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Council Culture

By Ben Lee

It's not really in my nature to get political. I tend to keep my head down, do my work, ignore the chatter and move forward. So it was out of my comfort zone to attend two events last month; first a "Meet & Greet," for City Council nominee Katy Yaroslavsky followed by a panel of the four candidates running to represent District 5 (that's us). It's easy to gloss over these smaller, city-level elections in favor of the glitzier national ones. I'll admit I don't always vote when the ballot is so localized, waiting instead for the bigger elections with more recognizable names. But after some time, you realize that the local elections are often more impacting than whoever is running for President. One of the problems I've noticed is unless you're willing to put in the work and really get to know who the candidates are, you're in a sense throwing away your vote because you don't know anything about whose box you're checking on the ballot.

The City Council plays an integral role in our city. Paul Koretz had represented our area for several years, and while he had a few fans, there were many more constituents who were thoroughly frustrated by the job he was doing. To be fair, though, it sounds like a difficult, thankless job in which he was most likely met with angry, irritated constituents complaining



about a multitude of issues that were not getting addressed. I imagine the list of problems is triple the length of actual solutions and no matter how altruistic the reasons of becoming a civil servant may be, it's easy to leave the position feeling depleted and frustrated by lack of action, too. So, to that end, I applaud anyone who is attempting to be elected and take on this role next. It's not an easy thing to do but from what I witnessed, the candidates all seem to have the energy and passion to do the job well.

But what exactly is the job in the first place? (and don't quote me, I'm no expert!) In broad strokes, the City Council is responsible for creating and

enacting laws for the city. They're like the legislative and judicial branch all in one. Each councilmember represents his/her district and together they try to create laws and budgets to benefit their constituents. The mayor works closely with the council and it's imperative that councilmembers work together in order to create consensus to get the mayor on board with what they want to do.

Councilmembers also take existing city laws and budgets and try to massage them into better serving their community. Because the city of Los Angeles is so huge, our councilmembers often need to work with various L.A. County organizations, reaching across different individual bureaucracies to access resources. They also should be well versed in acquiring available funds on the state and federal levels to help pay for what we need.

It was interesting to hear the panel of candidates tackle the biggest issues currently facing our District 5. They each had about ninety seconds to address everything from how to handle the increasing homeless problem; how to create more affordable housing; how to fix traffic headaches and ensure pedestrian safety; how to tackle climate change; how to increase/decrease the roles of police officers; and basically how to better the lives of millions of people from east of the 405 to Koreatown and south of Mulholland to Palms. It's a huge undertaking and whoever gets the job definitely has his/her work cut out for them.

But now comes the fun part!

Between today and the primary on June 7, take a minute to research the four candidates and see who resonates closest with you and who you would like to be your representative on the City Council. Here are the four people running: Jimmy Biblarz, Scott Epstein, Katy Young Yaroslavsky and Sam Yebri. They each have comprehensive websites that detail their professional backgrounds, government experience, where they stand on the issues and how they'll go about solving them. Then, you may want to find out the next time they're speaking and try to catch them in person. At the event we attended for Katy Yaroslavsky, we talked at length about crime and how it feels as though the criminals are emboldened to commit these acts because there doesn't seem to be any real consequences to their actions. She told me about her plan to get more support for police officers and reallocate the mental health and homeless calls to qualified professionals in those fields, thereby allowing officers to patrol more often, arrive quicker and concentrate on why they wanted to be police officers in the first place: to keep our neighborhoods safe.

I wish good luck to Katy and all the other candidates. They are taking on a herculean task by just running for this particular office and no matter who ultimately wins, I'm glad there are those willing to put themselves out there just to help make our city (and community within the city) a better place for all.



BEN, DOUG SCOTTI, AND KATY YAROSLOVSKY

My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Marina Del Rey - NEW LISTING!



4275 Corinth Ave \$2,650,000

4 Beds/4 Bath 3,763 Sq. Ft., 11,388 Sq. Ft. Lot

Situated on a massive corner lot in a quiet Culver City neighborhood. Surrounded by an orchard of mature trees that include guava, avocado, pomegranate and a variety of citrus, the foliage provides both privacy and farm-to-table nourishment. The house has a vast entertaining space on the entry level as well as convenient/private office scenarios for those who opt or need to work from home. With limitless appeal in an enviable location conveniently located near the shops, restaurants and studios of Culver City, seize this phenomenal opportunity to reimagine a true showplace.

Cheviot Hills - FOR SALE!



– GLENBARR –

Best Location in the Neighborhood!

6 Beds/8 Bath 7,500 Sq. Ft., 8,500 Sq. Ft. Lot

You may be curious about the new construction home being built on Glenbarr. Call Ben tel:3107046580 or send him an email mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com to learn more about this spectacular property.

Cheviot Hills - FOR SALE!



– LORENZO –

Best Location in the Neighborhood!

6 Beds/8 Bath 7,500 Sq. Ft., 8,500 Sq. Ft. Lot

You may be curious about the new construction home being built on Lorenzo. Call Ben tel:3107046580 or send him an email mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com to learn more about this stunning property.

Westwood - FOR LEASE!



