

OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE No. 20

WINTER 2000



photo by Carol Skinner

Looking west from Franklin Hills: west out Hollywood Boulevard, on a clear fall morning.

COMMUNITY POLICING

SENIOR LEAD OFFICERS: Re-Deployed?

BY Carol Skinner

In October of this year the Los Angeles Times carried a short article announcing that the LAPD would be reinstating the Senior Lead Officer program in response to community demand. Ever since the SLOs were put back in the cars community activists all over the city had been writing letters and attending meetings to no apparent effect; so this was good news indeed. Follow-up information for this announcement has been nonexistent at this writing (early November.)

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Here's such information as could be gleaned at a Northeast Division Community Police Advisory

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LAPD Northeast:

Where Are All The Officers?

by Mary Rodriguez

This time last year I remember seeing bike patrol officers riding around John Marshall High and the Los Feliz business district on Hillhurst and Vermont Avenues. They were a much welcomed sight and a beneficial addition to our Community Police Center, 2nd floor of CalFed on Hillhurst. I remember seeing quite a few black & white patrol cars along Sunset Blvd. and Franklin Ave. driving around the neighborhood. Now I no longer see the friendly faces of the bike patrol because it was discontinued, due to fewer LAPD officers. Currently, the Northeast Division, which covers Los Feliz, Franklin Hills, East Hollywood, Silver Lake, Atwater, Griffith Park and many other communities east of the river, is down 29 officers and counting.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Ricardo Gomez

Our June 7, 2000 annual meeting was a success. Approximately 150 residents attended the event at ABC-TV studios. FHRA sends its warmest thanks to the staff at ABC for making Rehearsal Hall One available and for the refreshments they provided, and to our neighbor Vivian Shea for providing her wonderful cookies. A special thanks to Nora Mosqueda of ABC who arranged the space for us. Nora grew up in our community and graduated from Marshall High School in 1969. She is president of the Marshall High School Alumni Association. The Association helps raise funds for Marshall and publishes an alumni newsletter three times a year. If you're a "lost" Marshall alumnus or would like to support the school, please contact the Alumni Office at (323) 953-6542 for more information. Again, thank you ABC for taking the time to get involved in your local community.

Attendance at our general meetings is very important because of the image it projects to City officials and politicians. The mere act of attending a meeting demonstrates significant community involvement and creates a visual "show of force" that tells our local politicians that we care about our community. When politicians walk into a community meeting the first thing they do is count heads. They are thinking of votes. Our feedback tells us that the June 7, meeting certainly passed the head count test. The City and State officials who attended the meeting were very impressed with the large turnout, the content of the program and the level of participation from the audience. Simply put, the large turnout at the meeting significantly increased my clout and that of the other board members when dealing with City government. Our calls are getting returned and the City is finally paying more attention to our local infrastructure needs. Thank you for attending the meeting and enabling FHRA to pursue its goal of improving our community.

Our accomplishments grow each year. We landscaped what was once just an asphalt median west of the bridge. We oversaw the restoration of the bridge. Those trees you see on Talmadge and Prospect avenues in the vicinity of ABC and elsewhere, we planted several years ago in a joint project with other community groups. More recently, FHRA has been instrumental in getting trees planted on Myra Avenue between Fountain Avenue and Santa Monica Blvd. Fourteen trees have been planted and another sixty are on the way. We had to get the City Council to pass a special motion to remove certain legal obstacles to this tree planting. We are actively involved in cleaning up the Myra Avenue underpass at Sunset Blvd. Thanks to lobbying from FHRA, we are finally getting streets re-paved. Sections of Franklin Ave and Cumberland Avenue were recently re-paved and we have a commitment from the City to re-pave several more streets in the area in the near future. We made a substantial contribution towards restoring the statue at King Middle School. We are actively involved in improving King and its surroundings. Recently we helped concerned parents lobby the Board of Education to designate King a computer learning center. These efforts succeeded and the Board approved the request. We are now waiting for implementation once some renovations are done.

