

summer 2006

newsletter

Save the Date!

Whpoa
Annual
Elections
Meeting

Wednesday,
October 25,
2006

Westwood
Hills Christian
Church

Corner of
LeConte and
Hilgard

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Dear Neighbors

Our traffic is the result of two decades of overdevelopment and more development is on the way in the form of Federal land use proposals and commercial and residential projects already in the pipeline on Wilshire Blvd. and in Century City.

Our local and state leaders are probably doing their best, but political considerations make short-term fixes more attractive than long-term solutions. For example, we have freeway widening instead of comprehensive land use planning that would relate development to infrastructure. Community organizations have been demanding this level of planning for years and instead getting gridlock.

This summer's action on the Westwood area Federal land use proposals provides reason to hope that things could change. News that the Department of Defense is trying to sell off its Armory property at Wilshire and Federal in an online auction was a final blow in a series that began with a VA process designed to open the way for commercial development of its West Los Angeles Campus and was closely followed by news that the GSA was considering add up to 1.2 million square feet at Wilshire and Veteran.

Virtually the whole Westside heard the wake-up call. Never before has this area witnessed such an outpouring of opposition to a set of land use proposals. We wrote thousands of cards, letters and e-mails. A coalition in opposition to the Westwood Federal Building expansion quickly grew to include organizations representing tens of thousands of citizens from Malibu to Fairfax. A meeting to demand that VA land be kept intact for Veterans needs filled the University High Auditorium to overflowing and the DOD land sell-off brought protesters into the street at the Armory site.

With our County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky leading the way, all of our elected officials, including Senators Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and Representative Henry Waxman, and Councilmembers Weiss and Rosendahl have joined the cause and are working hard to make certain that land is not sold off and that a plan is drawn up for its use. The County is in court to stop the Department of Defense from moving forward with sale of the Armory property, and the heirs of Arcadia Bandini De Baker are suing the Army to stop the sale and are in the process of finalizing plans to seek support from the community to cover their legal costs. Their goal is to preserve the property for its originally intended use for the benefit of Veterans. The heirs and our elected officials will need our help.

Stay informed. Stay involved. Support those who support us!



US Senators act on VA land issues

Senator Barbara Boxer writes to share good news about recent legislative action made possible by Senator Dianne Feinstein: "Senator Feinstein, who is Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, inserted language into legislation that calls for the creation of a master plan for development at the West Los Angeles Veterans Campus and directs the Veterans Administration to undertake no commercial development at the property without the approval of Senate and House Appropriations Committee."

For the many thousands who have expressed concern about the added congestion that would be created with commercial development at this property, Senator Feinstein's actions are a very important step in the right direction. The legislation will now be considered by the full Senate, where I will proudly stand with my colleague to support her actions.

The West Los Angeles Veterans Campus was created to benefit our nation's veterans. The discussions about turning this land into commercial property are inappropriate at this time when so many returning veterans will need long-term health care. I am very pleased that Senator Feinstein was able to take this action in her committee, and I look forward to continue working with her and with local leaders to ensure that no drastic changes are made to this property, which was dedicated to veterans and should be used for their benefit."

Contact Sen Boxer 312 N. Spring Street, Suite 1748, Los Angeles, CA 90012
213-894-5000, <http://boxer.senate.gov/>

Sen. Feinstein, The Hon. Dianne Feinstein, 11111 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 915, Los Angeles, CA 90025, 310-914-7300 <http://feinstein.senate.gov>



"The West Los Angeles Veterans Campus was created to benefit our nation's Veterans"

Army turns deaf ear to protests

Despite protests, the Department of the Army moved forward with its plan to an on-line auction of the 10-acre site at Federal Ave. and Wilshire Blvd. that is home to the Army Reserve Center. When the internet sale closed on June 23, a single bidder had offered to enter into the agreement which requires a buyer to build three new facilities for the Army and make a cash payment equal to the difference in value of the three new buildings and the West LA Land. No information was released concerning the name of the bidder or the size of the bid, although the internet site said that the winner bid the minimum which was one dollar.

