

From Home Owner to Homeless

Serial rent increases may force mobile home owners out of their homes.

by P. Vincent DiNova

Many residents of Blue Star Mobile Home Park (Blue Star) in Lopez Canyon are fearful of soon losing their homes because of aggressive, frequent, and legal space rental increases by a new corporate landlord, Kort and Scott Financial Group (Kort). Kort purchased the park on January 1 of this year and Blue Star is one of 52 such holdings owned by the organization.

This sale poses some ominous potentialities for tenants, according to Glen Bell, park tenant and president of Neighborhood Friends. His grass roots organization advocates, among other ideals, the "right to prevent the taking of our home equity and our home ownership by any land owner bent on forcing us to abandon our homes by continually increasing rents beyond our measure to pay." However, since mobile home owners only rent the land their homes sit on, corporate interests, such as Kort, and Equity Lifestyles, headed up by Sam Zell, are treating their tenants simply as renters and sometimes even much less kindly, according to Bell. Zell's company purchased 249 mobile home parks in California in one day. It is Bell's opinion, which he basis on his review of relative business plans, that the objective of these types of companies is to eliminate all rent controls in the United States. This would be to the detriment of the disabled, working poor, and the retired elderly who no longer have the time to put their world back in financial order again.

For those who are able to remain at the parks, there are other concerns, such as utilities discounts that park residents may have been receiving before the new owners took over the property. However, in some cases those discounts seems to have vanished. In other instances, there is an immediate reduction in park staff personnel by the new proprietors, which were justified as "cost saving measures." Less staff members raises concerns about safety and security for many residents, especially the elderly and disabled.

Although the Mobile Home Residency Law (MRO) has been on the books for 30 years, it is Bell's view that it has done little to protect its intended benefactors from illegal and immoral business practices. He also states that the Golden State Mobile Homeowners League (GSMOL) as an advocacy group whose purpose was to monitor applications of the MRO has been totally ineffectual.

Bell has been in communication with many local and state representatives. He is



Owners of this little "snug as a bug" home may be looking for new digs.

dismayed to learn how little any of them knew about the current predicament facing mobile home park tenants. He found it even more alarming that they expressed little or no interest in doing anything about it. However, Bell said that there is one notable exception: Alex Padilla, Councilman, 7th District. Upon being appraised of the circumstances at Blue Star and other like properties, Padilla introduced a bill before the Los Angeles City Council addressing a number of safeguards for mobile home park tenants. Upon further investigation by his office, on September 4 of this year he submitted an amended version of that bill which contains much stronger and compelling language.

The rent at Blue Star has been increased by only \$129.00 this year, according to Bell. He believes the reason is only because of a huge ground swell of protest by a tremendous number of people. He doesn't know how long it will last and thinks it's time for the government to finally step in and protect low income housing from totally disappearing. According to Bell's organization corporations like Kort and Equity Lifestyles currently own 30% of all mobile home parks in California.

Mobile home park tenants are at a distinct disadvantage in one important area. Although they live in mobile homes, their abodes are really not that mobile. Only 1% of these homes are actually ever relocated because it is far too costly. The feeling among owners now is that with such dramatic rent increases it makes moving their home even more improbable. So, in essence, the homeowner has become a "captured consumer" to the landowner. So, according to Bell and other members of Neighborhood Friends, once the rental rates rise beyond the ability of the low income, senior, and disabled persons' ability to pay, they will have no choice but to abandon their homes.

Bell and his organization's supporters believe that once the new corporate park owners

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photographer: P. Vincent DiNova

Sex Offenders Housed in Local Motel

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Neighbors at Odds with Union Rescue Mission

by:P.Vincent DiNova

On December 15, 2005, an announcement was made by Andy Bales, President, Union Rescue Mission (URM), in conjunction with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, which they plan to relocate a significant number of homeless persons from downtown Los Angeles to Lopez Canyon within the San Fernando Valley.

This will take place on acreage purchased by the mission, thus alarming scores of neighboring residents. These displaced persons constitute all races, ages and backgrounds. Many suffer from drug and/or alcohol abuse. Some are entire families. The subject property purchased by URM for the relocation efforts in Lopez Canyon was formerly owned by The Forrester organization as an assisted living retirement facility for their senior members, and is situated in Los Angeles County.

According to Los Angeles County Mayor Michael Antonovich's office the URM was supposed to secure the support of the property's neighbors before a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) could be issued. However, the URM opted to proceed with the purchase of the property before affecting their required outreach. Yet they had already received support from the land use committee of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council to open the facility in Lopez Canyon without input from that Canyon's closest neighbors in Kagel Canyon. The affirmative vote was also acted upon without a presentation of all facts before the full board. According to Marlene Rader and Montana Knightsbridge, even the President of their own Kagel Canyon Civic/Town Council hadn't notified its members of the

URM's intentions regarding their project, which is to be called the Hope Gardens Family Center.

The ultimate goal of the center is to help its residents assimilate into main stream society equipped with skills that will help them to remain off the streets. However, Knightsbridge, who works for a hospital in Tarzana that specializes in helping persons with drug and alcohol related problems, expresses some concern. Although she cannot speak to the potential success or failure of the URM's Hope Gardens project, she states that the recidivism rate is very high among abusers. She says that she also shares the opinion of many other community members who feel that, although offering much more in the way of comprehensive services, the URM project is just one more "recovery" facility in the area and that there are already 27 such facilities within a five mile radius of the subject property.

When questioned, Bales

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assured all those concerned that URM's Home Gardens project would be catering to women and children only. However, community members are still fearful for a number of reasons. During their first meeting with Kagel Canyon community members, URM representatives made no



This tranquil site was formerly owned by The Forrester organization.

reference as to the age limits of the center's participants or the types of programs that would be made available to them. Also, Mark Siegel, Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) member, stated that he had attended Bales Garden City presenta-

of many community members Bales credibility is strained.

At a recent FTNC meeting, as a possible gesture of good faith, Bales announced that he had offered Kagel Canyon resident, Marlene Rader to assist in the screening of people entering the URM's,

open space. However his organization would not be willing to provide fire protection, and the Santa Monica Conservancy may not accept the donation due to financial constraints. In the interim it was learned that URM has moved six people into the facility without community knowledge. Foothills Trails Neighborhood council member, Linda Greco, suggests that the property should continue to be utilized as an elderly use facility only, as allowed by the original CUP.

There are a number of other concerns: increased traffic, increased fire hazard, noise pollution in a quiet canyon setting, other environmental issues. There are 280 homes in Kagel Canyon. An average household of 3.5 persons equals approximately 980 residents. An influx of 225 more people represents an almost immediate jump of about 23%. In the opinions of many in this community that is a far too great and rapid increase.

One of the greatest concerns of all is the potential escalation in crime. Kagel Canyon is an unincorporated area and is serviced by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Cars are dispatched from the La Crescenta substation. This represents quite a challenge for the department because currently there is only one car for approximately every 250 square miles of territory. As a result, response times are now averaging a little less than 50 minutes per call. This is a major concern for many community members because at the December, 2005 Kagel Canyon Civic/Town Council (KCCTC) meeting, URM representatives stated that "once an individual leaves their (URM's) program/property, they (URM) are no longer responsible or liable for the actions of the individual." Therefore, it would seem, the

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All Those Opposed

Can't Anyone Get Sunshine Canyon Right?

by Edward Rivera

The long battle over dumping in Sunshine Canyon hit the brakes for at least a little while, with the agreement August 4 by the LA City Council to pay an additional \$7.7 million to have 20% of the city's trash diverted to another company other than Browning-Ferris Industries (BFI). The long-opposed Sunshine Canyon landfill will continue to manage LA's waste for at least five years, however, based on an extension agreed upon in February.

While at least one City Councilman—Greig Smith—hails the extension as a long-awaited reduction in the amount of waste sent to Sunshine, others see it as one more compromise with the powerful waste industry.

In a press release issued by his office, Greig characterized the deal as “proof of the City's commitment to ending the dumping at Sunshine Canyon.”

According to the press release, “The vote broke the status quo of renewing BFI's exclusive contract to handle the City's residential waste. Currently, the City sends nearly all of its trash, 3,600 tons per day, to Sunshine Canyon.

“BFI had threatened to penalize the City with drastically higher rates of up to \$45 per ton if the City diverted any trash to other landfills. Council President Eric Garcetti put together a negotiating team to meet with BFI, which had previously refused to sit at the table with the City, its largest customer.

The team got the increase for diversion down to \$2 per ton above the current level, resulting in a cost of \$3.5 mil-

lion, a fraction of the Bureau of Sanitation's original projection of up to \$30 million.”

Smith cited the decision as the beginnings of his RE-NEWLA environmental plan, which according to his website is “a 20-year blueprint to end the City's use of landfills by using non-recyclable trash for beneficial use in the form of green electricity, alternative fuel sources and manufacturing feed stocks. It would create a new environmental-industrial sector with many high-quality jobs and make

Though the dump received official permission to become the city's number one waste site in the 1990s, after numerous court battles, the community has never been happy about its presence.

Los Angeles a national leader in resource conservation and recovery.”

Added Smith, in explaining the decision to a local political blog, “It wasn't just the typical extension of the contract. It was an extension with a reduction plan. The Council approved a plan last August to get out of Sunshine in five years. The first year includes a reduction of 600 tons per day. So what the council did (in

February) was to reaffirm our position that we want a 600-ton reduction this year, and then it orders the Bureau of Sanitation to come back with a 1,000-ton reduction next year within the boundary of the contract.

So, it's very complicated. For those who just think we extended the contract without making changes, we did not. We made significant changes. Some will be with BFI and some will be on the part of the city to find other ways to reduce trash.”

