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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2024 ANNUAL MEETING

• Jerry Hornof

The theme for 2023 was Homeward Bound. As I noted, besides being a popular Simon and Garfunkel song, the theme represents the two aspects of a home. One aspect is the physical structure that offers protection from the elements and facilitates daily activities. The second aspect is home as a supporting and loving space and community. It's the happiness, contentment, and calm we feel because of the space and surroundings we're in. Home is experiencing community, a community that includes family and neighbors. This is the home that we strive to establish in our Westdale community.

The 2024 Westdale Homeowners Association Annual Meeting was held on January 30th. The meeting was in person and, besides being able to distribute cookies, it was great seeing everyone. In my opening remarks, I highlighted two items from 2024. The first item was the Neighborhood Block Party held on October 7th. It was a wonderful event attracting hundreds of our neighbors. Thanks to our neighbors on Colby for hosting, and special thanks to Lauren Altman and Ethel Oderberg for shouldering much of the planning and coordination. The second highlight was the "BOO on Purdue" held on Halloween. The neighbors on Purdue again did a wonderful job of decorating their homes and inviting the neighborhood to a fun and safe evening of Trick or Treating. Thanks to Matt Liston, Rachel Berman, and Heather Butterfield for their efforts in making this a very fun and successful event. A special shout out to Sienna Listen, a Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) Junior Ambassador, and the Purdue Avenue families who were able to raise over \$10,000 for CHLA. I thanked the Board members and officers with a special thanks to the Villager team: Marjorie Templeton, Ina Lee, Dick Henkel and naturalist writer Ms. Umar. Meeting highlights follow with the detailed minutes soon to be available on the webpage.

The first speaker was our 11th District Council Woman Traci Park joined by 11th District Homelessness and Housing Liaison, Mar Vista Field Deputy Ashley Lozada, and 11th District Director Juan Fregoso. Council Woman Traci Park



Westdale
VILLAGER

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thanked Westdale for the invitation and appreciated the opportunity to participate. Council Woman Park spoke to her 1st full year in office. She highlighted her City Council initiatives and her excellent working relationship with Mayor Karen Bass that has aided in addressing important issues for Mar Vista. A major effort has been the successful and compassionate clearing of the homeless encampment on Venice Boulevard under the 405 overpass. That underpass is now scheduled to be a site for a mural. Council Woman Park also spoke of her support of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), and her concern for reducing crime and ensuring safety in our community. She also talked about her committee assignments, especially the Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee which she chairs. This committee is very involved with the planning for the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, and the infrastructure improvements necessary to make this a success. Council Woman Park also spoke of the importance of being engaged with the emerging Community Plan and cautioned everyone that it will be a very challenging budget year for the City of Los Angeles. In closing, Council Member Park encouraged everyone to visit the 11th district website (<https://councildistrict11.lacity.gov/>) and subscribe to the weekly Better11 emails. She emphasized that she is here to be our partner and advocate, and we should reach out anytime.

Following Council Woman Park were representatives of the LAPD, Senior Lead Officers Karwon Villery and Adrian Acosta, and Sergeant Lovick and Sergeant Cook. They reported that in Mar Vista in 2023 crime was generally down compared to 2022. The two major concerns for our area are burglary theft for motor vehicles and home burglaries. The vast majority of burglary theft for motor vehicles incidents involved catalytic converters. SLO Acosta and Villery emphasized the need to: 1) have an active Block Watch Program; 2) park cars on drive-ways or garages; 3) lock doors and have ample lighting around your home; 4) consider getting quality cameras; 5) file a report and also report any suspicious activity. Reporting is critical to ensure accurate data, justifying requests for additional resources, and providing authority for LAPD to investigate.

