



OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER

NOTES FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

Dear Oaks Neighbors,

As autumn begins, I'd like to welcome you with a new look and design for our now all-digital newsletter, as well as a fresh new logo for our Oaks Homeowners Association. It's the perfect way to provide you with some updates on the good work that your homeowners association board has underway.

Having lived in the Oaks a long time and seen this community grow, I'm thrilled to be leading the board at this important time in the history of our neighborhood. Until recently, I served the HOA as Vice President and before that held the positions of Membership Director and Treasurer. I joined the board back somewhere around 2002 (I'm not sure anymore!), but I've been a neighbor since 1998. Many of you know me from the neighborhood, from walking dogs, or as a regular at Trails Cafe. If we have not had a chance to meet, please give me a call or join me for a coffee at Trails most mornings between 8:00 and 9:00 AM.

I'd like to recognize Linda Othenin-Girard for her service as president of the homeowners association for the last four years – a consequential time, for sure. During that time, we joined

a lawsuit to re-open the Beachwood Gate to Griffith Park for hikers (unfortunately we lost in court but the board is still focused on reducing the impacts of the closure and the resulting increased traffic along Canyon Drive into the Park). We began our efforts for mitigations to the awful congestion along the Franklin Avenue corridor. And we helped Oaks residents negotiate the maze that is the city of Los Angeles by acting as a liaison with our local representatives, making sure the neighborhood gets the full attention of our elected officials. We also saw the mess of a sidewalk at Bronson and Canyon completely rebuilt. We're looking toward the beginning of the construction of the traffic circle at that same intersection. With Friends of Griffith Park, we successfully pushed for more "No Smoking" signs installed at park entrances adjoining the Oaks Neighborhood – an important measure as the numbers of fires each year increase in Southern California.

Being a member of the Board is a voluntary position and comes with extra hours on top of those of our day jobs and family obligations. But what we have accomplished so far in 2019 is well worth what we give. Being able to

serve the community you live in is one of the greatest joys you can have, and boardmembers approach their service with passion and commitment to our Oaks neighborhood.

There were many community highlights in 2019: the Architectural Tour in May (see the report on page 3) and the Summer Picnic in June. But the biggest (and most joyful) was the recent Halloween Walk. There were more kids and parents than ever in a night full of spirited fun and neighborhood pride. You would never guess the effort expended by our board to get the permits to close off the street, the applications to provide the DOT officers to monitor traffic, the door-knocking to get petitions signed for the street closure, and so much more. A big thank-you to board member Susan House who took the assignment on and did a fantastic job. Take a look at the photos in this newsletter and on our website and you'll see the happy results.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Holiday Party on December 15th!

Holly Purcell
President,
Oaks Homeowners Association

Welcome...

Your First All-Digital Oaks Newsletter *is Here!*

Starting with this Fall 2019 Issue, all future Oaks newsletters will be digital, delivered to the Oaks HOA membership via e-mail. As you'll see, we also have a new graphic design and logo! It's all part of our effort to serve you and our wonderful Oaks neighborhood better. Enjoy!



Beachwood Gate Legal Battle Ends

By Gerry Hans

Until very recently, Friends of Griffith Park, the Griffith J. Griffith Charitable Trust, and the Oaks Homeowners Association continued the legal effort challenging the City of Los Angeles' 2017 decision to close the Beachwood Gate to the Hollyridge Trail in Griffith Park. Our last legal action -- filing an appeal to the court's March 2018 decision in favor of defendant, the City of Los Angeles -- challenged several half-truths and inaccuracies that the City Attorney had continued to make in court.

In the end, the City was able to avoid the substance of the lawsuit, such as a "gift of public funds," on technicalities. Most shocking and shameful, despite the trial judge saying six times that the Beachwood Gate was closed, the City Attorney argued on appeal that the gate was in fact open to the public, since it is "not completely closed." As many know, the pedestrian gate allows for egress as an emergency measure. Being forced to point out the ridiculousness of this argument, the City countered that the appellants were attempting to re-litigate the facts of the case on appeal, which the court then listed as a reason for denying the appeal. We, the appellants, have decided to not pursue further the misdeeds of the City, having done so for more than two years already.

