



Westdale VILLAGER

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
WESTDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

MOVING FORWARD

• Jerry Hornof



The theme for the 2021 year is Together in Hope. As I compose this message, our city, county, state, and country are slowly emerging from the COVID-19 restrictions that have impacted our lives over the last 18 months. We are looking forward to gathering with family and friends over the next few months as we celebrate the holidays. The success of the vaccine in reducing the risk of infection and serious illness from COVID-19 continues to be very encouraging and makes us hopeful.

Recently a friend asked the question "If a person is vaccinated, why should they care if someone else is not vaccinated?" Apart from the obvious reasons that unvaccinated people are more likely to transmit the virus to others, especially impacting those with reduced immune systems, 1) they represent a significant strain on healthcare resources and healthcare workers, 2) they prevent achieving herd immunity and an environment where we are all protected, and 3) they increase the risk of developing a more deleterious variant. I also considered the actual financial cost to society. On November 12th, California reported 3,585 hospitalized COVID-19 patients. Research indicates that the average cost for a patient admitted and treated for COVID-19 is between \$20,000 and \$25,000. So taking this one snapshot in time in only California, the minimal cost of COVID-19 hospitalizations (almost exclusively unvaccinated individuals) is $\$20,000 \times 3,585 = \$71,700,000$. Think about that, \$71.7M versus \$143K ($3,585 \times \$40$ (the cost for a 2 shot vaccination)). Minimally, these costs are impacting both the insurance premiums and Medicare costs for all of us. My hope is that everyone will recognize that getting vaccinated is the respectful and generous way we care and support each other.

In the park report, I noted that the grass fields on the east side of the



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park (east of the gym and west of the tennis courts) are scheduled to be refurbished and fenced off from November 2021 through February 2022. This is an area of the park that has seen camping activities for many months. Over the last two months, the Park Advisory Board (PAB), Mar Vista Recreation Center Director Andres De La Hoya, Los Angeles Recreation and Parks, Mike Bonin's 11th District Council Office, St. Joseph Center, and Los Angeles Housing Services Authority (LAHSA) have been coordinating and working with the campers to identify and acquire appropriate housing opportunities prior to the refurbishing project start date. There is the clear historical experience and recognition that simply displacing campers without appropriate housing opportunities lacks compassion but, equally important, is not effective. The campers displaced without housing opportunities will only migrate to another location such as under a freeway overpass or, in this case, another area of the park. As of November 3rd, LAHSA and St. Joseph Center working in coordination with the 11th District Council Office has succeeded in placing eighteen (18) homeless campers at Mar Vista Recreation Center into housing using Project Room Key. There are eight (8) homeless campers remaining in the encampment tents who are still awaiting resources to be placed into a sheltering/housing situation. It is the expectation and planning by all coordinating parties that all campers will be transitioning to housing, and that the park will utilize all of its field space and facilities to further its mission to provide and support the vital and enjoyable recreational opportunities for our community. My hope is that we can achieve this outcome in both a sensitive, humane, and effective manner for everyone.



Starting in June of 2019, we began discussion about the glorious city trees that line our streets and how this is one of our neighborhood's truly special features. In spring and summer, they provide a beautiful, leafy canopy that shades our homes. In autumn, they put on a colorful display. Throughout the year our trees help to improve air quality, to reduce heat island effect, and to mitigate traffic noise. Unfortunately, most were planted when our tract was built which means that these trees are over 70 years old and are approaching the end of their natural lifespans. Some are slowly succumbing to fungus; others have simply toppled over or lost major limbs due to the recent drought and landscaping choices. After a pandemic caused delay, we relaunched the effort to replace the lost or damaged trees in February of 2021. We formed the Westdale Arbor Group and coordinated with the Mar Vista Arbor Group and the Venice Arbor Group. As a pilot project, we have initially targeted Coolidge Avenue and Butler Avenue for new plantings. Through the extraordinary leadership and efforts of George Oswald and Molly Selvin, we completed a parkway tree survey for those blocks in April of 2021. The survey identified 33 plantings that were needed to replace lost trees. The next step was George and Molly working with Leah Oye and the Block Captains to get Parkway Tree Signups. Los Angeles City requires that homeowners agree to water and care for trees prior to initiating plantings. We have successfully gotten commitments for the planting of 21 trees on Butler and Coolidge. Through coordination with our 11th District Community Forestry Advisory Committee representative Isabelle Duvivier, the city has identified the complimentary species and we are awaiting plantings to occur by mid-January. I appreciate and thank all those involved including the homeowners. You can all take pride in knowing that "someone will be sitting in the shade tomorrow because you planted a tree a today" (paraphrased from Warren Buffett). Thank you.

