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Westdale VILLAGER

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
WESTDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 66504
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90066
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Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king!



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Westdale VILLAGER

SPRING 2015 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HANDS ON WESTDALE

• Jerry Hornof

The theme of this year's annual meeting was *Hands On*. The challenge is for "active participation". Whether you are serving in our schools, community councils, park programs, Neighborhood Watch, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or volunteer organizations, please become an active participant. Your service will be rewarding for both yourself and our community.

The Westdale Homeowners Association Annual Meeting was held on January 27th. It was an active year for our association, which year included Mayor Garcetti's Town Hall meeting on the city budget, the Mar Vista Community Council Green Garden Showcase, the American Cancer Society Relay-for-Life with honorary host Bill Rosendahl, Westdale Homeowners Association Block Party on Purdue Avenue, and Disaster Preparedness Classes.

The annual meeting featured Councilmember Mike Bonin. He opened his remarks by saying that this is an exciting time in Los Angeles. Mike continues to see energy and hope that the current city government will result in positive changes in city programs and services. Mike spoke about his Neighborhoods First approach. He highlighted the wonderful synergy between the neighborhood council, the residents, and his office. This synergy was apparent as Mike and Mayor Eric Garcetti walked Venice Boulevard as part of the Los Angeles Great Street program. Los Angeles has more streets than any other city in America. At 7,500 centerline miles, our streets make up about 15% of all the land in Los Angeles. As our largest public asset, streets form and reflect the character of our neighborhoods, our people, and our city. The Great Streets Initiative seeks to take advantage of this underutilized asset to create and support thriving neighborhoods. This program is consistent with our council member's top priority to work with the Mar Vista Business Association to strengthen the growth of small businesses in Mar Vista. Mike talked about our transportation systems and the nearly complete Expo Line. Finally, he honored our Board Member Marjorie Templeton. Marjorie serves as a Westdale



MARNY MASLON

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Homeowners Association Board Member, Westdale Villager publication representative, and membership chairperson. Marjorie's efforts, especially her membership activities, have advanced and enhanced our ability to connect to our homeowner community. Beside her hard work to encourage membership, her efforts to maintain and update our emailing lists are acknowledged and appreciated.

At the meeting we also heard from our LAPD Senior Lead Officer Adrian Acosta. He emphasized the fact that we live in a safe community because we are vigilant. Our Neighborhood Watch program is a critical component of our safety. Officer Acosta encouraged residents to contact him (phone: (310) 622-3973 or e-mail: 37285@LAPD.LAcity.org). He emphasized that if we suspect a criminal activity is occurring, be sure to first contact 911.

The meeting concluded with presentations by Mar Vista Community Council President Bill Koontz, our CERT Coordinator Carl Ginsberg, and a Real Estate report by Debbie Kaplan.

Finally, as winter gives way to spring, the MVCC/ 7th Annual Mar Vista Green Garden Showcase will be held Saturday, April 25th from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. This is a great opportunity to tour gardens and collect new gardening ideas. Featured gardens will be open for viewing throughout our Mar Vista community. For more information please see <http://marvistagreengardenshowcase.blogspot.com/>

Please consider “hands on” active participation in support of our Westdale and Mar Vista Community.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Join the Villager editorial team.

Looking for someone interested in working on our Westdale quarterly newsletter.

For more information call Jan Burns 310 390-9715

CRIME AND SAFETY REPORT

•Leah Oye/Liaison to Pacific Police Division

Spring is in the air, the time of year for new beginnings. Welcome new families to our community; talk to a neighbor who may need help, or to share interests. Our block captains will be doing that and getting to know the community better by gathering and updating our contact list and distributing membership forms. This will help provide information about upcoming events, meeting and crime trends.



Do you walk around the neighborhood every day with friends or with your dog? Do you see the same people, do you notice anything different, see progress on construction projects? You are the ones who know our neighborhood the best, what looks "funny," what looks ok. Remember if something looks out of place or gives you a strange feeling, it may be worth reporting. To report something suspicious, call the non-emergency number 1 877 ASK-LAPD.