According to the original court's findings, Sunset Ranch does not have an exclusive right to the access road that leads to the trailhead, but the City had nevertheless interfered with Sunset's access by channeling pedestrians onto the road and by the City's security guards accidentally turning away certain motorists who were paying customers of the stable. The court ordered the City to stop turning away the stable's motorist customers and to steer pedestrians differently so they would not interfere with the stable's busi-



Does this gate look open to you?

ness. Rather than finding a way to accommodate pedestrians as the court mandated, the City decided it was simpler to close the gate for public access at Beachwood Canyon completely. This gave control over the newly-installed, \$250,000 gate (paid for at taxpayer expense) and a trailhead (belonging to the public) to a private business.

Bronson Canyon - The New Reality

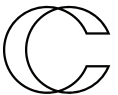
Oaks residents have always shared with other areas the burden of hiker and tourist traffic, the latter often seeking a convenient, good view of the Hollywood Sign. With the City's closure of the trailhead at Beachwood Canyon where a great view of the Sign is easily accessed, the Canyon Drive entrance to the park has taken the largest share of the displaced volume of Sign visitors. Unexpectedly, the City proclaimed access to the park (and the Hollywood Sign) via Canyon Drive as the alternative nearest to Beachwood in its entered stipulation with Sunset Ranch. Following the City's lead, some players to the west of us promoted the Canyon Drive access to visitors, as well.

For obvious reasons, though, the Brush Canyon Trail is not such a good alternative for the typical tourist. In particular, there is no good view of the Sign, short of ascending on a steep, two-mile trek. To arrive at the Hollywood Sign itself is more than a three-mile hike! Tourists are usually not prepared for that sort of strenuous journey.

Google Maps

Then, strangely, new short-cut trails began to show up on Google Maps! And magically, perhaps through social media tagging, the "Brush Canyon Trail" was renamed "The Hollywood Sign Canyon Drive Trail." Worst of all, Google's directions to the Hollywood Sign encouraged tourists to take shorter and dreadfully dangerous routes! Enough is enough, especially after these new shorter routes started showing up on social media. Surely park management, rather than Google, should have control over trails in their own park, not only for safety's sake, but also to prevent hill erosion and habitat destruction.

Continued on Page 7



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LAUTNER STARS IN 2019 OAKS ARCHITECTURAL TOUR

By Sheri Hellard

On May 4th an excited crowd of Oaks neighbors were thrilled to tour the Harvey House, a mid-century modern masterpiece designed by the renowned architect, John Lautner.



ern masterpiece designed by the renowned architect, John Lautner.

Kelly Lynch and Mitch Glazer were perfect hosts as they chatted with neighbors and shared charming (and sometimes harrowing) stories about their home, the saga of its restoration, and what it's like to live in a genuine landmark.

Guests were escorted through the house by trained docent volun-

teers from the neighborhood who described the extensive restoration process and pointed out highlights of the home's past and present.

The Harvey House was built in 1950 for wealthy industrialist and inventor Leo Harvey of Harvey Aluminum Company at a cost of two million dollars. By the time Kelly and Mitch purchased the house it had deteriorated to the point of being designated a tear-down. Original aluminum from Harvey's company is still visible in the home as are stunning examples of rare woods and dazzling walls of glass. Neighbors were delighted by the beautifully organic architecture and gorgeous lines of the home as well as by the vintage furnishings that Kelly and Mitch have acquired to accent their home.

After the tour, guests were escorted



out on the lawn to enjoy a stunning 270-degree view of the city while tasting fine wines, enjoying delicious hors d'oeuvres, and socializing with neighbors. Vintage pictures of the home and historic documents were on display for perusal while guests soaked up the afternoon sun.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Kelly and Mitch for generously offering their beautiful home for this year's event. Also, many thanks to the volunteer docents for their time and effort.

