

# VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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# HIGHLIGHTS



A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

February 2019

## Board Election Over, New Board Seated

Seven candidates ran for five seats for this year's board. Two were new and the other five were incumbents. The top five will serve for two years and join the remaining four whose terms will expire next year.

Claire Knowlton	258 (new)
Cynthia Singleton	232 (incumbent)
Jerri Allyn	201 (incumbent)
Steve Haggerty	200 (incumbent)
Chris Scornaienchi	191 (new)

Ben (Rueben) Ginsberg	166 (incumbent)
Dan Freitag	91 (new)

The directors in their second year are Joe Khoury, Haleh, Shoah, Cole Garrison, and Daniel Millner.

The new board met briefly and elected officers: President, Jerri Allyn; Vice-president, Joe Khoury; Secretary, Haleh Shoah; Claire Knowlton, Treasurer.

**Highlights** extends congratulations and best wishes to all on the new board and appreciation to all the candidates, with special acknowledgment of veteran director Ben (Rueben) Ginsburg for his past service.

Next month's newsletter will carry more election and Annual Meeting news. □



**2019 Board of Directors**

**Top row:** Steve Haggerty, Chris Schornaienchi, Cole Garrison, Cynthia Singleton, Daniel Millner. **Bottom row:** Claire Knowlton, Haleh Shoah, Joe Khoury. Board president Jerri Allyn is not pictured. *Photo by Avelene Schodorf*

## VGOA Annual Meeting

### A Sustainable VG Community *By Lucy Fried*

An engaged crowd of 80-100 owners turned out February 2nd for the Annual Meeting of the Village Green Owners Association at Baldwin Hills Pilot and Magnet Elementary School. The meeting marked the 46th year of the Green as a condominium association and the 78th year of its existence.

With an agenda highlighting committee work and offering an unusually generous portion of time for owner comments and questions, long lines of people streamed to the microphone to weigh in on this year's theme, "A Sustainable Village Green Community." Speakers addressed the urgency of responses to global warming; technology challenges; and completion of basic infrastructure overhauls in buildings and landscape in the face of rising costs. Others sought solutions to neighbor-to-neighbor issues including noise and pet behaviors and policies. Complicating all of these was a raging debate on whether or not the board should levy a dues increase for Association earthquake insurance.

A well-received short talk by Communications chair Colombene Gorton emphasized working on solutions that can be made at the neighborhood level. □



2019 Annual Meeting attendees. *Photo by Zig*

# Public Security Report

Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore

**December 6, 2018 - January 16, 2019**

**Dec 27 ATTEMPTED VEHICLE BURGLARY. Court 1**

**parking lot, 11:05 pm.** An officer saw a man trying to access a resident's car. The suspect fled on a bike, leaving behind a broken car window.

**Dec 28 VANDALISM. Court 15, 3:55 pm.**

A resident reported that a vandal had cut the cord of her decorative outdoor lights.

**Jan 1 VEHICLE VANDALISM. Court 4 parking lot,**

**12:30am.** An officer found a car with its rear window destroyed. The doors were locked, and nothing seemed missing. The officer left a note for the owner, who later reported the damage.

**Jan 8 SUSPICIOUS PERSON. Court 17, 8:08 pm.**

A resident reported a suspicious man in the court. Officers found him hiding in bushes holding a cardboard box and new medical supplies. They could not determine ownership of the items, so they asked him to leave the property and not return.

**Jan 11 WRONG-WAY DRIVER. West Circle, 6:03 am.**

An officer saw a man driving his car onto a West Circle sidewalk, where he stopped. Officers thought he was drunk, but LAPD declined to arrest him. They released him, and his car was towed. □

## February Foot Beats Schedule

*A project of the VG Safety Committee.*

**Thur., 2/14, 9:00 am:** Meet at Clubhouse.

**Fri., 2/22, 9:00 am:** Meet at Court 3.

**Wed., 2/27, 7:00 pm:** Meet at Clubhouse.

**Mon., 3/4, 9:00 am:** Meet at Court 17 entrance. □



## JANUARY MANAGER'S REPORT

*From Sherri Giles, Operations Manager*

### Electronic Work Order System:

Courts 4 and 5 residents were notified of the roll out and asked to opt in by providing updated contact information. Upon receipt, we will send them their log on credentials and continue onboarding the remaining courts in numerical order.

