

# VILLAGE GREEN

*Annual Meeting/Election Issue*

## Monthly Highlights

### Well-organized Annual Meeting Takes Care of Business

By Lucy Fried

Villagers flocked to Baldwin Hills Elementary School on February 4 to cast ballots for five open board seats and participate in the 2017 Annual Meeting of Members of The Village Green Owners Association. Many fortified themselves with churros, donuts, fruit, and coffee before taking seats. Inside the auditorium, candidates made their last pitch for votes, owners aired concerns, committee heads described their groups' contributions; and the president, treasurer, and operations manager delivered comprehensive reports.

A cheer erupted when elections chief inspector Cynthia Cyrus announced that the legally required quorum (minimum number of accurately-addressed envelopes from eligible voters) had been reached and exceeded, as this is often a challenge at Village Green. The quorum number this year was 305. She reminded the body they could watch the envelope opening and ballot counting at the Clubhouse starting at 1:00 pm, and the meeting soon recessed until then. Results were in by about 3:05 and posted soon after on the Clubhouse door.

Here are the election results: Jerri Allyn (219); Steve Haggerty (206); Ben Ginsburg (201); Diann Dumas (170); Cynthia Singleton (167); Norma Miller (153); Amelia Arau (139). The top five won seats on the board. At 4:00 p.m., the new board convened briefly to elect officers: Jerri Allyn, president; Joe Khoury, vice-president; Steve Haggerty, treasurer; Ethan Markowitz, secretary.

Appreciation to all who contributed to a successful Annual Meeting, including VG staff who set up, cleaned up, and assisted in the vote counting. □

### 2017 Board of Directors



From left: Cynthia Singleton; Ben Ginsburg; Steve Haggerty; Lucy Fried; Joe Khoury; Jerri Allyn; Ethan Markowitz; Diann Dumas.

Photo by Melanee Newkirk.

### State of the Green Village: Report to 2017 Annual Meeting

By Jerri Allyn, Board President

Welcome everyone! It's great to see familiar faces and new ones. I speak for the board and staff in thanking you for being here.

When casting about for ideas for a sense of 2016, our operations manager, Ms. Giles, said, "What about team? That's what's gotten the work done during this transition." TEAM - In Old English, it meant: *childbearing, brood, a set of draft beasts*. Many times during the last four years, I have felt our boards were draft beasts giving arduous birth – to something. I didn't always know what.

Your board has had some ferocious challenges to contend with: the economy still bringing liens and foreclosures of our neighbors; staffing shortages; the drought and well failure; trees toppling.... And we made many important decisions.

Ms. Giles, the staff, and board, like childbearing draft beasts, gave birth to one solution after another that kept us serving you, the membership.

**President's Report** continued on page 4...

# Report to Annual Meeting

By Sherri Giles, Operations Manager

Good morning, directors and members of the Village Green community. Today, I would like to talk with you about the challenges we faced over the past year and what our management team did to meet them, as well as discuss the goals we have for this year.

## Staffing Challenges

In 2015 the board asked, "What can we do to improve and strengthen management's ability to support this community?" In answer, they made the decision to restructure the management team by replacing the general manager and assistant manager positions with two new positions: operations manager and facilities engineer.

A critical element of this plan was finding the right person for the facilities engineer position. With the guidance and support of the board's transition committee, maintenance supervisor Harold Graves and I interviewed many candidates over several months. In July, we interviewed Martin Breit and knew we had found a valued member of the team. Martin brings to the Association his experience, including an extensive background in construction management. We are very happy to have him!

## 2016 Projects Completed

2016 started with two key projects that kept us busy: hiring a new arborist, which was crucial to maintaining the health of the many trees that contribute to the park-like setting of the Green; and completing emergency repair work to the well pump system that was necessary to provide irrigation to our valuable landscape. After Martin came on board in August, we were able to shift into a higher gear and complete a good portion of regular operating and reserve projects planned for 2016, including the following:

- Rehabilitation of the irrigation well, which involved the installation of a stainless steel liner to fortify the wall of the well, perhaps extending its life 10-20 years;
- Sidewalk and patio foundation repairs throughout the property;
- Restoration of the garage structures in Courts 9, 10 and 11;
- And the one you all love: annual garage inspections.

