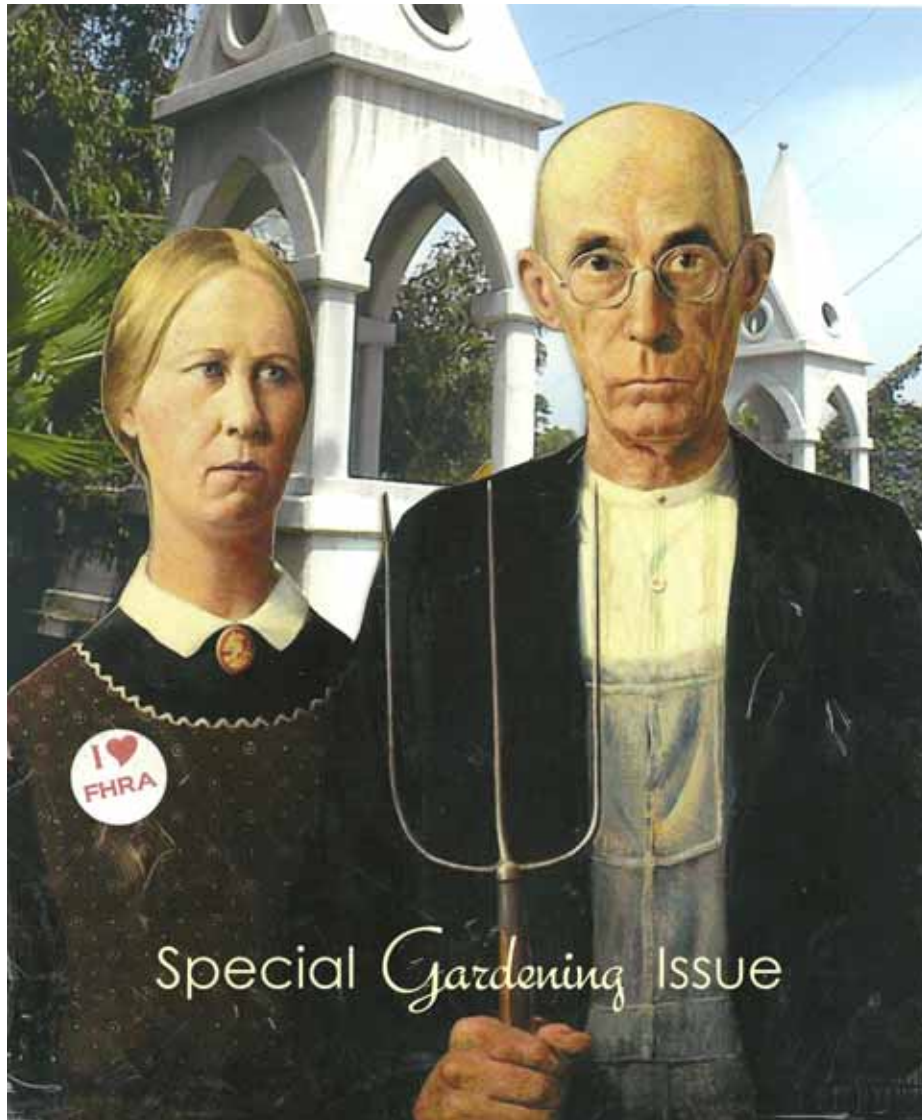


# OVERVIEW

Spring/Summer *Franklin Hills Residents Association* 2011



[FHRA Annual Mtg. / Sat. June 18 / 11am / LILA \(French-Am. School\) Library](#)

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## OVERVIEW

A semi-annual publication created and distributed by volunteer residents, neighbors, friends and supporters of the Franklin Hills Residents Association—a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization

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## President's Comments / *Chris Boutelle*

Spring has sprung, summer's almost here. It's time to get out and resume walking the streets and staircases of Franklin Hills and enjoying the views and plantings that are blooming anew.

Since I took over as the president of the FHRA in January, much has happened in Franklin Hills. We have all been impacted by the excavation of the streets for the sewer replacement project. Even if your street was not torn up, you surely had to detour or wait on other streets that are our main arteries to the outside world. Having driven all thirty of the streets of Franklin Hills on May 14<sup>th</sup>, I can happily report that all excavation seems to be completed and patched with concrete.

Along the same lines, I spent part of the morning of April 13<sup>th</sup>, driving our streets with our city councilmember, Tom LaBonge and his Field Deputy, Mary Rodriguez (a longtime Franklin Hills Residents Association member) identifying broken street surfaces, the worst potholes, and cuts poorly patched by utility companies over the years.

Mr. LaBonge was especially concerned about the

surface condition of the road around 4011 Franklin Avenue, just east of the Shakespeare Bridge in the west-bound lane. That is a major thoroughfare for cross town traffic (unfortunately) and needs to be addressed. This stretch is right at the three-way stop that is often a problem for people entering and leaving Franklin Hills. It is also in the direct path of both John Marshall High School students and many of the students of LILA, the French American School beside the bridge, as they walk to and from school during peak traffic hours. Nearby, he noted a dangerously protruding manhole on the blind curved rise where Franklin and Hollyvista Avenues cross. This is dangerous for southbound cars and even bicycles which must cross into the oncoming lane to avoid it.

Deputy Rodriguez was concerned about the settling and poor quality of sealing of the utility cuts made by the Gas Company and the DWP over the years. Let's hope that the sewer replacement contractors have done a better job of patching our streets. So far (one month) they seem to be very smooth.