There are many other FHRA accomplishments. I have highlighted a few to demonstrate that your membership dues, volunteer activities and attendance at meetings all have tremendous impact on the quality of life in your community. However, FHRA needs more membership participation. We need more volunteers to help us out with projects. If you have time to volunteer or know someone who does, please contact us. If you don't have time to volunteer, your membership dues and donations are greatly appreciated as is your atten-

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THE OVERVIEW — WINTER 2000

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e-mail: OverviewEditor@aol.com

ANNUAL MEETING HELD AT ABC LAST JUNE



photo by Bruce Carroll

Although it looks like FHRA's annual meeting was held in a forest last winter, the cool setting for the June meeting was really an ABC-TV rehearsal hall. A record turnout of over 150 neighbors enjoyed good company, some tasty snacks and re-elected five FHRA board members.

Those winning your vote of confidence: Peter Bedard, the newest board member whose efforts have spruced up the area around King Middle School; Ricardo Gomez, FHRA president; Charley Mims, FHRA secretary; Adam Weisman, FHRA Chairman; and Marcelle Zonta, FHRA transit chair whose aim is getting a DASH bus route connecting the Franklin Hills to the Red Line subway.

In addition to hearing that things at the FHRA were running well, we heard from several experts with suggestions on how to improve the level of service and responsiveness we get from various Los Angeles city departments. Plus the 56 new and renewing members who paid their FHRA dues at the meeting gave a great start to what has turned out to be a record year for FHRA memberships...breaking last year's record of 328.

October 21 saw a truly festive gathering on the bridge: the wedding of two prominent FHRA members. In fact, FHRA would like to claim credit for introducing them. Charley Mims (second from left) is our recording secretary and long time resource person on all matters constructional. Shirley Newland first appeared in these pages as "our lady on the bridge," observing and reporting on the earthquake re-construction and eventually becoming profoundly involved in the bridge party (see Overview 17) and other community events. To the left of Charley is Linda, the presiding minister, to the right of Shirley is her grandmother making sure her crown is right; then Diane Hampton and Shirley's father Bob Hampton, and almost out of the frame, Jean Hampton, Shirley's mother.



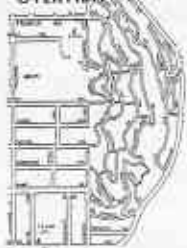
Last overview returned by Post Office

...
they couldn't find City Hall

The FHRA tries to keep in close touch with our city government but after we mailed the last issue of the Overview, we feared for a while that our leaders had skipped town and not left a forwarding address. But it appears that the Post Office has just updated the old saying "you can't fight city hall"...their version, "we can't find city hall."

FRANKLIN HILLS
OVERVIEW

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THE OVERVIEW — SPRING/SUMMER 2000



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LAPD, continued from page 1

There are many reasons that Northeast is losing officers including retirement, transfers and firings. The entire Los Angeles Police Department is down 1,000 employees. Many of these jobs are civilian, many clerical but somebody still needs to cover the "police" work. Who is covering this work? As for the patrol officers, it is very difficult to deter crime in Los Feliz when you are called across town to Eagle Rock to handle a situation because there are not enough officers covering the Eagle Rock, Highland Park, Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Elysian Valley, Mt. Washington areas; all parts of the Northeast Division.

The news reports that crime is on the rise. Many of us may have experienced this first or second hand. How will crime decrease with fewer patrols? Community policing would be one answer, but I am not convinced that officers from our side of the division, familiar with the problems in our area, are able to commit to patrolling and attending community meetings, especially when the call comes for them to assist with gang activity in the Figueroa Corridor in Mt. Washington.

Recently there were 2 murders along the Los Angeles River in Atwater. Apparently two local gang members encountered someone tagging in their area and shot him. A man biking along the newly installed city bike path may have witnessed the murder so he was killed, as well. Atwater and the Elysian Valley have heavy gang areas along the river. The city has greened, paved, beautified, and installed lights to encourage city dwellers to use the river for recreation, never addressing or alerting the community to the gang issues. The bike patrol should be reinstated along the river and the community should be apprised of the dangers of riding through the area.

Last June the General Manager of the Department of Recreation and Parks reached a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the LAPD Chief that would strip the City's Park Rangers of their law enforcement authority, including subduing violent individuals and making arrests. The Rangers could still enforce the leash law and issue parking tickets, relying solely on the LAPD Northeast Division to patrol and enforce the law in two of the City's largest urban parks, Griffith Park and Elysian Park. The surrounding communities would be severely impacted should this agreement be implemented at this time, when the Northeast Division is so understaffed. The Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners has not approved the MOA and has requested the department modify the plan for the larger parks.

