

# Miraloma Life

www.miralomapark.org

## From the President's Corner

by Robert Gee, MPIC President

Happy New Year and I hope 2014 will be a wonderful year for you!

Thank you for renewing your MPIC membership and for those of you who are new to our neighborhood—welcome!

Volunteer to Help the MPIC Board: If you consult the “New Business” segment of the minutes from our January 2 Board Meeting in this *Miraloma Life* issue, you’ll see that one of our goals this year is to get member volunteers more involved. Many of our members have indicated an interest in certain issues, including safety, zoning, the newsletter, graffiti eradication and social events planning. That we have so much interest is wonderful for our community, but you and we need to go one step further and get more members who aren’t on the Board involved in actually planning and doing some of these activities. At every Board Meeting, the volunteer Directors realize that we cannot take on and accomplish all that we would like to do for this neighborhood—there are simply too many demands on the limited time we can spare from making a living, caring for our families, and other personal priorities.

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## The Great Tasmanian Blue Gum

by Jake Sigg

During my many years as a professional gardener, I became smitten by the genus *Eucalyptus*. I traveled to Australia in 1977 to get to know these trees better, and spent several days in the field with the world’s top eucalyptologists.

In the latter years of the 20th century I became personally concerned about the deterioration of the stands of eucalyptus trees on Mt Davidson and tried to raise public awareness of this problem. In 1990 I talked to the MPIC, pointing out that the takeover of the understory by ivy and blackberry was not only destroying the diverse understory plants, but also imperiling the trees. English ivy was climbing 150 to 200 feet into tree

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## From the MPIC Board of Directors Safety Committee

**Marijuana Grow House:** The December 6 Ingleside Station Newsletter posted the following information:

11:00 pm, 100 Block Molimo, Marijuana Cultivation: Ingleside Officers Holland, Lok, and Hauscarriague were dispatched to check on the well-being of residents of a home on Molimo Street. A neighbor had called and said the garage door was open and the garage was dark. The officers entered the home and discovered several rooms with dozens of marijuana plants, grow lights, fertilizers, irrigation equipment, ventilation fans, and a sophisticated electrical system that bypassed the PG&E meter. All the plants and equipment were seized as evidence. A neighbor reported there was a continual “revolving

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## Events in February

6 MPIC Board Meeting\*  
Thurs, 7 pm

27-28 Spamalot at SOTA (see article within)

## Events in March

6 MPIC Board Meeting\*  
Thurs, 7 pm

1-8 Spamalot at SOTA (see article within)

\* Members wishing to address the Board of Directors should call 281-0892 to arrange to be placed on the agenda.

# Summary of MPIC Board Meeting of January 2, 2014

by Dan Liberthson and Carl Schick

Treasurer's Report (T Sauvain): Overall, the MPIC's financial situation was somewhat better in 2013 than in previous recent years, with modest increases in net worth, rental and overall income. MPIC 2013 net worth was \$24,662 in December, down \$849 from November 2013 but up \$812 from December 2012. December 2013 income included \$765 in memberships, \$1470 in newsletter advertising fees, and \$3490 in rentals (vs \$3115 in November 2013). Overall income was \$676 higher in 2013 than in 2012. Clubhouse rental income increased in 2013 to \$38,165, vs \$27,490 in 2010, \$24,306 in 2011, and \$34,833 in 2012. 2013 expenses were in line with those of previous years except for a notable increase in Clubhouse supply costs and decreases in expenses for civic participation, cleaning, landscaping, and office materials. \$2600 was contributed to the reserve account on 1/1/14, for a current reserve balance of \$14,448.

Committees: Membership (R Gee)—Membership was 526 on 11/30/13 and 540 on 12/30/13, including two new members. Clubhouse Maintenance (D Liberthson for K Rawlins)—Motion by D Liberthson, unanimously passed, to allocate up to \$2000 to pay Gutter Busters for Clubhouse gutter cleaning, rust proofing and prevention, and gutter covers. Planning (T Armour)—New homeowners asked T Armour about window style guidelines, which he explained were presented in the *Miraloma Park Residential Design Guidelines*. K Wood mentioned *Standards for Window Replacement*, which residents can download from the SF Planning website at [sf-planning.org/ftp/files/publications\\_reports/Standards\\_for\\_Window\\_Replacement.pdf](http://sf-planning.org/ftp/files/publications_reports/Standards_for_Window_Replacement.pdf). T Armour emailed Supervisor Chiu's office requesting notification of the status of Chiu's proposed in-law unit legislation. D Liberthson met with Supervisor Yee about the legislation, who, when informed of the strong opposition to the proposal in Miraloma Park and West of Twin Peaks, said he wanted to study the situation before taking a position.

