



OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE # 32

Fall • Winter 2006

OBSERVATORY RE-OPENS TO PUBLIC, VISITORS CHEER



Our Councilmember writes of the Observatory:

People are proud of what the City has accomplished in encouraging and supporting a public-private partnership of such magnitude, astonished at the high level of sophistication of the renovation and exhibit program and admiring of the professionalism from everyone involved in the project. When the public returns to Griffith Observatory for the first time since it was closed in early 2002, I am rock solid sure they will love it as much as those of us who've watched the project unfold.

The new planetarium show will take your breath away, particularly its poignant ending that brings the science of astronomy back home to Mount Hollywood. Playing in the Leonard Nimoy Event Horizon Theater is a 15-minute film about the Observatory's history, including never-seen work-in progress footage. The Zeiss Telescope, through which more people have seen the stars than anywhere else on earth, is open again. Observatory staff will also have additional telescopes placed around the building's decks and on the lawn at night to increase viewing opportunities for visitors.

We are eager to see how the shuttle system works and if people embrace the timed reservation concept. I can assure you, whatever it takes to get to the Griffith Observatory will be worth the effort. Whether you go to see what's been done on the "historical level" (the original Observatory), the underground Gunther Depths of Space or go for the views, it is nothing short of spectacular.

Tom LaBonge

See page 4 for information about shuttles and reservations for the Observatory.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Charley Mims

From the entire Board of the Franklin Hills Residents Association: we hope you have a peaceful and happy holiday season and a wonderful 2007!

This year the Lycee International de Los Angeles (LILA) has held several events in the evenings and on weekends that have generated a lot of noise. A recent Spaghetti Dinner created so much noise that I received telephone calls from several irate Franklin Hills neighbors. The noise began around 3:00 pm and continued till past 9:00 pm. I had been contacted by LILA the month before with a request to attend a get acquainted meeting. That meeting happened to be set for the week after the disturbance. Bruce Carroll attended with me for the FHRA. We brought a copy of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) that dated from the early 90's and that spells out the conditions under which a private school could be operated at this site. One of the conditions was no loud noises during evening and weekend hours. Another condition was that no artificially amplified sound will be allowed outside at any time. When Bruce and I went over these and other conditions with the administrative head of LILA, he seemed surprised and stated that LILA would immediately comply with all of the CUP conditions. He also stated that LILA wants to be a good neighbor and to have a mutually supportive relationship with our neighborhood.

Both Bruce and I were pleased with their responsiveness. They even decided right then and there to cancel a planned movie night for the kids. We were also promised that before any future function, we (the FHRA Board) would be contacted and asked to be a part of the planning process for the event. You can imagine our surprise then when we recently received word from several neighbors that LILA had an overnight function with kids outside late into the night. I will be contacting LILA's administrator next week to ask for an explanation. We will keep our FHRA members apprised of developments through emails and/or our website.

We plan on putting up the holiday lights on the turrets of the Shakespeare Bridge again this year. The median island on Franklin Avenue continues to look good. Our median committee, with help from our monthly paid gardener, continues to maintain this median island and keep the plants trimmed.

Eric Frase, who formerly chaired our graffiti abatement committee, developed a Franklin Hills Residents Association greeting card to welcome newcomers to our hills. The cards are being distributed to all new residents that we have learned about. If you have any suggestions for neighborhood improvements, please call our FHRA Hotline or email us.

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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WELCOME TEAM
Eric Frase & Anne-Marie Ripley

Editor, Layout, Typesetting:
Carol Skinner

All Photos
are by Bruce Carroll
unless otherwise identified

Contributing Writers:

Chris Boutelle, Bruce Carroll,
George Grace, Tony McEwing,
Charley Mims,
Sarah Picchi, Al Polehonki,
Anne Richardson,

Ad Sales & Distribution:

Chris Boutelle, 666-5548

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Please mail to:

Editor, OVERVIEW
Post Office Box 29122
Los Angeles, CA 90029
or e-mail FHRA@FranklinHills.org

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WE TIP (Anonymous crime tips) (800) 873-7283

FHRA's 17th Spring Meeting

By Bruce Carroll

The FHRA's annual election meeting was held in June at Thomas Starr King Middle School where the neighborhood was once again welcomed by Principal Charlene Hirotsu who said her staff tries to "teach all 2800 students to do the right thing and 98% do." On the big problem of graffiti she explained "it makes me so sad" to arrive on Monday mornings and find the campus has been hit again.



FHRA President Charley Mims introduces Councilmember Tom Labonge who really needs no introduction in the neighborhood.

Councilmember Tom LaBonge praised those who attended the meeting for caring about their community and for FHRA's efforts such as working to downgrade Franklin Avenue from a secondary highway, which will help protect our historic Shakespeare Bridge. LaBonge field deputy, Patty Malone, spoke about a new city sidewalk repair program where the city and property owners split the costs 50%-50% and get the sidewalks fixed on an expedited timetable. She also discussed plans to rein-in the trend toward "mansionization": building huge houses on small lots.

continued to page 4

17th Spring Meeting continued

Next came the business part of the meeting: election of members to the FHRA Board of Directors. On a voice vote newcomer Juli Kolb was elected along with Eric Frase, Anne Richardson and FHRA



Above: LAPD Senior Lead Officers Al Polehonki (left) and Red Falconer discuss some of the common graffiti tags in the area.

