



COMING UP

Spring 2012

Spring Meeting and Ice Cream Social
Saturday April 14, 4PM-6PM
Hillside Covenant Church
2060 Magnolia Way
Topic: Energy Efficient Homes

If you have any questions please bring them with you on April 14. The Hillside Covenant Church has offered their facility for our meeting. We will be in the room at the back/bottom side of the facility. Join us for a great time and bring your children and neighbors. We welcome new members! ■

10th Annual Parkmead Garage Sale
Saturday June 2



The PCA annual ice cream social will be Saturday, April 14, from 4pm to 6pm. Come enjoy ice cream sundaes while socializing with the neighborhood and hear our special presentations on solar/energy efficiency for your homes. Come hear about new, safe, and top quality options for homeowners and learn

a better way to quickly evaluate the increased number of options out there. There will be ice cream, lots of topping, beverages and even babysitters who will entertain the little ones with balloon tricks and videos!

The 10th annual Parkmead Garage Sale will be Saturday June 2. Last year over 50 of your neighbors made some extra cash and helped to keep this the biggest garage sale in Walnut Creek.

The PCA provides publicity for the sale, shopping maps to guide buyers to participating homes, and mailbox balloons to participants. We ask that participants pay the annual PCA dues of \$12. You'll find a membership payment envelope enclosed with this newsletter. Our website also has membership information.

Our first speaker will be Larry Goldzband, the Program Director of California Building Performance Contractors Association (CBPCA). With 12 years of experience in the field, Larry will share how all of our houses can become more energy efficient, more durable, and safer all in one fell swoop. Since 2001, CBPCA has been responsible for training hundreds of contractors in the field of building performance, enabling the homeowners to maximize their energy efficiency.

If you've been letting junk pile up in your garage for nine years without joining in, let this be the year you reverse that trend and take part in the Parkmead Garage Sale! Sign up to participate in the sale at our website, www.parkmead.org. Questions? Contact Chris Sherwood at garage@parkmead.org ■

Our second speaker, Jason Coolman, is an independent home solar advisor at My Solar Advisor. He has been involved in consumer solar space for the past 6 years including work at different companies in system quality assurance, rebate compliance, sales, site visit evaluation and layout design. His passion and role now is advising homeowners independently in presentations and through email and his website via a no-cost model to help make a more objective, informed, comfortable evaluation of solar.



Join/Renew Now

Annual Parkmead Community Association Membership Drive

Dues only \$12! Use enclosed membership form and return envelope. Please act now! Don't put it aside for later! We want your input for 2012—see survey. Also sign up for our email list on the membership form.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What does the PCA board do for the neighborhood?

Your PCA Board

has grown to 13 members - full capacity. I want to welcome our



newest members David Wright, Kristin Lanham, Heidi Nelkie and Carlos Nascimento. These new members

have brought new energy and creative ideas to what we are planning for the Ice Cream Social and other events this year.

Several of your neighbors have asked **“what does the PCA Board do for the neighborhood?”** I believe it is good to share some of these recent and past successes. Here are some of the best ones:

We worked with neighbors between 2005-2006 providing input into the City of Walnut Creek 2025 General Plan. This gave us value and recognition within Walnut Creek and indirectly the County. Prior to Trader Joe's opening, we worked with them to expand their site work design to include plants and flowers in the parking lot and entryway. We also worked with the City to install directional signs to move traffic away from Newell along California Blvd. We installed a bench and planted native flowers at Deadora Tree near the end of Newell near the freeway overpass. Most recently we worked with the City to re-install the left turn signal at Newell and S. California.

Recently, there were more complaints about the smoker area under the

freeway overpass behind Hick'ry Pit by many Kaiser employees. I first inquired within Kaiser's security and was told to go to Walnut Creek City Hall and the Walnut Creek Police Department. I did and they said that they could not discourage smoking on a public sidewalk. However, the plight is not over. I went back to Kaiser and elevated it to their Facilities Manager, highlighting that we have dissatisfied neighbors and parents within the community. They are going to change that location in the near future, moving it off the walking paths to Las Lomas. Obviously, Kaiser's spokesman said “we want to be good neighbors with you and the community.”