The sale has been challenged by the County and by the heirs of Arcadia Bandini de Baker and Senator John Percival Jones who, in 1887, donated more than 300 acres the "Pacific Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers." The original deed stated that the United States government must permanently maintain the land for the care of Veterans.

The heirs are Carolina Winston Barrie, Ricardo Bandini Johnson and Janice Ogden Lindus.

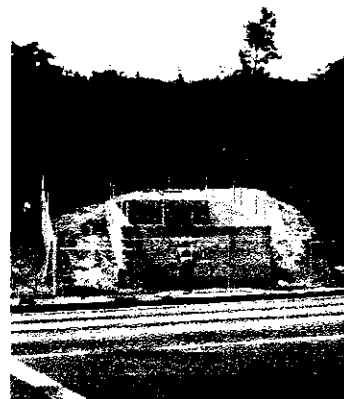
Caltrans 405 plans moving forward

Caltrans hopes for relief from gridlock on the 405 in the form of a carpool or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, despite credible research that shows that such lanes, in addition to decreasing safety, may actually increase traffic. We hope that Caltrans is right that the new northbound HOV lane on the 405 will improve traffic flow for all of us-- motorists passing through our neighborhood AND Westwood Hills residents alike. We all use the 405 and we could use some relief.

We know that the HOV lane won't make our air cleaner or our backyards quieter. And it won't make it easier to get into our community since Caltrans has said that it will close the Montana Avenue off-ramp in order to make room for the new HOV lane. They hope to improve northbound off ramps at Wilshire and at Sunset to make up for the loss of Montana. Two years ago, Caltrans proposed to replace the Montana off-ramp with a loop off-ramp that would soar over Dalkeith Avenue dumping all traffic onto Montana Avenue in the vicinity of Glenroy. This plan was abandoned when the Stop the Off-Ramp Group collected petitions in opposition from 80 percent of the homeowners in the area.

This current project has virtually unanimous support at every level of government and is already funded for a first phase that would take the lane from Sherman Oaks to Skirball. Since this project first came to our attention, WHPOA has been working diligently with our neighboring homeowners associations in Bel-Air and Brentwood Glen to make decision-makers and elected representatives aware that they must protect our homes from the negative impacts that the HOV lane entails. We join our neighbors in supporting retention of the existing Montana Ave. off-ramp if possible and opposing any freeway widening that would destroy or devalue our homes.

We won't know the details of the Caltrans proposal until December, when a Draft environmental impact report is due out. Caltrans had been planning a public hearing on the proposal for early January but we have asked Caltrans to put off hearings on the DEIR until later in 2007 to give us time to respond. Our Caltrans contact is Ron Kosinski, Deputy Director of Environmental Planning for this area. E-mail ron.kosinski@dot.ca.gov.



What Are Those Things?

Ken Simon, Caltrans Public Affairs has disclosed that the big concrete boxes that have been under construction along the 405 freeway for months are part of a Federally-funded project to combat water pollution by eliminating eliminate trash discharges into the storm drain systems along the freeways. The trash capture devices are designed to trap solid waste trash in a 5 mm mesh screen for later collection by maintenance crews. Mr. Simon also invites any resident concerned about a trash or litter problem in the Caltrans right of way to contact him at ken.simon@dot.ca.gov or 213-897-1876.

Our Traffic Committee Wants you to know:

*Parking Enforcement has said they will start enforcing a city ordinance that forbids parking on the apron (across a sidewalk in a drive way).

*Peak hour "Tow Away Zones" such as the east side of Veteran between Sunset & Montana (3:00PM -7:00PM) are designed to clear traffic lanes of parked cars so traffic can flow more smoothly during rush hour. Cars left after the posted time for example, are towed off the major street onto an adjacent side street and later moved to the city impound lot one by one.

*A Speed Radar Trailer test in March showed that average speed on Montana is 32mph, reflecting slow peak hour traffic and much faster off-peak traffic. LADOT engineers are recommending that edge lines be painted along Montana Ave. to control sideswipes and improve safety along this street.

*Wilshire & Sepulveda signal timing has been modified during weekend periods to allow more green time for Sepulveda.

