

NO. 93
November 2020

Beverlywood



BEN LEE PROPERTIES • Real Estate Broker • Licensed Attorney
www.BenLeeProperties.com • (310) 858-5489

BRE # 01808926

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Even in 2020, We are Thankful!



Freedom from Want

By Ben Lee

It's November and for me, nothing symbolizes the month in more illustrious color than a bustling and festive Thanksgiving Dinner. It has always been my favorite holiday and I look forward to it all year long. I love that it doesn't focus on frantically unwrapping presents- that the only gift being given and received is food. I love the chaos that comes from cramming many people together in a crazy pattern of tables set up in intricate ways in an effort to make the most efficient use of indoor space.

One of the accidental traditions we seem to adopt year after year is the surprise number of random guests who join the festivities. One Thanksgiving we included a handful of Taiwanese foreign exchange students from UCLA who were stuck on campus for the holiday. That happened to be the year our middle son was working on his 3rd grade artist report and Thanksgiving provided the perfect tableau for recreating Norman Rockwell's famous painting, Freedom From Want. All of a sudden someone yelled, "It's time! It's

time! Take your seats!" and while my wife held the turkey, I posed alongside her and a flurry of relatives quickly grabbed their pre-assigned positions to pose in perfect imitation of Rockwell's painting. Those poor, confused Bruin students attempted to sit down, too, only to be thwarted by a relative who had already been assigned his part to play in the re-creation. I think we might have quickly tossed the camera to one of them to snap our picture but it all happened so fast, who can remember? All I know is for years I wondered what those nice kids told their relatives about how a typical American family celebrates Thanksgiving. Did they think this was what happened in every household or just ours? I imagine their confusion at subsequent parties wondering why other hosts didn't insist on taking a highly orchestrated picture before allowing anyone actually to eat any food.

Our Thanksgiving Dinners are always fairly large because my wife and I were both born in Los Angeles and our extended families still live here, too. When we started hosting about a decade ago, both sides of the family came and the holiday has progressively grown a

bit bigger. The core group has expanded to also include a few extra people and every year is different. There will usually be a few random relatives we don't see too often or maybe my in-laws' neighbors who would otherwise be alone. I think one year we had a friend of my sister-in-law's boyfriend. No one should be alone on Thanksgiving and there's always room for a few more at our house. Last year my brother called at the last minute to say a handful of singers from the Young Artists program he runs at L.A. Opera had no where to go and could we invite them, too? Tables were rearranged and reset to accommodate the twelve or so extra guests. My brother whipped up a few extra pies and a grand time was had by all. We didn't make them sing for their supper as it were but it was pretty special to be serenaded by some of L.A. Opera's most talented young stars when they spontaneously broke into song after dessert. I don't think any of us were expecting dinner and a show that night and it was definitely one to remember.

So, who knows how Thanksgiving 2020 will look? I imagine significantly different than in previous years. We

probably won't have the Macy's Day Parade to watch in the morning but imagine we'll still be able to go on our annual pre-dinner hike. We will hopefully still have our close family members over to eat but not sure anyone in the high-risk category is willing to take the risk. And this may be the first time ever when we'll have to deny an invite to someone with nowhere else to go. Actually, pandemic or not, I can't imagine that will ever be the case. In fact I could see us having everyone sit at individual TV tables with a single serving Hungry Man frozen turkey dinner before we would ever turn anyone away. But no doubt this year will be different than any other Thanksgiving. Possibly smaller, perhaps held outside, definitely masked and a greater selection of hand sanitizers at every table. We are prepared to be flexible and have an open heart and mind when it comes to Thanksgiving 2020 and acknowledge that "different" does not necessarily mean "bad." As long as the turkey is tender, pies are plentiful and corn is creamy, everything will be right as rain (but please, no rain! Not while we're eating outside!).

My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Cheviot Hills - COMING SOON!

NEW CONSTRUCTION!



3062 Earlmor Dr 6 Bed / 9 Bath \$6,995,000

A magnificent brand new construction on one of the most coveted streets in the Country Club Estates section of Cheviot Hills, this astounding 6 bedroom/9 bathroom home is a true sight to behold. Unique design flourishes really set this traditional style home apart from the pack and it manages to feel warm and intimate despite its vast 7,000 + square foot size. Stone entry leads to a hard wood open floor plan that allows a breezy flow from room to room. A Butler's pantry connects the formal living room and formal dining to the ultra modern kitchen- a sleek vision in immaculate white. Even the custom Viking appliances have been finished in white for an overall clean, polished look.

