



Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

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Join the Club

By Ben Lee

When was the last time you attended your local Homeowners' Association meeting? I know- it's been a while for me, too. In fact- I can't say for certain if I have ever gone to one in all my years of belonging to a handful of different HOAs while living in Cheviot. At the end of a long day, the last thing I'd want to do would be to voluntarily endure yet another meeting, especially as contentious as what I'd imagine the HOA meeting would be.

However, I come to you today as a proud new convert. I went to the most recent HOA meeting at Vista del Mar and I have a newfound respect for getting more involved in the inner workings of government on its most local level.

First off, much respect to the neighbors who volunteer their time to serve on these types of boards. It's time consuming and takes an exorbitant amount of patience and commitment. More often than not, these men and women face a lot of angry, irritated residents who are convinced their problems are the only ones that really matter. These board members likely don't get much out of their terms of service other than a lot of headaches. Yet, they're doing it for the good of our shared community and for that reason alone, they deserve our gratitude.

What's interesting about attending a meeting once in a while is you get a real sense of what's happening in our neighborhood beyond our personal interests. For instance, you can ask me about any house in the neighborhood that has changed hands for the last 10 years and I'll likely know who bought it, who sold it and how much it went for. But if you asked me about the latest burglary a few blocks away, why the power blinks in and out for no apparent reason, or the latest commercial developments on Pico or Robertson, I might feign some knowledge but I'm usually pretty clueless about the details.

But education is gained through attending local neighborhood meetings and I'll now share with you some of the interesting tidbits that I learned.

Our city Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky was first to speak. She looked a little tired after what I imagine was a busy day however steeled herself to bravely face her constituents. I guess the citizens who choose to attend these types of gatherings have some rather strong opinions and how often do they find themselves in the same room as their elected representative? But exchanges stayed polite. The most pressing topic was the homeless problem and Katy said she's working with Mayor Bass's office to get these people sheltered. Beds are few and far between and using taxpayer's funds for hotel rooms isn't sustainable, but she's committed to getting as many

people off the streets as respectfully and quickly as possible. She spoke about the Purple metro line construction and hopes eventual high-rise housing units are built around the metro stops and jobs in District 5 to reduce traffic and congestion on the streets. Katy is trying to be proactive regarding public safety and increase the budget for police funding. She is available if there are problems that she (or her trusty staff) can help address and hopefully solve: Councilmember. Yaroslavsky@lacity.org

After Katy was done speaking, she made a beeline for the exit and Chris Baker, the lead officer for our district, took the stage. Officer Baker told the crowd that what's great about our neighborhood is: violent crime isn't a problem (thank goodness!). Even non-violent crimes decreased this year from what he saw in 2022. However, residential burglaries certainly occur, and he had a few helpful tips to try and prevent them from happening. Chris really likes video doorbell systems like Ring. He also suggests responding when someone is knocking at your door (instead of pretending you're not home). He cautions against opening the door to strangers, however, if a person is there you should respond over the microphone or from behind your locked door. Burglars prefer it when no one is home so if you respond, they're more likely to move along. If you're not home, leave a few lights on as well as a TV or two. The noise deters would-be criminals.

Officer Baker hopes residents create neighborhood watch groups with block captains. Homeowner Association Board member Cindy Kane has helped organize these groups and is an expert in community safety. It's a simple idea: get to know your neighbors and be on the lookout to protect one another. The captain can create a group text chain so that if someone on the block needs a hand, a nearby neighbor can help. Also, if you know your neighbors, you can better recognize strangers lurking around in what may be out of the norm or suspicious. Cindy is available to get you started if you're interested in being a safety monitor for your block: neighborhoodwatch@cheviothills.org

A few other points of interest according to Officer Baker: there is plan in the works to create an off-leash dog park at Cheviot however until that happens, keep your pups on their leads because otherwise you'll get a ticket. Police officers will start to enforce the speed limit on Motor more so be aware of how fast you're going otherwise you may be cited. He mentioned that there'll also be a catalytic converter etching event in the park sometime this summer. The date hasn't been set yet but if you'd like to be notified you can contact me (ben@benleeproperties.com) and I'll



keep you posted. I told him I'd contribute an ice cream truck to sweeten the event. Here's Chris Baker's email to keep on hand, too: 39796@lapd.online

After Chris' talk, we were treated to an uplifting success story courtesy of Margaret Gillespie who co-manages the non-profit West Los Angeles Homeless (WLAH). She shared how easily and quickly well-meaning and hardworking individuals can find themselves suddenly homeless and on the streets. For those who need assistance, one of the nice things WLAH does is provides loans to keep people who may not have enough cash on hand to pay for first/last month's rent and security deposit. Margaret shared how WLAH helps keep already housed individuals in their homes and shared a happy story how recently one gentleman who was forced to move out of his apartment was able to gain access to another one thanks to the loan provided

by WLAH.

