

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

29th BPA May Fête: A Pirouette into the Future

By Sue Luttner



Photo by Jo Hamilton

With free ice cream from the Driftwood Deli and fresh burgers and dogs right off John King's personal grill, this year's BPA May Fête not only ushered in a new era—an ice cream parlor right in the neighborhood!—but also celebrated past tradition, recalling the years when Bob Moss brought out the local barbecues to serve up kosher hot dogs, replacing the fabulous fête kabobs available before restaurateurs Ken Arutunian and his sister moved from the neighborhood. This time, John was filling in for a vendor who cancelled at the last minute. Thanks, John, and good job.

New on the lawn this year were volleyball and paper airplanes for the older youngsters, and the Peninsula Catworks project. After an afternoon of talking to neighbors about strays, neighbor and Catworks volunteer Reine Flixer concluded that feral cats are not a problem in Barron Park at the moment, except in the Magnolia-Military way area, "which is already being addressed." If you do have feral cats near your house, contact the project at www.peninsulacatworks.org

This year's fête program featured demonstration Maypole weaves early in the afternoon, called by Gary Breitbard, with volunteer neighborhood dancers. Live music

was by Side by Side, an accordion duet; Harmon's Peak, American fiddle tunes; and Broceliande, traditional Celtic and early music.

Because of this year's Light Brown Apple Mother quarantine, we were unable to use flowers from our own yards for the bouquet atop the Maypole—but we raised enough with note-card sales to pay for commercial, inspected, LBAM-free flowers. (Remember, under terms of the quarantine, we're not supposed to move plants or plant parts, including flowers or unwashed

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

Thanks to the following local businesses for helping to sponsor the 2007 May Fete.

A1 Liquors, Al Peterson Roofing & Repairs, Barron Park Shell, Classic Pet Grooming, Driftwood Deli & Market, Ernie's Wine & Liquors, Front of the Pack, Gwen Luce (Coldwell Banker), James Witt (General Contractor), Jim Davis Automotive, John St. Clair and Lydia Kou (Alain Pinel Realtors), John W. King (Alhouse King Realty), Palo Alto Auto Repairs, Inc and Taqueria El Grullense.

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B P A M A Y F E T E 2 0 0 7



Photo by Jo Hamilton

Dancers at the May Fete.

fruit, from our properties, even within the quarantine area.)

Founding fêter Paul Edwards, no longer in the neighborhood but still ready to come call a Maypole weaver, received a thank-you plaque from the BPA, presented by historian Doug Graham, who's served many a term not only as BPA board president but also fête chair.

The fête is made possible by people in every role, from volunteer ice-cream scoopers to this year's masterful co-chairs John St. Claire and Karen Michael (with unflagging support by Lydia Kou). We tried to get as many names as we could for the published thank-you list, but we know we missed some of you. Thanks to all.

The sound system, music, and other expenses were covered by sponsorship donations from the local merchants listed in this newsletter. Please patronize them and thank them for supporting the fete.

Committee

Don Anderson, Larry Breed, Gary Breitbard, Soroor Ebnesajjad, Paul Edwards, Linda Elder, Jen Hess, John King, Lydia Kou, Gwen Luce, Sue Luttner, Jeannie Lythcott, Julie Lythcott-Haims, Karen Michael, co-chair, John St. Clair III, co-chair, Samir Tuma

Exhibitors

Barron Park Garden Network, Bay Area Garden Railroad Society, Live Steam Section (Eric Struck, Gary Whaley, Harlan Barr), Doug Graham, Barron Park Historian, Green@Home, Humane Society Silicon Valley/Peninsula Catworks (Denise Salles, Reine Flexer), Palo Alto Historical Association, Palo Alto Fire Department, Station 5 (Lee Taylor, Jesus Zuniga, Herb Brandt), Palo Alto Neighborhood Disaster Activities (PANDA) (John Benza), Palo Alto Police Department—Bike Registration (Susie Jones, Community Service Officer; PAPD Volunteer Marshall Deitsch), Perry and Niner, attended by Inge Harding-Barlow, Edith and Lee Smith and grandson Lee Smith

Volunteers

Ken Bencala, Maddie Bennet, Hans Boehm, Boy Scouts Troop 52 (Nick, Miles, Jessie, Scott, Arman, Harry, Jeremy, Daniel, Gaylan), Morgan Bricca, Kate Canrinus, Lee Clarke, Lucas Coonen, Jeff Dean, Jillian Du, Paul Edwards, Rich Elder, Viveca Eliscu, Sharon Ericson, Lara Fromherz, Bob Fraley, Laura Fraley, Karl Franzen, Bob Frost, Mark Frost, Maya Fujimura, Verna Graham, Nancy Hamilton, Katelyn Hempted, Carolina Hernandez, Josh Kelly, Gillian King, Stephen Luce, Dan Lythcott-Haims, Lynnne Melena, Patrick Muffler, Susan Ogren, Sally O'Neil, Jenna Rauti, Erika St. Clair, Pat Sanders, Jerry Scharf, Bill Soule, Ron van Seventer, Tom Wagner, Zobin

Musicians

Broceliande, Harmon's Peak, Side by Side

Special Thanks

Juana Briones School, Steve Rezvani, Driftwood Market

B P A M A Y F E T E 2 0 0 7



Photo by Jo Hamilton

Sophie Giarrusso and Granddad Dr. Fred G. Giarrusso.



Photo by Jo Hamilton

Doug Graham (BPA Historian) giving Paul Edwards his special plaque for instigating and producing the May Fete and May Pole Dance for over 20 years. Thank you, Paul.



Photo by Jo Hamilton

Some students from Terman hung out and had a good time at the May Fete: Cami Freeman, Robin Qyung, Maddy Dray, Tiffany Miller...

B P A M A Y F E T E 2 0 0 7



Photo by Jo Hamilton

Spencer Jackson, Laura Grams, dog "Jack."



Photo by Sue Luttner

The Palo Alto Police Department Community Services team registered dozens of neighborhood bicycles against theft.



Photo by Sue Luttner

Harlan Barr and Barron Park native Eric Struck, members of the Bay Area Garden Railway Society, ran scale-model live-steam trains all afternoon.

B P A M A Y F E T E 2 0 0 7



Photo by Jo Hamilton

From left: Gary Breitbard, Peter Tommerup, Karl Franzen, Art Friedman, Bill Stewart.



