

# VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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# HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

May 2020

## VGOA Elects New Board Despite Multiple Obstacles

By Lucy Fried

The VGOA Board of Directors election will count! "50% plus one" owners heeded the call last month to exercise their right (and duty) to vote, and the time and money spent was not in vain. All nine board seats are now filled, and three new directors have joined the six incumbents to complete the 2020 board.

Achieving a quorum at the Green is rarely if ever easy, but this year was truly a challenge. First, the usual February election was postponed to April to meet requirements of a new state law. Then, the Covid-19 hit. No "Meet the Candidates" forums, no Annual Meeting, and a "why bother" confusion because of six vacancies and only six candidates.

Management, the election inspectors, Communications Committee, and the candidates themselves spent many hours working to inform owners and encourage them to vote, with multiple letters, flyers, **Highlights** articles, website notices, Facebook posts, and personal reminders.

Yet, as Election Day (April 25) dawned, there was no quorum. The inspectors set up a second polling spot in the main green. Finally, Chief Inspector Rob Creighton announced a quorum! 65 ballots had been cast between Friday night and Saturday noon. "This year the election was unique, and the Village Green residents rose to the occasion," he told **Highlights**. Congratulations to the new board and thanks to



all who worked so hard to make this election a success.

### Board Directors, Election Results, and Board Officers

Directors serve for two years unless they are replacing someone who resigned before their term was up. The two directors with the fewest votes will serve one year and may run again. The new board met briefly (Zoom) and elected their officers. *Here are the nine 2020 directors, with vote numbers and officer designations:*



Joe Khoury (285), President  
Laura Civiello (284), Vice-president  
Daniel Millner (276)

Haleh Shoa (271), Secretary  
Avelene Schodorf (260)  
Ashley Fondrevay (256)

Claire Knowlton, Treasurer (second year)  
Steve Haggerty (second year)  
Chris Scornaienchi (second year)

Design: Sophia Beauvy  
Editor: Lucy Fried

#### Inside **Highlights**:

Page 2 Mgmt. News and Security Report  
Page 3 Board and Committee News

Page 4 Distance Teaching  
Page 5 VG Helpers  
Page 6 "How We Got Through April"

## MANAGER'S REPORT

### 2020 Refurbishment Projects

Residential insulation, painting, and carpentry repairs are still on hold due to the COVID-19 and consequent "Stay at Home" order, as are residential building copper re-piping and follow-up painting.

### Escort Call Box Update

The call box near the office has been upgraded and re-installed, with bollards on either side to protect it from cars. Over the years, it has been struck many times and put out of service, and the most recent accident damaged the box beyond repair. The new box allows residents to call a guard by simply pushing a button. A guard can then respond immediately via cellphone.

### Electrical Update

As reported last month, S3 Builders has completed two Phase 1 deliverables. It is now gathering bids from engineering companies to help them develop timing and



*from Manager  
Sherri Giles'  
April  
Board Report*

costs for phases 2 and 3. The DWP has not yet set a date for an initial planning meeting.

### Tree Trimming

Trees earmarked by the arborist as "high priority," as well as those blocking lights or causing property damage, were trimmed or removed in recent months. Additional trees from these reports will be addressed at the end of bird nesting season (August 31).

### Landscape Maintenance

Greencrew reported that infrastructure problems have prevented the planting of the trees still in boxes but plan to work closely with the arborist and Tree Committee to find appropriate alternative locations. In Court 14, a lateral irrigation line broke and was

repaired, and a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " mainline along the service road near Courts 13-14 also broke and was fixed. Workers detailed courts 3-7 in April, and after completing 7 will be in 8-12 this month. □



## PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT March 19 - April 15, 2020



*Edited by  
Jordan Deglise  
Moore*

**MAR 24, FALLEN TREE;** Court 13, 4:40 am. Residents reported a tree was falling. When officers arrived, the tree was down and blocking a patio gate. The area was cordoned off and a call made to after-hours maintenance.

