

# 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.

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## What's Bugging My Tree?

by John H. McClenahan

Trees bring joy to our lives in many ways—beauty, shade and air quality, to name a few. When our trees are ailing or threatened by various disease and insect problems, it can reduce the joy and contentment they provide. Several problems from insects to disease are affecting certain Oaks, Monterey pine and Eucalyptus. With trees, like with humans, stress can increase susceptibility to disease and insect infestation.

**SOD:** Some of our state's prized oaks are currently threatened by Sudden Oak Death, a forest disease caused by a fungus-like pathogen known as *Phytophthora ramorum*. The trees most commonly affected are tanbark oak (*Lithocarpus densiflorous*), black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) and coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). This rapid decline of oaks is occurring mainly in oak woodland areas. Fortunately, it is still fairly uncommon in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

Multiple theories exist about what the true cause of this mass tree decline is. The alleged cure or preventative treatments provide a common denominator. Research through the U.C. and other groups indicates that a type of phosphorous known as phosphonate or phosphite boosts trees' immune systems and minimizes their risk of decline. These fertilizers are not new to the agriculture community and have been used to help other species resist *Phytophthora* for many years.

Treatment methods for these products vary from trunk injection to trunk spray and foliar spray. Brand names for these fertilizers-turned-fungicide include Agri-Fos and Fosphite. It is not necessary to use these products unless your tree is in a zone of infestation. Consult a Certified Arborist and or licensed pest control adviser to help determine if chemical controls are necessary for your tree preservation needs.

**Pine Pitch Canker:** Unlike our native oaks who take many years to grow into stately trees, Monterey pines thrive and

Continued next page

mature very quickly. They often achieve mortality at between 50 and 75 years. Pine pitch canker and bark beetle problems contribute to this species' decline. Unfortunately, California's weather patterns, with extended periods of drought, predispose these trees to bark beetle attack. Pine pitch canker causes branch dieback scattered throughout the canopy creating a sickly appearance. Several species of the engraver beetle (*Ips spp.*) cause the tree to die from the top down. The best management practice is to promote vigor through supplemental irrigation during the dry season by deep watering once a month by means of either a soaker hose or soil injection at a rate of 10 to 20 gallons per trunk diameter inch. Supplemental irrigation should occur close to the dripline and not at the base of the tree. Root damage will also stress the trees as it reduces their ability to absorb water and nutrients from the soil and thus reduces the amount of energy reserves stored in root tissue. Pruning the foliar canopy during the growing season and summer months also increases pine susceptibility to bark beetle attack.

**Eucalyptus Bugs:** Eucalyptus trees are revered by few; nonetheless they contribute shade, oxygen and beauty to our landscapes. At least eight species of eucalyptus are affected by insects known as the red gum lerp psyllid (*Glycasas brimblecombei*) and by the eucalyptus long horn borer. The psyllid is a tiny piercing/sucking insect that finds a safe place to suck sap from leaves under a little white cap. Damage in severe cases is tree decline or significant branch dieback. Systemic insecticides can control this pest adequately. Researchers have

observed numerous natural enemies (parasitoid wasps, lady bird beetles, minute pirate bugs, green lacewings, brown lacewings, syrphid flies, spiders, chestnut-backed chickadees and bushtits) feeding on this insect. The long horn borer is similar to the pine bark beetles—they tend to attack stressed trees and are extremely difficult to control after a tree is infested. Again, maintaining adequate soil moisture and nutrition to promote vigor will reduce the risk of infestation.

### **Tips for maintaining healthy mature trees:**

- Plant houses further from the tree. Remember, roots are supposed to extend beyond the foliar canopy in most species. Less root area equals less water absorption thus yielding tree stress. Root loss is similar to drought stress and will predispose different trees to various diseases and pest problems detrimental to their existence. So give the tree some room—plant the house further away!
- Trees prefer deep infrequent irrigation. Too much water can drown tree roots and prevent them from absorbing essential water and nutrients.
- As trees mature, direct irrigation water away from the trunk towards the dripline. Too much water at the root crown increases susceptibility to root crown disease such as oak root rot or Phytophthora root rots.
- When possible, mulch trees. This creates many benefits including increased moisture holding capacity, improved soil properties and nutrient availability. Again, do not pile mulch onto the root crown (where the trunk meets the ground).

