

# Top of Hiller

## Hiller Highlands Four Association Newsletter

Summer  
2011



### In this issue:

Swan Songs	1
CORE	3
Neighborhood Watch	4
Save these Dates!	5
David White	6
George Innes	7
ACC	8
President's Message	8
Neighborhood Notes	9

For all the latest information, visit our website:  
[www.hhiv.org](http://www.hhiv.org)



Swan Song by Lawrence Ferlinghetti, 1992

### SWAN SONGS

By Cheryl Brodsky

A Swan Song is defined as the last act, appearance, utterance, or publication of a person before retirement or death. The expression is derived from the legend that, while they are mute during the rest of their lives, swans sing beautifully and mournfully just before they die. A 16<sup>th</sup> century English composer, Orlando Gibbons, composed a madrigal about the dying swan:

*The silver Swan, who living had no Note,  
when Death approached, unlocked her  
silent throat.*

*Leaning her breast against the reedy shore,  
thus sang her first and last, and sang no  
more.*

Observation has proven that swans are not mute until they are ready to die, but it is a dramatic tale and the expression lives on. But, what does this esoteric story have to do with Hiller Four?



### My Swan Song

First, this is my swan song as President of Hiller Four. I have retired as President but don't get your hopes up... I won't be going too far as I will be serving as Vice President of the Hiller Four Board. It has been my pleasure and an honor to serve as your President. I have particularly enjoyed getting to know many of you and broadening my appreciation of what it takes to keep our community running smoothly. I am particularly grateful for the help that I have received from so many people. I highly recommend the experience to all of you. The Board, and by extension the Hiller Four community, functions best when it is continually infused with new blood and new ideas. Come to Board meetings (they are open to all owners of Hiller Four), volunteer to help with a few events, and before long you may be writing your own swan song. Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of odd numbered months at 7:00 PM at the Highlands Country Club. You are welcome to call me with any questions (548-8866) or just show up at a meeting.

## Top of Hiller's Swan Song



Sadly, this is also the swan song for the "Top of Hiller," our quarterly newsletter. During the past few years this publication has expanded from a simple flyer to a multi-page glossy newsletter with a variety of articles and colored photos. At the annual meeting in April, the membership expressed support for the bulletin and agreed to receive it via email in order to save on costs. However, after this issue, we are still without a new editor. Bob Kuzma has done an outstanding job as interim editor, but he took the job for just one year. This issue is his last. Unless someone steps up to the plate, this is the swan song for our quarterly bulletin. To keep the newsletter alive we need someone with computer skills and a little creativity. We promise that you won't be alone. You'll have the help and support of the Board and of all of the Committee Chairs. Please consider volunteering your time and skills for this project. Call Gordon Seligson (845-2818), Mary Ellen Smee (845-4955), or me (548-8866) for more information.

## Carbon Monoxide: A Silent Killer



The legislature has a way of sneaking in laws that that we sometimes don't find out about until the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. I've been hearing ads on the radio about a new law requiring carbon monoxide detectors but I figured that was just

advertising hype by the folks who sell them. I decided to check it out for myself and discovered that in 2010 a law was passed by the California legislature requiring all residential dwellings to have carbon monoxide detectors installed. The deadline to have these detectors installed was July 1, 2011 for single family homes like ours. These devices must be able to detect carbon monoxide and produce a distinct, audible alarm that is different from a smoke alarm.

Carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless, and tasteless; and it kills 500 people and sickens 20,000 people annually. If you have heating systems or appliances that use fossil fuel (e.g. gas water heater, gas stove, gas or wood burning fireplace) or if you have an attached garage (which we all do in Hiller Four), carbon monoxide detectors will be mandatory. The recommendation is to install one detector per floor of a residence, with additional alarms near every sleeping area. Carbon monoxide detectors can be purchased in most hardware stores and cost between \$15 and \$70 each. Some of them come combined with smoke detectors. California homeowners without carbon monoxide alarms in their residences could face a \$200 fine, although I can't imagine that there will be carbon monoxide police knocking on your door to check for these detectors.

Don't wait—be safe and install your detectors now.

