

OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE No. 7

SUMMER 1992

MetroRail

A TRULY BORING STORY

by Bruce Carroll

When Billy Shea, John Kiewit and J.W. Kenny were kids, their moms probably yelled at them for getting filthy while digging in the park. Now that they're contractors, Messrs Shea, Kiewit and Kenny will be getting \$172 million for digging in the park. That's the price tag on the contract approved by the LA County Transportation Commission last month for the Wilshire/Vermont to Hollywood/Highland Red Line subway tunnels that will be bored from beneath Barnsdall Park.

In September, prep work at Barnsdall should be visible, according to Roberta Tinajero of the LACTC. "That's where they start grading the site, paving it, building the shaft, and setting up a lot of large equipment." The six-month process begins by surrounding the site with a chain link fence. Metro Red Line plans to encourage the use of "see through" fencing, even envisioning construction as a tourist attraction allowing the public to see that their money may be going into a hole in the ground it's a worthwhile hole.

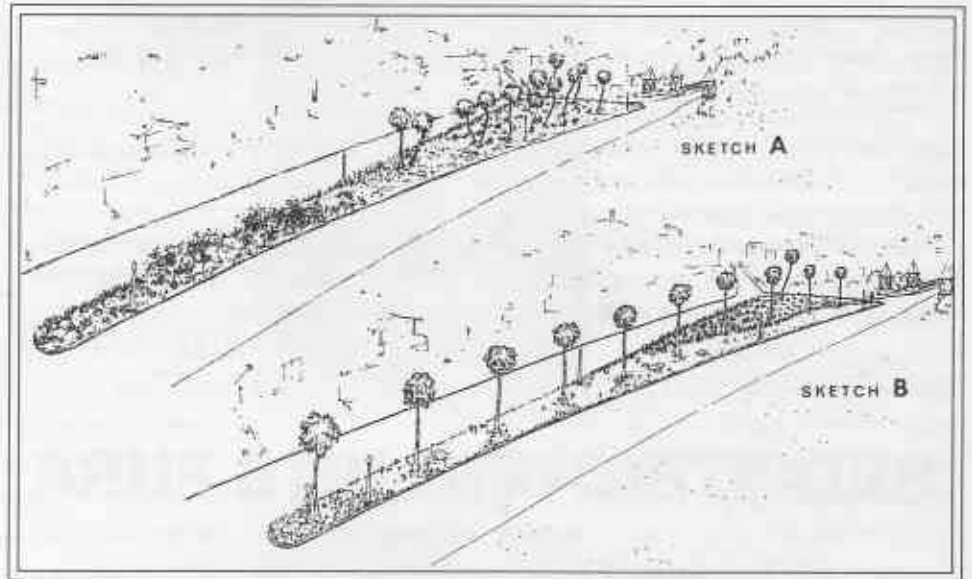
The tunneling equipment won't be lowered into the shaft until March.

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Two concepts for landscaping of the Franklin Avenue median near the Shakespeare Bridge.

FRANKLIN AVENUE MEDIAN:

A BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE

by Riccardo Accorsi

Who's idea was it, anyway? Probably everyone who passes the Franklin Avenue median near Shakespeare Bridge has noticed, consciously or subconsciously, its homely state. The idea of beautifying it may have been on the tip of a few tongues, but not brought to language until lately. Now that the suggestion has actually been made, many of us may feel like we do when we find something long misplaced — a sort of community-wide "of course!"

The Franklin Avenue median was constructed together with the bridge in 1926 and served as a turn-around for those who wished not to cross the bridge. The median has been streamlined several

times since in response to increased vehicular speeds. Its presence has been reduced to a mere strip of (almost) maintenance-free asphalt paving. Having long lost its original beauty, it actually degrades the surrounding context, including the landmark Shakespeare Bridge.

