

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

January 2022

BOARD AND MANAGEMENT NEWS

By Patrick Comiskey and Lucy Fried

28 people, including the nine directors, attended the December 14 Board of Directors meeting. Much of the meeting concerned items brought by Management, with only three action resolutions on the Board's agenda.

TREE SIGNS VANDALISM

In her report, property manager Sherri Giles highlighted an unsettling incident in Court 15 in which Board-approved "No Tree Climbing" signs had been defaced and replaced with a drawing of a child in a tree. The perpetrator(s) had used a strong commercial adhesive backing to paste over the existing signs, effectively destroying them. These signs had been set in concrete after the previous ones were stolen earlier in the year.

Ms. Giles expressed distress at the vandalism. "To see this conduct and disregard for safety occurring in the community is disappointing," she said. "The residents responsible are promoting the idea that when someone disagrees with a policy or rule, even one in place for safety and the preservation of the landscape, theft and vandalism are the appropriate courses of action."

The issue of children climbing trees on the property has been discussed at multiple Board meetings, where directors and residents alike debated the pros and cons of modifying or ending the longtime ban on tree climbing.

The directors agreed to discuss responses to the vandalism in executive session and plan to issue a statement on this matter next month. *Cont'd on Page 2*

MESSAGE from the EDITOR

Dear Readers,

Editing the **Highlights** has been an endlessly interesting and gratifying privilege, but it's time for me to step away from the helm of the newsletter and catch up with the rest of my life. I'll continue contributing to **Highlights**, but in smaller ways.

Fortunately, our dedicated volunteers will continue to serve, and Patrick Comiskey (Court 3) has stepped forward as acting editor starting with the February issue.

Patrick and his wife moved to the Green in 2016. He has written about wine and food for **Wine & Spirits**, **the L.A. Times**, **S.F. Chronicle**, **Bon Appetit**, and other publications. Patrick was recently acclaimed for his book, **American Rhône**, about the history of Rhône varieties in the U.S. Enjoy his Page 3 review of VG's 80th anniversary party.

Please continue sending photos, story ideas, questions, and constructive criticism to villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com and consider joining the newsletter volunteer staff.

We want the newsletter to reflect our diverse community. □

Lucy Fried, Court 13



The Peter Myers Orchestra was a huge hit at the Green's 80th birthday party. Story on Page 3.

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HIGHLIGHTS is an all-volunteer project of the Village Green Communication Committee.

Email us at

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Three Friends on a Bench

BOARD AND MANAGEMENT NEWS

cont'd. from Page 1

REIMBURSEMENT FOR DAMAGED DECORATIONS?

Management asked the directors' opinions regarding reimbursement requests from residents whose holiday decorations, installed near their units, were damaged by vendors or VG Maintenance. They unanimously indicated they did not favor such claims.

GOPHERS Having learned that the L.A. Country Club's lethal method of gopher control – when used properly and not disturbed – is enclosed and does not impact other animals, Management will try to identify a vendor who can conduct a trial and cordon off the area with a high visibility barrier.

GARAGE INSPECTIONS Campus-wide garage inspections are scheduled for early this year. Residents will be notified in a timely manner once the schedule is finalized.

GREENCREW REPORT Last month, workers detailed courts 5 - 9 and will be in 10 - 13 in January.

TREES UPDATE After a late November walk-around, VG tree consultant Cy Carlberg reported one tree in irreversible decline and recommended removal. There is also concern about various amounts of dieback in the

Clubhouse olive allée. Carlberg requested these trees be left untouched while they're being observed. (Ed note: This accounts for the obstructed pathways along this allée.)

BOARD RESOLUTIONS APPROVED:

\$181,002 Insurance Premiums Package, a 20% increase from last year due to a carrier's rate hike and a former resident's claim

2021 Audit Contract - \$8,000 fee for required 2021 audit and tax preparations

Tour and Video of the campus for a YouTube channel, "The South LA Recap." A Board director will supervise and accompany the shoot. □



New Addition to Maintenance Staff

Manager Sherri Giles is pleased to announce that we've hired a new maintenance technician, Darwin Harry Ruiz. With 20 years of maintenance experience, Mr. Ruiz will be a valuable addition to our team. Please welcome him when you see him around the Green

PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT November 11 - December 8, 2021

Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore

COMPLAINT ABOUT DARK COURT - 11/17, Court 15, 7:49 pm. A resident asked for and received hourly overnight checks of their classic car which could not be garaged during painting and termite fumigation.

TRASH BIN FIRE - 11/26, Court 10 trash area, 6:27 pm. Officers responded to a call, and with the resident's help, used the Courts 9 & 10 extinguishers to douse the flames. LAFD arrived to ensure the job was finished.

VEHICLE BREAK-IN - 12/4, Court 17 parking lot, 10:30 am. A resident reported their car had been broken into and a coin purse was missing; it was later found.

SIGN ALTERATION - 12/06, Center Green near Court 15, 9:40 am. Security received a report that the "Please don't climb the trees" signs had been altered.

INTOXICATED RESIDENT - 12/7, Court 13 driveway, 12:55 pm. Security received multiple calls about an apparently intoxicated person. The person was found and escorted home. □



Happy 80th, Village Green!

By Patrick Comiskey, Court 3

By any measure, the 2021 Village Green Holiday Party was a smashing success!



