

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lynnne Melena, BPA President



Two local non-profits, some motivated Barron Park residents and the Barron Park Green Team. That was the dynamic mix that produced two volunteer efforts to enhance the natural environment of our neighborhood this past fall.

One project was the planting of 13 new street trees in the vicinity of Maybell and Georgia Avenues. The other project was restoring native vegetation along the bank of Matadero Creek in Bol Park.

New Trees for Barron Park

The street tree project was the brainchild of Barb Mackraz, who lives on Baker. She couldn't help but notice that her little neighborhood had a rather barren look because there were so few trees along the streets. The lack of trees is somewhat a by-product of Barron Park's preference for no curb, gutter and sidewalk. Without these improvements, there is no clear delineation of the public right-of-way making it difficult to site public street trees.

New Trees for Barron Park

About a year ago, Barb contacted Canopy, a local non-profit dedicated to planting and protecting trees in parks, schools and along streets of Palo Alto and neighboring communities. In turn, Canopy contacted the Barron Park Association and that eventually lead to the Green Team agreeing to

co-sponsor the tree planting project. Barb, along with the Canopy team, identified potential locations for trees, contacted the property owners to ask about their tree preferences (from the City's street tree list) and settled on 19 locations. Gino Segna, City of Palo Alto Tree Section Program Manager, helped on the placement of each tree. Property owners who receive trees must agree to water and look after them in their early years.

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BPA ANNUAL MEETING

Barron Park Historian Doug Graham will be the featured speaker at the Barron Park Association Annual Meeting.

Date: Sunday, February 12

Time: 2-4 p.m.

Place: Barron Park School Multi-Purpose Room

Doug's presentation will be on how Barron Park became the place it is today from its origins in the 1800s, through the agricultural period, the rise of the Barron Park Association, the annexation battles and more. Watch for postcards announcing the meeting and providing more details.



Tree planters Katia Reeves, Ken Bencala, Sally O'Neil, Joel Davidson, Lynnne Melena and Cedric de la Beaujardiere.

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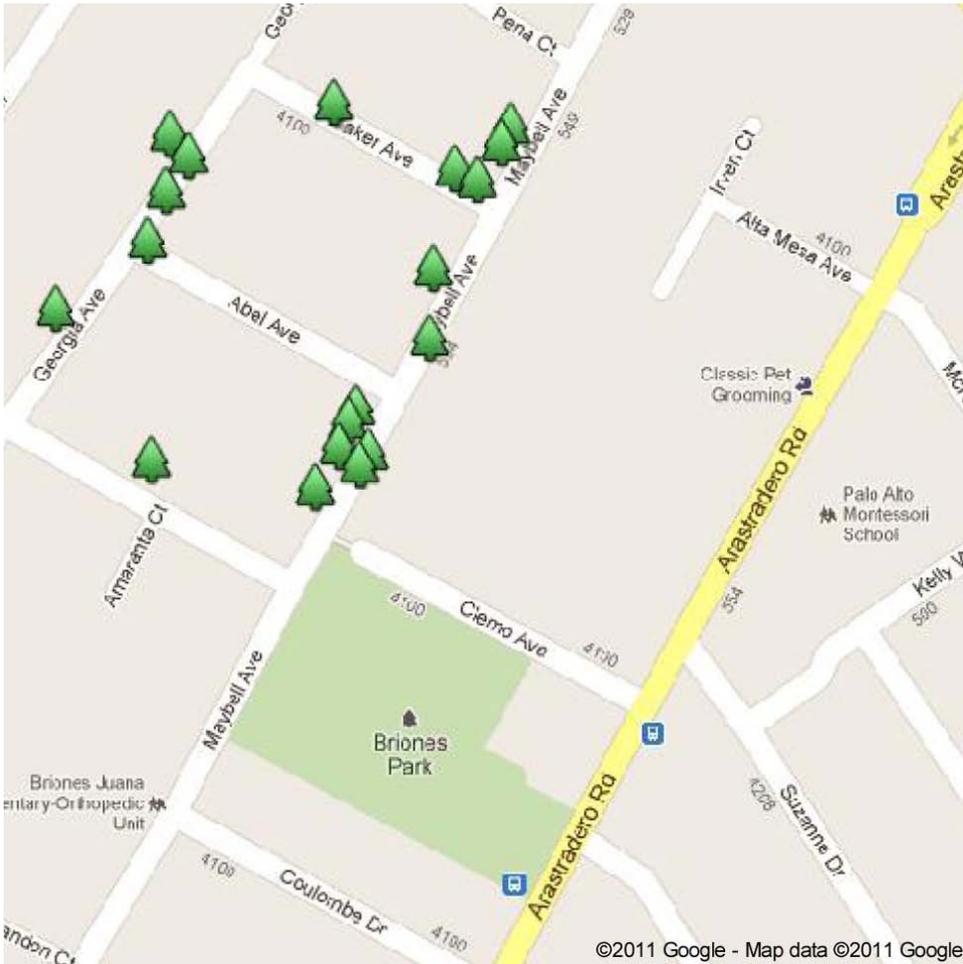
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Locations where new street trees were planted on October 29 or will be planted at a future date. The 13 trees already planted are: Pistache, green oak, parrotia (Persian ironweed), Japanese zelkova and crape myrtle. The six remaining trees will be valley oaks.



Art Liberman digs into a lawn to plant a tree.



Ann Johnson, Barb Mackraz, Art Liberman and Susan Dansker are about to fill in the dirt around this tree on Maybell.



Matadero Creek restoration volunteers led by Susan Stansbury (center foreground).



Alice Frost plants a tree.

