



The Bowfin Inquirer



February, 2023

The Origins of This Block Newspaper

Aaron's Answers

We have new neighbor (her first name is Anita) on the block. Welcome!! In a future edition, I hope she'll be able to provide us with answers to some of our "From Strangers to Neighbors" questions (first developed by Lauren Iwata for her BI columns some years ago).

I did get a moment to visit her on her driveway last week. She acknowledged that the realtor had shown her the BI, and she asked how the Bowfin Inquirer came to be. I'll use that as an excuse to fill the left column of this somewhat spare issue with a quick history.

When I was 11, I found that my parents had a box containing a purplish, gelatinous substance which could be used to copy documents. It was a boring, hot summer in Rockford, Illinois, and I got the idea of making a few pennies by creating a two-page newspaper for my block and peddling it to my neighbors. Those folks knew each other quite well, held block "fish fries" during several summers, and didn't mind sharing their stories to be my "news." I didn't become a W. Randolph Hearst that summer, but I DID sell a few copies to people on my block.

Fast forward to mid-1993, when two new families moved to our block and came door-to-door to introduce themselves to the rest of Bowfin St. That event, compounded with my recollection of how the 1989 earthquake here demonstrated that there was utility in neighbors getting to know each other better, brought the idea of a block newspaper to my mind. This time, though, purple gelatin wouldn't be needed to make copies. I had just purchased a used Intel-286 IBM PC that I'd be needing in my UC Berkeley MBA program, and I'd noticed that the previous owner had left a copy of "First Publisher" on it.

As we approach the 30th anniversary of the paper this October, we look forward to sharing more fun and information with you all, hosting (or supporting others who might wish to host) summer block parties, and running occasional contests for our children.

Welcome to Bowfin Street, Anita!



Top: A nice, friendly little quail

Bottom: An aggressive, mean magpie

Question: The birds living around your new environs in Utah probably differ from the ones you used to see on Bowfin St. Do you have any "favorite bird species" there that you can tell us about?

-Jerry

Aaron's Answer (A'sA): Certainly! Back in Foster City, the main three groups of wildlife that I saw were crows, geese and squirrels. Geese are way less common here in Utah, but we still see them

continued on page 3