

# newsletter

FALL 2010

## Save the Date!

WHPOA  
Annual Meeting

**Wednesday  
October 27, 2010**

6:30 p.m. desserts  
7:00 p.m. elections  
and speakers

**Village Church  
of Westwood  
343 Church Lane**

Speaker

**Paul Koretz**  
Councilmember

Special Guests

**Chris Ragsdale**  
Senior Lead Officer  
LAPD

**Mark Van Gessel**  
Metro Sunset  
Segment Project  
Manager  
405 Sepulveda  
Pass Widening  
Project

**Scott Whittle**  
Westwood  
Neighborhood  
Council Member

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## **Councilmember Koretz at Annual Meeting**

**Mark your calendars! Our WHPOA Annual Meeting is October 27, 2010.** You don't want to miss it! We will have appetizers and refreshments -- plus door prizes to kick off a fun and informative evening highlighted by remarks from our Councilmember, our LAPD Lead Officer, and Metro's Project Manager for our section of the 405 Sepulveda Pass Project. We will also be electing our 2011-12 WHPOA Board of Directors.

And, this will be our first chance to greet and congratulate our newly elected representative to the Westwood Neighborhood Council, **Scott Whittle**. Thanks to the stupendous support of Westwood Hills, Scott polled the most votes among all of the top-of-the-ballot candidates in an election that swept homeowner-backed candidates to victory in 16 of the 19 seats at stake. Hats off to our voters

**Socializing begins at 6:30 p.m. and the Agenda begins at 7 p.m. The place is the Village Church, 343 Church Lane.** (The Church Lane closure doesn't affect access to the Village Church which is only two blocks north of Montana).

We are fortunate to have our 5<sup>th</sup> District Councilmember, **Paul Koretz** as our featured speaker. We will be looking to him to enlighten us on how the City is planning to stay afloat in these troubled times and on how his office is responding to issues facing our neighborhood. Will we ever get our streets repaired? How about overdevelopment in the North Village? Can he help us with Sepulveda Blvd. landscaping?

To update us on the 405 construction, we have invited Metro's Manager for our segment, **Mark Van Gessel**. Mark can give us the latest version of what to expect as work begins in earnest on the Sepulveda retaining walls. Is the worst yet to come?

Security is a major neighborhood concern, and we will welcome as a speaker, **Chris Ragsdale**, our LAPD Senior Lead officer for Westwood Hills. What should we be doing to make our neighborhood safer?

New this year, our door prizes will include Napa Valley Grille's CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program boxes filled with farm fresh produce. The CSA program enables consumers to buy produce directly from farmers as local growers share their bounty.

As always, Special thanks to our WHPOA Annual Meeting Sponsors: \* Larry Young, Prudential California Realty, Chairman's Circle Platinum, Prudential's Most Distinguished Award Winner \* Our Westwood Whole Foods Market on Gayley \* Joseph Gillard, Executive Chef, Napa Valley Grille~Westwood.

**INSIDE: DEBBIE NUSSBAUM REPORTS ON 405 LANDSCAPING ISSUES.**

## IN THE GARDEN

The Westwood Hills Garden Club was formed in August 2008 and is open to anyone in the neighborhood. Our meetings are typically held on the second Sunday of each month at 3:00 p.m. We meet at members' homes and/or to take a walk in the neighborhood and view different gardens. Some of the topics we have discussed include Bulbs, Drought-Tolerant Plants, Rose Pruning, Garden Pests and Diseases, Succulents, and Orchids. We have seen many beautiful and interesting gardens in the neighborhood and look forward to visiting more. The Garden Club is a great way to get to know your neighbors and share information and ideas about plants and gardening-related topics. If you are interested in joining the Westwood Hills Garden Club, or in showing off your garden, please contact Caroline Lee at

[raucherlee@earthlink.net](mailto:raucherlee@earthlink.net).

-- *Caroline Lee*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*Dear Neighbors —*

Our 2010 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, October 27, is fast approaching. I hope you will all join us!

Our Annual Meeting is a great opportunity for us to get together in person—socialize, enjoy some delicious munchies from local Westwood businesses, meet new neighbors, renew old acquaintances, catch up on local news, get updated on local security/crime issues by our LAPD Senior Lead Officer, hear reports from and ask questions of our elected and appointed officials.

I personally appreciate the opportunity to put faces to the many names I have gotten to know via the email network but have never met. So please make every effort to attend this year—and bring your neighbors! It'll be both fun and informative. And it's FREE!

