

The Village Green

Highlights

A Quarterly Publication of the Village Green Owners' Association

Spring 2007

A Letter From Our New President Reba Glover

Greetings to all –

As your new Association President, I would like to say a few words about the coming year. At the annual meeting in February, owners were informed about some difficult realities—how a lack of long-term planning, and maintenance deferred for long periods of time have created a precarious situation for us all. On the flip side of that grim news, the annual meeting was one of the most well-attended in history, and everyone showed respect and tolerance for one another's opinions, and voiced valid questions and concerns. The meeting in February was light years from my first VG annual meeting in 1999, at which boos and jeers were heard.

So will this be a tough year for Village Green? Maybe. But through adversity also comes the opportunity for growth. Perhaps, if we are all forced by the current realities at Village Green to see the bigger picture, and to develop some long-term planning, then the result will be a stronger association from which we all benefit. I am certainly looking at our present situation in these terms. We cannot change the reality of the past, but if we are patient and work together, we CAN change how the future will look.

Aside from working on the infrastructure replacement plans, as discussed at the February annual meeting, I will be working with the other directors to support our current staff in order to improve administrative functions in the VG office and the maintenance functions in the maintenance yard. Another goal that I have for this year is to update our myriad, and sometimes conflicting, governing documents to create a concise set of enforceable documents that we all can read and understand. I also hope to improve on our process of identifying and greeting new owners to the Green by providing an opportunity for an orientation meeting.

In closing, I would like to thank the many people (you know who you are) who choose to give something to our community by serving on committees and volunteering their time. I would also encourage all new residents to come to a monthly board meeting (4th Tuesday of the month) or join a committee and become involved and informed. Together we can make a difference!

—Reba Glover
VGOA Board President

VGOA Annual Meeting

A Discussion about
Our Infrastructure

It was standing room only at the VGOA annual homeowners' meeting on Saturday, February 3rd at the Baldwin Hills Elementary School. Many remarked that they had never seen such a large crowd at an annual meeting. Owners had come out in response to information from the Board of Directors stating that the 2007 projected income would not be sufficient to adequately fund deferred repairs and urgently-needed replacement of portions of our infrastructure. At the meeting, owners were able to hear information regarding some financial options and ask questions of expert guests.

Deferred Maintenance

The meeting opened with a presentation by the Board describing the effects of years of deferred

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Choose VG p. 5

Village Green Owners' Association
5300 Rodeo Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90016

FROM THE GARDEN GURUS....

DROUGHT?

Concerned About Water Usage this Summer?

We are over 10 inches behind in our annual rainfall this year, which means that we should be looking at ways to conserve water over the hot summer months. If you would like some tips on saving water around the Green, please visit the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's online resource www.bewaterwise.com, for helpful tips on watering in Spring and Summer. This web site contains a lot of useful information for water and plant usage during the kind of rainless year we are having.



Plant Succulents

In addition, you might want to try replacing water-thirsty plants with plants that take much less water. Consider succulents, which come in all shapes, sizes and colors and can add a wonderful new dimension to garden space. They are easily found in local garden centers and grow well either in containers or in the ground. They can be grouped together for colorful, whimsical statements in your patio and need very little care. They are slow growers and are not prone to pests or plant diseases like many of our other plants. Even during our most recent, unusual freeze, most of them held up beautifully, suffering no frost damage.

Don't Hose Off Your Patio

One important way to save on water usage is to refrain from hosing off your patio or adjoining sidewalks. It is a convenient way to clean the patio, but hundreds of gallons of water are wasted when doing so (see www.americanwater.com and your new, revised Village Green Handbook, pg. 19, Section 8.4, Watering).

New Plantings Should Wait for the Fall

Another tip: don't start new young plants during the hot summer months. They will require more water and care and may die despite your efforts. Start new young plants in the "cool spring," otherwise known as October, November and December. Then rain will provide water without your having to watch them so closely.

Use Mulch

Mulch is a must for keeping your soil cool and moist in the hot summer months. It acts like a blanket so that the soil doesn't dry out from hot air and wind. Free mulch is available in Culver City at 6000 Jefferson Blvd. (just west of where Jefferson and Rodeo meet). Avail yourself of that as much as possible. The price is right! One caveat: if you are growing edibles in your patio, do not use this mulch with the soil, as it is not suitable for edible plantings.

