



NEWS

West Pasadena Residents' Association

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

ESTABLISHED 1962

WINTER 2011

Citizens of Pasadena, unite! Organize to save our great legacy of trees, parks

By Ann Scheid
Author and historian

Pasadena's public park system once comprised more than 1,000 acres, and this in an era when the city's population was under 50,000. Now, depending on how you count, Pasadena has only 840 acres of park land, of which 502 acres is open space, for a population exceeding 150,000. How did this happen?

- **In the beginning** — Early Pasadenans settled on the edge of the Arroyo Seco, which served as a source for water, firewood and, sadly, a place to dump their refuse. Fortunately, Pasadenans soon subscribed to ideas current at the time of providing public parks in cities and of preserving the wilderness.
- **1900s** — Pasadena developed its two downtown parks, Central Park (at South Fair Oaks and E. Del Mar) and Memorial Park (at N. Raymond and E. Holly) and began to acquire and preserve land in the Arroyo, developing it according to a plan promoted by noted Pasadena-based architect Myron Hunt. The city also initiated its street tree program, which resulted in a large and diverse urban forest — a legacy we all enjoy.
- **1920s** — This decade saw the development of the neighborhood park system. It began with Washington Park (at Washington and El Molino) and was followed in quick succession by McDonald (at E. Mountain and N. Wilson), Singer (at W. California and S. St. John) and La Pintaesca (at E. Washington and N. Fair Oaks) parks, several designed by the noted landscape firm of Theodore Payne and Ralph Cornell.



Arlington Garden, by Joseph Stoddard

- **1930s** — Depression-era work-relief programs contributed to the construction of La Casita on the Arroyo, the stone walls in Washington Park, and most of the walls and trails in the Arroyo.
- **1940s-1950s** — After World War II, a buoyant economy funded the development and expansion of a number of neighborhood parks. The Parks

Pasadena developed a visionary plan to connect city parks with an *emerald necklace* linking Eaton Canyon to the Arroyo. It was an idea akin to designs for Chicago, Boston, Kansas City and other great urban park systems of the early twentieth century.

- **1960s-1970s** — During the 1960s, Pasadena reacted to the decline of the

"We can accomplish much with sufficient imagination and sustained effort. Other cities are doing it, and so can we."

Department employed about 150 people working in administration, planning, maintenance, construction, street tree planting and maintenance, and administering the Rose Bowl, Civic Auditorium/Conference Center, Brookside Golf Course and the Rifle Range. The staff also maintained the landscapes of smaller city-owned properties such as the Gamble House and the Wrigley Mansion. It was during this era that

downtown by funneling federal funds into massive redevelopment projects, neglecting parks and street trees. The emphasis in parks also shifted to recreation centers, resulting in the development of several centers, notably in Victory Park and Villa Parke in the 1970s. Responding to an ideological shift, the Parks Department was abolished and many of its functions were moved into the Public Works Department, where

WPRA in motion

About us

Mission: Founded in 1962, the West Pasadena Residents' Association is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the character of our community and the quality of life in West Pasadena. The WPRA fulfills this mission by keeping you informed of current issues, representing your interests and supporting the activities of others with whom we share interests.

Area: The WPRA focuses on the area bounded by Colorado Boulevard on the north, Fair Oaks Avenue on the east, and the city limits on the south and west.

Funding: All WPRA activities are funded through membership dues and contributions. The WPRA receives no public funding and has no paid employees. Since the WPRA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation, membership contributions and donations are fully deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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WPRA website: www.wpra.net

The WPRA wants you!

The WPRA is looking for volunteers to serve on committees and become involved in neighborhood issues. Whatever your interest, we have many opportunities for involvement. The only prerequisite is to be committed to preserving the quality of life in West Pasadena. *For more information, send an e-mail (with your contact information and interests) to WPRA President Michael Udell at udell@wpra.net.* ■



Parent is grateful to WPRA

Editor's note: WPRA education chair Marilyn Randolph received this letter in 2010 from the parent of a child now attending San Rafael Elementary School.

Dear Marilyn,

On behalf of the parents, students and staff of San Rafael Elementary School, I want to thank you so much for the many ways you've provided support to our school. I became involved with San Rafael last year, in anticipation of my daughter starting there this fall. I was impressed by the huge support you and the WPRA provided during the PEP's Technology Challenge, ultimately making us one of the schools that raised the most money toward new equipment for our school.

I just wanted to express our gratitude for all that you have done to make San Rafael a better learning environment and a stronger community.

And as I am learning the ropes, I'm discovering that there are many more ways that you have sponsored San Rafael: by partnering with Ms. (Alyson) Beecher (San Rafael principal), by securing donations from Staples (and others) and by sponsorship of the parent lecture series. I just wanted to express our gratitude for all that you have done to make San Rafael a better learning environment and a stronger community.

As I send my first child off to San Rafael this fall, I am keenly aware of the great strides children can make when they have what they need to learn and grow. I am immensely grateful for all you and the WPRA have done to contribute to the education of my child and all of the children at San Rafael.

Thank you again for all your support.
Mrs. C. ■

Courts, school district hear citizens loud and clear

By Michael Udell
President, WPRA

Happy New Year! Since the last time we shared a moment (in the Fall edition of WPRA News), ongoing issues have been in motion, and new issues have emerged. Let's get right to them.

■ **IDS lawsuit.** You may recall that in December 2009, Pasadenans for a Livable City and Pasadena Heritage filed suit against the city to stop the 160,000 square-foot project, claiming state and city rules had been violated. On Oct. 22, 2010, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Thomas McKnew ordered the city to set aside its approval of the project. He ruled that there were "glaring omissions" in the project's Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Specifically, Judge McKnew found that a new EIR should include:

- An analysis of a proposed mid-block crosswalk on El Molino linking the plaza with the Pasadena Playhouse
- A "revised analysis" of smaller lower-built alternatives
- An examination of the project's proportional relationship with surrounding historic buildings

Many believe that this citizens' victory forces the city staff and council to reevaluate its project approval process and reaffirms that citizens of Pasadena have a voice and will use it. (*See the related article on page 5.*)

■ **PUSD school consolidation.** In November 2010, the PUSD Board of Education voted to close two elementary schools (Burbank and Loma Alta) due to budget shortfalls. The district had initially identified San Rafael Elementary as one of seven schools considered for consolidation or closure. Fortunately, the news brought out a groundswell of community support for San Rafael.