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WHAT'S BUGGING MY TREE continued from page 2

- Consult a qualified Arborist to determine when pruning or fertilizing may be necessary and most beneficial to the tree.
- Call Canopy for a free list of arborists in the area

For recommendations on reduced-risk pesticide or pesticide treatments on your trees, consult a Certified Arborist who is a licensed pest control adviser.

*John McClenahan is a Certified Arborist WE-1476A Member, American Society of Consulting Arborists, Licensed Pest Control Advisor ■*

## Canopy's Tree of Knowledge Is Growing — Expanded Web Site

By Karin Chapin

This spring there will be another tree branching out at Canopy—the Canopy web site. Currently receiving the final touches, the new, expanded and updated Canopy web site will offer visitors a number of new features, including:

- a searchable library of information about Palo Alto trees—find the right tree for your garden,
- collected information about trees in Palo Alto, their care and selection,
- information about Canopy's accomplishments, programs, events, staff, and board,
- an online donation option through Network for Good,
- downloadable guides to Palo Alto's historic tree walks,
- a fresh new look and feel.

Stay tuned to <http://www.canopy.org!>

*This website was funded in part by the California ReLeaf 2003 Capacity-Building Grant Program and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. ■*



Susan Hansen (far right) helps Program Director Jana Dille and fellow volunteer Chris Holstrom plant a magnolia tree at the Palo Alto Art Center in November 2003.

## Volunteer Spotlight

Canopy volunteer Susan Hansen has lived in Palo Alto with her husband and two sons for 20 years. She is a native of Spokane, Washington and originally came to California to attend Mills College. Susan says that “seeing the many changes—economic, architectural, social—in Palo Alto over that time makes me think about the city we are building and the legacy we are leaving.” Susan’s desire to create a positive future for Palo Alto led her to set a goal to plant 100 trees with Canopy. So far, she has planted 12. Susan recently helped plant a tree in memory of local California artist Bob Stocksdale at the Palo Alto Art Center. She has also been helping Canopy develop a marketing strategy. Susan’s dedication to Canopy arises not only from her vision of the future, but also because she enjoys working with Canopy’s staff and volunteers—“they are knowledgeable, committed and visionary.” ■

## Annual Party a Big Success

Last October 6, Canopy celebrated seven years of advocating for our community's forests with a party honoring volunteers and members of the community that have made a difference. Over 50 volunteers, donors, and community leaders were in attendance. The guests enjoyed refreshments provided by Guckenheimer Catering Company and members of the Board of Directors. The following awards were presented:

**The Arnold Soforenko Awards, given to an individual or company that has made an extraordinary effort to enhance and preserve Palo Alto's community forest, were presented to:**

**Susan Rosenberg**—Susan was a founding board member of Canopy and served on the board for six years. She is currently on Canopy's Advisory Committee and is key to the Canopy's fund development efforts. She is also the co-chair of the Trees for El Camino Project. Her award is for "outstanding support of Palo Alto's trees through her vision, tireless energy, and willingness to do whatever is necessary to ensure the success of local organizations supporting the goal of

enhancing our urban forest."

**Roche Palo Alto**—Roche has demonstrated a real commitment to community involvement. They approached Canopy three years ago and suggested a unique partnership arrangement that provided both funding to Canopy and volunteer opportunities for their employees.

Since that initial contact, Roche has held volunteer projects each Earth Day, sponsored a tree walk through their campus, and frequently provided use of their facilities



Left to right: Executive Director Howell Lovell; Straun Edwards; Peter Sortwell, President of Arbor Well; Ruth Soforenko; Susan Rosenberg; Dr. Ian Massey, Senior VP of Research and Development at Roche Palo Alto; Board Chair Marty Deggeller

and resources for Canopy activities. In addition, one of their employees became a member of our Board. Their award is for "contributing to a healthy local environment by taking the initiative to develop an innovative partnership with Canopy that includes important financial support, volunteerism, and countless in-kind donations."

