



# The Village Green Highlights

## Summer 2005

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Village Green Owners' Association  
5300 Rodeo Rd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90016  
<http://villagegreenla.net>

## Town Hall Meeting

If you missed the Town Hall Meeting on Saturday, June 4, 2005, you missed important information about the Board's long-range goals for 2005 and about where your assessments are being spent. Seven members of the Board were present at the meeting. They gave a precise progress report for the re-piping project (including problems incurred), and the sewer replacement and painting schedules. Questions were answered about color selections for the painting of buildings, maintenance of our grounds and trees, handling of violations, and safety. Earthquake insurance and the Mills Act were issues that will require further investigation and discussion.

The meeting was divided into two segments. The first half was devoted to answering the wide spectrum of questions submitted from residents before the meeting through Court Council. The second half was devoted to questions from the floor. The Board and residents all came away with a better understanding of the operation of the Village Green, and the needs and concerns of its residents.

The Village Green is 60 years old. Age and maintenance-deferral present mind-boggling problems. Our board is tackling these problems with skill and proficiency while keeping a close eye on the budget. And remember, these are volunteers!

*Continued page 2.*

## The First VG Resident Art Show

The Cultural Affairs Committee inaugurated its first resident art show on Sunday June 12, 2005 in the Clubhouse. The event was such a success that it is likely to become a regular happening. In the future, watch for "call for artists" notices posted in the laundry rooms.

Residents participating with paintings, drawings, photographs, sculpture and craft were: Muriel Dickerson, Dan Frank, Jean Gaignard, Michael Guidice, Monique Henry, Karen Jackson, Steven Keylon, David Mellon, Robert Nicolais, Aram Saroyan, Gailyn Saroyan, Carol Walker, Helen Washington and Fred Wilson.

The show was a wonderful opportunity for VG residents, both participants and guests, to meet and get to know one another and to discover the unknown talents of many of their neighbors.

Robert Nicolais and Karen Jackson coordinated the event for the Cultural Affairs Committee. They predict many more residents will participate in both visual and performing arts events in the future. We have an incredibly creative community and want to encourage the sharing of the talent that resides here.

- Karen Jackson

## Town Hall Meeting

*Continued from page 1.*

If you want to learn more about how the VG operates, we urge you to attend Board meetings, held on the fourth Tuesday of every month. If you have a problem that has not been resolved, you can present your problem to the Board at one of these meetings. Communication is the key.

Minutes from the meeting will be posted in the laundry rooms soon, and on the VG Web site (<http://villagegreenla.net>). Court Council appreciates the cooperation of the Board and the concerns of attending residents.

Katherine Carr, Court Council Chair

## Safety First at the Village Green Join the Safety Committee

Safety is an important subject at the Village Green because of the world in which we live. The Safety Committee will be an important committee in dealing with these aspects of today's world.

It is our mission to ensure a safe and secure environment for residents of the Village Green. We will develop consistent communication to residents about how and when to react to certain situations that may happen within our community.

*Escort and Patrol*, does just what their title says. Allied-Barton is a company that has been hired by the Association to escort residents to their homes in the Village Green and to patrol the grounds, to make sure that all is safe and secure. It is the responsibility of officers to respond to situations and take action, which may include notifying local authorities, such as law enforcement, the fire department, and the VG Manager or Board President.

One of the goals of the Safety Committee is to work closely with the Board liaison and the Assistant Manager to ensure that Allied-Barton fulfills its contractual agreement, and to give suggestions for improvements.

The committee meets every third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the clubhouse. We need your input to make Village Green a safe and secure place to live. Please come and help us make this happen!

- Nat Hutton

## New Local Deli

### LaVerne's Deli

**3745-B La Brea Ave.  
(corner of Coliseum)**

323-299-0012, 1-800-481-5338

(fax) 323-299-0312

Open Mon-Sat 11 a.m.—8 p.m.

Have you been down La Brea lately, between Rodeo Road and Coliseum? There are some new stores that have opened and of course, the wonderful Eso Won bookstore.

