





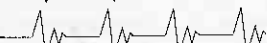
OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE No. 12

WINTER 1994

FRANKLIN MEDIAN

BLEEP 
BLEEP 
BLEEP 

Bleep . . . bleep . . . bleep . . .
 What has been keeping the Franklin Avenue Median landscaping project alive, anyway?

Well, one reason might be that landscaping the median is a wonderful idea. Another reason is that much has been happening behind the scenes, including the fact that numerous grants have been applied for, and two have been awarded, increasing our budget to just under \$8,000.

But we all still wait in disbelief, because our beautiful median island is just a quagmire elsewhere in town: Downtown!

The issue at hand is the steep slope across the width of the median, along 400 feet of its 600 feet of length. We have received approval to landscape the remaining flat portions of the strip, and we could opt to proceed with that anytime. A second phase for the steep areas could be planned for a later time, pending

See MEDIAN, page 9



The D.W. Griffiths *Intolerance* movie set towers in the west behind undeveloped Franklin Hill, as seen in 1917 from above Griffith Park Boulevard near the intersection of Fountain and Hyperion Avenues

A STRONG INFLUENCE ON FRANKLIN HILLS

Once upon a time, when all the cars were big and American, a young man cruising the narrow confines of Sunset Drive between Mayview and Sanborn had to swerve to allow an expensive car to proceed. As the two passed, the man in the expensive car rolled down his window and said, "The son of a bitch that laid this street out ought to be in jail." The young man approvingly replied, "He sure should be."

That story, told to the Overview by Rose Dee Tavella, illustrates the wit and wife of Frank R. Strong (see photos), the man in the expensive car. He's also the man who subdivided parts of the Franklin Hills and laid out some of our narrowest streets. The theory was, "the smaller you made the streets the more lots you'd have to sell," according to Ms. Tavella. She grew up admiring the humor and generosity of Mr. Strong, her mother's boss. The family still lives on one of the Franklin Hills lots that he gave her mother, Pam Hanrahan, over 50 years ago.

Mr. Strong and his photographer, Alvaro A. Pratt came out to take pictures of the still naked Franklin Hills in March 1917 (see accompanying photos). Three years later surveyor Horace N. Taylor had mapped tract # 3594 encompassing all the lots from the north side of Cumberland south

See STRONG, p. 8

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

At the risk of unseating our bard Bruce Carroll as resident curmudgeon, I am going to mention something that has been bothering me lately: *Scavenging*.

Some of us worked long and hard to get the City of Los Angeles to institute a city-wide recycling program so we don't end up filling in every canyon in the county with our refuse. Just about all of us dutifully fill our yellow bins weekly and set them out on trash day, hoping the city will take the recyclables away and that income derived from recycling will (at least partially) pay for the process.

However, by the time the green truck rolls around many, if not most, bins are empty of anything of recyclable value and much of the remainder is trash on the street. The culprits? Scavengers driving through our neighborhood, ripping off every last thing of value in the yellow bins, dumping them in bulging vans or packed cars, then selling the goods on the recycling market for cash.

Now, of course, you say "so what's the problem? The stuff is getting recycled! Right?" Right—and, if these people were really good at this, it might be the most practical and efficient way to achieve our goals. However, note the key works above: "Many, if not, most bins are empty..." Not all bins, not all neighborhoods.

I predict if we do not get control of this issue soon, the impact of the scavengers will grow. The City will find it is not cost-effective to send trucks to pick up nearly empty recycling bins in some neighborhoods.

We should combat this decay by putting our bins out at the last possible moment—no earlier than the morning of pickup. And there will soon be a hot line to report scavenging, which by the way, is strictly illegal.

Don Waldrop

Dear Editor,

At last night's community meeting on the Los Feliz Branch Library, held at the John Marshall High School Auditorium, there were copies of the Overview available on the sign-in table. I helped my self to one, being curious about the publication but unfamiliar with it, as I live outside the boundaries of your Association.

Let me congratulate all of you who have worked on this publication. It's filled with lots of neighborhood news, as well as historical and current features. I found the photographs and the drawings of the MetroRail station to be an especially nice touch. Moreover, it's handsomely produced, with a good balance of text and illustrations on each page, advertising which hopefully defrays some of the production cost but doesn't dominate the news portion, and exclusive use of black and white, showing that color, while adding a nice touch, is not necessary to produce a first class publication.

Best wishes on your future issues!

Sincerely,
Franklin Tom
Los Feliz

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The Franklin Hills OVERVIEW is published as often as possible. We invite your comments on matters relating to articles and the community and, space permitting, we will publish letters mailed to *Editor, OVERVIEW, Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90027*

THE CURSE OF LOS FELIZ

by *Thelma Jasber*



The moment one steps into the old adobe house, a landmark located in the heart of Griffith Park, a chill runs through his veins and the walls seem to quiver with the soft anguished moans of a young woman.

Is it one's imagination, or is it truly the "Curse of Petranilla Feliz," still demanding retribution? You would have to know the history of the land now known as Griffith Park before you could make your own assessment.

Maybe this story—which a living descendent of Petranilla has to tell—will shed some light on the mystery.

Most of the facts he speaks of are documented by the city, old newspapers, and family heirlooms. After reading his account, I've wondered to myself "what do you think?"

In the early seventies, Spaniards and Indians roamed and fought bloody battles over all that land. Then, in 1796, for outstanding service to the Crown, the victorious King of Spain awarded eight thousand acres of beautiful terrain to Corporal Jose Vicente Feliz.

The land was known as "Gran Rancho de Los Feliz," and because there was plenty of room, eleven of the related Feliz families came to settle. They loved and cared for the land, and it was as if the land loved them.

The grand oak trees grew taller, the grain fields flourished, and the streams filled with fish. When Corporal Jose Feliz became the first "Comisionado" (city manager of the Pueblo de Los Angeles), all the many members of the Feliz families joined in a fiesta of music and dancing to celebrate his appointment.

Jose Feliz and his wife devoted their life to the City of the Angels. They vowed that their ranch would always belong to the Feliz family, and when Corporal Feliz died, the ownership passed to his eldest heir, Don Antonio Feliz.

For many years, Don Feliz lived in a rambling adobe house with his sister and beloved niece, Donna Petranilla. However, it was soon apparent that Don Antonio was not like his father. Being a carefree bachelor, he loved to gamble and drink.

In payment for gambling debts, he gave acres of land to hustlers; the other Feliz families tried to convince him to change his ways, but he wouldn't. They were all heart-broken but could do nothing to stop him.

But the worse was yet to come. In 1863, Don Antonio Feliz fell victim to smallpox and lay dying. His niece had gone into the city for supplies, and while she was gone, an opportunist named Don Coronel came to the house



See CURSE OF LOS FELIZ, p.9

THINKING AHEAD

by Violet Weber

Except for a few unfortunate instances we, who call the Franklin Hills home, escaped the very worst of the mean consequences of the 1994 January earthquake. Most of us simply rebuild the chimneys and the walls and just hope we're going to get by with no more harm the next time.

