

# CANOPY

## TREES FOR PALO ALTO

*Canopy is a non-profit advocate for Palo Alto's community trees and works to educate, inspire and engage Palo Altans as stewards of new and existing trees.*

**WINTER 2004-2005**

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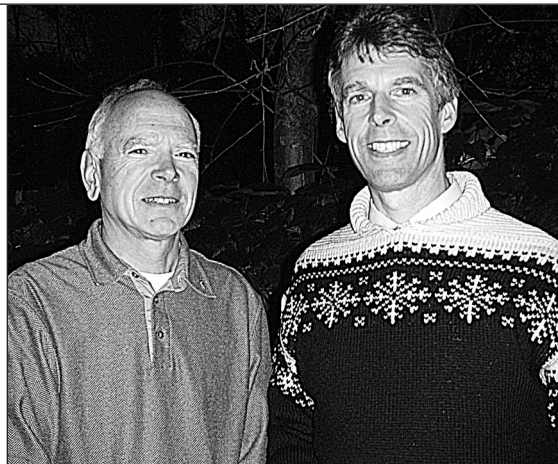
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## CANOPY CHANGES CHAIRS

CANOPY HAS A NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD. Glenn Rennels, who joined the board in 2003 and was previously vice-chair, has been elected to the chair position. Marty Deggeller, who has served as chair since 2001 when Canopy was still a project of Acterra (successor to PCCF), is now the vice-chair. No, we're not engaged in a game of musical chairs—this was a planned transition. Marty had previously decided that it was time to hand over the job of board chair to someone else; Glenn Rennels had agreed to take on the responsibility and was duly elected to do just that. Both Marty and Glenn have had a long-time relationship with Canopy, having started as volunteer planters and planting leaders before joining the board.

Canopy has seen many positive changes during Marty's tenure. In addition to overseeing the transition of Canopy to a standalone 501(c)(3) corporation the year after he took office, Marty developed and maintained a five-year strategic plan. Canopy's programs grew with the



**Marty Deggeller, new Board Vice Chair and Glenn Rennels, new Board Chair.**

institution of a yearly "Arbor Month" set of activities which feature all of Canopy's programs. In addition Canopy developed a City-wide young tree care program while also expanding the "Fungus Fighters" program to include City parks.

There have been changes on the Canopy literature table too! All of Canopy's self-guided tree walks were rewritten and republished. New brochures on the benefits of trees and the proper care of young trees were developed and published. And the Canopy website was completely redesigned—it now includes lots and lots of indexed tree-related information.

*Continued on page 5*

# Heritage Trees—What's In a Name?

by Dave Dockter, City of Palo Alto

**IN 2004 PALO ALTO** was again rated as a Tree City-USA city by the National Arbor Day Foundation and the State of California. It was the 20th year of achieving this distinction for the City. Last June, in keeping with the spirit of promoting one of the City's greatest natural resources, its trees, the City Council added Heritage Tree #7 to its ranks of notable trees. This tree, a 55-foot tall Aleppo Pine in a Ramona Street front yard, is estimated to be more than 70 years old and has been called "the best example of an Aleppo Pine in all of Palo Alto." The tree has a height and spread of sixty feet.

Trees qualify for the honorary status of "Heritage Tree" if they meet one of the city's criteria of being an outstanding specimen; one of the city's largest or oldest trees; or having a distinctive form, size, age, location or historical or cultural significance. This Aleppo Pine conclusively exhibits several of the character-defining criteria and is an outstanding specimen.

Palo Alto is similar to many communities which realize the role special trees play as a significant landscape component. A heritage tree doesn't have

to be the biggest or the best. What may be an 'ugly duckling' to one may represent an area of respect for another. The El Palo Alto redwood, misshapen

by centuries of conditions but maintaining its vital existence, illustrates this point.

## What Distinguishes a Heritage Tree from Others?

In considering this application for heritage tree status, I made the customary site visit to interview with Mrs. Carlitz, the application's sponsor. Sitting beneath the enormous shade canopy of her tree, she spoke of the way the pine contributed to creating a special and unique sense of place in her front yard. It was evident that the Ramona Street neighborhood also benefits from the spreading tree. We discussed both the honor and legal

obligations of owning a heritage tree. This honor reflects several things: the owners' love for their natural environment; their civic pride in taking care of the resource for their community; and the City Council's public acknowledgment, resolution and commitment to apply the benefits of the Tree Ordinance standards to the private property heritage tree.

*Continued on facing page*



## Whose Responsibility is it?

Palo Alto's heritage trees are added to the 'protected trees' category of the municipal code at the request of the property owner on a case-by-case basis. This designation entails several legal responsibilities assumed by both the city and the property owner. After a tree is designated, the property owner commits to maintain the tree in reasonable health and condition according to the Tree Preservation and Management Regulations, or Tree Ordinance. Protection of the tree from injury or damage from actions—whether deliberate or unintentional—is the responsibility of not only the tree owner, but contractors and adjacent property owners as well. It is said that protected trees have no boundaries, unlike typical land-use designations.