## Top of Hiller

Published by the Hiller Highlands  
Four Association

Newsletter Design & Editor  
Bob Kuzma

Proofreading Editor  
Bill Hunt

Contributing Articles Editor  
Mary Ellen Smee

### Contributors

Cheryl Brodsky

Bob Kuzma

Tom & Pauly Langguth

Janet Saalfeld

Gordon Seligson

Hiller Highlands Four Association  
30 Schooner Hill  
Oakland, CA 94618

### Board of Directors

Gordon Seligson – President and  
Treasurer  
[sixchx@att.net](mailto:sixchx@att.net)  
845-1216

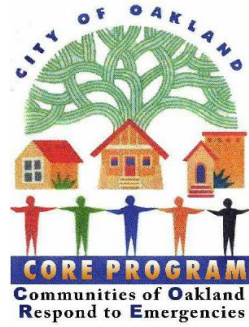
Cheryl Brodsky – Vice President  
[clbrodsky@sbcglobal.net](mailto:clbrodsky@sbcglobal.net)  
548-8866

Mary Ellen Smee – Secretary  
[mesmee22@aol.com](mailto:mesmee22@aol.com)  
845-4955

Robert Farwell – Director  
[robert.farwell@cushwake.com](mailto:robert.farwell@cushwake.com)  
848-2818

Kathy Anderson – Director  
[aka11@columbia.edu](mailto:aka11@columbia.edu)  
843-1718

## CORE Communities of Oakland Respond to Emergencies



By Tom & Pauly Langguth

On April 30, the city of Oakland's Office of Emergency Services and CORE sponsored a city-wide emergency preparedness exercise. The primary purpose of the exercise was to simulate a major disaster, and to practice an effective emergency preparedness response, concentrating on emergency communications training. Hiller Four participated in this exercise, and designed a training program on how to use walki-talkies to conduct emergency communications within Hiller Four, as well as with other outside emergency responders.

Our Hiller Four Association had twenty-one homes represented during this exercise; however, five of these were the homes of people running the exercise. This wasn't the turnout we had hoped for but there are now a few more residents who understand just how important emergency preparedness is.

Special thanks to Bob Kuzma, Bill Hunt, Janet Saalfeld, Lionel and Lorraine Chan, and Shek Yu for working on this project. This was a great team for getting things done. Thanks also to our Board for approving the purchase of new two-way radios. They will be invaluable when we need them. (And, some of us now know how they work!) The radios will be housed in our two Emergency Boxes and with selected residents.

To date we have received 57 *Disaster Preparedness Information Forms*. That means that 23 of our homes still haven't returned their form. **Please** complete the form and leave it in the mailbox at 30 Schooner Hill or the mailbox at 3 Captains Cove.



CORE trained exercise facilitators



The Oakland Fire Department joins the activities



## Neighborhood Watch

By Tom & Pauly Langguth



Three of our Block Captains attended a city-wide Block Captain's meeting on April 27, and three others attended a meeting that focused on area 13Y (our area) on June 8. There was an interesting discussion regarding the use of mounted neighborhood cameras at the second meeting. More information will be provided on this topic at a later date. Safety reminders:

Put an identification number, or mark, on possessions that might be taken in a robbery and photograph these items. This will help the police when items are recovered.

1. If you see a crime in progress call 911.
2. If you see suspicious activity email Officer Trent Thompson at [tthompson@oaklandnet.com](mailto:tthompson@oaklandnet.com) and/or call the non-emergency police number 777-3333. Please let your Block Captain know if make a report.
3. Never open your door to an unknown or unidentified person. Utility personnel rarely come unannounced and never come without proper identification.

### Public Safety Meeting

Tom and Pauly attended an area 13Y Public Safety Meeting to address the issue of our local "skateboard team". If you see skateboarders please note the location, day, and time, and report

to your Block Captain. The police patrols will try to swing by if there seems to be some pattern. Obviously, with all the city's current budget issues, they don't have the staff to respond to one call regarding one incident. This behavior is likely to get worse during the summer.



### Siren's Call

The City of Oakland has erected emergency sirens throughout the city to help inform residents of public safety emergencies (fire, terrorism, etc.). The closest siren servicing our neighborhood is located at the top of a tall pole near the south entrance of Hiller Drive.