Photo by Jo Hamilton

Tia Moss and daughter Olivia waiting for ice cream.

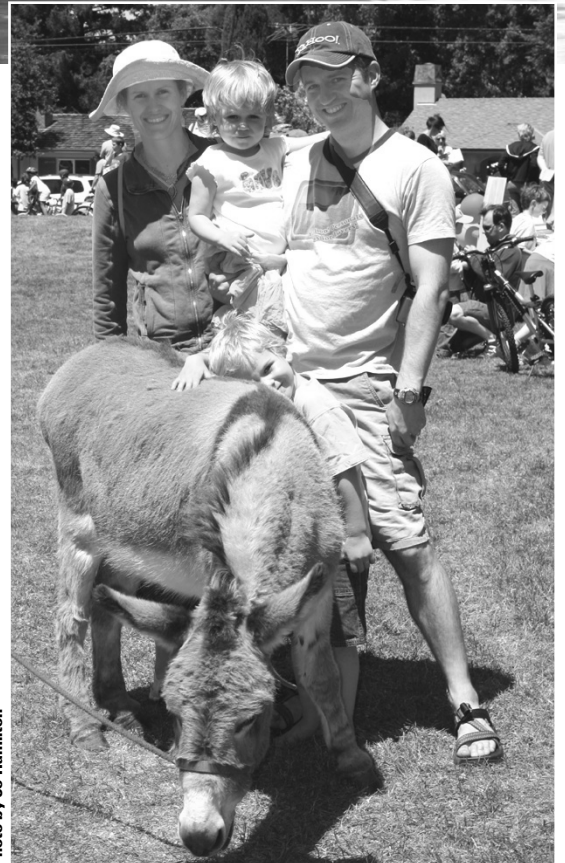


Photo by Jo Hamilton

David and Morgan Bricca, with Sky (2), and Lucas (5) hugging Perry.

NEW PALO ALTO ALERTING SYSTEM

By Doug Moran

As a result of years of persistent pushing by the BPA and other neighborhood associations, the City of Palo Alto is in the final stages of getting a new Alerting system: Installation is scheduled for July and August. The previous alerting system (“Tele-minder”) had deteriorated from inadequate to inoperable.

While I am encouraged by the range of features and capabilities of this system, simply having the technology doesn’t mean that it will be used effectively. None of the companies bidding to provide this system did even a marginal job of providing “lessons learned” from their early clients, and many had such grievous errors that it could have been comical. One company’s default script for alerting people of a life-threatening event had an introduction that could easily be mistaken for a telemarketer. And one email template had the very same visual layout as that used in a very common piece of SPAM.

In the old system (Tele-minder), the phone numbers came from a single source, and were encumbered with a variety of legal restrictions that severely constrained when that alerting system could be used. The new system avoids these restrictions by building its database from various sources. This is essentially the standard telephone lines (“landlines”).

The new system allows people to add additional contact information (via a Web interface or telephoning in). You can add your cell phone number, either for voice or texting, and e-mail. You can subscribe to get alerts for locations other than just your home, for example, your children’s school. If you have elderly parents, you can subscribe to get the alerts issued for their neighborhood.

The new system will provide several levels of alerting, and you can specify different alerting schemes for different levels. For example, if the police were chasing an armed criminal in the neighborhood, that alert would go out at the highest level, but the “All Clear” would go out at the lowest. You might want to avoid the interruptions of the latter by *not* getting a voice message on your telephones (landline and cell), but just getting an e-mail or a text message to your cell phone.

There are enough options that it can easily be confusing. The City is going to need to go through an extended process of developing instructions, so that residents know what the system is and is not capable of doing and so that they know how to specify their choices to the system.

The new system is promised to make alerting cheap and very fast—The old Tele-minder system would take hours to notify just a fraction of Barron Park. There is going to be an extended “Goldilocks” period as we try to figure out what is the “just right” level of notification. Not too little—not sending alerts that residents would have liked to have received. And not too much—residents getting annoyed because they are interrupted by too many alerts that have no real value to them.

To get this reasonably debugged before we really need the system, we are going to need the participation of residents representing a wide range of experiences, perspectives and sensitivities. So when we solicit (via e-mail) for people to participate in the tests and exercises, please consider playing a role.

Golden Guardian

Every November, there is a series of loosely connected exercises related to Homeland Security and disaster preparedness. The California portion of this goes under the name “Golden Guardian.”

In the upcoming exercise, the local scenario centers upon the stealthy release of an airborne infectious germ at a concert in San Jose, with attendees returning to their homes in a wide range of surrounding communities (such as Palo Alto) before anyone becomes aware of the problem.

Several neighborhood leaders, including me, have been invited to participate in the planning of Palo Alto’s role in this exercise. Our preliminary focus is to test the ability of the City government to pass critical information to residents and local businesses. This could be a good test of the new alerting system, both the technology and the ability of the City to produce effective messages. It is also hoped to be a test of communication system being developed by the neighborhood’s Emergency Preparedness Committee to provide effective

two-way communications for block coordinators and other neighborhood disaster workers.

Panic

There are several excellent papers debunking the notion that people panic during emergencies and disasters. A common example is a fire where “panicky” people climb over the bodies of people who have fallen. But when examined carefully, those “panicky” people are being pushed by line after line of people behind them—they don’t have the capability to stop the forward movement of the crowd. The people in the middle of the crowd are similarly being pushed by those behind them, and have no notion that there are people in the front who have fallen. Characterizing this rational predictable behavior as “panic” is analogous to explaining an avalanche as the panicky result of snowflakes being afraid of heights.

Despite this research, government officials routinely bring up the need to be prepared for mass panic during a disaster. I try to walk them through why there might be “panic,” it often turns out that they expect people to be impatient and uninformed, and problems to cascade from this. However, getting them to try to address these root causes is very difficult—there seems to be something psychologically attractive about anticipating panic.

Aside: Tuberculosis (TB) on a Plane

I have been heavily involved in local preparedness for Pandemic Influenza (articles in previous newsletters by Patrick Muffler), and was quite aware of how poorly prepared the public health services were for an epidemic.

Despite these low expectations, I was flabbergasted at how badly the public health officials handled the recent case of the Atlanta man with Extensive Drug Resistant (XDR) TB. Despite years of worrying about air travel facilitating the spread of highly infectious lethal diseases and several near misses (SARS), the public health system doesn’t seem to have absorbed some of the basic lessons from the failure to contain the AIDS epidemic (early and mid 1980s).