Gang activity is becoming more prevalent in every community. I'm sure that you have noticed more graffiti than usual in the last year.

The dismantling of the CRASH Units in all of the divisions may have given the green light to some gang members. While the new Gang Detail officers are becoming experienced with gang members, boundaries, identities, etc., our communities are paying the price for too few patrol officers covering too large an area.

LAPD officers want to do a good job. They take pride in their work and in themselves. I personally know more than a few really good, intelligent, caring, and well meaning police officers. I hate it when I hear them apologize for what happened in Rampart, our neighboring division. It is a reflection on them, but it is not them. I am concerned about low morale. I recently asked some officers why in the world they would want to be LAPD. They laughed but they emphatically replied, "Because LAPD is the best in the world." Yes, it has to do with "1-Adam 12", and "Jack Webb." Those images remain carved in their minds as they aspire to protect and serve, sometimes against all odds.

As a law abiding citizen, a community activist and a member of the Los Feliz Improvement Association's Police Committee, I am very concerned that when the LAPD baby boomers hit retirement age, which begins next year, 2001, this city will experience a real crisis in crime management. The police academies are at the lowest enrollment they have ever been. What can LAPD offer young people for incentive? What can politicians do to encourage retiring officers to stay a while longer? I don't hear this subject discussed among any of the mayoral or city council candidates and that worries me. Next time you have the opportunity to speak with a candidate bring up the subject and please let me know what they say.

Mary Rodriguez lives in Los Feliz—just north of our bridge—and is a hard-working community activist, the mother of school age children and a frequent contributor to the Overview.



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Dead Animal Pickup (323) 227-7179

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BRIGHT LIGHTS Streetlight repair: (800) 303-5267

BUILDING & SAFETY VIOLATIONS: 888-LA4BUILD

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FHRA HOTLINE (323) 664-7247 ; FHRA2000@hotline.com

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TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT: (213) 485-2799

POLICE: EMERGENCY ONLY: 911

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

Northeast Division, 3353 San Fernando Road, LA 90065:

Problem Solving Unit: (213) 847-3136

Adult/Women Abuse: (800) 978-3600

Community Relations: (213) 485-2548

Gang Problems: (213) 485-7538

Graffiti: Officer Colenzo (213) 847-0511

LAPD on the net: <http://www.Lapdonline.com>

Main Desk: (213) 485-2563

Reports: (323) 485-4193

Sr. Lead Officer Al Polehonki: (213) 509-2964

Basic Car Coordinator: Sgt. Marcey

Basic Car Coordinator: Sgt. Williams

Traffic Enforcement (Speeding) (323) 485-2799

Los Feliz Outpost: (323) 913-4682

POISON CONTROL(800) 876-4766

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

WATER & POWER: (800) 342-5397

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

ANNUAL MEETING

continued from page 2

dance at general meetings.

We are still trying to make headway on certain problems in our community. The illegal street vending is still ongoing around King Middle School along with the attendant litter and loitering problems. The police response to enforcing the 500 foot no vending zone around the School has been tepid. We still have a significant problem with loitering and drinking near the Sunset Drive perimeter of King and with large groups of people loitering and drinking in front of the apartment buildings across from the school. The police response to this problem has been disorganized and ineffective. Abandoned couches, furniture and other bulky items are still a significant problem. We are still trying to get the City to reorganize the way it handles removing bulky items from our streets. In response to our lobbying, we were told that the Mayor increased the budget to purchase more trucks for bulky item pickup. However, this problem is far from being solved. We need to keep pressuring the City to reorganize this service. Street sweeping is irregular in the areas that need it the most. For example, the 4200 block of Fountain across from King Middle School (south side between Sunset Blvd. and Effie Street) has not been swept in over one year in spite of repeated complaints and inquires. Street services has offered no explanation for this service failure.

We have made tremendous progress in neighborhood improvement but we still have many problems to solve. We are a very small Board of Directors who have taken on a lot of work. If you are concerned about your community, take the time to contact us and find out how you can help out. We need fresh faces. All are welcome.



