

Notes from the PRESIDENT

This is my inaugural *Notes from the President*; so let me first introduce myself (at least a little). I have lived in the Oaks for over thirty years. And, I am recently retired from the California Attorney General's Office where, for the last ten years, I supervised thirty lawyers scattered around the state who practiced land use and environmental law. I spent the bulk of my career in the environmental arena. I like to believe that my years in the law have given me some insight into the problems different communities face as they try to improve the lives of their residents. I also think that those years make me appreciate how lucky I am to live in the Oaks.

Having said that, we have our issues; issues that the Oaks HOA board has continually sought to address. In that effort, we have often found how hard it is to move the City to get things done. For instance... we all know that many of our streets are in terrible condition. Your board has attempted to be the squeaky wheel that gets the City to repair the streets. And at times the City responds. For example, Street Services just resurfaced the top of Hill Oak where it meets with Spreading Oak. This was a place where tree roots had turned the street into a severe obstacle course. So, having that

blight repaired (after two decades of complaining) was good. The problem is that the City's decision-making is completely opaque. Nonetheless, the board will continue to try to get more streets repaired and resurfaced.

Another issue we face is that of development in the Oaks. While we are protected by an ordinance that limits the square footage of new development (as a proportion of lot size), we also see applicants for development permits attempting to evade those limits. And we see instances where the City seems to interpret those limits in ways that are inconsistent with the ordinance's plain language. So, we must remain vigilant in order to insure that those limits on development are enforced. Another recent development issue involves the large parcel between the ends of Wild Oak Drive and Green Oak Drive. The property owners there have started some initial soils testing on the property, but to date have not provided us with any information about their plans. Here too, we need to keep on top of the situation.

Finally, I want to touch on security. While we are a relatively safe neighborhood, we obviously are not immune from crime. All



of us must be alert, and we must report suspicious activity to the police. The only way the police department can have accurate crime statistics for our area (and thus determine the resources we need) is if we report crime to the LAPD.

While these issues keep your board busy, at the end of the day we still appreciate that we live in a wonderful neighborhood.

John Saurenman
President
Oaks Homeowners Association

Oaks Architectural Tour a Smashing Success!

By Sheri Hellard

On February 10th, a sold-out crowd of over one-hundred lucky Oaks residents toured two impressive neighborhood homes as part of a fundraising event for the Homeowners Association. It was a beautiful day, sunny and warm as trained docents (who had studied up on the history and provenance of each structure) led small groups through two homes owned by Brian and Mia Henson.

The first was a classic and charming Spanish Revival built in 1928 and once owned by the famous 1920's stage and screen actress, Lupe Velez. Velez was known as "The Mexican Spitfire" and had a tempestuous affair with Gary Cooper – a frequent visitor to the home. (Continued on page 2)



L to R – Ann Caldwell White, who grew up in the beautiful 1928 Spanish Revival home, and her daughter Gwenmarie White were on hand to share their memories. Homeowners Mia and Brian Henson and their daughter Millie generously shared their spectacular homes for the Oaks Architectural Tour.

The second home, a recently constructed, high-tech, contemporary industrial design is the dream abode of Mia and Brian who have incorporated green technology throughout, including eco-friendly water systems and a Tesla power wall. Large windows overlook spectacular views of downtown Los Angeles, and wonderful finishes and landscaping add to this amazing example of imaginative architecture in our neighborhood.



Past OHA President Caroline Schweich and current President John Saurenman join Architectural Tour leader Sheri Hellard in celebration of a great event.



The after-tour hors d' oeuvres and wine on the deck capped a truly wonderful day.

After their tours, guests were treated to a tasting of fine wines and elegant hors d'oeuvres as they convened on multiple backyard patios to take in city views while chatting with neighbors.

Many, many thanks to Brian and Mia Henson for so generously offering their homes for the tour. Money raised will help further the work of the Oaks Homeowners Association.

