

# OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE No. 19

SPRING-SUMMER 2000



"Lunar Perigee over Franklin Hills—December 22, 1999" Ulf Wallin

## GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY EVENING JUNE 7 AT ABC-TV

By Carol Skinner

FHRA's Annual Meeting will be held this year at ABC-TV studios Rehearsal Hall One. Enter the ABC lot at the Main Gate on Prospect, just east of Talmadge (*not* the Talmadge gate) and the guard will direct you from there. Refreshments—courtesy of ABC and FHRA — will be served starting at 7 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 7:30.

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For the major part of the evening we hope to have general discussions and questions on topics of interest, such as City Services (street sweeping) Infrastructure (read potholes,) Neighborhood Councils, Cityhood for Hollywood—does it affect us?, and LAPD—crime and responsiveness. Articles in this issue of the *Overview* relate to some of these topics. Representatives from city government, police and other community groups will be invited to attend and supply information. Planned agenda also includes such annual business as election of Board members and yearly reports.

Past projects of the association include the median landscaping, this newsletter, stairway cleanups, tree planting, disaster preparation plans and neighborhood school environment restoration. Many of these came about because someone attended an annual meeting in the past and said, "What can we do about. . ." . Maybe *you* will be

the person with the needed and doable project this year.

Reminder letters have been sent to past and present dues-paying members; fliers have been posted and sent out to notify the rest of the neighborhood. We are not a "Home owners Only Association" although we cherish the support of those who do own a home here, along with renters and fans. If you did get a letter, please bring the tearoff with you as it will speed the check in of members. If you are not yet a member, you are encouraged to join at the meeting—it's \$10 per person or \$20 for a couple. Donations are tax-deductible and go to support the association projects. More than your dollars, we want your ideas and participation. Weed the median, plant a tree, help with folding and stuffing of letters, attend a meeting somewhere, write for this newsletter. . . we have (or can have) a project for every inclination. Even if you are not sure about joining, please join us at the meeting.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Ricardo Gomez

Contrary to what our Mayor says, things are not entirely better in the City of Angels. As a long time resident of Los Angeles, I can attest that there is more trash in the streets and that more dilapidated housing and buildings exist now than at anytime during my 44 year life here. The present conditions exist because Los Angeles does not adequately provide basic municipal services to many of its residents. Some Franklin Hills residents have labored for years to improve our neighborhood. Often, however, it seems as if we are fighting an uphill battle with city officials turning their backs on us. Many city officials don't feel any sense of accountability towards us and they feel free to disregard our best interests. The solution? We need more citizen involvement in City government.

### Neighborhood Councils, Farce or Furtherance?

Recent City Charter reforms established the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (known as "DONE"). The purpose of DONE is to establish "neighborhood councils" in Los Angeles and thereby improve our City government. These neighborhood councils will act in an advisory capacity to City government.

Recently I went to one of the meetings sponsored by DONE to solicit input on how to set up a neighborhood council. The meeting was raucous and the DONE employees did a good job in a difficult situation. At the meeting I read the text of the proposed ordinance and, to my chagrin, I discovered that these proposed councils are something less than advisory. They will have no real power to make City government listen to their advice. Although the draft ordinance superficially requires that city officials give notice of intended actions, such as voting on legislation, to the neighborhood council before they occur, the ordinance contains a general exception to the notice requirement.

The general exception allows city officials to disregard the existence of a neighborhood council when they see fit. City officials can legally take action on a matter of great importance to the community without first notifying the neighborhood council for input. If you don't think that this will happen just remember the secret dealings with the Greek Theater contract and the Children's Museum. Simply put, powerful special interests will still be able to secretly lobby city departments, the City Council and the Mayor to put projects or conclude deals in your neighborhood without your input.

Are neighborhood councils a farce? It depends on what we do with them. If neighborhood councils are structured so that the geographical boundary of each neighborhood council is merely coextensive with that of an existing residence or improvement association, then they will be a farce. Why have a neighborhood council that merely parrots an existing association? It is a waste of public monies to fund something that is already provided by citizen volunteers at no cost to taxpayers. Such small boundaries will further balkanize our City and will diminish citizen power vis a vis the special interests who tend to dominate City government.