Property crimes continue to plague the Pacific Division with at least 50% of property crimes being preventable. Many are due to unlocked doors/windows or items left visible in cars. If you notice someone looking into cars or trying door handles, call 911 to report as this is considered a crime in progress. Thefts of catalytic convertors from parked cars continue to be a common stolen item, especially from high profile vehicles parked on the street.

Pacific Division Captain, Brian Johnson has been promoted and reassigned to another area. Second in command, Captain Nicole Alberca will take over the leadership of the Pacific Area. We are fortunate that our Senior Lead Officer, Adrian Acosta will continue to be our liaison to LAPD for Mar Vista. He can help with non-emergency questions, status of investigations, current crime trends as well as leading neighborhood meetings. Officer Acosta's contact information is: (310) 622-3973, 37285@LAPD.LACITY.ORG or www.facebook.com/14SLO25.

Some other useful contacts:

- Call 311 for LA city services for bulky item pick-up or graffiti removal.
- maps.latimes.com/crime/
Enter Mar Vista under neighborhood for up-to-date crime information, including locations.

We are still recruiting for block captains. Captains are especially needed on Palms Blvd., Rose Avenue, and part of Stoner, Navy, Stanwood and Colbert Avenues.

*If you would like to become a block captain or to receive timely updates about upcoming events or crime/safety issues in our neighborhood, send your contact information to:
westdalehoa@yahoo.com*

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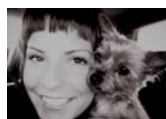
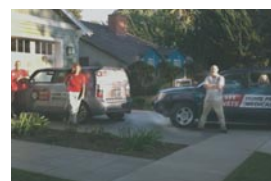
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HULAFROG

• *Leslie Len Meis*

Mothers of young children have to make a lot of decisions. So many choices now exist, ranging from day care to family-oriented activities, that it can become a bit overwhelming.

But thanks to Hulafrog, and “mompreneurs” like Leslie Len Meis, help is just a mouse click away.

Hulafrog is a network of local websites and newsletters for parents, which give the lowdown on everything for children age twelve and under, including classes, money saving offers, where to hold the best birthday parties, kid-friendly eateries and ways for PTAs to raise funds. All this on one website.

The events and ideas featured are basically within a fifteen-mile radius, covering Venice, Mar Vista, Palms, Marina del Rey, Playa del Rey, Playa Vista, Culver City, Westchester, El Segundo, and parts of West LA. Although it is a national site, Hulafrog Venice-El Segundo was founded by a local mom.

Hulafrog was started in Red Bank, N.J., by Kerry Bowbliss and Sherry Lombardi, who describe their venture as “similar to Groupon, but more local,” and focused on kids. The two moms were even featured in the January 2012 issue of Fortune magazine.

Hulafrog Venice-El Segundo launched just before Halloween and has been extremely well received. Parents love the calendar filled with local events, activities and the sense of community building it’s providing. One of the main messages of Hulafrog is to “shop & play local”, by supporting local business events and “to give where you live” by posting volunteering opportunities for the whole family. One of the more popular features is a weekly email newsletter with little snippets of information that moms want to know about. This provides a great way to stay connected and active in the community. Local businesses are an important aspect of the site too. Over 1100 businesses are listed in the database. There is no cost to be listed in Hulafrog’s directory or charge for registration. Revenue is made through advertising sales and registration by entering an email address.

On the site, your opinions count! Events and businesses can be rated and reviewed by parents. Business owners and event organizers can update their listings and post activities or special offers.



So far, the site has been a hit with parents, as well as grandparents looking for activities for visiting little ones. The feedback has been extremely positive, and the site is easy to use. Be sure to check it out and sign up today, maybe even “love” some of your favorite spots! Check out Hulafrog at www.hulafrog.com/venice-el-segundo-ca, and don’t forget to “like” Hulafrog Venice-El Segundo on Facebook. Your family will love you for it!



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

• *Margie Templeton*

Our dues collection efforts are paying off! As of March 10, 264 of 887 homes have paid dues for 2015. The block captains have been talking to their neighbors and encouraging dues payment by those who did not pay when the winter Villager arrived. I know that some people (including me!) never got their winter Villager. Check your own status on the web site at www.westdalehoa.org. Click on the green “See if you are paid” on the right side. If you haven’t paid, you may click on the red “join” to get the form.

