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# 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.*



SPRING 2001

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## Tree Care Project Gets Underway

Canopy has launched a brand-new Tree Care program this spring. As the saying goes, “It takes five years to plant a tree—a morning to get it in the ground and five years to care for it.” Thanks to a generous grant from the *California Relief 2001 Capacity-Building Grant Program* and the *California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection*, Canopy will now be able to focus more efforts on caring for the urban forest.

**Canopy thanks the *California Relief 2001 Capacity-Building Grant Program* and the *California Dept. of Forestry and Fire Protection* for their generous grant of \$8,547.00. The grant will pay for tools and equipment, as well as fund the first year pilot.**

The goal of the Tree Care program is to improve the health and survival rate of each new street tree planted in Palo Alto. Canopy volunteers will visit Palo Alto's recently planted street trees, surveying their general health and maintenance needs, looking for particular problems such as pests or damage. Trained volunteer maintenance teams will then come through the area to take care of the trees. You will see them rebuilding the basins around young trees, fixing or removing stakes, adding mulch or even weeding. If you want to join in, please call Canopy at (650) 964-6110.

This year, the Tree Care program will begin with a pilot project in College Terrace. Canopy hopes to expand the project to other areas of Palo Alto in future years. ■

## Fundraising Goal on Track

**A** BIG thank you to our members who made Canopy's first fundraising campaign a big success. With three months left in our fiscal year, Canopy has received gifts from our community representing an increase of more than 180% over the amount of last year. More significantly, the number of gifts of \$100 or more was up dramatically. Last year, there were 64 such gifts. So far this year, 95 donors have given us gifts of \$100 or more. Even more impressively, 38 wonderful donors made gifts of \$250 or more.

Continues page 8.

## What You Can Do to Care for Young Street Trees

The first five years of a tree's life shape its health and vigor as it matures. You can help make sure your young street tree grows into a healthy mature tree by following these simple guidelines:

### What to DO

- **Please water new trees in dry weather.** California's wet winters usually provide adequate water for young trees. In dry weather, water new trees every two weeks. After the first year, water every four to six weeks or more frequently during hot weather. Give your tree about 15 gallons of water each time you water. The easiest way is to turn your garden hose on low and let the water trickle slowly into the watering basin for about half an hour. Make sure the entire basin and root ball are thoroughly saturated.
- **Please protect new trees from damage.** Do not allow lawnmowers or other gardening machines to damage the trunk. Small nicks in the trunk can lead to big disease problems.
- **Please keep the base of new trees free of weeds and other vegetation.** Weeds, grass and other plants compete for vital water and nutrients. Give your tree a good start by weeding regularly.

### What NOT to do

- **Please do not prune the trees.** They need all of their energy to grow strong roots. The City will prune the trees at the appropriate time.
- **Please do not apply pesticides or herbicides on or near the trees.**
- **Please do not apply fertilizer to the trees.** ■

## Volunteer Opportunities

Canopy is looking for the following volunteer help with the Tree Care program:

**Survey Volunteer** Working individually or in pairs, you survey the health and maintenance needs of young street trees. Training provided at two hands-on sessions led by certified arborists. Additional training in tree identification offered through "Tree Walks". You will be asked to spend a total of 10 hours over two months surveying trees.

**Tree Care Maintenance Leader** Teach others how to care for young trees. Lead small teams of volunteers looking after trees, performing such tasks as rebuilding basins around young trees, fix or remove stakes, add mulch or weed. Training provided in two hands-on training sessions led by certified arborists. After training, assist in 3–4 Tree Care Maintenance Days held throughout the summer and early fall.

**Tree Care Maintenance Volunteer** Help look after the young street trees. No experience necessary. Canopy provides training and tools at each Maintenance Day. They are held on Thurs. evenings and Sat. mornings throughout summer and early fall.

