



## BOULEVARD PARK'S *PARK BEAT*



# Neighbors Kick Summer Off With Community Spirit

A fortuitous streak of moderate June temperatures reflected the spirits of those who gathered at Boulevard Park's back-to-back neighborhood gatherings, paving the way for residents to enter the summer free of excess belongings yet filled with new connections. The festivities began on Saturday, June 7th, as 40 neighbors came together at Washington Elementary School's park to build a temporary flea market serving hundreds of attendees while over a dozen more held simultaneous partner sales to round out the offerings for would-be treasure hunters. The following Friday, June 13th, overcame its inauspicious date by playing host to a Neighborhood Mixer which turned out over 70 residents spanning as many years of experience. *See June Events Recap, p. 2*

# Preservation Sacramento's 49th Annual Historic Home Tour



This year's home tour showcases Sacramento's youngest historic district (designated in May 2024), an important residential neighborhood in South Land Park Hills. The new tract was developed in the mid-1950s by Joseph Eichler, who was famous for building affordable Modernist style homes for middle income families. "Designed for better living," according to one of the advertising slogans, Eichler homes had open floor plans, exposed beam ceilings, floor-to-ceiling glass doors, and spacious patios. Five homes (four of them built by Eichler) have been selected for inclusion in the tour and will be open to ticketholders on Sunday, September 21 (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Classic cars from the 1950s and 1960s will be parked throughout the neighborhood, and there will be a street fair in Reichmuth Park, just steps away from the homes on tour. For more information and for advance ticket purchases, go to: <https://www.preservationsacramento.org/hometour>. If you would like to help at the tour, go to: <https://www.preservationsacramento.org/volunteer> (mention the home tour in the "additional information" block). To learn more about Sacramento's Eichler Historic District, go to: <https://www.eichlernetwork.com/article/eichler-victory-sacramento>

## Grant Park Cleanup & Future Vision

Mark your calendars for a Grant Park clean-up day on **Saturday, July 26th** from **9 AM to 12 noon!** We'll be getting together to power wash some of the play structures, pour new sand for the sand pit, clean out weeds, and time permitting, trim the overhanging bushes near the train tracks. We'll also have representatives from the City of Sacramento and the BPNA looking to solicit ideas on what improvements you'd like to see made at Grant Park! It'll be all hands on deck for this one, so if you enjoy the park, come help make it even more awesome! Tools will be provided, but feel free to bring your own. **Coffee and donuts will be provided.**

## June Events Recap

*continued from page 1*

The Community Yard Sale was the second iteration of the event which was first revived last year, and featured a new location in addition to allowing sellers to peddle wares from their own homes. Featuring twice as many participants as the 2024 event, the ad-hoc bazaar was rounded out by delicious tacos from *La Sabrocita* and set to the sounds of DJ. Ian Maas's eclectic collection of records. Punctuating the intention of the Yard Sale, one neighbor commented afterwards that "after getting to meet so many neighbors, I felt so much more connected to my community".

Keeping to the theme of reprises, the Neighborhood Mixer followed up a similar event from March, this time being held at the courtyard of the 2216 H Street apartment block. The event offered music, pizza, beverages, and most-importantly mingling to nearby residents, and was comprised primarily of new faces to the neighborhood's events - which isn't to discount the presence of the peculiar mannequins adorning the picnic tables nearby. Given its outcome of dozens of interested volunteers and countless new relationships, the Mixer's success appeared to signal an appetite for local engagement which BPNA leadership hopes to satisfy with continued activity.

### Spaghetti Dinner - Call for Volunteers!

The BPNA's Spaghetti Dinner is set for Saturday, September 13th - it will be here before you know it! Each year, we rely on dozens of volunteers to help check in attendees, serve food and beverages, and clean up the aftermath. If you're interested in lending a helping hand, head to <https://www.boulevardpark.org/volunteer> or scan the QR code below to put your name on the list.

