

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

October 2022

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Compiled by P.J.C.

Thirty-six people attended a long, jam-packed Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 27; a number of consequential topics were discussed.

BOARD HEARS UPDATE ON MASTER PLANTING GUIDELINES

Peter Emerson and Jessa Chisari, of landscape architecture firm RIOS gave an update on the Master Planting Guidelines project, describing it as **a huge opportunity for “the complete renovation of the existing irrigation system, respecting the historical landscape, improving biodiversity, expanding amenities for residents, and reducing water use significantly.”**

They recommended reducing the amount of lawn to cut water use, an objective that aligns with the original 1942 Barlow landscaping plan. “Barlow installed 11 acres of turf; today we have 29,” said Chisari, who is a Village Green resident. “Lawn is the thirstiest thing we can grow.” The RIOS team suggested replacing the lawn in the areas found directly outside units’ front doors with a diverse selection of low maintenance, drought-tolerant,



native and adapted plant species, which will have the added benefit of sustaining pollinators and other wildlife. (See graphic above, courtesy of RIOS.)

Existing lawns in common areas that constitute shared space, like the Garden Courts and Main Green, East and West Green parcels, would remain intact.

RIOS also recommended restoring

a number of the property’s original amenities by converting some beds at the edges of the Garden and Garage Courts into play areas, seating areas, and specialty plantings.

RIOS urged the hiring of a full-time, experienced landscape director to oversee the project’s planning, execution, and long term maintenance. “This campus is a dream job for some highly qualified horticulturist,” says Emerson.

After some discussion, the Board asked the Tree & Landscape Committee to work with RIOS to create visual representations of the recommendations for review at a future Board meeting.

The Board agreed to schedule at least one Town Hall meeting to present the proposed changes to the community, before approving any plan. Stay tuned for more information in coming months.

FIGHTING TREE PESTS

Arborist Cy Carlberg and Jeanne Jones of pest management company RPW were invited to address a threat to our urban forest: an invasive, non-native beetle that is destroying trees all over Southern California. The shot hole borer beetle is ravaging the Village’s tree population, in particular mature sycamore trees: a June survey revealed that 155 trees were at-risk. The Board unanimously approved a plan to mitigate the scourge through the use of insecticides, fungicides, and nutritional treatments, at a cost of \$112,600.



Tree damage from these pests
Photo by Reba Glover

BUDGET OUTLOOK, 2023

Treasurer Claire Knowlton presented the Board with a draft budget for 2023, a year projected to have more expenses owing to inflation, as well as rising insurance and maintenance costs. In addition, the electrical and irrigation upgrades are projected to cost \$2.5M per year. The Board will consider a dues increase of between 5% and 7% to pursue these projects when it votes on the final budget at the October meeting.

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Highlights is an all-volunteer project of the **Communications Committee**.
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ComCom is looking for new volunteers aged 18 and up! Contact us for more info.
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Manager Sherri Giles' September Report to the Board

Compiled by Lucy Fried

ORGANIC WASTE PEST MITIGATIONS

Ms. Giles told the Board that although odors and pests are less prevalent now in our courts, they continue to plague us. To keep fluid from leaking into the containers, she announced the addition of a compostable liner within the more durable liner inside the bins, as well as weather stripping for the lids to help keep them secure and sealed. Also, the main receptacle in Court 17 will now be emptied twice weekly.

Ms. Giles requested that residents stop dumping food waste directly into the compost bins and instead use sealed compostable or biodegradable bags.



LANDSCAPE REPORTS



Arborist Cy Carlberg toured Court 15 and the East Green and recommended removal and replacement of four trees severely infested with the invasive and highly infectious shot hole borer beetle (see also "FIGHTING TREE PESTS" on page 1). She noted the November 2021 recommendation for campus-wide sycamore deadwood pruning. The photo at left shows staining around entry holes of a highly infested sycamore tree, downloaded from UC Riverside's "Pests in the Urban Landscape" agriculture blog.

Green Crew Landcare announced they will be detailing courts 7-12 in October. While the pump was down in September, they reported hand-watering all the recently planted trees and plant material, fulfilling work orders, removing vegetation blocking walkways and security lights, and removing plant materials close to a building scheduled for painting.

ADVISORIES

Garage Inspections will start on October 3 with Court 1 and then Court 2. **Garage Restorations and Painting** in Court 8 begins in early October and moves to Court 14 in November.

