



# OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE # 33 Spring • Summer 2007

## ANNUAL MEETING TUESDAY, JUNE 12

### The REEL Franklin Hills Our Movie Making History

By Bruce Carroll

Earlier this year Film LA, the group that coordinates location filming in Los Angeles, contacted the FHRA because AFI film student, Nic Emilani, wanted to film a scene from his final exam, a short film called *My Desert Song*, on the Shakespeare Bridge. We said okay as long as his small band of film-making students wrapped by the time Marshall High School's huge band of students started heading home.



Photo by Jean Pritchard

*Student film crew on the Shakespeare Bridge in March. The film, titled, My Desert Song, has an Hasidic Hip-Hop theme and a scene where a despondent character is dissuaded from leaping off the bridge. For more info about the project check mydesertsong.com*

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Reflecting on the project it seemed an appropriate area for film students to learn their art since the longest and largest resident of the Franklin Hills resides on about 23 acres now known as The Prospect Studios. The studio started its film career 95 years ago when the land was purchased for about \$20,000 by Albert E. Smith, one of the founders of Vitagraph Studios.

Actual filming may not have gotten underway until about 1915.

*Continued on Page 4*

### "FHRA XIX — Return to the Studio"

By Bruce Carroll

Every year as we head toward summer we can expect certain traditions: an inundation of ads for movie sequels...about four dozen due this year...and, of course, the FHRA Annual meeting. To get into the spirit of the season we have named it "*FHRA XIX - Return to the Studio.*"

The premier will be Tuesday, June 12, 2007, at The Prospect Studios. Check-in, schmoozing and snacking begin at 6:30pm. The meeting runs from 7pm to 9pm. The old ABC TV lot had been one of our most popular meeting venues, but post 9/11 security concerns put it off limits for a few years. You'll still need to be on our list when you drive through the studio's Employee East Gate along Prospect between Myra and Sanborn, but all Franklin Hills neighbors are more than welcome.

The studio has set up a special RSVP line for the FHRA Meeting. To get on the security list call 818-560-8200 and leave your name(s) and a phone number or address. You can also RSVP by e-mail to [FHRA@FranklinHills.org](mailto:FHRA@FranklinHills.org).

On the agenda, in addition to the election of FHRA directors and info on FHRA projects, will be crime and graffiti reports from our LAPD senior lead officers, Fire preparedness info from the LAFD, updates on Griffith Park and issues with the LILA School (see page 10) and, if there is time, a look back at some of the movie scenes filmed during the studio's Vitagraph and Warner Bros. days.

We look forward to seeing all of you. Please check the [www.FranklinHills.org](http://www.FranklinHills.org) website for agenda and meeting access updates...and don't forget to RSVP.



President's Report  
Charley M. Mims

We are approaching the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Franklin Hills Residents Association and we have had another good year! On Tuesday June 12, 2007 the FHRA will hold our Annual Meeting from 7:00 pm to 9:00pm with check in starting at 6:30 pm. Please come early to hear what we did last year and what we plan for this year and to vote on new Board members.

This past year we have revisited our relationship with LILA (the French school.) Board member Juli Kolb, who lives near the school, obtained copies of the Conditional Use Permits, (CUP's,) issued by the City which place legal conditions upon the operations of this school in our residential neighborhood. Bruce Carroll and I met with managers of the school last October. They have created a new position, President, and hired John Fleck in this position to oversee all operations at their several campuses in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas. Mr. Fleck brings a business persons' perspective to school operations and to relationships with our neighborhood. I recently met with several members of the school leadership and staff from Councilman LaBonge's office to go over changes the school is making. They are stopping the school bells from ringing when school is not in session. They have also committed to replacing the current bell system with a visual system not employing any sound by the start of the next school year. They have already discontinued scheduled weekend events to be in compliance with the CUP.

When we discovered that they had exceeded their pupil enrollment limits set by the CUP, they began the process of reducing enrollment to the authorized level. They continue to devote space for the Norman Harriton Community Garden. We hope that their actions to comply with the CUP and to become better neighbors will restart good relationships with our neighborhood.

The Shakespeare Bridge and adjacent median island in Franklin Avenue continues to be a gateway to our community and to our spirits. The FHRA still maintains the landscaping which we created over a decade ago. We have also helped to clean up and landscape the area under the bridge and that landscaping continues to be maintained by neighbors along Monon.

Once again you FHRA volunteers put up the holiday lighting strands on the turrets guarding the Shakespeare Bridge. We really lighted the approach to the Franklin Hills for you holiday pleasure!

Eric Frase continues to provide a Franklin Hills Residents Association Welcome Card to greet new residents to our neighborhood. Many thanks to Eric and his committee for continuing this latest version of our famous Welcome (baskets!)

Bruce Carroll and I continue to serve as your elected members on the Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council Board, and Bruce continues to serve as web master, historical pictures curator, neighborhood photographer and generally good guy. I was re-elected to serve as President of the GGPNC for the 2007 term and have received much support from our large and wonderful group of volunteer stakeholders. This year the GGPNC has worked on improving parking, easing traffic, beautifying our public areas, outreaching to all our stakeholders, and keeping an eye on proposed development to maintain the character of our neighborhoods. The owner/developer of the Derby site notified me that they will be marketing these properties for sale to others rather than to continue their efforts to develop the site themselves. Their decision was made

*continued on page 15*

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The **Franklin Hills OVERVIEW** is published as often as possible. We invite readers' comments, submissions and opinions, and will publish as space allows. Please mail to:  
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## Up In The Hill\$ FHRA Treasurer's Report By Bruce Carroll



The Franklin Hills Residents Association ended 2006 with year-to-year increases in: memberships, contributions, *Overview* advertising income, and interest and dividends. We ended the year with a gross income of \$14,519 up 21% from 2005. Our treasury grew from \$20,782 at the end of 2005 to \$25,422 a year later... a 22% increase. Although some of that increase was attributable to a larger percentage than usual of *Overview* advertising due in December 2005 that wasn't paid until 2006.

On the spending side our biggest expense was the *Overview* which costs about \$2,860 per issue, but for the first time this was more than offset by ad revenue. Please continue to patronize the helpful businesses you find on these pages.

Our next biggest expense in this litigious age was insurance. We spent \$1,578 to protect the FHRA and our community garden. Coming in 3<sup>rd</sup> in spending were our outreach efforts at \$964 this includes meeting costs of \$573 and internet, voicemail and snail mail costs of \$391. Just behind that was the median upkeep at \$70 per month. That was more than three times our median donations and the cost will be increasing substantially in 2007 as our previous gardener has resigned. Rounding out the expenses were \$341 to replenish the stock of FHRA Historic Photos, \$340 in donations, and \$195 on equipment and upkeep of the Norm Harriton Community Garden... a figure we have already exceeded this year.