The residents of the City of Los Angeles generate about 3600 tons of waste every single day, and all of it has gone to the Sunshine Canyon dump.

A number of Granada Hill residents have opposed the dump for at least two decades, for environmental and political reasons, citing BFI's long history of environmental violations, going back at least 20 years across the country.

Though the dump received official permission to become the city's number one waste site in the 1990s, after numerous court battles, the community has never been happy



The dump expansion will be higher and even closer to the water with a trash pile that will be up to 2,200 feet!

about its presence.

The North Valley Coalition (NVC), an opposition group based in Granada Hills, cites violations by BFI going back to the early '80s.

“BFI are the masters of negotiations,” Wayne Hunter, current president of the Coalition, told LA City Beat. “All due respect to the city council, but they're babes in the woods [compared to BFI].”

According to the NVC website, “BFI is a major violator, and violated Clean Water act of 1996; dumped millions of gallons of raw sewage in Philadelphia, gave false water samples to public agencies, and paid millions in fines and restitution.

The site continued, “BFI and its subsidiaries have a long-checked past when it comes to both polluting

the environment and dealing fairly with competition. BFI's violations range from illegal disposal of hazardous wastes to price fixing/ anti-trust violations; and, state officials have pled guilty to accepting bribes from BFI. Recently, BFI compiled a ten-year history of their company and presented it to Pennsylvania's DER in response to questions about the company's integrity with regards to a proposed 154-acre landfill in Berks county. They admitted to the following: 270 civil penalties, administrative orders, permit or license suspensions and revocations, as well as bond forfeiture actions, 10 misdemeanor or felony convictions and pleas; 24 court decrees or settlement orders and one pending court case, from 1981-1991.

“In addition, BFI and subsidiaries have disclosed more than \$75.5 million in fines

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North Valley Reporter

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Changes Announced For Los Angeles' City Planning Department

by Nina Royal

As the guest Speaker during a luncheon sponsored by the Sylmar Chamber of Commerce held at the China Town Buffet, on Wednesday, August 23, City Planning Director Gail Goldberg announced big changes are taking place at the Los Angeles City Planning Department.

After an extensive search, Ms. Goldberg was hired by Mayor Villaraigosa to fix the ills of the Department of City Planning. Ms. Goldberg holds one of the most powerful positions in the City of Los Angeles.

"We need to have higher expectations and communities should not stand for bad decisions."

Goldberg stated that she was shocked at the condition of the department. She discovered 700 cases that were backlogged due to lack of manpower and hired 33 former City Planners to help. Now the cases are down to 200 with 83 being active.

She also stated that she is making changes in the operations of her department.

Planners are going to be assigned to communities permanently. She expects them to learn everything about their communities and work closely with the community to learn their needs.

Goldberg believes in the integrity of a community and that the "cookie cutter" concept does not fit all. She says she will listen to everyone: community members, neighborhood councils and developers. She will make whatever decision is proper per good planning concepts and regardless of special interest requests. "I came here to do real planning. If I cannot do what I was hired to do professionally, I will leave. I want to make a difference. No one is going to influence our planning recommendations that are based on sound planning principles. It is OK for the City Council to not agree. They can overrule if they can get eight of their friends. We will not be influenced by what policy makers do".

Ms. Goldberg said she is shocked when she hears people say: nothing is going to happen. "We need to have higher expectations and communities should not stand for bad decisions. You should be participating as well as protesting at the public hearings. They're [the

City] is not looking at the cumulative impact and traffic studies are not adequate. Los Angeles has low expectations around planning. We

Planners are going to be assigned to communities permanently. She expects them to learn everything about their communities and work closely with the community to learn their needs.

should demand better service. We don't have great neighborhoods or streets. New development needs to pay its own way."

Goldberg stated her observations regarding Community Plans: "We are not doing good plans. They are not detailed enough. They need to be more specific with a consensus built within the community. They should

include discussions around the unique quality and character of each community with regard to transportation needs public infrastructure, parks and libraries to support plans. Discover what the real issues, fears, aspirations of a community are. By-right developments come from the

community plans that don't reflect what the community wants. It's the plan that gives that right. We can accommodate growth by putting projects in places that will enhance a community. Developments should make things better for the people that live there. We should be looking at commercial corridors, sharing parking and looking at LA in a better way."

Goldberg stated that Sylmar's Master Plan is a developer-favored plan. An ICO (Interim Control Ordinance) by a Councilmember can stop certain kinds of development if it proves to be detrimental to safety. Developers are taking lands in Sylmar that have been traditionally equestrian neighborhoods. Also State Bill 1818 (Secondary Highway Density Bonus) is responsible for a certain amount of building. "Problems can be solved in the Community Plans by being more specific. We should not rezone to change a Community Plan. A Community Plan will take a two year period and include bringing other departments to the table and meeting with the neighborhood councils, their land use committees and to reach others to ask what do you want your community to be like? What problems do you now deal with? It is important to get as many from



City Planning Director Gail Goldberg

the community as possible and neighborhood councils will help."

Clearly, it appears her department is understaffed. Goldberg stated that she needs and will ask for help from other departments in the City such as Transportation, Recreation and Parks, Fire, etc. in order to accomplish her goals for reorganization and to give better service to the City. She is calling a meeting with those departments and asking them to commit their staff time in order to help resolve problems. Meanwhile she will continue to walk the communities personally with her staff who volunteer to go with her on Saturday mornings. She wants to have a personal feel for the neighborhoods she is serving.

There are 35 Community Plans and eight new plans which include Sylmar, San Pedro, Boyle Heights, Westlake, Granada Hills, West Adams, South Los Angeles and South East Los Angeles. Also, Master Plans for the L.A. River Revitalization, Civic Center and Little Tokyo, around transit stops – the Expo line. She is also attempting to hold policy discussions regarding affordable housing, condo conversions, industrialized areas and mansionization.

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Fire Season Is Here

by Nina Royal

Los Angeles County Firefighters received "Automatic Aid" assistance from Los Angeles City Firefighters. The fire broke out at 3:43 p.m. on August 29 in a mutual threat zone. The fire was located on County property at the on-ramp of the North 210 Freeway, at Paxton St. that borders the community of Lake View Terrace and the Lopez Canyon area. Parts of Lopez Canyon are under County jurisdiction.

Three LAFD Battalion Chief Officer Command Teams and one LAFD Division Chief Officer Command team performed under the direction of Assistant Chief Curtis James. They were also aided by three LAFD Rescue Ambulances, one LAFD Arson Unit, one

LAFD Rehab Air Tender Unit, four LAFD Helicopters, one contract Helitaker, one LAFD Brush Patrol and one LAFD EMS Battalion Captain,

The amount of resources was necessary because the area is near the mouth of Lopez Canyon which is an environmentally sensitive area leading to the beginning of Angeles National Forrest. Together, their efforts saved a Trucking Company whose large tankers as flames were lurching toward them.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.



Sex Offenders in your Family's Home Away From Home

by Nina Royal

Sylmar - Community leader Tammy Flores recently received word that the Super 8 Motel at the corner of Roxford and Foothill Blvd., in her Sylmar community, has a contract with the State of California and is currently housing 36 convicted sex offenders.

State Officials and the LAPD confirmed that fact. According to Flores, this was done without knowledge or input by her community members. During her interview, Flores stated 'this cannot be allowed because I know that visiting families with children of North Valley residents stay at that motel when visiting for holidays and/or taking trips to local entertainment facilities. It is the only motel in the foothill area. Where else can visitors go and stay close to their families in this area?'

Flores say she is so incensed that she has demanded and received cooperation to put together a "fact finding" meeting with public officials, along with selected community leaders, scheduled for September 5. The plan is to discuss possible solutions to correct the current situation.

Officials who have committed to attend are: California State Parole Officer, Marty O'Neal, State Senator Richard Alarcon's representative, Iris Zuniga, LAPD Mission Area Commanding Officer, Captain Jorge Villegas, along with two of his Detectives, plus representatives from the California Highway Patrol.

The public will be informed of the results and invited take part in a meeting to be scheduled in the near future.

NORTH VALLEY Reporter

Welcome. We hope you are enjoying the inaugural edition of your new neighborhood newspaper! We, your publishers, are long time foothill area community activists. Our passion and our mission is to serve our North Valley neighbors by "keeping you informed" Our Neighborhoods are Sun Valley to Mission Hills and Granda Hills, including the foothill communities

This is the first and only "Editorial Opinion" that you will receive from us. Our goal is to report the news, not make it. We are committed to doing so fairly and honestly. We will not tell you what to do or how to think. However, what we will do is give you the tools that will help you make your own informed decisions.

Your paper is published the first and third Wednesday of each month and will consist of the following categories:

"In Your Neighborhood" Neighborhood Councils and Quality of Life

"Serving the Public" Public Safety issues and concerns

"For Youth" Activities, Education, and sports

"Your Ecology" Environment projects, conservation and information

"Going out for Business" Support for Chambers of Commerce and Business activities.

Also included will be Classifieds and Obituaries

"SoundOff" Just because we won't be expressing our opinions, doesn't mean that you can't express yours. In fact...please do.

"Mark Your Calendar" All events across the north valley in order that

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SOUND OFF

On Haines' Pond — What's Really Going On?

The county of Los Angeles recently posted a notice that they intend to fill in the pond at the mouth of the Haines Channel outlet, in Sunland Calif. No one noticed it, it was only posted on the gate that the county itself uses to enter the mouth for clean up each year. The one notice was hardly visible to anyone. Nowhere else was it posted.

The Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council (hereinafter called STNC) was not notified. The Design Advisory Committee (of the STNC), with two volunteers including the recording secretary (this letter's author), living near it, were not notified.

