

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Linnie Melena, BPA President



From Creeks to Mini Cans

What do our local garbage service and our neighborhood creeks, Barron and Matadero, have in common? They both interact with the environment and they are both projects of the Barron Park Green Team.

Matadero Creek

Matadero Creek conjures up more pleasant thoughts than garbage, so I will start with that. Several years ago, I read a book titled "Last Child in the Woods" by Richard Louv. It was about how children today do not spend enough unstructured free time in the natural environment. I asked my now grown-up kids what they remembered about their childhood experiences, and they said, "We used to like to play in the creek up at Bol Park." They were talking about the place where the steps lead down into the creek, where they could splash in the water and look for what-ever might be hiding there—a treasured memory even 30 years later.

Matadero Creek, where it runs through Barron Park, is one the few creeks in Palo Alto that is not in a concrete channel. (A short segment of Barron Creek is also open.) Although Matadero Creek is bordered with fairly heavy vegetation, much of it is invasive, non-native plants such

as ailanthus (tree of heaven), fennel and English ivy.

Earlier this year, the Barron Park Association was contacted by Acterra, the local environmental organization, about whether there was interest in starting a project to remove the invasive plants and replace them with natives appropriate to a riparian corridor. After a presentation to the Board by Acterra, the Barron Park Green Team decided to take the lead.

Acterra has funding for plants and staff support that it had received, via the City, as mitigation money from someone who had caused damage to the creek upstream and had to pay a fine. Acterra will provide expertise, and tools, but most of the work will come from volunteers who live in Barron Park.

The first step is to find one or more locations which are publicly-owned, accessible and visible enough to serve to educate residents about appropriate types of plants. Bol Park is one possible location, but there are several others.

An organizational meeting to discuss locations and scope will have been held on June 16—after the deadline for this article, but before publication. Once one or more locations is identified, there will be work days to remove the invasive non-native plants and plant the natives that will improve the health of Matadero Creek.

Planting will take place as the rainy season approaches next fall. Working together on a neighborhood project helps bring our community together, improving not only creek health but the health and well-being of the neighborhood as a whole. Watch for notices of meetings and work days on the BPA email lists.

The Mini Can Challenge

And now moving on to garbage. The City of Palo Alto Zero Waste program, which operates our garbage service, recently published a progress report on the percentage of mini-can use by neighborhood. A mini-can, at 20 gallons, is the smallest (and cheapest) garbage service available. The mini-can percentages ranged from 13–37

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Enjoy the Summer



But, please remember, when school starts in the Fall, our streets will be filled with kids in the early morning hours trying to get to our local schools. Let's all drive safely so that we can encourage more of them to walk and ride their bikes.

School starts on August 23.

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percent. The City challenged the community to get to 50 percent.

The Barron Park Green Team, along with the College Terrace and Midtown neighborhoods, embraced the challenge. In April, the Barron Park Green Team entered the race to get to 50 percent first. The Challenge rewards? Working side by side with neighbors to strengthen our neighborhood, a sense of accomplishment, saving money and of course, bragging rights.

While this is a friendly, neighborly competition, we want Barron Park to win! Currently Barron Park is at 30 percent mini-cans. To reach 50 percent, 300 households will need to switch to the mini-can service. You'll be hearing more about the Challenge as Barron Park works toward that goal. Already, you may have received a flyer, had a conversation at a neighborhood event, or received e-mails about the Challenge.

Why Go "Mini"

- Save money. Switching from a 32-gallon can to a 20-gallon mini-can can save \$203.52 per year.
- Help the community with its Zero Waste goal.
- What's left for the dump? Not much since you can put so much in the recycling and yard trimmings carts.
- Households of all sizes are switching to the



mini-can, even households of five people!

Here are some answers to questions most often heard by Green Team members.

■ Who do you call?

Call GreenWaste at (650) 493-4894.

■ How can you be sure that you can reduce to a mini-can? If you currently have a 32-gallon can, monitor how full it is over a few weeks. If your can is only 2/3 full on a weekly basis, you can switch to a mini-can, no problem.

■ What if you can't always get by on a mini-can? If occasionally you make more garbage than a mini-can holds (e.g., holidays), you can put out extra garbage for an additional charge of \$10.60. Only pay extra when you need it.

■ Could you use some neighborly, personalized help? E-mail barronpark@pagreenteams.org to talk trash.

■ Do you have questions about what can be recycled? Visit www.pagreenteams.org for frequently asked questions, link to a sorting game, information on what goes where, and videos answering questions like, "Do I need to rinse my recyclables?"

Finally, if you have questions or ideas for how to get Barron Park to 50 percent mini-cans, or are interested in Volunteering on this project, go to barronpark@pagreenteams.org.

Watch for New Benches in 2012

Replacement benches for the Matadero Well Site (on Matadero near Josina and Whitsell) are on the way. They have been purchased and are being stored by the City until the Utilities Department completes rehabilitation of its water pumping facilities in that area. Unfortunately, that project won't be completed until early in 2012.

The benches will replace dilapidated benches removed about four years ago. The Barron Park Association Board began discussions of whether and how to replace the benches almost two years ago. The City would not pay for new ones, but would install benches if we provided the funds. Finally, after multiple meetings and outreach, the Board decided to purchase two benches. Then, the Henshel family, long-time residents of Barron Park, offered to pay for one of them.

Anticipating installation this summer, the benches were ordered. In May, the Utilities Department said that the well rehabilitation work would continue on longer than expected. Discussions of how to get some aesthetic improvements to the pumping facilities, as part of the rehabilitation project, are underway.

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 Sustain-



able 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 bob-frost34@yahoo.com.



New benches will be similar to this one at Heritage Park (old Palo Alto Medical Center site).

BARRON PARK
ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

Barron Park Association
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BPA Welcomes New Board Member Markus Fromherz

I am delighted to join the BPA Board and serve the Barron Park community in this role. My wife, Heike Schmitz, and my two teenage children have now lived in Palo Alto for seventeen years, first South of Midtown, then for the last almost six years in Barron Park. Heike and I are both Germans, but for the most part grew up in Switzerland. Our children were born in Palo Alto.



(Xerox) Palo Alto Research Center and currently Chief Innovation Officer at ACS, a Xerox company. I am also on the board of two scholarship nonprofits, including the Gunn Foundation.

On the BPA Board, I am initially taking the role of business liaison. I don't have a particular agenda, but I

believe that Barron Park benefits from the stores and restaurants along El Camino Real, and I believe that those businesses benefit equally from being in tune with the interests and needs of residents and business neighbors. I'd like to invite both residents and business owners to bring up any issues you feel BPA can be helpful with or should be involved. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all those businesses who have been supporting BPA and Barron Park with material support over the years.

I live on Amaranta Avenue, which means I also represent the south part of Barron Park on the BPA Board. Again, feel free to bring any ideas and issues to my attention, if you believe that the Barron Park Association should be involved. I look forward to talking to you.

We enjoy this neighborhood tremendously. This is a lively, active community that is both tolerant and attentive to its members, and we made friends quickly.

Soon after we moved here, I became a PANDA (now Palo Alto Community Emergency Response Team or PA CERT), where I met quite a few neighbors; Heike became a Block Preparedness Coordinator for Palo Alto's emergency communication system; and my children met many local friends through Gunn High School. (Plug for PA CERT: please consider taking a training class. You can use what you learn to help your family in an emergency situation, and your neighborhood will be thankful as well!) I am a former director at the

EMAIL LISTS

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

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

My Experience at 'A Little Secret' Women's Clothing Store

By Shirley Finrock



I visited this new business earlier this week. Sep Hines who has owned and operated the Palo Alto Tailoring Shop, at the corner of Barron and El Camino is the proprietor. She partners with Tim Jung. She has also designed some of the garments she sells in the shop. I found reasonably priced clothing with much style arranged in the store by color.

Sep was extremely helpful in locating clothing items that I needed to attend a fancy luncheon. She pulled a variety of tops and skirts for me to try, and was very helpful and honest about the items she thought were most flattering. I returned the second time, with a skirt I found in

another shop and Seb chose a very appropriate top to finish the outfit, and I also purchased a top to wear with casual clothing. I definitely will be shopping at 'A Little Secret' in the future.

While in the store I encountered a young woman in her 20's who found some chic clothing to purchase, and also two customers who were over 40. The clothing Sep has chosen to stock and her personal designs are appropriate for all ages.

I felt I was being served, as I had been 25-30 years ago in independent clothing stores. Another great feature, Sep provides free alterations for garments purchased at 'A Little Secret.'

Quakeville 2011—Save the Date September 10-11

By Lydia Kou—Chair, Emergency Preparedness & Safety Committee



In a disaster, the American Red Cross will have the predominant role in providing shelter to the victims (long-established national protocols). Their strong preference is to have mass shelters in gymnasiums, schools and other buildings with large open rooms, but in certain circumstances they will create tent cities. In Palo Alto, Cubberley Community Center is designed to be this mass shelter.