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## FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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Shirley Newland 666-2520

#### **METRO RAIL:**

Bruce Carroll 467-8703

#### **PLANNING & ZONING:**

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The Franklin Hills OVERVIEW is published as often as possible. We invite your comments on matters relating to articles and the community and, space permitting, we will publish letters mailed to *Editor, OVERVIEW, Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90029*

## MISSION semi-IMPOSSIBLE

By Bruce Carroll

This mission impossible has no international spies or self destructing instructions, but it does involve time travel. The last issue of the Overview featured a story about Harold "Bud" Young who had made a sentimental journey back to the Franklin Hills for the first time since the great depression. That was when the family was evicted from the house that his father and uncle built with their own hands in the early 1920's.



While the house was still under construction, Bud, in his mother's arms, along with his sister Ella and "two Stockdale children" were photographed sitting on a small pond in the backyard (see above). After the last Overview story Bud found this and other old pictures that show the surrounding neighborhood 75+ years ago looking like a rural village. It was this that set me on my mission to match the 1923 photo with the same perspective from the same location today.



I easily found the cute little cottage at 3914 Sunset Drive. It has defied the California pattern of frequent turnovers according to its current, owner Brenda Kilbourne. In tracing the lineage of the house where she has lived for the last 17 years Kilbourne found that Blu Hicks and her husband ob-

tained the house from the foreclosing bank by "investing \$ 100 worth of improvements. . . apparently a paint job." Kilbourne's research also found that "before they moved the Hicks lived in a tent on the hill at 3939 Sunset Drive." About half a century later contractor Joe Hoefler got the Hick's house at a probate sale and resold it to Kilbourne.

Trying to duplicate the 1923 photo from the backyard today I saw nothing but flowers and trees. I tried neighboring houses on Sunset and Delongpre and determined that it was a mission, at least semi, impossible.



Decades of building and planting had made the intersection of Hyperion and Lyric invisible from Sunset Drive as shown in the old photo. When I went down to the intersection, alas I could not match any of the buildings in the photo with what is there now, but through the trees I could see old glory proudly from Bob Shea's Mayview Drive balcony.

I figured if I could see the flag, the Shea's might be the closest location today that could approximate the 1920's perspective. In photo #2 you can see what 77 years has done to the barren hill in the old photo's background.

The background hill was also my target in a 1925 snapshot of Bud's brother Francis in his stroller. The



continued to page 4

## SEMI-IMPOSSIBLE

neatly written note on the back of photo #3 says, "Taken from the back yard, Sunset Dr. looking over Hyperion & up the hill where movie star Anthony Moreno's home is on top of the hill." The home, which Shea believes later became a monastery, is

still there, now enshrouded by trees only three of which stand out in the old picture. Most visible of the old buildings, in photo #4 taken recently from the Sunset Drive backyard, are three square buildings that seem to form steps near the top of the hill in the center of both the old and new photos.



Bud Young

My mission to find our neighborhood's yesterdays hidden in today was both fun and frustrating.

Of course I knew that beneath the layers of homes were the once barren hills, but what I hadn't realized was, that more than the buildings it was the trees that would keep me from truly duplicating past perspectives. Despite all the ugliness 75 years of development might have imposed on the hills, each of us in our own backyards have patched together an urban forest.

And in that Franklin Forest dwell what many would have us believe is a disappearing breed: People who are genuinely neighborly, friendly and interested in their neighborhood. Most of the time I spent on my mission semi-impossible was spent chatting with residents who saw me on the street trying to figure out if I could match one of my pictures from their location. They invited me in, offered me snacks along with juicy tidbits of neighborhood history. Getting the information was so much fun that I have material for future issues of the Overview and invite anyone with old photos or stories important to preserving our area's history to get in touch.



Francis Young



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**ABC-TELEVISION:**

Security: (310) 557-5354.

**ANIMAL CONTROL:** (888) 452-7381

Dead Animal Pickup (323) 227-7179

**BARKING DOGS:** (888) 452-7381

**BRIGHT LIGHTS Streetlight repair:** (800) 303-5267

**BUILDING & SAFETY VIOLATIONS:** (213) 847-9685

**COUNCILMAN JOHN FERRARO, 4th District:**

(323) 485-3337

Room M-30, City Hall, 200 Spring St., L.A. 90012

**FHRA HOTLINE** (323) 664-7247

**FIRE DEPARTMENT: Emergency 911;**

Non-emergency: 485-6185.

