

OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE No. 18

WINTER 1999



An O-38 (O for Observation) plane like this took the 1932 photo. The pilot sat in front with the cameraman behind so the wing wouldn't get in the picture. This photo is from the Air National Guard website at: www.ang.af.mil/ for a better look at the large photo, see pages 12-13

ANOTHER LOOK BACK...FROM ABOVE

By Bruce Carroll

There was a lot more open space, a lot fewer houses and almost no trees when this aerial view of John Marshall High School, with the Franklin Hills in the foreground was taken on June 26, 1932.

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Whether the California National Guard 40th Division, 115th Photo Squadron, was doing reconnaissance for defense of the strategic Shakespeare Bridge...or they were just on a routine training mission is a fact lost to history.

What luckily wasn't lost, is this very detailed high resolution photo donated to the FHRA by Sterling Weaver. In the early 50's he was a fighter pilot in the Air National Guard based at Van Nuys Airport when he recalls "a couple of guys I knew were just ditching pictures." Some of the other photos Weaver saved and thankfully donated to interested organizations showed "train wrecks around the area and the Griffith Park Observatory."

This photo, of then one year old Marshall High, also has a connection with Griffith Park. In 1932 the O-38 observation bi-plane that took this picture was based at the long gone Griffith Park Airport.

A careful analysis of the picture shows some things never change. Note the very cracked pavement on the streets in the lower half of the picture (l-r Sanborn, Melbourne, Prospect, Deloz, Hollyvista and Franklin). Also of interest is what looks a lot like a trash dump below the intersection of Sanborn and Melbourne (above the first "H" in "High") and what appears to be a stable at the end of Sanborn on land now occupied by the LILA School. The rest of the LILA property, south of the bridge, remained a ravine until filled in with dirt from the Hollywood Freeway excavation in 1949, 17 years after this photo was taken.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Ricardo Gomez

I recently assumed the presidency of the Franklin Hills Residence Association because I am interested in improving the quality of life for all residents of our neighborhood. Although most of Franklin Hills is quaint and beautiful, there are a few areas that are neglected and in dire need of attention. This neglect adversely impacts the entire neighborhood.

Identifying the Problems

As president, I have pledged to address the infrastructure needs of all of Franklin Hills, and one of my paramount goals will be to improve these previously neglected areas. For example, we need to focus on the streets themselves - on street re-paving, improved street lighting and street sweeping, not to mention the removal of bulky items that are frequently dumped on our streets. Owners of blighted properties need to be encouraged, or required, to improve their own properties.

Another quality of life issue is excessive noise. Many residents are frustrated because their peace and quiet is disturbed by a continual bombardment of noise from loud and raucous parties and other gatherings in the area immediately bordering King Middle School. Public transportation is also a problem. We have a new subway system that can whisk passengers to Downtown or North Hollywood in a matter of minutes. Yet, the MTA and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation have prevented Franklin Hills residents from taking advantage of our local subway stop by refusing to provide a shuttle service from our neighborhood to the Vermont and Sunset station.

My Own Background

When I attended Franklin Avenue elementary school, King Middle School and later graduated from John Marshall High School in 1973, most of these problems we are now facing did not exist in the Franklin Hills. After completing my undergraduate and legal education at U.C.L.A., I practiced law in Downtown L.A., lived in other parts of the City and spent a lot of time working on projects around the country. About ten years ago I moved back to the Franklin Hills area and was astonished at the blight that had crept in on a few streets and at the City's failure to provide basic services to the area. I had a tough time even getting the City to sweep the street in front of my house (this is still a problem around King Middle School). Ultimately I joined FHRA because it provides an excellent vehicle for getting involved and effectuating improvements in our neighborhood. Over the last several years, I have witnessed a lot of major improvements, and we achieved many of these by using the political structure afforded by FHRA.

Our Accomplishments to Date

Unfortunately, the City of Los Angeles is no longer user friendly towards its residents. In many instances the City will fail to provide basic services and improvements. If you want something done, you have to fight for it or the tax dollars will wind up being spent elsewhere. For example, members of the FHRA spear-headed and monitored the restoration of the Shakespearean Bridge which was damaged by the Northridge quake. Without our activism, we may have ended up with an uninspiring utilitarian looking bridge. The median just west of the bridge was an ugly asphalt slope until members of the Association took it upon themselves to organize a landscaping project. It was the FHRA, not the City, that landscaped the area and to this day the FHRA maintains the median.

From the President

Several years ago the residents of Cumberland Avenue organized themselves and, after years of pushing, they got the City to repave Cumberland Avenue between Sanborn and Talmadge. Although we are still trying to induce the City to repave more streets in our neighborhood, at least we have gotten a start on addressing a major problem in Franklin Hills (if not City wide), that of crumbling

Continued on p.8

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Franklin Hills OVERVIEW

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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 90029*

Sunset Drive Becomes Memory Lane

As told to Bruce Carroll

"It looks a lot different...everything has changed" That's what first struck Bud Young when he visited his old Franklin Hills neighborhood after being away for nearly 70 years. Bud, along with his older sister Ella and younger brother Francis moved away from the small house at 3914 Sunset Drive in 1930. "There used to be a lot of vacant lots...it was better for the kids," recalled Bud after his sentimental journey

The house, built by his father Harold and his uncle Paul in the 1920's, was according to Bud, "the first place I remember." As he recalls the neighborhood, "most of the people who lived nearby worked in the movie business, not actors, but people who built sets and the like." And he remembers being able to look down Hollywood Boulevard and "see the search lights at Grauman's Chinese Theatre."