**Straun Edwards**—Straun is with Arborwell, a company located in Castro Valley. As part of the Sand Hill Road Corridor Agreement between Stanford and the City of Palo Alto, it was stipulated that all of the trees in the area near the Menlo Park bridge behind the Stanford West Apartments be professionally trimmed and that dangerous trees either be made safer or removed. The scope of this task was enormous—special specifications were

required since many trees had not been trimmed in 100 years. In the words of Dave Dockter, Planning Arborist for the City of Palo Alto, the result of this effort was “one of the most outstanding jobs I have seen in my career, both in quality of workmanship and size of the job. The public trail is now one of the most beautiful, peaceful and safest places in Palo Alto to walk.”

Strun’s award is for “his expert maintenance of many historic trees along San Francisquito Creek during one of the largest local tree maintenance programs, and for ensuring that ‘not one errant cut’ would be allowed to destroy what nature had spent a century growing.”

**Canopy also presented its Out-on-a-Limb Awards, volunteer awards given to outstanding Canopy volunteers, to:**

**Chris Holstrom**—Chris is a great all-around Canopy supporter. He designed and wrote the program for Canopy’s new tree database, served as “tech support” for various office computer problems, helped Canopy make the move to a new web-host, worked as a planting leader at 5 planting events, and authored an article for the newsletter. His volunteer award is for “his many roles as database developer, computer tech support, planting leader, and author.”

**James Imahiro**—James has been a great volunteer for the past year. He’s done everything from helping re-arrange office furniture to scanning and tracking hundreds of photos for Canopy’s



Marty Deggeller and Soforenko Award recipient Susan Rosenberg.

new website. He helped plant trees at the Lawn Bowling Green, enter data from last year’s tree care survey, and compile information for the tree database. James has also been a great help in solving office computer problems. His volunteer award is for “all his hours in website development, tree-care survey data entry, computer problem solving, and planting trees.”

**Julie Luu and Talia Bender**—Julie and Talia are students at Gunn High School. They first came to Canopy last summer to help with the tree care survey. They enjoyed their first route so much that they really went the extra mile and took on four more over the course of the summer. Together they surveyed over 100 trees. Their dedication really helped Canopy complete this



Board Chair Marty Deggeller presents “Out On a Limb” Awards to volunteers Julie Luu and Talia Bender.

year’s tree care survey. Talia has now become an office volunteer and helped to enter the data that she and Julie collected. Each is given a volunteer award for “her enthusiasm and dedication in surveying the health of over 100 young street trees.” ■

## Canopy To Host Author Cass Turnbull

To kick off this year's Arbor Month celebration, sponsored by the Palo Alto Weekly, Canopy will host renowned speaker Cass Turnbull. Cass is the founder of Plant Amnesty, whose goal is to "end the senseless torture and mutilation of trees and shrubs." Plant Amnesty strives to educate the commercial and public sectors on responsible, appropriate pruning and landscape management practices, establishing a standard of quality care for the urban ecology. Cass is a Washington State Certified Landscaper, a Certified Arborist and teaches horticulture at Washington State Vocational Schools.

Cass will present "The Show of Pruning Horrors" which covers the most common forms of mal-pruning. She will explain what's wrong with what's wrong and how to prune shrubs and trees correctly. The slideshow covers the most common forms of mal-pruning: tree-topping, inappropriate

shearing, and over-thinning. Also covered are definitions and examples of real "pruning art" such as pollarding, coppicing, topiary, and cloud pruning and how they differ from common mal-prunings seen everywhere. The talk will take place on Saturday, March 6 at 9:30 a.m. in the Lucie Stern Community Center Ballroom. Registration begins at 9 a.m. General admission is \$10, \$15 at the door, and \$10 for students. To reserve your spot, mail a check to: Canopy, 3921 East Bayshore Road; Palo Alto, CA 94303. Cass will also be signing copies of her recently published book, *Cass Turnbull's Guide to Pruning: What, When, Where and How to Prune for a More Beautiful Garden*.

