

Westside Village News & Views

The President's Letter

By Brian Considine, President of the WVHA

Dear Neighbors,

It is with decidedly mixed emotions that I write this letter as I will be stepping down from my role as President of the Board of the Westside Village Homeowners Association as of our Annual Meeting on March 1. I have served on the Board since 2004 and was the Secretary to the Board before assuming the presidency in 2012. During that time, I have learned a tremendous amount about our city's government and, most importantly, what it takes to build a successful neighborhood village as well as the importance of volunteering for your community. And while I will miss serving with the incredibly dedicated members of the Board, some of whom have worked tirelessly for our community for decades, I have decided, for the present, to focus my volunteer efforts elsewhere.

During the past year, the WVHA has undertaken several initiatives. We helped ensure that our members had access to the information necessary to make informed decisions about local elections, particularly the election for our City Councilperson. To this end, we invited all the candidates for this office to address our Annual Meeting last February and we had a very engaging discussion. As you know, the result was that City Councilperson Paul Koretz was re-elected by an overwhelming majority. We also had the tremendous benefit of several meetings and classes on Emergency Preparedness organized by Valerie Fontaine; her article in this Newsletter describes these events in detail.

Another issue of great interest to our members was the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance Revisions and the new R1 zones that were approved by the City Council on March 8. This is a complicated issue, but the new BMO, as it is called, limits the floor area of a house to 45% of the size of the lot it is built on. Unfortunately, we did not hear about this initiative until after it was passed, but there is an appeals



Great
Horned Owl
Photo by
Hartmut S.
Walter

You are invited to the Westside Village Homeowners Association 2018 Annual Meeting

Thursday, March 1, 2018
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:

6:00 Registration, dessert and coffee

6:30 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,
and our Neighborhood Watch team

8:30 Closing remarks

process. When we heard about this situation, Laura Laser Galperson and I met with Joseph Galloway, Senior Field Deputy to CP Koretz, and Faisal Alserri, Senior Planning Deputy, to better understand the implications. The new BMO was designed to address the problem of very large cube-shaped houses changing the look of neighborhoods, blocking sunlight and even air currents from the neighbors. There are a number of variations, for example, the buildable area increases for a house with a separate garage and if the second story is set back from ground floor. While we were very disappointed that we were never informed despite their assertions that there had been extensive outreach, in the end, this measure will help preserve the character of our neighborhood.

More recently, we addressed the very serious danger posed by the leak of mercaptan gas on November 29, 2017 from the Rancho Park drill site operated by the Hillcrest Beverly Oil Corp. I am sure that most of you were aware of the strong odor produced by the gas that is added to natural gas to give it an identifiable odor. Thankfully, the leak was only mercaptan without natural gas. Our concern was that on the evening of the leak, no attempt at notification to the public was made and no information was made available to people who called SoCal gas or any public safety agencies. I, for one, waited on hold for over 30 minutes only to be told that they had trucks in the area. Our questions were: what the chemical was, which city agency regulates the facility in question, whether or not relevant regulations were being enforced and, most importantly, why no notifications were made via text or NotifyLA, the city's mass notification system. You can sign up for NotifyLA at: <http://emergency.lacity.org/notifyla>. Shortly after this incident, I wrote to CP Koretz on our communal behalf to express our serious concerns and to ask for answers to our questions. Unfortunately, I have not received a reply to my letter, which is posted at: <http://www.westsidevillage.org>.

Unfortunately, I am not the only Board member to retire this year. Carolyn Saltsman, who has been a loyal and energetic member of the Board since 2009, has decided to step down this year as well. Even before Carolyn joined the Board, she made serious contributions to the organization as an enthusiastic volunteer and by hosting innumerable Board meetings during her husband Richard's term as Board President. Thankfully, Carolyn has offered to continue volunteering for the benefit of the neighborhood. But we are not just losing Board members; following an appeal for new members at last year's Annual

Meeting, we were happy to invite three new members to the Board: Stacy Shure, Philip Accas and Laura Laser Galperson. Stacy, Philip, and Laura have already made their mark on the Board's endeavors and I am confident that they will continue to do so.

