

# VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

# HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

January 2020

## NATURAL MULCH AND A NEW POLICY

### WHY WE NEED IT AND HOW TO MANAGE IT

Mulch is a soil covering. It's called "natural" or "organic" mulch when it's produced by trees or plants. Our horticulturist and maintenance company have recommended increasing the Green's use of natural mulch to improve and protect the soil in our tree and shrub beds.

While natural mulch can be purchased, many of our trees and some shrubs produce their own mulch. The leaves they drop act as their natural food source, slowly decomposing to release nutrients that support healthy plant and insect life while maintaining good moisture in the soil. Yet, for years, our maintenance companies have blown this mulch out of the beds.

Now, the Green is adopting a more environmentally friendly approach to landscape care by embracing the natural mulch cycle and allowing a reasonable accumulation of "home grown" as well as commercial mulch in the beds.

### How will green crew keep the beds and walkways tidy?

Green Crew has been asked to instruct its employees to stop blowing natural mulch out of the plant beds. If mulch reaches three inches or sidewalk height, they will rake the level down a little. Less bed cleaning will leave time for more sidewalk cleaning!

The new approach is also a win in the fight against climate change, as natural mulch plays a big role in creating the kind of healthy soil that sucks up and stores carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Be on the watch as the cracked, grey soil around the Green stops being blown and raked bare and starts to accumulate a healthy layer of leaves or other natural mulch. It's good for the plants, and it's good for the planet. □



*One of 28 trees slated for removal for various reasons this winter. 100 trees are to be planted.*



*Four Western Bluebirds search for termites that were gradually emerging from an underground hole near the western edge of the Main Green last November. The leaf mulch is an integral part of the Green's eco system, providing habitat for various creatures and, when decomposed, nutrition for the soil.*  
Contributors to this article: Claire Knowlton, Lucy Fried, Tad Daly, Chris Scornaienchi

## NEWS FROM THE BOARD

### DECEMBER

### Election Rules

The board approved board election rules revisions to comply with California's new HOA election law (SB323). The revised rules were then mailed to all owners.

### Community Air Quality Monitor

Directors unanimously authorized \$296.20 to install a wi-fi enabled Purple Air PA-II air quality monitor outside the Club house patio. Purple Air uses laser counters to measure particulate matter in real time and is well-reputed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

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## SAFETY ADVISORY

Tired of being in the dark?

The Safety Committee reminds residents that long lasting "dusk-to-dawn" light bulbs are available from maintenance. Submit a work order to have one installed in your porch and/or patio light fixtures. □

## Residential Re-Piping

The asbestos in Building 95 was removed, and the building's re-piping is expected to be completed in December.

## Residential Building Insulation, Painting, and Carpentry

Building 81 is expected to be completed in December; the project will then move to the tenth and final building (87) and should conclude in January.

## Owner Bill-Back

DRC consultant billing has been completed through December 2019, with \$2,960.00 charged to various owners for unit modification compliance assistance.

## Roof Cleaning

The annual roof cleaning has started and will conclude in mid-December. All building roofs will be checked and cleaned for debris.

## Electrical Upgrade Investigation

On December 9, VG management and Hariton Engineering began preliminary investigations to determine existing electrical conditions at the Green. They plan to inspect all electrical boxes in the patios as part of Phase 1 of the Electrical Upgrade Project. (more information on page 3)

## **BOARD NEWS** cont'd from Page 1

### Air Quality

Residents can get an app and measure the air quality at the site at any time. With smog levels and number of smoggy days increasing, and with the Green just east of stop-and-go La Cienega, .8 of a mile from the 10 freeway, and within a mile of the Inglewood Oil Field, the board agreed air monitoring can help residents understand our risks and perhaps act to reduce them.



## **PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT** November 7 - December 4, 2019

### **NOV 8 PROPERTY DAMAGE** Management Office, 2:00 pm.

A resident backing their car out of a parking space knocked over the escort call box and damaged the electrical cord inside. An escort and patrol officer who witnessed the incident tried but was unable to stop the resident before they left the property. However, the resident was identified. □

*Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore*

## Percolation Test

VG staff and landscape maintenance company Greencrew are jointly conducting a percolation test (soil water absorption rate) at the corner of Coliseum and Hauser.