The Barron Park project kicked off Canopy's 2011-2012 planting season on Saturday morning, October 29. After receiving a very informative lesson on how to plant trees from Canopy arborist Michael Hawkins, the team of 35 volunteers picked up their shovels, picks, tree stake pounders and gloves and scattered in small teams.

By noon, they were done and could stand back and admire their work. These volunteers will be able to watch "their" trees grow for years to come. The tree locations are shown on the map. They are easily identified on the streets by the two tall stakes next to each one—demonstrating the correct way to stake trees. Some trees appear to be on private property, but all but one are actually on land that is in the public right-of-way.

In addition to the 13 trees planted in October, another six trees, mostly valley oaks, will be planted at a later date.

Besides local residents (identified in photos), there were Canopy volunteers from other parts of Palo Alto and about six employees of Soleenic, a local solar/wind energy company, which has recently partnered with Canopy to offer a "Watts for Trees" program. Soleenic will donate \$50 to Canopy to purchase a tree for every kilowatt of solar and wind energy they install.

Matadero Creek Restoration



Vaughn Deline, Bob Frost and Cedric de la Beaujardiere look over the area they sheet mulched for future planting.



Peter Neil plants into the erosion fabric next to the water.

The Matadero Creek Restoration Project is also co-sponsored by the Barron Park Green Team working under the leadership of Barron Park resident Susan Stansbury and Acterra, the non-profit environmental organization. The origins of this project are well documented in the Summer and Fall issues of this newsletter. The first step in this project was a community meeting held in June at which time a unanimous decision was made to start restoration in Bol Park near the steps that enter the creek.

On the first work day, Saturday, October 15, we weeded out non-native invasive species growing along the creek bank in Bol Park. (We only worked on the publicly-owned side of the creek.) Most of plants that were removed were periwinkle (vinca major) which squeezes out native plants as it spreads across the bank. We also uncovered some historical artifacts—rusted old barbed wire probably from the donkey pasture that pre-dated Bol Park. It was buried deep under layers of leaves and growing into one of the trees. (Bob Frost came back with a wire cutter later that week to remove it from the tree.)

Three weeks later, on November 5, we returned to begin planting the native species which Acterra had propagated in its nursery for this project. Erosion control matting was staked into the steeper parts of the bank and we were given lessons in how to plant. Then we spread out over

the creek bank with our seedlings, tools and fellow planters. About 30 different species were planted, including mugwort, California aster, woodland brome, woodland strawberry, coral bells, iris, hairy honeysuckle, yerba buena, stream violets and more. Another work day will be scheduled for January to plant an area further along the creek which was mulched to smother undesirable plants and prepare it for natives.

Local residents who helped were: Joel Davidson, Cedric de la Beaujardiere, Vaughn Deline, Stephanie Enos, Bob and Alice Frost, Joan Marx, Peter Neil, Katia Reeves, Susan Stansbury and myself. In addition, there were volunteers from San Jose State, Foothill College, and high schools in East Palo Alto and San Jose. We really appreciated their coming to our neighborhood to help us make it a better place.

Right now, if you visit the creek, it may be hard to spot the new little plants. However, they are living where they like to grow and have a good chance of taking hold with the



Bob Frost plants in the poison oak area.

winter rains and some supplementary water to get started. In a few years, this little area should provide a good demonstration of what can be done to restore the creek to its former state—what it looked like before it was overtaken by plants that escaped from our gardens.

These two projects demonstrate how anyone can chip into make Barron Park a better place. What's more, you will acquire a sense of ownership and pride in what you have done.

Social Networking in the Neighborhood

By Markus Fromherz



Online social networking has become an important part of how people connect and share news with each other, exchanging everything from the

mundane to the revolutionary (see column 3). As part of upgrading our web presence, the board of the Barron Park Association (BPA) recently discussed the interest and value of social networking for Barron Park residents. What would online social networking in our neighborhood be like, and would residents be interested?

Consider the old bulletin board at the local park or grocery store. Residents may be advertising their piano lessons, looking for a babysitter, or giving away old furniture. Others are sharing historical perspectives, posting news about the latest street improvements, or recommending nearby businesses. A neighborhood social networking site puts all of that online. Instead of visiting the bulletin board, you visit the web site and get connected to a stream of information and updates. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, social networking enables short, immediate feedback and discussions, as if you met a neighbor on the street or in front of the bulletin board. It is easy to discuss a posting, add a comment, ask a quick question, organize an ad-hoc outing, or exchange ideas for a block party.

The BPA has been a pioneer in using the web and email for local communication since the mid-nineties. The existing email lists, in particular bpa-news, are invaluable; much important information is passed on through these lists. Social networking adds another channel for communication. The bar for sharing is lower, and while not all postings may be relevant to everybody, those small exchanges are actually what brings people closer. (We recently had a new puppy join our family, and posting pictures on Facebook brought likeminded friends to suggest names and volunteer play dates.) Social networking also enables dialog among users to a greater extent than email can, without filling up inboxes with every single posting. (Continuing the puppy example: people had fun commenting on each

other's naming suggestions, which both gave us good ideas and told us something about our friends' personalities.) Finally, social networking sites provide a space to organize relevant information, such as referrals, equipment available for borrowing, or simply photos of recent events (or puppies). There are no plans to replace the BPA email lists, but those benefits – more sharing, more dialog, and better access to information – led us to think about adding social networking as a means to further connect Barron Park residents.

With these ideas in mind, the board decided to run a survey of Barron Park residents. Over a hundred people responded, and we gained a number of useful insights (see next page). Most people were in favor of a community social networking site or at least wanted to give it a try. About half of the respondents regularly use sites like Facebook and LinkedIn, but a majority wanted a dedicated site open to residents only. Most importantly, respondents had many ideas for how they would use such a site.