New Business: R Gee listed priorities for the MPIC in 2014, including safety, zoning and planning, the Miraloma Park resiliency project, continued Clubhouse maintenance and improvement, acquiring new volunteers from the MPIC membership, events to build community, and the Miraloma Life.

## From the President's Corner

(Continued from page 1)

Our community will become better and achieve more in direct proportion to the number of neighbors who become actively involved and engaged in the MPIC's work. Frankly, when I first moved into the neighborhood in 1998, I took for granted all of the city services and the quality of our neighborhood. I thought the city would take care of everything because it was looking out for our best interest. Since then, I've learned that a lot of the good that gets done in our neighborhood—from preserving single-family zoning to ameliorating transportation and traffic problems, improving safety and police services, and maintaining our parks and recreational

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12 Sherwood 3/2 \$1,000,000

506 Molimo 3/2 \$1,100,000



## From the President's Corner

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facilities—happens because of the volunteer work of many past and present MPIC Board Members and community members who take it upon themselves to advance our neighborhood make sure we get the services our taxes pay for. As in any neighborhood, the residents need to speak up when there are problems. But even more, we need to speak together with one large voice to make positive changes happen. So the next time you see a positive change in our neighborhood, please consider who made that possible, and become actively involved in neighborhood betterment by phoning or e-mailing the MPIC to volunteer some of your time in your area of interest. Below I'll describe several projects on which the MPIC Board is currently working, on many of which additional volunteers could well make the difference between success and failure—and of course there are other efforts that would benefit from member volunteer involvement.

Miraloma Playground: On 7/11/13, we wrote a letter to Phil Ginsburg, General Manager of SF Recreation and Parks Department (SFRPD), requesting Playground Safety Program funds to renovate and improve the Miraloma Playground, graded "D" on the 2012 SF Parks Alliance Playground Report Card. We wrote that safe playgrounds for children must be a priority for City services, and that a "D" grade warrants urgent maintenance attention and capital investment. On 1/4/14, Mr. Ginsburg finally responded in a letter saying that SFRPD is working closely with the Park Alliance to create a playground community task force that will set criteria they will use to assess which playgrounds around the city are in most need of investment. Mr. Ginsburg acknowledged that while no final decisions have yet been made and the community process is just beginning, his Department has long recognized that the Miraloma playground needs renovation.

Some neighborhood volunteers have already expressed an interest in working on the playground issues. We plan to ask the Parks Alliance for a meeting about their assessment process and to send a letter to the SF Recreation and Parks Commission explaining why our playground should get priority for renovation. We will also look into funding for playground upgrades from the SF Community Opportunity Fund Program, part of the 2012 SF Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks General Obligation Bond. With the help of our neighborhood volunteers, we aim to make a real difference for the Miraloma Playground.

Undergrounding Utilities: We reported recently in this newsletter that we endorsed undergrounding utility wires. In the near future we will coordinate with the SF Coalition to Underground Utilities to schedule a neighborhood meeting at the Clubhouse along with interested neighbors from Glen Park and Sunnyside. The meeting will be publicized in our newsletter and on our website, as well as on Next Door Miraloma Park. We can rid ourselves of the visual blight of aerial wires by undergrounding if we insist on it with a unified voice.

Designation of Critical Habitat: On 12/20/13, the US Fish and Wildlife released its Final Rule on the designation of critical habitat for the Franciscan manzanita plant in San Francisco (see [gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-12-20/pdf/2013-30165](http://gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-12-20/pdf/2013-30165)). Prior articles in this newsletter outlined our concerns and requests in response to the Draft Rule: (1) to reduce the amount of critical habitat space designated for Mt. Davidson and (2) to explain the 3.2 acres of private property designated as critical habitat along Marietta Drive. The Final Rule did not address our request to reduce the critical habitat space on Mt. Davidson but did reduce the allocated area of private property (from 3.2 acres to 0.8 acres). In an article in last month's newsletter, Jake Sigg argued that because Franciscan manzanita is sustainable only on serpentine-based soil, of which there is none on Mt. Davidson, and the issue was moot for practical purposes. However, concerns remain, not so much with respect to potential restrictions and impacts due to manzanita planting and preservation needs, but more because of the precedent of the SFRPD recommending to US Fish and Wildlife the re-classification of private property without notice to or input from the owners. It's an issue of SF's government engaging in a closed process that should have been open and respectful of homeowners' and citizen's rights to be informed and have a voice in decisions.

