

See more photos from the
Fall Festival on the back cover



Westside Village Homeowners Association
www.westsidevillage.org
February 2010

Westside Village News & Views

President's Message

By Richard Saltsman

We hope this newsletter finds you all well. We appreciate our large membership (one of the largest voluntary HOA memberships on the Westside), but we have very few volunteers who are willing to join the board to help keep us moving forward. According to the Bylaws, the board should consist of four officers and ten directors. We have been operating with four officers and eight directors and at this time, we are losing at least two more board members with no one to replace them. For those that may be new to our community, here's a brief list of what we do:

- 1) *Develop information resources about what's going on in or near Westside Village.*
- 2) *Collaborate with local government, city services, developers, etc., advocating for the interests of our membership. The most recent example is consulting with the developers of 3115 Sepulveda (old Shoe Pavilion/Circuit City building) to ensure that the property height and density are in line with the neighborhood, safety concerns are met and the building is attractive and neighborhood-appropriate.*
- 3) *Support Neighborhood Watch.*
- 4) *Fund community improvements such as the tree plantings along Palms Blvd. and those around St. John's Church.*
- 5) *Make charitable donations such as the most recent to Charnock Road Elementary for their Wonder of Reading Library.*
- 6) *Plan and partially fund the Fall Festival.*

We all juggle many commitments, from family to work to social lives, but we believe the WVHA is worthy of your time. We have contributed to Westside Village and would like to continue to do so, but we need more help. We have goals that we've been unable to achieve due to sheer lack of manpower. All of the above is in jeopardy of continuing if we don't have a full board soon. If you are interested in volunteering to be a board member, it's a great way to get involved and make our neighborhood and the City of Los Angeles a better place in which to live. Please email us at westsidevillageboard@yahoo.com if you are interested.

You are invited to the Westside Village Homeowners Association 2010 Annual Meeting & Dinner

Thursday, March 18, 2010
St. John's Presbyterian Church
Fellowship Hall

Southwest corner of National and Military
All Westside Village Residents are welcome.
Seats will be available for
latecomers who cannot attend the dinner.

Dinner is \$6.00 per person, catered by Baja Bud's.

Program:

5:30 Registration

5:45-6:15 Buffet Dinner
Dessert, Coffee, and Refreshments

6:15 WVHA Business Meeting
Reports by President and Treasurer and
Election of Officers and Directors

6:45 Comments by LAPD Senior Lead Officer
Juan Ceja and Neighborhood Watch Coordinators,
Guita Farin and David Graue

7:15 Questions and Answers for
Council Districts 5 and 11

8:00 Closing remarks

And for the many Westside Villagers who pay their annual dues, we thank you for that contribution. We have done our best to freeze annual dues at \$10/year, despite increased costs for just about everything, to encourage as many residents as possible to become members. The greater the membership, the greater good we can do. We have attached a dues slip and we appreciate your consideration to become members or continue your membership in 2010.

Expo/Transportation Planning Update

By Ken Alpern

The Westside is flush with construction projects. For starters, the 405 freeway widening project has finally ended, giving us a wider highway with a carpool lane and upgraded cross-streets at National, Palms, and Culver Blvds. The 405 will now be widened north of the 10 freeway, but the construction impacts will not directly be felt in our area. Over the next year, we'll see both a completion of the DWP substation project at National/Bentley and a widening of the Overland Ave. bridge over the 10 freeway.

The Expo Line (light rail) is also moving forward, but has been plagued by delays. Originally scheduled for opening to Culver City in 2010 in its first phase, the light rail line will at best open from Downtown (near Staples Center) to Crenshaw Blvd. in 2010, and to Culver City in 2011. Lessons learned by the Expo Construction Authority will likely result in an expedited schedule for both the first phase (ongoing) and the second, Westside phase from Culver City to Santa Monica for a planned 2015-16 completion date.

At this time, Expo Line crossings at Overland, Westwood, and Barrington will be ground-level with crossing gates (at-grade), and crossings at Centinela, Sawtelle, Pico and other streets will be elevated (grade-separated); it is uncertain at this time if Sepulveda will be ground-level or have a rail bridge because both options are being evaluated.

