20 Firefighters to respond safely to one full-structure incident.

FACT – Palo Alto has 8-10 Police Officers on duty at any given time.

FACT – Palo Alto has ~40 Utilities operational personnel for electrical operations.

FACT – Palo Alto has ~30 personnel in water, gas and waste-water operations.

FACT – We should not expect any help or response from City personnel for minimum 3 days to 1 week.

I believe very much in being self-reliant. I ask you humbly and respectfully for us, in Barron Park, to be self-reliant. The following are some suggestions:

Have a Family Emergency Plan.

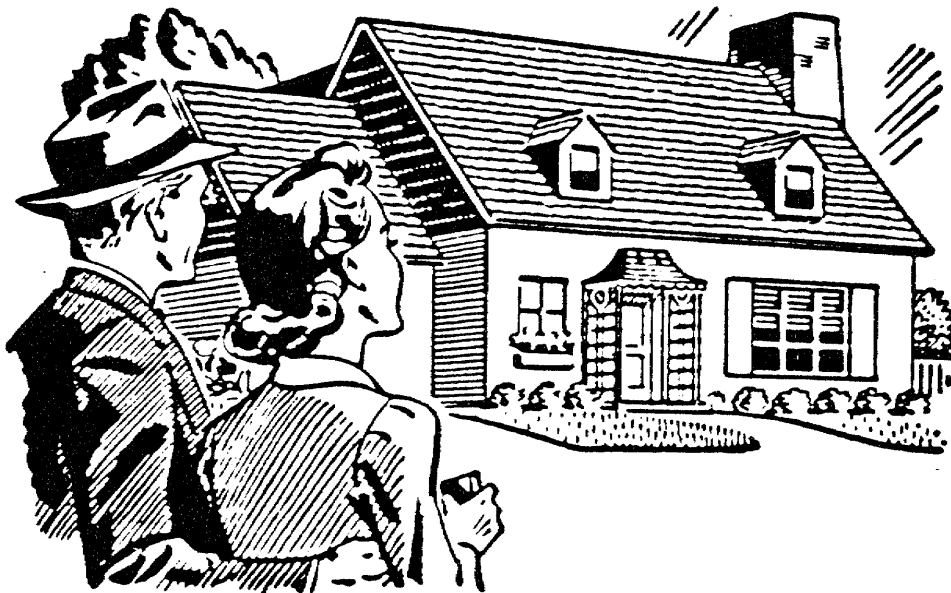
Prepare your family Emergency supply kits for your home, car and work.

Be informed and aware of your neighborhood response plan.

Be engaged and become an emergency response volunteer by either becoming a Block Preparedness Coordinator (BPC) or a member of the Palo Alto CERT. BPCs are coordinators on their streets and remain in the neighborhood on their street during a disaster. Palo Alto CERT members report to their Fire Stations for further instructions during a disaster. For further information about either program, please contact me at (650) 996-0028 or Lkou@apr.com.

If you are not on the Barron Park Association e-mail distribution list, but would like to receive information or updates from the Emergency Preparedness and Safety Committee, please email your name and contact information to Lkou@apr.com and I will add you to the distribution list.

Be Safe...be prepared.



How the Information Age attitudes changed the BPA

By Doug Moran



For much of its history, the BPA waxed and waned around specific issues related to the neighborhood. But starting in the early 1990s,

there was a shift in the types of people joining the Board—people for whom communications and outreach were important parts of their professions. Their attitudes and aptitudes combined with increasing use of the Internet by residents produced a shift in how the BPA regarded its role: Instead of focusing on having the Board try to represent the neighborhood to the City and various agencies, the Board focused on first getting the information to residents so that they could have their preferences and views better represented to decision-makers, either individually or as groups. The Board's secondary focus was to use their experience and credibility with decision-makers to help residents be more effective in making their points. A summary of this philosophy was published in the Spring and Summer issues of the BPA Newsletter (links 1&2, found at end of article) by incoming BPA President Doug Moran.

This shift was accompanied by a dramatic increase in BPA membership, from about 125 households to well over 400 (of the neighborhood's 1600, including apartments) with an email list membership of over 650.

This article aims to provide a sense of that shift and is not intended to be a comprehensive history. I will cite *some* of the more significant people involved to give a sense of the breadth of involvement, but it is impossible to give credit-due in the available space. To simplify excerpting of this article, I will refer to myself by name rather than pronoun.

