

South Pocket Homeowners' Association  
 NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS  
 Spring 2025



What's that?  
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# Around the Pocket

## MEET YOUR BOARD

### President

Sue Ruiz  
 ruizsue@icloud.com

### Vice President

Paulo Ferreira  
 paulo-lisa@sbcglobal.net

### Secretary

Sabrina Pape  
 sabrinapape1@gmail.com

### Treasurer

Sue Ruiz  
 ruizsue@icloud.com

### Architect Review

Paulo Ferreira  
 paulo-lisa@sbcglobal.net

### Newsletter

Gary Funk, Editor  
 gary@garyfunk.com

### Neighborhood Watch

Hilary Bagley Franzoia  
 bagleyhg@yahoo.com

### Directors at Large

#### Lori Johnson

uffdalj@gmail.com

#### Michael Lipkin

michael.lipkin@sbcglobal.net

#### Lisa McCauley

lisa-mccauley@sbcglobal.net

#### Hailey Yeager

haileyerinyeager@gmail.com

## IMPORTANT CITY NUMBERS

Emergency: 916-732-0100  
 Non-Emergency: 916-264-5471  
 City of Sacramento: 311

## How to reach us

P.O. BOX 22812  
 5930 South Land Park Dr.  
 Sacramento, CA 95831



[www.southpockethomeowners.org](http://www.southpockethomeowners.org)

## After my husband died, it took more than a security system for me to feel safe at home

### Simple Safety Tips for Women Living Alone

*By an anonymous widow  
 from the neighborhood*



Getting accustomed to solitary living is a transitional time. I followed most suggestions made by friends and family: get dogs, a firearm, and a security system. But other things also can help with feeling vulnerable, especially at night.

**Don't mention living alone:** I rarely reveal my status as a widow. Aside from trustworthy neighbors with whom I can rely, no one needs to know that my spouse has passed. My spouse's name is not required to be removed from public accounts. Of course, I closed his card accounts, which could have been hacked, but his name remains on checks, utility bills, and our SPHA neighborhood roster. Repair and maintenance personnel are never told of my widow status. The less strangers know of your status or that you live alone, the better.

**Get a few cameras:** Today, cameras are not expensive. I have multiple small chargeable RING cameras providing views of my front porch, walkway, mailbox, driveway, back patios, and side yards. They are all synced to an app on my phone. You do not need to purchase a service plan with a monthly fee to have this ability with RING cameras. Recently, I added motion-activated RING flood lights with cameras covering the front and back of our property. They cost \$180.00 each at Home Depot. Both were wired into our electrical system by my handyman. Day or night, anyone

*Continued on Page 3*

## Membership Meeting, Tree Talk, Board Elections, June 5 at 7 PM

We are excited to announce that our speaker, Nicole Harrison, a consulting arborist, will talk to us about what to watch out for in your valley oaks, redwood trees, and others, provide more insight into the Mediterranean Oak Borer, and answer your questions. We also hold board elections that evening, so if you want to join the board, please contact any board member. We hope to see you there!!!

## Join the fun on May 17 for our Annual Yard Sale!

SPHA's annual sanctioned yard sale is less than a month away! We will place ads and notices on Facebook and NextDoor with signs at the entrance. Visit our website and look for "TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL YARD SALE."



# New oaks growing strong thanks to community effort

By Pat Clark

This summer of 2025 will be the second summer for many of our new oaks in Marriott Park. Thanks to our neighbor volunteers, the trees are in good shape, and we are making progress in this two- or three-year project.

For new neighbors who might not know the history, this tree project is an SPHA effort to re-populate native oaks following the devastating storms in January 2023. Around New Year's, that series of storms brought down approximately 200 trees in city parks. Marriott Park lost the two oldest trees on the corner of River Ranch and El Douro, approximately 250 years old according to the city arborist, and several mature trees in the Nature Area closest to Grand River and Roman Oak.

Because all these trees were in a Nature Area, which is a non-irrigated portion of the park, different City Parks rules applied.

SPHA worked with City Parks in 2023 to create an SPHA project to re-populate the trees using neighborhood volunteers to give supplemental water to the new young trees to get them off to the best possible start. The plan also called for the city to obtain new oak saplings for one area, and we would continue to nurture the oak saplings that sprouted from acorns from the really old trees.

Nothing exactly like this plan had been done previously with a Nature Area in a City Park and we were thrilled to receive City approval for our unique plan in May 2023.