**HOMELESS, Food and Shelter** (323) 974-1234

**INFO LINE** (L.A. County Referral Service) (213) 686-0950

**LOS FELIZ PUBLIC LIBRARY:** (323) 913-4710

**NEIGHBOR DISPUTE:** (213) 485-8324

**TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT:** (213) 485-2799

**POLICE: EMERGENCY 911;**

**Spanish:** (213) 485-4333; **Asian:** (323) 893-8100

**Northeast Division, 3353 San Fernando Road, LA 90065:**

Adult/Women Abuse: (800) 978-3600

Community Relations: (213) 485-2548

Gang Problems: (213) 485-7538

Graffiti: Officer Colenzo (213) 847-0511

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

Main Desk: (213) 485-2563

Reports: (323) 485-4193

Basic Car Coordinator: Sgt. Marcey

Basic Car Coordinator: Sgt. Williams

Traffic Enforcement (Speeding) (323) 485-2799

Los Feliz Outpost: (323) 913-4682

9 to 4 M-F

**POISON CONTROL** (800) 777-6476

**RAPE HOTLINE** (213) 392-8381

**RESTRAINING ORDER** (213) 974-5587

**STREET SERVICES:** (800) 996-2489

**TRASH RECEPTACLE INFO:** (800) 248-9726

Bulky Item Removal (800)773-2489

Missed Trash Pick-up (800) 773-2489

**TREE TRIMMING (Hazards):** (800) 996-2489

**WATER & POWER:** (800) 342-5397

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

## Letters to the Editor

1. (On hand laid notepaper:)

Hello—

*Peter from Bates Avenue said "Hi" to us the other day and so here we are writing a check! I teach 7th grade at King M.S. and live on Cumberland. King has me teaching in the old Boy's Locker Room . . . I simply love the Franklin Hills and would be happy to be a part of graffiti removal or beautification projects.*

*Solid Newsletter!!*

*Matt Weaver & Hannah Lockhart*

2. (with gorgeous photo of sunset from Clayton Avenue)

To Editor, Overview,

*Thankfully the retrofitting of our bridge has saved it. But, alas, the gray paint job is dull and depressing. Our bridge still has its charm but has lost its glamour. My friends and I ask that serious consideration be given to painting it white. It will then be, as it was, a sparkling gem.*

*And oh, what happened to the Christmas lights promised?*

*Sincerely*

*Larry Colhause.*

Thanks for such attractive note cards! Seriously, folks:

- We promise to let you know of projects; and you are invited to Board meetings to make suggestions.\*
- A friend of mine taught for several semesters in a faculty restroom. In L.A, but not at King.
- Thank you for the kind words
- Do we remember a project manager promising us (at a general meeting) that the bridge would be the original color? We need to follow up on that!
- The Christmas lights for the bridge are safe in storage, awaiting electrical skills and a cherry picker. Anyone interested, please, please call\*
- We hope for further correspondence for future issues.

Please address to:

Editor, The Franklin Hills Overview

P.O. Box 29122, Los Angeles CA 90029

\*call the Hot Line: 664-7247



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**Richard Stanley**  
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## Little Changes

by Peter Bedard

When I moved into my home in the "flats" of the FHRA area there was a lot of work to be done. There still is a lot to do, but little victories are sweet. Our most recent victory is just outside of our association area. With the help of the Hollywood Beautification Team and the LA City Council we will have trees planted along Myra Avenue. A whole stretch of fifty trees will soon line the drive from Santa Monica Boulevard to Fountain Avenue. The city arborist has approved the planting of Jacarandas, as they will make a colorful impact and a stately drive which will reveal all the improvements being made at Thomas Starr King Middle School at the end of Myra Avenue. These quick growing trees will have an immediate impact on the area and make the drive into FHRA a real treat all year. Our hope is that the trees will provide shade for the children walking to school, slow down cars as the leafy canopy grows, and reduce the illegal dumping problem plaguing the area. Lucent Technologies, which has a site on Myra, has also agreed to help in the maintenance of the trees by helping FHRA purchase drums and hoses for water.