The money raised by the Tour goes to furthering the work of the Oaks Homeowners Association in our community.



holistic healthy happy

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Chicken Fricassee

with Chorizo And Peppers

By Joan Young

Serves 4 to 6

When cooking for guests, it's always nice to have items you can make in advance. This dish actually tastes better if made the day before. The only ingredient that might be tricky to find is the dried Spanish chorizo. Mexican chorizo is easily available but it is an uncooked sausage and this recipe requires dried Spanish sausage. I prefer to use spicy (picante) if it's available. Bob found some at a lovely little Spanish grocery in Glendale called El Mambi Mercado (328 E. Chevy Chase Dr.)

8 Chicken thighs, at room temperature
Salt

Freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 onions, peeled, halved lengthwise, and thinly sliced

6 plump cloves garlic, peeled, quartered, green germs removed

2 cups Chicken Stock

2 ripe, red tomatoes, cored, peeled, seeded, and chopped, or one

14.28 oz can of whole tomatoes

1 tablespoon tomato paste

2 red bell peppers, trimmed, seeds removed, cut into thin strips

2 green bell peppers, trimmed, seeds removed, cut into thin strips

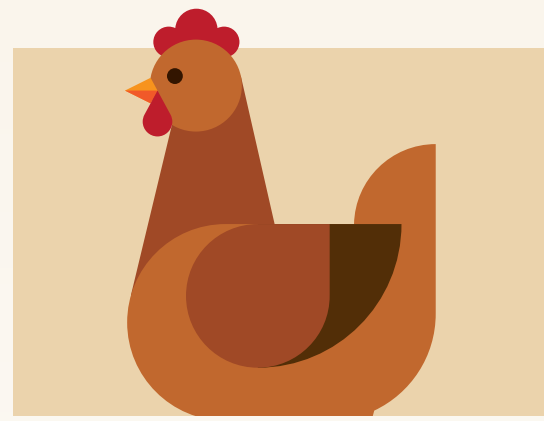
8 ounces dried Spanish chorizo, cut into bite-size pieces

A large deep skillet with a lid, or a dutch oven

Instructions

1. Generously season the chicken on all sides with salt and pepper.

2. Heat the skillet over moderate heat until hot. Add the chicken skin side down, and brown until the poultry turns an even golden color, about 5 minutes. Using tongs (to avoid piercing the poultry), turn the pieces and brown them on the other side, 5 minutes more. Carefully regulate the heat to avoid scorching the skin. This may have to be done in batches. When all the pieces are browned, transfer them to a platter.



3. Place the onions and garlic in the fat in the skillet and sweat — cook covered over low heat until soft but not browned—for about 3 minutes. Return the chicken and any cooking juices to the pan. Add the stock, tomatoes (and juices if using canned), and tomato paste. Partially cover and cook over low heat, turning the chicken in the sauce once or twice until the chicken is cooked through and has thoroughly absorbed the sauce — about 20 minutes. Add the peppers and chorizo. Cover and cook over low heat just until the peppers are soft, about 10 minutes more. Taste for seasoning. Serve with rice or fresh pasta.

Note: The Oaks Board taste tested this recipe and it's delicious!

Electric Scooters:



By Linda Othenin-Girard

I looked up one day and the sidewalks of Hillhurst Avenue and Larchmont Boulevard, were cluttered with variously colored metal objects lying on their sides like so many tin soldiers with wheels, strewn haphazardly as if people meant to discard them. My first response was "Ugh! This looks aw-

What They Mean for the Oaks

ful. These scooters should be banned."

"Not so fast," I said to myself. "Before you go off half-cocked on your MyLA311 app, why not do a little research



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to see what the pros and cons of e-scooters are?"

Here's what I've found:

On the Pro side:

From an energy standpoint, electric or dockless scooters (as they're called) are pretty efficient when compared to cars. It's all about weight ratios. The average America car weighs just under 4100 pounds and the average driver weighs 175 pounds so the average car weighs 23 times the average driver. That's a lot of weight to pull around just to move the average body. Most scooters aver-

age about 28 pounds and run off an electric motor, thereby requiring much less energy than a car to move a body from one place to another.