Newsletter: The first and most important change came with the newsletter, which many members rate as their most important benefit (so renew now). Before Nancy Hamilton took on the editorship, the newsletter was typically 2-4 pages, and often got to members so belatedly that most of the articles were no longer relevant. Nancy is largely responsible for growing the newsletter to what you see today. Although she has handed off the

actual assembly of the newsletter to Patrick Coyne, she continues to handle the difficult task of getting people to submit articles on deadline. For many readers, Doug Graham's history articles are favorites (archives at link 3) and help create a sense of community.

Although a few other Palo Alto neighborhood associations have hardcopy newsletters, none comes close to what the BPA produces. And from time to time we get calls from other groups asking how we produce such a good newsletter, and these often are groups with several times our membership. It is especially interesting to hear that other cities' historical associations are envious of what Doug Graham produces each issue for us.

Email: The BPA email list was created in the early 1990s by then-resident Fred Lakin and taken over by Doug Moran around 1996. Initially the list grew slowly, but started taking off in 1998 through a combination of new residents who were already comfortable with email and existing residents taking it up. Without email, the BPA would probably have become a hollow shell because the old means of communicating with residents between newsletters—dropping leaflets on doorsteps—had become impractical because of a lack of volunteers.

There was the inevitable chicken-and-the-egg phase where the BPA needed to supply enough relevant information on the email list to make it worthwhile for residents to subscribe at a time there weren't yet enough subscribers to justify the effort. Fortunately, several other neighborhoods were also starting to use email and we could share the burden. Even today, two neighborhoods—Barron Park and Midtown—account for most of the messages going out to residents, and those neighborhoods rely on very, very few individuals. Sending announcements from other organizations to the email list is rarely as simple as just forwarding it because they come in a format based upon the press releases that were delivered to newspapers for them to use in writing a story. Such announcements need to be substantially rewritten and formatted to be suitable for email.

The ability to share information by email

between neighborhood leaders and then to residents was a major impetus behind the creation of *Palo Alto Neighborhoods (PAN)*, an umbrella group of the neighborhood associations, in which BPA plays a major role. And there was an accompanying change in news coverage. In the 1990s, articles about Council deliberations often ignored or misrepresented input by ordinary residents. I particularly remember a meeting where a group of BP residents had given an insightful analysis of an aspect of the issue (flood control), but the story in the *Weekly* simply described them as "whiners."

And the political class (the "insiders") also noticed. Instead of residents finding out about issues after the decisions were made, more were now weighing in. In her 2003 *State of the City* speech, Mayor Dena Mossar said "Neighborhood associations have banded together to create large and small e-mail communication networks that have changed the lobbying landscape significantly from the days -but six years ago-when a neighborhood typically fought its battles in solo mode. The business community, in an attempt to level the playing field, is trying to find an effective way to respond." (link 4) In Palo Alto politics of that time, "business community" meant developers and did not include retailers, services or most employers. A largely compliant and credulous City Hall—staff and Council—would routinely grant concessions and other giveaways despite residents showing that the proffered justifications had significant factual errors and contradictions.

And the *Palo Alto Daily News* under its original owners tried to denigrate the neighborhood leaders (and others) by running pictures of them going to a PAN meeting as if it were a Mafia conclave or a "perp walk" (see Wikipedia) and by running editorials, opinion pieces and news articles that attacked various neighborhood leaders using "facts" derived from their ideology rather than reality. The intensity of these attacks seemed out of proportion to the minor dilution of privileged access and influence of the developers and their allies.

The City has been quite slow to make use

of the neighborhoods email lists, and in some cases been outright hostile—they don't want "their" information being distributed via a channel they don't totally control. There have always been some individual staff members who saw the advantages of these lists and worked with the neighborhoods and there is increasing push from the top to do more.

Web: The BPA was early to the Web, with a site created around 1995 by Nancy Hamilton and Fred Lakin, with Doug Moran later becoming a significant contributor and co-webmaster. Perhaps surprisingly, the web site has had little direct impact, functioning as a combination archive and a repository for addendums to emails—pages that have links in emails for those who might want more info on a topic.

Because the BPA was early to email and the Web, we received inquiries from neighborhood associations and other civic groups around the country. Moran wrote a note (link 5) that described practices and technical details that might be amusing for those interested in ancient history (1997-2000).