What most of us should be busy doing is retrofitting our homes so we can breathe a little easier, as well as making it possible to get insurance (eventually.)

Surprisingly, the government is willing to help us do just that and with their (our) money through the Federal Emer-

gency Management Authority. Although FEMA will be ending its program on January 20, 1995, it is still possible right now to get a grant or a loan to shore up your walls, bolt down the foundation, strap your water heater and, just in general, allow us to ride out the next one. And seismologists, warning us every day that there will be another earthquake, keep finding new faults.

Anyone wanting to take advantage of the government's program must contact FEMA to establish eligibility, which means you must have received sufficient damage to your house or business to

need repair and to prepare for the next one.

Not everyone is eligible, of course, but it takes only a little bit of time to stop in at a FEMA office, make application and get the help one needs. Our nearest office is in Hollywood, at 6385 Hollywood Boulevard, (800) 726-4995.

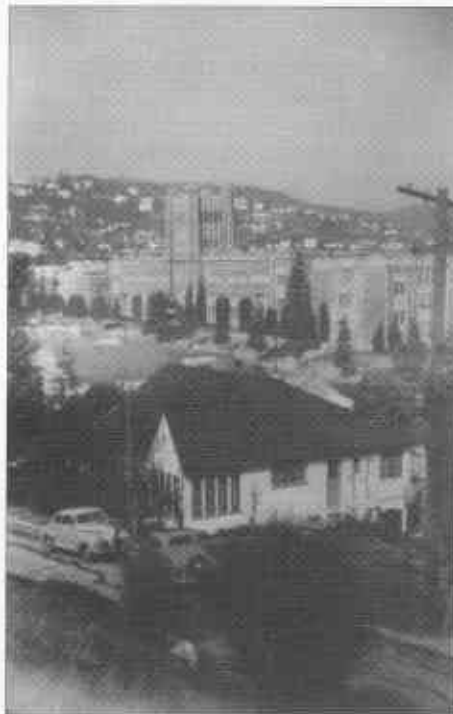
FEMA support will be discussed in full at our anniversary meeting on January 17, when a representative from FEMA will give us the last word on this opportunity for government help. Remember, the FEMA deadline for application is January 20, 1995.

Dear Editor:

A copy of your well-written and informative newsletter came into my hands, bringing back memories of living and going to school in what was then called "East Hollywood."

My family lived at 2468 Lyric Avenue, the address mentioned in the article about Bernice Fletcher and Clarabelle Westberg. Bernice was a good friend of my mother's and, as a teenager, I used to babysit her children when she lived elsewhere.

From 1937 to 1949 or '50, my family owned their Spanish-style house which must have had an interesting history, although I never heard any tales about it. The house had three stories down the hill, a high-domed ceiling living room with storage area in a short



2468 Lyric Avenue and Marshall High School in 1940

tower. Details of the bedrooms were carefully planned, with beds that pulled out from the walls and good looking cabinetry.

Beside our house was a vacant lot where we had an elaborate "Victory" garden, which was periodically raided by my pet lamb that was being raised for meat because of rationing. (We could never get ourselves to eat a bite of him.) These two pictures are the only ones I could pry out of my scrapbook. Both were taken above Lyric Avenue, I believe.

I graduated from Starr King in 1939 and from Marshall High in 1943.

Sincerely,
Catherine Titus
La Quinta, CA

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See page 23 for details

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**Happy Holidays to our Friends in Franklin Hills
from Ted Bayless and the gang**

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• community phones •

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- ABC-TELEVISION:**
Security: (310) 557-5354.
- CITY ANIMAL REGULATION:** (213) 222-7138
- COUNCILMAN JOHN FERRARO, 4th District-**
(213) 485-3337
Room M-30, City Hall, 200 Spring St., L.A. 90012
- DEPT. OF ANIMAL REGULATION:** (213)485-5761
Barking Dogs: 222-7138 or 731-8281
- ENVIRONMENTAL:**
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Operation Clean Sweep (213) 237-1797
- FIRE DEPARTMENT: Emergency 911;**
Non-emergency: 485-6235.
- GRAFFITI :**
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Graffiti Hotline: (213) 485-0511
- HOMELESS, Food and Shelter** (213) 974-1234
- LOS FELIZ PUBLIC LIBRARY:** (213) 664-2903.
DUE TO REOPEN IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH
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Northeast Division, 3353 San Fernando Road, LA 90065:
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Community Relations: (213) 485-2548
Sr. Lead Officer Richard Kanzaki: 847-3138
Sr. Lead Officer Sam Salazar: 847-3135
- RAPE HOTLINE** (213) 392-8381
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- TELECOMMUNICATIONS:** (TV Cable) 485-2751
- TRASH RECEPTACLE INFO:** (800) 248-9726
- TREE TRIMMING (Hazards) 485-5661**
- WATER & POWER:** (800) 722-1122

DOES GRAFFITI BUG YOU?

FHRA NEEDS YOUR HELP in fighting grafitti in our area. We need someone to organize paint outs and people to work. We provide all materials. Call the Hotline to volunteer. 664-7247

FRANKLIN FOTOS

As you have no doubt noticed, the editor of the Overview has an affinity for photographs taken in the early years of the Franklin Hills, Los Feliz and Silver Lake areas. We are trying to assemble a pictorial history of our district and would like to hear from anyone with such photos. If you grew up here, or if your parents built a house here, or if you inherited some photographs, please give us a call on the Hotline or send them to our mailbox.

We guarantee they will be handled very carefully while we have a copy negative made. The originals will be returned to you in their original condition. Look for your old photographs and give us a call!

Disaster Preparedness

FHRA Disaster Preparedness needs to know about the trained professionals living in our area. There is a clear need for doctors, nurses & trained emergency personnel in a disaster. If you are willing to assist in such an event, please contact the Hotline: 664-7247

Please Patronize "Our" Advertisers

Traveling to other areas to shop is troublesome now that the population and traffic have increased so much. The businesses that are advertising in this newsletter are charged the absolute minimum possible advertising fees. Their ads pay for the paper and any surplus supports FHRA on-going projects.

Please support our advertisers and Tell them you saw their ads in the "Overview."



1st ANNUAL END OF SUMMER FESTIVAL



Photo: Jim Trull

At high noon on Sunday, September 25, 1994, we cranked up the amplifiers, stepped up to the microphones and began 6 hours of nonstop music, games, movies and prize giveaways. The 1st annual Franklin Hills End Of Summer Festival had begun. After five years in the dream stage, this year it really happened.

The location was perfect — under the shade trees on the historic campus of L.I.L.A., the French American School.

Those attending were a cross section of our community ranging from families with young children to older retired residents. It was a day to picnic, mingle, meet your neighbors and be entertained. And there was lots of entertainment. It consisted of 5 musical

BELOW: During the Water Balloon Toss a youngster learns the right and wrong way to catch.



