



# UPPER EAST ASSOCIATION ■■■ SANTA BARBARA

## Upper East News

Fall 2013

[www.sbuppereast.org](http://www.sbuppereast.org)

### A Message from the Board President

It's that time of year when some of us start to get a sense of "fall," a time to talk about where we have been this last year. Our Upper East Association has an active Board with all our members contributing to a variety of efforts, from our ongoing garden exchanges to our monthly electronic newsletter.

We are also continuing and enhancing our ability to gather as a neighborhood, such as at our upcoming annual meeting and this summer's "walkabout," which brought attention to the wonderful landscape of several of our Upper East streets. We also have had some success by helping to retrieve some lost items, and when necessary providing alerts about safety issues in and around our homes.

As a Board we have also been monitoring and addressing some specific issues that affect the entire neighborhood, including the noise issue at Earl Warren Showgrounds and the new project now slated for construction at State and Mission. We are encouraging dialogue among our members concerning the "Hedge Ordinance" that is about to come before the Council early in 2014 for action.

As our activity grows, and to support initiatives such as our legacy project of Safe Passage, we find that our need to supplement the association's income becomes a bigger part of our responsibility. We hope that our active participation in getting information out to our membership and participating in important community discussions will make our mission of preserving and enhancing our neighborhood a positive contribution to all of you as members.

Speaking of important conversations, I hope you will attend our upcoming City Council Candidates Forum on September 12<sup>th</sup>. This is our opportunity to hear and interact with the candidates and to let them know what is important to us as a neighborhood.

As for my dog Mo and me, we will continue to take our walks and explore the Upper East and share our thoughts about what makes this place special.

Fred Sweeney  
President, Upper East Association  
Board of Directors

### Candidates Forum

Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 6-9pm  
Friar's Hall

The Upper East Association will host a forum to give you the opportunity to see and hear the candidates for Santa Barbara City Council in the upcoming election.

Ten candidates are running this November for three positions on the seven-member City Council. Mail-in ballots will be sent out October 7<sup>th</sup>, and Election Day is November 5<sup>th</sup>.

From 6-6:30pm you can meet the candidates informally at their individual campaign tables. At 6:30pm we will hold a short audience town hall where concerns specific to the Upper East may be presented to the candidates for their consideration. At 6:45pm, the formal question and answer format will begin.

## Candidates Forum (continued)

**Location:** Friar's Hall, on the grounds of the Santa Barbara Mission Renewal Center. Entrance at 2300 Garden Street; parking directions will be available there. Walk-ins are welcome, of course, but do bring a flashlight for the walk home.

## Become a Member for 2014

It's time to renew your membership in the Upper East Association for 2014, or to join if you are not yet a member. The annual dues for next year will be \$20.

If you live or own property in the Upper East you know what a lovely and historic neighborhood it is. The Association's goal is to keep it that way. We serve three key roles:

- Monitor local government initiatives affecting the Upper East and keep our members informed.
- Share the Upper East perspective with local government officials.
- Promote activities to beautify the neighborhood and enhance the quality of life of our residents.

We send out an email newsletter most every month alerting our members to coming events and newsworthy issues. We invite members to let us know about quality-of-life issues, and in a number of cases we've been able to do something about them. We maintain a website with up-to-date information about the community and the Association. Finally, each fall we distribute this printed newsletter to every residence in the neighborhood.

The Association has grown to comprise over 215 member households. Our ability to draw the attention of City officials to our issues is only as strong as our membership roster. The more members we have, the greater our influence.

If you are currently a member we hope you'll rejoin for 2014. If you're not yet a member, please join us.

## Annual Garden Party Sunday November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3-5pm Junipero Serra Hall

All members are invited to the Upper East Association Annual Garden Party, which is an opportunity to meet your neighbors, review the Association's activities during the past year and share goals for the next. Light appetizers, wine and other refreshments will be served.

We are excited this year to have as our guest speaker local historian Neal Graffy.

Neal has written numerous articles for both local and national historical publications. His most recent book, *Santa Barbara Then and Now*, presents a fascinating journey through Santa Barbara as it was and as it currently is in a side-by-side comparison of Then & Now images. His two previous books are *Street Names of Santa Barbara* and *Historic Santa Barbara*.

Mr. Graffy will be sharing his knowledge about development in our Upper East neighborhood in a presentation he has titled, "Who's on First – The Early Streets and Homes of the Upper East Side".

The UEA Garden Party is limited to current and new members only. If you are not yet a member, please consider joining today so we can include you on the invitation list.

In addition, we are looking for new or current members who are interested in the following volunteer activities:

- Garden Party planning and refreshments.
- Member artists who would like to display selections of their works on their own easels to be enjoyed by your fellow members during the Garden Party social hour.

If you are interested in either activity, please email us at [ueacomm@gmail.com](mailto:ueacomm@gmail.com).

**Location:** Junipero Serra Hall, corner of Garden and East Los Olivos Streets.

## Monitoring City Initiatives

From time to time issues arise in the City that affect the Upper East and merit our oversight and community input. The UEA Board has stepped forward in a number of such situations during the past year:

**Mission & State Development.** The UEA Board has closely monitored the proposals for the vacant property at the corner of Mission and State Streets, and representatives of our Board have attended the meetings of the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC). At the June 6<sup>th</sup> 2012 meeting of the HLC, UEA Board members Fred Sweeney and Joan Livingston urged the HLC to require a design for the property that reflects the importance of its location as a gateway to the Old Mission and the Upper State parkway.

