



OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Issue #42

Fall/Winter

2011



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President's Comments / *Chris Boutelle*

OVERVIEW

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We Are Not Alone

In the past eight months, I have become somewhat of a roads scholar, having taken an interest in the condition of the streets of Franklin Hills but also that of other areas in Los Angeles such as Silver Lake and even the busy Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards. We are not alone. Street surfaces all over town are in really bad condition. Because of a freezing of property tax revenues due to the implementation of Proposition 13 in 1978 and more recently, a slowing of taxes due to the recession, the City has not had the funds to properly maintain our streets.

Equally important, as long overdue infrastructure projects such as sewer replacement and gas piping upgrades are being done, they leave a crisscross of patches some of which have settled to be bone jarring pot holes.

According to Mr. Nazario Saucedo, Interim Director of the Department of Public Works/Bureau of Street Services, "The only available option the City has to rehabilitate these streets in their present condition is to overlay them in asphalt. If the community agrees, we

can create a project and add it to the database for consideration in a future resurfacing program with all of the other qualifying streets in the City."

The City no longer has a concrete crew that can bring our streets back to the condition of 80 years ago. A question that has dogged the neighborhood is do we want black asphalt streets and should we get in the line to get ours done? Many neighbors do not like the look or heat retention of asphalt but most of us would prefer smoother streets.

Since our last issue in June of this year, much has happened to the streets of Franklin Hills—some of it good, some of it bad. I have to thank Councilmember Tom LaBonge and his Field Deputy, Mary Rodriguez, for following up on a ten point list of problems in our streets. With the help of Mr Saucedo and Mr. Ron Olive, Assistant Director of the Bureau of Street Services, the westbound lane of Franklin Avenue just east of the Shakespeare Bridge has been repaved in asphalt and is much smoother now. A protruding sewer manhole that caused an eight inch tall "speed bump" at the crossing of Hollyvista and Franklin Avenues was cut

down to the surrounding street level and the road patched with concrete making it no longer a hazard. Debris from a fallen tree at Cumberland and Myra Avenues was removed and dozens of decade-old one-foot square utility cuts in the concrete streets of Lyric and Franklin Avenues were patched with asphalt. Deep gouges in the 3900 block of Sunset Drive were filled with asphalt and a clunking steel sewer cover on Ronda Vista has been set in concrete and so silenced.

Things that we must keep on top of include the monitoring of the new Portland Cement Concrete and asphalt patches to the sewer replacement work that was done over the summer. Although we have been told that the asphalt patches are "temporary" and will be readdressed as soon as there are enough of them to warrant full truckloads of Portland Cement Concrete, I feel that we have to keep the City aware that we will not be satisfied with work that further depreciates our streets. Please email me at ads@franklinhills.org if work is not completed on these cuts by the end of January.

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Did You Get Dangerous Dust? / *Bruce Carroll*

Sandblasting of old parking lot paint at The Prospect Studios may have created a more serious problem than the noise they warned us about. An e-mailed FHRA alert in late September passed along word from the studio asking for "your patience with us while we spruce the place up."

A month later we heard from Russell Ave. resident Roe Sie, who reported in early October, "my three year old son had an unstoppable coughing fit, my wife had the first asthma attack of her life, and I had a coughing fit so severe that it caused vomiting." Then Sie noticed his backyard greenhouse had accumulated "quite a bit of fine, sparkling gray powder." On October 15th Sie says his wife, "noticed a large plume of dust extending 20 or 30 feet above the top of the soundstage directly behind our house."

That's when Sie had an environmental analysis done. It found alpha quartz silica at 10 times normal levels and copper, lead and zinc at 3-4 times expected levels. All of those elements are used by sandblasters who are supposed to prevent them from getting into the atmosphere, but apparently failed.

After an FHRA alert reported the problem, we heard from neighbors. Above the studio on Deloz Ave. a mom reported, "my daughter, age 7, has had a persistent cough throughout the month of October." And residents as far from the studio as Ronda Vista Dr. and Mayview Dr. saw the dust plume or had gray dust on their plants. The LILA school, which borders the studio, reported no problems, but said they do frequent cleaning and the school is closed on Saturdays when the sandblasting took place.