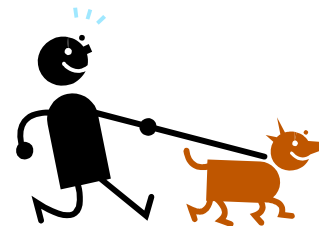
The city tests these sirens on the first Wednesday of each month, at noon. Hearing this siren may be rather alarming if you don't know what it is supposed to indicate. If you hear the sirens at any other time, follow these guidelines:

1. Shelter. Go inside.
2. Shut all doors and windows.
3. Listen. Tune to AM 530 Radio Oakland, or AM 740.
4. Please do NOT call 911 if you hear the siren.

### Pet Rule Reminders

Keeping your dog on a leash at all times when outdoors is required by an ordinance of the City of Oakland, as well as the Pet Rules of Hiller Highlands Four Association. No matter how friendly or well behaved your pet may be, a leash is required at all times.

And please, always pick up after your dog.



### Fire Department Inspection

The Oakland Fire Department has just completed its annual vegetation inspection of Hiller Four. They should have left a report on your door telling you whether or not your home is in compliance. **If it is not in compliance** or if there are suggested modifications, please put the report in the Association mailbox at 30 Schooner Hill so that we can have our gardeners resolve any issues.



## CORE Team Fire Hose Demonstration

**10:00 AM Saturday  
August 27, 2011**

We like to think that by now you are familiar with the locations and contents of our HH Four Emergency Boxes. Among the items in each box is a fire hose for use when it becomes evident that the Oakland Fire Department will not be able to arrive in a timely manner. While we are reassured by having hoses in our boxes, we are concerned that we have very few residents who are trained to use them. Needless to say, the time to become acquainted with the hoses and the hookups is before a fire, not during a fire!

For this HH 4 Emergency Preparedness Project, we are fortunate to have a Hiller resident who just happens to be a CORE Trainer, for our instructor. Please join us on **Saturday morning, August 27, 2011** to learn the correct way to connect our hoses to our hydrants and the correct way to fight a fire. We will also learn when it is advisable to try to fight a fire and when we should not attempt to put it out. We will gather at the **hydrant in front of 20 Schooner Hill at 10:00 a.m.** to receive instructions and hands-on practice. Please be on time and bring a pair of work gloves with you.

If there are those in attendance on the 27<sup>th</sup> who aren't familiar with our Emergency Boxes, we will have CORE members available to show you the locations and familiarize you with the contents. If you are unable to attend the demonstration but want to know about the Emergency Boxes please contact Pauly or Tom Langguth at 549-9081 or [pl2gs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pl2gs@sbcglobal.net) and we will arrange to have you meet with a member of the CORE Team when convenient.

Save these  
Dates!



## 2011 Fall Social

**Sunday, October 2, 2011 at  
4:00PM**

Our annual Fall Social will be held at the Highlands Country Club. All residents including renters are invited. We will be having a delicious paella dinner, prepared by Eduardo as we watch, and enjoy wonderful Spanish wines. The program begins at 4:00 and Cocktails and Dinner will follow. The Social Committee will be looking for some help, so please call Janet Saalfeld at (510) 843-1088 or send an email to [saalfeld@sbcglobal.net](mailto:saalfeld@sbcglobal.net) to volunteer or get more information. Invitations will be coming in September. It's a wonderful opportunity to get to know your neighbors.



## An Epitaph for David White

By Cheryl Brodsky

Hiller Four has suffered a tremendous loss with the recent death of David White. David was a special person whose life was dedicated to the betterment of his country, his family and his community; but he never lost sight of himself.

David was born and raised in Beaumont, Texas. After graduating near the top of his class in high school, he attended Howard University and obtained a Bachelor's degree in chemistry and a Master's degree in experimental psychology. After graduate school, David entered the U.S. Army and when his tour of duty was completed, he returned to his alma mater as an instructor. David subsequently reentered the army, this time as an officer. David was married and had two children, Judy and David. During his military career David was stationed in Bremerhaven, Germany and was later deployed to Okinawa, Japan.