Surveys: The "information worker" mentality also includes getting feedback, leading the BPA to do a series of surveys (link 6). Those surveys predate online services that made the administration of surveys easy—Shirley Finrock did much of the heavy lifting to make those general surveys possible. The BPA hasn't done a survey in quite some time because there has been a shift to using actual participation rather than expressions of interest.

Membership Increase: Ken Tani, a computer professional, set up a more sophisticated database to track membership and discovered that many members would simply miss renewing for a year every now and then. This led to better renewal reminders, handled by Don Anderson and Mary Jane Leon.

Face-to-Face Community Building: In the BPA's discussions of electronic communications there was constant awareness of the wide range of skills, aptitudes and access by various residents, including those that had none, and that the BPA needed to try to serve everyone. There was also the recognition that personal contact and a real community was often critical to the functioning, even survival, of virtual communities. This led to an expansion of social events. Maryanne Welton reinstated the Annual Membership Meeting. The

now-inactive Beautification Committee led by Shirley Finrock organized a series of *House and Garden Tours*. Although they were still popular with the residents, for the organizers it had become "*Been there, done that*", but perhaps enough time has passed... Taking its place was the *Green Tour* organized by Lynn Melena and the BP Green Team. Don Anderson organized the Holiday Caroling Parade and Party (a replacement is needed).

To facilitate new residents becoming part of the community, not just moving in, Gwen Luce created and runs the fall Welcoming Party, and she leads the Welcoming Committee that aims to greet each new resident with an impressive packet of introductory materials. I am not aware of another Palo Alto neighborhoods that makes this level of effort.

Attitudes towards information: There are two basic attitudes toward the handling of information. One view is that valuable information must be tightly controlled, with the subtext that the benefit to the holder comes from others coming to him. The opposing view is that information *becomes* valuable by being used and shared, and the propagator gains through relationships and reputations established in the process. *Aside:* Readers of spy novels will recognize this as a dilemma inherent in intelligence agencies.

One of the problems with getting better information about civic affairs to residents is that many of the experts are willing to *talk* about what they know, but are unwilling to reduce it to writing suitable for distribution to a broader (unseen) audience—it is a mix of them wanting the gratification of direct feedback from the audience and of that type of writing being very, very hard.

Alerting: Getting the City to provide timely, meaningful alerts has been a long-standing battle by various neighborhood associations, with Barron Park being a leader. However, my experience has been that the City is dominated by the bureaucratic/legalist attitude that favors withholding information: That it is better for the public to be totally uninformed rather than partially misinformed, because the officials focus on the possible consequences of putting out the incomplete or slightly inaccurate information.

Emergency Preparedness: In 2006, then-Mayor Judy Kleinberg revived Emergency Preparedness as an important topic for the

City (Barron Park had been a driving force in an earlier iteration that was ended by a Fire Department reorganization). Unfortunately, her Task Force turned into a talk-fest, so the neighborhood associations split off as a committee. The initial inclination of this committee was to do more of the same, but expect different results (one definition of insanity). That approach was for individual families to not only become prepared, but to expect to have to defend their supplies from their neighbors.

Doug Moran argued that this was not just morally bankrupt but ran counter to what actually happened in disasters. Backed by Patrick Muffler and others, his argument for a community-oriented approach slowly came to prevail. This approach had two prongs. The first was to create a structure that would give residents the information to better work together (the Block Preparedness Coordinator program). The second was to get the City to change its plans that called for essentially abandoning residents ("*You're On Your Own*" = YOYO) into plans that incorporate residents as resources (*We are not a bunch of YOYOs*). Lydia Kou took over from Patrick Muffler as E-Prep chair and has been the leader in fleshing out and implementing this approach for Barron Park, with other neighborhoods piggybacking on what she has done.

Summary: There are a variety of admonitions that begin "If you can communicate, you can...". The BPA has been reshaped by people who brought different notions of communication with organizations, people who were attracted to computers and the Internet and were shaped by their experience with that technology.

