

The Portola Valley Post

Spring 2013

Town Picnic
June 8



Town Picnic

Annual Zots to Tots race, fun and games for the whole family at the Town Center!



Portola Valley Garden Share

Join your friends and neighbors to share the bounty from your garden!



Thank You, Skip Struthers

Skip retires after 33 years of taking care of Portola Valley.



A Few Words on High Fire Danger (and Blues & BBQ)

The dry, warm, and windy season brings with it the Fire District's "High Fire Danger" sign program.



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Town Picnic on Saturday, June 8

Mark your calendars for the annual Portola Valley Town Picnic! Start the day at 9 am with the Zots to Tots foot and bicycle race from the Alpine Inn to the Portola Valley Town Center, then enjoy fun and games for the whole family at the Town Center!

Schedule of Activities

- 9:00 am Register for Zots to Tots Race, Alpine Inn, 3915 Alpine Road
- 10:00 am Race begins, good luck everyone!
- 10:30 am Picnic begins, join the fun!
- Noon Live Music
- 1:00 pm Local beer and wine tasting, appetizers, too
- 2:00 pm Bingo begins for ages 10 and up
- 3:00 pm Picnic ends. Thanks so much for coming!



For more information on Zots to Tots, please contact Wendi Haskell [via email](#) or phone (650) 851-1033. Additional information will be provided on the [Town Picnic](#) webpage.

Exploring Portola Valley



Portola Valley trails and paths offer Town residents over 36 miles of walking, hiking, bicycling and equestrian opportunities. While we all see the trails along our main roads being used at all times of the day, our less-traveled trails and paths offer the chance to explore our beautiful environment and obtain new perspectives. Turning a corner, you may find yourself in a quiet glen, a meadow with views of Windy Hill or face-to-face with the neighborhood deer, chickens, horses or even a llama. You will also meet your fellow Town residents as they carry on their daily dog walking, shopping and exercise routines.

Our trails and paths range from easy walks to challenging climbs, offering every resident a chance to see nature up close in a special way. We encourage you to visit the [Portola Valley Trails](#) webpage and choose a new trail or path to explore this summer.

The Trails & Paths Committee is also organizing a **community hike on Saturday, June 22nd**. We invite interested residents to join this walk, which will involve routes they may not normally use. Please watch the website and PV Forum for details to come.

Judith Hasko, Chair, Trails & Paths Committee
Our committee needs volunteers! Apply online!

Portola Valley Garden Share

Every Fourth Saturday from 10 ~11 am
Redwood Grove near the Historic Schoolhouse at Town Center



Join your friends and neighbors to share the bounty from your garden! Bring what you have to share; take home something your neighbor has to share.

A garden share is an opportunity for adults and children to come together and share homegrown vegetables, fruits, herbs, flowers, honey, eggs, seeds, bulbs, seedlings, compost, etc. It's a great way to connect, learn, and enjoy your garden even more.



Items Typically Shared:

Freshly Picked: fruit, vegetables, herbs, flowers, eggs

Freshly Made: pickles, preserves, jams

For Growing: seeds, seedlings, roots, bulbs

For Composting/ Fertilizing: chicken manure, earth worms, grass clippings

**Any prepared items exchanged at the Portola Valley Garden Share should be acceptable under the [California Homemade Food Act](#) adopted in September 2012.*

*Brandi de Garmeaux
Sustainability & Special Projects Manager*

Thank You, Skip!



Things have changed in Portola Valley over the last 33 years, but Skip Struthers, the Town's first maintenance employee, has been here working with the Maintenance Department for all that time. Skip has maintained streets, lands, and buildings and provided janitorial service for Town buildings. You've also probably noticed him filling potholes, trimming trees and unclogging storm drains. In June, Skip will be retiring from his position as Senior Maintenance Worker.