But the bright lights faded quickly for the Young family when the depression came. Bud's father, who had "finally gotten an old Model T," eliminating the walk down the hill to climb aboard the Sunset street car for the ride downtown, had lost his job. The pharmaceutical company McKesson Robbins no longer needed men to mix chemicals. And soon the Youngs lost their house at 3914 Sunset Drive. The family was "forced to leave the furniture and everything," laments Bud, who was 9 years old at the time. His father eventually found work on gold dredges and sawmills in the foothills northeast of Merced. By 1935 the family had finally set down new roots in Chula Vista where Bud's father worked for the Customs Service and Bud worked as a route salesman in the overall supply business before retiring.

On Easter in 1995 Bud got to thinking, "gee, I'd like to see it again." So he decided to show his bride of over 50 years the house where he grew up. "it was a special trip," he reminisces. "I just got kinda curious...so we jumped in the car and took off early that morning...there wasn't much traffic...everything has changed from what was there." Well almost everything. The Franklin Hills hospitality was still there and the current owner of 3914 Sunset Drive, Brenda Kilbourne, welcomed the time travelers and showed them around the house. In exchange Bud sent a packet of vintage family photos showing the old neighborhood. What does he remember about his trip down memory lane?

"I didn't realize the streets were so narrow."



In a picture that could have come right out of "Our Gang" Bud Young (center) is flanked by his brother Francis (l), the next door neighbor girl Ethel Madgshon and an unidentified dog. The house in the background is 3917 Sunset Dr.



Looking east down Sunset Drive from in front of 3914...Bud Young (r) with sister Ella (c) neighbor Ethel Madgshon and an unidentified doll riding in brother Francis' carriage. The lack of trees makes it easy to see the nearly naked hillside across Hyperion



Standing in front of 3914 Sunset Drive mother Lucille Young reaches out to keep Bud's younger brother Francis from rolling down hill.

Los Feliz Branch

Eight months after opening, the branch is very busy. We have become more than just a new warehouse of books, magazines and videos, we are also a community center where families of toddlers and parents come weekly, teens hang out after school & adults find needed community information.

We are a "link" on the web pages of Los Feliz On-Line: the LF Village Business Association Home Page, featured on Leonardo DiCaprio's web pages and along with Barton Phelps, the library was in the September issue of Architecture Magazine. In addition, many people come in looking for community referrals to banks, restaurants, day care and auto repairs.

In response to requests from people for "good places to eat" after their library visit, we are working with the business association to collect area menus into a reference collection call "A Taste of Los Feliz". So far it has been very popular and we have had a wonderful excuse to try out lots of great food.

Traditional library services continue with circulation continuing to grow. In the temporary building 21,000 books were borrowed from January to March. From April 8 to June 30, 51,000 items were borrowed and from July 1 to September 30, 53,000. The gate count shows 246,250 people passed into the building. The carpets have now been cleaned three times.

As promised there have been more adult interest programs. The Internet Resource Workshop and the Computer Comfort Clinics are offered twice a month and we look forward to offering more of them as the staff and the hours expand. The computers (both Internet and Word Processors) are in use constantly with people looking for library materials, writing resumes, checking their e-mail and learning how to search the Internet.

We launched an author series called Lounge Chair Literature (like Armchair Travel). The idea is a cross between an author reading and a book discussion group. Both author and patrons gather in a small circle with tea & cookies and just talk. The first of the series were very successful chats with local authors Paula Woods in September and Yolanda Alaniz in November.

The series will continue in 2000 with Eve Babitz on January 11 th.

The Los Feliz Library League raised & donated \$10,000 to establish a books-on-tape collection and arranged a donation from the Times Foundation Reading by 9 project for an additional \$10,000 for children's books and audio sets. The League also presented very successful Architecture Lectures that will continue next year. For information on joining the League and a schedule of lectures call (323) 644-9449.

The Friends of Los Feliz Library continued the 4th Saturday monthly Book Sales. \$950 supported children's & teen programs and supplement additional copies of best sellers and \$2,750 will be used to establish a Los Feliz in Literature collection.

In addition, the Los Angeles Dodgers donated incentives including team balls, caps, bats & game tickets to encourage children to read. The Buffy the Vampire Slayer Production Company contributed teen reading incentives and the Los Angeles Zoo once again provided a free family zoo pass. A new Children's year-round at home reading club, "2000

Reasons to Read" is in effect now. Sign-ups are at the library reference desk to get a reading log and after 2000 minutes each child receives a grade level dictionary as a prize.

The library will be closed from Dec. 23rd to Dec. 27th and again on Dec. 31st to Jan. 3rd.