Just when the BPA ran the survey in October, a new company, Nextdoor, opened their site (and also had some positive press). While other community social networking sites exist, Nextdoor happens to have many of the properties of a good site (using lessons from Facebook) with the kind of protection that survey respondents preferred. Also coincidentally, the Barron Park Green Team started to think about a social site to share information for sustainable living, another confirmation that the time was ripe to try this.

A Barron Park resident (not affiliated with the BPA) started a Barron Park neighborhood on Nextdoor, and several of us signed up shortly afterward to explore its features. While the site doesn't have all the functionality we would like yet, it is a good start, and the Nextdoor team has been very responsive to requests and feedback. (For example, we had to correct the boundaries, we need a better way to organize online documents, and they have promised a way to connect to adjacent neighborhoods.) Anybody in Barron Park can sign up on the web site, or you may get an invitation from a current member. Nextdoor verifies residency by sending a

physical postcard with a code to your address, thus ensuring that only residents can post and read on this site.

Participation is of course completely voluntary. This site is not controlled or even set up by the BPA, but the board decided to support the trial, especially since it is largely aligned with the interests of the survey respondents. We invite you to give it a try: <http://barronparkca.nextdoor.com/>. A number of residents have already signed up and introduced themselves, made recommendations for local businesses, offered basketball tickets and a free mattress, and shared updates about street lighting and gas pipelines. Join the conversation!

What is Social Networking?

Online social networking has seen enormous growth in the last five years. What started on college campuses and in small circles now connects family and friends across large distances. 800 million people are active on Facebook, sharing events and musings in their lives, discussing breaking news and interesting articles, recommending recent movies and old songs, and asking and answering questions from people they trust. Users between 18 and 34 years make up about half of Facebook use, and those 35-65 are another 40%; the average age of Facebook users is 38. Clearly, a broad cross-section of the population is networked online. (A little trivia on the side: much of the early Facebook software was written in a house in Barron Park, after Mark Zuckerberg and friends moved here from the East Coast.)

The biggest benefit for many of us is that it connects us with family and friends on a daily basis. There are many people I haven't seen in years, but I am at least peripherally aware of what is happening in their lives, and I benefit daily from their experiences. Best of all, I can connect as much or as little as I have time and interest for; it's easy to set up and use, none of it clogs up my email, and if I don't connect for a few days I can just ignore old posts or go back and read as much as I like.

A more recent development is that social networking is becoming local again. While Facebook connects you to family and friends across the continent and the world, new sites like Nextdoor connect

you to your neighbors. While anybody can sign up for Facebook, community social networking sites generally restrict access to residents of defined neighborhoods. This makes the experience more personal and interactions more relevant and safer.

Two important concerns that always exist with social networking sites are privacy and security. These sites are generally as safe as or safer than email; after all, most email today is kept on web servers, and a lot of email travels over unencrypted channels, so messages are easier to intercept than interactions with a secure web site. A neighborhood site can provide some additional protection, in that access is more restricted than on general sites like Facebook. Still, the site owners are amassing a lot of personal data, and of course they need to make money in order to provide their services, which often means targeted advertising. In the end, most people see more value than risk, and advertising is usually acceptable if it is not intrusive. (For example, advertising on Facebook is fairly well done.) The best advice, as with email, is not to post anything that you wouldn't want the public to see.

Social Networking in Barron Park

We had an excellent response to the BPA survey on social networking. Of the slightly more than 100 respondents, 84% were BPA members, 90% have lived in Barron Park for more than 5 years, people were about equally distributed in age from 40 to above 70, and the female to male ratio was 60:40.

Slightly more than half of the respondents use social media regularly. Top sites are Facebook and LinkedIn and to a lesser degree Google+ and Twitter. Almost nobody was using a community site; five people mentioned one site each. Top uses of social networking are for friends and family (38%) as well as professional use (22%), and to a lesser degree for entertainment, news, and business (10-13% each). For the 44% of people who responded that they don't use social media regularly, the top reasons given were that they saw no need, were concerned about privacy/security, or had no time.

About half of the respondents expressed interest in a dedicated Barron Park social networking site. Most of the others said maybe; only 10% were not interested. On how they would use it, people were quite diverse. The top interests were learning about and discussing local events and connecting to the BPA, but we got many

write-in comments for additional ideas. Respondents expressed interest in posting or looking for local jobs, baby sitters, dog walkers, and various other helpers, learning about their neighbors and making new friends, using it for lost & found, sharing referrals, listing rentals, posting and finding local for-sale or free items, and documenting information like available equipment for earthquake response or the Green Team. People clearly saw many potential benefits of such a community site.

A majority of survey respondents preferred a dedicated neighborhood site (42%) over integration with Facebook (22%), but many were also unsure (29%). (A key advantage with Facebook would be that many people already check it on a regular basis.) Also, a majority would prefer a closed site (61%), i.e., a site where only residents had access, over an open site (17%), with 22% being unsure.

There were also many write-in comments to the final, open-ended invitation for input. Not everybody was interested in a social networking site, and a few people were clear that they liked the current BPA email lists. A few people expressed concern about personal attacks or getting too much irrelevant information, and a few people also thought that such a site should not be controlled by the BPA. Overall, though, a majority of respondents were clearly and enthusiastically interested in a community social site.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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BPA meetings are held the 3rd

Tuesday of most months at 7:15 p.m.
Call Lynnne Melena for location: 493-2135

www.bpaonline.org

Barron Park History—Potpourri #1

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

Pot pour ri (noun, French)

1. originally, a stew.
2. a confused collection; a miscellaneous mixture; a medley; a hotchpotch.
3. a mixture of dried flowers and spices for perfuming a room; also, the vase or jar holding the mixture.
4. in music, a medley.
5. in literature, an anthology.

