



## PARK BEAT

*The Pulse of Greater Boulevard Park*

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association • Box 163179, Sacramento 95816 • November 2009

### Our Tree Hero! City Arborist Recognized for Outstanding Service

By Margaret Buss

Over the last eighteen years, many Boulevard Park residents have had the opportunity to work with **Dan Pskowski**, the City of Sacramento Arborist with the unpronounceable name but encyclopedic knowledge of – and passion for – trees in the urban environment. Dan was our go-to expert, who took extra time and care either to save a tree or to compassionately explain why a tree had to be removed, knowing that removing one of our beautiful old trees is not just a physical loss but also an emotional one. This year the Sacramento Tree Foundation officially designated him a Sacramento Tree Hero, bestowing on him the C.K. McClatchy Award, which honors a long-term commitment to trees at the regional or community level. The award is given to a person whose pursuit of the greening of Sacramento matches the passion and energy of C.K. McClatchy, the prominent Sacramento newspaper publisher, who early championed the importance of trees in this area.

Dan volunteered his own time to attend neighborhood meetings so that he could directly address residents' concerns, try to find acceptable solutions, and educate residents about tree care



and removal. He used scientific principles of arboriculture but understood the human element in maintaining and valuing the urban forest. As the award committee said: "He was always willing to go the extra mile to ensure the best possible outcomes for trees and people alike. Dan understands that our urban forest is made up not only of trees, but also of the people who live beneath them... His years of dedication to preserving our historic trees and helping the next generation of trees grow-up healthy and strong is a major gift to our region."

### Speaking of Trees...

The **Sacramento Tree Foundation (STF)** sponsors free "Get Out Under the Canopy" tours in different parts of the city, a kid-friendly, dog-friendly event for people of all ages. Each tour is led by a knowledgeable staff person or volunteer who will share information on species of trees and history of the area, and will also answer any questions you may have. No need to pre-register – it's an opportunity to explore with experts the wonderful tree canopy that gives Sacramento the name "the City of Trees."

Upcoming tours are from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon on **Saturday, November 7th** (Capitol Park Tour: meet on the east steps of the Capitol) and from 10:00 to 12:00 noon on **Saturday, November 14th** (Sacramento State Campus Tour: meet near the bus stop at the J street entrance). *For more information on these and other events and programs sponsored by the STF, go to [www.sactree.com](http://www.sactree.com).*

### News from Friends of the River Banks

The popular "Salmon Festival" in October is a hard act to follow, and the FORB still are discussing what the November activity might be. Typically there is a hike along the north banks of the American River on the **Second Saturday of the month** (November 14 in this case) and certainly there will be something to see – Robert Sewell already has spotted a sea lion in the river (*possibly in pursuit of a tasty wild salmon*) and a hive of wild bees in a tree stump.

If you are interested in participating in the November activity or simply learning more about Friends of the River Banks, please contact Laurie Litman at [llitman@pacbell.net](mailto:llitman@pacbell.net). She would be happy to add you to her e-mailing list. The riverside hikes and other activities are a collaboration of Friends of the River Banks and Friends of Grant Park, which is funded in part with a grant from First 5 Sacramento.

*Additional information about the First 5 Sacramento Commission is online at [www.First5Sacramento.net](http://www.First5Sacramento.net) or by calling 876-5865.*

### Annual BPNA Holiday Party – December 12

As announced in the October issue of *Park Beat*, this year our neighbors **Marc and Angela de la Vergne** will host the Holiday Party in their home at 610 22nd Street. The Capitol Brass Quartet will play your holiday favorites. The party will be from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., and BPNA residents who are also participating in the Second Saturday Art Walk that evening should feel free to come to the party before or after visiting the galleries. Everyone is asked to bring a dish to share (whether appetizer, main course, or a dessert) and a favorite festive beverage.

*More details will follow in the December issue of Park Beat.*

## Places to go, people to see

**November 2 – Neighborhood Response Team (NRT)** –7:00 p.m., home of Jan Seaman, 1822 G Street. Are you aware of illegal dumping, parking problems, or other city code violations in your area? Come see what can be done about them. *For more information or to report a code violation, contact Jan Seaman at [janseaman42@comcast.net](mailto:janseaman42@comcast.net).*

**November 7 – Capitol Park Get Out Under the Canopy Tour** – 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, meet on the east steps of the Capitol. *See details on page 1.*

**November 12 – BPNA Board Meeting** – 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Contact Rob Sperling at 444-8147 for location and to add items to the agenda. *Open to BPNA members and other interested neighbors.*

**November 14 – Sacramento State Campus Get Out Under the Canopy Tour** – 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, meet near the bus stop at the J street entrance. *See details on page 1.*

**November 14 – 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](http://www.sacramento-second-saturday.org).*

**November 15 – Copy and Ad Deadline for December issue of Park Beat.** To submit articles and calendar entries, email Asha Jennings at [ashajennings@gmail.com](mailto:ashajennings@gmail.com) or call her at 803-7409. To place an ad, call Rob Sperling at 444-8147.