The entire Los Feliz Library staff wishes our Franklin Hills neighbors an excellent holiday season and a safe new years. We look forward to seeing you all in 2000.

-submitted by Pearl Yonezawa Senior Librarian



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Dead Animal Pickup (323) 227-7179

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BUILDING & SAFETY VIOLATIONS: (213) 237-0685

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HOMELESS, Food and Shelter (323) 974-1234

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LOS FELIZ PUBLIC LIBRARY: (323) 913-4710

NEIGHBOR DISPUTE: (213) 485-8324

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Northeast Division, 3353 San Fernando Road, LA 90065:

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Community Relations: (213) 485-2548

Gang Problems: (213) 485-7538

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LAPD Online: <http://www.lapd.org>

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Reports: (323) 485-4193

Basic Car Coordinator: Sgt. Marcey

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Traffic Enforcement (Speeding) (323) 485-2799

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POISON CONTROL (800) 777-6476

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New Officers at Northeast Division

by Carol Skinner

Thanks to the Northeast staff and to the LAPD website (<http://lapdonline.org>) for supplying the information contained in this article. Ed.

Northeast Division of the Los Angeles Police Department has two Captains who were assigned this summer after the retirement of Captain Tom . The Commanding Officer is Captain Kyle Jackson, who is a 22 year veteran of the LAPD and holds the rank of Captain Three. He has previously been assigned to a wide variety of duties ranging from patrol officer to his current assignment. In this capacity he oversees the efforts of the Detective Section, CRASH, Vice, Crime Analysis, and Patrol Operations. As part of his collateral duties he is responsible for developing liaisons and support within the business community to reduce crime and fear.

Captain Jackson has also been assigned as the Commanding Officer of the Devonshire Detective Division (when holding the rank of Lieutenant), and was Project Director of the Devonshire Area Volunteer Surveillance Team. This citizen group received national recognition as an effective community policing/problem solving program. It would be excellent if we were able to establish such a program here in Franklin Hills. Captain Jackson was part of the Department's Community Policing cadre and provided in-service training to officers and supervisors in community policing and problem solving.

Captain Jackson has received numerous awards of recognition. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from California State University, Long Beach.

Captain I Charles Roper was born in Santa Monica, California in 1946. Although a California native, he was raised in western South Dakota and educated at the University of Wyoming, graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in History/Pre-Law. After serving in the US Navy as a helicopter pilot he joined the LAPD in January 1973.

He was promoted to sergeant in 1979, lieutenant in 1990 and to Captain in August 1999. He has been assigned to Wilshire and Central Patrol, as a SLO in Hollenbeck, 77th Street in Air Support Division, was a watch commander at Hollywood and for five years was Officer-in-Charge of Emergency Operations Section. In EOS he was responsible for developing Department response plans for natural and man-made disasters.

As the Northeast Operations Support Division Commander, Captain Roper directly supervises the activities of the Area's Detectives, CRASH, and Vice Sections. He also coordinates the Safe School program for the Arts.

LILA School Update

Adam M. Weisman,
FHRA Chairman and LILA Trustee

One of many wonderful organizations within our neighborhood is *Lycee International de Los Angeles*. Located at the end of Russell Avenue and set below the Shakespeare Bridge, this 6.5 acre campus has been in operation since 1991 providing students from Kindergarten to twelfth grade a unique bicultural and bilingual educational experience. With buildings designed by Architect John Lautner, the campus is classified as Historical Site #553 by the City of Los Angeles.

The school is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the French Ministry of Education, and the International Baccalaureate Organization. Although additional campuses are located in Tarzana, Fountain Valley, Monrovia, and Woodland Hills, the Franklin Hills campus is the largest and is considered the flagship of LILA. This year 328 students are enrolled on our neighborhood campus with a zoned capacity of 350.

Over the last year FHRA has worked hard to improve communication between the school and its neighbors. This became essential when residents raised concern about LILA's property management and student noise. Neigh-

bors pointed out the temporary trailer along Sanborn, trash and vegetation overgrowth in the same area, and recess noise drifting upward along the neighboring homes. Each of these issues impacted the quality of life among the hills.

As a trustee of LILA and FHRA board member, meetings were arranged with neighbors, city officials and school management. Following negotiations, the campus trailer and recess area was moved to a setting under the bridge. Fencing was constructed

around the recess field for safety. Tentative plans have the trailers being set on to permanent cement slabs. The soccer (football) field along Sanborn now remains in its original condition and neighbors enjoy an unobstructed natural view. These outstanding results provide another example of the positive and constructive spirit in our neighborhood!



Jeff Myers and J. Alan Jones, representatives from the area noise abatement group, voiced appreciation for the actions of LILA and FHRA. Both commented that noise has diminished and the property management has improved. No other complaints have been raised by the group.