## Landscape Maintenance

Greencrew reported that the workers detailed courts 2-7 in November and would move to courts 7-11 in December. They pointed out that the rains have reduced the need for watering, and they have been mowing less, since most of the grass is "warm water grass" that is dormant in the winter.

These conditions have enabled the crew to tackle other projects, including tree planting, tree mulching, repairing broken lateral irrigation lines, and replacing old sprinkler heads. 100 trees are scheduled to be planted this winter in the Phase 3 Shade Tree Project.

The company also reported: "Over the past month, all tree plant wells located in Courts 1-4 received mulch. Along with this, we have continued to leave all the natural mulch in the planted beds, as requested by the Landscape Committee. We will be continuing this trend throughout Village Green until all trees, new and old, have been mulched." □



*Photo by Don Dongallo*

## Patio and Garage Cement Repairs

\$24,350 was allocated for concrete repairs in two patios and two garages. Facilities Engineer Alfonso Casanova explained that, in one situation, the ground had dropped six inches from the walkway, while the garages had large foundation cracks that allowed water intrusion. □

*Compiled by Lucy Fried*



## ELECTRICAL UPGRADE PROJECT, PHASE 2

Last month, Steve Haggerty and Diann Dumas introduced Phase 1 of the board's three-phase electrical upgrade plan to replace our 1940s system. In this issue, they continue with Phase 2 and will return next month with Phase 3.

Phase 1 contractor, S3 Builders/Hariton Engineering, is now working with our staff surveying and recording our current electrical system and conditions. They will then convert the information on the patio electrical meters into the diagrams and documents required to request an electrical plan – one based on 2019 (not 1940s!) electrical industry standards for multi-family buildings.



*L. Todd Schoenhouse, Hariton electrical engineer and project manager*

*R. Kevin Fishberg, electrical engineer and vice-president of engineering*

*Hariton and VG will continue the field survey around the Green on Mondays and Wednesdays, with completion targeted for March.*

*Photos by Steve Haggerty*

### **Diann Dumas: When will Phase 2 roll out?**

**Steve Haggerty:** It is targeted to start later this year.

### **DD: What will happen in Phase 2?**

**SS:** Phase 2 is about engineering, and we will select an electrical engineering contractor to assist us. The contractor will be expected to produce fully engineered electrical drawings (structural, architectural, and landscape) as needed. We will also expect a lump sum construction proposal, RFPs, and vendor selection for Phase 3, "Construction".

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## SINGLE LINE DIAGRAM

In further discussion, Steve mentioned that one of the diagrams our Phase 2 engineering company will need in order to develop a new power plan for the DWP is a single line diagram of our current electrical system.

A single line diagram (sometimes called a drawing) is the representation of a power system using a simple symbol (i.e. circuit breaker, meter, distribution panel, transformer, conduit, etc.) for each component. It shows the main connections and arrangement of the system components along with their data, such as locations (units/buildings), meters, circuit breakers, circuit voltage-current-phase, and inter-connections.

After 79 years, neither the VGOA nor the DWP has a single line diagram for the existing power map of the property. However, the engineering company/staff/VG board cannot develop a new power plan without knowing the current power situation for each unit. The DWP will not consider a request from the Green to provide more power to each building and each unit without knowing what is there now.

That is why the S3 Builders/Hariton Phase 1 meters survey is so important. They will incorporate the meters data into a single line diagram of our current electrical power situation, as noted above. Then, our Phase 2 engineering contractor will use that information when creating a new, engineered single line diagram showing what power changes we want.

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**DD: What will be produced at the end of Phase 2?**

**SH:** With all the required information and drawings finally in our hands, we will develop the upgrade plan that best fits our needs for electrical power, costs, timing, and other factors. It will include specific upgrade plans, cost estimates, and estimates of implementation timing for each court.

