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Westdale VILLAGER

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
WESTDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
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WINTER 2018 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WESTDALE - CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES

•Jerry Hornof



The theme for this year is Westdale – Connecting People and Places. This year's Westdale Homeowner's Association Block Party (Sunday, September 30th) on Colby Avenue between Stanwood and Kingsland was a wonderful example of connecting. I appreciate and thank the families on Colby for making this a success. A special shout-out to Lauren Mickelson Altman for her leadership role. The party attracted over 300 neighbors and we consumed all the hotdogs (280+). I really enjoyed seeing the many children who attended. There were games, moon bouncers and just great entertainment including a youth band. It was fun to talk with Mike Bonin and a thank-you to his office for covering the street closure fees. Also, thank-you to Carl Ginsburg for bringing the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) truck. As we have been dealing with wildfires here in California, we are reminded of the work Carl and other CERT members make in preparing our community and also providing valuable support to fire department responders. Thanks to all who attended and looking forward to next year.

October is always an active month in Mar Vista and Westdale. Besides our annual block party, the Mar Vista Community Council sponsored the Fall Festival at Mar Vista park, the park hosted the Halloween Party and Mar Vista Elementary celebrated the Big Boo. October is always a fun month for Westdale residents.

There are a number of issues being discussed in the community and Mar Vista Community Council committees. I continue to encourage Westdale residents to visit the MVCC website (www.marvista.org) and consider participating. There are two issues I would like to highlight. The first is the Great Streets Initiative: Venice Boulevard. If you walk about Westdale and the greater Mar Vista community you can't miss the signs protesting the current redesign of Venice Boulevard. The major concern is that the redesign has possibly added



+ INSIDE +

SAFETY REPORT

+

MEMBERSHIP TIME

+

"ROCK"ING MAR VISTA

+

GRAPES OF
WESTDALE 1939

+

MV SCHOOL IGNITES
WRITING SPARK

+

BLOCK PARTY

+

PARK REPORT

+

REAL ESTATE REPORT

+

ECO-FRIENDLY
GARDENS

★ WESTDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION ★



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to the neighborhood traffic congestion. It is important to remember that this was a pilot study. The intent was to provide a more neighborhood friendly streetscape (rather than a thoroughfare), safer bike lanes, and a safer environment for pedestrians. The MVCC continues to address this redesign (pros & cons) and Great Streets Ad Hoc Subcommittee (part of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee) meets monthly to provide information and feedback to Councilmember Mike Bonin’s office. Proposed subcommittee actions include: 1) a stakeholder petition requesting a town-hall meeting to present the one-year pilot project data; and 2) possible action regarding constituting a community panel and conducting an independent traffic study of the project. The second issue is the electric scooters now seen throughout Westdale, Mar Vista and the surrounding communities. The MVCC has provided presentations by the scooter companies with question/answer sessions. In these forums question addressing improper use, safety (rider and pedestrians), and technology (lighting, battery life, signaling) have been discussed. You can review MVCC Board Meeting minutes for more information. Please take time to connect with these and other issues.

In closing I wanted to remind everyone to visit the Westdale Homeowners Association website (www.westdalehoa.org/). Our Westdale Homeowners Association Annual meeting will occur on Tuesday, January 29, at 7:00pm at Mar Vista Park. Be sure to mark your calendars. As we look to the New Year I hope that 2019 will be a wonderful year for all of our Westdale families.

SAFETY & SECURITY REPORT

•Leah Oye/Liaison to Pacific Police Division

The LAPD Pacific Division is about 26 square miles, from Venice Beach to the Palms Area on the east and from the 10 freeway south almost to LAX. It’s a large area that has many diverse neighborhoods. So far this year, violent crime is down 4%. Property crimes are on the increase in Pacific Division. There has been a 2% increase in burglaries, a 4% increase in theft from vehicles, and an 8% increase in theft in general (bikes, packages, purses...) year to date. Please be aware of your surroundings. Venice Beach usually gets about 30 additional officers for the summer months. However, due to the increase in the crime rate there will be 10 additional officers assigned to Venice on a permanent basis.