President Charley Mims who were re-elected.

LAPD senior lead officers Al Polehonki and Red Falconer discussed area crime and some then-recent arrests including two men whose capture cleared up about 50 residential burglaries. Officer Polehonki explained that "the majority of the arrests were made because of alert neighbors." And noted "it was exciting to see that." (See "Cell Phone Camera" page 5 for another example of the power of police/people partnership.)

As we head toward a new year the FHRA wants to hear from you about topics that you'd like to explore and discuss at future FHRA neighborhood meetings. We want to make our meetings relevant to your concerns and desire for knowledge about the community. When you have a "why did they do that?" or a "why don't they do that?" thought about some neighborhood topic, please take a bit of time to let us know what's on your mind. We are easy to reach: 323-908-6078 (voicemail/fax), FHRA@FranklinHills.org, or PO Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90029

New Observatory Access and Parking

A temporary visitor access program will be implemented featuring a timed-entry and shuttle reservation system aimed at preventing long waits and overcrowding.

In addition, a limited number of timed-entry reservations will be available for hikers and cyclists who make reservations 48 hours before their visit.

Visitors will not be able to drive up to the observatory for several months.

Shuttles will pick up visitors from parking lots at the Hollywood & Highland entertainment complex in Hollywood and the current Griffith Observatory Satellite, adjacent to the Los Angeles Zoo in Griffith Park.

Reservations can be made by either visiting the observatory's website at www.griffithobs.org or by calling (888) 695-0888 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The cost for shuttle trips is:

- \$8 for adults
- \$4 for children 5-12 years and senior citizens 60 and over
- Free for children under 5
- Free for hikers, bikers and disabled from the Greek Theatre Parking lot with reservations.

The observatory will be open:

Noon to 10 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays

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Cell Phone Camera Captures Burglary Suspect — and so do Police

By Bruce Carroll



At the FHRA's June meeting LAPD Senior Lead Officer Al Polehonki showed a blurry photo of a fleeing suspect who had been spotted breaking into a residence near Vermont and Finley on the morning of May 27th. Right after the meeting, the photo (left) and the suspect's description were posted on the www.Franklin-Hills.org website and also the neighborhood council website www.GGPNC.org.

The internet posting explained that "a resident had spotted the suspect as he rang the doorbell at a neighboring house, and after receiving no response, tried next door where he was spotted removing panes of a louvered window to gain entry. Realizing he had been spotted by the neighbor, the suspect began to run. The neighbor pursued the suspect in a car and managed to capture the photo with a cell phone camera. He may be a transient who frequents the Los Feliz area."

That indeed turned out to be true. On October 11, 2006 a local merchant called LAPD when he spotted the suspect along Hillhurst and recognized him from the photo and description that had been printed off the internet.

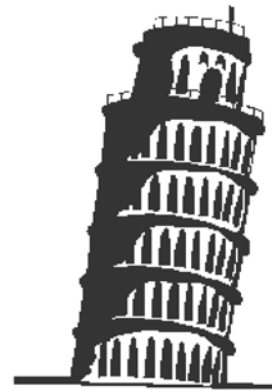
When officers arrived, alas, the wanted man was once again on the run, or more precisely according to witnesses on the bus. But LAPD did not give up. They followed the bus route and caught up with the bus but the suspect was no longer among the passengers. The driver was able to tell officers where the suspect had gotten off the bus and when police checked the area near that bus stop they found him. Officer Polehonki reports the man has been up to no good in our area on and off for many years and for a while called the roof of the 7-11 his home. He has been charged with one count of burglary and may be moving to the Graybar Hotel.

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A Tale of Two Dogs

by Bruce Carroll

October was a Dickens of a month for two area dog owners. For police responding to dog related calls it was the best of times, quickly reuniting a stolen dog with its owner, and the worst of times having to use bullets to stop a menacing pit bull.

It Was the Best of Times

Sarah Rosenberg was celebrating her 32nd birthday at the Green Leaves Restaurant on Hillhurst when she lost her Pizza. It wasn't her dinner. Pizza is her 5 year old spaniel/dachshund mix dog that she had left tied to a chair leg outside the restaurant.

When she went to check and the dog was gone the first part of the mystery was solved by the restaurant's surveillance video. It showed a woman dressed in a printed skirt and sweatshirt look around to see if anyone was watching, then pick up the small dog and carry it off. That was on Sunday, October 15th.



Green Leaves Restaurant surveillance video shows Pizza the dog, whose leash was tied to a chair leg, being picked up by the dognapper. The dog is in the white circle at the bottom.

Rosenberg and her friends quickly started putting up reward posters in the neighborhood and their efforts paid off. On Wednesday she got a call with a tip saying Pizza was being held in a Los Feliz home.

Police report the woman at the home refused to open the door and they finally had to force it open. As expected they found the dog and Pizza and Sarah were quickly reunited. The woman was taken into police custody for the theft.