**November 16 – 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](mailto:jmartindale@cityofsacramento.org) for information.*

**November 28 – 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](mailto:sallyfo@hotmail.com) if you would like information on traffic calming devices in need of watering – some of them may be near your home!*

**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](http://www.sacramentoskating.com) or call Brian Malone at 715-2808 or Bernard Scoville at 447-8288.*

See [www.thebeehive.org](http://www.thebeehive.org) and/or [www.cityofsacramento.org](http://www.cityofsacramento.org) for City Wide events; [www.oldsacramento.com](http://www.oldsacramento.com) for Old Town events



### CRESS PAINTING

“When it's worth doing right”

**TOM CRESS**  
(916) 203-9674

residential, renovations  
apartments, commercial  
free estimates  
Contractor's Lic. #539004

## Historic Homes of Boulevard Park

### 700 22nd Street – James Warrack House

This home was built by James Warrack, a railway agent who lived there with his family until 1920. Railroads were Sacramento's largest employer in Sacramento by 1912 when railroad wages of the combined workforce of Western Pacific and Southern Pacific totaled almost \$12 million dollars. This house was a single family home until Faith Murphy converted it into a boarding house for men and remained so until 1979 when it was converted into a Bed and Breakfast. The previous owner continued to restore it as Hartley House Bed and Breakfast. The current owners have returned it to a single-family home.

The interior has the original hardwood floors, stained woodwork, leaded and stained glass windows and many of the original light fixtures. The exterior has an angled bay and asymmetrical facade

combined with deep eaves and formal Colonial Revival trim. The deep front porch provides a shaded retreat from the summer heat.

*[Adapted from “Boulevard Park: A Walking Tour” by the Historic Boulevard Park Committee.]*



### When the Leaves Flutter, Don't Clutter the Gutter

Our trees are a treasure, offering us shade in summer, reducing our energy bills, and making walking in hot weather bearable. But there is a reason they call this season “fall,” and – as the October 13 storm reminded us! – all too soon our City of Trees will have streets and sidewalks full of fallen leaves, which can clog gutters and storm drains, leading to street flooding when it rains. Therefore, when creating leaf piles for city pick-up, make certain the pile is 12 to 18 inches away from the gutter and any storm drains. That distance will allow water to flow freely along the gutter to the drains.

## LOUIE

**DONALD J. LEWIS, JR.**  
**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**  
**HOME IMPROVEMENTS**  
**REPAIRS**  
**HANDIWORK**

AFFORDABLE HOURLY RATES  
FOR SMALL JOBS  
LOCAL TO THE MID-TOWN AREA

**916-443-6617**  
**916-443-6618 FAX**  
**916-838-5677 CELL**

[lcnlw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lcnlw@sbcglobal.net)

[louie1250@vzw.blackberry.net](mailto:louie1250@vzw.blackberry.net)

WINDOWS AND DOORS  
CARPENTRY  
PLUMBING  
ELECTRICAL  
ETC.

KITCHENS AND BATHS  
DRYWALL AND PAINT  
CONCRETE AND STUCCO  
DECKS AND FENCING  
ETC.

Licensed, Bonded, and Insured  
CSLB #662431

## BPNA Board of Directors 2009

CHAIR	<b>Rob Sperling</b>	444-8147	robsperling@sbcglobal.net
SECRETARY	<b>Catherine Turrill</b>	278-5786	turrillc@csus.edu
TREASURER	<b>Hal Edmonds</b>	599-5814	capnhal@gmail.com
<b>Margaret Buss</b>		448-6246	mbuss@jps.net
<b>Marc de la Vergne</b>		448-6909	marcangela@comcast.net
<b>Sally Flory-O'Neil</b>		446-3390	sallyfo@hotmail.com
<b>Dave Philipp</b>		212-1322	dave@davephilipp.com

*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:** TBA

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

**Repro:** Grady's Copy Shop, 1228 H Street, 444-6166

**Block Captain Coordinator:** Leo Pauly

**Great ad rates! Call 444-8147 for details.**

**The deadline for ads and copy for the Dec. issue of Park Beat is Nov. 15th by 5pm!**

# Comping the Core and Other Real Estate Notes for Fall 2009

By Liz Edmonds and Dave Philipp

Real estate in the neighborhood, think "City Core," has certainly been interesting these last few years. Many people have asked us recently how the City Core/Midtown market has performed in the downturn. Apparently, almost everybody has been focused on the big picture, reading the Bee or any other paper for that matter or watching the media has been doom, gloom and more doom. What those outlets often don't provide is a micro look at individual neighborhoods. In this report we look at the City Core, an area of Midtown and Downtown bordered by the freeways on three sides and the river on the fourth. The data compares September results over several years: had we compared May or December the results might vary somewhat. As it is October (of this writing) the most recent results are from September. So here they are--let's look at some real numbers and see how they relate to us here in the Jewel of Sacramento, Midtown.

Looking back at July through September of 2008 there were an average of 55 properties on the market at any point in the quarter. Compare that to 2009 during the same period, when there were an average of 37. Sales however were eerily similar, with 21 closed sales for each period. Looking to pended sales to see if they tell a different story shows that in 2008 we had 26 pended and this last quarter we had 28. Pretty helpful information isn't it? Well, okay, not so much.