The Strategic Decision Support Center at the Pacific Division gathers intelligence 24 hours a day. They analyze reported crimes looking for trends in types and location of incidents. This helps to create a map of incidents which determines the deployment of officers each day. Posting on Nextdoor or Facebook is good, but this does not take the place of completing a police report. These social media posts are not considered statistics for the LAPD. Reports leave a record. If you DO complete a report, please attach photos/videos. There are some crimes that can be reported electronically. Please visit the Pacific Division website: www.lapdonline/pacific_community_police_station.

The My LA 311 app is very useful. You can schedule bulky item pick up, report graffiti, or report homeless encampments. This provides a documented request where the city services must respond.

The recent fires have emphasized the need to be prepared in case of emergency. We usually think about an earthquake, with water, food and clothing. What if you can’t take your family earthquake kit in the car? Do you have your important papers, electronics and chargers, flashlights? Do you know how to turn off the gas? What about medications?

Please report suspicious activity to 877 ASK-LAPD or call 911 if a crime in progress. For non-emergency questions contact: Senior Lead Officer, Adrian Acosta, 37285@LAPD.ONLINE

Who Is “ROCK”ING MAR VISTA?

•Adrienne Fuhrman

Have you found a small, beautifully painted rock anywhere on your walks around our neighborhood? I have spotted many of them as I am out walking my dog. Most are at the base of the trees along our easements around the elementary school.

Generally, I leave where I find them after thoroughly examining and enjoying them. They are beautiful, colorful, creative and unique! Most of them have cheerful or encouraging phrases on the back such as “Follow your heart” or “Life is but a dream”. Some I have carried on my walk and then left in another location for someone else’s delight. But one I have kept, because I feel it was meant for me to find. It is of one of Monet’s water lilies.

I wish that I could thank the artist who is joyfully sharing their talent and encouragement. They truly have brightened many of my days. So keep your eyes open, and maybe you too will discover one of these little gems!

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NATIONAL & SAWTELLE IN 1939

•Dannie Cavanaugh

This image is a few frames into the opening shot from THE GRAPES OF WRATH Blu-Ray edition, looking southwest along Sawtelle Blvd. from the northeast corner of National Blvd., which is the cross-street from left to right. Henry Fonda as "Tom Joad" is walking in the middle of the road.



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3 BD | 2 BA | 1,591 SQ FT | 7,316 LOT



3314 MCLAUGHLIN AVE | \$1,775,000
4 BD | 3 BA | 1,985 SQ FT | 7,232 LOT

IN ESCROW



3219 BUTLER AVE
3 BD | 3 BA | 1,593 SQ FT | 7,054 LOT

IN ESCROW
OFF-MARKET



3301 PURDUE AVE
3 BD | 2 BA | 1,801 SQ FT | 7,570 LOT

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November 2018

5

MAR VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IGNITES THE WRITING SPARK

•Shari Dunn

Mar Vista Elementary School has forever been a coveted school. Tucked into our close-knit neighborhood community, the school has it all: an active and caring parent community combined with a dedicated and energetic faculty that continues to earn the School for Advanced Studies status and high academic scores. But no matter how good you get, you can always get better, and that's the exciting part. When the school was hiring for a second grade teacher, Principal Katherine Choe knew this was her opportunity to push toward a Balanced Literary program. And at the start of the 2015-2016 school year a new spark lit up the campus: Ms. Jennifer Sakai joined the school and brought with her a six-year focus on writing curriculum. And thus the Writer's Workshop was born at Mar Vista Elementary School.

Writing Workshop is a method and philosophy developed in the 1970s, codified at Columbia University. It says that to develop skills as a writer, students need three things: ownership of their own writing, guidance from an experienced writer, and support from a community of fellow learners.

From an instructional standpoint, the method is a radical departure from the conventional curriculum. It requires investment, commitment and agility by each teacher. The teacher provides coaching rather than rote instruction in the form of probing, open-ended questions. Once the need is identified for each student, the teaching can begin. While the school can endorse the program, it is summoned to life only when the teacher learns the methodology and embraces it.

Writing Workshop is designed for use in grade levels K through 5. Each grade level has specific units of study tailored to meet developmental and curricular needs. Students have a large amount of choice in their topic and style of writing. The teacher acts as a mentor author, modeling writing techniques and conferring with students as they move through the writing process.