RIGHT



WRONG

Photos: Jim Trull

TOP: Rachelle, lead singer with Me, Myself & I and A Small Crowd, kept our crowd entertained. LEFT: Big Blue Can was the first group to play during 6 hours of entertainment. LOWER LEFT: Michael Simmons and Patrick Weathers played guitar and sang ballads.

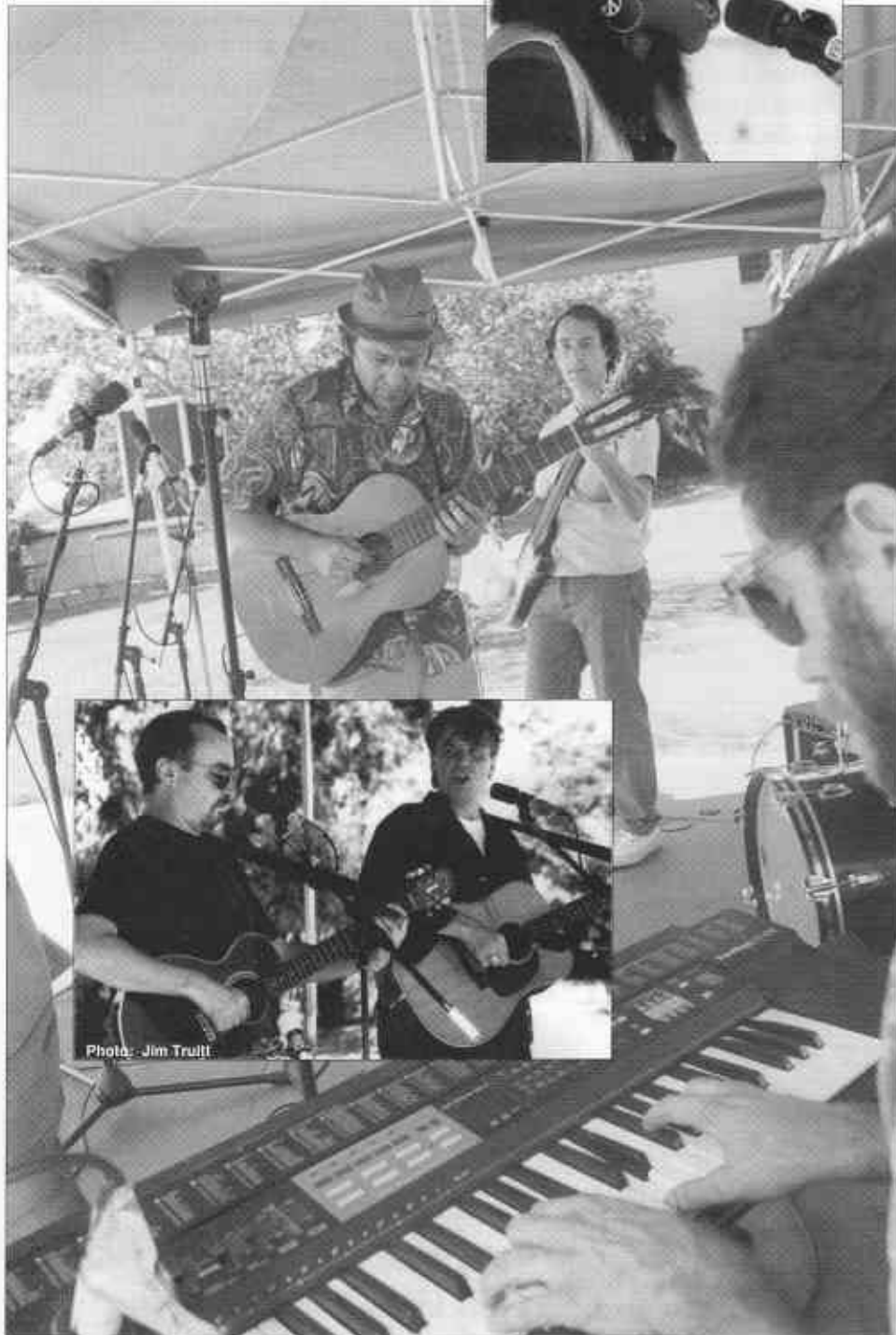


Photo: Jim Trull

Photo: Laura Regan

acts with 25 professional musicians who were engaged for the event by Penny Layne.

To keep the musicians from melting in the midday sun, Chris Boutelle and Glenn Patterson devised and rigged up an ingenious stage awning that was much appreciated by the bands.

Tim Cutler became our own Pied Piper as he led a troop of kids from the soccer field, where they played Kick Ball, to the bandstand, where they had Skunk 'N Possum Sack Races and Water Balloon Toss. Some of the kids got prize ribbons, some just got wet and all had a great time.

With prizes donated by local businesses, there was a late afternoon raffle with 22 prizes being awarded to lucky ticket holders.

Film Historian, David Fertik, brought a collection of old time movies filmed in our area. Included were: Our Gang Comedies, Mack Sennett Comedies, Laurel and Hardy, D.W. Griffiths' Intolerance and a documentary on Bunker Hill.

As the sun set and the last musicians left the stage, everyone headed home having had a memorable day at an event that truly captured the spirit of our neighborhood.

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION THANKS THESE VOLUNTEERS AND BUSINESSES WHO MADE THE FESTIVAL POSSIBLE:

FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

Chris Boutelle	Glenn Patterson
Bruce Carroll	Laura Regan
Eugene Cheltenham	Bunny Riley
Jeanne Cogswell	Carol Skinner
Tim Cutler	Jim Truitt
David Fertik	Don Waldrop
Sandra Harper	Adam Weisman
Penny Layne	

ENTERTAINMENT

Clark Branson (MC)	Me, Myself & I
Michael Simmons & Big Blue Can	Ye Olde English
Patrick Weathers	Blue Barron

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Buy both or choose your favorite. Get the classic Franklin Hills logo shirt with the Shakespeare Bridge 2-color design printed in teal and purple. There's also the Franklin Hills End Of Summer Festival design printed in white on either a peacock blue or purple shirt. All are heavy-duty 100% cotton. Designed and illustrated by Eugene Cheltenham.

All proceeds from the sale of the shirts go to help fund the Franklin Hills Residents Association's efforts to preserve and enhance our neighborhood.

Choose from:
- Peacock Blue
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Franklin Hills End of Summer Festival
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STRONG, from p. 1

to Fountain and not dead-end at Sanborn, those who live on Delongpre would be residing on Felice Street, and the folks on Fernwood would call Mildred home instead. While the city had no problem with most of Mr. Strong's plans, including naming his daughter Mildred, they did object to a street by the same name. Perhaps they still harbored hope that some day the ten mostly non-contiguous blocks of Fernwood Avenue, stretching from Bronson to Micheltorena, would one day be joined.