We will continue to be “our neighborhood voice” within the community and would like to hear your suggestions. I encourage you to visit one of our board meetings to see what we are up to and about. We meet monthly every second Tuesday at one of the member's houses.

We live in a great part of Walnut Creek, enjoy our eternal Spring and be sure an join us on Saturday, April 14th between 4 PM – 6 PM at the Hillside Covenant Church. Be sure and arrive early if you want some ice cream choices.

Richard West
PCA Board President

PARKMEAD REAL ESTATE
REAL ESTATE MARKET UPDATE
by Kristin Lanham

Investors offering cash continued to outbid first-time home buyers requiring a mortgage for the opportunity to purchase priced to sell bank-owned and short sale bargains across much of Contra Costa County.

What the news doesn't report is most homes priced under \$600,000 are seeing multiple bids due to the lack of inventory in our area. Palo Alto and the surrounding area including SF housing market is on fire, primarily due to the FaceBook IPO and the expansion of Google, Zynga etc. corporate offices in the Mission Bay area of SF. This trend will most likely trickle into our area in the next 6-12 months.

As of 2/29 our 94595 zip code (not including Rossmoor) had 12 detached and 5 attached active listings. Total closed for our zip code in the month of February was 4 detached homes and 0 attached. More specifically to the Parkmead area we have had only 2 closing this year: 100 Lancaster & 41 Maple Lane with an average 3 days on the market and an average sales price of \$670,000, way above the median price for all of Walnut Creek. As of March 1st, we have 2 active listings and 8 pending in Parkmead.

Homes Sold	Homes Sold	% Change
Q4/11	Q4/10	
119	97	23
Avg DOM	Avg DOM	Change (days)
Q4/11	Q4/10	
58	64	6
Median Price	Median Price	% Change
Q4/11	Q4/10	
\$590,000	\$712,500	-17

By Pete Johnson

Chabad Day Care Center – As reported in the Fall newsletter and on the PCA website, Chabad is planning a child care center at its facility at 1671 Newell at Circle Dr and the freeway underpass. Chabad hosted a neighborhood meeting on Oct. 25 to discuss their plans for a child-care center. Neighbors in attendance expressed concerns about increased traffic and parking and Chabad committed to working with the neighbors and County on these issues. The County is still reviewing the latest plans and the environmental report so there will be no public hearings with the Zoning Administrator until April or later. Check our website www.parkmead.org for updates.

County Supervisor Elections – Now that we are all in District 2 and Gayle Uilkema the current supervisor is retiring we want all voters to be aware of the importance of this election on June 5. It will be a wide-open campaign for a 4-year term. There are 3 announced candidates – the 2 considered most viable are Tomi Van de Brooke, an Orinda resident and trustee on the Contra Costa Community College District board (see <http://tomivdb.com/>) and Candace Andersen, Mayor of Danville (see <http://andersenforsupervisor2012.com>) The third candidate is Sean White of Lafayette, an energy professor, who is on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/seanwhiteforsupervisor>. If no one candidate wins 50% on June 5, there will be a run-off in November. The new supervisor takes office in January 2012.

I-680 South Bound HOV Lane – There are plans to extend the high occupancy lane on I-680 from N.

Main thru the 24/680 interchange to Rudgear. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) made a presentation to the WC City Council on Feb. 21. This will involve some widening of lanes and re-striping, new sound walls and widening the Las Trampas Creek bridge on 680 near Newell, Paulson Lane and the Palm Court shopping center (Bothello and Alpine). It also may involve the S. Main under crossing near Creekside. This is all expected to be in the current right-of-way. This project will be designed in 2013-15 and construction will be 2016-18. City staff informed the PCA and Friends of the Creek of all this and the CCTA will be arranging a neighborhood meeting and sending out a flyer.