Next year's Architectural Tour is already in the planning stage. Once again there'll be two incredible homes to enjoy on a single afternoon. So stay tuned: you won't want to miss it!

New Restrictions on Short-Term Rentals and Party Houses Put in Place by City Council

Led by our councilman David Ryu, the LA City Council has created new regulations governing short-term house rentals as well as a new ordinance on the conduct of party houses. Both measures seek to address abuses in home rentals that have grown in frequency in recent years.

[illegible]

proliferation of short-term rentals, which come in two varieties. Room rentals – in which the homeowner is renting part of the space in his/her primary residence – are largely accepted by neighbors. Whole house rentals – where the owner of the property may live elsewhere and rents out the entire house (or multiple properties) – have come under increasing criticism for noise and disturbance to neighbors and disruptions to the character of neighborhoods. Not only does this latter type of rental seem to create small hotels in the midst of residential neighborhoods, but their proliferation pulls properties out of the long-term rental inventory, making it more difficult for people to find housing.

(Continued on page 3)



**THE
OAKS**

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www.oakshome.org**

To find contact information for Oaks Board Members,
please click *Contact* on top of the home page.

The new home-sharing regulations require that: the host-owner register with the City in order to rent rooms; that rented rooms must be within the homeowner's primary residence; that such rooms cannot be rented for more than 120 days per year (although proven good-actor hosts may apply to increase that number); and that the host is liable for disruptions or nuisance caused by his/her renters (enforcement provisions are stipulated). Whole home rentals for short-term periods (days or weeks) remain illegal.

Council's new "Party House" Ordinance creates the strongest



legislation yet to rein in loud and unruly gatherings at whole homes rented out by the day or weekend. The ordinance allows for escalating fines on party hosts and on homeowners to ensure that hosts who throw (or allow) unruly parties are cited for multiple offenses, and that property owners remain liable for renting out their homes to party house operators who abuse the quiet and character of neighborhoods. Those who violate the ordinance are prohibited from engaging in short-term rentals for thirty days. Read the full text of both Ordinances at www.oakshome.org within the Short-Term Rentals article.

How to Report Construction-Related Issues

A collection of construction-related items including a yellow hard hat, rolled-up blueprints, a level, and a ruler, symbolizing construction work and safety.

There's a lot of remodeling and construction going on in the Oaks. While it's nice to see folks fixing up their homes, the sheer volume of construction on certain streets can be overwhelming for neighbors. The noise and the dust can be irritating and sometimes downright dangerous when construction workers leave large equipment and debris containers in the street, blocking traffic and turning our already narrow streets into hazards.

There are several ways you can address these issues when they crop up on your street. It is essential these processes be followed so accurate data is captured in the system and retained not only for future analysis but also in getting the appropriate city staff to the site as quickly as possible.

There will be times when there are temporary blockages of the right-of-way due to construction vehicles delivering equipment and materials. However, if these blockages occur for a period of longer than 10 minutes or if vehicles are parked illegally you should report to Parking Enforcement Dispatch: (818) 374-4823.

This involves more sustained obstructions like dumpsters, storage containers, or construction fencing placed in the street. To report such prolonged violations in the public right-of-way, you can file a complaint to Bureau of Street Services via My311 website (they also have a great app if you want to download) at <http://myla311.lacity.org>. Click on “Create a Service Request,” fill in the information, and click on “Next” for the next few pages to complete the request.

Building Code Violations on Private Property

For code violations occurring during construction, you can file a complaint to LADBS via their website at <http://www.ladbs.org/>. Click on “Services” on the top menu, then “Report Code Violation” under the Request Services tab. You can fill in the information and click on “Next” for the next few pages to complete the request.

Work Outside of Permitted Hours

Construction is permitted Monday through Saturday from 8 AM to 6 PM, but not on Sundays. Construction hour violations can be reported at the following website: <https://www.ladbs.org/services/core-services/inspection/inspection-special-assistance/permitted-construction-demolition-hours>

Once a complaint is filed, either LADBS or Bureau of Street Services will send personnel to investigate. They'll either close the case if they find there are no violations or issue an Order to Comply or citation to bring the project into compliance. You can check the status of the complaint case via their websites, and they send status updates to the person who filed the notice.