Although I am ending my fourteen years of service on the WVHA's Board, I continue to believe firmly in the importance of our homeowners association and I will support it as much as I can. I hope that you, too, recognize the critical mission of our neighborhood as its character is threatened by large-scale building on both Overland Ave. and Sepulveda Blvd. We have a Board of only twelve members and, it goes without saying, we greatly need the support of both new members of the Board and volunteers for our projects. This organization can continue to protect the character of our neighborhood only with the sustained commitment of its members.

For more information about serving on the Board or to volunteer, please contact us through the WVHA website: <http://www.westsidevillage.org/contact-us.htm>

Transportation/Planning Update

By Ken Alpern

Although the ability to expand and improve our freeway system on or near the Westside is over, innovative methods to improve transportation still exist in our area. The longstanding upgrades and widenings of the 405 freeway and the 405/101 interchange are well in our rear-view mirror, and traffic is as bad as ever.

The Expo Line, which travels along the I-10 freeway corridor from Santa Monica to Downtown Los Angeles, has reached its 2030 ridership goal of 64,000 average daily boardings. It should be mentioned that light rail lines usually--for operational purposes--have a ceiling of approximately 90-100,000 riders a day based on the number of cars and trains a line can carry.

This is especially true for the Expo Line, which shares tracks Downtown with the Blue Line. This track-sharing and ridership ceiling was the reason for the lower priority of elevating the line over major streets, in that there is a maximum number of trains that can operate per day on the Expo Line.

So what to do when the freeways and Expo Line maxes out? Well there IS the Wilshire Subway, which also connects the Westside with Downtown, and which can carry hundreds of thousands of riders per day. The Mayor and Metro are fighting hard for funding, planning, and construction efforts to complete the first

phase of westward completion of the Subway to La Cienega by 2023.

It is uncertain as to when the second and third extensions of the Subway (to Century City and the West L.A. Veterans Hospital, respectively) will be completed, but there is an effort to create Metro's countywide projects years to decades faster in the Mayor's "28 by 2028" program.

What happens in 2028? The next L.A. Olympics!

Currently, the two major projects affecting the Westside region are the north/south Crenshaw/LAX light rail line connecting the Expo Line to the Green Line (with a concurrent east-west LAX People Mover rail line to connect the Crenshaw/LAX line to the actual LAX terminals), as well as the Downtown Connector Light Rail Line which will extend the Expo Line eastwards to Union Station.

These two north-south and east-west lines are to be completed by approximately 2022/3, and will create connections between all of the Downtown rail lines and establish Metro Rail/LAX access.

There is also a major effort under way to create a north-south subway to connect the Westside and the Valley, but that is only in its earlier planning stages.

So what about the here and now? There are the Uber/Lyft models that have affected bus ridership, but have worked well in accessing our rail lines, but our roads remain in need of repair for individual motorists, the Uber/Lyft users, and even busriders to use safely and efficiently.

Furthermore, our City is experimenting with "road diets", including one on Venice Blvd. which has been very controversial in Mar Vista. In addition, the lack of available parking on major surface streets have caused a spillover of cars parked onto adjacent residential streets (including single family homes in Westside Village).

Which, as well as the proliferation of homeless and RV/Camper dwellers on our sidewalks and streets have made things in our region...well...

...interesting.

Interesting, and even (at times) acrimonious as our Councilmembers and Mayor try to figure out the right balance between the rights and responsibilities of those living and working here, as well as the need for affordable housing balanced with the need for neighborhood preservation.

Adding to the concern and confusion is State Senator Scott Wiener's bill (SB 827) to virtually abolish city land use controls within a 1/2 mile radius of a rail line or frequent bus route...and which would allow virtually

unlimited development throughout most of the City of Los Angeles, including our neighborhood of Westside Village.

The Westside Village Homeowners Association does not have all the answers, but a greater effort to ensure a rule of law and development plan that preserves our neighborhood, as well as mobility throughout our neighborhood, is a fight that we all need to share.

We are looking for new Boardmembers and block captains who can work with and communicate with each other to address our common problems. Like you, we all have jobs, families, and busy lives, but we've learned that one person can make a difference.

And maybe that one person is you.

Capacity Crowd For Fourth Annual Westside Village Preparedness Fair

By Valerie Fontaine

For the fourth year in a row, the Westside Village Disaster Preparedness Fair at St. John's Church on October 7, 2017 drew a crowd. This year's theme was disaster communications.

