

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HIGHLIGHTS

A quarterly publication of the Village Green Owners Association

Spring 2012

2012 Annual Meeting Recap and Election Report

By George Rheault, Court 2

Village Green owners came together on February 4, 2012 for our Annual Meeting under a sunny morning sky. While awaiting confirmation of the quorum, attendees were treated to a slideshow courtesy of the Cultural Landscape Report Committee and outgoing board member, Steven Keylon. The slides included newly acquired historical photographs, as well as illustrations comparing the original landscaping to our current grounds. With the final Cultural Landscape Report expected to be delivered this year, the slideshow was an excellent way to update residents on how this important tool for managing our property can inform our future plans.

Councilman Bernard Parks, his wife and staff also dropped in unexpectedly halfway through the proceedings. Their goal? To educate residents on the City's tumultuous redistricting process, which will likely move the Village Green from the Eighth Council District to the Tenth, absent a court challenge.

In addition to other valuable committee reports, director

introductions, and some queries to the Board, Nat Hutton, the Chair of Court Council, presented Jean Gagnard (Court 1) with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation for her volunteer service as the Council's secretary. Ms. Gagnard retired in January after 12 years of dedicated minute-taking.

The long, drawn out stabilization project for Buildings 8 and 14 also generated some heat, but only limited discussion, as a special meeting of the Board was scheduled to tackle the topic later in the month. For those who could not attend, complete minutes of the Annual Meeting are available upon request at the management office. ■

Election Report

As part of the Annual Meeting, the following four directors were elected to a two-year term:

Joseph Khoury	269
Gabriela Worrel*	247
Reuben Ginsburg	237
Daniel Frank	233

*New director (non-incumbent)

A fifth candidate, Wendell Conn, received 111 votes. This

year's quorum was 300, which is arrived at by dividing all eligible voters (some owners are disqualified from voting due to delinquencies) in half and adding one. All ballots received will be held for one year in case of any challenge to the election results, and then shredded.

Big appreciation should go out to Cynthia Cyrus, her co-inspectors and her ballot-counting team. Cynthia has been helping ensure integrity and efficiency with our elections since the 2007

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The Village Green Owners Association
5300 Rodeo Road
Los Angeles, CA 90016
<http://villagegreenla.net>

A Pet's Eye View of Village Green

By Stacy Alston (East Circle), deArmond Bebo (Court 11), Mickey Fielding (Court 7), Yadin Larochette (Court 15), and Jolene Pellant (Court 16)



Zachary and Noble love living in the Village Green

Hello. We are five of the many Village Green pet residents and we want to introduce ourselves. Our names are: Noble, Steve, Moses, Zackary (canines) and Trey (a feline).

We like living here at the Green. Every day, we canines go for walks on the perimeter of the Green with our owners (they would be lost without us!), where we get to meet lots of our VG and surrounding neighbors.

(Election, continued from previous page)

election. Including this year, she has been the Chief Inspector of Elections three times.

While the rest of us just have to show up at the Annual Meeting, the inspectors have already sacrificed several evenings in preparation, arrived early to set up the election rosters, and spend the rest of the afternoon opening ballots, double-checking

Recently, our owners joined with other Village Green pet owners to form a group to look after us even better: The Village Green Pet Society.

This is an association to share pet education and information among all Village Green pet owners. They even have a Facebook page!

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/VGPetSociety/>

Our owners say they are also happier since we've arrived, and who are we to disagree! Many studies have shown that owning a pet reduces stress, helps ward off depression, lowers blood pressure and boosts immunity. Steve the

dog loves to run, and he gets his owner to do so, too. Moses's owner calls him her personal trainer because he makes her go on long walks every day. She says she's in better shape than she's ever been thanks to him!

If you see us walking around the Green, please come by and say hello! Noble is our ambassador because he's the friendliest dog anyone could know. Zackary is also a friendly little one—he's four pounds small, if you can imagine that. You may also spot Trey through the window, where he loves lounging and looking out at trees filled with birds and squirrels. He's never bored with all he has to watch.