Debbie Nussbaum, our Vice President for Traffic was present at a recent Transportation symposium that brought together top level transportation leaders and elected officials from Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, Culver City and West Hollywood to discuss traffic improvements on the Westside and in the region. She reports:

The Westside is a jobs rich area with heavy travel patterns from many parts of the county. The major streets in the area are operating at unacceptable levels of service "F" during rush hour denoting that streets are beyond capacity and approaching gridlock.

The Westside is underserved in mass transit given that it has eleven percent of the jobs and six percent of the residents and only three percent of the land in the County. One third of all offices in the County and 427,000 jobs are in the Westside, second only to jobs in downtown LA, with 557,951 jobs.

Five of the top ten transit bus lines are here on the Westside and 13% of Westside residents use transit to get to work compared to the county average of 6%. Buses average 11 miles per hour and have to wait in traffic with the rest of us. The only two freeways that serve the Westside are among the most congested in the nation, the 405 and the 10.

The short and long term plans to improve traffic on the Westside include the Exposition Light Rail Transit (phase I to Culver City) that is completely funded at a cost of \$640M with completion in 2010 and the Wilshire Blvd. bus only lane, scheduled for completion in 2013. Under study projects include an I-405 busway, Phase II of the Exposition Light Rail (to Santa Monica), and the Metro Red Line Extension.

399 is the cell phone number for non-emergency Los Angeles County freeway roadside assistance.

The website <http://trafficinfo.lacity.org> will show you real-time traffic information along 1,000 miles of major street segments in Los Angeles.

Looking for a few (more) good neighbors

From Security Vice President Lori Fontanes: Although Westwood Hills has one of the largest and most dynamic Neighborhood Watch groups on the Westside, there continue to be reasons to maintain a robust program. Looking ahead to the possible uptick of property crimes that often occurs at the holiday season, I would like to find more captains for those streets that are still not fully covered.

That said, I do want to emphasize that the Watch is **not** a police force and **we do more than just worry** about crime. The Watch is essentially a network of people who care about each other and communicate in an emergency—police/fire/natural disaster/other. Captains keep a list of their neighbors' contact information and act as a point person for the homeowner's organization in getting news out quickly when the email network is not enough.

If you want to step up for your block and be on the inside track regarding Westside security issues, send me an email at dreamprods@earthlink.net. And many thanks to those of you who already give so generously of your time to serve on Neighborhood Watch.

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New crime information service

LAPD recently unveiled an on-line service which shows you what crime happened near you in the last 7 days. They also have started an "e-policing" email service. You give them your contact info and your Senior Lead Officer will send periodic crime bulletins. The website for both the maps and the e-policing sign up is at: <http://www.lapdcrimemaps.org/>

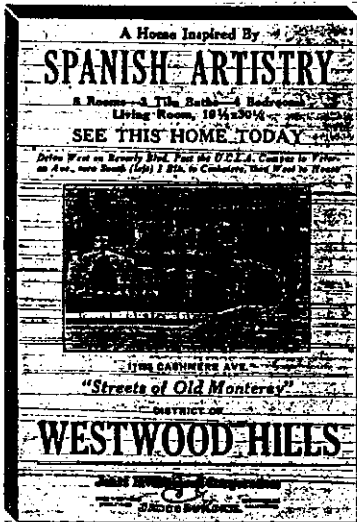
SUV owners targeted

According to the LAPD thefts of third row seats from GM SUV's have been occurring for some time and they are a hot item on the market and can even show up on e-bay. The seats are not marked with any identifiers or serial numbers so it is very difficult to track them. These thefts are difficult to prevent, since these professional criminals frequently bypass sophisticated alarms, kill switches and special locks. In addition to the seats thieves many times will remove air bags, custom wheels, seats, audio/video electronics and many other custom features that come with a high price tag on the retail market. We have had several of these third seat thefts in our neighborhood, one as recently as the end of July. If you are vulnerable, take evasive action. If possible, park your car in a garage or at least a driveway, lock it, and be sure you alarm is set.