As a reminder, last year's Block Party was cancelled due to the pandemic. The Westdale Homeowners Association Board has decided to plan for a Block Party in the Spring of 2022. Stay tuned for more information on location and date.

In closing I wanted to remind everyone to visit the Westdale Homeowners Association website (westdale-hoa.org). Our 2022 Westdale Homeowners Association Annual meeting will occur on Tuesday, January 25. As we look to the New Year, I hope that 2022 will be a wonderful year for all of our Westdale families.

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COMPASS

CRIME AND SAFETY REPORT

• Leah Oye

The holidays are just around the corner, and there have been many changes in our lives this year. Here are some updates.

The overall crime statistics for our area of Pacific Division are down thanks to the residents who now park in lighted areas or in driveways or have invested in shields which can be placed by body shops. Since last year, violent crimes are down by 20%, and property crimes also decreased slightly by 2.2%. Unfortunately, Grand Theft Autos crimes increased 19%; however, this is down recently compared to the beginning of the year and early summer. Many stolen vehicles are due to unlocked doors and keys left in cars. The use of a steering wheel lock can discourage thieves. The number of stolen catalytic convertors has decreased compared to early this year. Go to: www.crimemapping.com for recent crime statistics. Due to COVID, many parking regulations were put on hold. Most have been reinstated, but LAMC 85.02 continues to be on hold, allowing people to live in their vehicles. The LAPD can cite if the vehicle remains in one place for more than 72 hours or blocks driveways.

The homeless encampment on Grandview and Venice was removed, but 2 of the 8 residents returned. On November 15th, there was a clean-up at Mar Vista Park. Some homeless residents returned to the park, but more are being housed.

Package thefts continue and will probably increase with the holidays. Please have packages delivered with prompt retrieval. Alert systems and porch cameras may help. Consider using Amazon lockers for delivery available at Whole foods and the Rite Aid on National.

With more people using the park, there have been complaints of dogs off leash. Dogs must be leashed at Mar Vista Park. Your dog may be friendly, but others do not know. A small unleashed dog was attacked by a larger dog. The small dog was not pulled to safety because it was off leash. Animal control and LAPD are working together to enforce the leash law at Penmar, Oakwood and Mar Vista Parks. They are issuing citations.

It is important to report crimes, as this impacts how patrol officers are assigned. Some crimes can be reported online and the lobby of the Pacific Division at Culver/Centinela is now open. If you notice suspicious activity, please call the non-emergency number, 877-ASK-LAPD. For crimes in progress, call 911.

Our Senior Lead Officer is Karwon Villery. He can be contacted at: 38717@lapd.online for non-emergency questions.



★ WESTDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP TIME!

• Margie Templeton

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 take a walk and drop it off at Jami Olson's houses 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 2023. 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 WHOA as the owners of rental home seldom pay dues, and the benefit of our association comes to the renter.

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

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WANT TO READ MY LETTER TO SANTA? ALL THAT?!

I HOPE I DIDN'T FORGET TO ASK FOR SOMETHING I WANT. THIS IS ALPHABETIZED.

YEAH, AND I CROSS-INDEXED THE ACCESSORY ITEMS HE'LL NEED TO GET. I TRY TO HELP HIM OUT. THIS SAYS, "VOLUME ONE."

"ATOM BOMB" THROUGH "GRENADE LAUNCHER." YOU'RE GOING TO BE ONE SAD LITTLE KID ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

THE NOËL TEAM
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THE NOËL TEAM'S CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

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Friends & Neighbors,
As 2021 comes to an end, we are filled with gratitude for another amazing year helping buyers & sellers in our community. Whatever your real estate needs, we are here to guide you through every step of the process. Wishing you a beautiful holiday and happy 2022!

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WINTER BIRDS IN L.A.

• M. Umar

In Mar Vista, there is a remarkable range of animal diversity, especially in the winter when things have cooled down. This winter, many fascinating animals are showing up. Some are passing through the area. Several are here for the first time. Others have lived here for ages, yet seem to be popping up everywhere.

The vilified turkey vulture is being observed more often. They're not exactly the most beautiful birds in town, with their bald pink heads, dark feathers, and gloomy bearing. However, they are remarkably helpful, as they are scavengers that eat roadkill. They're often spotted gliding in the sky, using their excellent sense of smell to sniff out dead animals. When they find a carcass, they eat it by thrusting their head forwards into it. (The reason they're bald is to prevent the meat from sticking to their feathers.) Turkey vultures are in Mar Vista year-round, but more pop up in fall and early winter. Often, they hang out in groups called kettles. If you want to see more, I recommend going to Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area in the early morning. You may see them stretching their 6-foot wings (!) to warm up or cruising on thermal air currents. If you see a turkey vulture, try to imagine what life would be like in LA without them to clean up. (Disease and the disgusting smell of death would be everywhere.)