## Incentives and Benefits

Without a doubt, one of the primary incentives of a heritage tree designation is the obligatory protection from injury during land-use development on or adjacent to the property. Consideration of a variance or exception to standard zoning setback requirements may be supported if it is deemed necessary to preserve a heritage tree that constrains the site. One of the most cited benefits applies to the real estate value from the contribution to the landscape from a large mature specimen tree on the property—possibly adding as much as 15-20% of the gross value.

A heritage tree designation 'runs with the land' from owner to owner. In a real way, an individual may find this as a good way to start a personal legacy that will outlive their years for generations. However, an owner may apply for the City to rescind the designation if circumstances change sufficiently.

## What's in a Name?

The names for regulated trees are as diverse as the number of progressive cities worldwide that have a tree ordinance. Cities usually list a variety

of species that are considered most important to their area, and provide legal protection and criteria for candidate selection. City municipal codes identify these 'special trees' that contribute to a community's character and deem them valuable enough to preserve and protect. Thus, the category name must be agreed upon and adopted. Examples of such names that I have encountered in various ordinances are 'Old and Valuable Tree', 'Exceptional Tree', 'Landmark Tree', 'Protected Tree', 'Heritage Tree', 'Significant or Indigenous Native Tree', and 'Monarch Tree'.

Cities provide a person the opportunity to designate a heritage tree in order to preserve these green leafy individuals of character, and are willing to share in the privileges and responsibilities of care. Heritage trees are important to the quality of life and provide us with the ability to help shape the environment in which we live and for the future generations.

The other current Heritage Trees of Palo Alto are The El Palo Alto Redwood, The Rinconada Oak, a Coast Redwood on La Donna Street, a Dawn Redwood on Forest Avenue, a Silver Maple on Edgewood Drive and an American Elm on Ponce Drive. The City maintains the Heritage Tree list, complete with photographs and descriptive insight, on the city web page at: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/trees/>. To consider nominating a 'special tree' for designation by the City Council, visit the Palo Alto web page and click on 'Heritage Trees' or contact the City Hall Planning Division at 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301 or 650.329.2441. ■

## About the Author:

*Dave Dockter is a contributing resource for Canopy and supports its mission and goals. He is a managing arborist functioning as the resident landscape specialist in land development in the Department of Planning and Community Environment and administers the Tree Preservation Ordinance for the City of Palo Alto.*



# Tree Stories from Spain

by Marty Deggeller

LAST NOVEMBER my wife Judy and I had the pleasure of visiting several parts of Spain on a three-week vacation. One of the areas we saw was the hill town of Ronda in the Andalusian area of southwestern Spain. Ronda is a charming town in a dramatic setting perched on cliffs that are divided by a 300-foot deep gorge. Having had a



Three-hundred-year-old Castaña (Chestnut) Tree

week full of churches, mosques, art museums, and cities, we were both ready to see something of the surrounding countryside.

We made arrangements with a local guide to take us on a 4-wheel drive outing into the nearby mountains. We originally thought we were going into the

mountains surrounding the interesting little hill town of Grazelema, but we soon found out we were heading in the opposite direction with the Sierra de las Nieves (snow mountains) being the destination. While our guide, Cuco, spoke pretty good English, we had clearly had a breakdown in communications!

It turns out Cuco was a real tree-lover (he'd make a great Canopy member!) and his main purpose on this trip was to show us two trees—a 350- to 500-year-old evergreen conifer known locally as “pinsapo” (also known as Spanish fir) and a huge, 300-year-old castaña (chestnut) tree. We did about three hours of driving mostly on a rough, rocky, rutted, steep, and narrow mountain road and some hiking to visit the two trees. While both trees were impressive, Cuco was very

fortunate to have us as guests because without a real interest in trees, I'm not sure everyone would have had the patience to endure the rugged drive!

The visit to the chestnut tree was particularly interesting, not only because of the mammoth size of the tree, but because of the group of small black pigs feeding nearby. Cuco and Judy started feeding them chestnuts that they clearly loved, particularly the ones that Judy peeled for them!

Along the way we also saw many cork oak trees and eventually came across an area where the cork had been freshly harvested. The cork was removed to a height of 6 to 8 feet on the trunk and the lower branches revealing a beautifully smooth, bright cinnamon-colored surface beneath. This provided a colorful contrast to the brown and green of the surrounding forest.

During the outing we had another interesting experience that didn't involve trees. At one point we stopped at an overlook where there were about 20 sheep grazing. Within a minute of us stopping, dozens, if not hundreds, of sheep came running down out of the hills to visit us. As I was videotaping them, they approached me, and when I started walking down the hill, they all followed. They apparently thought I was their shepherd, while I felt like some kind of ovine Pied Piper!

