

# Avenues



The newsletter of the Fair Oaks Beautification Association, Inc., an all-volunteer, non-profit group

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FOBA's Website: [www.foba.org](http://www.foba.org)

FOBA Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month 6:30-8pm, Riekes Center, 3455 Edison Way. All are welcome to attend.

**Contact us:**

FOBA  
P.O. Box 4001  
Menlo Park, CA 94026-4001  
[info@foba.org](mailto:info@foba.org)

**2006 FOBA Officers:**

Art McClish, President 321-6336  
Uri Sarid, Vice President  
Brian Crawley, Treasurer  
Christian Molick, Secretary

FOBA purpose: To bring people together.

**FOBA Mission:**

Fair Oaks Beautification Association, Inc. is dedicated to the care, protection, enhancement, and improvement of our community. We define our community as the unincorporated portion of San Mateo County known as North Fair Oaks bounded by Sixth and Eighteenth Avenues. We practice cooperative action through education, volunteer service, and community events.

## Playground Fun & Fundraiser Event A Success

We've nearly reached our annual fundraising goal of \$6,000 to pay for our park and playground maintenance. If you meant to send a contribution, it isn't too late. All donations are tax-deductible. FOBA is a non-profit 501c3 organization. Eighty-seven households sent donations (an average of \$57). Our total so far is \$4,920, and we're still counting...on you!

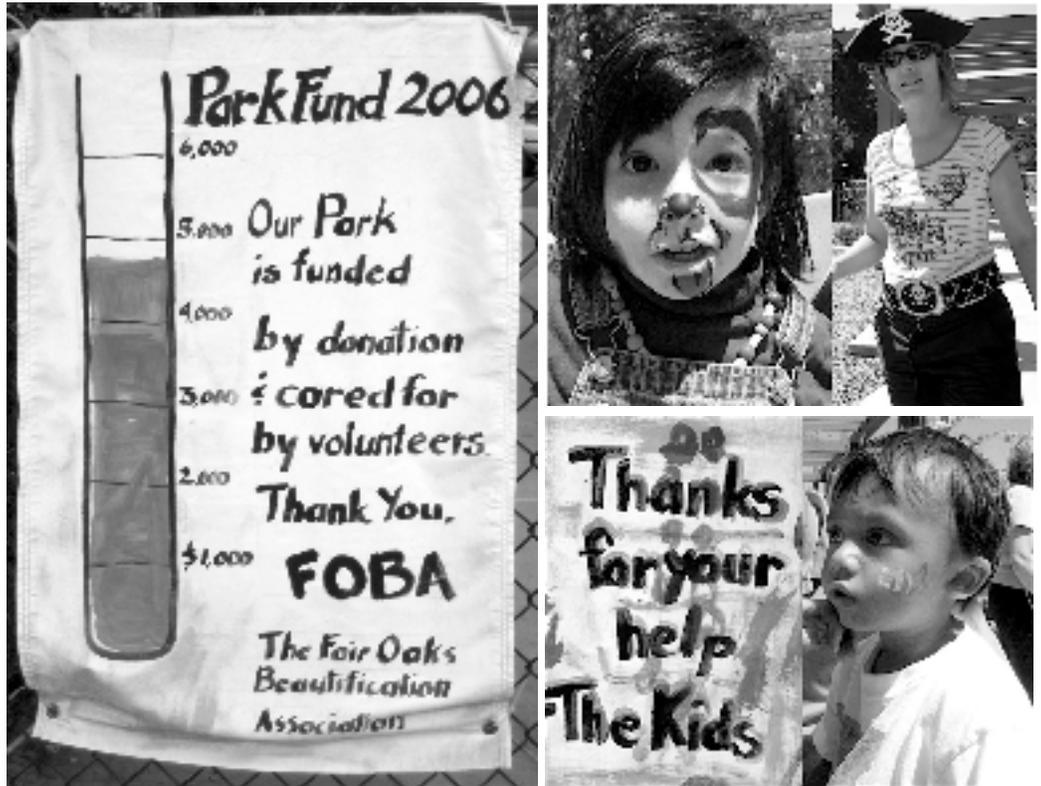
The fundraising campaign involved a request letter and an activity day. Scores of neighbors gathered at the Park. Many enjoyed the bouncy house, face painting, games, and lots of yummy food, all donated by neighbors.

A big thanks to everyone who participated in our first annual Fun Day and Fundraiser. I applaud Laura Caplan for her tireless coordination of the event. I'm pleased with the outcome and look forward to seeing us keep up the momentum.

**Highlights**

- Connecting with neighbors. Knowing my 5-year-old son can play safely under the watchful eyes of other parents is priceless. This is the greatest benefit of my work with FOBA.
- Lots of donations. Many folks wrote checks or gave cash donations. The children got into the spirit by donating for face painting, balloons, and the beanbag game.
- Great baked goods. Jim "the baker" Preston prepared dozens of mini apple pies. Mara Young baked and iced beautiful dinosaur and moon cookies.

Jill Kinney-Andre, Playground Coordinator



# Wanted: Webmaster & Creative Director for Neighborhood Website

Our neighborhood website, [www.foba.org](http://www.foba.org), is a true community site, owned by everyone in the neighborhood. People can sign up and then publish stories, make comments, start discussions, post pictures, and more. The site is a great source of information about the neighborhood and what's happening with our neighborhood organization, FOBA (Fair Oaks Beautification Association).

FOBA is composed of volunteers just like you, and we need help in maintaining this site and breathing life into it. Web technologies (and, unfortunately, spammers) keep moving forward, so we're looking for somebody to take on the responsibility of moving our site forward as well. Working on our website gives you a chance to express your creativity and skills—technical, artistic, or social (or all three)—in ways that directly affect our community.