So, this is the second summer for the eight Valley Oaks near Grand River and Roman Oak and the second summer for the Valley Oak saplings near River Ranch and El Douro. Supplemental watering from our wonderful volunteers will continue this summer. According to the city arborist, newly planted oaks benefit from regular watering during their first three years, giving them the best chance of success, and then transition to the 'dry



**Our city parks arborist has set a trap for the Mediterranean Oak Borer, a new pest that attacks old Valley Oaks. The City is working with CalFIRE to set traps in this area. The trap in the nature area closest to Grand River Drive contains no toxic chemicals, just water and Dawn dishwashing liquid. We ask that the trap be left alone. There is a lot of concern about this invasive borer in the Rancho Cordova and Del Paso Heights areas. If you observe anyone doing anything to the trap, please ask them to leave it be. Thank you for helping us be stewards of our beautiful park.**

— Pat Clark

summer' characteristic we all know.

One measure of our success is growth. For example, one of the oaks at River Ranch and El Douro last April measured 50 inches tall; this April, it is 98 inches tall, so it almost doubled its height and it is now over 8 feet tall.

There is also a group of oak trees, planted in 2021 before the storm devastation, along the northern section of Roman Oak and they will be transitioning this year off supplemental water as they are four years old.

Thank you to our wonderful watering crew! We have some champion weeders in that group as well. We could not do it without you.

## SPHA membership drive

As of press time, our membership number stands at 182, a bit short of previous years. Members will be receiving their membership roster on their doorsteps in the next few weeks.

We want to thank all those who have joined this year.

You make what we do possible and we are truly grateful.

— Sue Ruiz, SPHA President



## SPHA Notes:

- **Streetlights out?** If you have a streetlight that is out, please log it to 311 and let Paulo or Michael know you have done so. We report streetlights that are flickering or are out, but we always need you to let us know if we missed one.
- **See something that doesn't seem right?** Connect with Hilary (Neighborhood Watch) [bagleyhg@yahoo.com](mailto:bagleyhg@yahoo.com)

# More than alarms and dogs: what helped me feel safe alone

Continued from Page 1

walking by or entering our property will activate the light and the camera. I get an audible alert sent to my phone so that I can watch the video in real-time on my phone. What a convenience when you are upstairs and not near the area. With that said, always keep your cell phone handy.

## Use deadbolts and dowels:

I use deadbolts on important doors — six in all. Broomstick dowels are handy in the tracks of locked sliding doors and windows. Our front door also has a chain lock, which I use with the deadbolt.

**Use a door stopper:** If one feels particularly vulnerable while asleep

or in the shower, durable door stoppers are available on Amazon, making it virtually impossible to open a closed door. Like a brace can hold up a fence, stoppers lean into and against an interior door to prevent entry from the other side. They can withstand 400 pounds of force, are adjustable, and are frequently used by women traveling alone and staying in hotels.

**Lock your gates:** Our side yard is double gated. Once you enter the exterior gate and walkway, and before entering the backyard, you encounter a second gate. Both gates include manual locks to which padlocks can be added. The gate facing the street has a deadbolt that I control from the inside the yard. Double gating is excellent for dog owners since it is rare that both gates will be left open accidentally. Double gating with a deadbolt is one of the most secure features I have added.

**Put up signs of deterrence:** Security system signs, RING camera stickers, and signs on gates and exterior doors that warn visitors

of dogs deter unwanted conduct. “No Solicitors” and “Beware of Dogs” signs are very apparent at our front door, along with a RING doorbell and additional camera.

**Get a panic button:** Most security systems include a wall-mounted panic button, but portable versions—similar to garage door openers—can be kept on your nightstand. When activated, they silently alert your security company and then law enforcement. Loud, standalone panic alarms are also available; though not integrated with systems, they’re effective deterrents audible to neighbors. For added protection, Amazon offers pepper sprays and stun devices to help lone occupants feel more secure.

**Connect with other women:** There is much we can share. Please contact our wonderful SPHA President, Sue Ruiz, if you want to meet other women in our neighborhood who are concerned about living alone. We have much in common and can be available for one another at a moment’s notice.

## The Marriott Park sign could use a little love!

Paulo Ferreira is looking for some handy folks to help him repair and paint our lovely sign, Saturday, June 21. Want to pitch in? Shoot an email to Sue Ruiz, [ruizsue@gmail.com](mailto:ruizsue@gmail.com)