Senior Update, Summer 2007

By Mary Jane Leon

What I found most disturbing about the incident was that it was dominated by institutional failures, not individual mistakes. Example: The Custom's Officer who failed to detain the TB patient, reportedly because he didn't appear to be sick. This represented a double failure by front line agencies. The Customs agency failed to educate its employees on the basic principle that someone could be infectious without appearing to be sick. And the public health officials apparently failed to anticipate a common mistake and emphasize this fact in its detention order.

Another example: Doctors freely acknowledge that the basic test for who has infectious TB is notoriously unreliable: The figure cited is that at least one in six people with TB was infected by someone who the test said was *not* infectious. Yet when these very same doctors talk about whether an individual is infectious, they talk as if the test is 100% accurate, ignoring that high false-negative rate.

The underlying culture of the public health field is criticized for failing to recognize that its underlying assumptions are obsolete. First, public health officials have a reputation of requiring extraordinary levels of proof that a person poses a substantial risk before requesting that person endure even modest inconveniences. This is based upon the assumption that infectious diseases do not spread quickly (long distance travel is rare) and that they are treatable (no drug resistant strains).

Second, they assume that patients will cooperate to avoid infecting others. Even when a patient flagrantly and persistently puts others at risk of infection, their inclination is to give the patient multiple chances to mend his ways before they move for involuntary quarantine.

Third, public health officials see their job as the treatment of patients (or the administration of treatment facilities). This is natural since they are doctors first and foremost. I have not encountered one that seemed to have a real interest in, and feel for, risk assessment and management. My sense is the hundreds or thousands likely to be infected are not real until they are turned from projections (statistics) into actual bodies.

Unless there is extraordinary leadership and/or a cataclysmic event, this culture is unlikely to change significantly.

Water Over the Dam

Yes, there has been a lot of it in eight years. I retired in April 1999, and by summer was already bored with jigsaw puzzles and was looking for something a bit more meaningful to fill my time. Then, in the Summer 1999 issue of this Newsletter, Katie Edwards said "Good bye" in her last Senior Update column. Well, gee whiz, here was I, a former writer, and there was the BPA, needing someone to write a seniors column. I volunteered, they accepted, and I became a "senior" with a capital "S."

For my first column, I visited the four closest senior centers—Palo Alto, Mt View, Los Altos, and Menlo Park, and wrote about their similarities, their differences, and what they all had to offer. That column went over well enough with the Editor and the Board that I figured they would keep me on. A few months later, I was asked to join the Board and became the Seniors Coordinator. Now the time is drawing close for my second retirement—from the BPA Board and from this column.

Seniors Helping Seniors

We have had some varied projects during my tenure. One of the most interesting was Seniors Helping Seniors. Early on, a group of BP seniors got together to talk about what we all needed or wanted from our neighborhood. Out of that meeting grew a small, informal volunteer group. We called ourselves Seniors Helping Seniors, and we offered transportation, errands, and other small services to Barron Park neighbors. It turned out that our reach exceeded our grasp. The group survived for about three years, but we found ourselves turning down people who needed more than we could provide, and also struggling to find enough volunteers to maintain the small services we could provide. It was a good experiment, but we now know that a volunteer organization needs to have structure, financing, and a large population

base from which to draw participants.

Other Projects

We had booths at several May Fetes, offering a shady place to sit and a signup sheet for other activities. We helped out with BPA membership drives a few of times. We got in the habit of baking cookies for the annual Holiday Party. In short, we enjoyed getting together and acting like neighbors do.

Join Us for Lunch

Our most enduring project has been the Barron Park's Seniors Lunches. The second Tuesday of every other month, we meet in a neighborhood restaurant, or in Bol Park when the weather is good. The next lunch will be August 14. Responsibility for the lunches has been completely taken on by Bob Frost, Rosemary Jacobsen, and Julie Spengler. If you would like to come to the next lunch, and are not already on our e-mail or phone list to be notified, call Rosemary Jacobsen, 493-9152.

An Opportunity

So this is my swan song as the Barron Park Association's Senior Coordinator. My resignation from the Board will take effect in the late Summer. As the saying goes, I will be taking on other projects.

You will still see me around the neighborhood, hanging out at the Seniors Lunches and other Barron Park events, and walking our dog Toby up Strawberry Hill.

The lunches will continue, under the able management of the people named above.

Meanwhile, there is now a wonderful opportunity for another Barron Park senior. The BPA Board is looking for a new Senior Coordinator and/or column writer. Both serving on the Board and writing this column have been enjoyable and rewarding experiences for me. I recommend either or both to any interested person. If interested, please contact me at 493-5248 or feel free to drop in one of the monthly board meetings—visitors are always welcome.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION

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Zoning & Land Use: Lynnie Melena



BPA meetings are held the 3rd

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

Call Doug Moran for location: 856-3302

www.bpaonline.org

ZONING & LAND USE, SUMMER 2007

By Lynnie Melena, Chair

Alma Plaza Plan Approved

After years of discussion and debate, the City Council unanimously approved a redevelopment plan for Alma Plaza (the former Albertson's property) on May 14. The approved plan requires a minimum 15,000 square-foot grocery store and another 12,720 square feet of commercial space. The main retail building (containing the grocery store) will front on Alma and the other commercial building will be behind it.

There will also be 37 new single-family houses, 14 Below-Market-Rate (BMR) rental units and a public park with 8,900 square feet (0.2 acre). The BMR units and a required 1,330 square-foot community room will be on the second floor of the main building.

The Council initially approved a plan requiring the grocery store to have a minimum of 10,000 square feet, but increased it to 15,000 square feet (as recommended by the Planning and Transportation Commission) in response to neighborhood demands for a larger store. The Council also required that the grocery store be

leased and constructed before the houses are occupied.

The commercial development must comply with criteria for Silver certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program (a widely recognized "green building" standard).

CPI Hazard Watch

Residents of the Chimalus Drive neighborhood have updated and renamed the web site which they created to monitor hazardous materials use at CPI (Communications and Power Industries). CPI is located immediately adjacent to the north of Chimalus Drive. The web site is now called: CPIHazardWatch.org. The web site provides background information and news on CPI and hazardous materials stored and used at its metal plating shop. The web site has a new list of steps that CPI should take to drastically reduce the risk to residents. Coverage of emergency response and notification issues resulting from ongoing discussions with Palo Alto city management and the Fire Department will also be added.