**MAR 24, FALLEN RESIDENT, LOST KEYS;** Court 5, 9:10 pm. Officers happened upon a resident who had fallen and lost her keys. She declined further aid after they helped her find them.

**ONGOING, RUDE CYCLISTS;** the greens and East & West Circles. Multiple residents have reported adult and children cyclists riding too fast and close to walkers. We have spoken to them as we are able to, reminding them that safe riding is paramount, and citing *Village Green Handbook* Section 13.1B, page 33.

**ONGOING, TRESPASSERS;** the greens and East & West Circles. Multiple residents have reported non-residents using the property. We are doing our best to weed out trespassers.

**APR 13, RESIDENT INJURED IN FALL;** Court 7, 10:30 am. Officers happened upon the resident while her husband and passerby were rendering aid. Officers contacted medics, but the resident declined further help and was escorted home.

**APR 14, FORMER RESIDENT USING FACILITIES;** Court 7, 9:45 am. A resident reported a former resident was regularly using the laundry room, accessing it by waiting for someone to unlock it. After watching his behavior, officers confronted and warned the man he could be arrested for trespassing. He agreed not to return. □

## NEWS FROM THE BOARD - APRIL

*Directors okayed these resolutions at their April 28 regular open (Zoom) meeting:*

- VGOA and COVID-19:
  - Affirmed the VGOA's commitment to strictly follow city and state COVID-19 guidelines, including social distancing, protective masks, and the Safer at Home Public Order, and asked management to continue publicizing these regulations;
  - Affirmed the importance of residents following existing policies regarding recreational use of common areas;
  - Board president Joe Khoury will send a letter to the Families List regarding bicycle and scooter safety protocols. (Daniel Millner)
  - Extended appreciation to the newly formed VG Neighbors Outreach Team and authorized up to \$300 for expenses reimbursement under the umbrella of the Cultural Affairs Committee. (Safety Committee)
- Approved a proposal to update about 70 "Private Property" stenciled entry signs on driveways and walkways throughout the property. (Design Review Committee)
- Fumigate (for termites), make carpentry repairs, and paint garages in courts 5 and 15 (\$71,079 (Management)
- After discussing WASH's confusing reply to the board's queries, Village Green Operations Manager Sherri Giles announced that management would become more active on this problem and seek a comprehensive monthly service report. □

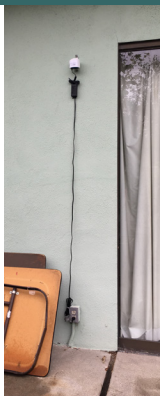
### What do you need to get through May?

**HIGHLIGHTS** asked ten Greenies, and here are some of their replies ...

Courage  
Salsa  
Put one foot in front of the other  
that my computer doesn't crash  
Compassion  
Wine  
Watch out for potholes  
break down  
Creativity  
Music  
I won't let the !!!! get me down...  
courtesy  
Walks, Runs  
Friends  
a good joke  
Village Green  
Netflix  
Laughs  
play  
Family  
Neighborliness  
A couple of good books  
water  
Self-awareness  
TV, texting, phone calls, Zoom  
Money  
self- discipline  
Quiet  
birds and a sunny day  
Kindness  
Noise  
children laughing  
Patience  
pats on the back  
an hour without kids ...

## AROUND THE GREEN

**Air Monitoring:** Ever wondered how clean the air is at the Green? Now you can check via a new air quality monitor installed at the Clubhouse by the landscape & tree committees. The monitor measures particulate matter and uploads data to the PurpleAir website every ten minutes. See the latest reading at: [VG Air Monitor](#) (Laura Civiello, Tree Committee Liaison)



**Safety Committee Advisory:** Due to COVID-19, the RYLAN (Ready Your L.A. Neighborhood) disaster preparedness workshops for groups of courts have been canceled until further notice.

**Letter to the Editor:** I thoroughly enjoy reading the **Highlights** each month due to its diverse and interesting topics. In a recent issue, the VG Sustainability Group discussed the Climate Strike (later canceled due to COVID-19). I recently saw the movie **Planet Earth** (released 2012) for the first time and was literally blown away by its depiction of the damage being done to "our" planet from climate change due to fossil fuel.