In the TV coverage of disasters, you have undoubtedly seen pictures of people crowded into gyms, sleeping on mats and cots (see photo). What you see less often, because it doesn't make as good TV, are the people that get stuck in auditoriums with bolted down chairs and fixed armrests, as was the case in the Superdome during Hurricane Katrina. It is only slightly better than getting stuck in tourist class in a crowded airplane sitting on the tarmac.

The motivation for Quakeville is to be able to have something that falls in between sheltering in your own house and evacuating to a mass shelter. One of the observed effects of mass shelters is that people lapse into just sitting around waiting to be told what to do, a predictable response to the stress from the crowding piled on top of



"Quakeville 2010" held at Juana Briones Park.

the stress from the disaster. Quakeville allows people to be more spread out, while still having enough people close enough together to encourage them to work together, as well as providing the psychological support of seeing that they are still part of a community.

The Quakeville exercise has multiple purposes. For families, it encourages you to think about what you would need should you have to evacuate, and then provides

a simple test of that plan. There are many things to consider: shelter (tent, sleep gear), food and cooking, hygiene, entertainment, medical and other special needs,... For the BPA Emergency Preparedness effort, it allows us to test and further develop plans for how to run such a facility. And unlike normal camping with family and friends, part of the experience is being thrown together with people you may not know in a simulated disaster setting.

The first Quakeville occurred in 2010, an idea of mine that was adopted by then-Mayor Pat Burt who obtained City sponsorship (in the photo, his is the tent with the light brown top). That exercise was attended by many Barron Park residents; some were your very own Block Preparedness Coordinators (BPCs). Also participating were the Palo Alto CERTs (Community Emergency Response Team, formerly "PANDAs"), the local chapter of the Red Cross, Boy Scout Troop 52, the Palo Alto Fire Department's Explorer Post and Palo Alto Police Department.

Quakeville is what you make it. I hope that you will join me, either as "just" a resident, or as a community emergency preparedness volunteer. Besides, when do you get a chance to camp outside in one of our city's public parks (other than Foothill)?

To participate, please contact Lydia Kou, Lkou@apr.com.



"Mass Shelter."

Volunteers Needed for Quakeville Exercise

By Doug Moran



People Locator Service

During a disaster, people often can't get home or they need to stay somewhere else, for example, their home is too badly damaged, or they have to be somewhere that has electrical power for their home medical devices. Most people immediately think of reuniting families, but it is also important for friends and neighbors to be able to check on each other. For example, if you arrive home and see that your neighbor's house is badly damaged, it would be good to be able to confirm if they got out safely so that you don't have to worry whether they are still trapped inside and unconscious.

The Red Cross has a computer-based system for tracking where people are, and we are looking to have an exercise in which this is a component. We need volunteers to plan an exercise, people to staff the computer system, and people to role-play the various cases of people who are moving from one location to another.

To volunteer, please contact Lydia Kou, lkou@apr.com

Recharging Cell Phones

During the Quakeville exercise, we would like to experiment with recharging cell phones and similar equipment—stand-ins, not your real ones. We have been lobbying the City to coordinate with the cell phone companies to help keep the cell towers working during a prolonged power outage. This is in early stages and could include refueling backup generators for the larger towers and possibly recharging the backup batteries for some of the smaller towers. If successful, we could have cell phone service well beyond the 8 hours currently provided for.

First, I would encourage everyone to have charging adapters for their cars. However, there will be situations where we need alternatives, and we want to experiment

with a drop-off facility where you could leave a cell phone, or similar device, for recharging. Because this is an experiment, we won't be using people's actual devices because we don't want to risk damaging or losing them, or deprive people of their use during the experiment.

We need four types of volunteers. First, we need people who would briefly stop by the Quakeville site, at times of their choosing, to simulate dropping off and picking up phones. Having a wide range of actual people often reveals the misunderstandings and other flaws that don't come out if you have just a few people play-acting. When these volunteers show up at Quakeville, they will be given a dummy phone to check in, which they will return after they go through the later check-out procedure. The second need for volunteers is to arrange to have suitable dummy phones available, for example, get an electronics recycler to loan us a batch.

Third, we need volunteers to staff the drop-off facility during the exercise. Fourth, we need volunteers to plan and organize the operation, both the administrative and technical aspects. The former involves figuring out the details of check-in and check-out, and organizing the other volunteers. The latter addresses the problems of *safely* recharging a non-trivial number of devices: The electrical generators available during a disaster will likely produce power that is too "dirty" to be used directly, but needs to be properly "conditioned" (more than your normal surge suppressor). We need someone with expertise in this area, or able to find the appropriate details. Planning groups typically focus their efforts on trying to ensure that things work as intended, but greatly benefit from those who have a skill at seeing how things can go wrong, both to critique the developing plans and to arrange test cases during the exercise.

To volunteer, please contact Doug Moran, quakeville@dougmoran.com

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION

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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

How Did Our Street Get its Name?

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

This article is an excursion into the mysterious realm of Palo Alto street names. The unapproved thoughts expressed herein are the author's own, and are not to be confused with official policy of the Barron Park Association, the City of Palo Alto, or any other group, organized or otherwise. Some of this stuff is documented history, some of it is educated speculation, and some is not. If you read this, please keep this material from anyone who thinks that everything makes sense, as it may be damaging to their world view. Proceed further at your own risk.

The "Tree" Streets Barron Park's Biggest Tract

Encina Grande Park, with 162 lots, is the largest housing tract in the Barron Park area: even bigger than Palo Alto Orchards (80), Greenacres One (90) or Greenacres Two (129). It was laid out in 1946, before the other three (see Illustration A, map of the tract). It provided minimum-acreage lots suitable for small homes, many bought by World War Two veterans and financed by federal "G.I. Bill" lending (see illustrations B, a real estate ad from 1948, and C, photo of one of the houses in 1949).

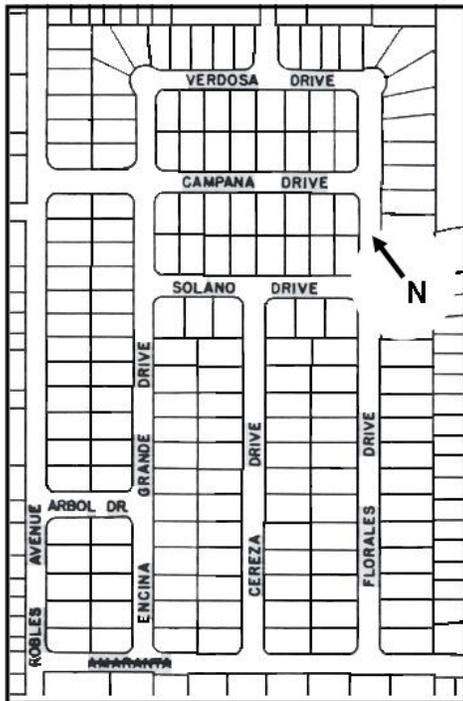


Illustration A: Map of Encina Grande Park.

THREE BEDROOMS

\$12,450

One block west of highway in Palo Alto. If you are a veteran these properties qualify for GI financing. Available for purchase by non-vets. These homes are ready built and deserve your inspection. There are only 4 left out of the first 26 built. Price includes lawn and fence, street work, etc. Salesman on premises after one o'clock daily. Drive to the 4000 block on El Camino in South Palo Alto, turn west at Los Robles Road 1 block. (The Chat and Chew Restaurant and Chef Restaurant are on the corner of Los Robles Road and El Camino, or turn west 1 block, at Longbarn Restaurant. George H. Gorham, Sales Agent. Phone Fireside 5-2456.

Illustration B: Ad for houses in Encina Grande Park, *San Mateo Times*, July 24, 1948.

The land had previously been occupied by 25 acres of prune plums in two parcels, stretching from the current line of Amarantha Avenue northeast to the current line of Campana Drive. Another 12-acre parcel at the end of the tract closest to El Camino Real appears to have been pasture with scattered oaks (from analysis of the aerial photo taken April 17, 1941). The orchard had evidently been planted in the 1930s, except for one enormous encina or live oak, whose canopy spread 50 or 60 feet wide. This ancient leviathan must have inspired the names of the housing tract and two of its streets, Arbol and Encina Grande

By the way: if la encina is liveoak and a feminine noun in Spanish, why is the well-known town of Encino in southern California (part of Los Angeles) spelled the way it is—a masculine form? See "a classic sign-maker's mistake," below, for a clue.

Why are they called "drives"?

The streets in Encina Grande Park are all called "drives," even though the longest ones are less than 0.3 mile long. I speculate that the example was taken from the original Barron Park tract of 1925, when 600-foot-long La Selva was called a drive to evoke its origin as one of Edward Barron's driveways to his mansion.