Thanks for all your support over the years...let's keep up the growth in 2007.

## Movie Making History

Vitagraph, which started in New York City in the 1890's, was perhaps the first reality producer. They followed Teddy Roosevelt on the ship that took him to Cuba and charged with his Rough Riders up San Juan Hill in the Spanish American War. That was such a big hit they decided to follow it with "newsreels" of Admiral Dewey's defeat of the Spanish fleet alas, they had not actually filmed the battle, but apparently audiences of the time didn't notice that the war ships were cardboard miniatures, the battle smoke was from a cigar and Manila Bay was a bathtub on the roof of Vitagraph's Brooklyn studio.

Vitagraph's first California studio was by a real bay, in Santa Monica, but with 25% of their films being westerns they likely realized it looked better for their cowboys to ride off into the hills than the ocean. Besides it was a lot sunnier away from the beach, and the infant movie industry had already begun to cluster in the Hollywood area.

Vitagraph's staples were monthly newsreels and comedy shorts. One of their comedy stars was a Franklin Hills resident Babe Hardy, better known later as Oliver Hardy. Among his 1919 shorts (sans Stan Laurel who also worked for Vitagraph) were *Soapsuds and Sapheads* and *Mules and Mortgages*.

We don't know if Hardy had a mortgage when he lived across from the studio at 1719 Talmadge, or nearby at 4401 Clayton and later at 4425 Russell. As to "soapsuds" they're still plentiful on the lot, the 45 year home of ABC soap opera *General Hospital*

While Vitagraph was a pioneer in making films and actually the first studio to lease their own theatres, they soon dropped the idea. It was a costly mistake in an era when other studios were building their own theatre chains. Soon Vitagraph's distribution was becoming limited and in 1925 the whole Vitagraph company was sold to the up-and-coming Warner Bros. for \$735,000, less than today's average price of a Franklin Hills house.

Warners turned the Brooklyn Vitagraph facility into Vitaphone and pioneered work on talking pictures. Parts of Al Jolson's first 1927 "talkie" *The Jazz Singer* were filmed on the Prospect and Talmadge lot along with many other early Warners hits. But by the time WWII hit, Jack Warner, recently commissioned Lt. Col. Warner, turned the lot over to the Army Signal Corps.

*Continued on page 5*



*Vitagraph Studio circa 1920. We're not sure what movies the towers in the upper center of the photo were used for, but Vitagraph made Tower of Jewels in 1920 and Gray Towers of Mystery in 1919. They certainly weren't keeping their name a mystery. Vitagraph is painted three times in large letters along the Talmadge side of the property.*

Historic photos of the studio are available from the FHRA

## Baskets Full of THANKS



While the May Griffith Park fire was still smoldering, FHRA Board member Anne Richardson and President Charley Mims present a gift basket to fire fighters Eddie

Trujillo and Michael Banda to thank all those from Fire Station 35 on Hillhurst for their outstanding work on the Griffith Park Fire. Some of station 35's crew were still on duty snuffing out lingering hot spots in the park.

Mims discusses the Griffith Park Fire with LAFD Captain Gregg Olson of Station 56 on Rowena, which covers the eastern half of the Franklin Hills area. Olson was one of those seen on TV nearly trapped under a park pedestrian bridge.

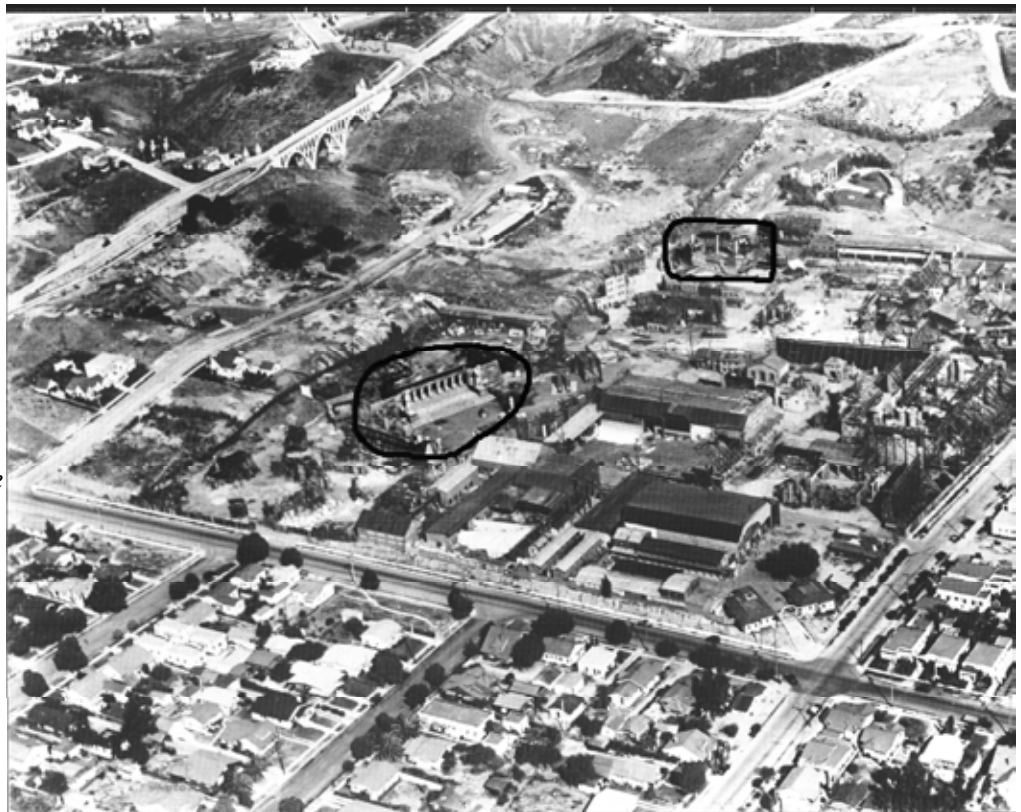
He commented that Franklin Hills is "a good community to be in."

FHRA also presented a Thank You basket to the LAFD air unit based in Van Nuys.



## The Prospect Studio

*By 1928 the studio and the neighborhood had grown and the Shakespeare Bridge had been completed. But it's unlikely the large ship on the lot south of the bridge had sailed under it to get there. In the 1920s Vitagraph made several nautical films including Dead Men Tell No Tales, Captain Swift, and Captain Blood. In 1925 Warners made Sea Beast, a silent version of Moby Dick, starring John Barrymore. There is also an impressive ancient monument near the center of the photo which was built between September 1927 and October 1928. Does anyone know what film it starred in?*



The studio became headquarters of the FMPU (First Motion Picture Unit). Since the studio had been unused for years and was without equipment, the first 300 recruits...movie pros who were enlisted for their skills...slept on cots in the empty stages. Films turned out by the unit included *Winning Your Wings*, credited with recruiting 150,000 Army Air Corps Cadets; the exciting *How to Fly the B-25*, still available on the internet; and the less popular four part series *Aircraft Wood Repair*.