**Office Volunteer** Support our staff by doing data entry and helping organize Tree Care events. Time commitment of 2–3 hours, once a week, May to Oct. Experience with Macs and FileMaker is helpful. ■



Tree Walk with David Schrom of Magic

## Planting 2000–2001— Over 50 Trees

**M**any thanks to all of you who helped make the 2000–2001 planting season a success. Canopy planted over 50 trees along Palo Alto streets and in city parks. We had a great year for involving volunteers from many different community groups. Canopy planted trees with the help of the Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto, Menlo Park Kiwanis Club, Peninsula Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club of Palo Alto, the Menlo-Atherton Key Club, the Gunn High School Key Club, Youth Community Service from Gunn High School, Stanford students, the Earth-savers Club of Monte Vista High School, employees of Roche, and many committed individuals.

Canopy thanks the organizations and businesses that make our tree plantings possible. Big thank yous to David Sandage, Gino Segna, and the Tree Section of the Department of Public Works, City of Palo Alto, and to Wade Fujino and the Palo Alto Unified School District. We also appreciate the contributions of Larry Hassett and Palo Alto Hardware in helping us purchase our tools. Those of you who attended the tree planting in honor of Mayor Liz Kniss will be no strangers to the wonderful coffee-cake Hobee's often provides.

Thank you all again. We look forward to seeing you at our next planting season this fall. ■

## Record Grant Received from Roche

**C**anopy proudly announces a partnership with Roche Pharmaceuticals to improve the quality of Palo Alto's urban forest. Roche will give us a \$15,000 grant spread over 3 years. Roche VP of Communications and Public Affairs Nancy Peterson, stated: "A partnership with Canopy is terrific for Roche since one of our key community priorities is to contribute to a healthy local environment. This is a great fit for us since our financial investment can be coupled with volunteer opportunities for our employees." Roche employees will be encouraged to volunteer at Canopy events. Roche has also generously offered meeting facilities for Canopy events.

The first Roche project was a tree planting at Jordan Middle School. 24 Roche employees joined with 4 regular Canopy volunteers to plant 16 trees. The project was timed to coincide with Earth Week. For each employee involved with the planting, Roche made an additional contribution to Canopy.

Canopy and Roche invite the community to a "Tree Walk" in early June on the 100-acre Roche campus—one of the most beautiful business locations on the peninsula. It will be led by City of Palo Alto Planning Arborist, Dave Dockter.

The \$15,000 grant is the largest private grant in Canopy's history and is an excellent example of private businesses, the public and Canopy uniting to improve the urban forest. ■



Roche and Canopy volunteers celebrate the Jordan tree planting.

# Canopy Enthusiastically Endorses Trees for El Camino Project

by Susan Rosenberg

**T**he Trees for El Camino Project is a local, nonprofit, grassroots effort to raise funds to plant approximately a thousand additional shade trees along the 4.3 mile stretch of El Camino Real in both the medians and sidewalks. The group plans to raise \$1 million to purchase and plant the trees. This fundraising drive will supplement the \$1.5 million earmarked by the City Council for median plantings along El Camino.

**The idea is to plant enough trees along El Camino to transform it into a well-shaded boulevard.**

Canopy's Steering Committee recently voted to "enthusiastically endorse"

the project. Steering Committee Chair Forest Preston said, "We see the wonderful long-term benefits of the project to our community and we will help in any way we can."

While Canopy and the Trees for El Camino Project are both about trees, their missions differ and for that reason they have separate nonprofit status.

Canopy will continue to advocate for Palo Alto's community trees and work with the City of Palo Alto to ensure the long-term health of trees. Trees for El Camino Project, on the other

hand, is a two-year project; the fundraising campaign will begin in the fall with trees planted the following year (2002).

## Trees for El Camino Project Background

Although still a designated State Highway, El Camino Real is rapidly becoming home to many as more residential units and hotels have been built in the last five years. It is no longer simply a thoroughfare for cars. El Camino Real is used by people who walk to work or are on their way to lunch, neighborhood residents who use businesses along El Camino, children who head to school, and hotel guests.

In January 1999 a group of Palo Alto residents began meeting regularly, developing an idea to plant enough trees along El Camino Real, border to border, to transform much of the blighted route through Palo Alto into a well-shaded boulevard.

Now, after countless informational meetings with a variety of community members and leaders to gain city-wide support, that idea for a shaded, tree-lined street is much closer to reality.