David and Gordon Seligson met in Okinawa and eventually both resigned their commissions as Captains and they moved together to Berkeley. They have been partners for 45-years. In 1974 David and Gordon moved to Clipper Hill in the fledgling Hiller Highlands Four development and except for the time rebuilding after the fire, they have lived here ever since.

David worked as the Senior Research and Planning Consultant for the Bay Area Social Planning Council and when that function was brought in house at the United Way, David became an Associate Vice President for the United Way. He retired from that position 15 years ago.

Life was always a journey for David, not a destination. He was a doer who enjoyed every minute of life. He was an avid swimmer, skier and hiker. David and Gordon had a quest to visit all the U.S. National Parks and they were well on their way to achieving that goal. David had the National Parks Passport and before enjoying the sights at any park he would head straight to the ranger station to make sure that his passport got stamped. David and Gordon enjoyed extensive foreign travel and a highlight was a barge trip they took with

family members on the idyllic Canal du Midi in the south of France. David tried his hand at ice skating, tap dancing and he even studied flamenco dancing. He loved the rush of rollerblading and some of you may have seen him whizzing down Schooner Hill.

After retirement, David became involved in the Senior Tutors program and then he became a first grade teacher's assistant at the Kaiser Elementary School off of Hiller Drive. His work with children became a new passion. He was energized by the exploits and the successes of "his children." The children in his class were deeply affected by David and presented his son with a book they had made, which expressed their sentiments about David. The cover of the book said: "If there ever comes a day when we can't be together, keep me in your heart, I'll stay there forever." (Winnie-the-Pooh)

Family was paramount to David. He was one of five siblings and his mother was one of eight siblings. He never had a shortage of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. He spent time every summer with his own children, he enjoyed time with his grandchildren and boy did David go bonkers when his great grandson was born. He shared with them his love of musical theater, museums, and amusement parks and most of all, his love of life.

Words of consolation are inadequate to ease the pain that Gordon and David's family are now feeling. There is an old adage, "We can shed tears that he is gone or we can smile because he has lived." I think we know which one David would prefer.



## In Memoriam -- George Innes

By Janet Saalfeld



Our Hiller Four neighborhood has lost another long time, “before the fire” resident. George Innes died on June 16<sup>th</sup> of a heart attack at home.

As many of you knew, George was the very capable chair of the Architectural Control Committee. You may have seen him on his annual Hiller walk-around, keeping our homes looking ship-shape and in compliance with the Rules.

Born, raised and educated in Berkeley, including graduation from CAL in 1961, George moved back to the Bay Area after the Army and completion of his MBA at the University of Cincinnati. He began a life-time career with Wells Fargo Bank in various aspects of Human Resources. He met his wife Sandy at Wells Fargo and they were married in 1973.

George and Sandy moved to Hiller in 1974, and rebuilt after the fire. He has held every Board office, including President, and participated in all the committees. He served as treasurer during the time of the re-build. He always had an interest in and skill with architecture and design and was able to gently remind us of that “piece of siding that is falling off,” being persistent until we had it repaired! Mixed with that perseverance was a very kind and playful sense of humor.

George had many interests and hobbies, including woodworking and carpentry. He was a wine connoisseur and was always seen at Hiller socials helping with hospitality and the choice of fine wines. He was active with his Cal fraternity Chi Phi and enjoyed getting together with his fraternity brothers.

Both Sandy and George enjoyed family in the Bay Area, and they remember him as the “Great Uncle” who was always ready to listen and be supportive with his warm smile and gentle humor.

Our sincere sympathy and condolence go out to Sandy at this time. We all will continue to remember and be grateful to George as we walk the Hiller Four pathways and admire the beauty of our neighborhood.