The dates for the hearings were already past (in June and July) by the time my husband happened to notice it in August. No one was otherwise notified prior to the hearings. None of the local residents that live by this pond were notified prior to the hearings other than the one little posted notice.

When city officials, such as Wendy Greuel's office, were contacted most already knew about this. This project has been going on for months, unbeknownst to all local residents and the community at large. The city and county officials have been having meetings, emails, and phone calls regarding this project. Some reported a project would be done that was in different locations and involved only removal of Arundo. Others countered and said that it

was not that location but this one and involved much more. The bottom line is what is in writing. The guy who does the work is not going to have anyone there telling him, "no not that tree". He is relying on written instructions. Those are in the form of the current Mitigated Negative Declaration. That is very clear about what is being done and which trees! In short you get a different story every time you "talk" to someone.

For those of you that do not know where the pond is the Haines Channel is on most maps. You can see where it ends. That is where the pond is that is home to many creatures and plants.

The pond area, the flowing water and this part of the Tujunga Wash, are traveled by many groups, schools, walkers, horse riders, Sierra Club, and bird watchers. The local community has taken care to do periodic clean ups, guard against graffiti, protect the wildlife from abuse by travelers, stop any illegal dumping, stop illegal vehicle use of it and much more. More is always needed and welcomed! This whole area is very much protected and used by the community of Sunland Tujunga. It is dedicated land due to the countless endangered species living there. The Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council has always been very responsive to any help needed to keep this area safe as a natural habitat.



There are photographs taken, just this week, of many wild birds including Road Runners, Heron, Egret (a family of them), and others. Recent reports have been received of Osprey, Raccoon, Deer, Quail, Doves, Bluejay, Mockingbird, Red Tailed Hawks, Night Owls, owls, nests of Hummingbirds, fish (including the endangered

www.SunlandTujunga.org. That report details that wildlife would be relocated for the five days of work. That means there will be death, injury and permanent relocation by the creatures themselves. The removal of any of this area will remove eggs, frogs, fish to the detriment of the entire eco system. The report cites the reason for this as protection

of public from mosquitoes and West Nile Virus. There are no reports of West Nile Virus (which is deadly to horses) in humans or animals near this area. As we all know the mos-

quito breeds in standing water, not running water. There is no standing water, at present, save only where the golf course has failed to do any clearing of the channel beyond the county land (area of intended project). That is the true source of the problem. Ensuring they quickly get the needed permits solves the problems completely and saves the county millions of dollars on a completely useless, destructive and unnecessary project.

All that is needed is removal of the aggressive Arundo (a tall weed that takes over killing everything in its path) and another pond weed, and trash which have slowed down the flow, creating a bottleneck effect and ponding on the Golf Course side of this channel. Clearing of these is all that is needed thus freeing the flow. This is the only thing that will prevent future heavy rains from having any effect on any property, as much as one could expect, in an attempt to control the flow of water.

Because the real problem and area was not fully understood by all that looked at the project it was not noticed that the current project would "not" resolve the problem, it's in a different location. It would only destroy what is now a running stream that is

home to many and a natural habitat.

Barbara T., a resident, environmentalist and member of the Tujunga Watershed Council volunteered on her own initiative and had gone into the intended project removing trash (normally the responsibility of LA County Flood Control District, though clearly neglected) and the vegetation on the county side. It is now completely clear and running requiring no further action, at all. This woman may have just single handedly corrected any possible county side problem, if there ever was any, already. The natural flow has been restored, there are hundreds of happy frogs & fish, trees and plant life that were undisturbed. The work done by this one woman did not require years of letters, phone calls, emails or huge reports, removal of trees, wildlife and the invasive, and expensive, project planned by the county. This woman just lovingly went in there and took care of mother nature with no invasive tools, machinery or other destructive equipment. She may have saved the county a bucket load of money in the process. A huge round of applause over to Barbara for her efforts. Let's hope the county learns a very valuable lesson and sees how to save money by doing the right job, in the right place at the right time!

Meanwhile the poor neighbor with the flooding, will get flooded again and again, until that area owned by the Golf Course is finally cleared. It is so overgrown you cannot get to it! The county area, is not the target, and not the solution. I have offered to help the golf course get their permits, or anything necessary so we can implement a true handling and not an expensive, unnecessary correction of the wrong area, the golf course representatives do not even bother to return the call. I have offered them help in many ways, many times. In fact they have repeatedly ignored my calls over different issues for many weeks.

— Tomi Lyn Bowling
Sunland Resident

Call for Council Office

This letter is being written by a concerned citizen. It's about our community, I live on Brand Boulevard in Mission Hills.

People getting killed on our street is becoming common. We have had many accidents and two fatalities on Brand Boulevard so far this

*Because the real problem and
the area was not fully understood
by all that looked at the project it was
not noticed that the current project
would "not" resolve the problem...*

Arroyo Chub), frogs, turtles, families of ducks and more in this pond and waterway. An unconfirmed report of a California Condor as well has been received.

What was intended to be corrected, originally, is not what is happening. A nearby resident was flooded during the recent heavy rains (as were most of us!) because at the far west end of this channel/pond there is overgrowth with non-native, aggressive, vegetation and Arundo (Asian riparian weed). The distraught property owner wrote and called the Golf Course, and authorities trying to get remediation. This went on for many, many months. Senators received letters with pleas for help as did other politicians. By the time the "order" came down to the county level, a complete alteration of what was needed was in the works in the form of a completely unwanted, expensive project in the wrong area.

While the plans clearly do not call for any concrete the Mitigated Negative Declaration Report that the county did forward to some residents after alert citizens demanded to know what was going on does call for complete "re-configuration" of the channel/pond. The STNC has posted this report at their web site,

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year. I think that if our city fathers would have granted us a stop sign or signal, as we had requested, these accidents could have been avoided. We are told by our Council Office that they will look into it and we don't hear about it again.

About 4 years ago, we tried to stop a Bus Depot from coming into our community. We went to meetings, got signed petitions and took them to court. That Depot was supposed to have been off that site two years ago, but it is still there. Again, we have not heard a word from our Council Office. How long are we supposed to wait for service?

— Joe Pinoy Lozano
Mission Hills

60-Day Notice Moves to the Governor's Desk

On Wednesday, California Assembly Member Torrico convinced several other Assembly members to reverse their positions on AB 1169, the bill that will enact the return of the 60-day notice to vacate. This bill now moves to the Governor's desk. If Governor Schwarzenegger signs this bill, the 60-day notice for termination of tenancy will be reinstated as of January 1, 2007.

I strongly object to the bill because it requires rental property owners to provide a longer notice than is necessary to terminate a tenancy. The current 30-day notice requirements have worked well

The unfortunate effect for the tenant is that to hold the replacement unit, the tenant must pay rent on it as well as on my unit, thus paying rent on two units at one time.

to preserve the rights of all tenants. Last year, the Assembly rejected SB 51, which is almost identical to the current version of AB 1169, because the bill's supporters failed to prove that there was merit in continuing the 60-day notice. AB 1169 will impede the operation of my rental housing business by placing an unwarranted burden on me. Once I give a tenant a notice to vacate, I am obligated to allow

the tenant to stay for the entire 60 days and not one day less. On the other hand, the tenant can give me a 30-day notice at any point. This is neither fair nor equitable. It can damage both owners and tenants.

As you probably know, many tenants stop paying rent as soon as they receive a notice to move. This just means that I will lose an additional 30 days of rent! However, more particularly, it will hurt the tenants in my rentals. Under AB1169, once a tenant who has been given notice finds another rental unit, s/he MUST give me a 30-day notice at that time or continue to pay rent on my rental until the 60-day notice period ends. The unfortunate effect for the tenant is that to hold the replacement unit, the tenant must pay rent on it as well as on my unit, thus paying rent on two units at one time.

Proponents of AB 1169 claim that lower cost rental units are harder to find. A 60-day notice does not help a tenant to find replacement housing. Even if state law were to require a 180-day notice to terminate, tenants would still be required to pay rent for the duration of the notice period. The increased notice does not improve a tenant's financial resources to locate affordable replacement housing.

Historically, landlords have used a 30-day notice to remove problem tenants quickly, so that they do not continue to pose a threat to other tenants or to the property. Disruptive tenants should not be protected. AB 1169 protects tenants who cause problems by permitting them to remain in the residence twice as long. Landlords have a legal duty to provide for the quiet enjoyment of property and for a decent, safe and habitable dwelling for all tenants. Tenants that disrupt these rights should not be allowed to remain at the dwelling for extended periods. Consequently, law-abiding tenants are subjected to the nuisance tenant for a longer period. The Governor has 30 days to sign or veto the bill.

Joan Slater Broker
Slater Realty & Property
Manangement
Tujunga

How to Stop Mansionization

Sunland-Tujunga has an ordinance (referred to as an Interim Control Ordinance or ICO) restricting the floor area for new homes in Sunland-Tujunga to the larger of 40% or 2,400 square feet for residen-

tial lots of 8,000 square feet or less. What this means is that on any lot smaller than 8000 square feet you can build a house, including garage which has a total floor area up to 40% of your lot size. However, we did not want to prevent owners of small lots from providing shelter for their families, so the law allows a 2400 square foot house regardless of lot size, and of course, the builder must follow the required setbacks for front, back and side yards.

This was a necessary step towards preserving the character of our neighborhoods. Residents have been appalled by huge boxlike houses springing up practically overnight. Speculators put up two or three boxes where one house stood and often the demolished house was a small older home that provided affordable housing. The new houses were invariably in the \$500,000 to \$800,000 price range.