While we are busy romping, playing and sunning ourselves, we hope you will take note of the Pet Society and maybe even join in yourselves! Squirrel! ■

ownership lists, and counting returns so the new Board of Directors can convene at 4:00 p.m. the same day to elect officers and get back to the business of our association.

Thank you 2012 inspectors and ballot counters!

Kathryn Carr,
Bernie Altman,
Muriel Dickerson,
Marlene D'Aunoy,
Diann Dumas,

David Morioka,
Lucy Fried,
Dagmar Buck,
Priscilla Browner,
Penny Bannerman,
Teresa Thompson,
Reba Glover (Inspector),
Betty Harris (Inspector),
Alex Martinez
(office receptionist),
Sherri Giles
(assistant manager), and
Guy Verdino
(facilities coordinator) ■

The Fragility of Community

Twenty Years after the 1992 Riots

by George Rheault, Court 2

It's complicated.

That might be the only way to explain the six days of rioting and violence following the afternoon of April 29, 1992. The acquittal of four LAPD officers that day in the beating of Rodney King was only a trigger for much larger forces. Mired in a deep recession at the time, Los Angeles faced a widening gap between rich and poor, exacerbated by the structural decline of its industrial base and the transformations wrought by increasing immigration from Asia—particularly Korea—and Latin America, as reports studying the unrest later noted.

Deeply overlaying this economic stress was a long-standing perception of unequal law enforcement by the LAPD. Many felt there was a lack of justice in the King trial. This added to fears that LAPD had little accountability to curtail practices of racial profiling, harassment and brutality.

Looking back, it almost seems an inevitable response to a hopeless situation until one surveys the damage: over 50 deaths, thousands injured, and over \$1 billion in property losses.

Many would say no solutions are ever found in such destruction, but it was a stark reminder of how tenuous is the foundation of real community. Trust among citizens and a willingness to respect one another is hard won and can disappear in

a flash. Those who refuse to acknowledge the concerns of others can not always expect to control the actions of those ignored.

Fortunately, the Village Green emerged physically unscathed from this urban calamity. But the damage was all around us—from the retail ruins along La Brea to those on La Cienega, many familiar signposts of daily life were altered beyond recognition, in many cases permanently, as many burned-out business never returned.

The Fedco department store, where Target is now located, suffered over \$14 million in damage (1992 dollars). Though it was reopened a short time later on May 21, 1992, a lasting legacy is the imposing fence that now wraps around its parking lot.

Improvements in the national economy during the Clinton presidency, and economic redevelopment efforts locally, helped renew parts of our community. Yet the anxiety and scars unleashed by the experience did not soon disappear and the lessons of that time should never be forgotten. ■

1992 Recollection

The following is one recollection from Dr. Colette Foster Groves who lived in the Village Green from 1989–1995 and remains an involved owner today.

Chills ran through my spine as I read the *Winter 2012 Highlights*: 'Where were you in April 1992?' I couldn't believe time has passed so quickly.

I remember the Rodney King case well. I had just settled into my cozy abode in Court 15, having done the long work commute from Orange County. A friend and I had chatted about the verdict and I fell asleep on the sofa. I awoke from the thunderous stereo sounds of helicopters hovering over Village Green live, and from the television I had left on. I smelled a smell of a lifetime as the intersection of LaBrea and Rodeo was ablaze burning and I had the thick layer of soot on my vehicle to prove it.

