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# Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



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# LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

By Ben Lee

It occurred to me the other day while walking my dog, how quiet the streets in our neighborhood are. I'd occasionally pass someone I'd know and stop and chat (which I always enjoy) however I often feel these exchanges are the exception, not the rule. I meet so many people at Open Houses and other activities around town that I sometimes take it for granted that I know many people while out and about. But I've found that many residents, and correct me if I'm wrong, don't really know many of their neighbors.

I chalk this up to many different factors: Everyone is busy. We wake up, go to work, come home tired, maybe eat some dinner, watch TV and go to bed; only to repeat the same schedule the next day. The weekend routines aren't too different. Especially if you have kids, you probably spend much of your 'downtime' working harder than during the week. Between shuttling them to their activities, preparing snacks for the game, going to and from kids' birthday parties and squeezing in whatever appointments you couldn't attend during the work-week, Saturdays and Sundays don't leave much time for just hanging out at home.

Another contributing factor to not knowing our neighbors is: there isn't just one neighborhood school anymore. We're incredibly lucky to have extremely strong public schools in the area but it seems that once kids hit middle-school age, they branch out to one of the many terrific private schools around town. Unless a neighbor happens to pick that same school, your kids' friends likely live all over the city, and rarely on the same block.

When we take walks, we listen to music or podcasts with air pods in our ears, essentially shutting ourselves off from engaging in spontaneous conversations with fellow passers-by. Thanks to the convenience of internet shopping and the dissolution of our beloved Westside Pavillion,



many of us can't run into people we know at the mall anymore. We don't have a centralized market that we all frequent- even the sparse amount of restaurants come and go without much of a following. When Islands used to be on Pico, you could usually count on running into someone familiar but that spot has been left vacant for years and no family-friendly mid-range restaurant has come to replace it.

We don't spend too much time in our front yards which is another reason why we don't seem to meet many of our neighbors. With the bulk of our landscaping being taken care of by professional gardeners, our newspapers being delivered digitally, and our packages dropped off right at the door, there doesn't seem to be much of a reason to hang out outside. One of the only highlights of the pandemic for my family and me, was every evening at around 5pm, when we'd sit up on our balcony that overlooked the street and we'd just chat with whoever happened to be strolling by. It was the brightest spot to an otherwise solitary, insular existence.

I'm not suggesting we return to the pandemic! But if only we had an excuse to make an effort to connect more with other neighbors, I think it would make for a better community for us all. Both my wife and I shared a similar experience growing up in the 80s. She lived in Brentwood and I was in Santa Monica but we shared one fact in common: our closest friends happened to be the kids on our street. After school or on the weekends, we'd wander up and down our respective blocks and see who was home before embarking on a host of suburban adventures. While we haven't stayed in close contact with these kids decades later, we still have managed to stay in touch thanks to Facebook and other social media. I received a call from one of these neighbors a year or two ago- I hadn't heard from her since I was 12. But she knew I went into real estate and asked me to list her childhood house, still standing on the same street where I learned how to ride a bike and wrote my name and left my handprints in the sidewalk's wet cement.

So, how do we return to this idyllic

Mayberry-like neighborhood existence when we're all so busy and pulled in a variety of different directions? One idea is to connect with your block captain and join whatever communication thread the block captain has put into place. Even if being social isn't your thing, you can still be made aware of what's happening in the community. If your block doesn't currently have a captain and you're interested in volunteering to serve in this important capacity, I'd visit your respective Homeowners Association website and ask any board member listed how best you can get involved.

Another idea is to plan a block party. We used to live in the Country Club Estates and my kids looked forward to attending our block party all year long. Yours certainly doesn't have to be as extensive or expensive as that one was to produce. All it really takes is a temporary special event permit (apply at: [permitla.lacitydbs.org](http://permitla.lacitydbs.org)), someone to set up cones to block traffic, and a few tables dragged out of the garage for a fabulous pot-luck feast.

If becoming a block captain or producing a block party feels like too much work, here's one more idea that could be fun and easy. Make a plan to go and meet someone on your block. Take a selfie if you feel compelled (not necessary) and send me an email ([ben@benleeproperties.com](mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com)) letting me know that you've met. Then, on Saturday, March 14, you and your new neighbor friend(s) are cordially invited to a casual party at our house. Food, drinks, new friends- what could be more neighborhood-y than that?

So, gather a little courage and get out there to start meeting your neighbors! It behooves all of us to know who lives nearby and you never know where it might lead. I can't wait to hear how it goes and I look forward to meeting you and your new neighbor-friends at the party in a few weeks. Until then, have a fabulous February and I look forward to hearing from you (and your neighbors) soon.