Not convinced? Here's a more technical way of looking at energy efficiency in e-scooters. An electric scooter can travel more than 80 miles per kilowatt hour whereas a gas-powered car can travel less than a mile on the same kilowatt hour of energy.

From an emissions perspective, electric scooters are also more efficient and cheaper to operate than cars.

They don't burn gasoline so they have a minimal impact on ozone and carbon dioxide levels. The cost of fueling an scooter is only a fraction of the cost of fueling a car that delivers 28 miles per gallon. Most e-scooter trips are under five miles and only cost a few dollars per ride. [Note: There is a question with the efficiency argument. Do scooter trips really replace car trips or do they replace trips people would have taken on foot or by bike? Not enough data has been compiled yet to resolve this question fully.]

[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)



By Sabrina Speer

On a recent walk with my daughter through Griffith Park, we stumbled upon a fairy wonderland. It's true. Well, at least that that's what my four-year-old called the new play structure in Fern Dell. To our surprise and delight, the old playground had disappeared and a new one magically sprouted up in its space. (In reality, it had less to do with magic and more with financing from Quimby Funds — money collected from fees on new development.) Gone is the old, small, and unimaginative play structure that lacked shade. In its place is a larger playground with dual slides for racing, musical instruments, a bridge to a climbing tower, and a play area for smaller children. Everything is set amongst fake trees with forest animals and places to hide. It really does look like a fairy wonderland and my daughter's imagination ran wild as she sat on her "throne" accessible by the "troll's bridge".

Coincidentally, another bridge is being built a little to the south of the playground. Rather than appealing to the youngest among us, this new bridge is for all of us who happen to like safe conditions when we walk around Griffith Park. An old pedestrian bridge has been closed for more than fifteen years because of safety concerns. However, in

IMPROVEMENTS REVITALIZE FERN DELL



avoiding the closed bridge, pedestrians were often forced to walk in the narrow street creating yet another safety hazard. The decrepit bridge that's been replaced was built in the 50s or 60s and was quite utilitarian in nature and unattractive. The new structure reflects the design of the original pedestrian bridge from the 1920's with a graceful

arch and classic X design on the railings. This bridge is the first significant project for Friends of Griffith Park's plan for the revitalization of Fern Dell Park.

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Continue to support the work of your **Oaks Homeowners Association in 2020**

2020 promises to be a consequential year for our country and our neighborhood. The Oaks Homeowners Association is your neighborhood's voice in the conversation.

Traffic continues to be a significant headache in Hollywood and in the Oaks.

- Major new high-rise and mid-rise developments are going up in Hollywood without much thought to the circulation

able to remove these ill-conceived trail designations from GPS maps.

- We have met with institutional resistance from the city on a new traffic signal at Canyon and Franklin. Such a signal would provide safe passage at the intersection for pedestrians and would relieve the pressure at Bronson and Franklin. We will continue to advocate.

Homelessness is a surpassing concern for Hollywood residents. All of us in Los Angeles are searching for effective ways to bring our most vulnerable off the sidewalks and into safe housing. That's why we've decided to dedicate our Annual Meeting this coming March 10th to the subject of homelessness in Los Angeles: the causes and the remedies, how we should think about those experiencing homelessness, and what you as Oaks residents can do.

Each year the Oaks HOA brings residents and their families together for community events. In 2020 we'll host the Summer Picnic, the Halloween Walk, the Holiday Party, and in the spring, our fifth Architectural Tour and Benefit! These moments remind us of the bonds we have with our neighbors and our neighborhood.

Please Join or Renew Your Membership for 2020 at our website at www.oakshome.org to pay with PayPal

And if you haven't already gotten one of our limited-edition Oaks HOA license plate holders, now you can. For a donation of \$100 or more (which includes the \$45 dues) you'll receive one of these frames designed by renowned artist and Oaks resident Geoff McFetridge.



