



# Westside Village News & Views

## 2008 WVCA Annual Meeting

On February 26th the Annual Meeting of the WVCA was held at St. John's Church—thank you very much to St. John's and its staff for being so welcoming and helpful.

Following the delicious buffet dinner catered by Baja Bud's, outgoing President Stephanie Johnson began the business portion of the meeting. She highlighted the many accomplishments of the Westside Village Civic Association in 2007. We revitalized the Neighborhood Watch Program, held a terrific Fall Festival with more than 500 attendees, made a \$5,000 grant to Charnock School's Wonder of Reading Library and held several tree plantings and tree care events. But—Stephanie emphasized that the Association Board is small and we are truly in need of more volunteer help. If you have an interest in volunteering or just want to learn ways you can help, please email me at [Richwvca@ca.rr.com](mailto:Richwvca@ca.rr.com).

We were fortunate to have Senior Lead Officer Juan Ceja and Councilman Bill Rosendahl attend our meeting. Councilman Weiss was represented by his Field Deputy Jennifer Badger.

Officer Ceja spoke about the rise of home burglaries and the benefits of a new, stronger Neighborhood Watch. Tanya Lach, David Graue and Guita Farin were thanked for revitalizing the Watch program and involving so many new folks. But, we still need additional block captains, so if you are interested in volunteering, please contact David Graue & Tanya Lach, our Neighborhood Watch Coordinators: via email at: [WestsideVillageWatch@ca.rr.com](mailto:WestsideVillageWatch@ca.rr.com), or by phone at: 310.592.6959. We need your help!

If you witness suspicious activity, please report it to the LAPD. Of particular interest in the recent crimes has been a stranger knocking at the door and, if someone answers, asking for a random name. If no one answers, the stranger and a partner-in-waiting quickly break in through a back door or window and ransack the house, taking everything they can in a short amount of time. Please be vigilant and help keep our neighborhood safe.

Councilman Bill Rosendahl spoke about issues of concern to our area: left hand turn signals, safety at LAX runways and parking meter increases to raise revenue. He discussed some of the problems related to the Santa Monica Airport, including the higher levels of toxicity due to the increased number of jet traffic hours. More news: the Palms Overpass is scheduled to be completed in May and the National underpass to be done by October; the Expo Line phase two is now being studied and meetings are being held to discuss the routes.

The Councilman, Officer Ceja and Field Deputy Badger took questions from the floor and tried to



LAPD Senior Lead  
Officer Juan Ceja

answer as many as possible within the time available. Firefighter Jeffrey Hudson spoke briefly, due to time constraints, about the Crisis Response Training at the Mar Vista Library—apologies to Mr. Hudson for the limits of our agenda. And, I thank all of our speakers for their time and participation.

Westside Village Civic Association Board members were presented with Certificates of

Appreciation (courtesy of Councilman Weiss) and outgoing President Stephanie Johnson was thanked for her hard work and many successes. New Directors Kristen Baldrige and Lisa Lepore were introduced and the slate of Officers and Directors were approved unopposed. Also, the revised constitution was approved.

Finally, in appreciation of her dedication and extraordinary leadership, Stephanie Johnson was presented with a gift certificate by the Board of Directors on behalf of the members of the Westside Village Civic Association. She received a rousing applause and the 2008 Annual Meeting was concluded.

*Richard Saltsman, President (Pro Tem)*

# Westside Village Neighborhood Watch Needs You

## Progress Report

We're now into the eighth month since the revival of the Neighborhood Watch program and we want to thank those that have made a significant contribution to making Westside Village a safer neighborhood.

We currently communicate with over 635 email addresses and several watch captains also hand deliver hard copies to those without email. More and more neighbors are reporting suspicious activity to the LAPD and we're getting more coverage from SLO Juan Ceja as he personally responds to calls in our neighborhood. He's also had unmarked cars in our neighborhood

watching for criminal behavior. As you may have noticed from the alerts, the number of home burglaries seems to have slowed down but there's been an increase in car burglaries during the night. Please make sure you're not leaving valuables in your vehicles.

The purpose of the Crime Alerts is to help our neighbors recognize what type of criminal activity is occurring around them so that they may have the chance to prevent it from happening to them. We hope that if you hear that a burglar got into your neighbor's house through an open window or back door, you will be reminded to be sure your windows and doors are locked. If you see someone's workbag was stolen from their car, you will remember to go out and bring in items left in your car. Or, if you hear of suspicious individuals going door to door, you will be more likely to ask for identification and look for signs of suspicious solicitation. The best way to prevent crime is to know what is happening in your neighborhood. So, whether it's an email that goes out to Westside Village or just talking with your neighbors, we encourage you to communicate and share your experiences and observations.

Please note, if you call SLO Ceja's cell phone to report suspicious activity and you get his voice mail, hang up and either call LAPD's main information line at 877.ASK.LAPD or Pacific Division's front desk at 310.482.6334 so they have an opportunity to respond to the tip. When Ceja is off duty he may not check his messages until he's back on duty days later.