According to the School Consolidation Study Committee's Report to the Superintendent, San Rafael was saved because of improving academic performance and increasing neighborhood attendance due to the Dual Language Immersion Program. Another important reason was that San Rafael is the only public elementary school left in the 91105 ZIP code. In 2011 and beyond, the WPRA will continue to strengthen and expand its partnership with San Rafael Elementary to help ensure it stays open for many years to come. (*See the related article on page 14.*)

■ **Rose Bowl renovation.** On Oct. 11, 2010, City Council approved a \$152 million financing plan to fund Rose Bowl improvements over the next three years. In fact, construction will begin in January, almost immediately after the 2011 Rose Bowl game. Bowl renovations include:

- Expanding the press box to increase from about 550 to 2,500 the number of premium seats
- Enlarging up to 12 access tunnels at the end zones
- Doubling the number of concession stands
- Increasing the number of restrooms

Safety improvements will help reduce from 30 to 17 minutes how long it takes an individual to exit the bowl after a major event. Additionally, the Rose Bowl Operating Committee has entered into a memorandum of understanding with the WPRA and the Linda Vista, Annandale and East Arroyo neighborhood associations to limit as much as possible residential disruption during the construction period. (*See related article on page 12*)

Continued on page 11

In my own voice

I must confess a selfish joy, a guilty pleasure. As editor of this publication, I have the remarkable opportunity (while preparing each edition) to learn from Pasadena's Masters. In this edition alone, for example:

- Author and historian Ann Scheid provides a succinct and elegant 100-year history of parks in Pasadena and calls for a true grassroots movement to restore our park profile!
- Federal prosecutor and former WPRA president Vince Farhat delivers a pithy digest of the big (and back) stories echoing through City Hall corridors.
- Local attorney and planning pro Richard McDonald helps us — in fewer than 500 words! — catch up on the General Plan update progress — don't worry, there's still time to get involved, to leave your mark.

■ Screenplay writer and Neighborhood Watch maven Alix Reeves shares the lessons she's learned while building her own e-mail watch group.

■ Assistant archivist Kirk Myers at the Pasadena Museum of History delivers another historical jewel (in a continuing series), this installment about the Rose Garden at the Tournament House on S. Orange Grove.

Toss in a dozen or so other engaged citizen-reporters with great stories to tell, and what we've got is another interesting and educational edition ... I hope! But, my education aside, you'll be the judge of that. What's an indisputable fact, however, is that the WPRA appreciates your interest and welcomes your feedback, comments and ideas. E-mail them all to me: HUDSON@WPRA.NET. ■

— Chuck Hudson

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Pasadena City Hall digest & update

By Vince Farhat
Director, WPRA

Army closes Desiderio Center

After 67 years, the U.S. Army Reserve has vacated its base on Westminster Drive in the Arroyo. The Desiderio Army Reserve Center (named after Reginald B. Desiderio, a soldier in the United States Army during the Korean War, who posthumously received the Medal of Honor), was closed as part of the federal government's Base Realignment and Closure program. At the time this newsletter went to press, Pasadena officials were still waiting for federal approval of the plan for a nine-unit affordable housing project to be built by Habitat for Humanity. Approximately 75% of the land on the site will be maintained as open space.

However, even if federal housing officials accept the city's plan, the Department of Defense will still have to approve the official transfer of the property to the city. Demolition of the site's 1940s-era, reinforced concrete buildings probably won't start until 2012 at the earliest. The WPRA is closely monitoring this project. *To receive weekly e-mail updates (Neighborhood Update) from WPRA about this and other local issues, send your e-mail address to update@wptra.net.*

Pasadena's Public Works Director goes to Santa Monica

Public Works Director Martin Pastucha has left Pasadena to become public works director for Santa Monica. Pastucha served as Pasadena's Public Works Director since July 2003. His last day with Pasadena was Jan. 4. Pastucha oversaw a number of significant projects during his tenure, including the retrofit and renovation of City Hall and the Central Arroyo Seco Stream Restoration Project. He is scheduled to start his new job on Jan. 18.

State pension shortfall impacts city budget

Pasadena officials learned late last year that the city faces an unexpected multi-year budget shortfall of approximately \$13.2 million as a result of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) revising its retirement pay-in rates. CalPERS increased Pasadena's costs for fiscal years 2012, 2013 and 2014 after determining that city employees in the system are retiring



Pasadena City Hall, by Joseph Stoddard

earlier and living longer. The increases also resulted from declining performance in financial markets, where CalPERS has lost ground in its own investments. City finance officials have been quoted as noting that Pasadena's unfunded CalPERS liability, which is paid over the course of 30 years, has now increased from \$113 million to \$193 million.

Also, Pasadena could face additional annual costs of up to \$11 million each year between 2014 and 2022 to pay off pension debts incurred by its Fire and Police Retirement System (FPRS). FPRS covers employees hired in 1977 and before. Unlike the CalPERS situation, however, no current employees are paying into the FPRS, since all participants have already retired. In recent years, the city has faced steadily decreasing revenues in sales, utility-user and hotel-bed taxes.

Personnel costs make up 76% of the city's operating expenditures, excluding debt service and transfers from other departments. City Manager Michael Beck has indicated that everything is being considered

for budget cuts, except for those that would impact police and fire response. Budget revisions for fiscal year 2012 will be discussed during City Council budget hearings in May, if not sooner.

