

# VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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# HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

February 2022

## NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE GREEN BOARD

By Lucy Fried & Patrick Comiskey

Forty-five people, including the nine directors and two staffers, attended the January 25 Board meeting via Zoom. Homeowner Comments included enthusiastic praise of the competence and professionalism of Facilities Engineer Alfonso Casanova.

With only three resolutions on their agenda, Directors unanimously approved a lien on a unit in arrears and a letter asking the California Insurance Commissioner to reduce future insurance rate increases.

### HATE SPEECH POLICY

Then they settled into a lengthy discussion of our attorney's response to a Communication Committee request in November 2021 for suggestions on how to enforce the prohibition of hate speech incidents at the Green. Directors seemed to favor the attorney's suggestion of adding an anti-harassment policy to the **Village Green Handbook** but found numerous shortcomings in the response, from irrelevant language to insufficient enforcement detail.

All agreed a specialist in harassment issues should be consulted, and Ms. Giles will research this. The Communications Committee will also consider further review and revision.

### ELECTRICAL UPGRADE UPDATE

According to the Electrical upgrade team (consisting of Sherri Giles, Board members Steve Haggerty and Laura Civiello, Alfonso Casanova, and members of the engineering firm Hariton) a dramatic increase in the number of electrical work orders received by the office have added to the urgency of replacing Village Green-owned electrical equipment. The team is recommending several actions be prioritized: upgrading existing wiring and electrical panels to be code compliant, installing wiring that connects the panels to new meters, and installing new meter enclosures on or near the buildings. Running power to each unit from LADWP vaults in the driveways remains a daunting task, and Hariton and ARG will be recommending contractors to help with this process.

The project to bring 34.5 kilovolt power to the Green has been moved down the priority list. After compiling research on three possible sites for a power source, the team recommended putting this effort on hold: LADWP is in the process of upgrading their existing on-site transformers to provide more power to the Green in this way, making the 34.5kv upgrade less urgent. The team will revisit this aspect of the project once the rewiring projects are completed.

*"News" continued on Page 2*



The Cultural Affairs Committee is delighted to announce this year's speaker for the Black History Program 2022.

Dr. Caroline Streeter, Associate Professor of English and African American Studies at UCLA and Village Green resident, will present a talk titled

**"From Tragedy to Triumph: Dorothy Dandridge, Halle Berry & the Search for a Black Screen Goddess."**

Dr. Streeter has promised some movie clips and other visual goodies.

Please join us on Zoom, Sunday, February 27th at 3pm.  
Meeting ID: 317 169 6861  
Password: VGBH2022

If we're able to have an in-person meeting at the clubhouse, we will provide information closer to the date.

Questions can be directed to [allisongroverkhoury@gmail.com](mailto:allisongroverkhoury@gmail.com) □

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## INSIDE HIGHLIGHTS

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**Design:** Terry Park

**Highlights** is an all-volunteer project of the Village Green Communications Committee. Email us at [villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com](mailto:villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com)

### MANAGEMENT NEWS *Cont'd. from Page 1*

**GOPHER ERADICATION** In December, the Board approved the test use of gopher traps deployed in tunnels and cordoned off. A vendor was contracted to conduct this test, and a high-traffic area will be chosen.

**GARAGE RESTORATION AND PAINTING** Garage termite treatment and tenting have been completed in courts 5 and 15. A large bougainvillea behind one garage building hid the rot on the building's back wall, which had to be replaced.

**MORE BUILDING MAINTENANCE** **Garage Inspections** will commence in early 2022 ... **Repiping** of buildings 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 97, and 98 will continue this year; once completed, the entire property will have been refitted with copper piping ... **Building 85 Painting and insulation** will be finished this month, completing last year's painting schedule.

**GREEN CREW** In response to community requests, **the Green Crew has eliminated gas-powered blowers**, and are using electric blowers instead. (Hallelujah!) The crew detailed courts 10-14 last month; Courts 14-17 are next.

