



Inside Ladera

Official Publication of the Ladera Heights Civic Association

Fall 2006

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5357 Centinela Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90045

(310) 641-2294

Annual Homeowner's Meeting

Thursday, November 16, 2006

Where: University Christian Church,
5831 W. Centinela, LA 90056 (at Wooster)
Time: 6:30pm County Departments On Display
7:00pm Civic Association Meeting
Who: County Services, Supervisor Burke
and Guests

Agenda:

Election of Board of Directors
Crime and Safety
(Sheriff, CHP, Security Service Systems)
City of Hope
Ladera Center
Baldwin Hills Conservancy

Election of LHCA Board Members

All residents are invited to run for the LHCA Board of Directors and make a difference. Six Ladera residents will be elected and serve a two-year term. If you are interested, you can find an application at the Ladera website at www.laderaheights.org. Download it and get it in no later than November 13, 2006.

What's So Special About Ladera Heights?

by Gerald Riberio

Several weeks ago, my husband and I were invited to a "Welcome to Ladera Party" given by one of our friends in Upper Ladera for two new families that had moved on their street. It was a nice gesture and positively got most residents re-thinking about this great neighborhood we call home. The two new families were asked to share a few reasons why they chose to move to Ladera. Like many of us, both couples talked about the usual and obvious reasons: very affluent urban neighborhood; manicured lawns; centrally located; a friendly, safe and neighborly place to raise a family.

However, one couple raised many eyebrows when they stated, **"one of the most significant reasons we moved here is because of the strong Ladera Heights Civic Association."** Now no one in that room should have been surprised to hear that having had prior knowledge of the many good things the Ladera Heights Civic Association does for this community. Nevertheless, some of us did not anticipate that response especially from a newcomer. As the new residents saw puzzled looks in the



"City of Hope is joining LHCA"

We are honored and look forward to having the City of Hope join us at our upcoming November Annual Meeting. They will talk about the most recent City of Hope's medical breakthroughs as well as share ways in which the Ladera Heights Civic Association may become involved. The City of Hope is one of the world's most outstanding cancer and medical research institutions. There will also be literature available to learn more about their medical programs, treatment, and research in the fight against cancer and other catastrophic diseases.

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President's Report

Dear Neighbors:

I hope everyone had a great summer. With the return of fall, it becomes darker earlier and the need for security before the holidays becomes critical once again. While we live in a relatively safe neighborhood, we can always do more. If you haven't started a Neighborhood Watch group, now is the time to do so. You can contact Cheryl Cook, our newsletter editor, at (310) 641-2294 or e-mail her at CCookLA@aol.com and she will tell you how to get started. In addition, we need more Ladera residents to sign up for patrol with Security Service Systems in the hopes of getting a second, dedicated patrol car. The patrol is a great deterrent to criminals and the cost is only \$25.00 per month which is considerably less than other companies. The service includes vacation watch as well as regular checks. Further, if you don't have an alarm system, or even if you do, Security Services provides alarm monitoring service for only \$21.00 per month. Please contact George Aceves at (310) 477-2095 for more information.



The annual meeting of the Ladera Heights Civic Association will be held on **Thursday, November 16th** at the University Christian Church on Wooster in Lower Ladera. We urge you all to attend. In addition to the election of the Board of Directors, we will discuss several items such as trash collection; Slauson beautification and a special presentation by City of Hope. The doors will open at 6:30 with various County departments represented. The meeting will start promptly at 7:00. Anyone who has paid their dues is eligible to vote. Please try and arrive before 7pm to vote.

Regarding school options, the first group of Ladera students just started attending the Wiseburn School District. All the parents are very pleased with both the elementary and middle school. If you would like more information or a possible tour, feel free to contact Alicia Galindo at the district office at (310) 643-3022. The API scores at both schools are over 800. The Wiseburn School District offers our community a free quality education with a "private school feel" and it is only 10 minutes away.

A dues envelope for the 2007 year is included with the newsletter. The dues for the year is still only \$20. These funds are used to pay for our quality newsletter that is sent to the entire community, and other projects and issues in order to maintain the quality of life in our community.

