



# Bidwell Park Pulse

Quarterly Newsletter of the City of Chico's Park Division

## Fundraising for Chico's Crown Jewel

In light of current budget challenges, Park staff has donned our fundraising hats. While many of these efforts are just starting, we hope to encourage the community to support the Park.

We kicked off the inaugural Bidwell Park Birthday Bash, which raised about \$2,000 in July. The Park Division raised about \$7,000 participating in the North Valley Community Foundation's Annie B's Community Drive. This marked the 7th year that the Park Division participated. Funds raised will help: 1) repair Park infrastructure (including Caper Acres); 2) improve trails and signage; and 3) support a Park Division Intern scholarship (interns complete special park projects and guide volunteer efforts). The NVCF matches all donations made (8% last year). If you would like to be reminded next year of the Annie B's Community Fund Drive, please email your address to [lise.smith-peters@chicoca.gov](mailto:lise.smith-peters@chicoca.gov)

In addition, you can wear your support of the Park. Local artist and Bidwell Park enthusiast Jake Early designed T-shirts for sale with proceeds going to Bidwell Park. Jake developed a new design based on the Centennial Monkey Face print and put a new circular spin on it, adding the message "Enjoy Support Protect."

T-shirts may be purchased at the Park Division office at 965 Fir Street (Monday through Fridays, 7 am to 4 pm) and at the Chico Creek Nature Center.

Many people do not realize that public purpose donations made to

the Park Division are tax deductible (IRS Publication 526 (2012) p. 2).

The Park Division also kicked off a planning effort at the October Natural Resource Committee meeting to renovate Caper Acres.

The area has been subject to recent closures, because of the staffing levels required to clean, inspect and repair the aging infrastructure of this popular Chico icon. Public input will guide priorities for improvements. The effort will bring the play area up to safety codes, and reduce the time consuming tasks of continual repairs and maintenance. Following the list of priorities, we will kick off a capital campaign. Keep your eyes out for the announcement of the Caper Acres Capital Campaign, which will be a community-wide effort to raise the funds for this landmark. To get involved, call Dan at 896-7801 or Lise at 896-7831.

*~Lise Smith, Park Services Coordinator*



## Work Starts on ADA Trail at Horseshoe Lake

Park staff has begun work on the established trail south of Horseshoe Lake. The work will make the trail accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act and link Parking Lots C & E that have accessible parking spaces, porta potties and an accessible fishing pier.

The improvement project is part of a \$175,802 CA Dept. of Parks & Recreation grant that the Division received in 2010. For more information on the project, contact the Park Division at 530-896-7800.

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**The Bidwell Park Pulse**

The Bidwell Park Pulse is a quarterly newsletter of the City of Chico's Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways, and Preserves Division. The Parks Division is part of the Public Works Department, and is responsible for maintaining and operating City parks, open space, and recreation areas including Bidwell Park, Children's Playground, Depot Park, City Plaza, Lindo Channel, Little Chico Creek Greenway, Teichert Ponds, and other preserves. Parks Division programs include: Maintenance, Ranger, Lifeguard, and Volunteer Programs. Printed on 100% recycled paper.

**City of Chico Mission**

To protect and enhance our community's quality of life for present and future generations.

**Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC)**

The BPPC is vested with the supervision, control and management of many public parks and playgrounds within the City. **Commissioners:** Mary Brentwood, Lisa Emmerich (Chair), Mark Herrera, Jim Moravec, Richard Ober, Janine Rood, and Drew Traulsen. **Staff Liaison:** Lise Smith-Peters, Park Services Coordinator.

**Contact**

Questions, comments, or photo contributions? Contact us:

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Web: [www.ci.chico.ca.us](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us)

**About the Banner Photograph**

Chico Parks and Chico Fire conduct a prescribed burn on October 14, 2013. Prescribed burns are an important tool to revitalize oak woodlands and prevent catastrophic fire.

