

See inside for more photos
from the Fall Festival

Westside Village Homeowners Association
www.westsidevillage.org
February 2011

Westside Village News & Views



You are invited to the Westside Village Homeowners Association 2011 Annual Meeting & Dinner

Thursday, March 3, 2011
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

President's Message

By Richard Saltsman

It is that time of the year again—The Westside Village Homeowners Association Annual meeting and election is going to be held on Thursday, March 3rd. The evening begins at 5:30 p.m. with a delicious dinner catered by Baja Buds, followed by our business meeting and election. If you are planning to have dinner, please send in the attached dinner reservation form along with your check (\$6.00 per person) as soon as possible. If you do not wish to have dinner, please come after dinner and join us for coffee and dessert before the meeting. The evening is always a great opportunity to see your neighbors and meet with our Senior Lead Officer of the LAPD, Juan Ceja as well both City Councilmembers, or their staff, who serve Westside Village—Paul Koretz (CD 5) and Bill Rosendahl (CD 11).

It is impossible at one meeting to take questions from everyone present. Therefore, I urge you to submit any question or issue that you may have to our email address: WestsidevillageBoard@yahoo.com or if you wish you may fill out a question form at the meeting. We will try to consolidate them and present them to the appropriate speaker.

As I reported in a previous newsletter, after the 2010 annual meeting the WVHA Board appointed two people to be directors, Kristin Killey and Patrick Walker. They are beginning the second year of a two year term along with the current officers and two Directors. Five Directors wish to run for a new two year term. We have one open position to fill. If anyone is interested in being on the Board, please contact us at our email address: WestsidevillageBoard@yahoo.com

Finally, if anyone has suggestions or ideas that would benefit Westside Village, please let us hear from you. Write us a note at the meeting, speak to one of the Board members, or contact us via email. We all have a vested interest in maintaining and preserving our Westside Village Community. Show your support and join the Westside Village Homeowners Association for \$10 per household. I look forward to seeing you on March 3rd and I wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Prepare For “The Big One” With CERT

By Valerie Fontaine

Are you ready for “The Big One”? In a major disaster, first responders and public resources may be overwhelmed, leaving citizens to cope. The CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) program, provided by the Los Angeles Fire Department, can help you act effectively without placing yourself in unnecessary danger.

About 10 years ago, this newsletter announced a CERT course at Mar Vista Elementary School, and I enrolled. Fire Department instructors covered earthquake preparedness, search and rescue, first aid, light firefighting, and disaster psychology. Since then, I participated in refresher programs to update my skills.

**CERT training is free.
To join a class visit
<http://www.cert-la.com>**

Anyone over 18 can take CERT training. The course lasts six or seven consecutive weeks (you can make up missed sessions) and is offered at various times and locations throughout Los Angeles. See www.cert-la.com for the current schedule. If you don't find a convenient class, contact the LAFD CERT Unit at 818-756-9674 or lafdcert@lacity.org for future opportunities. Or, you can organize training for your neighborhood, business or community group with a minimum of 20 people.

The “T” in CERT stands for “team”. Others from Westside Village were in my class a decade ago, and more from our neighborhood completed the course since then. If you're CERT-trained, please contact me at vfontaine@sfbsearch.com so we can support each other in an emergency. If it's been a while, and you want to brush up your skills, we can organize refresher training, also free of charge.

It would be comforting to know, when disaster strikes, that that you're as prepared as possible and others nearby stand ready to assist.

Keeping You Up-to-Date On Transportation And Building Plans

By Ken Alpern

Light Rail:

The Exposition Light Rail Line (Expo Line) is a future passenger rail line that will stretch 15.2 miles with 19 stations from approximately the Staples Center to the Third Street Promenade and will closely parallel the 10 freeway. It is anticipated that there will be at least 64,000 riders per day by 2030, with an estimated trip from Santa Monica to downtown taking 46 minutes. The estimated cost is \$2.4 billion for the entire project. Phase 1 is about 75% complete. Service from Downtown (Metro Center, which is the connection to the Red/Purple Line Subways) to Culver City is anticipated for operation in 2012. There is an associated public art program featuring one artist per station.