## This Year's Goals

This year, we will be carrying out the board's decisions to repipe the interior water supply lines of at least eight buildings; complete painting of at least 10 buildings; and replace the exterior domestic water supply lines in several courts. We will also address some of the projects that were deferred during the transition period, including:

- Completing the process of bidding out the landscape contract; Bidding out the insurance for the property;
- Finding a qualified tree pruning company;
- Procuring and implementing a computerized maintenance management system *which will include an online work order component*.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the board of directors for their continued support and to the community for your patience during the transition. Your involvement is vital to the lasting harmony of this community. Thank you. □



## Community Outreach Update

By Cynthia Singleton

**Coliseum Traffic:** Councilman Wesson announced that NO DUMPING signs will be posted on Hauser and Coliseum, and that his office will be moving forward with permitted parking along the Coliseum corridor east of La Brea.

**Kaiser Hospital:** A new Kaiser Permanente medical center with a broad range of out-patient services is planned to open by year's end just west of the Crenshaw Mall.

**Homeless Food Bank:** Volunteers and donations are needed at a food bank at the Crenshaw United Methodist Church, corner of Don Felipe and Stocker. Contact director Karen Reed at 323-292-0141.

**USC Housing:** FYI - USC is now acquiring apartment buildings to house students in the Baldwin Village (formerly "The Jungle") just east of La Brea. □

## February Foot Beats



**Friday, 2/10, 10 am:** Meet at Clubhouse, walk VG central section.

**Saturday, 2/18, 7 pm:** Meet at Court 1 entrance, walk VG east section.

**Thursday, 2/23, 11 am:** Meet at Clubhouse, walk VG west section.

**Thursday, 3/2, 7 pm:** Meet at Court 5 entrance, walk central section.

**Tuesday, 3/7, 9 am:** Meet at Clubhouse, walk VG east section.

# Review of 2016 Financials

By Steve Haggerty, Treasurer

Overall, the condition of Village Green financials as of December 31, 2016, is good. We have \$386,747 in our operating funds bank account; \$1,289,431 in our regular reserves bank accounts; and \$65,364 in our special assessment bank accounts. Again, a good position to begin 2017.

## Total Budget

Total reported income was \$3,771,430. Total expenses were \$3,733,654. So, our income exceeded our expenses by \$37,776. Our monthly transfers to reserves totaled \$1,374,099. Expenses other than reserve transfers totaled \$2,359,555.

## Operating Budget

Our planned operating budget was \$2,386,321, and our actual spending was \$2,359,555, which was \$26,766 (1.1%) under our planned budget.

Our operating budget discipline was very good considering the turnover in the staff handling our check processing. There were 29 over-budget accounts totaling \$249,111 and 44 under-budget accounts totaling \$276,367. Improvement is needed. Accounts more than \$20,000 over-budget: wages-temp workers; grounds - maintenance contract; utilities-water; legal-collection costs; plumbing repairs-other; and utilities-sewer. Accounts more than \$10,000 under-budget: tree care; wages-regular; legal-association; repairs-exterior; concrete repairs-exclusive common area; payroll taxes; utilities-electricity; and outside services.

## Reserve Budget

Regular reserves were budgeted at (\$774,154) in 2016, and special assessment reserves at (\$592,970), totaling \$1,367,124. Actual reported spending was \$275,825 for regular reserve projects and \$710,400 for special assessment reserve projects, totaling \$986,228, and leaving \$380,899 remaining.

The major regular reserve projects were: well shaft/liner (\$122,836); garage painting (\$57,057); garage repairs (\$21,780); and water intrusion repairs (\$20,229). (\$710,400) was paid from special assessment funds for sewer line replacement. As was the case the prior year, continuing staff shortages in 2016 resulted in deferring projects like re-piping, painting-buildings, exterior lighting, serpentine walls, driveway/asphalt repairs, and others.

## Where are we with Special Reserve Projects?

**Building stabilization:** we completed 100% of the planned work for buildings 8 and 14 in 2015.

**Sewer line (external) replacement:** All planned court work has been completed except the eight-inch mainline lines tying Village Green sewer pipes to LA City pipes in courts 1 to 17, 4 to 3, 6 to 14, and 7 to 10. The estimated cost for the remaining work is \$494,440 and it's planned for 2019 and 2020.

**Copper Re-pipe:** 66 or 69 percent of our 96 buildings have been copper re-piped. Our plans are to re-pipe 13 buildings in 2017; five buildings in 2018; four buildings in 2019; and complete the project with five buildings in 2020. The estimated costs are: \$587,120 for 2017; \$227,520 for 2018; \$138,400 for 2019; and \$219,060 for 2020.