Finally, the traffic construction work along Slauson should be completed by January. A third left turn lane going west on Slauson is being added in hopes that the traffic will move more smoothly. We are currently working with the County and Culver City to try to synchronize the signals on Slauson. This should help the traffic move in a more efficient manner.

Hope to see you at the annual meeting.

Ronni Cooper,
President

Ladera Heights, "Setting An Example"

**The Ladera Heights Civic Association meets
the third Thursday of each month
(except July and August) at 7pm in
the Ladera Sheriff's Service Center.
Come and make a difference!**

Help support this Newsletter

**and the many activities of the Ladera Heights
Civic Association. Please send your 2007 dues now!
Use the enclosed envelope and keep a record of your payment.**



Update on the Wiseburn School District

by Cheryl Cook

Earlier this year in the midst of our petition to get Ladera transferred from the Inglewood Unified School District (IUSD) to the Culver City Unified School District, the Chief Petitioners met with Dr. Don Brann of the Wiseburn School located in Hawthorne. During that meeting, Dr. Brann made it clear that the Ladera families would be welcomed if they wanted another public school option. This sparked the beginning of the Ladera/Wiseburn partnership. Dr. Brann came to Ladera and made a presentation at a special LHCA meeting last March. Information was disseminated and tours of their schools were organized. *Continued on page six...*



Dr. Don Brann, Superintendent



Mr. Matthew Wunder,
Principal, Dana Middle School



continued from page one... What's So Special About Ladera?

room, the wife stated that *"for the last two years, through a friend, I have read about this wonderful neighborhood through the **Ladera Heights Civic Association Newsletter**. It is the LHCA that makes this community stand-out. Further, I believe that a community can only be as good and as strong as their civic association and that the virtues and values of the association allow residents to engage and trust each other for mutual benefit."*

After the initial shock of hearing what we already knew, we applauded our new neighbor and the evening was changed...re-directed. Other residents were asked to share some of the good things the LHCA has done. Like a kid in school, I was the first to jump up! However, Ladera resident, **Beverly Kuykendall Jones** had already begun speaking from her seat. Beverly shared that one of the largest contracts her company was ever awarded came from a networking-connection she made at a LHCA meeting. Once again, the room was silent.

Shortly thereafter, I began re-sharing some of the good things that the LHCA does and continues to do. I view the association as the glue that binds this community. The LHCA has ensured our connectivity with the County which has resulted in a positive, working relationship. Also, the LHCA recently spent **thousands of dollars** and **countless man/woman-hours** on the school petition project. This was not a minuscule task. Those intimately involved were extremely dedicated. Again, I applaud Ronni Cooper, Cheryl Cook, Dr. Allan Boodnick and all others who took on this project.

Additionally, the LHCA continues to work closely with Supervisor Burke's office on significant community matters. Pass successes include the installation of the Centinela fence in 2000, and

the derailing of the projected power plant on La Cienega, etc. Currently, the LHCA is working with the County on several projects: the construction of the Senior Center in Ladera Park; the beautification of Slauson; graffiti removal and the list goes on. They also have a notable relationship with the law enforcement departments that man our area.

I conclude by saying, we can look at civic associations all over this great city/state, however, you will not find an association more passionately dedicated to the community as the LHCA but it is **volunteerism** that makes it work and they need good, dedicated people who care to make a difference. If you can't attend all of the meetings, perhaps 3 or 4 a year. Also, the measly \$20 donation that the LHCA asks of us is nothing in comparison to what this organization does for the community. True, we all live and lead busy lives. However, my father always says, *"There will always be rocks in front of you and around you. You can choose to step over those rocks and use them as stepping stones; you can pick them up and throw them out of your way; or you can sit on them and do nothing."*

As a neighbor, long-time resident and one who loves this community and without imposing, I would like to invite you to think about volunteering and donating the \$20 (or more) to the LHCA. I am certain there is something you will enjoy doing. Remember, volunteerism is no doubt, the modus operandi and is entwined with the uninterrupted development of our neighborhood. Moreover, we cannot have a civic society if we do not have volunteers to put into effect the problem-solving characteristics of a community.