After several iterations the HLC conducted a final review of the project on August 14<sup>th</sup> 2013 and approved the building and landscape design, an attractive one-story building in the Spanish Andalusian style.

Because the property is zoned C-2, however, it can be leased to anyone who qualifies for that zoning. Members of the UEA Board attending the hearing expressed our concern about the traffic some commercial uses may generate. Unfortunately, that is not an issue over which the HLC has control.

**Hedge-Height Ordinance.** The City Ordinance Committee is considering what to do about City ordinance 28.87.170 governing Fences, Screens, Walls and Hedges – better known as the “hedge-height ordinance.” Members of the UEA Board attended the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the committee and the August 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Neighborhood Advisory Council, during which the discussion addressed the sometimes conflicting desire for both safety and privacy. This is a topic of interest to many residents of the Upper East, where we have our share of tall hedges.

We will keep our members informed of developments via our monthly newsletters. If this issue is important to you we encourage you to attend public hearings and let your voice be heard.

**Urban Forest.** Many thanks to renowned landscape architect and UEA member Grant Castleberg for leading a street tree walkabout on July 27<sup>th</sup>. It was well-attended with almost 50 people proceeding up Santa Barbara Street from Los Olivos to Constance and down Garden Street.

Grant assisted in compiling recommended changes to the City’s Street Tree Management Plan, which the UEA Board will present to City Parks and Recreation staff at upcoming meetings on the Urban Forest Management Plan (scheduled on Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm and Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> from 10am-noon at the Louise Lowry Davis Center).

If you have questions about what street trees are approved on your block, contact Mandy Burgess at 564-5436 or [aburgess@santabarbaraca.gov](mailto:aburgess@santabarbaraca.gov).

**Earl Warren Showgrounds.** As you may have experienced earlier this year there have been a few occasions, particularly on Sunday afternoons, when a very disturbing “noise” rose over our neighborhood. When members of the UEA Board received phone calls and emails concerning this occurrence we sought to identify the source and address the issue. As it turns out the sound was emanating from Earl Warren Showgrounds.

Our president and members of our Board met with the director of Earl Warren Showgrounds and were assured that this was only a one-time phenomenon. As we soon experienced that wasn’t the case. Some events are held inside the arena where the roof area of the arena acts as a megaphone and spreads the sound over wide portions of the city.

In May a delegation of our Board attended the monthly meeting of the Showgrounds state-appointed board of directors to express our concern. We were assured by board members that this issue will be addressed and a policy concerning sound at the Showgrounds put in place. We will keep UEA members updated on the situation.

## Safe Passage between Mission Historical Park and Mission Canyon

What can be done about a dangerous stretch of highway that passes through an area of historical significance and is owned in part by the City and in part by the County? We're talking, of course, about the winding road leading from Mission Historical Park up to Mission Canyon. Pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists uneasily share this bottleneck, and for years the answer was 'nothing.'

In 2011, a working group comprising representatives of adjacent neighborhood associations, institutions, preservation groups and property owners formed to tackle the problem. UEA Board Members Fred Sweeney, Steve Forsell and Don Olson became and remain active members in the working group, which later expanded and formally became the Concerned Citizens for Safe Passage.

Rather than dive into solving the problems, the working group focused first on defining them. In 2012 it published a comprehensive Information Packet documenting both the safety issues and the many historical resources that must be considered in developing solutions. The Information Packet is available on the UEA website. It is also available along with other information on the Safe Passage Project website at [www.safepassagesb.com](http://www.safepassagesb.com).

To educate public officials and members of our community about the issues and challenges, the working group has conducted over a dozen walkabouts through the Safe Passage corridor. To date, over 150 City and County officials and interested citizens have participated in these walkabouts.

As a result of the working group's success in documenting the issues and advocating for attention, Caltrans has awarded the County of Santa Barbara an \$88,000 grant to develop a conceptual improvement plan for the corridor. The City of Santa Barbara is an active partner with the County on the project along with the working group.

The working group has recently developed a series of conceptual proposals to improve pedestrian and vehicle safety in the corridor. These proposals will

be the focus of public workshops to be held later this fall, and we urge interested residents to attend and participate in the discussion. We will inform UEA members when these workshops are scheduled.

## Garden Exchanges

We've held five successful garden exchanges this summer, with more to come. Please mark your calendar for the next one, on Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 10am-noon at 14 East Los Olivos St.

The idea of a garden exchange is simple ... if you have excess garden goodies – vegetables, fruit, plants – bring them for others to share. If you don't have anything to bring, please come anyway. After all, someone has to take home all those extras. There will be coffee, tea and munchies plus the opportunity to meet and chat with your neighbors.

## Upper East Association Board

The UEA Board of Directors currently consists of nine members:

### Term ending December 2014

Fred Sweeney – President  
Steve Forsell – Vice President  
Joan Livingston – Treasurer  
Milt Hess – Membership  
Tony Fischer

### Term ending December 2013

Marie-Paule Hajdu – Secretary  
Lisa Burns  
Don Olson  
Beth Perry

Board members serve two-year terms, with one-half of the Directors elected in even-numbered years and half in odd-numbered years. The Board meets monthly.

The election of Board members for the 2014-15 term will be conducted in November 2013. Prospective candidates for the Board are invited to contact us at [ueacomm@gmail.com](mailto:ueacomm@gmail.com) to express interest and to schedule a meeting to discuss what the role entails.