Frank Strong

Frank Strong was an active developer with interests from San Diego to Idyllwild (where he did manage to name a street after himself) to Los Angeles, where he owned property at Hollywood and Vine. He subdivided Moreno Highlands in Silver Lake, as well as much of Wilshire Boulevard east of Vermont Avenue. He had planned to build a home on the Bullocks Wilshire site, but that plan, like the one to build in Franklin Hills, didn't happen. He had a huge house on Occidental, near Third, and what Ms. Tavella describes as a "castle, sort of a Swiss chalet" in La Cañada.

Among his other pursuits were an insurance agency, an oil company, and all women. "He had a philandering eye," said Ms. Tavella, "and as wonderful as he was, he couldn't pass any woman." He was married three times.



Developer Frank Strong at the intersection of Sanborn and Fountain, surveying Franklin Hill in 1917

According to Ms. Tavella, his only problem was, "He couldn't keep his eyes on his own fireplace and, outside of that, I can't think of an evil thing the man ever did." When he divorced his first wife, Pearl, he married her former best friend, Helen. Three months after Helen died, he married Betty, the widow of his daughter's brother-in-law. When asked how he could have remarried so quickly, he replied, "Helen couldn't have been any deader."

Frank Strong died about 1955. All the Franklin Hills lots were sold by then, but Rose Tavella does remember one near her house selling for \$1500 in

1953. And she remembers her mom's last encounter with the man she termed, "the most generous giving man I've ever known."

"He was such a tease. The last night she saw him, he let her out of the car and he looked at her very sweetly and said to her, 'Come here a minute.' She walked over to him and he says 'Hold out your hand.' She held out her hand and he put his chewing gum in it. It was so typical of him. She came in the house laughing with this chewing gum. And that night he had a heart attack. He was 80 years old."

Ms. Tavella was interviewed by Bruce Carroll and Don Waldrop.

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MEDIAN from p. 1

those permit approvals. This is a real option, but we have not chosen it yet.

But here's how it goes, working with the City. Back in February of this year, the City of Los Angeles authorized its Department of Public Works to prepare a geological report. This investigation would determine the effects of landscaping and irrigation upon the stability of the upper roadway. The report was faxed to us in the middle of June. After five months of (no doubt) intensive investigation by Public Works, we were being advised to have a geological report to determine the stability of the slope! The geological study would cost FHRA \$2000 to determine what the City had already ordered Public Works to do.



But don't lose hope yet! Our independent search has put this cost at \$850, and we anticipate that the findings will be conclusive and favorable to the project as designed.

If we don't use the grant money we have been awarded by the end of 1995 we will lose it, so you can be sure that we will all have a greener thumb soon. Keeping in mind the long history of this project, you may not believe it, but you should be hearing from us during the first couple of months of the new year. Then, we hope, you won't have to listen to us anymore, just to the living heart "bleep" of a landscaped median.

Riccardo Accorsi, Median Project Director

CURSE OF LOS FELIZ, from p. 3

with his attorney.

They brought with them a will, and when he refused to sign it (according to a relative who was peering into a window), they threatened to kill Don Antonio by pressing a large plank of wood against his throat. In severe pain, he nodded. After they pulled him up, he reluctantly signed the will.

Petranilla returned to the house just as the two men were about to leave, and when she discovered that the will had left nothing for her, only small bequests to several relatives and the lion's share to Don Coronel, her screeching pledge—which ever since has been known as "The Curse of the Feliz"—is still on record: "A blight shall fall upon the face of this terrestrial paradise; the cattle shall no longer fatten, but sicken on its pastures; the field shall no longer respond to the toil of the tiller, and the grand oaks shall wither and die! The wrath of heaven and the vengeance of hell shall fall upon this place."

Predicting disaster for Coronel, his lawyer, and all who dared possess the ranch, she ran out of the house and stood on the front steps. Suddenly, her lovely face contorted with pain and, within seconds, she died of a broken heart. Witnessing all that happened...and frightened by Petranilla's words, Coronel quickly conveyed the ranch to his lawyer, who scoffed at the curse. But a short time later, when the lawyer sold the valuable water rights for \$8,000, true to Petranilla's prediction, disaster struck. During a celebration of his good fortune, the lawyer was shot and killed. The first actual purchaser of the rancho was Leon Baldwin, but before he could enjoy the life of a country squire, disaster

struck again. His cattle sickened and died. Fire destroyed his crops and a mortgage, necessary because of the misfortunes, fell due. Baldwin was then forced to sell the ranch to Col. Griffith J. Griffith.

For a while, all was quiet...until March of 1884, when a giant storm sent walls of water rushing down the Los Angeles River and through all the canyons and creeks. When water-soaked field hands swore they saw the ghost of old Antonio Feliz riding the waves, Col. Griffith paid no attention to their ravings. But the men were terrified and fled the ranch.

Moreover, for the next decade, there was nothing but trouble. Strange, inexplicable events such as reported sightings of Petranilla riding a white stallion through the hills—and much more—took place. There were floods and fires and Griffith couldn't keep help to work his fields.

Finally, out of desperation, in 1896, Col. Griffith donated 3,000 acres of his ranch to the city of Los Angeles, which purchased the balance of the ranch from Griffith for \$40 an acre.

From the time he had originally purchased the ranch until after he no longer owned it, Griffith's life was one of tragedy. He was sent to prison for shooting his wife because he suspected her of infidelity.

In accordance with Col. Griffith's bequest to the city, the land was developed into a park and named after the donor. For a while, life was calm again, and the terrain was filled with joyous visitors, most of whom were unaware of its past. But in 1933, Don Petranilla's curse struck again when a brush fire flared up in the

See CURSE OF LOS FELIZ, p. 11



MY VIEW

by Bruce Carroll

ZAHOOR THE GHOSTBUSTER

"The first time I saw this house it was like a haunted house," said Maria Qureshi. Others confirmed the ghostly diagnosis for the house at 4205 Camero, but that didn't worry her husband, Zahoor Qureshi. "Ghosts don't come close to me. You know one of my neighbor's sons came to me and he told me when we moved in that there are a lot of ghosts living over here, you know. So I told him I'm the biggest ghost. The ghosts are scared of me."

It's been about seven months since the Qureshi family started chasing the 70-plus years of ghosts. "On the roof there was 6 or 7 layers of shingles when I bought the house...and there was newspaper from 1921 or 22. ...In the living room the hardwood floor was so thin that if you walk on it, it cracks...the walls had big bumps and the doors were black with dirt," said Mr. Qureshi. He sold his restaurant and office furniture business to devote full time to the house restoration and seems happy with his decision. "I enjoyed the whole thing...there was nothing hard for me."

Well, almost nothing. "The paint was really difficult to take off. There are so many layers of paint. We tried to burn the paint, we sand it, we scrape it, we used so many different ways to take it out." And what works best? "The fire, but oh my God, you can't breathe. The smell is very bad and it's toxic. The paint remover, it works like for one or two coats, but not for eight or nine or ten coats." You can see the parade of changing tastes on a door that's been varying shades of yellow, green, red, blue and gray. Mrs. Qureshi, who did most of the painting, has turned it into a contemporary off-white.