Some of the stations, such as La Brea and La Cienega are elevated and built on MSE (Mechanically Stabilized Embankments), which are long walls that will likely be covered with ivy for graffiti-proofing in much the same way as is the 10 freeway overpass on Westwood. Elevated rail crossings will not be on slimmer, less visually intrusive columns because that would be much more expensive. Metro will study existing bus routes prior to opening Expo stations to see if they need to be modified or upgraded, and to see if they can improve operations and facilitate access to/from the Expo Line. The Palms NC and Metro are very interested in establishing a connecting rapid bus route on Venice Blvd that will allow a speedy, convenient connection for Westsiders who live south of the 10 freeway, and also allow another quick transit route for commuters to the beach.

The Phase 2 Final EIR was certified on Feb. 2, 2010 with completion projected by 2015 at a cost of \$1.5 billion. Trains will have a peak rush hour interval every five minutes. The average stop light where this line will cross streets is 40 seconds, which is exactly how long it will take for the barriers to come down, the trains to pass by, and the barriers to then come back up. Each train is approximately three times the length of a bus (unlike the very long Metrolink or freight trains that commuters fear) and stations are being built for three car trains.

By schools, there will be a visual barrier and, for safety purposes, a pedestrian gate. Metro representatives are going to schools, recreation centers, and senior centers before opening rail service to brief the community and promote safe pedestrian practices next to trains. Expo will cross Overland Avenue and Westwood Blvd. at street level, with a station to the east of Westwood Blvd located on the right-of-way between Westwood and Overland.

There is strong political and grassroots support for the crossing at Sepulveda Blvd. to be elevated, but for that to happen, funding must be found.

The line is planned to then be elevated and go under the 405 freeway, and then go over Sawtelle and Pico/Gateway. In order for the train to fit under the 405 freeway and yet be elevated over Sawtelle, Sawtelle will need to be lowered by six feet; the line will be elevated at Bundy/Centinela. The average parking capacity for Phase 1 is 500 cars per station. At Sepulveda, it is 260 at present.

If you have any questions, please contact Gabriela Collins, Government/Community Relations Manager for the Expo Construction Authority (T: 213-243-5535, F: 213-243-5553, gcollins@exporail.net).

Westside Subway:

In related news, Metro was just formally notified that the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) has approved the Westside Subway Extension and Downtown Regional Light Rail Connector (which is an underground light rail extension that will connect the Expo, Blue and Gold Lines and thereby extend direct access for Expo Line riders to Union Station) for entry into Preliminary Engineering (PE). The approval moves both projects a step closer to actual construction. This notification means that both projects will almost certainly be accepted into the federal New Starts program that coordinates the funding and construction of federally-approved freeway and transit projects. The approval also means that the first installment of federal funds for both projects could be included in next year's federal budget. They anticipate completing PE work for the subway to begin in late 2011, and for the Regional Connector in early 2012.

Local Building Development:

The anticipated project at the old Circuit City/Shoe Pavilion site ran out of funding after years of repeated negotiations between the WVHA, MVCC and Council District 5, and the property is now in the hands of the bank. So, too, is the much larger Bundy Village project at Olympic/Bundy, although it is anticipated that both sites will be up for some sort of future development.

Nearby highways:

The 405 freeway project to connect the carpool lanes from the 10 to the 101 freeway is being constructed in earnest, as is the Overland Avenue widening over the 10 freeway. The 405 project is anticipated to take two years for completion, and the Overland Avenue widening is anticipated to take up much, if not most, of 2011.

Why Should You Pay \$10 And Become A Member Of Westside Village Homeowners Association?