Developers bulldoze mature oak trees, pines and sycamores to maximize the square footage of the house, building from lot line to lot line, leaving only the minimum legally required yard space. Loss of "urban forest" is a serious problem. Mature trees lower air temperatures in the summer. We use and pay for more air conditioning when our communities no longer cool off at night. You may have noticed this during July's heat

wave. It's called the "heat island effect".

Huge houses also cover more of the ground on a lot and so increase water runoff, flooding lower-lying communities like Sun Valley during the rainy season.

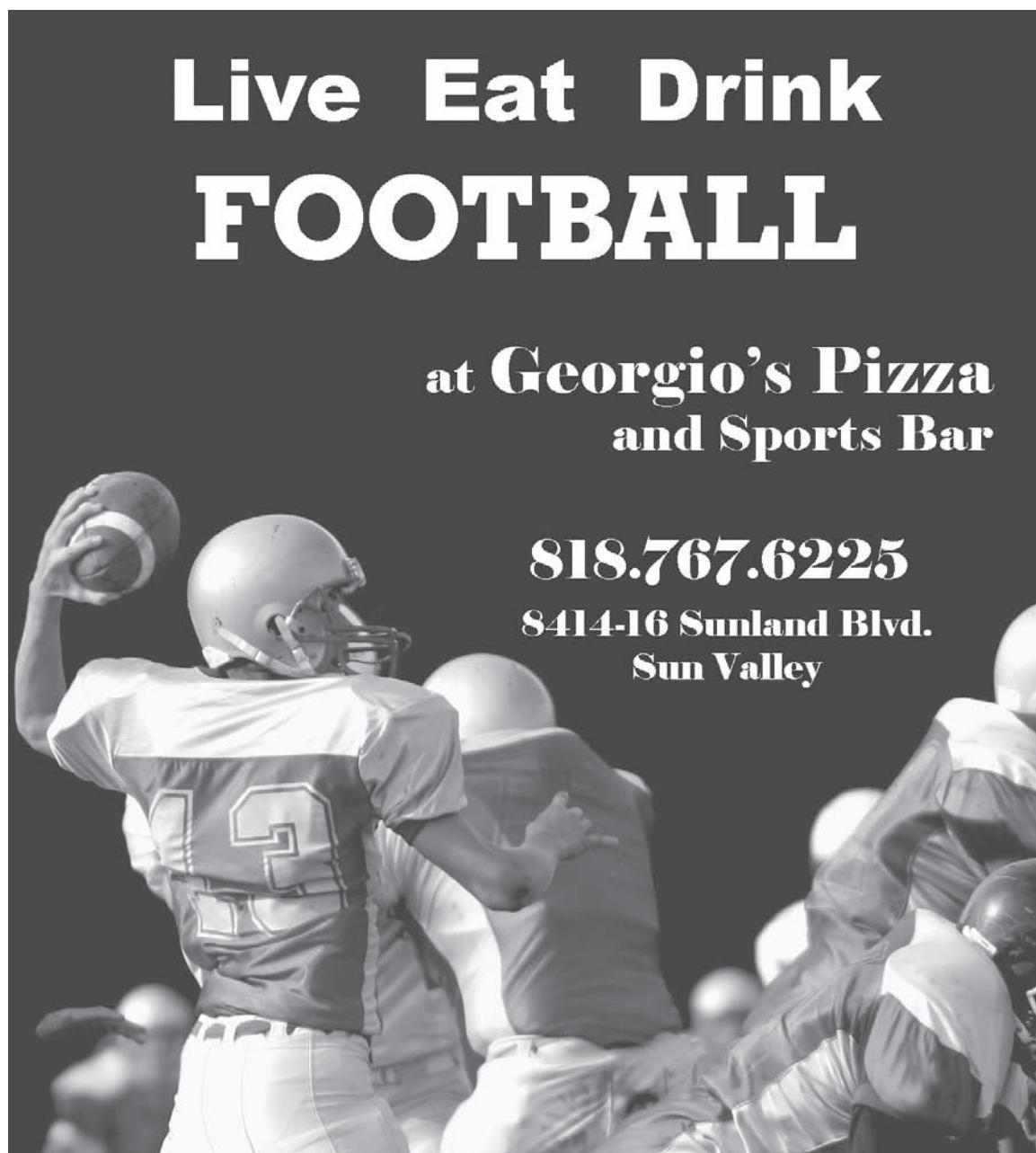
The City and develop-

Loss of "urban forest" is a serious problem. Mature trees lower air temperatures in the summer. We use and pay for more air conditioning when our communities no longer cool off at night.

ers view Foothills neighborhoods as "low-hanging fruit" to be exploited for maximum profit. We decided to do something about it. The Neighborhood Council's Design Advisory Committee researched successful anti-mansionization laws in California communities and drafted an ordinance in spring of 2004. Council District 2 staff

provided strategic and technical points to assist the Committee. Once the draft was completed, the STNC Board obtained CD2's public support. The ICO was passed in September 2005. However, the battle for our neighborhood is not over. Some developers were granted dubious "hardship exemptions" and there's a developer here who has built dozens of boxcar-like houses as an owner-builder, in violation of State law limiting him to the sale of no more than four houses per year. We are still waiting to see what the City or State will do about this abuse of his contractor's license. City officials also promised a new ordinance to expand anti-mansionization protection to the rest of the City of Los Angeles. However, we have since learned that certain staff in the Planning Department are devising the ordinance to actually eliminate the limits imposed by our ICO. Other communities may have different needs, but I would advise residents to do very careful calculations if they are "offered" this "Neighborhood Character" ordinance. We are planning to do whatever is necessary to keep and strengthen our existing anti-mansionization ordinance.

— Roberta Actor-Thomas
Sunland-Tujunga



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 PAC-Pacoima, S-T-Sunland-Tujunga, S.V-Sun Valley, SYL-Sylmar,



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WEDNESDAY, SEPT 6

TRANSIT COALITION
Metro San Fernando Valley Gov. Council
Marvin Braude Center
6262 Van Nuys, V.N.
6:30 pm

FOOTHILL OPTIMIST
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

THURSDAY, SEPT 7

S-T ART ASSOC.
Dory Grade-Acrylics
S-T Library
7771 Foothill, S-T
7:30 pm 249-7270

SYLMAR N.C. LAND USE
Re: ICO, details at
www.SYLMarnc@verizon.net
13515 1/2 Hubbard, SYL
7 pm 833-8737

NETWORKING BREAKFAST
SYLmar Chamber of Commerce
Denny's Restaurant
13201 Gladstone, SYL
\$20 7:30 am 367-1177

FRIDAY, SEPT 8

STNC-BYLAWS COMM.
NVN City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
3 pm 951-7411

YOUNG ADULT COUNCIL
SYLmar Library
14561 Polk, SYL
3:30 pm

SATURDAY, SEPT. 9

"ABOVE & BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY" AWARDS
has been changed to
Oct. 21 due to special circumstances

MUSIC GOSPEL FEST
Heros of Life
Hansen Dam, LVT
10 am 890-5082

CASINO NIGHT
American Legion Hall
10039 Pinewood Ave, S-T
6:00 pm 353-9856

A MUSICAL JOURNEY

"Chumash Healing & Use of Medicinal Plants
Bolton Hall Museum
10110 Commerce, S-T
1 pm 951-1041

COMMUNITY BUDGET DAY
City Hall, 3rd Floor
200 N. Spring, L.A.
213-485-1360

COMMUNITY PICNIC COUNCILMEMBER WENDY GREUEL
Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Park
14201 Huston St. V.N.
11:30-2:00 pm 353-8637

TREES FOR A GREEN L.A.
LADWP Workshop
14561 Polk, SYL
11:00-1 pm
1-800-473-3652

SUNDAY, SEPT 10

GRANDPARENTS DAY

CONCERT IN THE PARK
Full House-Classic Rock
El Cariso Park
13100 Hubbard, SYL
5:30-7:30 pm 367-7050

CONCERT IN THE PARK
Armenian Folk & Dance
Little Landers Park
10110 Commerce, S-T
6 pm 352-3420

BOLTON HALL MUSEUM
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-342

MONDAY, SEPT 11

ANDRES PICO ADOBE
10940 Sepulveda, M.H.
Tours 1 pm-4 pm
365-7810

MISSION HILLS N/C GENERAL MEET.
San Jose St. School
14928 Clymr St. M.H.
7 pm

AARP #140
Senior Center
8640 Fenwick, S-T
1-3 pm 353-9571



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TUESDAY, SEPT 12

SHADOW HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOC (SHOPOA)
Tierra del Sol
9919 Sunland, S.H.
7 pm

STROKE PREVENTION SCREENING
VFW, 14071 Polk, Sy
Fee 1-800-324-1851

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MIXER
Casa Torres Restaurant
12631 Glenoaks, SYL
5:30-8 pm 367-1177

BOLTON HALL MUSEUM
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-342

DINNER AT JOSELITOS BENEFITS LITTLE LANDERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
7308 Foothill, S-T
6-10 pm 951-1041

S-T KIWANIS
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6 pm 352-4857

ETI CORRAL 12
SYLmar Chamber Office
13867 Foothill, #104, SYL
7:30 pm

SUN VALLEY N/C
General Meeting
Villa Scalabrini
10631 Vinedale, S.V.
6:30 767-2024

COMMUNITY (PACCT) MEETING.
LAPD Foothill Area
S-T Elks Lodge
10137 Commerce, S-T
7 pm 756-8866

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 13

SYLMAR WOMEN'S CLUB
Odyssey Restaurant
15600 Odsey, G.H.
\$20 833-8033

STNC GENERAL MEETING
Mt Gleason Middle School
10955 Mount Gleason, S-T
www.stnc.org
7 pm 951-7411