I pointed out the 3900

block of Mayview Drive, where the street is extremely eroded and seems to be slipping down on to properties at the top of Udell Court, a badly torn up spot in the 3700 block of Clayton Avenue where tree roots have upended the road surface until it jeopardizes a car's undercarriage, and a retaining wall in the 3900 block of Cumberland Avenue that is leaning so precariously into the street that it is potentially a danger to cars and pedestrians on that narrow, curving street should it suddenly fail.

As we drove through Franklin Hills, the Councilman had Ms. Rodriguez make notes of street problems from Bates Avenue all the way up to Ronda Vista Drive. He has since sent me a copy of a letter to Mr. Nazario Saucedo, Interim Director of the Department of Public Works/ Bureau of Street Services, asking him about what can be done to seal and protect our aging concrete hillside streets from water damage and erosion.

I hope we can find an answer so that our streets will once again be safer to drive and walk and enjoy in our daily life. ■

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## Thanks To Our Council Office / Shirley Mims



Councilmember Tom LaBonge's office came through in replacing our Franklin Hills neighborhood identity signs. As reported in our last Overview, three of our seven signs had gone missing in the last couple years. While the three replacement signs were in production, a fourth disappeared. Our Council office was able to add the fourth sign before the order was finished. All four new signs were installed in late February with tamper resistant hardware. Hopefully the signs will stay up and we will have no more problems with them disappearing. We are extremely grateful to LaBonge's Franklin Hills area deputy, Mary Rodriguez, who followed through with DOT and City Hall to have the signs made and installed.

Mary Rodriguez and our Council office also worked behind the scenes to restore the Shakespeare Garden underneath the Shakespeare Bridge. The garden needed to be torn out in order to replace a sewer pipe at the end of Monon Street. At the Council office's direction, before digging out the garden the contractors were asked to uproot and place the white iceberg roses in temporary pots. The contractors watered and maintained the roses throughout the construction. When they replanted the slope, the contractors added several more iceberg roses and other plants including rosemary and lantana. The result is a clean and young looking garden.

Over the next few years, the slope will once again mature and fill in. FHRA member Shirley Mims has volunteered to continue the maintenance of the garden. Periodically, we will have garden clean-up parties to pull weeds and prune overgrowth. It's a great way to meet and greet neighbors while contributing to the beautification of our neighborhood. If you are interested in joining us, please send an email to [fhra@FranklinHills.org](mailto:fhra@FranklinHills.org). ■

*Photo by Shirley Mims*



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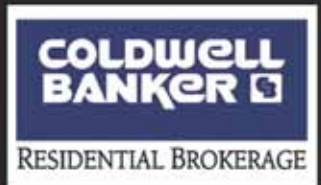
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## FHRA's Response to Local Noise and Graffiti Issues / *James McEwen*

### Raving Noise

Last year several of our members expressed concern about late night noise from the raves held at the LA Coliseum. The Franklin Hills Residents Association together with The Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council sought the assistance of our Councilmember Tom LaBonge in seeing that the city's existing noise ordinances were being observed and to evaluate the impact of future events. Our neighborhood groups' goal was to see that the Coliseum Commission required promoters to cover the expense of audio monitoring of any future events at the LA Coliseum or the Sports Arena.

For now, the organizers of the Electric Daisy Carnival, because of both safety and noise concerns throughout many parts of Los Angeles, have moved the raves to Las Vegas. Should they return, or when the area attracts similar presentations, monitoring could assure that shows can be conducted safely while observing the existing city noise ordinances which protect our neighborhood's quality of life.

Working together we hope to find a way forward, because music is good for the soul as well as for the city's coffers.

### Grappling with Graffiti

With the start of the school year in the fall of 2010 Franklin Hills experienced a new wave of graffiti. Through the combined efforts of the FHRA, Marshall Area Neighborhood Watch, LAPD's Northeast Division and the administration of Marshall High School, one of the main tagging crews responsible was identified and action was taken against the offending students. While graffiti in the neighborhood has decreased significantly since this action, there are several steps we can take to help keep Franklin Hills graffiti free.

One of the most effective methods of combating graffiti is quick clean up, ideally within 24 hours. Leaving a tag in place invites further graffiti and competition from rival crews. The cleaned area simply becomes less inviting to fellow vandals. FHRA will be giving away free bottles of graffiti remover at the Annual Meeting on June 18th.(see pg 22)

Graffiti on either public or private property can be reported to the Hollywood Beautification Team, a city contractor tasked with painting over tags along with other municipal clean up projects. HBT will come out and paint over the tag, matching the original paint as closely as possible. They can be reached by phone at 323-962-2163 or through their on-line request form. [www.anti-graffiti.lacity.org](http://www.anti-graffiti.lacity.org)

Some homeowners may choose to clean the tag by themselves. To aid those neighbors the FHRA will make available a limited amount of "Lift-Off" graffiti removal solution at our annual meeting.

A digital photo of the graffiti along with the specifics of date, time and place sent to the LAPD's Northeast Division's Community Relations/ Graffiti Officer Adam Mazquita can be helpful in tracking offenders and building a case against local taggers. Officer Mazquita can be reached at 213-485-2548 or via email at [32108@lapd.lacity.org](mailto:32108@lapd.lacity.org).