Digging a little deeper let's review the price point, which for most people is the "big picture" they focus most closely on. Let's start with the whole market combined as we look at the data. In September 2005 the average sales price per square foot was a whopping \$368 compared to today's \$278. To save you the math that's a 23.6% decline from the market high when all properties are considered.

In Midtown there exist a lot of smaller properties that typically sell at a higher price per square foot. The primary reason for this is the value of the land on which the building sits is pushed into that smaller square footage number and adds a higher percentage of value than in larger homes. That is of course not to be confused with the sales price, because smaller still sells typically for less than larger! When we break out the figures for homes under 1300 square feet we see the price decline a more dramatic 28.8% from \$400 in 2005 to just \$285 in the most recent report. The number of homes sold and pended in this range however stayed very stable and sales actually were a little stronger in the Sept 2009 snapshot we are using. Conversely when we look at larger homes sold in this period—those over 1300 square feet—we see a much softer decline of only 16.1% from \$317 down to \$266 per square foot.

When looking at this data remember that this is a snapshot and not the gospel. The point being that these are averages and not every house fits into this box. As we have said in previous articles, there are many additional factors that play into house value and we won't revisit them all now.

What will impact the sales price in Midtown as well as the real estate market in general, however, is the appraisal process now in place. This could be an article of its own but, in brief, for years and years appraisers built reputations and relationships with lenders and underwriters. Lenders could pretty much call appraisers they worked with in specific areas and send one out to write the appraisal based on a fairly certain knowledge that he or she would know the "comps" and know the neighborhood housing inventory. In the new world of finance, appraisers are chosen at random from a pool of hundreds and in our case come to Midtown with a map on their lap and a GPS unit to be able to find an address. These appraisers often times have never been to Midtown and are unable to decide which "comp" to use. Often times, they are unwilling to use "comps" provided by the agents involved and create huge headaches for buyers and sellers by appraising properties lower than they are being sold for.

We know that clearly in many areas and ways the old system failed. The new system however is failing too. In unique areas with non-typical housing stock and so many nuances in the neighborhoods the new system all too often fails everyone--buyer, seller, lender and investor.

## Nominating Committee Formed

As stated in the BPNA Bylaws, no later than October of each year, an ad hoc nomination committee will be formed from the voting membership. Additionally, the nomination committee shall present to the general membership no later than November 30th, the slate of prospective Board Candidates that they recommend. **Sally Flory-O'Neil, Liz Edmonds and Pete Bramson** have agreed to serve as this year's nominating committee.

If you are interested in being nominated to run for the 2010 Board of Directors, please contact the nominating committee at sallyfo@hotmail.com. *If you would like to find out what being on the Board involves, please contact any of the current Board members listed on page 3.* You must be a member in good standing to be nominated, meaning your membership is current and you have attended three BPNA meetings or events in the past 12 months.

# 5th Annual Midtown Children's Fair a Great Success!

By Tiffanie Simpson

Thanks to everyone who joined us for our **Fifth Annual Midtown Children's Fair**. Over the years, the tremendous support from groups like BPNA has helped to make this entirely FREE EVENT a huge hit with families. Funded by **First Five Sacramento**, the Midtown Children's Fair is also greatly supported by donations of time, skills, money, and hours of volunteer work. This year we were able to bring **Joey Ventitelli** (a local resident) to the stage along with "Voice of the Wood," performing a play using hand-made masks.

**Friends of Grant Park** is very fortunate to have collaborative partners and neighbors that frequently attend our events and make them so successful. Thanks to all of you for your continued efforts to help build a strong community for families with young children in Midtown. We especially thank Councilmember Steve Cohn and his incredible staff, the Department of Neighborhood Services, the Sacramento Fire Department, Bead Fetish, One Village, Sacramento Parenting Partnership, the high school student volunteers from Florin and Saint Francis High Schools, Courtyard School and, of course, the Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association.

Visit [www.boulevardparkna.org](http://www.boulevardparkna.org)  
for neighborhood news & events!

# City of Sacramento Phone Numbers

Sacramento City Operator .....	264-5011
Animal Care Services .....	808-7387
Code Enforcement.....	808-5948
Graffiti Hotline.....	264-8819
Parking Enforcement .....	808-5354
Parks and Recreation Department.....	808-5200
Police Emergency .....	911
Police Non-emergency.....	264-5471
SMUD Customer Service .....	1-888-742-7683
Streetlight Shop.....	808-6313

## 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](mailto:ashajennings@gmail.com).

## EDMONDS AND PHILIPP: *Your Way Home*



Whether buying or selling, call the team that lives & works in Boulevard Park.  
Recycling vintage homes in record time is our specialty!

*Dave Philipp*

**REALTOR**

916.212.1322

[dave@davephilipp.com](mailto:dave@davephilipp.com)



*Liz Edmonds*

**REALTOR**

916.838.1208

[liz@lizedmonds.com](mailto:liz@lizedmonds.com)



## 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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**New Member**       **Renewing Member**       **Yes! I want to help. Call me.**

**Would you like to receive the newsletter by email, as well as home delivery?**