



Volume 2, Issue 2 + Grant Park Neighbors is a special project of Ante Meridiem, Inc., a 501(c)3

Neighborhood History: Branciforte Creek

In the spirit of getting to know our neighbors better and learning more about our neighborhood's history, GPN is conducting interviews with longtime residents.



Interview with Dave Wallace

Dave is the "mayor" of Branciforte Creek. If you regularly walk the creek trail behind the Senior Center you've probably seen him clearing brush or planting blackberry bushes or trimming trees leading down to the creek. His parents moved to a house on Berkeley Way by the creek in 1968. His wife, Iris, grows award-winning Dahlias in their expansive yard and often leaves buckets of her rainbow of flowers for neighbors to take home. Dave retired nearly a decade ago from a sheriff's department over the hill and especially enjoys fishing, gardening and biking. He and Iris take frequent camping trips around the state, and visit her relatives in Switzerland every other year. When they travel their two sons take care of the property.

GPN: What was Branciforte Creek like during your childhood?

Dave: The creek was the focal point for the kids in the neighborhood. We had forts along the aqueduct and a rope swing. We had boat races down the creek during the spring when it was about 3-4 feet deep. We rode down on inner tubes, all the way to Adolph's restaurant (now the closed Saki restaurant). We used to climb out of the creek using the vertical steps in its concrete walls. We watched the steelhead salmon gather in pools near the spot where the natural creek meets the aqueduct. It's illegal to fish in the creek but the steelhead are still here.

GPN: Has the trail changed much over the last few years?

Dave: Pretty much same as its always been. I've cleared it out some to make it easier to get down to the creek and cut down on illegal camping. I think it would be nice to see some murals on the concrete walls.

GPN: What was the strangest thing that happened by the creek?

Dave: When I was a kid another boy died from sniffing glue creekside.

GPN: What improvements would you like to see on Branciforte Creek?

Dave: I'd like to see more people using the path. In the last couple of years more families have discovered the path and so have dog walkers. It's a local treasure.



GPN: Is there more illegal camping by the creek?

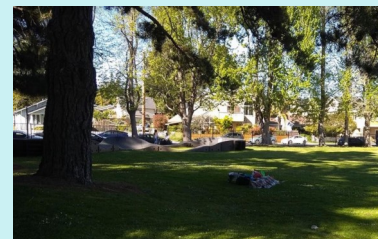
Dave: It's sporadic. There's one regular older camper who seems harmless. Some of the others leave a lot of trash and leftover food. A few years ago heroin addicts hung around the creek. I heard that they liked being around the soothing sound of the running water.

GPN: GPN has gotten the County to agree to assign a Downtown Streets Team to patrol our streets and do clean up. Do you think it would be a good idea to have them patrol the Creek area?

Dave: Once a week would be great.

GPN: Anything else you'd like to say to your neighbors about the creek?

Dave: Get out and walk. There are lots of other secret walkways in Santa Cruz as well. I'm hoping to build a bench by the creek one of these days. And I'd like to pay tribute to Rick Deitz who died last year. He lived for many decades back here and was called "The mayor." He took care of the trail and is missed.



Vision Statement

Grant Park Neighbors (GPN) will work with the Parks and Recreation Department, Santa Cruz City and County to promote a safe and welcoming environment for neighbors and the community to gather for recreational, leisurely, and family activities, and to enjoy the beauty of the park.

More Information, details for events, news and volunteer opportunities can be found on our website grantparkneighbors.org Or contact us at grantpark95060@gmail.com

Senior Survey

Grant Park Neighbors asks for your input on our organization's scope of activity with six (6) short surveys.

Each survey has less than 15 questions, and will take no more than five (5) minutes to complete.

Those that complete all six (6) surveys will be entered in a drawing for three \$25 gift cards; one from Dig Gardens, one from Marianne's Ice Cream, and one from the Habit Burger Grill. Our first survey concerns **Senior Activities**. The link to the survey is here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HYHTQ5V>