FOOTHILL CPAB
(Comm Police Advisory Bd.)
10631 Vinedale, S.V
6 pm 756-8866

ROTARY CLUB
Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 am 951-5299

FOOTHILL OPTOMIST
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

THURSDAY, SEPT 14

S-T LIONS CLUB
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6:60 pm 353-5420

S-T COORDINATING COUNCIL
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
11:30 am 353-7056

S-T ELKS LODGE
10137 Commerce, S-T
8 pm 352-2098

FRIDAY, SEPT 15

NAT'L POW/MIA DAY
Free for Teens

ANIME & MANGA OTAKU CLUB
SYLmar Library
14561 POLK, SYL
3:30 pm

SATURDAY, SEPT 16

CITYWIDE ALLIANCE OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS
Regarding Prop R & Guest, Gale Goldberg,
L.A. City College
Vermont & Melrose, L.A.
9:30-1 pm www.allncs.org

WORKSHOP-GRANT COMM. BEAUTIFICATION
North Valley City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
9-10:30 am 213-978-0226

STNC-OUTREACH COMM.
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
1 pm 951-7411

CA. FED. OF CHAPARRAL POETS
S-T Library
7771 Foothill, S-T
951-4211

COASTAL CLEAN UP DAY
Haines Canyon
Wentworth & Wescott
8:45- 11 am 486-0712

SUNDAY, SEPT 17

ANDRES PICO ADOBE
10940 Sepulveda, M.H.
Tours 1 pm-4 pm
365-7810

SAN FERNANDO PIONEER
Memorial Cemetery
Foothill & Bledsoe, SYL
Tours 9 am-12 pm
365-5860

BOLTON HALL MUSEUM
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-342

MONDAY, SEPT 18

ANDRES PICO ADOBE
10940 Sepulveda, M.H.
Tours 1 pm-4 pm
365-7810

4H CLUB MEET.
Shadow Hills Pres. Church
10158 Sunland, S.H.
7 pm 352-0864

FAMILY CONCERT
The Peruvian Ensemble
SYLmar Library
14561 Polk, SYL
4 pm 367-6102

STNC-LAND USE
(Design Advisory Comm)
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 951-7411

TUESDAY, SEPT 19

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH
Stonehurst Park
9901 Dronefield, S.V.
768-0988

S-T BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL WOMEN
7 pm 352-4415

BOLTON HALL MUSEUM
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-342

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 20

SYLMAR CHAMBER LUNCHEON
Andrew A. Adelman, G.M
Building & Safety
China Town Buffet
13760 Foothill SYL
\$20-\$25

PACOIMA N/C GENERAL MEETING
Youth & Family Comm.
Room
12143 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm 590-4792

ROTARY CLUB
Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 am 951-5299

S-T LIONS CLUB
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6:60 pm 353-5420

FOOTHILL OPTOMIST
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, PAC.
6:30 pm

THURSDAY, SEPT 21

WORKSHOP FOR L.A.
County Art Grant
500 W. Temple, L.A.
10 am-12 pm Room 374A
www.lacountyarts.org

PUBLIC WORKS COM-MISSIONER
Yoland Fuentes
Sun Valley Chamber
John Wells Golf Range
11501 Strathern, N.H/
5-7 pm 768-2014

STNC - SAFETY COMMIT
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
6 pm 951-7411

KAGEL CANYON/CIVIC
Town Council
Dexter Park
www.kagelcanyon.com
7 pm 890-0993

ST-SERVS/CERT
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, s-t
7 pm 352-5504

FOOTHILL TRAIL N/C
Lake View Terr Rec.
11075 Foothill, LVT
7 pm

FRIDAY, SEPT 22

ROSH HASHANAH
Young Adult Council
SYLmar Library
14561 Polk, SYL
3:30 pm

SATURDAY, SEPT 23

SHADOW HILLS COMMUNITY BBQ
Tierra Del Sol
9919 Sunland, S.H.

SUNDAY, SEPT 24

BOLTON HALL MUSEUM
10110 Commerce, S-T

DOCENT TOURS
1-4 pm 352-342

CONCERT IN THE PARK
Little Landers Park
BRAZILLIAN BOSSA NOVA TRIO
10110 Commerce, S-T

MONDAY, SEPT 25

ANDRES PICO ADOBE
10940 Sepulveda, M.H.
Tours 1 pm-4 pm
365-7810

GRANADA HILLS NORTH N/C
Van Gogh Elementatry
17160 Van Gogh, G.H
www.ghnnc.org
7 pm 360-4346

TUESDAY, SEPT 26

SUN VALLEY N/C
General Meeting
Villa Scalabrini
10631 Vinedale, S.V.
6:30 pm 767-2024

S-T KIWANIS
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6 pm 352-4857

IN YOUR COMMUNITIES

Red Flag Alert For Neighborhood Councils

by Greg Nelson

For those of you who don't know me, I recently retired as the general manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.

One of the reasons that I retired is that I wanted to have more freedom to speak out in support of Neighborhood Councils, and so I could more effectively help them increase their power. Another reason is so I wouldn't have to wear a suit and tie anymore. I was involved in the development of our city's system of Neighborhood Councils from the beginning. It is my passion.

Several Neighborhood Councils have asked for my help with problems they were having with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. Sometimes it's just a matter clarifying the facts behind rumors. Other times it involves developing a successful strategy for a Neighborhood Council that feels it has no other place to go for assistance.

The problems that most Neighborhood Councils have been experiencing are not limited to a single Neighborhood Council, but they are marbled throughout the system. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly clear that the best answer to the problems is the ability of the Neighborhood Councils to join together in resolving them. There IS strength in numbers. Solidarity DOES work. Neighborhood Councils working together to solve common problems is something that the designers of system always envisioned. Helping Neighborhood Councils help each other is something to which I will be devoting a great deal of time.

A major effort that is being led by the Neighborhood Councils is opposition to Proposition R on the November 7, 2006 ballot. The measure would give the City Council members an extra term, weaken the city's ethics

laws, and would further empower the lobbyists. This measure began life as a Charter amendment, proposed by the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles. that would increase term limits. If it had stopped there, we wouldn't have experienced the parade of horrors that followed.

Their polling showed that such a proposal would be in serious trouble with the voters. A scheme was developed to confuse the voters by tossing in some changes to the city's ethics laws, calling them "reforms," and then promoting the whole package as "good government" measure. Shockingly, a motion was submitted in the City Council on Friday, July 14 to place this measure on the ballot. Because this came up at literally the last minute, it was scheduled to be voted upon by the City Council just two business days later on Tuesday, July 18. But no one had yet seen the proposal.

The actual proposal, all 13 pages, showed up at the Office of the City Clerk and the City Council on Tuesday morning just moments before the first crucial vote was to be taken. Unless everyone in the Council Chamber was an Evelyn Wood honor graduate, it's a good guess that nobody had read and understood this proposal. Although the Brown Act requires that copies be available for the public, none were. Regardless, there was no way for a visiting Neighborhood Council member to read the proposal, have a meeting of their board, nor understand the measure well enough to have a vote before the City Council members staked out their positions and took the first crucial vote to place it on the ballot. The decision was made before lunchtime.

This is especially important because City Charter Section 907 guarantees that Neighborhood Councils receive notice "as

soon as practical", and that they receive "a reasonable opportunity to provide input before decisions are made." This provision was added to the City Charter to recognize the special place that Neighborhood Councils have in the system, and to prevent the City Council from doing exactly what they did.

While the City Attorney was drafting the legal language for the ballot measure, he warned the City Council that the proposal was on shaky legal ground because state election law doesn't permit two issues to be combined to deceive the voters. He also

While the City Attorney was drafting the legal language for the ballot measure, he warned the City Council that the proposal was on shaky legal ground because state election law doesn't permit two issues to be combined

found two provisions among the so-called ethics "reforms" that he said would actually weaken our ethics laws.

One provision would allow lobbyists to avoid disclosing who they are working for if they agree to wait and get paid at the end after the matter has been decided. This is especially important to Neighborhood Councils because they are often visited by lobbyists. It's the complete opposite of transparency.

The other provision would require more people to register as lobbyists and be subject to the restrictions that come with that designation, such as union representatives. It comes from the law firm that was hired by the

Chamber of Commerce to help design the scheme. That law firm represents the lobbyists, and has appeared before the City Ethics Commission arguing that a certain lobbyist requirement should be eased.

City Controller Laura Chick said, "I do not think in its current form it should go on the ballot, and if it does, it should not pass." According to the Los Angeles Times, she said that the worst feature of the measure is its "lack of transparency and clarity. This should have been a straightforward request to the voters on its merits, but to try to cover it, couch it and package it, to me, is exactly the wrong message." City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo was more blunt. He said, "The people of Los Angeles have been cheated."

The proposal was submitted so near the deadline that the City Ethics Commission wasn't able to meet, scrutinize it, and provide input. It's a good guess that it would have been able to spot these provisions that the City Attorney said actually weaken the ethics laws. Ethics Commission Bill Boyarksy, a former editor and columnist for the Los Angeles Times, called the proposal "outrageous" and said that the City Council "showed absolute contempt for the Ethics Commission."

The shame of it all is that if the proponents weren't able to present their proposals in advance, the two issues could have been placed on the March, 2007 ballot. This matter was moving so fast because of an upcoming legal deadline, that if there were to be an argument on the ballot opposing the measure, someone would have to act quickly.