But you owe it to yourself to stop in at the wonderful La Verne's Deli for lunch, or even breakfast. Everything is made fresh and from scratch, even the green salad. The sandwiches are to die for. You will be hard-put to make a selection, there is such variety, even a salmon burger made from fresh salmon, not canned—how often do you find that?! These sandwiches are so huge you'll have enough left over for lunch the next day! Don't feel like cooking dinner? Well, they've got all kinds of salads—potato, coleslaw, pasta, chicken, macaroni—all fresh and homemade, as are the soups. There's a marvelous (homemade, of course) meatloaf. If it's too big for you, they will cut it in half, or even sell you a slice or two. I could go on and on about their Sweet Edibles or their breakfast croissant sandwiches, or their muffins, but I think you should go in and see for yourself. And if you tell them you're from Village Green, they'll give you a 15% discount!

And while you're there, don't forget to visit the Coffee Beanery, where you can sit outdoors on the patio and coffee klatch with your friends. Next door, a new restaurant is soon to open—the Black Whale, which will serve Louisiana Cajun-style seafood.

Bon Appetit!  
Alice Haggerty

# THE MILLS ACT AND VILLAGE GREEN

**THE MILLS ACT:** The Mills Act provides property-tax reductions for owners of historic properties. Owners must sign a contract agreeing to maintain their property according to The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Village Green was designated a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument in 1977. This makes us all eligible to apply. We were also given National Historic Landmark status in 2001.

**How the Mills Act would apply to the VG:** If an owner wants to apply, the VGOA Board must approve and co-sign the contract. Every 10-year contract will be different, depending on what the owner wants to do and what the City approves. The contract summarizes the owner's plans for the unit. If the contract is approved, the city will inspect the property during the 10-year period. An owner would be responsible for the part of the contract that covers the interior of his or her unit. When the Board co-signs a Mills contract, it is agreeing to maintain all Association property to the Secretary of the Interior's standards. This includes all buildings and landscaping.

**Potential tax reduction:** There are two ways the County can calculate the value of your unit. The common way is based on the most recent sales price of the unit. The second way is based on potential income if you were to rent your property (this does not mean you have to rent your unit). If you sign up for the Mills Act, your property value and your taxes will be calculated using the second method, which may lower your taxes. VGOA does not pay any property taxes and would not receive any tax reduction.

**Would you benefit?** Most owners who bought after the mid-1980s would likely benefit, as would some who bought around 1980—prices dipped in the early 1980s and taxes on those properties are already low. All Mills Act owners would potentially benefit when their property is sold because the new owner "inherits" the tax benefit. This lower tax assessment increases the value of

a unit because the new owner automatically pays lower property taxes.

**What are the obligations?** The assumption is that the owner of an historic property saves money on taxes; in exchange, the owner agrees to spend money on maintenance or rehabilitation. The good news is that every owner at Village Green is already spending money on maintenance and rehabilitation. Your monthly homeowners' assessments are now paying for rehabilitating the water supply piping (the re-piping project), rehabilitating old sewer lines, and maintaining the historic trees and landscaping. Interior main-tenance is required but rehabilitation is not. Additional credit might apply if there is additional rehabilitation work you want to do on your unit. Those expenditures would have to be accounted for separately in individual owners' contracts.

**Potential Penalties:** The Mills Act contract is a binding legal document. City and County offices would inspect your property from time to time. If the City or County finds problems, they will ask the owner to fix the problem within 6 months (this time period can be negotiated). If the owner won't meet the terms of the contract, the City can fine the owner 12.50% of the current fair market value of the property. Since 1996, the City has not fined any Mills Act owners. Most of the conditions the City would object to are already prohibited at Village Green. The Association is currently carrying out maintenance and renovation projects that meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

**What's next?** The Grant Committee will hold more informational meetings. There's more information on the Mills Act at the Los Angeles City Planning Office Web site. If you want to get involved, please contact Grant Committee Chair, Robert Nicolais at 323-294-0892.

Information about the Mills Act:

<http://cityplanning.lacity.org/CulturalAffairs/MillsAct.htm>

Information about historic preservation in Los Angeles: <http://cityplanning.lacity.org>, click on "Historic Preservation."



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\*\*An early closure release fee may be charged to recover all costs incurred in originating your loan and may apply if you close your account within 36 months. Property insurance and the fee to release an existing mortgage may be required.

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## VG Resident Profile

### George O. Totten III: Northeast Asia Peace Promoter

On entering the home of Professor Emeritus George P. Totten in Village Green, I walked into a living room that made a statement—from the Asian rugs to the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean scrolls on the walls, and the *objets d'art* all around, accented by vivid red pillows on the sofa and chairs. This is not a museum, but a Village Green living room, full of mementos of Totten's life.