In 1948 Warner Bros. sold the lot to the newly formed American Broadcasting Company for its west coast headquarters and channel 7, KECA-TV. Legend pegs the price at about \$250,000. It is California's oldest continuously used TV studio and since ABC was acquired by Walt Disney in 1996 it has been refurbished, renamed, and returned in part to its movie making roots as The Prospect Studios.

## 'City Lights

by Eric Frase

The Staples store tucked away in a corner shopping center at Vermont and Santa Monica is not only the closest location to Franklin Hills but also has the most whimsical parking area. Sprouting up out of the grassy median directly in front of the office supply store is a candelabrum of two dozen vintage and contemporary streetlights. What appears to be a mini museum of Los Angeles Bureau of Street Lighting is actually an art installation created in 1993 by artist Sheila Klein.

Impressed by the varied styles of light fixtures used over the years in different Los Angeles neighborhoods, Klein was able to borrow a collection of lamp posts from the nearby city streetlight yard at Santa Monica and Virgil for what was intended to be a one year installation.. Fourteen years later, the eye-catching line of 25 lamp fixtures continues to give onlookers a glimpse of a small sample of the hundreds of styles of L.A.'s quarter-million streetlights.



*An artist initiated sculpture located in the parking lot of a mini-mall. It is a drive-in museum of street lighting. Completed with help and cooperation from diverse City of Los Angeles Bureaus and Departments, business, the neighborhood and lots of friends; it functions within and without the realm of art, offering light, history, visual interest, and formal composition to anyone who ventures upon it. "Vermonica" is named for the intersection where it is located, Vermont and Santa Monica Boulevard.*

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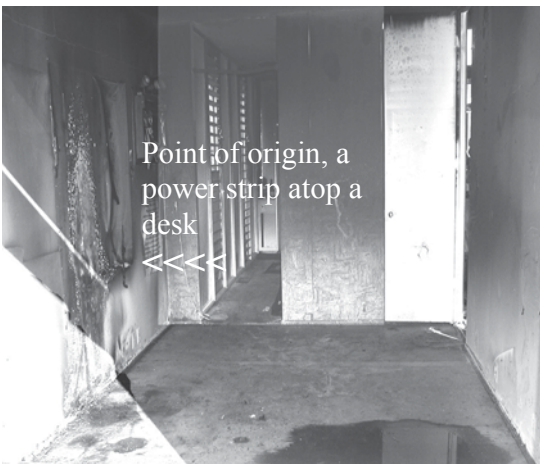
## WARNING: A Potentially Pyro Product

By Bruce Carroll

While many of us watched the destructive Griffith Park fire and worried and wondered what we would do if a wild fire came close to home, there remain many potential disasters waiting to happen right inside our homes. Among them all those electric power strips.

A while back, as I was showing some out of towners the eccentricities of Venice Beach, I received calls from friends around Mayview and Franklin about a fire at a rental house I own. Thankfully, alert neighbors had spotted the smoke and promptly called the fire department. The firefighters from station 35 on Hillhurst responded quickly and ever so efficiently.

There were clear signs of the fire's origin, and that should give just about all of you something new to worry about in your homes and offices. The fire started in an electrical power strip, according to analyses by Robert Jones an insurance company hired investigator. It's the kind of multi-outlet device designed to protect computers and other electronics from power surges. It seems that sometimes the circuitry hidden inside fails and heats up to the point of ignition setting the device, then flammable surfaces nearby on fire.



It's not that the power strip was overloaded by too many things plugged in...in fact, none of the equipment plugged into the

strip was turned on at the time of the fire. It is indeed a scary thought that such commonly used devices could turn from protection to pyrotechnics. When I asked investigator Jones how to prevent this type of accident he advised buying a "good brand" of power strip. But a quick internet search turned up evidence that that is much easier said than done.

One case history, featured on several websites, was a similar fire at the Sanford University Nuclear Linear Accelerator in 1999...involving a well known name brand of power strip. If Stanford's nuclear geeks can't find a safe power strip, how likely are we to make the best choice? But, metal is likely safer than plastic.

The moral of this story is perhaps we are all just moments away from a potential personal disaster even if it doesn't rise to the level of "film at eleven."



### What time is the right time?

If only real estate had a clock everyone could read. We'd know when the best time would be to buy; when to lock-in a loan—and when to sell. Real estate would be so easy.

Alas, real estate isn't so easy or simple. Beyond the complex nuts-and-bolts of a transaction, there's a great deal of art to interpreting the ticking pulse of the market. Why does one house sell for more than a similar house? Is this house a good buy? Should I sell now? In answering such questions, there is no aid greater than successful experience.

I like to think that if my clients enjoy working with me the first time, there might be another time. This notion has guided me over the last 20 years in real estate here in our neighborhood. If you want to know if now is the right time in real estate for you, I invite you to call me soon. Time is indeed "of the essence".



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# Sending a Clean Community Signal Via Radio Walk



FHRA Board Member Anne Richardson (left) and Patty Malone, our hands-on CD-4 deputy, size up the job of clearing what had become almost Radio un-Walk-able.



It took 3 hours, 12 tools, 14 hands\* and 50 bags to clean the 300 steps. That's 36 seconds per step, 6 steps per bag, 7 bags per volunteer and infinite community spirit.

\*GGPNC board member Tom Wilson, area residents Janet Williamson, Muriel Balian, plus FHRA President Charley Mims and Treasurer Bruce Carroll in addition to Richardson and Malone.

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At the finish of our "Big Sunday" clean-up project... which actually was on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>...we could all see light at the end of the stairway. Radio Walk is now 81 years old and despite a few cracks and missing railings, stands ready to welcome its fifth generation of walkers.

# PALERMO

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## New Art Galleries Springing up on Hyperion

By Anne Richardson

You may have noticed some new storefronts in our neighborhood lately, and wondered where the old ones went. Remember that feed store on Hyperion you passed a million times, wondering if there were enough chickens and goats in the neighborhood to keep the store going? Metro Gallery Contemporary and Fine Art now occupies the former feed store near the bend in the road where Hyperion turns into Fountain.

The new owners, Juan Garcia and David Freire, opened their gallery in September, 2005, and have enjoyed a successful beginning to their new business. They started out showing local artists from Silver Lake, Los Feliz, and Echo Park, and now have submissions from national and international artists competing for their representation. Their shows range from figurative paintings and photography to abstract work and mixed media. Recent shows include Sacred Excavations, exploring the meanings of spirituality by three artists, and photography by Ann Mitchell using vintage equipment to evoke atmospheric images of the past.