The future Exposition/Sepulveda Expo Line station will have an adjacent large development project by Casden Developers that will hopefully provide enough mitigations to please Westside residents. The WVHA Board continues to work closely with the CD5 office, in conjunction with neighboring homeowners associations and the Mar Vista Community Council, to ensure that this project does not create a negative precedent leading to over-density and aggravated traffic in the Sepulveda Blvd. corridor.

Much closer to home, the 3115 Sepulveda Blvd. project (old Circuit City/Shoe Pavilion site) is being closely watched by the WVHA Board and the MVCC. The involvement of the WVHA and MVCC has encouraged the developer to scale the building down to four

stories (from six) and add an additional traffic light on Sepulveda at Clover to ensure both pedestrian safety and safe left turns in and out of the project. The project and its traffic/pedestrian mitigations might also enhance the commercial and walkability aspects of the entire Sepulveda/National area, but it must also not create a negative precedent to the Sepulveda Blvd. corridor. We will continue to monitor this project to ensure that it meets with the community needs and safety concerns.

Improving our neighborhood via transportation and planning projects, while preserving and enhancing our quality of life, is a full-time and ongoing effort, and your WVHA Board remains active and ready to represent you. Your own ideas, input and energy are equally important to us, and we look forward to hearing from you as these projects move forward.

6th Annual Westside Village Fall Festival – Still A Hit

By Andy Comins

What would a wonderful early fall day on the Westside be like without a community celebration? Well, for the sixth time, the Westside Village Homeowners Association held its annual fall festival on Saturday, October 10th, at St. John's Church. And once again, over five hundred people gathered to have fun with dear friends and neighbors and make new acquaintances.

This year's activities ranged from the old stand-bys: the adorable petting zoo and pony rides; the always



More photos on back cover.

wild and crazy bounce house; and numerous arts and craft activities, including a Color Me Mine table and hair braiding by Anita; to the new favorites: local environmental museum Eco Station's exhibit of snakes and lizards for the brave to behold and the tumultuous water balloon toss which invariably puts a mildly wacky bow on the day's events and leaves two sets of winners soaked and rewarded with free movie passes donated by The Landmark Theater.

And for the first time, we were pleased to present young people in live musical performance. From Cornerstone Music Conservancy, eight-year-old classical violinist, Grace Anderson, played several pieces, while fellow eight-year-old Miraclestar Doby laid down some classic R&B in a solo keyboard performance. A local teen band consisting of students from the Hollywood School of Rock did just that—they rocked the house!

On the food front, a superbly organized catering effort was led by Board Members, Carolyn Saltsman and John Moyer, along with their great crew of volunteers. Long waits were a thing of the past thanks to their efforts. Our traditional fare was embellished with Matteo Restaurant's generous donation of delicious Italian sandwiches.

Exhibitors and table participants included the Friends of the Los Angeles Library, Ballona Creek Renaissance, Heal the Bay, California Solar, LA DWP, and Plug in America. We hope you found their resources of interest, and the WVHA Board extends its sincerest thanks to them all for their time and generosity.

Special thanks, as always, go out to our Neighborhood Watch Coordinators Guita Farin and David Graue. They met with residents to outline their ongoing efforts to keep our community safe, along with a representative from Security Service Systems. On the WVHA historical front, Caroline Alley, who has taken over the reins from our beloved long time Board Member, Marie Wallace, once again presented images and assorted material about our community's past.

Our Senior Lead Officer Juan Ceja, not only fielded residents' questions and concerns, he also arranged for the LAPD Mobile Command Unit to be on site. And our friends at the LA Fire Department #34, rolled in with both their blazing red fire engine and ambulance. Almost too much fun for the little ones to handle!