Dues are used primarily to support publishing and distribution of the Villager, our quarterly newsletter. Advertising helps to offset some of these costs. Dues also support the neighborhood through contributions to Mar Vista School, Mar Vista Park, and zoning advocacy to protect our neighborhood. Additionally dues support website maintenance, communication software, the LAPD, the block captain program as well as the annual block party. Supplemental payments to Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) support our homeowners’ emergency supplies, which are stored at Mar Vista School, and the disaster awareness course.



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February 2015

Dear Westdale Resident:

Keeping a safe community in the Westdale area takes a strong effort between its residents, local police division and partnering security firms such as ours, Security Service Systems. Since the early 1990s, Security Service Systems has been a viable presence in your community, providing dedicated patrol and alarm monitoring for customers throughout the Westdale area. We are the only security company in the area that currently provides an exclusive, car patrol within the Westdale area.

Security Service Systems is committed on developing a 24-hour, dedicated car patrol in Westdale and strengthening our partnership in your neighborhood, while working closely with LAPD Pacific Division on community issues. Our Westdale Community Patrol program currently is servicing the area with random patrols, daily. Our goal is to increase the number of hours on our patrol with a marked patrol car in your area to deter criminal activity and increase neighborhood security.

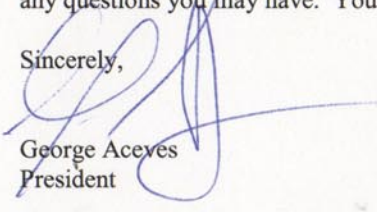
Please consider joining your neighbors with support of the Westdale Community Patrol program. Our goal is to keep the monthly subscription fees at \$25 per month and with the more subscribers enrolled in the program, it will be possible to increase the dedicated patrol service to up to 24 hours per day.

As an enrolled subscriber to the patrol service, Security Service Systems provides you 24-hour emergency response, vacation watch service and security signage for your property. We are also committed to developing weekly communications to our customers to inform them of local community issues, security tips and resources, and access to a real-time, patrol vehicle locator application.

As an added bonus, residents with an existing alarm can have their system switched over to us for alarm monitoring, or with a new alarm installation, you will receive a \$5 monthly discount of the patrol fees. Basic alarm monitoring starts at \$28 per month.

Please complete the attached enrollment form to begin service right away, or call our office at 310/477-2095 with any questions you may have. You may also visit our website at www.sssp patrol.com.

Sincerely,


George Aceves
President



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310/477-2095 Fax 310/215-8528
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Email : _____

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2. 24-hour armed response to any subscriber's call or alarm system.
3. Vacation service, remove newspapers, junk hangers and collect your mail until return
4. **Avoid false alarm charges from the City of Los Angeles with SSS armed response. The cost for false alarms has just gone up to \$209 per response from the city of Los Angeles.**

Cost to the subscriber is \$25.00 per month. (new subscribers only)

1. Subscriber will be billed quarterly.
2. Please make your check out for \$75.00 payable to Security Service Systems. We also accept all major credit cards.

Alarm Monitoring

- We install and monitor alarm systems to fit your needs and budget. If you already have an alarm system and wish to have SSS monitor your existing alarm system, we can convert your alarm at no cost. The cost for basic alarm monitoring is \$28 per month. **(ENROLL INTO BOTH PATROL AND ALARM AND RECEIVE \$5.00 OFF THE PATROL PER MONTH).**

Subscriber signature: _____ Date: _____

() Please enroll me into the Westdale patrol.

() I have an alarm and I am interested in establishing monitoring with SSS.

() I do not have an alarm, but I am interested in purchasing one for my home.

Random patrol until we reach 220 subscribers and at that point we will go with an 8 hour dedicated patrol car and at 480 we will go with a 16 hour dedicated car and 564 we will go with a 24 hour dedicated patrol car.

NOTE: SSS VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH GPS SYSTEM, TO MONITOR CAR IN YOUR AREA AT ALL TIMES.

THE CASE AGAINST ARTIFICIAL TURF

•Melissa Stoller

As the movement to replace our thirsty turf lawns with other alternatives accelerates, fueled in part by the current DWP rebate of \$3.75 per square foot, some are turning to artificial turf. But we need to think about more than just watering less.

