

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HIGHLIGHTS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE VILLAGE GREEN OWNERS ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 2012

Renters at Village Green

By Lucy Fried, Court 13

Village Green is attracting some wonderful renters, people who appreciate the special attributes of this national historic living monument and want to contribute to its vibrant community.

Renters are very much a part of the Green and some have been here longer than many owners. They have rights and obligations both as tenants and as community members. What is true of owners is also true of renters: when they feel welcomed and respected, and in turn respect and participate in the life of the Green, the whole community benefits.

While owners pay mortgages, homeowner assessments and property taxes directly, renters pay indirectly through their rent. Renters can't belong to the homeowners association or vote for its directors, but they can participate and vote in committees. And although common wisdom holds that owners

(Renters, continued on page 10)

Village Green Honored with Prestigious Preservation Award

By Steven Keylon, Court 1

The Village Green Owners Association (VGOA) was recognized recently for the work we are doing to preserve, rehabilitate and restore our National Historic Landmark homes. On May 10, at the 31st Annual Awards Luncheon, the Los Angeles Conservancy honored our historic structures report with one of its 2012 Preservation Awards.

Seven awards recognizing outstanding achievement in historic preservation were handed out at the event, which was held at the Biltmore Hotel downtown and attended by 600 people.

The recipients are selected by an independent jury of some of the most prominent experts in historic preservation, architecture, and community development.

Board President John Keho and I attended the awards luncheon, where I was asked by the Conservancy to accept the award on behalf of

(Award, continued on page 10)



Steven Keylon with Katie Horak from Architectural Resources Group (ARG)

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The Village Green Owners Association
5300 Rodeo Rd., Los Angeles, CA 90016
villagegreenla.net

Police Chase Ends Near Village Green

By Shumway Marshall, Court 14

The search for an armed robber blocked access to the Village Green for over three hours the evening of Thursday, July 12. According to an NBC-LA Channel 4 report, three men fled a home invasion one block north on South Cochran Ave. when police arrived on the scene at 10:50 p.m. Two of the men were apprehended after they abandoned a vehicle near the intersection of La Brea Ave. and Jefferson Blvd.

The third suspect sought refuge in the lush foliage of the Village Green. Dozens of Los Angeles Police Department officers were deployed for a manhunt, aided by a K-9 unit and a helicopter. Entrances to the Green were barred starting at about 11:20 p.m.

The suspect was finally apprehended about 1:30 a.m. nearby, according to Platt Security. Some residents on the north side of the Green were allowed back in around 2:30 a.m., whereas residents on the south side reported not being able to return to their units as late as 3:30 a.m.

Community Response

The incident demonstrates both the resolve of a community to come together in an emergency and the increasing role of crowd-sourced reporting and social media. Residents reported their experiences from both inside their units and from outside the Green.

At 11:19 p.m., resident Jolene Pellant was the first to post on

the Village Green's Facebook group, Village Green Los Angeles, that a fleet of police cars was pulling up along the Rodeo Road entrance and a helicopter was circling overhead.

Residents responded by calling the Southwest Community Police Station and the LAPD Air Support Division for more information.

When I arrived at the Green around 11:45 p.m., I took to the Facebook group to recount my conversation with an officer on Coliseum St. He told me that no one was allowed into the Green because they were searching for an armed suspect of a home invasion. When I tried to park along the Green, he told me to move across the street.

Two of my Court 14 neighbors who were also blocked out, Jessa Chisari and Rex Ravenell, and I went to the Mandrake to wait out the drama. After the bar closed, we returned to the north Cloverdale entrance where an LAPD officer provided regular updates. Jessa, Rex and I posted information from the front line, including the first report that the suspect had been apprehended around 1:38 a.m., and later that a police car had just whizzed by carrying the victim to identify him.

In total, 136 posts and comments on Facebook about the incident informed the community and gave a sense of security. By knowing what was happening as it happened,

residents knew to take extra precautions like locking their windows and doors, and also knew the exact nature of LAPD's efforts.

Without this community reporting, residents would have little information either that night or later. The following day the NBC-LA Channel 4 report misquoted the incident as having taken place in the Crenshaw area and did not mention the Village Green. The Los Angeles Times' crime map lists only the time and case number of the incident, as well as an incorrect block number.

What You Can Do

With a diverse community, preparing for future emergencies provides a difficult challenge, but everyone can take ownership of their safety.