Continued on page 9

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King Middle School

Editor's Note: Mrs. Rodriguez is a community activist, school chair for the Los Feliz Improvement Association, Los Feliz member of the Community Police Advisory Board, an always cooperative neighbor to FHRA, and the mother of two school age children. The two previous issues of the Overview have contained articles explaining how she decided to re-landscape and restore the King campus; how she applied for and won a Neighborhood Matching Grant of \$5000 and started to work a year ago. Trees were planted, ground mulched, pruning and planting begun. To continue:

By Spring we realized that Proposition BB air conditioning construction was to take place at the front of the school so we moved our efforts to the back of the school on Sunset Drive where a community garden was to be planted. Community volunteers came from the Silver Lake Gardeners Club, the Los Angeles Gardeners Club, the Community Police Advisory Board - Northeast Division, and the Beautification Committee of the Los Feliz Improvement Association. Susan Martin president of the Silver Lake Gardeners Club guided our planting of Mexican Sage, Rosemary, Aloe Vera, Sweet Lantana, and other drought tolerant plants which are doing very well.

When the 1999 school session returned from Winter Break in January we found that several very large, ugly chain link cages had been installed to protect air conditioning transformers at the front of the school. These large cages would be impossible to hide. No landscaping could conceal LAUSD's answer to security for the AC transformers. So after much letter writing to Stephen Soboroff, Chair of the Proposition BB Oversight Committee, and John Ferraro President of the City Council, and endless phone calls and meetings, LAUSD promised to reduce the size of the cages and hire a landscape architect to help design a plan which would hide the cages. On October 18th the cages were reduced and in November the irrigation work began.

Mia Lehrer + Associates, which had already donated time to redesign the courtyard was hired to design both the irrigation and the landscaping, which includes a grove of Crape Myrtle trees, Italian Cypress, Lantana, Star Jasmine, Vinca Major, Birds of Paradise and Flax to name a few. It is sort of a drought tolerant tropical look which we think will be most attractive along Fountain

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FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION MEMBER?:

YES
NO

From the President Continued from p. 2

streets. Had the residents not organized themselves, the City would not have re-paved that stretch of Cumberland at any time in the foreseeable future. We need your help to keep up the pressure on the City so that we get a fair return on our tax dollars by getting our share of City services.

On-going Projects

Currently, some of our residents and friends are trying to clean up Sunset Drive and Bates Avenue where they border King Middle School. As many of you know, parts of these streets are very blighted and a lot of trash is dumped around the school. Unfortunately, the Department of Transportation removed the street sweeping signs around the school during construction. Many residents have complained about this and we are working with the principal, Dr. Thelma Yoshi to rectify the situation. Mary Rodriguez has been working very hard to landscape and beautify the campus and deserves our thanks. Peter Bedard also deserves congratulations for his tireless efforts to clean up the area.

Finally, I would like to welcome Captain Kyle Jackson, the new Area Commanding Officer for LAPD Northeast. These are turbulent times for the LAPD in many respects. One controversy arose when Chief Parks relieved the Senior Lead Officers of certain community based policing responsibilities. Chief Parks' decision has been very unpopular with many members of our community. Captain Jackson now has the difficult task of developing and implementing a new plan for delivering police services to Franklin Hills. Although some of us may not be happy with this change, we should support his efforts and ensure that a successful plan ultimately evolves. Hopefully we will be able to deliver a progress report to all of you so that you will know how to contact the LAPD for non-emergency services such as getting a nuisance problem solved.

In Conclusion

FHRA exists to serve our neighborhood and to prevent the City from ignoring the needs of our residents. You can help by getting involved and contributing as much or as little time as your schedule permits. One significant way of getting involved is simply to join the Franklin Hills Residence Association. When I am pushing City politicians to spend our tax dollars on providing services to Franklin Hills, often the first words out of their mouths are "So how many members are there in your organization?" The politicians gauge our strength by the size of our membership. The more members we have, the more attention we get from City Hall. If your availability for involvement is limited to only a few minutes out of the year, then take that time to fill out the membership form attached to this newsletter and write a check for \$10.00 in dues. That gesture alone is a significant act of involvement and it will benefit you a thousand fold. If, on the other hand, your taste for involvement is greater, if you would like to initiate a project for example, or solve a problem, then contact us and we will help you organize and find a solution. We welcome all residents and encourage them to participate.

LILA Continued from page 6

Over the next year, LILA will be working on fund raising (a never-ending process for FHRA too!), capital improvements (e.g., ESL, computer supplies), and developing unique social events that celebrate the French culture and its international impact. The parents group is working on developing the school as one of many disaster safety sites within the Hills (including ABC studio and Thomas Starr King Junior High School). Pearl Yonezawa, our neighborhood librarian reported that our library stocks a small number of French-language books for young children (K-6th), but she is willing to stock up to 60 French-language books within their teen room for up to three months. If any FHRA resident would like more information about LILA (admission, volunteer work), you may call 66-LILA-6 or Adam Weisman (666-4630)

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Ave. from Bates Ave. to Manzanita St. We hope to implement this design the first Saturday in February and volunteers are welcome.