LAPD was followed by Mar Vista Community Council (MVCC) representatives Drew Ruesch (Chair) and Andrew Marton (vice-Chair and our Zone 3 representative). Drew and Andrew described the role of the MVCC to promote more citizen participation in government and to make government more responsive to local needs. Drew emphasized the need to be involved, especially as the Community Plans addressing development are being formulated. Andrew emphasized that his role as a

zone director is to represent our community. He is continually looking at ways to gather input, ideas, concerns, and participation from the community. Reach out to him anytime. Drew and Andrew encouraged people to attend MVCC meetings and to participate in the public comment portion of the meetings. The website (<https://www.marvista.org/>) contains the calendar of meetings and other community related information.

Next up was Mar Vista Recreation Center (MVRC) Director Keith Rice. Keith reported that the MVRC sports programs have been well attended and successful. For example, the current basketball season has over 500 participants in the program. Soccer, basketball, and volleyball teams have been awarded medals at both the regional and city-wide competitions. The tennis program is also very popular with over 300 participants ranging from 7 year-olds to adults. There are also a wide variety of non-sports programming including piano, arts & crafts, drawing, drumming, and theater. Keith also discussed the pool renovation that is being planned (see the Park Report in this issue for additional information). One audience member asked about pickleball courts at the park. Keith indicated the park is looking at putting some pickleball court stripping on the south side tennis courts. Keith concluded by encouraging people to use the park and to consider volunteering, especially on the Park Advisory Board.

The final speaker was Rob Kadota. Rob is very involved with three major activities in the Mar Vista community. The first is his co-chairing of the board for the Friends of Historic Fire Station 62 and the establishment of the Bill Rosendahl Community Center. This board is working to create and operate a vibrant Community Center in Mar Vista's Historic Fire Station 62. It is committed to establishing a center that promotes environmental sustainability, as well as educational, cultural, and civic experiences that enrich the lives of all in our community, while sharing and celebrating our diversity and interests. They are looking for support from our community. The second is his involvement with the Mar Vista Farmers Market and, besides the Sunday market, all the other festivals and events they sponsor throughout the year (<https://www.marvistafarmersmarket.org/>). Finally, Rob is an active bicycle enthusiast and hosts bike tune-up opportunities at the Farmers Market as well as at other community events (example: the Westdale HOA Block Party). He also promotes the CicLAvia programs throughout the city. There is a CicLAvia event on Venice Blvd scheduled for April 21st.

In my closing remarks, I stated the 2024 theme: Home is an Oasis. Our home in many ways is like an oasis in that it provides refuge, relief, and a pleasant escape for our often very hectic life. Look forward to articles that reference "oasis" throughout the 2024 year.

CRIME & SAFETY REPORT

•David Konell



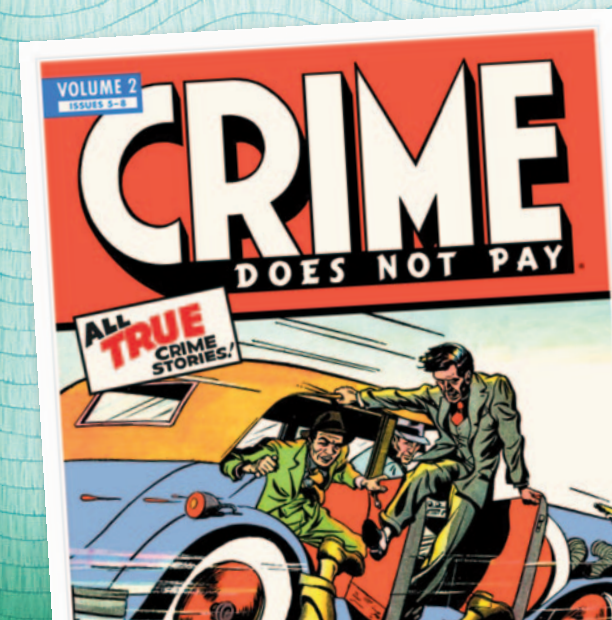
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: "Target hardening, also referred to simply as hardening when made clear by the context, is a term used by police officers, those working in security, and the military referring to the strengthening of the security of a building or installation in order to protect it in the event of attack or reduce the risk of theft. It is believed that a strong, visible defense will deter or delay an attack"

Tuesday January 30th was the annual Westdale Homeowners Association annual meeting. Our city councilwoman, Traci Park, our Mar Vista Community Council Board Member (Zone 3) Andrew Marton, and Officers Villery and Acosta as well as Sergeant Cook and Lovick from LAPD all gave presentations and answered several questions regarding crime and safety. The message was clear, "harden your target" We all know that cameras, dogs, alarms, etc. don't necessarily prevent burglaries, but they help. Safes that aren't secured in cement or bolted to floors and studs are going to be stolen, even if they weigh 400 pounds! More than anything, the police department stressed "knowing your neighbors."

