

# VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

## Monthly Highlights

### Board of Directors August 24 Meeting News

By Claire Joyce, Board Secretary

After two homeowner comments, the board considered 15 business items; three design review recommendation; correspondence from five homeowners; and reports from the treasurer, manager, president, committees, and operations.

#### **Actions included:**

**Tree Care...** accepted new arborist Cy Carlberg's first report containing recommendations for removal and replacement of dead and decaying trees.

**Water and the Well...** approved contracts for hydro-geological and engineering services during the upcoming well rehabilitation and an ongoing ground water monitoring program. Management was authorized to consult an attorney regarding issues pertinent to the well.

**Website...** approved communication committee resolutions on procedures for the new website, scheduled to launch in the next month.

**Information Meeting...** voted to sponsor an information meeting in October on the LaCienega/Jefferson Cumulus development and the city's traffic plans for LaCienega and nearby streets.

**Reserves Budget Meeting...** scheduled a special open meeting on Sept. 20 at 7p.m. to discuss the reserves budget.

**Review of Delinquencies** In executive session, the board began a detailed review of the status of each delinquent account. Further action was taken as necessary and the process is ongoing. □

### Village Green Welcomes New Facilities Engineer Martin Breit

By Lucy Fried

After more than a year, Village Green's management team is rounded out with the hiring of facilities engineer Martin Breit. Martin started August 1 and is interfacing closely with operations manager Sherri Giles and maintenance supervisor Harold Graves on facilities issues – from water leak and balcony repairs to building painting, landscape irrigation issues, garage inspections, and much more.



Photo by Diann Dumas

Martin has 25 years of experience in commercial/residential facilities management, maintenance, and construction, and has worked with homeowner associations for 12 years. "But," he said, "I have never worked in a condominium community that has the history of Village Green. I am impressed with the surprisingly good condition of the Green. If you consider the age of the development, and its urban location along with the aging infrastructure of Los Angeles, the Village Green is aging quite well."

Martin has a degree in electrical engineering and certification in building operations and hopes to obtain his facilities management certificate (FMC) from U.C. Irvine this winter. Then, he intends to sit for the International Facilities Managers Association certification. "The rapid rate at which Facilities is always advancing makes the need for continuing education imperative," Martin said. "Technology is barely marketed before another is developed to replace it."

When asked what he considers to be his biggest challenge at Village Green, he replied, "It will be to maintain the charm and character of the Village Green while updating its infrastructure to carry it into its next century of existence." □

### Butterfly Flutter By

Do you know how to tell a male from a female monarch butterfly?

Only the males have two small black spots on the upper surface of their hind wings. This male was attracted to blossoms in Court 16 in mid-August. For more information, go to <http://monarchbutterflygarden.net/female-or-male-monarch-butterfly-pictures/>

Thanks to Audubon Society birder and photographer Dan Sterba. □



# Public Security Report

July 15 - August 15

*Edited by Gabriela Worrel*

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

**July 19 THEFT. Ct. 4, 5:05 p.m.**

Resident reported a spare tire stolen from the rear of a guest's car.

**July 23 SAFETY CONCERN. Court 3, 10:16 p.m.**

Resident reported neighbor left window open while nobody was home.

**July 29 MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. Ct. 1, 4:29 p.m.**

Resident observed a neighbor in need of medical assistance. Emergency services were called and arrived shortly.

**July 30 THEFT. Ct. 12, 5:50 p.m.**

Resident reported clothing item stolen from clothesline.

**Aug 05 VANDALISM. Ct. 15, 10:37 p.m.**

Resident reported glass patio door had been broken. LAPD was called and took a report.

**Aug 05 THEFT. Ct. 5, 12:34 p.m.**

Contractor reported seeing a man break into their work van and steal a backpack with personal items. LAPD was called and took a report.

**Aug 13 BROKEN TREE BRANCH. Ct. 10, 6:40 a.m.**

Resident reported broken tree branch blocking front door. Maintenance was called and began tree branch removal immediately.

**Aug 13 NOISE COMPLAINT. Ct. 7, 9:00 a.m.**

Resident reported construction noise from neighbor's unit. Officer spoke to contractor, who then complied with noise policy.

**Aug 13 DISPUTE. Ct. 6, 3:34 p.m.**

Resident reported someone parked in front of garage, blocking the door. Officer observed driver leaving the property shortly thereafter. □

## Manager's Report

*By Sherri Giles,  
Operations Manager*



**Facilities Engineer:**

We are very pleased to welcome Martin Breit as our new facilities engineer. He is a welcome addition to our VG management team, and we are looking forward to a long and productive relationship. *(Please see article on page one.)*

**Garage Inspections:**

Garage inspections in all courts are scheduled Sept. 7th-19th. Notices have been placed in all on-site mailboxes and on garage doors. *Please make the necessary preparations to pass the inspection in a timely manner.*

**New Washers/Dryers and Payment Process:**

New washers and dryers are scheduled to be installed September 13-15 in all laundry rooms. WASH will hold "mini-trainings" on the machines and credit/debit card payment method. *Look for details in your mailbox.*

**Painting and Carpentry Requests for Proposals:**

We are putting our painting and carpentry repair work out to bid. Ten residential buildings and three garage courts are planned for painting this year.