Within days, Jason Lyon (former co-chair of the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council and Jeff Jacobberger (board member of the Mid City WEST Community Council) asked and were designated to write the argument despite attempts by powerful forces to discourage them from doing so. A few Neighborhood Council leaders immediately jumped in to help them with the immediate task of writing the

ballot argument, the rebuttal argument, and finding signers for both. Last Thursday, they met all the deadlines.

In another fast-moving event, Jeff filed a petition with the Superior Court on behalf of resident and voter, Dan Pasley. The petition charged that the argument submitted by the pro side contained one major misleading and incorrect statement, and two others. It asked that the court order the City Clerk to change that language. In court last Thursday morning, the proponents conceded that our major complaint was valid. That language will be stricken from their ballot argument.

The pro side hired a prominent law firm, Kaufman Downing, LLP, to file its own petition claiming that corrections are needed in our argument. The hearing was Thursday, August 31, and the side representing the interests of neighborhood council prevailed on nearly every point, and won on its major request which was that the ballot title (many voters only read the title) was deceptive. The judge ordered the title be changed to clearly state that the proposal would "lengthen" term limits for the City Council members. The City Council had changed the wording to make the purpose of the measure less clear to voters.

This whole effort is extremely important for the Neighborhood Councils because it's a golden opportunity for them to join together behind a common and important goal. I don't need to tell you that this may be the mother of all David vs. Goliath battles. We must now begin the process of creating a massive grass-roots campaign effort.

A website has been launched at www.notpropr.org. It is in its infancy. The goal is that it will include all articles, documents, updates, and all the information you will need to help. Already the Harbor Gateway North, Tarzana, Winnetka, Granada Hills North, Sun Valley Neighborhood Councils, and the Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils have passed resolutions opposing Proposition R. A sample resolution can be found on the website. Hopefully, every neighborhood council will join together in this effort.

This measure is so bad that there is something in it that can repulse everyone.

It is important that all neighborhood councils be involved from Day One. This is Day One. A lot of people are watching this one to see if Neighborhood Councils are ready to make the leap into the world of real political power.

If you have a valuable skill that you'd like to offer, please contact us at info@notpropr.org. We're looking for leaders and workers. If we don't hear from you, we will be contacting you and urging you to join this historic movement. . www.notpropr.org.

Approval of In-Car Video Camera Systems for LAPD?

by Elektra Kruger

During the Los Angeles City Council's Budget and Finance Committee deliberations of the proposed FY 2006-2007 Budget, one Agenda Item was the LAPD recommendation for implementing a pilot program for digital "In-Car Video" (ICV) Cameras in 375 LAPD vehicles. \$5 million of the FY 2006-2007 Budget has been transferred to a "holding" Unappropriated Balance Fund pending a report to Council from the LAPD prior to release of a Request for Proposals (RFP's) following which

a contract for the pilot program may be awarded. The pilot program will assess how data from the ICV's would be retrieved and used and to quantify the anticipated overall cost of a full program before even entering into an initial pilot program contract. The Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council (SVANC) purchased 2 ICV Camera Systems for 2 Foothill Division LAPD vehicles for \$40,000. Several nearby Neighborhood Councils such as the Sunland/Tujunga Neighborhood Council and the Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council

have participated in supporting the purchase by reimbursing the SVANC \$4,000 apiece. On Aug 10, 2006, a staff report was forwarded to the Council's Public Safety Committee by the LAPD's Information and Communications Services Bureau. The report listed other cities in the country using similar wireless in-car video technology, listed the differing ways in which the video recording device will be activated, the types of technology available on the market, the storage capacity and software requirements for storing indexing and retrieving data and anticipated maintenance/replacement schedules. The recording devices will be initiated on an incident-provoked basis which would in-

clude such things as 1.) User pushing a record button or activation of the record button by wireless microphone transmitter; 2.) Activation of emergency lights and/or sirens; 3.) Air bag deployment; 4.) The speedometer reaching a pre-determined mark; or 5.) The shotgun being removed from the rack. Your input relative to approval, denial or amendment of this proposal will be very useful to Council. Refer to CFI #06-0600-S38 in your communications such that recipients of same may access and review documentation relative to the proposal on file.

ICO on Condominium Conversions?

by Elektra Kruger

A recent challenge to the housing situation throughout the City of Los Angeles has been the increased tendency toward converting existing rental units into condominiums. This results in serious financial challenges for families and disruption of communities as a whole. Councilmember Alex Padilla, CD 7, has expressed concern that, while the City of Los Angeles is entertaining the idea of a moratorium on condominium conversions to address those impacts, residents in the NE San Fernando Valley and the Seventh Council District in particular urgently need protection from displacement as a result of condominium conversions until such time as the City establishes policies for fair and smooth transition for affected tenants.

To deal with this issue on a short-term basis, Councilman Padilla has submitted a Motion that, if approved, would call for Council to instruct the Planning Department along with the Office of the City Attorney to prepare an Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) to prohibit conversion of existing rental units into condominiums in the Seventh Council District. Actually, this problem is not unique to the Seventh Council District and should be considered as a Citywide ICO. That would increase pressure on all Councilmembers to give this Motion serious, immediate and thorough consideration far more quickly than if it were restricted to the Seventh District alone.

The Motion included an Urgency Clause that would make the ICO effective the date of publication and applicable to properties that had been approved for conversion in the past 180 days but had not yet pulled appropri-

ate permits as well as properties that have filed applications with the Planning Department for Condominium Conversion but had not yet had a Public Hearing. Councilman Padilla's Motion, if approved, additionally would instruct the Planning Department to prepare a report for review by the Council of possible permanent regulatory controls to be implemented in permanent Condominium Conversion Regulatory Controls which is to include a review of similar Ordinances enacted elsewhere in the State of California. These Controls might include such things as: 1.) a restriction on Condominium Conversions until such time as the local rental vacancy rate is at a minimum of 5% or, at the very least, the number of vacant units in the area would equal the number of units to be converted such that displaced tenants will have a place to go; 2.) set a maximum number of allowable conversions each year per Planning Area throughout the City; 3.) restrict accepting Subdivision and Tract Map applications for Condominium Conversions for a period of one year for newly purchased rental properties - and many more similar Controls. On Aug. 1, 2006, this Motion was forwarded to the Planning Land Use and Management Committee and the Housing, Community & Economic Development Committee of the Los Angeles City Council for their review. I strongly recommend that you submit your input and ideas relative to this Motion to all Members of City Council, the Planning Department, the City Attorney's Office and the Mayor. Reference CFI #06-1772 in your communications such that the recipients may access the Motion as written for their review.

Sylmar N/C Intallation Stalled

The Sylmar Neighborhood Council election for the year 2006-2007 has been plagued with problems. First there was a mistake in counting the ballots. One bundle of ballots was not included in the final count. It led Fabian Garcia to believe he was the winner. However, his opponent Tammy Flores felt there was a problem and asked for a re-count. It was then that the missing bundle of ballots was discovered. The re-counted ballots changed the election result and Tammy Flores was declared the winner.

However, before installations took place, an unknown stakeholder filed a grievance questioning the validity of the election. They have yet to be advised by DONE as to the

nature of the grievance or the name initiator. Therefore, the present Board Members must stay in office and conducts business as usual until the matter is resolved. The following are Board Members Elect waiting to be installed:

Senior Representative
Kathleen Clement

Faith Based Representative
Randall Lee Kelly

Education Institution Rep.
Jeanne Rowe

Recreation/Open Space
George Enrique Ortega, Jr.

Home Condo Owners (2)
Rodolfo Lopez

Fidel Ramirez

Renter
Tammy Flores

How Neighbors Scored a Stop Sign for Summitrose

by Nina Royal

Tujunga - Residents and neighbors on Summitrose, a street in the Tujunga area with an above average incline, successfully lobbied city officials for a Stop Sign. They were fed up with the accidents, near misses and speeders on their street.

Spearheaded by their leader "Donna Biven, they brought their plight to the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council meeting. There they were advised to attend the STNC Safety Committee meeting. They were also advised to contact Motor Officer MacAdam, who is in charge of the Sunland-Tujunga area and Senior Lead Officer Frank Avila.

They were advised to come to the meeting with ideas for possible resolutions on how to make their street safer. Every idea would be considered and discussed. Safety Committee member Susan Putthoff recorded the following items as they were submitted:

Speed limit signs - Could a sign on each side of the street on every block be funded by the residents and posted on private property because there are no sidewalks.

Speed Bumps - Police and Fire Department personnel oppose extensive use of speed bumps

due to concerns of emergency response time. Furthermore, many small cars are not affected. Speed bumps could be grooved for fire engines, but, this would promote driving in the middle of the street by the general traffic.

BLOTT BUMPS - this could be a possible alternative

Valley Traffic indicates that speeding is prevalent throughout the city and Summitrose is not an exception. One of the best tools for prevention is education.

to speed bumps to slow traffic and does not impede city safety vehicles, however, they are slippery when wet and not practical on an incline.

Speed Camera - While this would alert drivers to their vehicle speed, there was no consensus that it would change behavior without enforcement.

Police enforcement - Possible incentives to decrease vehicle speed and increase safer driving habits included increasing traffic tickets to

a felony, if the ticket involved distractions such as cell phone use. Also temporarily tripling traffic fines for tickets issues on their street which includes a High School

Stop Sign - Transportation Dept. doesn't believe in using stop signs to control speed, however, they were going to try for it anyway.

They agreed to turn their list into Wendy Greuel's council office with their request and ideas and meet again on August 30, with the Senior Lead Officers and her Representative. Obviously, her council office went to work.

Christmas came in August for the residents of Summitrose. Before the meeting had a change to progress, Angela Mota, Field Deputy for Wendy Greuel, announced that they had secured the service of the Transportation Department who agreed to survey the street. They did they survey and agreed that Summitrose was in need of a stop sign, which they then scheduled to be installed within two weeks.