Do you know ALL of your immediate neighbors? Do you have their cell phone number(s)? Do you know what car(s) they drive and have an idea of what their schedule is like? Are you part of a very localized neighborhood text group? These are all questions that should be answered in the affirmative if we as a community want to "harden" our neighborhood and make it less attractive to these organized burglary rings.

As it stands, things have not improved, but now both Federal and local authorities are coordinating efforts to bust the burglary rings that are plaguing our neighborhood. LAPD has added another officer to the burglary task force as well.

Unfortunately, Mar Vista was in the news recently, and not in a good way, as it highlighted the rash of recent burglaries: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAZ_atpsNWQ



MAR VISTA EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

•Lilah Newkirk

My personal favorite part about growing up in Mar Vista has been the numerous opportunities I've had to explore my interests. No matter what phase of life I was going through, there has always been a class, camp, or after-school program to support my development. In fact, some of my absolute favorite memories of living in Mar Vista have been from the activities I've participated in – even those that did not stick as I've gotten older. As many of you know, we are lucky to live in a very kid and family-friendly neighborhood. Before I leave for college this year, I want to share some of my favorite local extracurricular activities for the neighborhood kids to try out as they grow up in this amazing community.

Shuffling through a dozen sports is an inevitable part of childhood. Luckily, this habit is one that our neighborhood will gladly support. At Mar Vista Recreation Center, I have found myself playing basketball, soccer, handball, volleyball, and even becoming a junior league assistant coach. As soon as I moved to this neighborhood at 8 years old and joined my very first sports team, I knew I never wanted to leave. I highly recommend giving your kids that extra push to step out of their comfort zone and try playing on a sports team at Mar Vista Rec Center. They will remember it for the rest of their life!

Of course, you can never go wrong with summer camps. I absolutely love the countless opportunities we have for camps of all ages in the neighborhood. I was personally always the type of kid to try out new camps, which is why this neighborhood felt so welcoming and perfect for me. For example, my school, Windward School, has camps ranging from robotics to debate to dance. This is a great opportunity for kids to meet friends their age and explore their interests. I participated in a couple of Windward camps before I attended the school in 7th grade, and the environment was always very welcoming. You never know what new interests and talents you may discover until you give a new camp a chance.

If you are looking for day-to-day activities, we should never overlook the beautiful landscape of the neighborhood itself. From houses lined with floral-filled trees to delicious restaurants nearby, I have always adored how walkable Mar Vista is. There is a dog park just 5 minutes away, schools within walking distance, multiple stores, a public pool, and so much more. If these 9 years of Mar Vista residency have taught me anything, it would be that going outside will always cheer me up. Mar Vista provides such incredible activities for all ages, making it a wonderful community and a true home.