Four land-use alternatives

Pasadena is now considering four alternatives to update Pasadena's General Plan — the blueprint for future development. City planners, with input from citizen commissioners, will undertake an environmental analysis of each of the alternatives, including traffic and utilities, while city staff will conduct an economic impact analysis. They expect to present their findings to the public this Spring. Pasadena residents will then be asked to select a preferred plan, which could be one of outlined alternatives or a hybrid that uses aspects of one or more of the four. City Council will likely consider the draft plan in June. *For more information see the article on page 7 or visit cityofpasadena.net and click on "General Plan."*

Court ruling forces reconsideration of IDS Playhouse project

The IDS Playhouse Plaza project is a proposed five-story, 159,000-square-foot retail-office development at Colorado Boulevard and South El Molino Avenue. In late October, the Los Angeles County Superior Court ruled in favor of Pasadena Heritage and Pasadenans for a Livable City (PLC) in their lawsuit against the IDS project. The lawsuit challenged the city's approval process and the adequacy of the environmental impact report (EIR). As a result of this ruling, all project approvals were set aside, and additional study of historic resources, pedestrian safety issues, and project alternatives is now required.

The City Council gave the proposed project a 10% bonus in square footage, extra height and 155 public parking spaces that would increase traffic on a narrow de-emphasized street. The lawsuit alleged that little attention was given to the historic setting of the project, including the landmark-eligible Arcade Lane building immediately east of the site and the adjacent Pasadena Playhouse and National Register Playhouse District across the street.

The environmental studies and review processes for the project must now start over, with more and better information for the public and decision-makers to understand and consider.

Search underway for new Planning Director

At the recommendation of City Manager Michael Beck, City Council has decided to split the Planning and Development Department into two separate departments. The idea was first discussed when former Planning Director Richard Bruckner announced his resignation in December 2009. The development division is responsible for promoting business interests and developing a strong local economy. The planning division makes independent decisions on whether proposed developments meet city zoning laws.

The WPRA and some council members have argued that a combined planning and development department can lead to conflicts of interest. The issue came up during discussion of the IDS Playhouse Plaza project. Assistant City Manager Steve Mermell will supervise the Development Department, while the new director will manage the Planning Department.

In August, Beck hosted a community

meeting, during which residents, business owners and others commented on the search for a new Planning director. Recruitment for the position closed in mid-September. Beck appointed a community committee to help him select up to four finalists. In December, the community committee met to interview the finalists. As this newsletter goes to press, Beck anticipates appointing a new Planning director by the end of the year. *For the latest information, please visit cityofpasadena.net.*

Ambassador West update

The Ambassador West campus development continues to move forward as City Ventures prepares to begin construction early next year. City Ventures' first phase will include 10 homes on West Del Mar Boulevard and the related driveway improvements for the lot as well as the three apartment buildings to the north of the lot. This phase of the project cleared a major hurdle on Nov. 22 when the Design Commission approved Final Design Review for the phase. The approved design of the two buildings that contain the 10 homes and surrounding landscaping was deemed to be consistent with the designs presented when the project was approved in 2007, and with additional details added and upgraded through the Design Review process.

The Final Design Review approval also included a recommendation to relocate the existing rose garden to the eastern portion of the neighboring Manor Del Mar property. City Ventures and the Chaves family, owners of the Manor Del Mar property, will work with city staff to complete the final design details of the new rose garden location.

City Ventures has already started the design review process for its three other development phases and will bring these three lots back to the Design Commission for Conceptual Design review in February. To begin construction, the project's Final Subdivision Map still needs to be recorded. City Ventures is leading this process on behalf of all of the property owners covered under the development Conditional Use Permit (CUP). City Ventures has submitted an application to extend its entitlements in the project to allow more time to record the Final Subdivision Map. On Jan. 12, the Planning Commission will consider extending the entitlements through April 2013. City Ventures continues to process the street, sidewalk and utility improvement plans for the campus through the city's Department of Public Works.

Pasadena Convention Center news

■ In September, City Council unanimously approved the development of a new ice rink at the Pasadena Convention Center. The current ice rink, located behind the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, will eventually be restored to its original purpose — a ballroom. Council approved the new plan one year after voting down a proposal to construct a rink in East Pasadena that would have cost nearly \$20 million. The new rink will have one sheet of ice and be built in a temporary tent-like structure at the Convention Center. Half the funding will come from the capital reserves of the Pasadena Center Operating Company, which will manage the rink. The other \$1.5 million will come from the city as a loan. The new rink will include a public benefit program for local students and low-income residents. The rink will be about 25% larger than the current facility and is expected to open in September or October of this year.

■ Because of its commitment to sustainability, the expanded Pasadena Convention Center has been awarded LEED Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, making it one of the greenest convention centers in North America. The center achieved LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification by implementing aggressive environmentally friendly initiatives in the areas of energy, lighting, water, material use, recycling and traffic reduction.

Pasadena gets its own smart app

West Pasadena residents can download Pasadena's free smartphone application by typing in "GoPasadena" on the iTunes app store or Android Market. Like an electronic visitor's guide, GoPasadena offers detailed information on the City's museums, shopping and entertainment areas, hotels, gardens, movie theatres, events, performing arts organizations, architectural tours and much more.

Pasadena implements cool-season watering schedule

City Council has declared a "Level 1" water shortage in Pasadena. Outdoor watering with sprinkler systems is restricted to one day per week. Each property owner may water on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday



City Hall Update, Continued from page 5

Pasadena Water and Power (PWP) offers \$150 rebates on smart controllers. The one-day-per-week watering schedule is consistent with plant needs during cool weather. Watering during periods of rain, washing down pavement, excessive runoff onto pavement and other forms of water waste carry fines of \$100 and \$1,000. *Learn more at cityofpasadena.net/savewater or call the Water Shortage Hotline at (626) 744-8888.*

As reported in the latest issue of the City's *In-Focus* newsletter, the federal government recently named Pasadena a "Preserve America Community." The designation is awarded only to cities that "protect and