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## The Great Tasmanian Blue Gum

(Continued from page 1)

crowns, blocking light and stressing the trees by its sheer weight and root competition. The rampant growth of ivy and Himalayan blackberry that occurs as a secondary effect of tree introduction prevents the gum trees from regenerating by seed. Then, as older trees topple or die from old age—which was happening then and is accelerating now—there is nothing to replace them except ivy and blackberry that smothers the understory. Thus, the Mt. Davidson eucalyptus groves are doomed unless they are managed. Untended, the area will eventually become a treeless biological wasteland, of no interest to humans or animals. Fortunately, in 2002 the SF Recreation and Parks Department drafted a management plan to preserve this valuable tree stand.

The Tasmanian blue gum, *Eucalyptus globulus*, is one of the world's great trees, but in recent decades it has become the center of controversy. The debate has unfortunately obscured the merits of the eucalyptus and its proper use. In fact, the supposed detriments of the eucalyptus have little to do with the tree itself, but rather with improper siting—planting in inappropriate areas. An oddity of human nature impels us to blame the tree for its negative impacts, rather than the humans who planted it in the wrong place.

Of the approximately 700 species of eucalyptus, the Tasmanian blue gum (the type planted on Mt. Davidson) is among the tallest, and one of the world's tallest hardwoods. It can reach 150 to 180 feet in favorable sites (250 feet in India), with bole diameters of 8 feet or more. Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, director of the Melbourne Botanical Garden, played a big role in blue gum's importation into California in the mid-19th century. He had moved from Germany to Australia for health reasons, and became a champion of the genus *Eucalyptus*. Von Mueller was correct in his assessment of the gum's suitability for the California climate and its advantage of rapid growth. Fast tree growth interested the timber-hungry miners and railroad builders of the 1800s, and that accounts for its widespread planting here. However, it was discovered that the wood was useless for most building purposes, because it seasons poorly, warps and checks on drying, and rots quickly. The tree did grow very well here, but land speculators betting on profiting from its lumber fared less well. Most of them went bank-

rupt, leaving over much of the California coastal region large eucalyptus stands as memorials to their commercial failure. The extensive grove on Highway 1 at the base of Mt. Tamalpais, climbing out of Mill Valley, is one; others include the University of California at Irvine campus and the East Bay Hills—which, after a disastrous firestorm in 1991, has become the object of heated debate.

Adolph Sutro, who in common with Eastern and European settlers considered the plains and grasslands “barren,” planted large tracts of trees on Mt Sutro, Mt Davidson, and the surrounding Westwood area. The Westwood trees were later cut down to make space for houses. In fact, the Tasmanian blue gum is one of the most widely planted trees on Earth, in part because its ability to consume water surpasses that of any other tree. Mussolini used the blue gum to dry the Pontine Marshes south of Rome, and it has been planted to drain wetlands around the world. However, now that wetlands and water have become scarce resources, many of these plantations are being removed. Water-hungry South Africa is busily ridding its riparian areas of blue gums, and habitat restoration is being accomplished by government funding as well as by volunteers.

For clarity I refer not to “forests” but to “plantations.” These large-scale eucalyptus plantings are not natural forests, which are complex systems that over time change little in overall appearance and function. The blue gum tracts are, rather, plantations installed by humans that lack the self-regulation of natural ecosystems. They are an aggregation of plants from distant parts of the world that did not evolve in association with each other, and there are no “rules” for cohabiting, as there are in natural ecosystems. In artificial plantations, a few plants inevitably come to dominate: Himalayan blackberry, English ivy, poison oak. The multiplicity of plants and the complexity of their interrelations that occur in natural forests are absent in these planted areas. Expertise in forest management is of no help in this artificial situation; they present a gardening problem, and gardeners know this challenge well.