**Staff Spotlight:****Dave Bettencourt**

*Six questions and answers with Street Tree Field Supervisor of the Park and Street Tree Division*

*How many years have you been with the City of Chico?*

Dave Bettencourt started as a senior tree worker in December 2008 and became Field Supervisor of the Street Tree Division in 2009 and worked directly with Urban Forest Manager Denice Britton. Dave has been a certified tree worker and arborist since 1995 (ISA) as well as Tree Climber Specialist and Ground Operations Specialist (TCIA). He worked with brother Tom of North Valley Tree Service for 16 years before joining the City.

*What do you enjoy most about working in the Urban Forest?*

Dave enjoys the Heritage trees, the vegetation and wildlife. One of his hobbies is Tree identification and sharing this with his children. He also enjoys talking with citizens about tree care and concerns.

*What do you see as a big challenge facing the Park/Street Tree Division?*

The budget and adjusting to staff shortages; and perhaps the biggest challenge is not being able to offer the same level of service to the public as in the past.

*Where are you from originally and what about your family?*

Dave was born in Corning, CA and raised in Capay. He made Chico his home in 1991. He has 11 siblings (6 sisters and 5 brothers!) and the family lived on a working dairy farm. Dave is married to Julie and has two children, son Kyle 13 and daughter Kiara 10.



*What is your favorite type of tree?*

Dave hesitates but answers Redwoods.

*What hobbies and interests do you have outside of work?*

Dave enjoys spending time with his family. He is and has been a volunteer coach for Little League Baseball for 9 years and Little League Softball for 3 years. Dave has also coached CARD boys basketball for 4 years and 1 year for the girls team. He enjoys being outdoors with his kids in the Park, camping, fishing, and hiking.

Dave still climbs trees but now only for friends and family!

*Park Watch Volunteers provide information during the July 4th celebration at One Mile Recreation Area. THANK YOU Park Watch members!*

**Park Postcard:**

## Street Trees

# Removing Hazardous Trees

Chico loves its trees and the shade and greenery they provide. Besides their aesthetic value, they produce a huge benefit to the community in the form of energy reduction from shade, pollution absorption and carbon sequestration.

Chico's Street Trees Program cares for and manages the City's urban forest of street and park trees. The City's street trees and Park and greenway trees, plus the privately owned trees throughout town also are part of the Urban Forest. The City is responsible for approximately 34,211 street tree sites of which 30,667 contain street trees (thus, approximately 3,544 open planting sites). The City also has 1,439 trees that are scheduled for eventual replacement, due mostly to aging, structural problems, or lack of establishment of young trees.

Park staffs' decision to remove public trees is not taken lightly. Dictated by Chico Municipal Code (CMC), the process to evaluate and then act on street trees is:

- 1) First a tree is determined by its location as to whether it is in the Right of Way (Street Tree), on City property or whether it is a privately owned tree on private property. Calls are then prioritized for review depending on condition and as to whether another review process is in progress, such as in the case of a Capital Project.
- 2) Staff performs an inspection to determine the urgency of a full

inspection or more immediate action.

- 3) If staff finds a City tree is dangerous to public health and safety but it is not on the removal list, then the Director and City Manager have authority to remove a tree/shrub, without the authorization or direction of either the BPPC or the City Council (immediate removal is necessary for public safety -CMC Section 14.40.270).
- 4) If a private party calls in for a removal of a City tree and if the "...tree or shrub is not dead or dying and its continued existence does not create a dangerous or defective condition upon public property, in which case its removal is deemed to be for the convenience of the property owner...", staff recommends the owner begin the permit process for removal. In which case, the owner will be responsible for all removal costs. The City keeps a list of tree service companies on the Parks & Street webpage for citizens to use.
- 5) Trees may come to the public attention as part of a Capital Project or through a development process. These discretionary trees typically go through a review process at the BPPC, Planning or Council meeting. For more information, call the Park Division at 896-7800.