*Photinia Hedges*

Screening Concerns Dominate June Slauson Beautification Meeting

by Dorothy Harris, Chair LHCA Beautification Committee

After months of inactivity as we awaited input from the LA County Department of Public Works, the LHCA Beautification Committee met in June at the home of Chair Dorothy Harris. The group was joined by a number of residents, both owners and renters, who live adjacent to Slauson and benefit from the screening provided by the large oleanders that line portions of the Slauson frontage.

Representing the County, outgoing project manager Carolyn Bell reminded the group that the scope of the Slauson project, originally restricted due to funding limitations to the southern strip of Slauson between Wooster and La Cienega, has been substantially expanded. The new project area will include the entire strip of Slauson from Wooster to La Tijera in Old Ladera. As such, it will deal with the condition of the several strips that currently feature oleander bushes.

It was immediately clear that committee members and guests attending the meeting had no attachment to oleanders *per se*, but they were united in concern about losing the screening aspects of the shrub. In response, Bell explained why the oleanders should be removed for practical as well as aesthetic reasons:

some already have a fatal blight that has attacked this species of oleander recently in Southern California; our plantings are “old” in their life cycle and will become more “woody” and less attractive with each trimming; oleanders are prone to trash collection in the leaves and between the plant and ground; removal of the green and black cement and installation of an in-ground watering system will damage at least some of their roots and will exacerbate plant die-back.

Because staff had been made aware of the resident’s concern about losing their screening, Bell was ready with a proposed solution. A variety of the “photinia” shrub offers both screening and relatively low maintenance and watering needs. It grows quickly (vertical 12-24 inches per year) and so - if planted in a large size, described as 4 to 5ft - they will fill up and out rapidly. Also, this shrub will begin its leafing at ground level thus eliminating the lower leg space where debris blows and collects. Finally, photinias will be watered regularly through an automated system although as a plant species they only need a minimal amount of water. *Continued on page five...*

*Photinia Hedges*

If you have ideas, questions and/or concerns for ***Inside Ladera*** please call the LCHA at (310) 641-2294 or send an e-mail to CCookLA@aol.com

Continued from page four... Queried about maintenance, attendees stressed to County staff the need for ongoing supervision and quality care for our plantings. Cheryl Cook, one of the Beautification Committee's stalwart members, pointed out the poor job of trimming recently performed on the screening trees along Centinela. All agreed that oversight on quality care is an essential part of a landscape redo.

In response, long-time shepherd of Ladera landscaping projects, County Engineer Lance Grindle, noted that the work on the project would be performed by outside contractors including the post-installation trimming and maintenance. It was the sense of the group attending that the terms and conditions for the contracts, as well as monitoring of the contracts' compliance, needs to be tightly watched. The Beautification Committee will be involved as needed.

Although it was mentioned by incoming project director Maria Simm that the entire project could be done in one phase (funding through Supervisor Burke's office may be available), Mr. Grindle suggested that a two (or three) phase project might be more appropriate in that it will allow residents to see the photinias "in situ" before removal of the oleanders which will take place in the second (and possible third phase) and would undoubtedly allay fears about their appropriateness in the subsequent plantings.



Photinia Hedges



Photinia Hedges

The first phase is slated to begin in the summer of 2007, and will encompass the southern strip along Slauson, from Wooster east to La Cienega. Phase One of the project will take 2-3 months for completion. Trees planted three years ago will remain. In addition to the removal of the infamous green cement and installation of a watering system, full landscaping will be installed including photinias and additional lower plantings.

An elegant low-profile monument sign at the westernmost point of Ladera (on the south strip at Wooster) will designate our neighborhood's entrance. The Beautification Committee met this summer to recommend specifics on the sign. Committee members will also investigate requirements for bus benches as the group feels there are far too many lining the avenue.

The next Ladera Beautification meeting is scheduled for late November, at which time County landscape architect, Mie Joness, and her team are expected to detail landscape and other hardscape plans for Phase One, as well as additional information relating to the balance of the project. An exciting prospect for all Ladera residents, we look forward to a significantly upgraded main avenue for our neighborhood!