Skip notes that when he began as a part-time employee, many of the residents were war veterans soon to be retiring from their post-war jobs. It wasn't as expensive to live here and there were fewer residents. In Skip's own words, "The Town was like a caring family that felt the Town was theirs, and so I always treated the Town as I would my own backyard, embracing the rural values, caring about the environment and protecting wildlife."

Skip has some fond memories of the early days. During Bob Anderson's term as Mayor, he was Skip's sort-of boss and often worked side-by-side with Skip. When there was a tree down across Portola Road, Bob told Skip to get the chain saw and the two of them went out and worked together to clean off the road. The job took about a half day and Bob, who was then about 70, worked with Skip until the job was done.

Portola Valley had its share of crisis situations over the years, and Skip particularly remembers the major storms and resultant flooding in 1984. Raging water and huge logs were hurtling down Corte Madera Creek and created a log jam at the bridge, destroying the roadway. Bob Anderson collected up a group of volunteers to deal with the

mess, and the group was considering lowering Skip and a chain saw by rope over the side of the bridge so he could cut up the logs. To Skip's great relief, the group finally decided it was a better plan to get a crane in to clean up the mess.

Town picnics were a little different in those days, too. Skip would drive a donated truck with the bed filled with hay bales and musicians. Portola Road was closed for the event and 200 – 300 residents would walk down the road following the truck to the picnic site. The Silver Throats, a local group, sang old songs at the picnic.

Public Works Director Howard Young states that "Skip is a jack-of-all-trades and will be missed. The Town does not have 24-hour maintenance service, but Skip has always made himself available at a moment's notice. He knows what needs to be done and does it efficiently and economically. It has been a pleasure to work with someone so dedicated to the Town through the years."

What's next for Skip? His parents, (who are both 97—now you know why Skip is still so hale and hearty), have just moved to assisted living. So in the near future, Skip and his wife will prepare his parents' home in Belmont for sale, and they will continue to enjoy looking after them. Skip is also looking forward to spending more time hiking with his son and daughter-in-law and returning to his love of music. Skip has written more than 100 songs and now he'll have time to pursue that passion again.

Thank you, Skip for your 33 years of service and being such a valuable part of the Town's team. All who have had the pleasure of working with you over the years wish you the best!

The Mayor's Letter

A Few Words on High Fire Danger and Blues & BBQ



In my nearly 50 years of living in Portola Valley, I can't recall an earlier start to the high fire danger season. Where I've historically mowed my meadow in late May or early June, I've had to advance that by at least three weeks.

The coming of the dry, warm, and windy season brings with it the Fire District's "High Fire Danger" sign program. Beginning now through October wherever you see the "High Fire Danger" signs please avoid high-risk activities (such as mowing at mid-day) until the dangerous fire conditions have subsided.

I also encourage you to visit [CERPP's High Fire Danger](#) webpage for access to a wealth of resources that will help you protect your property and our community from the devastating impacts of fire.

You are also encouraged to take advantage of the free neighborhood chipper program to help mitigate wildfire risk provided by dry vegetation. Please review the 2013 chipper schedule for your neighborhood's chipper dates at www.portolavalley.net.



If you've heard rumors that Blues & BBQ is being cancelled due to a lack of volunteers, it is true. The significant decline in new volunteers on Town committees in general has had a corresponding impact on our ability to maintain some of the community's most valued events. In fact, this year's [Town Picnic](#) was in serious risk of cancellation if not for a group led by the Boy Scouts who banded together earlier this year.

You may have heard a hundred times that our Town was founded by volunteers, and those volunteers have built a community unlike any other in our region. But as with all things sprinting along without rest, volunteers burn out, too. Unfortunately, this year's Blues & BBQ must be cancelled due to a lack of volunteers, so I hope that a new generation of volunteers steps up to ensure that we have Blues & BBQ in 2014.

I encourage residents to contact the Town Clerk at (650) 851-1700 x 210 to learn more about opportunities to volunteer in our community or visit the [Town Committees](#) webpage.

