

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

October 2020

ALFONSO CASANOVA: VG's NEW MAINTENANCE MANAGER

Sherri Giles, Operations Manager

Following Harold Graves' September 30 retirement, I am excited to announce that Alfonso Casanova is now Village Green's maintenance supervisor. Alfonso came to Village Green in 2019 after 20 years successfully managing large and diverse maintenance crews at USC, and has already received resident commendations and made a positive impact here. We are looking forward to implementation of his innovative ideas for improvements in maintenance and resident service.

To learn more about Alfonso, read the interview in the October 2019

Highlights. www.villagegreenla.net. □

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

With appreciation to directors Haleh Shoa and Joe Khoury

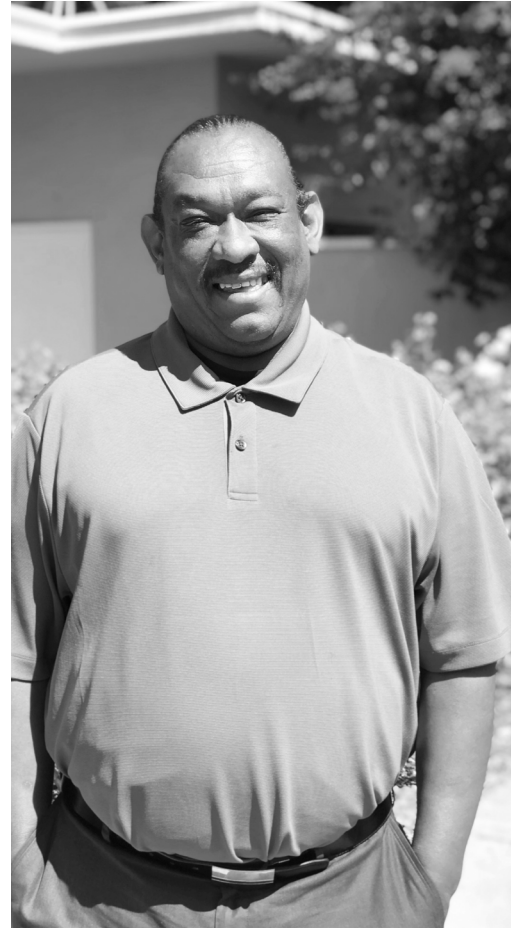
The board's September agenda was short, but as always, challenging. Perhaps for many residents, the directors' most important topic was how to safely, effectively, and considerably help residents combat the intensifying heat inside our units, given our inadequate electrical system and other constraints.

For many years, our **Handbook** rule prohibited air conditioners (ACs) because their loud noise disturbed neighbors, and because of the danger of electrical outages. However, due to medical accommodation laws, the board allowed those with a doctor's note to apply and, with board approval, install an AC system in their unit while adhering to power and noise requirements set by the board.

More recently, many people have responded to the overwhelming heat waves by buying free-standing portable AC units. Yet, these units are far noisier and less energy-efficient than many "in-place" AC systems! Some residents have multiple portable units that exceed safe power levels and create overwhelming noise.

With this understanding, and knowing that AC mini-split condenser units have significantly improved noise levels and energy efficiency, the board's unanimous response last month was to remove the medical accommodations rule from the Handbook and extend the right to ALL owners to seek board approval for air conditioning. Noise, power, and condenser placement rules must still be adhered to.

Note: The 2021 Operating Budget will be approved next month. Also note that the Special Assessment will expire after February 2021. □



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HIGHLIGHTS is a volunteer project of the Village Green Communication Committee

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Design: Sophia Beauvy

Photos: Don Dongallo, Terry Park, Zig
We want to hear from you! Please send comments and submissions to village-greenhighlights@gmail.com.

from Manager Sherri Giles' September Board Report

Residential Building Insulation

Per the board's August request, we are investigating an option to bring building insulation to more buildings sooner by separating from the painting schedule and painting only the building areas where insulation is installed. We will do some sample installation points on the Clubhouse and collect bids from our insulation and painting vendors.

Security Screen Doors

Our vendor will bring a physical model of a security screen door to substitute for the now discontinued board-approved model. The door will be tested for use here and, if appropriate, presented to the board for approval at a future meeting.

Garage Court Driveway Striping

Reminder: No garage court parking is allowed on a court's restriping day. Painting is scheduled from September 28-October 6 in Courts 8, 9, 10, 13, 16, and East and West Circles. Residents were notified.