Valley Traffic indicates that speeding is prevalent throughout the city and Summitrose is not an exception. One of the best tools for prevention is education.

NORTH VALLEY Reporter

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Equestrian
Cheri Blose
Industrial
Jan (Janette)Snfstrom

Sylmar's Executive Board, President and Vice President, etc., are elected by their board from within, per their by-laws. Their elections were completed on July 29. President Tammy Flores who is still in office is hoping that a decision will be forthcoming soon. It's very difficult to make plans and councils decisions that could affect the in-coming board before the grievance is resolved.

Sunland Tujunga NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL



by Cindy Cleghorn,
Chairperson

The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) makes recommendations to stakeholders and to officials of the City of Los Angeles on such vital issues as planning, traffic and city services. The STNC acts as a liaison to facilitate government responses to the problems impacting our community. The STNC also meets with our neighboring neighborhood councils to share common issues and work together for solutions.

Your STNC is involved in a number of key issues that impact our community. Some of these issues are both local and citywide. Following are some items of interest:

DWP Rate Increases: As a result of a decision of the California Supreme Court on July 24 the proposed L.A. DWP water rate increases of 2.75% for fiscal years 2006/07 and 2007/08 are subject to procedures required by Article XIII D Section 6 of the California Constitution. This decision will provide neighborhood councils an extended deadline to comment on the proposed water rates. A public hearing will be held downtown at City Hall on October 4, 2006 and written comments now have a deadline of October 3, 2006. A written notice has been mailed by the DWP to the owner of record of each parcel subject to the Water Rate Increase. Did you receive yours?

The STNC already participates in the LADWP-NC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) along with 48 other neighborhood councils throughout the city. Therefore, as part of the MOU the STNC is required to respond to the proposed increase and will consider a response at our next meeting. The STNC has already taken a position opposing the trash fee increase.

More information on the following is available on the LADWP web site at: www.ladwp.com, click on Community & Safety.

Solar Program Applications – The Board of Water and Power recently approved LADWP's revised Solar Incentive Program. LADWP began accepting applications on August 14. The application along with additional information is posted at www.ladwp.com.

Energy Efficiency Rebates

LADWP has begun to implement a variety of new and expanded energy efficiency programs for residential and commercial customers to:

- help customers save energy and money
- reduce the demand on LADWP's generation resources; and
- enhance the environment by reduc-

ing emissions

Residential customers can now receive up to \$100 in cash rebates for new Energy Star® refrigerators when their old refrigerator is recycled by LADWP.

LADWP is also offering rebates on home air conditioners, Energy Star® windows, and pool pumps as part of the Consumer Rebate. LADWP has also begun a significant expansion of its efforts to promote energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs. STNC may help in the distribution of the bulbs when they become available.

In addition to higher rebates for commercial lighting and chiller equipment, LADWP will be implementing new programs for commercial and institutional customers, including programs for small businesses, new construction, energy efficient refrigeration technologies for small food and convenience stores, and others.

Reinstatement of Outdoor Area Lighting Program

Recently, LADWP's "Outdoor Area Lighting" (OAL) Program was reinstated. The OAL program was temporarily suspended during an extensive review of the cost effectiveness of the program. The review indicated that the program achieved the necessary financial goals, but during the time it was suspended LADWP noted that it had the overwhelming support of the Mayor's Office, LA City Council, LAPD, the business and residential communities, and Neighborhood Council stakeholders as a needed service in the deterrent of crime and public safety in Los Angeles and as a tool in improving regional economic development. During the temporary suspension of the OAL program, LADWP also received numerous customer letters indicating their approval of the manner in which the lights were installed and maintained. **Background:** The OAL program offers LADWP customers an inexpensive means of providing private property lighting on: 1) existing DWP overhead facilities (where available); 2) existing light standards owned by the Bureau of Street Lighting (with their permission); or 3) customer owned buildings. Customers, located where there is a lack available facilities to attach the lighting, may pay an additional one-time fee to have poles installed for the purpose of outdoor area lighting. Note: Customers are billed monthly for the energy usage and maintenance.

Local – Your participation at STNC meetings as well as involvement in the issues is critical to **improving**

the quality of life in Sunland-Tujunga. Even if we don't see you out at every meeting, I know you're out there doing your part. This could be writing a letter regarding a public hearing notice or contacting Councilmember Wendy Greuel to let her know how you feel about mansionization in our community, the proposed developments along Tujunga Canyon Blvd., traffic safety concerns and the proposed Home Depot. **Neighbors make a difference.**

The Design Advisory Committee often has a big turnout of neighbors to hear about the critical land use issues in Sunland-Tujunga. Join us on September 18 to hear updates on the former Ralphs in Tujunga and the extension of the FAR/ICO (mansionization ordinance) as well as updates on past items that have been discussed at a DAC meeting.

Haines Canyon Channel Maintenance project: This area is located at the end of Tujunga Valley Street and continues to the Angeles Golf Course. At the August 9th STNC meeting a neighbor brought this item to our attention. Soon after a meeting was hosted by Los Angeles County and City representatives to give us more info on this proposal. The Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and other documents are available for public view at two locations: Public Works, Hansen Yard, located at 10179 Glenoaks Blvd., Sun Valley, CA 91352; and Public Works' offices at 900 S. Fremont Avenue, Annex 2nd Floor, Alhambra, CA 91803. If you have comments regarding this proposed maintenance work (which may be done between September and October 2006, or later if permitted), you are encouraged to participate in the process by sending your letter to: Ms. Jemelle Cruz, County of Los Angeles Public Works, 900 S. Fremont Street, Annex 2nd Floor, Alhambra, CA 91803-1331. Reference: Haines Canyon Channel Outlet Maintenance

Home Depot: The STNC's position is that the community deserves the full environmental review process and the opportunity to voice their concerns for a project of this type

Tujunga Canyon Blvd: The recent DAC meeting left us with more questions and more research needed. As far as the Department of Transportation is concerned, the proposed and in process development projects are reviewed on a case by case basis. This is difficult for many of us to understand why they are only reviewed on a case by case basis. Our streets are already heavily impacted with the traffic we have now. The following are some of the proposed projects either being considered or in process: Joy Fellowship Church for 250 congregants; 25 condominiums at the site of the current Oakview Convalescent; up to 269 units at the site of the current Verdugo Hills Golf Course. Other impacts include the future Canyon Hills Development and town houses on Tujunga Canyon that are almost complete.

How to Contact the STNC

The STNC meets every second Wednesday of the month at Mt. Gleason Middle School at 10965 Mt. Gleason Avenue, Sunland at 7 p.m. All stakeholders are welcome and meetings operate under California's open meeting rules (the Brown Act). Agendas are posted to the STNC web site and also at several locations throughout Sunland-Tujunga. You can also sign up to receive STNC News by e-mail through the STNC web site at www.stnc.org

**September 13 Monthly STNC meeting – 7 p.m.
Mt. Gleason Middle School**

**September 16 Outreach Committee – 1 p.m. at
Joselito's**

**September 18 Design Advisory Committee (DAC)
– 6:30 p.m. at North Valley Neighbor-
hood City Hall (NVCH)**

September 21 Safety Committee – 7 p.m. at NVCH

**September 27 Executive Committee – 7 p.m. at
NVCH**

**Subject to change. Check the STNC web site for updates or call the STNC office to verify meeting time and location. Thank you to The North Valley Reporter for providing space for this article.*

NVCH = North Valley Neighborhood City Hall, 7747 Foothill Blvd., Tujunga

STNC Office: 7747 Foothill Blvd., Room 101

Tujunga, CA 91042.

(818) 951-7411

FAX (818) 951-7412

Please visit the STNC web site often for new updates and information at: www.stnc.org

SERVING THE PUBLIC



Awarded officers left to right Police Officer II Robert Tamate, Police Officer II, Dorion Brown, Detective Nicole Kittle, Detective John Fleming, Police Officer III Charles Chacon, Sergeant Kim Kempton, PSR II Cliff Watson

Lapd Mission Area Officers Honored

by Nina Royal

The Mission Community Police Council honored exceptional Officers for outstanding service from the Mission Area Station during their awards breakfast for the Officers and their families at the Odessa Restaurant in Mission Hills on August 29.

They were welcomed by MCPL President Greg Pedrick. The Explorers performed presentation of Colors and Pastor Jerry Jimenez gave the Invocation. Megan Hayashi

was responsible for the food service. Congressman Howard Berman was the Guest Speaker and drew applause as he stated "tongue in cheek" he would keep his speech short as a gift to the honorees. Also in attendance for the occasion were Deputy Chief Michael Moore and Commander Val Pannacia who complimented all the Officers of the Mission Station for their exceptional service.

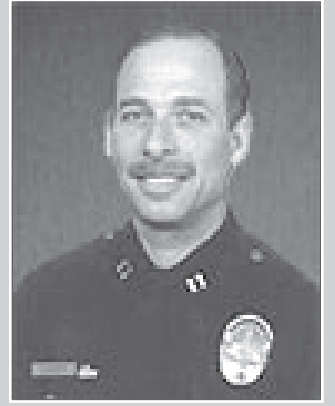
Captain Jorge Villegas, Captain John Incontro and Lt.

Ernest Eskridge made presentations for the Second Quarter 2006. Officers who received Certificates and congratulated for outstanding service were: Police Officer II, Dorain Brown and Robert Tamate Specialized Unit Police Officer III Charles Chacon, Supervisor Sergeant I, Kimberly Kempton, Detective II John Fleming and Nicole Kittle and Police Service Representative Clifford Watson.

