



OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE # 24

WINTER 2002

Overview and Underview

As noted above, this publication is known as the Overview. In our commitment to provide varying views of neighborhood issues we have included the underview of the Shakespeare Bridge. This rarely noticed and long neglected area has recently become the focus of efforts to clean up graffiti and rid the bridge's underworld of undesirable elements.

Photo & Caption by Bruce Carroll

Perfecting the Bridge

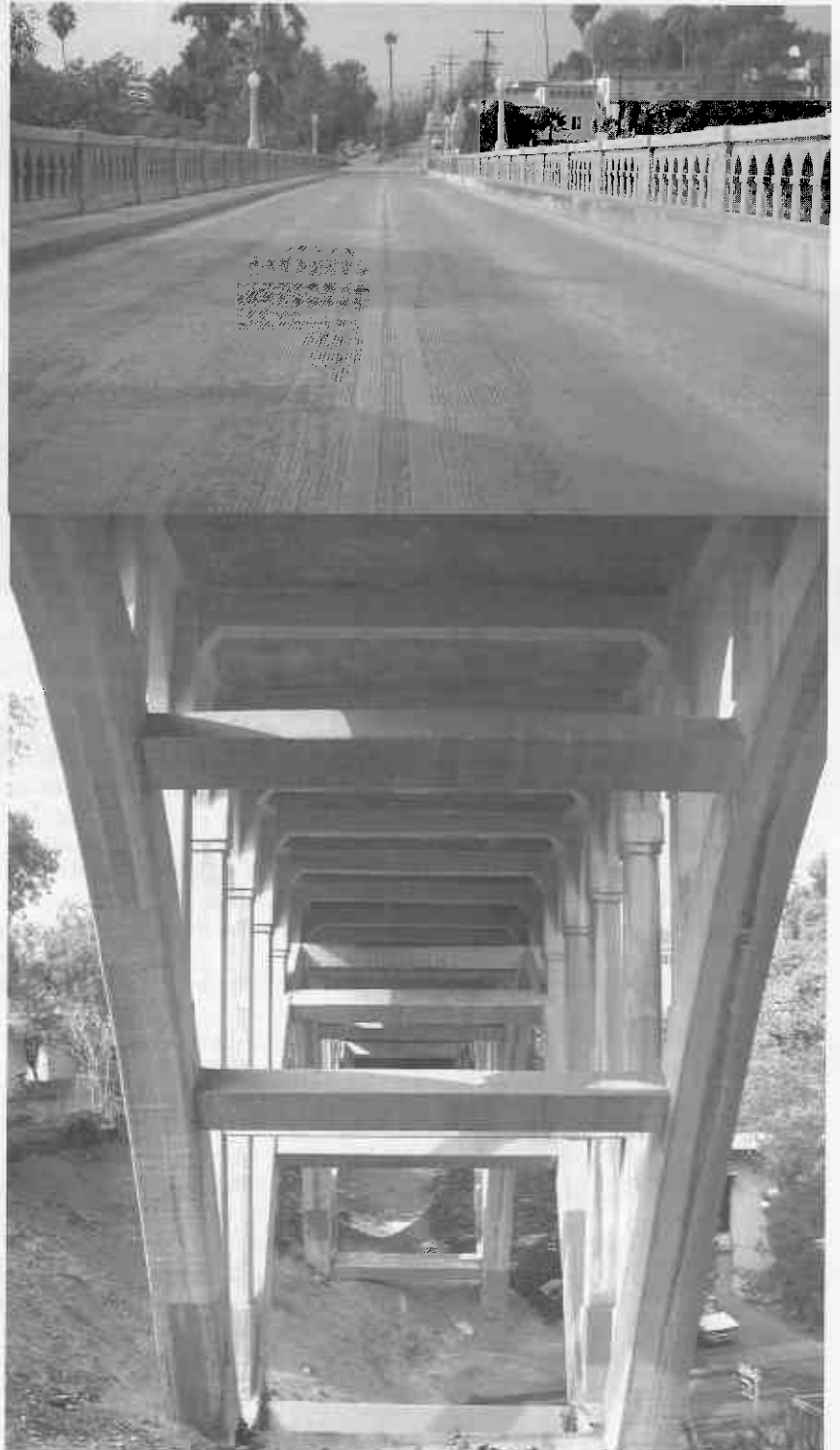
by Shirley Mims

There is a breathtaking view of the Shakespeare Bridge underneath it at the end of Monon Street. From there you can look up at its magnificent arches and see the whole bridge in its grandeur. Monon is a quiet street off of Tracy Street which has probably seen more foot traffic than cars. In recent years the area underneath the bridge had fallen to neglect and loitering. Kids were using it as a hang out spot. There was a lot of graffiti. A homeless camp showed up on the slope. Neighbors made reports of drug dealings and occasional fires.

By the request of neighbors of both Franklin Hills and Los Feliz, Los Angeles City Councilman Tom LaBonge and his staff, the Department of Public Works, local schools, and the LAPD are working together with us to clean up and beautify the area under the bridge.