... and the Worst of Times

Shane Markland mourns Cam, his 8 year old pit bull, he describes as "my second child, a very, very, very friendly dog." For next door neighbor Corey Reynolds it was a frightening moving day when Cam and Josie, Markland's smaller pit bull, got out of their yard and into Reynolds's. While Reynolds and a locksmith took shelter in the house on the 1800 block of Talmadge about 2:20pm October 26th, the dogs tried to get at them through windows, even climbing on the garage roof.

Reynolds saw the dogs running towards neighbor Rupa Magee walking her pug 'Raja' on the other side of Talmadge; he and others called 911. Luckily a SUV honked at the dogs and they turned and headed back home. One of the 911 callers, Ana



Machado, said she had seen the dogs loose in the past. The police response was quick, and to Reynolds, who plays a LAPD Sergeant on TV in TNT's drama "The Closer" it may have seemed like being at work.

When the LAPD arrived the pit bulls had returned to their own back yard, but Machado hollered to the officers that the gate was still open. As officers approached, Cam charged toward them. Two police officers tried pepper spray to drive him back, but it only seemed to make matters worse. Next an officer fired a Taser, but LAPD says it missed and the dog kept coming aggressively. Finally, according to LAPD senior Lead Officer Gina Chovan the officer fired two shots that hit Cam's chest and still the dog was charging, so two more rounds were fired into the head and Cam lay dead on Markland's front steps.



Rupa Magee and Raja.



Corey Reynolds by the damaged wooden fence that separates the properties. Reynolds said the dogs barked, growled, chewed and pushed hard against the fence when he entered his backyard.



Cam lies where he was shot on the front steps (between the bushes) of Shane Markland's Talmadge Street house.



Councilmember Tom LaBonge discusses the dog shooting incident with LAPD officers on the scene at Talmadge and Franklin.

Conclusion:

No one has a clear explanation of how the dogs got loose. Markland explains the gate to his back yard is self latching and only opens in toward the dogs, but it was not locked. He does admit the dogs are territorial, and did not know the new neighbor on his first day in the neighborhood, but he does not understand why police needed to use lethal force. He feels, "whether or not my dog chased anyone down the street, bottom line is he didn't bite anyone; if my dog had mauled somebody or the dog had bitten somebody I'd understand" And he says Animal Services told him the shooting "was so not necessary...all they had to do was back up."

On the other side of the battered wooden fence that separates the properties Reynolds points to planks loosened by the dogs as they "viciously growled" when he visited the property before moving in. He also says another neighbor who called 911 said this was not the first time the dogs had been loose. And Reynolds described the officer involved in the shooting as "so non-Rambo" and reports he said "that was the most vicious dog I've ever encountered." Both LAPD and the LA City Attorney are conducting investigations which are expected to be lengthy.

In the end Markland and his fiancée will be moving to Silverlake to leave behind the sad memories that well up every time they walk up their front steps. And the memory of Cam lives on. As a memorial, Markland had a large portrait of Cam tattooed on his upper back.



Sarah Rosenberg and Pizza reunited following police recovery of the dog after forcing their way into a Los Feliz home. Photo courtesy of LAPD

HOT OFF THE PRESS: New at the LOS FELIZ BRANCH LIBRARY

A new project of the Los Angeles Public Library is now at your Los Feliz Branch. The library receives multiple copies of the top best sellers by popular authors such as John Grisham, Danielle Steel, Alexander McCall Smith, John Saul, Walter Mosley, Janet Fitch, Elizabeth George and more. These HOTP books stay at the Los Feliz Library and are available for a special seven-day loan instead of the usual 21 days. This means the books are on the shelf faster and more often. In addition, we get the books quicker, often on the first day of release, and you don't have months to wait on the holds list. These HOTP books cannot be reserved. It is a browsing collection and every day there is something new. These HOTP books are in the same section as the new books in the library: isle #31. Of course, you still can put the regular copies on reserve if you'd like more than 7 days to read it.

We have also received special funding to purchase more DVD classics for your entertainment. We have

already put out over 100 new DVD's. You will find those as you first walk in to the library.

For those holiday parties, check out the new improved music CD collection. Thanks to new Teen Librarian, Mike Hibben, music is now arranged by topics; classical, country, holidays, popular, new age, jazz/blues, rock, soundtracks & world. We hope this makes it easier for you to find something to listen to while you read the books. If you missed the teen karaoke event, let Mike know you'll sing at our next karaoke party.

We invite everyone to join the Library, the Los Feliz Village Business Improvement District & Councilman Tom LaBonge on the evening of Saturday December 2nd. We will once again light the corner tree for the holidays and join the merchants & businesses of the village in welcoming the holiday season.

Continuing in 2007 will be the Architecture & Beyond lectures, Book Discussion & Gossip groups, Chess, Quilting & Scrabble clubs, Teen Club, Terrific Toddler Times on Tuesdays and the new Teen Film Club. We are also looking for adult volunteers to help us behind the scenes.

The library will be open during the holidays except for Monday the 25th of December and Monday the 1st of January 2007. We will be closed those days so we can share the time with our families and loved-ones.