Principal Choe saw Writing Workshop in action in Ms. Sakai's classroom and was impressed. Principal Choe said, "I realized that I wanted to utilize her expertise and passion to support our learning of Writing Workshop and implementation of a balanced literacy program." So in her second year, Principal

Choe hired Ms. Sakai to do all the Writing Workshop professional development training with the faculty. To benefit fully from the program the teachers needed more support in their learning and implementation so Principal Choe took a request to the booster club for funding a semi-dedicated Writing Workshop Instructional Coach. "We specifically fund-raised at our annual auction through Raise-the-Paddle and was able to hire Ms. Sakai as a half-time Instructional Coach. With Principal Choe's recommendation, Overland Elementary School has become a partner in sharing the coach position. Now Ms. Sakai is a full-time Instructional Coach, working between two neighborhood schools.

"We all have something to say, we all have stories to tell," says Ms. Sakai reflecting on the life-long benefits of a program that starts with kindergarteners. "To be taught the skills and strategies to bring our voices to the world in such compelling ways is empowering."

When you can write well, you can accomplish anything. Whether it's telling stories, petitioning to avoid chores, or arguing that it's time for a phone, kindergarteners through fifth graders are getting a healthy dose of practice making their point. Be warned.

Note: With the resounding adoption and success of the Writing Workshop, Reading Workshop, with a similar approach, is being introduced now, too.

BLOCK PARTY 2018!

•Lauren Mickelson Altman

This year we had another fantastic Westdale Block Party! The day went off without a hitch. Neighbors came together to share in the potluck and to get to know each other better. The kids had a blast on the jumbo slide and bouncy house and loved showing off their designs by the face painter and henna tattoo artist. We even had a brass band to keep the party going, and a beer garden to keep the parents happy.

A very special thanks to all of our amazing sponsors who helped make the day happen: the Mar Vista Community Council, Councilman Mike Bonin, Sherri Noel, Dean Jubas, Ron Wynn, Whole Foods, Primos and Complete Eye Care Center. We are also incredibly grateful for the Colby Ave families who planned and orchestrated the event: Lauren and Peter Altman, Jessica and Spencer Persson, Kristen and Anton Reut, Fran and Justin Rossi, and the rest of the Colby Moms!

The Block Party always reminds me of how fortunate we are to be part of such an incredible community. We are all already looking forward to next year's event!

2018 WESTDALE BLOCK PARTY ON COLBY AVE



2019 HOMEOWNER DUES

Please support the Westdale Homeowner’s Association (WHOA) by paying your annual dues. At \$20/year, it is a bargain. Dues are used to support publishing and distributing the Villager, our quarterly newsletter. Advertising helps to offset some of these costs. Dues also supports the neighborhood through contributions to Mar Vista School, Mar Vista Park and zoning advocacy to protect our neighborhood. They 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.

The web site <http://www.westdalehoa.org/> has a link to a list of addresses of those who have already paid. Many of you have already paid for 2019. You may pay for up to 3 years with one payment. In spite of the name “home owners,” we welcome participation of renters.

	# Years (1-3)	TOTAL
Dues \$20 per year		
CERT optional support - suggested \$10		
General fund optional donation		
	TOTAL	

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

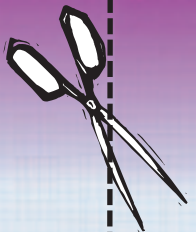
Primary Phone: _____ email: _____

Second member’s email: _____

Please make checks payable to “Westdale Homeowners’s Association”. If your check is a business check, give your house address as well in order to credit your house as paid. Return to Jami Olson at 3216 Barry or mail to:
Westdale HOA, PO Box 66504, LA, CA, 90066.

MEMBERSHIP INTERESTS:

Let us know if you would like to serve on the board, participate in CERT, or serve in any other capacity: _____



MEMBERSHIP TIME

Please support the Westdale Homeowner’s Association (WHOA) with your annual dues payment. Use the enclosed form and envelope to respond today. Mail your check in the enclosed envelope or to save postage, take a walk through the neighborhood and drop it off at Jami Olson’s house at 3216 Barry Avenue.

Those who have already paid are listed by address on our web site www.westdalehoa.org. Many have already paid through 2019. You may pay for up to 3 years with one payment. In spite of the name “homeowners,” we hope that renters will also pay dues to our neighborhood association as the owners of rental homes do not pay dues, and the benefit of our association comes to the renter.