Photo and text by Bruce Carroll

*West on Franklin at Holly Knoll the road had a hump
A dangerous place...where cars went bumpity bump
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But the bottom line may be...
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Police Continued from page 1

Board (C-PAB) meeting in October. Probably 84 of the 168 SLOs will be re-deployed now and the rest in July. SLOs will once again be permitted /encouraged to attend C-PAB meetings. The Problem-Solving Unit ((213) 847-3136) will continue in operation, but as of now there is only one officer assigned to the unit (Officer Sandra Escalante) who will also be assigned to Community Relations and community meetings.

According to Captain Kyle Jackson, Northeast Commanding Officer, there is now a serious shortage of sworn personnel citywide and in Northeast. Every single body available is on the street to respond to emergencies. Officer Jennafer Johnson who has been working community relations (see article p.9) and Officer Frank Ellman who has been in CRO for many years are both reassigned.

Resource Centers



At a recent C-PAB meeting Rosa Rivas (l) and Barbara Lopez, Civilian Co-Chair, chat with Captain Kyle Jackson, Area Commander

Further impact on community policing: The community resource centers will be staffed part time only, except for the Los Feliz center above CalFed on Hillhurst, which will be manned full time on day watch by Of-

ficer Trujillo. The bicycle unit will be assigned primarily to East Hollywood and Los Feliz. The gang detail will be focused on the areas of greatest reported crimes: the Figueroa Corridor, Atwater, and Sunset Blvd. from East Hollywood to Silver Lake.

The soon-to-be-opened LAPD Historical Museum will be located in Northeast at the old Highland Park Station located at 6045 York Boulevard in Highland Park and will be staffed by Northeast officers

Toy Drive in December

On December 9 Northeast will host a Toy Drive for children of the Northeast Community. Toys will be given to any child up to age 13 who has some document (utility bill, school id, etc.) identifying them as belonging to Northeast. Seems that in the past children turned up from all over the city and then there were not enough toys to go around for our neighborhood children. Individual or corporate toy donations will be most welcome. Contact Officer Rita Vallejo at (213) 485-2548

Website

The LAPD Website is recommended reading for anyone interested in police matters. It is indeed a house publication, and the editorials are all by the chief, it is also well structured, colorful, easy to use and full of interesting items. After the site opens you get two pulldown menus to take you to a division or a story. Check it out. <http://www.LAPDONLINE.com/>

FHRAAlert

What's goin' on? Why not be among the first to know crime problems and other important events that could affect you and your neighborhood. You don't have to be an FHRA member to get these notifications, but we do need your e-mail address. We promise this system will be used very sparingly and we never sell or even lend our list.

It's just a quick neighborly notification of important safety news, community meetings, etc. Just send an e-mail to FHRA2000@hotmail.com ...let us know your name, e-mail address, and if you want to share it, your street address and phone number.

Also let us know of any ideas you might have about what you'd like our new FHRAAlert to let you know about.



photo and text by Bruce Carroll

MEDIAN MYSTERY SOLVED

In the last issue of the Overview we were distressed at a very large excavation in our Franklin Avenue Median and wondered who had made the "Mysterious Median Mess?" Well the answer to our question, "who coulda' done it?" turned out to be none other than contractors working for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

They admitted to FHRA's Median Landscaping chairwoman Shirley Newland that the whole hole was made by mistake. As this recent photo shows (under Newland's constant nudging) the contractor finally refilled the hole, replaced the stone work that had been removed, repaired the irrigation lines that had been broken and replanted the plants.

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WHAT'S UP ON ROWENA?

by Charley Mims

Did you ever wonder what the Department of Water & Power has been doing at the old Rowena Reservoir site for the last two years? I did a little checking and found out that we have had a reservoir at this location since 1902. It was originally called the Wicks Reservoir and was reconstructed in 1910 when it was renamed the Rowena Reservoir. It had a wooden roof from 1910 to 1942 when extensive repairs were made and the wooden roof was removed.