Prospect Studios Production Services Manager, Debbie Nelson, asked the FHRA to have those who believe they were impacted by this problem contact her at 323-671-4044 or Debbie.L.Nelson@Disney.com. Please let FHRA know also, so we can keep track of the problem and cleanup efforts.

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* * * * *

We all need reminders from time to time. If you would be willing and have space to put a "slow down" sign in your front yard occasionally, please contact fhra@franklinhills.org. Someone will call you and go over our program with you. Many, many thanks!

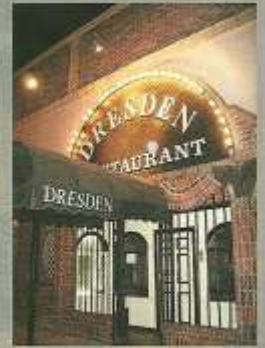
Elizabeth Richardson - Program Co-ordinator
 Illustration from "Round About" (an Alice and Jerry Book) 1936

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Coyote Tracks / *George Grace*

Managing urban coyotes is only one of the responsibilities of Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS). LAAS is a major department of the City that deals with all animal issues. Originally created to cope with stray dog problems, Los Angeles Animal Services now administers programs that include pet licensing, pet adoptions, investigating animal cruelty, spay/ neuter/microchip programs, animal rescue, and wildlife issues. The department runs six animal shelters for housing animals that are lost, strayed, injured, or have been abused or deliberately abandoned by their owners. They also administer several tax deductible funds for supporting animals. According to the LAAS website, "Your donation, large or small is gratefully accepted to help care for animals in LA City shelters, to help increase adoptions, and to help end animal cruelty." Their comprehensive website has detailed information about all their activities and downloadable brochures about animal issues. <http://www.laanimalservices.com>.

Urban wildlife issues are handled by LAAS Wildlife Officer Greg Randall in conjunction with Captain Wendell Bowers, the Wildlife Program Coordinator. Greg is the only "hands on" Wildlife Specialist in the City (there used to be two), and does an extraordinary job responding to the 1,400 to 1,900 calls that come in each year. He is an expert in wildlife behavior, and has been instrumental in developing LAAS' wildlife policies and procedures. Greg recently sent me a lengthy email describing the Department's current wildlife policies that is briefly summarized below. If you would like a copy of his email, let me know and I'll forward it to you.

"Los Angeles Animal Services wildlife program allows for a department representative to provide on-site evaluations, education on methods of exclusion, deterrents and discouragement of wildlife forays into city neighborhoods. It is not the intention of LAAS to remove wildlife from residential areas. Rather, the Department is hoping to rectify most problems through neighborhood education and individual homeowner attention. This is a multi-tiered program designed to help neighborhoods better deal with wildlife issues, and further lessen contact by investigating changes in both human and animal behavior."

(continued Page 20)

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Distraction Crimes / *James McEwen*

The FHRA has been made aware of a disturbing type of daylight crime targeting seniors. Criminals posing as city utility workers or as cable or Internet providers, knock on the door to make an unexpected service call. Once the homeowner has been lured outside by the imposter or is engaged in conversation another subject enters the home to commit a robbery.

There are several other variations this ploy with the criminal claiming to be a past resident or repair man.

Be aware, utility workers rarely need to enter a home to make repairs or read a meter. All LADWP workers wear ID badges, though certainly there have been reports of these imposters wearing fakes. Before you open the door or allow any city worker access to your home verify their identity. Get his name, his employee number and the name of his supervisor and verify the information, either by calling DWP at: 1 800 DIAL DWP, or by checking with city services if repairs are scheduled in the neighborhood. If in doubt do not open the door. Often these criminals have knocked on the door to see if anyone is at home. If you answer they will present their story. If you don't they may try to gain access another way. Be watchful and report these actions to law enforcement and or directly to the utility (i.e. DWP) in question. If you see "workmen" trying to enter your yard without proper warning, call 911.