Another little change you may have noticed already is the return of the "no parking" signs for street cleaning on the streets surrounding Thomas Starr King Middle School. After years of fighting for their return we finally have them. Thanks to Lupe Franco at John Ferraro's office and a dozen or so other people in the community. From experience, I can say that we are picking up two large trash cans full of garbage on a monthly basis on Bates Avenue alone. The street cleaning will hopefully reduce this eyesore. We still need to get trash cans placed on the basketball courts and playing field of Thomas Starr King Middle School, as the school doesn't seem to have the resources to clean itself up. As a neighborhood we are cleaning up these portions of the school and working towards a solution—wire mesh trash cans maybe.

On Bates~ we planted Euryops (a yellow daisy type of plant) along the parkway to reduce dumping, as this has helped in the past. This was done at a Mother's Day BBQ and street-cleaning event sponsored by the Bates Avenue Neighborhood Watch. Every mother was very proud, as we all should be, living in such a dynamic area full of promise!

Little changes can have a tremendous impact on our lives. If you have an idea for a "little change" that will improve our neighborhood, then let us help you make it a reality. Call the board, start a committee and make a difference.



REFLECTIONS ON FRANKLIN HILLS

By Shirley Newland

Everybody's view is a little bit different from our homes in the hills. Besides the view from our home, moving to Franklin Hills has changed my perspective and outlook in many ways. The attraction to the area was its surroundings and environment in Griffith Park for hiking, The Derby for swing dancing, and The Philosophical Research Society for self-discovery. But the biggest influence has been the people on the board of our residents association.

Coming from a background of limited social interaction I had little faith in believing that others care about what goes on around them. I was used to people closing up and keeping to themselves. But this is an extraordinary group. These people have shown me that working in the community can be a fun and rewarding experience, that I am not alone, and that together we can make a difference.

Unlike a lot of organizations where people get together and moan incessantly about their problems and don't do anything about fixing them, the Franklin Hills Residents Association looks for and acts in positive and helpful ways of working toward resolving them. Rarely is there heard a complaint that cannot be resolved with a helpful solution from at least one of the members at the monthly meetings.

Franklin Hills is a special place, especially for the people that live here and are on our board. Our former president, Adam Weissman, has a way of organizing projects and keeping people together to see them through. With his guidance, I was able to take on the Shakespeare Bridge construction and the Median projects. I am also grateful for the patience, support, and friendship of the others on the board and in the neighborhood.

As the leadership changes I am looking forward to continuing my involvement with the board. The association can only become richer for all who have contributed to it. As I sit up on our little piece of the hill and reflect upon all the nice people I have met here I am filled with gratitude and happiness for the home I call Franklin Hills.

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FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION MEMBER?  YES  NO

## Membership is More Than Just Money

Adam M. Weisman Chairman

Spring has traditionally been the season in which FHRA sends out the membership dues statement along with information about the upcoming Annual Meeting. In a process that has usually consisted of late-night envelope stuffing and stamp licking, a small crew of members send out notifications about the last date when you contributed to FHRA and various options as to where you would like your contribution to go. Typically, contributions are placed into the general fund that runs the organization. This includes mailings, The Overview, Median maintenance, Hillside Federation membership, and Community Police Advisory Board membership. In this last year, some of our operating budget funded two arts projects at Thomas Starr King Junior High, namely the mural and statue restoration. Occasionally, members come to the board and present us with small neighborhood improvement projects that usually receive the full support of FHRA. It's great when the neighbors bring up innovative solutions for isolated problems that impact upon our quality of life. For FHRA, each project is an investment our community and the dividends of such efforts are wonderful!

FHRA appreciates all the contributions, large or small, that have supported the organization since its inception. However, money is only one part of the membership process. By filling out your membership forms, each of you provides a great deal of information. By knowing where you live, we have developed a large-scale lot map of Franklin Hills. In my dining room (also used as a meeting room) hangs a 4 foot x 6 foot pin map with information about who lives where, where rental and business property are located as well as empty lots. Such information is not meant to be some part of a secret

governmental conspiracy. In situations such as crime alerts, we are able to locate and call neighbors who may be unaware of crime patterns along their street. Often, we receive calls about suspected criminal activities near houses that appear vacant or abandoned. By identifying the ownership, FHRA helps open communication. When trees from vacant lots endanger occupied homes, we can contact owners to circumvent any further problems.