Environmental Methane Testing

The testing required by the LADWP is completed, and we expect a report for the October board meeting.

Serpentine Wall Inspection and Repairs

Maintenance has inspected and prioritized all the serpentine walls on the property for repair and replacement and is collecting bids.

Locks for Patio Gates

We have requested bids for security mesh to prevent entry from outside for the wrought iron gates that need latches. Maintenance continues to work with residents on necessary lock changes.

Landscape and Trees:

Greencrew reported repairing two broken irrigation valves and a broken lateral line break. They detailed courts 1-6 and will be in 6-10 this month. Arborist Cy Carlberg recommended nine trees for pruning and one for removal and replacement (California sycamore near unit 5317). □

PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT August 24, 2020 - September 22, 2020

Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore

AUGUST 6 ILLICIT BEHAVIOR; Court 16 laundry area, 1:30 pm. A resident reported two unclothed people having sex in the laundry room while being photographed by a third person who fled upon the officer's arrival. The two non-residents were escorted off the property and warned of arrest if they returned.

AUGUST 29 AUGUST 29 FALLEN TREE BRANCH; Court 11, 3:45 pm. Security cordoned off the area.

AUGUST 29 TWO RESIDENTS WALKING DOGS; Center Green, 5:35 pm. An officer reminded them of the rules, and they promised to follow them.

AUGUST 30 NOISE COMPLAINT; Court 9, 8:00 pm. Responding to a report of very loud music, security contacted the resident and turned it off.

SEPTEMBER 1 SCOFFLAW DOG OWNER; Court 5, 4:45 pm. Security witnessed a resident's failure to remove their dog's fresh feces from the sidewalk. When confronted, they refused to clean it up or provide their name or unit number. Another resident cleaned up the feces.

SEPTEMBER 7 TRESPASSER; Center Green, 6:15 pm. A resident reported someone acting erratically. The non-resident was escorted off the property.

SEPTEMBER 10 FALLEN TREE; Courts 2-3 Garden Court, 2:30 pm. Responding to a loud noise, an officer found a large oak tree had fallen and helped maintenance secure the area.

SEPTEMBER 13 DRONE USE; Court 5, 4:30 pm. A resident reported someone flying a drone. The responding officer reminded the resident of the HOA rules against drone use. □

October Foot Beats

Monday, 10/5, 7:00 pm - Meet at Ct. 6 entrance, walk VG west area.

Tuesday, 10/13, 9:30 am - Meet at Office, walk central area.

Wednesday, 10/21, 7:00 pm - Meet at Ct. 1 entrance, walk east area.

Thursday, 10/29, 9:30 am - Meet at Ct. 13 entrance, walk west area.

“THE OFFICE”

Do you know what Village Green’s office does (and doesn’t) do, the names of the people who work there, and how best to effectively communicate with them? Even some longtime residents have been confused lately as office procedures and personnel have changed and COVID-19 has forced more changes to protect residents and workers. To shine some light, we asked Operations Manager Sherri Giles if she would make time to answer some questions. She kindly agreed, and we hope this interview will be helpful.



Highlights: What is “the office” responsible and not responsible for?

Sherri Giles: Management advises and executes the vision set forth by Village Green’s Board of Directors. We administer the day-to-day operations required to make that vision a reality.

Management is not a substitute for processes controlled by the Board of Directors, such as deliberating and rendering final decisions in member discipline matters and levying/waiving fines for non-compliance with HOA rules. While the management office and our contracted escort and patrol company are responsible for issuing notices of violations, once a violation is reported to the board, it is the duty of a board executive committee comprised of two or more directors to make final decisions on the outcomes. The office cannot waive or vacate late fees, parking fines, DRC fines, etc.

HL: What are some of management’s main responsibilities?

SG: We play a pivotal role in planning and executing reserve projects such as re-piping, sewer replacement, residential building insulating and painting, garage restoration, the electrical grid upgrade, irrigation replacement, etc. And we direct the actions of our vendors, including our grounds maintenance company and escort and patrol service, and oversee their compliance with our rules.

Facilitating resident matters is also an important function. This includes issuing permits, resolving concerns, relaying

information to the board, and disseminating important information about events and projects in the community.

HL: Who can an owner or renter talk to when they have a question or problem about a specific topic?