Red flag day signs removed

Thanks to our Councilmember Jack Weiss and his deputy Beverly Kenworthy our streets are no longer included in the "red flag day" area established by the Fire Department for hillside areas. Signs prohibiting street parking on "red flag days" were removed from Ophir Drive, Cashmere Terrace and Denslow Ave earlier this summer after, the Fire Department decided that our three streets were included in the hillside area by mistake.

"The committee will have information available about how to research your house at the annual meeting in October."



"The moral of the tale is to call for professional help."

Please tell us about your house

If you know the name of the architect or the history of your home, please let WHPOA know by e-mailing Carole Magnuson at chmagnuson@mac.com or call her at 310-472-9352 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. only please). We would like to put together an architectural history of our neighborhood that will complement similar work underway in Holmby-Westwood. Our neighborhood was created by the Janss Corporation in 1929 as part of a planned University community that was called Westwood Hills and comprised neighborhoods east and west of the UCLA campus as well as Westwood Village. Holmby-Westwood was called "University Gateway" and our neighborhood was the "Streets of Old Monterrey."

Many of our homes were designed by the leading architects of the 1930s and the 1940s and many then, as now, were occupied by musicians, artists, actors and other persons of note. Our new architectural history committee hopes to gather this information and to preserve it in a published or digital format. The committee will have information available on how to research the history of your home at our annual meeting in October. Sometimes finding information is as easy as searching your street address on the Internet, but there are other resources available. In addition to enriching our enjoyment of our neighborhood, information about the original architects and owners can be helpful to new owners planning renovations and other building projects.

If you have lived in the neighborhood a long time and would like to share your memories and experiences, please let us know. We would also like to identify neighbors who have lived in Westwood Hills since 1958, when our Association was founded. Another idea is to interview your neighbors, if you know that they have lived here for many years and e-mail the results to chmagnuson@mac.com and we will pass on the information to the committee that is planning our anniversary celebration. You are invited to join the committee as well. Just let us know your ideas.

Bee - ware

Jane Schwab, who lives on Bronwood, had a honey of a time this spring when her husband became aware of a beehive located along the upper side of their house on the south side. Jane called a bee handler to come out, and was informed that the bees were inside an exterior wall between the wall and a closet, but fortunately they were not actually inside of the house. They had been there for about four months and there were approximately 20,000 of them. The bee handler identified the bees as Africanized honeybees and removed them plus 20 pounds of honey that was in the hive. This little adventure required the Schwabs to seal off all of the entrances to the wall, replace the siding of the house, and repaint. The moral of the tale is to call professional help if you notice bees swarming anywhere on your property.

We don't know what happened to the honey.

E-mail network earns neighborhood praise

Any WHPOA member can join our private e-mail network by e-mailing his or her name, address, telephone number and e-mail address to westwoodhills-owner@yahooogroups.com. More than 400 of your neighbors have, and this is what some of the have to say:

"I can't even begin to say how terrific it's been having this form of communication. As a newcomer to the neighborhood, this network has enabled my family to assimilate quickly into neighborhood. We've met several neighbors due to communications originating from this network. The access to news, information and personal things of interest has already "paid-off" and we've only been in the area for six months! Moreover, when one considers the awareness residents receive re: security issues and compares that to the amounts that people pay for security service, the price of "admission" to this network - i.e. joining the WHPOA - is a screaming deal in my opinion. In fact, I'd say we don't charge enough!" **Chip Bailey**

"I find the referrals through our group to be excellent, and I imagine might be very helpful to new neighbors who haven't developed local resources. It's also a quick way to be in touch with a large group of neighbors in special circumstances like lost or found pets. Both my husband and I receive the emails because we feel it keeps us in touch with the many developments within our community like the potential development of the VA or 405 construction...." **Linda Zame**

"I work from a home-based office and am at my computer for the greater part of the day. The Westwood Hills email network is an invaluable tool not only for immediate security updates but also for quick referral requests (and responses) to my neighbors and growing list of good friends... Being in touch with neighbors is so important.... Keep up the good work and THANK YOU." **Patti Londre**

The WHPOA email network has been most helpful, answering new and emerging needs of changing times for new young families and the old timers. WHPOA works for the common need of all families to feel safe and secure i what has always been a safe and secure neighborhood. It has organized our important neighborhood watch, email communication and direct liaison with the local police. Thanks to our special volunteers. WHPOA has been working extremely well. **Stella March**