"The [response on the] Facebook group was fantastic," said VGOA president John Keho in an interview. "But I think the concern is about people who don't access [Facebook]... We need people to join the Safety Committee to figure out how to respond [in these kinds of incidents]."

With meetings at the Clubhouse on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m., the Safety Committee helps inform the residents about what they can do to be prepared for a variety of emergencies. For more information, email safety@villagreenla.net. ■

Local Residents Demand Fracking Regulation and Moratorium

By Gabriela Worrel, Court 13

Local residents overwhelmingly demanded a moratorium on fracking activities in the Inglewood Oil fields at a June meeting held in Culver City. California's Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) was accepting public comments on how to approach regulation of fracking in California. Local residents and representatives from community groups took the opportunity to ask for the regulation of fracking operations and, demand full disclosure of what chemicals are being used in fracking operations. Many also called for a ban or moratorium on the practice until it is proven safe in local soils, which are more complex than those in the eastern states which have been studied more thoroughly.

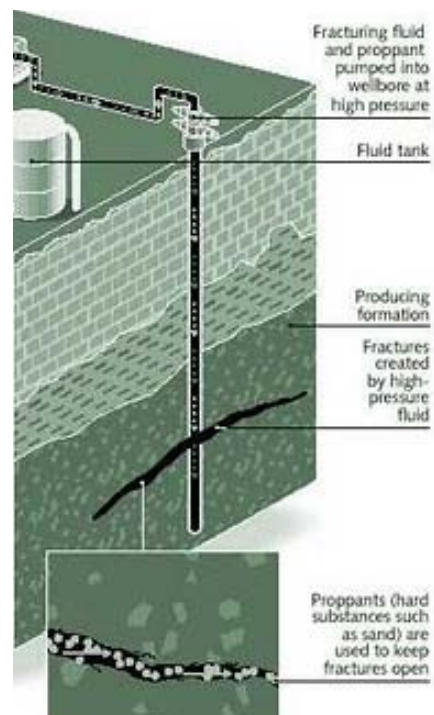
DOGGR defines hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking, as "the high-pressure injection of a mix of fluids and substances called 'proppants' into an oil or gas reservoir. The mix, injected under pressure, fractures the reservoir rock. When the fluids are removed, the proppants keep open the cracks left by the fracturing, allowing oil or natural gas to flow back to the well."

Oil extraction in the metropolitan Los Angeles area has a long history. The nearby Inglewood Oil Field, which is positioned along the Newport-Inglewood Fault zone mostly in unincorporated land

overseen by the county and Culver City, has been producing oil products since 1924, before residential communities surrounded the fields. Currently operated by Plains Exploration & Production Co., or PXP, it is the nation's largest urban oil field.

Tensions came to a peak a few years ago when four local organizations, the City of Culver City, Concerned Citizens of South Los Angeles, the Citizens Coalition for a Safe Community and Community Health Councils, Inc., challenged the County of Los Angeles's environmental standards for oil field operations. Out of this grew stricter oversight, a special zoning overlay that allows the County to assign stricter regulation, and the creation of a community health assessment performed by the County of Los Angeles.

The latest issue that has been gaining attention is the practice of oil 'fracking,' which has apparently been occurring in the Inglewood Oil Fields. The County reports there are two test wells at the moment with more expected in the coming months. DOGGR, during the public meeting in June, openly admitted that until now fracking has been basically unregulated and companies are not required to disclose their fracking activities. Fewer than 200 wells are voluntarily reported in California, and DOGGR, the only public agency that has



the legal ability to implement this type of regulation, wants to create state-wide regulations. It is holding public meetings around the state to hear from residents about how DOGGR should go about doing this.

Local residents from Baldwin Hills, Culver City, and other surrounding areas rallied to make their voices heard, causing the meeting to end more than an hour later than planned. Speakers voiced concerns about the safety of chemicals leaching into ground water, the wasteful use of hundreds of thousands of freshwater required to run fracking operations, the potential risk of causing earthquakes as a result of fracking, and chemical danger to residents if a well were to have an unfortunate accident, triggering an evacuation.

(Fracking, continued on page 11)

Meet Some of Your Renter Neighbors

By Lucy Fried, Court 13

ANNALEIGH & JACOB



Annaleigh and Jacob Breeden were expecting. Jacob, an aerospace engineer, and Annaleigh, a full-time nurse, wanted to find an apartment with green space for their baby, Esther. But even using Craigslist and with church friends living here, it took seven months and a realtor's help before they found the right unit. Now, 14-month-old Esther can be found gamboling on the Green with other toddlers and participating in Halloween festivities and Easter egg hunts. Her parents enjoy mingling with neighbors at Drinks on the Green and jazz concerts.