As former Mayor Bill Lane so aptly wrote: "Finally, it is often said that you get out of life what you give. Through volunteerism, we not only provide support for our Town; we obtain the rich rewards of friendship and of truly making a difference, while setting a meaningful example for future generations."

Donna Reed on Steroids: The PV Women's Club



Photo—Ginger Creevy

Members and significant others enjoyed our Harvest Soirée

The Portola Valley Women's Club is shaking up the old-fashioned view of a women's group. Our inclusive neighborhood club strives to embrace all PV women in order to spark dialog, community service and friendships.

While maintaining the warmth of a small neighborhood coffee klatsch, the PVWC has tailored the club experience for the busy modern woman. Our membership includes doctors, housewives, artists, and professionals who want to be active and connect with their neighbors and our community.

We have three official PVWC semi-yearly social gatherings and a constant stream of member-driven activities including coffees, card games, hikes and lectures. There are no mandatory meetings or time requirements, no dues and all social events are potluck in order to avoid event fees. Unlike many traditional women's clubs, we have no specific requirements to join the group and all PV women are welcome.

We encourage you to join us - just email the PVWC at join@pvwomensclub.com with your name, PV address (Ladera included), email address and phone number. Or visit our website at www.pvwomensclub.com.

Jennifer Hammer, PVWC Member and Board Member

By Popular Demand - Goodwill "Give 'n Go" Donation Stations at 2013 Neighborhood Clean-Up Events

By popular demand, GreenWaste and the Town of Portola Valley are teaming up with Goodwill of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin Counties for convenient donation drop-off days throughout the year. The Town of Portola will host three *Give 'n Go* donation drives throughout the year in conjunction with the Neighborhood Clean-Up events on May 4th, August 3rd, and October 5th from 8 am -11 am.

Simply bring your gently used toys, clothes, household items and eWaste (electronic products) on neighborhood cleanup days. Your tax deductible donations to Goodwill not only help take pressure off local landfills but also fund Goodwill's job training and placement programs, giving people in your community with barriers to employment a second chance. An added bonus? Less clutter in the rooms and closets of your home.

Visit www.portolavalley.net for more information on the types of donated items Goodwill and GreenWaste can accept at the Neighborhood Clean-Up Events.

*Brandi de Garmeaux
Sustainability & Special Projects Manager*

Portola Valley & Woodside 2013 Earth Fair



Photo by Virginia Bacon

For the first time ever, Portola Valley and Woodside joined forces for an Earth Day Celebration on April 27 at Runnymede Farm in Woodside. Attendees enjoyed live music, a self-guided tour of the beautiful Runnymede sculpture garden, food, performing birds and a variety of exhibits. The event was sponsored by the Woodside Sustainability & Conservation Committee and the Portola Valley Sustainability Committee.

Look for the Earth Day Fair at Town Center in April 2014.

*Brandi de Garmeaux
Sustainability & Special Projects Manager*



 EMPOWER PORTOLA VALLEY

Join the conversation. Connect with us on facebook to stay updated on Portola Valley's residential energy health and become part of the solution.

EMPOWER PORTOLA VALLEY is our town's pledge to build a bright, healthy future on clean and efficient energy.

Being Prepared for a Disaster is Like Getting Ready for a Camping Trip

It's really not very complicated to be prepared for a disaster. Have you ever gotten ready for a camping trip?

It's really easy to have a few simple things set aside in a handy place that you could grab if something were to happen. People often ask me if there are special items they need. You don't need anything special, but you need it to be in a known place where it is easily accessible.

Imagine going on a two-day camping trip. The spot you are going is in the beautiful outdoors but will have no running water, no electricity, and no cell phone coverage. Now imagine that place is your home.

For starters, you need **water**. A person can live on a few gallons a day.

Every home has lots of water already in storage – the water heater. But it never hurts to have some gallon containers in storage too, just in case your water heater is destroyed or rendered unsafe. Most water heaters are 50 gallons and have a faucet on the side from which water can be drawn.