Totten was born in Washington, D.C. to an architect father who specialized in designing embassies, and a Swedish mother, who was internationally known for the delicate porcelain figurines she created. Dr. Totten's life was greatly impacted by his military service, which began in 1943, when he was assigned by Military Intelligence to learn Japanese in order to interrogate Japanese prisoners. After attending high school at Choate School in Connecticut (a few years after John F. Kennedy graduated) he went on to Columbia University. After completing his B.A. he earned his Ph.D. at Yale University. Totten then began a career teaching in colleges and publishing on topics in the fields of political science and international relations, focusing on Japan, China and Korea.

In 1965, after teaching at several universities on the East Coast, such as M.I.T. and Boston University, Totten joined the University of Southern California faculty where he taught until he retired in 1992. At USC, Totten set up the East Asian Studies Center (originally the Asian Studies Department, headed by Professor Theodore Chen, whose wife, now 101-years old, still lives in the Village Green) and its overseas programs, as well as aiding the formation of the USC-UCLA Joint East Asian Studies Center.

Throughout his career Totten has worked for peaceful solutions to world tensions, starting with General George Marshall's attempt to get the Chinese Nationalists and Communists to stop their fighting and work together. After the Nationalists fled to Taiwan, Totten supported

movements for the U.S. to recognize the People's Republic of China, which President Richard Nixon eventually did. Totten met his first wife when he was in the army and she was a student at the University of Minnesota. After she passed in 1975, Totten visited China for the first time. That fall he met a Lilia Huiying Li at a U.S. China People's Friendship Association national convention in Chicago. A year later they were married and his new wife, (she kept her Chinese name), joined the USC faculty on a part-time basis.

Dr. Totten began his career writing about Japan. He then shifted to China, and to North and South Korea. He became friends with Korean dissident Kim Dae-jung. Kim had been freed from prison and sent to a hospital in the U.S. in an agreement between President Ronald Reagan and South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan, who was criticized worldwide for unjustly condemning Kim to death for causing riots in Kwangju, in the southern part of South Korea. The agreement allowed Kim to come to the U.S. to be treated for "ailments" contracted in jail. Totten invited him to USC to give a talk, which helped introduce him to the American public. Later, Kim returned to South Korea and was elected president, serving from 1998-2003. Through USC, Dr. Totten published President Kim's book on the peaceful reunification of Korea. After Kim's famous visit to North Korea in 2000 to meet its president, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Dr. Totten and Ms. Li attended the ceremony on Oslo.

In the course of my interview with him, Dr. Totten was most gracious. He showed photographs of his beautiful wife and himself, including one of Ms. Li in traditional Chinese finery. He also showed me examples of his mother's porcelain figurines. Altogether this was a most enlightening and enjoyable hour.

Evelyn Greenwald

# ADVERTISE IN HIGHLIGHTS

**How to Submit**

Please submit ads by e-mail if you can. Most file-types are acceptable. Hard copies should be mailed to the office.

e-mail submissions: [vghighlights@yahoo.com](mailto:vghighlights@yahoo.com)

**Deadline**

The 15th day of the month before publication: quarterly on the first of April, July, October, and January.

**Fees**

Payment should be made out to:  
Village Green Owner's Association

**Mail fees and hard copy ads to:**

Highlights Editor  
Village Green Homeowners Association  
5300 Rodeo Road  
Los Angeles, CA 90016

**Community Ads for VG Residents**

40 words or less, non-commercial.  
\$3 per issue; \$5 for 3 issues.

**Examples:**

Seeking activity partners. Offering services like babysitting, house sitting, car washing, etc.  
Selling household items, bikes, or other personal items

**Home-based Business Rates**

For services from your home or in others' homes that do not require a license.

**Commercial Rates**

Businesses or services requiring a license and/or operations permit. Examples:  
real estate, day care, financial services, retail, electrical, plumbing, handyman, painting, etc.

The Highlights editor reserves the right to decline any advertising.