On behalf of the entire Festival Committee, we tip our caps for the extraordinary efforts at the Registration table by our President, Richard Saltsman, and fellow Board Members Roberta Schiller, Brian Considine, Greg Severson and Kristin Baldrige, and the patience of Board Members Don Elliott and Ken Alpern as they made sure no children bounced out of control! We would also like to thank our friends at St. John's Church for hosting the event once again and for the wonderful dessert table and Patti Lawhon, Scott Goldman, Renate Lichter and all the volunteers who helped out with the event.

The fall festival is an event the community has come to anticipate and cherish. It's the one time of year we all come together and celebrate life in Westside Village. As we turn our attention to next fall's event, we strongly encourage and seek your ideas for improving what we do and what we offer. And volunteer participation is always greatly appreciated. So until then, be well and we hope to see you at the annual meeting.

Austin MacInnis – In Memoriam

Long time resident and past President of the Westside Village Civic Association, Austin J MacInnis passed away on December 13, 2009. Austin was born on March 15, 1931 in Minnesota where he grew up and attended school until he was drafted. He served almost three years in the Korean War. In 1957 he married Virginia and they completed their BA degrees at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN before moving to Tallahassee, Florida. Austin earned a PHD in biology from FSU, then worked as a research associate at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

In 1965, Austin accepted a teaching and research position in the Department of Life Sciences at UCLA. Upon settling here, Austin and Ginny and their three daughters Heather, Suzanne and Bonnie moved into a home on Military Avenue. Austin taught at UCLA for nearly 40 years. In the 1970's he edited the Journal of Parasitology for five years. From the American Society of Parasitologists he received two awards: the Mentoring Award, and the Distinguished Service Award.

Austin and Ginny were active in the WVCA for many years—Austin served two and a half terms as President. Austin was proud to be on the UCLA faculty and proud to live in Westside Village. When reflecting about his Presidency of the WVCA, with his usual sense of humor, Austin used to say that his biggest problems were Westside Villagers who would call to complain about barking dogs! (Still an ongoing problem.) We send our condolences to Ginny MacInnis and family.

Everett Wallace – In Memoriam

At the time of printing this newsletter, we heard of the passing of Everett Wallace, a founding member of the WVHA (formerly WVCA) and past President, an active advocate of the neighborhood watch and a community volunteer and leader. Everett leaves behind his wife Marie, who just recently stepped down from the board, and their daughter and son.

Everett built up the block captains and neighborhood watch several decades ago to ensure the safety of all the residents of Westside Village. He did so with such conviction and fervor. All those who knew Everett, remember being so very impressed with his strength of character and dedication to our community. He has always been an inspiration to so many community members and volunteers throughout the years. Everett will always have a place in the hearts of all who knew him and will be sorely missed.

Thank You From Clover Avenue Elementary School Wonder Of Reading Program

By Gail Torr

The Clover Avenue Elementary School would like to thank all our neighbors who volunteered for the Wonder of Reading program. We can now help 12 children at Clover improve their reading skills. Your dedication to your neighborhood school is truly appreciated by all of us. There are still eight children who need our help. If you have a spare hour a week and would like to help, please let us know. Contact either Gail Torr at ourgail@hotmail.com or Janet Evans at jfe9598@lausd.net. Once again, a huge thanks to those who volunteered.

Charnock Road School Dedicates Walter D. Renzi Reading Garden

By Jason A. Buchalter

On a crisp, autumn day, replete with spirited student performances, speeches from local dignitaries, and heartfelt expressions of thanks, the students and families of Charnock Road Elementary school



Walter Renzi and Councilman Bill Rosendahl

dedicated the newly constructed Walter D. Renzi Reading Garden. Mr. Walter Renzi, a longtime resident of Westside Village and active community volunteer at Charnock, is no stranger to the school. His daughters Nicole and Simone both graduated from Charnock in the 1970s. In an emotional ceremony, Mr. Renzi was honored by Councilman Bill Rosendahl with a proclamation from Mayor Villaraigosa recognizing Mr. Renzi's dedication and commitment

to Charnock Road School and the Westside Village community.