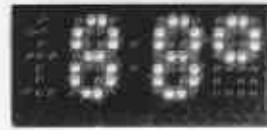
Many people and business have helped fund this project: the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) has pledged to help by purchasing the plants needed to fulfill the landscape design. John Aaroe & Associates Charitable Fund donated \$2,500.00, the Franklin Hills Residents Association donated \$1,250.00, the Los Feliz Improvement Association matched that amount for a total of \$5,000.00. I reapplied for the 1999 Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant and was awarded another \$5,000. I then applied for a grant to 'Save Outdoor Sculptures' (SOS) in Washington D.C. and I am hopeful that the answer will be positive. If I am awarded the SOS grant we will begin restoration on 'The Vanishing Race' the 1936 WPA statue in January. Then our energies will turn toward the heart of the school, the courtyard, which includes the restoration of the circa 1926 tiled fountain and a complete re-landscape design by Mia Lehrer.

Also in January 2000, an after school program will be implemented by Los Angeles Center for Education Research (L.A.C.E.R.), a landscape/horticultural class, a mural painting class, music, dance, and academics will be offered to all King students. The mural class was awarded \$1,700.00 from the 1999 Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant. The neighborhood contribution came from the Franklin Hills Residents Association, L.A.C.E.R., and volunteers, to hire muralist Ricardo Mendoza, to work with the students and create a work of art at the back of the a school on Sunset Drive. It will complement our garden in progress and enhance the school's back entrance and the neighborhood. We have also been informed by LAUSD that the school is scheduled for painting next year and I was asked to choose the colors. All in all, in the year 2000 Thomas Starr King Middle School will be off to a great start.

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A SOIREE OF SUCCULENTS

By Bob Page

Cacti are peculiar things to understand, though personal communication with one or more is not something I dabble in. At least not often. There is one aboding¹ in a pot on the wall of our carport that is so situated that the morning sun backlights it...and seems to go right through it in glowing translucence. Right through it as if it had no skeletal support system at all. It never ceases to fascinate me.

We keep hearing that the majority of the Los Angeles basin would be semi, if not total, desert were it not for the invasiveness of humankind determined to overlook that. Exotics from all over the world seem to thrive in parks, gardens, patios, and decks, and I suspect that just about each of those has some form of cacti and or succulent. We certainly do, and I'd like for you to wander with me as I write about some of our spiny and colorful friends.

Did you know that poinsettia is a euphorbia, a member of a succulent family? I'm cheating a bit here, because that's one euphorbia we do not have.

Nonetheless, that milky sap that readily runs out when the stem is cut is SOP for that family, some of which is so toxic that it is used to tip the arrows of South American Native Americans (which they use in blow guns.) Most of the euphorbias we have as house or garden plants in L.A. look more cactus-like than some cacti, and it's a task sometimes to pass on the message that thorns a cactus do not necessarily make.

Some of the most widely used non-cacti are the agaves. One of the most apparent (and one to step widely around) is the "Americana". That's the "century plant" with the six foot leaves which have a nasty array of wicked spines. They are rugged and handsome, and one plants with caution. On the hillside next to our home I planted the standard version on the lower slope and the beautiful variagated one at the top. The was several years ago, and the only water they got was from rain. Nonetheless, both have spread out over a large section of land. The less "lethal" and less spreading agave is the "attenuatta"...a much safer bet.

For us the most colorful cacti that we have are the "jungle cactus", the epiphyllum. They are an amazement in that they come in so many forms and have so many different flowers (all, however, typical cactus flowers). They can be potted on your deck, some make wonderful hanging container plants, while others grow to great lengths up tree trunks. They bloom from April to June The reds start off, followed by the pinks, and then the creamy whites. The flowers don't last long, but they can be spectacular. Though some are small and profuse, most of the blooms are huge...some up to 10" in width. We must have four dozen different containers plus one garden plant that is spiralling up and around a tree in front. One hanging plant has a couple of "arms" that are six feet long. On the older plants there may be a dozen or more blooms. I still gawk, but I long ago stopped taking photos!

Several years ago I came across a discarded cactus, of the prickly pear variety that has tiny needles (once

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you find them in your skin you have much greater respect for Mother Nature.) But what a handsome cactus! The fine spines so covered it that it was a radiant yellow. Well, of course it's now growing in our yard with surprising vigor and producing dozens of canary- yellow blooms...with only rain water to nourish it.

We live at the eastern edge of what was deemed "the banana belt", where in the last century even wheat was grown along the edge of the Hollywood Hills; where, apparently, an endless, vast variety of plants thrive...from orchids to succulents. And some of those succulents have blooms to rival orchids. Or so it seems to me... In any case, the wealth of cacti and succulents that are available and so easy to grow and enjoy is boundless although room in our garden and on the decks is not!

¹ Aboding : adjectival form of the noun abode (Ed.)

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*Why cannot we have some form of transit to the subway?*¹⁴
IS THERE LIFE AFTER MTA?

By Marcelle Zonta

For the past 4 months the Red Line has been up and running. It is good to have the choice of taking either the beautiful, clean, fast subway or the bus.

Unfortunately there is no parking near the subway and there is still no bus picking up folks from the Franklin Hills and transporting them the one to one-and-a-half miles to the Subway. But every morning around 6:35 a.m. an MTA bus drives south on Hillhurst, stops at the donut shop on the N.E. corner of Franklin and drives on, leaving the people standing on the corner of Franklin and Hillhurst waiting for a bus! The sign on this bus reads "NOT IN SERVICE." From what I can gather, it goes down as far as Sunset and turns right, heading for Vermont and Sunset. Now I ask you, would it be so terrible for this bus to pick up people along the way? After all a totally empty bus cannot be too economically feasible.