If these measures do not produce a response, you should send our Councilman David Ryu's office an email with the complaint (Customer Service Request Number) and they will immediately send to the staff in the appropriate Department to follow up. Contact: cd4.issues@lacity.org

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The Oaks and the Comprehensive Strategies Report

By Gerry Hans

For more than a year, your Homeowners Association has been focused on the balance between the competing priorities of park access for everyone and livability of our neighborhood. Those two priorities came into conflict last spring with the City's closure of the Beachwood gate to Griffith Park. In the aftershock of that closure, Councilmember David Ryu underwrote an extensive study that brainstorms solutions to the adverse impacts on residential areas next to Griffith Park largely related to Hollywood sign-seekers. In his motion, Councilmember Ryu made reference to last year's record Los Angeles tourism numbers (48.3 million visitors) and the critical role tourism plays in LA's job growth and economy.

The contract for the study was given to Dixon Resources Limited, a "parking solutions" consultant which had previously worked on the Observatory-focused Circulation and Parking Plan. Two meetings were hosted with invited community stakeholders: mostly representatives from affected residential neighborhoods. Beyond these discussions, Dixon assimilated volumes of comment by email. A limited amount of data was collected on traffic volumes at various impacted locations. Parking occupancy rates on some street sections and in the parking lots in Bronson Park were also collected.

The resultant Comprehensive Strategies Report describes a whopping twenty-nine strategies, with ideas ranging from a gondola that would ferry tourists through the air to the Hollywood Sign (a notion that quickly grabbed the media's attention) to improvements for visitor signage.

The Oaks Homeowners Association has given its support for the concept of an electric shuttle bus bringing visitors and hikers up Beachwood Drive and through the Beachwood park gate for a safe drop off at the Hollyridge Trail. There tourists would have a very short hike to a great location for selfies with the Hollywood sign. This shuttle would originate at a Metro Station or at DASH stops. Because public transportation must be encouraged to reduce the number of personal vehicles, Oaks also supports small electric shuttles along Canyon Drive to safely serve Bronson Park.

We further support the Beachwood "alternative access trail" proposal at the end of Beachwood Drive. Local residents and the public should have the basic right to enter the park on foot; currently they are locked out. (see Update on Beachwood Lawsuit on page 6)

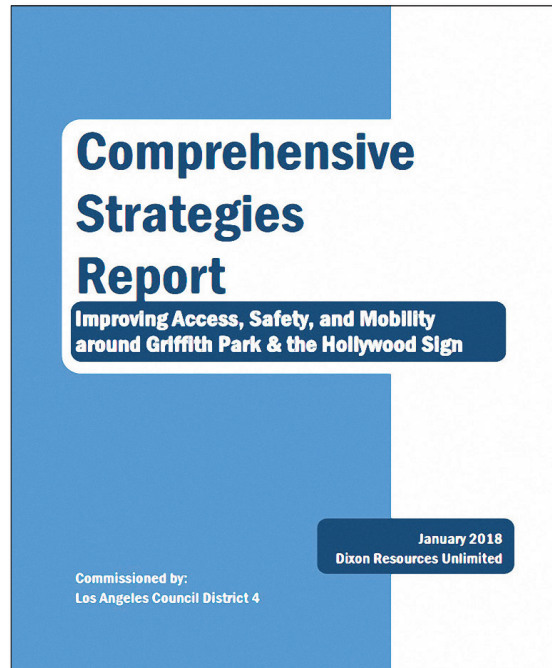
Paid parking inside Bronson Park, both on the road and in the lots,

was also considered in the report. Oaks Homeowners is not supportive of such a plan at this time since it might necessitate establishing "preferential parking districts" in a large area of upper Canyon Drive in order to protect residents from the overflow of cars seeking free street parking. It is hoped that other measures can be implemented that might restore a more normal level of Bronson Park usage, once the Beachwood Gate is again in use and other mitigations become reality.