LADWP uses private contractors for tree trimming services and these contractors do not wear city ID. You can call the above number to verify that any work has been authorized by DWP. Again, if you have any doubts, call 911.



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Wings in Motion / *Shirley Mims*

On June 11, 2011 residents of Monon Street, FHRA members and our council office met under the Shakespeare Bridge to clean up overgrowth, prune the roses, and get acquainted. What started out to be a one hour meet-and-greet turned in to a four hour overhaul.

What fun we had. We identified roses that needed special care and pruning, cut back plumbago overgrowth and pulled weeds. Councilmember LaBonge called for a City truck to haul away the palm fronds and castor bean plants. Later, FHRA generously donated money to cover the cost of rose food and soaker hoses to bypass a leak in the watering system.

The garden was dedicated in 2003 and was motivated by several residents who wanted to create a serene and beautiful setting and to dissuade the graffiti-ridden hoodlum-hangout under the arches of the bridge. The garden was made possible by support and cooperation from several community groups including Franklin Hills Residents Association, residents on Monon Street, our Council office, Lycee International of Los Angeles, Hollywood Beautification Team, Marshall High School, King Middle School, Los Feliz Improvement Association and Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council.

After a major sewer pipe replacement construction project displaced the garden earlier in the year, the contractors replanted the original roses, added more roses and other plants such as rosemary and lantana, and rebuilt the stone wall in front.

Over the next few years, the plants on the slope will once again mature to fill in the bare areas. Volunteers from the community are committed to continue the maintenance of the garden. We welcome you to join us.

Periodically, we will have more 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 so that we can alert you to the next "garden party!"

Right—Swallowtail butterfly flits around plumbago on the slope.

Far right: Shakespeare Garden workers, (L to R) Tom LaBonge, Mary Rodriguez, Rick Moffit, Sheila Yamaguchi, Charley Mims, Brigid LaBonge, Richard Spicer.



Photos by Shirley Mims

FHRA Annual Meeting #23

By Bruce Carroll

Once again the FHRA's annual meeting, held at the LILA School in late June, was like a cornucopia of community concerns and commitment. FHRA President Chris Boutelle welcomed the crowd and numerous city representatives.



First up was long time FHRA member Mary Rodriguez who was pinch hitting for her boss Councilmember Tom LaBonge. She reported she's been working with Boutelle on the poor condition of many Franklin Hills streets and knows "there is a lot of frustration with trying to get our concrete streets repaired. There is not enough money to redo concrete streets with concrete." That, she explained is because, "concrete is more than double the cost of asphalt repairs," and she pointed out that the city's Street Services used to repave concrete streets with asphalt, but that led to so many complaints that now a majority of people on a block must request asphalt over concrete before they will do it. The problem with asphalt she explained is "that it doesn't hold up as well as concrete and it really doesn't hold up to water." That's a

problem that causes bigger problems in hilly areas. Despite those limitations she promised to tackle the list of the 10 most needed repairs submitted by the FHRA. As for sidewalk repairs she said the same asphalt only rules apply.

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Capt. Bill Murphy, commander of the LAPD's Northeast Division, reported impressive numbers with Northeast ranking #1 citywide in violent crime reduction and showing a 15% decline in property crime for the first half of 2011. Capt. Murphy also expanded his graffiti fighting team with the addition of Officer Molly Beall. Officer Beall is working with Officer Adam Mezquita to keep track of the taggers so when one is caught they can present to prosecutors evidence of many crimes from the photos of their tags that have been collected over time. You can e-mail them graffiti photos with location and date to Ofc. Mezquita at 32108@lapd.lacity.org

They divide the taggers into three categories: gangs, crews and "oners," loners without the "L." Most of the activity in our area has been from the "oners" and some crew activity. They

also work closely in our area with the school authorities at Marshall High to ID the taggers.



Perhaps the biggest hit of the meeting was the FHRA's own enthusiastic graffiti fighter Shirley Mims who demonstrated the effectiveness of "Lift Off #4" which can be used to easily remove spray paint and markers from most surfaces including metal traffic signs, plastic trash bins, also

concrete, brick and stucco walls, although such porous surfaces take a bit more scrubbing. The FHRA prepared convenient sized spray bottles and gave them out to those who attended the meeting for use on their property and around the neighborhood.