1323 Club View Dr Offered For Lease
Furnished or Unfurnished \$28,000/month

6 Beds/7 Baths 4,839 Sq. Ft. - 11,742 Sq. Ft.

A breathtaking property that effortlessly blends a contemporary style with old-school Hollywood glamour. The large bedrooms are en suite with walk-in closets and stylish bathrooms. This home provides additional possibilities for at-home offices, and/or gym and if more space is needed, there's a convenient finished basement with built-ins for storage.

Santa Monica - GREAT NEW PRICE!



141 Hollister Ave for lease at \$30,000/month

5 Beds/6 Baths 5,000 Sq. Ft.

Steps from Prime Santa Monica Beach! Gorgeous new 2020 construction, state-of-the-art masterpiece mere moments from the beach. The kitchen opens to the sophisticated and drought-resistant landscaped backyard. There are sliding pocket doors that completely open to an outdoor side deck dining area, ideal for parties al fresco. Luxe master has treetop views, walk-in closet and 5-star bath. 900 sq. ft. rooftop deck with firepit and hot tub.

Cheviot Hills - IN ESCROW!



10440 Lorenzo Pl \$4,995,000

4 Beds/5 Bath 4,585 Sq. Ft., 9,001 Sq. Ft. Lot

Stunning Mediterranean style home has been completely remodeled and is absolutely gorgeous. Sweeping, unobstructed view of Rancho Park Golf Course; this home's vast interior is open, masterfully constructed and basks in the glow of an abundance of natural light. The backyard boasts a swimming pool, an antique outdoor shower, designer tile artwork, covered patio with TV for al fresco dining and entertaining, built-in BBQ.

Beverlywood - SOLD!



2030 Castle Heights Ave \$1,995,000

3 Beds/2 Bath 1,980 Sq. Ft., 7,281 Sq. Ft. Lot

Classic traditional style home beautifully maintained with hardwood floors and crown moldings throughout. Generous open plan kitchen with breakfast area and stainless-steel appliances. 3 bedrooms and 2 original tiled baths. Central heat and air. Laundry room with newer washer/dryer. Light and bright with large windows in every room. Lush private backyard with fruit trees, natural bluestone patio and grassy yard.

Cheviot Hills - SOLD! (over the list price in multiple offers)



3029 Motor Ave \$2,999,000

5 Beds/5 Bath 3,010 Sq. Ft., 6,985 Sq. Ft. Lot

Seize the unique opportunity to be the second owners of this luxurious home that is less than a decade old. State-of-the-art craftsmanship and fine attention to detail created this stately 5 bedroom/5 bath exquisite estate in Cheviot Hills. Surrounded by lush foliage and totally private, this immaculate home in the highly coveted Overland Avenue School District must be seen to be believed!

Beverlywood happenings

Coffee With A Cop

By Ben Lee

Did you know that from time to time our local police officers will hold meet and greets with neighbors? Earlier in the month, friends came out to Rancho Park to say hello and ask questions of our Senior Lead Officer Christopher Baker and his associates. Long time Cheviot Hills resident and legal scholar Laurie Levinson (pictured here) was on hand along with dozens of other

neighbors. According to Beverlywood resident and LAPD volunteer Rick Solomon (who graciously provided the coffee), questions ranged from concerns regarding home break-ins, vehicle thefts/catalytic converters and school security. All in all, a pleasant morning in the park with our friendly neighborhood police officers. To find out when the next event will be, you can call or email Officer Baker: (310) 444-0740 or 39796@lapd.online.



B.R.A.K.E.S.

By Ben Lee

Recently got the chance to take my two teenaged drivers to B.R.A.K.E.S. which stands for Be Responsible and Keep Everyone Safe. BRAKES is a tactical driving course (primarily for teens but anyone can attend) held out at the Fontana Racetrack and is designed to help young drivers navigate complicated and arduous road conditions through obstacle courses and other challenges. It's a truly worthwhile experience designed to keep kids safe on the road. While a fun time was certainly had by all, the inspiration for the class was built from tragedy. Famed racecar driver Doug Herbert lost his

two sons in a horrific car crash while one son was driving and the other was a passenger. Since that terrible and fateful day in 2008, Doug has devoted his life to teaching young drivers ways to stay safe behind the wheel. His team runs weekend courses all over the country, free of charge (a deposit is needed to reserve a spot and it's recommended to donate that at the end of the day, should you choose). Thank you to neighbor Ira Chester for recommending my boys take the class. I'm so glad they did. If you would like to learn more and register for the next time BRAKES is in town, I can't recommend the experience highly enough. www.putonthebrakes.org



RAFFLE

By Ben Lee

Thank you to all those who entered our raffle to win a \$50 gift card to Pitfire Pizza. We had an overwhelming number of entries and the lucky winner this month is: Stan Schloss. Congratulations, Stan! Hope you enjoy all the delicious food from this neighborhood favorite restaurant. We were happy to see Cheviot resident and last month's winner Dr. Jack Wetter enjoy his meal from Holy Cow BBQ! To all

those who entered and didn't win, don't worry! We always have another chance right around the corner. This month, in honor of April being my wife's birthday month, we are raffling off a \$100 gift card to her favorite birthday dinner spot: Lawry's the Prime Rib! To enter, simply send an email to ben@benleeproperties.com and write "LAWRYS" in the subject line. That's it! We'll pick a winner at the end of the month and notify you via email. Good luck!