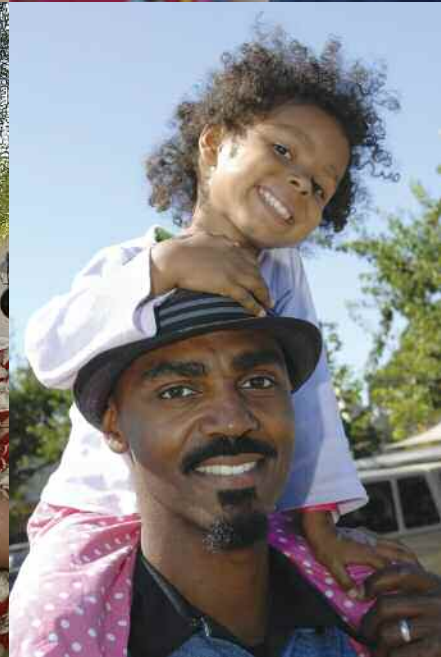
- 1. Support your community of Westside Village.**
- 2. Increase your Board of Directors' ability to bring community-based programs and services to Westside Village.**
- 3. Improve Neighborhood Safety**
- 4. Partake in upcoming new programs to help residents respond effectively to wide reaching emergencies, specifically, earthquakes. (See the CERT article by Valerie Fontaine)**

What has the board done with dues in the past?

- 1. Host the Annual Fall Festival.**
- 2. Sponsor the planting of trees on Palms Boulevard and all along Military, Veteran and other streets in Westside Village. Continue to maintain the newly planted trees for a year with watering and tree maintenance programs in partnership with TreePeople.**
- 3. Help fund vital programs at Clover Avenue and Charnock Schools, by underwriting their "Wonder of Reading" libraries.**
- 4. Maintain and improve the infrastructure network to your Neighborhood Watch program; help provide timely reports of break-ins and robberies so you can more fully protect yourselves.**
- 5. Produce and distribute the Westside Village Newsletter that strives to connect and keep the neighborhood informed about local activities that impact Westside Village residents.**
- 6. Fund the annual meeting where neighborhood issues are discussed, and council members provide community updates about city hall activities. (Next one is March 3rd! Come join us!)**
- 7. Ensure that our neighborhood, to the extent possible, has an ability to acquire legal and advisory council related to commercial development activities.**
- 8. Work with local council offices to ensure that Westside Village gets its share of City services, such as, pothole repair or street improvements.**

Did you know you could get SO much for just \$10.00 per family per year? PLEASE JOIN!

Memories from our Fall Festival





The 7th Annual Westside Village Fall Festival

By Andy Comins

Lucky number 7? Absolutely! As summer turned to fall we were once again fortunate to have beautiful weather, and our extended hours delivered a terrific turnout. The usual array of activities were on hand, from face painting, pony rides, and a petting zoo, to live music, fire engines, and, of course, a bounce house. The kids especially enjoyed the creepy, crawly creatures from Eco Station.

This was the first year we invited Westside Village artisans and craft people to exhibit their wares. Several talented folks came, and we hope and expect to see much more participation in the years ahead. The 7th festival also marked the introduction of what will surely be a perennial favorite ... a "Bake-Off". Twelve talented bakers competed and were judged by Boardmember Patrick Walker, with tie-breaking assistance from Senior Lead Officer Juan Ceja. Yummy blueberry muffins were the winners.

Our "green" friends from TreePeople, Heal the Bay, California Sun Systems, and Ballona Creek were once again available to educate and stimulate. And for the gardeners in the crowd, the "Gardenerd" dispensed information and inspiration.

Of course, hats off, as usual, to our dedicated Neighborhood Watch team, who along with our SLO Juan Ceja, fielded questions and shared their insights about community safety.

So, all in all, it was yet another enjoyable Saturday with friends and neighbors in our beloved village. We thank everyone for their participation and support, especially our crew of volunteers, and we look forward not only to seeing all of you next year, but also to your ideas and suggestions for making the 8th Annual Festival even better.

Good News In The fight Against Blight!

In a major victory for the community, the City of L.A. began towing mobile advertising trailers from our streets after Councilman Greig Smith's legislation to regulate the blight of unhitched trailer billboards went into effect on Jan. 1, 2011.