The gallery is taking part in a burgeoning local movement to increase the visibility of art galleries in the area. The Silverlake Alliance is working to broaden advertising for the galleries and hopes to hold several coordinated openings for their artists. See [www.galleryalliance.com](http://www.galleryalliance.com) for more details

Metro Gallery has also been a vigilant member of the Neighborhood Watch, chasing vandals and personally bringing about the arrest of two taggers. For more information on the gallery, see [www.metrogallery.org](http://www.metrogallery.org) or stop by Tuesday through Saturday, from 1-7 p.m., at 1835 Hyperion.



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# LYCEE LOS FELIZ EXPANSION?

by Juli Kolb

For over 20 years I've called Franklin Hills home. Over that time much as changed in the city but our neighborhood as remained an urban oasis. Which is why it is important to bring the following issue to the attention of the Franklin Hills Residents.

The Lycee International School of Los Angeles--LILA, Los Feliz campus, is located on 6 1/2 acres of Los Angeles City owned property below the Franklin Avenue Shakespeare Bridge. This land has an interesting history, originally a deep ravine, it was used for Hollywood freeway construction debris during the 50's and classified as a "city dump". The property was compacted, landscaped and over neighborhood objection, a permit was issued to the Midtown School in 1959. Renowned architect John Lautner designed the unique multisided buildings for the 45 student facility. (See picture at right)

Over the years school population grew and management changed hands, until in 1979 the school was allowed 290 students under a conditional use permit (C.U.P) with 16 strict conditions. Again, in 1986, the school petitioned to expand to 523 students. This request was overwhelmingly opposed by the neighborhood residents citing the existing C.U.P. violations of noise, traffic, unregulated off-hours activities and over development. Negotiations resulted in a total of 350 students, with the same C.U.P. conditions and a 3 year review.

Between 1986 and 1990 the then Apple School became financially insolvent and filed for bankruptcy. At the time, Prospect Studios and private developers attempted to purchase the property for proposed parking lots or town home housing, both were considered detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood and in response the Franklin Hills Residents Association was founded. FHRA efforts stopped both plans and resulted in the continuation of a school along with cultural historic designation of the Lautner buildings. In 1991, LILA, signed a very favorable long term lease with the City of Los Angeles to operate a maximum 350 student campus under the existing C.U.P with minor modifications.

As a homeowner overlooking the school grounds I've witnessed substantial changes instituted by LILA administration, including the installation of 8 trailers, paved parking over green space, a large awning, fencing, an outdoor public address system and additional exterior lighting. I was unaware of the specific conditions governing the school until 2006, when after years of trying to stop the after hours noise, and unabated expansion I was given a copy of the C.U.P by a neighbor. From that time forward I've been very involved in seeking C.U.P compliance.



Currently, LILA is in the 3rd year of a 5 year fundraising drive to further expand facilities, plans include a gymnasium/auditorium and additional classrooms, along with potential purchase of the property. Moreover, LILA Head of School Ms. Chaponot and President Mr. Fleck acknowledged that the school has over 350 students, which is a clear violation of the C.U.P. Although LILA pledges to comply with the C.U.P. next school year, LILA would like to expand by approximately 30% in the future, an idea that is as incompatible to the peace and enjoyment of the surrounding neighborhood



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## LOCAL SCHOOL CELEBRATES POETS FROM LANGSTON HUGHES TO VICTOR HUGO

*Karin Bouju-Davies*

### Bilingual Poetry Fest Marks National Poetry Month with Art, Drama, Music and Games

Students from Kindergarten through 5th Graders at the LYCEE INTERNATIONAL de LOS ANGELES (LILA) celebrated National Poetry Month with a day-long poetry festival on its Los Feliz campus. National Poetry Month was established by the Academy of American Poets as a month-long, national celebration of poetry in 1996. It has grown over the years into the largest literary celebration in the world.

LILA students explored poetry through art, music, drama and creative writing in a series of workshops including a Poetry Café, that allowed them to order poetry readings from parent/waiters off a menu; a puppet-making workshop based on Ogden Nash's "Custard the Cowardly Dragon" poems with Los Angeles arts educator Marianne Sadowski (LACMA, The Getty); a Scavenger Hunt; and a Strip Poetry comic strip writing lesson. Jazz musician Fred Selden used music to teach children about the rhythms in poetry, and 4th and 5th graders competed in a mock game show, "Who Am I? Extreme Poet Edition."

Since LILA is a French-American school, with a bilingual curriculum, the workshops explored both French and American poets and were conducted in French as well as English.

"Voltaire called poetry the music of the soul," said Head of School Elizabeth Chaponot, "and it is a central part of our elementary curriculum. Even our kindergarten children are accustomed to learning and reciting poems. With LILA Celebrates Poetry! we wanted to reinforce the importance of poetry -- of listening it and writing it and reading it by having some fun with it. We wanted this to be a day, an experience, the children really remember."

More than 30 parents volunteered to help with the event which kicked off with a Poetry in Pajamas Party in each classroom. "It's a wonderful example of what a school community can do when teachers and parents work together to make the most of all the talents they have and share them to enrich our children," said Chaponot.

The LYCEE INTERNATIONAL de LOS ANGELES (LILA) is a bilingual (French/American) private school serving students from PK to 12th. LILA's Los Feliz campus, the largest LILA campus, is located in the hills above the ABC Studios and spreads over 6 1/2 acres of greenery below the famous Shakespeare Bridge. Designed by John Lautner, the school is classified as an historic monument. Its unusual design provides for airy classrooms, an imposing library, science building, and cafeteria, all in a park-like setting

LILA was recently named one of Los Angeles' "60 Best Elementary Schools" by Los Angeles Magazine.

## Addressing a Yearly Question To Paint or Not to Paint?

By Bruce Carroll

Most homeowners in the area have been solicited by someone offering to paint your address on the curb, usually for a charity donation. We know it certainly can be a helpful service, making it easier for friends and emergency vehicles to quickly identify your home.

But here's what you likely don't know about curb address painting. For nearly 45 years it has been controlled by city ordinance #122,905 which requires painters to buy a yearly permit (now \$211), have proper insurance and abide by the 11 rules and regulations reprinted below from the city's website.

Most interesting are rule #6 which seems to require numbers be painted on all curbs of improved property in a block, unless a property owner objects. And rule #9 which seems to bar the tactic of implying that if you don't pay your address won't get painted.

As of April 2007 only two painters have the city permits and the city official in charge of the program admits he can't recall ever enforcing rules #6 or #9...in fact he's not sure they say what they seem to say.