All City Council members have endorsed the idea and allocated \$75,000 of Capital Improvement Project funds to develop a new a

landscape and hardscape design plan for El Camino Real. They have also earmarked \$1.5 million in the budgetary process currently under consideration, to plant trees and install or update irrigation in the 4.3 miles of medians along El Camino Real. A vital part of the success of this project is the City's commitment to long-term maintenance which includes regular irrigation and pruning.

No single variety of tree has been chosen for this project. Given the difficulty of growing a tree in such adverse urban conditions, any tree selected will have to meet a number of criteria. That decision will be left to the City's arborists and landscape architects.

The citizens group that has been meeting for the last couple of years is very excited about the current state of this project. However, a few challenges remain before we bring out our planting shovels.

## Challenges

Caltrans: El Camino Real is technically under the jurisdiction of Caltrans. While the City of Palo Alto is responsible for maintaining trees along the route, guidelines developed by Caltrans determine the size of trees planted in the medians.

Current Caltrans guidelines limit narrow medians (4 feet) to full-grown trees with small trunks (for example, crape myrtles in the medians in Menlo Park). This conflicts with Palo Alto's plan to shade the street with wide-canopied trees. City Planners are currently working with Caltrans to ameliorate differences between current Caltrans guidelines and Palo Alto's desire to shade its city streets. Menlo Park and Redwood City are currently developing their own plans to plant trees along El Camino Real. All three communities are working with Caltrans and each other. Byron Sher and Joe Simitian have endorsed the concept and are advocating on behalf of this project.

For the time being, the City of Palo Alto will proceed with plans to plant trees according to current Caltrans guidelines.

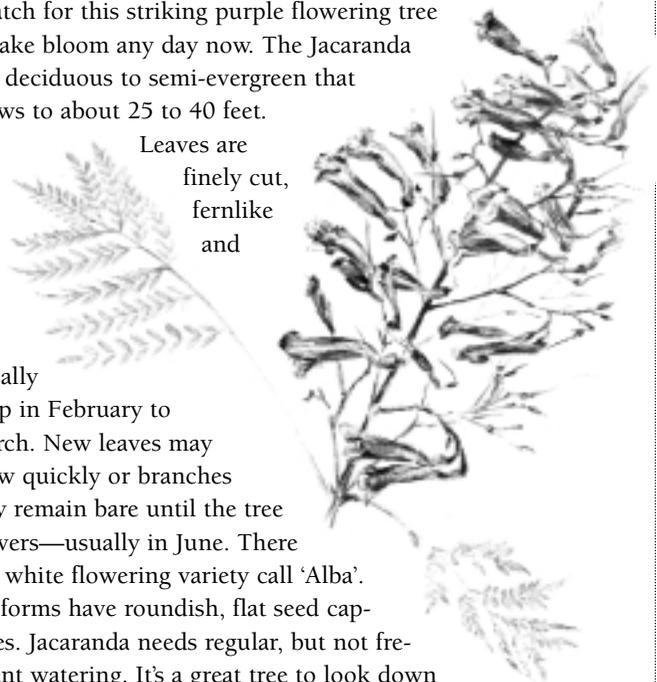
**Businesses:** Merchants are often reluctant to have a tree fronting their business for fear it will block any signs. In the early stages of growth it can be an issue, but as the tree develops and is pruned appropriately, the tree's canopy grows above the sign and roof line. A well-shaded storefront is more inviting for consumers, for example, Santa Cruz Avenue in Menlo Park has done an economic about-face since the street was landscaped with London Plane trees. ■

## Know your trees—*Jacaranda mimosifolia*

**W**atch for this striking purple flowering tree to take bloom any day now. The Jacaranda is a deciduous to semi-evergreen that grows to about 25 to 40 feet.