The project started in January with several meetings between neighbors,

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Letter from the President

by Charley Mims

Friends and neighbors:

As we go into this holiday season we have plenty for which to be thankful. I sincerely hope that you and your family and friends are healthy and prosperous.

We have just survived the attempts of the secessionists to divide our neighborhood and our City. We remain united in the City of Los Angeles and in our neighborhood. The vote to keep our City whole was by an overwhelming margin, greater than two to one. Now is the time for all of us to come together and return to those volunteer activities and projects which improve our block, our neighborhood, our community and our great City.



The Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council (GGPNC) which includes our area was certified by the City Department of Neighborhood Empowerment last June. The end of October saw the election of ten members to the Board of the GGPNC. For District A (north of Los Feliz Blvd.) Cheryl Johnson and Bernadette Soter were elected. For District B (east of Vermont Avenue) Jacqueline Kerr and Andrew Westall were elected. For District C (from Vermont Avenue to Commonwealth) Dora Herrera and Meredith Patten were elected. From District D (east of Commonwealth and north of the Franklin Hills area) Yvette Bryant and James Balesh were elected. From District E (the Franklin Hills area and westerly to Commonwealth/Hoover) Joseph Hahn and Charley Mims were elected. Cheryl and Bernadette are longtime neighborhood activists. Jacqueline is a neighborhood activist and Andrew is a political activist who currently works for the Speaker of the Assembly. Meredith Patten is new to the area and brings a lot of enthusiasm, while Dora is active in the community and is a manager/owner of Yuca's Hut on Hillhurst. Yvette is relatively new to the area and brings leadership skills and enthusiasm, while James is an attorney and active in other volunteer groups. Joseph is also an attorney who spearheaded the successful efforts to string holiday lights on the Shakespeare Bridge last year. Charley is active in his neighborhood (and I am always looking for more neighbors to volunteer a little time and energy to improve our area!).

The elected GGPNC Board has the responsibility to appoint the final nine Board members to complete the first regular Board for the GGPNC. We all hope to increase the cooperation within our community and our partnership and communication with City officials and departments to the betterment of our area. Please participate.

In addition to our work to get the GGPNC organized and off and running, the Franklin Hills Residents Association's volunteers have continued to improve our neighborhood in many ways. Past President Ricardo Gomez has been appointed to Chair a Nuisance Abatement Committee. Ricardo is concentrating on bulky item removals in cooperation with Commissioner Janice Wood of the Board of Public Works and Councilman Tom LaBonge. He met with the Commissioner and Councilman LaBonge to get information on City budget priorities to rid our neighborhood of the unsightly couches and other bulky items that our neighbors leave in front of their residences without calling the Bureau of Sanitation to pick them up. Ricardo found out that the City plans to increase the number of crews devoted to picking up these nuisance items. Another area that Ricardo has been helpful in is testifying at Planning Department hearings on illegal zoning practices of a few local auto body shops. He was successful in his efforts to convince the City to NOT grant variances to allow illegal building and other activities that harm the neighborhood.

Joseph Hahn is once again leading the effort to string holiday lighting on the Shakespeare Bridge. As mentioned earlier, Joseph has also just been elected to represent our area on the Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council. I will have the pleasure of working with Joseph on this important neighborhood project. We plan to bring to bear the combined efforts of all groups within the Council area to improve our neighborhoods and to create better communication with City officials and the dreaded bureaucrats!

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COUNCILMAN TOM LABONGE, 4th District:

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FHRA HOTLINE (323) 664-7247 ;

FHRA@FranklinHills.org

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Emergency 911;

Non-emergency: 485-6185.

HOMELESS, Food and Shelter (323) 974-1234

INFO LINE (L.A. County Referral Service)

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LOS FELIZ PUBLIC LIBRARY: (323) 913-4710

TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT: (213) 485-2799

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POLICE: EMERGENCY ONLY: 911

ALL OTHER CALLS::1-877-CALL LAPD

(877-275-5273)

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

Northeast Division,

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Community Relations: (213) 485-2548

Gang Problems: (213) 485-7538

Graffiti: Officer Colenzo (213) 847-0511

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

Los Feliz Outpost: (323) 913-4682

Sr. Lead Officer Al Polehonki:

(213) 509-2964

Traffic Enforcement (Speeding)

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POISON CONTROL (800) 876-4766

RAPE HOTLINE 310) 392-8381

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Officer Gonzales 323-660-1440 x 240

Thomas Starr King Middle School:

Officer Harris 323-664-1176 x140

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WATER & POWER: (800) 342-5397

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

Garden Art

by Foongy Lee

The Franklin Hills Residents Association community garden on the grounds of the Lycee Internationale de Los Angeles flourishes and grows. Even here in Southern California, gardens are about changing seasons. Recently, Norm Harriton stepped down as garden coordinator, and Tori Kjer took his place. We will continue to benefit from Norm's friendly leadership and gardening savvy.

We have seen other changes in our gardeners and our garden plots. Babies have been born and adopted. Children have grown. People have moved out of our city and new people have arrived.