**Landscaping Requests for Proposals:**

RFPs have gone out to seven landscaping companies who expressed high interest in bidding on a contract. Initial walk-arounds have been held so far with four companies.

**VG Mailbox - The Saga Continues:**

Following the vandalism of our mailbox, a more secure box was placed near the flagpole. It will be moved closer to the office – the traditional area – after a concrete pad is installed to anchor it. □

## Window Screens - Think of the Next Person

*Ed. Note: Thanks to resident Sue Hausmann and maintenance supervisor Harold Graves for bringing this issue to HIGHLIGHTS and clarifying it.*

Think of the next guy, and please don't throw out your unwanted window screens! Village Green's screens are an important part of our units. They were constructed for the type of windows we have, and it takes time and money to have them replaced.

Even if you don't want your screens, the next owner or renter could be desperate to have them to keep out pesky insects. When residents dump screens in the dumpsters or trash areas, the screens often leave the property and cannot be recovered.

*Please make space in your garage to store your unwanted screens.* Our maintenance area is not big enough to store residents' unwanted items, and our staff is not responsible for storing them.

Also, please be sure anyone working for you knows not to trash the screens. □



*Photo by Sue Hausmann*

## OUR COMMUNITY'S WATER RESOURCES

# Water Costs at Village Green

*By Lucy Fried and Kelly Wilson Samojlik, with financial facts from Steve Haggerty, Board Treasurer*

Five years of drought and rising temperatures have led to a new appreciation of water. Throughout California, this sense has been heightened by browning grass and significant loss of trees. Here at Village Green, the damage was worsened by repeated irrigation well breakdowns and forced reliance on barely adequate amounts of expensive city water. Each day we use city water for irrigation, our DWP bill goes up by approximately \$1,000.

We thirst for water, yet when water bursts from our old pipes, we not only waste it but must pay to repair the damage it causes.

We wondered what the Association spends for all our water and water-related costs, so Steve looked at our expense reports for this year and each year back through 2012 and created the table below.

### Let's Dive In

The first line in the chart below, "DWP water/sewer," shows what we spent for DWP water delivery and sewer service. The total for the whole period was \$1,097,000, or nearly six percent of our actual operating expenses for that period. DWP has

announced rate hikes of up to 4.7% for each of the next five years.

When pipes break or leak inside our buildings, the VGOA pays for damage to walls, floors and ceilings *as well as* repairing and replacing the pipes.

### Irrigation

Well maintenance costs listed for this year do not reflect the recent expenses incurred by well shut-downs or the recently approved upgrade totaling \$113,000.

The biggest regular irrigation expense is for watering by hand. Our 1940's irrigation system is run manually, so two workers turn on the irrigation well pump and open and close the sprinkler valves around the Green throughout the week. We also have many beds that lack irrigation, and a third worker hand-waters daily. LandCare regional manager Don Cully estimated that one-third of their monthly fee is for this work, about \$10,600.

*Have our spending decisions been aligned with our expectations? What should the board prioritize? Should we be spending more or less on some things?*

Budget Items	2016 (7 mo.)	2015	2014	2013	2012	Totals
DWP water/sewer	\$166,300	\$220,000	\$243,000	\$241,000	\$226,000	<b>\$1,096,300</b>
Leak repairs: inside buildings	\$2,015	\$13,945	\$45,215	\$87,271	\$157,873	<b>\$306,319</b>
Irrigation: well & pump maint.	\$5,246	\$42,420	\$2,517	\$2,444	\$55,909	<b>\$108,536</b>
Irrigation: pipes & parts maint.	\$8,750	\$5,867	\$5,538	\$8,882	\$1,305	<b>\$30,341</b>
Estimated Irrigation Labor	\$74,083	\$127,000	\$127,000	\$127,000	\$127,000	<b>\$582,000</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$256,394</b>	<b>\$409,232</b>	<b>\$423,270</b>	<b>\$466,597</b>	<b>\$568,087</b>	<b>\$2,124,256</b>

### First Person

## Stay Water Wise!

*By Jeff Clark*

Don't even try to make sense out of the state water board's recent announcement that Los Angeles and over 100 other urban areas can return to the water use levels of 2013 – the year before the state finally began setting conservation goals for the drought that began in 2011 and hasn't stopped yet.