Links:

"BPA: Working to get the Neighborhood's Views Represented": <http://www2.bpaonline.org/BP-News/2002spring/index.html#pres>

"Participating in BPA Activities": <http://www2.bpaonline.org/BP-News/2002-summer/index.html#pres>

History archive: <http://bpaonline.org/history>

Mossar speech: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/filebank/bl obdload.asp?BlobID=3574>

"How a Neighborhood Association Uses the Internet: Advice and Reflections" (1997-2000): <http://bpaonline.org/Online/inet-adv.html>

Surveys: <http://bpaonline.org/surveys.html>

BARRON PARK
ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

Barron Park Association
724 Barron Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94306

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Barron Park Reduces
Waste by Adopting
20-Gallon Mini-Cans



Barron Park can take pride in having one of the highest rates of waste diversion in Palo Alto. According to <http://www.zerowastepaloalto.org/progress-report>, 30 percent of households in Barron Park use 20-gallon mini-cans, the smallest garbage can available. Barron Park has the 3rd highest subscription rate of 24 neighborhoods in the City. The City is challenging all neighborhoods to "go green" and achieve 50 percent. The mini-cans cost less, too.

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Neighborhood Safety & Preparedness:

Lydia Kou

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Zoning & Land Use: Vacant



BPA meetings are held the 3rd

Tuesday of most months at 7:15 p.m.

Call Linnie Melena for location: 493-2135

www.bpaonline.org

Help Support the Barron Park Donkeys!

All those who care about Perry and Niner seek to guarantee their proper on-going care and shelter, as well as to ensure that assets will be available for health concerns as the donkeys age. The handlers hope that those generous neighbors who have contributed in the past will consider increasing their support this year. Contributions for the donkeys' care may be sent to: The Palo Alto Donkey Project, ACTERRA (Action



for a Sustainable Earth), 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303-4303. The check must be made out to "ACTERRA-Palo Alto Donkey Fund." All of the above must be included.

For further information about making a contribution on behalf of the donkeys, or if you would

like information about how to become one of the volunteer donkey handlers, please call Bob Frost, 493-8272 or email at bobfrost34@yahoo.com.

ONE MAN MAKES A DIFFERENCE



Bob uses five different kinds of removal spray, and has to date removed at least 12,500 tags! A before shot of the tagged building at 505 Barron Ave. which is scheduled to become "Keep it Secret."



The BPA Board on behalf of the whole community would like to thank Bob Moss for his timely removal of graffiti from around our neighborhood, our Barron Park businesses, and in Bol Park. Although the BPA (through your membership) pays for supplies, Bob has for many years generously volunteered his time and labor toward this endeavor.

Art Liberman, our VP and Membership Chair says, "In my opinion, kudos go to Bob. I wish someone would take a photo of him while he's doing this work and publish it in the newsletter. I've seen him myself, up on a ladder, doing graffiti removal on the sides of business buildings. It is amazing what he does."

"This work reminds me of Louis Olave and his trash patrol, or Doug Graham and his Barron Park history stories.....an example how one person—persistent, patient, resolute, dedicated—can improve the neighborhood."

Removing graffiti as soon as it appears has been shown to significantly reduce the rapid accumulation of more graffiti which can contribute to the overall degradation of buildings and properties. This is an important service to businesses on El Camino, whom we also invite to become members of the Barron Park Association.

Thank you Bob, from your community. We appreciate the work you do.

The same building after having the graffiti removed, trash cleared, and the building painted.



Tag on a tree on El camino beside Adobe Creek.



The same tree after Bob removed the tag.

EMPOWERING YOUNG MINDS

By Soroor Ebnesajjad

I have been tutoring students in math for about 5 years. I am interested in tutoring for two reasons. First, I have always enjoyed math very much so I majored in math in college. Second, tutoring gives me an opportunity to help people who dislike math or have trouble with it.

I watched closely what my kids did in their math classes in Palo Alto schools. As I started understanding the system I realized the emphasis was generally more on breadth than depth. Rigorous proofs were rarely required. Study guides were provided with the aim of helping students solve the test problems. In my days in high school we were not given any such guides. Students prepared for a math test by first studying everything that had been covered in class. They were then expected to work on challenging problems beyond the course book. No student could earn an A in a math course unless she understood the material profoundly.

Sometimes I asked my son, who got good grades in math, how he would prove a particular theorem. His standard response was that my question would not be on the

test plus he was too busy to spend time on it. This attitude prevails among our high school students.

To train competent engineers and professionals for our country we need to create an environment that encourages rigorous and in-depth study and understanding of math. And by this I don't mean memorization. I mean learning to have patience when trying to solve a problem, learning that some problems simply take more time, and that there will be many failed attempts before the solution is discovered. Unfortunately too often I see students declare defeat at the first sign of difficulty.