Held in and around the Clubhouse patio on the afternoon of December 4, it marked the Green's 80th birthday, a big number that called for a big band—in this case, the fabulous Peter Myers Orchestra, a 14-piece jazz ensemble whose bebop and swing sounds echoed off the property's historic buildings for four rollicking hours.



After almost two years of pandemic isolation and the cancellation of several VGOA social gatherings, this was just the sort of shot in the arm needed to pull a COVID-weary community out of its doldrums, with hip-swinging music, delicious food, plenty of drink and conversation.

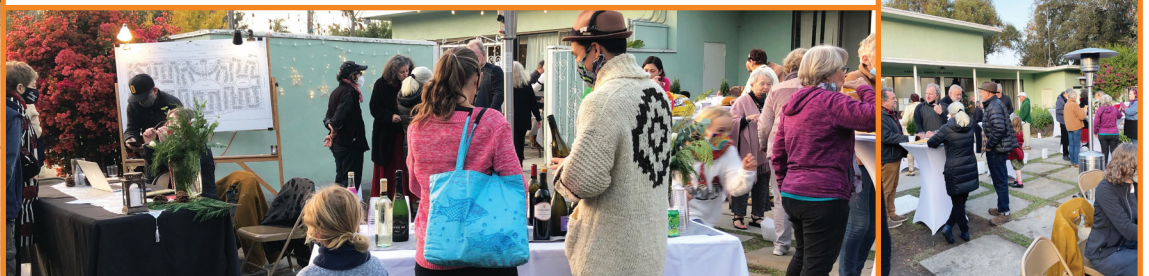
The event was planned collaboratively by the Cultural Affairs and Tree/Landscape committees. A crew of volunteers strung lights, built and lit propane heaters to keep everyone comfortable and safe, decorated tables, and replenished a seemingly bottomless spread of tamales and Brazilian appetizers.

The 3:00 pm start time changed the complexion of what is traditionally an evening event: children, lots of them, were a boisterous addition, many in holiday getups, revved up by the lights and music, darting between and beneath klatches of grownups, playing hide and seek in the olive grove, dancing and creating merriment for young and old alike; it was an all-ages celebration for the ages.

Outside the patio, the Tree and Landscape Committee (TLC) set up a table to raise funds to repopulate our urban forest. Tree Committee chair Laura Civiello and members Johnny Blades, Reba Glover, Chris Scornaienchi and Genia Young processed gifts ranging from \$25 to \$300; sponsors could select from a property map that pinpointed the available trees. The committee has raised more than \$15,480, enough to plant 51 trees, \$480 and one tree more than their goal.



"This is the sort of event that captures the Village at its best," said Rasheda Carroll, Court 9, whose eight-year-old daughter Josephine dipped into her piggy bank to make a \$25 tree fund contribution. "The community's musical and artistic roots, its trees and landscape, and of course its people, all of it came together." □



MEET JIM VAIL

Ted Robbins, Court 1, interviewed Jim Vail.



Without hearing a note, you know Jim Vail is a musician.

The entrance to his living room off Court 15 is dominated by a parlor grand piano. His walls are filled with drawings and photos like the one of Brahms behind his chair. "I love that picture of him at the piano," he says. "That may be my favorite. I did my master's thesis on the

Brahms Requiem. Done that probably more than any other piece. It's kind of my signature piece."

At 92, Jim Vail is still conducting choral concerts, most recently in November leading his group, the Laudamus Te Singers, and the St. Bede's (Mar Vista) Episcopal Church Choir in Beethoven's Mass in C Major. A tall, thin man, he bounced up and down during the performance.

"I get so fired up," he says. But, he says, it will be one of his last as a conductor. "I noticed that my eyesight keeps getting worse. And when it gets a little worse, I'll probably stop. Maybe six or eight months."

Jim has had a long, rewarding musical career. After earning his master's and doctoral degrees in music at USC, he was offered a position and stayed there, teaching choral and sacred music for 39 years. Jim was also choirmaster of St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Westwood for 40 years before retiring at 80. Over the years, he has mentored some of the country's best choral talents, including Morten Lauridsen, who received the National Medal of Arts and whose music is widely performed.

Jim Vail moved to Village Green in 1985. Some things, he says, have not changed at VG since the 1980's—the urban forest and the "nice, modest units we live in." Other things, he thinks, have changed for the better. "There's a lot more social exchange, people out having a dinner with friends on the grass and kids playing a lot more. (Not long before Jim came, families with children weren't allowed at VG.) The mix of residents has also gotten more diverse... I really like seeing the black and white kids playing together. That's very nice. I'm very glad I live here." □

Dear Neighbors,

My neighbor Alan Canterbury's fourth grader and my kindergartener attend Baldwin Hills Elementary, our neighborhood school. Like schools everywhere, we are experiencing staff and volunteer shortages due to COVID, and we are asking our resourceful community for support.

We need volunteers to help in the classroom, at recess and lunch, and in the mornings as the children arrive. Also appreciated now more than ever are supplies, gift cards, and creative morale boosters for staff. And we are looking for video/editing talent to create a small promotional video for the school.

If you are considering supporting our school, please email us at NIABaldwinHills@gmail.com. Thank you. □

Joanna Casucci, Court 3, and Alan Canterbury, Court 3



BHES Reading Garden