The final speaker of the evening, Lena Wilson, spoke on behalf of the venue, Vista del Mar. She walked us through a brief history of the facility, how it helps hundreds of kids-in-need in a variety of different ways and highlighted it's emerging partnership with the Angel City soccer league, with a plan to provide a practice facility for the athletes on the Vista del Mar campus.

The evening concluded by electing a new group of board members and on behalf of the thousands of residents who don't want to do it, thank you for stepping up. Bottom line: I'm not saying attending a meeting will be the most exciting night of your life but it feels good to participate, get a bit more involved and learn about what's happening in the community we all share. Hope to see you at the next one!

My featured listings

Santa Monica – NEW LISTING!



1027 Ashland Ave - \$2,995,000

3 Beds/2 Bath 1,518 Sq. Ft., 8,528 Sq. Ft. R2 Lot

Stunning like-new remodel in a quaint pocket of Santa Monica's Sunset Park, mere blocks from the beach and moments from the shops and restaurants of Ocean Park Boulevard and Main Street. Exquisite 3 bedroom/2 bathroom, 1,518 sq ft home on a MASSIVE R2 8,528 sq ft lot! Beautifully designed and inspired by the sand and shore, the home boasts beachy hardwood floors, colorful blue accents, bright and airy bedrooms with large closets. French doors lead to the enormous backyard and allow natural light to flood the interior space. The open kitchen has Frigidaire stainless steel appliances, walk-in pantry, banquette seating and extensive storage. The primary suite features a large walk-in closet and beautiful bathroom with sunken tub. This lot is so large, and favorable zoning provides the rare opportunity to BUILD UNITS OR ADDITIONAL STRUCTURES behind the main house with the possibility to subdivide. A must see!

Cheviot Hills – FOR SALE OR LEASE!



9825 Altman Ave - \$3,995,000 or \$16,000 p/mo.

5 Beds/5.5 Bath 3,539 Sq. Ft., 6,677 Sq. Ft. Lot

Nestled within the natural beauty of a rustic, quiet cul-de-sac in Cheviot Hills, this brand new construction on Altman Avenue is a hidden neighborhood gem. Five bedrooms, five and a half bathrooms and exclusive in its luxury and craftsmanship, every detail of this beautiful home has been thoughtfully considered. Personal touches that include coffered ceilings and fireplace in the formal Living Room, colorful walls and classic finishes provide personality. The private, grand backyard is freshly landscaped, surrounded by trees and has both patio and grass areas, perfect for parties. Upstairs are four of the five bedrooms and each are en suite with large closets and far-reaching, beautiful views. Upstairs laundry room, landing lounge with built in desks, two-car attached garage, in-wall wine display and an abundance of smart storage solutions. Located in close proximity to the award winning Cheviot Hills Elementary School, come see this handsome home today.

Crestview - COMING SOON!



8920 Cadillac Avenue \$2,049,000

3 Beds/3 Bath - 1,816 Sq. Ft., 4,242 Sq. Ft. Lot
with 1 Bed/1 Bath ADU

Beverlywood - NEW LEASE LISTING!



1153 S. Clark Drive \$11,995.00 p/mo.

4 Beds/4.5 Bath - 3,000 Sq. Ft., 6,249 Sq. Ft. Lot

Beverlywood - COMING SOON FOR LEASE!



9220 Monte Mar Drive \$8,000.00 p/mo.

3 Beds/4 Bath - 2,068 Sq. Ft., 6,649 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - LEASED! *Dream Home*



10422 Lorenzo Pl \$25,000 per/mo.
6 Beds/6 Bath - 6,600 Sq. Ft., 8,100 Sq. Ft. Lot

Westchester - SOLD!



6404 W 85th St \$1,199,000
2 Beds/1 Bath - 1,153 Sq. Ft. Lot

Manhattan Beach - SOLD!