Without **electricity**, your refrigerator will be off. Try not to open it until you need something – it saves the cold. Always have food on hand that doesn't need refrigeration. Food like power bars, canned goods, and dehydrated food go a long way (in addition to that jar of peanut butter).

It's dark at night. So for sure you'll need **flashlights** and **extra batteries**. Flashlights and electric lanterns have come a long way since that campout you did with your dad in 1970.

LED based lights are small, bright and last a long time. Have lights near places you might be when the disaster occurs, i.e., under your bed, next to your favorite reading chair, and in the kitchen. A small LED light can lead you to safety.

Finally you should have an **AM/FM radio**. During a disaster this will be your most dependable source for vital emergency-related information. (Don't forget your car has a radio, too.)

For additional information on being prepared for a disaster, check the PV website or www.ready.gov. Being prepared is a smart way to live in Portola Valley.

Ray Rothrock, Chair

Emergency Preparedness Committee

Our committee needs volunteers! Apply online!

Affordable Housing Community Discussions

In early 2013, the Town Council appointed a nine-member Affordable Housing Committee to lead the community in developing an affordable housing mission statement based upon a consideration of need, option and priorities.

The Ad-Hoc Committee is charged with delivering its report to the Town Council on June 12. The report is to include a mission statement to guide the Town's vision for future housing decisions, and criteria by which to evaluate proposals for a variety of types of housing and sites for housing. Essential to this effort is the articulation of community values relevant to providing housing for a diverse population.

Five community meetings have been held to gather input from as many PV residents as possible. Concerns have been expressed and many valuable suggestions made; the comments are being collated to serve as the basis for the committee report.

The Town's unfulfilled commitment to provide eight moderate-income units in the Blue Oaks development has led to consideration of:

- alternative types of housing
- site and density concerns
- encouragement of second units
- multifamily housing (as at the Priory)
- maintenance of local control
- the importance of preserving the Town's rural atmosphere

The Committee members were selected to represent a cross-section of community attitudes as well as for geographic distribution. They are Susan Dworak, Bud Eisberg, Wanda Ginner, Judith Hasko, Judith Murphy, Jon Myers, Andrew Pierce, Onnolee Trapp, and Carter Warr. Steve Toben chairs the meetings, and Nick Pegueros and Karen Kristianson provide staff support.

The committee continues to be eager to hear from all residents. If you have been unable to attend a meeting, please send your ideas and suggestions directly to the Town. A [downloadable comment card](#) is available. Comments may be submitted via the submission box located at Town Hall, email to town-hall@portolavalley.net or by regular mail.

Information about the Town's obligations, background material, comment forms and FAQ's are available at

www.portolavalley.net/affordablehousing

Onnolee Trapp and Judith Murphy

Affordable Housing Ad-Hoc Committee

Nature and Science Fun

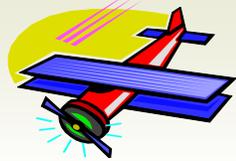
The specific intent of the Nature & Science Committee is to engage the young and the young at heart in the virtues of science, technology, engineering and math, as well as to introduce them to engaging hobby activities.

Flight Night

May 31, 2013

6:00 p.m.

Town Center



On the evening of Friday, May 31, Town Center will host the third “Flight Night” event with more exciting demonstrations and exhibits related to radio-controlled (RC) flight.

The 2011 and 2012 Portola Valley “Flight Night” highlighted spectacular demonstrations of RC model planes.

Flight Night 2013 will double the outdoor flying space, and feature more dual-control instruction opportunities and actual construction of model gliders. You won’t want to miss it! Activities begin at 6:00 p.m.

The Nature & Science Committee branched into mathematics this year with the “Fun with Figures” series on some very special numbers – Pi, e, and *i*.

George Comstock and Paul Heiple led this fascinating exploration that drew attentive audiences from various ages and was highlighted by slides and hands-on activities to illustrate the unique properties of these numbers.