BARRON PARK MOTHER'S GROUP

by Jen Hess

I moved to Barron Park in July 2006. Shortly after I moved, I had the opportunity to meet Beth Delson on Matadero at Bol Park. There she introduced me to the Barron Park mother's group, which she coordinates. The Barron Park mother's group is a sub-group of the larger Palo Alto Menlo Park Parents Club. The Barron Park group has one e-mail list, but two playgroups. The playgroups are based on the children's ages. One is for kids 3 and up (plus their siblings) and a group with younger children meets as well. Residents and their children are welcome to attend whichever playgroup fits their schedule. It is a great opportunity to meet other people in the neighborhood and their children.

In the year since I joined, we have had a Halloween parade down Orme street, a pretzel making party, a holiday cookie decorating party, and a lot of playgroups at neighborhood homes or parks. I am looking forward to our upcoming potluck. Occasionally there are Mom's night's out held at local restaurants. The mothers in the group have also introduced me to some great resources, such as gardeners, etc.

Beth coordinates playgroups for the older children and Gina Signorello currently coordinates playgroups for the younger children. If you are interested in joining, please contact Beth Delson at bdelson@igc.org

LIGHT BROWN APPLE MOTH QUARANTINE

By Sue Luttner

Our neighborhood is right in the middle of the Santa Clara County quarantine zone for the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM), an agricultural pest from Australia that's starting showing up in Bay Area monitoring traps.

If the moth becomes established in California, it will not only damage our own fruit and vegetable crops but also shut out markets outside the state for California pro-

duce. The moth larvae feed on a wide range of hosts, including pit fruits like apricots and plums as well as citrus.

Both the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have imposed quarantines in the areas where moths have been detected. We are warned not to move any plants or plant parts from our yards, even to another yard within the quarantine area.

Because an individual moth has a very limited potential range, biologists say that human transport is the most potent force now spreading the pest. Stopping the infestation early will avoid the pressure for aerial spraying if the LBAM range starts growing.

Please dispose of your yard waste through the city compost services, and advise any gardeners you hire to leave waste products on your property, in the city bins. Resist the urge to give your neighbor a bouquet from your yard, and wash all produce carefully before removing it from the property.

For more information, see <http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/>, and click the Hot Topic button for LBAM Quarantine.

The moth is not seasonal and can produce multiple generations in a few weeks. The adult is difficult to distinguish from other small brown moths. Eggs are laid on the upper sides of smooth leaves, and the young larvae crawl to the underside, where they typically start feeding near a vein, eventually wrapping themselves in fine silk webbing.

To report a suspect pest, call 1-800-491-1899.



BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Barron Park Association
4028 Laguna Way
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Nancy "Jo" Hamilton
EDITOR

Patrick Coyne
DESIGNER

Mary Jane Leon, Gwen Luce,
Doug Moran
COPY EDITORS

Linda Elder, Doug Graham, Jen Hess,
Mary Jane Leon, Sue Luttner, Lynn
Melena, Doug Moran, Halimah Van Tuyl
CONTRIBUTORS

SARAH GREEN—Abandoned Wife and Society Matron

By Doug Graham, Barron Park Historian

Sarah Wallis—Continuing the Story—Part Three

Sarah Wallis was one of the most notable people to have lived on the land that is now our neighborhood. She was one of the very first pre-gold rush “Anglo” immigrants to California, a prominent lady in San Francisco and Mayfield society, and the leader of the woman suffrage movement on the west coast.

Part One of her story appeared in the Fall, 2003 edition of this newsletter, and covered her importance in California and Barron Park history, her early life as Sarah Armstrong, her marriage to gunsmith Allen Montgomery, and the first half of their overland immigration to California.

Part Two, in the winter 2004 issue, covered the adventures during the second half of her trek in 1844 with the Stevens party, the first immigrant group to bring wagons across the Sierra Nevada.

It also covered Sarah’s life in the sierra foothills, Sutter’s Fort (Sacramento) and San Francisco during the years 1845-47. Part two concluded with the abandonment of Sarah by her first husband, the gunsmith Allen Montgomery, in San Francisco, just before the Gold Rush began.

Since writing that part of the story in 2003, I have gained access to the papers of Dorothy Regnery, who was researching to write a biography of Sarah Wallis. Regnery’s research notes include more information on this part of Sarah’s life, so I am starting Part Three with a more detailed description of the final years of Sarah and Allen’s married life together.

Winter at Sutter’s Fort

Sarah spent the terribly wet winter of 1846-47 at Sutter’s Fort, without her husband. Allen Montgomery was in Southern California, serving in the volunteer California Battalion that was involved in suppressing a revolt of Californios against the U.S. military occupation (the Mexican War was in progress at that time). There were a few other white women at the fort, especially Mrs. Leahy, with whom Sarah was sharing quarters, and Eliza Gregson, who wrote a memoir thirty years later. Their husbands were all in the California Battalion, and the

women were drawing government rations. Mrs. Gregson had a little girl who had been born September third. The promised rations were neither dependable nor adequate, and Mrs Gregson wrote “...the worst of it (was) I had very little to eat and I got so thin in flesh that I could scarcely carry the few clothes that were on my back. I was nursing a fat cross baby and had very little nourishments—about that time Mrs. Leahy she says come and live with me & we will put our grub together it will be better for us both, as her husband was gone too so I moved the few things I had & stayed with her and Mrs. Montgomery.” Gregson had mentioned, earlier in her memoir, “...Mrs. Montgomery in other years later Mrs. Wallace (Wallis) of Mayfield near S. F. City,” so she was aware of Sarah’s later social prominence.

The dreary winter dragged on. Gregson wrote “That winter was a very wet one & we were scarce of food and fuel & we had hard work to keep fires. The Indians were told to supply us with fire wood but the whole valley (was) flooded to the foothills & they had hard work to supply themselves...” This was the winter that the Donner Party was starving in the Sierra snow, and the people at the Sutter’s Fort knew about it but there were almost no men left to attempt a rescue mission. To add to the misery, a messenger arrived from the army carrying letters telling of a battle with the “Spaniards,” with four Americans killed and seven wounded, none of them named in the message—so, for the rest of the winter, the women had to wonder if they were widows.