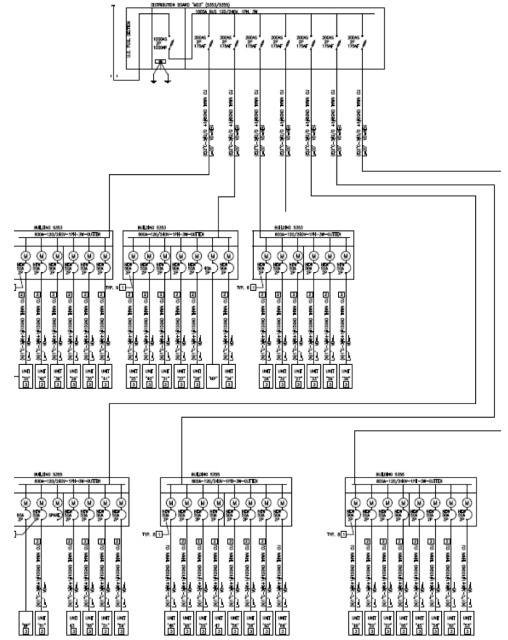
**DD: What are all the drawings needed for?**

**SH:** There are two aspects to the plan we need.

1. First is for the DWP to bring more power to our buildings. (The electrical engineering contractor will work with the DWP, Department of Building and Safety (LA DBS), and our staff to develop specific plans for DWP's electrical infrastructure to do that.)
2. The other aspect of the plan is upgrading the electrical infrastructure within our buildings, including panels, wiring, and outlets, etc. Our staff, electrical contractor, and DBS will develop specific plans for upgrading the electrical infrastructure within our buildings.

**DD: Why do we need these plans?**

**SH:** They are required by DWP, DBS, and the contractors we hire in Phase 3 to do the upgrade work.



Here is an example of a single line diagram provided by S3 Builders that shows the electrical connections for six apartment buildings with 6-8 units each. *The Green has 95 buildings with 629 units in 19 courts.*

**DD: How long will Phase 2 take, and what is the cost?**

**SH:** Depending on board approval and funding, we guesstimate 6-12 months for the phase. We won't know the cost until Phase 1 is nearly complete, but we guesstimate it at \$200-400,000.

**SS: Will homeowners need to be involved in Phase 2?**

**SH:** Not directly, as no upgrade work is done until Phase 3. However, as upgrade plans are being developed, there may be alternative upgrade approaches where homeowner input is needed.

**DD: What are we going to do with the end product?**

**SH:** Depending on board approval and funding, we will move to Phase 3, Construction. ☐

## Another Electrical Outage By Lucy Fried

In the wee hours of December 23, yet another electrical outage struck the Green. Alarmed and bewildered residents of two Court 6 buildings turned to the VG's Facebook page with posts like this: "Our electricity is going crazy. The lights are turning on and off on their own...Anyone else experiencing strange electrical occurrences?"

While walking on December 29, I saw DWP trucks parked at Coliseum and Court 6. One of the workers told me they were exchanging the temporary fix from the December 23rd incident for a permanent one. When I asked him if the cause of the outage was a transformer in a vault or something in the outside junction box, he said it was neither; rather, a cable in the underground pathway that brings the electricity from the vault to the box had failed and had to be replaced. I asked him how long the cable run was, and he replied it was about 100 feet...

I wish I had asked him what caused the failure, but does it really matter whether it was a pushy tree root, water intrusion, or an electrical overload? The basic reality remains. We need an electrical overhaul.. ☐

## COMMITTEES (All meet at the Clubhouse)

### Safety Committee (2nd Wednesdays)

The Safety Committee has enlisted L.A.'s Emergency Management Department to offer "Ready Your Los Angeles Neighborhood" (RYLAN) emergency preparedness workshops at Village Green. These complement the CERT workshops offered last summer.

We are preparing for more RYLAN workshops to help neighbors in each court meet one another and get organized. Please look for announcements of five trainings in the Clubhouse in April and May.

We welcome additional volunteers. Please email [vgdisasterprep@gmail.com](mailto:vgdisasterprep@gmail.com) if you are considering becoming a lead person for disaster preparedness efforts in your court. □

### Communications (2nd Tuesdays)

In next month's **Highlights**, director Steve Haggerty will conclude his series on the board-approved three-phase electrical upgrade project. Also, director Cole Garrison will discuss landscape architect Melinda Taylor's impressively researched conceptual design for courts 9/10 (Coliseum/Hauser) and explain the board's long-term plan for an irrigation overhaul and landscape rehabilitation. □

### Tree Committee (2nd Mondays)

An enthusiastic group arrived at the Clubhouse early one morning last November for the Tree Committee's bird presentation with veteran VG birders Don Sterba and Richard Barth. They were treated to pictures and the calls of birds, common and rare, that have visited the Green.



