



View from the Terrace

SPRING 2021

BALBOA TERRACE HOMES ASSOCIATION - WEST OF TWIN PEAKS, SAN FRANCISCO

President's Message

Rich Hill - BTHA Board President

A gentle reminder: If you have not paid your annual dues, please do so immediately. The payment was due on March 1, and we want to avoid a collection process if possible.

In the coming weeks and months, we will be focusing on a small handful of our neighbors who do not meet minimum landscaping standards, i.e., those homes with no landscaping, excessive weeds, etc. Our goal is not to penalize our neighbors – rather, our goal is to improve our neighborhood and improve our property values. We will start with a light touch and we will offer assistance to our neighbors. Only if our efforts are unsuccessful will we threaten fines and penalties. We all want to live in a community that visually shows that we care about and respect each other.

In closing, I want to emphasize that we are a community of neighbors. In its simplest form, a neighbor is any person being near another. Expanding on that definition, we find the words “friend,” and “being generous toward one’s fellow human being.” As we look around, I encourage you to help where and when you can. I have personally witnessed entire blocks in Balboa Terrace transformed by the initiative of one individual. Let’s all try to be that person.

As always, please feel free to attend the monthly BTHA Board meetings. Most of the meetings are the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m., with the exception of January, July, and September when the meetings are the second Monday of the month.

BTHA monthly Board meeting agendas and Zoom links are posted on the association website ahead of each meeting: <https://www.balboaterrace.org>

Neighborhood Improvements

Tom Cator - BTHA Board Vice President

Maintaining and improving our common areas and neighborhood is critical to increasing the value of our homes, the top priority of your Board of Directors. We want to keep our neighborhood beautiful and a desirable place to live.

The HOA dues increase assessed for 2021 and the last several years is a direct result of borrowing from our reserve fund (our savings) to meet neighborhood needs that should have been met years ago out of operating expenses. It is meant to rebuild our reserves while continuing to make needed improvements. Our operating budget has remained flat; however, we had approximately \$157,000 in our reserve fund two years ago. At the beginning of 2021, that amount had been reduced to \$30,000.

So where have your dues been spent?

The biggest expense was addressing two major drainage problems, one of which PG&E identified as a fire hazard potentially impacting 10 homes, at a cost of \$80,000.

As noted, before in “View from the Terrace” the following landscaping and infrastructure improvements were recently made:

- ❖ Roughly \$30,000 was spent on repairing and sealing our alleys.
- ❖ The outdated, inefficient sprinkler system in the two easements, in the Monterey Boulevard median, and in the Junipero Serra entrance area was modernized at a cost of \$9,000. This will save an estimated 30 percent on our HOA water bills and be a big benefit if we are forced to reduce water consumption.
- ❖ Security cages were added to all irrigation controls because of repeated vandalism.
- ❖ Irrigation issues have been corrected along Monterey Boulevard and west of San Benito, the area has been resodded.
- ❖ Electricity was installed, re-landscaping was begun, concrete/masonry repaired and repainted in the Junipero Serra entrance area.
- ❖ South easement bowls have been replanted.

In the near future, the following projects are under Board review for repair and/or replacement

- ❖ “Concrete trips” in both easements, areas where uneven concrete could cause somebody to fall.
- ❖ The concrete alley between Santa Ana and San Leandro
- ❖ Dying trees at the Junipero Serra entrance

At our recent HOA annual meeting, the Board also noted that we are interested in working with the city to landscape the Junipero Serra median between Ocean Avenue and Monterey Boulevard which is often filled with litter and weeds. If we decide to proceed with this project, it will likely take years to complete, but when done it will be the end of any major landscaping costs.

After the SFMTA completed a traffic study that confirmed vehicles averaged 35 mph on many of our streets, several traffic calming measures were completed at no cost to the HOA through Board efforts:

- ❖ Four-way stop at Santa Ana-Darien intersection.
- ❖ Speed humps added at the south easement on Santa Ana and San Leandro.

The Board is also working with our new District Seven Supervisor Myrna Melgar on traffic mitigation on San Benito Way at Upland.

As all these projects are being completed the Board will continue to build our reserves to fund the estimated \$450,000 to \$500,000 needed to replace alleys in 15-20 years and make every effort to avoid a special assessment for alley replacement, as each homeowner would be required to pay at least \$1,600 if we fail to carefully plan for what is coming.

Lots of action has occurred in the neighborhood and more is to come. Please share your thoughts with the Board on improvements you see need to be done.