When they moved in, their landlord talked with them about the Green's rules and gave them our handbook, along with other information. The Breedens read it (and still refer to it!) and when in doubt consult their neighbors. Their Court Council representative welcomed them and made herself available for any questions or problems.

But their first year did not go as smoothly. The first plumbing problem—a sink back-up—occurred when Esther was just two weeks old. Despite the information they had, they did not realize they could call Village Green maintenance and instead, called a plumber. Kindly, their landlord credited their expense and told them about the emergency maintenance number and our work order system.

Then, in October of their first year here, their Court 8 building's interior water supply was re-piped. With orders to be out of the building and nowhere to go, Annaleigh, by then a full-time mom and part-time nurse, spent days outside with Esther. They knew the project would be messy because Jacob had gone to the information meeting the Green offered beforehand—and it was. A hole had to be cut in the wall and days passed before the cleanup and painting began.

This year, Court 8 has experienced two crime incidents. The Breedens and their neighbors responded by doubling down their vigilance. Annaleigh expressed appreciation for the timely reminders posted in the

(Breedens, continued on next page)

MATT & LINDSEY



Three years ago, Matt and Lindsey Barr were looking for a better place to live when they saw a picture of Village Green on Craigslist and couldn't believe their eyes. After walking around the grounds and checking out several units, they knew there was no other place they wanted to live. Matt, a personal chef, and Lindsey, a real estate attorney, soon celebrated their wedding at their new home in Court 6 and have now set their sights on buying a townhouse or a rare three-bedroom unit.

Moving in and adjusting to the community went pretty smoothly for them. Their landlord, as required, gave them a packet containing the rules, emergency information, and other information.

"In general, I don't feel this is an unsafe area," she said.

(Barr, continued on page 11)

MARTINE



Martine Hubbard joined the Village Green community two years ago. She needed to move to Los Angeles to be closer to her terminally ill father, but despaired of finding anything to match her idyllic Pasadena cottage. Luckily, she knew about the Green from friends and is now happily renting in Court 13. An artist and health and wellness coach, she looks forward to retirement from the corporate world. "I fell in love with the greens and trees and the peaceful, diverse community of people and families here. I wanted to work from home and stretch out into the community, perhaps join the Cultural Affairs Committee."

Martine is already contributing to Village Green. Despite her very busy life, she quickly

joined her court's hospitality committee to help welcome other new residents. This spring, she presented several excellent pieces to our art show.

Yet, it took awhile to realize the authority she has as a renter.

"At first, I didn't know that I had a right or a responsibility to call the office when I had a plumbing problem or something in the building needed to be repaired. Through conversations with my landlord, I finally realized I could put in a work order myself." And Martine, like the Barrs and Breedens, didn't know she could vote as a member of a committee.

Suggestion to the Office:

"I wish the office would give more than two weeks' notice before a major project. Working full-time and then having to be out of town the week before my garage was to be re-asphalted, I didn't have enough time to line up my busy family members and friends to help move my things out of the garage. [I] had to pay someone to do it." ■

BEVERLEE & RICHARD



Before Beverlee Pattonallen and her husband, Dr. Richard Allen, moved into Court 3 two years ago, these up-to-date seniors went online to villagegreenla.net and read the by-laws, handbook, and everything else. Their niece and nephew, Village Green owners, gave them "enormous assistance" both before and after moving in. And their next door neighbors, one a member of the Board of Directors, were warmly welcoming and shared important information about

(Beverlee, continued on page 9)

(Breedens, continued from page 4)

laundry room.

"With the security and the presence of neighbors around in the daytime, we're doing a pretty good job of watching out for one another. I still feel

this is the best place we could have found to live in L.A."

Tip to Renters: "As with anything in life, the more you put into it, the more you get back."

Suggestion to the Office: "Please give more notice before a project

starts. If we could have had a month or more notice, I might have visited family in Texas during the week of the repair and painting of the hole in the wall. As it was, we had visited family, then got the notice the week we returned, and then re-piping started two weeks later." ■

Summer Events on the Green

It's summer and that means a plethora of events for the Village Green community to come together. Whether it's a concert, movie, pancakes, or a yard sale, residents enjoy our beautiful setting and great neighbors. Here are a few of our most recent events.