### Concrete Repairs:

Concrete repairs to sidewalks and walkways began in December but were interrupted by rainy weather.

### Landscape Maintenance:

Greencrew announced the completion of three special projects: (1) Phase 1 of the Shade Tree Project, providing 19 replacement trees in the East Green; (2) replacement of the venerable oak tree in the bed just west of the West Circle garages (the original oak tree had toppled suddenly in 2018); and the removal and replacement of all the dead Pittosporums along the Rodeo median.

### Requests for Proposals (RFPs):

Electrical Grid Survey – One bid has been received. Management will be meeting later this month with a new lead and expects another proposal.

Irrigation Overhaul – Management forwarded the three bids received to consulting landscape architect David Larkins for his review. In late January, VG board director Cole Garrison, Larkins, and management will meet to discuss the next steps.

Hauser/Coliseum Landscape Design – One bid has been received and forwarded to David Larkins. In late January, the team above will also discuss next steps for this RFP project. □

## Patio Gardening

### Container Gardening 101 *By Amanda Sigafoos, Master Gardener*

Have you been wanting to grow something and create a little beauty in your patio? If you've never done it before, now is the time to try.

Planted now, flowering plants like shade-loving impatiens, pansies, petunias, begonias, and violets will provide showy flowers throughout springtime. You can plant herbs, veggies, and wildflowers in sunny spots. Most cacti and succulents prefer sun also and require very little water.

### Containers and Potting Mix

Gardening with containers is your solution. It's easy, and the small spaces let you quickly correct anything that goes wrong. Choose terra cotta or glazed ceramic pots with drainage holes so you have no chance of over-watering. Because mosquitoes lay eggs in even small amounts of standing water, County health officials ask us not to use saucers underneath.

Buy potting mix for containers (not planting mix). Do not use garden soil from the ground because it adds unnecessary weight to your pots and the soil will suffer from being trapped.

### Planting Tips and Steps

If you buy seedlings (small "starter plants") from a nursery to transplant, look for the smallest plants... *Continued on page 6.*



# January 22 and 29 Board Meeting Highlights

**At its regular January 22 open meeting,** the board approved a lien for non-payment of assessments and set a special January 29 open meeting on reserves spending for 2019. On January 22, board actions included:

- *Approved a revision of Village Green Handbook Section 14.7A to prohibit smoking or vaping of tobacco products or any other substance INSIDE UNITS as well as on porches and balconies and in patios, balconies, garages, and all other common areas. The revised rule revokes the in-unit smoking exemption for resident smokers who had moved in before the rule was passed. It also adds vaping.*
- Okayed \$35,669 for restoration of the garage buildings in Court 16, West Circle, and East Circle, including termite treatment, carpentry repairs, and painting;
- Authorized management to install a new light fixture on the south-facing side of a Court 5 garage building, as the area is dangerously dark at night.
- Requested the operations manager coordinate with arborist Cy Carlberg to review the Tree Committee's

proposed plantings for Phase 2 of the Shade Tree Project and inform the committee of results by March 1. Phase 2 will restore Barlow era shade trees to their former locations in Courts 7-12. The deadline is intended to allow adequate time to present a board resolution for planting of the trees in April. A proposal for Phase 3 is intended for later this year.

**On January 29th,** the board considered and prioritized a long list of needed replacement and maintenance items not included in the operations budget, from a new irrigation system to building painting to the purchase of a new utility cart.