Sarah Learns to Read and Write

This was the winter that Sarah learned to read and write, at the age of 21. Mrs. Gregson wrote about it: “...another item which I must not forget...I was living with Mrs. Leahy & in the same house with Mrs. Montgomery. Mrs. Leahy had two little girls, Mary Ann and Libby. Mary Ann (was) between 4 & 5 years old. Well Mrs Leahy was very kind to me for which I hold her in grateful memory. She had been teaching Mary Ann her letters as best she could. She asked me if I would teach her little girls to write as she did not know how herself. I told her Yes I would & was very glad for I had no employment so at it

I went. During that time Mrs. Montgomery would watch us with great interest. One day she says to me will you teach me Mrs Gregson. I looked at her to see if she was in earnest. & I told her yes if you want to learn. She said if you will learn me how to write I will do something very big for you if I am able. So I fulfilled my part but she forgot her part.”

Author’s note: I think there’s a moral to be found in this—You had better watch out what you promise to do for someone, because if you fail to do it, and later become wealthy or prominent, they will write you up in their memoirs and then some jerk will put the detail in a history article 150 years later.

The Montgomerys move to San Francisco

Sometime in the spring or summer of 1847, the Montgomerys moved to San Francisco where Allen apparently worked in his trade as a gunsmith. They rented a house from William H. Davis that had just been built on the corner of Sacramento and Montgomery Streets (in today’s financial district, two blocks south of where the TransAmerica pyramid is now). The house was described later by the historian Hubert Bancroft as “a wooden shanty” with a redwood fence.

Sarah helped make ends meet by taking in boarders. She reminisced in later years: “There (were) only one or two houses (in San Francisco). There was nothing there when we came.” Sarah was exaggerating a little; the village of Yerba Buena, soon to be renamed San Francisco, had several dozen structures in early 1847, including stores and warehouses owned by a number of prosperous mercantile firms.

In the autumn, Allen decided to go to Hawaii, perhaps in search of more profitable employment. The war was apparently over in California, but overland immigration to California was way down in 1847—only 450 newcomers arrived, less than one-third as many as in 1846. After the news of the Donner Party disaster in the snows of the Sierra Nevada during the wet winter of 1846-47 became widespread in the Midwest, the tide of immigration swung almost completely away from Cali-

fornia to Oregon: the California Trail had acquired a fearsome reputation. San Francisco was undergoing a sort of miniature economic depression in late 1847. Perhaps Allen was discouraged and did not think he could make a good living as a gunsmith in these changed times. In any case, he took passage on the American Steamer Julia for Honolulu, via Monterey.

Allen Abandons Sarah

At the time he departed on October 28, 1847 Sarah did not realize that she would never see him again. She was left in her boarding house on the corner to fend for herself. This was, effectively, the third time that he had abandoned Sarah, and it was the last. Dorothy Regnery has written that, "As a respectable "widow" Sarah pursued almost every acceptable means of livelihood: (she) fed boarders, rented rooms, took in washing and did sewing." Fortunately for the 22-year-old Sarah, San Francisco was growing rapidly and there was a steady demand for her services.

She never heard from Montgomery again, and in California it came to be believed that he had been lost at sea. However, the Julia arrived safely in Honolulu on November 22, and the Hawaiian royal government archives reveal Montgomery to have been alive and well the following summer. In June, news of the gold discovery in California reached the islands, and on July 10, 1848, upon payment of a \$2 fee, Allen Montgomery was granted official permission to leave Honolulu for California. Dorothy Regnery speculated, in her notes on Sarah Wallis' life, that "A transformation in Montgomery's appearance, such as growing a beard, would have been sufficient disguise to conceal his movements through San Francisco and into the gold fields. Multitudes of foreigners were spilling into California. Montgomery may have struck it rich and discreetly moved elsewhere..." In 1851, George McKinstry in a letter written from Sutter's Fort stated that Montgomery was dead, but he provided no facts to support the statement about when, where or how Montgomery's death occurred."

The Gold Rush Begins

In January, 1848, John Marshall discovered gold nuggets and dust in the mill race of the sawmill that he was building for Sutter on the South Fork of the American River. The mill was located near the cabin where the Montgomerys had spent the winter of 1845-46. This geographical coincidence was probably the origin of the later belief

that the gold discovery had been made on the Montgomerys' property.

At first, Sutter tried to keep the gold discovery a secret. But the news was out in San Francisco by April, and in Hawaii and the West Coast Mexican ports a few weeks later. More than half the able-bodied men in California dropped what they had been doing, that spring of 1848, and took off for "the mines," as the Sierra foothill region placer deposits became known. Sarah stayed in San Francisco and continued to make her living running the boarding house.

Marriage to Talbot Green



Photograph of Talbot H. Green, early or mid-1850s.

At some point after Montgomery's disappearance, it was assumed that Allen had been lost at sea, and the residents of San Francisco began to regard Sarah as a widow. On October 25, 1849, she married Talbot

Green, a prominent and well-to-do businessman, after a "protracted courtship." The marriage took place in Sarah's home on Pine Street in San Francisco. The couple later repeated their vows at a gala affair in San Jose which was written up in the newspapers. Sarah was described at the wedding as "attractive and strong-willed." She was 24 years old. It was held at the home of Green's close friend Grove C. Cook, a fellow immigrant in the Bidwell and Bartleson Party, In letters written years later to his friend Thomas Larkin, Green said "I...then began really and truly to love the woman (Sarah) I married. I studied her character well and was convinced that she had a much stronger mind than my own...I married the wife I did to save me..." Apparently Green was an incipient alcoholic and had fallen into a "dissipated life," and looked to Sarah to save him.

Talbot Green's immigration and life in Monterey and San Francisco

Talbot Green was a fascinating person, whose life we can only touch on in Sarah's story. He is well worth reading about, although he played no part in Barron Park history except as Sarah's second husband.

He, like Sarah, immigrated overland to California. She was a very early comer, but he was even earlier, having been a member of the very first overland immigration party to California, the Bidwell-Bartleson Party of 1841. They abandoned their wagons in Utah and eventually walked all the way around the southern end of the Sierra Nevada and down the San Joaquin Valley to Marsh's Rancho nestled in the foothills of Mount Diablo in what is now the delta town of Byron.

Within a year of his arrival in the then-Mexican Province of Alta California, Talbot Green had become the trusted employee and agent of Thomas O. Larkin, the richest businessman and the United State Consul at Monterey, the Capital of Alta California. Working from the base of Larkin's support, Green so well established himself as a successful and publicly esteemed businessman that, on January 1, 1849, he was admitted as a partner in the largest trading firm in Yerba Buena, Mellus and Howard. It is probably about this time that he began courting Sarah Montgomery, although they may have met earlier when Green was still working for Larkin in Monterey.

