

# Neighborhood where Dugard was held returns to normal

By Paul Bugarino, Contra Costa Times

ANTIOCH – Calm has returned to Walnut Avenue.

Drive through the rural neighborhood during the day and you may spot a flock of chickens strutting across the road or a child riding a bicycle in the dirt. At night, activity is even more sparse.

Nearly a year ago, that was anything but the case.



The Antioch compound where Jaycee Lee Dugard was kept for 18 years.

Photo/KTVU-TV

On Aug. 26, 2009, this unincorporated Contra Costa County tract just outside Antioch became the epicenter of media coverage around the world when longtime residents Phillip and Nancy Garrido were arrested on suspicion of kidnapping Jaycee Dugard and holding her for 18 years in the backyard of their Walnut Avenue house.

The spotlight eventually dimmed, but the sordid tale of the

Garridos' arrest and accusations of the sexual captivity of Dugard still resonate among residents, who say their lives were disrupted and the neighborhood unfairly stigmatized as a haven for sex offenders.

The neighborhood of large lots and isolated properties is "back to normal," said Helen Boyer, who lives next to the fenced-off Garrido house – which had a hidden backyard lair that authorities said shielded Dugard and the two daughters she bore Garrido. The house today stands vacant, its fate undecided.

**Read the whole story**