1. This Permit becomes invalid if and when the required liability insurance is cancelled or the surety bond amount is depleted; or upon notice of revocation by the Street Use Inspection Division.
2. The Permit (sic) must be in possession of the person performing the work and available for inspection on demand.
3. The Permittee shall instruct each of his employees and agents to comply with all applicable provisions of Section 62.96 of the Los Angeles Municipal code and these Rules and Regulations.
4. Permittee must give sufficient advance notice when house number painting is scheduled so as to allow time for property owners or occupants to make an objection if they so desire. Such notice shall be in writing and contain (sic) Permittee's name and telephone number, and the date the work will be done.
5. Permittee shall maintain a record of the streets in which he paints house or street address numbers. A list of such streets shall be forwarded to the Street Use Inspection Division upon completion of the work on a weekly basis.
- 6. House numbers shall be painted on the curbs in front of each improved parcel of land in the block unless the owner or occupant makes an objection.**
7. A first quality paint manufactured for use on concrete shall be used. The second coat of paint shall be compatible with the first.
8. The Permittee shall not fail, refuse, or neglect to promptly correct in a workmanlike manner any error made in a house number.
- 9. Solicitation for donations or payment for the work shall be made in a civil and courteous manner without inference that donations are mandatory, or that the City established or regulates the amount of such donations.**
10. The Permittee shall immediately advise the Street Use Inspection Division of any change in address, telephone number, or company name.
11. Failure to comply with these rules and regulations will result in revocation of this Permit."

## Save, Don't Pave... The NO's Have it

By Bruce Carroll

"To Pave or Not to Pave" was the question posed in the last issue of Overview. The results are in:

### 36% were for repaving:

"50 Years and 3 earthquakes is long enough" Monique Harriton

"I teach nights and dread walking from my car fearing I'll fall on my face." Brenda Kilbourne.

"If you had a 40 foot long pothole in front of your home, where the chunks of concrete rumble every time a vehicle passes by, I really do not think you would be happy." Dean Kono.

### 57% were against repaving

"Unfortunately, unless we can get speed bumps and other effective, official traffic-slowing measures, the potholes and ridges are our only small measure to combat speeders." Sue Cross

"Unless they are repaved with concrete (not asphalt), I say: No, let them be." Randy Akerson

"Paving will speed up the traffic to a dangerous rate putting walkers and children in peril." David Campbell

The other 7% was Peter Rozsa who suggested "they could fill the potholes and contour crevasses possibly followed by a thin armor coat. This would avoid the hills being locked up for months by major excavations."

What was fascinating about the responses was their method of transmission. 83% of those who favored spending the \$\$ to repave the streets and then presumably more \$\$ for speed humps put their \$\$ where their pen was by spending 39cents to put in their 2cents via snail mail.

Conversely, 88% of those inclined against repaving our hills used free electronic means to communicate via e-mail and phone.

Thus proving whatever happens to our streets, Franklin Hills residents tend to practice what they preach.





Architecture, Murder and Movies at your  
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The Architecture & Beyond speaker series is back once a month on a Thursday evening. Confirmed speakers include Edward "Ted" Bosley from the Gamble House in Pasadena on May 17th and Richard Stanley discussing 19th century photography on June 14th. Doors usually open at 6:30 with the lecture beginning at 6:45. Books for purchase and signing are always available from Skylight Books and many local Los Feliz Village businesses support the program by providing wonderful refreshments. You can come for an evening of information, fun and coffee. There will a summer break but we will begin with new speakers in September.

During July & August the library will have two mystery writer events. The first, on Tuesday July 17th, will compliment the Architecture speaker series. Landmarked For Murder will feature Gay Ann Degani, G. B. Pool, Darrell James, Dee Ann Palmer, Paul D. Marks, Kate Thornton, Jinx Beers, Pamela Samuels-Young, Arthur Coburn, and A. H. Ream. This fictional travelogue visits some Los Angeles landmarks, each of which serves as the setting for ten tales of dark passions and murder. On Tuesday August 14th, Murder Abroad will feature a panel of writers whose mysteries cover the world.

The Library continues to carry HOT OFF THE PRESS books. This new project of the Los Angeles Public Library allows us to carry top best sellers by popular authors such as John Grisham, Dani-

elle Steel, Alexander McCall Smith, John Saul, Walter Mosley, Janet Fitch, Elizabeth George and more. The books are available for a special 7-day loan instead of the usual 21 days. This means you don't have months to wait on the holds list. 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.

Los Feliz Branch is in east Hollywood. Of course this means our teens want to make a film. The Teen Film Club is busy working on it's first short film and hope to have a neighborhood viewing by the end of summer. Keep an eye on the flyers in the library and check out the new manga & animee sections.

Book Discussion & Gossip groups, Chess, Quilting & Scrabble clubs, Teen Club, Terrific Toddler Times on Tuesdays and the monthly Friends Booksale continue. We are also looking for adult volunteers to help us behind the scenes.

**The library is open Monday & Wednesday from 10:00am - 8:00pm; Tuesday & Thursdays from 12:00noon -8:00pm; Friday & Saturday 10:00am - 6:00pm.**

We invite you to stop in to the library to see what's new, what's coming, and what we have to offer

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## Northeast Division, LAPD



It seems that everyone loves the Franklin Hills. Unfortunately this now seems to include car burglars. Recently three suspects were arrested for breaking into vehicles. Shortly thereafter one of the suspects told investigators that he liked the area because he always finds good stuff in the cars. It would seem that each one of us could do a better job at "hardening the target".

- Always roll up your windows and lock the doors.
- Never leave valuables in plain view, even if your car is locked.
- Try to park in well lit areas.
- Report vehicle burglaries even if little or nothing is taken. Timely reporting gives an accurate picture of crime trends.

The first two weeks of April showed a sharp spike in vehicle burglaries that were occurring in the evening hours. Officers assigned to the Northeast Division Criminal Apprehension Team reviewed the crime pattern and time frame then deployed to the area.

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at 7:20 PM the officers monitored a radio broadcast that described suspects involved in a vehicle burglary on Prospect Avenue. Responding officers met with the witness who said that he had observed a male leaning into the broken window of a parked car. The male removed an I-Pod and walked away. The witness followed and confronted the male, telling him that the I-Pod did not belong to him and to give it back. The male surrendered the I-Pod then fled on foot to a waiting vehicle. The witness was able to provide a description of the suspect, vehicle, and license plate.

The officers checked the address of the registered owner but were unable to locate the vehicle. A short time later the vehicle was observed driving northbound on Vermont Avenue with three occupants. The vehicle was stopped and all three occupants were detained. One male was found to match the description that the witness had given. He was arrested for vehicle burglary. The other two occupants were found to be

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in possession of porcelain spark plug chips and were arrested for possession of burglary tools. (The chips are frequently used to shatter vehicle windows).

Since these arrests, the pattern of late night vehicle burglaries has stopped completely. These particular suspects may not return but others may find the pickings to good to resist. Please keep your car locked and valuable items out of sight.