Graffiti on Metro bus benches is cleaned by Bench Ads. To report tagging on city bus benches call 800-234-5460. ■

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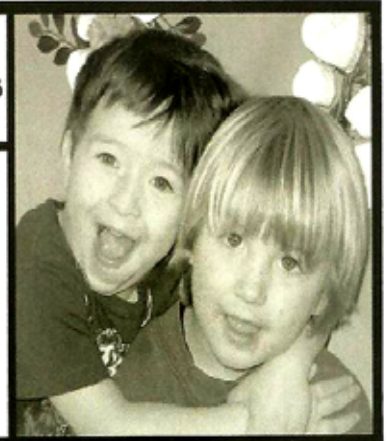
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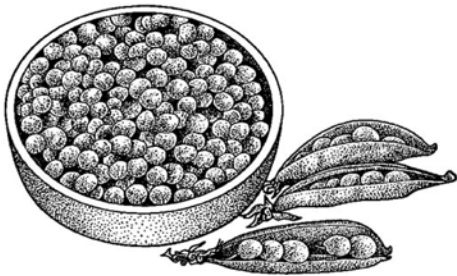


## You're Invited / *David Farmer*

The second annual Marshall Area Neighborhood Watch picnic is set for Sunday, June 26, 12-4 p.m. on the front lawn of Marshall High. (We're telling you early so you can schedule your trip to Tuscany around the picnic. ) Once again, it will be potluck, so please bring enough food and drink to feed your party, exchange with others, and offer some to the police and fire officers we'll be inviting. There will be tables and chairs, or you can sit on the grass or the low wall next to the sidewalk. You should also bring utensils, napkins, and cups. These can either be recycled afterward or taken home with you. We will leave the grounds neat and clean as we did last year. We expect to have an LA Fire Department truck for kids and immature men (like me) to clamber on. There will be a separate children's game area, supervised by the same gracious folks who did it last year. We'll have entertainment, organized by Jane Cantillon of the duo Dick and Jane. Last year we had singers and instrumentalists, plus a belly dancer. This year's lineup is not set yet. A representative from the Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council will help you sign up for emergency response classes. And we plan to invite experts on wildlife control and graffiti.

Surprise bonus: the MANW is creating a website that we'll introduce at the picnic. It'll be one more way to stay informed about our great neighborhood. Feel free to tell friends from nearby streets about the picnic and urge them to join our group. We already have members on Tracy, Lyric, Ames, Monon, Wanda, Holly Knoll, Claremont, St. George, Aloha, Talmadge, Hazel Kirk and Evans. We picked up a lot of members at the picnic last year, and expect to do so again. The MANW currently has 170 members. We welcome residents between Hyperion and Talmadge, Griffith Park Blvd. and Franklin. It costs nothing to join, and we're dedicated to cooperating with valued groups such as the FHRA, the LFIA and the GGPNC. If you have a talent or skill you want to display at the picnic, please let me or Carole Nese, MANW president, know about it. We'll direct the information to the right chairperson. And we'll keep you updated as June 26 approaches. ■

## FHRA Annual Mtg. / Sat. June 18 / 11am / LILA (French-Am. School) Library



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## FHRA Finances Mirror the Economy's Ups & Downs / *Bruce Carroll* FHRA Treasurer's Report

On the plus side our biggest revenue source, *Overview* newsletter advertising, was up to \$6,700, slightly exceeding printing and other costs. And member dues and contributions were also up, reaching nearly \$5,000, although the actual number of memberships at 244 dropped slightly from 2010.

On the minus side bank interest declined nearly 75% to just over \$80 and sales of FHRA T-shirts (pg-11) and historic photos (pg23) also declined in part due to the cancellation of the Los Feliz Street Fair.

We received a \$2,500 donation from Councilmember Tom LaBonge's office to help support the \$3,600 FHRA donated to the creation of the Big Blue "M" mosaic mural at Marshall High. We also got \$2500 from the Silver Lake and Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Councils to support the 4<sup>th</sup> Myra Ave. mural (see pg 10) which was completed in May 2011.

Other income included:

\$1,085 for the Norman Harriton Community Garden more than offsetting garden expenses of \$557.

\$1,000 for the Griffith Park Natural History fund to partially offset the \$3,500 we spent on a Griffith Park plant survey. Earlier this year the FHRA spun-off the Friends of Griffith Park group which now has taken over the park nature studies (see pg 20).

\$300 for the Franklin Ave. Median Fund, but we spent five times that on median maintenance (see pg 17). That was partially offset by a \$500 donation from a commercial production company that used our scenic area to help sell their cat food.

Other expenses included:

\$3,060 to study the sounds emanating from the Prospect Studios and hopefully work on ways to reduce the noise pollution.

\$961 on insurance, a reduction of almost \$500 from 2010.

\$390 for membership mailings and meeting expenses.

\$223 for web hosting, [www.FranklinHills.org](http://www.FranklinHills.org); voicemail 323-908-6078; and PO Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

\$72 for miscellaneous expenses ranging from holiday decorations to bank fees.

The good news is that so far this year memberships and donations have increased from the same period in 2010. If you have not yet renewed your FHRA membership for 2011, current members can use the return addressed envelope in the FHRA letter you should have received. If you're not already a member use the convenient membership form printed in this Overview (pg 22) or come to the annual meeting and join us there. Individual dues are just \$15 per year, \$30 for a household and of course extra contributions are always welcome and tax deductible since FHRA is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charity. Thank you for your continued support for FHRA and the businesses whose ads make the *Overview* possible. ■

FHRA Annual Mtg. / Sat. June18 / 11am / LILA (French-Am. School) Library

## Coyote Tracks / *George Grace*

Way back in May of 2003 I set up a webpage to collect anecdotal data about local coyote sightings and encounters. Hard to believe it was 8 years ago. Since then, over 300 people have come to the site and reported their coyote experiences, and thanks to the internet, some from as far away as Maryland and Texas!

There is a link on the site to verbatim comments submitted through April, 2011. Some are long, some short, and the online file still needs some editing (I'm going to get to it soon..maybe), but they are an interesting read, as I rediscovered while doing my recent update.