We finally wound our way out of the mountains to reach the coastal town of Marbella from where we returned to Ronda in the mid-afternoon. While we learned a lot from Cuco during the day, he was also very interested in Canopy and California robles (oaks), and was eager to check out the Canopy website! ■



Freshly harvested Cork Oak Tree

## Does Money Really Grow on Trees? Canopy's Arbor Month Celebration

by Jana Dilley

**THIS MARCH CANOPY** will once again be celebrating Arbor Month with a flurry of events. Chief among them is a Tree Talk by Dr. Kathy Wolf from the University of Washington.

Dr. Wolf has dedicated her work to researching the value of the urban forest. Her studies have shown the positive impact that trees have on areas like urban shopping districts and transportation corridors. She also addresses the positive impacts of trees on human health and well being.

Dr. Wolf will be giving a talk entitled "Does Money Really Grow on Trees?: The economic and social benefits of the urban forest" from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Palo Alto Art Center auditorium on Saturday, March 5. The talk is free and refreshments will be served. Her presentation is funded by the California ReLeaf 2004 Capacity-Building Grant Program and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Canopy will hold a tree planting at the Palo Alto Golf Course on March 12. Later that day the new Heritage Park will be inaugurated.

But Arbor Month doesn't stop there! On Sunday March 13, Canopy will be launching a new Tree Walk in conjunction with Elizabeth F. Gamble Garden. Join Gamble's Director of Horticulture Merrill Jensen and Canopy's Program Director Jana Dilley on a tour of Gamble's interesting and unique tree collection. We will meet in front of the Carriage House at Gamble Garden, 1431 Waverley Street. This is also a free event.

Events continue throughout the month with a Fungus Fighter workday on March 19, followed by a street tree planting on March 20. For more information on any of these events, check Canopy's website at [www.canopy.org](http://www.canopy.org), or call Canopy at 650.964.6110, or e-mail [info@canopy.org](mailto:info@canopy.org). ■

## Planting Continues Along the El Camino Real

by Susan Rosenberg

**ACCORDING TO THE CITY'S LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Chris Rafferty the Trees for El Camino Project is moving "full steam ahead" on the second phase of tree planting on El Camino Real. Approximately eighty trees will be planted in South Palo Alto this summer. A mix of red maple, oak, and London plane trees will be added to the existing palette of stone pine and ginkgo trees. This project will include new soil, a new irrigation system, and under-story planting.

This project is the result of a five-year public/private partnership between the nonprofit Trees for El Camino Project and the City of Palo Alto. ■



### Canopy Changes Chairs *—continued from cover*

On the financial front, a new membership structure was created which features membership benefits for both individuals and businesses. And through it all, Marty was able to see that Canopy's reserves were maintained—despite the major economic downturn. He turns over the organization in a strong financial position well positioned to continue its mission of educating, inspiring, and engaging Palo Altans as stewards of new and existing trees.

A hearty thank you to Marty for a job really well done. And our congratulations and good wishes to Glenn as he takes over the helm. ■

# Canopy Honors Its Volunteers

by Catherine Martineau

CANOPY COULD NOT FULFILL ITS MISSION without the work performed by volunteers. In our 2004 fiscal year some 2,000 volunteer hours made our Planting, Survey and Tree Care programs possible. It is Canopy's tradition to celebrate and honor these volunteers in October. All volunteers who worked for Canopy in our last fiscal year were invited to the eighth Annual Party along with community leaders and individuals who have made a difference for the trees of Palo Alto.

The Arnold Soforenko and Out-on-a-Limb volunteer awards were presented during the party.

Arnold Soforenko Awards, named in memory of Canopy's first treasurer, are given to those who have made extraordinary efforts to preserve and enhance Palo Alto's urban forest. This year awards were given to The Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto for providing five years of financial support and willing volunteers to participate in Canopy's tree planting and tree care programs; and to The Trees for El Camino Project for the lasting impact on Palo Alto's urban forest through their persistent and persuasive leadership in beginning the transformation of El Camino Real into a welcoming, tree-lined boulevard.

Out-on-a-Limb Volunteer Awards were presented to Kacie Draeger for her exceptional support of Canopy's tree planting, tree surveying, and mature tree care programs; and to Karin Chapin for her creative work in designing and implementing Canopy's new website.

In addition to Canopy's awards each recipient was presented a commendation certificate from the office of Santa Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss. ■

# Volunteer Spotlight— Canopy's Project Leaders

by Jana Dilley



## THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Canopy's planting and Fungus Fighters programs add new trees to the City's urban forest and help to protect its already existing mature trees. In 2004 Canopy held 12 workdays for these two programs. These workdays could not take place without the help of our dedicated Project Leaders.