Arbol and Encina Grande Drives

Arbol is Spanish for "tree." This one-block, 150-foot-long street is possibly the shortest

"Drive" in Palo Alto. There are only four lots with Arbol Drive addresses. It is, however, a through street, as it runs between Los Robles Avenue and Encina Grande Drive. The intersection of Arbol and Encina Grande is very close to the location of the giant oak, which was still there in the 1955 photo, after the entire tract had been built up. However, the oak was removed sometime before another photo was taken in 1966 (see Illustration D, aerial photo taken September 26, 1948). Does anyone reading this have a ground-level photo of this iconic tree?

Cereza Drive

Parallel to Encina Grande to the southeast is Cereza Drive. Cereza is Spanish for "cherry." It is interesting, in view of the history of the land, that they did not give the name Ciruelo ("plum tree") to any street of this subdivision. Perhaps they thought it would be too hard for "anglos" to pronounce.

A classic sign-maker's mistake

The next "fruit" street has been spelled wrong for at least the past 73 years—since a 1932 street map of Palo Alto and surrounding area. "La Para" Avenue was evidently laid out sometime between 1926 and 1932. It runs more than a third of a mile from La Donna Avenue (then called simply "Donna") to Laguna Avenue. It was originally spelled "La Pera" (Spanish for "pear") because it was laid out alongside a very large area planted to pear trees (all the way along its northwest side). In the 1930s and early 1940s, pears were one of the major crops of Barron Park, second only to apricots.

My guess is, that when they first put up street signs, the painter was told "it's called La Pera," pronouncing it the Spanish way. The painter used the English spelling "para." Both would be said, phonetically, like the English "pehr-ah" as in paramedic. When the "Streets of Palo Alto" is revised the next time, I intend to get this explanation in the book, which currently has a labored and incorrect speculation written by me in 1991, before I researched the agricultural history of Barron Park and before I stumbled across an old map with the La Pera spelling.



Illustration C: 771 Encina Grande Drive, 1949.

Laguna Oaks Place

Laguna Oaks Place was named to tie it to Laguna Avenue, which in turn was named for the small irrigation reservoir located in the angle between Laguna Avenue, Los Robles Avenue, and today's Shauna Lane. There are still several beautiful old oaks on the property at the end of the cul-de-sac.

What's in a Name?

A digression—it seems that cul-de-sacs in Palo Alto are usually called "Courts," except when they are "Places." I have to admire the humorists who named the cul-de-sac off Arastradero Road "King Arthur's Court." At least one cul-de-sac in Barron Park is called a "circle" (Rincon Circle). Short streets, longer than mere cul-de-sacs, are usually "Ways" or "Lanes," whether or not they connect through to another street. Later in this article we

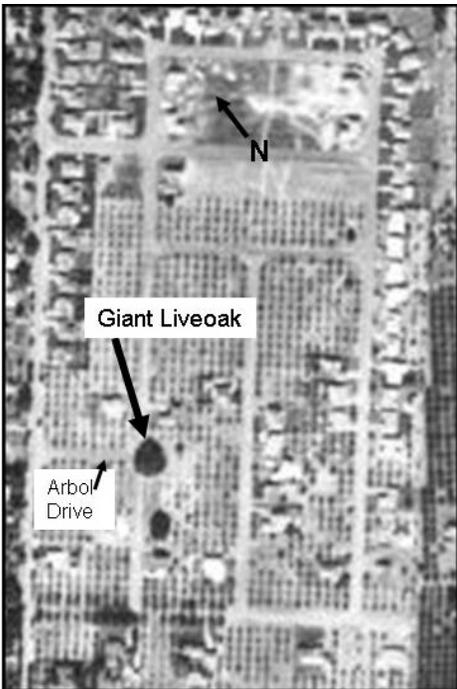


Illustration D: Aerial Photo, Encina Grande Park, 1948.

will encounter a strange violation of the "Way" rule. "Lanes" are now the preferred designation for alleys. By the way: lanes are supposed to be named after trees—or at least plants. Except for the ones that are named for something else, of course.

Longer streets are "Streets" or "Avenues," except when they are "Roads" (which usually means that they were named when they were completely rural). We have "Expressways" but are short on "Boulevards," except for those narrow streets designated as "Bike Boulevards." There are many exceptions—I caution you against thinking you (or anyone else) can fully understand this topic.

Los Robles Avenue

O.K., here's a biggie. One of our major collector ("yellow line") streets is named after—oaks! (surprise). Roble is Spanish for oak—deciduous oak—not necessarily of the white oak type, although our local roble, the majestic Valley Oak, is indeed a white oak. It is a merely interesting coincidence that the second recorded owners of our land—when it was still part of the Rancho Rincon de Francisquito—were the Robles brothers. Anyway, the takeaway lesson here is: encina is liveoak, roble is deciduous oak—got it?

Another Fruit Tree—and more Confusion

The next street we will examine is Manzana Lane—not an alley, but a perfectly nice suburban street of one very long block. Manzana is Spanish for "apple." I don't think Barron Park ever had an apple orchard. The area along Manzana Lane was in orchards by the end of the 1930s, but it seems most likely that they were either apricots or pears. I have been told that the local subdivision, probably made in 1947,

was called "The Rancho." This suggest it was part of the 1947 Rancho Tract along Amaranta Avenue, but the 1949 Orme subdivision falls in between the two, so this information is unconfirmed, and suspect. See Illustration E, map of the Manzana Lane Area About 1953.

The first house built on Manzana was at 4060, and was built by the owner, F.L. "Chris" Christman in 1947. The Christmans lived there for 14 years until they moved to Scotland in 1959. The street may have been originally known as "Sherwood Lane," as it appears this way on a 1951 Street map. In 1953, it was renamed "Manzanita" lane, but appears on the 1955 and subsequent maps as Manzana Lane.

Magnolia and La Selva Drives

As Yoda might say, "Back we are now the drives to."

Magnolia Drive was laid out in the 1937

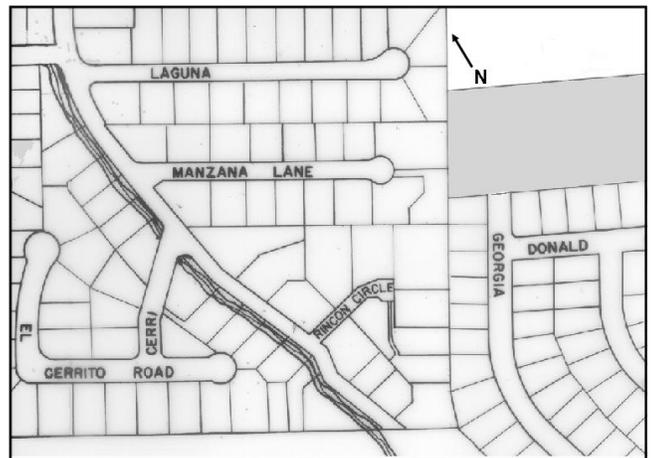


Illustration E: Manzana Lane Area, about 1953.

"Woodland Park Tract" where the California Military Academy had occupied the grounds surrounding the site of the Wallis-Barron Mansion (see Illustration F, map of Woodland Park). It was laid out roughly along the line of one of the drive-ways, starting at Military Way and running southeast, parallel to El Camino Real (ECR), for one short block before making a right angle and running southwest. The segment parallel to ECR was later renamed La Selva Drive, as if it were an extension of that curving street, also parallel to ECR (see "Why are they called drives," above).

Some amazing turns

Magnolia, after running southwest for one long block, makes another right turn and runs northwest for two short blocks, again parallel to ECR, but this time running in

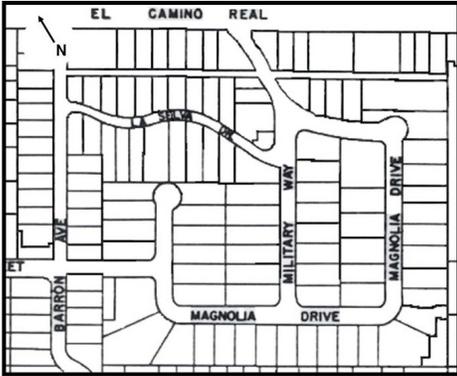


Illustration F: Map of Woodland Park.

the opposite direction. It was the confusion of numbering the lots on two “north-south” blocks with the same name, only one block apart, that led the post office to insist on the re-naming described above. Magnolia makes one final right-angle turn northeast, straight back towards ECR as if to close the loop, but dead-ends as a cul-de-sac without connecting to La Selva a second time.

As if the twists and turns were not amazing enough, the numbering starts at the end of the cul-de-sac and proceeds around the open loop in a fashion designed to raise the hair on the back of the neck of any UPS delivery person new to this maze. It is one of Barron Park’s best defenses against drivers who might otherwise “cut through the neighborhood.” It also makes a nice walk, as the La Selva-Magnolia complex has little traffic and beautiful trees to admire (some of them planted by Sarah Wallis or Edward Barron in the mid and late 1800s). If you walk there, be sure to take a couple of minutes to read the State Historical Marker between 3890 and 3899 La Selva, at the site of Sarah’s mansion.