And we heard from contractor and Hyperion resident Joseph Tannous, (right with Chairman Charley Mims) about a great way that graffiti fighting can be rewarding. His security cameras have led to the arrest of half a dozen taggers in the last two years. Tannous explained he had applied for and received the city's \$1,000 reward for info leading to the conviction of taggers six times. He was also lucky at the meeting, winning a raffle prize of books on LA's political history.

Former FHRA President Adam Weisman, also Chairman of the LILA School Board of Directors, talked about the FHRA Norman Harriton Community Garden and his pet peeve of garbage bins left in the street after collection day. Your bins should be off the street by 8pm Thursday evening.

The meeting finished with Chairman Charley Mims announcing the results of the election for 6 seats on the FHRA Board of Directors. While all six incumbents were reelected, first time candidate Aida Rodriguez was not far behind and in July was appointed to fill a board vacancy.

As usual the unspoken highlight of the meeting was the delicious array of home baked goodies from FHRA member Vivien Shea.





time capsule

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City Services



We all depend on city services for emergency help with police and fire protection, to clean up the mess we leave with trash pickup and street sweeping, to get us where we are going with roads and signs, and to wash away problems and brighten our lives with water and power. With the bum economy have come bumper cuts to the city's budget which will likely leave us all waiting longer to get less.



Navigating the mass and maze of city services was eased a few years ago when LA introduced the 3-1-1 phone number where you can reach an operator trained to direct your call to the right city department. It works well most of the time, but now operates only between 8am and 4:45pm. There is also the city's website www.lacity.org where you can navigate to the various departments for info and many have online forms you can fill out to report problems. The FHRA website, www.FranklinHills.org and page 17 of this issue of Overview have listings of helpful contact numbers, including our Councilmember Tom LaBonge and his staff, who often can help in getting problems resolved.



One of Those Days

Text and photos by Bruce Carroll

While most of the time getting a lot of city services is a good thing at times too much of a good thing can cause problems. That's what happened one Thursday in July at the corner of Franklin Ave. and Mayview Dr. First to arrive were a pair of crews from the Department of Street Lighting to figure out why many of the street lights seemed to be taking a summer vacation. After much testing, jackhammering and old fashioned digging they found the problem, a symptom of old age, the electric cable was broken. The nearly 90 year old thick metal conduit (highlighted in red) meant to protect the wires was rusted through like Swiss cheese.

Long before the electricians finished their work, the sewer cleaners arrived to do preventive maintenance by snaking out the sewer line before it gets clogged and causes real problems. For most of the 41 years I've owned the house I didn't even know I had a sewer manhole in my back yard, but in the last few years the three man sewer crew comes by about every 6 months in their big yellow truck. Perhaps just a bit too big for the narrow street on trash day when a green sanitation truck suffered a partially detached mirror as it grazed the sewer truck.

Now we have four city trucks blocking the corner with more to come. As word got to headquarters another trash collection truck arrived with a supervisor to make a report about the accident. Shortly thereafter truck number six, this one from the General Services Department, showed up with a mechanic to reattached the mirror, and of course the Police had to make an official report about the City vs. City accident.

After two hours of mirror repairing, note taking and lots of head scratching, things got back to normal. The sewer was clean, the trash cans were emptied, and that night the street lights were back on, even the concrete street was properly patched in a timely manner.



DIY Neighborhood Clean Up / *James McEwen*

Everyone has heard the story by now. City budgets are tight. City services are being cut. The City's focus is on facilitating big projects like road repair and trash collection. Just as with neighborhood watch groups, we citizens can take part in the betterment of our streets and walkways.

Franklin Hills is crisscrossed by a network of 14 stairways and walkways offering neighborhood residents and urban hikers across the city a great chance to explore the beauty of Los Angeles on foot. Sadly, in spite of many past attempts to organize adopt-a-stair programs and neighborhood clean ups of some of our beautiful stairways, part of the charm of our neighborhood, are often found to be overgrown. Alas, the landscaping and simple clean up has been ignored.