When walking near oak trees or phone poles, listen for a hollow hammering sound or someone calling "YAK-ah, YAK-ah, YAK-ah." That is the boisterous acorn woodpecker, either pecking holes in tree bark or partying with other woodpeckers. They have black-and-white plumage with a crimson cap on their heads and buggy white eyes. When they fly, you can spot white patches on their wings.



A group of hundreds of holes in trees, made by acorn woodpeckers, is called a granary. Acorn woodpeckers stuff acorns inside the holes to eat later. They don't just eat acorns, though; they also eat insects, seeds, or suet. Keep an eye and ear out for them.

Other animals to watch for are warblers, scrub jays, Jerusalem crickets, crows, and an enigmatic pair of mallard ducks that occasionally fly by Colbert Avenue. If you find a species of plant, animal, or even fungus that you don't recognize, I highly recommend using the free app iNaturalist. On iNaturalist, you upload a picture of the organism. Then, others can identify it for you, and you can identify others' observations.

SANTA MONICA MUSEUM OF FLYING

• Margie Templeton



I am amazed by how many neighbors have never visited the Museum of Flying at the Santa Monica Airport. It is a marvelous history museum as well as being a great destination for an outing with children. It is also available for fund raisers and special events.

The museum presents the history of the Santa Monica Airport (SMO) and its contribution to the development of the aviation industry in Los Angeles. SMO is the oldest operating airport in LA County. From 1920 until 1970s it was used primarily to test the planes that were manufactured at the Douglas Factory which was on the north side of the airport. At its peak, the factory had 44,000 employees. The factory was dismantled in the early 1970s.

The current museum is at the third location. The original Douglas Museum and Library was opened in 1979 at 2800 Airport Avenue as a repository for artifacts from Douglas Aircraft. It did not include any aircraft. Even then our two boys loved to visit the museum. Our son Chris is now a helicopter pilot. He credits his interest in flying to watching planes flying over our house or landing at SMO.

In 1989 the Museum of Flying was opened on the north side of airport. It included the original collection plus a collection of vintage aircraft. The emphasis was on WWII fighter aircraft, many that could still be flown. In 2002, this museum was closed due to economic hardship. Eventually, the museum was reopened in 2012 at the current location. The exhibits have been broadened to include aircraft by other manufacturers. However, it does not include the hangars for aircraft that could be flown.

When you enter the museum, you are surrounded by the planes on the ground and overhead. The museum operates mostly with volunteers. Steve Benesch, Director of Operations, is pictured. Mike Machat is the curator. One person mans the checkin when the museum is open.

Steve is in front of one of the newest exhibits, a helicopter that was completely refurbished by the volunteer team headed by Bill Eyre, a retired FAA employee.

My favorite exhibit is the series of pictures of the Douglas Aircraft Factory. During WWII, it was camouflaged so that it appeared so that it appeared to be a residential neighborhood. Even the runway was made to look like a field. This picture shows the aircraft plant looking toward Mar Vista.



A noticeable feature of the museum is the front of a Boeing 727 jet protruding from the front wall. The inside of the cockpit is a big draw for wannabe pilots. They can sit in the pilot's seat and push the buttons.

The adventurous can also ride a flight simulator. Our children and grandchildren have enjoyed it. However, we brought a visiting French test pilot and his son to the airport. They tried the simulator, and the pilot was very shaken by the lack of control! His son loved it! Unfortunately, the cockpit and flight simulator are temporarily closed due to COVID restrictions.



The museum is small, but it is packed with planes of all vintages, a fire engine, models of planes, the Douglas board room, flight attendant uniforms, and short movies about aviation. The museum covers flight from the earliest days to the present. They have a replica of the Wright Brothers plane.

A new exhibit shows the history of women in aviation. During WWII, the majority of workers in the Douglas plant were women. Women delivered the planes built at the Douglas plant to bases around the country. In 1929, Amelia Earhart and 20 other women pilots flew from Santa Monica to Cleveland, the first sanctioned race for female pilots. This photo shows the women at work in the Douglas plant.



The museum is currently open Thursday to Sunday from 10AM to 4PM. For more information about the museum or renting for special events, see the web site museumofflying.org.