Photo by Zig

Later, walkers spied one or more Black Phoebes, Cedar Waxwings, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Townsend's Warblers, Lesser Goldfinches, and House Wrens. □

## Considering a Run for the Board?

### SB323 Makes It Easy

By Lucy Fried

California's new law (SB323) has one mandatory qualification for a board candidate: the candidate must be an owner and a "natural person," not a legal entity. The law also gives HOAs several optional conditions for disqualifying a candidate. In December, the VG adopted these *disqualifying* conditions

1. The owner is delinquent in the payment of any regular or special assessment. (However, an owner who is behind but on a payment plan or has paid under protest will not be disqualified. Also, the disqualification does not apply to delinquencies for fines, late payments, etc.)
2. The Association learns that the person has a criminal conviction that would prevent the HOA from buying or force the HOA to terminate legally required fidelity bond coverage.
3. If elected, the person would be serving at the same time as another person with a joint ownership in the same unit who is either an incumbent director or a properly nominated candidate.

The board declined to approve an option requiring that a candidate be an owner for at least a year.

Because California's laws grant significant powers to HOA boards of directors, it is important that owners inform ourselves about Village Green issues and participate actively in the election process. At least five board seats will need to be filled soon. Consider whom to nominate, including yourself, and why. Look for the first election notice in your mailbox. □

**Note: The complete VGOA board election rules are or will soon be on the website at [www.villagegreenla.net](http://www.villagegreenla.net).**

Do you appreciate Highlights and the website? Have a suggestion? Reach us at [vgcomcom@villagegreenla.net](mailto:vgcomcom@villagegreenla.net) or [villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com](mailto:villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com).

## JANUARY FOOT BEATS

A Safety Committee activity for all security-loving residents ...

**Tues. 1/14, 7:00 pm** - Meet at office, walk VG east area.

**Wed. 1/22, 9:00 am** - Meet at Court 6 entrance, walk VG west area.

**Thurs. 1/30, 7:00 pm** - Meet at office, walk VG central area.

**Fri. Feb. 7, 9:00 am** - Meet at Court 1 entrance, walk VG east area.

## JANUARY EVENTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

Homeowner comments start promptly at 7:00 pm.

### BEYOND THE GREEN



*By Cynthia Singleton*

As the largest urban oil field in California, the Inglewood Oil Field has responsibilities to the surrounding community in the event of an emergency.

Sentinel Park Resources, the oil field operator, currently contracts with CodeRED to facilitate a notification (CAN) system to alert oil field neighbors should an emergency arise. Any alert would be sent out in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

Sentinel Park is required to conduct a test of the CAN system each year. The 2019 test was conducted December 11 at 2:30pm; the company said it sent 30 emails and reached 22 numbers out of 30 attempted calls.

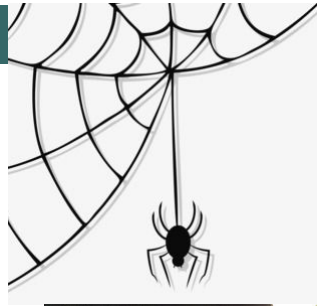
To be part of the Code Red alert system, fill out the online information form at <http://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/enUS/547421C9D6F0>. □

### Court Council Party



Nat Hutton (left) and Court 6 rep Jordan Moore enjoy the last few minutes of this year's annual Court Council holiday party. Court reps help keep their neighbors informed by distributing the Highlights and events notices.

The reps meet on the first Wednesday of each month to discuss residents' concerns and relay them to the board of directors. Visitors are always welcome. □



Photos and caption by Feliza Kohan



### Halloween on the Green

A scary time was had by all at the Halloween children and adult parties. The children loved the story-telling time around the coral tree, followed by trick

or treating around the Green. A special thanks to those who decorated the Clubhouse. □

### December's Village Green holiday party

included a special birthday salute to resident **Ted Lumpkin**, who celebrated his 100th birthday on December 30.



Long before 2001 when Ted and Georgia moved to the Green, before he retired as a department manager with 32 years with L.A. County, before they raised four children and later became grandparents ... Ted was a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Force and one of the famous Tuskegee Airmen who, during World War II, broke the "color barrier" and earned a place in history as some of America's most dedicated and decorated air warriors.

Happy Birthday, Ted. May you live peacefully as long as you wish and continue to prosper! □