The blue gum's detractors talk about its negative effects, notably its “rambunctiousness”: a facility for spreading quickly via seed and muscling out other plants by dropping copious litter that smothers them. Thus, blue gums eventually create a monoculture as well as a fire hazard. These are reasons for not wanting the tree to grow in particular areas, but not for hating the species. It is merely doing a good job at what nature so brilliantly designed it

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## The Great Tasmanian Blue Gum

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to do. The blue gum has its ardent defenders, including those who would not cut down a single tree or thin out trees unless they are dead or a danger, but it would help if these aficionados would inform themselves of the inescapable management problems associated with blue gum plantations, rather than insisting on no management at all, a course that will lead to their demise.

Among the often unrealized problems of managing this eucalyptus in aggregate are: (1) The innate self-destructiveness of coastal blue gum groves. Because they drip copious amounts of fog condensation, they create the equivalent of year-round rain. Weedy plants that otherwise would not survive in our dry summer climate do very well in this perennial moisture, forcing out tender and fragile species that create variety and pleasure for humans and food for wildlife. This uniformity makes blue gum groves monotonous and uninviting to humans and animals. (2) Sutro's plantation replaced a rich ecosystem that evolved with the landscape over eons and has now vanished forever. Because this ecosystem was self-sustaining, "just leave it alone" was a viable option, but leaving a plantation alone is not an option unless we want all the trees to die. Mt. Davidson will have to be managed by humans in perpetuity. Forestry management principles are of little or no value for plantations, which effectively require gardening methods: planting or allowing to grow those plants considered desirable, while controlling undesirable plants that tend to dominate.

Preventing the plantation's self-destruction requires thinning trees and clearing aggressive understory plants,

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## From the Safety Committee

(Continued from page 1)

door" of people coming to and going from the home and the occasional appearance of a crew-cab pickup truck. The case is under investigation. Report number: 131030546

The MPIC has been successful in the past working ac-

tively with police and other city agencies to bring about permanent abatement of illegal activity in Miraloma Park houses. But please note that the above report describes "a continual 'revolving door' of people coming to and going from the home." This certainly qualifies as suspicious activity and should have been reported without delay to police by neighbors. Also note the "sophisticated electrical system that bypassed the PG&E meter." Translation: extreme fire hazard, one that could have destroyed surrounding homes. Yet, the illegal and dangerous activity taking place at the residence reportedly was discovered by accident—someone called in about an open garage door and requested a well-being check.

Miraloma Park is still one of the City's safest areas, but no neighborhood is exempt from criminal activity. Please pick up the phone and report suspicious activity to police, allowing them investigate and so helping neighbors as well as yourself to stay safe.

**Trespassing Youth:** We've received reports of youth trespassing—eating, littering, and smoking—on properties in the vicinity of the Portola shopping area, and we have requested SFPD assistance to address this problem. Officers have met with the Ruth Asawa School of the Arts (SOTA) principal, who will address the problem with students and parents. The Academy of Arts and Sciences shares McAteer Campus with the School of the Arts (SOTA), and SFPD will meet with Academy officials as well.

In addition, MPIC Board members will meet with school officials to discuss these concerns. Please let us know if you'd like to participate in the meeting by emailing us at [miralomapark@gmail.com](mailto:miralomapark@gmail.com). The MPIC has requested that officers monitor the vicinity of Juanita/Evelyn/Fowler/Teresita during the noon to 1:30 pm period and take appropriate action regarding trespassing. Also, we all can help: please call 553-0123 to report trespassing on your own or neighbors' properties.

**911 Call Response:** The MPIC thanks Ingleside Captain Timothy Falvey and Director of Emergency Services Lisa Hoffman for investigating a 40-minute delay in response time to a 911 call. On December 11, a frightened Juanita Way resident called police about an unknown male pounding on her door at approximately 1:30 am. Captain Falvey is actively investigating the reason for the delay in officer response time. In addition, he has addressed this serious concern with Ingleside officers to ensure that this unacceptable response time is not repeated. This newsletter will report the results of this investigation when they become available.



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**From the President's Corner**

(Continued from page 3)

Graffiti: Occasionally the stores along Portola are hit with major tagging spree, and we often see graffiti along the reservoir, up on Mt. Davidson, and on mail-boxes, sign posts, and fences throughout the neighborhood. The City just doesn't magically appear and paint out these graffiti, although the Department of Public Works (DPW), if notified by a 311 call or on line ([sf311.org/index.aspx?page=117](http://sf311.org/index.aspx?page=117)) may, given time, remedy larger infestations reported to them. In fact, it is your MPIC Board Members and other community volunteers who paint out most graffiti ASAP (that discourages the taggers) and notify business owners to abate tags on their storefronts. Because unabated graffiti invite more of the same, we try to remove tags as soon as we see them. If you see tags we've missed, please contact DPW (see above) to report them. If you want to be a part of our graffiti abatement team, please let us know and we can outfit you with the paint and brushes, cleaner, and operational tips. The time commitment is reasonable.