Thanks to the efforts of organizations such as Pasadena Heritage, Pasadena has become a historic destination. Since 1969, the Planning Department has helped secure historic status for more than 3,500 properties. During two comprehensive surveys in the past two years, the city cataloged another 685 properties built between 1935 and 1965 that are eligible for historic designation, plus 870 pre-Craftsman structures built at the turn of the 20th century. Owners of designated historic properties are eligible to participate in certain incentive programs, including a residential property tax cut of up to 75%, a waiver of the city's requirements for covered parking and special rules that apply when the buildings are modified, modernized or relocated. *For more information, visit cityofpasadena.net/historic, preserveamerica.org or call (626) 744-4009.*

On March 8, West Pasadena voters will go to the polls in the primary election for Mayor, City Council District seat 6, and Pasadena Unified School District Board of Education seats 2, 4 and 6. Mayor Bill Bogaard is seeking re-election. District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison is being challenged by Planning Commissioner Carolyn Naber. The WPRC is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation and does not endorse candidates for public office. *For more information about the election, visit cityofpasadena.net/cityclerk/election or call (626) 744-4124.*

Editor's Note: Vince Farhat is a past president of WPRA and serves on the board of directors of the Pasadena Center Operating Company (PCOC). Before joining PCOC, Vince was West Pasadena's representative on the Transportation Advisory Commission. Contact him at farhat@wptra.net. ■

General Plan update process generates four land-use alternatives



By Richard McDonald
Director, WPRA

Did you know that ...

- In 1994, Pasadena had one historic Landmark District and six National Register Districts citywide? Since 1994, the City has added 16 historic landmark and seven National Register districts. Of the 30,178 properties in the city, 3,693 — 12% — are designated as historic.

grow as a city, Pasadena is updating its General Plan, which includes the all-important Land-Use, Mobility, Open Space, Conservation, and Economic Development elements.

To date, the city has undertaken an extensive public engagement program, during which more than 3,000 residents shared their comments and concerns about the future of Pasadena.

The first phase of outreach ran from April 2009 through December of 2010, when more than 100 events were held. These

2. Reduce development caps throughout the city

3. Promote “walk-ability” and mass transit through affordable and workforce housing near transit stops by centralizing residential development around transit stations or near commercial areas. This alternative, known as the “sustainability alternative,” emphasizes social equity, the environment and the economy by creating mini-villages within which residents can walk to a variety of basic services



- The number of people working in Pasadena has increased from 97,640 in 2002 to 100,947 in 2008?
- Since the 2004 General Plan Update, the city has added 42 new acres of parkland, for a total of 342 acres of developed parkland citywide, and 21 acres of passive open space, for a total of 523 acres of open space citywide?
- Since 2000, approximately 3,785 net-new residential units were constructed in areas designated in the zoning code as transit-oriented districts?
- Between 1994 and 2009, 3,668 units were constructed as part of mixed-use developments, or 64% of all the units constructed citywide in this time period?

events included stakeholder interviews, small group meetings, community workshops, the Move-About tours and an open-house extravaganza.

Late last year the city also held a multi-day, collaborative workshop to translate the full range of community comments and priorities into a series of plan alternatives. The city also discussed other planning challenges such as economic development, environmental sustainability and state housing law.

The land-use alternatives

The outcome of the workshop was the identification of four land-use alternatives:

1. Reduce development caps (limits) in the Central Business District, and shift capacity east to the other major corridors such as East Colorado Boulevard, North Lake Avenue, Lincoln Avenue and around the Sierra Madre Villa Metro Station

4. Promote economic vitality and job creation

Next steps

City planners are now preparing a detailed analysis on how each alternative would impact traffic, the local economy, the environment and more. In Spring 2011, city staff will present the draft alternatives and their analysis of the impacts of each, at which time the community can help select one or a combination of several alternatives. Then, the draft plan will be presented to City Council for its consideration and review. This will likely happen in June 2011.

For more information visit cityofpasadena.net and click on “General Plan.” ■

What it all means

To figure out what all of this means to our quality of life and how we should continue to

Gone, but not forgotten

The Rose Garden: 'Scene of many pleasant gatherings'

By Kirk Myers

Assistant Archivist

Pasadena Museum of History

Editor's note: The Pasadena Museum of History has graciously agreed to provide WPRA News readers with a series of historical vignettes that expose Pasadena's past and, we hope, will inform the future, proving that although we've already lost much, we haven't forgotten.

The Rose Garden on South Orange Grove and Arbor Street is a beautiful complement to the Tournament House, which from 1914 to 1958 was the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Wrigley Jr. Although it now appears to be an original feature of the design by G. Lawrence Stimson, it was once a significant site in the history of early Pasadena in its own right.

It was here in early March 1874, shortly after the division of land on Jan. 27, 1874, that Col. Jabez Banbury finished building the third house in the settlement that later became Pasadena.

A 1924 *Pasadena Star-News* article reported "the Banbury house was the center of a great deal of the social life of the early colony ... Colonel and Mrs. Banbury were noted for their hospitality, and the old house was the scene of many pleasant gatherings of friends and neighbors."

The Banburys sold the home in 1882 to Mr. and Mrs. I.M. Hill, who opened up Arbor Street, naming it after the cypress arbor planted by Col. Banbury. In January 1895, Henry C. Durand of Chicago purchased the Hill home, and soon began constructing a "handsome residence" that the *Pasadena Daily Evening Star* predicted "will be one of the ornaments of the avenue."

The home was later sold to Mr. and Mrs. Edward T. Barnum. Mrs. Barnum's first husband was J.W. Robinson, founder of the department store.

After purchasing the Stimson home in 1914, William Wrigley acquired the Barnum estate in September 1915. This purchase made Wrigley one of the largest landholders on the avenue, controlling all of the approximate 4.5 acres between Lockhaven and Arbor streets. Wrigley demolished the



Then: Col. Jabez Banbury's home



Now: The Tournament House Rose Garden

Durand-Barnum home and replaced it with the current gardens. As part of the headquarters of the Tournament of Roses, it is still "the scene of many pleasant gatherings."