Scheduling an airing of **Planet Earth** in VG's Community Room would highlight the Sustainability Group's efforts to promote a more sustainable world. My thanks to all the publication's contributors!! S. Clark, West Circle. Reach us at [villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com](mailto:villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com) with comments.



## THE GREEN AND BEYOND

Parents, teachers, and children are all struggling during this time of closed schools and distance learning. Below, Marie Germaine, a 4th grade teacher at Baldwin Hills Elementary and UTLA activist, shares the challenges she is facing. This is her second column for **Highlights** on teaching during the pandemic.



## TEACHING IN THE TIME OF THE COVID-19

By Marie Germaine, Court 12

**Thursday, April 23, 2020**

It is our sixth week away from school, and every day brings new expectations and distance learning experiences. As our principal has extended compassion and empathy to teachers, we share the same with students and their families. During these times of great vulnerability, we continue to hold on to the strong desire for our students to grow and learn - and how that is done is all determined by the needs of those we serve.

Baldwin has many second or even third generation students, and some families include multiple generations living within walking distance of the school. Since many parents are essential workers going out every day to work, these extended family members are caring for their children. We recognize that students' home schedules vary greatly, as does access to learning tools, and we are messaging and troubleshooting with the caretakers and students.

Through these difficult times, many students demonstrate responsibility, independence, and drive. They are eager to participate in class video chats and connect with peers. They are completing and submitting work on the weekends and all times of the day, including at midnight. As more familiar school experiences (spoken yoga, chess, music) are built into remote learning platforms, the students express their interest and appreciation.

### Distance Learning

However, despite our best efforts, all is not seamless.

\$100 million does not solve technology/internet deficiencies for LAUSD families overnight. There are more families with internet connection needs than initially estimated. Families with internet are experiencing connection issues when all their children try to connect iPads at the same time. People are put on a list and weeks later remain without internet and reliable iPads and computers. Yet, parents and students are resilient and are finding ways to keep their children involved with remote learning.

The new grading policy adopted for our distance learning period is controversial for many teachers and students. Students want to know if they will have punitive consequences (be retained), because they are not at the school. We reassure them that school is for learning, and grades are part of the system but not the main reason for school. Our focus is on continuity of learning and engaging and supporting them.

### Looking Ahead

Each day, new decisions are made about the closing of school and reopening for the 2020-2021 school year. Society's circumstances change, and every child, family, and citizen of the world will feel the impact differently. Teachers and community members will continue to support and embrace our students .... and our country's success through the worst global pandemic in one-hundred years will be measured and remembered by the experiences of our most vulnerable populations - children, ethnic minorities, the poor, and those living with trauma. □

## It Does Take a Village

By Joanna Casucci, Court 3

April 24

When the Safer at Home restrictions came into effect in March, many Village Green residents felt a sense of powerlessness and a simultaneous urgency to, “do something.” This led to more than 50 of us organizing and offering to help at-risk neighbors who would be confined to their homes.

Ashley Coats (Court 17) began a discussion on the Village Green Facebook group about what could be done. Within a week, Ashley, Norma Miller (Court 15), and I created systems to reach every single neighbor. We set up a new Facebook group called VG Neighbor Outreach Team to organize volunteers; a dedicated phone number and email address; and a Google form for tracking requests.

With the help of Court Council, volunteers distributed flyers to every unit in late March. In response to the flyer, 16 Village Green residents have requested and received assistance. Neighbors have helped neighbors navigate the online work order system, changed batteries in carbon monoxide detectors, made masks, and picked up medication, pet supplies, and groceries. Over the weeks, additional neighbors have volunteered.