I have been helped by Westwood Hills neighbors on two different occasions when advice was sought. I also have replied to requests for information. The Westwood Hills e-mail network is a definite plus for our area. **Roland Childs**

"I think you have done a great service to all of us in Westwood Hills by keeping us aware of what is happening in our neighborhood and giving us a focal point for dissemination of information. We should all be members of this email group. Thank you for being concerned and interested. Congratulations,"
Barbara Schoenfeld

I don't have enough words To describe how happy we are with the Westwood Hills email . We have moved to this neighborhood three years ago after living in O.C. for 32 years. We love it here. We bless our choice everyday. We credit the email 'connection' to making this an incredibly friendly, helpful, safe, enlightening, useful, comforting place to live....." Sincerely,
Archie and Tami Wilson

WESTWOOD HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Carole Magnuson
President

Alvin Milder
Lori Fontanes
Larry Londre
Deborah Nussbaum
Vice Presidents

Margot Barron
Treasurer

Sue Polep
Secretary

Directors

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Judy Brown
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owner@yahoo.com](mailto:westwoodhills-owner@yahoo.com)

Whpoa welcomes new members

Board member Judy Brown has signed on as our official welcomer. Judy will be putting together a packet of useful information about our Association and our Community to distribute to new residents. In the meantime, please join us in welcoming these new members to our Association: **Michael and Becky Clements** (Bronwood) **Shlomo Benartzi and Leslie Faro** (Bronwood) **Kirsten Sommer** (Denslow) **Francis and Helen Lawrence** (Denslow) **James and Jean Farnham** (Denslow) **Patrick Loo and Delphine Lee** (Cashmere Terrace) **Roberta Wong** (Montana) **James C. Opdyke** (Thurston) **Chip and Ruth Bailey** (Cashmere) **Jane Barrett** (Thurston) **Ronald and Natalie Bernudiz** (Cashmere) **Josh and Robyn Mandelberg**, (Cashmere) **David Kan** (Bentley).

Praise for the network (continued)

"As a block captain as well as an interested neighbor I find the Whpoa web-site to be invaluable in keeping abreast of daily events in the neighborhood. Keeping posted on burglaries, suspicious people seen and where, as well as information on all sorts of subjects have assisted my wife and I on many an occasion. Those who have not signed on are really missing out...." **Harry & Shirley Macy**

"Thank you very much for maintaining the network. It enables us feel a connection to our neighborhood and appreciate our neighbors." **Ron and Priscilla Rosenfeld**

"I am an enthusiastic supporter of the WHPOA network. Having some background in the subject (I served on the President's Information Technology Advisory Commission for several years) I am impressed at how a local community network such as ours is an outstanding application of the Internet... It most definitely provides a sense of community in Westwood Hills when most of us are so busy with our lives that we find it difficult to meet our neighbors face to face." **Steve Dorfman.**

New farmers market open at VA

If you haven't visited the new Westwood Farmers' Market at the VA yet, check it out. It's very convenient to Westwood Hills and parking is free, easy, and plentiful. The market area is large and tree shaded and there is plenty of choice. In addition to delicious and ripe fruits and vegetables, stalls offer cheese, eggs, nuts, dates, cider, even bison. Prepared food stalls are in a lovely area with picnic tables in the Vets' Garden area where Vets' Garden flowers, plants and produce are sold. To reach the market from our neighborhood, drive south on Sepulveda and turn west at Constitution Ave. Follow signs to the Market. Summer hours are 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

WHPOA MEMBERS ONLY GARAGE SALE: Sunday, August 27, 11 a.m.- 3 p.m. HOME OF HARRIET MILLER, CORNER OF GREENFIELD AVE AND CASHMERE. Items such as flower pots and vases -starting at 4 for one dollar; baskets; aprons; frames; musical instruments; unused tools and objects collected during Harriet's travels: South African colorful beaded coasters, Argentine silver mate straws, a Swiss cow-bell, and many Japanese items. Silent auction and free things with purchases of \$5 or more. Checks accepted. No parking permit needed.