We wish all of our neighbors a safe, healthy & peaceful holiday season. We invite you to stop in to the library to see what's new, what's coming, and what we have to offer.

Pearle Yonezawa, Senior Librarian



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Coyote Tracks

by George Grace
gmrnet1@grmnet.com

We've only had 24 coyote sightings posted since May, although I'm sure you have probably spotted more! Let me hear from you, so I can share your "coyote sighting" experience. Record your sighting online at www.gmrnet.com/Coyotea.html Interestingly, some of the sightings were posted from as far away as Illinois and Maryland. The reach of the internet amazes me.

Here's what was posted on May 29th from Aurora, Illinois: "12:10AM, Coyote came running from the neighborhood playground/park/pond area chasing a rabbit. The small park is in the middle of an urban area. There are very few trees and bushes."

Here are some of your local experiences:

July 14th: "Around 3:30 a.m.- maybe later. You won't believe this one. I was sitting on my front porch and saw a neighbor's cat crossing the street towards my direction. It was then that I realized that this cat was walking right toward a coyote. The coyote looked at the cat and the cat continued to trot after the coyote. The coyote trotted away from the cat, heading south on Commonwealth. I frantically yelled for the cat to return. The coyote eventually went on its way. I don't know if these two were friends, or the coyote was full or just dumb."

August 25th: "I was leaving for work about 8:15 AM. The coyote was walking as though turning from Ronda Vista to Radio Walk. The coyote saw me and stopped in the middle of the intersection. I looked at the coyote and the coyote looked at me. It then turned around and went down Ronda Vista Dr towards St George St. The coyote was not plump, but it looked in much better condition than the scrawny coyotes in Joshua Tree National Park near Jumbo Rocks campground. The coyotes there have patchy fur. This coyote's coat did not have missing tufts and looked healthy."

September 11th: "Coyote was trotting down Lucile Ave on sidewalk then in the road - headed away from Sunset (south). Approx time was 8pm."

September 26th: "From my balcony. Could see 10+ and hear the calls of many more. 10pm and 3am every night in Bronson Canyon very close to homes"

And this sad posting on October 8th: "About 6 weeks ago a Coyote killed and consumed my cat!! I was out of town, but was given the info via a neighbor."

Personally, I saw the same coyote during my morning dog walk on Clayton Avenue seven times from May 10th through September 11th. He was never threatening, and always sauntered off as I got closer. My dog Bootsie just ignored him. Now that I haven't seen him for close to six weeks, I'm worried. He'd become such a fixture on my daily route, that I miss him. I know this anxiety isn't unique to me. I've heard other neighborhood coyote observers say the same thing when their local coyote or coyote family suddenly disappeared. I hope he's found his way to greener pastures - preferably with his cousins in Griffith Park.

That's all for now. I'll issue a new report next issue, so keep on posting.



... a Los Feliz tradition for over 60 years

Having a Birthday?

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Marty & Elayne
at the piano bar



Valet Parking in Rear

Franklin Avenue Elementary: Our Neighborhood Gem

By Sarah Picchi



Anyone with a young child knows how anxious and neurotic parents can become with the approach of kindergarten. I know because last year I was one of them. Today I am a well-adjusted parent of an extremely happy kindergartener.

Looking back I find my brush with insanity a bit embarrassing. I had my spreadsheets with financial projections -- over \$200,000 to send two kids through private K-6, without taking tuition increases, after-school care, school supplies or fundraising into account?!?! I had logistical considerations which seemed like a word problem from hell (If child#1 needs to be at school by x, and parent #1 need to be at work by y, and child #2'S school doesn't open until z, then.)

We ended up ruling out private school and moved on to consider two options: the Los Feliz Charter School and Franklin Avenue Elementary. Our daughter ended up getting a spot at the charter but by that point we had already fallen in love with Franklin.

It is now a few months into the school year and we are so happy that we chose Franklin. The school is a true microcosm of the neighborhood. Franklin offers

diversity (racial, cultural and socioeconomic), a large group of dedicated parents, wonderful experienced teachers and a new principal who is very personable, active, and visible on campus.

Franklin's parent-run afterschool program is fantastic. Kids get help with their homework which is a godsend to parents. Kids also have a chance to play with friends and an opportunity to take fantastic classes. The homework club and classes are affordably priced and scholarships are available. The club runs from 2:40 until 5:30. Classes offered include ballet, cooking, mosaic-tile making, hip hop, marine biology and animation.

We cherish walking to school. Actually, we walk and our daughter skips and sings en route. Our daughter loves and respects her teacher. We see our child taking pride in all that she is learning.

Also, Franklin is one of the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) elementary schools that has a School for Advanced Studies (SAS) program. As described by the LAUSD's website, these are programs which have been implemented to improve educational options and increase professional training to support

the development of gifted and talented youth. The SAS program is offered to LAUSD resident students in Grades 1-12 who meet the criteria. The program offers an intensive, articulated, academic program in which both innovative and traditional courses are taught.