SG: Generally, **Bernie Montolla**, our administrative assistant, handles new resident processing, parking permitting and enforcement issues, resident billing issues in concert with Ross Morgan, and additional general administrative duties. **Sean Abbott**, our operations assistant and the newest member of our team, handles accounts payable duties, assists with budgetary planning, special projects, and information technology. **Terry Brewer**, our assistant manager, oversees resident rules compliance, handles administration of our online work order system, and assists with vendor management, among many other duties.

All staff members handle resident issues and assist with reserve projects. Prior to joining our team, both Terry and Sean managed large condominium complexes in Los Angeles and are an asset to our team. Broadly speaking, our office staff is cross-trained on the duties, responsibilities and tasks of their co-workers and are able to step in where needed.

HL: Is the management office also responsible for maintenance issues and staff?

SG: Maintenance staff are part of the Village Green’s operations. While I oversee all operations, the maintenance team has its own chain of command with Alfonso Casanova replacing Harold Graves as the maintenance supervisor, with a future facilities engineer to head the department.

Continued from Page 4



HOW TO CONTACT US

HL: What should an owner do if they are dissatisfied with service or follow-through?

SG: Please email the office at villagegreen5300@sbcglobal.net or call us at 323-294-5211 on business days from 8am-noon and 1pm-5pm. We review all resident issues and follow up with the appropriate person, vendor, or department.

HL: What are our security company's duties, and how can I reach them?

SG: Reach them at 213-703-0540. Security patrols the grounds, enforces parking rules, and provides escort service for all residents. Importantly, they also take emergency calls outside business hours and then contact our on-call maintenance personnel to make sure emergencies are addressed in a timely fashion. If a pipe bursts, electricity goes out, or a security issue arises after hours, we urge residents to call this number.

The www.villagegreenla.net website is a fantastic resource for all owners and renters. It has all the information above plus up-to-date copies of all of the Association's governing documents, including the Village Green Handbook. All residents should familiarize themselves with the governing documents, and specifically the Handbook, as it answers most of the common questions residents have about what is and isn't permissible, as well as procedures here at Village Green. DRC requests also begin with a submission through the Village Green website. It also has an "FAQ" section that can answer most general questions.

HL: Why does Village Green use work orders to report and fix maintenance problems? Can renters submit work orders?

SG: All maintenance work is initiated with a work order. A work order acts as an official written request for service and provides a record of that request. Anyone, renters included, can submit a work order. We may be required to get an owner's permission before being able to fully attend to a renter's work order.

Although we accept paper work orders, we prefer that residents use the eMaint system because it provides a single collection point for all work orders. If you need an account or have an account problem, please reach out to Terry Brewer. Paper work orders are still provided at all laundry rooms and may be returned at the laundry room, front desk, or office mail slot.

HL: How has COVID changed management routines and plans?

SG: We have shifted to a very conservative, safe posture, closing the office to walk-ins to protect both our staff

and residents. Virtually all inquiries, even those requiring documents, can be handled online via email, and physical items like parking permits are delivered to units by our staff without any face-to-face resident interaction. DRC requests can be made through the website. While many of us – residents and staff – miss the contact, most have acclimated well to the changes and been very supportive of keeping their neighbors safe in these unusual times.

The board and management have also temporarily shifted goals and project plans to ensure health and safety, delaying re-piping and other projects requiring interfacing in multiple ways with large numbers of residents. The vendors on the projects we completed this year (including the environmental testing) worked independently, and all meetings were held remotely. We plan to finish replacing the sewer lines later this year.

Questions? Comments: Email us at villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com. □



METHANE TESTING DONE, RESULTS EXPECTED SOON

By Lucy Fried, with appreciation to Board Director Steve Haggerty and Maintenance Supervisor Alfonso Casanova

The underground methane testing required by the LADWP was completed in September, bringing the Discovery phase of our three-phase electrical upgrade process a step closer to completion. Results are expected to be reported at the board's October meeting.

Steve explained that the testing was one of the remaining Phase 1 steps required for Village Green to move to Phase 2 of the project (Engineering). The tests were important to understand possibly necessary methane mitigation in our electrical vaults and conduits. He added that there is also some Phase 1 investigation remaining to be done of our underground power vaults, as well as additional easements to be identified.

In Phase 2, we will finally design the plan to bring more electrical power to residents and also seek electrical contracting and consulting management services to carry out the construction of the project (Phase 3).