Mr. Renzi requested that the Reading Garden be dedicated to the memory of veteran Charnock teachers Flo Starr and Angie Alfon, who both tragically passed away while serving the community. According to Mr. Renzi, "These outstanding educators had a lasting impact on a generation of Charnock children—people like Mrs. Starr and Mrs. Alfon are our nation's true unsung heroes." A permanent plaque has been placed in the garden in their memory.

Although Mr. Renzi naturally shies away from public attention, he has been a true hero to the Charnock community. After retiring from a distinguished career of public service as a probation officer, Mr. Renzi has dedicated himself to helping the youth in the local community. Every Wednesday morning for the past ten years, Mr. Renzi can be found at the back table of Mrs. McLaren's first grade class, helping the children with their reading. Mr. Renzi says that books and reading have greatly enriched his own life, and he wishes to pass these treasures along to the next generation. When asked why he keeps returning to the school year after year, Mr. Renzi replied that "working with the children was a pure joy. There is nothing in the world like the smiles you receive when you walk through that classroom door. It's priceless!"

In addition to tutoring students, Mr. Renzi serves on the Wonder of Reading library leadership committee, helped institute a Friday morning story hour for the students, and has been a generous financial supporter of the Wonder of Reading library and Renzi Reading Garden.

Located next to the school's new Wonder of Reading library, the Renzi Reading Garden provides a tranquil oasis in the center of the campus for children to read their library books, for parents to relax, and for teachers and volunteer reading tutors to work with students. Designed by noted landscape architect Mark Tessier of Tessier Landscape Architecture, who generously donated his firm's design services, the garden features beautiful redwood benches, lush planting areas and an "outdoor classroom" area, all nestled beneath the dappled sunlight and shady branches of a majestic 60 year old Benjamin Fig tree.

The Renzi Reading Garden represents the latest step in Charnock's ambitious school improvement and beautification program. Previously, Charnock won a prestigious Wonder of Reading grant, which replaced the cramped student library with a spacious, state of the art library, including multi-media technology, an expanded book collection, and numerous community outreach programs. The Wonder of Reading library was also underwritten with generous grants from the Westside Village Homeowner's Association, the Palms Neighborhood Council and members of local community.

The school improvement program has definitely been paying off, as Charnock's API scores have consistently risen during the past five years, and are now up to 779. Principal England and the teachers are confident that Charnock will reach the magic number of 800 API in the next year!

Please join us at Charnock Road School as a guest storyteller for the annual Read Across America celebration scheduled to take place in March. The school is also looking for special individuals who would like to join Mr. Renzi as a volunteer reading tutor. Financial contributions to purchase library materials may also be made to the Friends of Charnock Booster Club. Please contact Jason Buchalter at (310) 838-6110 or jab9896@lausd.net for more information about any of these programs.

Local Healthy Aging Group Mobilizing

By Lori Gilder

Imagine living in a neighborhood where help was always available to you, especially in time of need. Imagine the opportunity for social gatherings and trips planned with your neighbors. Imagine saving money through collective discounts with local vetted vendors. Imagine a "Village" in the City of Los Angeles here to help you.

We are a new non-profit group founded by neighborhood volunteers whose mission is to help older adults in our community continue living at home with dignity, independence, and an enhanced quality of life. Our vision is to build and maintain a community that supports its older residents by providing affordable, membership based, and consumer driven services. As a resident who is 50 and over you will be able to:

- *Have one phone number to call when you need advice or help*
- *Have vetted and discounted vendors*
- *Have volunteer opportunities*
- *Have increased opportunity for social, cultural, educational, and intergenerational contact with your neighbors*

Consumer-driven means that the consumer determines what services are offered. If we cannot find a volunteer to help you, we will refer you to a provider who we have pre-screened and is willing to offer you a discount. We will follow up with you to make sure you were satisfied with your service.

Your needs could be simple such as needing someone to wait for a repairman at your home, advice about choosing a plumber or handyman or help fixing your computer. Or your needs could be more in depth, such as you have an important and stressful doctor's

appointment and want an advocate to come with you, you broke a bone and need to hire temporary help or you want someone to check in on you from time to time. Or perhaps you just want to feel part of a group—connected to others in your community. That's where we come in. Our new "Village" will be part of a nationwide movement to provide social support that allows you to "age in place." This movement began in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Boston in 2000 and has grown to include at least 46 successful programs throughout the United States.