Community Phone Numbers



Animal Control:

(310) 523-9566

County Neighborhood Code Enforcement

1-877-966-2633 (CODE)

County of LA Zoning Complaints: (888) 924-HELP

Graffiti:

There are two methods to remove graffiti: by leaving a message for the Sheriff's Explorers at (310) 649-6633 or by calling Public Works at (800) 675-4357.

Mosquito Abatement: (310) 915-7370.

Neighborhood Watch/Block Club:

If you do not have a Neighborhood Watch on your block, now is the time to start one. It is easier than you think. Just call the Civic Association at (310) 641-2294 and you've taken the first step. We need total protection in our community. If you don't have a Watch on your block, it is a weak link in our chain of crime prevention.

Shopping Carts:

If you see a shopping cart in our community, please contact the appropriate store manager.

Sidewalks: (323) 776-7552.

Street Lights:

Call Edison at (800) 655-4555.

Emergency Numbers

Sheriff's Dept: (310) 823-7762. Fire Dept: (310) 677-1181 or use 911. CHP (310) 642-3939.

If you live in the Los Angeles City Strip, dial 911 and state "I live in the City of Los Angeles Reporting District 1469".

Continued from page three. Wiseburn Update...

Eventually, approximately eleven families decided to give the Wiseburn School District a chance. The families had to first go to the IUSD to get release permits. The IUSD was cooperative and granted permits based on the following three factors: child care, continuing, or hardship. Next, the families had to apply to be accepted into Wiseburn. Alicia Galindo in the Wiseburn permit office was extremely helpful. She can be reached at (310) 643-3022

In August, prior to the beginning of the school year, Gary and Cheryl Cook hosted a barbeque/pool party so the Ladera families could get acquainted. Even Wiseburn school officials (Dr. Don Brann, Superintendent, Mr. Matthew Wunder and Mrs. Aileen Harbeck, Principal and Vice Principal of Dana Middle School, and Alicia Galindo, Permit Office) attended the festivities. Everyone felt honored that they would spend their Saturday after-

Trees:

White fly problems: (562) 862-0517.

For tree removal, call (323) 776-7552.

Trash Collection: The LHCA asks that you put your trash out the evening before your pick-up day and to take your cans in on the day of pick-up. The blue, recycle can does not need to go out every week. Only when it is full. If you wish to exchange the large trash container (the black one) for a smaller size; order additional ones; or have extra pickup items, etc. contact Consolidated Disposal Service at (800) 299-4898, Monday thru Friday from 7am to 5:30pm. This number is also on each container. Remember, hazardous waste like **paint** (latex or oil-based), **paint thinner**, **antifreeze**, **household cleaners**, or **motor oil** is **NOT** allowed. To dispose of these items, call 1(888) CLEAN LA or 1(888) 253-2652.

Important Information

To report crime, call the Sheriff's Dept. **directly**. It is recommended that you program their direct telephone number (310) 823-7762 into your cell phone and home phone memory so you won't have to look it up. If it is an emergency, of course dial 911 then call the Sheriff's Dept. Calls to 911 from your cell phone go to the CHP.

Ladera Park:

The park closes at sunset. Please call the Sheriff's station if you see anything suspicious.

Location of sex offenders: www.meganslaw.ca.gov



noon with the Ladera families. The party was a huge success and families were able to exchange numbers in order to organize carpools even though the commute has been very doable.

And as if that wasn't enough, Dr. Brann just hosted a luncheon at Shanghi Reds in the Marina to thank the Ladera families for having faith in their ability to educate our children in a safe and positive environment. It was clear that the Ladera parents felt they made an excellent decision. The children have transitioned very well and the teachers and staff have been wonderful. It's a **free** public school with a private school feel. The feeling of extreme satisfaction among the parents was unanimous. Dr. Brann is truly admired and respected by everyone. It is hopeful that this is the beginning of a great relationship between Ladera and Wiseburn and that more Ladera families will benefit through our partnership.