California-Newell Improvement Project – The City recently informed the PCA of plans to upgrade the traffic signal and left turn lanes at S. Main and Newell (by the high rise). They will also resurface Newell between S. Main and the San Ramon Creek bridge and S. California by Trader Joe's this summer. Some bike lanes will be installed at the S. Main and Newell intersection and a sidewalk will be added on Newell by the strip mall (Pacific Bay Coffee and Georges Giant Hamburgers). The sidewalk will be built in the street where cars now can park at meters so those will be removed but it will not affect the parking lot. There will be a continuous sidewalk from the intersection to the creek bridge to get pedestrians to and from the Kaiser area and Whole Foods area. ■

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TEAM TRAINING IN APRIL

Help yourself and assist our community during a disaster while staying safe by becoming a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) member. Walnut Creek is divided into nine units. Parkmead is in the Tice Unit which also includes the Tice Valley and Saranap. Whether you live within the city boundaries or not you are invited to participate.

CERT training classes will be Wednesdays, 6:30-10 p.m. April 18 - May 23, at Tony LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation. There will be a final drill the morning of Saturday, June 9. Training topics include disaster preparedness, how to shut off utilities and use a fire extinguisher, light search and rescue techniques, and disaster First Aid.

CERT graduates are sworn in as volunteer Disaster Service Workers for the City of Walnut Creek. In the event of an earthquake or other disaster, CERTs gather at pre-designated staging areas and work as a team in responding to the community. Cost is \$25 and pre-registration is required. Email cert@walnut-creek.org or call 925-256-3556. More information may be found at www.walnut-creek.org/cert. If you would like to know more about CERT in Parkmead, contact Mary Andre. ■

Knock, Knock, Who's There?

By Hannah Edgar

It's a funny thing to serve on a neighborhood board—acting dually as representative and civil servant to hundreds of homeowners—and juggling high school, extracurricular responsibilities and general teen-dom at the same time. But, then again, Julia Cohen and I are used to it. After all, we have been serving as the Parkmead Community Association's teen representatives for over a year now. That being said, it is equally funny (not to mention totally gratifying) to see, after days and sometimes weeks of hard work, our budding ideas be translated into reality. The annual caroling event we have held for the past two years now is exemplary of this. Though whatever contributions Julia and I make are often preconceived and thoroughly discussed before presenting them to the rest of the board, this particular event did not require extensive brainstorming at all. In fact, as I recall, it was devised in a rather unorthodox fashion: by starting off as a joke.

When Julia and I attended our very first meeting back in fall of 2010, we weren't sure what to expect. We'd only just heard about the opportunity to join the board in a recent PCA newsletter, much like the one you're reading now. As we were wrapping up, the board discussed how to garner more publicity for PCA, and I, hoping to break the ice, mentioned to the room half-sarcastically that Julia and I could go door-to-door, look cheesy, and sing carols around the holidays as a perverse form of advertisement. I expected vague chuckles in return, but instead came the raising of eyebrows. A few members of the board shared excited glances, and an exclamation

here and there of "how fun!" sealed the deal. As they rattled off ideas, adding to the potential of the event, Julia and I exchanged surprised glances, and we both left that night with plans to organize a legitimate December event. Needless to say, it was definitely an eventful first meeting for both of us.

We have since remained the primary organizers of PCA's caroling night, and in return Julia and I dote upon the event as if it were our own child: crafting posters, printing lyric pamphlets, and plotting out routes to lead a crowd of bundled-up carolers down on the night itself. And words cannot express how fully our weeks of organization pay off, as the look of joy on people's faces when they open the door makes toughing out the nippy weather more than well worth it for everyone.

One moment that was unforgettable in particular occurred last year, when our caroling party received a request to carol for a 101-year-old neighbor living on Newell. This year, when we learned that the same neighbor was in the hospital over the holidays, Julia led us in setting up a video camera and filming a special rendition of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" for her to kick off the night. At the tune's conclusion, the group of almost twenty carolers yelled out their well-wishes to the camera, waving and smiling under knit caps and knotted scarves.

Call me idealistic, but it's always been a fantasy of mine to live in a neighborhood where people carol. But then again, it's been a fantasy of mine since elementary school to live in a neighborhood like Parkmead. Though conceived in jest, it goes without saying that this event, merely a single display of the overwhelming

generosity and joy already present in our community, only reminds me why.



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