While looking for the membership list on our website be sure to check out the rest of the web site for current news, crime and safety reports, links to city services, and past Villagers.

Westdale's Own Debbie Kaplan



I have lived in Westdale Trousdale for over 40 years. I was treasurer of the Westdale Homeowners for 15 years, and am still an active member of the Board of Directors. The Board sponsors the Villager, the quarterly newsletter, it monitors and influences such matters as adherence to building and property restrictions, graffiti controls, earthquake preparedness and response, and traffic control, and also sponsors block parties. It also runs a website; Westdalehoa.org. I am proud to continue serving on the Board.

I have been a Realtor for for almost 40 years. I have first hand knowledge of neighborhood trends. No one knows your neighborhood better than your neighbor! If you were to list with a larger name company, your listing would be turned over to many different people throughout the process.

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PARK REPORT

•Jerry Hornof

Mar Vista Park continues to be very active. Soccer (coed and girls divisions), coed flag football, girls' volleyball and coed roller hockey are in full swing. The Halloween event was celebrated this year on Saturday, October 27th. This event was co-sponsored by Mar Vista and Palms Recreation Centers.

Over the last few months Mar Vista Recreation Center (MVRC) staff and the Park Advisory Board (PAB) have discussed a project to enclose the space adjacent to the park office and between the gymnasium and the auditorium. Enclosing this space provides a safe and secured location for storing park facilities equipment including tables and chairs. This will avoid cluttering the gym and auditorium during the day and relieves MVRC staff from moving this equipment in every evening and out every morning. Construction has begun. Seeing this project move toward completion is very rewarding to all involved.

The MVRC hockey program is a very active program for both youth and adults. The adult league has 18 teams distributed in three divisions. Over 150 adults (men and women) participate weekly in the league. Recently, the league was able to fundraise and purchase new nets for the rink. The fundraising and purchase of the nets was done through the Los Angeles Park Foundation (www.laparks-foundation.org). The foundation is a non-profit organization that accepts directed donations to be used for projects designated to specific Los Angeles City Parks. Those interested in seeing enhancements at MVRC are encouraged to make a tax deductible contribution through the foundation designated to MVRC.

As you plan your winter activities, I encourage you to check out the winter lineup at MVRC. Activities include art, music, dance, and parent&me. Sports include youth basketball (girls' and coed divisions), tennis, and hockey. As always, enjoy our wonderful park.

EVERYONE ASKS ME.
HOW'S THE MARKET?

•Sherri Noël

The reality is that homes prices in Mar Vista have held their own over the last year, but we are starting to see some slow down. Double-digit price increases had a dramatic run, but it's hard to continue that frenetic pace for an extended period. The chart below shows just how positive the last 12 months looked in the Westdale/Trousdale area. We are now just

starting to see price reductions and an increase of days on the market with a higher build-up of inventory. In Mar Vista, we used to have 30-40 houses available on average, and today we see 70-80.

When the inventory was more scarce, just a few months ago, it was unheard of for buyers to make low offers or hold out for what they absolutely wanted. It was a seller's market. Sellers had the luxury of giving little to no credits for differed maintenance and much-needed repairs. However, in the last quarter, the Los Angeles median sale price went down by 7.1 % and, along with this decrease, the total number of sales also went down by 5.8% during the second quarter of 2018. The tide has changed, and sellers are having to become more flexible by negotiating their asking prices and pitching in money for some repairs.

These are all signs that Los Angeles is currently experiencing a "leveling off" in the real estate market but not quite a "cooling." What is influencing the market shift is uncertainty in the global economy, the stock market, and rising interest rates. Los Angeles real estate is currently experiencing a return to more sustainable measured growth. We all know that historically speaking real estate on the Westside has been a great investment. The real estate market is not tanking. Historical patterns show that it rises slowly and drops slowly, but it always goes higher than the last high. Real estate transactions are all about a willing buyer and a willing seller. If you are currently preparing for retirement or need to sell for financial reasons, there is no better time than the present. A strong social media strategy and a well-connected agent who can proactively reach out to a well-established database of agents and buyers will help your home sell faster.