Platt Security Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, June 30
Sponsored by the Safety Committee



Drinks on the Green

Sunday, June 24, 2012
Hosted by the Cultural Affairs Committee



Jazz on the Green

Sunday, July 1



2012 Village Green Art Show

Sunday, May 20

Hosted by the Cultural Affairs Committee



(From l to r) Art by Jeanne Gagnard, Gina Michel and Jason Williams

The Expo Line's Predecessor

By Joseph Taylor, Court 16

The recently unveiled Metro Expo Line now connects downtown Los Angeles to the Westside in Culver City. But while the Expo Line is a new landmark in our area, it is not the first offering of light rail mass transit here. As KCET pointed out in March, the Expo Line actually retraces a historic right of way through the city.

On Oct. 17, 1875, the Los Angeles and Independence Railroad (LA&I) opened to the public. The steam-powered trains ran 16 miles from downtown Los Angeles through the Ballona Creek plain to the edge of Santa Monica Bay. It was the second railroad built in the city; the first was the 21-mile Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad, which opened in 1869.

The westward route was the brainchild of silver businessman and U.S. Senator John P. Jones of Nevada and sheep rancher Robert S. Baker, who sought to establish a seaside resort town called Santa Monica and expand east to potentially lucrative mining towns. In the midst of an economic downturn in 1877, before being able to develop east of downtown, the partners were forced to sell the railway to Southern Pacific Railroad.

In the 1880s, use of the railway increased as Santa Monica grew in population and in popularity with day-trippers. A competing railroad, the Los Angeles Pacific, even opened through the



A passenger Air Line red car heading westbound at Culver Junction at Venice and Robertson on July 17, 1953, two months before being retired. (Photo by Alan Weeks.)

Westside and reached Santa Monica in 1889. Freight use for the LA&I also increased, especially after the Santa Monica Long Wharf, a forerunner of today's existing pier, was built in 1893. Commercial use dropped four years later, however, when the federal government chose San Pedro as the site of a commercial shipping harbor.

In 1908, Southern Pacific leased the railway and wharf to Los Angeles Pacific Railway (later acquired by Pacific Electric Railway). Renaming it the Santa Monica Air Line, they introduced "red cars" and electricity from Santa Monica to the La Cienega-area stop and reduced the number of station stops and street crossings. Electrification for the remainder of the route to downtown L.A. was completed three years later. Pacific Electric

Railway became synonymous with the Red Car system, a sprawling Southern California mass transit network utilizing light rail, streetcars and buses.

Despite the upgrades, the Air Line could not draw enough passengers as purchases of automobiles swelled. By 1924, red car service along the route dropped to just one trip per day, and a year later some of the trains were retired and replaced by buses. The Santa Monica Air Line finally closed to passengers in September 1953, though limited use of diesel-powered railcars for freight shipping continued into the late 1980s.

For more about the history of this early Los Angeles railway, visit KCET's SoCal Focus online and Metro's The Source blog. ■

VG Resident Tackles Childhood Obesity

By Laurie Liles, Court 4

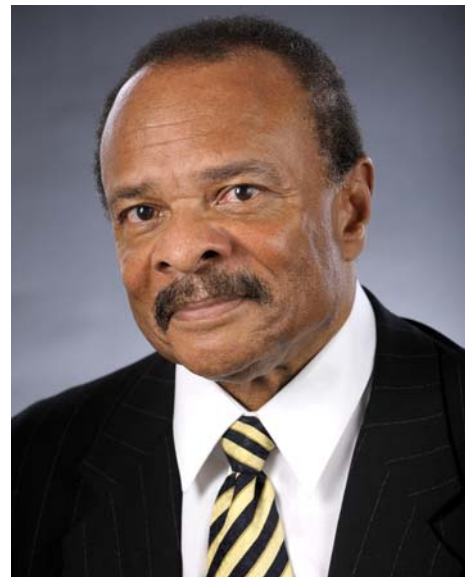
Childhood obesity rates have tripled in the last 30 years, and doubled for adults 50+. So what is to be done?

Village Green resident Nat Hutton, who moved here in 1973, is tackling the problem head on. He is coordinating the recruitment of over 50 volunteers for a program called CATCH Healthy Habits, which promotes healthy eating and exercise for both the young and young at heart.