Recently, I got tired of seeing Lower Prospect Walk overgrown. So I headed out with a friend, some bags, and some gardening tools. After a couple hours we had cleared away most of the debris, raked the leaves and had the walk cleared for easier passage and increased neighborhood safety. The clearer the view, the safer our streets.

Even without an official adoption, we can all do our part to help maintain the neighborhood. Try organizing friends one day a season and meet out at your favorite stairs or the walkway closest to you for a clean up party. Enjoy fresh air, exercise, and a cleaner, safer neighborhood handmade by Franklin Hills residents.

I realized after a brief hour spent cleaning up the walk that I had spent more time in the months before complaining about the problem than it took me to just fix it myself.

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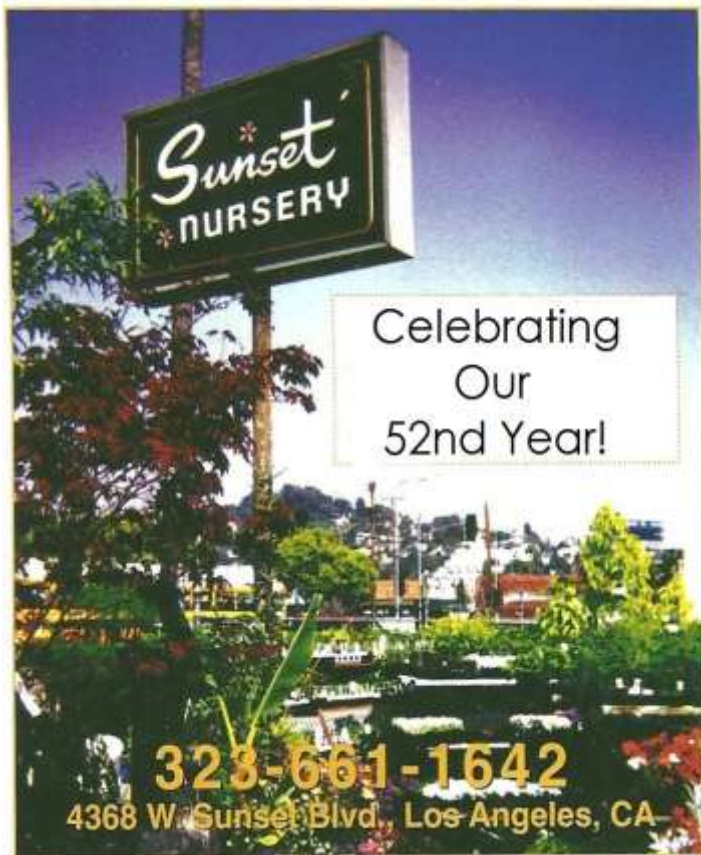
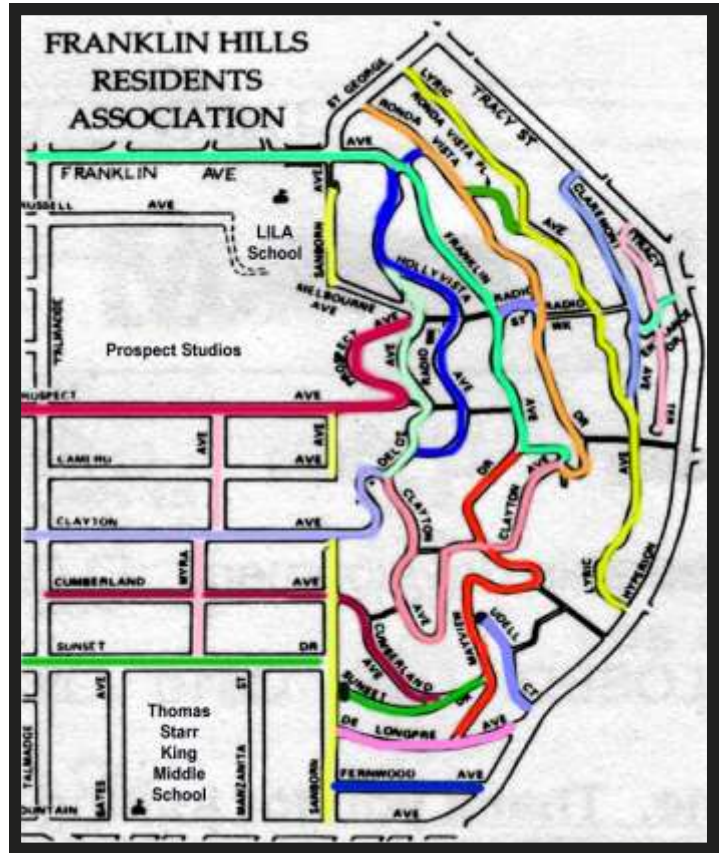
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- Councilmember
- Tom LaBonge email:(213) 485-3337
- 4th District: councilmember.labonge@lacity.org