We are specifically looking for someone to be the Kitchen Coordinator. This would entail helping develop the process for preparing (pre-cooked) spaghetti/sauce, and overseeing volunteers who will be helping in the kitchen on the day of the event. If you are interested in this role, please check the relevant box on the form and we will reach out to you.



# Insects in Our Neighborhood: June Bugs



You may have noticed these large beetles clinging to the outside of a screen door or clattering against a windowpane after dusk on a summer evening. Many people call them June bugs, but the more accurate term is a June Beetle. Apart from their size, these scarab beetles are memorable for making hissing or squeaking noises when they are disturbed or threatened. They are called “June” beetles because that is the month when they typically emerge in their adult form after spending several years underground as a grub or larva. The photograph shows a Ten-Lined June Beetle, so named because of the distinctive white stripes on its two wing-covers. The large antennae identify it as a male. Because the June Beetle grubs eat plant roots, they are considered an agricultural pest. However, they also are a tasty treat for wild birds and for the four-legged critters that visit our backyards at night, like raccoons and skunks.

## Save the Date for Nat'l Night Out!

Tuesday, August 5, is “National Night Out” in Sacramento and around the country. As in past years, the Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association and the Marshall-New Era Neighborhood Association will be co-hosting a progressive potluck dinner that spans our two neighborhoods. The meal starts with an appetizer course in the grassy median strip of 22nd Street between F and G Streets (6 p.m.), continues with a dinner course in the side yard of 2431 H Street (7 p.m.), and ends with a dessert course in Marshall Park, 28th and I Streets (8 p.m.). Participants are asked to bring a favorite dish to share at any of the three courses. There will be more information about this fun event in the August issue of *Park Beat* and on social media for both neighborhood associations.

## 2025 BPNA Board of Directors

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## 2025 BPNA Membership Form

Please send this form with your dues payment (recommended: \$5-15 per adult member, per year) to:  
BPNA, P. O. Box 160811, Sacramento CA 95816-0811

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

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Please mark as appropriate:

- New Member                       Renewing Member
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- Would like to receive the *Park Beat* newsletter by email (paper copies are delivered only to residents living in the greater Boulevard Park neighborhood)



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# A Home for Maija

By Elaine O'Brien

As a longtime admirer of the celebrated California Funk artist Maija Peeples-Bright, I was delighted to discover that she grew up on D Street, just a block and a half from my house in Boulevard Park.

Maija's parents, Herbert and Biruta Gegeris, purchased the two-story Classic Revival foursquare at 2012 D Street in 1952. Built in 1906, the well-made three-bedroom house was a longed-for refuge for the Gegeris family after hard years of exile from their ancestral homeland in Latvia. "My parents were remarkable people," Maija says—an understatement. When the Soviet military wrested Latvia back from Nazi Germany and brutally reoccupied it in 1944, Herbert and Biruta fled with two-year-old Maija. Finding their way to a refugee camp in postwar Germany, they stayed until the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) helped them immigrate to Orangevale in May of 1950. A high school math teacher in Riga, Herbert worked as a farmhand for the Douglas family, their sponsors; Biruta, who had taught high school ethics and Latvian language, was the household maid. "We worked off our sponsorship money," Maija explains, "and then we moved to the big city . . . We were happy to go to Sacramento."

Maija was nine years old when the Gegeris family settled at 2012 D Street. She still has vivid memories of her childhood there, even recalling the horseshoes found in their backyard (relics of the old racetrack days). In the early years, she and her parents "slept in the living room and rented out all three of the upstairs bedrooms." Her family befriended their "roomers," single men like Peter Kore, a Latvian who had immigrated to San Francisco in the 1930s, and Domenico Vezzani, an Italian immigrant who repaired store mannequins and statues for Catholic churches. "It was fun having the roomers there," Maija says. "They would read me stories when my parents were out working." Herbert and Biruta found office-cleaning jobs, working together and later assisted by Maija, at Bekins Storage, Canada Dry, Globe Mills (on C and 12th), and the Addressograph-Multigraph offices (on S and 10th).