The kitchen offers two center islands with designer pendants, two dishwashers, double-sized refrigerator, beverage fridge and banquet seating in the breakfast nook. This level of the house also includes a Great Room with fireplace, guest room, private office and French Doors that lead to the backyard. Take the elevator or stairs to the subterranean level and marvel at the luxurious screening room, wine cellar and gym. There's also a private guest room suite with patio allowing the space to be basked in light. The second story of the home is where you'll find the family's sleeping quarters: exceptionally large bedrooms all en suite with generous closets, balconies and sophisticatedly decorated bathrooms.

The Master Bedroom retreat offers a romantic fire place, cozy seating area, enormous walk in closet and a bathroom with free standing tub, brass fixtures and toilet room. The beautiful backyard of this fabulous home is an entertainer's dreamscape: flat expanse of grass, swimming pool with Jacuzzi, built in barbeque, a pergola covered patio and sociable fire pit. Tall hedging surrounding the area provides absolute privacy. Additional features include: chutes to the laundry room, multiple skylights, immense walk-in pantry, elevator and masterful craftsmanship unlike any other home currently on the market today. See to believe!

Cheviot Hills - GREAT NEW PRICE!



3021 Club Drive \$4,295,000
5 Bed / 5.5 Bath

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



9906 Girla Way \$2,495,000
3 Bed / 3 Bath 2,481 Sq. Ft., 10,139 Sq. Ft. Lot

Rancho Park - NEW LISTING!



10513 Blythe Ave \$2,195,000
3 Bed / 2 Bath 2,885 Sq. Ft., 6,202 Sq. Ft. Lot

Beverlywood happenings

Westside Stories

By Michael Harris

We all have been taught that Thanksgiving started in the United States when the Calvinist Separatist pilgrims started a new life on the East Coast, struggled with hardships through a difficult winter, and then with the indigenous peoples of the area feasted together in thanks for what they believed would be a successful future.

WHAT ABOUT A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE ON THE WEST COAST?

The California missions were developed in part to convert the indigenous people including the local Gabrielino and Chumash tribes to Catholicism. There is no known record that these missionaries feasted



together at harvest time with the natives in a thanksgiving like celebration. However, the word thanksgiving in Greek is Eucharistia which might

suggest a sharing of bread and wine as part of a religious ceremony. Now however the Los Angeles Mission feeds hundreds of people in need with hearty

Thanksgiving meals. This is the true spirit of the holiday.

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, just search for Westside Stories by Michael Harris.

GIVING BACK

By Ben Lee

This time of year often inspires us to set some time and energy aside to helping others. But like just about everything else since the onset of Covid, volunteering anywhere in

person is most likely affected. Two organizations are very much in need of help, though, especially holiday time. In previous years One Voice has gathered food to make baskets for families needing a little extra help. Due to Covid, though, building the food

baskets is no longer feasible. However, One Voice is attempting to give away 2000 grocery cards valued at \$100 each instead. In exchange for your donation of any amount, One Voice will send you holiday cards to give to your family/friends if you'd like to make the donation in honor of a loved one. Los Angeles Regional Food Bank is welcoming volunteers (but only aged 18 and older and no one in a high risk

category). Masks and gloves must be worn and social distancing enforced but volunteers will be able to help fill boxes of food that will be distributed to those in need. For more information about either of these two very worthy charities please visit their websites: <https://www.onevoice-la.org/> and lafoodbank.com. Thank you, in advance, for your generosity!

Be on the Lookout...

By Ben Lee

In a few weeks you'll be getting a little gift from me delivered to your doorstep. Every year I like to give a small token of appreciation to the neighbors of Cheviot Hills, Rancho Park and Beverlywood- basically a thank you gift for all the trust you've instilled in me for your past/present and

future real estate needs. Deliveries will take place starting around a week before Thanksgiving and every precaution has been taken that the gifts are handled in a safe Covid-free way. If for some reason your house was inadvertently skipped, please send me an email and I'll make sure to get one to you right away: ben@benleeproperties.com. Hope you like it!