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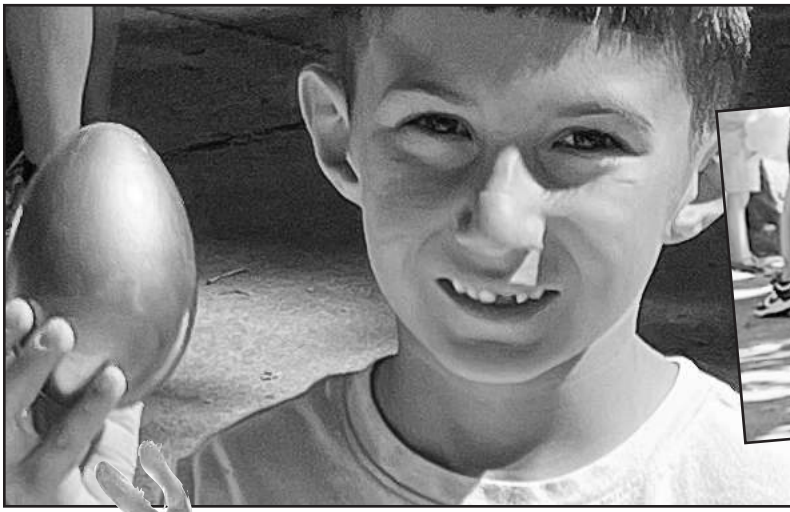
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## Thanks for making our Easter Egg Hunt a hoppin' success!

Thank you to all who came to play and those who worked to put on our Easter Egg Hunt this year! The weather cooperated, and the kids and parents had a wonderful time. We got many thank yous from parents, grandparents, and kids, so I want to recognize the team who made it all possible: Janette and Gustavo Casillas, Lisa and Doug McCauley, Paulo Ferreira, Sue Faist, Dianne Louie, Hailey Yeager, Cynde

Keasling, Lori Johnson, Michael Lipkin, Ray Mancini, and Annice Porter. Between all of them, they took care of the park permit, signs, flyers, emails to the neighborhood, shopping for candy, refreshments, prizes, and toys, putting a piece of candy in EACH EGG, set up and take down, photos, and day of event activities (toys, prizes, refreshments, crowd control :). Check out the videos and photos on our website!

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**SOLD**

1104 Rio Cidade Way — South Pocket



**coming soon**

South Pocket  
One-of-A Kind, River View,  
Tri-Level  
Updated Throughout  
3, possible 4 bed; 2.5 bath



**SOLD**

Grand River Drive — South Pocket



**PENDING**

5918 Lakestone Drive — Natomas

# Celebrating The 4th of July...in April?

Roughly 17 years ago, my family and I started celebrating the 4th of July in our neighborhood by placing an American flag on every lawn. The accompanying photo is my husband Carlos and our granddaughter, now 15 but then about 2 years old. Needless to say, she's now busy with teen activities while Carlos carries on the tradition himself.

Every year 500 flags were ordered a couple of months in advance to allow time to add a label to each flag. Two days before the 4th and usually before most of our neighbors were awake, our intrepid little team...namely Carlos, would head out to install the flags. At each home on every street these beautiful little American flags began to appear.

While the installation process has remained essentially the same over the years, there have been changes as landscaping has evolved. Drought conscious irrigation, fewer grass lawns, weed barriers and more drought resistant plants resulted in harder soil. This made care and caution with the flag placement more of an imperative and the job more time consuming.

Carlos and I greatly appreciated your many thanks and gestures of appreciation over the years. This year we are sad to say that the flags will not be present in your yard on the 4th as we will be on a long-awaited vacation on the 4th and the crucial pre-4th preparation days.

We hope you have enjoyed the tradition of receiving the flags as much as we have in providing them, but in our absence, we wish you all, albeit early...

## HAPPY 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY!

## Spring Outdoor Spruce-up Tips

- **Clean & Declutter:** Sweep debris and wipe down all surfaces and furniture. Seal wood decks, power wash other surfaces and remove clutter and wilted annuals.
- **Add Ambiance w/Lighting:** Invest in lighting to transform your space with solar powered LED fixtures, string lights or battery-operated lanterns and candles.
- **Create A Private, Green Oasis:** Think of self-standing bamboo screens, hanging planters, ladder-style plant holders, rail mounted flower boxes or a vine-covered trellis.
- **Get Personal:** Mix in cozy textiles, weather-resistant pillows and more. Consider adding a rug, a piece of art, decorative sculpture, or wallmounted water feature.

Be ready for spring and summer – start prepping now.



Your South Pocket Neighbor  
916.508.5313 • [sabra@sabrasanchez.com](mailto:sabra@sabrasanchez.com)  
[www.sabrasanchez.com](http://www.sabrasanchez.com)



**REAL ESTATE SNAPSHOT**  
S Land Park/Greenhaven, March 2025  
March 2025 vs. 2024

- # of Sales:**  
Up 14.29%
- New Listings:**  
Up 60.47%
- Average List Price (Sold):**  
Up 0.12%
- Average Sale Price:**  
Down 2.07%
- Average Days on Market:**  
Up 50%
- Median Sales Price:**  
Down 9.66%