Work with City Departments: The MPIC Board doesn't merely write letters of complaint to City and State Departments; often, we need to muster people to attend hearings or meetings with officials and other neighborhood organizations. Additionally, we write thank-you and commendation letters to city employees, such as police officers who have helped our neighborhood or public servants who instrumental in getting problems solved. Maintaining appreciative and cordial relations with our governing bodies and departments is vital to achieving our community's goals. Please copy the MPIC on any correspondence you send to City officials and departments regarding problems or thanks for problems solved, so that we can follow-up where necessary.

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## Pleasant Surprises and Three Easy-to-Do Resolutions

by Bill Kan, CFA

The start of a new year is always exciting for me. There is so much energy from those around me about resolutions to get better, more fit, and healthy in the new year. This article describes a few simple items for your to-do list to help with personal finance.

You may be in for a pleasant surprise when you review your financial statements for 2013, which you should do at least once a year. Gather the paper statements of the year-end summaries or download them from your bank, brokerage, retirement plan, insurance company, etc. See what changed over the last year. While you may have heard your share of Holiday party stories of how Tesla or Netflix quadrupled in value or how Gilead doubled in 2013 (all references to returns are total returns in 2013 through 12/15/13), there were many different ways to participate in the rally last year. Broad baskets of stocks such as the S&P 500 index were up 30%. A person randomly throwing darts to pick stocks in the US had better than 50-50 odds of picking a stock that gained over 20%, which is more than double the historical annual average stock market return. Equipped with information from the statements, you will know much better about where you stand financially.

Another to-do list item is to tally up what you owe: mortgage, home equity lines, school and car loans, and other. If what you own is greater than what you owe, and the difference increased over the course of the year, congratulations. You made progress in saving for goals like retirement, education, etc. Exactly how well you did will depend on your financial plan, a roadmap that describes your strategy to reach your goals. Another plus for doing this review annually is that in completing it you will also make progress toward getting ready for tax season.

The last “to-do” item that I want to share is to make necessary adjustments to your finances to keep them

in balance. Your investment portfolio may have ended 2013 more risky than at the start of the year. Stocks are generally considered to be more risky than bonds. Given that stocks advanced strongly and bonds were largely unchanged, stocks would likely account for a larger portion of a portfolio at the end of 2013 than at the start, which would make your portfolio more risky. This is a good time to ask whether the current percentages of stocks and bonds are consistent with your goals.

To stay on track, areas of the portfolios that performed well may need to be trimmed back and additions may be needed in areas that did less well. This “re-balancing” is similar to getting a haircut periodically or tending to your garden. It is routine maintenance necessary to attain desired results. Studies have shown that periodic re-balancing helps reduce swings in the value of a portfolio with little impact on long-term returns, and reducing volatility in this way can reduce the stress you’ll experience if your portfolio is unbalanced and highly reactive to market changes. Re-balancing works better when it is done with an eye toward costs, taxes and other elements of a financial plan. If you have questions, consult your investment advisor and other trusted resources for assistance.

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## The Great Tasmanian Blue Gum

(Continued from page 5)

thereby creating healthier conditions for the trees, and this action, proposed on Mt Davidson by SFRPD, is both necessary and desirable. In 1990, my sole objective was to preserve the charms of the Mt. Davidson “forest.” I loved it, especially on foggy or rainy days when it was most seductive, and I was asking only that the understory blackberry and ivy be removed so that a greater variety of understory plants could survive and the trees themselves could reproduce. Twenty-four years later, many of the plant varieties I would have liked to save have succumbed to invasive plants, more trees have fallen or have been weakened by the ivy’s sinister embrace, with nothing to replace them—and management has become much more expensive. Thus, the need for management planning and execution is far more urgent today, both for preservation of the groves and enhancement of understory support for wildlife. Variety is the spice and source of life, and now invasives have been given free rein to the extent that they have reduced the ecosystem to primarily

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## The Great Tasmanian Blue Gum

(Continued from page 7)

three plants: blue gum trees, Himalayan blackberry, and English ivy.