Most of the Gegeris family's friends were Latvian. Their homes, as well as monthly Latvian church services and frequent social events, were largely within walking distance. "It was quite a community!" Maija exclaims. "And there was Saturday school for the Latvian kids that included us little kids, to 16-year-olds. They were generally at a house where someone could teach something. We learned Latvian dictation, where they dictated a story, and we had to write it down in Latvian. Or they would give us a history lesson about Latvia. They wanted the children to keep their roots."

Maija left D Street in 1962 to complete her B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees at UC Davis. In the fifty years of prolific creative production that followed, Maija has given us an ideal world exclusively filled with the exuberant spirit of playful joy. I understand it now as a child's place of perfect refuge.

To learn more about Maija Peeples-Bright and her artwork, go to: <https://parkergallery.com/artists/maija-peeples-bright>



Courtesy of Maija Peeples-Bright

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# July 2025: Places to Go, People to See

**TIP:** For more information about public events this month, go to: [sacramento365.com](https://sacramento365.com)

**Most weekend mornings, 9 to Noon:** Join volunteers in beautification tasks at Sutter's Landing Park. Contact FOSL's volunteer coordinator, Betsy Weiland ([flweiland@yahoo.com](mailto:flweiland@yahoo.com)); or 279-202-4677).

**Every Saturday:** Midtown Farmers' Market (8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 20th St. between I and L Sts.; K St. between 19th and 21st Sts.). Website: <https://exploremidtown.org/midtown-markets/>

**Every Sunday:** Sacramento Certified Farmers' Market (8 a.m. to noon; under the freeway at 8th and W Sts.; free parking).

**Fri., July 4:** Independence Day concert by the Capital Brass Quartet, on the grass in the park in the center of the F, G, 21st and 22nd Street block (3 p.m.). See below.

**Fri., July 4:** Annual Community Block Party at 19th and D Streets (7 p.m. to 10 p.m.). Music, games, food, and fun for all ages. See below.

**July 11-27:** California State Fair, at Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd. Exhibits, entertainment, livestock and food. Website: <https://calexpostatefair.com/home-state-fair/>

**July 11-17:** *West Side Story*, presented by Broadway at Music Circus, at UC Davis Health Pavilion, 1419 H St. (matinee and evening performances; admission charged). Website: <https://www.broadwaysacramento.com/production/west-side-story-8/>

**Fri., July 11:** Choir and orchestra performance of Dave Brubeck's mass, "To Hope," at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, 1019 11th St. (admission charged; advance ticket purchase recommended). Website: <https://www.cathedralsacramento.org/>

## Celebrate Independence Day in Boulevard Park!

Starting at 3 p.m. on Friday, July 4, Boulevard Park's own Capital Brass Quartet will perform patriotic and other American music in the grassy park at the center of the block bordered by F, G, 21st and 22nd Streets. The four players and their instruments are: Karl Fitch, trumpet and flugelhorn; Tim Ragan, trumpet; Josh Cambridge, trombone; and Hal Edmonds, bass trombone.

Please enter the park from the 22nd Street side, using Fog Alley (if you are driving, please leave your car outside the park). You may want to bring a lawn chair, blanket, or other portable surface for sitting on the ground, plus something to drink (or to share with the band—horn playing can be thirsty work on a July afternoon!).

Later that same day, there will be a lively neighborhood block party at D and 19th Streets (7-10 p.m.). Proceeds from this year's event will benefit Refined Mind, Inc., a local nonprofit that empowers youth and families through financial literacy and education. Bring lawn chairs or blankets and join us for a festive evening of music, games, and fun for all ages. A scrumptious dinner by a local chef will be available for purchase. More info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2094865601033873/> (or scan this QR code).



