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Beverlywood



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Moving right along

By Ben Lee

Being a realtor means that I see a lot of houses. Daily. Actually, in most cases, hourly. This can be considered either good or bad, depending on how you look at it. What's good is: I have an unparalleled knowledge of what's the latest in all things architecture, design, landscaping, in-home technology, finishes, layouts and more. Name the trend and I can almost guarantee that I first saw it long before it was widely used or en vogue. Now, how can this first-hand real estate experience be construed as a negative? I guess you'd have to ask my wife. She would probably tell you that back when I was just starting out, she read an article that she quickly made me confirm whether or not it was actually true. It stated that, on average, most realtors stay in their homes for only three years before getting the urge to move on. It could've been worse—at least it didn't say realtors move on from their wives after three years! And only time would prove that article to be basically correct. My family has been in our current house for a record five wonderful years and anyone who knows us isn't too surprised to learn we're moving this month. To the uninitiated, though, there can be some shock upon hearing we're moving on to the next place. None of the typical reasons for selling and buying really applied to us. We love our house and most would consider it a real gem of a property. It was featured on the website Houzz.com and in the magazine Real Simple. It's great for entertaining and has been the faithful backdrop to hundreds of get-togethers



over the last five years. We weren't looking to either go bigger or downsize. We love our neighborhood and had no desire to go somewhere new. We really hate packing and unpacking.

So, why go? I guess a better question really is: Why not? I love the creative process of designing a home from the ground up. I really enjoy joining the collaboration between contractor, architect, landscaper and interior decorator. I like inhabiting homes of specific styles. So far we've gone from California bungalow to Spanish to

Nantucket/Traditional and our next will be Modern. I like a change of scenery and the chance to improve upon my previous work.

The roughest part of moving so many different times is the laborious process of shedding material possessions. I'm terrible at it. Every time we move, I can't bring myself to throw anything away and tell myself I'll deal with whatever knick-knacks that have been gathering dust on the shelf once we get settled in to the new place. No big shocker: that never happens. We

typically just drag boxes of belongings from one place to the next, bemoaning the habit of humans for amassing so many silly items in the first place yet paralyzed from doing anything productive about it.

The other potential negative to this habit of moving is the idea that we're not providing our children with that solid foundation of having just one family home. A few years ago I was worried about this so I asked my sons how they felt about moving every couple of years and if not having just one home bothered them. I was relieved and touched by their unanimous answer. They said that Cheviot Hills is their home (and by extension Rancho Park their backyard). To them, the actual, physical house matters less than just continuing to be a part of this neighborhood they call home. So that made me feel better about my habit of moving the family around. And, it also made me realize that there's a benefit to them learning about how houses get built and the decisions that go into them. They seem to have caught the similar bug and get a kick out of the building process they've literally been raised with.

So, goodbye to our old house and hello to our new one. Please come by and say hello! But no need to get too attached because it won't be long before we're packing up and moving once again. While it may be true that there's no place like home, the same can be said for: 'Variety is the spice of life.' And even if our houses change shape, as long as my family is with me, home is most definitely where the heart is.



My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Brentwood - ACTIVE!

5 Bed / 6 Bath 10,668 Sq. Ft. Lot



224 N Kenter Ave – \$3,399,000

A vast property that incorporates elements of traditional and colonial styles, this 5 bedroom/6 bath estate in Brentwood has a multitude of features to please any potential buyer. Inside you'll find a formal living room with an abundance of light, hardwood floors, intricate crowned moldings and fireplace. There's a formal dining room that connects to the kitchen and also opens to a private, exterior courtyard. Upstairs you'll find the generously sized bedrooms, bathrooms and walk-in closets. In addition, there is a downstairs finished basement with access to the two-car garage. In the coveted Kenter Canyon Charter Elementary School district, this home is a definite must see!