A properly landscaped median will certainly enhance the bridge as well as complete this historic setting in our otherwise charming neighborhood. The Franklin Hills Residents Association proposes to beautify the Franklin Avenue median by landscaping it with drought tolerant plants and trees. The

Please see **MEDIAN**, p. 22

From the President

Since our Spring issue on crime and what we can do about it, our community has been affected by the May riots. Several of "our" stores were looted and there were fires nearby. We had a graphic representation of how our public services (fire, police) can be quickly overloaded by such events and how important it is for each of us to be self-reliant. Now, in past weeks, we have experienced several earthquakes of major intensity. Have these events given you a "wake up call?" Were they enough to convince you: 1) that you are self-reliant and prepared for anything, 2) to leave town, or 3) that you should get yourself and your family prepared for a disaster that could come at any time?

If your answer is 3), then you owe it to yourself to be at our next meeting — August 12 at Marshall High School. On hand will be special Disaster Preparedness experts from the Fire and Police Departments to give you the information you need.

This will be our first general meeting of the 1992-93 year and we hope to have four. Others being contemplated are another meeting with representatives from L.A.P.D. on the crime and gangs issue and a possible candidates forum prior to the November elections.

If you have ideas for other meeting topics or projects you think we should be involved in, please call our new FHRA HOTLINE 664-7247. Your call will be returned by the appropriate board member or committee head.

— DON WALDROP

REDISTRICTING HITS FHRA

by Don Waldrop

Political connections for a grass roots organization such as the Franklin Hills Residents Association are an extremely important asset. Our connections have grown in increments since the early skirmishes with proposed development of the private school property in the area below the Shakespeare Bridge and with our concern about ABC-TV's projected growth plan (which came to our attention after a huge building was erected on the lot in 1987.)

The support given FHRA by Council Michael Woo and his staff has been immense. Deputies Dianne Breuggemann, Carole Joseph, Jan Perry and Kathy Godfrey have been very responsive and involved in nearly aspect of this group's interests. When information was needed, they supplied it. When we needed support on issues, they were there — able to call the right people or do the right thing for us, and always with Mike Woo's knowledge and guidance.

On the other hand, we had just gotten to know Assemblywoman Barbara Friedman. Her campaign in our area was intensive, with many one-on-one discussions of community concerns. She was elected out of an incredibly strong group of candidates, any one of whom would have been an effective representative, and we were happy to have her on our side, knowledgeable, dedicated and interested in our issues.

So what happens? They are both no longer our representatives due to the political process called *redistricting*. And, while the redistricting process may be an appropriate way of ensuring proper minority representation, this process effectively destroys the political connections and friendships carefully built up over the years, leaving us to forge new alliances and develop mutual respect.

Our new Councilman, City Council President John Ferraro, has long been a major figure in City politics and we look forward to working with him and his staff.

See **REDISTRICTING**, p. 9

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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1992 FHRA Directors Elected in May

Who Are Your Board Members?

by Isabel Dietz



Riccardo Accorsi, beginning his first term on the Board of FHRA., is an independent architect and specializes in residential design. He and his family have lived in Franklin Hills since 1987. His wife, Lise McKenna, is a social worker and they have two children, Sancho, age four, and Luisa, age two. Riccardo loves to cook. "I enjoy making great food, although our kitchen is tiny. I also like

gardening about twice a year with my favorite tool—the rake." In addition, he is a musician and has a small home studio where he performs and records multi-instrumental tracks of guitar, piano and bass. Riccardo is currently involved in planning the landscaping of the median on Franklin Avenue just west of the Shakespeare Bridge.



Chris Boutelle, a returning Board member, has lived here for eleven years and works in the entertainment industry as a key grip. He loves the neighborhood for its views, atmosphere and diversity, and has participated in neighborhood activities for years, beginning with the Neighborhood Watch when it was first formed. He has painted out his share of

graffiti and was the sole graffiti eradicator on the Franklin Avenue Bridge before Phil Lyon took on the job. Chris is Search and Rescue Team Leader in the Disaster Preparedness program and has taken the training twice. Chris enjoys

improving his hillside landscaping and is a bountiful source of information on retaining walls and planting.