On Sunday, March 7 (the next day), Cass will be leading a demonstration pruning class. Participants will get a chance to learn pruning techniques from a professional. The registration fee for this class is \$25 and you must pre-register. Space is limited, so call Canopy at 650.964.6110 to reserve your space today. ■

## New Tree Walks Available

Ever wonder what kind of trees you pass in your daily routine? This may be your chance to find out! Thanks to a grant from the California ReLeaf 2003 Capacity-Building Grant Program and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Canopy has put together a revised set of tree walks. Canopy's Tree Walk series is designed to teach you to recognize the trees that you encounter in your daily life and to help you get to know them a little. Each walk is a self-guided tour that covers a given neighborhood and was prepared by a certified arborist. If you are looking for a particular type of tree,

the Tree Walk Index will help you out. The Index lists every tree on the walks and on which walk you will find it.

Canopy Tree Walks are available in these neighborhoods: Barron Park, College Terrace, Community Center Area, Crescent Park, Greenmeadow, Main Library and Art Center, North Palo Alto, Old Palo Alto, Palo Verde, South of Forest, Southgate, West Bayshore Area

Hard copies of the Tree Walks and the Tree Walk Index are available in the Canopy office. The Tree Walks and Tree Walk Index will also be available on our new website (*see related article on page 3*). ■

## "Lives" — the Mosaic Tree



As you stroll through Barron Park, you might come across a unique and interesting tree at 3680 La Calle Court. "Lives" is a mosaic tree

sculpture created by local artist Christine Heegaard. The tree is made from a number of materials that represent the different stages we all pass through in life. This is what Christine had to say about the creation process:

"The California sky gave me the dominant blues, the numerous species of trees gave me the shapes of the leaves and fruits—then, in the process, I became wild and invented some of my own!; and the seasons gave me the colors of the leaves and fruits. I could not make a tree without a squirrel and a bird which give a noisy life to our trees, and I even add a little frog, because we have some of these visitors in our pool, at night. Where the branches meet, you can see five little hearts—donated from an admirer of the "in-the-making tree," with kind words of encouragement—for the five members of my family, who supported me during a whole year of hard work.

Christine has left the area, but the tree is still there. For more about Christine and her art, see her website at [www.mamosaic.com](http://www.mamosaic.com). You can contact her by email at [chh@mamosaic.com](mailto:chh@mamosaic.com).

Here's Christine's statement about "Lives":

*This mosaic tree had lots of lives or ages: paper age, iron age, wire age, concrete age, glass age, grout age, everlasting age.*

*As for us, we go through different stages: baby, child, student, employed, spouse, parent, retired.*

*This tree is reflecting this plurality: it wears all the seasons, all the fruits.*

*As a tree it gives also:*

*shade—the tree/and/sun shape*

*shelter—the animals*

*oxygen—the woman and man figures  
colors...*

*As you come to see "Lives" again, let it borrow the colors and the mood you wear that day through its little pieces of mirror, so you can at your turn reflect about the joys and opportunities of your lives—past, present and future. ■*

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## Mayor's Tree Planting



Former Palo Alto Mayor Dena Mossar helps plant a redwood tree in Mitchell Park to shade the dog run. Every year, Canopy plants a tree to honor the outgoing mayor. This was Canopy's eighth such ceremony.

## “Ask the Arborist” — Coming Soon to the Canopy Newsletter

Do you have a burning tree question— one you can’t get out of your mind, but have never known who to ask or how? Well, we’ve got the solution for you. Send your question to Canopy at [ask@canopy.org](mailto:ask@canopy.org).

We’ll compile some of the most interesting and thought-provoking questions and we’ll publish answers from arborists. Watch for the “Ask the Arborist” column in future editions of this newsletter. ■

## Canopy’s Leadership

### Staff

Hal Lovell, *Executive Director*

Jana Dilley, *Program Director*

*Advisory Committee*

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Jeanne Kennedy

Larry Klein

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Carolyn Reller

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### Board of Directors

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Gail Schubert, *Secretary*

Kate Feinstein

Joe Hirsch

John McClenahan

Nancy Peterson

Forest Preston, III

Glenn Rennels

Jane Stocklin

## Coming Events

March 6 Tree Talk with Cass Turnbull  
Book Sale & Signing

March 7 Demonstration Pruning Workshop

March 10 Challenger Space Shuttle Trees  
Dedication

Southgate Tree Walk

March 13 Tree Planting

March 20 Fungus Fighters  
Main Library Tree Walk

March 25 Unveiling of Tree City U.S.A. Sign  
South of Forest Tree Walk

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