Our landscapes do not exist in a vacuum. They are part of the eco-system shared by all of us...including local birds, animals and beneficial insects. We should look at every landscape as an opportunity to achieve multiple benefits: absorb rainwater for irrigation, groundwater filtering and recharge; sequester carbon; reduce green waste; create wildlife habitat. This is called the watershed approach: Conservation, Permeability and Retention. You can see examples of this approach at the Mar Vista Green Garden Showcase on April 25 (see marvistagreengarden-showcase.blogspot.com for details).

Artificial turf is made from fossil fuels. In the face of a shrinking supply of fossil fuels, requiring more extreme methods to extract, and climate destabilization, we should be working to reduce their extraction in every way.

Artificial turf traps heat, adding to the urban heat island effect. Like concrete and asphalt, it radiates heat back into the air. This increases demand for energy (particularly air conditioning), intensifies air pollution, and increases heat-related health problems. That radiating heat also means nearby plants may need extra water.

The surface temperature of artificial turf can reach 160° or more on a sunny day. This is dangerously hot for children and pets. The heat can even be felt through the soles of shoes! Under these high temperatures, the petroleum products used in manufacturing artificial turf can begin to off-gas as toxic substances, adding to air pollution and creating respiratory problems for people and pets. Natural turf and drought tolerant turf grass alternatives decrease the impact of the urban heat island effect and they also absorb and filter rainwater and pollutants.

Healthy soil acts like a sponge to hold onto water

and is a magnet for locking up carbon (soil can lock up five times more carbon than plants). Rainwater percolating through it helps purify and replenish our ground water. Healthy soil biology requires air, water and food. Artificial turf—a sheet of plastic installed on a compacted base—blocks all three of from reaching the soil underneath.

“But I need lawn for my kids/dog.” This is something we often hear. Artificial turf is not the solution! Here are a few suggestions:

- Consider a hardy, drought tolerant turf grass alternative.
- Use California native plants to create some special “secret” places that stimulate the imagination.
- Don’t underrate the joys of dirt for children and dogs. A dirt space can provide open areas to run and play. Dig in it, build “mountains,” create roads for toy vehicles.
- Remember...domestic dogs evolved without turf lawns. Scampi and Sage love to run around this grass-free yard. And yes, there’s a place (mostly dirt) for that other dog necessity. For our two dogs, this is

how backyards are supposed to be!

If the look of conventional turf is essential, keep a small patch of grass. Unlike artificial turf, it won’t create an urban heat sink. That’s better for our environment and our feet. Have you ever really mistaken the plastic perfection of artificial turf for real grass?

Although it is far preferable to use low-water varieties of

turf or native plants, even conventional turf, if managed responsibly helps keep the soil healthy and provides habitat for insects such as skippers, the small orange-colored butterflies found throughout Los Angeles. Mow your turf less often—the grass will be healthier and retain moisture better, requiring less water. Ditch chemical fertilizers and pesticides that kill the soil biology, contaminate water, and harm foraging birds. Eliminate pollution-belching leaf blowers. Rakes are quick and effective and today’s grass clippings are tomorrow’s mulch. Leave clippings on your lawn and cut fertilizer applications by about 25%. Clippings left on the lawn decay quickly, recycling nutrients back into the soil.

If anything, we need more nature, not less. Plastic “nature” substitute is not the answer!



MAR VISTA SALES UPDATE

90066 SINGLE FAMILY HOMES SOLD IN 2014 VS 2013

		West of Centinela	Mar Vista Hill	Westdale/Trousdale	South of Venice Blvd.	South of Mar Vista Park	Total Avg. in Mar Vista
HOMES SOLD	2014 2013	89 97	34 36	23 24	120 108	15 17	281 282
AVG. SALES PRICE	2014 2013	\$1,335,315 \$1,019,926	\$1,645,127 \$1,281,294	\$1,444,398 \$1,313,955	\$916,425 \$819,117	\$1,155,200 \$892,441	\$1,213,087 \$1,009,710
AVG. PRICE PER FT. ²	2014 2013	\$757 \$647	\$661 \$608	\$681 \$606	\$650 \$583	\$675 \$563	\$692 \$611
AVG. DAYS ON MARKET	2014 2013	53 37	51 73	41 41	54 39	70 47	54 44

ARE WE IN ANOTHER REAL ESTATE BUBBLE?