Mr. Qureshi tried where possible to keep original fixtures, taking the time to repair the old windows rather than re-

placing them, but many things were too far gone. "I put a new roof, I put new walls and ceilings, new kitchen, new bathroom, new landscaping, new plumbing." Copper replaced the galvanized because his Mrs. Qureshi complained, "When you open the faucet it was like dropping, no water at all, just dropping and dropping."

The family has been in America about 12 years. The desire to come to this "dreamland" began when Zahoor saw movies at the US Information Service office near his home in Islamabad, Pakistan. "It was a movie all the time in your brain to go...so I came over here and that's it. I don't want to go back." The Qureshis spent about two years looking for a house. With a daughter four years old, and four sons ranging from 5 to 19, they were mainly enticed by the area's good schools. But they also liked Franklin Hills because it is "very quiet around here, very, very quiet."

That may be changing, "There were no kids here maybe five years ago. Now they're everywhere," says Patricia Jiminez, who lives next door. "In the 60's, there was a whole generation of children that were on the street. I was part of that and then it kind of died down during the 70's and 80's and in the 90's it's another boom again."

Ms. Jiminez says, when she was growing up, the 1000 square foot house was "one of the nicest houses on the block." But without paint for 15-20 years, "it was just horrendous. It was a major fixer upper. ...It was the kind of place you could get it for a steal, but the amount of work was just phenomenal." Mr. Qureshi paid \$140,000 and figures he's spent about \$50,000, not including the value of his labor. And his neighbors appreciate the effort. "I'm impressed. I take my hat off to them...they've done a magnificent job," says Ms. Jiminez. She and other neighbors, fueled by Qureshi's enthusiasm and some earthquake repair money, have been sprucing up their Camero Avenue homes, too.

So far the Qureshis have been lucky. They've found a \$100 Tropicana Hotel gaming chip made into a tie clip, two worn buffalo nickels, and a newspaper reporting the wedding of Ramon Navarro's brother. And instead of finding ghosts, Zahoor Qureshi has found the ability to revive the soul of a dead house and renew the can-do spirit that keeps neighborhoods alive. He heartily recommends such projects as "a good experience," plus the exercise now allows him to wear his belt a notch or two thinner.

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CURSE OF LOS FELIZ, from p. 9

park and snuffed out the lives of twenty-seven workers.

One of the firefighters, Arnulfo Feliz, the father of Charles (the surviving Feliz), was the only one who managed to escape the fire unhurt. He and his wife, Consuela Sepulveda Feliz, and their children were the last of the clan to live in the home their ancestor had built.

Still standing proud and strong is the 189 year-old rambling adobe house where loving people lived and died. Towering above it is a tall rock formation which, through the years, has been sculpted and weathered by the wind. Incredibly, its very peak bears the distinct countenance of Petranilla.

While the large Ranch remained in the Feliz family for only seventy years before it was stolen from them, they have never really left the land. Ever since that fateful day when Don Antonio signed his dreaded will, one of his direct descendants has always worked on the grounds.

Many distant relatives of the original Feliz family bear the name as does Los Feliz Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard—named for the family of Consuela.

Their anger toward the injustice done them has all but vanished through the years, but remaining is their love for the land. In their minds, and even mine, it is still "Gran Rancho de Los Feliz."

Can you possibly believe the strange story of Petranilla's curse? Perhaps not if you haven't been in the adobe house, felt the eerie chill upon entering, nor seen the weathered countenance on her figure towering above the house. I wonder...because I have felt and seen it all.

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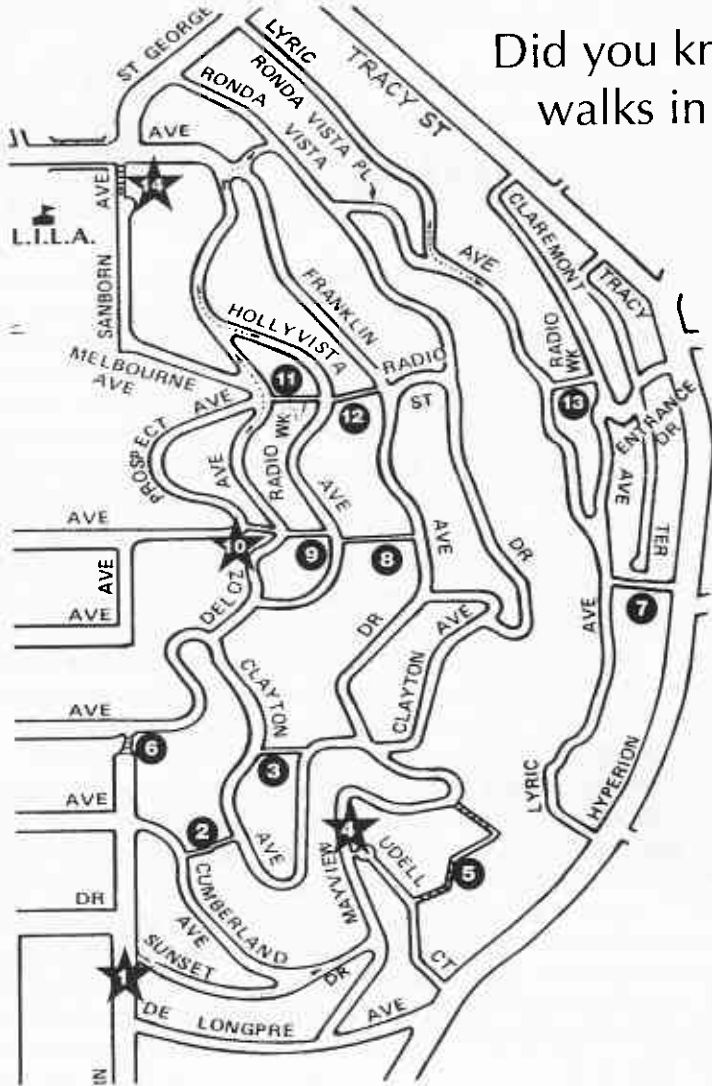
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ADOPT-A-STAIR PROGRAM

Did you know there are 14 stairways and walks in the Franklin Hills? Each one is special and needs your help!



- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Sunset Drive Stairs | 8 Prospect Walk |
| 2 Cumberland Stairs | 9 " " |
| 3 Clayton Walk | 10 " " |
| 4 Mayview-Udell Ct. Stair | 11 Radio Walk |
| 5 Udell Court Walk | 12 " " |
| 6 Sanborn-Clayton Stairs | 13 " " |
| 7 Lyric Stairs | 14 Franklin Stairs |

★ = Adopted

The FHRA Stair Committee has developed a personal program for the stairway or walk closest to your home. By selecting the stair number (see map), FHRA will help you develop a special STAIRWAY CLEANUP PROGRAM. Each of the stairs has a unique set of maintenance needs, most of which would take less than an hour of work each month.