Roble Ridge

The last of our “tree” streets is also one of the best places in Barron Park for a short walk. Start at the corner of Laguna and Matadero Avenues, at the site of the 1930s and 40s Southern Pacific Railroad “flag stop” named “Neal Station,” for the landowner of the area where La Mata Way and Laguna Court now exist. On Matadero Avenue, cross over the bikepath (the old railroad tracks) and turn left on the lane shaded by eucalyptus trees and runs parallel to the bikepath. This is the private road named Roble Ridge.

Before the houses on this rise were built, the entire knoll was covered with a deciduous oak and grass woodland. Its only pre-suburban agricultural use was as pasture. After you have walked about

650 feet south, paralleling the bikepath, the street makes a broad turn to the right and runs up southwest up the hill for another 500 feet before ending in a couple of driveways. Be sure to make that right turn and do not continue to walk parallel to the bikepath—if you do, you would be on a private driveway to the former Bol property.

Dr. Inge Harding-Barlow is currently doing research on the early residents of Roble Ridge and Matadero Hill, and we hope to produce a joint article soon on this lovely mini-neighborhood as it was in the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

**The Shrub and Flower Streets
Amaranta Avenue and Court**

Amaranta is Spanish for the *Amaranthus* flower, an annual flower considered by some to be old-fashioned. It can be eaten as a spinach substitute. Varieties have eye-catching names, such as Love-Lies-Bleeding, Tassel Flower, Prince’s Feather and Joseph’s Coat.

The street was first laid out in 1941 or 1942 as Amaranta Way, and did not connect to Maybell Avenue. According to *The Streets of Palo Alto*, the street divided the property of the Buckley Brothers who sold the land to the developers of Encina Gardens and Encina Grande Park. For awhile, the street ran only from Cereza to Florales and one lot-depth further. The street was not pushed through to Los Robles Avenue and to Maybell Avenue until 1951 or 1952.

Does any reader know where the Encina Gardens Tract was located? I have not found this tract name in any of my research.

Chimalus Avenue

The name derives from the vegetation that grew in the area the street along the boundary between Barron Park and the Stanford Land (Research Park). It was an area of tangled chaparral, which the Indians called “chimiles.” Old maps have the area so labeled. Another sign-maker’s (or clerk’s) error transformed this into “Chimalus.” It was probably mostly Coyote Brush, which grows along the bikepath.

Once More, Back to the Drives

Encina Grande Park has two more drives named for vegetation; Florales (“flowers”) and Verdosa (the adjective *verdoso* “greenish”). I’m wondering if this particular usage of Verdosa might fit better translated as the noun “greenery.” If this is read by anyone who speaks fluent, colloquial Span-

ish and English, please respond and tell me what you think—would you speak of land as being “greenish”?

Wisteria Lane

Last of the “trees and vegetation streets” is one of the newest street names in the neighborhood. When the small 1930s and 1940s houses on Goebel Avenue (a short, private cul-de-sac: really, just a driveway, running southeast off of Vista Avenue) were demolished about a decade ago, the name of the private road was changed to Wisteria Lane (even though it’s not an alley...). The new, small two-story single-family homes and the narrow lane manage to retain some of the feel of Goebel Avenue, which by the way was named by and for an early professor of German at Stanford University, Julius Goebel.

La Donna Street and other examples of “Spanish”

This is probably the place to point out that, with the exception of Matadero, Arastradero, and El Camino Real, the “Spanish” names in Barron Park are not a legacy of the original Spanish and Mexican occupation of the land. They were the result of a faddish trend, almost a craze, to give California towns and streets “Spanish” names in the 1930s and 1940s in an effort to rescue some of our state’s Spanish heritage before it would be totally lost. Unfortunately, the hispanicization of the place names was done by people who didn’t speak Spanish (at least, not fluently and accurately). This led to some blatant errors such as converting Donna to La Donna, the misspelling of La Pera, and other oddities.

For instance, there is the mystery of La Mata Way, the curving cul-de-sac off Matadero Avenue near Laguna. Is this an obvious contractive synthesis of Laguna and Matadero (like the cities of Mexicali and Calexico), or is it the Spanish noun “The Grove”? *The Streets of Palo Alto* suggests that “La Mata is either the Spanish name of a bush or a word designating a group of trees.” However, the 1941 aerial photograph shows the area in question to be devoid of any noticeable trees.

The Curious Case of La Jennifer Way

Perhaps the oddest case of all is La Jennifer Way, named for Jennifer Hill, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Hill, local property owners (see Illustration G, a snapshot of Jennifer). Besides the improper use of the Spanish article, implying that Jennifer is a common noun, they compounded their error by calling it a “way” rather than a “court.” This is the “strange violation of



Illustration G: Jennifer Hill.

the way rule" that I alluded to above in "What's in a Name?").

La Jennifer Way may become a better-known street in the future: the house at 819 La Jennifer was the place where Mark Zuckerberg and his group of young Harvard students did the real work of developing Facebook (see Illustration H, portrait of Mark Zuckerberg). The adventures of the Facebook crowd, such as their recreational use of a backyard zipline from the house's chimney, were recently chronicled in the popular movie *The Social Network* (although the actual filming was done at a house in Southern California).

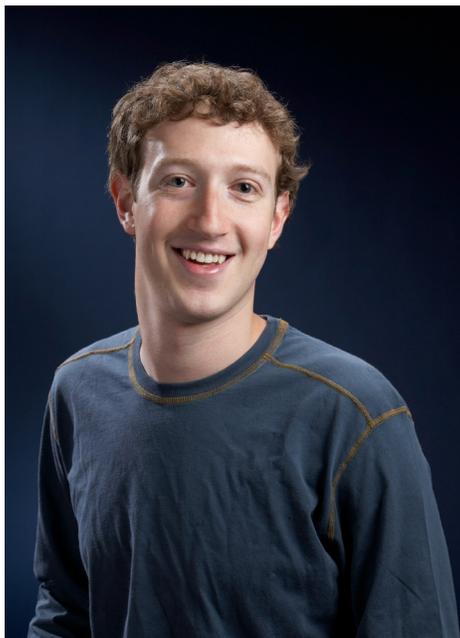


Illustration H: Mark Zuckerberg.

Additional Information:

I hope that you have enjoyed these explanations of the origin of some of our street names. For additional information, check "How Did Our Street Get its' Name?" in the Summer 2004 issue of this newsletter, and "History of the Land is Hidden in Our Street Names," in the Winter 2002-3 issue. They are to be found in the newsletter archive in the BPA website.

For the rest of Palo Alto, I refer you to The

Streets of Palo Alto, a handy and fairly authoritative 72-page booklet published by the Palo Alto Historical Association. I will sell you a copy for \$7.00, and if you live in Barron Park I will hand-deliver to your doorstep, free of charge. If not, send me an additional \$1.00 to cover postage, etc.

If you have any questions, corrections, or something to add to these little stories, please contact me at dgrhampaca@gmail.com, or by mail at 984 Ilima Way Palo Alto CA 94306, or call me at 650-493-0689.

MAY FETE 2011

By John King

We had a very unique

May Fete 2011. It was definitely for the brave souls who weathered the rain and wind and the bright sunshine which broke through periodically to warm the musicians who valiantly played through the cold conditions. Nevertheless, for those who came, we had a very enjoyable Fete and I would like to thank those who participated in volunteering and coordinating the event.

Paul Edwards, who originated the May Fete back in 1978, was there once again to help set up and pack up the May Pole, lead the processions and the dance, and guide the ribbon cutting team with preparing the ribbons that wrap around the May Pole. The stage set up was coordinated by Larry Breed and the musicians and dancers were organized by Gary Breitbart, who also provided the tent to cover the audience during the multiple downpours during the afternoon.

Sarah Van Zanten and her family, coordinated the event for the 3rd year in a row. Sarah also had a number of friends who helped with the activities during the afternoon. The membership table was manned by Art Liberman next to Lynnne Melena's Green Team table. The Boys Scouts from



Troop 52, whom the BPA sponsors, were there to assist. The donkeys visited brought by their handlers Juanita Gonzales and her son Leonard Simpson. I managed the BBQ, the warmest spot in the park!

To all who helped in the May Fete this year, a huge

thank you for helping continue a wonderful Barron Park Tradition.

The neighborhood businesses who contributed to the May Fete were: Creekside Inn, Carlsen Volvo, Stanford Carpet, John W. King, Realtor, Q Hair Design, Subway, Gwen Luce Realtor, Mike's Cleaners, Driftwood Deli, John St. Clair and Lydia Kou Realtors, Ernie's Wines and Liquors, Jim Davis Automotive, Barron Park Florist, Nursery and Market and Celia's Restaurant.

In-Kind donations including drawing prizes were made by: Ace of Sandwiches, Barron Park Florist, Celia's Mexican Restaurant, Creekside Inn, Copy Factory, Driftwood Deli, Ernie's Wine's & Liquors, Fish Market, Hobee's Restaurant, Starbucks and Subway.

