



PARK BEAT

The Pulse of Greater Boulevard Park

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association • Box 163179, Sacramento 95816 • February 2010

BPNA General Meeting

By Catherine Turrill

BPNA's main general meeting of the year was held at the Ethel Hart Senior Center on Wednesday, January 6. The four scheduled agenda items were the BPNA Executive Board elections (*see article below*) and presentations by Councilman Steve Cohn, a representative of the Alchemist Community Development Corporation, and a representative of the New Era Community Garden. We also had a surprise visit by County Supervisor Roger Dickinson (District 1).

After distributing print copies of his "2010 State of the District Report" (also available on his website), Councilman Cohn discussed various issues of concern to district residents, ranging from the economy to his "top priorities" for the new year. He mentioned the establishment of additional quiet zones at the city's railroad crossings and future improvements to Sutter's Landing Park, including a possible "Solar PV Farm," a project that excited some interest at the general meeting. He devoted most of his presentation to a discussion of the installation of new street lights in midtown. With the assistance of Sompol Chatusripitak (a senior engineer with the Department of Transportation) and a large map, Councilman Cohn explained that funding had been secured to cover the cost of lighting sections of several blocks between I, J, 21st, and 26th Streets. The exact number and placement of the old-style acorn type of streetlamps will depend on the bids offered, however it is hoped that the weak economy may encourage favorable bids. In response to questions from the audience, he explained that the acorn streetlamp contributes minimally to "light pollution" of the night sky.

After Councilman Cohn's presentation, Roger Dickinson, who is now in his last year on the County Board of Supervisors, was invited to say a few words. Among other topics, he commented briefly on the state of the budget before directing our attention to an upcoming program related to AB 811 (Energy Efficiency for Cities and Counties), where any debt incurred by property-owners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes would be attached to that property and become part of the property tax.

Our last two speakers of the evening contributed to its "green" note: Noah Painter, a member of the board of the Alchemist Community Development Corporation, discussed the Urban Farm Stands project, which makes it possible for city residents to buy local produce for reasonable prices in their own neighborhoods. Deniz Tuncer followed with a presentation about the very successful New Era Community Garden at the north end of

26th Street, just below the railroad tracks. Located on a vacant lot that was leased in July 2009 and has since been augmented by an additional rented parcel, the Community Garden has won the support of local residents and businesses alike. Deniz shared some of the group's ideas for future projects involving the site, including a mural project on the exterior wall of a building that abuts it, a children's garden, fruit trees, and the hosting of community events in collaboration with Friends of Grant Park. For more information about Urban Farm Stands and the New Era Community Garden, see page 2 in this issue of *Park Beat*.

Meet the 2010 BPNA Board of Directors

Voting members of the BPNA who attended last month's general meeting had the opportunity to cast their ballots for this year's Board of Directors. Returning to the Board are **Margaret Buss**, **Hal Edmonds**, and **Catherine Turrill**. They are joined this year by residents **Asha Jennings**, **Tom Martens**, **Julianne Richards**, and **Greg Smith**.

The 2010 Board would like to thank our four departing members – Mark de la Vergne, Sally Flory O'Neil, Dave Philipp, and Rob Sperling – for all of their hard work last year. We also are grateful to Sally for continuing her service as membership coordinator. At our meeting on January 13 (*note: all future board meetings will be on the first Wednesday of each month*), Catherine Turrill was elected chair, Greg Smith secretary, and Hal Edmonds treasurer. Margaret Buss will continue working on historic preservation issues, and Asha Jennings will continue as the editor of *Park Beat*.

7th Annual Mardi Gras Party!

The 7th annual **Mardi Gras party** is coming up on **February 20th**, starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Betzing's home on 516 F Street (*the ballroom entrance is on the southeast corner of the house on 22nd Street*). Dress up in your finest or in Mardi Gras attire, come mingle with the neighbors and dance to some wonderful music. Enjoy spirits of your choice and bring an appetizer, drink, or dessert to share.

While you are there, please drop a little cash in the donation jar to buy bicycles and cycling gear for the children at Washington School. Students with the best attendance, good grades, and participation will be the winners. The kids are always so appreciative!