The Pasadena Museum of History is located at the corner of Orange Grove Boulevard and Walnut Street (470 W. Walnut, Pasadena

91103); free parking in the Museum lot. The Research Library & Archives are open to the public free of charge Thursdays-Sundays from 1-4 p.m. For additional information, please visit the Museum's website, pasadenahistory.org, or call 626-577-1660, ext. 10. ■

parks projects had difficulty competing for funds. Directed by men trained as engineers, Public Works naturally gave priority to prominent infrastructure projects; park planning and design work was in the hands of civil engineers rather than trained landscape architects.

Larger civic institutions like the Rose Bowl formed separate entities, based on corporate models, and maintenance work on street trees and public building landscapes and gardens was contracted out. Topping of street trees became the norm, replanting was haphazard, and park planning no longer a priority.

Tournament Park's 23 acres were sold to Caltech and the 15-acre Carmelita Park, once an arboretum boasting stately trees, many planted from seeds brought by John Muir from his wanderings through the California wilderness, was developed for the Pasadena Museum of Art (now Norton Simon). Designated as the site of a future art museum in the 1920s, plans from that period showed a museum in a park, but in the 1960s the museum building, its parking lots, and the 134-210 Freeway connection took precedence, sacrificing the landmark trees. A Senior Center was built in tiny Memorial Park, destroying a Civil War memorial and sacrificing valuable parkland in a now dense urban area. More recent expansion of the center has further eroded park space in the downtown.

- **1980s** — Late in this period, a new Public Works director, educated in public administration instead of engineering, created a new position, Parks Administrator, to oversee all park maintenance, street tree operations, master park plans and landscape construction projects. Projects to restore the parks were implemented, and the Parks Commission became more active in the development and improvement of the parks.
- **1990s** — During the 1990s, the Parks Administrator position devolved into an administrative rather than a park planning position, tied closely to the Human Services department, which administers park recreation facilities and social welfare activities in the city. The Parks Commission became the Recreation and Parks Commission.
- **2000s** — Again a remedy was sought and a new position, Park Planner, was created in 2001. The new Park Planner

(later City Landscape Architect), revitalized many of the park master plans, revived the idea of the emerald necklace, and implemented park restoration projects, especially the award-winning restoration of Washington Park. Reflecting the new emphasis on the environment, the parks division became Parks and Natural Resources, in keeping with the city's recently adopted commitment to Green City practices.

And more recently:

- The city purchased an additional 37 acres in Hahamongna Watershed Park (not all open space).
- Both the city and the Pasadena Unified School District are working to re-open school playgrounds and athletic facilities to neighborhood use.
- Restoration of a portion of the stream in the Lower Arroyo Seco has made that area more attractive to walkers, and the recent completion of the wider path for pedestrians around the Rose Bowl has provided a safer environment in one of the most popular recreation spots in the city.
- Washington Park received a major restoration, including rebuilding of historic walls, planting native plants, and adding new playground and picnic facilities. Building on the work of original designers Theodore Payne and Ralph Cornell, the park restoration team received the Honor Award in 2007 from the local chapter of the ASLA.
- Aided by assessments to neighboring properties, the city acquired a 22-acre wilderness canyon in the Linda Vista area, with the goal of adding other acreages in the area to be linked eventually by hiking trails.
- In his address to the Recreation and Parks Commission last year, City Manager Michael Beck reported that the city is building a fund to acquire more parkland in the downtown area.
- Even dogs have benefited, with the creation of the popular Alice's Dog Park in East Pasadena.

Hard park times

In spite of these recent park pluses, Pasadena is still desperately short of parkland and open space. In response to the current city fiscal crisis, Public Works reorganized and, in the process, eliminated 33 positions, including that of Parks and Natural Resources Administrator. Parks

planning staff, renamed Parks and Forestry, is now under the direction of the City Engineer, a return to an earlier failed model. Additionally, to save more than \$800,000, the city expects to:

- Contract with private firms to maintain Defender's, San Rafael, Singer, La Pintoresca, Gwinn and Sunny Slope parks
- Cut personnel and work programs at other parks
- Limit street tree maintenance and contract some of that work out
- Reduce overall park maintenance, trail repairs and graffiti removal

Lessons learned

Although it would seem Pasadena may be returning to the dismal park record of the '60s and '70s, we can learn an important lesson from the past: *creation and preservation of the city's parks have always been strongly tied to citizen efforts.*

Early settler Charles Legge donated the land for Memorial Park. A syndicate of citizens purchased options on the parcels in the Arroyo and held them until the city could raise the funds for purchase. Residents of the Washington Park neighborhood funded 20% of that park's purchase price, and the Friends of Washington Park, a neighborhood organization, spearheaded the recent restoration effort.

Strong citizen participation, in cooperation with the city, can move things forward by:

- Aggressively seeking funding from public and private sources
- Taking advantage of opportunities to acquire more park land
- Reversing the reductions in maintenance that threaten both parks and street trees

A true grassroots effort

Additionally, citizen groups across the city can organize park support groups to ensure we maintain the great legacy of our street trees, our neighborhood parks and of our most magnificent park, the Arroyo Seco. In short, we can accomplish much with sufficient imagination and sustained effort. Other cities are doing it, and so can we.

The author thanks those who provided source material, including Tim Wendler, former chair of Recreation and Parks Commission; Michael Hurley and Frank Osen, who organized a landmark exhibition on park history at the Pasadena Museum of History a few years ago; Laura Verlaque and Ardis Willwerth of PMH; and George Buck, landscape architect and retired city employee. ■

E-mail can help take a bite out of neighborhood crime

A simple, inexpensive and fast way to form a Neighborhood Watch group

By Alix Reeves

If knowledge is power, as the saying goes, sharing that knowledge can empower a neighborhood. But finding a simple, inexpensive and fast way to share that knowledge is essential. After all, knowing about a very recent break-in in your neighborhood enables you to take action immediately — check for unlocked doors and windows, set alarms and, generally, be more vigilant. This is where e-mail comes in.

E-mail is the best way

There are many reasons why e-mail is the most effective way to communicate with neighbors.