I would like to welcome back Captain Jose Perez from Rampart Division who will be the new Commanding Officer for the Northeast Area. Captain Jose Perez, if you remember, was the Patrol Captain here approximately 9 months ago. He has recently been promoted to Captain III and will assume his duties as the Commanding Officer on May 1, 2007. We wish Captain Perez the best and I look forward to working with him.

Have a safe and happy summer,

*Al Polehonki, Senior Lead Officer.*

## President

*continued from page 2*

after we achieved an historical designation status for the Derby at Hillhurst and Los Feliz Blvd. We have also continue to have direct input into the revamping of the Griffith Park Master Plan and expect these efforts to result in a new Master Plan that all of us can support. "Big Sunday/Mayor's Day of Service" took place on April 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> to make so many improvements to our great City! In the Franklin Hills the Radio Walk public stairways downhill from Franklin Avenue were shoveled free of dirt, pruned of vegetation overgrowth and swept down with volunteers from the FHRA and GGPNC Boards and from the local neighborhood. My thanks to each and every one of you for all the good deeds you do for our community!

Once again the FHRA is setting records for the number of members and the number of great volunteer activities that we bring to improve and beautify our neighborhood. Thank you for continuing to support your volunteer neighborhood spirit through the Franklin Hills Residents Association!

**Don't forget to attend the FHRA Annual Meeting to hear more of what's happening in the Franklin Hills and to vote on your new representatives.**

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## Fire in Griffith Park

by George Grace

I wrote two articles that appear elsewhere in this issue. One concerns coyotes in Hancock Park, and the other is an upbeat report on Griffith Park news. I opined that even though our present drought has created a minor crisis for wildlife, things in general are pretty good.

Then on Tuesday, May 8th Griffith Park caught fire.

Reaction to the emergency was immediate and effective. The Los Angeles Fire Department and Park Rangers coordinated efforts to fight the fire. They had solid support from other city departments including LAPD, LA Animal Services, and Zoo staffers who stayed on the job with their animals. Fire Department helicopter pilots flew dangerous water drop missions until early Wednesday morning. Thanks to the heroic efforts of the many, no one died, no landmarks were lost, and only one home in Los Feliz was damaged. We should all be proud that the City was so well prepared for this crisis.

Even so, more than 800 acres - one fourth of the Park's natural area - was burned. Famous hiking destinations like Dante's View and Captain's Roost were totally destroyed, large areas of wildlife habitat disappeared, and most disturbingly, wildlife died.



By Thursday, the fire was over, and the challenging task of restoring Griffith Park became the principal subject of discussion by Recreation and Parks, Councilmember LaBonge, community groups, environmentalist organizations, scientists and the "plain people" who were the original beneficiaries of Colonel Griffith J. Griffith's extraordinary 1896 Rancho Los Feliz gift to the City of Los Angeles.

On Friday, May 11th, the L.A. Times published a letter to the editor by Dan Cooper. Dan is the ecologist in charge of the FHRA sponsored "Griffith Park Natural History Survey". His letter is a brief analysis of what happened to the park, and issues that need to be considered in its restoration. His thoughts are worth reprinting:

"Fire in chaparral - the dominant and native - habitat of Griffith Park is 100% natural.

As with many urban parks, Griffith has been described as our city's "lungs" - a big, wild place where coyote and even bobcat sightings are nothing extraordinary. It has also been the canvas onto which generations of Angelenos have imparted their personal vision for the park, from the redwoods in the bird sanctuary to the tropical gardens of the vista points.

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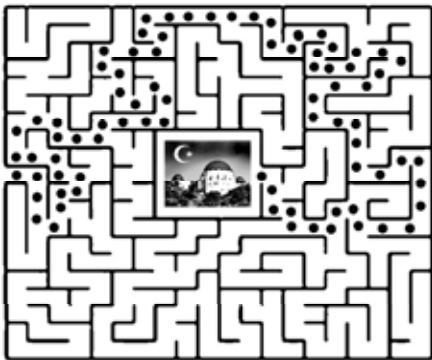


## Griffith Park Fire

The park has always struck a balance between the built and the natural, the wild and the calibrated. Even as its structures are given a face-lift, and rebuilt, the park's natural areas have been victims of neglect, with a complete lack of trail signage, human transients ensconced in the bushes along its perimeter, and lush sycamores and oak groves stripped of their undergrowth by off-leash dogs and aggressive maintenance practices. Although restoring many components of the park are welcome, let's hope this is done with an eye toward better stewardship of the natural resources we may have been taking for granted." Amen to that.

You can help Griffith Park too. Volunteers are signing up with the Sierra Club and other groups now. Check the FranklinHills.org and GGPNC.org webpages for volunteer opportunities. Long live Griffith Park!

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PUZZLES ON  
PAGE 20**



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### Coyote Tracks

by George Grace – email: gmrnet1@gmrnet.com

We've had 15 new coyote sightings posted on the FHRA website since last October, all pretty ordinary. Maybe the ornery critters moved on to Hancock Park for easier pickings. At least you might think that from newspaper reports earlier this year. I haven't seen any coyotes near my house, but there was a recent sighting of four on Franklin Avenue at Radio Street.

The excitement caused by coyote sightings in Hancock Park gave me a feeling of déjà vu. On January 23rd, the L.A. Times reported that Hancock Park "Residents are howling at the sight of coyotes". This prompted

an excellent and informed response by L.A. Animal Services General Manager Ed Boks on January 25th - one of the best summaries of the urban coyote issue I have read - that essentially recommended that we learn to coexist with our "Wile E. neighbors". (I take him at his word that if the Hancock Park "pair" is trapped, that he will "release them back into the wild.") On January 29th, the Times published a bemused letter to the editor from a Stone Canyon Reservoir resident who wondered what all the fuss was about; followed by a January 30th op-ed from columnist Joel Stein extolling "The yip of the wild", and declaring that "without his wayward coyotes, the Hollywood Hills are just suburban." I definitely agree with Mr. Stein.

There is a simple explanation for coyotes being in Hancock Park. On February 2, 2007, the L.A. Times reported that Los Angeles is having another record dry year, only 1.5 inches in Los Angeles vs. the normal 7+. They compared this year to the "driest year in L.A.'s documented record: In 2001-02, 3.66 inches of rain fell between July 1 and June 30. Then it really got dry."