## Architectural Control Committee

By Bob Kuzma

The members of the Architectural Control Committee will sorely miss George Innes and his many longtime contributions on behalf of the ACC and the entire Association. George brought a unique assortment of leadership qualities, experiences, and personal charms to his position as the ACC Chairman, as well as his many other volunteer positions within Hiller Four. His easy-going manner and sense of humor merged with a strong belief in fairness and dedication to community service to produce an outstanding leader. George had an uncanny ability to diffuse touchy situations with disarming humor; and by ensuring that everyone’s voice was fully heard, appreciated, and considered. He worked hard to ensure that all decisions would be fair, well documented, and consistent with the Association’s principles and governing documents. As homeowners in Hiller Four, we all have benefited from his commitment to this high level of professionalism and public service.

There is no easy way to fill the void that George’s absence reveals. Experience and wisdom take time to develop. I’m hopeful that others will step up and donate some of their time to learn about ACC functions, and help fill the gap. My experience with the ACC has been very personally rewarding; as I am appreciative of the experiences and time I’ve had to work with and learn from George and other members over the past ten years. The opportunity to develop meaningful personal friendships is just one of the many side benefits of volunteering and working with your neighbors. Please contribute to your community, and volunteer today; as we never know what tomorrow may bring.

## ACC Walk-Around Inspection

*2011 Inspection* – This year’s annual inspection will be delayed until August 2011, after which reports will be issued to all homeowners. If there are no corrective actions noted, the letter will indicate “All OK”. If there are actions noted the Board and the ACC will appreciate your cooperation in addressing them promptly according to the stated timeline.

## Repainting Season

If you’re thinking of repainting, visit the Hiller Four website, <http://www.hhiv.org> for information. On the Home Page, select “Architectural” then click on [Paint Scheme Assignments](#) to look up the color scheme assigned to your home, and click on [Appendix A - Painting Rules and Guidelines](#) to review the painting standards and description of the standard color schemes.

All requests to repaint the exterior of the home in the assigned colors must have prior approval by the Architectural Control Committee (“ACC”). You should advise the ACC of your intent to repaint via a note in the Hiller Four mailbox, or call/email Bob Kuzma, the ACC chair. We will schedule a brief meeting to verify that the chosen colors are accurate and approved – **prior to painting commencement.** The ACC can provide you a set of paint color “chips” to assist you and your painter.

As a courtesy, nearby neighbors should also be advised as to when painting will take place and care should be taken to protect adjoining residences from paint spray. Further, in the event damage to common area plantings and/or irrigation system occurs as a result of the work being done, Hiller Four will take needed corrective measures and will bill you for the cost. If you intend to hold the painting contractor responsible to reimburse you for any such repair/replacement expense, we recommend you advise him/her in writing before the work commences.

## Solar Installations

If you are considering the possible installation of a photo-voltaic solar array for your home, please communicate with the ACC as early in your vendor selection process as possible. All vendors are not equal. Some may not be able to fully meet the Association’s architectural requirements. Please get in touch with the ACC before signing a solar contract.

## From the President’s Desk ...



At its May meeting, the Board elected new officers. I would like to particularly extend thanks to Herb Holman for his two years of service as he rotates off the board, to Cheryl for a busy year as President (she remains on the Board as VP) and to Bob Farwell for his service as Secretary for the past year. Mary Ellen Smees continues on the Board, now serving as Secretary, and we all welcome Kathy Anderson as she joins the Board.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions made by our many volunteers:

George Innes, Bob Kuzma, Keith Beckwith, and Phil Thompson have been an engaged and responsive Architectural Control Committee. The team is looking for fresh faces to help allay the loss of George’s unique contributions and leadership.

Pauly & Tom Langguth are keeping Hiller Four’s CORE activities going as well as making Neighborhood Watch a reality. In regards to the latter, Arlene Nestor, Bob Kuzma, Bill Hunt, Jean Martin, and Rick Bohner have all volunteered their precious time to serve as Block Captains (refer to [Spring 2011 Top of Hiller](#)).

Janet Saalfeld is our one-person Welcome Committee and has been busy with the several changes of owners and renters during the last few months.

Dick Saalfeld continues to monitor the parking situation and is extremely pleased by Julie Petrini’s offer of assistance.



## LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

We are close to signing a new contract with Cleary Bros., thanks to Cheryl Brodsky's efforts over the past many months. Early last year the crew was downsized from four to three, which caused some concerns whether that was sufficient staffing to keep the grounds at current standards. The Board and Barbara interviewed three possible alternative contractors, but in the end decided to stay with Cleary given our satisfaction for the last fifteen years. The new contract does not stipulate a specific staffing level or number of hours, but rather "The crew will visit the site two times per week and will be staffed to accommodate the workload and expectations of this agreement." So the onus will be on Hiller Four to identify perceived problems in a timely manner to ensure that we remain satisfied. To that end, I hope that we can enlist some interested residents to work with Barbara in assessing our level of satisfaction – three individuals volunteered earlier this year, Barbara and I will be contacting them regarding the process going forward.

## Treasurer's Report

By Gordon Seligson



During her annual review earlier this year; our CPA identified \$23,385 of expenses that were paid with operating funds rather than from reserves. We had done this over the past couple of years because there were sufficient operating funds available. Instead of reducing the reserves by the amount, the Board declared an extra contribution to reserves in this amount to resolve the matter. As of May 31, the operating fund has \$28,633.

## NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

By Janet Saalfeld



Please welcome our newest neighbors. Liz and Brad Chamberlain, their children Brad and Sophia, and their black lab Fraser have moved into 15 Captains Cove from Marin County. Nancy Lueck has purchased 25 Schooner Hill, and Willard and Julia Mies have purchased 7 Clipper Hill. The Mies are long time friends of Phil Thompson and he is particularly happy to have them join the Hiller Four community. Please give them your usual warm welcome.

The Welcome Committee is looking for additional members to help. It's a great opportunity to meet the new folks and just means writing a note and baking (or buying!) and delivering the new resident packet. Contact me: [saalfeld@sbcglobal.net](mailto:saalfeld@sbcglobal.net)

## Local Interests

East Bay Hills Project



Experience the East Bay Hills during the mid-20th century from the Rockridge section of Oakland to Walnut Creek in a photographic journey following the right-of-way of the Sacramento Northern Railroad. Stuart Swiedler, an East Bay railroad historian has put together a wonderful web site: <http://www.eastbayhillsproject.org>. This is a must-see web site if you are interested in East Bay history or railroads.

# The Back Page

This Summer 2011 issue of "Top of Hiller" is the final edition to be published. I began this project as a temporary "fill-in" for one of the ever changing volunteer opportunities within Hiller Four, but the task soon turned into a real "labor of love." It was my honor and pleasure to have the opportunity to practice some long-dormant computer graphics and design skills in the creation of this newsletter. However, the large amount of time required to produce a high-quality publication became arduous, and the color printing costs seemed excessive for a neighborhood bulletin. This final edition is being electronically distributed via email to all homeowners, instead of being printed. Going forward, any "newsletter type" information that should be distributed to homeowners will be posted to the [www.HHIV.org](http://www.HHIV.org) website, with notices of these postings sent via email alerts. However, should anyone else get bit by the creative bug in the future, I'm sure there will be plenty of support to resurrect a printed publication.

–Bob Kuzma

## 2011-2012 Officers

President – Gordon Seligson: (510) 845-1216

Vice President – Cheryl Brodsky: (510) 548-8866

Treasurer – Gordon Seligson: (510) 845-1216

Secretary – Mary Ellen Smees: (510) 845-4955

Director – Robert Farwell: (510) 325-5602

Director – Kathy Anderson: (510) 843-1718

### Committee Chairs:

Architectural Control – Bob Kuzma: (510) 981-1445

Landscaping – Barbara Schindler: (510) 841-7753

Streets & Lights – Gordon Seligson: (510) 845-1216

Parking – Dick Saalfeld: (510) 843-1088

Welcome – Janet Saalfeld: (510) 843-1088

CORE – Pauly Langguth: (510) 549-9081

Webmaster – Bob Kuzma: (510) 981-1445

### Block Captains:

Arlene Nestor: (510) 548-7855

Bob Kuzma/Bill Hunt: (510) 981-1445

Jean Martin: (510) 845-4654

Rick Bohner: (510) 204-9654

Spring came late to the Bay Area this year. But when it arrived, the landscape burst forth with magnificent displays of color. The photo below is of the hillside behind Captains Cove in early May.

