

Westside Village News & Views



You are invited to the Westside Village Homeowners Association 2014 Annual Meeting

Thursday, March 13, 2014
St. John's Presbyterian Church
Fellowship Hall

Southwest corner of National and Military
All Westside Village Residents are welcome.
Dessert and coffee will be served

Program:

6:30 Registration, dessert and coffee

7:00 WVHA Business Meeting
Reports by President and Treasurer and
Election of Officers and Directors

Comments by
LAPD Senior Lead Officer
Juan Ceja

Questions and Answers for
Council Member Paul Koretz

8:30 Closing remarks

President's Message

By Brian Considine, President of the WVHA

I am pleased to write to you just before our Annual Meeting, which will be held at St. John's Church, as usual on Thursday, March 13. We will have refreshments at 6:00 and start our meeting at 6:30. I'd like to take this opportunity once again to express our sincere gratitude to Rev. Craig and the community at St. John's for their ongoing generosity and welcome to us at the Church. We are very fortunate to be able to hold our events at such a beautiful place that is at the heart of our community.

2013 has seen some changes to the makeup of the Board of the WVHA. This Fall we bid farewell to two very important Board members: Andy Commins, who took responsibility for almost all of the arrangements for the Fall Festivals for a number of years as well as serving as the photographer for both the Festivals and the Annual Meetings. Andy was a tireless Board member who did far more than his share of the heavy lifting for years. We also said good-bye to Joyce Purcell who served as the Board's Treasurer for several years. Joyce was a librarian and those skills served us well indeed as Joyce was an ace researcher in addition to being a precise treasurer. We will miss Joyce with her dry sense of humor and Andy, whose sense of humor was more up front. While we won't see too much of Joyce as she has moved to San Diego, Andy is still a Westside Village resident, so we will see him.

The Bylaws of the WVHA (<http://www.westsidevillage.org/bylaws.htm>) call for a Board of fourteen members.

We currently have only eleven, so we are in serious need of recruiting three additional Board members. We have serious challenges facing us, such as the proposed JMB expansion of Century City which would multiply the complex several times and have a significant impact on traffic from the ocean to downtown. Last year we rallied in collaboration with other neighborhood associations to limit the size of the Casden project at Pico and Sepulveda. And we were successful in that endeavor. There remains a lot to do and many of us on the Board have served for more than ten years. It is time to bring in new ideas and new energy so that we can continue the important work of protecting our neighborhood from rampant development.

The Board meets approximately ten times/year for two hours and we host two events each year. The neighborhood needs your help, so if you are interested, please email me at brian3036@gmail.com.

Thank you very much and we look forward to seeing you on March 13.

Please Join the Westside Village Homeowners Association (WVHA)

By Roberta Schiller

By joining the WVHA you support your community of Westside Village. You help convey your concerns and interests to the organization and that results in your Board of Directors increasing their ability to bring community-based programs and service to the Village – as well as improve neighborhood safety. Your membership and participation helps our residents to respond effectively to wide-reaching emergencies. Your Neighborhood Watch program keeps you informed of break-ins, suspicious behavior and keeps you aware of any issues that might be affecting your safety.

With dues that have been paid from Westside Villagers, the Association has been able to hold its Annual Fall Event, has sponsored tree plantings, has helped fund vital programs at Clover Avenue and Charnock Avenue Schools. We have also produced and distributed our Westside Village newsletter. With the help of our excellent Block Captains, we have worked to keep the neighborhood informed about local activities and issues that impact our residents.

The Westside Village Homeowner's Association takes an active role in communicating with our City leaders to make certain that our voices are heard on commercial developments (the Casden Project and the JMB

building plans, for example). We work to make sure that WV gets its share of City services, such as street repair and tree maintenance and improvements.

The cost of annual membership is \$20 per household – please join us in our effort to make Westside Village be the best it can be. Your participation and membership make a difference!

Welcoming a New Neighbor – The Doughroom

By Kristin Killey

As you may have noticed, last summer, Westside Village welcomed the opening of a new gastro pub along Overland, The Doughroom. I stopped by recently to meet its owner Kaveh Karimi and see how the new eatery is settling into the neighborhood.

I took in the open room with high-beams and brick walls, leather booths and subway tile. I was invited to have a seat at the long marble bar by a fresh-faced worker named Brandon. He brought me some water and let Kaveh know I was there. Meeting Kaveh, it was clear he had a lot on his plate. Armed with a lined notepad with drawings and notes, passing along suggestions to sous-chef Amanda Avila, and finishing a conversation with a supplier, all as he landed on the adjacent barstool.