(From Webster's *New Twentieth Century Dictionary*, unabridged, second edition)

Bits and Pieces from Many Sources

Many of the most interesting bits of neighborhood history have been related to me by readers, either in letters, e-mails, phone calls or in person at May Fetes, Welcoming Parties and other gatherings, especially when I have set up the history exhibit boards. In this article, I'm going to share some of these with you. They are not in any particular order, as befits something called a potpourri (see box). It is entitled #1, as I already have enough small topics for a second one.

Snow Fell in Barron Park

It never snows here: Right? Wrong. Sometimes it does. Most recently we got about ½ inch one night in 1976. But the last significant snowfall was in 1962. I have received photos of that snowfall from two different sources. The orchard scene shown here was sent to me by Carolyn Feroben, of Mariposa, who grew up in Barron Park. Carolyn attended the Verna Jean School on La Selva Drive, Barron Park Elementary



Photo A: January, 1962 snowfall in Apricot orchard on Maybell Avenue.

School, Ray Lyman Wilbur Junior High (now Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School), and Cubberly High School. Carolyn and I collaborated on an article about the Verna Jean School that ran in this newsletter (see *Verna Jean School*, Winter 2010). You can find that story, and other stories referred to later in this article, in the newsletter archive section of the Barron Park Association website, www.bpaonline.org

See Photo A in this article. As Carolyn explained in an e-mail in December, 2009;

“Attached is a photo Christmas Card sent by Fran and Don Manning in 1963. The photo was taken in Jan of 1962 of the apricot orchard that was on our driveway off Maybell. The Manning House was to left, our house was just a bit to the right of the tree in the foreground and set deep back in the photo, and visible to the far right is the house owned by the Claussen family. They owned Pards. The three families shared the driveway.”

Pards was a hamburger joint near where the Jiffy Lube is now, at the corner of Charleston Road and El Camino Real (see *The Heyday of Restaurant Row*, Summer 2009). Fran and Don Manning owned the land where the six houses of Frandon Court were built in 1955. The court runs off of Maybell Avenue west of Juana Briones School.

Chat and Chew Owner with Waitress

Another popular restaurant on the Barron Park strip was the Chat and Chew. Barbara Young-Kelsey sent me the photograph of her Grandmother Torrey the owner, at the counter of her restaurant, probably taken in the late 1940s. The younger woman was a waitress. See Photo B.

Barbara sent it to me in March, 2010, just a year after a photo of the Chat and Chew exterior ap-



Photo B: Chat and Chew owner (R) and waitress—late 1940s or early 1950s.

peared in this newsletter (see the article in the Spring, 2009 issue, entitled *A Day in the Lives of Barron Parkers in 1949*). I have several photos of the exterior of the restaurant, which was where the All-American Market later stood until the building was remodeled for Blockbuster Video, but this photo is the only one I have of the proprietress and the interior. The restaurant was a great favorite of Barron Park residents as well as of travelers on El Camino Real (which was then U.S. Highway 101-Business).

A L'Omelette Menu from the 1930s

Joyce McClure, a Director on the Board of the Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA) gave me a menu from L'Omelette, undated and a little stained, but otherwise in excellent shape, which she bought on EBay. Judging by the dinner prices, it probably is from the mid- or late-1930s. The restaurant opened in 1932, and the prices are definitely pre-World War II. For instance, “Our Special” Saddle of Lamb cost \$1.80 (this included soup, salad, fresh vegetable and potatoes). Roast Squab, stuffed, served with wild rice (and all of the above) cost \$2.50. The most expensive dinner was Filet Mignon, charcoal-broiled, with all the extras which cost \$2.90. See Illustration C, which is an excerpt from the front page of the Menu. L'Omelette, more familiarly known as “L'ommie's”, morphed into Chez Louis in the 1980s and was finally torn down to make way for Walgreen's in 1996.



Illustration C: Excerpt from L'Omelette menu from late 1930s.

The (sometime pink) Taco Tio

While we are on the topic of restaurants (a perennial favorite of our readers), do you remember the Taco Tio at 3490 El Camino Real (ECR)? It was at the corner of Matadero, on the Creekside Inn property. One year in the 1980s or 90s it was painted violently pink. Half the neighborhood (it seemed) objected to the City and wanted to know how it ever got past the Architectural Review Board (hint: the board wasn't interested because it was just a re-paint job). Does any reader have a color photograph of the place in its shocking pink glory? I'd like such for my eventual book on the history of Barron Park.

Anyway, John Treichler, formerly a Barron Parker but now a resident of Los Altos Hills, still reads our newsletter. In response to my articles on ECR's Restaurant Row and the follow-up article of reader responses (*Smorgasbord of memories*, Fall 2009), Treichler e-mailed me his reminiscences, the first of which I have entitled;

"The March of the 'Hos"

"The discussion about restaurants left out my favorite, although calling the Taco Tio at the corner of Matadero and El Camino a restaurant is a very big stretch. Whether it was the garish paint or the cheap tacos that appealed to me, I won't tell you. I was a poor graduate student at the time, living in a rental on Chimalus, just across the street from Dick Placone.

My wife remembers the Taco Tio for a different reason. If you recall, there were two "massage parlors" (quotes added) on the east/north side of ECR straddling Matadero. This was well before the traffic light was installed there. Sally remembers traffic screeching to a halt on all lanes of ECR when the "ladies" from the massage

parlors would cross ECR in their very high heels to get something to eat at the Taco Tio."