From a biological point of view, the Mt. Davidson groves have become a wasteland, lacking the rich interactions of plants and animals that make up a natural ecosystem. Diversifying the understory of this plantation by proper gardening management, including thinning and removal of exotic invasives by hand and judicious use of herbicides, will pay huge dividends and ensure the trees' survival. While not technically a "natural area," the management of this "naturalistic area" has been assigned to the Natural Areas Program, and the City's approval of the Significant Natural Resource Areas Management Plan (SNRAMP) will allow the Mt. Davidson "forest" to thrive. We must act now or this forest, and the delight it affords to us all, will soon vanish, like the native ecology it replaced. For reasons not clear to me, dialog between the SFRPD and the neighborhoods has broken down. SNRAMP may well be the last chance to save the Mt. Davidson Forest. Please don't let animosity, suspicion, and misunderstanding derail this program.

*Editor's note and response:* I believe that Jake Sigg, veteran gardener and native plants advocate (formerly President of the CA Native Plant Society), and herein

revealed (no doubt to the surprise of many Mt. Davidson Woods defenders) as a lover of the mountain's non-native blue gum groves, is sincere and generally on target in his insistence that the woods on the mountain must be managed to survive, and the need is urgent. Anyone who walks the trails and sees the devastation wrought by the invasives will surely recognize this need. Jake appears to believe that the passage of SNRAMP and the funds that it would provide are the only way to save the blue gum woods, and he may be correct in this, too. The problem, as explained in several previous articles in this newsletter, is that the draft SNRAMP plan released the year before last has the potential to allow extensive cutting of trees in highly visible areas. Opponents of the plan have argued that this could cause visual blight and increased wind. When the SF Recreation and Park proponents of SNRAMP addressed the MPIC last year they maintained that the goal was to create a dappled, "glade" effect by removing selected smaller and sick or dead

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## The Great Tasmanian Blue Gum

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trees and invasive understory, not large, healthy trees. If this were in truth what is proposed, I think there would be less alarm and opposition to SNRAMP. But the text of the draft can be read as indicating more extensive cutting in some areas highly visible from homes and trails. This is why the MPIC submitted comments critical of the plan. If indeed the intent of SNRAMP management is truly to thin groves in order to preserve the forest rather than to heavily clear areas in order to reintroduce native plants (which after all have a large treeless area to the north-east in which to flourish), then I hope that the revised EIR and Response to Comments, which are to be released later this year, will present clearly and in detail this preservation objective and the methods proposed to achieve it. This would go a long way toward addressing the objections to SNRAMP of the MPIC and others. We'll see.

## What's Growing in Our Backyards?

by Denise Louie

Miraloma Park is close to significant natural resource areas (SNRAs) on Mt. Davidson and in Glen Canyon. California is a biodiversity hotspot, with many native plants and animals that grow nowhere else and are threatened by human impacts and global warming. Our state has lost 99% of its wildflower-bearing grasslands, and we must protect the remainder. By volunteering with the Natural Areas Program (visit [sfnaturalareas.org](http://sfnaturalareas.org), or email [Joe.Grey@sfgov.org](mailto:Joe.Grey@sfgov.org)), you can learn about native plants in these SNRAs and what to do in your own backyard to help preserve them. Invasive non-natives can spread from your yard into native ecosystems, where they out-compete native species and deprive wildlife dependent

on them.

Please avoid planting invasive plants ("weeds") and remove any you have from your yard to your green bin, including Jupiter's beard (valerian), scarlet pimpernel, and agapanthus (lily of the Nile). Jupiter's beard has pretty, pink, red, or white, cone-shaped flowers with many seeds easily dispersed by wind. Agapanthus is so often used in landscaping that it hardly seems a weed, but it spreads rapidly from the roots: given an inch, it will take a yard. Other weeds found in yards and SNRAs are yellow flowering wild mustard and French broom; white, pink, and lavender flowering wild radish; non-native grasses, including pampas grass with its large, feathery fronds full of seeds; cotoneaster with its red berries in December (different from toyon, a native shrub with red berries); fennel; Himalayan blackberry; and ivy.

In place of weeds, plant native wildflowers like phacelia (scorpion weed or heliotrope), coast buckwheat, and seaside daisy. Phacelia blooms in spring, and its purple flowers complement California poppies, easy to propagate by seed, but plant the pale yellow coastal poppies that belong in SF, not the intense orange inland ones. Three years ago I helped propagate wildflowers for Nature in the City's Sunset District project to join two populations of the rare Green Hairstreak Butterfly by a land corridor. Wonderfully, these butterflies have returned to a plot I worked on, showing that human effort can restore

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## What's Growing in Our Backyards?

