

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

April 2020

VOTING IN THE TIME OF THE COVID-19

VG BOARD OF DIRECTORS URGES OWNERS TO VOTE PROMPTLY

The VGOA is safely conducting this year's annual election despite the pandemic, and directors urge owners to vote and vote promptly. Please put your marked ballot into the white envelope and seal it. Put that into the yellow one and mail or drop it into the VG office mail slot.

Six of nine board seats need to be filled. If you are an owner, your vote is essential because without ballots from a majority of eligible voters (a quorum), the election doesn't count...

The envelopes below are a reminder to follow the voting steps correctly. According to our inspector of elections, 19 votes couldn't be counted last year because of voter errors! Please turn to pages 3 and 4 for more election information. □



TEACHING IN THE TIME OF THE COVID-19

By Marie Germaine, Court 12

Marie Germaine is a fourth-grade teacher at Baldwin Hills Elementary Pilot and Magnet School. As UTLA chapter chair last year, she led her school's united participation in the strike and will soon be representing LAUSD West Area schools on the UTLA board of directors.

Marie journaled her experience during the first week of the LAUSD shutdown. Parents and fellow teachers may especially appreciate it.

Friday, March 13

The last day in a week full of wonderful parent conferences. Reflections and appreciation for the progress my fourth-grade students have made so far this year.

Last day of school for the next couple weeks due to Coronavirus. Knots in my stomach the whole day, but I promoted calmness with my students... Text and email updates arriving from the district, our principal, and union leadership... Seven students out today; many students absent this week with cold and flu symptoms or cautious parents. I pray that none of our students suffer any loss in this pandemic. I don't know the next time I will see them, and it wasn't safe to give them a hug good-bye.

Monday, March 16

First day of distance learning via iPads from home. I will support my students and their parents. I do not know exactly how this is all supposed to look and feel but I am going to take everything one day at a time. I know how smart my students are and I'm excited for their opportunity to show their families our online programs, the word processing skills their children have learned, research they have conducted on California's social justice organizations, power-point presentations they are creating.

... Then the messages began rolling in from parents..."iPads are not working"...will not connect to the internet."

Cont'd on Page 4

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Directors okayed these resolutions at their March 24 meeting

- Place a lien on a unit in arrears.
- Buy two used electric maintenance carts (\$9,832) to replace two gas carts more than 30 years old. All VG carts will then be electric. (Management)
- Buy a concrete grinder (\$1,699) to enable staff to do many concrete repairs more promptly and cheaply than the current process allows. (Management)
- Upgrade the electrical system of the main Clubhouse room, including wiring, switches and outlets; and install lighting (\$33,150). (Design Review Committee)
- Because many varieties are too invasive, add bamboo to the list of prohibited trees listed in the Village Green Handbook. Owners may apply at the office for an exception from the Green's consulting horticulturist. (Landscape Committee)
- Adopt a digital communication system so owners and residents can receive information from the office, board, and committees via email, mobile phone, apps and/or other channels. (Communications Committee) □

MANAGEMENT NEWS

Electrical Upgrade, Phase 1

The anticipated Phase 1 report meeting with Hariton Engineering and S3 Builders occurred as planned with staff and board director Steve Haggerty on March 10. After sharing their completed "current conditions" data from the field survey, the companies presented their upgrade proposal.

The proposal contains industry-standard documents required by DWP for power service upgrades and based on L.A. Department of Building and Safety multi-unit residential building standards. They include initial single-line diagrams, multi-family load calculation worksheets for each building, and projected electrical site plans and electric meters locations.

Significantly, the plan calls for each building to have its own direct connection to a corresponding DWP vault. Today, 2-5 buildings are connected in a chain, which limits a building's power by the consumption of prior buildings in its chain.



*From Manager
Sherri Giles' March
Board Report*

The next step in the process is to meet with DWP to review our service upgrade request and conduct an on-site walk around. However, due to the coronavirus, at this time there is no date in sight.

2020 Refurbishment Projects

Scheduled insulation/painting/carpentry repairs; interior re-piping and painting follow-up; and Building 13 repairs/repainting are on hold until further notice.

COVID-19 Responses

VG office staff are following government guidelines for HOAs and working remotely except for functions requiring physical contact in the office. Maintenance staff are minimizing contact when possible, and residents with non-urgent work orders should expect longer waits. As of now, third-party vendors Greencrew, Strategic Pest Control, and Public Security continue to work at the Green.