Some parents in the area are considering charter schools. I encourage parents not to overlook our own neighborhood gem and learn more about Franklin:

- 1 Attend a Friends of Franklin Meeting
Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month, usually at 6:15 p.m. in the auditorium. These meetings are open to the public. We found this was a great way to learn about the community as well as what parents are working to improve.
- 2 Visit and Observe a class
If you live in the area you can stop by and visit any classroom. Go to the office and tell the staff your address and which classroom you would like to observe. We observed 2-3 classrooms.
- 3 Talk to Franklin Parents
Attend a FoF meeting and introduce yourself to parents.
4. Feel free to contact me with questions
sarahpicchi@yahoo.com

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The New Los Feliz Arts Charter School

by Anne Richardson



Principal Karin Newlin

This fall, a new school has opened serving elementary school children in Los Angeles: the Los Feliz Arts Charter School (LFACS). Temporarily located at Fairfax and Fountain, its Board is searching for a Los Feliz-area location to which it will eventually move. Officials

forecast that the school will move to Los Feliz in 2-3 years.

Charter schools are public schools that, because of their charter status, are not required to follow many of the rules and regulations of other public schools. For information go to www.lausd.k12.ca.us/newLAUSDnet/pdf/FACTSHEET_Charter_Schools.pdf (be sure to use caps as indicated and no breaks or spaces).

LFACS is chartered to become a K-6 elementary school with after school care until 6 p.m. School begins at 9 a.m. The 2006-07 year has classes of kindergarten and first grade, and the school will grow one class every year. The ratio of students to teachers is 20-1 all the way through. The fall of 2007 will be accepting 2 kindergarten classes.

The philosophy behind the school is "to foster project-based learning, through the lens of the arts." The school posits that learning acquisition should occur the way it occurs naturally and that children learn by working on projects. Thus, children learn vocabulary, writing, science, all their subjects, through various projects. And they use the arts for those projects.

Parent participation is an important aspect of the school. LFACS requires 60 hours per year, which can be met by any members of the family, including grandparents or other extended family volunteers. The school tries to match interest to activities and includes opportunities in fundraising, communications, outreach, inroom volunteers, carpooling, and after school programs. The school will create assignments that parents can do at home or work as well as at the school.

Karin Newlin is the principal. She has been principal in 9 schools in 8 districts within the state of California, and has been named Principal of the Year. All the California and federal government standards will be taught; all required testing for any public schools will be given. In addition, LFACS will employ some additional testing to learn more about the population and how the children are learning.

Interested parents can apply by downloading an application from the website, at www.losfelizarts.org. Orientation sessions will also be posted on the website. Applications must be postmarked by February 28, 2007 or hand delivered



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by 4 p.m. on Monday March 5, 2007, to 1265 N. Fairfax, Los Angeles, CA 90046. There is a public random drawing on March 6, and the top 40 kids are selected. Priority is given to residents of LAUSD. The school continues down the list if not all the selected children decide to go to the school, since many parents apply to multiple public and private schools.

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Al Polehonki
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The holidays are upon us once again. So first things first, change those batteries in your smoke detectors.

Once again, another suspect was captured thanks to an alert citizen. Earlier this summer, a suspect was observed fleeing the scene of a residential burglary. His image was captured on a cell phone camera and he ran away. This image found its place on two valuable web sites, the Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council and the Franklin Hills Residents Association.

Then for several months, nothing. We discovered later that he had left California for a few months but decided to return to enter a drug abuse program that he had previously participated in. Shortly after his return, a citizen who had printed out a copy of his picture saw him on Hillhurst Avenue and called the police. He was taken into custody and when shown a copy of the photograph, stated, "yea, that's me."

Many thanks to Bruce Carroll who is not only handy with a camera but does a great job getting crime information posted on the web.

This summer was busy with residential and vehicular burglaries being the most common type of crime. We did have several street robberies earlier this year where high school students were targeted because they carried I-Pod music devices. These ended quickly after the identification and arrest of the suspects.

We are still looking for the suspects that smashed approximately 40 vehicle windows on the evening of October 7th. These suspects if identified and arrested will face felony charges as damages came close to \$20,000.00.

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On November 6th, at approximately 8:10 PM, an elderly woman was walking home after closing her shop on Hillhurst Avenue. When she turned westbound on Finley Avenue, a lone male approached, grabbed her purse, and fled. She began screaming and attracted the attention of several citizens who gave chase while the police were called. The suspect was captured and held until responding units arrived. Our victim received minor injuries and her purse was recovered.

The suspect was booked for robbery. He is a gang member and has an extensive arrest record.

While we praise the efforts of the citizens that chose to come to this victim's aid and helped in his quick capture, we hope that such situations are approached with a bit of caution. Had the suspect been armed or had an accomplice the outcome may have been different. Come to the aid of someone that has been victimized and make yourself available as a witness, but be careful when taking further action.

Officers Salazar, Falconer, Chovan and I hope that everyone has a safe holiday season.



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GGPNC Election Results

In October's elections for the Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council Board of Directors FHRA President, Charley Mims, and Treasurer, Bruce Carroll, were both re-elected in our area which comprises most of GGPNC District "E." Mims has served as GGPNC president for most of its four year history and Carroll created and manages the www.GGPNC.org website.