FHRA can help with tools, rubbish bags, and extra laborers. We will also liaison with city officials to deal with structural repairs, graffiti, and hauling away the rubbish bags.

Our First Annual FHRA Stairway Cleanup on the Udell Court-Mayview Stairway was an extraordinary success. For over 30 individuals with diverse backgrounds, the hours of hard work paid off with a beautiful and safe walkway for everyone on the most scenic of our walkways.

Thanks go out to the families and individuals who have adopted the four stairways and walkways on our hill. Our hope is that, within the year, all of the stairs and walks will have sponsors and the quality of life will continue to improve in Franklin Hills."

Please fill this out and send it to FHRA, P.O. Box 29122, L.A. 90027 or call the FHRA Hotline at (213) 664-7247 and give the information listed below.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Stairway number: _____ Best times to reach you: _____

Comments: _____

ON THE STAIRS

by Adam Weisman

For those of you who had not met me at the Annual Meeting, I am the newest member of the Board of Directors. My nomination speech was simple and somewhat obsessive: "Let's clean up the stairs!" Call me a one issue candidate. None the less, it worked and I thank the other board members for the nomination and encouragement. I hope that my tenure on the board will be productive and creative for Franklin Hills.

In the last 18 months, the stair committee has been busy in developing goals to revitalize the 14 stairways and walkways in Franklin Hills. The committee members: Libby Simon, Stephen Dreher, Brady Rubin, organized the First Annual FHRA Stairway Cleanup Party on July 25, 1993. It was great success, thanks both to the volunteers and to the residents and neighbors bordering the Udell Court Walk.

After our muscles and backs had healed from the hard labor, the committee developed the second phase of it's cleanup campaign: the FHRA Adopt-A-Stair Program. The philosophy behind the program is to give FHRA neighbors the opportunity to choose which stairway or walkway they wish to restore. FHRA would provide equipment and minor fi-

nancial support to help with each stair project. Each project would give FHRA's activists a chance to meet our neighbors who live in and around the stairs. Also by facilitating "adoption" of the stairs, it is hoped that FHRA would help give residents the opportunity to

show their spirit of caring in the neighborhood.

Shortly after the notice was printed up in the Spring 1994 Overview, four stairways were fully adopted. The first stairway adopted was the Number 10 stairway, located between Prospect and Deloz Avenue. Ken and Morena Garcia called the FHRA Hotline and asked to clean the stairway. Ken is a banker and his wife, Morena, is a teacher's aide. Ken stated that he was excited about adopting a stairway and wanted to clean the stairway within the

week. His motivation and enthusiasm was not ignored. In the next few days equipment was gathered, the neighbors along the stairs were informed and the city was notified to pick up the refuse. On June 5, at 10:15 AM, Ken and Morena Garcia as well as Ray and Jan Wedeen came to clean the stair. Ray is a retired surveyor who had some experience working in Franklin

Hills. With the additional help of stair neighbors, Ben Morris and Michael Collins, the stair was cleaned within four hours. Ben, a retired minister, discovered during the cleanup that he used to work with Ray Wedeen's brother in Burbank. Ben was very appreciative of the stairway cleanup and enjoyed meeting his neighbors on the hill. Refreshments were provided by FHRA.

The Franklin Stairs (#14) were adopted by Kay Ostrander and Walt DeMamiel. The couple chose to clean up their nearby stairs with no fanfare, equipment or refreshments. On June 15th, the couple completed their task. When I went to see how their efforts turned out, stair neighbor Betty Wise came out to greet me. She thought I was from the City of Los Angeles inspecting the work on the stairs.

See STAIRWAY, p. 14



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CRIME UPDATE

from Northeast Division, Los Angeles Police Department

HOT PROWL BURGLAR

The hot prowler burglar is still at large and is operating in our area. Please stay alert and watch out for him. He usually cuts the phone lines, turns off the electrical power and, in some cases, he has poisoned dogs. He enters through open windows or pries them open, sometimes with residents sleeping inside. He has not injured anyone to date and mainly takes jewelry and money. The investigation is continuing and he will eventually be arrested.

To protect yourself, please take precautions by placing a lock on your outside power box and installing some sensor activated lights around your house. There are inexpensive types of battery operated motion sensor or switch operated alarms that you can purchase and place them by or on your windows. Keep your doors and windows closed and locked. Secure your sliding glass doors with some type of locking device or rod to prevent them from being forced open. IF you have a cellular phone, keep it nearby. (Remember that cordless phones do not operate if the telephone line is cut or if the power is turned off.) Place your pets inside your home during the night.

BURGLARY

We have experienced 170 day and night burglaries in November. Usually, these burglars break into homes while the residents are at work during the day. They steal anything of value.

Neighborhood watch is one of the ways to prevent this crime. Please be on the lookout for anyone who may be suspicious in nature or prowling around your neighbor's house. Audible alarms or dogs are helpful too. The best neighborhood watch persons are the nosy and aggressive neighbors who go around challenging strangers as to why they are in the area. They can also alert the police and neighbors as to the suspicious activities seen.

FAKE UTILITY WORKER BURGLARS

We have been alerted that there is a team of fake utility workers in uniforms posing as DWP, Gas, or other type of utility workers victimizing the Senior Citizens in the area. The two or three suspects arrive at the victim's house, claiming there is a problem of some type. While the victim is showing one of the suspects the gas or water meter, the others ransack the victim's house.

Please *do not* allow them into your home. If you did not call for that type of service, call the company and verify it. Do not use the telephone number that they may give you. Call information or obtain it from your telephone book.

STOLEN VEHICLE AND VEHICLE BREAK-INS

Numerous cars are stolen or broken into each month. These crimes usually occur in the evening during sleeping hours. There were 258 cars stolen during November, with the most popular ones being (1) Toyota, (2) Chevrolet and (3) Honda. There were 204 break-ins with the same makes of cars as most frequent targets.

ROBBERIES

There were 115 street and business robberies during November. Suspects approached their victims while they were walking around their residential area, walking to their car, or while shopping. Some suspects produce a gun, knife, or simulate a weapon.

Please do not panic! Cooperate by giving them what they want. Minimize your loss by wearing less jewelry or carrying less cash in your wallet. You might consider carrying some cash separately. You can replace your property, but not your

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life. Stay calm and be a good witness by remembering their face as well as their clothing descriptions, number of suspects, getaway car description and license number

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By driving under the influence you may not only hurt yourself, but more importantly, you may hurt other innocent people. If you are arrested for driving under the influence it can be very expensive. There will be a fine ranging from \$500 to \$5000 and a jail sentence from two days to four years. In addition you could face large attorney fees and loss of wages. Use a non-drinking designated driver for holiday parties.