Directors also discussed an earthquake insurance survey and agreed to continue refining the wording. Lastly, following three owners' announcements that their lenders have demanded they purchase flood insurance, the directors agreed to ask our attorney's assistance regarding the FEMA re-zoning process. □

## COMMITTEES

## Monthly Round Up

## FEBRUARY

**Budget & Finance:** 3rd Thursday (2/21), 7:00pm.

February is an exciting month for B&F because Ross Morgan (RM) is attending our meeting to provide deeper insight into our financials. Besides collecting your monthly assessments, RM is also the Village Green's bookkeeper.

**Court Council:** 1st Wednesday (2/6) 7:00 pm.

Court Council consists of a representative and an alternate from each VG court. They distribute *Highlights* and the committees' publicity monthly and make suggestions to the board.

**Design Review:** 1st Monday (2/4), 7:00 pm.

With a new DRC consultant, we are revamping VGOA's upgrade process so that it's easier for owners, management, DRC, and the board. This year's key projects include the electric upgrade and Cubhouse bathroom remodel.

**Safety:** 2nd Wednesday (2/13), 7:00 pm.

We are beginning a review of the fire extinguishers on the property with an eye to reporting to the community on how to access them during an emergency. Look for announcements or come to a meeting.

**Communications:** 2nd Sunday (2/10), 12:00 pm.

Get your creative juices flowing! We are looking for a cartoonist and a "Kids Corner" columnist. If interested, please come to a meeting or email [villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com](mailto:villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com).

**Cultural Affairs:** 4th Thursday (2/28), 7:00 pm.

This is Black History month. On Sunday, Feb. 10th, 3:00 pm, our speakers will share what it was like, "Being a Black Woman in the Armed Forces in mid-20th Century." Kids welcome.

**Landscape:** 2nd Monday (2/11), 7:00 pm.

Immediate tasks are working with management to speed up work orders and re-plantings of aging beds. A new irrigation system and restoration of the Hauser/Coliseum landscape are key 2019 goals.

**Trees:** 2nd Tuesday (2/12), 7:00 pm.

The committee advises and makes recommendations to the board on matters pertaining to the preservation and maintenance of the trees, monitors tree pruning and removal by contractors, and facilitates the planting of new trees.

**For more committee information, go to**  
[www.villagegreenla.net/overview.html](http://www.villagegreenla.net/overview.html). □



## Editor's Note:

After months of saying we want to hear from you, Highlights hit the jackpot in January! Write to us. We'll share it. [villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com](mailto:villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com).

## This month: Words of Appreciation, Gratitude & Insight

Hello!

I just wanted to say that I thought this month's issue was really excellent! I enjoy reading it every month but thought it was really full of a lot of great information this time...

Haya Handel, Court 8

### *Response from Highlights Designer, Kelly Wilson Samojlik:*

Thank you, Haya! A LOT of work goes into each month's issue but we really enjoy the opportunity to provide the service for our community. And, personally, I love getting to use my creative side!

Happy New Year!

Just a small note to tell you I have used the online work orders system and for me, it was dreamy: easy and fast. Much easier and faster than fetching a work order, filling it out and submitting it; much easier and faster even than printing a saved, blank work order, filling it out and submitting it via email. Short story: digitized work orders rock. Thank you for implementing this.

Cheers,

Liz White, Court 1



Dear Editor and Neighbors,

I am a Village Green homeowner and resident, and I have the privilege to work in the community in which I live. I am a school teacher and the United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) chapter chair at Baldwin Hills Elementary Pilot and Magnet Center (BHEP). I want to thank you, my neighbors, for your support during the strike and share some information that you may not know.

Last fall, as contract talks intensified and broke down between LAUSD and UTLA, it became more and more apparent to UTLA members and the public that we were headed towards the first teachers' strike in 30 years. For teachers, this was a time to make a decision about the level of commitment we would make to ensure that we could win a fair contract - one that protected public schools for students now and in the future and that represented a very much needed financial investment in public education in Los Angeles. The teachers at BHEP were 110% sure we would participate in the strike to the full extent.