ADDRESS	BD	BA	SQ FT	LOT	\$ PER SQ FT	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE
3401 COLBERT AVE	3	1	1,248	5,986	1099.36	1,125,000	1,372,000
11306 KINGSLAND ST	3	2	1,750	7,375	800	1,400,000	1,400,000
3300 BUTLER AVE	3	2	1,956	7,564	849.18	1,500,000	1,661,000
3113 COLBY AVE	3	2	1,978	7,079	872.42	1,585,000	1,725,640
11601 CLOVER AVE	3	2	1,735	6,893	979.83	1,629,000	1,700,000
3152 PURDUE AVE	4	2	2,190	7,501	801.19	1,639,000	1,754,610
3261 COOLIDGE AVE	3	2	1,743	8,199	985.08	1,695,000	1,717,000
11347 CLOVER AVE	3	3	2,350	7,318	755.32	1,789,000	1,775,000
3231 COOLIDGE AVE	3	3	1,940	7,245	1020.62	1,795,000	1,980,000
3307 COLBERT AVE	4	3	1,988	7,622	995.98	1,850,000	1,980,000
3312 COOLIDGE AVE	4	3	2,026	7,081	974.83	1,895,000	1,975,000
3241 FEDERAL AVE	3	2	1,577	5,880	1154.09	1,985,000	1,820,000
3158 FEDERAL AVE	3	2	1,960	7,200	1096.94	1,995,000	2,150,000
3312 COOLIDGE AVE	4	3	2,026	7,081	989.63	2,005,000	2,005,000
3311 COOLIDGE AVE	5	5	3,674	9,637	612.41	2,490,000	2,250,000
3318 COLBY AVE	5	5	3,771	7,080	688.15	2,685,000	2,595,000
3387 COLBERT AVE	5	5	3,331	5,985	798.56	2,695,000	2,660,000
3300 McLAUGHLIN AVE	5	5	3,650	7,363	780.82	2,795,000	2,850,000

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ECO-FRIENDLY GARDENS

•Melissa Stoller

Eco-friendly gardens are proliferating all over Westdale! I've seen so many in my walks around the neighborhood looking for Mar Vista Green Garden Showcase eligible gardens. The next Showcase has been postponed to 2020, so you have lots of time to become eligible.

What is an eco-friendly garden? First and foremost, as our climate gets dryer and dryer and the snow pack that we currently depend on shrinks, it is a water wise garden. This of course means that the non-edible plants in the garden require comparatively little water. In addition, it means water capture: efforts to keep irrigation and rainwater on the property and either reuse it or allow it to percolate into the ground.

Water capture features include rain gardens, berms, dry wells and stream beds, water barrels, rain chains and permeable hardscape. Organic mulch and healthy soil also play an important role, helping the ground absorb and retain water.

Is your ground covered with landscape fabric? Check the soil underneath—is it hard and dry? Landscape fabric prevents water from percolating down and our friends the earthworms from aerating the soil. Mulch sits on top: decorative but not functional.

Structures and pavements in our urban environment create a heat island effect, increasing temperatures more than global warming. An eco-friendly garden uses inorganic materials only in moderation. Concrete, gravel, volcanic rock and other inor-

ganic materials absorb and retain heat, releasing it as the sun goes down. Rocks reflect a lot of heat off of their exposed surfaces. All this can increase day and evening temperatures inside and out. Trees and vegetation help reduce this effect by shading building surfaces, deflecting radiation from the sun, and releasing moisture into the atmosphere.

Like gravel and concrete, artificial turf increases the temperature of the air and ground. It also functions much like landscape fabric: preventing water penetration and earthworm activity. It has no place in an eco-friendly garden.

Another important function of eco-friendly gardens is providing habitat—food, water and shelter—for birds, butterflies, bees and other pollinators, beneficial insects and, yes, even our urban wildlife. California native plants are ideally suited for this, and also require fewer resources to maintain. An eco-friendly garden needn't be all California natives, but including a selection of them provides habitat for our native birds, insects and wildlife.

Eco-friendly gardens avoid plants considered invasive in California. Mexican feather grass is perhaps the most readily available invasive plant in our area. It's beautiful! But it produces tens of thousands of seeds which are widely dispersed by wind, water and animals (including us humans). It commonly self-sows in California, overcoming native plants and animal species once it becomes established. It crowds out pasture grass species as well as native grasses in coastal areas.

It's important not to poison your habitat. Avoiding toxic pesticides, herbicides and synthetic fertilizers prevents harm to all living creatures, including humans.