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- Do not get pressured to make a fast decision. Beware of scare tactics.
- Check workers' and officials' credentials before you let them in your home. Ask for ID. Check out the company, the license or credential.
- Always get more than one estimate for service or repairs.
- For home repairs: Use a licensed contractor; get all verbal promises in writing and specify materials, material costs and completion dates; read the contract carefully; get proof of workers' compensation and liability insurance coverage; make payments in installments as work is completed; and get lien waivers from each supplier before paying the contractor.
- Although you have a three-day right to cancel most door-to-door sales, it's hard to do this if you cannot locate the company.
- Shop around. Some businesses advertise earthquake sales offering products at reduced prices. These prices could be great bargains or just gimmicks. Protect your disaster recovery funds.

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LOS FELIZ LIBRARY

“...And They Shall Beat Their Asparagus Spears Into Bookshelves.”

by Bruce Carroll

Outside 1801 Hillhurst, the marquee is still hawking “homemade sausage,” or “live soft shell crab” plus a “cappuccino bar.” Inside, work is finally underway to convert Le Petit Market into a temporary library, less *petit* than the one condemned after the earthquake. Although the City Council approved the deal in May, the lease was not signed until October, and work did not start until last month. “What really happened was just bureaucracy,” said David Moss, who heads Friends of the Los Feliz Library.

Construction should be finished in January, and Moss prays, “Heaven willing, the library will be in by the middle of February or early March.” Then hard cover books will replace soft shell crabs and minds will be

stuffed instead of sausages. It’s doubtful the Library Commission will keep the cappuccino bar but patrons should be able to satisfy their thirst for knowledge.

At a June 30 community meeting with architect Barton Phelps, who is designing the new permanent Los Feliz Branch Library, just about everything but a cappuccino bar was suggested. Rumor has it all the good suggestions have created a mountain of dandruff from months of head scratching over how to fit all the wants into the limits of space and budget. A second community meeting is promised to be held when they’ve got a tentative plan for the building at the southeast corner of Franklin and Hillhurst.

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STAIRWAYS, continued from p.13

When Betty was informed that her neighbors had done the work she went to Kay and Walt's to thank them.

The Mayview-Udell Court stairway was adopted by Ian and Tiffany Delahoy. The couple live near the top of the stairs and have some experience in stairways; having to traverse the long stairway each day up to their home.

The fourth stairway actually was adopted long before the program came into existence. Stephen Dreher organized the Sunset Drive stairway (#1) over two years ago and has helped in getting the City of Los Angeles to do major structural and cosmetic repairs along the stairs.

The committee thanks everyone who has been involved in the stairway cleanup. An additional number of members have shown interest in cleaning the upper (#12) and lower (#11) portions of Radio Walk. With such a large (and steep!) task, the stair committee suggests that a larger group be formed to clean these stairs. A suggestion has been made to devote the Second Annual FHRA Stairway Cleanup Party to Radio Walk. This will be contingent upon interest from the neighbors in the area.

Please look over the notice and map for the Adopt-A-Stair Program and choose a stairway to adopt. And if you are interested in being a part of the stair committee or have ideas you would like to share, please contact me through the FHRA Hotline (664-7247).

See you on the stairs.

Adam Weisman

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See page 23 for details

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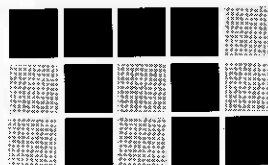
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WHAT WE ARE UP TO

Respectfully submitted by Bruce Carroll, Secretary/Treasurer, FHRA

During Overview's long hiatus the FHRA Board of Directors has been busy. At the May general membership meeting, Adam Weisman, who's taken the stairway cleanup program to new heights, was elected to replace the retiring board member Carol Mason. The board sends its grateful thanks to Carol for her years of service as a founding member. Riccardo Accorsi, Charley Mims, Violet Weber and Frank Yogus were reelected in May to two-year terms.

July's board meeting heard good ideas from residents Gene Cheltenham and Penny Layne and gave the go ahead for the First Annual FHRA End of Summer Festival. For those who don't know what that was, you missed the fun on September 25 (see p. 6). We also took resident Tim Cutler's suggestion and sponsored, in cooperation with Los Feliz Improvement Association, a pre-election forum for our state Assembly candidates.

In August, Festival planning went forward as did efforts to get FHRA representation on the Northeast Division's Police Community Advisory Board. So far they have been unreceptive. If we ever do get a seat, Adam Weisman has volunteered to be our representative. We also discussed ways to get the median project unstuck from the red tape that has bound it, or perhaps just go around the tape by landscaping the portions that have already been okayed. See more on the median on page one.

September's board meeting came just after the free-to-all End of Summer Festival. We congratulated impresario Gene Cheltenham for a great job and started planning for next summer...discussing what worked well and what we'll make better. We also put out a call for any good ideas for fund raisers. Suggestions are still very welcome.

On the environmental front, Adam Weisman re-

ported the adoption of four stairways, and Riccardo Accorsi had the usual good news and bad news on the median project. The good: we will get some grant money through the LA Conservation Corps. The bad: more delays from the city and a second grant application was turned down. We also discussed the plight of some of the poor little trees we planted in the spring along Talmadge. Several have been neglected by their human neighbors.

In October the board was generous, perhaps to ward off ghosts and goblins. We voted donations to support the Los Feliz Business Association's efforts to provide more security while we shop in Los Feliz Village, along Hillhurst and Vermont. And at long last rewarded Don Waldrop with an honorarium for devoting so much talent, time and dedication to getting each issue of the Overview onto Franklin Hills doorsteps. To ward off things that go bump in the night...and the day, we decided to see what we could get the City to do to warn drivers of the big hump in Franklin Avenue as it transitions from a slight to a steep grade near Holly Knoll, just west of the median. A couple of nearby residents have reported accidents and near-accidents when cars hit the hump too fast.

At November's meeting, the board started planning for our January 17th quake anniversary general meeting. We hope to shake some new life into our Preparedness Clusters and to provide lots of information on how to make your home more safe and secure. Plus, we'll have an update from LAPD on how Frankon Hills is faring, and how much we should be fearing, as crime marches on.

For information, questions, suggestions or comments, call the Franklin Hills Residents Association Hotline (213) 664-7247

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VACANT LOTS, from p. 24
reminiscences of his boyhood in Hammond, Indiana.

One night he began by reading an article from New York daily about some kids who'd been arrested for hubcap stealing (keep in mind this was 30 years ago). From this innocuous story he launched into an elaborate recollection of an Indiana swamp near his boyhood home.

He and his pals would congregate on the edge of it and trade scary tales of its foreboding nature. They'd dare each other to enter it, after dark, a suggestion too frightening to be taken seriously. This went on for years until one night Shepherd knew he had to enter that swamp. What had terrified him for so long now seemed to challenge him in a way he could no longer deny.

On the appointed night, with great trepidation—despite warnings from his contemporaries—he entered the swamp. When he emerged in the morning, as he told it, he was somehow different. He couldn't explain it then, nor convey it to his buddies, but they could see and sense a change in him. In that one pivotal moment he had crossed an invisible demarcation between boyhood and manhood.