This is the first posting from 2003:

5-12-03 - Location: Hillside to the west of Hollyvista, in the backyard of a house about 1/2 block south of the Franklin intersection. Comments: Coyote was in the backyard of the house about 7:30a.m., when I first saw it. There was some residential construction in progress at the house next door, to the north, and the noise (hammering, etc) appeared to frighten it. It made its way back toward Hollyvista between two houses (apparently with no gates/fences between front and back yards).

Here are some others:

11-13-05 - Location: At intersection of De Loz and Clayton. Comments: Around noon I was driving up Clayton and at the De Loz intersection Ave. and spied a coyote. He turned down DeLoz to avoid my car, and was facing another car coming to the intersection from DeLoz. He jumped up onto the driveway of the house there, and sped away down their driveway. I have seen him before on Clayton. He is very wary of humans, and avoided me - and my car.

07-14-2006 - Franklin and Commonwealth. Comments: 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 then 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. Saw another coyote in the same area a couple of months ago, as well.

06-12-09 - At my home on Prospect Ave LA. Comments: At Approx. 3 a.m. my dogs responded to noise. Coyote was spotted through the window trying to get in the Backyard! Yikes my husband screamed! The Coyote ran! Dogs went nuts, Neighbors were probably upset with the noise. Thanks!

There have been several postings in the last few weeks about a healthy looking coyote that is hanging out in the DeLoz/Hollyvista area by me and other neighbors. Here is the latest post:

04-12-11 - Location: DeLoz near stairway. Comments: 9:30AM. A little coyote - about 20 or 25 lbs. was standing in the street as I drove up. When he saw me coming he politely got out of the way. He went up the hill about 10 feet to a flat spot, then sat down to look at me. I stopped to look at him. He looked at me, and was still looking at me when I drove off 30 or so seconds later.

Have you seen him/her? If you have - or have seen any coyotes around the neighborhood - please post your sighting at [www.gmrnet.com/Coyotea.html](http://www.gmrnet.com/Coyotea.html) (you'll have to capitalize the "C" in "Coyotea"), and add to our growing file of data about what happens when coyotes meet humans. Hope to see you at the FHRA June 18th annual meeting. ■



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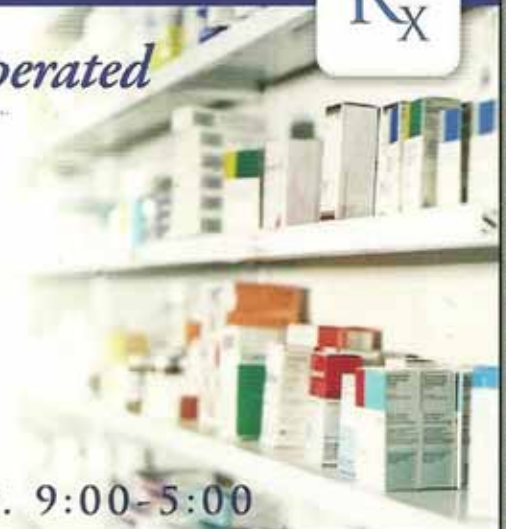


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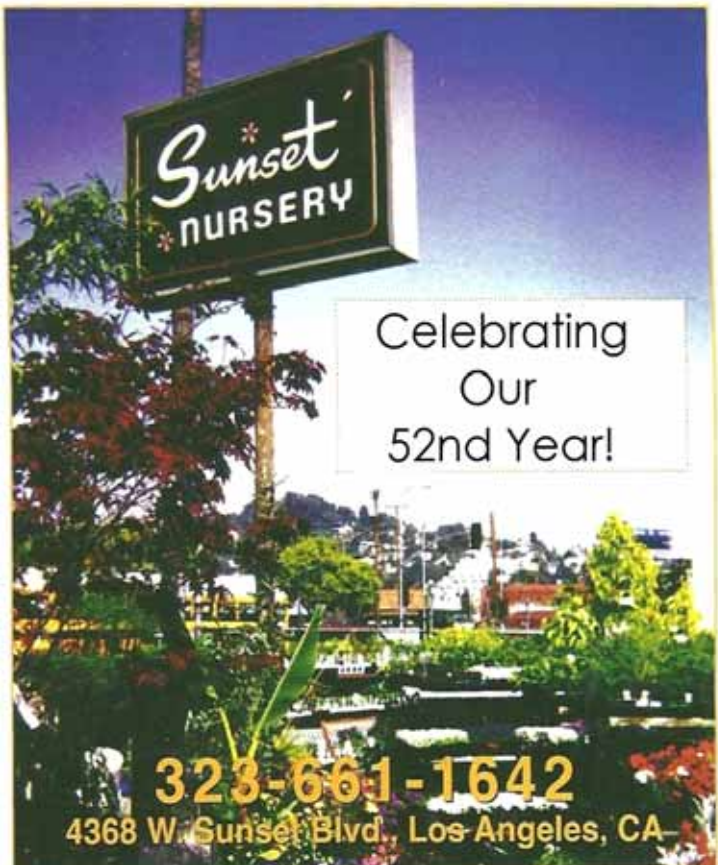
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## Is City Budget Cutting Burning Holes in our Safety Net? / *Bruce Carroll*

As you light your summer bar-b-que or jog on a very hot day you can join other Angelenos who may be a little less safe this summer because of LA Fire Department (LAFD) cutbacks approved in May as part of the City's austere budget plan. LAFD cutbacks raised a lot of public concern becoming the most hotly debated budget item. The result was that 318 firefighter positions won't be "permanently" eliminated, they just will remain vacant, and when city finances improve some of the cuts could be restored.