It was in that driest of 2002 summers while walking my dog Lucky, that I first saw coyotes in my Franklin

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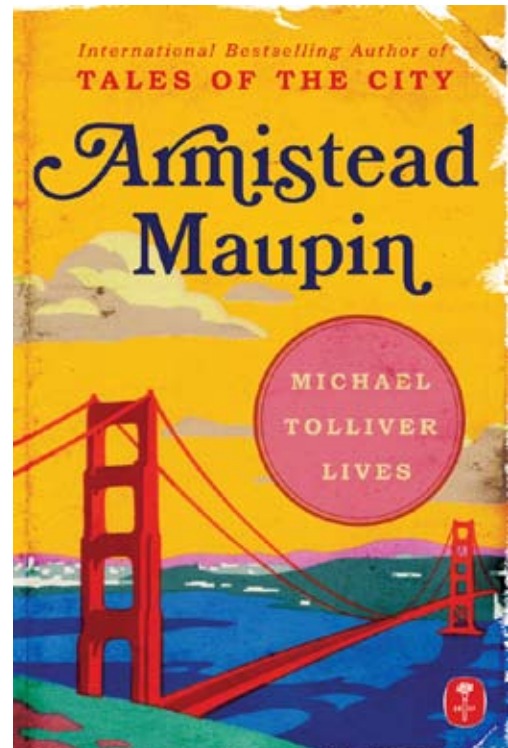
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## SHOTS FIRED IN FRANKLIN HILLS

by Chris Reynolds

Hills neighborhood. I was used to seeing 'possums, 'coons, and skunks regularly, but coyotes a block from my house was totally unexpected, and made me a bit uncomfortable. My third encounter within three weeks in those dry days in 2002 had a profound effect on me. On that day, I observed a small coyote by the edge of the road as I drove down the hill. He looked pitiful - scrawny, thin, and sad looking. He was hardly a threat to me or my 80 pound Labrador dogs. I really felt sorry for the little critter, and wondered what I could do to help. I decided to become a wildlife advocate.

We all need to become wildlife advocates. Reports indicate that droughts will continue in Southern California for the indefinite future. This means there are going to be continuing hard times for our wildlife. You can help. Join the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, the Humane Society, or any number of worthy organizations. Better yet, join them all!

And don't forget to post your coyote sightings at: <http://www.gmrnet.com/Coyotea.html>.

At least six shots were fired and two suspect-victims may have been wounded in a May 3 shootout on the 4000-4100 blocks of Prospect Avenue that wounded no neighborhood residents but rattled neighbors throughout the hills.

By 7:30 pm on the night of the shooting, police were reporting that they had questioned at least three suspects and taken into custody two cars, one with blood in it. But three weeks later, no arrests had been made and none were expected soon.

In fact, for many neighbors, the most significant revelation since the shooting is probably that another shooting took place some weeks earlier, in mid-afternoon, on the 2500 block of Lyric-- multiple shots, no apparent injuries, no cars left behind, no arrests.

It's unclear if the two events are connected. But at least two neighborhood watch meetings have been held in the hills since then (on May 4 in Prospect Avenue residence, on May 17 at Marshall High School) to address these events, and another was scheduled for June 6 at a Prospect Avenue residence, with representatives from LAPD and Councilman Tom LaBonge's office expected.

continued on p. 21

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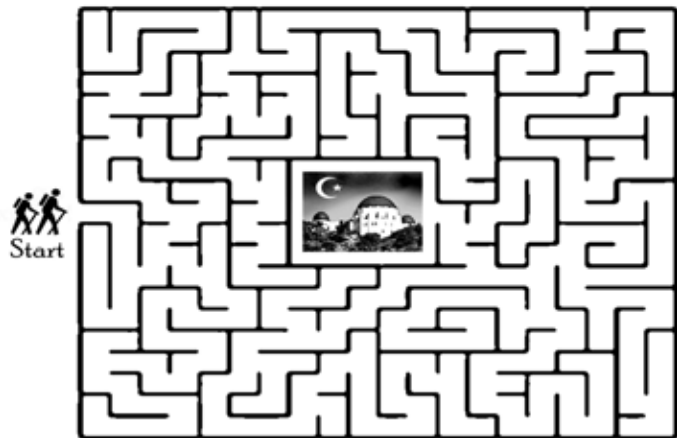


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# Overview For Kids

Answers on page 17




Help these hikers find the way to Griffith Observatory.

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**SHOTS FIRED** *continued from p. 19*

Among the expected topics: studio security enhancements (workers in late May began putting up six new lights along Prospect); and the chances of getting permit parking, cautionary signs and increased police attention along that studio-adjacent stretch of Prospect.

Witnesses and police said the May 3 incident erupted at about 6:15 pm among three carloads of young men who were parked alongside the Prospect Studios in an area where young Armenians often park to smoke and chat. Apparently a dispute broke out between groups, which led one young man to pull out a gun and fire a shot. That apparently led another man to pull out another gun and return fire, repeatedly.

Witnesses along the 4000-4100 block of Prospect heard the shots and saw the men scramble into vehicles and scatter, two to the west on Prospect and one to the south on Sanborn. On its way west, one suspect's car clipped a parked vehicle on the north side of Prospect, leading the suspect or suspects to jump out and apparently hop into another car. Alerted by multiple 911 calls, several police cars arrived within about five minutes of the incident, including neighborhood SLO officers Al Polehonki and Sam Salazar.


Witnesses and police later counted at least six shell casings on the street, and witnesses said they may have heard as

many as a dozen shots. At least two otherwise uninvolved cars were hit by stray shots and a spent bullet was recovered at the corner of Prospect and Sanborn.

Police said one victim-suspect turned up that night with a gunshot wound to one leg at Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital, where police questioned at least two of his companions and examined their car, a BMW. (The other suspects are believed to have been driving a Toyota Camry and a Mercedes.)

Though details remain sketchy, the police say they believe up to eight young men were involved. Because of the blood and spent bullet found in the car that was abandoned on Prospect, authorities speculated that a second suspect-victim may have escaped the scene, and later identified an uncooperative victim of a gunshot to the hand.

However, despite the physical evidence, the identification of suspects and the many witnesses who saw the run-up, heard the shots and saw the aftermath, police said their case was hurt by the absence of the guns, the unwillingness of the victim-suspects to cooperate, and the lack of witnesses who saw the shootings themselves.




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## Griffith Park Natural

### History Survey Information

*George Grace, Survey Steering Committee*

There can be no doubt that Global Warming will significantly affect the local ecology, including the ecology of Griffith Park. There can also be no doubt that reliable scientific data about Griffith Park is essential to the goal of providing informed stewardship of the Park's ecosystems. Unfortunately, there is very little scientific data about Griffith Park, and what exists is not easily retrieved.

The Griffith Park Natural History Survey is an effort to fill this void in knowledge, compile existing information, and establish an easy way to make the data available to the public via an internet website. After an initial launch, the website will require ongoing funding for maintenance and database updating as new study information becomes available.

Franklin Hills Residents Association (FHRA) and the Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council (GGPNC) have partnered with Griffith Park Rangers to sponsor the project. It is hoped that additional local groups and organizations will join the partnership.