Places to go, people to see

February 3 – BPNA Board Meeting – 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Contact Catherine Turrill at 278-5786 for location and to add items to the agenda. *Open to BPNA members and other interested neighbors.*

February 13 – Great Backyard Bird Count – 9:00 a.m., meet at Sutter's Landing Park (at the north end of 28th Street, near the railroad tracks). *See details to right.*

February 13 – Second Saturday Art Walk – Each month, galleries around town stay open late into the evening to showcase specific artists and new showings. Many serve wine and hors d'oeuvres. *Check out their web site at www.sacramento-second-saturday.org.*

February 15 – Copy and Ad Deadline for March issue of Park Beat. To submit articles and calendar entries, email Asha Jennings at ashajennings@gmail.com or call her at 803-7409. To place an ad, call Jim Younkin at 997-5081.

February 15 – Area 1 Neighborhood Advisory Group (NAG) Meeting – 6:15 to 8:30 p.m., Hart Senior Center, 27th & I Streets. *Contact Janine Martindale at 808-8193 or at jmartindale@cityofsacramento.org for information.*

February 20 – BPNA Mardi Gras Party – 7:00 p.m., Betzing's Ballroom, Southeast Corner of 22nd and F Streets. *See details on page 1.*

February 27 – Green Thumb Brigade – 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., meet at 711 22nd Street. Come help keep our traffic circles in tiptop shape! We also need volunteers to water the traffic calming devices. *Please contact Sally Flory-O'Neil at 446-3390 or sallyfo@hotmail.com if you would like information on traffic calming devices in need of watering – some of them may be near your home!*

February 27 – Friends of Grant Park and Friends of the River Bank Riverbank Clean-Up – 10:00 a.m. to noon, meet at Sutter's Landing. *See details on page 3.*

Every Monday – Monday Night Skate – 7:00 p.m., Meet at the parking lot at the corner of 3rd and S Streets. *For more information, go to www.sacramentoskating.com or call Brian Malone at 715-2808 or Bernard Scoville at 447-8288.*

Grow A Garden, Grow A Community

The **New Era Community Garden** has proved to be well-named. The gardeners have found that it grew a community along with the plants. Those neighbors who attended the January Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association meeting got a glimpse from Deniz Tuncer, one of the founding members of the New Era Community Garden, into this wonderful new community. The Garden has been wildly successful: all the initial plots have sold, and there is a waiting list for new plots. But the Garden provides more than good produce and lower grocery bills. It has grown connections amongst the gardeners, whether from the neighborhood or not, creating a new community with shared values and mutual support. It provides a safe place for kids to play outdoors (or help in the garden) while their parents work, a real boon for parents looking for healthy alternatives for their children. And the garden plots have produced... a lot, judging by the height of the plants.

The owner of the parcel, who has been very supportive of the project, just recently agreed to lease the adjacent lot. Anyone interested in getting one of the new plots or getting on the waitlist should contact Deniz Tuncer at deniztuncer@sbcglobal.net. The cost for renting full 12' x 12' plot is \$170 from January through August; a 6' x 12' half plot is \$90, and a 6' x 6' quarter plot is \$50. You will get from the garden much more than food; you will get a community.

Friends of the River Banks Will Help with the Great Backyard Bird Count

By Catherine Turrill

This month the Friends of the River Banks are participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) by holding a field trip on **Saturday, February 13**. Join Julie Serences of the Audubon Society and Robert Sewell of Boulevard Park as they lead bird-watchers along the south banks of the American River at Sutter's Landing (north end of 28th Street, on the other side of the railroad tracks). Other bird walks, each led by a member of the Audubon Society, will be in William Pond Park on the American River Parkway on February 12, on the American River Bike Trail near the Fish Hatchery on February 14, and in the Mother Lode on February 15.

Each walk, including the one in Sutter's Landing Park on February 13, will begin at 9:00 a.m. Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars, bottled water, and a snack, and to wear layered clothes and comfortable shoes (but please leave your dog at home!).

