



# Midtown Residents Association Neighborhood Newsletter

## FALL 2013

Visit our web site at <http://www.midtownresidents.org/>

### MRA 2013 in Review

By Sheri Furman

This year's MRA efforts included bringing art to Hoover Park, emergency preparedness awareness, traffic issues (including the proposed Matadero Creek Trail), working with our Midtown Center businesses and, of course, our annual ice cream social.

In this issue we are highlighting some of these efforts

### Hoover Park Bears Are Here!

By Annette Glanckopf

The Midtown Residents Association (MRA) is happy to announce the installation in early October of a family of sculptural bears by artist Beth Nybeck in Hoover Park.

In mid-2008, the Midtown Residents Association prioritized bringing public art to Hoover Park. At the ribbon cutting for Scott Meadow in Greer Park in late 2010, MRA asked the Public Art Commissioners for art in Hoover Park. Some of the phrases that we thought important to convey the type of art and scale important for Midtown were:

Human scale	Graceful	Humorous/whimsical
Touchable	Playful	Climbable
Nothing that will rust	Approachable for all ages	Must relate to neighborhood



This quickly became a positive, productive, collaborative process and included funding and approval of the project by the Art Commission, creation of a selection committee with representatives from MRA, the Public Art Commission, Keys School, the Parks & Recreation Commission and a neighborhood resident artist.

A call for artists attracted approximately 20 artists. Five artists were selected to create site specific proposals for the site. The selection panel chose Beth Nybeck's Mother bear and three flowing, playful cubs for Hoover Park.

We asked you to help give the bears nicknames. Thanks to the numerous entries. The winners of the MRA contest were:

Bear 1 - Grace Mah with the name Rolly

Bear 2 and 3 – Ben Erickson with the names of Scout and Mischief

These are great names, but as Mayor Greg Scharff said at the kickoff, "I know that each and every one of you will have your favorite names for each bear."

MRA thanks the Palo Alto Art Commission for their support in bringing these adorable, climbable, touchable bears with distinct personalities to Hoover Park. They will bring smiles to those who pass them; a happy seat to kids who climb them; and a delightful surprise to those who discover them.

See our website ([www.midtownresidents.org](http://www.midtownresidents.org)) for more photos.



## Midtown Emergency Preparedness & Home Safety Faire

By Annette Glanckopf

In early September MRA in collaboration with El Carmelo School hosted its first Emergency Preparedness & Home Safety Faire with a grant from "Know Your Neighbors."

Over 200 residents came to actively participate in safety and well-being by learning how to prepare in advance for emergencies. There were over 100 free gift bags, raffle prizes, exhibits, demos, and educational and hands-on experiences for all ages. Participants learned valuable tips on preparing for a disaster/pandemic, how to turn off the gas, keeping family and pets safe, available local resources, household safety tips, bicycle safety and much more. The Gunn Movers and Shakers used a prize wheel to teach kids about emergency preparedness and helped little ones build a comfort kit for times of emergency. The raffle had over 60 winners with the grand prize of a bike going to Gordon Sakai. Here are some photos:



## MRA's 16th Annual Ice Cream Social

By Jill Matzke

The 2013 Ice Cream Social was one of our most successful ever, with large crowds of neighbors, family and friends gathering throughout the afternoon. In fact, the huge numbers in attendance meant that we had to pick up extra serving utensils! Everyone seemed to enjoy the food and fun as well as the chance to learn more about local community organizations, businesses and City services. Kids expressed themselves with face-painting and sand art activities. And while ice cream is always the center of attention at this event, everyone also enjoyed a variety of snacks and of course the famous Palo Alto Fire Department chili. In addition, we were all treated to a fun musical performance by the School of Rock as well as a Karate demonstration by United Studios of Self Defense. And, no offense to the many City dignitaries who were in attendance, but Eddie the Police Dog was probably our most popular guest!

Thanks especially to Piazza's for contributing the ice cream and to all of our participating exhibitors this year!

Acterra

Canopy

Deborah's Palm

Fabmo

Palo Alto Friends

Uber Eyes

LoYakk

Televisit

Palo Alto Cert Team

School of Rock

United Studios of Self Defense

City of Palo Alto Police, Fire, Public Works, Utilities and Public Art



## Our Diverse Heritage

By Louise Yeung Furutsuki

At the Diversity Table, residents and visitors marked their family heritage on a large World Heritage Map as well as played a game of identifying the cultures associated with artifacts from around the world, courtesy of MRA board and friends. Everyone was a winner and the activities were fun for children and adults alike.