**ARBORIST REPORT** Carlberg Associates reported they have inspected trees in courts 1-3, and rapidly assessed the entire property, recommending five high priority risk trees for removal and replacement. □

### **PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT** Dec 9, 2021 - Jan 19, 2022 *Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore*

**ARMED ROBBERY** 12/13, Court 4, 7:56 pm. A resident reported being followed into their patio and mugged at gunpoint by a man and his accomplice, who then ran west down Coliseum. A crime report was filed with LAPD.

**SIGN DEFACEMENT** 12/13, Main Green, late night/early morning. For the third time, officers found VG "No Tree Climbing" signs vandalized with stickers promoting children to climb trees.

**PLANT STOLEN** 12/13, Court 8, time unknown. A resident reported the theft of a potted plant from the patio.

**VANDALISM** 12/15, Court 1, 3:30 am. A resident reported graffiti on their unit exterior. The perpetrator's image was captured on camera.

**POOR LIGHTING IN PARKING AREA** 12/16 Court 15 parking lot, 5:40 pm. A resident asked

for and received hourly overnight checks of their classic car during garage painting and termite fumigation.

**LARGE TREE FALL** 12/23 Court 3, 9:20 am. There were no injuries or property damage.

**ATTEMPTED CATALYTIC CONVERTER THEFT** 12/26, Court 2, 1:30 am. A resident contacted security after hearing suspicious noises. The startled thief fled in a red pickup without his phone and jack – which were turned over to LAPD.

**CHILDREN MAKING NOISE & RIDING A FOUR-SEAT BICYCLE** 1/5, East Green, 5:30 pm. An officer asked the children to be quieter and keep the bike off the grass.

**CHILDREN MAKING NOISE** 1/18, Court 15, 5:09 pm. The responding officer determined the noise was normal for children. The resident called again and requested another report. Then, another resident called, complaining that their neighbor was upsetting the smaller children by filming them while they were playing and requesting Management assistance. □

### **Urgent Safety Committee Notice**

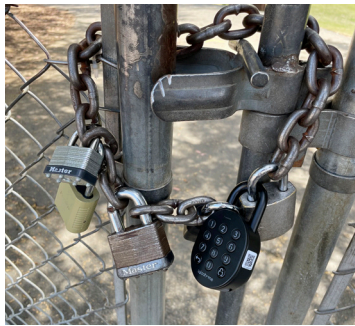
Officer Roybal of the Southwest precinct has noted that property crimes, aggravated assaults, robberies, and transient (loitering) activity have been increasing near the corner of LaBrea and Coliseum. Those committing crimes there and in the adjoining plaza, which includes the Dollar Tree store, have been known to use the vacant property at 5035 Coliseum as an escape route after they commit their crimes. Use of the vacant building by transients has coincided with an increase in incidents. **Officer Roybal urged residents to use extra caution when walking and shopping in that area.**

*For any community concerns, please phone Senior Lead Officer Roybal at 323-387-9621 or email him at 38066@lapd.online* □



## “ACCESS FOR ALL” TO KENNETH HAHN PARK! THE CLOVERDALE GATE WILL OPEN! *by Daniel Millner*

In a victory for health- and community-conscious Village Green residents, the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (LACDPR) announced that park staff will open the existing pedestrian gate at the south end of Cloverdale during regular park hours. The County’s decision, announced Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>, is part of LACPPR’s “Access for All” initiative whereby “all members of the public should have equal access to the park,” adding that “allowing certain individuals to have private access to a public park creates an equity issue.”



Residents of Village Green and surrounding neighborhoods have been unable to enter Hahn on foot, although a gate exists on Cloverdale less than a mile from VG. House owners adjacent to the gate have had access to the park, however, using a private chain and lock system with a secret combination. Over the past year, dozens of community members attended and spoke up at

virtual meetings, made phone calls, and sent dozens of emails, expressing health and safety concerns at having to drive to the Park’s access points, and concerns about lack of equity with this arrangement. LACDPR listened! As of this writing the gate has been installed; access is forthcoming.  
*photos by Daniel Millner* □



Bobbe Akalonu (Court 2) and her niece Judy Thompson (Court 7) share a Sunday afternoon snack and chat on the Court 2-3 Olive Allée bench. Photo by Lucy Fried

## Rate Assessment Hike Explained:

In January, 2022, Village Green owners saw a 7% assessment increase take effect. The increase helps us continue operations in the face of rising material, labor, and insurance costs. It also helps us fund major projects like the electrical infrastructure upgrade, a project that is already three years into planning, and will likely take another 10-12 years to complete, at a projected cost of \$10 million or more.