Building Insulation and Painting will start on Building 33 on October 4.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Well Pump: A new irrigation pump was successfully installed on September 16. Green Crew has resumed irrigating.

Sycamore Avenue Fence Rejuvenation: The wind screen installation is expected to be completed in October. Our horticulturist is developing a planting scheme for the area. □



Public Security Report August 29 – September 21, 2022 Edited by Lucy Fried

RESIDENT FALLS INSIDE UNIT, INJURES KNEE: Court 3, August 20, 8:35 pm. Multiple calls from residents brought two officers to the unit where, with a neighbor's spare key, they entered the unit, assisted the neighbor, and called paramedics. After the paramedics arrived, one officer stayed until the unit was secured.

POSSIBLE ATTEMPTED BURGLARY: Court 15, August 28, 4:02 pm. A neighbor noted damage on a resident's patio gate lock and reported a possible attempted burglary. Security confirmed the gate lock damage and the resident said she would put in a work order the next day. Security photographed the damage.

STOLEN VEHICLE: Court 16, September 14, time unknown. A resident reported her 1990 green Volvo had been stolen. Security took a report, and she also filed a police report. Security said it would increase patrols in that area.

POTENTIAL BURGLAR: Court 5, September 19, 9:05 am. Security arrived after receiving a resident's call about a man looking over her patio fence. The man spoke to her but quickly departed when he saw her dog. Officers were unable to locate a suspect but said they would continue to patrol the area.

BELLIGERENT DOG WALKER: Main Green, September 21, 4:03 pm. A resident called Security to report a man walking a dog in the Main Green and added he cursed at her when trying to explain he was breaking a Village Green rule. When Security spoke to the man, he again refused to comply. Security intends to pursue this situation and will report accordingly.

NOISY NEIGHBORS: Court 5, September 22, 11:00 pm - 8:00 am daily. After receiving several complaints about from a resident about neighbor noise preventing sleep, Security suggested the resident call Security in real time - as the noise is occurring - so that patrol can verify the complaint. □

Autumn Movie Night a Smashing Saturday Success!

By Patrick Comiskey with photos by Alison Copeland and Avelene Schodorf



On the night of September 24th, with the evening air taking on a fall chill and clear skies over the sycamore boughs, the Cultural Affairs Committee launched its second outdoor Movie Night devoted to African American filmmaking on the Main Green. More than sixty people attended a showing of five short films from four neighborhood

artists, three of whom live here at the Village Green; the presentation was followed by a short discussion, moderated by the famed director Charles Burnett ("Killer of Sheep," 1978; "To Sleep With Anger," 1990).

The evening, titled "The Neighbors Think I'm Selling Dope" (borrowed from a J Cole song, "Neighbors"), brought attention to some of the hurdles that African American auteurs face in an industry that is often inattentive to their efforts. But more than this, it was an occasion to see four stellar, confident films from immensely talented artists who happen to be out neighbors.

Three of the five films were directed by Marshall Tyler and produced by his wife, Moira Griffin, Village Green residents since 2017. These are local films, literally, set in and around the Village Green and South LA. Tyler's storytelling is spare and deliberate: pacing is one of his evident gifts.

These films unfold slowly with extraordinary intimacy and quietude, none more so than "CAP," a tragic tale of a South LA family torn apart by gun violence. What starts out as a tale of loss takes a documentary tack when Amelia, the family's grieving mother, played with solemn grace by Medina Sanghore, attends a real-life support group of parents who have lost their children to gun violence in Los Angeles. Tyler's success with these shorts has led to directing gigs for episodic television; another of his short films, "Slow Pulse," is up for Oscar consideration this year.

Adisa Septuri's artistic career has taken a more unexpected turn. In 2009 Septuri, who lives in Court 8 with his family, wanted to document the grueling lives of children working in Sierra Leone's diamond mines. Septuri's role as documentarian shifted when, with a partner, he decided to sponsor a soccer tournament in Bongema for local residents called "A Day Without Mines." That effort has become a full-fledged philanthropic enterprise—the tournament is an annual event, and Adisa is known as Sahr Bongema, the first son of the village. He will continue to document his philanthropic efforts.