Read the Revised Handbook

Be sure to read the revised Village Green Handbook (Article 8—Landscaping Guidelines, Section 8.21 and 8.2, pps. 17–18) before pruning, removing or installing plant materials outside your unit in the common areas. If you have questions or suggestions, please join us at a Landscape Committee meeting the second Monday of the month. We need your input and creative ideas. The Green is full of talented people and we would love to have your help!

—L.Liles/L.Secor

Bird Walk, Saturday April 21, 2007, 8:00 a.m.

Take a bird walk with Richard Barth of the Los Angeles Audubon Society. Richard Barth is an expert birder with the Los Angeles Audubon Society. He has been birding at the Village Green for a number of years, creating a bird list here of over 80 birds. Meet in the Clubhouse and bring binoculars if you have them.

Sponsored by the Landscape and Tree Committees.

For more info call Lorraine Secor, 293-6657, or Teresa Thompson, 296-6330.

Black History Month Event: Negro Baseball League and the Buffalo Soldiers

In keeping with a tradition of providing the residents and guests of Village Green with interesting and enlightening programs, the Cultural Affairs Committee presented a fascinating program for Black History Month.

It is often said that “Black history is American history.” The afternoon began with residents and guests singing “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” a composition by James Weldon Johnson, which is often referred to as the Negro National Anthem. Immediately following was a musical selection performed by the Jeffrey Barnes Baha’i Choir, an interfaith community choir, directed by Kristin Barnes.



Buffalo Soldier

The dynamic speaker for the Sunday afternoon event was Bobby McDonald. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed McDonald to the California Cultural and Historical Endowment Board, and he was named an Honorary Life Member of the Buffalo Soldiers Ninth & Tenth (Horse) Cavalry Association. Bobby provided the audience with some moving stories about the Buffalo Soldiers.

McDonald also entertained the audience with very interesting stories about the Negro Baseball League (NBL) and some of its famous players. At the end of his presentation, Bobby answered questions and treated all guests to a box of delicious Negro League Baseball cookies in assorted flavors. A picture and profile of different NBL teams were printed on the box.



Jackie Robinson

The program ended with another musical selection from the Jeffrey Barnes Baha’i Choir. Guests enjoyed a delicious light buffet of greens prepared by Village Green residents Joseph Khoury and Tom Brown, fried chicken strips, potato salad, and sweet potato pie. They then had the opportunity to watch a special screening of the black & white movie *The Jackie Robinson Story*, starring the legendary baseball player Jackie Robinson.

Upcoming event: Easter Egg Hunt, Sunday April 7, 11 a.m. in the Clubhouse

ELECTION RESULTS

5 Director Positions

	# votes		# votes	
Drew Furedi*	238	Ronald Williams*	198	<i>* elected for 2-year terms on the Board of Directors</i>
Daniel Millner*	235	Thomas Brown*	170	
Edmarine Edwards*	217	Patricia Brown	159	

Proposals A, B and C—defeated*

Proposal A—Reduce VGOA Board to 7 directors

Yes—174 No—96

Proposal B—Add being a resident to director qualifications

Yes—205 No—70

Proposal C—Change the date of Annual Election

Yes—201 No—69

** Proposals to change the Village Green Bylaws need ‘yes’ votes by a majority of the owners that are eligible to vote. At this election, 278 ‘yes’ votes were required to amend the Bylaws.*

Proposal D*

For support of restoration of the Rico LeBrun Mural and the Mural Room

Commit to restoration of both the 150

mural and the room

Commit to restoration of the mural only 54

Not commit to either 55

** Proposal D was used as a survey of owner support for the project. Of those owners who voted on this issue, 58% were in favor of restoring the mural and the room.*

Annual Meeting Report, continued from p. 1

maintenance on the Green's infrastructure and landscape. The slideshow was created by Director Steven Keylon with assistance from Property Manager Robert Bonfiglio. Board Treasurer Reba Glover (Ms. Glover is now Board President) narrated the slideshow by describing many areas where our infrastructure is suffering from neglect. Photographs in the slideshow showed owners the problems—peeling paint, bathtubs backed up with raw sewage, a sewer line invaded by a tree root, floors ruined by broken pipes, rusty pipes being replaced piecemeal, leaking irrigation lines, etc.