Thanks to all the Frankinites who voted in the elections, more votes were cast for the candidates in District "E" than in any of the other four districts. Continue to let your voice be heard throughout the neighborhood and attend GGPNC board meetings the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm on the second floor of the Citibank building on Hillhurst.

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PAUL LAURITZ HOUSE

by Tony McEwing

Unless you're an art historian, the name Paul Lauritz is not likely to mean much to you. It certainly didn't mean much to me when I purchased my home at 3955 Clayton Avenue several years ago. My Realtor, Henni Bouwmeester's brochure stated very matter of factly, "built for artist Paul Lauritz." Never having heard of the man, that was certainly not a big selling point with me. It wasn't until I was fairly well settled in the place that I started doing a little digging, only to discover, much to my amazement and amusement to some degree, what a valuable piece of Los Angeles and Franklin Hills history I had purchased. And all it took was googling the name. Up popped page after page of information on a man considered one of the greatest American landscape artists of the 20th century,



with a myriad of paintings in galleries, museums and the homes of art collectors all over the world.

Lauritz was born in a small art colony on April 18, 1889 in Larvik,

Norway. Famous painters from all over the world would come to Larvik to capture the enticing scenery. One of them, an English watercolorist, gave Lauritz painting lessons in exchange for his family providing room and board. By the time he emigrated to Canada in 1905, Lauritz was already very well skilled in art. To make money, he worked as an illustrator, making posters, decorations and maps for real estate promoters. It wasn't until he got to Portland in 1912 and married his wife Mary that he became a serious artist. He started out as a portrait artist, but that would change.

Just after World War I, in 1919, Lauritz made his final move to Los Angeles when the city was just beginning to boom. It was the perfect opportunity for Lauritz who rented a studio on Spring Street in the old Lyceum Theater, where he painted portraits and where he would develop an interest in the kind of landscape art that would eventually make him famous around the world. In 1921, he and his wife built the very first house on Clayton Avenue with views from Hollywood to the ocean, including



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Coast at Palos Verdes
Oil on canvas by Paul Lauritz

the site of the Griffith Observatory, which wouldn't be built and open for another 14 years.

From his studio on Clayton Avenue, he completed dozens of paintings of the Sierra Nevada, Mojave Desert, Laguna Beach, Carmel, Monterey, Arizona, Nevada, even Mexico. He would display his paintings for sale from his front porch. He could never have foreseen that almost all of them sell today for much more than it cost to build his craftsman-like home on Clayton, which he lived in and expanded until his death in 1975. Although he might have had some indication when the King of Norway purchased one of his marine paintings during World War II and had it delivered by submarine. Lauritz was also one of the pioneer architects of LA's art scene and served on the Los Angeles Municipal Art Commission and was president of the California Art Club.

His home on Clayton has now been declared historical-cultural monument #784 by the city of Los Angeles, joining other area landmarks like John Marshall High School and the Shakespeare Bridge, in an effort to preserve the golden nuggets of history hidden in the Franklin Hills. Imagine that-a world famous artist making his name right here in the Franklin Hills. Who would have thought? Certainly not I.

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How Many Hybrids Can Fit On Top Of A Hill?

By Chris Boutelle

Have you noticed lately how many of the new hybrid, gas/electric cars are showing up in the Franklin Hills? In a word-- lots.

Residents of Franklin Hills seem to have fallen in love with these cars. There is a Toyota Prius on almost every street in the Franklin Hills. I counted a total of twelve on Franklin Avenue, Hollyvista and Ronda Vista Drive, as I drove around one late summer evening (although one was just a visitor from Silver Lake.) The combination of gas mileage averaging over 45 miles per gallon of regular gas and their quick, quiet and sleek performance has made many environmentally conscious neighbors take the plunge.

Cars like the Toyota Prius, the Honda EV and the Honda Civic Hybrid not only get great mileage, but are



able to fly a "Clean Air" sticker from the DMV, which earns them some very special privileges. Did you know that if your car has one of these "Clean Air" decals, you can drive it solo in the Diamond Lanes (High Occupancy Vehicle lanes) both on California freeways and on the metered onramps that have lanes for HOVs? And as an added bonus, you may park at parking meters in the city of Los Angeles without feeding the meter. (Council File # 04-1362) And starting in tax year, 2006 the Internal