(Continued from page 9)

native plants and their animal dependents (see [natureinthecity.org](http://natureinthecity.org)). Rare Mission Blue butterflies have been reintroduced to Twin Peaks, where they depend on lupine. With ongoing effort, these lovely insects may again flutter widely over SF.

Please remember to remove weeds from your yard before they go to seed and spread. Dig up oxalis when it first appears, to exhaust its resources. The hori-hori gardening knife (available on-line) works well, but a screwdriver may loosen the soil enough to pull out a small weed's roots or extract weeds from sidewalk cracks. Please keep after all weeds: it really matters what grows in our backyards!

## Ruth Asawa School of the Arts (SOTA) Presents *Spamalot* a Monty Python Spoof

by Dan Liberthson

The Ruth Asawa SF School of the Arts annual musical is Monty Python's *Spamalot*, lovingly ripped off from the comic film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Retelling in hilariously warped fashion the legend of King Arthur, *Spamalot* includes a bevy of beautiful show girls, not to mention cows, killer rabbits, and snotty Frenchmen, all very familiar to Monty Python fans. I have seen three of the school's prior musicals, and all were terrific, as you'd expect from the cream of the Bay Area's talented teens guided by top-caliber faculty and visiting artists. Tickets for performances on Feb 27 and 28 and Mar 1, 6, 7, and 8 at 7:30 pm; and Mar 1 and 8 at 2 pm, can be purchased for \$15-17 at [sfsota.org](http://sfsota.org) or in person at 555 Portola Dr. Musi-

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SOTA Presents *Spamalot*

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calls at SF SOTA can sell out, so get tickets now at 10% off when you order on-line and enter promo code **Diamond**.

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### Miraloma Park Improvement Club Membership Application

Please complete and mail with your dues to the Club address below. Make check payable to Miraloma Park Improvement Club, 350 O'Shaughnessy Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94127. (No cash, please). Thank you!

New Member       Renewing Member      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please send me an email reminder to renew my membership.

Enclosed are my dues for the next twelve months (check one):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$12 Senior Member(s)    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Single Member     |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Contributing Member | <input type="checkbox"/> \$_____ Other          |

No MPIC membership information is shared with other parties or organizations.

## Important Phone Numbers

EMERGENCY	9-1-1
All City Calls	3-1-1
Poison Control Center	1-800-222-1222
Non-emergency Police Dispatch	553-0123
Suicide Prevention Hotline	781-0500
Ingleside Police Community Room	404-4000
Parking Complaints	553-1200
Abandoned Cars	553-9817
Security Survey/Nbd. Watch	673-SAFE
Office of Citizen's Complaints Against SFPD	241-7711
Narcotics Tips (anonymous)	1-800-CRACKIT
SFPD Tip Line	587-8984
Domestic/Family Violence (24hrs)	864-4722
Stray, Abused, or Dangerous Animals	554-6364
Dumped Item Pickup – DPW	3-1-1
Vital Records	3-1-1
Code Enforcement Hotline	554-3977
Graffiti Cleanup – DPW	3-1-1
Police New Graffiti Hotline	278-9454
MUNI Shelter Damage/Graffiti	1-510-835-5900
Ingleside SFPD Hearing-Impaired line	404-4009
School of the Arts	695-5700
Norman Yee, Supervisor Dist. 7	554-6516

(norman.yee.bos@sfgov.org)

## RENT the MPIC Clubhouse



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Call 415-281-0892 for rates/availability

Or E-mail: [miralomapark@gmail.com](mailto:miralomapark@gmail.com)

## Miraloma Park Residential Design Guidelines:

Adopted in 1999 by the SF Planning Commission to promote preservation of neighborhood character by encouraging residential design compatible with neighborhood setting, these Guidelines facilitate the complex process of permit application and design review and can prevent costly, time-consuming Discretionary Review proceedings.

The Guidelines are at [www.miralomapark.org](http://www.miralomapark.org).

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### Article Submission Policy

The deadline for March 2014 articles is Monday, February 10.

E-mail copies of your article (Times New Roman, 10 pt Black only font) to [miralomapark@gmail.com](mailto:miralomapark@gmail.com), with "Miraloma Life" in the Subject. Or mail to: Editor, Miraloma Life, 350 O'Shaughnessy Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94127.