This year, probably the single biggest challenge for our neighborhood has been the 405 construction. We are all grappling with the issues involved—including cut-through traffic, loss of landscaping, the aesthetics (or lack thereof) of the final Sepulveda Blvd. plan, the location and specifications for proposed soundwalls, construction noise and air pollution, increased incidences of crime, and incursions by rodents and other wildlife disturbed by the construction. The 405 construction will continue to impact us for another two to three years. Of course, we will have to live with the final results for many years to come.

As you know, our association is run entirely by volunteer neighbors; there is no paid staff. We are very fortunate to have such a caring and involved neighborhood.

Our wonderful traffic chair, board member Debbie Nussbaum, has worked very hard to represent our interests with Metro, Caltrans, the city and state, all of whom have some role in the 405 project. Our vice president Carole Magnuson, other board members, and some impacted neighbors have also been working with Debbie on these issues. Dealing with the bureaucracies of the various jurisdictions has not always been easy, and the process is still ongoing. From time to time we may ask your assistance in sending emails, calling or writing letters.

Our speakers at this year's Annual Meeting include both our councilman Paul Koretz, and a representative of Metro, which is the lead agency on the 405 construction in our area—so this is a terrific opportunity to ask your questions.

I look forward to seeing you all on October 27.

Best regards,

*Terry*

## Board Elections

**Elections to the WHPOA Board will take place at the annual meeting** on October 27. The slate of candidates is listed below. The list includes both new candidates and current board members whose terms are expiring and wish to continue serving. With regret, we say a fond farewell and thank you to Barbara Dobkin who is leaving the Board after many years of valuable service. **Our slate** of candidates for two-year terms beginning in January 2011 follows: **Margot Barron, Judy Brown, Harry Macy, Carole Magnuson, Deborah Nussbaum, Sue Polep, Stephen Rohde, Terry Tegnazian and Sherry West.** Board Members who will be serving the second year of two-year terms are **Aphrodite Banks, Wayne Hodges, Russell Korobkin, Caroline Lee, Larry Londre, Alvin Milder, Frank Ponder, Jane Schwab, Stacey Siegel, and Mitchell Wong.**

—*Alvin Milder, Vice President*

# I-405 FEIR promises not being kept; Impacts not mitigated

The chopping down of all the trees along sections of Sepulveda Blvd. in the vicinity of Westwood Hills has me so upset and depressed, I could spit nails, and by the end of this article you will share my outrage. Unless we act now, the landscaping that our community was promised by government officials and that was written into the FEIR is not going to materialize at the end of the construction phases. Here are some facts to think about as I try to paint a picture of what Sepulveda Blvd will look like:

- Only 59 of the 775 mature trees being removed along Sepulveda Blvd. between Wilshire Blvd. and Sunset Blvd. will be replaced by Metro.
- **ZERO** trees will be replanted along the west side of Sepulveda between Wilshire and the northern boundary of the VA Cemetery, leaving the cemetery and homes on Bentley and Cashmere Terrace exposed to noise and pollution from the wider freeway.
- Only 30 trees are planned for the west side of Sepulveda north of the cemetery to Montana.
- From Montana to the start of the northbound (NB) Sunset off-ramp **NO vegetation** of any kind is to be planted.
- A **sterile concrete trench** is being created between Montana Ave. and Bronwood. There will be no landscaping for the east side or the west side in this section, just concrete! **See the photo below!**
- Where planting is provided along the west side of Sepulveda between Wilshire and Montana, it is minimal.

## What Can We Do?

Our Councilmember Paul Koretz has responded to our request for help: “My office agrees with the community that we need to replace trees and other landscaping presently being removed along Sepulveda Blvd. as part of the 405 project now underway,” he states. “We share the community's goal of having appropriate landscaping on both sides of Sepulveda, vines along the freeway retaining wall on the west side of Sepulveda and the replacement of street trees along the east side of the street. We have been and continue to push for this both with Metro and the appropriate City departments. We are hopeful that these issues will be satisfactorily resolved, and will keep the community informed of our progress.” WHPOA is also working to persuade Metro to provide trees and soundwall protection south of Cashmere where the new Freeway is almost at the same level as the VA Cemetery. But we need help. Thank Paul for his support and let our elected officials know that the current landscaping plans with their dearth of trees and minimal amount of vines and ground cover is not acceptable. The National VA Cemetery deserves a respectful row of trees for visual isolation from the freeway in the section where the freeway is close to grade level with Sepulveda---and Westwood Hills should not be left with a concrete trench at the end of this project.