Prior to the strike date, several neighbors reached out to me via email and phone to offer their support for the teachers at BHEP. Numerous

parents called the school's main office and asked what they could do. With the backing of our parents and community members, we knew that victory would be ours!

On January 14th, 2019, the first day of the strike, a rainy Monday morning was upon us, and our teachers took a stand for our students. For six days! Rain, cold, wind! Drenched! We stood tall and picketed at BHEP in the mornings (7:00-9:00 am), attended mid-day rallies, and returned for the 2:00 pm afternoon picket.

But we did not stand alone. We stood with the support of our veteran teachers who also walked the line in '89; we stood with the support of our Village Green retired teachers, parents, and other neighbors who showed up in union red for morning and afternoon pickets. Some brought us hot food, lattes, and Normandie Bakery pastries and reassured us that our strike was righteous. Scores more honked their horns and gave a friendly wave as they drove past us on Rodeo and Hauser.

Some of our classified staff showed their support by joining us on the picket line and/or by not crossing our line. Our principal, Dr. Davis, offered words of encouragement every morning via text and reminded us who

we are and will be after the strike - a united, caring and cohesive staff - and she greeted us and hugged us when she arrived at work. This is what community looks like!

You can read the whole 2019-2022 UTLA contract at [www.utla.net](http://www.utla.net).

In unity,  
Marie Germaine, Court 12



# Earthquake Insurance Town Hall Jolts Owners

By Lucy Fried, photo by Diann Dumas



There was standing room only in a packed Clubhouse on January 12 as some 80 or more homeowners heard four speakers discuss the cost requirements, benefits, burdens and possible consequences of purchasing earthquake insurance for the entire property.

Director Daniel Millner, chairing the meeting, welcomed attendees with the observation that the topic is complicated, and that, “while it’s about what is right for Village Green, what is ‘right’ is different for different people.”

### Insurance “Master Policy”

First up was insurance broker Scott Littman. His November board proposal for a \$410 annual per unit earthquake master policy with a 20% repairs/rebuild deductible provided a basis for examining some aspects of earthquake insurance. His bid is summarized in more detail in January’s Highlights.

Owner and data scientist Michael Schiavoni used Mr. Litman’s bid to examine scenarios with variables including premiums, rate increases, damage totals, deductibles, and payouts over time to analyze the potential financial upside and downside of a master policy. He found that it could, “offer significant benefit in severe damage scenarios, but with its high deductible, only little benefit in mild damage ones.” *He concluded that a master policy, coupled with homeowner earthquake insurance, would offer the optimal situation possible for owners in the event of a massive earthquake.*

Director Haleh Shoah clarified that personal earthquake insurance is for one’s own unit, while HOA insurance is assessed to every owner and covers all the common areas. Owner Jim Bouchard shared a helpful chart showing various price combinations of a master policy and an individual policy.

### Village Green’s CC&Rs

Director Cynthia Singleton’s presentation introduced another basis for discussion, i.e., our CC&R’s, the Association’s founding legal document. Section 10 mandates that after an earthquake (or other disaster) damages or destroys all or part of the property, the board must arrange the repair/rebuild and impose a special assessment if necessary. However, before imposing the special assessment, the board must call a special meeting of the members and inform them of the cost of rebuilding. ***A membership vote must be taken on whether to repair/rebuild, and if a majority of the voting power of the Association does not agree to it, any insurance proceeds are to be distributed to the mortgage lenders and owners, and the board is to “sell or otherwise dispose of the project...”***

The CC&Rs are available in the office and on the VGOA website, [www.villagegreenla.net](http://www.villagegreenla.net), under “Resident Resources.”

### More to Come?

HOA earthquake insurance isn’t a new topic here, but the idea has gained currency with scientists’ repeated predictions that a severe earthquake is overdue. VG owners have a range of financial situations and outlooks. Some have high mortgages and little equity and others the reverse. Some with personal quake insurance or plans to buy it are reluctant to incur yet another bill. And some are dubious that the results will work out as advantageously as presented.