The Beachwood area was successful in getting an LA Department of Transportation bus that drives around their area and drops folks off at the Hollywood and Vine station. How different are we from Beachwood? We have hills, they have hills. We want to get to the subway, they want to get to the subway. Go figure. There seems to be some sort of bias against people who reside east of Vermont. What is the problem?

I refuse to accept their answer that when leaving the subway in the evening, one can always pick up the Pasadena bus (180/181) and get off up the road at Franklin, Hillhurst or

Griffith Park Boulevard. Has anyone seen the Hollywood/Vermont bus stop at 5:00 P.M. ? There is nary a sign of a bus for miles and when the bus does show up it is jam-packed. There is obviously no coordination between the folks in the bus office and the subway office.

It seems that the Franklin Hills community is being left out of the mix. Why?

I am formulating a letter to Councilman Ferraro asking why we cannot have some form of transit to take people to the subway. After all, we helped pay for it so we should at least have some access. I could use a bit of help in the brainstorming department. Maybe some of us could get together and compose the letter under the aegis of the Franklin Hills Residents Association and perhaps we could get something moving. Councilman Ferraro, are you reading this?

Myself — I love to walk! In the mornings I walk to the bus and in the evenings, I walk home from the subway, which is nice in daylight hours. But now that it grows darker and darker, walking those few blocks from the subway until you pass Hollywood and Prospect can be a pretty creepy experience. And many of us cannot devote the time needed to walk a mile or two to and from the subway!

I hope to hear from some of you right away. Maybe we can persuade the powers that be that Franklin Hills residents should have some method of getting to the Subway.

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Park or Parking Lot

By Bruce Carroll

The FHRA Board of Directors, at its October meeting, voted to join several neighboring groups in opposing plans to move the Los Angeles Children's Museum to a Griffith Park site adjacent to the Mulholland Fountain at the corner of Los Feliz Blvd. and Riverside Drive. The Museum, which wants to expand from its 17,000 sq foot location near City Hall to a three story 80,000 sq foot building in the park, has already received approval from the Recreation and Parks Commission despite the fact that a full environmental impact report was not done and plans for such a building violate the Park Preservation Act and are inconsistent with the Griffith Park General Plan.

The Los Feliz Improvement Association has filed suit to block any further action until a full EIR is prepared as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. While high voltage electrical transmission lines overhead and a huge 55 inch water tunnel just below the surface might cause problems, the biggest concern is traffic. The museum hopes to attract a million children a year. During the week most come on school buses, but on weekends they arrive by car. Lobbyist, city commissioner and museum board president Douglas Ring told KCRW "while I will absolutely concede that there will be some additional vehicle trips they won't come at those times the intersection is most congested."



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But LFIA President Charlotte DeArmond points out that at Los Feliz and Riverside "traffic fluctuates from minor gridlock to total gridlock. And the worst traffic we have in the neighborhood, of course, is on Saturday and Sunday and there have been no traffic studies at all done during that time period." Even without a formal traffic study we Frankinites know the more gridlocked Los Feliz gets the more cars seek our streets for relief.

DeArmond bristles at charges that those opposing the plan are anti-children. She suggests the Museum look nearby at Barnsdall Park, already a center for youth art activities, which has the added advantage of excellent public transit access both from bus and subway.

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Bates Avenue Neighborhood Watch

by Peter Bedard

Hello from the other side of the neighborhood. In case you haven't heard, there are several changes beginning out here on Bates Avenue. The neighbors on the street have recently begun to mobilize and the first ever Bates Avenue Neighborhood Watch was formed with Astrid Mendez and Gloria Cadorna co-chairing. Our first event, a Halloween party, was planned in less than a month. The children on the street approached the Neighborhood Watch requesting to close the street for Halloween, and with the help of Lupe Franco in John Ferraro's office we successfully petitioned the city council and closed the street for Halloween night. There were games, prizes, a haunted house, a piñata, lots of candy, a Halloween costume contest and a D.J. The kids raised money by asking neighbors and local merchants for donations and organizing car washes and bake sales. The kids learned a lot in planning the event and over two hundred people joined in and had a great time!

The Bates Avenue Neighborhood Association is also making some moves in other directions. Keep an eye out for Bates Avenue to look a little different soon. The Hollywood Beautification Team (HBT) has agreed to work with the Neighborhood Watch and help in the planting of trees along the residential side of the street. The trees should be planted by January 2000.

The Neighborhood Watch is very concerned with the appearance of the street and has organized several clean-up parties over the last few months. The city is still having communication problems between departments, and street cleaning services is extremely delinquent in returning sweeping services to the outside perimeter of Thomas Starr King Middle School. In the mean time many neighbors clean the street and the school weekly to help remove the trash dropped by the 2000+ students attending King. We are also working on getting garbage cans placed in and around the school property as there are none on the playing field or basketball courts.