Close to home, Fire Station 35 on Hillhurst has lost one of its 2 pumper engines and the rotating crews of four firefighters who staffed it. That unit used to respond to between 7 and 10 calls a day for fire and medical emergencies, with summer seeing the highest demand for service. By a wide margin most LAFD calls are to aid the ill and injured, not to battle blazes. Station 35 is still staffed with a single engine plus a hook & ladder truck and 2 ambulances. But with cuts elsewhere nearby, the demands for these remaining units' services will be far greater.

At a rally held at Station 35 on Fire Service Recognition Day last month, United Firefighters LA City President Pat McOsker said with the cuts at Station 35 and other stations in the city it is unlikely that the LAFD will be able to meet the accepted standard of responding to 90% of calls in 4 minutes or less with the first unit, and 8 minutes with additional units. McOsker predicts "more people will be dying" and everyone will "be at greater risk."

The LAFD has 106 fire stations and none will be closed, but 11 stations, like #35 will lose engines and 7 will be losing their big ladder trucks. In July the current system, where each day over 20 units are not staffed on a rotating basis, will end. The ladder truck remaining at Station 35 will be the only one between Station 27 near Cahuenga and Fountain and Station 50 across the LA River on Fletcher Dr. near San Fernando Road. The trucks are the ones that carry the "jaws of life" device frequently needed to free auto accident victims.

While LAFD leaders say they will adjust staffing for weather conditions that increase fire danger in the hills, there is no way of predicting when and where an arsonist might strike or serious accident victims will need life saving help where time is precious. ■



FHRA President Chris Boutelle (left) and one very young firefighter wannabe were among the crowd at the Fire Service Recognition Day rally at Fire Station 35 on Hillhurst as Firefighters union chief Pat McOsker explained the dangers posed by losing Engine 35.

*photos by Bruce Carroll*



This map shows Station 35's primary coverage area in pink and other nearby stations, such as Station 56 on Rowena, which has primary responsibility for the eastern 1/4 of the Franklin Hills, plus Station 82 on Bronson near Hollywood Blvd., Station 20 on Sunset near Alvarado, and Station 52 on Melrose near Western, which could be the backup units when Station 35's units are unavailable.

## King Kids Create Myra Mural IV / *Bruce Carroll*



The 4<sup>th</sup> FHRA supported mural to adorn the underpass where Myra Ave. crosses under Sunset Blvd. soared from planning to painting on a late May 2011 weekend. The "Soar" design by King Middle School student Michelle Kim was the winner of a 2010 online contest. FHRA got funding support from the Greater Griffith Park and Silver Lake Neighborhood Councils. About 20 students participated in the painting instructed by mural artist Nori Shirasu, (right) and King teacher Kirk Palayan (left). Former FHRA board-member Peter Bedard has coordinated the four murals which have turned the once dingy haven for graffiti into a drivethru art gallery gracing the Myra gateway to the Franklin Hills. ■



Murals II, III, & IV (right to left) are on west side of Myra Ave. between Fountain Ave. and Santa Monica Blvd. a route taken by many students of King Middle School who can proudly point to the school's role in design and painting of the murals.

*Photos by Bruce Carroll*

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**View**  
From Our  
**Garden**

by Kathy Siegel



From the author's  
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*White Peaches,*  
*Violetta Eggplant*  
& *Burgundy Chinese*  
*Long Beans*



My boyfriend James and I have lived in the Silver Lake/Los Feliz/Franklin Hills area for many years. We have shared this current address along with our cat, three dogs, and a hen house of feisty chickens for nearly eight years now.

Gardening in Franklin Hills can be a challenge.

We live on a hillside with rocky clay soil, shaded by our neighbor's towering pine trees. Our gardening quandary was partially solved with a series of large beds, shade plants, retaining walls, fill dirt and pots - whiskey barrels, terra cotta, potato towers, even plastic buckets. Lots and lots of pots in what is at least partially an elaborate container garden, each vessel or bed connected to the others by a sprawling drip irrigation system.

We rotate our vegetables to get the most of Southern California's year-round growing season. We start seeds on our sunny deck when we can, or when the squirrels don't get them first (FH's real gardening challenge) and fill out our yard with purchased seedlings. Heirloom varieties and vegetables with unexpected colors: purple cauliflower, burgundy okra, blue-podded peas are favorites in our yard.

In the fall we plant chard, kale, collards, lettuces, garlic, peas, broccoli and several kinds of potatoes. I try cauliflower every year but have yet to produce a successful crop. Each year we learn a little more about what our plants like and so we keep trying. Because they are one of my favorite vegetables, every year, after the fall crops have finished, we put in a large cover crop of fava beans to nourish the soil. I love the little white flowers and the promise of tender spring salads. This past season we devoted the entire front yard to a sprawling crop of leggy fava beans.

In April we changed over the garden to spring and summer crops. We have several kinds of tomatoes, but Costoluto Genovese and Ramapo, "the Jersey tomato," are the ones we've had great success with so they are our stand-bys. For color and summer fun we've added in Pink Ping Pong, Nebraska Wedding, Green Velvet, Snow White, Black Mauri, Black and Brown Boar and Tess' Land Race Currant Tomatoes all new to our garden this season. Summer squash, herbs, garbanzo beans, melons, peppers, pumpkins and for the first time a summer crop of potatoes are all growing in our yard right now accompanied by a smattering of sunflowers and black-eyed Susans - another new idea for 2011. The coming weeks and warmer weather will bring okra, more beans, and perhaps delicate lettuces in the shadiest areas.