Why Methane Testing, Why Village Green

Are methane tests a typical requirement for an electrical upgrade? They are, in areas near oil fields and landfills. However, they weren't always. Some readers may remember the huge explosion on March 24, 1985 in the Wilshire-Fairfax district that destroyed a Ross for Less store, damaged other stores, and sent more than 20 people to the hospital. Scientists eventually determined the explosion was the result of high-pressure methane soil gas which had accumulated inside the department store from underground. After that disaster, the City of Los Angeles



established high-risk boundaries that define Methane Buffer Zones, and the DWP and Department of Building and Safety (DBS) implemented testing and mitigation requirements in those zones.

Alfonso explained that before the testing, ZIMAS, a public online geo-mapping service, had divided the Green into six L.A. County Assessor parcels and determined that the four western-most parcels were either in a methane zone, methane buffer zone, or both. To measure the methane concentrations, our vendor, Sway Features, dug 184 five-ft boreholes and 93 twenty-ft boreholes in the four most western VG parcels.

About All Those Flags

What did all the different colored flags indicate? I asked Alfonso. He said that the blue flags indicated the perimeter of the particular drilling area; the white, a drilling site; red, a pipe or other object below; orange, a cable line below; and yellow, natural gas below. The vendor was responsible for removing the flags.

For a review of the electrical upgrade process, see the three-part interview with Steve Haggerty in the December 2019 and January and February 2020 issues of **Highlights**. They are easy to access on the Village Green website at www.villagegreenla.net in the newsletter archives. □

www.swayfeatures.com has videos and other information about methane testing. □



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you, **Highlights** staff. You bring a breath of "normalcy" in these strange times.

It is wonderful to open my mailbox, and there it is - delivered by our faithful court rep, Harriette Bone, or alternative, Carol Walker - wonderful for an old non-techy to hold the paper in her hands, sit down and read it, then put it on the stand to be referred to again and again. Our Village newsletter.

May the force be with you!
Sincerely,
Georgia Lumpkin, Court 12

Hi, Highlights team.

I've been meaning to write for a while regarding the Green Power program offered by LADWP. The Green L.A. Program is a very small line in the DWP bill that you might miss, but it offers the chance to switch to fully renewable energy for a nominal fee (3 cents per kWh).

For our 3-bedroom unit, with everyone working from home and staying at home, \$42 of our \$370 bill for June-August brought us 100% of our energy supplied by renewables. With wildfires raging and temperatures hitting all-time highs across California, I feel it's a small price to pay.

Thanks,
Tim Chester, Court 3

Dear Highlights,

You are doing a wonderful job of keeping residents thoroughly informed. I so appreciate it, especially since we do not live on site, but own some rentals. Our daughter does live there. If I wanted to donate a tree, how would I do that?

I enjoyed the letter from Harold Graves and all the historical info you provide, too.

Anne Buxie

Green Memories

Dear **Highlights**,

When we moved to the Green in 2001, there were very few families with kids here. It was couples, retired couples, and single people. My kids loved being outside, loved to play on the lawn and climb the trees and do kid things. On the weekends, they would get up early and start their fun outside, which many around me were not used to.

I admit early on a Saturday after a long week and you want to sleep-in, hearing kids play may not be the way to wake up. There were a few times when the neighbors asked the kids where they lived and who their parents were. Even had a neighbor tell them they couldn't play on the lawn and they should go to the park.

The kids came home and told me what had happened, so I went over to the neighbor's unit and introduced myself and the kids to ease the tension, which it did. We came to an understanding about the decibel levels and we never had an issue again. Sometimes talking out your issues can bring you to resolve!

As a kid, I grew up in Baldwin Hills. My uncle lived in the Green, and my friends and I played here in this kids' wonderland. The security guards would chase us on our bikes when we rode in the Main Green, never catching us but never giving up. When I hear the kids and see them playing, it makes the Green seem that much more magical and alive!

Kenny Miller, Court 8

Halloween on the Green, Pandemic Style

Cultural Affairs Committee is sponsoring a **5:00 pm Costume Parade** around the 3 greens on Halloween, October 31st - approved by the Board of Directors for Village Green residents only. Everyone must wear a protective mask and stay at least 6 feet from others.

A virtual Halloween Story Time with our resident storyteller Robb Curtis will follow. Please note that L.A. City and County have banned Trick-or-Treating. *More details coming.*