**Roofing Replacement:** In 2010, the plan was to do complete roof replacements, but that was not needed and not done. In the six years since 2011, we've spent \$140,038 on roofing buildings and \$253,824 on roofing garages. Our plan for 2017-2025 is to spend \$155,750 on roofing buildings and \$278,750 on roofing garages. VG's facilities engineer will be researching the condition of our roofs in 2017 and will bring the results back to the board for action and funding.

## Where are we with Regular Reserves Projects?

### Replacement Projects

#### Estimated replacement costs:

Irrigation system replacement: \$575,000 planned for 2017-18

External water supply lines: \$940,634 planned for 2017-2022

Exterior lighting: \$507,201 planned for 2019-2021

Interior drain lines: \$1,698,390 planned for 2020-2023

### On-going Projects

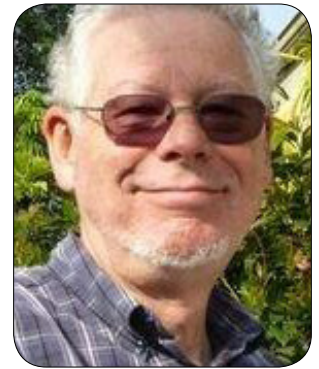
#### Estimated 2017-2025 costs for major regular reserve projects:

Painting buildings: \$1,612,409, Painting garages: \$306,570

Water intrusion repairs: \$449,928

Garage roof repairs: \$278,750

Termite/fumigation: \$259,623 □



To read more about  
Village Green's reserve  
projects, visit  
[www.villagegreenla.net](http://www.villagegreenla.net)



## President's Report, continued from page 1...



### Overall Financial Picture

A key management position unfilled for 13 months meant more money to put into our reserves account, but the reality is fair labor practices will require us to pay more, material costs are rising, and new younger owners and directors with 21st century expectations have different needs and more demands on the office than our "seasoned" Villagers. In the future, we may require more staff.

The board and I remained committed to ensuring a stable financial status. As a TEAM, we approved the operations, reserves, and special assessment budgets for 2017. Some deferred maintenance and capital improvement projects are planned for this year, but for now we have held off increasing monthly dues even though our Reserve Funding Study indicates the Association is still underfunded. We decided to complete the 10-year Special Assessment/Mills Act projects first, which conclude in Feb 2021. Cost-wise, Village Green's dues remain in the middle with comparable HOAs.

Our new leadership and management structure will continue to develop in 2017 with the intention of being fully operational by December. Many longtime residents have been patient through this period, and we can't thank you enough.

### Balancing Act

To paraphrase a new owner recently vetting me as an incumbent candidate: "This neighborhood is changing rapidly – buyers are in bidding wars, and the winners are snatching up units. How is this Association going to remain fluid to change and serve individuals who are paying half a million for a small condo that cost \$250,000 just five years ago? This place is special and unusual. How are you going to balance the historic features - windows and doors that no longer fit right, and old, flattened insulation that no longer keeps in winter heat or summer cool – with the need for a 21st century, ecologically efficient infrastructure, including air conditioning? How are you going to serve younger, tech savvy neighbors who expect more?"

INDEED! How are we? Sure, it's great to see our property values continue to climb, but the board, staff and committees have been facing these budget challenges and juggling the rising cost of everything all year. The City of Angels, along with New York – is the most expensive place to live in the country. How are we going to meet the expectations of ALL our neighbors in this inter-generational Green Village with widely varied incomes?

A team is also *a group of people or animals linked in a common purpose. Human teams are especially appropriate for conducting tasks that are high in complexity and have many interdependent subtasks.* (Wikipedia). I am sure whoever comprises the 2017 Board will welcome all interdependent ideas from new and long-time owners alike, to solve these complex challenges.

### Moving Forward Last Year and This

Here are some of the important "interdependent subtasks" we took on.