In a regional emergency such as an earthquake, our communications systems—cell phones, land lines, and Internet—likely will fail. If it's a big earthquake, experts tell us communications and power could be out for 10 days or more. At the Preparedness Fair, attendees learned how to plan and prepare so they can communicate with members of their immediate and extended families, neighbors, and disaster responders.

The event featured experts, demonstrations, and hands-on opportunities to try various methods of communications, and vendors so attendees could add to their disaster preparedness supplies. Vendors included Adventure 16, More Prepared, and The





Surplus Store. Resource tables were staffed by Palms Middle School students and their teacher, Mrs. Santana, and volunteers from CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and PepC (Palms Emergency Preparedness Coalition) which donated fabulous door prizes, including earthquake preparedness kits and supplies. A huge crowd-pleaser was in the parking lot—the CERT Mobile Unit, a pickup truck tricked out with the latest mobile communications equipment and owned by CERT volunteer Dennis Goode.

After a brief welcome by Councilmember Paul Koretz, Valerie Fontaine, CERT Level II-trained WVHA Board member and our representative to PepC (Palms Emergency Preparedness Coalition, explained how to make a family emergency communications plan.

Kevin Tamaki, Director of External Affairs for ATT, discussed what we can expect from the communications network when a disaster hits; how best to use telephone, cell, and internet communications following a disaster; and ATT's plans to keep the network working and restore service quickly after a major disaster.

Elliot Hanna, chair of the Mar Vista Community Council Public Safety Committee described the Committee's activities and how we can get involved.

Four expert speakers covered the spectrum of radio communications options available to us in a disaster situation and compared their advantages and disadvantages. Our impressive panel included:

- Roger Satorra, *the Radio Communications Leader for the LA Fire Department CERT Battalion 18 responsible for coordinating the training and radio protocols for communications between the CERT members of his battalion.*
- Michael Schlenker, *West Bureau Communications Unit Leader for LAFD Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS), a group of volunteers managed by the Los Angeles Fire Department for the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department to assist during communications emergencies for the City of Los Angeles. LAFD ACS has set up an Citywide emergency communications network without reliance on any existing systems or the need of any additional equipment, even if there were a failure of the primary communications systems.*
- Teri Cohan Link, *CERT level II-trained volunteer Ham*



Radio communicator with LAFD ACS responsible for the ACS members in this battalion area.

- Roozy Moabery, District Emergency Coordinator for ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) LAX Northwest District, a former Marine who chairs several public safety committees and consults with many local organizations on emergency and disaster communications. ARES Supports 68 hospitals in the city and county of Los Angeles, as well as the California Highway Patrol, and several Emergency Operations Centers.

Our final speaker was Chin Thammasaengsri, CERT South Bureau Operations Coordinator, which covers about a quarter of Los Angeles. He manages three CERT battalions, including Battalion 18, of which Westside Village and the Palms area are a part. He described the emergency radio communications network that he has been instrumental in creating and which, thus far, reaches from San Pedro to the San Fernando Valley. Westside Village residents can participate through radio training and monthly check-ins. **See below for details about a beginners' radio training exercise in westside village on Saturday, March 10, 2018.**

FREE American Red Cross First Aid/CPR Certification Class

By Valerie Fontaine

You never know when YOU might be the person who can save the life of a loved one or a stranger. Rapid, trained medical intervention after an injury or cardiac episode heightens the chances of one's survival. In most cases, these things happen when medical and emergency responders are not around, so that means YOU, the bystander might be the difference between someone living or dying.

That is why a capacity crowd turned out at the Palms-Rancho Branch of the LA City Library for First Aid and CPR training on Saturday, January 27, 2018. In fact, the instructor commented that it was the largest group he'd ever trained. The American Red Cross provided Westside Village residents and neighbors with both lecture and hands-on exercises in basic



wound treatment, response to choking incidents, and CPR techniques. On completion of the class, participants earned official certification from the American Red Cross.

Westside Village Disaster Communications Plan

By Valerie Fontaine

In a regional emergency such as an earthquake, our communications systems—cell phones, land lines, and Internet—likely will fail.