The attendees found the sessions so stimulating that they are anxious to continue with more topics, perhaps zero and infinity.

Saturday, August 10 will be the date for the “Star Party” this summer. See the summer constellations and far space objects with the great telescopes set up by knowledgeable amateur astronomers.

This is always a great opportunity for the whole family with indoor activities and exhibits in addition to star-gazing.

Star Party

August 10, 2013



And be sure to stop by Buckeye activity room on Town Picnic day, June 8. The Nature & Science Committee will have activities and displays set up that should catch the interest of both children and adults.

Yvonne Tryce, Chair, Nature & Science Committee
Our committee needs volunteers! Apply online!

Cultural Arts Committee of Portola Valley

The Cultural Arts Committee is a group of people who enjoy increasing the community's cultural awareness by sponsoring and supporting a wide-range of local cultural activities in the areas of art, music, science and nature, history, drama, literature, photography and dance. To join the Cultural Arts Committee, please call committee chair, Linda Olson at (650) 851-2624 or submit an application via the Town's website.

QUILTS



This past year we had the wonderful quilts that were in the windows of the Historic Schoolhouse restored. The quilts were made in 1998, by former 3rd grade teacher Linda Vlasic's class with the squares made to depict local history.

Quilt expert Nancy Goodrich recently brought these fragile squares back to life. She was able to return some of the original color and shape to the squares and surrounded them in a beautiful new quilt.

They are currently on display in the Historic Schoolhouse and in the Town Library. Please come and enjoy Nancy's handiwork.

SUMMER CONCERTS



This summer we will again sponsor the Summer Concert Series. This has become an iconic outdoor summer event around which the community schedules their calendars.

The scene is one of great community camaraderie with picnickers blanketing the lawn, children, dogs, and laughter all set against a backdrop of stellar musical performances spanning Americana, rhythm and blues and smooth jazz.

Concerts are held whether it's clear and warm or breezy and foggy (in which case we're wrapped in coats and blankets)!

June 20: **Bundy Browne and the Espresso Rhythm Section.** Americana music with great energy.

July 18: **Charged Particles.** Highly composed jazz with elements of Latin, Funk, and Classical applied to originals and standards.

Aug. 22: **The Dutch Uncles.** R&R cover tunes played to perfection by six outstanding musicians

HOLIDAY FAIR



On Saturday, December 7 we will hold a Holiday Fair, which features a wide range of local arts and crafts from more than 30 vendors.

The Fair began in 2009 and a portion of the proceeds supports local education and open space.

Linda Olson, Chair, Cultural Arts Committee
Our committee needs volunteers! Apply online!

The Bicycle, Pedestrian & Traffic Safety Committee Our Second Year

BPTS continues to take an active interest in helping our Town and its visitors keep on the move safely. We have a wide purview, tackling issues identified amongst BPTS members, those brought to us by Portola Valley residents, and organizing outreach events for education and fun.

A major focus of the BPTS committee is the younger members of our community. BPTS is proud to support the "Safe Routes to School" initiative, which encourages our children to seek healthy and environmentally friendly ways to make the daily journey to and from school. This has been spurred on by "Bike and Walk to School Day" events about once a month during the school year, which are enjoying ever growing participation.

This year has just seen our first-ever "Bike Rodeo" event, (shown at right) held at Town Center. The Safe Moves team was enlisted to instruct young cyclists (and the occasional scooter) on safe and responsible cycling techniques, which they practiced on a guided ride run. There were lots of fun activities, and with almost one hundred children participating, the atmosphere was fantastic.



FOR THE BICYCLE

ABC quick check for the bike:

- Tires pumped up
- Brakes properly adjusted & working
- Chain and cranks in good order

FOR THE RIDER

- Wear a helmet at all times, use the proper size and adjust the straps to a correct fit
- Be visible, always use lights at night and in the fog and rain
- Don't use headphones
- Ride with traffic and obey signs, signals and traffic laws

In other areas, BPTS strives to work in an advisory capacity with the Town of Portola Valley on road and pedestrian matters.