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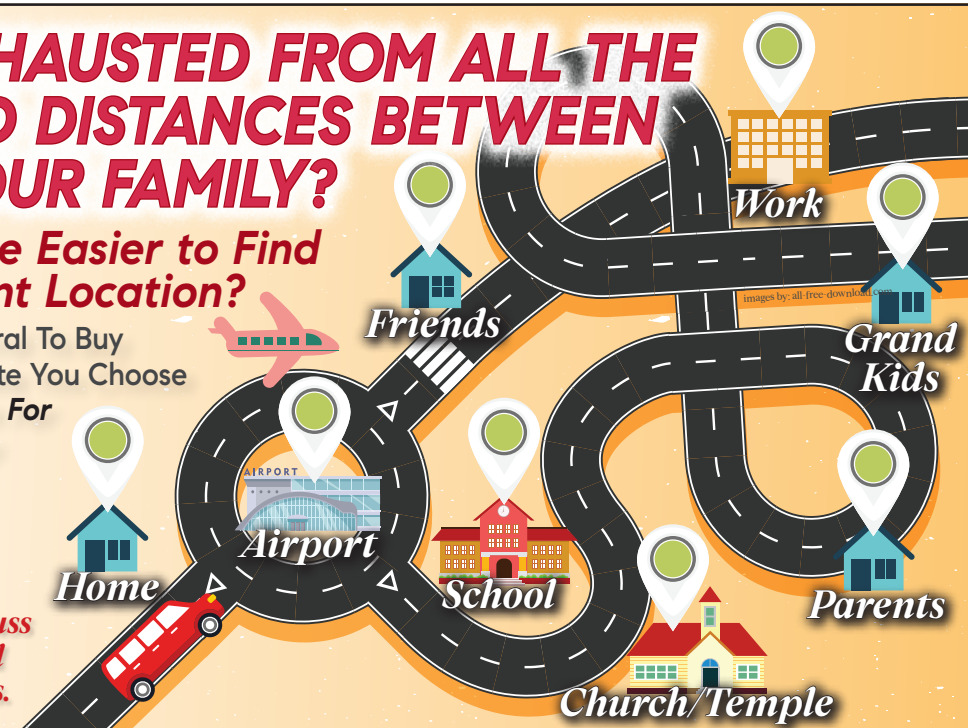


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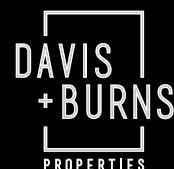


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MEMBERSHIP TIME

Once again, we have a small percentage of our residents who support the WHOA. So far, just 226 residents out of 907 have paid their membership. Of those, several also added money for CERT or the general fund. You can use the web site to check whether or not you have paid, you can also download a membership form which can be returned to Jami Olson at 3216 Barry Avenue. It's your neighborhood, enjoy it and help support it!

Thanks from the WHOA!