- Field Deputy:(818) 755-7630
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- FHRA Voicemail:(323) 908-9078
- email:FHRA@FranklinHills.org

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- Homeless Food & Shelter(323) 974-1234
- LA Info Line(323) 686-0950
-(800) 339-6993
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- Al Polehonki(213) 793-0763
- Emergency911
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- Northeast Division(213) 485-2563
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- Graffiti(213) 847-0511
- Los Feliz Outpost(323) 913-4683
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- Restraining Orders(213) 974-5587
- School Police:
- Marshall High(323) 660-1440 x240
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- Street Services:(800) 996-2489

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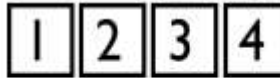
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YOU Can Make a Difference *Bruce Carroll*

May 23, 2011

A Franklin Ave. resident e-mailed Mary Rodriguez, Councilmember Tom LaBonge's, field deputy for our area, the left photo and sent a copy to the FHRA. "There is a railing along the Franklin Hills "Radio Walk" steps. It ends on Franklin Avenue and has now become a danger. The horizontal part of the railing has rusted away and dropped into the ivy. However, the remaining metal support post has become just a



rusted spike some 2+ feet jutting out of the stair top. Many users of the steps may not see it before they are injured by it"

May 26, 2011

The FHRA e-mailed "Until the city cuts through their red tape, I applied some FHRA red tape, plus an old rag, and a discarded plastic coffee cup I found on the steps to provide a temporary safety cushion to the rusted post at Radio Walk & Franklin."



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June 3, 2011

The resident e-mailed another photo:
“Hi Mary: Late this morning a city worker left a large orange cone to cover the spike at the top of Radio Walk. Any idea of when a better repair might happen?”

June 6, 2011

“Hi Mary: Thank you. Great that the dangerous spike is gone. That was fast!”



June 8, 2011

“Hi Mary: This time it looks that the work on the Radio Walk railing has probably been completed. The repair seems to work. My pix do show that the welding is a bit rough. There was a hope that it would reflect the era it was originally constructed in. However, the generic cap may be all that can be obtained for now.”

Owner Will Finance



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We would like to thank Councilman Tom La Bonge and Councilman Eric Garcetti for their hard work and dedication in governing our Districts. They truly have our community at heart!

Thank you Tom and Eric!

Bruce Jay



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DUES are \$30.00 per couple or \$15.00 per person --- Larger Contributions are Appreciated

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$15____ \$30____ \$50____ Other \$_____

Mail your check to: FHRA PO Box 29122 Los Angeles, CA 90029

Coyote Tracks (continued from page 5)

"The Department responds to wildlife complaints in a variety of ways depending on the severity of the incident." To report a wildlife incident, first call the animal shelter nearest to you. Franklin Hills' is the North Central Shelter at 888-452-7381. Once you reach the shelter, you will verbally complete a "Wildlife Incident Report", that includes your location, and details such as date and time of incident, type/number of animals, and a description of why you are calling. If you are calling to report a "sick, injured, orphaned, distressed, or trapped animal", where immediate action is required, you should also call a local wildlife rehabber who can probably respond in person sooner than LAAS. Valley Wildlife Care is a good choice. They can be reached at 818-346-8247. Instructions for what to do before help arrives is also available at their website: www.valleywildlife.org. After you have submitted your report, LAAS will determine what action should be taken. Greg personally responds to incidents that are "happening now".