Questions? e-mail [vghighlights@yahoo.com](mailto:vghighlights@yahoo.com)  
or drop your written question at the office attn: Highlights Committee

Ad Sizes & Rates						
Size	Dimensions	VG Residents		Non-residents		
		Home	Commercial	Home	Commercial	
Business Card	3.25" W x 2"H	\$20	\$30	\$30	\$60	
1/4 Page	3.25" W x 4.75" H	\$30	\$60	\$50	\$100	
1/3 Page	3.25" W x 6.5" H	\$40	\$80	\$70	\$140	
1/2 Page	7.5" W x 3.25" H	\$50	\$100	\$90	\$180	
	7.5" W x 4.5" H					
Full Page	3.25" W x 9.75" H	\$90	\$140	\$130	\$220	
	7.5" W x 9.75 H					

## Notes from the Manager

*Board meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the clubhouse.*

*Meeting minutes are posted by the board on the clubhouse door.*

Garages in Court 4 have been fumigated and repairs will begin the week of June 27. Fumigation of garages in Court 5 has begun. Building painting moves at a fast pace, with Hi-Tech and Stein working simultaneously on separate buildings. Tree pruning, removal, and replacement continue, with the assistance of Jan Scow, Western Arborist, and

Harnisch. The light-fixture replacement project has been temporarily suspended. The electrical re-wiring project is beginning, with quotes from various vendors coming in. The patio tree-removal project is being reassessed before moving forward. Fines are still being assessed from homeowners who haven't complied with HOA regulations on garage usage. Residents are moving satellite dishes, after receiving violation notices. The office continues to address awning and satellite-dish violations. Issues around perimeter trees are being addressed with members of the City Planning Division of Street Trees.

# Re-greening the Rodeo Median

The Re-greening of the Rodeo Median project is soon to be completed. Grant committee members Suzanne Jagers, former Board of Directors President (2003), and Laurie Liles applied for a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant to provide funds to redo our median, which had lost many plants to old age and Giant Whitefly infestation. The grant was written by Jagers, assisted by Liles, who has written this type of grant in other neighborhoods. The grant was awarded in July of 2003. Various permits were obtained to replace the worn-out irrigation system along the median to assure the survival of new plants.

The Neighborhood Matching Fund requires that every dollar awarded be matched by community volunteer labor or by services and goods to complete of the project. The VG Board of Directors embraced the project and provided financial help from plant renovation reserves.

In the first phase last September, resident volunteers from the Green stepped up to help dig up dead and dying plants so the irrigation lines could be installed. The Landscape Committee, chaired by Lorrain Secor, was instrumental in lining up volunteers and establishing a bank of residents to call on. Labor Day 2004 saw volunteers removing dozens of bags of dead and dying plant material and debris. The irrigation lines were installed last fall and were up and running by November 2004.

The second phase was to remove a large number of rocks that came to the surface while digging for irrigation lines. In mid-January, residents came forward again to assist removing rocks from the planting areas. This proved to be an arduous job, but their energy and persistence prevailed.

Bennett Landscapers are now completing the final phase of planting, with the goal of completing the project in late June. Since the VG is a Landmark Heritage site, plant species from the original Barlow plan are being installed. When fully grown, these should provide a nice hedge along the Rodeo median.

A hearty "THANK YOU" goes to all the residents who volunteered their time and energy to help us achieve this improvement to our property.  
- Laurie Liles

**Community Ads** For Village Green residents. \$3 per issue; \$5 for 3 issues. [vghighlights@yahoo.com](mailto:vghighlights@yahoo.com).

• **VG Resident seeks rental** – beginning August 1<sup>st</sup>. For two people, any floor plan, excellent credit and references available. Can be flexible about dates and lease terms. Willing to take over lease or sublet. Michael Underwood, 310-916-7737; [munderwd@calarts.edu](mailto:munderwd@calarts.edu).

## Incident Reports

**June 3**—resident in Ct. 4 reported a serious water backup. In Ct. 8, police responded to an alarm in a unit. No disturbances were reported.

**June 8**—a dog was reported barking from within a unit in Ct. 4. The office advised the owner of the HOA's CC&R rule regarding pets. A moving truck was reported in Ct. 12 in the early a.m. The movers were assisting a resident and were asked reduce the noise to not disturb the other residents.