Cheviot Hills - IN ESCROW

4 Bed / 3 Bath 2,300 Sq. Ft., 6,505 Sq. Ft. Lot



10552 Cheviot Dr – \$1,499,000

Presenting a storybook Tudor located on a large corner lot in the Overland Avenue School District, this 4 bedroom / 3 bath much-loved family home is on the market for the first time in generations. Built in 1929 and perched high above the neighborhood, this home has a downstairs private suite, perfect for guests, in-laws or to be used as a den. The main floor of the house offers hardwood floors, crowned moldings, a romantic fireplace in the living room and very pretty views of the nearby homes and treetops. There is a formal dining room adorned with picturesque leaded glass windows and the kitchen and breakfast nook overlook the quaint upper-level courtyard.

Beverlywood - IN ESCROW

3 Bed / 3 Bath 2,245 Sq. Ft.



2407 Bagley Ave – \$1,875,000

Warm and inviting, this traditional style is as charming as it is efficient. Perched above one of the most family friendly streets in the neighborhood. Oversized windows in every room allows for natural light to stream in from every corner. Hardwood floors, wainscoting and crowned moldings shape the personality of the formal dining room and living room. The kitchen offers attractive granite counters, stainless refrigerator and glass cabinetry. Located in the award winning Castle Heights Elementary school district, this winsome home is sure to bring comfort and happiness to whoever inhabits it next.

Cheviot Hills - ACTIVE!

4 Bed / 4.5 Bath 3,075 Sq. Ft.



2826 Medill Place – \$2,999,000 Great new price!

This is a rare opportunity to inhabit an authentic yet updated mid-century modern dream home with arguably one of the most breathtaking views in all of Cheviot Hills. Perfect for the connoisseur who appreciates the beauty and style of 1950's architecture yet with a modern-day sensibility. High ceilings and open dining and living spaces punctuated by floor to ceiling glass doors allows for light to pour in from every angle. Located in the award winning Castle Heights School district, this once-in-a-lifetime chance to call such a special property 'home' should not be missed.

Cheviot Hills - ACTIVE!

5 Bed / 6.5 Bath



2715 Forrester Dr – \$5,299,000 Great new price!

A luxurious Hamptons retreat on the most coveted street in Cheviot Hills, impeccably designed and newly constructed estate by Diamond West Distinctive Homes. Artfully detailed wainscoting and intricate custom built-ins. Greeted by a formal living room with fireplace and bay window, pass the formal dining room with butler's pantry to enter the gorgeous gourmet kitchen. This dazzling property, unmatched in location is truly an opportunity that cannot be missed.

Beverly Hills

SOLD

5 Bed / 3 Bath

1142 S Camden Dr

Undisclosed Price

Restored Spanish in Beverly Hills School District



Cheviot Hills

SOLD

3 Bed / 2.5 Bath

3120 Earlmarr Dr

\$2,300,000

One story traditional with pool in prime Cheviot Hills location.



Pacific Palisades - IN ESCROW

5 Bed / 4 Bath 4,100 Sq. Ft., 8,276 Sq. Ft. Lot



515 Muskingum Ave – \$3,195,000 Great new price!

Newer Mediterranean set on a quiet loop street with unobstructed ocean, canyon & mountain views. Bright & dramatic entry leads to wide open living & family rooms with bar/lounge area. Step down to the spacious dining off center-island kitchen – all opening up to huge entertaining deck & views. Five large bedrooms, 4 baths + several balconies, view decks & covered patios. Lower level storage area, etc. (additional 1,200 sq. ft.) with 12-ft. ceiling opens to patio & view.

Cheviot Hills - ACTIVE!

5 Bed / 5 Bath 3,842 Sq. Ft., 7,444 Sq. Ft. Lot



2742 Forrester Dr – \$3,295,000

A once-in-a-generation chance to own this authentic gorgeous, Spanish-style, 5 bedroom/5 bath hacienda. It's a remarkable true beauty with a palatial entry hall and museum-style 2 story wood-beam living room. Virtually all details are original from its inception in 1929: intricately designed stained glass windows, crystal doorknobs, exposed wooden beams, coved ceilings and doorways, wrought iron banisters alongside the sweeping, dramatic staircase. The bathrooms present museum quality, bright and beautiful Spanish tile sorely missing from homes constructed today. Located in the award-winning Castle Heights Elementary School district.