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Oaks Homeowners Dues for 2020 are Due now!
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problems this increased density brings. We will press the city for mitigations to this rampant increase in vehicles.

- As Hollywoodland pushed Hollywood Sign visitors out of Beachwood Canyon by closing the entrance to the Park there, unnamed actors promoted Bronson Canyon as new "entrance" to the Sign even though the route to the Sign is a strenuous three-plus mile hike. Along with Friends of Griffith Park, we have pushed back on this underhanded tactic and, with support from the City, were

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THE OAKS

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
www.oakshome.org

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

After an emergency rescue was initiated as a result of these illegal “goat trails,” the Parks Department, with help from CD4, sided with Oaks Homeowners and Friends of Griffith Park and agreed that something needed to be done. A little background here: Google and other technology platforms enjoy near immunity from liability due to inaccurate con-

tent. They only provide the platform, they say, and they’ve been winning in court when challenged. However, when safety is an issue, they will at least listen to public officials. Google was successfully contacted (by phone, the old fashioned way). They listened, and now the GPS mapping of Brush Canyon has been corrected. We will closely monitor to assure harmful information does not creep back onto the Google maps of Griffith Park.

Going Forward

The City did not have to choose closing all public pedestrian access to Griffith Park near the Hollyridge Trail to settle the lawsuit; there were other options. Those options still exist. Rhetoric that continues from city officials claiming the court ordered the closure is simply untrue. At a minimum, mitigations should move forward, and not at a snail’s pace.

[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)

The City Will Give You a Rebate for Repairing the Sidewalk in Front of Your House – HERE’S HOW

By Kathy Richards

If you’ve been concerned about the condition of the sidewalks in front of your house and the City’s inability to fix them in a timely manner, you’ll be interested in the City’s new sidewalk rebate program.

Funded by the Safe Sidewalks LA initiative, this is a limited-time rebate program for property owners willing to pay up front for repairs to the sidewalks next to their homes. And a new window for rebate requests under this program opened on October 1st. Applications will be accepted for a limited time, based on available funding. Here are the important details:

- Eligible participants include “property owners within the City of Los Angeles with sidewalks that are not compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.”
- People who have already applied for or received a Class A permit to repair their sidewalks, but who have not yet completed the work are also eligible to apply.
- People who have already completed repairs are not eligible to apply.
- A property owner may submit applications for multiple properties (a separate application is required for each property).
- Repairs are limited to sidewalks in the public right of way.
- Covered repairs include “any section of sidewalk not in compliance with the 2010 ADA regulations.” This includes:

Uplifts in sidewalks greater than 1/4 inch

Sidewalks with a width less than 4 feet

Sidewalks with a cross slope greater than 2 percent

Sidewalks with openings in joints (gaps) or grates greater than 1/2 inch

Sidewalks with longitudinal slope irregularities causing inaccessibility such as those caused by tree roots

Driveways that do not have an intersecting sidewalk with a minimum 4-foot width and 2% cross slope.

To sign up for the rebate program, complete a Service Request through MyLA311 (online or the mobile app), or call 311. The City will respond to each request in the order it is received.

Rebate caps are:

- \$10,000 per lot for residential (R5 or more restrictive) properties
- \$10,000 per lot for commercial and industrial properties, as defined in LAMC 62.104

For more information about the rebate application process, check out the full FAQ at <https://sidewalks.lacity.org/rebate-program-frequently-asked-questions>



HALLOWEEN 2019



[CLICK HERE TO SEE MORE HALLOWEEN PHOTOS](#)

SAVE THE DATE!
THE OAKS ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Charity Recipient and Items to Donate • To Be Announced
Sunday, December 15th 5:30 – 8:30pm
At the home of Bob & Joan Young
2419 Park Oak Drive – rsvp@oakshome.org



[CLICK HERE TO SEE MORE HALLOWEEN PHOTOS](#)



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