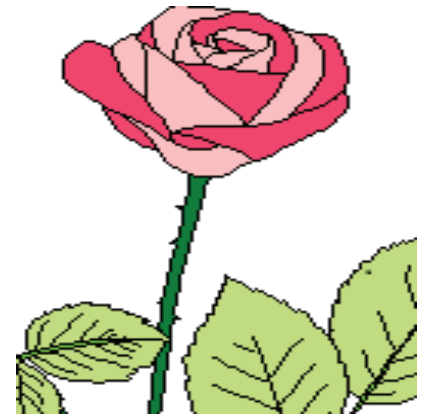
I drove to Orange County the next day. It was like I was in the land of Oz; the Emerald City was oblivious to the L.A. nightmare. Many co-workers made catty remarks about the neighborhoods in flames until I defended my paradise of Village Green. My husband called me and advised me not to drive back to L.A. that night because he witnessed looters running from the FEDCO store with large TVs at the intersection of La Cienega and Rodeo.

The fourth day of looting we were due to travel to Europe.

(1992 Recollection, continued on page 4)

The Healing Garden

By Gabriela Worrel, Court 13



If you need renewing this spring, get thee to a garden!

It's easy to get disconnected, isn't it? From life, I mean. Sometimes, you wake up and realize that the days have blurred together in a string of endless tasks, the sum of which seems inconsequential in the big picture of life. In this state, relationships can feel shallow, like wading through a puddle, instead of swimming in a lake. 'Doing' things can become a series of chores, instead of a celebration of being alive and well in the world. At this time of year, it's not unusual to feel exhausted. Run down. Irritable. Downright grumpy, even.

It is during these moments when a garden comes in handy. It needn't be big, or fancy, or even your own.

Researchers have found that the simple act of viewing a garden has restorative effects on the body and mood, decreases blood pressure, increases brain activity that lifts the mood, and stimulates the immune system.

Hospitals have even begun to use 'healing gardens' and ensure natural views from patient recovery rooms to speed up the body's own

physical and emotional healing processes. Intuition tells us there is a ring of truth to this.

E.O. Wilson, biologist at Harvard University, points to the fundamental need of humans to find connection to the natural world. He writes that biophilia is the innately emotional affiliation of human beings to other living organisms.

This affiliation is apparently not only a natural one, but also a therapeutic one. ■

April Planting Tips

Sow or transplant vegetables like asparagus, beets, carrots, kale, lettuces, summer-maturing onions, white potatoes, radishes, and spinach. Sow or transplant all summer annual and perennial flowers now.

Transplant early-maturing varieties of beans, cucumbers, eggplants, melons, peppers, squash, and tomatoes that will tolerate cooler soil temperatures.

For **protection from pests and some nighttime chill**, cover plants with hotcaps or clear plastic water jugs with their bottoms and caps off.

From Yvonne Savio's Gardening Calendar for Southern California. For Savio's full list visit www.themulch.com

(1992 *Recollection*, continued from page 3)

My husband barricaded our condo with bars and chains as we packed, making me feel even more that I was in a war-torn zone.

I was most surprised at how supportive Europeans were as we traveled. Once we stated we were from Los Angeles and our neighbor-

hood was affected, we had great conversations from France to Italy to the Netherlands.

Funny to feel I had to go thousands of miles from home to get more love and understanding than from those clueless souls I worked with a mere county away. ■

New Celebrity Chef Restaurant on Crenshaw

By Shumway Marshall, Court 14



Inglewood native Chef Govind Armstrong wants to bring a healthy, local way of eating to the neighborhood.

Post & Beam is more than just a restaurant; it seeks to be an agent of change in the neighborhood. Filling a void of quality dining in the area, the eatery features seasonal and locally-sourced foods. By partnering with local markets and area farmers, the restaurant not only provides a new neighborhood destination, but also lends a helping hand to other local businesses and promotes healthy eating. This is, after all,

ground zero of the L.A. City Council's moratorium on new fast food restaurants.

Post & Bean is created by celebrity chef Govind Armstrong and restaurateur Brad Johnson, best known in L.A. for the restaurants Table 8 and 8 Oz. Burger Bar, which succeeded one another on Melrose. Post &

Beam is situated next to the Debbie Allen Dance Studio in the parking lot of the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza. You'd never know this was formerly a Golden Bird fried chicken spot. The space now features retro lighting, a wood-fired oven, and *al fresco* dining area with an herb garden and comfy patio furniture.