FALL REAL ESTATE REPORT

• Debbie Kaplan

Halloween has brought joy to the neighborhood. As I write, Thanksgiving is around the corner. It's a time to be with friends and family, and to enjoy that we can get together without masks! If your discussion leads to a decision to sell your house, check my "to do list" to help prepare your house. It is at the end of this article.

The inventory of houses to sell is very low. Houses are sold within days of being on the market, and often substantially over the asking price. In the past 6 months, 14 houses have sold, and the townhouses on the corner of Barrington and Indianapolis have all sold.

Here's a recap of homes that sold:

3213 Purdue sold in less than 2 weeks. It has 5 bedrooms, and 3 Baths. It has 3,474 sq. ft. and a pool and a spa.

3318 Colby, 4 br, 5 ba. It has 3,410 sq.ft., pool and a pool house as well.

3146 Federal, 3br, 2 ba. It sold for \$251,000 over asking price. It has 1,738 sq. ft.

3121 Corinth, 3 br. 2 ba. It has 1,783 sq. ft. It was sold to a developer, under market.

3301 Corinth, 3br, 3 ba. It has 1,978 sq.ft. It sold for \$305,000 over asking price.

3308 Corinth, 3br, 2 ba. It has 1,863sq ft. It has a pool and a spa.

3254 Coolidge, 4br, 3 ba. It has 2,209 sq. ft.

3213 Coolidge, 4br, 2 ba. It has 2,033 sq. ft. It sold for \$209,000 over asking price.

3242 Barry, 3 br, 2 ba. It has 1,722 sq. ft. It sold at asking price.

11815 Indianapolis, 3br. 2 ba, 1,770 sq. ft. Across from Mar Vista School.

11417 Kingsland, 4br, 3 ba. 2,180 sq. ft. It sold for \$176,000 over asking price.

Contact me for sale prices.

Other sales:

3373 Mc Laughlin 3br, 2ba. sold on 11/3/21 for \$1,600,000 and has 1,391 sq. ft.

3405 Stoner 4 br, 3 ba. sold on 6/21/21 for \$2,710,000 and has 1940 sq. ft. Pool.

3159 Barry, 3 br. 3 ba. sold on 6/4/21 3br for \$2,635,000 and has 2,140 sq.ft. Pool.

3246 Federal, 3 br, 2 ba. sold on 6/29/21 for \$2,383,000. Pool

As of this writing, there are no Active listings, and no Pending listings. This can change quickly.

In addition to my report on recent sales, I am presenting a list called "Top Ten Tips For Preparing Your Home For Sale" by Realtor.com.

1. Clean up to shiny perfection and make sure your home smells clean! (You can put a little bit of Lysol in water in the kitchen sink before each showing to give the home a fresh clean smell. Just make sure you drain the sink before the buyers arrive!)

2. No clutter on the floors, even the floors of the closets. Clutter will make a room appear to be smaller than it actually is.

3. Straighten bookcases and dust between the books. Straighten closets and hang each item neatly.

4. Organize your pantry, line or clean the shelves, and straighten the laundry room.

5. Make sure you have a good choice of paint colors throughout your home. (Do not paint your home white on all walls). It will give you home an "institutional look". A blend of whites, beige's, tans, grays, is what the eyes of buyers prefer.

6. Do not remove your framed photos. Leave them on the bookcases and tables as it gives a cozy family feeling. Think how you feel when you look at smiling faces in a frame. The exception would be if you had a hallway with photos lined up and down the walls. If you do, remove all of them, and putty and paint the nail holes and the walls.

7. Toys. Leave some of your children's favorites out along with their books. Make the beds everyday.

8. Bathrooms, this is huge! They have to be spotless. No toys in bathtubs, or towels on the floor. Clean and smelling fresh. Toilets - no rings

9. Yard. For some reason, homes having yellow or red flowers in pots or near the front porch seem to sell faster. Make sure yard is always manicured as this is the first thing a prospective buyer will see. The outside appearance is the gate of approval or disapproval.

10. Create a good patio space for entertaining. Make sure to clean patio furniture and have fresh flowers in each pot.

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Could The Crash Still Be Coming?

-I Doubt It.

Needless to say, one of the most asked questions lately and one of the most Googled questions, particularly from home owners in America is "Will there be another Real Estate crash?"

Although no one can ever be 100% sure, there are true facts that push that possibility far out for the time being. The main fact and one that most people will find thoroughly ridiculous until explained is "real estate is more affordable today than it's been in many years." Is that possible? It's actually been researched and confirmed. Affordability is based on salaries and income to mortgage payments (based on current fixed rates of interest for a 30 year mortgage), adding property taxes and other fixed monthly expenses.