So far we have three victories. Greater neighborhood participation. A wonderful Halloween party. The promise of street trees by HBT. Next comes the ongoing trash problem caused by the multitude of street vendors and lack of trash cans, the speeding along the street (speed-bumps maybe?), and a Christmas party. Stay tuned.



Max, Jasmin, unidentified, Lloque

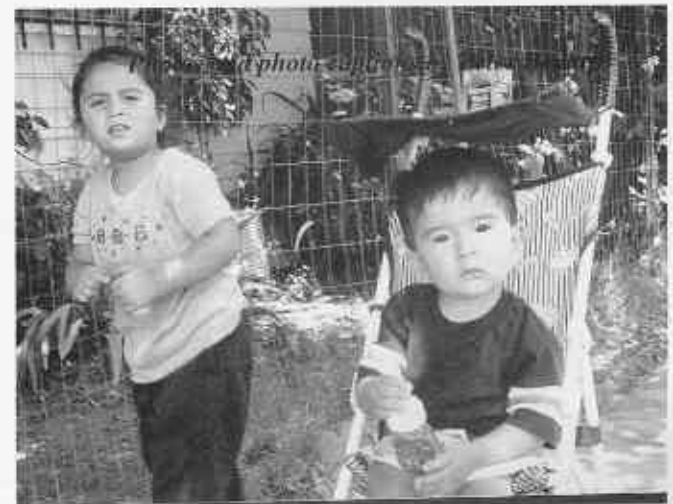


Myra and Francisca



Peter Bedard and Darius Cadorna

Fernando, Carmen, Carolina



Neighborhood visitors: they didn't introduce themselves to our correspondent

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Neighborhood Councils Where Do We Fit In the Picture? By Bruce Carroll

January 1st isn't the only date in the upcoming year likely to be plagued by pandemonium predicting pundits and anxious Angelenos awaiting allaying of their fears. The new city charter, approved by the voters last spring, takes effect on July 1, 2000. With it comes a hopefully smooth blending of old and new ways for the 219 year old City of Los Angeles to do business.

Perhaps most prominent among the new ideas is the charter's provision for Neighborhood Councils. Article IX of

the new charter gives the councils no ultimate power, saying only that they "shall have an advisory role on issues of concern to the neighborhood" (sec. 900). It also creates a nearly blank canvas on which the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with council approval, must start to paint a picture of what a neighborhood council should look like.

So far there are virtually no rules about size, boundaries (they may even be able to overlap), organization etc. except that, "Regulations shall not restrict the method by which the members of a neighborhood council are chosen" (sec. 904d) and that all must "adopt fair and open procedures" (sec. 904e). Those are pretty broad brush strokes and the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners has until September 2000 to fill in the details. After that the City Council has six months to lend their artistic vision to the plan.


But where do we come into the picture? That was the subject of a workshop held in late October and attended by a group of neighborhood associations from FHRA west along the Hollywood Hills. William Weinberger, a former charter commission member and now one of the first members of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, told the gathering, "it's not too early to start." But he explained the commission had not yet set any of the public meetings that will gather input for setting the criteria...the what any group needs to do...to qualify it as a Neighborhood Council.

Weinberger did make quite clear that to be certified a Neighborhood Council "must represent all the interests." It can't be just residents, like FHRA, it must include businesses, schools, churches, etc. In most areas residents and business interests each have their own separate associations, Weinberger said the new councils "are not supposed to be them against us." Given the Neighborhood Councils' purely advisory roles, this might seem like a prescription for an impotent debating society. But it could also be a powerful tool to bring better understanding among divergent community interests.

There were also fears expressed that the Neighborhood Councils could eclipse whatever influence groups like FHRA might have with city government. That in the future the easy answer from City Hall could be, "take it up with your neighborhood council." But Weinberger explained, "the idea is not to have another layer of bureaucracy."

Bennett Kayser, another former charter commissioner, who spoke at the workshop, advised, "we should be getting ready in every neighborhood now, then showing up at commission hearings." Even at this very early stage that sounds like good advice. Those Franklin Hills residents who would like to be kept up to date about what the FHRA knows about Neighborhood Commission or community meetings please email us at FHRA2000@hotmail.com

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It's Baaack...

By Bruce Carroll

Once upon a time...two years ago to be exact...the Overview reported the loving restoration of the old fashioned street sign at the corner for Franklin Ave. and Mayview Dr. The Parsons family, whose house commands the high ground at the corner, had taken on the project out of civic pride and probably compassion for the rusty post.

Alas, about a year ago the sign was hit by a misguided truck and seemed to be a goner. The summer issue of the Overview even carried the sign's obituary, reporting that "city sign gurus declared that it could not be resurrected."

But you can't keep a good sign down...at least not when it has Lynn Parsons and her sons Gregg and John in its corner. After numerous bouts with city officials who wouldn't give "yes" for an answer, the Parsons once again turned the sign into a do-it-yourself project. They poured a new concrete base and firmly re-planted the old style enamel sign with it's distinctive Kaiser Wilhelm finial on top.

To most people it's just another sign...but to those who know its story it's just another sign of how much folks in the Franklin Hills care about the neighborhood.