Some of the math classes in the top high school math track superficially cover many



different topics in a very short amount of time. Students often end up memorizing equations and techniques instead of understanding the method. Some students are so discouraged by lack of success in math that they prematurely decide they are not good at math or at any sciences. This is disappointing, and more importantly not a good trend for our country.

As a tutor I see my role as filling the gaps in the students learning and encouraging them. I try to help them realize that they don't need to memorize much when doing math. I teach the students that if they understand the basics of a topic, they can build on that and derive many of the solutions through reasoning. I also discourage the routine use of a calculator for basic calculations. My goal is to empower the young minds to have faith in their own learning ability and to teach them that math is not scary when understood. It can even be fun when one excels at math. It is said those who learn math can learn anything.

Soroor Ebnesajjad is a math tutor who lives in Palo Alto. She can be reached at: <http://paloaltomathtutoring.weebly.com>.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

My name is David Poulton

I recently graduated from UC Santa Cruz with a major in Literature and a minor in Education. I have had experience as a tutor for children from elementary school through middle school and for literature classes. I have worked on formulating and editing essays and creative works through college level. I can tutor in any subject through middle school, Mathematics through sophomore year of high school (depending on the level of math in question), and any level of English/Literature. I am not associated with any tutoring service and as such my rate is flexible.

Contact me via email at dkpoulton@gmail.com or by phone at (650) 906-3216

Annie Liberman French tutoring. Native speaker, experienced teaching conversation and grammar at all levels, to adults as well as teenagers and children. Contact her at annieliber@yahoo.com

Hi, I came to Barron Park with my family of 6 (me included) from France 2? years ago. I taught Math in France for 10 years.

I am quite busy with my 4 children (from 2 to 11 years old), but I will be delighted to be a Math or a French tutor in the neighborhood.

Best regards,

Judith Rapoport judith.rapoport@gmail.com

Fruit Tree Tutorial: you can learn to prune. If you've been wanting to take charge of the fruit trees in your yard, this hands-on tutorial service will set you on the path to independence. Romola Georgia, Master Gardener Santa Clara County, will teach you all about: fruit tree care and pruning principles; tools and safety; setting goals for your trees and getting started.

Contact Romola Georgia 493-1230 or rgeorgia@gmail.com

Ivy League med school-bound tutor in Barron Park

I am a patient, experienced tutor and am eager to help high school students excel in their classes. My educational background

spans from the humanities to natural sciences. I am qualified to teach a variety of subjects:

Biology, Chemistry, Physics w/o calculus, Spanish, English/writing/reading, History/social studies, Arabic

Additionally, I have experience assisting students with time management, scheduling, and study skills.

A bit about my background and qualifications: After graduating from Gunn High School, I attended Smith College, where I majored in history and Spanish. While at Smith, I tutored my peers in Spanish and writing. Recently, I completed an accelerated post-baccalaureate pre medical program, during which I took chemistry, biology, organic chemistry and physics in a year. I will start as a medical student at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons this fall.

Please contact Annette at: annetteg@gmail.com or (646) 285-5477.

The Manzana Music School

Music lessons in Palo Alto for kids age six and older and adults on Guitar, Mandolin, Banjo, Vocal, Violin, Piano, Music Theory, and Arranging. All levels, beginner through advanced, including adult beginners and first time players.

Visit www.manzanamusicschool.com, call (650) 799-7807, or email manzanamusicschool@yahoo.com.

Hands-on Nutrient Dense Cooking Workshops in small groups at Lisa's Counter Culture in Barron Park. Special focus on fermentation (kraut, pickles, kombucha) and traditional cooking using local organic ingredients.

Also a site host for several local farmers/vendors including Evergreen Acres Goat Farm, Happy Girl Kitchen, Local honey hive on property, Surfside Chicken and Eggs and Happy Girl Kitchen Food Preservation group.

Contact Lisa Herndon at 650 858-1148 or email lisa@lisacounterculture.com

BPA Annual Meeting Held January 30



Mayor Sid Espinosa taking questions at the BPA annual meeting.



Kevin Skelley, superintendent of the Palo Alto Unified School District and a Barron Park resident, answers questions at the BPA annual meeting on January 30.

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