Armenia	3	Norway	1
Australia	1	Philippines	1
Austria	2	Poland	3
Canada	3	Russia	5
China	10	Singapore	1
Czech Republic	1	So. America	3
Egypt	1	So. Korea	5
Finland	2	Switzerland	1
France	6	Taiwan	7
Germany	8	Thailand	1
Hungary	1	Turkey	1
India	3	Ukraine	3
Iran	1	United Kingdom	14
Israel	5	US-East	5
Italy	2	US-South	2
Japan	4	US-West	12
Latvia	1	US-Mid	5
Lithuania	2	Vietnam	1



*Heritage Map and Diversity Table activities organized by Midtown Teen Diversity Ambassadors.*

## Ice Cream Social Residents Survey Results

By Louise Yeung Furutsuki

Thank you to all who filled out the surveys at MRA's Ice Cream Social this year. 4 winners won a pair of tickets each to Midtown's Winter Lodge Ice Skating Rink.

<b>% interested in children's events</b>	<b>78</b>	% shopping in Midtown a few times a month	64
% interested in senior events	50	% shopping in Midtown daily or a few times a week	31
<b>% interested in a Midtown food fair</b>	<b>78</b>	% never shopping in Midtown	0
% interested in a Midtown health fair	44	% interested in a free Midtown business directory	50
% interested in expert seminars	39		

## Midtown Business: Dziem Le of Midtown Hair Studio

*Interview by Sylvia Gartner*

Dziem Le, owner of Midtown Hair Studio at 2786 Middlefield Road, is a very outgoing and friendly person, and one immediately feels at home in her salon. She has been a cosmetologist for 10 years and has lived in Midtown for 2.5 years.

Dziem loves both living and working in Midtown, finding the neighborhood very convenient as well as friendly. She shops at Trader Joe's and Piazza, and her daughter takes swimming lessons at the Ross Road YMCA. Dziem's customers are nearly 100% her Midtown neighbors. And, like the rest of us, she loves Palo Alto's perfect climate.

I visited Midtown Hair Studio for some services before it closed for remodeling, and I can vouch for how pleasing to the eye the salon is now.



Dziem immigrated to the US when she was 24; arriving, she said, with no English and no money! She certainly is fluent in English now! Her father was with the South Vietnamese army and was imprisoned for 11 years by the Vietnamese government, before eventually being released. Meanwhile, Vietnamese who had earlier come to the US as immigrants did extensive lobbying of the administration of President George Herbert Walker Bush. A law was eventually passed that permitted veterans of the South Vietnamese Army to immigrate. With the help of Refugee Services, Dziem, her parents, and her three sisters were able to come to the US.

Dziem is now a US citizen and can travel freely anywhere. She has been back to Vietnam.

She loves having her own business, but has difficulty having to be the bad guy when employees need discipline. She feels that she is living a dream and enjoys running into her customers around town.

## Electric. That's what our next car will be.

*By Jeb Eddy*

In our early 70's and 40+ year residents of a Midtown, we are within one year of making the decision to let our old 1979 Volkswagen beetle pass into the hands of a collector.

The immediate question that prospective EV owners like us face is "range anxiety." How far can an electric car drive before it needs a refill?

The availability of public and private places to plug in and recharge for 1-4 hours is improving rapidly. This Wikipedia page has lots of good information about what's happening worldwide:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charging\\_station](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charging_station). A company in Campbell, Coloumb Technologies, is a rising player in design, manufacture, and state-of-the-art charging network development.

An iPhone app called "PlugShare" displays a map of businesses, public locations and volunteer homes, restaurants, churches, etc., where charging is available. There are LOTS in the peninsula and SF. Facebook, Intuit, City Hall, Stanford Shopping Center -- all of these have chargers, some free, some for fees. And users of PlugShare can record their votes about accessibility, ease of using a special charge card, etc. It's a young market, with bugs being worked out.

For many working-age families, the EV is a second car. The adult who commutes more than 30-40 miles one-way to work (where the employer has not yet installed a charging facility) drives a gas-powered car or hybrid, leaving the other adult to use the EV. The second driver rarely needs to make long trips that might strain the maximum distance of the car's batteries. Smart driving extends range. But yes, given present ranges for all-electric cars, there may be a few times per year when some different behavior for trip making is needed. Plan ahead. But note: EVs are great for short or moderate commutes.