Created by research teams from the University of California, San Diego, University of Minnesota, Tulane University and the University of Texas, CATCH engages volunteers 50+ years old to lead fun, active games, share healthy snacks and teach about good food choices in after school programs for youth in grades K-5.

Volunteers develop healthy food options for students, encouraging everyone to eat less pre-packaged foods and to opt for healthier food choices. Plus, everyone benefits from movement and exercise.

The program is run by OASIS, a national nonprofit organization providing lifelong learning and service programs for adults age 50+ in 40 U. S. cities. OASIS, which has three locations in the Los Angeles area, has a successful history of building multi-sector partnerships, mobilizing diverse communities, reaching children and older adults including those at the highest risk of obesity and implementing evidence-based, intergenerational approaches in the areas of healthy eating and active living.



By the end of 2012, CATCH aims to reach more than 750 adults and over 4,000 children in 18 cities across 14 states.

Nat is helping to lead the charge in this necessary and exciting collaboration, but he can't do it alone. If you would like to volunteer, contact Nat at (323) 298-4400 or at nhutton@ca.rr.com, and visit www.oasisnet.org for more information. ■

(Beverlee, continued from page 5)

village Green policies. "We haven't had needs that weren't met," says Beverlee.

Like many other residents, though, they got a ticket for parking in the interior motor court without the proper parking permit. And, like the Barrs, Breedens, and Martine

Hubbard, they didn't realize that they could participate fully on committees.

Retired from distinguished careers in education and international development, Richard and Beverlee are not standing still. He tutors adult learners in literacy through the Los Angeles Public Library sys-

tem, and she is working on a novel that will be published as an audio book. And, starting July 25, Beverlee teaches an "all ages" fitness class three days a week at the Clubhouse. "All residents are welcome!"

Suggestion: "We hadn't heard about court reps. There ought to be someone you could ask that would be a liaison." ■



Looking Fresh!

The Village Green's newly-refurbished laundry rooms look spiffy with their cheerful yellow paint and black-and-white patterned linoleum selected by a group of the Design Review Committee.

Said Court Council co-chair Lucy Fried, who shepherded the improvement from start to completion, "The improvements were long

over due and not easily come by, but finally, the residents were heard. We now have a pleasant environment in which to do our laundry, and I hope everyone who uses the rooms will help keep them clean and orderly.

The laundry rooms are community facilities, and we are the community." ■

(Renters, continued from page 1)

do a better job keeping up a property than renters do, that is not always the case.

Let us all—landlords, court reps, neighbors, and staff—give renters the information and support they need.

How Many Renters Live at Village Green?

It's hard to say exactly how

many residents are renters. Information supplied to the office by our management firm, Ross Morgan, indicates that about 130 of the 629 units use an offsite address. This suggests renters make up about 20% of the Green. Since some landlords also live here, the actual number of renters is probably higher. For example, in Court 13's 39 units, 11 are rentals, a rate of about 28%.

Are Village Green Renters Covered by Rent Control?

The answer is "yes," for renters who established their tenancy before January 1, 1996, but "no," for all who came later. Any renter with a question can call the city's Renters' Hotline, at 866-557-RENT or attend a free tenants' rights clinic at Plummer Park sponsored by the non-profit Coalition for Economic Survival. ■

(Award, continued from page 1)

Architectural Resources Group (ARG) and the VGOA.

Several years ago, the VGOA hired ARG, a historic preservation architectural firm, to complete the report. Not only was it required component of our Mills Act application, but the document would also serve as a useful tool for the VGOA, providing a roadmap to help guide restoration and rehabilitation work in a responsible

and informed manner.

Katie Horak from ARG led a team that worked months on the report, which describes our property's history and importance, documents our current conditions, and makes recommendations for our ongoing work.

We are working again with ARG on the companion piece to the Historic Structures Report, the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR). After years of

volunteer work by a small group of our own residents, ARG will use our findings to complete this important document.

To see a list of the other award recipients, check the Los Angeles Conservancy's website: laconservancy.org/awards

The Village Green Historic Structures Report can be viewed in the office or online at villagegreenla.net/rules.html ■

Neighbors to Neighbors—On Facebook

By Wendell Conn, Court .11

Are you wondering what's on your neighbors' minds or are you looking for a tip on improving your unit? Head to the Village Green Los Angeles group on Facebook. Since 2009, the group has been a huge success, with residents posting their thoughts about life at Village Green and sharing their experiences here.

The social network has greatly contributed to building connections and a more robust VG community.