After a short career in finance, Kaveh found himself drawn back into the family restaurant business. For the last seven years, he's run Santa Monica Pizza Kitchen. As a self-proclaimed "beer geek" and fan of the Portland restaurant scene, in The Doughroom Kaveh wanted to create a contemporary, neighborhood-friendly restaurant with approachable high-quality seasonal food and craft beers and artisanal wines.

While there, I tried an experimental dish, tempura cauliflower with sunchoke chips and sunchoke puree.



Not knowing what a sunchoke actually was, Kaveh explained that it was the root portion of a sunflower plant. Who knew? This led to a discussion about his passion for choosing ingredients that, while being local and seasonal, also promote the low-waste/high efficiency use of the

produce itself. This process takes time and creativity, but in the end gives customers the same high-end foods of five star restaurants with lower prices. Kaveh thought the dish might need some citrus. I thought it was delicious!

We talked about the diversity of the surrounding neighborhoods. He said he has enjoyed meeting the residents.

“So far we get a lot of families in here. Actually, a lot of young families, which is nice. We welcome anyone in the neighborhood. We’ve also become good friends with some of the eateries in the area like Phorage and Scoops Westside.”

When describing the future direction of The Doughroom and its menu, Kaveh seems to be attempting to find more ways to engage while finessing the sweet spot of familiar comfort food and sustainable local organic cuisine.

“...We’re working on getting a take-out menu, which we don’t have yet (soon). We’re looking to throw more fun events to promote microbreweries. Overall we’re constantly working to give our customers a better experience and product...”

As residents, we need to remember that supporting good local businesses and encouraging their success will lead to more high-quality businesses setting up shop within walking distance. We have the power to increase property values and bring in higher-value services to our fellow residents.

If you haven’t been to The Doughroom, give it a try. (The bacon pizza and clam pizza are very popular.) If you have, stop by again and, as Kaveh suggests,

“Don’t be afraid to try something new! We have wine on tap as well as microbrews from all over the States.”

Besides, having a local joint you can call your own increases quality of life, and reduces at-home dishwashing!

3409 Overland Blvd

424-258-6194

www.thedoughroom.com

Mon, Wed-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm, 5pm-close;

Sat, Sun 10:30am-2:30pm, 5pm-close

Closed Tuesdays

Smell Something Good In The Neighborhood?

By Ken Williams

If you haven’t experienced a Clover Avenue School Food Truck Night yet, you and your taste buds are missing out.

Scheduled for the last Thursday of every month, a variety of trucks — usually four savory and one sweet — roll over to the front lawn of Clover Avenue School (11020 Clover) and serve up freshly prepared dishes for the hungry and adventurous.

Over the last year The Lobos Barbecue Truck, Baby’s Badass Burgers, Ludo’s Fried Chicken, The Grilled Cheese Truck, Joe’s Pizza, Sweet E’s Bakeshop, Belly Bombz Wings & Sliders, and King Kone — to name a few, have opened up their mobile kitchens. Each month a new combo of trucks join in and serve from 5 pm to 8:30 or whenever the food runs out. Menus/prices are clearly posted on the trucks and cash is king. Also, Clover School benefits as 10% of food truck purchases go directly to the Clover 5th grade fundraising efforts, which include sending every 5th grader to Astrocamp in the Spring.



When my wife Kate, our son Ry and I last attended there were about 75-100 of us spread out on the lawn – some even brought blankets for picnicking. As our neighbors Shirley, Bill, Leslie and Sam can attest, it's a fun event and a great chance to catch up with the locals. Mark your calendar for the next Food Truck Night and join us for a wonderful, moveable feast!

Community Profile of Leo Gedjeyan, Proprietor of Crest Cleaners

By Brian Considine

From time to time we present profiles of businesses in the Westside Village. For this Newsletter, we are profiling Leo Gedjeyan of Crest Cleaners, which is located at the corner of Palms and Sepulveda. Leo has been the proprietor of Crest Cleaners since 1988 and today he runs the business with his wife Evelyn. Leo's is an American dream story made possible by determination and long days of hard work.

Leo was born in Yerevan, the capital city of Armenia in 1955, a time when Armenia was part of the Soviet Union. After finishing high school, he went into the Soviet Navy for three years of mandatory service. Because he had many relatives living abroad, he wasn't deployed on a ship for fear that he would jump ship. He describes it as a peaceful time, so his service involved mostly driving trucks, but he noted that he learned to finish things in the Navy. His family's background was less peaceful.

Leo's grandparents were born in West Armenia, which is now part of Turkey. After the genocide in 1915, the Armenian population fled abroad. Leo's grandparents went to Syria, returning to Soviet Armenia only after World War II in 1947. Sadly, the Armenia they returned to was not what they remembered, but they were not permitted to leave. However, after serving his military service, Leo's father was determined to get the family out. They had the good fortune of having an uncle already in Los Angeles who was able to obtain green cards for all of them. In 1979, a time when the Soviets had relaxed the emigration laws, Leo, his parents and three brothers bought exit visas and moved to Los Angeles "so that they could live in freedom".