# My featured listings

## Encino – FOR SALE OR LEASE!



NEW CONSTRUCTION

**16879 Mooncrest Dr -**  
\$5,395,000 or \$27,000 p/mo.  
5 Beds / 8 Bath, 5,900 Sq. Ft. 10,890 Sq. Ft. Lot

A dazzling, brand new construction on a quarter acre lot south of Ventura Boulevard, this impeccably designed 5 bedroom/8 bathroom home is luxury living at its finest. This 5,900 square ft home has everything a discerning buyer could want: vast, spacious living spaces; open floor plan, natural light, elegant landscaping and enormous backyard with BBQ. The chef's kitchen offers top-of-the-line appliances and an abundance of space for entertaining. In addition to the elegant bedrooms and bathrooms, there is also a state-of-the-art theater, great room, living room, office and elevator to visit each floor with convenient ease. Additional amenities include: 3 fireplaces, designer light fixtures/chandelier, basement gym and bar, solar roof panels (paid off, no cost to buyer), electric water heaters and two laundry rooms. A certified Smart Home that offers Control 4 throughout, this isn't just a magnificent estate but a true architectural achievement. Also available for lease.

## Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



**3388 Manning Ct –**  
\$2,999,000

4 Bed / 3 Bath 2,388 Sq. Ft., 7,204 Sq. Ft. Lot

Completely Tucked within the cradle of a tree-lined cul-de-sac on a quiet street in Cheviot Hills, this home is a designer's dream. The property features an awe-inspiring outdoor living extension, including an additional 600 sq ft covered patio with skylights, Basalt flooring, and a fire pit—ideal to enjoy as is or easily enclosed to create an additional room for seamless indoor-outdoor living. A fully remodeled farmhouse with an open floor plan, the home offers warmth and elegance at every turn. Original walnut hardwood floors, a romantic bay window, wood-burning fireplace, custom white oak shelving, and exposed beams create timeless character. The picturesque chef's kitchen features oak open shelving, a fire clay tile backsplash, stainless Thermador oven and range, refrigerator/freezer, wine fridge, and is anchored by a stylish eat-in island built from walnut with Caesarstone countertops. The private backyard is massive in scope, offering a vast expanse of grass, a hot tub, and a dizzying array of fruit-producing citrus trees including lime and Meyer lemon. Upstairs are the home's sleeping quarters, each bedroom generous in size with lovely natural light. The primary bedroom features a vaulted ceiling, an enormous walk-in closet, a large and beautiful bathroom, and a pretty view. Additional amenities include a new laundry area with stone counters, a new garage door (the converted garage has WiFi, heat/AC and is currently used as an artist's studio but can easily be returned to housing cars), new exterior paint, new windows, and a stone's throw to the Griffin Club, Expo Line, shops, and restaurants of Culver City and Cheviot Hills. An absolute jewel of a home on an especially family-friendly street—this one will not be on the market for long.

## Cheviot Hills - FOR LEASE!



**2890 Forrester Drive –**  
\$25,000 p/mo.

4 Bed / 3 Bath 2,388 Sq. Ft., 7,204 Sq. Ft. Lot

Like Brand New, Recently Remodeled! Built in 2007, a luxurious Contemporary/Modern Mediterranean home located in Cheviot Hills on the coveted Forrester Dr. Grand foyer with rolling staircase, skylight, & soaring ceilings. Spacious living room with fireplace opens to the cozy den/office which leads to a grassy, well maintained & fenced side yard. The back yard provides several options for al-fresco dining and entertaining no matter the time of year. Private and elegant formal dining room with ample built-in storage space. Sleek and modern kitchen features custom cabinetry, stone counters, new appliances & center island. Off the kitchen is the expansive family room, leading to a sprawling patio. Upstairs are 4 BDs, including an expansive master. One Bedroom has its own en-suite bath and other 2 bedrooms share a dual bath with a double vanity & oversized spa tub. The master features an amazing walk-in closet with a center storage unit, & an impressive spa like master bath perfect for relaxation. Downstairs is subterranean 2 car garage aside Maid's Room. Available March 15th.

## Beverlywood – FOR SALE!



**2803 Cardiff Avenue -** \$4,845,000  
5 Beds / 6 Bath, 4382 Sq. Ft., 6763 Sq. Ft. Lot

## Rancho Park – IN ESCROW!



**2831 Malcolm Avenue -** \$3,795,000  
*The seller is offering \$100K in concessions and is open to a seller carry-back, giving buyers a unique chance to get creative with financing and reduce out-of-pocket costs.*  
4 Beds / 5 Bath, 3450 Sq. Ft., 6324 Sq. Ft. Lot