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Battalion 18, of which Westside Village is a part, is actively working on a Radio Communications plan which will be crucial in the event of an emergency. The plan consists of individual residents using FRS (Family Radio Service) hand-held radios who pass information to neighbors who are GMRS (General Mobile Radio Service) and ham radio operators who, in turn, relay it to Battalion 18 Radio Operations, who pass it along to the Fire Department as appropriate. The first phase, designing and testing the plan, finished successfully and the second phase, educating and training local neighborhoods to use it, is underway.

To kick things off, on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2018, CERT- and non-CERT-trained residents from Westside Village and the surrounding area met on the front lawn of Palms Middle School for a training exercise on FRS radio operations. FRS radios are great at the neighborhood level because a FCC (Federal Communications Commission) license is not

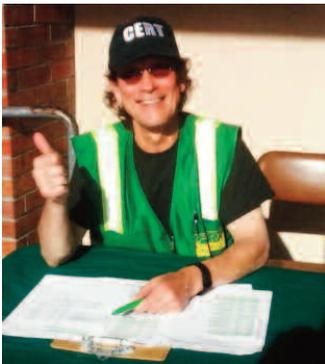
required, and the low power used on these frequencies won't interfere with other communication bands. Our neighborhood operational FRS frequency is Channel 7 (462.7125).

FRS radios, which are small, portable hand-held devices that function like walkie-talkies, work well for short range communication. They are an important part of your family's disaster preparedness kit because they are cost efficient, easy to obtain, and easy to use.

Anyone who uses a mobile phone can, with a little training and practice (and fresh batteries), become a good FRS radio communicator. You can buy them at most hardware and sporting goods stores, disaster suppliers, and general merchandise stores, as well as online. Both Motorola and Midland have a selection of moderately-priced models, as do several other brands. NOTE: Some devices are marketed as "FRS/GMRS" or "dual-service devices" but, if you operate such a radio exclusively under FRS rules, you don't need a license.

Those who want to get a little more sophisticated can get hand-held GMRS radios, which are more powerful, transmit further, and required an FCC license to use. During a disaster, residents can transmit via GMRS to Battalion 18 Radio Operations via CERT's new repeater in Lafayette Square. Battalion 18 Radio Operations will monitor traffic on the repeater and relay it as appropriate to the Fire Department.

Ham radio is the most powerful amateur radio option and requires training and a test to obtain a license. Ham operators communicate using higher wattage equipment and frequencies, reaching a greater geographic range. For residents using FRS radios—which will be most of us—information can be passed from one FRS user to another within our neighborhood and relayed to a local ham (or even a GMRS) operator, who then passes it along to Battalion Radio Operations,



which will relay it to the Fire Department as appropriate. Westside Village's primary HAM operator is long-time resident Philip Jamtaas, and there are a few other HAM licensed residents in the neighborhood, as well.

We encourage more Westside Village residents to train and obtain their HAM radio licenses to bolster our disaster communications capabilities. Roger Satorra, CERT Battalion 18's Communications

Coordinator runs "Ham Radio for Newbies" classes periodically. He walks you through Ham radio operations and the process to become a licensed operator. He assures us that it's simpler than you think. Roger has additional GMRS and FRS radio communications training sessions planned, as well. If you're interested in becoming more active in radio communications, please join us at any of these events:

Saturday, March 24, 9 am – 5 pm: Ham Radio Tech refresher (you should have already taken a class or studied online) and Testing session at 3 pm

Saturday, April, TBD: Ham Radio Back to The Basics

Saturday, April 14, 9 am – noon: Baldwin Hills Village Neighborhood Exercise

For more information and future training opportunities in any of these radio options, contact westsidevillagentp@gmail.com

Domestic Abuse Resources For Westside Village

By Christine Stemar

NATIONAL STATISTICS: On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men.

Domestic abuse and violence affects all socio-economic backgrounds. Physical, emotional, and financial abuse hurts and even kills.

What is Abuse?—A Warning List

Many people who are being abused do not see themselves as victims. Also, abusers do not see themselves as being abusive. People often think of domestic violence as physical violence, such as hitting. However, domestic violence takes other forms, such as psychological, emotional, or sexual abuse.

Domestic violence is about one person in a relationship using a pattern of behaviors to control the other person. It can happen to people who are married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated, or dating.