The Oaks HOA also supports the creation of a safe sidewalk around the narrow gated entrance to Bronson Park and continuing into the park. This sidewalk would connect to the existing sidewalk on the east side of Canyon Drive that currently ends just south of the Park entrance.

The strategies are currently being vetted by multiple city departments to consider their feasibility, after which Council District 4 is expected to announce which solutions it supports. We will keep you informed of upcoming opportunities for your comments. Read the full Report at www.oakshome.org within the Comprehensive Strategies Report article.

Finding the right balance between accommodating public access to our great park and protecting residential livability is an exceedingly difficult task. While we work with the city to implement strategies that find this balance, we must also be vigilant that strategies selected don't turn out to be promotions for increased tourism in our own neighborhood. After all, the 2028 Olympics is coming!



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Shop Locally and Support our Neighborhood

By Kathy Richards

One of the nicest perks of living in the Oaks is the opportunity to shop locally – and avoid the crazy LA traffic. Not only is it convenient, but supporting our local businesses is good for our neighborhood and our merchants, many of whom live in the Oaks, too. Here's a quick guide to the merchants of our own Victor's Square. Check out these names: some are new, some are long-time favorites – they are all worthy of your business.

LA VILLITA CANTINA



La Villita Cantina brings some Mexican ambiance to the neighborhood.

When Victor's Restaurant closed in 2015 we all wondered what would replace it. Now we know: on Cinco de Mayo of this year Greg Morris (of Oaks Gourmet and Franklin & Company) opened his newest eatery, La Villita Cantina. It's a charming

little bistro serving up traditional Mexican fare and great Margaritas in a colorful, rustic setting, reminiscent of a small town square. Sink into one of the Cantina's big brown booths and try out what's sure to become a new neighborhood favorite.

TAILWAGGERS AND TAILWASHERS



Tailwaggers & Tailwashers owner Todd Warner greets a furry friend.

We're fortunate to have a fantastic place to care for our furry friends. Whether it be organic dog and cat food, pet washing services, or toys that squeak, Tailwaggers and Tailwashers have something for every pet and owner. Their expansive retail space is warm and welcoming thanks to the friendly staff and the incredibly supportive neighborhood owner, Todd Warner. Todd even started The Tailwaggers Foundation, which provides funding to qualified animal rescue organizations for the treatment of sick and injured animals.

notice. Family friendly, Fresh Brothers offers a variety of fresh-from-the-oven pizzas, salads, and wings, plus a gluten-free menu. You can mix and match the three crust offerings or go for "Da Works", which is their everything-but-the-kitchen-sink pizza. Yum!

BRONSON BOUTIQUE



Bronson Boutique has some fun and unique gifts, clothes and accessories.

When Kate Croley went to work at Native on Franklin Avenue a few years ago, she had no idea how much she would enjoy the creativity and fun of retail. When that location closed, she decided to open her own boutique where neighbors can pop in and browse the eclectic selection of clothes, jewelry and gifts. As a former nanny herself, Kate made sure there's also an excellent selection of charming children's clothes and toys. There's even a tiny room full of toys for the little ones to play with while you shop. Be sure to visit this lovely addition to our Square.

HOLLY HILLS CLEANERS

This excellent cleaners has been part of Victor's Square forever! And, the reason they're such a neighborhood staple is that they are so good. First-rate cleaning services, fast turn-a-round, and the friendliest of staff. Holly Hills even offer alterations and mending services, which is a blessing for us needle and thread-challenged people. Thank you, Holly Hills Cleaners for serving us so well over all these years.



Robin Collins

CalBRE #01316789

At Home in The Oaks

323.630.0373

323.463.2663

robintcollins@gmail.com

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Thank you, Todd – we're so proud to have you as a neighbor.