Bruce Carroll (Secretary/Treasurer) was born just five blocks from the Franklin Hills, but didn't have the good sense to move here until 1970. In 1976, he bought property across the street from his home and cut down a tree to improve his spectacular view. Having planted a dozen fruit trees on the lot, he says, "It's my farm." When not weeding or harvesting, Bruce's other

interests since retiring as a producer for ABC News include tinkering with busted old electronic things. Bruce became active with FHRA by volunteering to keep the membership list. An admittedly frugal fellow, he became FHRA Treasurer in 1991, and added Secretary this year. Additionally, as may have been noted on these pages, he is Overview's resident curmudgeon.



Gene Cornell is a new Board member this year. He has background in industrial engineering and experience as an efficiency expert. He started a school called the Cornell Institute, where he holds classes in various subjects related to communication skills, principles of scientific observation, development of personal values and the use

of logic in problem solving. He is interested in the stock market and has developed some new investment concepts.

JOIN FHRA — See page 23 for Details and Membership Form

Board, from p. 3

Gene's hobbies are golf, tennis, reading, and entertaining (he is a singer) at various charity events and at parks and recreation centers.



Bryant Crouse (Vice President) returns to the Board this year for his third term. He received his undergraduate degree in psychology from Princeton and has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from UCLA. He has been a practicing psychotherapist, an organizational development consultant, and now he is an executive recruiter for the entertainment industry. Bryant has

lived in the Franklin Hills since 1984. Very active in the community, he works on the Nominating, Planning and Development, and Membership Committees of FHRA. Bryant's leisure interests are tennis, jogging, movies and theater. He urges anyone with ideas for new projects for FHRA to get in touch with him at (213) 666-0307

Charley Mims, who is a Los Angeles native and has lived in this general area for twenty two years, is beginning his second two-year term on the Board. He is a Division Head in the Department of Public Works, Los Angeles. With a twenty-five year career as a city employee, he knows a great many people in city government and has been an

invaluable source of information to Board members seeking resolution of various neighborhood problems coming under the jurisdiction of city or county government. Charley and his wife, Ardelle, are famous in the neighborhood for having won the annual FHRA croquet match and receiving a trophy at the same time for the most appropriate dress for the occasion.



Arnie Netka, a seventeen-year resident of Franklin Hills, was born, raised and received all his schooling in the Bronx. Before coming to Los Angeles in 1971, he taught elementary and junior

high school in New York for four years. He has been Director of Purchasing for the Port of Los Angeles since 1983. His wife, Suzanne, is a first grade teacher at Franklin Elementary School and they have two daughters, Danielle, age fifteen, and Brooke, age twelve. He says, "I like to camp, fix things around the house (often breaking them first so that I can fix them later), and shop (since I do it as a profession)."



New Board member, **Carol Mason**, has been active with the Association in many ways since its inception. She has worked with Vi Weber on the Disaster Response Program and is Fire Captain of the FHRA Disaster Response Team. She also serves

as the ruthless copy editor of the *Overview*. A native of Los Angeles, Carol has lived in the Franklin Hills area for five years. Recently, she parlayed a ten-year career in computer sales and marketing into her own business as a free-lance writer. An amateur astronomer and Egyptologist, her friends also say she is a great dancer and a good shot.



Violet Weber, who is beginning her third year as a Board member, has lived in the Hills since 1965. She has a home-based business – a fashion export service, advising out-of-country clients who need help in selecting American fashions. Previously, she was the Fashion Editor and Home Furnishings Editor of Home Magazine for the Los Angeles Times for fifteen years. She would like to see a greater participation of residents in the activities of FHRA. Says the ebullient Vi, "I wish people would be more cognizant of the fact that they don't just live in a house, they live in a neighborhood. Vi has been Director of the Disaster Preparedness Program for Franklin Hills, which means she is responsible