The Board explained that many of these problems could have been avoided with preventive maintenance, but that in the past such maintenance had been deferred. Now the owners of Village Green are faced with a number of large-scale, expensive infrastructure replacement projects that all need to be done at the same time. The list of projects includes the copper re-piping project, sewer line replacement, replacement of old water supply pipes running to buildings, restoring the degraded brick patio walls, replacement of the original 1940s wiring in order to bring it up to code, and the replacement of the entire irrigation system.

In addition to these once-in-a-lifetime replacement projects, the Green must also fund ongoing maintenance such as painting, roofing, and concrete and asphalt repair/replacement. Most of these recurring items have been deferred to concentrate funding on the copper re-piping project.

How to Fund these Projects?

Ms. Glover explained that the VGOA reserves do not have enough funds to finance all of these large projects. And the projected income from 2007 assessments cannot support these projects either. We are faced with a hard decision about how to fund these necessary projects while both maintaining a schedule for annual maintenance, and funding the reserves for future replacements.

There are two options. One option is self-funding, wherein

the Association would use a combination of increased monthly assessments plus a large special assessment each year over the next several years, until the necessary projects have been completed. Another option would be for the Association to borrow money from a bank specializing in loans to HOAs, which would allow us to get the projects done over a shorter period of time. To discuss the loan process, the Board asked Ms. Cyndi Koester from Community Association Bank to give a presentation to homeowners at the Annual Meeting about loans to Homeowners' Associations.

What's the Bottom Line?

VG owners need to fund three major categories for maintenance and repair:

- 1) Urgent replacement of major infrastructure items: e.g. re-piping, sewer lines, replacing original wiring. These will not need to be planned for again for another 30+ years.
- 2) Annual maintenance: e.g. painting, asphalt repairs, roofing.
- 3) Reserve-fund contributions for future replacement projects.

If we fail to fund necessary planned maintenance and replacements, our infrastructure will continue to suffer unexpected failures and emergencies, resulting in unplanned cost increases that must be funded with special assessments to owners and/or by raising monthly assessments.

What Are Our Options?

- 1) Self-funding—increased assessments and special assessments
- 2) An HOA Loan—owners can pay a lump sum, pay the HOA loan, or take out personal loans

After these presentations, there was a very lively Q&A session in which many owners expressed their opinions, asked questions and made general comments.

Get Informed

All of the material from the meeting will be made available on the Village Green's Web site at www.villagegreenla.net, including a transcript of the Q&A session and the information presented by the representative from the bank. The Board encourages all owners to get educated about this important issue: speak to your financial advisors, talk to your neighbors, read the resources on the web site and do your own research. The Board will be setting up opportunities (Town Hall meetings and workshops) in the near future to learn more, explore options, and ask questions.

More information: www.villagegreenla.net

—Susan Edwards, with input from the VG Board

Getting Acquainted = Safety!!

On February 18th, Court 12 held an afternoon tea party. Hosted by Georgia Lumpkin, the court's Neighborhood Watch captain, everyone enjoyed spending a moment with their neighbors and getting to know each other a little better. People also signed up to participate in Neighborhood Watch, agreeing to watch out for and report

any suspicious activity. It's free, very effective in reducing crime, and builds community. If you are interested in holding a get-together for your court, the Safety Committee can get you started. Please contact Amy Noble at (323) 842-9108 or anoble@sprintmail.com.



Cheers! Court 12 residents get to know each other at a tea party

Help Make Our Neighborhood Safe



With just a little effort from each of us, we can make Village Green a safer place to live. We need Neighborhood Watch Captains from each court. Responsibilities include:

- Help people in your court get to know each other
- Pass on guides about keeping our homes protected
- Help ensure suspected crimes get reported
- Meet twice a year with other NW court reps

Contact the Safety Committee to get involved!