Facebook provides another method of getting to know one's neighbors and can provide a wealth of information that will enhance your VG living. Recent topics range from re-grouting historic tiles to what to do with rusted screens. Photos and videos are also sometimes uploaded that help document everything from the latest butterfly arrival to sewer replacement machinery doing its amazing work.

In addition to this resident-driven Facebook page, the Communications Committee also maintains a Facebook page, Village Green L.A., where events and developments are discussed. And, as was highlighted in our last issue of *High-lights*, there is also a Facebook group for Village Green pet owners and lovers, Village Green Pet Society.

So find your green on Facebook. Thanks to all who take the time to share. ■

(Barr, continued from page 4)

A plumbing issue that arose early on was promptly addressed when they called the emergency maintenance number. Soon after moving in, they attended "Drinks on the Green" and met lots of friendly people.

They can't get enough of the outdoors here. Lindsey loves the "mobile zoo" on the

grounds and the friendliness of people on the paths as they walk the Green. For Matt, "It's the best coming-home-from-work cocktail anyone could imagine."

Tips to Renters: *"Knowing the rules well makes a difference when problems arise. Also, making time to enjoy the beauty of the Green and participate in community*

events really enhances the experience here."

Suggestion to Landlords: *"It would be good if owners notified the office when they have a new renter, and if the office then passed the information on to the renter's court rep. Court representatives can't welcome new neighbors if they don't know they have one."* Ed. note: VG rules require such notification. ■

(Fracking, continued from page 3)

Representatives from organizations such as the Sierra Club, Community Health Councils, along with former Culver City elected officials repeatedly cited concerns that fracking is being done without precautions that, many noted, could not be designed in a regulatory environment that provided little information about how fracking is done, what risks might be taken, and who would be affected if an accident occurred. Many of these speakers unabashedly called for a moratorium, and at the very least transparent

information about the chemicals used in the fracking process—chemicals which could potentially leak into local ground water. Currently, there are over 740 chemicals that may be used, making it nearly impossible for municipalities and residents to effectively test water for dangerous levels of these substances.

It's unclear at this point if DOGGR will implement a moratorium and when that might be. Culver City Mayor Andrew Weissman asked for strict state regulation of fracking. "We hope that

DOGGR will do its job. We expect that DOGGR will act to protect the community. But if DOGGR is unable or unwilling to do its job, then Culver City is not likely to stand idly by. We cannot afford to be timid when the public health and safety is at risk."

State Assemblymember Betsy Butler (D-Marina Del Rey) introduced a bill in the State Legislature that, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, "would bar oil regulators from approving new drilling permits for wells where firms employ 'fracking' to tap oil deposits." ■

Thank You Susan!

A huge “thank you” to Susan Edwards, who has served on the Communications Committee for over nine years, the majority of that time as its chair. As the editor of *Highlights* and the committee’s monthly update, she has spent countless hours coordinating writers, editing articles, finding images, correcting grammatical errors and supervising layout. Susan even coded our current website entirely by hand, and continues to provide constant updates.

From everyone on the Communications Committee, thank you Susan, for your tireless service and for ensuring our community is well informed!

EMERGENCY RESOURCES

Dial 9-1-1 for immediate help.

For other matters call:
(877)ASK-LAPD
Platt Security (800) 986-3868

Southwest Community Police Station: (213) 485-2582

LAPD Air Support Division (213) 485-2600

Download a free app on your smart phone like 5-0 Radio Police Scanner Lite

Join the VG Facebook Group: Search for “Village Green Los Angeles”



Congratulations to June’s photo contest winner Anne McGinn for her image of a jam session on the Green.

Visit the Village Green’s Facebook group for a photo contest every month.

Save the Dates!

Village Green Movie Night

Sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Committee and the ad hoc Movie Night Committee.

Saturday, August 25, 8 p.m.
Saturday, September 22, 8 p.m.

Jazz on the Green

Featuring Jeffrey Suttles

Sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Committee

Monday, September 3, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Village Green *Highlights* is the community newsletter of the Village Green Owners Association, incorporated on August 9, 1973. We make every attempt to ensure the accuracy of all information. However, we are not responsible for errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in this publication. The editor reserves the right to edit articles and letters for tone, clarity and length. Opinions expressed in *Highlights* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the VGOA Board of Directors or the Management. Please submit submissions or comments to the editor at highlights@villagegreenla.net, or to the Office.