## Dedicated Patrol for Westside Village

On March 3rd Security Service Systems increased the dedicated patrol to eight hours a day, Monday – Friday and two hours each day on the weekend. Initially we experienced several weeks without a home burglary but recently have had some that occurred on the weekend when the patrol has limited hours. We need more subscribers to increase

the patrol to seven days a week. Our ultimate goal is to have enough subscribers for 24-hour patrol to help reduce the overnight car burglaries. The more subscribers we have means the less it costs so encourage your neighbors to sign up. It costs less than a cup of coffee per day...how can we afford not to do this for our peace of mind!

The following are some of the services provided by SSS:

- 1) *Armed patrol officer in a clearly marked car that randomly patrols the area to prevent crime.*
- 2) *24-hour armed response to any subscriber's call or alarm system being triggered*
- 3) *Vacation service that checks your home while you're away, removing newspapers, mail & junk hangers.*
- 4) *Escort service – an officer will meet you when you come home.*
- 5) *Patrol signage posted at entry points into the area.*
- 6) *Detailed GPS report available indicating streets patrolled by time and date.*

Bernard Guinto is our new full-time patrol officer, so if you see him please introduce yourself plus it's also important for him to recognize who lives here and who doesn't belong. As another deterrent, SSS has offered to make warning signs that say Westside Village is protected by a Neighborhood Watch & dedicated patrol. We'll be contacting residents to get placement for these signs at the entry points into Westside Village.

To subscribe for the Westside Village Dedicated Patrol we encourage you to contact George Aceves of Security Service Systems at 310.477.2095 or [ssspatrol@aol.com](mailto:ssspatrol@aol.com).

## Are you on one of the Missing Blocks?

Out of the forty blocks within our community we presently have thirty-five watch captains confirmed, leaving five blocks without an active captain. We need your help, so if you are interested in volunteering or know of any potential candidates for the following blocks please contact the Neighborhood Watch. The block's missing watch captains are 3300 blk Bentley, 3400 blk Bentley, 3400 blk Kelton, 10800 blk Lawler & 3500 blk Veteran. We also have two blocks (3500 blk Bentley & 3200-3300 blk Greenfield) where the captains have requested to be replaced. Plus, the captain on the 3000-3100 blk of Bentley, with over 40 homes, is in need some of help updating her block list if you're able to give a hand.

We feel this block captain network is critical to the safety of Westside Village—not just from a crime perspective but also in case there is ever a disaster. When we have a major earthquake in Southern California for instance, we want to be able to have a network in place to help account for the residents of Westside Village because police and fire officials



## Ask Your Board

### Where can I take hazardous waste for recycling?

You can take hazardous waste materials to a S.A.F.E. Center for recycling. A S.A.F.E (Solvents, Automotive, Flammables and Electronics) Center is a permanent collection facility that accepts residential hazardous waste such as paint and solvents, used motor oil and filters, anti-freeze, other automotive fluids, cleaning products, pool and garden chemicals, aerosol cans, all medicine, automotive and household batteries, computers, monitors, printers, network equipment, cables, telephones, televisions, microwaves, video games, cell phones, radios, stereos, VCRs and electronic toys, fluorescent tubes and bulbs and mercury containing gadgets. It's quite an exhaustive list of what they accept. However, there are items they do not accept: business waste, ammunition, explosives, radioactive material, paper, computer software, biological waste or tires. They also do not accept bulky items such as furniture, refrigerators, washing machines, dryers or conventional ovens.

There are two recycling centers close by:

- 1) **UCLA, 500 Charles E. Young Dr. West in Westwood – Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 8:00am – 2:00pm (electronics only on Saturday)**
- 2) **Hyperion Plant, 7660 West Imperial Highway, Gate B in Playa Del Rey Saturday and Sunday from 9:00am – 3:00pm**

Please use this valuable service for your hazardous recycling needs. For more information, please call 1.800.98.TOXIC or visit their website at [www.lacity.org/san/index.htm](http://www.lacity.org/san/index.htm)

may not be able to respond to our area for up to five days or more. We will have to help ourselves and our neighbors. The more organized we are the more effectively we can help each other during a crisis.

Some of our current block captains still have not collected contact information from everyone on their blocks. If you haven't heard from your block captain in the past eight months please contact us at [WestsideVillageWatch@ca.rr.com](mailto:WestsideVillageWatch@ca.rr.com) or 310.592.6959 we will put you in touch with them.

#### **DAC / CERT**

While the Neighborhood Watch is focused on preventing crime we also recognize the importance of preparing our neighborhood in the event of an

emergency situation. On April 19th we organized a Disaster Awareness Course ("DAC") taught by firefighter Hudson who gave twenty-five neighbors the basics on how to better prepare themselves. On May 1st, over 25 neighbors take the next step by starting a seven week course to become "CERT" trained (Community Emergency Response Team). The class takes place every Thursday at the Palm's Recreation Center and will be instructed by Fire-fighter Sergio Mayora. Our goal is to have a CERT member on every block to look out for their neighbors when a disaster strikes. If you're interested in taking one of these classes or a CPR class, please contact the Neighborhood Watch so we can offer you more classes. We'll need to rely on one another in the event of a disaster so why not take some easy steps to do it safely.