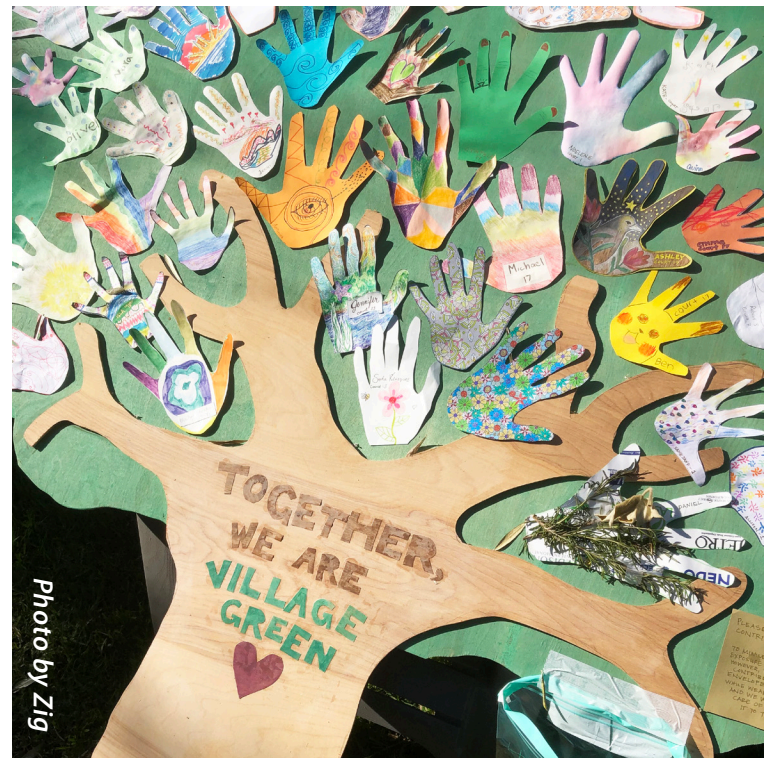


*Perhaps most importantly, the group has helped neighbors realize that they are not alone. A community in crisis has chosen to come together and help one another. Our goals are: (1) reaching and helping as many neighbors as possible (2) being respectful of the privacy of neighbors (requests can be anonymous) and (3) connecting neighbor-to-neighbor in an ongoing way (volunteers are paired with fellow court members in a “buddy system”).*

We are still in the midst of this crisis, and it is important to continue reaching out to share supplies and offer help. The team is planning a second outreach effort to find neighbors who are having trouble accessing food and connect them with local food banks and neighbors who would like to share food staples, veggies and fruit. Please let the Village Green outreach team know if you would like to volunteer to help, or if someone you know could use some neighborly assistance. □

Phone: (424) 248-5779

Email: [villagegreenhelp@googlegroups.com](mailto:villagegreenhelp@googlegroups.com)



### Helping Hands

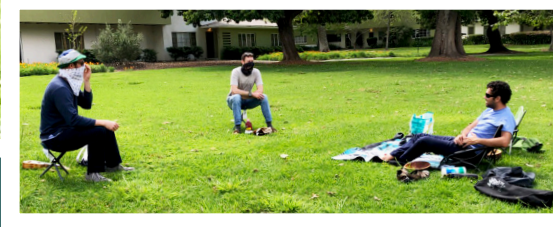
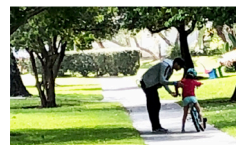
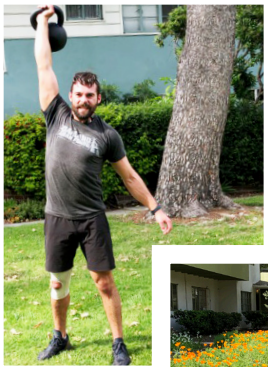
This informal and lovely cooperative tree mural was created by Court 17 resident Ashley Coates for residents to enjoy and add to. Make your own creative paper hand and put it in the plastic bag on the bottom right of the photo to be added to the tree. On a sunny day, you may find it gracing the lawn on the East Green.

The “helpers” team encourages everyone to create and share encouraging and informative stories and artwork. □

## How we made it through April



*"... 44 acres devoted to greens and garden courts ..."*  
Thank you, Village Green Architects



Photos by Zig, Don, and Lucy