## Call, Email or Write (call for address)

- Councilmen Paul Koretz (310) 289-0353 [paul.koretz@lacity.org](mailto:paul.koretz@lacity.org) ; Deputy: Jay Greenstein [Jay.Greenstein@lacity.org](mailto:Jay.Greenstein@lacity.org)
- Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky (213) 974-3333 ; Deputy: Vivian Rescalvo [vrescalvo@lacos.org](mailto:vrescalvo@lacos.org)
- Assemblymember Mike Feuer (310) 285-5490 ; Deputy: Ellen Isaacs , [Ellen.Isaacs@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Ellen.Isaacs@asm.ca.gov)
- Senator Fran Pavley (310) 314-5214 ; Field Deputy: Kara Seward [Kara.Seward@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Kara.Seward@sen.ca.gov)
- Representative Henry Waxman (310) 652-3095; Deputy: Lisa Pinto, [Lisa.Pinto@mail.house.gov](mailto:Lisa.Pinto@mail.house.gov)

---Debbie Nusbaum , Traffic Committee Chairperson



**WESTWOOD HILLS  
PROPERTY OWNERS  
ASSOCIATION**

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This newsletter is  
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Property Owners  
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as a service to  
members.

Carole Magnuson  
Editor

## Security—Everyone's Job

This past year has certainly been a time of change for all of us. We have seen the beginning of the I-405 project and the widening of Sepulveda. Along with that has come the loss of all of the trees on the west side of that boulevard and the increasing problems of our coexisting with urban wildlife.

These past months I have tried to send out information that would be helpful to everyone who has questions about what to do regarding problems relative to raccoons, coyotes, bobcats and mountain lions. In the future, I will be posting suggestions about how to handle increased problems with rodents.

Due to the displacement of the natural habitat of these creatures, caused by the recent freeway development, we have been faced with more and more situations that necessitate an increased awareness of how to interact with that urban wildlife. I feel it is my responsibility to research ways in which I can be helpful to all of us.

As more and more traffic seems to pass through our streets, we need to be constantly aware of our surroundings. I want to thank all of the homeowners who have posted concerns on the email network regarding unusual sightings of people or situations that require increased vigilance by our security patrols, or the LAPD. Remember that you can email [www.alertcommunity.com](http://www.alertcommunity.com) to report suspicious activity.

Increased lighting is also important to everyone's safety, as is the immediate reporting of streetlights that are out. You can call 311 to report these outages, and if there is not satisfactory response within a limited period of time, calling Councilmember Koretz's office (1-310-289-0353) is suggested

A Neighborhood Watch is only as strong as the individuals in the neighborhood. It is important that we stay in contact with our neighbors, taking care to note the comings and goings of each of us. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to be a block captain. I can be reached at [mintjam9@yahoo.com](mailto:mintjam9@yahoo.com) --*Jane Schwab, Security Chairperson*

## Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome the following families to WHPOA: Muriel Dance and Alvin Martin (Dalkeith), Elizabeth and Lee Jenkins (Denslow), Lindsey Bergman and Thomas Casparian (Tavistock), Elizabeth and Jonathan Saven (Bronwood), Bonnie and David Millett (Bronwood), Paula and Dan Lewis (Glenroy), Brenda Lopez and Larry Clemens (Denslow), and Alison Iglow (Glenroy).

If you have not yet joined WHPOA we hope that you will seriously consider doing so. WHPOA is devoted exclusively to protecting and enhancing the quality of life enjoyed by the residents of Westwood Hills. Dealing with issues ranging from the potential commercial development of VA land to the widening of the 405 freeway, WHPOA works closely with governmental agencies and community groups to represent our interests.

Our Association is staffed entirely by volunteers. Unlike other homeowner Associations, we do not have annual dues. There is a one-time nominal membership fee of \$100, which provides you with the privileges of membership for as long as you live in the neighborhood. Once you have joined WHPOA you are eligible to become a member of the Westwood Hills email network which links neighbor to neighbor and facilitates updates on urgent issues. If you wish to receive more information regarding membership please contact Sue Polep, Membership Chair, at [s.polep@gte.net](mailto:s.polep@gte.net). --*Sue Polep, Secretary*