- The board acted carefully and decisively to save our well and give it 10-20 more years of life.
- Following inspection by supervising architect Russell Tyner for cracks that re-surfaced in Buildings 8 and 14, we mitigated these with repairs and continue to monitor. Mr. Tyner conclusively determined the structure, exterior walls and pilings are safe and sound.
- Responding to complaints of short term rentals (like Airbnb), the board took a resolute stance and clarified that these are prohibited in our founding documents. We asked management to initiate the enforcement process for owners who continue to violate this regulation.
- The board assisted Ms. Giles with several legal cases, and a director headed up our defense against a long-running Small Claims Court suit that challenged our 2016 election procedure. The judge ruled decisively in our favor.
- Ms. Giles negotiated a favorable contract with the highly-regarded arborist, Cy Carlberg. Experienced in historic landscape restoration, this company now oversees the care and rehabilitation of our "urban forest," including the input of data about our 2000+ trees into a satellite tracking program... And this year, we restored the historic and now flourishing Olive tree allee behind the Clubhouse.

*Continued on next page...*

## Committee Meeting Times (All committee meetings are held in the Clubhouse.)

Budget and Finance: 3rd Thurs, 7 pm  
 Communication: 2nd Thurs., 7:30 pm  
 Court Council: 1st Wed., 7 pm

Cultural Affairs: 4th Thurs., 6 pm  
 Design Review: 1st Mon., 7 pm  
 Landscape: 2nd Mon., 7:30 pm

Safety: 2nd Wed., 7 pm  
 Trees: 3rd Mon., 7 pm

**For more info. go to [villagegreenla.net](http://villagegreenla.net).**

## President's Report, continued... Moving Forward

For the past 21 months, under the competent, hard-working and diplomatic leadership of Sherri Giles, the staff has done a decent job with work orders. There is room for improvement, and soon your TEAM will be rolling out a pilot program to test a new online work order system that we expect will increase the efficiency of responses to residents. Heads up: we'll be recruiting volunteers to assist owners without computers!

**Landscape maintenance contract:** The important 1940s landscape design that complements Village Green's mid-century modern architecture was greatly damaged by a 1963 dam-break flood. The landscape was then redesigned by a second architect. For decades, the landscape rarely had professional guidance. Most design elements drawn up by the landscape architects have not been followed, and many areas have been degraded. In 2011, a re-negotiated contract reduced the landscape maintenance fee from \$30,000 to \$24,000 a month and the quality of care and service decreased. The landscape committee and concerned owners began to insist on proper maintenance, and this TEAM is assisting management in vetting vendors so a new contract can be considered by the board soon.

### Committees and Volunteers

***A TEAM becomes more than a collection of people when a strong sense of mutual commitment creates synergy, thus generating a performance greater than the sum of its individual members.*** –Wikipedia.

A few years ago, persistent conflict resulted in the complete dissolution of two committees and weakening of others. 2016 saw the rebuilding of the two, and almost all committees are flourishing and increasingly effective. Committees are the arms of the board, and that's why they're so important. Board meetings are designed largely for final business decisions, but committees allow for a lengthier process - the opportunity to have productive debates and consider in-depth solutions to problems. Committees provide appropriate, useful reports and recommendations to the directors so we can make more informed decisions. May all our committees continue to grow and provide a variety of opportunities for participation!

I want to honor elections chief inspector Cynthia Cyrus, and Rob Creighton, Heidi Oglesby and Mickey Fielding who ensure procedures follow all legal requirements.

Not everyone participates on committees, but woven into the fabric of this community, many residents do their part. They manage the unofficial Facebook page, the unofficial pet owners page, and the families email list; they alert Public Security when something seems amiss; put a note on the broken dryer, and call the company and ask for repair. A big salute to owners who fill out work orders to let our staff know about a leaky irrigation head or pick up litter; and to those who take the time to write a letter to the board or offer suggestions at a board meeting. All of these actions come from owners and renters who understand that they are part of the fabric of civil society within this HOA, part of the TEAM. Will everyone who contributed to this community in 2016, please stand. Let's give **US** a big hand for serving on the Village Green Team!

### What does democracy look like?

In "civil society," people who participate are democracy in action. It's a messy process – a never ending one that takes time, often involves conflict, demands compromise, and offers enormous rewards. What does democracy look like at Village Green? This is what democracy looks like. □

## Board of Directors January Meeting News

*By Claire Joyce, Board Secretary*

After two homeowner comments, the board considered 10 business items and four design review recommendations; correspondence from two homeowners; and reports from the treasurer, manager, president, committees, and operations. **Actions included:**

**Reserves Budget...** discussed and

approved projected Reserves Budget projects for 2017. Each will require proposals and approval.

**Handbook Updates...** approved proposed changes specifying that common area use for commercial purposes requires board approval; membership input is invited prior to inclusion in the *VG Handbook*.