Please contact the Neighborhood Watch at [WestsideVillageWatch@ca.rr.com](mailto:WestsideVillageWatch@ca.rr.com) or 310.592.6959 with any questions. We greatly appreciate your support.

### Expo Line Update—Westside Rail Mass Transit is Becoming a Reality

The first phase of the Expo Line to Culver City, with a western terminus at Venice/Robertson, is scheduled for opening in 2010 and already construction can be observed for those wishing to see its progress. The second phase from Culver City to Santa Monica, tentatively scheduled for opening in 2014-15, is in the planning stages and will have a draft EIR out in a few months.

There are two potential routings between Venice/Robertson and Exposition and Sepulveda, both the Rail Right of Way (ROW) and Venice/Sepulveda routings, that are being evaluated by the Expo Line Construction Authority. There are several routing and station issues in Santa Monica as well, but that is beyond the scope of this article, but can be researched (along with an opportunity for you to weigh in) at [www.buildexpo.org](http://www.buildexpo.org). A final decision of the routing issues by the Authority and by Metro is planned by the end of this year.

Westside Village input was fundamental in past Expo Line routing decisions, and your input is again encouraged. Should the Venice/Sepulveda routing occur, stations near us would include Venice/Overland, Venice/Sepulveda and National/Sepulveda with an elevated line predominating in the medians of both boulevards.

The ROW routing by/through Cheviot Hills and Rancho Park is now projected to have stations near us at National/Motor and Exposition/Westwood (but with parking access from Overland as well).

The Authority is still evaluating whether Overland and Sepulveda would be elevated (grade-separated) or be at street-level (at-grade). There is a bikeway and park-like landscaping also planned for the ROW segment.

Key comparisons of the two routes include ridership (ROW routing with 41,400 projected daily riders vs. 34,700 for the Venice/Sepulveda routing), Santa Monica/Downtown L.A. transit time (ROW routing has 44 min vs. 49 min. for the Venice/Sepulveda routing), and cost (ROW routing is \$1.6 billion vs. \$2.0 billion for the Venice/Sepulveda routing).

Both routings tentatively have stations at Exposition/Sepulveda, although CD11 Councilmember Bill Rosendahl favors a station at Pico/Sawtelle instead to better serve the Pico Blvd. corridor. The Mar Vista Community Council Transportation/Infrastructure Committee just passed a resolution to the MVCC Board that also supports a Pico/Sawtelle station, as well as continued support for the ROW routing with elevations at Overland, Westwood and Sepulveda to minimize interference with car traffic, and with sufficient parking and other amenities to enhance Expo Line access and convenience while mitigating its impact upon neighboring communities.

To date, the WVCA has also come out in favor of the ROW routing, and we strongly encourage you to provide your own input in the months to come.

## Community Resources for Seniors

Once a part of Rancho La Ballona, Westside Village was created in the early 1940's by developer Fritz Burns. For many years Westside Village was considered the best kept secret in Los Angeles. We have been discovered and a younger generation is changing the complexion of village life.

Television, newspapers and magazines regale us with ads for Botox and formulas for smoothing wrinkles. Little has been said about the real concerns of the seniors who own their homes and still live here. Many of the senior residents want to live out their retirement in their homes among the new arrivals but with available resources of information concerning the problems they face in their golden years.

A few weeks ago a group of seniors met to discuss the problems and the needs of the seniors in Westside Village. Among the topics discussed was the need for a resource center for local dissemination of information on resources for senior citizens.

We learned that the City of Los Angeles has sixteen multipurpose senior citizen centers and 100 plus

community dining centers throughout the city. These centers serve as focal points for senior services including but not limited to Information and Assistance, Adult Day Support and Care Management. Also, we learned there are a multitude of non-governmental organizations providing help with some aspect of the requirements of elder citizens, such as how to find a caregiver or how to modify the kitchen for a person in a wheelchair.

We are compiling a list of telephone numbers and addresses for these services and will post them on the WVCA website [www.westsidevillage.org](http://www.westsidevillage.org)

It is the consensus of this small group to encourage local blocks to form small groups in order to bring the information in closer proximity to those needing the information and to share experiences. This would include younger residents who are functioning as a care provider for a relative or neighbor.

For more information, call Ron Meza 310.475.4156 ([rmz@msn.com](mailto:rmz@msn.com)) or Marie Wallace 310.837.0839 ([everettandmarie@earthlink.net](mailto:everettandmarie@earthlink.net))



### **Please let us know what you think.**

If you wish to contribute to News and Views, please email us at [westsidevillageboard@yahoo.com](mailto:westsidevillageboard@yahoo.com)  
Visit us at [www.westsidevillage.org](http://www.westsidevillage.org)

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