Beverlywood happenings

March Showers bring April...

By Ben Lee

FLOWERS! There has been so much needed rain drenching our fair city, now that it's starting to finally dry out a bit, you really ought to treat yourself to checking out the gardens at the Getty Center. I decided to take my three boys there, not just for a cultural outing, but also as an excuse to see all the beautiful landscaping in bloom. The exercise was somewhat lost on three kids who were rather disappointed to be at a museum instead of watching the Black Panther, however, they

couldn't deny how impressive the views from so high up above were. Far reaching vistas not just of the gardens but (what felt like) the entire stretch of the 405 freeway to the south, downtown to the east and the ocean to the west. Nothing makes one appreciate the beauty of Los Angeles more than when perched high above it. To take an afternoon to get out of the congestion, smog and traffic was a delightful change of pace and if you haven't visited the Getty lately, I highly recommend taking advantage of this (almost free) LA institution.



Circle of Giving

By Ben Lee

If you ever feel like you want make a real difference in the lives of under privileged women and girls, you may want to consider joining the Los Angeles Giving Circle. In 2010, Cheviot Hills resident Helen MacKinnon decided to see if many donations pooled together could create a greater financial impact to benefit the charities

that support underserved women and girls. And so, the Los Angeles Giving Circle was born. Local philanthropists wanting to support worthy causes combine charitable

donations to create a larger sum to be allocated across a number of organizations. Since its inception, the LA Giving Circle has given away over five hundred thousand dollars to causes benefitting women and girls. There is also a grants committee that goes beyond collecting and donating money. These volunteers analyze the many grant requests that come through annually and help decide where funds will go. This year, the LA Giving Circle will be granting \$150,000. If you would like to donate your time and/or finances to this altruistic organization, please visit the website for more information: www.losangelesgivingcircle.org. To donate, please go to www.libertyhill.org/lagc.



A Raffle worth featuring

By Ben Lee

Thank you to all who entered the raffle to win a \$50 gift card to Eataly. We had an unprecedented number of entrants this month and congratulations go to Dawn Urbont, you are the lucky winner! We hope you enjoy spending your \$50 gift card at one of the most delicious Italian restaurants/marketplaces in all of Los Angeles. To all those who entered but sadly didn't win, don't



worry because there's always another raffle around the corner. This month we are giving away a \$50 gift card to Landmark Theaters. One of our favorite things to do is share a bucket of popcorn and watch a movie at this neighborhood theater where we always seem to run into people we know. To enter, simply email: ben@benleeproperties.com and write 'MOVIE' in the subject line. That's it! We'll pick a winner at random on April 25th and notify you soon after. Thanks and good luck!

Westside Places

By Michael Harris

The Will Rogers State Park is located in the Pacific Palisades. It was originally the home of the humorist Will Rogers and the park today includes hiking trails and the chance to see his home and its grounds. There is the only full sized polo field in the area where games are still played and can be watched on

Sunday afternoons when the horsey set is in attendance. This pleasant retreat is close by and worth a visit to see how Will Rogers relaxed, roped and lived a cowboy's dream on the Westside. The Rogers home which has been restored dates from the 1920s. It became a State Park in 1944 after Mr. Rogers' death. Many movies have been filmed there including one of the Star Trek features.



If you enjoy reading these vignettes each month, you may want to check out my father-in-law's book, Westside Stories. It's a memoir/history of growing up on the Westside of Los Angeles in the 1940s and 1950s with great photos, anecdotes and stories. Perfect for the history buff/enthusiast in your family! It's available for purchase on Amazon, search Westside Stories by Michael Harris.