

# VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

## HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

February 2020

### ATTENTION VILLAGE GREEN OWNERS

## VGOA ANNUAL MEETING on SATURDAY, APRIL 25

*Please plan to be at Baldwin Hills Elementary at 10:00 a.m. for this once-a-year state-mandated HOA owners' event. Learn how our property and Association are doing, and take this last opportunity to vote for the six open Board seats.*

### NEWS FROM THE BOARD - JANUARY

*Compiled by Lucy Fried*

**BOD Election:** Directors appointed Robert Creighton, Heide Oglesby, and Michael Schodorf as inspectors of election, with Cynthia Cyrus as an alternate ... Nominators and nominees should note that 2/21, 4:30 pm is the strict deadline for nomination forms to be returned to the office...

**VG History:** The fact that Village Green is situated on land historically part of the Tongva (or Gabrielino) Nation will be added to the "History" section of the **Handbook**.

**Rules Changes:** After sending owners proposed rules changes and considering owner comments, the board finalized approval of several important new rules, including:

- **Smoking and vaping** of tobacco or any other substance are prohibited now in all dwellings, including inside an owner's unit.
- **Two pets** are now allowed per unit (except aquatic animals).
- **Parking:** The existing rule stating that parking permits are issued to residents only was clarified. Also, if a resident and/or a resident's guest is responsible for a parking violation, the resident may now waive the right to a hearing and place a check or money order in the envelope and return it to the office within 15 days.

*Continued on Page 2*

## A FUTURE FOREST

*By Laura Civiello, Tree Committee Chair*

A Coast live oak in Court 3...a California sycamore on the Main Green...a Fire-wheel tree in Court 14. These are just three of the 115 trees planted around the Village Green in January, the culmination of the tree and landscape committee's months-long effort to replace some of the 300+ trees the Green has lost to old age and/or disease. The 43 trees sponsored by our many generous neighbors helped us replace some of those lost trees.

Some of the new trees are part of an ongoing project to provide much-needed



*Green Crew stands with resident Jim Muller and the Coast live oak he sponsored.*

shade. Others are part of the automatic remove-and-replace initiative passed by the Board that assured removals will be replaced by the same or another arborist-recommended tree.

The locations and species were selected based on the Green's historic planting designs, in conjunction with an October site survey and evaluation by the Green's contract arborist, Cy Carlberg. Every court received new trees, including:

- American sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) – A native of the Eastern U.S., its sap was used during World Wars I and II to produce soaps, drugs, and adhesives.

*Continued on Page 4*

# MANAGER'S REPORT

## **Escort Call-Box**

The call box is still non-functional after being struck by a resident's car. However, new wires have been pulled and bids are out for re-installation, including bollards on both sides to prevent it from being knocked over again.

## **Concrete Repairs**

Two patios and two garages have been repaired, and we are submitting proposals for 2020 concrete work.

## **Storm Drains**

All storm drains on the property have been thoroughly cleaned out.

## **Residential Re-piping**

Re-piping of the six buildings scheduled for 2019 (68, 75-78, and 95) is complete.

## **Residential Insulation, Painting, and Carpentry Repairs**

This three-part project is complete for the ten buildings scheduled for 2019: 6, 7, 13, 31, 52, 59, 71, 74, 81, and 87.

## **Greencrew Report**

The company detailed courts 7-15 in January and plans to be at courts 15-2 in February. The massive tree planting project was about half-way through at this writing. Large stumps left in the ground after earlier removals have slowed the project down. They also reported the well pump

has been off all winter, so repairs have not been done on broken sprinklers and lateral irrigation lines.



*from Manager  
Sherri Giles'  
January  
Board Report*

## **Arborist Report**

Cy Carlberg in December noted 18 trees had been recommended in May for pruning and one for removal/replacement – a Liquidamber in Court 7. Her January report noted three trees requiring pruning and four to be removed. The four are a Yucca (Court 9); California Sycamore (Court 14 garage court); Shamel ash (Court 17); and volunteer Brazilian pepper (garage court 10). All but the pepper were recommended for replacement. □

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## **NEWS FROM THE BOARD** *Continued from Page 1*

- **Garage Access Violations:** If, after a hearing, the Enforcement Committee determines that an owner failed to comply with inspection notices, forced entry may now be authorized; and owner access may be denied. See Section 19.4 (D) for more details.