The board is responsible for any decision on an assessment increase. President Jerri Allyn has asked for more information and discussion before the board acts on the issue. □

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Black History Month Program**

**Sunday, February 10, 3:00 pm,** VG Clubhouse.

Panel discussion on the experience of black women in the military in mid-20th-century America, as told by a group of vets who lived it. Stay for supper at 5:00 pm. All residents are welcome.

### **Inglewood Oil Field Odors**

**Wednesday, February 13, 5:30 pm,**

St. Paul's Church, Coliseum & LaBrea.

Get in at the beginning of the Toxic Odors Reporting Project. For more info, contact Cynthia Singleton.

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 26th.**

Homeowner comments start promptly at 7:00 pm.

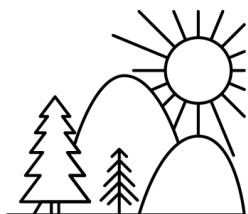
### **Annual Meeting Follow-up**

#### **WHAT NEXT?**

**Sunday, March 3rd, 2:00-4:00pm,**

VG Clubhouse.

Sustainability & Community  
Interest Group Meeting □



## **Patio Gardening** (cont'd from page 2)

...so their root system will grow to the size of the pot rather than being squeezed into their new home. **To transplant them:**

1. Fill your pot about 2/3 - 3/4 full of potting mix.
2. Place the seedlings with the soil they were grown in on top of the mix.
3. Carefully fill in the spaces with more potting mix. If there isn't much room between the seedlings, use a kitchen spoon to pour potting mix in place.
4. Add more mix if needed, but keep leaves above the soil level. *The top of the planting mix should just reach the bottom of the seedling's stem.*

## COMMUNITY NEWS

By Cynthia Singleton



### **Sidewalk Vending**

Sidewalk vending, including pop-up restaurants, is now legal in the City of Los Angeles. The City took this action to encourage vendors to get legal licenses and pay taxes. Food operations will be inspected by the Health Department and issued alphabet ratings like the brick and mortar restaurants. The new law applies to sidewalk vendors located at Rodeo and La Brea.

### **Oil Field Odors**

Baldwin Hills Estates HOA (west of VG) and VG community representatives are attempting to gather data about any strange odors suspected of coming from the oil field or other facilities such as the factories on Jefferson near Ballona Creek.

Look for a flyer announcing a meeting to organize the process of data gathering. Details in "Upcoming Events" column at left. Please attend.

After we gather data for several months, there will be a Town Hall at the church with invited guests to speak on issues relating to air contamination and other environmental concerns regarding the Inglewood Oil Field drilling. □

If you start with seeds, look for ones specifically bred for container gardening. Start by filling your container with potting mix and follow the directions on the back of the packet.

### **Watering**

Both seedlings and seeds should be watered just after planting. Seedlings may need water every day or every other day for the first few two weeks to establish their root system. Seeds will need water every day to aid in germination. Gradually decrease watering in both planting scenarios as your plants settle in. Enjoy! □

## PEOPLE OF THE GREEN

### **Remembrance of Longtime Village Green Resident**

*By David Mellen and Teresa Thompson*

Harold Pelster passed away December 7th. He lived at Village Green for 58 years with his wife Erika until her death last February. They first moved to Court 12 in 1960 when the Green was a rental complex and were there in '63 when the Baldwin Hills dam broke. They bought their two-bedroom Court 8 townhouse in 1974 where they lived until their deaths.

Harold was born in Missouri of German descent. He met Erika in Berlin after World War II while he was serving in the army. Harold was a painter, sculptor and ceramicist and taught art at El Camino College for many years. After his retirement, he religiously kept the leaves swept up in front of his row of garages. He was a great lover of theater, opera and the LAFil, and he picked flowers for Erika every day of their sixty-three years of marriage. He is missed by his neighbors in Court 8.