This step backward will be temporary. In January, new standards for landscape irrigation and indoor residential use will be announced. L.A. recently approved mandatory and voluntary rules aimed at further reductions in water use by January 2017. If conservation stalls, these could trigger further mandatory reductions, with stiff fines for those who do not comply.

### Practice Water Conservation

Now is *not* the time for Village Green to relax water use vigilance. With the disappointing El Nino rains this year, L.A. is still in the grip of the worst drought since the city started

keeping rainfall records almost 140 years ago. We have been averaging just 7.75" of rain per year for the past five years. To put things in perspective, according to the *Los Angeles Almanac*, our "normal" annual average is 15".

### Please Continue To Be Water Wise:

- Keep showers short
- Install low-flow toilets and appliances
- Don't run a half-full dishwasher or laundry load
- Practice conservation in your patio
- Don't run water unnecessarily anywhere!

While there is no word yet on what regulations the state and city will announce for homeowner associations, we can be sure there will be a demand for less water use. □

## Upcoming Events

### Special Reserves Budget Board Meeting

Tues. 9/20, 7:00 p.m., Clubhouse.

### Board of Directors Meeting:

Tues. 9/27, 7:00 p.m., Clubhouse. Homeowner Comments period starts promptly at 7:00 p.m.



### Dads Game Night:

Sat., 10/8, 8:00 p.m., Clubhouse.

Co-Spons: Cultural Affairs Committee.

Contact: [vgfathers@googlegroups.com](mailto:vgfathers@googlegroups.com)

### HOLD THESE DATES:



Sat., 11/5, 9:30 -11:00 a.m., Clubhouse.

Smart Gardening and Composting Workshop.

Spons: Landscape Committee.



Sat., 12/17, 7:00-11:00 p.m., Clubhouse.

Celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Historic Village Green!

40's theme: food & drink... big band music... got your dress picked out yet? Spons: Cultural Affairs Committee.

Contact: [avelenef@gmail.com](mailto:avelenef@gmail.com). □

## September Foot Beats

**Tuesday, 9/6, 9 am:** Meet at Hauser & Coliseum; walk west section of VG.

**Thursday, 9/15, 7 pm:** Meet at office, walk center section of VG

**Monday, 9/19, 10 am:** Meet at Court 4 entrance, walk east section of VG.

**Friday, 9/30, 10 am:** Meet at Court 8 entrance, walk west section of VG. □



### Lock It, Hide It, Keep It!

By John Howell, Safety Committee

We are still experiencing sporadic thefts of visible items in cars and unlocked bicycles in patios.

Remember to "Lock It, Hide It, Keep It!" in both places.

### If You See or Hear...

**Something suspicious:** Call Public Security

On-site line: 213-703-0540 or

Dispatch: 323-293-9884

**Crime in progress:** Call 911 first & then Public Security.

### Need an escort home?

Call 8140\* from the call box outside the office.

## Community Outreach Update

By Cynthia Singleton and Lucy Fried

### Pocket Park

As Highlights went to press, Councilman Wesson still had not responded to the community's concerns about his support for a "Pocket Park" to divert westbound traffic on Coliseum to Hauser and Rodeo. VG opposes the idea and wants other ideas considered, including removing the left turn lane on Coliseum.

Please continue to contact Mr. Wesson and other local officials and organizations. Recently, the Empowerment Congress West Area agreed to put the issue on its next safety committee agenda to bring to the city traffic department.

### "Community Plan"

In June, the City Council approved a "New Community Plan" for the West Adams, Baldwin Hills, Leimert area, including the Village Green area. It is part of a larger citywide plan to guide planning and land use until 2030.

The local plan includes height limits on new developments. However, the City Council promptly ignored its new local plan by granting the developers of the 1200-unit luxury Cumulus project an exemption and okaying a 320' high, 30-story tower at its La Cienega and Jefferson location.

The local plan also includes a "mobility" chapter with policies intended to make room on the roads for modes of transport other than cars. Readers curious about how the City intends to address traffic problem on La Cienega and other streets may find clues in the local plan.

### CITY LAND USE PLANS

#### Local Plan:

<https://sites.google.com/site/westadamsnpc/home>

#### Citywide Plan:

<http://planning.lacity.org/> □

## V.G. Resident Appointed to Museum Board

Congratulations to Louisa Cardenas, who was recently appointed to the Board of Governors of L.A.'s Natural History Museum (NHM). Luisa moved to the Green in 2001, served on the landscape committee, and arranged a well-attended gardening workshop for residents. She is a Master Gardener.

Louisa said, "My love for the NHM, including its summer youth science programs, goes back 35 plus years. My other love, L.A. Unified's Carthay School of Environmental Studies Magnet, recently participated in an NHM bio-diversity project."

She plans to work with the NHM board and staff on its educational programming and expansion of native garden sites. □