Landscape Maintenance

Landcrew reported they detailed Courts 1-3 and will focus on 3-7 in April. Weed control is a central concern. A 2" lateral irrigation line in Court 1 broke last month, and along Sycamore a 1" mainline broke. Both were repaired. □



*Edited by
Jordan Deglise
Moore*

PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT February 20 - March 18, 2020

FEB 28 VEHICLE TOWED, Court 1, 1:45 am. A resident's vehicle lacking a permit to park in the garage court was towed after the resident failed to respond to multiple citations and warnings.

MAR 7 LOUD MUSIC COMPLAINT, Court 9, 2:30 pm. A resident called to complain about a neighbor's loud music and then also played loud music, which in turn caused additional calls to security. The afternoon event had been authorized.

MAR 16 ATTEMPTED GARAGE BURGLARY, Court 10, 2:37 pm. Two residents witnessed, confronted and reported a suspect trying to break into a garage. The suspect fled before security arrived. □

SIX CANDIDATES FOR SIX SEATS

Laura Civiello

Throughout my career I've been a collaborative, hardworking problem-solver. As Tree Committee chair, I created a mobile-friendly map and worked with management and Green Crew to replace 115 missing trees. I also spearheaded the purchase of an air quality monitor that posts real-time conditions to PurpleAir.com.

I believe in doing whatever it takes to better our quality of life, whether it regards our infrastructure, neighborhood issues, or emergency preparedness. Whatever the challenge, I can craft thoughtful policies that move us forward without sacrificing what makes living here so special.

Ashley Fondrevay

I am honored to have been nominated for the board and didn't take my decision to accept lightly. I am even more committed in light of current events. We will all need to make sacrifices, step up to help. I am excited to do my part for our community.

As a financial officer for 10+ years, I look forward to bringing that experience to help steer Village Green in our ongoing improvements for the benefit of all. Village Green is unique, and my sincere wish is to help safeguard it for years and generations to come.

Joe Khoury

One word characterizing my experience these past ten years on the board is growth - for me personally, the board, and the Village Green community.

My commitment is to continue growth sustainably. I'm a "live within our means" voice on the board. Upgrading infrastructure and rehabilitating trees and landscape must progress while protecting the most vulnerable among us.

To our outgoing directors: Thank you Jerri for infusing the Green with compassion; Cynthia for strengthening our discipline; and Cole for elevating our professionalism.

I'm looking forward to whatever strengths Ashley, Avelene, and Laura will bring!

Daniel Millner

Communication, compromise, and community motivate my extensive volunteer efforts to make Village Green a better place to live. I continually seek input from residents who form the culture here. This input drove me to be a leader in supporting the Mills Act, the Overnight Parking District, various social events (Drinks and Movies on the Green, Doughnut Breakfasts, Dog Happy Hour), and multiple iterations of paper and electronic communication. I reject an "us/them" mindset. For me, there is one big, messy, beautiful "we". I would appreciate your vote for the Village Green Board of Directors.

Avelene Schodorf

When our family moved here in June 2015, I immediately joined the Cultural Affairs Committee and have been an active member ever since. I love living here and am overwhelmed regularly with gratitude for such a beautiful space.

It's easy to gripe about the issues that confront us here. But I believe the positives of our community far outweigh the negative, and I want to voice those opinions on the board. One of the things that makes our community so special is its diversity. I hope to represent and be a voice of that diversity.

Haleh Shoa

I joined the VGOA Board of Directors with the intention of demystifying the fear surrounding the DRC modification process, and to create a clear way of explaining what owners can and cannot do. With the help of many, I was able to achieve this by setting up an automated application system on our website and creating a chart that visually explains any type of modification and their requirements. I am excited to collaborate with a new board to bring more positive change for our community. I look forward to serving for another term. □

DEAR VG OWNER

The board election only counts if a majority of eligible owners vote (a quorum). Please don't delay voting.

You can mail your ballot or put it through the office mail slot. Deadline: April 25, noon, VG office. □

TEACHING IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 *Cont'd. from Page 1*



Tuesday, March 17

Today my colleagues and I exchanged ideas for online interactions with our students and offered each other support on technology implementation. I continued to contact parents and troubleshoot technology and login issues their children were experiencing. We made progress today.

Social media sites are great for exchanging information with teachers across the district and state, but fear, uncertainty, and speculation are running rampant among both teachers and parents and can become overwhelming.

Wednesday, March 18

Today I woke up with renewed hope for my students' learning. I checked in with parents and students via ClassDojo and Google Classroom. Corrected online work and chatted on the Google Classroom stream with a couple of students; their comments about being away from school, their assignments, and their greetings and interactions with each other made me chuckle. I know I must keep their spirits lifted and maintain

humor in our interactions. I want them to continue to love school and learning.