As stated in the Sacramento Audubon Society's press release, the GBBC is jointly sponsored by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Ornithology Laboratory, is now in its 13th year, and will involve the participation of bird-watchers from throughout the country. Last year more than 11 million birds of 619 species were recorded in the United States during the GBBC. With 216 check-lists submitted, Sacramento topped all California cities. This year the city hopes to rank even higher by achieving a place in the top ten nationally. Even if you are unable to join one of the hikes scheduled over Presidents' Day weekend, you can still do your part for the GBBC. Just count the highest number of each bird species that you see in any 15-minute period. Then enter your tally on Great Backyard Bird Count website at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>.

If you are interested in learning more about the GBBC, go to the website of the Sacramento branch of the Audubon Society at www.sacramentoaudubon.org. For more information about any FORB events, or to be added to the e-mailing list, please contact Laurie Litman at litman@pacbell.net.

Friends of the River Banks is pleased to be partnering with Friends of Grant Park to encourage people, especially families and children, to enjoy and appreciate wildlife and to spend time with nature. These events are funded by First 5 Sacramento, which uses Prop 10 tobacco tax funds to support the healthy development of children ages 0 to 5. Additional information about the First 5 Sacramento Commission is online at www.First5Sacramento.net or by calling 916-876-5865.



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BPNA Board of Directors 2010

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SECRETARY	Greg Smith	442-4201	lafnlupn@pacbell.net
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Tom Martens		714-4563	tnlsac@comcast.net
Julianne Richards		443-6149	jrichards@cde.ca.gov

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association purpose: The BPNA is created to support, promote, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the greater Boulevard Park neighborhood. By achieving this goal we strive thereby to improve the quality of life for others who work and live in and around Boulevard Park and for Sacramento as a whole.

Committees

Membership: Sally Flory-O'Neil, 446-3390

Preservation: Margaret Buss, 444-0406

Park Beat Production Team

Editor: Asha Jennings, 803-7409, ashajennings@gmail.com

Advertising Manager: Jim Younkin, 997-5081, jayounkin@gmail.com

Graphic Designer: Katworks, 707-865-2899, katworks@comcast.net

Reproduction: Tri-City Technologies, 503-5300

Block Captain Coordinator: Leo Pauly

Great ad rates! Call Jim at 997-5081 for details.

The deadline for ads and copy for the Mar. issue of Park Beat is Feb. 15th by 5pm!

A Farmstand In The Neighborhood?

It could happen here – with your support.

By Margaret Buss

The **Alchemist Community Development Corporation (ACDC)**, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, has in the last three years created successful "**Urban Farm Stands**" in the Oak Park and Alkali Flat neighborhoods (www.urbanfarmstand.org) and has approached the Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association (BPNA) about having one here. Since the Urban Farm Stands are run entirely by neighborhood volunteers under the direction of the ACDC, the Board needs to know if there are neighbors who will commit to making the project work here. Also, the neighborhood association must pay for the produce in advance, and, although both of the Urban Farm Stands have been able to cover the cost of the produce, the commitment of the volunteers is crucial to ensuring the upfront investment pays off.

The Urban Farm Stands differ from a traditional farmer's market in scale and in concept. Rather than being a place for farmers to sell directly to consumers, the Urban Farm Stand produce comes from one or two local sources (in this case, Soil Born Farms, itself an interesting urban farming project, which also provides produce to the Sacramento Natural Foods Coop and elsewhere: www.soilborn.org). The Urban Farm Stands aim to bring fresh locally grown produce into neighborhoods that have little to no access to fresh produce in the immediate vicinity. Although many Boulevard Park residents can travel to the farmer's markets in town as well as to conventional grocery stores, there are many with more limited mobility are confined to canned or frozen goods at Rite-Aid or the corner stores since the closure of Albertson's. Also, the Urban Farm Stands not only bring fresh produce to people who otherwise might not have access, they have proven to be a favorite meeting place in their neighborhoods, a weekly family tradition to check out what's available, and a chance to get to know neighbors.