Farewell to a Neighbor



Helen Vögele Gourley, a resident of Balboa Terrace for more than 50 years, passed away on March 17, 2021. A graduate of the University of Rochester in Physics and Optics, Helen logged many years as a system engineer in radiation physics, electro-optical design, and aerospace before founding System Sciences Group in 1991 to provide optical design for companies in Silicon Valley. She and her collaborator, Dr. Darrell Mathis, counted among their clients Applied Materials, Xerox Research, NASA, and many others. Her illumination design included hundreds of commissions ranging from “light bulbs” for aircraft and military vehicles to fixtures for TV and movies. Helen was a mentor to young scientists, particularly women. She held yearly educational seminars through Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) which

presents science and technology seminars to middle school girls.

Helen's personal life mirrored her professional life. She had a way of bringing brightness to every room she entered. A long-time NERT volunteer and the visionary behind Balboa Terrace's first all-neighborhood garage sale, Helen was a one-person welcoming committee for many residents, even prospective ones. Susan Yip, a fellow NERT volunteer, recalls that "I first met Helen while house hunting in 1991. She and (husband) Darrell invited us into their home on San Benito to talk. We were strangers. That was so kind." Susan adds that Helen was an "inspired" NERT volunteer who believed that "when people know each other socially, it's so much easier in times of disaster." Helen was also an ardent supporter of the San Francisco SPCA.

An accomplished gardener Helen nurtured hundreds of orchids in a greenhouse on the upper level of her home. At gatherings through the years, neighbors would flow in and out of her home and Helen often played the harp for her guests. A celebration of Helen's life is planned for later in 2021. The Board and Balboa Terrace neighbors extend our condolences to Darrell, former BTHA Board member and president, and Helen's loved ones. She will be missed by many.

Garden Housekeeping

Robert Mann - BTHA Board Member

Nothing adds more value to your home and our neighborhood than great curb appeal enhanced by attractive landscaping.

Keep your garden happy this spring with this West Side checklist:

- ❑ **Prune back** herbaceous perennials (example: salvia, rosemary, lavender) to promote plant bushiness.
- ❑ **Prevent** powdery mildew and rust on roses and other plants with neem oil. Already have a powdery mildew problem? Treat with Monterey Complete Disease Control.
- ❑ **Aphids are beginning to appear.** Stop them early with neem oil or spray plant with a

soapy solution of one tablespoon of dish soap in a quart of water.

- ❑ **Stake perennials** like delphinium, foxglove, peony, coreopsis, garden phlox, hollyhock, centranthus, and shasta daisy.
- ❑ **Start planting** summer annuals like lobelia, begonia, impatiens, marigolds, cosmos, petunias, snapdragon, and alyssum.
- ❑ **Apply a lawn fertilizer** to your grass and groundcovers.
- ❑ **Snails and slugs** are hatching in your garden right now. Set out small flat bowls of beer for slug going away parties
- ❑ **Set out rolled newspapers at night to trap earwigs.** The following day collect and dispose of the newspapers in your compost bin.
- ❑ **Mulch all flower beds** and planted areas with forest mulch.
- ❑ **Plant summer bulbs**, corms, rhizomes, and tubers such as agapanthus, amaryllis, tuberous begonias, callas, cannas, dahlias, gladiolus, and tigridia.
- ❑ **Spring and winter-blooming bulbs** such as daffodils and tulips are finishing their bloom but do not cut off the fading green foliage. The foliage produces the nutrients needed for next year's blooms. Allow the foliage to wither and yellow. Hide the fading foliage by covering it with spreading annuals such as petunia or sweet alyssum.
- ❑ **Check irrigation systems for leaks and problem areas.** The Urban Farmer Store at Vicente and 40th is an excellent resource for classes, irrigation supplies, and expert advice.





Balboa Terrace Homes Association

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Wrong address?

Please direct any address changes or issues to the P.O. box address above or email us at: bthaboard@balboaterrace.org.

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Neighborhood Resiliency

Last spring during the statewide COVID-19 shelter in place orders your BTHA board in collaboration with many of your neighbors launched a neighborhood resiliency project focusing on the creation of a virtual communication network to help assure the health and safety of our neighbors during the uncertain times brought on by the pandemic. Thankfully, many of you responded by volunteering as block captains and helping collect this vital information. A year later, we have about 80 percent of the contact emails to help support these ongoing efforts.

You can help us get to 100%

If you are new to the neighborhood or not sure if your current email is on the official Balboa Terrace resiliency mailing list, please go to the BTHA website (balboaterrace.org) and enter the requested

information in the Neighborhood Communication form at the bottom of the homepage.

Please Note: *This information will only be used for official Balboa Terrace Homes Association communications.*

Thank You!

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