Housing markets that crashed previously were always when affordability sank lower than "120." We are nowhere near that today. The number I am referencing to above, is derived by the National Association of Realtors. The "Affordability Index" is a single number, taking into consideration prices, mortgage rates and wages. The number tells us if the "average employed person" can afford to buy a home. When this affordability number drops too low, it means the average American cannot afford to buy. That often forewarns a housing bust.

We are well above the past 30 year average for housing affordability which might be hard to understand. Looking at facts, the current affordability index number hit 173 last month which is a number that confirms one of the "most affordable" markets since affordability index records began back in 1971. This is key, because every housing bust in the past 50 years happened when affordability was below 120.

We will definitely see some months more active than others, some turbulent periods and bumps in the road, causing some minimal price correction, but personally, I don't foresee a "crash" based on the facts we've got before us.



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MAR VISTA PARK REPORT

• Jerry Hornof

Fall of 2021 at the Mar Vista Recreation Center (MVRC) shows positive signs of emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic. Fall programming and the start of Winter programming is going well. Fall sports included soccer with 24 teams, flag football with 5 teams, and girls' volleyball with 9 teams. All sports are required to follow COVID-19 protocols established by Los Angeles Recreation and Parks (LARAP) for indoor and outdoor activities. These included masking, proof of vaccination if eligible, or a negative COVID-19 test for children under 12 (recognizing that vaccination availability for this age group is very recent). There has been good cooperation from the players (and families), coaches, and spectators. The activities of piano, guitar, ballet, tap, and art are also underway with similar protocols. Please recognize that administering the COVID-19 protocols and the programs represent a herculean effort by the park director Andres De La Hoya and the entire park staff. LARAP is currently understaffed. During the pandemic many senior staff members retired, and promotions and hiring have been delayed due to funding and COVID-19 challenges. In spite of the demanding workload, the staff are happy to be able to do the job they love: working with children and young adults.

There was a successful movie night event held on the turf field in October. The park is hopeful that additional movie nights can be scheduled. So keep a look out for notices and signage.

At this writing (mid November) there is a temporary hold on registrations for the very popular and successful winter basketball program. MVRC is waiting for final determination by LARAP for the new and updated COVID-19 protocols for indoor sports. It is important that the protocols be clearly stated for families planning to register. Historically, basketball begins in late December and is in full operation in January. Please note that the registration delay may affect the December start date.

The park will be refurbishing the grass field on the east side of the park (east of the gym and west of the tennis courts). This will also include the baseball diamonds. It is anticipated that work will begin in November and continue until the end of February. The area will be surrounded by a fixed fence during that time to protect the grounds and equipment. The fields and grass will be ready for spring baseball and softball. There will be new tree plantings along the north wall of the park. These plantings will occur after the refurbishing project is completed.

The park will also be remodeling and refurbishing the children's playground area. Dates are still in discussion. There is an effort to address the unsanctioned off-leash dog events in the morning and afternoon. Animal Services has increased their presence at the park. The Park Advisory Board was informed that any sanctioned off-leash program or location would require a fenced area and regulations for use.


Please enjoy the park and its mission to provide and support the vital and enjoyable recreational opportunities for our community.



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MEMORIAL FOR SI AND ROZ BESSEN

• by Howard, Robert, David, and Steven Bessen

Si and Roz Bessen, longtime residents of Mar Vista, are no longer with us.

Si and Roz moved to Mar Vista in 1958. They bought their house on the corner of Kingsland and Butler from Lloyd Bridges, star of television's "Sea Hunt".

Roz was committed to keeping Mar Vista a great place to live and served on the Homeowners Association's Board of Directors for many years, including serving as President. She worked with City leaders to help build Neighborhood Watch and worked closely with police to help keep the neighborhood safe. In recognition, she received certificate of appreciation awards from Councilman Marvin Braude and Mayor Tom Bradley. Roz was affectionately called "The Mayor of Mar Vista" by many neighbors.

Si and Roz loved everything about Mar Vista, from the old Colonial Corners to the Santa Monica Airport where Si became a pilot. Their four boys attended Mar Vista Elementary, Daniel Webster Junior High, and Venice High School. Much of the family time was centered around sport and activities at Mar Vista Park.

Si died in September of 2019 at age 96, and Roz passed in March of 2021 at age 90. Both had full, happy lives with their family and their many Mar Vista friends. They are survived by sons Howard (Pat), Robert, David (Debra), Steven (Chris), and eight grandchildren.

The extended Bessen family is sad to part with the wonderful Mar Vista Community.

Thank you for all of the memories.