Canopy holds a Project Leader training every fall to teach new volunteers everything they need to know about planting trees and removing ivy. Project Leaders then help Canopy by attending regular workdays and supporting Canopy staff with their help and expertise.

This year's training was led by local arborist Kevin Rastery, and eight new project leaders joined Canopy's ranks. 2004 graduate Sally O'Neil said she became a project leader because "Canopy provides an avenue for me to combine my interest in trees with my interest in public service." Fellow graduate Sairus Patel added "I wanted to become a project leader to increase the depth of my involvement in my home community. The steadfast tree, so serene, allows change to move through it with such grace. It's such a privilege to help plant one."

Thanks to all of Canopy's wonderful Project Leaders! We could not get by without you!

To volunteer with Canopy, contact Program Director Jana Dilley at 650.964.6110 or by e-mail at [jana@canopy.org](mailto:jana@canopy.org). ■





## Ask the Arborist

by Dave Muffly

**Question:** *How can I tell if my tree is in danger of falling?*

Nearly a decade ago the largest Eucalyptus tree in North America fell over. It lived along Portola Road in Woodside. When the tree fell, it registered on the seismographs at Stanford—being in excess of 200 feet tall. The massive root flare and lower trunk are still visible along the road.

Arborists were called in to determine why the tree fell. The answer: human ignorance. A few years previous, the road next to the tree had been redone, and in the process, workers cut major roots. Human error is often at the root of major tree failures.

If you have a large tree and are concerned it might fall, here are some of the major trouble signs to look for. Has trenching or other root cutting ever been done under the canopy of the tree? If so, the trenching may have cut roots necessary to support the tree. Do you have a large California native oak that has been in a lawn or other heavily irrigated landscape for years or decades? If so, the roots are likely dying and the tree could fall, even if the top looks healthy. Does the trunk of the tree flare out as it enters the soil? If not, the vulnerable root flare may have been buried, and may be decaying. Does the canopy of the tree appear to be in decline—i.e., fewer and less healthy-looking leaves? If the top of a tree is dying, you can bet the roots are too. Are there big cavities or other notable decay near the base of the tree? Are there shelf-type mushrooms growing near the base of the tree? Are there any notable cracks in the trunk of the tree? Does the tree

have most of its branches and leaves on just one side? Have other trees in the immediate area fallen over in recent years? Has there been an increase in the amount of water in the soil around the tree, perhaps due to changes in storm drainage for your property?

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, you may be wise to call in an experienced certified arborist to inspect your tree. The arborist can advise you on any possible remediation.

*Palo Alto resident Dave Muffly is a Certified Arborist. He can be contacted at 650.283.6911 by or e-mail at [davemuffly@yahoo.com](mailto:davemuffly@yahoo.com). ■*



## Mayor's Tree Planting

Every year Canopy plants a tree in honor of the outgoing Mayor of Palo Alto. Here we see (left to right) former Mayor Bern Beecham, former Council Member Joe Huber, Executive Director Catherine Martineau, current Mayor Jim Burch, Council Member Judy Kleinberg and former Council Member Dick Rosenbaum gathered around the redwood tree planted in Bowden Park in honor of Mayor Beecham. ■

# Coming Events

Friday, March 4  
Canopy Presentation  
at PACE Breakfast  
Saturday, March 5  
Tree Talk with Kathy Wolf

Saturday, March 12  
Golf Course Tree Planting  
Sunday, March 13  
Gamble Tree Walk  
Saturday, March 19  
Fungus Fighters Workday

Sunday, March 20  
Street Tree Planting  
Saturday, April 9  
Project Learning Tree  
Training

# Canopy Thanks Our Generous Business Donors

Canopy has recently received significant gifts from the following businesses:

- ~ *The SafeTree Program of Pacific Gas & Electric Company*
- ~ *California ReLeaf*
- ~ *Morton & Associates, Inc. CPA (Pro-bono services)*
- ~ *Chilcote Trust*

# Canopy's Leadership

## Staff

Catherine Martineau,  
*Executive Director*  
Jana Dilley,  
*Program Director*

## Advisory Committee

Ron Bracewell  
Tony Carrasco  
Herb Fong  
Joe Hirsch  
Leannah Hunt  
Jeanne Kennedy  
Larry Klein  
Mary McCullough  
Betty Meltzer  
Nancy Peterson  
Carolyn Reller  
Lauren Bonar Swezey  
John Warren

## Board of Directors

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*Chair*  
Marty Deggeller,  
*Vice-Chair*  
Lanie Wheeler,  
*Treasurer*  
Gail Schubert,  
*Secretary*  
Anne Draeger  
Kate Feinstein  
John McClenahan  
Brooks Nelson  
Jeff Newborn  
Forest Preston III  
Susan Rosenberg  
Jane Stocklin



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