**More Board News:** Directors agreed with a Landscape Committee resolution that plants removed or accidentally killed in connection with maintenance work should be promptly replaced, "like for like"... They also approved a series of six court emergency preparedness workshops this spring and summer sponsored by the Safety Committee. □

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## **PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT** November 12, 2019 - January 22, 2020



*Edited by  
Jordan Deglise  
Moore*

**NOV 12 GARAGE-BREAK INS,** Court 16, 5:00 pm. Two residents reported that their garages had been forcibly entered. Nothing appeared to be stolen.

**DEC 17 GRAFFITI,** Court 1, 1:00 pm. A patrol officer found and reported graffiti on garages.

**DEC 18 ONGOING NOISE COMPLAINT,** Court 7, 9:47 pm. A resident reported that a neighbor was again playing music too loudly.

**DEC 23 BROKEN TREE BRANCH/PROPERTY DAMAGE,** West Circle garage court, 9:00 am. A Village Green employee reported a large branch had fallen and damaged two cars.

**DEC 29 RESIDENT FOUND DECEASED,** Court 7, 2:00 pm. A resident's relative notified LAPD that they had not heard from their family member in days. LAPD entered the unit and found the resident deceased.

**JAN 20 PERSON ON MOTOR SCOOTER,** 2:15 pm. While monitoring the unofficial VG residents' Facebook page, a patrol officer learned a person wearing a fake "security" jacket was riding a motor scooter around the greens. Officers searched but could not find the individual.

**JAN 21 RESIDENT FOUND DECEASED,** Court 1, 4:00 pm. A resident reported they had not heard from their neighbor in a week. VG employees entered the unit, found the resident unresponsive and called paramedics, who determined the resident had died. □

# The Power of (Tree) Roots

By Lucy Fried

On December 29 while walking on Coliseum, I noticed DWP trucks near Court 6 and found a worker willing to tell me why they were there. I was interested because I had read Facebook posts on December 23 from alarmed Court 6 residents whose power had gone out in the middle of the night. DWP was hoping to learn the cause and find a permanent replacement for a failed cable.



Walking again on January 12, I saw DWP trucks in the Court 6 driveway near the electrical vault and noticed that cables were strung above a building roof to bring electricity to the units. Workers were in a patio, gathered around a junction box (the distribution point for electricity for several units in the court). One worker kindly explained that they were preparing to pull the underground electrical cable through the underground conduit to the junction box there.

He said the chances were high that a root or roots of the huge and beautiful ficus tree in the path had caused the outage.

## Update from VG Facilities Engineer Alfonso Casanova

On January 21, VG Facilities Engineer Alfonso Casanova told me that the DWP could not pull the cable through; it had broken at the area of the ficus tree.

Village Green was still waiting for the DWP's report on the cause of the



break. The three possibilities were: the conduit was bent by a root; the wiring itself was old and frayed; there was an electrical overload. If new conduit needs to be installed or another way found to bring electricity from the vault to the units, it would cost considerable time and money.

If the outage was caused by Village Green's ficus roots, the VGOA would have liability.

Someone planted that ficus in the pathway near the conduit decades ago ... If you take a look at the **Village Green Handbook**, you'll notice that it is one of only a very few plants the Association has banned ... and it's banned because of its prolific and tenacious roots.

**Morals of the story:** (1) Don't plant banned plants. (2) Take the long view when you decide to plant anything, and consider its impact, above and below ground, in ten or twenty years. □



## So You Want To Be a Director...

*Thinking of running for the board? Prepare yourself to hit the ground running.*

- Attend a board meeting. Pick up a copy of the budget while you're there.
- Review our governing documents. Go to [www.villagegreenla.net](http://www.villagegreenla.net)
- Attend a committee meeting or two. You will be a liaison to a committee.

*Good luck!*

*Communication Committee*

**Highlights** is a volunteer project of the VG Communications Committee.

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## “A Future Forest” *continued from Page 1*

- Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) – Not a true pepper but rather a member of the cashew family.
- California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) – Food source for the larva of the Western tiger swallowtail butterfly.
- Chinese flame tree (*Koelreuteria bipinatus*) – Gets its name from the salmon-colored seed pods it produces in the fall. We have a spectacular mature tree on the west end of the Main Green.
- Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) – Acorns were an important food source for native peoples. The Oak Titmouse and Hutton’s Vireo both feed on insects that live in the bark and canopy.
- Evergreen pear (*Pyrus kawakamii*) – Despite the name, its leaves turn red and drop in late fall. Look for the profuse bloom of white flowers in early February.
- Firewheel tree (*Stenocarpus sinuatus*) – Native to Australia, its dramatic red, wagon-wheel-shaped flowers are pollinated by moths.
- Maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) – At 350 million years, it’s one of the world’s oldest trees species.
- Olive (*Olea europaea*) – We are planting ‘Wilsonii’, a non-fruited variety.
- Orchid tree (*Bauhinia x blakeana*) – There are 34 different species native to warm climates around the world. Blakeana is the national emblem of Hong Kong and produces showy pink flowers.
- Silk floss tree (*Ceiba speciosa*) – The seedpods’ fluffy fiber has been used as stuffing for pillows and life jackets.
- Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) – Named after French botanist Pierre Magnol, it’s endemic to the southeastern U.S. and is the state flower of Mississippi.
- Strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) – Widespread in the Mediterranean, the tree was documented as early as 4th B.C.E. The fruit is used to make jams, marmalades and medronho, a type of Portuguese brandy.
- Victorian box (*Pittosporum undulatum*) – Known for its fragrant small, cream-white flowers which attract bees and painted lady butterflies en masse.
- Weeping bottlebrush (*Callistemon viminalis*) – Australian native and a favorite of our hummingbirds.

We hope you enjoy watching them fill in the landscape! □



**9:30 am, Sunday, January 5:** Chris Scornaienchi (Tree Committee board liaison) plants a flag to show Greencrew to dig a hole and plant a tree there – one of 115 trees to be planted in January.

Chris, committee chair Laura Civiello, and other members planned to work clockwise around the Green and be out most of the day. “All the

tree locations are marked on a digital map,” she explained, “which I have on my phone and direct team members where to plant the flags.”

Greencrew workers began digging holes the next morning. □



Photo by Zig

January 16, 2020: A battalion of 41 new trees waiting to be planted

### February Foot Beats

*A Safety Committee activity for all residents ...*

**Fri., 2/7, 9:00 am** - Meet at Court 1 entrance, walk VG east area.

**Thurs., 2/13, 7:00 pm** - Meet at Court 14 entrance, walk VG west area.

**Wed., 2/19, 9:00 pm** - Meet at Court 3 entrance, walk VG central area.

**Mon., 2/24, 7:00 pm** - Meet at Court 17 entrance, walk VG east area

**Mon., March 2, 9:30 pm** - Meet at Court 13, walk VG west section.

## Electrical Upgrade Phase 3 – Construction

*Dear Reader: This article is the third and last part of an interview between director Steve Haggerty and Diann Dumas on the three phases of Village Green's electrical upgrade. We hope you're finding the conversation informative. Reach us at [villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com](mailto:villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com) with comments or questions.*

**Diann Dumas: When will Phase 3 start and finish?**

**Steve Haggerty:** It's targeted to start in 2021 and span a number of years.

**DD: What will be done in Phase 3?**

**SH:** This is the actual upgrade to get more power in our units and garages. It is the implementation of the Phase 2 upgrade plan and has three parts:

- Upgrades to the **DWP's service to our buildings**, and upgrades to be done by the **Association to electrical service within our buildings**;
- Upgrades to the DWP's service to our garages for **electric vehicle charging**;
- Upgrades to the DWP's service to our garages for **garage-roof solar power generation**.

**DD: What will the workers be doing?**

**SH:** DWP will be re-wiring the power to our buildings, and the Association will be re-wiring within our buildings. This new power grid will include new wiring, transformers, and meters in our buildings – and possibly new vaults, conduits, and cable underground.

**DD: How long will the construction phase go on?**

**SH:** Buildings will be converted to the new wiring at various stages during the project. The phase is likely to roll out similarly to our copper re-pipe project i.e., the first courts will be ready within one-two years after Phase 2 is complete, based on board approval, funding, vendor selection, etc. **Much depends on DWP's ability to supply more power, as well as VG's funding and the electrical contractors we hire.**

**DD: Will homeowners need to be involved?**

**SH:** Yes. One of the key planning strategies is to avoid "move-outs," but much like the copper re-pipe project, there will be periods of work when power is turned off during a day or two. Plans, meetings, and schedules will be announced as they become known.