In 2022, we will contribute about \$1 million to our reserves. Half of this pays for on-going maintenance of our 95 residential buildings and 97 garage buildings, like painting and insulation. The other half will be available for major projects, like the electrical upgrade, or in case of emergency.

I know this increase will be difficult for some, and even painful, but maintaining the property we all love depends on it.

*by Claire Knowlton, Treasurer* □

## THE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

*January 12, 2022*

Dear Editor,

Last month’s invitation to volunteer at Baldwin Hills Elementary in Highlights resulted in six neighbors expressing interest. Thank you! The pandemic has reminded us that we need each other more than ever to make a world where every person is valued and supported.

Amazingly, when we take strategic action to help others, we improve our own lives and happiness, too. This year, can we commit to supporting our local school to help our neighborhood thrive?

To support the school through volunteering and other means, contact Jheri Murdock, at [jherimurdock@gmail.com](mailto:jherimurdock@gmail.com).

*Gabriela Worrel, Court 14* □



## REMEMBERING LORRAINE SECOR (COURT 9)

July 15, 1926 - November 26, 2021

Village Green lost one of its most ardent and steadfast volunteer landscape guardians when Lorraine Secor died. Lorraine served as Landscape Committee chair and Tree Committee supporter from the 1970's through the first decade of the 2000s, and might have continued to this day had she not been stopped years ago by painful ailments that kept her bed-ridden.



Under her leadership (among other things, she was praised by members for 'making a good meeting'), the committee regularly partnered with Management in monitoring the work of our landscape companies and strove to educate and engage residents. Members with horticulture backgrounds, including Master Gardener Laurie Liles and Jeffrey Mintz, helped. Here's an example of their outreach from the Spring 2006 issue of **HIGHLIGHTS**:

*The volunteer opportunity for this month is to reduce several congested sword fern beds. If you are interested, meet at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 29, at the front of unit 5438 in Court 7. Bring a small round-tipped shovel or trowel, sturdy garden gloves, a sun hat and drinking water.*

Lorraine also served a term as a Board director.

Beyond the Green, she taught and counseled in public schools for 40 years, received multiple academic and civic awards, climbed the Matterhorn, played the violin in an orchestra, sang for at least 15 years in the St. Alban's Episcopal Church choir directed by VG's Jim Vail, and more. Rest in peace, Lorraine Secor.

*Information for this remembrance was supplied by Laurie Liles, Teresa Thompson, Jim Vail, and Adelaide Sinclair; compiled by Lucy Fried. Photo of Lorraine Secor, taken by her longtime companion, Elizabeth Dawson, who pre-deceased Lorraine. □*

## THE WEST GREEN LEAF-KINGDOM: AN INVASIVE SPECIES PUTS DOWN ROOTS



This past month, after the rains subsided, residents of the West Green observed a flock of tiny creatures taking up residence beneath the shadow of the large Shamel ash tree.

Small and chatty, the creatures set to work on dwellings known as 'leafhouses.' Others soon joined in, creating a need for more houses. In all, 15 such structures were built and occupied, sometimes seemingly overnight, with walls that appear at once flimsy and impermeable.

With such a large population there are occasionally battles. Neighbors have heard the cry of 'medic!' for fallen creatures. But for the most part, they coexist amicably.

In fact, discussions are underway for the creation of a "Kids Board," overseeing such committees as "Animals," "Nature," "Arts & Crafts," and "Fun & Games." An election for president—there are three candidates—will coincide with the Board election.

According to Max Havlena-Barr, 7, the Board will "advocate for kids all around the Green." It remains to be seen whether this organization will survive the first spring lawn mowing. —P.J.C. Photos by Zig □