"This is a huge success in our efforts to protect the quality of life in our community," Councilman Smith said. "This ordinance is long overdue, but now with local control over this issue, we can finally rid our streets of these nuisances."

Councilman Smith's position has always been that

these unhitched trailer signs are more than an eyesore—they are a blight and a safety hazard in our community. They obstruct drivers' view of the road, take up parking space, often fall over in high winds and become even more of an obstacle.

The weekend that the enforcement action began, more than a dozen unhitched advertising trailers were impounded and towed and over 30 were cited.

Owners of the trailers face misdemeanor fines from \$250 to \$1,000 and up to six months in jail.

To report a mobile ad trailer, call the DOT Parking Enforcement Communications Division at 818-752-5100 or 213-485-4181

Immediately Press "2" to report a parking violation. Be ready to provide the trailer license plate number and the street block location.

Help Palms Middle School And Help Yourself \$ave!

Westside Saver Cards are discount cards that provide substantial savings (10% - 50% discount!) on many products and services in our neighborhood and beyond. They also raise much-needed funds for Palms Middle School. They cost just \$10, and the cards usually pay for themselves after only a few purchases. Cards are valid through December 2011. The vendors include B&B Hardware, Bagel Factory, Baja Bud's, Burger King, California Pizza Kitchen, Champagne French Bakery Cafe, Charlie Kabob, Chilli Thai, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, Copyland, Crest Dry Cleaning, Hamburger Habit, Hot Dog on a Stick, IHOP, Julie's Pizzeria, Kristina's Italian Kitchen, Lenzini's 2-4-1 Pizza, Mayura, McDonald's, Palms Beauty Supply & Salon, Panda Express, El Pollo Loco, Simpang Asia, Smog Master, Subway, Taco Plus, and Yogurtland; some are limited to participating Palms area locations.

You can buy them in person at the Main Office at Palms Middle School using a credit or debit card, check, or cash. You can buy them on the Friends of Palms website using PayPal; see <http://www.palmsmiddle.school.org/westside-saver-cards>. Or you can buy them with cash or check by contacting Anne-Marie Schaaf, Palms parent and WVHA member from Tabor Street, at amtschaaf@yahoo.com or (310) 839-6806.

Time To Cut Waste

By Ken Williams

Recently my wife and I attended a six part sustainable living workshop and I thought it would be helpful to pass along some of the highlights as we all move towards a “greener” and healthier community.

WASTE

Waste is never a pleasant topic, but burying our heads in the sand won't make the very real problems surrounding waste disappear. It is not a problem we can just “throw away.” Collectively improving awareness and behavioral patterns will have a great impact on managing our waste crisis.

Landfills are intended to store and prevent contamination—they do not degrade material. And unless oxygen and sunlight can reach those biodegradable items you've thoughtfully purchased (hard to do in a packed landfill), even those things won't decompose quickly. We might be wise to change the language from throwing things “away” to throwing things “over there.” Also, as I recently learned, LA's landfills are at near capacity. Continuing at our current disposal rate, all of LA's garbage will be loaded on trains and dumped in new landfills near Joshua Tree State Park by 2013. One can only imagine the problems of cost, hauling, and pollution associated with such an undertaking.

A great percentage of all this waste is food scraps. According to the USDA, over a quarter of the country's food—26 million tons—gets thrown away every year. Californians throw away more than 5 million tons of food scraps every year. Composting is a great means of reducing your food waste and great for your lawn and garden. Please visit www.composters.com, a resource site, for more information on how to kick start your home into a composting home.

While you're becoming a composter, take stock of the hazardous waste materials in your home/garage and make a plan to rid your home of these toxic elements. A few months back I rounded up all my old paints cans, cleaning fluids, pest sprays, old medications, old cologne and a box of dead batteries, loaded it in my trunk and drove up to the Household Hazardous Waste Center at UCLA. On Saturdays they will also take E-waste items, many of which contain mercury and other heavy metals (computers, old cell phones, electronic devices, etc.). With a new baby in the house, this project got put on the top of my to-do list. Please see www.888cleanla.com for the latest on hazardous and household waste removal.