The Vice Squad Closes the Massage Parlors

Treichler continues: "...I should admit that I was one of the few eyewitnesses to Palo Alto's forced closings of those two massage parlors. If you recall, PA swept in during the early morning and emptied them out, forcing the proprietors to prove that they were within the law in order to get their stuff back and return to business.

I've always wondered how legal that was, but then Palo Alto was always pretty sure of itself. I witnessed it because I was out walking my screaming baby, a boy named Sean, so that Sally could get some sleep. Sean will be 34 in February (2010), so I guess that means that PA vs. the massage parlors was about 33 1/2 years ago.

Lynnie Melena wrote in response to this: "Actually, it was December 2, 1976, the day before my daughter Sara was born. We kept the newspaper from the day of her birth and it always provides a good laugh".

Treichler on Eichlers

Mr. Treichler also had some interesting things to say about the house he lived in on Josina Avenue;

"The house that Sally and I own at 718 Josina (and in which my mother-in-law still lives) still has the original tax assessment form stapled in the electrical service entrance box. It says that the house was owned by Joseph Eichler and that it was assessed for \$9,500. Neighbors from across the street (some of the original "settlers") told me, back in the late 1970s, that the \$9,500 price was considered excessive in 1949 and that Eichler had a hard time selling them (the houses). Further, they told me, this experience led him to cheapen up the houses for his new developments in South Palo Alto, going to slabs instead of raised floors, radiant heat instead of central heat, and more glass than wood in the outside walls." (This reminiscence was in response to the Spring, 2009 story, *A Day in the Life of Barron Parkers in 1949*, that includes a photo of a 1950 Eichler under construction. The Eichlers built along Josina Avenue in the Bol Tract in 1949 were one of Eichler's first tracts).

Artillery Range Near Old Page Mill Road

Have you ever wondered why Stanford University is so resistant to opening more trails in their hills, especially the Radio Telescope Hill that already has the extremely popular "Dish" trail? Perhaps one reason might be the existence of former rifle, machine gun and artillery practice ranges just south of that hill—off Page Mill Road below present-day Foothills Park. The range was an adjunct training facility organizationally attached to Camp Fremont in Menlo Park.

I am indebted to a Barron Park resident who sent me page 2 of the SRI Alumni Association Newsletter of April, 2008 with information about the firing ranges and Camp Fremont. The camp itself was located near San Francisquito Creek, just west of El Camino Real, and operated for 19 months in 1917–1918. It provided infantry and cavalry training, with 27,000 men and 10,000 horses and mules passing through the training units. The animals were based on Ravenswood Avenue, probably on or near the future site of SRI. Of the 1,124 buildings that comprised Camp Fremont, the only one left on the site today houses the Oasis Beer Garden, a long-time traditional hangout for Stanford students.

A Tank-Gun Shell Hits House in Los Altos

The military authorities had planned to locate an artillery brigade at the camp in 1917, but Stanford officials objected and the ranges were built southwest of the "Dish" hill instead. Soldiers from Camp Fremont trained there on howitzers and other small field pieces during both World Wars. In the Second War, there was some tank training, including firing practice. In 2009-2010 I wrote a 3-part story for this newsletter called *Barron Park at War – 1943*. In Part 2, Winter 2010, I told the story of the errant tank-gun shell that hit a house in Los Altos in 1943. Ernie Johnson, who lived at 3822 Laguna Avenue during World War II, told of hearing, at his house, machine gun and rifle firing on the ranges.

Old Shells Located and Destroyed in 2008 and 2010

In February, 2008, two rangers at Foothills Park discovered an unexploded shell while walking the fence line of a new property on the 3200 block of Alexis Drive, lying right next to the deer path. As the *SRI Alumni Association Newsletter* reported:

"With the help of a cell-phone camera and reference to a Wikipedia article back in the

Park Office, Supervising Ranger Lester Hodgins was able to deduce that the shell was most likely a 75-mm fragmentation shell dating from WWI! The shell was safely detonated around midnight by a group from the Palo Alto Police Department and the Santa Clara County Bomb Squad, along with officials from Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield. The next morning, the only traces of that part of the park's past were a few fragments of sandbags left from the night's detonation."

See Photo D, French 75mm Cannon.

On November 25, 2010, a construction crew working on a hillside in the 3200 block of Alexis Drive (which runs between the Palo Alto Country Club golf course and Foothills Park) found a "3-by-12-inch



Photo D: French 75mm Cannon like those used on the firing range off Page Mill Road.

shell." It was old, unstable and had been hit by construction equipment. It was detonated in place by the County Bomb Squad, according to Palo Alto Online.

I copy here a reader comment on the on-line story (anonymous except for the on-line identifier "T, a resident of another community");

"In the early days of WWII, the 17th Infantry Regiment and the 31st Field Artillery, 7th Infantry Division, had units stationed where HP (Hewlett Packard) and the *Wall Street Journal* now stand. The small arms range was against the hills on the southwest corner of the intersection of Page Mill Expressway and Junipero Serra Boulevard. 37mm anti-tank and old French 75mm howitzers were fired at another range (Alexis Drive area?). This area housed units that were building observation posts and stringing land (telephone) wires along the coast from Fort Ord to San Francisco."

I would love to know where all the ranges were. Can any reader help?

Long-Time Resident

OK, take a big mental jump. This short take has no relation to the foregoing (hey, this is a potpourri, remember?)