**Unit Modifications...** reviewed proposed design review committee (DRC)-initiated changes and information for owners and prospective owners. After further

board input and approval and membership input, the changes will be incorporated into the *Handbook*.

**New Plantings...** approved the landscape committee's first group of proposed plantings for 2017. The three horticulturist-recommended plantings are in courts 2 & 3.

**Dryer Doors...** reviewed homeowner information about a safety problem in many laundry rooms caused by dryer door orientation, and approved the manager-negotiated changing of the doors' location at no cost to the HOA.

# Public Security Report

December 10, 2016 - January 23, 2017

Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore

Note: Security officers are instructed to document and notify management of all incidents.

- Dec 30 BROKEN TREE BRANCH/PROPERTY DAMAGE, West Circle, 3:10 pm.** Resident reported tree branch had fallen and broken a bedroom window. No one injured. VG Maintenance removed glass, covered window. Resident filed work order for new glass.
- Jan 4 VEHICLE TOW/IRATE RESIDENT, Court, 14 8:15 am.** Resident confronted office staff because management had his car towed away. No VG permit was displayed on vehicle, and car had been parked longer than allowed period.
- Jan 11 VEHICLE THEFT, Hauser Blvd., 1:38 pm.** Contractor working for resident reported truck and tools inside stolen. LAPD report filed.
- Jan 11 VEHICLE VANDALISM, West Circle, 7:15pm.** Resident reported small dent on car hood believed caused while on VG property.
- Jan 13 ELECTRICAL POWER THEFT, Court 17, 11:15 am.** Non-resident living in RV on Sycamore caught using extension cord to tap power from Court 17 garage light pole. VG security and maintenance confronted non-resident, disconnect cord and advised him to stop. Non-resident drove away.
- Jan 16 TRESPASSERS, Court 5 garage court, 11:15 am.** Residents reported four adult males in red and black entering property with backpack, duffel bag, gloves and crowbar. Security asked them to leave the property; they unwillingly did so. Authorities notified.
- Jan 22 TREE DOWN, Court 10 garage court, 4:15 pm.** After residents' calls, security found a mature elm tree down and damage to three parked vehicles. Area photographed and yellow-taped. Information obtained from vehicle owners.
- Jan 23 TREE DOWN, West Circle 8:10 am.** Facilities engineer reported giant oak tree down, just west of parking lot. No injuries or vehicle damage, but three garages blocked. Maintenance advised. □



A fat caterpillar is caught munching on the last remains of a small Nandina plant (heavenly bamboo) in Court 3.

Photo by Maggy Gomez, LandCare.

Highlights and [www.villagegreenla.net](http://www.villagegreenla.net) need your feedback! Please fill out the survey and return to the office or any laundry room work order slot by March 15. Thanks!

## Upcoming Events



**Board Meeting:** Tuesday, February 28th, 7:00 pm, Clubhouse. Homeowner comments begin at 7pm sharp.



### MARK THESE DATES!

**Saturday, March 4th, 7:30 - 10:30am, starting at the Clubhouse**

VILLAGE GREEN BIRD WATCHING WALK LED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY

7:30am: Coffee, snacks, and talk before heading out at 9:00 am to bird watch. Learn about the amazing variety of birds that make Village Green their home (or migratory layover).

Please wear comfortable clothes and walking shoes. Feel free to bring cameras and binoculars.

*Co-sponsored by the landscape and tree committees.*

**Sunday, March 26, 3pm, Clubhouse**

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT: THE IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURE ON LA'S 20TH CENTURY BLACK MUSIC SCENE

Blacks on Blues and the Village Green Cultural Affairs Committee present a special Black History Month presentation by Dr. Lance A. Williams, producer of the phenomenally entertaining lecture-conversation series *Blacks on Blues* in Leimert Park since 1992. A full dinner will be served after the program.

**For more information, go to: [www.blacksonblues.com](http://www.blacksonblues.com).**

### IN MEMORIAM

*Highlights* sends condolences to the family and friends of former landscape committee co-chair Matt Redman, who died last December. Matt was a co-founder of AIDS Project L.A. and brought his determined leadership style to Village Green, where he campaigned fiercely for improved landscape maintenance.

**A memorial service will be held on Sunday, February 19th, 3-5 pm, at the West Hollywood City Chambers, 625 N. San Vicente Blvd, West Hollywood, CA 90069.**