- It's instantaneous.
- It delivers a message to many neighbors at once.
- It offers a way to share pictures, descriptions and phone numbers.
- It enables neighbors to ask questions or share an observation.

Gather e-mail addresses

Using e-mail to communicate, of course, requires you to get your neighbors' e-mail addresses. There are two ways to go about this.

- The first is to walk door-to-door through your neighborhood. While it might seem like fun at first, this approach is labor-intensive and extremely time-consuming.
- A second way is to mail a letter to your neighbors along with a form for them to complete. If you go this way, be sure to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to increase the odds neighbors return the form. To cut postage costs in half, consider hand-delivering the letter and form (with a self addressed and stamped envelope) to each neighbor.

Prepare the form

The form should include a short explanation of your Neighborhood Watch concept; your home telephone number, address and e-mail address. Be sure to ask what format

they'd prefer to receive the compiled list in: a Microsoft Word document, a PDF or as part of the e-mail itself. The object, of course, is to ensure that every neighbor on the list can send e-mails to others on the list.



Create the list

Once you receive your neighbors' e-mail addresses you can create a master list on your computer. Check with your e-mail service to find out how you can best create a mass e-mail list. Remember that some e-mail services limit the number of e-mails you can send at once. Once the list has been compiled, it's time to send it to every neighbor on the list.

Set the guidelines

It's important to set guidelines for how the list can be used. Setting guidelines upfront will not guarantee members will follow them, but it can discourage misuse of the list. For example, guidelines could include the following:

- The names of members should, above all, remain private. Forbid sharing, selling or publishing the list for any reason.
- Require members to use the list only in a "blind" fashion. That is, when members send messages to others on the list, the e-mail addresses should be withheld from view. Select the "blind" feature in your e-mail creation options.
- Use the list when you would like to inform neighbors of any activity or issues

that affect the safety of the neighborhood. Most groups also welcome postings about lost pets or items of value.

- The e-mail list shouldn't be used for business solicitation. You may wish to expand this guideline to explicitly forbid members from providing work telephone numbers in the "signature" of their e-mail messages.

The list manages itself

The beauty of using the e-mail approach is that since everyone on the list has access to the list, the list runs itself! For example, if your car is vandalized, it's your responsibility to alert your neighbors. By doing so, you are not only helping to find the vandal, but you're also alerting your neighbors to take precautions.

Involve local police

Speak with your local police department's Neighborhood Watch coordinator. Make certain that the coordinator's e-mail address is added to your list. That will enable him or her to send the group important crime information and alert neighbors about a crime trend in your area. This also promotes two-way communications with local police ... a good thing. Additionally, your list creates a record of criminal or suspicious activity in your neighborhood, a useful tool to enlist help from police.

More benefits

Besides the new and instantaneous communications you will create with your neighbors and the police department, there are other benefits to having a neighborhood watch e-mail list. By encouraging neighbors to report any suspicious behavior, over time you'll be helping to reduce the incidence of crime.

Neighborhood Watch groups help foster a new sense of cohesiveness. Neighbors will begin to feel a part of a community and more conscious of their role in keeping it safe.

Editor's note: Alix Reeves facilitates a West Pasadena Neighborhood Watch group with more than 400 participants. Last May, the WPRA recognized Alix's important work by honoring her with the annual WPRA Community Service Award. Alix can be reached at alixreeves@earthlink.net. ■



Student chefs at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Pasadena proudly display the remarkable cake they created in 2010 to help Pasadena celebrate its 124th birthday. One can only imagine what the 125th birthday cake will look like. (Photo by Laura Berthold Montero; lbmonteros@yahoo.com)

Museum planning big birthday bash for Pasadena's 125th

Every year the Pasadena Museum of History celebrates the city's birthday with a day of performances, workshops and presentations featuring the cultural contributions of our diverse communities. This year, however, it will be bigger and better than ever.

To find out how much bigger and better ... we invite you to join Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard on June 11 as he cuts the cake to celebrate Pasadena's 125th birthday at the Pasadena Museum of History (PMH). This community-wide event is free for the

whole family and will feature individuals and organizations that embody our city's rich cultural diversity.

The city of Pasadena; the San Gabriel Valley Newspaper Group; neighborhood associations, including the WPRA, which is ably represented by former WPRA President, Audrey O'Kelley; and numerous cultural organizations and individuals are joining with the museum to sponsor this event. Be sure to go to pasadenahistory.org to learn about all the exciting fun to be had on June 11 and how you can participate.

Happy Birthday, Pasadena was inspired by the Pasadena Museum of History's exhibit *Family Stories: Sharing a Community's Legacy*, which presented visual documentation of the diversity of this region's population since the late 1800s. There are many more stories to be told, so come to the birthday celebration on June 11th and tell your story.

Editor's Note: For more information contact Jeanette Bovard at the Pasadena Museum of History, 626/798-6272 or 626/577-1660 or by email at pasadenahistory@sbcglobal.net. ■

Courts, Continued from page 3

■ **General Plan update.** The General Plan update charrettes concluded in November. The city is now developing computer-based models — which the public will be invited to view in the Spring — to show how the various alternative plans would affect the city's growth and character. This will then be followed by another series of public meetings, which the WPRA hopes West Pasadena residents will attend. Our representation and input will help determine what will happen to Pasadena over the next 10 years and beyond. (See related article on page 7)

■ **Ambassador West/Sunrise Senior Living.** Sunrise continues to market

its property along the north side (along Green Street) of the Ambassador West campus. The WPRA will closely monitor the potential sale to ensure that the property development plan continues to include, as originally planned, senior housing.

■ **Spreading the word through a block party.** In addition to tracking and monitoring the issues affecting the West Pasadena, one of the primary WPRA goals this year is to increase membership and our membership's involvement in important city issues. To expose more area residents to the WPRA and the important issues, the WPRA is planning to host a "block party" this summer.

Want to help? Drop us an e-line.

If you have any questions or concerns about these or any other issues affecting West Pasadena, contact me by e-mail at udell@wpra.net. As always, all are cordially invited to attend our board meetings.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2011!