A Barron Park Association member,

Marion Mohr, has lived on Florales Drive (in the Encina Grande Tract) for 61 years. Does any reader know of other residents who have lived here for 50 years or longer? If so, please contact me (see the contact numbers at the end of this story).

The Glass Slipper

Do you remember the Glass Slipper Motel on El Camino Real? It is still called the Glass Slipper, although it now belongs to the Comfort Inn chain. It is architecturally notable because of its high, strangely curved sloping roof. Verna Graham remembers that there was a huge "glass slipper" perched on the ridge of the roof, with the toe pointing to El Camino. Apparently the city made the Motel take the slipper down after the Ventura neighborhood was annexed to Palo Alto, because it violated the height restrictions (or something). What we would like to know is—did any reader ever take a photograph of this grotesque piece of 1960s advertising art? If so, please let us know, we'd like a copy.

If you have anything to add to the growing collection of Barron Park reminiscences (or if you just want to complain about them), please contact me at; Douglas L. Graham, dgrahampaca@gmail.com 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto 94306, 650-493-0689.

EL CAMINO BUSINESS UPDATE – NOVEMBER 2011

By Bob Moss

The past six months have seen a continued turnover of businesses along our section of El Camino from Adobe Creek to Page Mill Road. Some closures were very unexpected—Jack-in-the-Box in June and Taco Bell in July in particular. Both fast food restaurants had been in place for more than 25 years. The acupuncture and herbal massage store at 3505 (corner of Margarita) also closed and the skin care health center at 3533 was replaced by the reweaving studio, which moved a few doors down.

The new businesses are more significant. McLaren and Fisker auto dealers opened at the former Volvo site at Arastradero at the end of September. McLaren is a very high end sports car, \$200,000 to \$300,000. Fisker is a relatively expensive electric car similar to the Chevy Volt. Papa John's Pizza opened at 3898 in part of the space that

has been occupied by a series of campaign offices. The remainder of this tenant space will be a Smokes and More store. Part of the vacant former Maytag store at 3666 was opened as Average to Elite Performance early in November. A Mexican-Salvadoran restaurant called Cholateco opened at the former Taco Bell in October. Perhaps someone will provide a review of the food and service quality.

Another vacant property will be getting a new tenant. The former Dan Brown's at 4141 applied for a liquor permit so that a business called Shockley Lab can open as a bar and restaurant there. "Old" Ernie's Liquors (at Military Way) remains closed as a liquor store as the Alcohol Beverage Control Commission is still reviewing several protests of its liquor license application submitted almost a year ago. One of the protests was signed by 140 residents, most of whom live nearby.

Vacancy rates overall continue to drop, especially on the Barron Park side of El Camino, as shown below:

	June	August	November
Ventura	8.7%	8.4%	9.1%
Barron Park	7.6%	7.3%	3.4%
Total El Camino	8%	7.8%	5.8%

A vacancy rate below 5% is considered fully occupied.

Another measure of economic vitality is total sales. Sales taxes from El Camino businesses for the year ending June 30 were \$0.9 million. Town and Country Village was \$0.4 million. California-Park-Lambert, which includes Fry's, was \$1.6 million. Downtown was \$2.7 million. It seems that El Camino businesses are doing relatively well particularly considering how many of the ground floor spaces are office or service, not retail.

BARRON PARK GOES "MINI" IN A BIG WAY

By Annette Puskarich

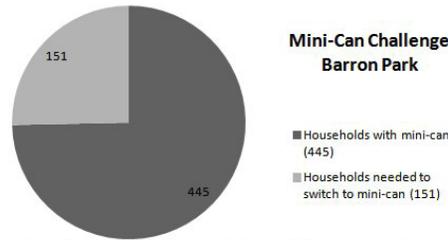
Have you looked at your neighbor's garbage can lately? If you have, you'll see that many of your neighbors have gone "mini."

Since April 2011, our neighborhood has been in a Mini-Can Challenge with other Palo Alto neighborhoods helping the community with its Zero Waste goal, and to see who can achieve 50% mini-can garbage service throughout their neighborhood first. A mini-can is the 20-gallon garbage service.

How is Barron Park doing in the Mini-Can Challenge? We have made great progress so far with 115 households changing to the mini-can garbage service between April and October. Our neighborhood mini-can percentage began at 28% and has increased to 35%. Congratulations and thanks to our Barron Park neighbors who have gone "mini" and to the Barron Park Green Team for their outreach and education to the neighborhood. That's quite an accomplishment!

How do we compare to other neighborhoods? Currently, College Terrace is in the lead with 44%. The University Park neighborhood also has 35% mini-can garbage service.

What's it going to take for Barron Park to



Goal: Be first Palo Alto neighborhood to have 50% of households with 20 gallon mini-can garbage service.

reach the 50% goal first and earn neighborhood bragging rights? For our neighborhood to win the Mini-Can Challenge, 150 more Barron Park households need to change their garbage service to the mini-can. Has your household gone "mini"? If your household has already switched to a mini-can, how about talking to your friends and neighbors about switching? Talking up the Mini-Can Challenge is acceptable "trash talk"!

If your household currently has the 32-gallon garbage service, you are a likely candidate for a mini-can. Households of all lifestyles (e.g., frequent entertaining) and sizes (e.g., households of six people!) have switched to the mini-can size garbage service. For households currently using the 32 gallon garbage service, here's a tip

A: Visit www.pagreenteams.org and click on "Mini-Can Challenge". There you will find links to information and videos that answer questions like "What plastics are recyclable?" and "Can I place electronics in the recycling?"

Q: Most of what is left in our garbage is food scraps. What more can we do to change to a mini-can?