Service is friendly and cordial. The hostess greets you with a smile and remembers your

name when you leave. The food is simple and delicious. Start with grilled octopus with garbanzo beans, sticky little ribs with braised fennel salad, or a seasonal salad like wild arugula with roasted beets and ricotta. Then, choose a main dish like oil-poached chicken or braised short rib, and add two of your favorite sides, such as oven-roasted cauliflower with braised chickpeas, or charred broccolini with chili and garlic. Or, opt for one of their "hand stretched pies" (that is, pizza) with toppings such as handmade turkey meatballs, wild mushroom, or roasted olives.

Post & Beam is a work in progress. The space is incredibly loud, so it's not for people looking for a quiet, romantic night out. They recently received a full liquor license and are adding lunch and brunch service. ■

Passages

Long time Court 2 resident Theresa Herbst Weisberg died on January 24 at age 100 after a brief illness. This extraordinary centenarian was born in Philadelphia, and lived during her earliest years in the Clarion Colony in Utah as part of the Jewish "back to the soil" movement, of which her father, Isaac Herbst, was a founder. She spent most of her life in Chicago, where her first job was dancing on the Yiddish stage at Glickman's Palace. In 1976 Theresa's beloved husband, the architect Alfred Weisberg, died.

Theresa was charismatic and innovative, a leader all her life. She was an early promoter of women in politics and was on the first Commission on the Status of Women in the state of Illinois. Among many other volunteer activities, was her three decades of service on the National Board of Woman's American ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation and Training).

Theresa spent her senior years in California, enjoying 15 years at Village Green between 1978 and 1993 where she was active in VG events and committees. She leaves daughters Ruth Weisberg and Naomi Harrison as well as five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Alfred and Theresa Weisberg Scholarship Fund, at the USC Roski School of Fine Arts. (This obituary adapted from the Los Angeles Times)

What's In A "Name?"

Well, For Us, a Definite Article and No Apostrophe

A note from your Communications Committee

Some readers may have noticed in last month's *Highlights* that the name of our homeowners' association looked different than in previous editions. The reason is the Communications Committee is being more careful to always use our official legal name.

When our HOA was incorporated in August 1973, there were already other HOA corporations using variations of the name "Village Green." Since we could not use names already taken, our founders settled on "The Village Green Owners Association" in their filing papers (our corporate "birth certificate" if you will).

Since then, our Board Directors, management and residents have sometimes been casual about using the precise legal name. This rarely causes confusion, but as most of us would agree, it is unprofessional to not get your own name right. None of us would approve of spelling "Village" with one "l" or "Green" with one "e," even if doing so is harmless.

For the very curious among you, here is a little background on the origins of other variations on the Village Green name:

Our Name

The Village Green Owners Association
(incorporated Los Angeles, CA—August 9, 1973)

NOT Our Name!

- Village Green Owners' Association
(incorporated Modesto, CA—June 5, 1969)
- Village Green Homeowners Association
(incorporated Dixon, CA—March 1, 1979)
- Village Green Property Owners' Association
(incorporated Thousand Oaks, CA—August 31, 1971)
- The Village Green Condominium Owners Association, Inc.
(incorporated Corte Madera, CA—August 23, 1979)

So, leaving off our "The," or adding an apostrophe that does not belong, means misspelling our name.

Therefore, please consider this a friendly reminder to all to use the proper legal name whenever possible, especially

in official situations.

Old habits die hard, but we at least are trying to turn over a new leaf and hope others will join with us.

Thank you! ■



It's Alive! (Almost!) Expo Line Opening Set for April 28

Free rides on the first day. The long-awaited light rail to downtown will include a stop at La Cienega, but the Culver City terminus at Robertson and Venice will not open until the summer. More information at <http://thesource.metro.net/>

Look Out Below!