**June 9**—a resident in the East Circle reported problems breathing.

**June 10**—in Ct. 7 a group of boys were reported trespassing. Upon request, the boys left the property.

## Committee News and Reports

**Court Council**—Thanks to residents and Board members who attended the Town Hall Meeting. Over 75 residents attended. The Board is addressing concerns about dogs in units, noisy neighbors, and children's play-toys left in common areas. Please be respectful of your neighbors and take small steps to make this a more pleasant community for everyone.

**Cultural Affairs**—The first Village Green Residents' Art Show was a huge success. Thanks to Karen Jackson and Robert Nicolais. If you invite guests for the summer concerts please ask them to park on the perimeter (Hauser, Coliseum, Rodeo Place and Sycamore). To ensure success of the programs, we must minimize disruptions to residents.

**Cultural Landscape Report**—The Committee elected Ted Lumpkin as chair and Sara Loe as co-chair. Fred Wilson will head the Saturday data collection. Mickey Fielding will supervise the plant photo album. Saturday morning inventory is 25% complete—more volunteers are needed. The Tree Policy is under revision, and the CLR will get input from the Tree and Landscape Committees to resolve problems and develop a plan of action.

*Continued next page*

# Committee News and Reports *continued*

**Design Review**—The committee continues to review modification requests, and thanks residents for their input. Awnings continue to be a source of concern. Members are monitoring responses from the recent letters sent to owners in violation. DRC will propose DuMar bench model #34 for placement around the Green.

**Grant Committee**— Results from the Mills Act survey are in. The majority of residents who responded were in favor of the Mills Act and want to participate. The committee is looking at grants for the Cultural Landscape Report, and for ways to work with the CLR committee.

**Landscape Committee**— The Rodeo greening project grant money has been received and 170 *Pittosporum tobira* have been installed. More plants are needed to complete the East and West medians. The mulching program is behind schedule; Court 8 should be completed this month. Clubhouse plants should be delivered in June.

**National Historic Landmark**—The committee is working to address Mills Act concerns. The Board voted down a proposal for original-equipment storage. The Division of Street Trees won't replant carob trees on the perimeter. The committee is addressing how to use benches throughout the Green.

**Parking**—The committee holds enforcement hearings once a month, and is consistently enforcing citations. Thanks to Ms. Giles in the office for keeping records of issued citations and notices. The committee is addressing perimeter parking along Hauser and Coliseum. Allied-Barton has been issuing citations in those areas, which have always been assumed to be governed by VG. The committee asked the Board to bring this up for discussion at the next Board meeting.

Village Green Committee Meeting Times and Chairs			
Budget & Finance	3rd Tuesday	6:00 p.m.	Gina Tramel
Clubhouse	Thursdays		Pricilla Browner
Court Council	1st Wed	7:00 p.m.	Kathryn Carr
Cultural Affairs	1st Wed	5:30 p.m.	Molly O'Brien
Cultural Landscape	1st & 3rd Wed	7:30 p.m.	Ted Lumpkin
Design Review	1st Monday	7:30 p.m.	Kathleen Louw and Frances Moore
Grants	2nd & 4th Wed	8:00 p.m.	Susan Edwards and Robert Nicolais
Highlights	3rd Wed	6:30 p.m.	Susan Edwards
Landscape	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m.	Lorraine Secor
National Landmark	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m.	Robert Nicolais
Parking			Pauline Carroll
Safety	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m.	Steven Keylon
Social Recreation	Thursdays	12:00 p.m.	Pricilla Browner
Trees	3rd Monday	7:30 p.m.	Gordon Brooks

**Safety Committee**—The committee elected Steven Keylon as chair, Drew Furedi as co-chair and Caroline Streeter as Secretary. Goals include addressing resident concerns about Allied-Barton, having a community meeting with local police and residents, creating a resolution regarding lighting, and developing informational flyers for residents.

**Social Recreation**—Look on the clubhouse bulletin boards for “news and views” and events flyers. See’s Candy Gift Certificates are available from the committee. The SRC will monitor problems with the clubhouse. Several trips are coming up, as is the movie *The Terminal* on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Please attend!

**Tree Committee**—The committee is not receiving reports such as the Arborist Report, Tree Trimming Report, and Work Orders, and thus has no way of monitoring and evaluating work being done. Dead trees are a concern; several have been dead for some time, with no notice of when they will be removed. The committee is currently looking at the Tree Replacement Policy, and how it affects the Memorial Tree program.

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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](mailto:vghighlights@yahoo.com), or to the office.