FRESH BROTHERS-HOLLYWOOD

Anyone want to order pizza? Well, we are lucky to have such a delicious and close-by pizza place ready to deliver anywhere in the Oaks at a moment's

UPDATE ON BEACHWOOD GATE LAWSUIT

By John Saurenman

Last year, the Oaks HOA joined with the Friends of Griffith Park and the Griffith J. Griffith Trust in challenging the decision of the City to enter into an agreement with Sunset Ranch that resulted in what now appears to be a permanent closure of the Beachwood gate to pedestrian traffic. On March 22, the superior court heard our case. At the hearing, Judge James Chalfant rejected our arguments about why the City’s closing the Beachwood gate was not proper. The centerpiece of our arguments was that staff of the Department of Recreation and Parks could not make the decision to close the gate to pedestrian traffic but rather the board of the Recreation and Park Commission had to make that decision in a public process.

The judge decided that, while permanent (or at least very long term) closure of the gate could seem like a policy decision within the authority of the board, here it was a decision that was within the scope of staff’s operational authority. We also made other arguments, for example, relating to Griffith Park’s protected status, and that in agreeing to close the gate, the City in effect gave it to Sunset Ranch in violation of the prohibition on gifts of public funds. Judge Chalfant rejected these arguments as well.

Going forward, the board of the Oaks HOA has until mid-June to make a decision about future steps, and in that period, it will be considering its options (including an appeal) and will be discussing options with the Friends and the Griffith Trust.

The Oaks Will Miss Our Neighbor, Marcia

Long-time Oaks resident Marcia Kraft Goin, M.D., Ph.D. passed away on April 26th at the age of 85 after a short but valiant fight with cancer, and surrounded by her two daughters, her two sons-in law and her beloved niece and nephew.

A renowned psychiatrist, long-time professor at U.S.C. and former president of the American Psychiatric Association, Marcia was one of the first women from Middlebury College to attend medical school (at Yale University, no less). After moving to Los Angeles in 1960 with her husband John, Marcia worked with patients at County/USC hospital where she devoted herself to coordinating the extensive and challenging outpatient hospital teaching program. She also began a busy private practice, publishing numerous papers and becoming a national leader in research on the teaching of psychotherapy to residents.

The Goins lived in The Oaks for over 40 years and loved to socialize and dance, as well as enjoy summer nights at the Hollywood Bowl. Marcia will be missed by many for her playful spirit, her intense scholarship, and her beautiful kind friendship.

HOMEMADE CHEEZ-ITS

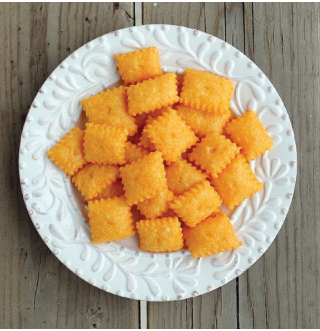
By Joan Young

This spring there were a few neighborhood and political fundraising events that I was happy to provide hors d’oeuvres for. Without exception the one item everybody raved about and wanted the recipe for were the Cheez-Its. These crunchy squares are nothing more than a homemade version of the commercial cracker in the familiar Kellogg’s box. It’s a super-simple recipe, but when made with good butter and fine quality sharp cheddar these crackers are irresistible. yield = about 90 crackers

- 4 T Unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 8 oz Sharp cheddar cheese, grated
- 3/4 t Salt
- 1/2 t Ground mustard
- 1 t Baking powder
- 2 T ice water

1. In a food processor, pulse all ingredients except the water to coarse crumbs.
2. Drizzle in water while pulsing till dough begins to clump.
3. On a floured surface, knead until a dough ball is formed. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill 30 minutes.
4. Roll dough 1/4” thick. Cut with a crimping cutter into 1 1/2” squares and with the blunt end of a bamboo skewer, make a hole in the center of each. Place squares 1” apart on parchment or Silpat. Sprinkle with salt.
5. Bake at 350 degrees until golden.