One homeowner in Palo Alto has received a permit from the city, and has already installed a 220 volt charger on his private land, for use -- free -- by other EV owners (it's near California Ave., not in Midtown). A church in town (which gets ~50% of its annual electricity from the solar panels on its roof) also has a public charging station, and the idea is under consideration by others.

A Tesla owner reports that he has driven to Los Angeles and back -- twice.

When you see or meet an EV owner, ask about their experience. Next year, you can ask my wife or me.

## Emergency Preparedness: Teen Involvement Makes Sense *By Divya Saini, Gunn High School*

Most preparedness efforts are directed towards the adult population in our society, and this can easily be rationalized as the logical thing to do. A compelling argument can be made, however, that young adults can be equally as effective in playing significant and meaningful roles in all aspects of disaster management: preparedness, response, and recovery. As significant parts of our society, teens *must* be included in the discussions and efforts. Here's why:

**The Social Component:** Teens have the same reputation all around the world: they are technology addicts. Can teens even **consider** living a day without typing, chatting, tweeting, commenting, posting, messaging, texting, and clicking? If you think about it, this intimate familiarity with the digital world could be a great asset during a disaster. In the aftermath of a disaster, teens will do what they do best, and will help communicate and comprehend information. The community will use this **skill** to get messages out, to gather updated information, to connect families together, and to inform authorities about vital situations. All that is needed now is for teens to be provided with the proper training and to be brought a sense of awareness about when to harness their innate technological talents in manners that can make a real difference to themselves and the community.

**The Emotional Component:** What we need, more than anything, is to have everybody in the community stay calm in the aftermath of a disaster. Safety will be of utmost importance during this time, and safety will be enhanced if and only if we are all mentally and emotionally resilient. Teens and children need to be helped in the process of building up their mental-readiness and emotional preparedness *proactively*. Teens that are able to stay calm and collected after a disaster will be an asset for the community, which will be able to use their help. It is important, therefore, to orient teens to the basics of preparedness such that during times of crisis, they are not only able to cope emotionally but are also able to offer assistance.

**The Physical Component:** Finally, it should be well understood that teens are as, if not more, physically capable as adults in communities. After a disaster their physical strength can be a direct asset when things need to be moved, transported, or distributed. Of course teens will need to be informed and proactively involved in preparedness efforts to understand this, which can translate into real impact—for their own, families', friends', and neighbors' lives.

These components exemplify that teens are an important part of the overall emergency preparedness and response picture, thus highlighting the necessity to involve them in ongoing discussions and training. Not only will training teens be beneficial to communities, the skills taught will be useful for the rest of the teen's life. Getting involved *now* will continue to be valuable knowledge and an asset to young adults in their *futures*. Finally, prepared teens today ensure a future generation of prepared adults, ensuring that our future society and our posterity will be stronger and more resilient than ever before. NOW is the time to get teens involved.

For specific next steps on how teens can begin to get involved: Contact [epvolunteers@paneighborhoods.org](mailto:epvolunteers@paneighborhoods.org) to learn about how teens can become Block Preparedness Coordinators. Also have your teens check out [Facebook.com/PaloAltoEarthquakePreparedness](https://www.facebook.com/PaloAltoEarthquakePreparedness) to stay up-to-date about upcoming volunteer opportunities and classes.

### I'D LIKE TO HELP SUPPORT MRA

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Add me to enews (email required)  Yes

Areas I'd like to become involved in:

Traffic  Schools  Events  Membership  Parks  Public Art  Trees

Working with Midtown Merchants  Newsletter  Enews  Zoning/Developments

==== Send your \$15 membership payment to Sylvia Gartner, 824 Moreno, Palo Alto 94303 ====

## Upcoming Events and Meetings

- **Annual MRA Ice Cream Social – September 2014**

Hoover Park — 2901 Cowper — 1:00-4:00 PM  
Details to be announced in enews and on website

- **Quakeville – September 2014**

Details to be announced in enews and on website

Please let us know ( [MidtownNews@att.net](mailto:MidtownNews@att.net) )  
if you would like to receive our periodic electronic enews  
and/or if you have a new email.

*Printing of this newsletter made possible by the kind donation of Midtown Realty.*



Midtown Residents Association

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**Your financial support enables us to pay for the modest expenses of MRA: postage, events, etc.**

Please note the date on your label on this newsletter is the date you last paid or sent a check.

To join or renew online: go to our web site [www.MidtownResidents.org](http://www.MidtownResidents.org) and click the left icon "Become a Member".  
If by check (\$15): make check out to MRA, and send to our treasurer, Sylvia Gartner, at 824 Moreno, Palo Alto, 94303.