Denise Brady— denise@dlbrady.com, (323) 295-5494

Steven Keylon — steven.r.keylon@wellsfargo.com, (323) 293-2868

We Asked New Owners: Why Did You Choose Village Green?

The affordability, the park-like setting, and the national historic landmark status. These are the features that came up again and again when we asked 11 new owners, who all bought their units within the last three years, to give their top three reasons for choosing the Village Green.

Each of these new owners cited Village Green's unique setting, mentioning either the historic architecture or the landscape, as a reason for choosing the Green. The landscape is a big sell for these owners who mention the trees, courtyards, patios, and the quiet as reasons for buying in Village Green. Marc Walton (Court 9) said, "with a child, having a large and green backyard was attractive." Elizabeth Thinnes (Court

6) summed it up: "Who doesn't want to live in a park?"

Seven of these new owners listed the Green's historic landmark status as a deciding factor. Two of the owners said they like the spaciousness and aesthetic of the structures and the inside of the units. Pete Handelman (Court 12) said he was attracted to the historic landmark status because it means there will be no major alterations to the Green.

The fact that Village Green units are a good value in the Los Angeles market was mentioned by six of the 11 owners. "I couldn't afford a single-family house in Los Angeles," says Cherie Chen, who lives in a bungalow in Court 9. "This is so unique. It is the

closest thing to a single-family house that I could find in a condo."

In addition to these popular reasons, owners mentioned things like the central location in Los Angeles, diversity of the residents, and moving to be close to family members who live here. Many also mentioned the community. "I've had the opportunity to meet my neighbors in such a short time, and build bonds with them," says Steven Keylon (Court 3 and one of our Board Directors). "It has the best sense of community I've ever experienced."

We all know that Village Green is a unique place to live. Clearly, the special qualities of the Green are just as desirable now as they were 10, 20, and even 60 years ago.

Showtime Cabaret Trip—Valentine's Day

Forty-seven “young at heart” souls traveled to the Castaways Restaurant in Burbank on Valentine's Day and savored a gourmet luncheon of prime rib or salmon. After the tables were cleared, everyone sat back and enjoyed the variety show of song titled *You Were Meant for Me*. The show opened with Vera Comeaux called to the stage to model her beautiful African outfit. Audience participation included an entertainer leaving the stage to serenade Luana Carter. The fun came when Virginia Jones joined the stage cast and three men sang romantic songs only to her. You could see she was really enjoying the moment. Vera Comeaux, Trudy Williams, Melvin Browner, and Priscilla Browner won prizes. Everyone on the trip received a small box of Valentine candy and happy birthday salutes and gifts went to Kathy Banks, Eva Foreman, Martha Lovelace, Luana Carter, and Deon David, motor coach driver, compliments of the Village Green Senior Club. What a wonderful day!

Upcoming Saturday Trips

Treat yourself to a fun-filled day trip and put some adventure in your life. The Social Recreation Committee promotes travel on a monthly basis. Deluxe motor coaches leave from the Clubhouse for exciting and interesting places. The success of our trips is attributed to the affordable prices and having a certified travel agent as the planner. Prices include transportation, driver's gratuity, room, accommodations, and meals.

For those unable to travel during the week, the following Saturday trips are available:

May 19, 2007	Strawberry Festival
July 28, 2007	Salsa Festival (includes Amtrak ride to Oxnard)
October 27, 2007	Glendale Theater with Lunch at Tam O'Shanter Inn
December 1, 2007	Glory of Christmas with Dinner at Po'Folks

If you are interested in these exciting trips, call Dorothy Washington at (323) 299-3367 or Priscilla Browner at (323) 290-9259, or stop by the Clubhouse on Thursdays, between 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. A complete list of trip information is posted on the outside Clubhouse bulletin board.

paid advertisement

ADVERTISE IN HIGHLIGHTS

How to Submit

Please submit ads by e-mail to
vghighlights@yahoo.com

Deadline

March 15, June 15, September 15,
and December 15—for publication in
the first week of the following month.

Fees

Send payment to to:
Village Green Owners' Association
Fees are for placement in one issue.