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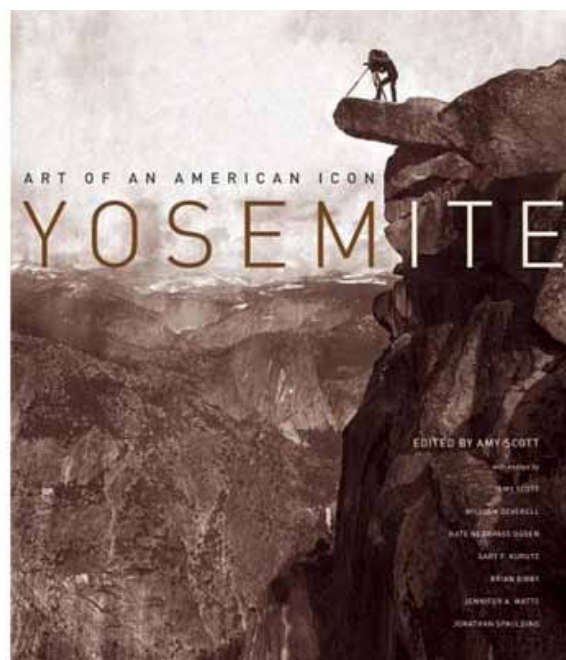
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These cars have both a small gasoline engine and an electric motor. You do not have to plug them in to recharge them, as they have an onboard generator that runs off the gas engine and also recaptures energy when you are braking or coasting down hills. This energy is stored in their large, under-the-trunk batteries. The electric motor starts the car moving and gets it over the inertia of its non-moving state. That motor is totally quiet, but it gets the car moving up to about twenty miles per hour. Then the onboard computer seamlessly starts the gas engine which takes over propelling the car. This 76 horsepower engine sips gas, but is ample for most around town or freeway driving. If you need more power, such as to pass a car or make an evasive move to avoid an accident, the onboard computer that controls the gas and electric motors will activate both at the same time for a burst of speed. But don't think that means you will burn rubber because the Continuously Variable Transmission doesn't like to waste energy on spinning tires and won't let the car break traction to spin its wheels.

Although only the Honda EV and Civic and the Toyota

Prius presently average 45 plus miles per gallon and are therefore eligible for the Clean Air stickers, there are several other Gas/Electric Hybrids showing up in Franklin Hills. Lexus has a Hybrid SUV that gets considerably better gas mileage than its gas-only model. Although this doesn't get you past the freeway ramps or parking meters, it does mean not just better gas mileage, but fewer exhaust emissions per mile, a great help to air quality and the environment.

As these cars have proven themselves to be popular sellers, other brands, including Ford Ranger trucks Ford Escape Hybrid SUVs and some Dodge vehicles are coming on board the Hybrid train. Some of them interest people not only in the great gas mileage, but in the added power of the electric motor that adds horsepower for people whose idea of performance includes faster 0-60 MPH engine trials.

I am sure that we will be seeing more and more of these new alternative fuel vehicles in the Franklin Hills as new ones are developed. Neighbors say that they are averaging up to 50 percent more miles to the gallon than similar sized cars that they own or have recently owned. That translates to fewer stops at the gas station. What's not to love?

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Starr King Deposed By Star President

By Bruce Carroll



While Thomas Starr King Middle School is likely familiar to Franklin Hills Residents, remove the “middle school” and few would get a passing grade on the question: who was Thomas Starr King (1824-1864)? His relative historic anonymity is at the root of his recent downfall.

For the last 75 years King has represented the best of California in the National Statuary Hall at the Capitol in Washington DC. Each state gets to display just two prominent figures. The other Californian is Father Junipero Serra, whose trek founding California’s missions in the late 18th century, is widely taught in grade school.

But Thomas Starr King’s historic mission was to keep California in the Union camp during the Civil War. Referred to as “the orator who saved the nation,” King was credited by Abraham Lincoln with persuading California lawmakers not to secede from the Union. As a Unitarian minister who migrated from Boston to San Francisco in 1860 he also was a prodigious fund raiser. The \$1.5 million he collected to aid wounded soldiers through contributions to the Sanitary Fund, predecessor of the Red Cross, was the highest of any state--and California wasn’t one of the big states then. California’s donations were about 20% of all the money collected.

In the chaotic closing day of this year’s California legislative session it seems Thomas Starr King’s statue got toppled by State Senator Dennis Hollingsworth (R-Riverside) who has admitted, “to be honest with you, I wasn’t sure who Thomas Starr King was.” Hollingsworth’s resolution calling for the statue to be replaced by one of President Ronald Reagan, the only California Governor ever to get star billing at the White House, was passed without hearings and only 40 seconds of debate according to State Senator Debra Bowen (D-Marina Del Rey), the only “no” vote.

Bowen, recently elected California Secretary of State, told the San Francisco Chronicle, “I was personally offended that we would not give citizens an opportunity to discuss this issue.” She argued, “Ronald Reagan believed very strongly in democracy, and this was just not a democratic process.” Bowen’s appeals failed to persuade Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to withhold his approval of the switch, which now must be approved by Congress.

Many King supporters note that Reagan has been memorialized by a multitude of public places from an airport on down, but, the now deposed, King must cling to a couple of mountain peaks (in New Hampshire and Yosemite) plus a few schools and a couple of San Francisco streets. And maybe that’s where King’s statute will wind up as he joins the growing number of homeless Californians.

Gang Up on Graffiti: Let's All Do Our Part To Undo Their "ART"

Franklin Hills is one of many LA neighborhoods that have seen a rise in graffiti this year. So it seemed a good time to repeat effective steps to control if not eliminate this menace.

Immediate removal of graffiti is the most effective deterrent against its recurrence. We ask that you take care of any graffiti that appears on your property.

Report ALL incidents of vandalism. Graffiti vandalism (regardless of size) is a crime and reports of such crimes in our neighborhood are noted by the LAPD. Frequent reports will get more police attention to our neighborhood.