If you've got the technical skills and experience, we'd like to hear from you! The site needs about a day's worth of work right away. We have an urgent need to move it to a new and reliable internet service provider (ISP) and update the engine to the latest version. In a few months it may need to be "tweaked" again. I am available to give advice and guidance. Ideally one neighbor or more will provide creative direction and implement ongoing changes. We could certainly end up with a team of people to do this work, each contributing their expertise and enthusiasm. If you're interested in helping out, please let me know by e-mailing me at [usarid@gmail.com](mailto:usarid@gmail.com). Our site uses open-source components such as Geeklog and MySQL.

Uri Sarid, FOBA Webmaster

Thanks to Douglas Printers on Edison Way for the discounted printing rate for this newsletter. We appreciate the help.

## Annual Playground Appreciation Day

Every spring, kids and families pitch in to tidy up our neighborhood playground. We feed the plants, oil the swings and replenish the sand box. We also get to know each other and share some treats.

This year we honored Wes Brinsfield for his years volunteering as Adopt-a-Month coordinator. Wes received a beautiful hand-painted plaque with his family's name.

Katie Grandy, our new playground coordinator, sends a big thank you to everyone who has volunteered for the Adopt-a-Month program. The playground gets a lot of use, and your efforts help to maintain the space and equipment for our community.

If you visit the park with your children, please consider whether you can do a little extra to keep the area a pleasant place to play and visit. Adopt-a-Month volunteers find the job can easily be done while you're there a few times each month. As Katie says, "It mainly entails sweeping, general clean-up of the area, and reporting any problems with trash or the equipment. We warmly welcome new volunteers." Please call Katie Grandy at 650-306-9648 for more information about the program.

### Let's Swing Playground Appreciation Day



# A Neighborhood History (Reprinted from a California Releaf Article by Michael Tanner)

In the early 1990s, traffic policy in the community of North Fair Oaks was coming to a literal dead end. This neighborhood of nearly 1,000 homes-located in an unincorporated area of San Mateo County and bordered by the cities of Menlo Park, Atherton, and Redwood City-had become part of a shortcut for heavy traffic from nearby U.S.101. The proposed solution was to cut off many streets at neighboring Atherton, leaving local residents landlocked.

## Traffic-Calming with Trees

“The big issue we were facing,” says Art McClish, president of the Fair Oaks Beautification Association, was that passing drivers “were not seeing us as a neighborhood, but as a path to where they wanted to go.” In response, he and a small group of neighbors got together to find ways to control traffic without having to close streets. Their solution was a series of 15- to 25- foot traffic circles at major residential intersections planted with oaks and shrubs, and smaller landscaped semicircles along side streets.

Not only is traffic under control now,”there are trees and bushes where there had just been asphalt,” notes McClish. He says that neither goal—calming the traffic nor greening the streets—really preceded the other, but rather the two came together and made a good solution. The community had come together behind the project as well. McClish points out a typical intersection visible from his own house, where a traffic island is crowned by a stately oak and looked after by a neighbor who maintains it as a memorial to her husband.

## A Place to Play

The small group of neighbors soon evolved into a non-profit organization, the Fair Oaks Beautification Association (FOBA). With the traffic circle project nearing completion, FOBA was able to turn its attention to other community needs. In 1998 the group began to work on a children’s playground, with the goal of establishing a fun and safe play area within walking distance of every home in the neighborhood.

Completed in 2001, the North Fair Oaks Community Playground is a delightfully designed wedge of land complete with swings, a sandbox, picnic tables, and a pirate play ship structure. Located at the corner of Edison Way and Fair Oaks, the playground is built on land owned by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (PUC). A portion of the Hetch Hetchy aqueduct runs below ground through North Fair Oaks. The Public Utility Commission leases the land above the aqueduct at affordable rates for nonprofit groups.

With the paint barely dry on the new play equipment, FOBA began raising money for an endowment to cover ongoing maintenance and insurance expenses. Along with the continued fundraising effort, the group actively recruits “playground guardians” and organizes playground work days.



## Neighborhood Winter Mixer – January 28, 2007



Come share your thoughts and some hot chocolate at our Winter Mixer at the Riekes Center, 3455 Edison Way. We will be planning activities and goals for 2007. What are your wishes for our community? FOBA can be a means for germinating your own ideas. Connect with your neighbors and make wishes come true.

A bouncy house will be available for the kids. Bring a treat to share.

Let us know if you can drop by: [jillkin@mac.com](mailto:jillkin@mac.com)

## FOBA 2006 Financial Summary



We encourage you to return the enclosed envelope with a donation to help our neighborhood continue to feature the things that keep us a “neighborly” place to live, such as events, our playground and park, and this newsletter. To those of you who already consistently support FOBA through your donations and time, *thank you!*

Here is a summary of FOBA’s income and expenses for 2006. Remember, FOBA receives zero financial support from the county. It is supported almost entirely by your donations.



<b>Income (Donations)</b>	\$5,507
<b>Expenses</b>	
Insurance	\$2,420
Water	\$778
Gardening	\$2,480
Post Office	\$254
Taxes	\$110
Tree Pruning	\$1,910
Misc.	\$179
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$8,131</b>
Deficit	\$2,624

# Here is your Avenues newsletter! Aquí esta su boletín Avenidas!

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(FOBA)  
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[Http://www.foba.org](http://www.foba.org)

## Road Improvement Update

The County is currently improving 12th Avenue and Fair Oaks Avenue from Edison to 12th. This is part of an ongoing project to reconstruct unimproved roads in the area.

More information is available on the County web site at <http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/>. Click the Public Works link on the left, then look at the Current Projects and Proposed Projects near the bottom of the page. Under Road Improvement Standards there is a link to PDF format text information and graphic maps of the work.