LAAS does not issue permits for the public to trap or remove "nuisance wildlife". "The trapping or relocation of wildlife by the public is prohibited. The Department of Animal Services suggests trying property alteration and exclusionary methods". This includes installing fences, blocking access to problem areas, and installing deterrent devices, such as flashing lights on your property. Greg consults with homeowners about specific solutions.

LAAS' policy to support the co-existence of humans and local wildlife developed after determining: "The source of the (wildlife) problems is not the presence of wildlife, it is the environment that humans provide for them just by the simple manner in how we are the provider of food, water, and cover for them. If we are going to push further and further into the habitat of wild animals we need to be responsible for our behavior."

Several years ago, there was a move by the City to eliminate the Wildlife program and all its personnel. Neighborhood support saved the program. The need for the City's Wildlife Program is critical for all of us who live in our area. Considering the dire situation with City financing, I would expect that we may be called on to save the program again. Please be ready to help.

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Los Angeles, CA 90029

City Pulls Apron (Parking) Strings of Area Residents / *Liz McDonald*

For over 40 years, thousands of Angelenos routinely parked in their driveways on the portion between the sidewalk and the street known as the "apron." Apron parking has helped relieve neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles of severe parking pressures. In many areas, the apron is too narrow to park in. But residents on streets like Hyperion, Silver Lake and Sunset Drive have aprons wide enough to accommodate a parked car with the car protruding neither onto the sidewalk nor into traffic. Neighborhoods like Pacific Palisades, Mar Vista, Westwood, Hollywood, and others have come to depend on apron parking.

For example, on my Los Feliz street, the apartment building next door to me has eight units and houses fifteen adult occupants. There are only four carport spaces available for these fifteen occupants. Four additional cars can park in the apron, tandem to the cars parked in the carport, thus opening up four additional parking spaces on the street for other neighbors. On Silver Lake Boulevard parking is nearly impossible for residents without apron parking. Residents are surrounded by "permit parking only" streets and commercial properties. They are constantly competing for parking with patrons visiting the local shops, and residents who live on, but pour over from, the "permit parking only" streets.

Apron parking is critical for many Los Angeles residents. It has been practiced and permitted throughout Los Angeles for over 40 years. LADOT (Los Angeles Dept. of Transportation) has openly acknowledged it and endorsed its practice. So why, then, on August 28th, did LADOT start ticketing those parked in their aprons? It was a complicated political move instigated by our City Attorney. I have written extensively about it on our website and blog, www.stopladot.com.

However, residents in the Los Feliz area combined efforts with residents in other neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles to fight the apron parking ban. Neighborhood councils around L.A. approved motions supporting an apron parking solution. On October 12th, we were able to successfully get a motion approved by city council that allows some residents to return to apron parking. However, this motion will not result in restoring apron parking completely. Only those who can park their cars completely in the apron, without sticking out into the street, will be able to do so. Sunset Drive in Los Feliz is one such street. However, hundreds of residents on other streets who used to park in aprons will not be able to take advantage of this motion.

What the October 12th motion did do, is confirm it is legal to park in our aprons. There is a Los Angeles Municipal Code that states no one is to park in the parkway. There was confusion as to the definition of "parkway", but the City Attorney has advised the City Council that the term "apron" and "parkway" are not the same. Now Franklin Hills residents will see cars returning to park in their aprons on Sunset Drive, but please note: this fight is not over for the rest of the city. For more information and to sign our petition, please visit our website: www.StopLADOT.com.

**ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS
~~MY TWO FRONT TEETH~~
A NICE SMOOTH STREET**

All I want for Xmas is a nice smooth street!

A nice smooth street...

That won't knock out my two front teeth.

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**Happy Thanksgiving To All Of Our
Friends In The Franklin Hills!**

George & Eileen



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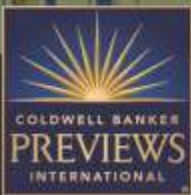


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