**DD: What are we going to do with the end product?**

**SH:** When each stage of Phase 3 completes, new devices can be safely installed. Plug in and enjoy the cool breeze! ☐

*Steve Haggerty is a director and past VGOA treasurer. He is also an electrical engineer.*

## Landscape Rehabilitation Takes Form

*By Cole Garrison, Landscape Committee Board Liaison*

Many months of planning are beginning to bear tangible results. The Landscape Committee, Board of Directors, and residents recently got a glimpse into the possible future of a landscape rehabilitation effort that is focused at the corner of Hauser and Coliseum.

This rehabilitation project is running in tandem with, and is dependent upon, another major board-approved project - the planning and phased implementation of a new irrigation system that will eventually completely replace our existing antiquated and failing system.

The irrigation replacement project has divided the Village Green site into 9 areas. Each area will be upgraded one at a time as funding is available. Per the advice of our irrigation design consultant, work will begin at the far end of the current main irrigation system and work its way back towards the pump. This is the best way to avoid stressing

out existing sprinkler lines that are not scheduled to be replaced until a future phase. As part of their services, Atomic Irrigation provided a preliminary cost estimate for the Phase 1 irrigation. They expect installation to be somewhere between \$480,000 and \$640,000.

At the December board meeting, our community was introduced to landscape architect Melinda Taylor, who has been engaged to design the .7-acre landscape rehabilitation project. The site of the current landscape upgrade (approximately .7 acres) is located within the larger (approximately 3.7 acres) Phase 1 irrigation replacement project boundaries.

*Ed. Note: Next month, Cole will introduce Melinda Taylor's thoughtful study of historical Village Green site plan designs and plantings and her preliminary rehabilitation design plan for the area. ☐*

## Calling All Readers

### Village Green's Libraries, Off and On Campus

By Susan Hamric

You may have seen my friend Jean Savage walking around the Green. When she's not chatting up a fellow walker, she's reading a book on her Kindle - and chances are she downloaded it from the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL).

Have you been to our local LAPL library? It's the Baldwin Hills branch on LaBrea between Jefferson and Adams. You can walk there, take the bus, or drive and park in the lot.

We're fortunate to be so close, because it has terrific FREE resources for everyone, from toddlers to senior citizens. You will find audio books, best-sellers, kids' books, graphic novels, magazines, books with large type, and much more. There are computers for adults and children and a staff member who provides technical assistance. Plus, you have access to the city's entire collection of thousands of items that can be ordered online and picked up locally.

If you've never been to a public library, I think you'll be surprised at how comfortable you will feel. Sada Mozer, Senior Librarian, is always welcoming and leads a friendly, knowledgeable staff. And if you haven't visited one lately, know that it's still a peaceful place, although not as quiet as it used to be.

Playing is encouraged in the children's section, which has soft blocks and puppets for little ones and lots of board books for beginning readers. Every week there's a children's program led by a wonderful children's librarian. Recently, there was a hugely popular visit from a team of firefighters who brought their hook and ladder fire engine. Another very popular program is "PAWS-Read to a Dog" with large and gentle dogs that love to be read to and petted. Meanwhile, the older kids can get homework help.

The library has so many programs for children and adults (including volunteer opportunities) that it's impossible to list them all. I hope you will check them out at [www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org).

### Village Green's Libraries

How about a library at the Green? In fact, we have two! The Village Green Library is in the Clubhouse, just behind the office, and consists entirely of books donated by residents. It has mostly popular fiction with some non-fiction titles. I don't remember how I discovered it, but over the years I've borrowed and donated many books, discovered new authors and revisited old favorites.



Susan in Village Green's library Photo by Zig

From 9-11 am and 3-5 pm, you can walk into the office and explain you want to visit the library, and staff will let you though. You can sit and read or check out a book on the honor system.

But what if you just have to have a book at a time the office is closed? A generous Court 12 resident has put a "Little Library" painted green on her patio for people to take or drop off a book. Thank you, Tracy King!

Can a library be a laundry room shelf? A trash area shelf? We seem to think so, as we often leave a book or magazine there for someone to pick up. Rescuing a good orphaned book can make my day. Keep your eyes open; you might find a treasure of your own! □

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2/11 & 2/12 CARB Community Meetings

The California Air Resources Board will place several air quality testing instruments in Baldwin Hills. VG input can influence where. Details at [www.villgegreenla.net](http://www.villgegreenla.net).

### Sustainability Group

**Saturday, 2/22, 10:00 am, Clubhouse.** Green New Deal and Sunrise Movement short films and discussion.

### VG Board of Directors Meeting

**Tuesday, February 25, Clubhouse**

Homeowner comments start promptly at 7:00 pm. □