If your partner repeatedly uses one or more of the following to control you;

- *pushing, hitting, slapping, choking, kicking, biting or burning*

- *threatening you, your children, other family members or pets*
- *threatening suicide to get you to do something*
- *using or threatening to use a weapon against you*
- *keeping or taking your paycheck*
- *putting you down or making you feel bad*
- *forcing you to have sex or to do sexual acts you do not want or like*
- *keeping you from seeing your friends, family or from going to work*

You have been abused!!

Where to find help 24/7:

- **If you are in danger call 911**
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline**
(800) 799-SAFE (7233) www.thehotline.org
(800) 787-3224 (TTY)
- **Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Hotline**
(800) 978-3600

Visit: <http://domesticviolence.org>

- **Download the:**
Domestic Violence Brochure
http://assets.lapdonline.org/assets/pdf/domestic_brochure_cps.pdf

Domestic Violence Resource Guide
<http://assets.lapdonline.org/assets/pdf/ArrestPolicyResourceGuide.pdf>

If you do not have a computer or need to use one in a safe place, visit your local library, all locations have computers with free internet.

Advocates offer victims information, emotional support, and help finding resources and filling out paperwork. Sometimes, advocates go to court with victims. Advocates may also contact organizations, such as criminal justice or social service agencies, to get help or information for victims.

Our local LAPD Pacific Division has a Domestic Violence Advocate: her name is Chryssy and you can reach her at: 213-620-3372.

Songs In The Night

By V.J. Waks

Beloved and feared nearly worldwide, and by our Native American and South American cultures, the birds of Athena – the Owls, are amongst the most magical of all the birds of prey. Their voice inspires

wonder in those privileged enough to hear it.

And it appears we may be so privileged here in the Westside Village area—once more, we have got a live one.

Long time residents know owls; decades ago, we heard if not saw them regularly. Nighttime predators 20 inches tall, with wingspans about four yards (but only just over 3 lbs.), they're as large as our resident pair of Red Tailed Hawks. The latest photo of our resident male Hawk (pictured), shows a mature raptor—and typically visible through the day, until late dusk. Great Horned Owls are rarely seen in full daylight—unless injured, or ill—invariably from poison.

Yet, miraculously, whether driven here by the Ventura fires, or searching for a new territory, an Owl has



Please let us know what you think.

If you wish to contribute to News and Views, please email us at board@westsidevillage.org
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.
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*If you are interested in submitting an article please reply to board@westsidevillage.org
All articles are subject to acceptance and editing.*



Red Tailed
Hawk
Photo by
Hartmut S.
Walter

been spotted in the Tract. The signature low, melodious ‘hoot’ has been heard. We may have a new, healthy, potentially breeding raptor once more here. Large and formidable, Horned Owls are not typically dangerous to us, or pets. They’re happy with natural prey—the species we usually consider as pests—crows, mice and rats. Hungry Owls know what they want, and what they want is rats. Therein, lies the problem.

With its ‘ears’ prominent, the Great Horned Owl shown here was caught, injured, near the Tract four years ago. She didn’t make it; her body had three rodent poisons in it. A sad fate for a uniquely valuable predator, and a needless one, as you will see.

Termites and rats—we all have them and probably always will. But there are no safe rat poisons; they kill through anticoagulants, as the cougars, bobcats and other predators in the urban mountains can attest. Even the big cats are killed by rodent poison; the autopsies of cougars and Owls show the same thing, rodent poisons in the food chain. Owls, hawks, dogs,

cats and even children are killed the same way rodents are—they bleed to death. And there are safer ways to kill rats, as even pest control companies will admit.

Why is this important? We need poison free, safe hunting corridors for our urban wildlife. It is untrue that poison can be contained; the data is at poisonfreemalibu.org. Our two juvenile Red Tailed Hawks are still alive from last summer’s brood. They face cold, rain and hunger this winter. They will feed on carrion—on rats, alive or dead—to stay alive. We can help keep them safe if we choose wisely.

Like many, I eagerly wait for our Hawks to breed again. I hope the land – and the prey – will stay safe for them to hunt. And I hope the same for our new visitor – the one who sings in the night.

V.J. Waks

Writer/Producer

Raptor Researcher and Habitat Preservationist.

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