New and Renewing Members

12/16/2009 - 1/15/2010

Robyn & Pete Bramson, Joe Concannon & David Philipp,
Vickie & Pat Cosentino, Hal & Liz Edmunds,
Mary Marks & Jan Seaman, Jackie Miller,
Paul O'Neil & Sally Flory-O'Neil, George Raya,
Preston Rudy & Travis Silcox, Betty Travis

The Urban Farm Stand Project includes a youth leadership development component. ACDC works with youth interns in each location and involving them in the planning and operations. Through volunteering with the Urban Farm Stand, the interns learn useful job and leadership skills as well as nutrition information about the dietary benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The bottom line?

The Urban Farm Stand project could be a real benefit to the Boulevard Park community – with sufficient volunteer support. The Stands are open for three hours a week (probably Saturday) every week from May through October. A minimum of two people, under the direction of an ACDC intern or staff member, are needed to staff the Farm Stand each week, including setting up the stands, selling produce, and taking down the stands at the end. Volunteer support may also be needed on occasion to pick up the produce.

If you are interested in making an Urban Farm Stand work by working a four-hour shift one or two weekends a month (May to October), please email Margaret Buss at mbuss@jps.net with your name, contact information (email or phone) and the amount of time you will commit to. The BPNA Board will consider the proposal at its March 3rd meeting.

Down By The River – Keeping It Clean

Friends of Grant Park and **Friends of the River Bank** are co-sponsoring a riverbank clean-up day on **Saturday, February 27th** from 10 a.m. to noon. Join them at Sutter's Landing Park near the skateboard park. Bring work gloves, trash bags, and your friends and family for an outing to help keep our stretch of the American River clean. It's a chance to get some exercise, visit the river, enjoy the day, and do a very good deed while spending time with friends. Hope to see you there!

LOOKING FOR PARK BEAT CONTENT

Upcoming events, topics of current interest, observations of the area around you – we are always looking for interesting material for *Park Beat*, your newsletter of the Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association. **Please call or write Asha Jennings, Park Beat editor, at 803-7409 or ashajennings@gmail.com.**

Dues, Dues, Dues

Now's The Time To Pay Them

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association dues become payable in January each year. Dues reminders with self-addressed envelopes will be mailed to individuals and families who were members in 2008 and who had not yet paid their dues as of January 15.

Those of you who were not members in 2009 and are interested in joining BPNA can simply detach and complete the bottom portion of the last page of this *Park Beat* and mail it with your check for \$5 – \$15 per voting member (as can be afforded). A \$15 payment pro-rates to \$1.25/month over the course of the year and will help support the many activities listed below.

There are many good reasons to join BPNA which is a local neighborhood association made up of people like you, who make this neighborhood such a special place to live. BPNA dues support a variety of activities that enhance the experience of living here, including the monthly Park Beat newsletter, general membership meetings, Green Thumb Brigade, Mardi Gras Party, Spaghetti Dinner, Holiday Party, Design Review/Historic Preservation oversight to protect our neighborhood's historic character, safer streets, National Night Out, and many more.

Thank you for your support of our neighborhood association!

www.boulevardparkna.org

Save These Dates!

2010 BPNA Calendar of Events

February 20th – Mardi Gras Party

June 5th – Annual Yard Sale

August 3rd – National Night Out

September 11th – Annual Spaghetti Dinner

December 11th – Holiday Party

CLEANING IN THE NEW YEAR?

Save Your Treasures for the BPNA Yard Sale!

BPNA holds its annual Yard Sale each June. This event is BPNA's largest fundraiser, helping us pay the costs required to publish the monthly *Park Beat* newsletter, make grants to such organizations as Friends of Grant Park, and finance such events as the Annual Holiday Party and the Annual Spaghetti Dinner.

As with any yard sale, the more items we have means the more money we earn for these important activities! We will take virtually any saleable item. We will publish more details about the Yard Sale in *Park Beat* as the date nears, including where to deliver your treasures that could use a new home!

Thank you for your support!

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Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association Membership Form

Send form with your \$5.00 to \$15.00 check (less than 4 cents a day per household!) for the remainder of the calendar year to:

P.O. Box 163179, Sacramento, CA 95816-9179

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