**Sat., July 12:** Kids' Tour at the Old City Cemetery, 1000 Broadway (2 p.m.; adults pay \$11.20 in advance, kids are free). This tour is designed for kids in the 4th grade and up, but all ages are welcome. Website: <https://historicalcitycemetery.org/tours-events/>

**Sat., July 12:** Second Saturday Art Walk: "Art in Motion", hosted by the Midtown Association. An art walk featuring performance art and live music in central Midtown and Sutter area. Website: <https://exploremidtown.org/second-saturday/>

**Thu., July 17:** 120th anniversary of the first property sales in Wright & Kimbrough's Boulevard Park (July 17, 1905). See article on page 6.

**Thu., July 17:** BPNA Board Meeting, Washington Elementary School, 520 18th St. (6:30 to 8 p.m.). Open to BPNA members and other interested residents. Contact Noah Mebane for information.

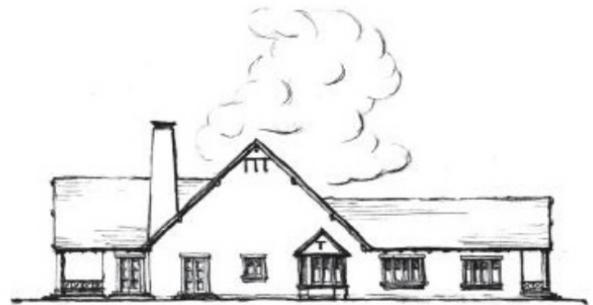
**Sat., July 26:** Grant Park Clean-up Event, Grant Park (9 a.m. to 12 noon). See article on page 2.

## And looking ahead to early August...

**Sat., Aug. 2:** Harvest Day, "Sacramento's ultimate gardening event," hosted by the UCCE Master Gardeners of Sacramento County at Fair Oaks Horticulture Center, 11549 Fair Oaks Blvd. (8 a.m. - 2 p.m.). Website: <https://ucanr.edu/site/uc-master-gardeners-sacramento-county/event/harvest-day-2025>

**Tue., Aug. 5:** National Night Out, with a progressive potluck supper co-hosted by BPNA and MNENA, 6-9 p.m. (see article on page 3).

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# The Doctor Is *In*: Health Notes for Boulevard Park Residents

By Dr. Jessica Nunez de Ybarra

With summer here, I wanted to remind everyone to check their blood pressure. Did you know that the prevalence of hypertension or high blood pressure increases with age? By the age of 65 years old, over half of Californians have been diagnosed with high blood pressure. High blood pressure is called a silent killer because you don't feel anything, but it can lead to significant damage to your kidneys, heart and brain over time if not treated. It's important for every adult to monitor their blood pressure at least four times a year, and more regularly for those who have high blood pressure to ensure that blood pressure readings are normal. Treatment can include lifestyle changes and medications. Everyone's health benefits from regular physical activity, no smoking, and diets low in sodium and full of vegetables and fruits. Do not take your health for granted. Be safe out there and take care of yourself and each other. For more tips, visit the American Heart Association at [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).

## BOULEVARD ..PARK..

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Snippet of a Wright & Kimbrough ad (*Sacramento Bee* - July 13, 1905)

## Boulevard Park Turns 120!

The sale of lots in the tract formerly occupied by the Agricultural Park Racetrack began on Monday morning, July 17, 1905. Newspaper advertisements posted by the developers, Wright & Kimbrough, promised investors that "no stores, woodyards, or business houses ... no saloons or other objectionable features" would be permitted in Boulevard Park, since it was intended "to be strictly and forever a high-class residence district." Furthermore, "houses [were] to be built on a line, and there [would] be no front fences." Other selling points included the two parked boulevards extending the length of 21st and 22nd Streets, the parks at the centers of three of the neighborhood's blocks (those bordered by G, H, 20th and 21st; by G, H, 21st, and 22nd; and F, G, 21st and 22nd), and the shade trees planted at the fronts of the lots. The first house to be built in Boulevard Park, 414 21st Street, was finished and occupied before the year ended; by February 1906, there were at least a dozen residences in the neighborhood, including the "elegant new home" of George W. Smith, a salesman for Wright & Kimbrough (724 21st Street).

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