We expect to begin offering services starting next summer. The membership fee still needs to be determined, but with volunteer support and fundraising efforts, the fee will be as low as possible, most likely a few hundred dollars for access to services for 12 months. When there are more developments on our new "Village," we will update you. In the meantime, please feel free to email Lori Gilder at village@marvistaowls.org for more information.

Letter From Paul Koretz, Newly-Elected Councilmember For Council District 5

I'm delighted to be serving the fine people of the Westside Village HOA. Your community involvement is crucial to the well-being of our neighborhoods, and that of our city as a whole. I've been asked to describe my five key goals for 2010. I have many goals, including those that have been suggested and prioritized by community organizations, and with your help I hope to achieve them all, but here's what immediately comes to mind:

- 1) My point of view is simple: a good council office has to be constantly in the community. During my first six months in office, my staff and I have visited 27 homeowner groups and 14 neighborhood council groups so far, and we will continue making the rounds because we want to hear, first-hand, your concerns and ideas.
- 2) We need to fix the city's budget crisis, and that's going to take tremendous resolve. I feel I am already doing my part, as chair of the city's Audits and Governmental Efficiency committee. We are aggressively working to identify and eliminate waste and abuse.
- 3) I am determined to save the Century Plaza Hotel, which was slated for destruction but which is a major cultural and historic landmark of Century City, the Westside and all of Los Angeles.
- 4) I am doing my utmost, working hand-in-hand with community groups, to get rid of the billboard blight which has despoiled many neighborhoods.
- 5) We need to fix our transportation, traffic and

parking woes, and I am working with other governmental officials and offices from throughout the region, but also with local community groups such as yours, to make sure that we implement the best possible solutions.

Please feel free to contact my Westside District Office at (310) 289-3088: you can also arrange office hours to meet with me, there, if you wish. I hope you also visit my website at <http://cd5.lacity.org/>. Have a great year, and I hope to see you soon!

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Challenge

By Stephanie Johnson

I'm sure many people have made and broken their new year's resolutions at this point. I know I have. Sometimes there are too many goals and they need to be more focused or done in stages, sometimes there's a lack of commitment and sometimes the goals themselves aren't enough to keep you on the straight and narrow. But here's a resolution worth keeping that's easy... Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

I have a neighbor who inspired me to do more for the planet, more for my family and more for future generations to come. Here's her list of reduce, reuse, recycle:

- 1) Recycle *everything*—cans, glass, plastic, paper, right down to bottle tops.
- 2) Use cloth napkins instead of paper.
- 3) Use towels and rags for cleaning instead of paper. Don't be quick to throw away ratty t-shirts and old clothes. Old, unwearable clothes become great rags for cleaning.
- 4) Donate wearable clothes to an organization that will pass them down to those in need or give it to a friend in need.
- 5) Use tote bags for grocery shopping—no more plastic bags.
- 6) Let the dogs lick plates clean so no big rinsing required before loading the dishwasher. They love it, the kids love watching it and seriously, they get every crumb.
- 7) Use environmentally-safe cleaners for everything—dishwasher, clothes, bathrooms, glass, etc.—and no bleach. Yes, she doesn't buy white clothes.
- 8) Buy in bulk to avoid small packaging.
- 9) Compost all natural food products from fruit peels to tea. Did you know coffee grinds are good for your garden?
- 10) Don't use trash bags or use ones that biodegrade quickly.