Rate Sheet

e-mail vghighlights@yahoo.com
Rates start at \$20.

If you are considering buying or selling Real Estate,
or would like a free market analysis of your property,
please give me a call at (323) 243-2326.



Cindy Alcoset
Village Green Resident since 1989
(323)243-2326
calcoset@ca.rr.com

The Real Estate Consultants
3206 Washington Blvd.
Marina del Rey, CA 90292

Not intended as a solicitation if your property is
currently listed with another broker.

Monthly Newsletter – March 2007

Board of Directors - Manager - Committees

Published by the Court Council Committee

Notes from the Board

Approved Board Meeting minutes are posted on the board by the Clubhouse door.

Board Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Clubhouse

Board approved moving forward with collection process on 3 delinquent owners. A resolution was approved to allow Landscape Committee to have oversight on planting replacements. Board voted by majority to commit to the restoration of the mural and Mural Room using grant funds. New paint palette for the exterior buildings, consisting of earth and mineral tones, was approved. Clubhouse building will be painted in April using the original 1940 color. Board voted to waive parking citations for 49 owners and enforce the citations of 62 owners with fines. New gates will be purchased for the Sycamore fence line totaling \$5,870. In a 2 Yes and 6 No vote, the resolution to adopt the revised Handbook failed. The Emergency Preparedness Plan was adopted and will be distributed to owners. Board will task the Budget & Finance Committee to prioritize the major projects and analyze all funding options for comparison. Board agreed to hire extra clerical help for the office during the months of April and May. The December 2006 Reserve Study was official adopted for use by the 2007 Board of Directors. An owner-request for patio tree replacement was approved for \$275. Directors agreed to further investigate owner-to-owner dispute over noise. Board will obtain cost estimate and engineer plan for irrigation system replacement to submit with grant application for Save America's Treasures. Motion to post approved association minutes on Village Green web site failed.

Notes from the Manager

As reported by Robert Bonfiglio, Property Manager

Exterior painting of buildings for 2007 will start March 26th with painting of the Clubhouse. Bldgs. 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 39, 44A, 65, 70, 71, 76, 87, 88, 89, 92 will follow. The VG office has maps showing building numbers. Paint prep work will begin shortly with the removal of patio trees. Owners received letters. Buildings to be re-piped in 2007 are 19, 22, 87, 88, 89, 92. Garage Cts. 9 and 11 scheduled for restoration and painting. Sewer line in Ct. 10 is scheduled to be replaced. New arborist (also a horticulturalist), Dan Jensen, begins on Apr. 1 and he will prepare the list of 200 trees to be pruned for '07. Completed Items: paint removal from Maintenance Yard; roof cleaning (approx. 1,000 bags of debris removed from residential, garage, clubhouse and maintenance yard roofs); tree pruning for '06; clothes lines in Cts. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14.

Incident Reports

February 15—resident in Ct. 9 reported falling and unable to get up. Security responded and called LAFD.

February 17—Security observed a black Lexus with driver's side window broken out. LAPD said car was used in a drive-by shooting and towed the vehicle from VG property.

February 24—resident in Ct. 2 reported a car had jumped the curb on Coliseum and hit the patio fence. No one was injured. Security took driver's

information and car was towed away.

February 27—in Ct. 15 resident reported someone hit her car while it was parked and broke the tail light.

March 4—a resident reported someone had broken into the garage and money was taken from the unlocked car.

March 6—resident in Ct. 7 complained of noise. LAPD was called and advised both parties.

Committee News and Reports

Budget and Finance—Committee discussed the chain of communication: committee >liaison >Board president >VG manager. BOD liaison D. Millner agreed to include committee requests and resolutions at BOD meeting if requested by committee consensus. Committee approved 2007 mission, goals and activities. Chair explained the process used to review the monthly financials and general ledger documents. Steve Haggerty is Committee secretary.

Communications—VG Committee Chairs urged to forward information about events and changed meeting dates and times to Susan Edwards (sedwards@getty.edu), to update Web site. Web site statistics: since Nov. average monthly visits have grown from about 500 to 766 visits per month. There was a marked spike in traffic in the week after the Annual Meeting.