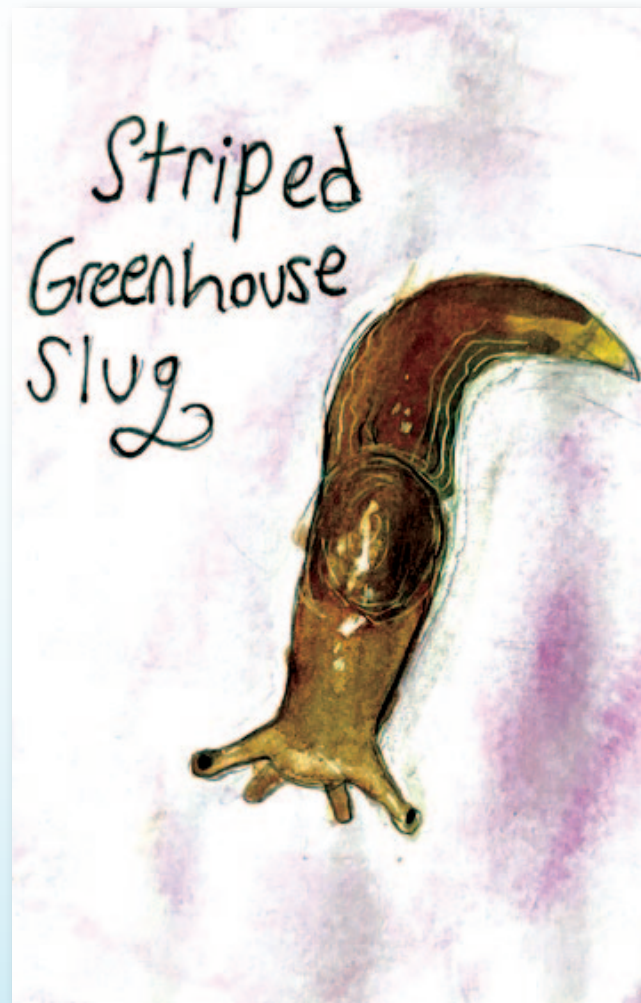


<http://westdalehoa.org/membership/membership-support>

SENSATIONAL SNAILS AND SLUGS

•M.Umar

Winter and spring in Los Angeles usually bring at least some rain. This winter had a huge deluge that led to flash floods all over Southern California. The rain also caused earthworms (covered in a previous issue) to pop up everywhere, floundering through giant puddles. I'm used to earthworms, but there was another rain-adjacent critter that I nearly forgot about until it was in my house. A few weeks ago, I went to get a glass of water. It was both dark and stormy outside. I noticed a brown splotch on the floor. Things became weirder when it started to move. Upon further inspection, it was a small slug that had snuck into my house! I wasn't entirely sure what to do. Eventually it found its way back outside.



It turns out the intruder was a striped greenhouse slug, which has the two or three eponymous stripes running down its narrow body. Striped greenhouse slugs are native to Spain and Portugal, and it's a mystery when they got to L.A. Had I seen the slug in the daytime, I would have noticed a "fingerprint" shape behind its head. This is called the mantle. These slugs are fairly common and can be found in groups all around the neighborhood (especially after rain).

Slugs aren't the only source of slime trails. Garden snails are even more common in Westdale. These big, beige snails were first introduced here in the 1850s when they were farmed to make escargot. This is similar to how eastern fox squirrels came to California: as a food source that eventually got away. Though garden snails are edible, they carry a lot of parasites and I don't advise trying to cook them. This species is hated by gardeners for their voracious appetite. Garden snails can and will chew holes in your plants. You can identify them by their brittle brown-streaked shells. (Don't pick up a snail by its shell! This can injure their mantles and cause painful death. Instead, just let it crawl onto your hand or a popsicle stick).

Snails and slugs are harmless to humans, but they can cause a lot of damage to plants. Most ways of managing this involve killing them. If you're like me and think gastropods (their class) are cool, some methods might just deter them. One of them is using copper tape, which allegedly causes an unpleasant electric charge for slugs and snails. This isn't always reliable, but it's still worth a shot. Another repellent is sprinkling crushed eggshells around your plants. Also, coffee grounds are surprisingly unpalatable to snails. Later in the spring, when the rain dies down, snails and slugs tend to become less of a problem. Snails will go into aestivation and stop attacking your plants. A snail in aestivation retreats into its



shell, seals off the entrance, and stays there to avoid the heat.

If you're a gardener, you might be against gastropods. However, I think slugs and snails have plenty of appealing qualities! For instance, to conserve water, slugs excrete crystals instead of urinating (a more elegant approach, in my opinion). Gastropods thrive in damp environments, and Southern California is decidedly not that. So it's best to just enjoy the snails and slugs while you can. If you want to contribute to gastropod research, there's a community science project called SLIME (Snails and slugs Living in Metropolitan Environments). It helps track how native snails and slugs have responded to city development.

Striped greenhouse slugs and garden snails are non-native. Native Southern California species like shoulderband snails are critically endangered, and could be hiding in your yard right now. We don't know enough about shoulderband snails, so by uploading your observations to SLIME, you could help find a new species! All in all, gastropods might be pests, but they're really neat. If you're taking a walk after the rain, try (literally) turning over a new leaf and searching for snails. What you find might surprise you.

Keep looking for creatures this spring!



REAL ESTATE REPORT

•Debbie Kaplan

As we bid farewell to the winter rains, I hope you've all managed to stay dry without any leaky roofs or unwanted pools forming near your doors. With the promise of spring on the horizon, it's a perfect time to look forward to brighter days ahead!

Reflecting on the past year, we've seen a dynamic real estate market within our Westdale-Trousdale community. A total of 21 homes changed hands, with the highest price of \$3,250,000 on Corinth Avenue. This newly constructed gem boasts five bedrooms and six bathrooms, a testament to the allure of our neighborhood. On the other end of the spectrum, the lowest-priced home also found its place on Corinth, featuring three bedrooms and three baths, selling for \$1,900,000.