The Rowena Reservoir serves as an emergency reserve and as a regulatory water storage site for portions of central Los Angeles. This site also became the home for the Landscape Maintenance and Pest Management Operations for DW&P. In January 1992 the Rowena Reservoir was drained and removed from service due to increased seepage of water through the earthen dam. The State of California's Department of Water Resources ordered this closure due to their concerns over whether the dam could hold up in an earthquake.

It took a long time to reach agreement with community activists from the Coalition to Preserve Open Reservoirs or CPOR. Mediated discussions were held in 1990, which led to an agreement to participate in a collaborative design study of alternative ways to recapture the functionality of the old reservoir. The design concept chosen was to build an underground tank to take the place of the old open reservoir. That left open the decision on what to do with the above ground part of the site, you know, the part that all of us neighbors see when we walk or drive by this property!



Well, the DW&P and the Rowena Water Committee, a sub-group of the CPOR, decided not to change the use of the site. This means that when construction is complete there will be no public access to the property. Agreement was also reached to landscape the surface areas and to include a water feature over a significant portion of the property. When you walk by, you can see the outlines of the water feature in the basin that has been constructed. New trees are being planted and the property will be landscaped and then fenced off to preserve the original use of the site as a utility service facility. Had the landscaped area been opened to the public, the DW&P would have had to do an EIR and would probably have had to provide off street parking and to widen Etrick Street north of the property.

The overall construction cost will exceed \$11,000,000.00 which will yield a safe new water storage facility with pump plant and the existing Landscape Maintenance and Pest Management Operations. What we will see is a lovely landscaped island in the middle of our residential community. Construction is progressing and the DW&P expects the new facilities to be operational and the landscaping complete within the next few months.

If you want additional information on this project, log on to their website at:

HYPERLINK

"<http://www.ladwp.com/water/projects/rowenaproject/index.htm>"
www.ladwp.com/water/projects/rowenaproject/index.htm

or call Kevin Brown, the Project Engineer, at 213-367-0834.

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The Northeast Beat

By LAPD Officer Jennafer Johnson

The month of October was very active for Northeast Area Community Relations. Your Northeast Area officers participated in 36 meetings. I would like to share two community meetings with you especially. The first meeting was initiated by our police officers and community members of Community-Police Advisory Board regarding the struggle against domestic violence in our area of Los Angeles. I certainly learned a tremendous amount of information during that gathering. The second community event, I am happy to say, was hosted here at our Northeast Area Community Police Station. It is a yearly attempt to open our doors to you and your families, We had a great turn-out

On Tuesday, October 10, 2000 the Community Police Advisory Board (C-PAB) hosted a Domestic Violence Symposium at the Eagle Rock High School. The C-PAB Domestic Violence Sub-Committee is to thank for the wonderful presentation. Those members include Claudia Cuevas, Rosa Rivas and Kaye Beckam. They facilitated a panel of speakers who were very knowledgeable about the cycle of domestic violence. The guest speakers were Deputy District Attorney Donna Wills, Social Worker of YWCA Glendale Arax Hoonitnian, Police volunteer for the Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) Monica Harmon, Police Officer in charge of DART Yvonne Blanpied and Detective

III of Major Assault Crimes (MAC) Mirta Ramos. The audience truly benefited from the information these powerhouse speakers shared. The crowd participation during question and answer session was tremendous although only 35 people attended.

The Northeast Area Annual Open House and Crime Prevention Fair was a big success this year. The event was held on Saturday, October 14, 2000 at the Northeast Area Community Police Station. The station had the help of many Americorp volunteers; under the direction of C-PAB member Faye Clement Northeast Explorers were on hand to serve snow cones, nachos with cheese, hot dogs, carne asada and drinks. Reserve officers and other volunteers gave tours of the Northeast Area Community Police Station every 20 minutes. Children enjoyed the free giveaways from earthquake kits to toy airplane flyers provided by Business and Law Enforcement Northeast Division (BLEND). A live DJ played music for all ages as children enjoyed playing in the "moon bouncer." Other sights at the Open House included the LAPD Air Unit helicopter, K-9 dogs, Metro horses and several informational booths from the Northeast Area. The number of community members in attendance was just under 1000 people. What a wonderful way to unite!

Upcoming Events!

Northeast Area toy drive is scheduled for December 9, 2000 from 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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