We hope that next year the weather will cooperate a bit more and that you'll plan to enjoy the Annual May Fete in 2012. If you are interested in participating or volunteering, please let me know.

MEMORIES OF BARRON PARK AND THE BPA BOARD

Emergency Preparedness and Ground Water Clean Up

By Inge Harding-Barlow—Genealogist, Donkey Handler and Retired Toxicologist

[Editor's note: We asked Inge for her profile and this article so that the neighborhood would be more familiar with her past efforts in emergency preparedness and the groundwater pollution clean up in Barron Park.]

I had the good fortune to be born the child of two Empires (English and Dutch) with a strong pioneering disposition. I first came to the US fifty years ago, this fall, on a post-doctoral Fellowship to the M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute in Houston, Texas. Five years later I was officially declared by a Board in Washington, D.C., "To be of more use to the US than my country of origin." With this strange, but very useful statement, I received a "green" card and celebrated by buying a home in Barron Park.

In 1966, Barron Park was in the unincorporated part of Santa Clara County and was delightfully rural. My greatest joys included the Saturday afternoon weekly community gatherings around the Bookmobile and such country delights, at various times, of a produce van, a milk truck and even some large dog shows. I grew to treasure the neighborhood and was proud and glad to help pay for Bol Park. There was folk dancing at the local primary school and at diverse times, neighborhood artists of all types showed off their works. In addition to the Bol Donkeys, who brayed for their food at 6:20 am on the dot, we had Flossie, the cow, a pony plus owner in a trap and a fat "old man" raccoon who "rolled down" Laguna at 10 pm for several summers. You knew your neighbors, you and your children greeted them and you helped out when you could.

At Christmas time you visited all your neighbors and sang to and with them. During the summer and on 4 July there were yard and block parties with wonderful homemade foods from many nations. Among my near neighbors, twelve different countries of birth are represented. But during the last decade things have changed and we "live in cyberspace" and this has brought its own problems. Today, it is safer to first greet the various neighborhood dogs, before daring to say "hello" to their owners and many of our neigh-



bor's children have been trained to take to their heels, if you so much as look at them! The US Army has taught us, "Never volunteer, unless there is a payoff." In addition, you should take classes for everything and nothing is worth anything, unless you pay for it.

When Barron Park became part of the City of Palo Alto, we lost some of our community spirit and thought the City would now take care of us. Some of us had become mistrustful of City government over gas meter grounding, which turned out to be an area-wide rather than homeowner problem, but the real wakeup call came in the mid-1980s when Doug Graham found Matadero Creek had turned milky blue. This was followed by dead fish in the Creek on several occasions.

In 1982 the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) first became aware of pollutants in the groundwater of the Stanford Research Park (SRP), when an underground sump at 3333 Hillview Avenue leaked. Further investigation showed pollution in the groundwater of several other SRP sites. In late 1985 the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) began a preliminary investigation of the distribution of pollution in the ground and surface water of the area. As part of this investigation, DTSC required Stanford to sample private wells in Barron Park. Trichloroethylene (TCE) and several other more toxic chemicals were found in a number of these private wells. Matadero Creek was subsequently sampled in February 1986, by the DTSC and the RWQCB and

found to be polluted. A public meeting was called and the Community and the then president of the BPA, John Joynt were told by several government agencies, in effect "No problem, we will take care of you." As a senior toxicologist of many years standing, I was greatly angered by this, since it was the classic, "Go away and don't bother us!" At the close of the meeting I offered my professional services to the Association at no cost to them, little knowing of the hundreds of hours of work and thousands of dollars that I would be donating pro bono. I sometimes thought it would be fun, particularly when I had had a very bad day, to send the BPA a bill for the professional section of my services to them and put at the bottom, "Paid in Full by the love of the Donkeys—Mickey, Perry and Niner and the wildlife of Barron Park!"

John Joynt was delighted by my offer of professional help and on my return from a 6-week overseas business trip, I found that he and Doug Graham had engineered my election to the BPA Board and shortly after that to the Executive Committee.

Action Begins

To the disapproval of several city departments and government agencies, the BPA Board under the leadership of John Joynt and myself, began to take a very active role in attempting to solve the neighborhood pollution problems. We let it be known that we considered we had the following three basic rights:

1. The right to know and be informed in detail—this went way beyond PR statements, to actual source documents,
2. The right to be heard and listened to—this meant taking an active part in all discussions and having an equal or near equal voice and,
3. The right to obtain positive action, not lip-service.

In addition we stated our then five main concerns and actions required, not just requested:

1. Our area had in 1986, ten known leaks-to-groundwater (10% of those then known in Silicon Valley) with at least one and

possibly two pollution plumes reaching under private and public (school) property. We knew that homeowners might later be potentially liable for cleanup costs. We wanted action, including cleanup to drinking water standards.

2. In the case of a chemical spill or accident in Stanford Research Park, it was possible that 30–200 families would need to be evacuated. Professionally, I had had active input into the Gas Model Ordinance and the BPA Board began working with the PA Fire and Police Departments on evacuation plans for families, schools, and children of all ages, the elderly, the handicapped and our animals. [The three latter were way ahead of their time].

3. Our two partially privately owned creeks were polluted and we wanted ongoing chemical and biological monitoring, cleanup and the calling of 911 when problems were noted.

4. The Barron Park private wells and one public well were polluted or at risk from pollution. We wanted continued monitoring, finding of the sources of contamination and cleanup.

5. Concerning all toxic issues, be they air, water or land, we wanted continued monitoring and ACTIVE REPRESENTATION IN ALL RELEVANT FORUMS. In July 1986, the BPA together with the City Manager and the Mayor set up the Hazardous Materials Coordinating Committee (H.M.C.C.) to deal with the City's and Barron Park's Toxic Problems. The committee was to consist of the BPA, the City (represented by the Fire Department), Stanford University and representatives of its industrial tenants. The latter two sent PR people, who just did not want to be there. This committee also proved unworkable because a number of key "players" were omitted, namely, the two State agencies, DTSC (Department of Toxic Substances Control) and RWQCB (Regional Water Quality Control Board) and also the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

Have I got you totally confused? Let me break this into the four parts, which developed over about five to six years. These were:

1. Evacuation Programs and Drills—BPA Committees, City Fire and Police.

2. Hillview-Porter Pollution Plume Definition and Cleanup—Committee Members: For the State, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)—at various times,

Janet Naito, Alfred Whanger and Denise Kato; for BPA—Inge Harding-Barlow, Marianne Strickfaden and Art Bayce; a Stanford University representative; a co-ordinator for the Polluting Companies (Peter Johnson) and two members of their "Cleanup" firm.

3. Super Fund Site—Hewlett-Packard 620-640 Page Mill—Committee Members: For the State Regional Water Quality Control Board—Representative(s); for the BPA Foundation—John Joynt, Bob Moss, Dave Charlton, their consultant firm paid for by an EPA grant and then representatives of Stanford University, the polluting companies and their "Cleanup" firm.

4. Matadero Bypass Committee—Santa Clara Valley Water District, the firm building the bypass and BPA representatives.

Initial Problems And Solutions

The exact order of some of the "happenings" in the pollution saga are now unclear to me, some 25 years later. Through about 1987–1996, I know I was going overseas on business trips four times a year for 2–3 weeks at a time and when at home, I was staying up to 1–2 am writing my "income producing" toxicology reports, which I then paid local Gunn High girls to enter on my Osborne and later laptop computers. I then, once or twice a week in the first two years, joined John Joynt at 7:00 am breakfast sessions with various fire and police officials or reporters from about 5–6 newspapers. I remember Lisa Lapin particularly well. Often other BPA members joined us, but my main concern was to arrive at the correct place at the designated time, before starting the rest of my own workday at 8:30 am, most often with phone calls to the east coast before their lunch break. One time, just as I was about to leave the house, my black lab brought a live baby skunk into my library. I arrived at the Cookbook late and "smelly." Art de Werk of the Police Department laughed loud and long and the owner of the Cookbook put us in the far corner, with plenty of space around us.

From late 1986 to 1994 the BPA seemed to be holding public meetings at least once every three to six months, some times more, sometimes less. This required a lot of preparative work of all types—getting the press out, seeing that all agencies and departments were invited, keeping the speakers happy, seeing there was coffee and tea, etc. We were very lucky in co-opting

a top-notch electronic engineer ex-NASA, Jack Paddock, who saw to all the audio-visual side of things and we have tapes of all the meetings from 1986–1996, which I will markup and give to Doug Graham, our historian. Jack eventually became an official member of the BPA Board about 1989 and was an active Executive member until his death in mid-1996. His "passion" was Ham Radio and he was a pro-active member of the various emergency groups in the county. It was he who found out that several schools and other key points could, at that stage, not be used by Ham's except with special equipment. I seem to remember that both the VA and the Barron Park School had "problems." Needless to say that changed within the month!