A: You may want to consider worm or backyard composting. Worm composting is no muss, no fuss and requires little space and works well with food scraps. The City offers reduced-cost bins for backyard composting. The City of Palo Alto Zero Waste Program offers free workshops for both types of composting. Contact the Zero Waste Program at (650) 496-5910 for details.

Q: Are there circumstances where I must use my own 20-gallon garbage can if I change to the mini-can?

A: Yes. If you have back/side yard garbage collection or you participate in the Physical Limitations Program, you must provide your own 20-gallon mini-can. GreenWaste does not provide a wheeled garbage cart in that service scenario. Contact GreenWaste Customer Service at (650) 493-4894 for details.

to help determine whether you are ready to change your service: If your 32-gallon garbage can is 2/3 full or less on a weekly basis, then you are ready to downsize to the 20-gallon mini-can. GreenWaste, Palo Alto's waste hauler, will provide and deliver a 20-gallon mini-can to you at no additional charge.

Switching from the 32-gallon to the 20-gallon and mini-can garbage service will also save you money. The 32-gallon garbage service costs \$449.76/year and the 20-gallon mini-can costs \$246.24/year, for a savings of \$203.52/year.

Please join your neighbors in switching to the mini-can garbage service and help Barron Park win the Mini-Can Challenge. Call GreenWaste, at (650) 493-4894 to change your service.

For more information on the Mini-Can Challenge or to contact the Barron Park Green Team, e-mail barronpark@pagreenteams.org Interested in receiving Zero Waste tips for local resources and getting the most out of your City services? Join the Barron Park BPA-misc e-mail list by going to <http://groups.google.com/group/bpa-misc> and click on "Join this group."

Q: What are the monthly garbage rates?

Size	Monthly Rate
20 gal., mini-can	\$ 20.52
32 gal., 1 can	\$ 37.48
64 gal., 2 cans	\$ 72.46
96 gal., 3 cans	\$ 106.38

Q: If I switch to a mini-can, the City will receive less revenue. What will the long term effect be on my rates?

A: The City is in the process of modifying its rate structure to address years of declining revenue and outdated refuse rate modeling. Currently, the rates are based on the size of garbage service only, with recycling and yard trimmings being provided at no additional cost. Less garbage has meant less revenue for the City; however, the reality is that there are costs associated with recycling and yard trimmings collection and processing services, too. Refuse rates also pay for street sweeping and household hazardous waste management. In addition, the closing of the Palo Alto Landfill and long-term contracts entered into years ago that are still in place contribute to a revenue shortfall and limitations on Palo Alto's waste management capabilities. For more information, contact the City of Palo Alto Zero Waste Program at (650) 496-5910.

Mini-Can Challenge- Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I want to make less garbage, but I have questions. Where can I get help?

A: Contact the Barron Park Green Team. We will give you neighborly, personalized assistance-FREE. If you want, we'll even make a house call. E-mail us at barronpark@pagreenteams.org

Q: How can I help with the Mini-Can Challenge?

A: First, a big thank you in advance for your help! If your neighbors or folks in your neighborhood groups (e.g., scouts, school) have not yet switched to a mini-can, talk to them about switching. There are other ways you can help, too. E-mail the Barron Park Green Team at barronpark@pagreenteams.org for more information.

Q: Most of the time our household makes 20 gallons (mini-can) or less garbage each week, but sometimes we have extra. What do we do?

A: On the occasions you need to place extra garbage out for collection, contact GreenWaste Customer Service at (650) 493-4894 so they know to expect it. You can place extra garbage out for a fee (\$10.60) and your account will be billed.

Q: I want to use the blue recycling, and green yard trimmings carts as much as I can to help me get to a mini-can. Where can I find information?

A TREE FELL ON KENDALL

By Art Liberman



Barron Park residents love their trees, but sometimes the trees do not reciprocate their affection. At 1:20 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 12th, on a calm night without much wind,

a large limb broke away from the stately heritage Valley Oak tree in front of Barbara Struck's home on Kendall Avenue.

The large limb fell onto the Strucks' van that was parked in their driveway, "totaling" it, and onto the Kennedy-Alexander home next door, damaging the roof and walls [See photos and separate first person account by Jeanette Kennedy]. It also fell across some high voltage electrical lines and caused powerful voltage surges. These were so severe that Shirley Gaines, who lives across the street, reported that she saw sparks coming out from the walls of several houses at places where electrical appliances were plugged in. These surges ruined appliances in the Kennedy-Alexander home and in several adjacent homes. In summary, the damage was extensive but, fortunately, no one was injured.

Caring for Your Tree

On inspection afterward, the limb, actually one of the trunks of a multi-trunk tree, appeared to be hollow. According to Barbara Struck, their tree had had extensive limb removal work in the past and had been pruned about two years ago but evidently the interior rot that led to the failure had not been detected.

This incident is a reminder to those of us with large trees on our property to have routine analysis done of the health of such trees, to check for weak branch attachments and to periodically check for safety. Watch your trees carefully for foliage changes to catch problems early and begin care and treatment. The risk of a failure from a falling tree or tree limb may be reduced by removing dead and broken branches, reducing branch end weights, by mechanically supporting weak branches from below, or by cabling and bracing.

The analysis of your tree's health, in particular a large tree, should be done by a certified, accredited arborist—not by those who merely trim and shape, but by someone whose profession it is to understand

tree growth and assess tree health. Canopy, a non-profit group dedicated to planting and protecting trees, maintains a list of companies in the Palo Alto area that have one or more certified arborists on their staff (www.canopy.org).