During 2012, a study on the application of bike lanes on the Portola and Alpine Roads was brought to our attention. BPTS took the study under consideration, held special meetings to garner public input and subsequently presented a recommendation to the Town Council that bike lanes were not desired, but improvement of the shoulders to facilitate cycle traffic should be considered.

Another topic frequently on the BPTS agenda is management of overspill parking from Windy Hill Open Space Preserve onto Portola Road. In this, we have been ably assisted by Town staff in testing a number of experimental methods to encourage safe parking, such as temporary signage.

Last mentioned in our committee title, but first in our minds, of course, is the safety of all road users and pedestrians. The Sheriff's department submits a report each month of the citations issued in town. Between the figures for speeding tickets and the accounts of distracted drivers, this can make for some alarming reading. Please take care on and around our roads and help our Town to remain the safe, calm and beautiful place we all love.

Meetings are held at the Historic Schoolhouse on Portola Road on the first Wednesday of the month at 8:15 am. One meeting each quarter will be held at the alternate time of 7 pm, beginning on May 7. Readers may also be interested to visit the BPTS section of the Portola Valley Town website via the link below.



Beautiful New Baseball Field Next Year

After one year's delay, the Town will move forward with the renovation of Ford Field. Last year, the Town issued bids to contractors to renovate the field, but the bids all came in substantially higher than the funds raised. The Town then modified the design to reduce the costs while maintaining the key improvements needed for the field. After a successful rebid process, the renovation is now back on track and soon to begin.

The improvements will include replacing the grass infield and outfield, installing a new irrigation system, building new dugouts and new bleachers, installing a new backstop and replacing the fencing around the field. When additional funding is identified or received, improvements for the batting cage and dugout roof structure will be considered.

Nearly half of the funding for this improvement project is from a California Parks Improvement grant. The re-

mainder has been raised by donations from Little League, the Ford Family, and the community. Donations are still being accepted at www.portolavalley.net/fordfield.

The renovation is scheduled to begin in June and the field will re-open next spring just in time for Little League season. We're all looking forward to a beautiful new baseball field in Portola Valley.

Jon Myers, Chair, Parks and Recreation Committee

Howard Young, Public Works Director

Our committee needs volunteers! Apply online!

News from Friends of the Portola Valley Library

The PV Friends of the Library continue to sponsor a wide variety of enrichment and entertainment programs on a regular basis.

From the incredibly popular Daffy Dan, who brought out an enthusiastic audience of 148 adults and kids with his hilarious antics, to a quilt trunk show presented by award-winning local artist Sylvia Gegaregian, the Library is able to present something for just about anyone's interests. Sylvia shared her creative process and techniques using 23 of her artistic quilts as examples. The audience gained a healthy respect for Sylvia's creative process, which makes her quilts true works of art.

Poetry Contest Winners May 20 at 6:30 p.m.

You are invited to hear the winners of the popular Poetry Contest coming to the Community Hall on May 20th at 6:30 pm. The poems come

to life when read by the young authors, with ages ranging from kindergarten through high school.

Be on the look out for our fundraising newsletter coming to your mailbox later this month. An addressed envelope will be attached to the newsletter for your convenience. Your donation will help ensure that the many wonderful events sponsored by the Friends of the PV Library will continue.

The Friends are looking for new board members. We currently are in need of adults who might have school-aged children. We are especially seeking people who have skills in web design, page layout, are computer-literate or are familiar with social media techniques. Your workload as a volunteer would generally be light, with five to six short meetings annually.

For more information call Wendi Haskell, President of Friends of the PV Library at 650 851 1033 or wendihaskell@sbcglobal.net.

Wendi Haskell



Mr Q leading toddlers in dance during Story Time



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