Your membership form also includes space to print your e-mail address. In the last year, we have placed all e-mail addresses into a database so that information about FHRA activities can be wired directly to your home. This gets you the information quickly and reduces mailings. As we all come to embrace this new technology, FHRA information will only a few key strokes away. Although your name, address, e-mail, and contribution are each very important to FHRA, probably the most important parts lie below those lines. First, what are you interested in doing for FHRA? Volunteerism is scarce in our fast-paced world. A few hours a month to help the organization is our foundation and we can not continue to exist without it. By choosing one area to volunteer, you will be linked to other volunteers. In some cases, you may have an idea that leads to a committee or project chair. For myself, it was the restoration and publicity of our 14-stairway system. There are numerous ideas raised at each board meeting and many await volunteers like you.

The last and most important part of the membership form is the suggestion area. Over the years, we have kept a stack of suggestions. Some of these suggestions have led to projects or event. Some have been critical of the organization. Some have become words of encouragement or appreciation. Regardless of their content, each suggestion is carefully reviewed by the board. Your words are essential to the progress of the organization. FHRA values your comments.

Even an occasional e-mail comes to the FHRA site and is forwarded on to the board members for review. Such an open flow of information, suggestions, and critiques has led FHRA to be a progressive voice for the community.

So remember to fill out your membership forms with all the information that can fit. Information that will help FHRA and will serve the needs of the neighborhood. Thank you again for your continued support!

*Alberto*  
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9  
**Coming Attractions**


The Overview will list any community event which we are aware of. Please let us know about events of interest anywhere in the area. Call the Hotline, drop a line to the P.O. Box or e-mail us.

July 2                      *Silver Lake Rocks, Silver Lake Runs*                      Sunday morning run around the reservoir, and a pancake breakfast. For information call Dr. Cheryl Revkin at (323) 665-1281

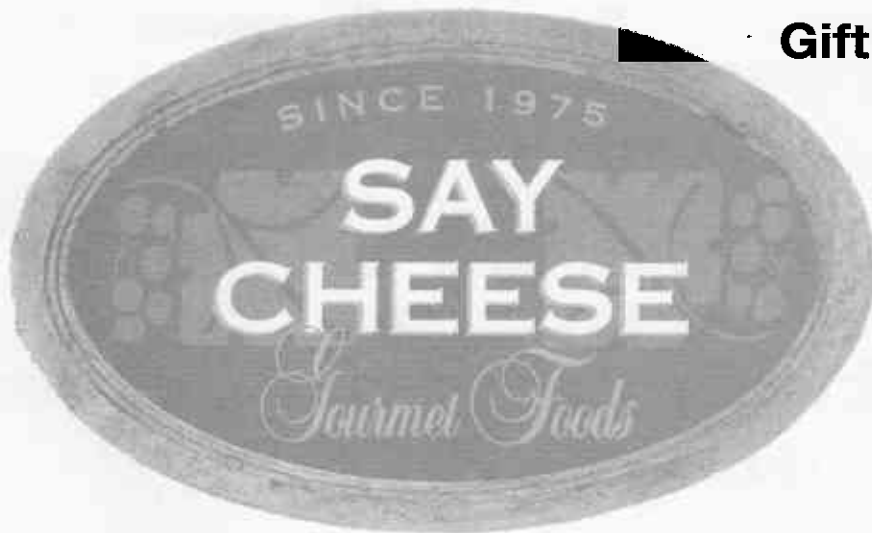
August 18-19-20 *Sunset Junction.*                      This justly famous event is right on our doorstep.

September 10                      *Los Feliz Village Street Fair.*

In fall this year, rather than in the spring. Lots of attractions, wonderful food booths, meet community associations which will have representatives there (see ya!) Children, animals, neighbors and tourists are all welcome. Do your gift shopping at the artisan booths.

U L F W A L L I N		P H O T O G R A P H Y
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