Cultural Landscape Report—Discussed plans for the May 5, 2007 California Preservation Foundation Conference (CPFC) workshop to be held at VG. About 40 people expected to attend; three subjects will be discussed: Architecture, Buildings, and Philosophy. Philosophy will be determined by analysis of mini-CLRs. Finalization of workshop will be completed at the next meeting. CLR Inventory/CAD Input: laundry room signs will be placed in courts being surveyed to increase participants and speed up the survey.

Design Review—Modification Requests: none. BOD liaison S. Keylon will present to BOD the new, simplified building paint palette (based on resident feedback at owner meetings from the past 2 years). DRC Goals for 2007: Document changes to building exteriors. Compile resources for historic components. Begin a “How To” column on VG web site of tips to help residents on interior restoration projects (also helpful for Mills Act). Set up a storage space and process for receiving and distributing historic fixtures of VG for residents (also helpful for Mills Act).

Grants—Committee decided to start a sub-committee to focus on Mills Act issues and asked BOD liaison D. Furedi to ask BOD to approve. Committee is working with Landmark Committee and resident volunteers to host a tour of VG for CPFC attendees on May 5. Save America’s Treasures Grant: a good prospect for getting a grant from this organization for the irrigation line replacement. Deadline is Apr. 26.

Landscape—New Business: reviewed and reworked several portions of the “Plant Removal/Replacement Policy/Procedure” and submitted a resolution to the BOD for approval.

CLR plant ID inventory update: Ct. 5 is nearly complete. More volunteers are needed on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. Mission Statement was discussed. Committee needs to continue to produce pictures to document pruning, removal and planting problems. Bird Walk—Saturday, April 21.

Village Green Committees

Committee	Meeting Time	Chair
Budget & Finance	2nd Thursday, 6:30 p.m.	Marie Fouche
Clubhouse	Thursdays	
Court Council	1st Wed, 7:00 p.m.	Douglas Ware
Communications	3rd Wed, 7:00 p.m.	Susan Edwards
Cultural Affairs	1st Wed, 5:00 p.m.	Molly O’Brien
Cultural Landscape	4th Monday, 7:00 p.m.	Ted Lumpkin
Design Review	1st Monday, 7:30p.m	Christian Daniels /Kathleen Louw
Grants	3rd Wed, 8:00p.m.	Susan Edwards
Landscape	2nd Monday, 7:30 p.m.	Lorraine Secor
National Landmark	2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.	Robert Nicolais
Safety	2nd Wed, 7:00 p.m.	TBD
Social Recreation	Thursdays, 12:00- 4:00	Pricilla Browner
Trees	3rd Monday, 7:30 p.m.	Gordon Brooks

National Landmark—Mural Room Project: project history reviewed for new members. Discussed updating budget and costs estimates for grant applications. One prospect: Getty Architectural Preservation Grant, due on Apr. 10. Carob Trees: BOD approved the proposal to plant carob trees on the perimeter of VG. Save America’s Treasures Grant was discussed.

Social Recreation—Independence Day Luncheon scheduled for June 28th, maximum of 60 people. Invitations sent to office staff employees. Fifty people enjoyed San Manuel Bingo & Casino, Mar. 13th; 43 people to go to Descanso Gardens on Mar. 30th. Twenty-one people will go on eight-day trip to Memphis, Branson and Nashville on Apr. 16th. Regular participating members now enjoy lunch every Thursday of a chicken hotdog, chips and drink, “free,” paid by Social Recreation account. Thanks to members who have contributed movies shown every Thursday. Board games, Pokeno and Bonanza, are still going strong. On Thursday, April 5th the committee is sponsoring a White Elephant Sale.

Village Green *Highlights* is the community newsletter of the Village Green Owners’ Association, incorporated August 8, 1973. We make every attempt to ensure the accuracy of all information. However, we are not responsible for errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in this publication. The editor reserves the right to edit articles and letters for tone, clarity and length. Opinions expressed in *Highlights* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Board of Directors or the Management. Please submit submissions or comments to the editor at vghighlights@yahoo.com, or to the office.