He entered into local government under the U.S. military regime still in place following the conclusion of the Mexican War in late 1848. On February 21, 1849, he was elected to the San Francisco District Legislative Assembly. In August this was replaced with an Ayuntamiento or City Council, of which he was named President (equivalent to Mayor of the city). In January, 1850 he was elected Councilman and then Debt Commissioner in 1851. Green was also prominent in society, being elected Treasurer of the Society of California Pioneers in 1850. This was a prestigious organization open only to those who had, like both Talbot and Sarah, come to California before the gold discovery.

Sarah Green—San Francisco society matron

Meanwhile, in 1850 the Greens had moved into a \$17,000 pre-fabricated cottage in "Happy Valley" (Mission Street between Third and Fourth). This was one of four similar (near-identical) houses shipped from New York around the Horn and erected in San Francisco for Green and his partners, W.D.M. Howard, George Mellus and Samuel Brannan. Dorothy Regnery wrote that "The attractive cottages were erected in a row on the outskirts of (the city)" and became known as "Howard's Row." Green had the title of the property

made out in Sarah's name. The significance of this action only became obvious later on.

Sarah was apparently fully accepted in what passed as "society" in early-1850s San Francisco, which was still a raw frontier town of rough shacks and tents, racked by regular fires that destroyed whole blocks, and peopled mostly by men without women (there was about a ten-to-one ratio).

Green exposed as embezzler and bigamist

However, the apparently happy marriage would be short-lived for the Greens. In April, 1851, the past caught up with Talbot Green, who was exposed as Paul Geddes—an absconded clerk and embezzler from Pennsylvania. Not only that, but he already had a wife—and children—in Pennsylvania, whom he had abandoned when he disappeared with about \$11,000 which had been entrusted to him. There are many stories about how he was exposed, but the triggering factor seems to have been his campaign for the mayoralty of San Francisco, to which he was widely expected to be elected.

As John Adam Hussey has written in the California Historical Society Quarterly;

"Green stoutly maintained that the case was one of mistaken identity and... seeing that his mere oral protestations would not clear him of suspicion, offered to return East to clear up the matter and prove his innocence. Within a day or two, he dissolved his partnership with Howard, transferred some of his property to his wife, and settled his affairs in general as best he could."

Hussey writes that Green's friends stood by him loyally "to the very last minute." On April 15, they gave him a send-off in the Eagle Saloon, then formed a procession and escorted him on board the steamer Panama, continuing to shake his hand until the boat moved away from the wharf.

"Then," says one of them, "we all turned away with a sad, sickening feeling, for the conviction was forcing itself on us more and more, as we thought it over, that Green was ...Geddes" Month after month passed without a word from Green reaching California. After a long time there were "...reports that Green had been seen in the East, but he had not been seen in Pennsylvania, and there were no indications that he had taken any steps to clear his name."

Sarah abandoned by Green

Once again Sarah had been abandoned by a husband who had apparently loved her.

And this time the stakes were higher for her—she was pregnant with Geddes' child. It is thought that Green had told Sarah Montgomery about his Pennsylvania wife, whom he then claimed to be insane.

Dorothy Regnery wrote: "Upon receiving word of her 'death', Green was free to marry Sarah. While both were guilty of bigamy, their circumstances were not unusual in the topsy-turvy (sic) of California's gold rush...If Sarah knew of Montgomery's whereabouts, she never disclosed the information." Montgomery's death was only a general public belief. The Montgomerys were never divorced, so Sarah was legally as much a bigamist as Talbot.

Sarah's first child born

During this difficult time, Sarah's first child, Talbot H. Green, was born on July 3, 1851. Apparently Green had arranged for Sarah to receive \$450 per month from his partner Howard before he left the city. This was not enough, however, given the gold rush-inflated prices in San Francisco. By late May, 1851 (one month after Green left) Sarah was taking in boarders again. By autumn, she was operating the White Rose, a "drinking saloon" at 235 Pacific Street. Running these two businesses successfully, she was able to keep going for the next several years.

Sarah is reunited with her brother

About two years after Green abandoned her, Sarah's badly crippled brother fortuitously turned up in San Francisco and they were reunited for the first time since being separated in Missouri at the time of the parents' deaths in 1842. John Armstrong was now 17, nine years younger than Sarah. He had been apprenticed to a blacksmith and plow-maker at age eight when the two orphans were separated. By 1851 he had been released by the blacksmith and was employed to help drive 500 head of cattle from Missouri to California. His injured leg was further damaged in an accident on the trail, but a "kindly companion" helped him reach the gold camps, where he recovered and worked as a blacksmith. In the fall of 1852 he moved to Sacramento and manufactured plows until flooded out in the winter. He then moved to San Francisco to find work and found his twice-abandoned older sister. As Dorothy Regnery wrote, "With Sarah's encouragement and financial Assistance he attended the University of Pacific (then at Santa Clara) and studied law under two attorneys in San Francisco. He was admit-

ted to the bar in 1855 and later put to practice some of what he learned by helping his sister with her legal problems...."

Settlement with Green and marriage to Wallis

Sarah continued living in the cottage on "Howard's Row" until some time in 1854. She started divorce proceedings against Green on January 31, 1854. The monthly payments from Howard are believed to have continued until mid-1854, when she remarried.