## Sherman Oaks – SOLD!



**3421 Castlewoods Place -** \$1,995,000  
4 Beds / 3 Bath, 2815 Sq. Ft.

## Cheviot Hills – SOLD!



**2700 Anchor Avenue -**  
\$2,995,000  
4 Beds / 3 Bath, 3426 Sq. Ft.

## Cheviot Hills – SOLD!



**10422 Lorenzo -**  
\$7,995,000  
6 Beds / 8 Bath

## West Hollywood – SOLD!



**9028 Rangely Ave -**  
\$1,750,000  
4 Beds / 1 Bath, w/Laundry in Unit

## Mar Vista – SOLD!



**3571 Colonial Avenue -**  
\$3,995,000  
5 Beds / 7 Bath, 4225 Sq. Ft.,  
7500 Sq. Ft. Lot

# Cheviot Hills happenings

## ASK KATY Y?



By Ben Lee

Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky came by Temple Isaiah last month to have an informal question/answer session with a handful of members and her frustration with the current state of affairs in our fair city was palpable. Congregants were asked to share in one word the issues they found particularly alarming. These answers included but weren't limited to: "anti-semitism," "ICE," "homelessness," "affordable housing," and "infrastructure." Katy endeavored to address each concern within these categories and as a fellow District 5 resident, parent, renter and daughter, she regarded each complaint with a degree of empathy. Katy declared, "I'm pissed off. I feel everyone's rage!" She went on to say that the city does a truly terrible job with the funds it has by over paying for goods, services and city-owned real estate that's currently underused. To those hoping for infrastructure fixes, she explained that there's currently a year-long waiting period just to get streetlights fixed which is totally unacceptable. She's introducing an overhaul to contracting to save money and is looking to find funds in other areas. She personally opposed SB79 (the rule that allows high density building near transit lines) but Newsom signed it into law so there isn't much she can do about it. She expressed disgust at how slowly it's taken to rebuild homes in the Palisades (including her childhood

home that was lost in the fire), claiming that other than some help from FEMA, California has received zero money and the red tape associated has been merciless. She is trying to figure out how to get money through the state/general fund but it's a slow process. As far as ICE is concerned, Katy called the current practices horrifying and unconstitutional. Rights are being disrespected and we are going through a really dark time right now. As a Jewish woman with her children currently enrolled in a religious school, she understands the feelings of anti-semitism and has worked to increase police and security presence especially during the Jewish holidays. Katy closed the hour-long meeting by agreeing that while things are far from perfect, progress is being made. She expressed hope for the future and encourages everyone to be engaged with civic life suggesting residents should peacefully protest against that which we don't like and get involved in issues, big and small. She hopes those in her district continue to be good partners with her office, and she will try to have better communication with her constituents as well. To that end, if you have questions or concerns pertaining to local grievances, you might get an answer quicker from her Director of Community Engagement, Allen Zipper: 323-866-1818 or [Allen.zipper@lacity.org](mailto:Allen.zipper@lacity.org) We are all encouraged to get involved, be a squeaky wheel and reach out to her office anytime!

## WINE NIGHT

It's not too late to rsvp to come to the Ladies' Neighborhood Wine Night which will be held in Cheviot Hills on February 19.

To get all the information, send my wife an email or text: [lillijlee@yahoo.com](mailto:lillijlee@yahoo.com) or 3106507735 and she will add you to the list.

## GOODBYE, UNCLE JEFFREY

By Ben Lee

We said goodbye to our uncle this month and if you are a long-term reader of this newsletter you are likely familiar with his work. Godfrey ("Jeffrey") Harris passed away at the age of 88. He was a former resident of Cheviot Hills and lived for many years on Glenbarr Avenue while attending Overland Elementary, Palms Middle School and Hamilton High. When my father-in-law set out to write nonfiction books about growing up on the Westside, his younger brother Jeffrey helped him research, edit and ultimately publish the series called Westside Stories (parts 1, 2 and 3). A devoted fan (and sometime critic) of this newsletter, Jeffrey would always comment on its content and offer ideas for future issues. When he learned that we give away a kitchen tool as



a holiday gift to the neighborhood, he suggested that this year we offer a tool of his own invention, the Knork: part knife, part fork. Nothing made him happier than when I was able to share with him how many of you wrote or called to say that you liked it. Getting those compliments may have been the highlight of his professional career. We'll definitely miss this beloved member of our family and are better off for having spent so much time together.

## RAFFLE



Thank you to everyone who entered our first raffle of the year! We received hundreds of emails, all vying to win a \$50 gift card to Laurel Grill in Culver City. Unfortunately there can only be one winner and that lucky person is: Christina Shackelford. Congratulations! To everyone who entered but didn't win, don't

give up because we offer a new raffle every month. This time we're giving away a \$50 gift card to Maria's Italian Kitchen on Pico. To enter, email me: [ben@benleeproperties.com](mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com) and write 'MARIAS' in the subject line. That's it! We'll draw a winner at random at the end of the month. Good luck!