Leaves are  
finely cut,  
fernlike  
and

usually drop in February to March. New leaves may grow quickly or branches may remain bare until the tree flowers—usually in June. There is a white flowering variety call 'Alba'. All forms have roundish, flat seed capsules. Jacaranda needs regular, but not frequent watering. It's a great tree to look down on—like from a second story bedroom window. ■



## Trees for the Home Garden—Barrie Coate

**O**n March 31, 2001, Canopy, Gamble Garden and the City of Palo Alto cosponsored a presentation by noted horticultural consultant and consulting arborist, Barrie Coate on "Selecting Appropriate Trees for the Home Garden." 75 enthusiastic tree supporters enjoyed the presentation that was supported by outstanding slide pictures highlighting the points Mr. Coate was making and showing the trees being discussed. Mr. Coate stayed until the last question had been answered. ■



## More on Sudden Oak Death Syndrome

by Julia Powers

The following article is reprinted in part from “The Bay Breeze”, the monthly newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the California Landscape Contractor’s Association.

If you feel an ill wind blowing, it may be coming from the coast. Sudden Oak Death Syndrome is a looming threat. At the moment, it has attacked three types of trees—coast live oak (*quercus agrifolia*), tan oak (*lithocarpus densiflorus*), and black oak (*quercus kelloggii*). It has decimated stands of these in coastal areas of northern California, although it seems contained to rural areas, only affecting trees in urban areas that border open spaces.

**Sudden Oak Death Syndrome lurks on the periphery of our habitation, threatening destruction that no laws can regulate.**

Oak trees in particular have stood and watched the unfolding of geologic time and the brief and hectic human story here. From the Native Americans who harvested acorns for sustenance to the Europeans who cleared the land for fruit orchards and created the “Valley of Hearts Delight”, to the computer cowboys of Silicon Valley, oak trees are our witness. Local communities have enacted heritage tree ordinances to protect them. And yet Sudden Oak Death Syndrome lurks on the periph-

ery of our habitation, threatening destruction that no laws can regulate.

The Tree Summit, organized by the SFBA chapter of the California Landscape Contractor’s Association, and co-sponsored by Canopy: Trees for Palo Alto, and SRI International, drew landscape contractors, city arborists, private arborists, landscape designers, and tree lovers in general. If you were lucky enough to attend, you know this was a cutting edge event where scientists shared what they know with practitioners, those most closely involved on a day to day basis with plants and trees—where the rubber meets the road, so to speak.

The first session was by Dr. Larry Costello of the UC Cooperative Extension office in San Mateo County. He opened the seminar with a talk that was useful to anyone who needs to evaluate tree health and safety from ground observation. The man is a walking encyclopedia of tree hazard horror stories. His slide show could give you chills, but it served to remind anyone who works with or around trees that we have to be very observant and aware of potential problems that with a little wind storm or torrential rain can become a safety disaster.

Dr. Pavel Svirha also represents UC Cooperative Extension, in Marin county. He is the one who recognized there was an epidemic killing

native trees and named it Sudden Oak Death Syndrome. He and other scientists are working on a fluid situation, with new information coming in all the time. Scientists still do not know where the disease came from, or how it spreads and they do not have a cure. He gave a history of the first detection of the problem with the deaths of tanbark oaks in the Santa Cruz mountains in 1995. He described the process of comparing it with other known diseases which were ruled out, to the eventual identification of the phytophthora pathogen.

While scientists are trying to understand the problem, many of the people at the Tree Summit are working every day with clients who will understandably be concerned about their oak trees. Dr. Svirha told the audience, “You are my eyes.” Many of us left realizing that we need to hone our powers of observation, and with new tools to do so. To stay informed about the latest discoveries, and for pictures of Sudden Oak Death symptoms, log onto <http://cemarin.ucdavis.edu>

Rounding out the discussion of Sudden Oak Death was a field session on root collar excavation with Fred Jungbluth and Paul McGuire of Pacific Slope Tree Cooperative. It included a hands on demonstration, a discussion of root aeration, and feeding for oaks. Michael Young of

## Sudden Oak Death Syndrome, continues

Urban Tree Care also did a field session on oak tree health assessment. Many of the problems that Dr. Costello had shown in his slides were seen in oaks on the SRI campus. Young also found a case of a phytophthora *cinnamomi* on one oak, which is the other phytophthora that attacks oak trees, different from sudden oak death, but still a cause for concern. Mary Kaye, a member of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers, gave a session on planting design under oaks. She gave many ideas for plants that work under and near oaks without the need for extensive summer water.