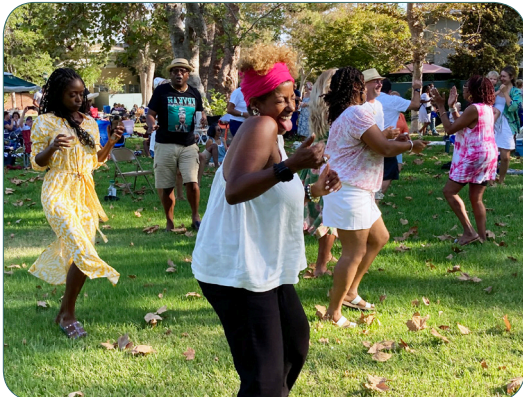
The last movie, "War Paint," was a powerful work by Katrelle Kindred, a neighbor up-the-hill, about a young girl navigating the menacing streets. Charles Burnett praised all the work as being remarkably polished, and its directors, he said, showed tremendous talent.

Bravo to the Cultural Affairs Committee for an inspired night of programming!



Dancin' the Day Away: Sylvia Boyd's Labor Day Jazz Concert Got VG Groovin'

The heat couldn't stop Villagers and guests from moving their feet!



Up to His Eyeballs: Board VP Joe Khoury's Role in Repurposing Food Waste

by Ted Robbins, Court 1

Board Vice President Joe Khoury was thrilled when the Village Green implemented California's new law mandating household food waste be recycled. As Supervising Scientist at LA County's Sanitation District, he knows exactly what happens to that waste. "We collect it and convert it to fuel for cars," he says.

Organic waste (any material that is biodegradable and comes from living organisms like plants or animals) dumped in traditional landfills decomposes and releases methane into the atmosphere—a much more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide (CO₂). The state wanted to slow global warming by sending biodegradable waste to what are called anaerobic digestion facilities. Food waste has been collected from restaurants this way for years, but in 2022, State Bill 1383 mandated residential diversion as well.

Here's how it works: a company picks up the waste, grinds it into a slurry and delivers that mixture to the enormous digesters at the wastewater treatment plant where he works—huge sealed tanks where sewage sludge is heated and stirred. "They are each the size of one of the buildings at Village Green... and we have 24 of them."

Anaerobic digestion of biodegradable garbage produces methane gas as it would in a landfill but in this case, the gas

is contained and used to power trash trucks and district vehicles. "By diverting our organic waste to the wastewater treatment plant and using it to produce biofuel, that fuel gets burned and eventually produces CO₂. But that biofuel replaces gasoline that would've gotten burned and produce CO₂. So, you reduce the total emissions."

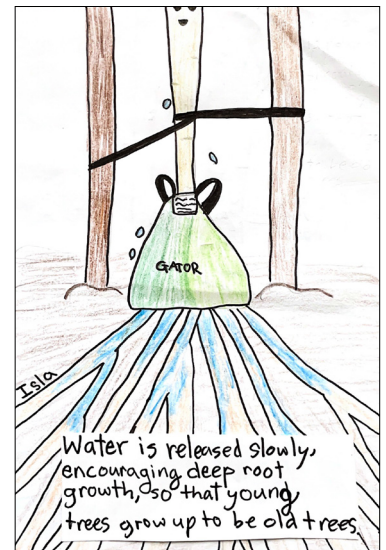
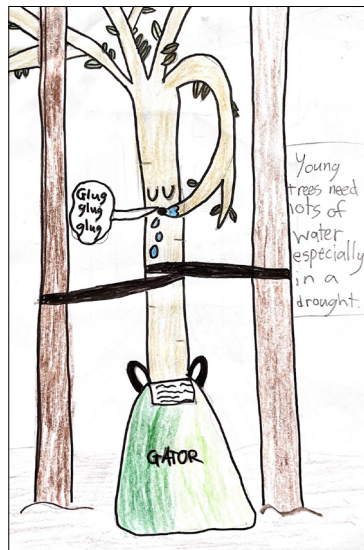
Khoury says people get confused between food waste and garden composting. The anaerobic decomposition rate, he says, is much faster than composting garden waste: "Branches from trees take a while to decompose. Because food waste breaks down so rapidly, it can't be handled in landfills but it's perfect for the wastewater treatment plants."

That's why we're using food waste bins in each trash area. It's not perfect, but it's a positive step in fighting climate change. □



Local Saplings Get a New Wardrobe

Text by PJC; illustrations by Isla Schodorf, age 10, Court 6



It's that time of year once again!
East Circle "Halloween House"

Photo by Kelly Samojlik