Insurance Coverage 101

If an incident like this should happen to us, the next step—once immediate concerns are resolved—is to contact our insurance companies to find out what coverage we have. But this may be too late. Each of us needs to review our insurance policies on a regular basis, before an accident occurs, and find out what items are covered for which types of losses, and our deductibles.

Insurance policies are, unfortunately, notoriously difficult to read, given all the detailed coverage clauses, exceptions, limitations and endorsements. I decided to call my agent, Mike Levine from Farmers Insurance Group, and understand my coverage under my homeowner policy, a standard policy this company calls "Protector Plus" (The following does not in any way replace your responsibility to find out what is actually covered in your own policy).

What I learned is that coverage in my policy—whether a tree on my property fell and damaged my house or a neighbor's tree fell and damaged it—is based on the cause of loss. The most common situations are:

- 1) If wind is the cause of the limb breaking—and if wind is not excluded in the policy—the homeowner has coverage.
- 2) If a vehicle hits the tree, which then falls and creates damage, the homeowner has coverage—whether it's your car or someone else's car.
- 3) If the tree was healthy and the tree limb fell without any warning or apparent cause, the homeowner has coverage. Some insurance companies may try to avoid paying for damage from falling trees by claiming

that they do not cover "Acts of God." But insurance companies cannot deny coverage due to "Acts of God" unless the policy explicitly excludes damage from natural catastrophes.

4) However, if there is no wind, and the tree limb broke because of rot or disease or old age, then the damage will not be covered. This emphasizes how important it is to have your trees' health examined by a professional and competent arborist, and have repairs or trimming done if the tree exhibits any instability or disease.

If I am covered, in addition to physical damages to my home, my insurance policy would also cover expenses for injuries sustained by a visitor to my house or someone staying a short period of time, but not for me or other permanent residents of the house.

Personal property (house contents) coverage is listed separately from dwelling coverage (structure). My policy says damage to my personal property caused by falling objects will be covered only if my roof or outside wall is damaged by the falling object. Thus, if the power outages or power surges caused by the falling tree limb damaged my appliances, as happened with the tree limb failure on Kendall, I would be covered only if my roof or outside walls were also damaged by the falling object.

You can see from the above how important it is to be sure your trees are in good condition. And if your neighbor's tree looks unstable, diseased or prone to failure, contact your neighbor. Let them know about the problem and ask that they



Jo Hamilton

take some action. You should monitor what they're doing and make certain that they're responding because you don't want that tree falling on your house. If it does, your insurance policy may not cover your damages.

If your neighbor does not respond, have a certified arborist make a hazard assessment and send them a copy. In this case, the tree owner cannot avoid knowing the tree was a potential hazard. If the tree or tree limb then falls and causes damage, your neighbor's failure to maintain their property which harms someone else makes him liable for the damage – this is exactly what third-party liability covers, which is part of a homeowner's policy. That part of his policy should also cover damages from any injury to me and members of my family.

Umbrella policies provide somewhat broader coverage and also provide a larger dollar amount of coverage but do not substantially alter the general areas of your insurance coverage.

Be Prepared for Emergencies

Fortunately, everyone on Kendall was able to exit their homes safely. The immediate actions of Jeanette Kennedy and others showed how important it is for everyone to be prepared for an emergency, a point that has been emphasized by the Barron Park Emergency Preparedness organization. In fact, Shirley Gaines mentioned that Lydia Kou and Gerri Roe had distributed flyers about neighborhood preparedness for emergencies just two days before this one happened on Kendall Avenue. Take a moment and review the information you've received from the Emergency Preparedness team and prepare yourselves and your homes now, before an emergency arises.

It Sounded Like an Explosion

By Jeanette Kennedy

..... and then came the acrid smell of something burning. It was 1:30 a.m. We grabbed the pets, threw them into our cars and moved the cars away from the house. Located flashlights (which were where we thought they were AND the batteries worked) grabbed purses, cell phone and the fire box with important papers.

When everyone was safely outside, we found out that a huge limb of the majestic

oak next door had fallen. There was an electrical wire lying in the street. We could not tell at the time if it was live or not. We sustained a hole in the roof that went into the ceiling of a bedroom. We lost all the overhead lights and the upstairs heater, and the microwave was fried. Everything plugged into a surge protector was safe. The protectors themselves were burnt, and the acrid smell of burning was from them, but we did not know if there was fire in the walls.

The impact to the house knocked the wall hard enough to move the wall off square so that the garage door wouldn't open, and the damage to the sheer wall will require removal of a broad area of siding for repairs. When the roofers start, the contractor will be able to ascertain if there is damage to the rafters. Work can only start after the City reviews drawings, which have to be submitted by an architect. Then permits will be issued to start repairs.

Our home has visible damage, but some of our neighbors have sustained significant appliance losses. Our insurance with USAA has been doing all the things we buy insurance for. Some neighbors seem to be having a great deal more insurance problems, some with denials because this was an "Act of God." (Does this mean atheist have better insurance?)

Lesson learned: Grab and run, locate flashlights in various places around the house (the type that are plugged in and turn on when the power goes off sound excellent, but I don't know if they would have survived a power surge). We called 911 and a police officer arrived within 15 minutes. Use surge protectors. Put car keys in an easily located spot—same with cell phones and chargers. It was pretty cold sitting out in the street. The warm stuff I placed in the garage was not accessible. Locate stuff away from the house—the things you would need if you couldn't get back in. Keep it safe from mice. Know your homeowner insurance emergency number, and try and understand what is covered. [editor: see Insurance 101 in adjacent article: A Tree Fell on Kendall].



Jo Hamilton

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 funds 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.

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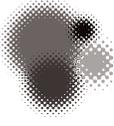
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