To this end, FHRA and GGPNC have hired Cooper Ecological Monitoring, Inc. (CEM, Inc.), headed by Dan Cooper to conduct the project. CEM, Inc. will research and develop materials for a web-based ecological information center, the Griffith Park Natural History Survey. The two phase survey will include compiling existing information, and developing new information about the flora and fauna in Griffith Park. Data will be digitized and made available to the public through an internet based website.

## Phase 1

Phase I of this effort will include the compiling of annotated wildlife checklists for Griffith Park (bird, mammal, reptile and amphibian). These lists will synthesize current and historical information on species status and abundance in the park, and will draw on a variety of sources, including unpublished studies/reports and field notes, specimen records (L.A. Co. Museum of Natural History), the Los Angeles Breeding Bird Atlas, and the Los Angeles Christmas Bird Count. Some baseline original fieldwork will be required to confirm existence of species of conservation concern not typically encountered when casually birding or hiking (e.g., Greater Roadrunner, Horned Lizard). These are referred to as "target species searches" below.

## Phase 2

Phase 2 will involve the design and development of the actual website, and will include more extensive field investigations and monitoring necessary to determine critical conservation areas for selected species and ecosystems within the park. The website will include a homepage with a mission statement and description of the Natural History Survey. The website will include digitized maps, reports and species checklists, which will be also available at the Griffith Park Visitors Center. It will also include identification tools, including photographs of characteristic and conspicuous species. The site will link to local/partner organizations and studies, enabling visitors to get involved in conservation issues in and around the Park. It will also include acknowledgments of donors to the Natural History Survey, as well as information about donating funds to ongoing conservation efforts.

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## Myra Avenue Mural Project - Mural #3 on its way!

Phase 2 field investigations will be coordinated by CEM, Inc., but will be largely voluntary. These will augment initial species lists and current natural history knowledge. These will include:

- Estimates of sensitive breeding bird species within the park, including raptors and habitat specialists particularly dependent on the park for habitat in urban Los Angeles (e.g., California Quail).
- Wildlife movement/crossing investigation, using roadkill surveys and other methods for detecting medium-sized and large mammals.
- Amphibian survey of major drainages within park.
- Rare flora mapping, working with local chapter of California Native Plant Society and other groups.

Phase 2 will commence concurrently, as funding allows.  
Project Coordination

Both Phase I and Phase II will be coordinated by CEM, Inc. The project to be administered by a steering committee consisting of: Albert Torres, Chief Park Ranger, Los Angeles Dept. of Recreation and Parks, George Grace, Franklin Hills Residents Association and Daniel S. Cooper, Cooper Ecological Monitoring, Inc.

### Timeline

Phases 1 and 2 will begin in April 2007. Initial fieldwork and checklists will be completed by June 30, 2007. Completion date for the Phase 2 website is estimated at September 30, 2007.

### Funding

Phase 1 funding - Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council  
Phase 2 funding - Franklin Hills Residents Association and others  
Website Maintenance and Updates - To be determined

The Myra Avenue Underpass has finally been repaired. A leak in the underpass had stopped us from moving forward with any future murals. A lot has changed at the intersection of Myra Avenue below Sunset Boulevard. Two award winning developments are finishing up construction, new lighting has been installed in the underpass, parking restrictions are in place there, and the area is cleaning up quickly.

Principal Charlene Hirotsu and former teacher Nora Gordon are starting to work with the kids at the Thomas Starr King Middle School to design their second mural at this location. Monies have been pledged by the Laguna site developers and the GGPNC Neighborhood Beautification Committee is looking into helping out as well. This mural will be the third one at this location and is being shepherded by Peter Bedard and the FHRA.

Recently the Myra Avenue Underpass was included in Frontiers Magazine's history tour of Silver Lake and its amazing to learn how the area has blossomed. If you haven't visited the first two murals, mural #1 on the North East corner of the underpass was designed by local artist Louie Metz and across the street on the North West corner of the underpass is mural #2 which was designed by the students at Thomas Starr King Middle School. This third mural will be centered on the Western wall next to the first King mural. These murals have helped reduce graffiti in the underpass and make the area visually welcoming as well as encourage pride in the neighborhood. See how your neighbors and neighborhood groups are helping to make our 'hood a better place.

Peter Bedard, MA, [C.Ht.](#)

**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](http://WWW.FranklinHills.org) and click on "Join FHRA" and you'll get an FHRA membership form that you can print and mail**

### FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION P.O. BOX 29122, LOS ANGELES, CA 90029

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DUES are \$30.00 per couple or \$15.00 per person; AMOUNT ENCLOSED:  \$15  \$30  \$50 larger contributions are extremely welcome. Thank you for joining FHRA! Contributions are tax deductible.



Isabel Duran Tellez  
 October 30, 1905--May 5, 2007

A Franklin Hills homemaker since 1977, Isabel Duran Tellez was often seen walking in coat, hat and gloves, greeting all the neighbors. From her home on De Loz Avenue, she walked to the local bus stops en route to the Glendale Galleria or to Hollywood to shop or visit with friends. Born in Clifton, Arizona, where her family had moved in 1900 from Chihuahua, Mexico to work in copper mining, she moved to Los Angeles in the 1920's where she and her late husband, Alfredo Tellez, raised their two daughters, Alicia Romero and Armida Bolton, of De Loz Avenue. Isabel was 101 years old.

Although her own life was that of a homemaker, she encouraged her daughters to study and achieve an education. Her daughter Armida is a long-time Franklin Hills resident and supporter of local projects; she donated generously to the support of the Franklin Avenue median in memory of her late husband. Armida's life, career and success are a monument to her mother's life and care.



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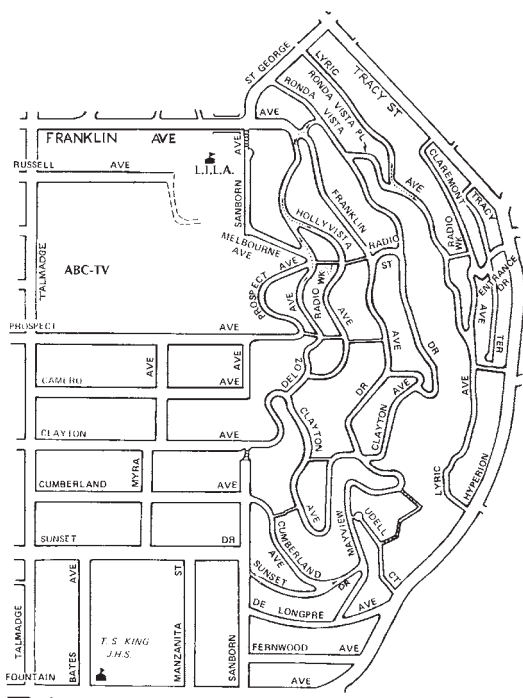


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## OVERVIEW

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