- 11) Use rechargeable batteries and properly recycle your spent batteries.
- 12) Install a water filter to reduce bottled water consumption.
- 13) For those with babies, it's really hard to ask people to use cloth diapers, but if you try to use a combination of disposable and a product like G-diapers that have flushable inserts, that's a great start. And for disposables, consider using the more environment-friendly type such as Seventh Generation or Nature Baby. For wipes, Nature Baby makes flushable wipes that help reduce what goes into the landfill and Seventh Generation makes wipes that don't use chlorine.
- 14) If you're going to paint, use low-VOC paints. Almost every hardware store carries a good selection.
- 15) Properly recycle your electronic and hazardous materials waste. UCLA SAFE Collection center information can be found at: <http://www.ehs.ucla.edu/pub/UCLA%20S.A.F.E.%20Center%20Flyer.pdf>

If you can add just one of the above items to your list of things you already do to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, I'll bet it's a resolution you'll keep. Once you're in a routine, you can do more. And don't feel like you have to spend money to be eco-friendly—there are plenty of items above that don't cost extra money. Finally, In case you think you don't have time to add anything new to your life, most of the above takes mere seconds to accomplish. My neighbor has four children, fosters kittens, works full-time and does it by herself. That's why I'm using her as my inspiration to challenge myself to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle more than ever.

Time To Go Solar

By Ken Williams

It turns out money does fall from the heavens—in the form of sunlight!

What if a neighbor told you that putting solar panels on your roof could save you up to \$90 a month on electricity costs with a green energy system that pays for itself in about seven years, and increases your property value, all the while helping out the planet? Well, I'm that neighbor.

We've all heard something about solar energy but few know what it's really like to have a system installed at their home. In November, I had 24 panels popped on my roof and like a proud father, I'm happy to tell my neighbors all about it.

In a nutshell, here are the basics:

- *The city of Los Angeles will pay for HALF of your total*

cost including labor, materials and installation.
(This particular element of the deal sold me...)

- The IRS will issue you a 30% tax credit (not write off) of the total cost.
- All you need is a roof that has unobstructed sunlight and, in two or three days, you too can watch your city electricity meter spin backwards.

The initial out of pocket cost of having a system needs to be kept in perspective. That number will abate every year until eventually you are receiving completely free, green energy. Unlike a Wall Street stock, solar power is an investment that will always deliver.

If anyone would like to see my system in operation, call or e-mail me anytime for a “solar tour” and a candy cigar. Ken Williams 310-480-5504 or kalanwill@aol.com.

Mar Vista Community Council Election Info

Westside Village is fortunate to be covered by two Neighborhood Councils – Mar Vista Community Council (MVCC) and Palms Neighborhood Council (PNC). We currently have two Westside Village residents serving on the Mar Vista Community Council – Babak Nahid as the Zone 1 (Westside Village) Director and Ken Alpern as Director at Large. We’ve been informed that MVCC will be having an election on April 11, 2010. We posted the candidate filing information on our website because the filing period closed prior to printing, but please go and vote for your community representatives on April 11, 2010, from 10:00am – 4:00pm at:

The Mar Vista Recreation Center
11430 Woodbine Street, LA 90066
www.marvista.org

All 13 seats on the Board of Directors will be up for election: 6 at-large directors, 6 zone directors and 1 community director.

Ask Your Board

*Is work still continuing on the DWP Substation?
When will it be completed?*

Work has been delayed due to “procurement problems” with items needed for completion. They plan to restart work in February and March and complete the substation mid-April. We’ve also been told that they will re-pave the front sidewalk and hopefully, the alley. We’ll keep you posted if we hear of any changes.

Calendar Of Events

Every Sunday – Mar Vista Farmer’s Market
9am – 2pm Grand View Blvd. at Venice

March 18 – WVHA Annual Meeting

April 11 – Mar Vista Community Council Election
10am – 4pm at Mar Vista Recreation Center,
11430 Woodbine Street, LA 90066

June – Newsletter

September – Newsletter

October 2 - The 7th Annual Westside Village
Fall Festival

Website Update

We have created a new page on our website (www.westsidevillage.org) – “Construction Updates.” We will post any information we receive on local construction, such as the Overland Bridge widening project, the DWP Substation or the development at 3115 Sepulveda Blvd.



Please let us know what you think.

If you wish to contribute to News and Views, please email us at westsidevillageboard@yahoo.com
Visit us at www.westsidevillage.org

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Fun times at our 2009 Fall Festival.

Photographs by Andy Comins