• *Sherri Noël*

The answer is perhaps. With cell phones, texting and the need for instant communication, it seems like everything is happening faster and faster and that may include real estate cycles. It's nearly impossible to time the market but here is what we do know. Sales in Westdale/Trousdale have never been higher than they are right now.

What's influencing the high prices? Low inventory and need for housing. People often ask me who's buying these homes? What I see are buyers downsizing from Santa Monica and Pacific Palisade. Buyers from Venice are attracted to the larger homes, yard sizes and available on street parking, not to mention some really great school choices. Because the home prices in Mar Vista seem like a value compared to these other areas, builders are also attracted to Mar Vista for the above reasons. Many small and outdated homes are in need of enlarging and enhancing. First time buyers often come from two income households. This can be a necessity in order to afford a down payment and qualify for a loan. These busy professionals often can't take the time to update a home or are afraid of what the end result might be, so they prefer to purchase a home that's turnkey.

As of the time of this writing, there is only one active listing in Westdale/Trousdale located at 3169 Coolidge Avenue. This home has 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, and boasts an impressive 3,554 square feet of living space with a pool in the garden. It is brand new construction listed for \$2,500,000.

- Located closer to the Mar Vista Elementary School, a home at 3271 Stoner Ave. is listed for \$1,675,000. Sale is pending at a price well above that with an over asking back up offer in place. That home has 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms with a lot size of 7,406 square feet. It has been expanded with an impressive master suite and is 2,372 square feet. The home went into escrow within the first seven days on market with seven offers.

- The property at 3029 Barry Avenue, which was listed for \$1,399,000, took a few months to get into escrow. The home has 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms on a 10,444 square foot lot. Proximity to the Whole Foods parking lot may have been a factor for the additional time it has taken for this home to go into escrow.

- The two most recent closed sales were both cosmetic fixers. The home at 11454 Rose Avenue sold for \$950,000. It has 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and sits on a smaller lot of 5,811 square feet. The home at 3213 Coolidge Ave. also has 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. This home was listed for \$1,475,000 and sold for \$1,450,000.

If you're thinking about selling and want to get top dollar in an unpredictable market, this year may be a good time to sell.

WESTDALE / TROUSDALE 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW
23 Properties Sold • Average Sale Price \$1,444,398.00 (an increase of 9.92% from 2013)
Average price per square foot in 2014 was \$681.00

MY ILLEGAL GARDEN

•*Margie Templeton*

I recently found out that I have an illegal garden! Two years ago we replanted our parkway strip with drought tolerant plants. It was done by a licensed contractor but without a permit. According to city regulations, the city could ticket us and force us to pull out the planting and replant the grass! The parkway strip is technically not part of the owner's property, although homeowners are obliged to maintain it.

City regulations passed in 2010 allow a homeowner to replace grass in the parkway with one of twenty different ground covers that grow up to 2" tall. LADWP will pay \$3.75 per square foot for healthy grass removed. However, if anything except ground cover is planted, a permit is required. The permit costs a minimum of \$400, which is more than could be earned with the rebate from LADWP. In addition, the allowed planting under the permit still does not cover the type of planting seen on some of our neighborhood parkways. Permitted foliage planted at least five feet from the sidewalk or street may grow up to 36" in height. However, since our parkway is less than five feet wide, the maximum growth height is 24". No rigid plants or those with sharp points are allowed. This eliminates many desert plants. The plants must allow for easy access from cars to the sidewalk. Edible plants and artificial turf are currently forbidden, although the city council is discussing ways to allow edible plants and fruit trees. Continuous hedges are not allowed. Decorative rocks or stones are not permitted. An 18" wide "convenience" strip is required to run the entire length along the curb with either paving or ground cover. To install decorative paving or storm water capture, an additional \$540 permit and provide proof of liability insurance may be required.

Fortunately, there is discussion within the City Council and Dept. of Public Works to exempt residential properties from the need for a permit. Eric Garcetti recently said that the LA residential parkway regulations are out of touch with the city's push for drought tolerant gardens, so he is working to improve the guidelines for parkway gardens. Eliminating the permit process would be a first step, but our garden and many others in our neighborhood still do not satisfy the permit requirements.