I also had a chance to run into my classroom to grab some items I needed. My classroom was clean, organized, dark and cold. It is just a space now.

Thursday, March 19

Reality check. We are dealing with a global health problem, a national health crisis, not an LAUSD problem, not a Baldwin Hills problem. We are all in this together. Our issues will be solved eventually. Priorities have to be set on providing for the needs of students.

Friday, March 20

This morning a parent reported internet connection issues as the reason her child could not access online learning this week. Many families are facing lack of devices and/or internet access. I wonder if the district can do more to support long-term solutions for households facing this situation.

In all the emergency preparedness practices we implement every school year, never have we prepared for any of our plans to include distance learning. We have never prepared for abrupt, indefinite, and long-term separation from school. We have never prepared for a pandemic crisis. But with only a moment's notice, this is what we teachers were tasked to do. Still so many questions about the coming weeks and so few answers, but patience and calm must prevail. □

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY *By Lucy Fried*

April 22 is the 50th birthday of Earth Day, a holiday launched after a massive oil spill near Santa Barbara in 1969. On April 22, 1970, twenty million Americans demonstrated against air and water pollution, leading to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts.

Today the EPA is under attack, oil spills continue, and the planet itself is imperiled. Yet, resistance occurs all over the world. Three important California victories made the news recently:

- Kern County: This county had issued more than 1,000 drilling permits in five years! The 5th District Court of Appeals ordered it to stop issuing permits until violations of the state Environmental Quality Act are corrected. (*L.A. Times*, 2/27/20.)
- Plains All American Pipeline agreed to pay \$60 million and modify its operations after a huge oil spill in 2015 near Santa Barbara. (*L.A. Times*, 3/14/20)
- California's oil and gas supervisor finally told Allenco Energy to shut down its oil site and plug its leaky wells in a residential neighborhood near USC after years of protests. (*L.A. Times* 3/7/20). □

A LETTER FROM VILLAGE GREEN'S INSPECTORS OF ELECTIONS

Hello Homeowner,

This year is a little different. Our election will take place on Saturday April 25, 2020, and because of the coronavirus, our annual meeting will **not** be at Baldwin Hills Elementary School.

Opening the secret ballots and counting votes will begin at noon on Saturday, April 25, 2020 in the Village Green Clubhouse.

It is essential that every eligible voter at Village Green cast a ballot. A quorum (majority of eligible voters) is required for the vote to count. There are six vacancies on the board. Four have two-year terms and two have one-year terms. The vote count will determine the candidates' terms.

REMEMBER

WE MUST HAVE A QUORUM, AND YOUR VOTE MATTERS.

Thank you for your help making the election successful this year.

Your Inspectors, Robert Creighton, Heide Oglesby, Cynthia Cyrus, Michael Boucher ☐

These are the steps to make your vote count:

1. Mark your votes on the ballot. **Place the ballot in the white envelope** labeled "**secret ballot.**"
2. **Seal** the secret ballot white envelope. Then put it into the **yellow envelope marked with your name and unit in the upper left corner** and addressed to the Village Green Office, Attention: Ballot Collector.

Please be sure that the name signed and printed on the yellow envelope is the same name that the VG office has on file for your unit.

3. Hand deliver or mail the sealed yellow envelope to the **Village Green Office** so that it is received in the office by **12:00 noon on Saturday, April 25, 2020**. You can hand deliver your envelope to the office (during regular business hours) or insert it into the mail slot.

PANDEMIC DRIVES COMMUNICATION CHANGES

The physical separation needed to contain the spread of COVID-19 is driving an increased focus on communication via phone and computer. With in-person meetings banned, the Board of Directors March meeting was held remotely for the first time, with directors and interested owners using video conferencing software and Zoom software. As the pandemic continues, and perhaps afterwards, these tools may continue to be used for committee meetings and other community gatherings. Kudos to the directors and office staff who spearheaded the effort.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CONSIDERS DIVERSITY

Two guests responded to our March meeting open invitation for a discussion on "the sustainability of diversity" at the Green. They helped generate an amazing list of types of diversity - including age, income, national origin, "race," length of residents, renters/owners/landlords, lifestyles, occupations, and more. The conversation is far from over, and we hope to find ways to keep it alive in the coming months.