Photo by Bruce Carroll



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To Sweep, Or Not To Sweep, That Is The Question

By Bruce Carroll

While longtime Franklin Hills resident Gregg Parsons goes out of his way to preserve some signs (see It's Baaack) he'd like to make one class of signs an extinct or at least endangered species along the narrow streets in our area.

Gregg is just the latest resident to suggest we get rid of the signs that prohibit parking for a couple of inconvenient hours each week so the city street sweeper can cruise by and redistribute the dirt.

In this first ever FHRA Overview poll we ask those of you who live on the hilly streets, where parking is only allowed on one side, whether you would like to see street cleaning related parking restrictions eliminated.

Since every action has a reaction, the demise of the signs would, according to LA City Street Maintenance Superintendent Thomas W. Thomas, cause the city to cut street sweeping from once a week to only once a month. Thomas pointed out, "I don't think the cleaning will be as effective" because of the inability to sweep where cars are parked. But he added, "we are not here to be overbearing."

If there is sufficient interest in eliminating the signs and the parking tickets that enforce them...often issued after the street sweeper has already come and gone...petitions could be presented to Councilman John Ferraro's office according to area deputy Lupe Franco-Butler.

You can make your voice heard on this issue in many ways:

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TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE....

By Clement Moore
Updated by Bruce Carroll

*'Twas the night before Y2K, when all through the land
Every computer whirring worried, would things go as planned?
All systems were checked and rechecked with great care,
In hopes than no glitches remained in software.*

*The doomsayers all hiding in the caves that they dug
Had visions of horrors from the deadly Y2K bug.
Programmers in garages, even Microsoft's Gates,
Had each settled down, all awaiting their fate*

*After months, well nigh years, of media clatter
Proclaiming Y2K a most serious matter,
Away to my Windows I flew like a flash,
Booted up the computer and awaited the crash.*

*And then in a twinkling, I saw on my screen
The icons were smiling, the programs serene.
When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a banner that read **HAPPY NEW YEAR!***

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Karen Weiss

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Il Capriccio The Phoenix Rises

by Dave Hall
Overview Restaurant Reviewer

After a low-key fight for their lease, Tony and Rosemary De Monte closed their restaurant Caffè Capriccio on Hyperion in the Silver Lake business district in 1998 and took a well-deserved vacation. In its 4-year history that tiny restaurant had become for many a beloved community institution, known equally for its outstanding Italian dishes and for its informal, welcoming ambience. It was a place where residents greeted neighbors and brought friends and colleagues to share this little treasure. It was missed.

Now rested, and invigorated by their new location, the De Montes have quietly opened **Il Capriccio** on the site of a former deli on Vermont Avenue, directly across the street from the Dresden Room. The new location provides considerably more parking (in the lot behind) and its location attracts more walk-in patrons. The new room itself seems to be twice the size of the old but there is less outdoor eating space, although possibilities in the back may be realized come summer weather.

The restaurant, with its high ceiling and tastefully painted and decorated walls, is unfortunately very live acoustically and clearly needs some work in order to eliminate the need to

raise one's voice to be heard in normal conversation. Having the open kitchen sharing the dining area, separated only by a 4' wall, adds to the general noisiness of the room.

Overshadowing any of this, however, is the quality of the food — fresh, imaginatively conceived and carefully prepared. Maitre D's - Waiters - brothers Gavin and Terrence Atkins welcome and seat diners cordially, enthusiastically greet the regulars and patiently list the extensive selection of specials for the day. Always on hand are fresh seafood dishes, salads, unique appetizers, soups, multiple entrees and pasta choices and some very special desserts. This reviewer recently enjoyed Funghi Melanzane (fusilli, eggplant, mushrooms and ricotta salata cheese) entree, followed by some astounding raspberry gelato, while his partners enjoyed the escarole and ricotta ravioli with rose sauce, a Spaghetti Del Mare and a lemon chiffon tarte. Don't miss the crisp and tender Calamari Fritti, served with Tony's unique marinara sauce. Dinner for two will range from \$20 to \$35 depending on add ons.

As before, no liquor license has been sought so patrons are encouraged to bring their own wines, which are corked and cooled at no additional fee.

*Il Capriccio, 1757 N. Vermont Avenue, Los Feliz Village.
(Hours: Daily 5 pm to 10 pm. Saturdays: 5 pm to 11 pm. Closed Mondays. Phone: (323) 662-5900. Private catering available.*

Turn to page 19 for a recipe from Il Capriccio



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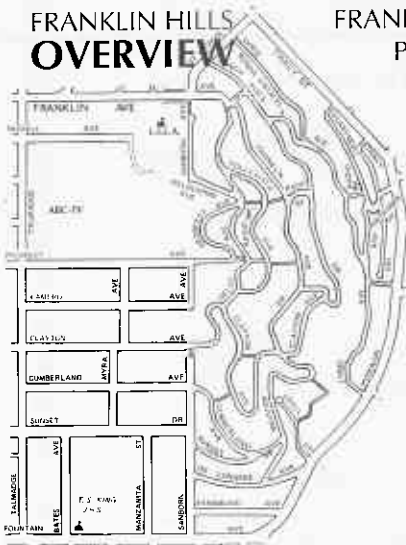
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