Everyone has a unique style, something unusual to contribute. Some of us garden chaotically, other are structured and precise. Some of us prefer flowers, the taller the better. One member plans on devoting her entire plot to corn next summer. Another gardener grew a zucchini the size of a large muffler. Okra flowers in several plots with creamy yellow petals and magenta centers were unexpectedly beautiful and prolific. Two of our gardeners installed competing irrigation systems on timers. They offhandedly discussed water pressure and dispersal while secretly planning advances in their system design. A tomato blight, which quickly spread to all plots but one, was the subject of a staggering number of conversations. In June we mourned our tomato crop and envied the gardener of the one successful plot. I became so obsessed with tomatoes that I dreamed about them—juicy, succulent, filled with the flavor of the earth and sun.

In July a kitten we named Balzac joined us. She basked in the sun on the paths and stretched in the shade cast by our vegetables. She is a three-legged, one-eyed, gray striped beauty, and she practices her feline instincts undeterred by her handicaps. We took her to the vet and members contribute cans of cat food.



Many of the fall plantings are in. We expect onions, fennel, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, squash, and more. Please feel free to stroll by and see our progress. We are located at the Sanborn cul-de-sac below the Shakespeare bridge. All the plots are currently occupied, but there is a short waiting list. If you are interested in adding your name, please contact Tori Kjer at 213-482-2160. We will gratefully accept any donations of cat food or veterinarian expenses for Balzac.

Attacking Graffiti

by Eric Frase



After a spike in graffiti vandalism in July and August, particularly on the western perimeter of the Hills, it seems that our neighborhood has established a reputation of "zero-tolerance" regarding the antics of local taggers. By removing graffiti within hours of its occurrence, involving our Senior Lead Officers from Northeast and (do NOT try this at home) confronting the guilty teens face-to-face in the dark of night, the flurry of IFT and FHC tags that scarred the vicinity of Fountain, Talmadge, Myra, and even the Shakespeare Bridge, came to a halt.

In 2001, the Franklin Hills were bombarded by hundreds of scrawls, large and small, by the IFT tagging crew. After documenting many of their tags before removal, the FHRA Graffiti Abatement Committee passed this information on to Officer Colenzo from Northeast's PACE unit. Using some of our information, police officers were able to catch several IFT members tagging a stairway one morning near Marshall High School last year and the appearance of IFT tags suddenly came to a stop.

The year 2002 saw the emergence of a new crew - FHC. According to Officer Colenzo this was a local group of kids calling themselves Franklin Hills Criminals. Officer Colenzo thought these were kids just "talking tough" and were not gang-related. This summer IFT and FHC tags began appearing more frequently throughout the area, often written next to each other, and apparently were being done in tandem. One evening, around midnight, a resident spotted a small group of youth spraying IFT and FHC tags on Myra near Cumberland. Several area residents went out and confronted the teenage boys and attempted to apprehend them while several of the offenders ran away into an apartment building at Myra and Sunset Drive. One of the boys said that FHC stood for Franklin Hills Crips. Within a week or so of this incident, a resident in the area of Sunset Dr. and Talmadge spotted after-

school tagging in that area and alerted the police. L.A.P.D. officers followed the trail of spray painted evidence up Talmadge to Franklin, and eventually stopped several youths at the east end of the Bridge who were "packing paint" as well as homework. After additional FHC and IFT tagging was witnessed again on Myra during the night, a neighbor contacted one of Franklin Hills' SLOs and the police paid another visit to the apartment at Myra and Sunset that seemed to be harboring the group of kids who were relentlessly defacing our neighborhood. It is unknown if any arrests took place or what became of the adult in that apartment who was aware their under-age charges were out after curfew, but the rash of graffiti by IFT and FHC has come to a sudden stop.

This is another example of how community involvement, such as direct reaction by residents, like painting out graffiti after work (and to the extreme, confronting ne'r-do-wells), and working with our community resources, such as L.A.P.D. Northeast, brings change to your neighborhood much more quickly (and is easier) than trying to form a whole new city.

(FHRA Board member Eric Frase chairs the Graffiti Abatement Committee. To be kept abreast of graffiti abatement efforts and news send your e-mail or phone number to him in care of FHRA@franklinhills.org or the FHRA message line at 323-664-7247.)

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Northeast Division News



As you know, Chief Pomeroy is leaving the Los Angeles Police Department after serving the city for 31 years. His goals while serving as the interim Chief for the past six

months were to unify the department toward a single purpose: make the LAPD a better place to work, improve morale and to increase recruitment and retention. The department he now retires from is a more competent and stable organization. Many thanks and happy retirement wishes.

We welcome William Bratton as the new Chief of Police. Chief Bratton's goals include the reduction of Part 1 crimes such as robberies, burglaries and Grand Theft Auto. He also will focus on "quality of life" issues like gang activity and graffiti. He is also a firm believer in a strong community / police partnership. Everyone should take an active part in helping to reduce the incidence and fear of crime in their neighborhood. Consider starting or joining a Neighborhood Watch or participate in the Northeast Volunteer Surveillance Team. Information on both of these programs can be obtained by contacting the Community Relations office at Northeast station, (213) 485-2548.