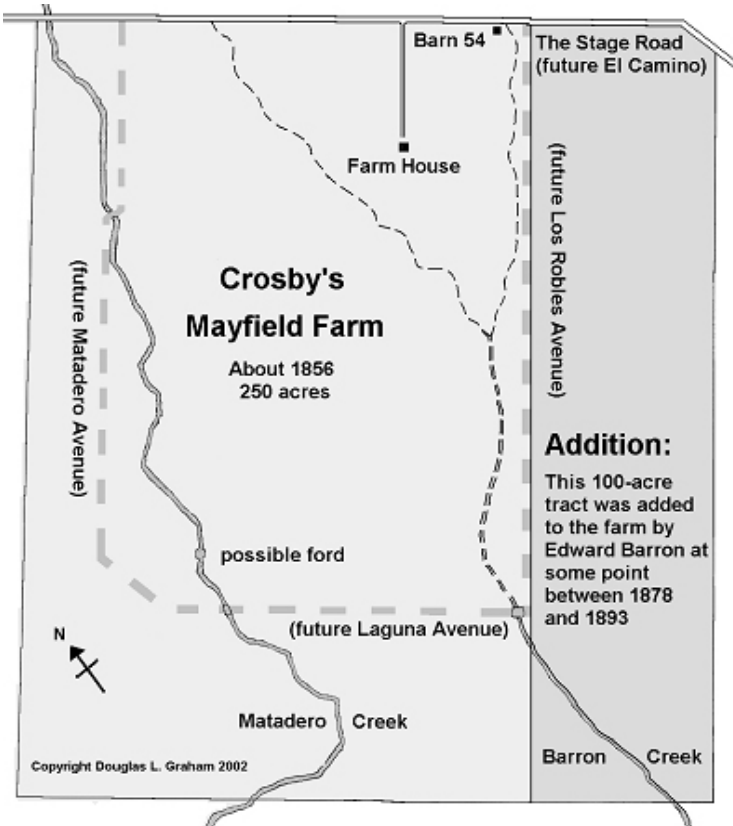
In 1855, Sam Brannan, the famous Mormon leader and San Francisco businessman, helped Green obtain what was owed him in California and applied it to Green's debts in the East, including covering the original embezzlement. Green then visited Howard, his main partner, who was then in Boston, and settled accounts with him. One observer remarked "If he recovers but a quarter of what he states Howard owes him, he will be rich enough for all practical purposes and he is still young enough to make a fortune..." In 1856 Green visited California to see friends and wind up miscellaneous business affairs. He visited Sarah and his son Talbot, then 5 years old. He had evidently made a handsome settlement with Sarah the previous year, as it was in 1855 that she began to be identified as "a wealthy lady"

On July 25, 1854, Sarah married Joseph Sawyer Wallis, who was studying for the law in San Francisco. They were both twenty-nine, and the marriage lasted until Joseph's death in 1898.

Joseph Wallis' life before meeting Sarah

Before immigrating to California, Wallis had received a broad formal education and was involved in politics. In 1848 he was a Massachusetts delegate to the National Free Soil Convention at Buffalo, New York. The Free Soil Party elected many men to local and state offices throughout the North in 1848 and 1852, and later comprised one of the main elements in the formation of the Republican Party in 1856. Wallis was one of those who progressed to positions of influence as a Republican in the Civil War and Reconstruction periods.

Dorothy Regnery wrote about Wallis' immigration: "The lure of finding gold in California stimulated Wallis to organize about twenty other young men in the Naumkeag Mutual Trading & Mining Co. Wallis was



change the name of their infant son." The boy was thereby renamed Talbot Howard Wallis by act of the California Legislature. On October 27, 1855, Sarah and Joseph's first child together, their daughter Eva was born. Their second daughter, Josephine was born just a year and a half later in March, 1857.

Joseph practiced law in association with Rhodes from 1855 through 1857. He also began to get involved in local politics as a "long hair" (one who believed in extending suffrage to

under tall garrets. It had a wide covered verandah around the front and sides, and Victorian "gingerbread" style woodwork ornamentation around the verandah and along the garret rooflines. The Crosby farmhouse, also two-story, was retained, attached to the rear and served as kitchen and servant's quarters (the details of the house and some of the furnishings will be covered in the next installment of this article). The mansion was surrounded by a landscaped park and the farm included an extensive fruit orchard near the house. See the map illustrating this article.

The move to Mayfield Farm

In November, 1857, the new mansion was ready for occupancy and the Wallises moved to Mayfield. They immediately became two of the most prominent people in the Mayfield area. A small village which took its name from the farm was being established where the intersection of California Avenue and El Camino Real is now. In 1858, Joseph was elected a Justice of the Peace for Fremont Township, which covered the area that is now Palo Alto and also included most of modern Mountain View, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills. Wallis was the only lawyer in the area. Later in 1858 Joseph was elected a Justice of the Court of Sessions, Santa Clara County, and from this year on, he was known by the honorific "Judge Wallis." In 1859, Sarah and Joseph's final child was born, their son Joseph.

The Story Continues...

I will continue with Sarah and Joseph's story in the fall 2007 issue of this newsletter, which will focus on her leadership of the woman suffrage movement on the West Coast, her losses in the financial collapse and recession of the late 1870s, her later life and final days.

It was to recognize and honor her leadership and vision that the state historical monument was installed on La Selva Drive in Barron Park, marking the site of the impressive and beautiful Victorian mansion that she built on Mayfield Farm.

The story will close by covering the significance of Sarah Wallis in California history, the installation of the state historical marker at the site of her mansion in Barron Park, and recent historical research achievements and problems.

If you would like more information, please don't hesitate to contact me at 650-493-0689 or dgrahampaca@sbglobal.net.

elected their President. They boarded the sailing ship Capital in Boston on January 24, 1849, sailed around the Horn and docked in San Francisco on July 19, 1849. Controversy within their ranks caused the group to disband shortly after reaching Sacramento. Wallis and a few members attempted mining on the Middle Fork of the Yuba River.

However, their luck must have been poor, because on November 4, 1849, Wallis returned to San Francisco and found employment as a "clerk." In 1852 he began to study law under a San Francisco lawyer, William H. Rhodes. Regnery wrote "Often Sarah was credited as encouraging him to pursue the study." He was admitted to the bar in 1855, the same year as John Armstrong. It is not known how or when Sarah met Joseph, but it may have been through John.

Sarah and Joseph's life in San Francisco

After the wedding, Joseph moved into Sarah's cottage on Mission Street, and they continued living there until they moved to Mayfield in 1857. He accepted Sarah's son Talbot Howard Green as their son. In 1855 Sarah and Joseph worked through their State Assemblyman to obtain passage of Assembly Bill 124, which "made it "lawful for Joseph S. Wallis and Sarah Wallis to

Americans of African racial heritage).

Sarah buys property in Mayfield

In late 1856 and 1857 the United States was troubled with a major financial crisis, including bank failures and a general business recession. San Francisco, the only important city in California at the time, was hit especially hard. Sarah's fortune seems to have been secure, as she soon made a major real estate investment by acquiring Mayfield Farm, a 250-acre parcel owned by Elisha Crosby near the village of Mayfield. On September 23, 1856, the farm was conveyed by two sheriff's deeds to John W. Armstrong as trustee for Sarah Wallis. Sarah acquired the farm for \$10,701 to satisfy Crosby's debt of \$10,000 to her. More details of Crosby's life are given in my two-part article "A Lawyer Founds Mayfield Farm" that appeared in the Spring and Summer, 2003 issues of this newsletter.