~by Dan Efseaff, Parks & Natural Resources Mgr

## Invasive Plant Profile:

### Catalpa

**Common names:** Western Catalpa, Northern Catalpa, Hardy Catalpa, Cigar Tree, Indian bean tree

**Scientific name:** *Catalpa speciosa*

**Family:** *Bignoniaceae*

**Native To:** Southern Illinois to Arkansas

**Means of Introduction:** Ornamental flowering tree for gardens

**Current CA Distribution:** all USDA zones

**Status/Weed Rating:**

Statewide impact: not listed (CAL-IPC)

CDFA Noxious Weed List: not listed [CDFA Weeds 2010]

**What does it look like?**

**General:** Fast growing deciduous tree, wood can be brittle; form is open with an oval crown. Bark; light brown and smooth on younger trees developing into ridged and furrowed grayish brown in older larger specimens.

**Leaves:** Opposite, Large heart shaped and medium green to bright green. 6 to 12" long 3 to 8" wide.

**Flowers:** Terminal clusters, Attractive, upright, white, somewhat bell shaped with wavy margins 2" long and as wide.

Blooms in mid summer.

**Fruit:** Long bean-shaped seed pod, 6 to 20" long and 1/2" to 3/4" wide. Pods develop in late summer and persist into winter.

**Reproduction and Dispersal:**

Seeds will readily germinate in most soil conditions in the Chico area especially moist creek side locations; it also sprouts from the root and base of trunk

(especially if roots or trunk are damaged).

**Where is it invading?** From Five Mile Recreation Area west throughout Lower Bidwell Park. Long seed pods float easily down Big Chico Creek.

**Why Worry?** Spreads easily and grows fast, quickly squeezing out desirable native trees.

**What is being done in Bidwell Park?** Friends of Bidwell Park in partnership with the Park Division will soon start a pilot project with a certified herbicide applicator, who will test a variety of herbicides and application measures on catalpa trees away from Big Chico Creek. The Volunteer Program will continue to remove smaller catalpa manually.

**Where do I go for more information?**

<http://ces.ncsu.edu/dept/hort/>

<http://ucanr.org>





Park Division  
General Services Department

965 Fir Street | PO Box 3420  
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## Donate to Chico's Park & Greenways!

     Yes, I would like to help Bidwell Park & City Greenways!

My donation selection and method of support is checked below. I understand that my contribution is tax deductible (IRS Publication 526 (2012) p. 2).

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caper Acres (99170) | <input type="checkbox"/> Park Improvements (99171)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trails (99174)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Park Infrastructure (99172)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Donation    | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation Management (99175) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park Intern (99173) |  |

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed please find my support in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- My check is attached (Please make payable to Chico Parks Division)
- Please bill my credit Card (\$20.00 minimum)
- Visa     MasterCard - Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Please clip and return to City of Chico/Parks Division/Donations/965 Fir Street/ Chico, CA 95926  
For official use only 050-000-46001/ \_\_\_\_\_ -000-3990

### Park Celebrates Make a Difference Day!



The Park Division celebrated Make a Difference Day in Bidwell Park and Greenways on Oct. 26th! Close to 400 volunteers came out to work in Bidwell

Park, Comanche Creek Greenway and along the City's Bike Paths. Projects included painting picnic tables, weeding, watering and planting native plants, trash cleanup and bike path cleanup. Some of the groups represented:

4-H Club ~ Chico Jr. High School ~ Paradise Intermediate Jr. High School ~ Community Action Volunteers in Education ~ Assoc. Students' Sustainability Group ~ Inter-Fraternal Council (8 Fraternities) ~ CSU Sigma Chi ~ Butte College Connections ~ CSUC Adventure Outings ~ CSUC Parks & Recreation Field School ~ Soroptimists International of Chico ~ Adopt-A-Park Students ~ Azad's Martial Arts ~ Chico High School CA Scholarship Federation ~ CA Native Plant Society, Mt. Lassen Chapter ~ Park Watch! ~ CA Conservation Corps (CCC).

Many thanks to our Volunteers, Crew Leaders, CCC, and sponsors: Costco, Home Depot, Starbucks, Recology Zero Waste, and Waste Management!

~Lise Smith-Peters, Park Services Coordinator