They will keep in an airtight container for a week in the fridge or for months in the freezer.



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Unfortunate Incident Highlights Problems at Franklin & Bronson Intersection

By Bob Young

A serious accident involving a motorist and a pedestrian has again focused attention on the dysfunctional intersection of Franklin and Bronson Avenues.

On the afternoon of April 3rd a car traveling northbound on Bronson (from the Franklin intersection) struck a woman crossing Bronson in the area between the Gelson’s store and the Victor’s Square mini-mall, injuring her critically. This is a stretch of Bronson Avenue where it is not safe for pedestrians to cross, yet scores of people cross the road there every day on foot because of the intensive usage of both shopping areas. In addition, the increased volume of vehicles on both Bronson and Franklin at this intersection (due to new office and residential towers nearby) regularly results in long backups and snarled traffic. Adding to that, there is the almost constant presence along Bronson Avenue of large delivery trucks for both Gelsons and the Victor’s Square businesses. Worse, the closure of the Beachwood Drive gate to Griffith Park one year ago has added hundreds of additional cars each day to Bronson Avenue as Hollywood Sign tourists, turned away by the City at the Beachwood park entrance, seek an alternate path to the Sign.

The result is a pressure cooker of vehicular and pedestrian traffic that inevitably results in near misses, short tempers, lost time, and a pervasively unsafe situation. The Oaks Homeowners Association has been aware of these intensifying problems for the last decade and has been talking with our city council office, the Department of Transportation (DOT), the owners of Gelson’s and the other businesses at the site, the police department, the neighborhood council, and residents about possible relief for the Bronson & Franklin intersection. The recent accident has given new urgency to those conversations.

There are a number of ideas that might provide some improvement. For a number of years, the HOA has been asking the City and DOT to consider installing a new traffic signal at Canyon Drive and Franklin Avenue. Such a signal would give motorists exiting



the Oaks neighborhood another option and could relieve some of the traffic pressure at Bronson.

The idea of left-turn arrows at the Bronson/Franklin intersection is repeatedly raised by residents. We have explored this concept and while arrows could be introduced on Franklin Avenue (turning onto Bronson), it would not be possible to have left-turn arrows on Bronson (turning onto Franklin) because Bronson is simply not wide enough to allow for a dedicated left-turn lane.

In the wake of the serious pedestrian accident, residents have asked us about measures that might prevent or discourage jaywalking on Bronson Avenue. The ideas proposed include: a pedestrian crosswalk; metal railings at the edge of sidewalks on either side barring crossing; signs indicating that pedestrian crossing is not allowed; and police fines for pedestrians crossing in unpermitted areas.

Members of the Oaks HOA will continue to meet with the council office, DOT, police officials, and neighbors to find measures that can lead to greater safety for pedestrians and drivers along the Franklin and Bronson corridors.

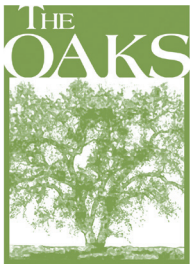
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NEIGHBORS CELEBRATE THE END OF THE “HUMP ON HILL OAK”

After 40+ years of asking the City of LA to do something about the terrible humps at the top of Hill Oak and Spreading Oak caused by tree roots, they finally dug up and repaved that section of the street. Neighbors felt this was a great cause for celebration, so they gathered to raise a glass of champagne and enjoy a few hors d'oeuvres at the newly paved location!



Don't Miss the Oaks Family Picnic!

Saturday, June 23rd, 2018

11:30 am – 2:30 pm

Bronson Park (at the end of Canyon Drive)
across from the playground

Kids games and entertainment – Great picnic food and desserts – Bouncy Bounce – Arts & Crafts
Meet new neighbors and connect with old friends.
For HOA Members Only. Not a current member? Join at the picnic! Annual dues are only \$45 per family.
We look forward to seeing you there!