Correction: Although it has indeed withdrawn as a member of Westgate Pasadena, LLC, the developer of Westgate Apartments in Old Pasadena, developer Sares Regis "continues to render services to the project in different capacities." The WPRA erred in the Fall edition of WPRA News by stating that Sares Regis had filed for bankruptcy. We regret the error. ■



Rose Bowl renovation slated to begin Jan. 10

By **Audrey O'Kelley**
Director, WPPRA

The iconic Rose Bowl stadium has marked many milestones, but none more important than Oct. 11, 2010, when the Pasadena City Council approved funding of the \$152 million Rose Bowl renovation project.

Thanks to the sale of bonds and the contributions from the stadium's major tenants — the Tournament of Roses and UCLA — work can begin on the three-phase renovation project to expand public areas and enhance and modernize amenities.

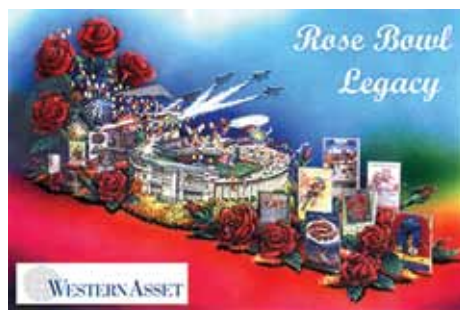
But this vital renewal project will need another funding component to ensure that all of the important, basic components of the renovation project will be realized. This challenge has been answered by a group of leaders who value the Rose Bowl; they have formed Legacy Connections to raise \$25 million. The group launched the campaign — the Rose Bowl Legacy Campaign — on Jan. 1, 2011.

Rolling into 2011

Voted one of the top venues of the 20th century by *Sports Illustrated*, the Rose Bowl has hosted the men's and women's soccer World Cup, Olympic Games, the Super Bowl and the BCS championship game, and is home to UCLA football. This history was reflected on the Rose Bowl Legacy Float at this year's Tournament of Roses Parade. The float was sponsored by Western Asset; the

president and CEO of Western Asset, James Hirschmann, will serve as president of the Legacy Connections' distinguished board of directors, working with Legacy Campaign director, Andrea Van de Kamp.

The Rose Bowl Legacy campaign's leadership group appreciates the Rose Bowl where history, champions and innovations have been made.



- Knute Rockne, Pop Warner, John McKay, Tommy Prothro, Woody Hayes and Bo Schembechler coached here.
- It was here that Clark Shaughnessy showed off his newfangled T-Formation and made believers out of football fans everywhere.
- Fifteen Heisman Trophy winners played here.
- Eight quarterbacks who played here on New Year's Day went on to play in the NFL Super Bowl.

The Rose Bowl is a place born of and a nurturer of greatness.

Rose Bowl renovation

Phase I: January 2011 – August 2011

- New electrical service upgrade and utility loop backbone
- South tunnels and concrete deck repair/waterproofing
- South scoreboard and advertising panels
- North video board and advertising panels
- East LED game information sign and advertising panel
- Remodel of east restroom building
- Press box foundations

The Legacy Campaign will help renew this iconic stadium that has meant so much to so many and ensure that the proud legacy of this National Historic Landmark endures. The short-term goal is to renovate the Rose Bowl in time for the 100th Rose Bowl Game in 2014. The long-term goal is to save America's Stadium for future generations

Editor's Note: For more information about the renovation project, visit rosebowlstadium.com/renovation, and for more information about the Rose Bowl Legacy Campaign, contact Audrey O'Kelley at aokelley@rosebowllegacy.com. ■

New neighbors have eyes on the stars, feet on Grand Ave.

By Susan Lendroth

Events and Communications manager
Planetary Society

Although it's only been a little more than six months since the Planetary Society (planetary.org) moved to its new headquarters at 85 South Grand Ave., it already feels very much like home.

Move to Grand

Founded in 1980, the society celebrated its 30th anniversary last year. For 25 years, the society was headquartered in a Greene and Greene craftsman house near Pasadena's Playhouse district. The society made the move to the west side of town in May 2010, welcoming many of its neighbors to an open house and ribbon-cutting this past summer.

In the beginning

Carl Sagan, Bruce Murray and Louis Friedman founded the Planetary Society in Pasadena as a non-profit membership organization to explore other worlds and seek life beyond Earth. Today, its international membership makes it the largest space-interest group in the world.

Another big change for the society in 2010 was installing its second executive director, a position held by co-founder Louis Friedman since the organization formed. Bill Nye ("the Science Guy") now leads the Planetary Society.

Planetary projects

As a space-interest group, its projects are as varied as they are interesting. One of the most intriguing is LightSail-1, a solar sail mission that the society plans to launch this year. Solar sailing is an innovative spacecraft propulsion method that uses the push of photons — sunlight — on vast, thin sheets of mylar, unfurled in space like giant sails.

Other areas of interest include searching for potential extraterrestrial signals with an optical telescope (SETI), supporting researchers tracking near-Earth objects (asteroids and comets), and an interplanetary mission to test how well microorganisms can survive a long journey through space.

Membership

The society is open to everyone interested in learning more about the universe. Members want to make a difference through their support of solar-system exploration.



Astronaut John Grunsfeld and Planetary Society Executive Director Bill Nye stand before a quarter-scale model of Lightsail-1. Bill holds a full-size engineering model of the spacecraft.



Rosaly Lopes, Charley Kohlhase, Louis Friedman, Bill Nye and Robert Picardo help cut the traditional ribbon in August of last year when the Planetary Society moved into its new headquarters on Grand Avenue.

The society's volunteer astronomy group meets each month, and volunteers meet bi-monthly to help with office projects.