Our fruit trees have flowered and there are already young fruits on the limbs of our white peach tree. And so begins this year's enactment the neighborhood's biggest gardening challenge - keeping the squirrels, and skunks, and raccoons (and chickens) out of the garden long enough so that we can share in the harvest. ■



Want fresh fruits and vegetables but don't have a green thumb?  
Check out some of the farmers' markets near Franklin Hills

**Atwater Village** - 3250 Glendale Blvd @ Brunswick / Sundays / 10am-2pm

**Echo Park** – Parking Lot #663 on Logan St. south of Sunset / Fridays / 3-7pm

**Hollywood** – Ivar & Selma Avenue / Sundays / 8am-1pm

Los Angeles Medical Center

Certified Farmers' Market – **Barnsdall Art Park** /  
4800 Hollywood Blvd / Wednesdays / 12 – 6pm

**Silver Lake Sunset Junction** –

Griffith Park Blvd & W. Sunset Blvd @ Maltman

Saturdays / 8am-1:30pm

Tuesdays / 2-7pm

**When Will the “Big One” Hit? Are You Prepared?**

Learn how to protect yourself, your family and your neighborhood in all types of emergencies. The LA Fire Department and the GGPNC are sponsoring the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training course (info at [www.lafd.org/lafd-cert](http://www.lafd.org/lafd-cert)) on seven consecutive Wednesday evenings starting on June 26, 2011 and ending on August 10.

The classes run from 7pm to 9:30pm and will be held at:

Our Mother of Good Counsel Church, 2060 Vermont Ave. a block south of Los Feliz Blvd.

Contact: Andrea Iaderosa, GGPNC Public Safety Chair, [andrea@GGPNC.org](mailto:andrea@GGPNC.org) or 323-666-3950

[FHRA Annual Mtg. / Sat. June 18 / 11am / LILA \(French-Am. School\) Library](#)

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## Gardening with the God System / *Bruce Carroll*

Nearly a century ago, poet Alfred Joyce Kilmer concluded his poem *Trees* with the famous line "Only God can make a tree." When I moved to the Franklin Hills 41 years ago I had little free time, but a big desire for free fresh oranges. So I decided that if only God can make a tree I'd let him do the rest of the work.

Over the decades I've planted oranges, lemons, grapefruits, tangerines, and apricots. In addition, figs and avocados, neither of which I like, planted themselves. Using what I call the God System in place of most chores such as fertilizing, pruning, pest control and weeding, almost all of the trees are going strong and producing bountiful harvests. I even have a grapefruit tree that's thrived for 35 years after sprouting from a seed my father found in his breakfast grapefruit.

The Franklin Hills, at least my part, seems blessed with rich productive soil that makes gardening easy and rewarding. Rather than paying market premiums for "organic" I just plant, water and pick. Remember that plants and trees thrived for millions of years before anyone wrote a how-to book on gardening.

I guess the bottom line of my preaching is that you don't need to spend lots of time and money or have any expertise to grow much better fruits and vegetables than you can get in the market. Citrus fruits can remain on the tree for over a year making them a great emergency food supply to have near-by when the "big one" hits. The only downside is that the stuff from the store tastes so bland after you and God grow your own. ■

With apologies to Mr. Kilmer I have *amended* his poem



I think that I shall never *be*  
*The one to labor over a tree*

A tree whose hungry mouth is *best*  
*Fed from earth's sweet flowing breast;*

A tree that looks to God all day,  
*Doesn't need any chemical spray,*

A tree, *be it orange or pear*  
*Can thrive with little human care*

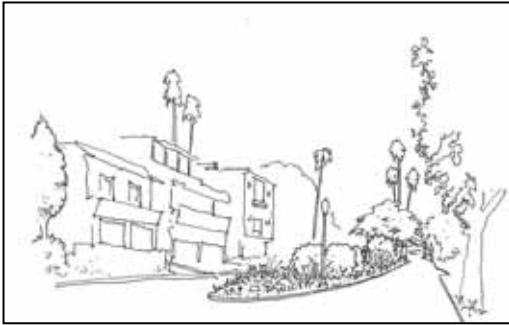
*Why expend the time and pain*  
*When God provides the needed rain.*

*Gardening is done by fools like me,*  
*But only God can make a Tree.*

The last time I fertilized this lemon tree, peanut farmer Jimmy Carter was president. It still produces lotsa lemons without much aid.

*photo by Bruce Carroll*





## The Franklin Avenue Median

By Armida Bolton / Illustration by Riccardo Accorsi

Delicate stems of purple Mexican Sage seem to bloom year round, but in spring they share space first with orange Bird of Paradise, the official flower of Los Angeles, and then with short-lived, fragile California poppies, and finally, they compete with the lavender flowers of two Jacaranda trees that burst into bloom in early May

For more than a decade, these plants have populated the Franklin Avenue median, a gift of the Franklin Hills Residents Association to its own community. Unfortunately, some of the original plantings have died and have been replaced by others. Some shrubs have become overgrown and are badly in need of skillful pruning. "Volunteers" have blown in and taken hold and need to be dug up. Still, the median remains a lovely island along Franklin Avenue.

The median was built just above Talmadge, in 1926, at the same time the nearby Shakespeare Bridge was constructed. It was apparently intended to complement the bridge and to serve as a turn-around for vehicles. It is not known if the traffic island was ever supposed to be landscaped. It is known, however, that over the years the median underwent a number of modifications to accommodate changes in allowed driving speed. But for much of its existence, it was just an asphalt-covered strip, 411 feet long, 11 feet wide, weeds poking through its many cracks.