It was an impelling and engrossing tale as Shepherd told it. My mind raced along making pictures of every snapped twig and frozen footfall. I could feel my heart racing alongside his as he pressed deeper into the ooze of the bog. Radio is a powerful, imaginative stimulus and Shepherd is a master story-teller.

Continued next page

*Ho Ho Holidays are here again. . .
Let's pray for peace and wiser men,
For more that's real and less that's fake,
For earth that's steady and doesn't quake.*

*Let each reflect on what's askew. . .
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See page 23 for details

Continued from previous page

Now with less than a minute until the closing theme, Shepherd says, "And that's the trouble with kids today, there aren't any swamps for them to explore. They're out stealing hubcaps, instead of exploring swamps where they can come up against their own fears and conquer them."

No swamps, no wetlands, few fields and fewer vacant lots.

Author Jerry Mander (*Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* and *The Absence of the Sacred*) framed an April talk at the Oak Grove School in Ojai around the seriousness of our present and growing estrangement with nature.

He pointed out how molecular engineering (nanotechnology), robotics, bio-engineering (genetics) are ways in which technology has separated us from the natural world. In a cautionary note, he observed that this disconnection from the natural world means that we now evolve within the context of machines and human activity, not nature. Our ways of relating and being are determined by technology. We adapt to fit (to serve) the machine (the system), not the other way around.

Long a critic of television's ability to foster spectatorship in place of experience, he went on to point out that 100 corporations control 85% of all commercial television ads and fund 50% of public television. T.V., he said, is the way

that corporations speak to the people, the head to the body. And computers, are its (the body's) nervous system. They're a centralizing agent. They make global communication possible and while bringing us incredible levels of help, also deliver tremendous power to corporations.

All systems take power away from local communities and deliver it elsewhere. We're likely to see, he went on, California's environmental laws challenged by farmers in Belgium who, under GATT and NAFTA-type treaties, will claim our local laws as barriers to trade.

A June 15, 1994 *Los Angeles Times* article "Where the Wild Things Are," by Bob Sipchen, in the Life & Style section, explores similar ideas regarding the loss of nature in a new book, "The Geography of Childhood: by Stephen Trimble and Gary Paul Nabhan.

The authors are chiefly concerned that the absence of nature and natural places to play may mean that kids never build "reservoirs of sensory imagery." They recall a PBS special where a Los Angeles boy could identify a half dozen types of weapons by their sound. "In another place and time we would have spoken as matter-of-factly about the calls of six common species of hawks and owls," they write.

From the book's preface: "Simply put, we are concerned about how few children now grow up incorporating plants, animals and places into their sense of home."



George Moreno, Realtor

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"My home had been listed with another realtor for over 12 months and they couldn't sell it. George took over the listing and began his marketing campaign immediately and sold the house. I should have listed with him in the first place.

Daniel Enos,
2184 Talmadge
Los Feliz

"As a financial planner, it's my business to get the best value for my clients. After interviewing all of the top realtors in the area, it was clear that George was the best one to sell my home in the Franklin Hills. He listed and sold it in 2 weeks."

Alan Boone
2036 Ames St.
Franklin Hills

"George sold our property in Los Feliz at a time when very few houses were selling. He found us the right buyer for our property, a downtown attorney who wanted to live close to his office."

Pam Devine & Patti Fairbanks
4125 Los Nietos Dr.,
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"When my wife was transferred, we needed to sell our triplex in Silverlake. After seeing George's for sale signs throughout the neighborhood, I called him. I'm glad I did. He listed and sold my property to one of his past clients and we were on our way."

Dr. Robert Bach
1211 Westerly Terrace
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Earth.

And Sipchen writes in his article of this untamed realm within the city or suburb, "Just beyond the reaches of adult scrutiny, children explore it, dig and get dirty in it, build forts and catch lizards in it. And in the process, they learn skills and gain understanding of the world that people can't teach."

And quoting British planner Robin Moore, Sipchen further writes, "Where is this vital activity to be carried on if every part of the child's environment is spoken for to meet the economic, social and cultural needs of the adult community."

As "The Geography of Childhood" puts it: "As parents, our job is to pay attention, to create possibilities—to be careful matchmakers between our children and the Earth."

We lost an opportunity to gain a bit more of it, open space, in (the June) election's defeat of Proposition 180. Understandably, voters were in no mood to further add to their bond indebtedness. Still, money for parks at a time when land prices are depressed and willing sellers abound would have been a boon to the preservation of our natural environment, our California heritage. Sadly, another chance to preserve a few natural spaces from the dwindling supply of what's left slipped by us. And, we could sorely use some

additional space between ourselves and the onslaught of technology.

The Mountains Education Program of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was set back along with the acquisition of more open space. Fewer inner-city kids will have the opportunity to learn first hand of the natural world in the mountains they see in the distance—a world beyond and away from the all too familiar sound of unfriendly fire.

Reading of the world's runaway population numbers, the disappearance of amphibians—an indicator species signaling real trouble ahead for all life—I marvel in the alchemy of reintegration evoked by the smell of dirt, pepper trees and streamside willows. The past's distances evaporate before powerful images—as clear as yesterday's lime popsicle—of twisted forts under a canopy of lacy branches and sticky red berries, of lazy summer days with dragonflies and cattails, of a shaking wood trestle and the squeal of laughter, and of that most magical of places . . . a vacant lot.

Alan Kishbaugh is currently the President of The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., a Los Angeles organization of neighborhood groups like the Franklin Hills Residents Association. Reprinted with permission from the Federation News.

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Larger contributions are extremely welcome. Thank you for joining FHRA!

THE VALUE OF VACANT LOTS

by Alan Kishbaugh

Where I grew up in east Pasadena, there was a pasture at the end of the street. It was home to a burro named Jackie and a mule 16 hands high. Nearby was 'the wash,' a place of pepper trees and, in rainy weather, tortuous water that coursed down from the San Gabriel Mountains through Eaton Canyon. It was one of our secret places where we made forts, met after ditching either school or an unwanted playmate, rendezvoused when on the lam from some neighborhood prank, staged our dirt clod fights after spring rains when whole handfuls of sprouting weeds yielded root balls of incredible ballistic capability, and, in summer, played at being hoboes in a jungle camp.

Less than half a mile away was an old timbered railroad trestle that spanned a gorge cut by the wash. We used to climb up the sides of it and hang off the

end of the railroad ties when the Red Car came barreling along on its way to Sierra Madre. There we'd be, dangling in space, some 30 or 40 feet off the ground, getting the ride of our lives as the trolley violently shook the whole of the trestle. We thought it was great fun.

My childhood memories are full of images of vacant lots ... spaces between places I always seemed to be visiting. Each one of them was an adventure and each one a place of fascinating plants and animals. There were many more open spaces in California and the west in those days.

I recall listening to humorist/author Jean Shepherd on WOR radio in New York City in the early sixties. He'd largely wing a 45 minute show every weekday night with intricate, humorous, and always relevant

See VACANT, p. 21



The last 5 houses featured here sold!

Karen Weiss

Season's Greetings!



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