The society is always delighted to show

visitors its new headquarters. Feel free to give them a call at 626/793-5100 or, better yet, drop by ... now that they're in the neighborhood! ■

An open letter from San Rafael Elementary

Editor's note: The WPRA has long believed in the enriching and ennobling power of education. For this reason, several years ago the board "adopted" San Rafael Elementary School (1090 Nithsdale Road), the only surviving public elementary school in its service area. In practice, that means WPRA education liaison Marilyn Randolph, through the Student Enrichment Program, works closely with the school staff to supplement classroom experience by providing students with access to talented and generous members of our community.

Dear WPRA friends:

At San Rafael School, it has been a busy and interesting start to the school year. Shortly after the start of the school year, we were faced with the possibility that our school might not be open next year. After a long and thorough process to determine which schools would be selected for school consolidation, the PUSD Board of Education on Tuesday, Nov. 16, elected to close Burbank and Loma Alta elementary schools.

As we breathe a sigh of relief that San Rafael was spared, our hearts go out to all of the children, families and staff at both of the schools to be closed. This is a bittersweet



Above: Katie Mencken shows off the expressive face-painting she received during the school's Fall Festival. Right: Angie Arzili, parent of a first-grader, helps create the mood during a Literacy Café featuring the book "Tortilla Sun," by Jennifer Cervantes. Below: Acclaimed children's author and "Principal for a Day" Pseudonymous Bosch (or someone who claimed to be him!) chats to a group of kindergarten students.





Fourth-grader Keaton Heimerl reads to a group of kindergarteners during the PJ & Storytime event.

moment for us; however, I would like to thank Council member Steven Madison, the West Pasadena Resident's Association and the many neighbors who shared their public support for the school during this process. It was, in large part, your support and active involvement in the school that made a positive impact on the PUSD selection committee.

As we look forward, it's evident that if San Rafael is to remain off future closure lists we'll need to make sure everyone becomes aware of what a truly great school San Rafael is. Toward that goal, a group of parents are meeting to determine how best to get the word out about our school.

We are also thankful to Steve Madison for the invitation to his Fall town hall meeting and his positive remarks about the school. Steve had an opportunity to visit San Rafael on Nov. 10, when he served as a Principal for a Day," (yes, San Rafael was lucky to have two principals on that day!). While serving, he met with parents and visited classrooms.

Throughout the fall, we have experienced some wonderful new programs and activities:

- On Oct 30, the San Rafael PTA sponsored the school's first fall festival in

recent history. While the festival was setting up, we had a surprise visit from 15 alumni from the class of 1954 who were in town for their 50th high school reunion. It was great to hear their memories of fall festivals and the teachers who were at the school in the early 1950s.

- This fall we also initiated Book Cafés, or what we are fondly calling Literacy Cafés. A talented group of parent and community volunteers are hosting these cafes, one classroom at a time. Each café is centered on a book the class has read. Students are welcomed into a room that has been transformed to give them a sense of actually living out the book. Adult volunteers lead five to six book-related activities, and students move from one activity to the next. We are looking forward to providing at least one café experience for each class.

- In keeping with our literacy focus for the year, we welcomed well-known children's author Pseudonymous Bosch as our second Principal for a Day. Pseudonymous visited classrooms and participated in a Literacy Café centered around his book "The Name of This Book is Secret."

- Thanks to the partnership with WPRA and education chair Marilyn Randolph, who connected us with Pasadena City College, our collaboration with Dr. McCabe and his students has continued. A group of student volunteers have been hard at work tutoring children in math or helping lead book clubs with small groups of students.

We'll have many more exciting enrichment activities through the spring, thanks to the WPRA's support. For example, Marilyn (Randolph) is setting up a series on restaurants, and in May we'll host our first career day.

If you are interested in helping with marketing, public relations, literacy, science or any other way to help make San Rafael even better, please contact me at abeecher@pusd.us or by calling 626/396-5790.

Sincerely,

Alyson
Alyson Beecher, Principal

Marilyn
Marilyn Randolph, Education chair, WPRA



**WEST PASADENA
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**
Post Office Box 50252
Pasadena, CA 91115-0252

Visit our website @ wptra.net



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Make your own motion!

There is much going on in our city — Open Space and Conservation policies being set, General Plans being updated — these and other ongoing work will affect our quality of life. Our representatives need to hear from you. Take a few minutes to make your voice heard and your own motion.

Mayor Bill Bogaard
bbogaard@cityofpasadena.net

City Manager Michael J. Beck
mbeck@cityofpasadena.net

Councilmembers
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jacquerobinson@cityofpasadena.net

Margaret McAustin, District 2
mmcaustin@cityofpasadena.net

Chris Holden, District 3
cholden@cityofpasadena.net

Steve Haderlein, District 4
shaderlein@cityofpasadena.net

**Victor Gordo, District 5
(vice mayor)**
vgordo@cityofpasadena.net

Steve Madison, District 6
smadison@cityofpasadena.net

Terry Tornek, District 7
ttornek@cityofpasadena.net

Pasadena: city on call

Police Department

Emergency 9-1-1
Non-Emergency (626) 744-4501

Services

Bulky items (626) 744-4158
Missed trash pickup (626) 744-4087
Missed residential recycling pickup (626) 744-4087
New trash container (626) 744-4087
New street light (626) 744-4191
Pothole (626) 744-4158
Recycling (626) 744-4087
Sewer problem (626) 744-4158
Street light not working (626) 744-4158
Storm drain blockage (626) 744-4158
Traffic signal malfunction (626) 744-4158
Traffic signal timing problems (626) 744-4191

Frequently called numbers

City information operator (626) 744-4000
Abandoned vehicles (626) 744-7627
Alarm permits (626) 744-4166
Animal control (626) 792-7151
ARTS bus (626) 744-4055
Code enforcement (626) 744-4633
Dog licenses (626) 744-4501
Graffiti (626) 744-7622
Historic preservation (626) 744-4009
Neighborhood Watch (626) 744-4550
Park/picnic reservations (626) 744-7275
Parking permits/exemptions (626) 744-6440
Parking tickets (626) 744-4360
Street tree maintenance (626) 744-4321
Trash pick-up (626) 744-4087
Water/power billing inquiries (626) 744-4005
Yard sale permits (626) 744-4200