We need to make our voices heard at City Hall. Write to LA City Council president Herb Wesson (mailto:councilmember.wesson@lacity.org) and reference Council File 13-0478 to get the parkway regulations changed. Copy Mike Bonin (mailto:councilmember.bonin@lacity.org) with your correspondence.

PARK REPORT

•*Jerry Hornof*

In January Mar Vista Recreation Center (Mar Vista Park) installed Lizka Mendoza as our new director. If you were active in Mar Vista Park programs a decade ago, she may be familiar to you. Lizka was a Recreation Coordinator at Mar Vista Park and advanced to a position at Penmar Park. She then became director at Oakwood Recreation Center in Venice. Lizka is thrilled and excited to come back to her roots at Mar Vista. She loves the energy and commitment that Mar Vista families bring to our park. She is an excellent manager who supports her staff, park programs, and community involvement. At her first Park Advisory Board (PAB) meeting she talked about walking through the park, identifying issues needing attention, and aligning the resources needed to improve and enhance the park. Lizka and the PAB would appreciate your input too. Please send me an email or even better stop by the park and introduce yourself to Lizka. Her special interests include camp programs. I am certain that under her direction the spring, summer, and winter camps will be active and exciting.

Our previous director, Jason Kitahara, has been promoted to Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks Operations. Jason served the Mar Vista Community for three years. He was a wonderful director who always accommodated Westdale Homeowners Association requests, including providing room space for our board and annual meetings. We thank him for his service to our community and wish him well in his new position.

Besides the full range of park activities and programs, be sure to mark your calendar for Friday, March 27. That evening will include a "flashlight" egg hunt beginning at 7:00 pm followed by a showing of the original Wizard of Oz at 8:00 pm. If you have not yet attended a Family Movie Night at the park, it is a very enjoyable event. There will be more movie nights and other activities throughout the spring and summer, so please look for information in the park office.

The Park Advisory Board (PAB) is looking for members. Please consider serving on this important board. The board's mission is to work with park officials to insure that our park is providing the programs and services best suited to the needs of the community. The PAB is currently raising funds to support the installation of sound reducing panels in the gymnasium. The sound during events (like basketball) can be deafening. Fundraising is being done through the L.A. Parks Foundation www.laparksfoundation.org. Please visit the park for additional information.

Finally, the PAB is continuing its effort to identify funding sources to cover the cost of resurfacing the synthetic sports field. The field is approaching nine years of age and will require this maintenance. If you have connections to large organizations (Nike, Adidas, etc.) that might wish to partner in the replacement, cost please let me know. As always, please enjoy your neighborhood park.



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Allison Beale, MED.
abeale@homewatchcaregivers.com
www.HomewatchCareGivers.com/los-angeles

310.956.8862

Little Red Truck

Plumbing



Dennis Smith
Lic. #798285

310 392 5062
Pager 310 239 4235



Homes on the Westside

Debbie Kaplan, MBA
Broker

310/397-3505
310/433-5053 cell
Debbie.dkproperties@gmail.com
lic. 00787672

marc hara, mpt
licensed physical therapist



erik nelson, mpt
licensed physical therapist

hara | nelson
physical therapy and wellness

Ⓟ 310.481.9965 Ⓡ 310.481.9986

11687 national boulevard los angeles 90064
haranelsonpt.com

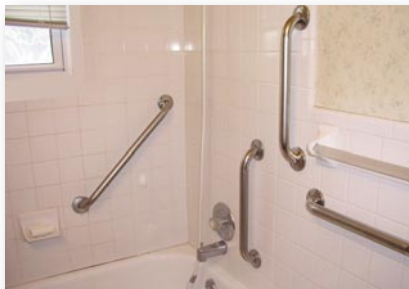


Laura & Rita's
Hair Studio

(310) 478 7800
11680 Gateway Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90064

CONTRACTOR FOR BATHROOM REMODEL

Can you recommend a contractor? We need to remodel a bathroom to make it safe for seniors.
Do you have a contractor that you would recomend? If so, please let me know.



PLEASE CONTACT DAVID BESSEN @ 714.313.3101 Thank you very much!