Now that you're a composting pro and have vanquished your home of toxins, what else can you do to help curb our waste crisis? Glad you asked!

Bring your own reusable bags to the grocery store. Paper or plastic are woeful options when one considers the growing plastic gyre twice the size of Texas swirling around the Pacific choking marine life and the millions of trees annually shredded to keep up with paper bag demands. Get in the habit of bringing the reusable bags with you to the store. Sometimes I have to move my bags in the front seat with me because I too often will leave them behind in the trunk and only remember them at the check out counter—Doh!



Reducing waste means we have to alter our patterns and invoke these changes sooner than later. By reducing, reusing, and recycling, all of us can lend a hand to keep our neighborhood vibrant for us and for the next generation of Westside Villagers.

For more information on waste management, water conservation, or to take a “solar tour” of our home solar system, write or call me anytime:

Ken Williams – kalanwill@aol.com – 310-480-5504.

LID in L.A.

By Kristin Killey

Did you know...

- 100 million gallons of contaminated water and debris enter our storm drain system on a dry day and 10 billion contaminated gallons on a rainy day?
- Beach attendance is down 56% since 1983?
- This is the third year in a row Los Angeles is experiencing a water supply shortage? (I'll bet you've noticed your increasing water bills.)

Is anything being done about it? YES!

Low Impact Development, or “LID” as many refer to it. Heard of it? It is an ordinance that was introduced by Councilwoman Jan Perry and unanimously passed by the L.A. City Council this past December. The LID ordinance, is a way to reduce urban run off and its associated problems through building designs that manage this water as close to it’s source as possible. Essentially, rather than channeling all of the rain water off of a property quickly into the gutter and into the storm drain, picking up trash and pollutants along the way, the goal is to slowly, capture, and/or infiltrate as much of the water as possible on the site where it falls. This can be done in a variety of ways, including having less concrete covering the property, increasing the percentage of grass, gardens and trees, and using rain barrels to catch the water flowing from gutters for later use.

Soon this ordinance will help to recharge our depleted aquifers, reduce the pollutants urban runoff channels into the ocean, and increase the amount of green landscapes in residential and commercial development in Los Angeles.

How will this impact you?

While the City Attorney is still reviewing the actual language of the ordinance, it is likely that construction and renovation projects over 500 impervious square feet and remodels affecting over 50% of their current footprint will be required to incorporate LID requirements. If you are considering a home remodel, there are many options and methods available to fulfill LID requirements. Some materials and methods you may want to learn more about include:

- 1. Porous pavement which includes but is not limited to porous asphalt, porous concrete, ungrouted paving blocks and gravel.**
- 2. Downspout routing which includes cistern/rain barrels for capture and non-potable uses, and rain garden/planter box – direct roof downspouts to gardens or planter boxes that provide retention and treatment of storm water**
- 3. Disconnect impervious surfaces – slope driveways and other impervious surfaces that drain to pervious surfaces like grassy swale.**
- 4. Dry well – built to infiltrate storm water and sized to hold at least 200 gallons of water.**
- 5. Landscaping and landscape irrigation – planting trees near impervious surfaces to intercept rainfall in their leaves and irrigation systems that minimize water usage and eliminate dry-weather urban runoff.**
- 6. Greenroof – covering at least 50% of the roof area and used to retain and treat storm water.**

LID programs have been successfully launched in several U.S. states including Washington, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Maryland and Illinois. In 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that with just a few exceptions, the capital costs of LID projects were less than conventional water management controls. Program savings ranged from 15–80%. The L.A. budget could use that!

As a homeowner, using water capture methods can help you save money by spending fewer days watering your lawn. As a beach-goer, a cleaner ocean means less risk of bacterial infections from swimming, healthier ocean life, and less trash washed up onto the beach. As a Westside Village resident, you can look forward to a greener and cleaner neighborhood.

It is always good to be reminded that L.A. is working toward a sustainable future, and taking steps to make it happen.



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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