Officer Dominick Colenzo is our LAPD anti-tagging tiger. His Police Assisted Community Enhancement unit aims to teach teens the error of their ways by requiring them to remove graffiti. Seeing the graffiti first hand aids Colenzo and other officers in tracking down the perpetrators. When you see graffiti leave him a detailed report of the location and appearance at 213-485-0511. You can also call the city's 311 non-emergency number to report graffiti and request paint out.

Not all graffiti should be "painted out" special Graffiti cleaners are made for street signs and other non-porous surfaces. Motsenbocker's Lift Off Graffiti

Remover, available in hardware stores, is a mild yet effective cleaner, is water-based, and is biodegradable. Graffiti Gold is an industrial strength cleaner that is provided free-of-charge by Officer Colenzo of the LAPD or through the FHRA.

Take a picture of graffiti before removal. Record the date and location. Forward the information to the FHRA Graffiti Abatement Committee or directly to LAPD. The information is used to identify trends and patterns of graffiti "crews" and determine if gangs are operating on our streets.

When removing graffiti, be aware of your surroundings and any potential dangers. Don't paint out alone unless it is on your own property. Work in the mornings when taggers are most likely sleeping in after a night of partying. Use matching paint when possible and if it is not practical to cover the entire surface, make neat, tidy rectangles.

There is even a reward if your information leads to the conviction of taggers. A link to the program can be found at www.FranklinHills.org. There you'll also find info on the FHRA Graffiti Abatement Committee which is headed by FHRA Board Member Anne-Marie Ripley and Sarah Picchi.



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On the other hand, there are those who think, "Oh well, if we can't get speed bumps because of the grade and the amount of traffic (the City's rules), at least the cracks slow people down. On streets where people speed up and down, ignoring the fact there are so many blind corners and that the lack of sidewalks requires pedestrian traffic in the street, anything to slow people down is a blessing."

It's not like people have not raised this issue with the FHRA before. But the City's response has always been that our concrete streets, "unlike more modern asphalt" cannot simply be repaved without extensive and costly repair.

So, we thought we'd take a poll. Assuming we could get the City to take our plea seriously, how many residents would like the hilly, cracked streets to be repaved?

_____ YES, REPAVE THE #@*%! STREETS

_____ NO, LET THEM BE

Send your response to the FHRA either by snail mail: FHRA, PO Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90029-0122 or

**INFORMAL FHRA POLL:
TO PAVE OR NOT TO PAVE?**

We've all noticed how, well, "uneven" the pavement is on the Franklin Hills. And when conversation turns to the pavement, there seem to be two schools of thought.

The first kneejerk response we all have run into is something like this "It's ridiculous to have so many horrendous cracks in the street, it's unsightly and it creates a hazard for people tripping and falling."

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Baseball Bat Bashers Hit Franklin Hills

by Bruce Carroll

This Mayview resident was one of about 40 victims of the car window bashers who used baseball bats to smash car windows beginning about 10:30pm on Saturday, October 7th and continuing until about 3am the following morning. The swath of damage stretched from Silver Lake to Franklin Hills with FHRA receiving reports of cars attacked at Talmadge and Sunset Dr., along Mayview, Clayton, Hollyvista and Russell.



that might have recorded images of the suspects or their vehicle.

Residents reported seeing a reddish 1990's era Ford Aerostar van with two shaved head males who got out to wield baseball bats against the cars, while one or two females were heard laughing as they left a trail of shattered glass. A police helicopter was dispatched but could not pinpoint the perpetrators. Police also put out a call for help from anyone with a security camera

One theory is that the baseball bat bashers were Dodger fans disgruntled after the team was eliminated from the playoffs shortly before the attacks. Others joke that if the Dodger bats got as many hits as these vandals they would have won the game. Police are still at a loss as to who the suspects are. If you have any info contact LAPD Northeast Division detectives at 213-485-2566.

We need your membership, but if you can't bear the thought of tearing the coupon below out of this issue of Overview you can go to our website: WWW.FranklinHills.org and click on "Join FHRA" and you'll get an FHRA membership form that you can print and mail

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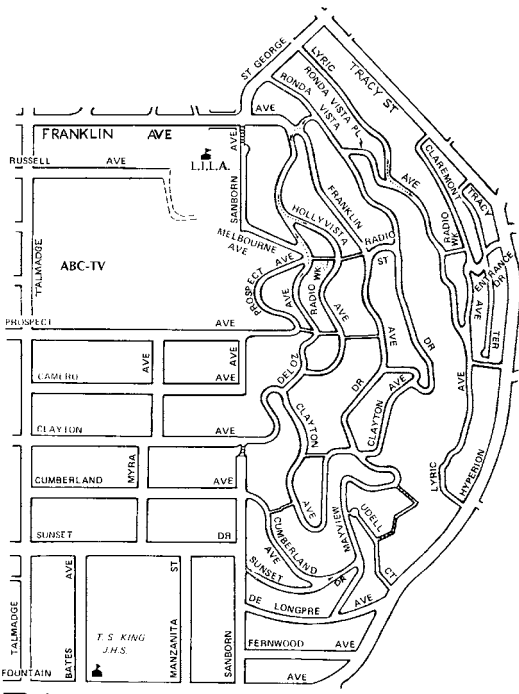
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