In mid-1986 we were still having toxic "dumpings" into Matadero Creek. A partial listing of newspaper articles of that time period may give a feel for the problem:

- "Degreaser pollutes Matadero Creek water, kills fish" (PTT 1986-06-25)
 - "Chemical spill in Palo Alto investigated" (SJMN 1986-06-26)
 - "Creek spill reappears; fire, water—officials baffled about source" (PTT 1986-06-26)
 - "Toxic chemicals in Matadero Creek a worry to Barron Park residents" (PAW 1986-06-26)
 - "Solvents found in PA creek not seen as a health threat" (SJMN 1986-06-27)
 - "PA Creek spill traced to Varian storm drain" (PTT 1986-06-27)
 - "Oil in Matadero Creek traced to Varian building" (SJMN 1986-06-28)
 - "Oil leakage linked to Varian" (SD 1986-07-01)
 - "(Company) officials say PA oil spill all cleaned up" (PTT 1986-07-12)
 - "(Further) test results awaited in PA leak" (SJMN 1986-07-12)
 - "Storm Drains checked" (PTT 1986-07-15)
 - "Barron Park residents mobilize" (PAW 1986-07-16)
 - "PA group vows to monitor toxics—to help creeks be toxic-free" (SJMN 1986-07-16)
 - "Quick action promised on toxic spills (says Fire Chief)" (PTT 1986-07-16)
 - "Creek free of PCBs tests show" (SJMN 1986-07-17)
 - "New spill in Palo Alto has PCBs" (SJMN 1986-08-09)
 - "More PCBs found in flood control channel" (PAW 1986-08-13)
 - "Cause in spill of PCBs still a mystery—new tests offer no clues" (SJMN 1986-08-15)
 - "Foam in creek checked in case of toxic spill" (SJMN 1986-09-18)
- [PAW = Palo Alto Weekly; PTT = Peninsula Times Tribune; SD = Stanford Daily; SFE = San Francisco Examiner; SJMN = San Jose Mercury News].

About this time John Joynt and I walked a long stretch of Matadero Creek and the grounds of the companies bordering it. We found some drains pouring out smelly liquids going nowhere(?), some into storm drains and one into the Creek, directly. Once while John and I were talking, we turned just in time to catch his younger son about to play in a pool of liquid created by one of the drains going nowhere. From the Fire Chief, we found out that the entire storm water drainage system from the Stanford Medical School area down through the Research Park all emptied into Matadero Creek. Due to the problems cited above in the newspaper articles, we had little difficulty in persuading Fire Chief Wall to investigate all the drains in the Research Park. The Fire Department found that there were dozens of illegal chemical drains flowing nowhere, into storm drains and a few in the creek directly. The Fire Department had a very busy time and I hope made money for the City! This greatly helped the neighborhood plant, aquatic and animal life.

We were also allowed to call 911 if we saw possible pollutants in Matadero Creek. The first time this happened, both Fire and Police rolled up and sent out a call for Fire Chief Wall and their toxics specialist, who lived in Santa Cruz. After about 30-45 minutes, with everyone standing around, Fire produced a large empty apple juice jar with label still attached, as their sampling container. They were not happy when I requested that they wash the jar in the creek several times before taking their sample, so that the contents did not contain apple juice. When Fire Chief Wall asked me if I had not thought their performance wonderful, I stated it was unfortunately way overkill and I applauded the police dog, who looked around, saw there was nothing for him to do, stretched and went back to sleep. I was not popular! But after that a single car with proper sampling bottles became the norm. Luckily the press did not come and join the show.

In October 1986, I organized a toxics symposium to give factual information to the community. The speakers were politicians, agency officials and NASA scientists, who spoke on a large range of topics, including new cleanup methods.

In February 1987, Linda St. John ran a 20 question poll on what the neighborhood thought about our toxics and other problems. There was a response rate of 15% out of 1175 households, which was above what

could normally be expected. Some of the results were as follows: 81% felt speeding was a problem on Barron Park streets; 73% felt a program was needed to help the elderly in the case of an emergency; 72% thought there should be a neighborhood approval process for building large houses on small lots; 55% believed Palo Alto was not prepared for an evacuation in the event of a toxic cloud or other disaster and 55% wished for a local mediation board to assist in resolving neighborhood disputes. It would be interesting to repeat this poll, using the same questions, now 25 years later.

Some of the newspaper articles which resulted from the symposium and poll are given below:

"Symposium on toxics planned in Palo Alto" (PTT 1986-10-05)

"Barron Park neighbors plan comprehensive toxics symposium" (PAW 1986-10-08)

"Toxic wastes symposium slated in Palo Alto" (SJM 1986-10-08)

"Stanford Research Park neighbors worry about toxic gas disaster" (PAW 1987-02-17)

"Barron Park at toxics safety vanguard; evacuation drill set for April 25" (SJM 1987-03-11)

"Barron Park residents survey brings intriguing responses" (PTT 1987-04-12)

"Poll cites neighborhood toxic worries" (SJM 1987-04-15)

[PAW = Palo Alto Weekly; PTT = Peninsula Times Tribune; SJM = San Jose Mercury News].

The preliminary investigation of the distribution of pollutants in the area ground and surface water was begun in late 1985 by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and was continued in 1986 and 1987. An extensive soil-gas survey was also carried out to further determine the sources and extent of the pollution. I was surprised by the size of the problem and will discuss the findings slightly later.

From 1988-1992 I served as the Community Representative on the Emergency Hazards Planning Board for Region II of the State of California. Region II is the biggest of the 5 regions, reach from the Oregon Border to mid-California. I was one of 3 members who wrote the original draft plan, before they gave a State paid staff, who wrote "good bureaucratic, cover-your-a--" documents. I must admit my constant questions of "What if...?," were not always welcome. However, my onsite reviews of several company programs taught me how unprepared we are for any type of disaster. Unfortunately, although we are prepared for common "occurrences," my "What ifs..?" globally happen far too often with resulting injuries,

loss of life and property damage.

Living With Our Faults

In 1981-1985, the BPA under the Committee leadership of the late Art Bayce with the able hard work of Verna Graham, Barbara Brown and the late Katie Edwards put together, with the City's Mick McDonald, a useful booklet, called "Living With Our Faults," which was distributed to all residents. Unfortunately, they did not copyright it. So a resident of Santa Clara County copyrighted it and I think another person also tried. This meant that Palo Alto could not use its own book without paying out fees (money). The end result was that the booklet had to be totally rewritten. In this second version, published in the mid-1990s, Katie Edwards did most of the hard work, with help from Art Bayce and myself. The City saw to the drawings etc. Katie, Art and I are all thanked on the inner cover, but Verna and Barbara were not mentioned. We objected, but by the time we found out about it, the booklet had already been printed in large quantities.

First Evacuation Drill—25 April 1987

On the Sunday before Thanksgiving in 1985, a fire at Varian on Hansen Way, sent hydrochloric acid vapors into the air, which then drifted towards the motel and Fish Market on El Camino and about 150 people needed to be evacuated [*San Jose Mercury*, 25 November 1985]. Although Barron Park was not in the path of the vapors, firemen in hazard-proof gear tramped around the area as far as Matadero Creek and refused to say why they were doing this "inspection." At least one other, non-press reported, vapor cloud from this plant, in 1986, [I think it turned out to be non-toxic steam] caused the BPA to press the City for an Evacuation Drill. John Joynt, Art Bayce and I had many meetings with PA Police and Fire at 7:00 am. For the meetings during the day, unless it was a Friday, when Art could attend, I was on my own. Key for the Police Department was Art de Werk and Nick Marinaro was one of the representatives for the Fire Department, although I most often dealt with Dennis van der Maaten or Fire Chief Bob Wall. Geoff Paulsen, who was the City Disaster Coordinator and he produced the 3rd draft of the City of Palo Alto Emergency Plan, Hazardous Materials Annex (also known as the "Area Plan") in March 1987. Judging by my notes on the document, I was not impressed and felt the document still needed a lot more thought and work. I was probably very vocal at the time too.

Some of the BPA key issues were as follows:

1. Given “an address” could Police and Fire find the most rapid route to the scene. The answer was not always. This became an issue later with the so-called “hammer” attack on the Bike Path. The problem was finally solved by an extensive walking tour by the City manager and the Police Chief and new maps were drawn up for all emergency services.

2. Could the wide Fire Trucks drive up the long private driveways, particularly for flag-lots? The answer was again, not always, even if the bushes were cut back. These practice drives proved useful following a medical emergency on Roble Ridge, just before the actual drill.

3. Could we use the VA in an emergency? That took several years of negotiation, before finally approval was granted. To this day, I wish the back entrance was more user friendly for us older folks.

4. How to evacuate elderly, handicapped, disabled or bedridden? I gave this drill a score of minus 10 and the drill in 1999 about a minus 8. In the 1887 drill, the stand-ins for the elderly were expected to cling to the sides of the Fire Trucks. In the 1999 drill a special bus was expected, but got lost and arrived about an hour late!