Needed Improvements Coming to the Base of Scenic Overlook

By George Rheault, Court 2

By the end of 2012, Village Green residents who enjoy a trip to the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook entrance at Jefferson Boulevard and Hetzler Road should have an easier time of it.

The Baldwin Hills Conservancy, a county agency, awarded Culver City \$570,000 in matching funds last summer for pedestrian improvements to this intersection. The work is set to begin late this spring, and should finish by December 2012. Culver City has also added to the original plan, which initially only called for a pedestrian signal, to now include a full traffic light at Hetzler to further enhance safety.

Raised medians, high-visibility crosswalks and bumped out curbs will transform Jefferson at the new traffic light. Full sidewalks on both sides of Jefferson will also be created, along with fresh landscaping. Lastly, another 25-30 parking spots will be added in a new lot off Jefferson, which will also get bike lanes.

The often-unpleasant experience pedestrians currently endure will be a thing of the past after the

construction process is complete. Long in the making, this project was approved shortly after an accident on June 16, 2011 involving a reckless driver and Midnight Ridazz bicyclists. While approval was likely even without the accident, the incident drew attention to the well-known dangers of pedestrians accessing the popular site.

Just a little further down Jefferson, the bridge at Higuera Street and Rodeo Road is also due for replacement in the next few years. It is hoped that federal highway funding will be forthcoming soon to get the almost \$8 million project moving.

Design work is already underway for widening the existing bridge deck to provide two lanes of traffic, bike lanes, and sidewalks in each direction. Funding to design a ramp to the Ballona



Creek bike path from this new bridge is being provided by the Conservancy. Access to the path is currently only available from either National Boulevard or Duquesne Avenue. So stay tuned! ■

For more details on the Jefferson improvements, visit: www.villagegreenla.net. And to learn more about the work of the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, visit: <http://www.bhc.ca.gov/>

ADVERTISE IN HIGHLIGHTS

Rates start at \$20 for Village Green Residents.
E-mail highlights@villagegreenla.net for a rate sheet.

For deadlines, see the *Highlights* production schedule, available on the Village Green website: <http://villagegreenla.net/news.html>

EVENTS CALENDAR

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 7
10:00 a.m. at the
Clubhouse

Village Green Landscape Tour

with Jeffrey Mintz
Saturday, April 7
10:00 a.m.
Starting at the
Clubhouse

Village Green Art Show

Sunday, May 20
2:00-5:00 p.m.
in the Clubhouse

Jazz on the Green

Sunday, July 1
3:00-6 :00 p.m.
On the Main Green
Featuring
Suzie Hansen

Calling All Artists for the Annual Village Green Art Show

Share your talent and your creations
with your neighbors

Artists using all different kinds of media are invited to participate in the upcoming 2012 Village Green Art Show.

Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Visitors will be treated to live music and refreshments as they view the artists' work. A children's art show and participatory art experience will also be part of the event.

The deadline to participate in the show is Saturday, April 21.
For information and application forms, contact Diann Dumas at (323) 291-1828, or dianndumas@aol.com.

Sponsored by the Village Green Cultural Affairs Committee



**COMMUNITY
COALITION**
people. power. progress.

Do you know the real story of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots? What really happened and why? I'd like to share with you my story of the Civil Unrest -- where I was on April 29, 1992 and the deep impact it had on my activism and my work. To watch, go to: www.LACivilUnrest.org. My story is the first in a new series titled 20 Years, 20 Stories that Community Coalition is launching as part of our 20th Anniversary of the Civil Unrest. Between now and April 29th, we will be unveiling video and audio reflections from everyday residents, city leaders and community activists who lived through the Civil Unrest and who have fought tirelessly to rebuild our city since then. Visit the www.LACivilUnrest.org to watch new stories every week, register for our weekend of commemoration in April, and share your own reflections of the Civil Unrest. With Hope, Marqueece Harris-Dawson President and CEO <http://www.cocosouthla.org/> 8101 S. Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90044 - 323-750-9087

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