When the FHRA was founded in 1989, one of its first proposed projects was the beautification of the median, and it quickly won enthusiastic support. However, it was not something that would happen overnight, nor even just a few years.

One of the myths about the development of the median is that FHRA fearlessly adopted the motto "It's easier to apologize than to ask permission" and that the median came into being magically before city bureaucrats found out about it.

In fact, even though the city had in place an "Adopt a Median" program, and encouraged private groups to undertake such beautification projects by offering incentives such as simplifying and expediting the permit process and waiving fees, there was much asking of permission.

Plans and architectural drawings had to be prepared, applications for permits had to be filed, and money had to be raised for the things that the city would not provide, such as an irrigation system, and plants and trees, planting soil, and mulch. Even though it was agreed that the plants chosen for the project would be drought-resistant, water would still have to be available, and a means of supplying electricity for the irrigation had to be supplied.

When FHRA board member Riccardo Accorsi, a talented local architect, agreed to take on the job of project manager, he had no idea how long it would take for the plans he drew on paper would turn into reality. Together with Melinda Taylor, another resident and landscape designer, he came up with the design that includes use of rocks that serve as walls as well as planters.

In the Winter 1992 Overview Accorsi reported that median project was "making progress at a rapid rate." In fact, it would not be until November 11, 1995, that the first shovelful of soil would be turned, and the first trees and blooming plants placed in the ground.

On that warm Veterans Day holiday, more than 30 enthusiastic volunteers, some long-time residents, some recent arrivals to Franklin Hills, and some students from local schools, labored all day to turn the dream of the median into a reality. Tom LaBonge, then an aide to Councilman John Ferraro, was among them. Other volunteers provided food and refreshments.

More than 100 donors came up with the \$13,763.44 the project cost initially. Fifteen years later, a number of FHRA members regularly make donations to defray the on-going costs, which are mostly to pay for the gardener who comes twice a month for trimming and clean up, and the city water bill, although the sprinkler system which delivers water is currently disabled.

Project manager Accorsi envisioned a median where most of the work would be done by volunteers. It is still a great idea. But where are the willing volunteers with the green thumbs, time on their hands, and a desire to keep FHRA's median project alive and blooming? If you are such a person and want to enlist to be on the median committee, please call the FHRA voicemail at (323) 908-6078 or come to annual meeting on June 18. and sign up in person! ■

# OVERVIEW KIDS' PAGE

## Fruit and Vegetable Scramble

Unscramble these favorite (and some not-so-favorite) foods...

TOPOTA      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

LEAPP      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

MUCBRECU      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

VOADACO      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

PEGARS      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

CORBCOIL      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

ISHDAR      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

GORENA      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

NIPUKMP      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

EBSTE      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

\*\*\*\*\*

T r e e   v i n e   o r   d i r t ?

Where do these foods grow?

On a tree? *T*

On a vine? *V*

Or underground in dirt? *D*

CARROT \_\_

GRAPE \_\_

APPLE \_\_

FIGS \_\_

PEACH \_\_

POTATO \_\_

PUMPKIN \_\_

CHERRY \_\_

AVOCADO \_\_

PEARS \_\_

ONION \_\_

PEANUT \_\_

Need the answers to the puzzles? - e-mail [Puzzles@FranklinHills.org](mailto:Puzzles@FranklinHills.org)

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Violations:	.....(888) LA4BUILD
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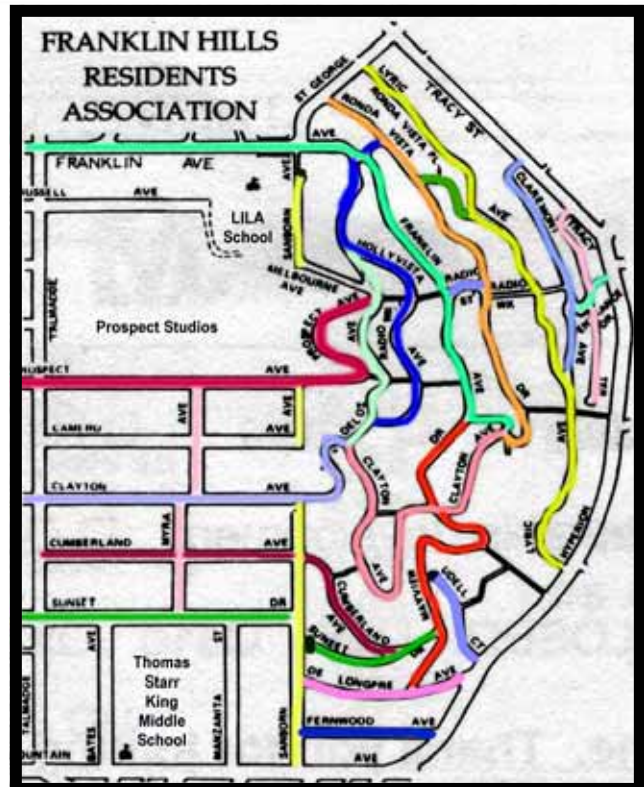
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## **Griffith Park Needs Friends / *Gerry Hans, President, Friends of Griffith Park***

Over the last decades, a myriad of people have come to the rescue of Griffith Park to counter proposals which may have completely changed the park's identity, now accurately characterized as the "nation's largest Urban Wilderness." These advocates came from all over the City and region, as well as locally. They represented citizens' concerns about the natural habitat, the park's historic resources, and the purpose for which it was donated by Colonel Griffith.