5. Evacuation of animals? In this drill animals came too and I think it was a first countrywide. The Oakland Fire changed much of the thinking on pets. The agreement between the BPA and the City was animals would go with their owners, except Mickey, the donkey and Flossie, the cow! As far as I know, I am still designated to evacuate the donkeys, other facts not interfering!

6. Alerting residents that they were to be evacuated. The problem remains the short timeframe required. Several methods were tried, but we learnt bullhorns do not work in Barron Park. The current system of phone alerting still has too many problems.

7. A problem that was not recognized in 1987 nor in 1999, which definitely exists now, is what do we do about frail, disabled seniors, who are on their own at home and speak little or no English? Unfortunately, there are several variations on this topic.

How did the BPA go about preparing the community to become involved? The area to be evacuated was designated as that between the Stanford Research Park and Matadero Creek, following a toxic cloud of nitric acid fumes generated at Varian, which had covered the neighborhood. We

first had the Board member, Bob England and “friends and neighbors,” including Marianne Strickfaden and Mark Georgia visit all the homes in the area and talk with the homeowners and leave a brochure—2 pages double sided. We kept a list of all homes where the owners were not available for a personal chat. Then Katie Edwards or I visited these homes, if necessary, at least twice. Finally, I think only about 6 were not personally contacted. I found talking to these neighbors fascinating, for example, Aldo Paccagnini [and several others] had been brought to the area from Italy, by the Varian brothers as skilled craftsmen after WWII. I also had the pleasure of seeing the remnants of a beautiful old garden on upper Matadero originally laid out by W.I. Wight of experimental garden fame and/or Jessie Morton.

In addition to giving out the brochures and having personal discussions with the residents to be “evacuated,” we had a pre-drill meeting on 21 April and several newspapers carried articles (see below). The pre-drill meeting was attended by some 75 residents from all over Barron Park.

During the drill, Board Members, Sam Spark, Linda St. John, Bob England, Jack Paddock, Bob Moss, John Joynt, Art Bayce and I spread out through the area and neighborhood and watched what happened! There were two groups of “stand-ins” for the handicapped (note the numbers actually required); group one to be “taken care of” by Fire and Police—Paul Edwards, Dorothy Bender, Jack Miller, Nat Sterling, Lucy Adelman, Alison and Harry Collin, Pam Ramsauer, Doug Graham and Will Beckett; and group two to be rescued by Mark Georgia, namely, Rosalie and John Price and Shirley Ortiz. Thanks Mark you did a good job! After the evacuation had been “completed,” the Board Members and their neighborhood helpers and Police and Fire joined those “evacuated” and their pets at Gunn High. I was stationed “where the spill of nitric acid+” occurred. It was very realistic. The “injured” received “treatment,” but this part obviously needed further practice. When I got to Gunn, I was amused to find that the Red Cross was there (we had not expected them), but since they were headed by a strict Mormon, bottled water only, was the order of the day, which led their other workers to raid the BPA urns of coffee and tea meant for the residents, who had been “evacuated.”

I have found most of the detailed schedules and other information used in the drill

and I will give all the original papers to Doug Graham.

On returning home, the Hassetts were asked by the Fire Department to evacuate for real, due to a chemical leak at Watkins-Johnson. They left for the East Bay for the rest of the day in disgust!

The main newspaper articles concerning the drill are listed below:

“Stanford Research Park neighbors worry about toxic gas disaster” (PAW 1987-02-17)

“Barron Park at toxics safety vanguard; evacuation drill set for April 25” (SJMN 1987-03-11)

“Barron Park residents survey brings intriguing responses” (PTT 1987-04-12)

“Poll cites neighborhood toxic worries” (SJMN 1987-04-15)

“Palo Alto drill for toxic spill” (SFE 1987-04-22)

“Barron Park neighbors to practice evacuation in case of toxic spill” (PAW 1987-04-22)

“Toxic drill to evacuate Barron Park” (PTT 1987-04-22)

[PAW = *Palo Alto Weekly*; PTT = *Peninsula Times Tribune*; SFE = *San Francisco Examiner*; SJMN = *San Jose Mercury News*]

The Quake Of 1989

When the earth trembled, Jack Paddock and I were setting up in the school multi-purpose room for a community meeting—political, I think. I made it to the doorway and certainly did not feel safe. My red 240Z was bouncing around in the parking lot and Jack kept saying “This is nothing like what I experienced in the Philippines.” After a bit I went home to find my black lab crouching next to the bathtub and she refused to move for several hours. I picked up my mini-battery-driven TV and returned to help Jack take down the equipment, because there would be no meeting! The moms watching the baseball game at the school told me I was nuts, when I told them that a section of the Bay Bridge had collapsed. When John Joynt got home we decided to visit all the homes where we knew there were disabled, elderly or frail persons on or probably on their own. We completed the list the next morning. Luckily we found no problems.

Second Evacuation Drill—23 October 1999

By 1999 the BPA Emergency Preparedness Committee had several new members, including Trish Corl and Gwen Luce. Block captains were becoming the vogue, although I felt the neighborhood should also pay attention to the “What if..?” problems, which includes the care of our seniors and flooding which could still occur following

potential breaks in the Hetch Hetchy lines. How many people know where the Hetch Hetchy lines run? In 1999 I found one resident and one Police Officer and I laughingly told him, "Your dog found it," since the Police dogs often exercised (played tag) at 2 am on Strawberry Hill. (Now I know where Niner, the donkey, got the idea you run, not walk, down Strawberry Hill!) I also noted that when the Hetch Hetchy representative visited, she did not immediately know where the lines ran, but then she had forgotten to bring her map! I feel strongly that in addition to block captains, there should be a small group of local neighborhood people to look at very localized problems. I know also that one would have to be very brave to be the block captain on my block, we just have too many potential problems. One problem at a time is fine, but pile on several, "heaven help" you!

Art Bayce, Jack Paddock and I were among the 8 graduates of the first class given under the PA Citizens Police Academy program in 1995 and a couple of years later Art Bayce, Katie Edwards and I were members of the first class of what became known as PANDAs. The PANDAs are trained to assist their neighbors in large scale emergencies that initially overwhelm police, fire and other agencies.

The second Barron Park drill in the Fall of 1999, simulated the overflowing of the sediment basin near Gunn High School and subsequent flooding of certain parts of Barron Park, similar to the flooding that had occurred in 1983 and 1993, before completion of the Matadero Bypass. A similar problem could occur if a Hetch Hetchy line broke due to one of our local earthquake faults. This drill again paid special attention to evacuation of the elderly, the infirm and pets of all sizes. One of the problems tested was the evacuation of the elderly across a "flooded" Barron Creek. Note: that there are a fair number of houses that are on one side of the Creek and the road is on the other. The BPA's Katie Edwards and Jack Miller were "game" to test the Fire Departments evacuation attempt. I think they were disgusted, I know I was, when the Fire Department used young agile persons as stand-ins. Even with the stand-ins, I rated this section of the drill at a 5. The special bus to transport the elderly to Cubberley got lost and arrived, I think, an hour late.

The animals were evacuated to a "tent" next to where the humans were, except for one very large dog, who received special treat-

ment in Bill Warrior's truck and was sorry to return home. [Bill Warrior is currently a well-liked P.A. Animal Services officer.]

The emergency food and drinks still need further consideration. When I helped out during the February 1998 flood, the workers came in tired, wet and cold. Fire were looked after by their own people and were kept separate from Police and Utilities. The latter, were given cold food and drinks, resulting in a near riot, before things were sorted out and thick hot soup and hot coffee were supplied. Sorry, I lived through the WWII time frame and hot drinks (caffeine and sugar) and filling hot soups are very important.

From a community point of view the pre-drill preparation was not as good as it should have been and was only about 50% of what had been done in the first drill. All residents in the evacuation test area received written hand-outs, but the personal follow-up was incomplete—I know I ran out of energy. The newspaper coverage was less than we had hoped for and for technical reasons (bureaucracy and mixed jurisdictions) unfortunately we could not have a pre-drill community meeting. Considering all the problems, we had a large turnout, I guess between 60-80. I felt the effort had been worthwhile, particularly if we were to have a Hetch Hetchy break, which could still happen.

The Story Of Two Pollution Plumes

As mentioned above, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) did preliminary investigations into ground and surface water pollution in the Stanford Research Park from 1985-1987, as well as an extensive soil-gas survey, to determine the sources and extent of the plume(s). It was found that many sources had contributed pollutants and due to the complexity of the geology (including several earthquake faults) and that the pollutants are now often at depths over 300 feet, the area was best characterized as two plumes running close together. After a lot of paperwork interchanges between DTSC and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), DTSC took over control of what became known as the Hillview-Porter plume, which included the VA and whole of Barron Park except for a small corner of the Creekside Inn property. Whereas RWQCB took over what became known as the Super Fund H-P 620-640 Page Mill plume, a much larger site which includes some commercial and office building areas,

apartment houses and a few small houses.