She builds a "wedding cake" Victorian mansion

At the time of the sale, it appears that there was a "very comfortable" farm house on the property, but Sarah wanted something better. She spent \$25,000-30,000 (a true fortune in those days) building a large square house with two full stories (14-foot ceilings) and a partial third story of rooms

K I D ' S K O R N E R

By Halimah Van Tuyl



An Inspirational Spot To Read

Have you ever sat beside a beautiful stream, amidst blooming spring flowers, and read your favorite book? The students at Juana Briones School are eagerly awaiting this pleasure, thanks to a delightful mural and reading garden in progress at the school. The mural, painted by local artist Morgan Bricca, is a tribute to the school's namesake, Juana Briones. It shows Juana gathering herbs on the hillside of her adobe house and cattle ranch. It also depicts the rich variety of wildlife and native California plants of this area.

Clusters of students can be seen many days a week at recess watching Morgan at work and absorbing her techniques. "How do you make that stream look so real?" they ask her. "Please add a bobcat, it's our school's mascot," an enthralled second grader urges as she runs by.

Morgan was commissioned to paint this project by Kim and Ken Perlmutter, who chose to make the garden as a tribute to their son, Joseph Perlmutter. They hope that by creating this outdoor space, the garden will bring joy to all for years to come,

and foster a love of reading and learning in the outdoors. Kim says, "May it inspire kids to dream and experience life to the fullest...like Joey did in his short life."

Morgan is excited to be painting a mural at Briones where her son will be a student in the fall, although her mural artistry is well established with her creations in many homes and commercial establishments around the Bay Area. With great attention to detail, Morgan works from photos and sketches and has immersed herself in historical information about Juana to create the murals. A photo of Juana Briones, which has been held for generations in Juana's great-great niece's family, has recently been given to the National Park Service and has been made available for Morgan to use in creating the likeness.

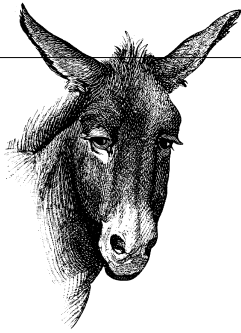
Kim is a library volunteer at the school, and the Perlmutter's have been active in their neighborhood school since their older daughters attended Briones. Laura Losier, Briones librarian, has been an active consultant on the project and is eager for children to start using the reading garden.



The flowers are already blooming in the planter boxes as you walk into the library. Boulders to sit on and tables and benches for reading have been installed. And visitors will notice that...yes, there is definitely a bobcat!

Halimah Van Tuyl is a teacher at Briones School. For more information about Morgan Bricca's artwork, visit: <http://www.muralsbymorgan.com>

Help Support the Barron Park Donkeys!



Support for Perry and Niner comes completely from the generosity of their neighbors and the community. The donkeys receive no tax dollars, no government funds, no funds from the City of Palo Alto, no grants from any animal welfare or humane organization. They are a part of the neighborhood simply because people who live here care about them and care about continuing this unique opportunity. In return, Perry and Niner provide warmth and joy to those who walk by their pasture; a rural equine experience for suburban children and adults who visit them on Sundays in Bol Park; an opportunity for humane education for children in Barron Park Schools; and a general reaffirmation for all of us of our connection to the natural world.

General farrier and veterinary expenses for the donkeys total about \$1,000 a year. Food costs about \$600 a year. Funds for the donkeys are managed by Acterra (formerly the Peninsula Conservation Center Foundation), which acts as fiscal agent for the Donkey Project, providing insurance

and handling donations and financial affairs. Fees for these administrative services totaled about \$200 this past year. All of these expenses are funded solely through donations.

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 donkey's 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.

W E L C O M E

By Linda Elder, Membership Chair

Welcome to new members and welcome back to continuing members. We have about 245 members so far this year! Thank you for supporting the BPA.

I've been thinking about the benefits of joining the BPA. There are many tangible benefits. You are reading one of the most popular right now! But the newsletter also represents some of the intangible benefits of being a member. It represents a sense of pride about our community, a sense of history, and a sense of well-being by living in a wonderful neighborhood. And that's what the BPA is all about. Have a great summer.

Who needs Paris when there's Barron Park?

My wife Tita and our two young children are renters in Barron Park, and looking to insure our place in the neighborhood for the long-term by making a home purchase. We wondered if you could post a note in the BPA newsletter asking neighbors who may be looking to make a move out or a move up to contact us. We moved here from Paris, France in 2005 and after only two short years, have been struck by the fabric and texture of the community and hearts touched by the many families both young and old that we have gotten to know, and would like nothing more than to find a place to call our own. We are hoping to find 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and some yard in good condition (or not, and priced accordingly). We can be reached on 650-796-7280 or by email at louis_lehot@hotmail.com.

FOR MEMBERS ONLY!

We have created PDF files of past newsletters. See the complete newsletters, including full-color photos!

These files are available ONLY to current BPA members. The PDF directory address will change each year, and is published on the "thank you" page when you join online, and in the summer newsletter paper edition. The files may take awhile to download (sizes given in advance).

BPA Website: <http://www.bpaonline.org>

PDF full color newsletter archive:

<http://www2.bpaonline.org/bp-news-golf/>

BPA EMAIL LISTS

bpa-news1@BPAOnline.org: News and announcements of problems, issues, meetings . . . No discussion.

bpa1@BPAOnline.org: Discussion of issues related to Barron Park. Some announcements and news.

bpa-misc1@BPAOnline.org: Other items of potential interest to Barron Park residents, such as people organizing groups (child care, exercise) and some buy-sell announcements. Anyone can subscribe to any of this lists. bpa-news is moderated, but anyone can submit items directly to the other lists.

For more info, go to www.bpaonline.org and follow the link for "BPA Email Lists"

9/9 Welcoming Gathering!

Save Sunday, September 9, 2-4 pm for our annual BPA Welcoming Gathering in Bol Park!!!

All "Old," "New" and "In-Between" Barron Park neighbors are invited to visit with each other, the donkeys, and enjoy free ice-cream from Driftwood Deli, plus games!

Please contact BPA Welcoming Chair Gwen Luce to offer help or ideas: 650-224-3670 or gluce@cbtnorcal.com

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