Various attractions in the park have long-standing organized groups supporting their particular missions, but until now, there has never been one group that supports the park as a whole. The newly formed non-profit organization, Friends of Griffith Park, has tasked itself to fulfill the enlightened stewardship of Griffith Park as a whole. It comes at a good time, as the budget crisis not only decreases the amount of maintenance in the park, but also creates pressures to use the park as a revenue source. The urgency to stave off encroachment of the free and open character of Griffith Park has never been as critical and important that it is today.

Friends of Griffith Park's goals include the advocacy, support, education and service. Of particular focus are:

- Preserving the open landscape, ecosystems and Urban Wilderness features;
- Safeguarding it as LA's largest Historic-Cultural Landmark and working to restore its historic fabric;
- Opposing identity-changing development and commercialization;
- Ensuring transparent decisions are made openly with the public's involvement, and with accountability;
- Promoting knowledge and education of the park's natural and human heritage;
- Providing grants and engaging in fundraising for the park's study and preservation.

Forming an organization such as this one takes a lot of planning. The 18-member board of directors met for close to a year before launching the organization. Formed as a 501(c)(3), memberships and donations to the organization are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Having received immediate interest and great support quite readily, Friends of Griffith Park has already:

- Launched website, FriendsOfGriffithPark.org;
- Published an 8-page newsletter and several other written pieces;
- Attended many public meetings, making comment and doing outreach;
- Supported Griffith Park Natural History Survey, the brain-child of Franklin Hills' George Grace;
- Led its first Inner-City Hike with twenty 6<sup>th</sup> graders, and plans to lead hikes on a regular basis.

As advocates for Griffith Park some of the biggest issues and challenges currently facing the park are being targeted by the new Friends group, including:

- Thwarting off the current attempt to allow advertising in our city parks. The concept of accepting "donations" from corporate sponsors in exchange for renting park spaces, walls, playgrounds, benches and roofs for signage is unacceptable. Even the City Attorney has said this plan violates the LA sign ordinance;
- Supporting a Master Plan for Griffith Park, not a "vision plan", as now proposed by the Department of Recreation and Parks, as well as Council District 4;
- Opposing paid-parking for Los Angeles Zoo parking lot;
- Supporting down-sizing development of the colossal NBC-Universal proposed project and also Forest Lawn's proposed large expansion project.

The new Friends of Griffith Park organization has its work cut out for itself. Griffith Park's future seems fragile without well-directed support and solid advocacy. Colonel Griffith J. Griffith envisioned the park as a place to escape the pressures of living in an urban environment. The park needs "Friends" to uphold this hundred-year-old vision, and as a member, you become a "Friend" of the park, too. ■

**FHRA Annual Mtg. / Sat. June 18 / 11am / LILA (French-Am. School) Library**



**DRIVE CAREFULLY**

This truck, trashed this wall, in this accident on Franklin in late April. No one was injured this time, but we always need to remember to drive slowly and carefully because our winding narrow streets leave very narrow room for even small errors. The wall has since fully recovered.

*Photo by Bruce Carroll*

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**Get Your Free Graffiti Remover / Shirley Mims and James McEwen**

Be sure to come to the FHRA annual meeting on June 18th and pick up your free bottle of graffiti remover. We will also give a live demonstration on how to use the product to remove graffiti from your property and around our neighborhood. This product works great to remove spray paint, ink pen and many other graffiti elements from both hard and porous surfaces. FHRA will be handing out 16oz bottles of graffiti remover to help residents remove graffiti that you might see and want to eliminate.

Thanks to our many community activists against graffiti, we have a good record of keeping our community relatively clear of graffiti blight. It is important to remove graffiti as soon as you see it. Leaving graffiti up invites other taggers to make their mark and increases the frequency of this eye-sore.

Common places for smaller tags are on garbage cans, bus benches, and street signs. The product we will be handing out at the FHRA annual meeting cleans graffiti off all these objects. If you are able help, we are ready to support you.

Providing materials to our residents is one of the many ways FHRA helps you to maintain the wonderful neighborhoods we all enjoy in Franklin Hills. If you need more help with graffiti problems in your area, or want a refill of the graffiti remover, please contact us at [fhra@franklinhills.org](mailto:fhra@franklinhills.org).

## FHRA Annual Meeting Saturday, June 18, 2011 11am –1pm



Come join your neighbors, make new friends, find out what is going on in the neighborhood and our city, plus help Fight Graffiti with a free bottle of Graffiti Remover (see pg 22).

We'll have a representative from the LAFD to answer your questions about the reduction in staff at station #35 which will have one less pumper truck. (see pg 9)

We'll have our LAPD senior lead officers to discuss what crime is up, what crime is down and what you can do to help the police and help us all to a safer neighborhood.

Long time FHRA member Mary Rodriguez, Councilmember Tom LaBonge's deputy for Franklin Hills, will be there to answer your questions and concerns. All this plus presentations on other topics of interest, FHRA Board of Director elections and refreshments. Sign-in and socializing start at 10:30am.

**The school is at 4155 Russell Ave. There is plenty of parking up the hill at the end of Russell...Hope to see you all.**

As FHRA members and guests gather at the LILA School they'll be walking across ground that wasn't there when this photo was taken 69 years ago. The area just below the bridge in the center of the photo was used as a dumping ground for tons of dirt excavated for the Hollywood Freeway in the late 1940's. What was on the hillside east of the ravine was a stable, possibly used in conjunction with the Warner Bros. studio that became ABC-TV and is now Prospect Studios. Near the bottom of the picture you can see the litter from a city trash dump.

To see the whole photo, and many more in the FHRA collection, go to [www.FranklinHills.org](http://www.FranklinHills.org) and click on "Historic Area Photos." From there you can order your own copies of our neighborhood's history.



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