COURT COUNCIL - NEIGHBOR -TO-NEIGHBOR IN HARD TIMES

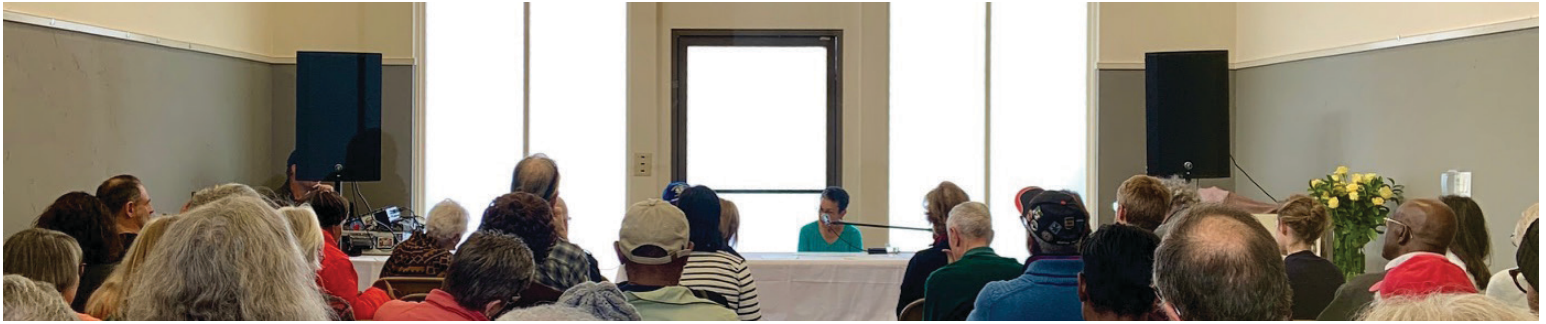
In March, some Court Council reps collaborated with other volunteers to distribute a flyer for residents who might need special assistance for such things as shopping. The volunteers had first gone on social media to express their desire to help.

HYGIENE ADVISORY

Thanks to Assistant Manager Terry Brewer for this reminder not to store bags of trash in your patio.

Letting trash bags accumulate in your patio brings rats and other vermin. Take trash to the bin right away; don't store it. ☐

EVENTS ON THE GREEN



The Cultural Affairs Committee's annual Black History Month is always a special event. This year's event was particularly meaningful, as West Circle's Cynthia Cyrus spoke about her father, a pilot with the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II. Ted Lumpkin (Court 11), a Tuskegee Airman himself and one of the few remaining, added his valuable insights. Ted recently celebrated his 100th birthday.

MY DAD WAS A TUSKEGEE AIRMAN

By Cynthia Cyrus

Sunday March 1, 2020 was magic. I looked out at a standing room only crowd and told the story of my dad, Lt. Claybourne Arnett "Buddy" Lockett, as a pilot with the Tuskegee Airmen. My dear friend Ted Lumpkin, whom I have known all my life, was at my side. Thank God he was there, because there were several times when emotions took over and I was unable to speak. He would jump in with pertinent information to fill the void until I could continue. I began with my dad's background and then explained how he joined the Army Air Corp and trained at the Tuskegee Army Airfield which Tuskegee University had built. I could tell that the audience was hanging onto every word. Depending on the story I was telling, the room responded accordingly. I heard the whole room gasp or moan in unison. It was amazing.

When I shared the story of several planes buzzing the tower at an Italian air base so they could get permission to land for refueling, there was laughter. When I shared the story of the song they sang when some of the pilots didn't return to base, the whole room moaned in unison. When I shared the story about my dad having to crash land his plane, you could hear the intake of air as everyone gasped in unison. At the end I held up the Congressional Medal of Honor that President George W. Bush presented to the Tuskegee Airmen on March 29, 2007, and you could hear everyone's elated reaction. They were given the chance to view it up close and even hold it.

For me the day was truly magical. The response was amazing and heartwarming. I'm glad I had the opportunity to share my dad with everyone. He was an amazing man – my hero. He is greatly missed but I stand at attention and salute him often. □



HOW THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN GOT THEIR NAME

The U.S. Army Air Corps was segregated from its inception in 1907. In 1939, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) launched a campaign to integrate the Air Corps and soon after, a Howard University student filed a suit to force the Corps to accept him.

Instead of integration, though, the Corps created a segregated unit to train black pilots and ground crews at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The plan was called the Tuskegee Experiment. Members of the Tuskegee Airmen believed it was called an experiment, "because we were supposed to fail". Instead, they flew more than 15,000 individual sorties in Europe and North Africa during World War II. Their impressive performance earned them more than 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses and helped encourage the eventual integration of the U.S. armed forces. Sources: History.com and Wikipedia.com

Many books and articles have been written about the Tuskegee Airmen. Two recommended by Ted and Cynthia are THE LONELY EAGLES, by Robert Rose; and THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN: BLACK HEROES OF WORLD WAR II, by Jacqueline Harris. □