**Marianne Waindle, of Monterey Chemical Company, spoke about integrated pest management.**

Another tree problem which is less deadly but more pervasive is sycamore anthracnose. (See related article in the spring 1999 issue of the *Canopy Newsletter*.) This disease causes gray, mycelium-covered leaves that sometimes defoliate sycamore trees. Tom Prosser, a self described “tree geek” from Rainbow Treecare, in Minnesota, talked about his company’s treatment for the problem. He explained that the blighted leaves are actually caused by a fungus that overwinters in one year old twigs. So they treat the problem with macro-infusion of a fungicide which is taken up by the tree and delivered to the canopy.

The process involves drilling into the root flare of the tree and pumping a solution into the water conducting tissues of the tree.

A related speaker was Marianne Waindle, of Monterey Chemical Company. She says that when you speak to clients about integrated pest management, they hear the word pest, they think about insects, and they want you to spray something. She says a more positive approach is to talk about plant health care. Her company has contact fungicide for the control of powdery mildew called Kaligreen (microencapsulated potassium bicarbonate), which is a food grade additive and a fertilizer and has been registered for organic use.

A threat to agriculture, the glassy winged sharp shooter, has begun to affect the nursery trade and landscapers. Don Baldocchi and Dave Van Egmond of Pacific Nurseries explained that the glassy winged sharp shooter is a native of the southeast United States which was brought to southern California and has been very successful there. Unfortunately, it feeds on host plants which contain the bacterium which causes Pierce’s disease, which is devastating to grape vines. There are a number of plants that are grown in nurseries in the affected areas that can function as hosts. Some plants as common as pittosporum, nandina, photinia and citrus

are now being regulated. So landscapers may find that prices of regulated plants go up, availability goes down, or it takes longer to get them. In general, it will now be harder to get plants from growers in southern California.

The CLCA Education Committee, with assistance from Canopy: Trees for Palo Alto, did an incredible job of bringing this seminar together. Canopy staff and volunteers worked together to make sure the press and related organizations knew about the event and helped with logistics and registration on the busy day of the Summit. Continuing Education units for International Society of Arboriculture, Department of Pesticide Regulation, and California Association of Nurserymen ensured the attendance of numerous professionals. Even when a last-minute change of venue was required, the co-sponsors ensured that the event went smoothly with support from SRI International, who provided a beautiful venue at a generous discount.

Kudos to CLCA, Canopy and SRI International for working together to get the problem of Sudden Oak Death Syndrome into the public eye and bringing together scientists, green industry professionals, and concerned citizens, creating a melting pot of ideas and approaches to preserve our urban forest. ■

## Canopy Calendar

**June 9** Tree Walk at Roche  
Pharmaceuticals, 10 to 11 am

**June 23** Tree Care Maintenance  
Day, 9 am to noon

**July 12** Tree Care Maintenance  
Day, 5 to 7:30 pm

**July 28** Tree Care Maintenance  
Day, 9 am to noon

**Aug. 9** Tree Care Maintenance  
Day, 5 to 7:30 pm

**Aug. 25** Tree Care Maintenance  
Day, 9 am to noon

**Sept. 8** Tree Care Maintenance  
Day, 9 am to noon

**Sept. 20** Tree Care Maintenance  
Day, 5 to 7:30 pm

## Fundraising, page 1

Thank you donors! Without such generosity, Canopy would not be able to function.

We thank those donors who renewed their memberships or joined Canopy for the first time. We call special attention to the generosity of several individuals who made designated gifts to help us purchase our new computer system—donations of \$2,250 were specially earmarked for this purpose. In addition, we received a generous donation of software and assistance in acquiring some of the hardware at a substantial discount.

Several of our larger donors have pledged to repeat their gifts for several years. Because of this generosity, Canopy can confidently do realistic future planning. ■

## Canopy's Leadership

### Steering Committee

Forest Preston, III,  
*Chair*

Joe Hirsch,  
*Vice-Chair*

Brad Denson,  
*Treasurer*

James Crawford,  
*Secretary*

Dave Bubenik

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Rita French

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Leannah Hunt

Jeanne Kennedy

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Kathy Levinson

Carolyn Reller

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