3528 Walnut Ave \$3,195,000 - List Price
5 Beds/3.5 Bath - 2,790 Sq. Ft., 4,645 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills happenings

Westside Stories



By Ben Lee

Did you know that Rancho Park Golf Course was once home to the Los Angeles Open? (Starting in 1956, Rancho hosted it 17 times). According to my father-in-law's book, More Westside Stories, the locals loved when Rancho would host because not only could amateurs watch the pros tackle the same course they had just played on mere weeks before, but to get ready for the tournament, the entire course would undergo a thorough beautifying makeover. "...the time money and effort to ready a course for a nationally televised tournament provides local amateurs with first-class conditions thereafter. The uniformity of the grass on the fairways, the difficulty of the rough, the depth of the sand in the traps of the rough...and

the quality of the greens provide high level consistency for months beyond the tournament." Legendary golfer Jack Nicklaus made his debut at the LA Open in 1962 but never won the tournament. Arnold Palmer, however, won three times, all at Rancho Park: 1963, 1966 and 1967. Even though the LA Open moved to the Riviera Country Club in 1973, Cheviot Hills can take pride in the fact that golf's glory days happened right in our own front yard. So the next time you drink an ice cold Arnold Palmer this summer, imagine he was doing the same thing, right on the golf course we know and love. To learn more fun, historical facts about Los Angeles' Westside check out More Westside Stories by Michael Harris. It can be purchased by contacting his brother and publisher Jeff Harris: hrmg@mac.com

Travel Tips

By Ben Lee

The NY Times recently published a handful of etiquette rules for airline travel, according to veteran flight attendant and author Kristie Koerber. With thanks to Kristie, here is a modified list of her do's/don'ts when you take to the friendly skies this summer.

Do:

- Tidy up after your young kids. Doesn't have to be spotless but don't leave a huge mess either.
- Flush
- Use headphones. No one needs to hear your conversation or video games.
- Keep your socks on. Feel free to take off

your shoes but socks are mandatory.

- Ask the gate agent to make seat changes before getting on the plane.

Don't:

- Recline your seat abruptly. Look behind you and ask if it's OK to recline first.
- Hog the armrests. The middle seat gets both, the consolation prize for being stuck in that spot.
- Prop your feet on the armrest in front of you or walk in the bathroom without shoes.
- Switch seats just because someone asks. If you want to swap, fine. But no obligation to do so.
- Remove someone's overhead bag just to make room for your own.

Narcan Can Save a Life

By Ben Lee

It's a topic no one wants to think about but last year nearly 110,000 people died from fentanyl overdoses in this country. It's a terrible, insidious problem and we all have been affected by it, some more tragically than others. Thankfully, the one seemingly most effective medicine that can reverse the immediate effects of an opioid overdose is now available without a prescription and drug awareness advocates are hoping that households keep a few does of Narcan on hand. The medicine is naloxone (Narcan is its brand name) and it's a nasal spray that can resume a person's breathing who might otherwise die from an accidental overdose. Your pharmacy may also offer either Kloxxodo (also a nasal spray) or Zimhi which acts similar to an Epipen. Any of these brands will work and are currently kept behind many local pharmacy counters such as CVS or Mickey Fine's. If a doctor prescribes, insurance may cover otherwise the cost is around \$80-\$100 each and there is no minimum age to purchase. Beverlywood resident Juli Shamash lost her son Tyler in 2018 after he died from an accidental fentanyl overdose at 19. She has since devoted her life to not only educate communities about how easy it is for kids to access deadly fentanyl, but she has started a nonprofit DrugEpidemicAwarenessFoundation.org and has worked tirelessly to pass "Tyler's Law." Named in honor of her son,



Juli Shamash, California State Senator Melissa Melendez and Doctor Roneet Lev

this makes testing for fentanyl automatic when an overdose victim gets taken to the hospital (and is given the standard five panel tox screen.) Juli hopes that every household, especially ones that have teenagers either living or visiting, keep Narcan around. Juli says that Endoverdose.net is another good resource as they'll send out dosages either for free or with a nominal recommended donation. Juli has access to additional dosages from the state so if money is an issue, I can put you in touch with her to get some for free. No one thinks it can happen to them but, sadly, it can. However, if keeping Narcan on hand helps save a life, that's at least one step in the right direction so another life doesn't have to senselessly be lost.

RAFFLE

By Ben Lee

Thanks to all who entered to win a \$50 gift card to Maple Block Meat Co. in Culver City. Congratulations to Nancy Knupfer! I hope you enjoy all the delicious BBQ Maple Block has to offer. For the raffle this month, we are celebrating teachers and helping them get their classrooms ready for school. To that end, we are offering not just one but TWO gift cards to the 99 Cent store: \$50 for you and \$99 to give to your favorite teacher! To enter, simply send me an email: ben@benleproperties.com and write 99 in the subject line. That's it! We'll pick a name at random at the end of the month and then you get to make a teacher very happy by giving him or

her a gift card, too. So this month TWO lucky winners will get to have fun back-to-school shopping at the 99 Cent store! Good luck!