It should be noted that agencies have different philosophies. DTSC looks at the toxicity of substances and most often requires cleaning up to drinking water standards. Whereas RWQCB, if it isn't drinking water and does not kill fish, plants, etc., often considers cost-benefit parameters. EPA often now mainly considers legal issues. John Joynt did a "judgment of Solomon" and gave the care of the Hillview-Porter Plume to Marianne Strickfaden, Art Bayce and me and that of the Super Fund plume to Bob Moss, Dave Charlton and himself.

Hillview-Porter Pollution Plume

First let me introduce the BPA cast of characters—Marianne Strickfaden who was a professional engineer specializing in pollution definition and cleanup (I found her a joy to work with); Art Bayce who taught materials engineering at San Jose State and myself who was an analytical chemist and toxicologist. After helping analyze the first "moon-rocks, I switched to "straight" toxicology, which I taught at the M.S. level, before becoming an international private consultant. Because Marianne and I were working professionals, we had little difficulty in being accepted as part of the working group. Art was also rapidly accepted because of his common sense approach to problems. Marianne and I went through all the documents, often line-by-line and many times I would ask the easy and medium questions, whereas Marianne would ask the tough and the very tough questions. Art's schedule seldom permitted him to go through much more than the summaries, but he listened to the "tennis game" at the meetings and asked interesting summary type questions.

The representative from DTSC that I remember best was Janet Naito and I was saddened when she recently changed jobs at DTSC. The co-ordination for the companies was done by Peter Johnson, who kept an eye on how much the companies were spending or rather how much DTSC and the BPA were making them spend. Of the members of the pollution consulting companies, which over the years changed, some were more knowledgeable than others. I felt very sorry for the chap, who after working hard in his office, on a Sunday, on one of the Hillview-Porter reports, when he left "dog tired" intending to go home, he found that his house had been burnt down in the Oakland fire.

The official record timeline reads as follows:

DTSC issued the Remedial Action Order (RAO) 9 December 1988. Scheduled surface and groundwater monitoring began in 1989. A Remedial Investigation (RI) began in 1990, was completed in 1993. Approved by DTSC in 1994. Based on the RI, a Feasibility Study (FS) to evaluate cleanup methods was conducted. DTSC approved the FS in May 1994. A Remedial Action Plan (RAP) was prepared to summarize the findings of the RI and FS. The RAP, which was approved by the DTSC on 19 December 1994. The Remedial Design and Implementation Plan (RDIP) was submitted 31 March 1995. The DTSC approved the RDIP on 19 May 1995.

This article gives no idea as to whether the work required in the field went smoothly (some of the well drilling did not and the contractor was fired) or whether the reports got agreed to rapidly (most did not). I remember many "field" inspections—drilling hoses that went where they should not have gone, lock boxes that did not lock and many safety hazards. I also remember asking and obtaining, changes in drilling and well placements and access points to "please" neighbors and to allow the transit of school buses and to..., the list seemed endless. In addition, many residents seemed to think that we had created the problems, rather than attempting to solve them just as fully and as rapidly as we could. To this day at least two residents can hardly be civil to me. My credo was "Do it once and do it right," so that the problem did not come back. We had a constant, "We are nearly there, but no, we have missed the following..." Last, but not least, the Matadero flood bypass project disrupted and held back the Hillview-Porter plume field work, since pumps had to be turned off etc., when the bypass workmen and their equipment roared, at a snail's pace, through a number of the key remedial investigation and remedial action areas.

A listing of some of the newspaper articles given below, may give a better feeling of what was happening:

"Anatomy of a toxic clean: Hillview-Porter; No simple solutions: a closer look at a Stanford Research Park toxic site" (PAW 1989-01-18)

"Politicians urge haste in cleanup: Barron Park timetable seen as 'painfully slow'" (PTT 1989-01-24)

"A short lesson on the toxicology of bureaucracy" (PAW 1989-02-01)

"Toxic plan is due: Barron Park study will set future path" (PTT 1989-02-16)

"Barron Park cleanup plans hit new snag" (PTT 1989-02-18)

"Hillview-Porter toxic work plan is issued, but may be inadequate" (PAW 1989-02-22)

"Meeting tonite on toxics: officials will discuss Barron Park Studies" (PTT 1989-03-15)

"Research Park toxic contamination confirmed in Matadero Creek wells" (PAW 1989-03-22)

"State orders H-P and Stanford to clean up TCE contamination: At Stanford Research Park" (PTT 1989-04-05)

"Barron Park toxic contamination forces realtors to make disclosure" (PAW 1989-08-09)

"Cleanup at Hillview-Porter site may begin sooner than expected" (PAW 1989-09-27)

"Barron Park residents could face lawsuits when selling homes" (PTT 1989-10-28)

"Hillview-Porter site: Parties agree to clean up" (PTT 1990-07-07)

"14 agree to Stanford toxic cleanup" (SJMN 1990-07-07)

"Flood water diversion may be affected also" (PTT 1990-07-07)

"Companies agree to fund toxic cleanup" (PAW 1990-07-11)

"Stanford might not help in toxic cleanup" (PTT 1990-07-20)

"Cleanup order ignored" (PTT 1990-07-26)

"Interim cleanup possible" (PTT 1990-11-15)

"Tests confirm suspected pollution, cleanup won't start until 1995" (PAW 1990-11-21)

"Matadero Creek cleanup to begin soon" (PAW 1992-01-29)

"Toxic plume detected at a greater depth" (PAW 1992-05-27)

"Toxics cleanup to begin" (PAW 1992-08-19)

"Seven years later, cleanup plan for toxics is finally ready" (PTT 1992-08-23)

"Cleanup of Matadero Creek begins" (PAW 1993-06-30)

"Barron Park cleanup plan is considered" (PAW 1994-03-16)

"Toxic cleanup is making progress" (PAW 1998-05-20)

"Barron Park cleanup falls short" (PADN 2001-04-30)

[PADN = Palo Alto Daily News; PAW = Palo Alto Weekly; PTT = Peninsula Times Tribune; SJMN = San Jose Mercury News]

For a number of reasons, particularly since the DTSC representative for the site has changed, it might be useful if Marianne Strickfaden and I were included by the BPA in reviewing some of the latest reports and then meeting with the current DTSC representative, just to be certain that pollutants do not creep back into the neighborhood.

Super Fund H-P 620-640 Page Mill

John Joynt, Bob Moss and Dave Charlton set up the Barron Park Association Foundation (BPAF) and applied for a grant to hire a consulting firm to advise them on the definition and cleanup of this plume. The BPAF were able to get the grant and hired a consulting firm. However, the money attached to the grant was low and consultants do not work for nothing, unless they are foolish, idealistic homeowners like Marianne Strickfaden and myself! Also BPAF were dealing with

RWQCB and some companies that did not want to spend money. I can only read now, years later, that things have gone wrong. Points to ponder include the amount of cleanup money spent on the H-P plume versus that on the Hillview-Porter plume. Also I puzzled over why pumps were not only turned off but decommissioned at the Mayfield School site in 2005. I feel that was asking for problems, since 650 Page Mill was already in trouble, judging by City documents I saw when that site was rebuilt. I suppose we can be thankful that 2700 El Camino Real is playing fields and not the family housing site Stanford originally wanted. I wonder whether the BPAF are thinking of talking to a lawyer?

Matadero Bypass And Revegetation

*Two years have gone. The work is done.
Time marches on and memories fade,
And we'll forget the price we paid
When winter storms bring rain and mud.
We'll flood no more. The battle's won.
—Hazel Rand, 1996*

The Matadero Bypass Committee which met most Friday afternoons at 4 pm for close to two years, consisted of the Santa Clara Valley Water District site representative, representatives of the firm building the bypass and BPA representatives—Bob Moss, Doug Graham, Art Bayce, Edith Smith, Jack Paddock and I.

How did I land on this committee? The pollution cleanup of Hillview-Porter was greatly delayed by the building of the bypass. Edith and I were concerned about Mickey, our aging donkey and Doug, Edith and I were looking towards the re-vegetation project.

There is much to tell, but I will give you the short version! During the initial replant, someone sprayed Mickey, the donkey, bright green! The re-vegetation plants were sub-standard, although the Water District tried hard to tell us "small" plants would grow better! Doug Graham, Edith Smith and I spent hours coming up with a list of suitable native plants. Jill Beckett, Doug Moran and I, with many others planted several batches of native trees and shrubs, which Jill and I watered, spending two summers dragging heavy hoses. Only some grew and Jill and I got tired of arguing with people, who did not know the difference between native plants and plants that came from Europe and Australia. I wish the current planters the very best of luck and please plant yellow flowers for the donkeys to enjoy—HEE-HEE-HAW (which means pretty please)!

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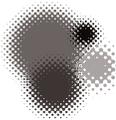
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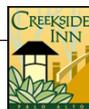
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