There was already a large Armenian community in Los Angeles (as in Spain, Iran and other countries)

that followed the diaspora. Their first priority upon arriving in Los Angeles was to learn English, added to the Armenian, Russian and Turkish, which he learned from his grandparents. Leo worked as a caterer for seven years, but was looking for a change when he had the opportunity to take over a dry cleaning business with his former partner in 1988. At that time, his business was at the site of the DWP Station on National just east of Sepulveda. They ran their business there for fifteen years. When the DWP claimed their site, Leo bought his partner out and moved to their present location.

Leo and Evelyn have been married for thirty years and have a son and a daughter. He reminds us that Los Angeles is second only to Armenia in terms of Armenian population and that there is a Little Armenia in Hollywood. Their family is very active in the Armenian community: their children went to



Armenian schools, they speak Armenian at home and they are members of the Armenian Church. While Leo has few remaining friends or relatives in Armenia and therefore not much desire to go back, his daughter has traveled there with a school group. Rather his view is "since you are here, you work hard and you make it your home". And so it is; everyone walking in to Crest Cleaners can expect a warm smile, a friendly greeting and a caring attitude.

Westside Developers, Developments and Deadlines

By Ken Alpern

There are many things going on in the region that will affect our commutes and—potentially—our quality of life that will impact Westside Villagers. While it may seem impossible to keep up with all of them, your Westside Village Homeowners Association (WVHA) and Mar Vista Community Council (MVCC) Boards are weighing in to represent you...but we always need your input and support!

To start, the I-405 Sepulveda Pass Widening Project is a \$1 billion project that will finish creating a widened I-405 freeway from the I-10 to the U.S. 101 freeway, with both local on/off ramp improvements and the last carpool lane addition to the I-405 to make carpool travel non-interrupted for that entire freeway.

The second phase of the Expo Line is anticipated to open either in late 2015 or early 2016. Currently, there is a western terminus at Venice/Robertson in Culver City, but work on the Venice Blvd. bridge and ongoing construction throughout the Westside will prevent the line from opening any earlier. As with the I-405 project, engineering and construction are going on virtually 24-7.

We're getting closer to a plan to connect LAX with Metro Rail! The Crenshaw/LAX Light Rail Line just broke ground, and it will create a vital north-south linkage between the east-west Expo Line in the north to the east-west Green Line in the south (with potential future extensions to the Wilshire Subway and South Bay).

However, the actual connection to LAX is a difficult and thorny one that involves many engineering, legal, operational and (of course!) fiscal issues to resolve. While a direct Crenshaw/LAX tunnel under LAX has been dropped as an alternative because it is too expensive and can't carry enough people, a People Mover train connection with the aforementioned Crenshaw/LAX Line has been moved forward for further consideration.

Such a People Mover connection will allow remote check-in and better access for motorists and train commuters alike to serve tourists, LAX workers and all Southland residents. More details to follow, because this is a work in progress, but it does appear that a consensus is being created for a "LAX Connect" to enhance rail, freeway and road access to/from LAX.

With development comes both progress and challenges, however! The Casden Sepulveda project is

one that had many commercial and residential buildings, but few to no transportation/transit improvements to justify the impacted regional car traffic.

Because of widespread and coordinated regional neighborhood input (of which your WVHA and MVCC played no small part), the commercial portion was dropped...but the residential portion, while approved by the L.A. City Council, is an uncertain "envelope" of which the details are currently lacking. The WVHA and MVCC will continue to monitor this large Casden Sepulveda development.

Meanwhile, the JMB Developer-planned Century City Center is a commercial project proposed for Century City that is 2.5 times the legal limit—and sets a potential precedent that could virtually triple the size of Century City and affect traffic from the ocean to Downtown. Both the MVCC and WVHA Boards have unanimously opposed this project, and will keep close communications with Councilmember Paul Koretz to make our opinions known and heard.



Please let us know what you think.

If you wish to contribute to News and Views, please email us at westsidevillageboard@yahoo.com
Visit us at www.westsidevillage.org

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Our newsletter is written and produced by volunteers.

*Roberta Schiller – editor
Donald Elliott – design and production
Articles written by Westside Village residents.
Distribution by Westside Village Block Captains.*

*If you are interested in submitting an article please reply to Westsidevillageboard@yahoo.com
All articles are subject to acceptance and editing.*



Growing up in the Palms community, I understand how amazing this area is. I am here to show you how much your home is worth as the market has been just as hot as it is outside. Give me a ring and I'll give you a no obligation consultation on the value of your home in this amazing market.



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Westside
Village
2013
Fall Picnic
Photos