Turning our attention to community upkeep, I want to emphasize the importance of maintaining safe sidewalks. Under state law, property owners are responsible for the upkeep of sidewalks adjacent to their properties, ensuring they remain safe and accessible. Neglecting this duty not only exposes homeowners to potential lawsuits, but also jeopardizes the safety of our community members. Overgrown



trees and shrubs encroaching on sidewalks pose hazards, from obstructing paths to causing injuries. By keeping our sidewalks clear and well-maintained, we not only promote safety but also enhance the overall appeal and value of our properties.

In other news, as mortgage rates gradually decrease, we anticipate a surge in property sales, providing both buyers and sellers with more favorable financing opportunities.

Let's embrace the upcoming season with renewed energy and a commitment to keeping our community safe and vibrant.





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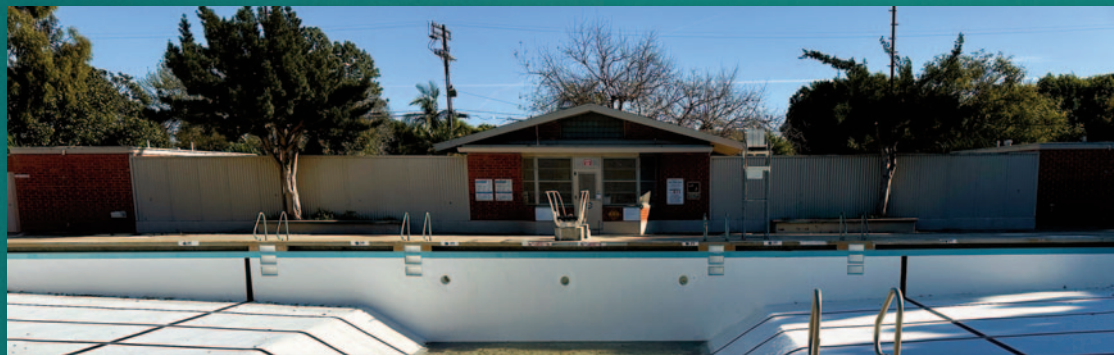
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MAR VISTA PARK REPORT

• Jerry Hornof

Mar Vista Recreation Center continues to be a very active and enjoyed oasis in our community. Sports programs including basketball, soccer, tennis, volleyball, hockey, and roller skating continue to draw hundreds of youth and adults to the park on a weekly basis. I encourage everyone to visit the Los Angeles Recreation and Parks website (<https://www.laparks.org/>) to see the wide variety of programs and activities offered at the park.

There was a lot of interest at the Westdale Homeowners Association Annual meeting regarding the proposed new swimming facility at Mar Vista Park. As I noted in the November newsletter, on October 2nd, I attended a meeting held by the Mar Vista Community Council Planning and Land Use Management Committee. The Los Angeles City Bureau of Engineering, in collaboration and at the direction of the Department of Recreation and Parks, presented a proposal to replace the aging 1959 Mar Vista Swimming Pool and Bathhouse Facility at the Mar Vista Recreation Center. The current swimming pool is 60'x120' and is to be demolished and replaced with an upgraded Olympic-size pool (50Mx25yards). The existing bathhouse will also be demolished and replaced with a current city standard Rec and Parks bathhouse facility (6,000 sf). The new Bathhouse and Pool will meet current green code requirements, including the City ordinance that all new municipal facilities be carbon-neutral. The scope of work will be limited only to the area around the existing bathhouse, pool, pool deck and fencing, and some adjacent surrounding landscaping. While the limit of work is confined to this pool area, the project design considers a holistic approach - seeking to enhance the overall park user experience by improving site circulation, connection to the Rec Center, and additional shaded park seating. The project will be in design for the next 9-12 months. The Bureau of Engineering will plan additional meetings as the planning advances and additional information is available. It will be a wonderful addition to have a year-round outdoor pool in our neighborhood.



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