These awards are given quarterly by the Mission Community Police Council. They are a non-profit organization that was established to provide financial support to the new station. Their membership consists of private business and concerned community members who donate their time as well as money through annual dues, donations and fundraisers for items not provided by the city budgetary process. They provide funds for equipment and financial support for youth programs, crime prevention and community events. For further information regarding this worthy organization, contact the LAPD Mission Area Community Relations Unit at 818-838-9860.

Crime Picture

by Captain Joe Curreri
Area Commanding Officer
Foothill Division



Congratulations to the North Valley Reporter on your first distribution. We at the Los Angeles Police Department's Foothill Station look forward to a long-lasting partnership designed to keep the community better informed.

For my first article, I would like to provide an overview of the crime picture in Foothill Area. Currently, Foothill is experiencing a 5% decrease in Part I Crimes, which includes homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, auto theft, burglary/theft from motor vehicle and personal theft. Although this is three percent lower than the Department's goal of an 8% crime reduction for the year, Foothill Area is arguably the safest place to live in the City of Los Angeles.

From January 2005 to the present, crime has been reduced by 28.9%, the largest decrease of any of the 19 Los Angeles Police Department Geographic Areas. Foothill Area comprises more than 46 square miles. Central Area consists of less than 5 square miles and has 144,000 less residents than Foothill, yet Foothill has had 243 less crimes than Central Area.

I bring this information to your attention to let you know that Foothill is still a great place in which to live,

work and visit; and that the personnel assigned to the Foothill Community Police Station are working hard to keep it that way. We are working diligently to reach an 8% reduction in crime by the year's end, but we need your help. Currently we are experiencing some spikes in robbery, residential burglary and auto theft.

Please take the precautions you've heard about many times before. Don't go for a walk late at night by yourself, be mindful of your surroundings, make your home a harder target for criminals: invest in a timer to turn lights and/or a radio on at various times when your not at home, don't leave windows open and doors unlocked when you're gone, lock your garage door. Keep your vehicle safe: lock it, don't leave items in the passenger compartment that a thief would want, park in a well-lit area when in a parking lot, if you have a garage use it for your vehicle.

The men and woman at Foothill Station care about your safety. Help us keep you safe.

Captain Joseph Curreri
Commanding Officer
Foothill Area Station
(818) 756-8860
curreri@lapd.lacity.org



By Captain Stacy Gerlich
Los Angeles City Fire Depart.

Be Emergency Prepared

I would like to introduce myself. I'm Captain/Paramedic Stacy Gerlich, a 20 year member of the Los Angeles Fire Department. I command the Community Emergency Response Team Unit. (CERT).

For many people who live in Southern California the thought of a big disaster occurring is quiet unsettling, which is why we teach the preparedness classes. We offer citizens of Los Angeles a FREE Disaster Preparedness program. The CERT training consists of 7 weeks of training. We will come to your location one day or evening each week and teach you the basic skills necessary to take care of yourselves in the event of a disaster.

We have recently added a new program to our sched-

ule. We refer to it as DAC (Disaster Awareness Course). It's a three-hour overview of what we cover in CERT. It's available to groups who cannot commit to the 7-week program mentioned above. Regardless of your age or other disabilities, you are welcome to participate in this training. There is a place for everyone. Disasters do not choose who they affect. Everyone can benefit from the information that is made available in these courses. The best way to deal with disaster is to be prepared. CPR, First Aid and AED Red Cross courses can also be provided as well as disaster preparedness courses. However, there is a fee for the certification of the above mentioned Red Cross courses.

I have had the tremendous opportunity to be a part of the teaching cadre that is responsible for having already trained approximately 50,000 people in the CERT program. I believe in being prepared and I believe that our community members should have the trained ability to as-

sist the LAFD in situations that overwhelm the available emergency resources.

I look forward to bringing fresh ideas to all citizens of Los Angeles. My goal is to train everyone who lives in Southern California. You may think that goal is unattainable, but it all depends on each and every one of you. If you want the training, I'll make sure you get it!!

Please direct any questions that you may have to me personally. I look forward to hearing from you and remember, "Train as if your life depends on it, because it does!"

Captain/Paramedic
Stacy Gerlich
CERT Unit Commander
Los Angeles Fire Department
5021 N. Sepulveda Blvd.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
(818) 756-9674 office
(818) 756-9681 fax
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THE CULTURAL SIDE



The Stone House, 8642 Sunland Boulevard prerenovation.

by Tina C. Cameron

Their neighborhood has been abuzz for months over the renovation and opening of their beloved historical stone house at 8642 Sunland Boulevard. Built in 1925, it was acquired by the City of L.A. in 1998. The house is made entirely of river rock and a favorite Sun Valley landmark. Having been unoccupied for years, neighbors feared it would eventually be torn down for a more modern structure. However, the City of Los Angeles and the Department of Cultural Affairs has deemed it an historical site and it will become the home of the new Sun Valley Youth Arts Center.

Great effort and dedication went into the restoration of the stone house. Light fixtures, windows and other

amenities have been restored to their original likeness and new hardwood floors have been installed.

The exterior remains unchanged, even while the structure has been given appropriate upgrades in order to meet modern safety standards. New landscaping and pavement has been added as well. A second two-story structure has been erected next to the stone house in order to make optimum use of the lot.

The Grand Opening is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 14, 2006. The stone house will then house an administrative staff and classes for children ages 12 through 17 studying digital photography, digital illustra-

tion and graphic design. The newer building will serve children age's 3-1/2 to 12 for the courses in painting, sculpting, ceramics, performance arts and music. Students are able to explore self-expression, hands-on color theory, ceramic glazing and kiln firing.

The instructors are professional artists who will donate their time in order to bring art appreciation to the community. They will use a building block approach to give a comprehensive education in the arts.

Courses will include materials and be eight weeks in length. The fee is \$36 for children ages 3-1/2 to 12, and \$48 for ages 12 to 17 years old. Classes will be Monday through Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to noon, 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Sun Valley Youth Arts Center, in cooperation with Music LA, will also support quality music instruction in band, string and music theory. The Fee will be \$175 for a 7-week session. Scholarships will be available to 5 musically committed applicants.

The Sun Valley Youth Arts Center is being made possible by voter-approved Prop K funds, under Councilmember Tony Cardenas. Prop K is an annual real property tax assessment on City residents over a 30-year period. The program's primary purpose is to provide park, recreation, childcare and community facilities.

For more information, call Art Center Director, Chuy Rangel, 818-252-4619, fax to 818-252-4704, or drop by the center at 8642 Sunland Boulevard, Sun Valley, CA 91352.

Opposed

cont. from page 2

and settlements from 1972-1994. This is by no means a comprehensive list. Complete data concerning fines on numerous violations are simply unavailable. This data serves to illustrate the scope BFI's violations and its history of disregard for the law.

FUN FAMILY FESTIVALS

September 8 Thru October 1

LOS ANGELES COUNTY FAIR

Carnival rides, games, traditional exhibits, art, agriculture horticulture, agriculture and livestock

Monday-Friday 10 am - 10 pm

Saturday & Sundays 10 am - midnight

Fairplex, 1101 McKinley, Pomona

www.fairplex.com www.lacountyfair.com

September 16

ANNUAL BENEFIT FOR OUR BRAVEST

Music, rides, Firefighters, Police, live & silent auction supports 38 fire stations in SFV

Sat. 1 pm - 7 pm

Valley Inn Restaurant and Los Angeles Fire Department

4577 Sherman Oaks Ave., Sherman Oaks

www.benefitforourbravest.org

September 9 - 10

Fest of San Gennaro

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1-877-832-1418 www.festifka.org



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Shadow Hills



Concerts In The Park = Family Fun



On a warm Sunday evening listening to live music in the park is a great way to end your weekend. Bring a picnic dinner or buy snacks at the park. You might want to bring a lawn chair but you could also just stakeout a patch of grass and spread a blanket. Admission is free.

Little Landers Concert in the Park

10110 Commerce Ave.

Tujunga, CA

818-352-3420

As of 1992 BFI had admitted to at least 270 civil penalties, administrative orders, permit or license suspensions and revocations and bond forfeiture acts, along with 10 misdemeanor or felony convictions and pleas, and 24 court decrees or settlement orders.

In the end, the landfill and any subsequent decisions, come down to money. As Smith told City Beat, "There's no way to shut down Sunshine Canyon tomorrow. There's nothing you could do short of eminent domain, and that would cost the city too much."

FOR YOUTH

Head Start Programs Offered

Volunteers of America is now enrolling children four years of age for education programs. Their programs consist of Head Start, State Preschool and Early Head Start at no charge.

The additional services they provide at no cost, are services for children with disabilities and special needs, Mental Health Referral Services Nutrition Services, Parent involvement and Parent educational training. They are currently enrolling at the following local schools: Esperanza, 11329 Valerio St, Sun Valley, tel. 818-764-0320, Sol Del Valle, 10721 Penrose St., Sun Valley, tel. 818-767-2515, Plainview, 10819 Plainview, Tujunga, 818-352-7894. For further information, call Evelyn at 818-980-2287

Neighbors at Odds *cont. from page 4*

burden is placed on the community at large to deal with the recidivism of the facility.

Upon request of the Kagel Canyon residents, the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council held two special meetings, which included hearing presentations from both sides of the issue. They also requested further information to answer critical questions about URM's plans and verification of their neighbors' concerns. Upon conclusion of those meetings, their Board voted to support the Kagel Canyon community and urged denial of the CUP. In a letter to Mayor Antonovich, they stated "We in the North Valley already have our share of homeless shelters with 27 in our immediate area. We believe

that each community should be responsible for its own homeless issues and not put them off to outlying neighborhoods as a resolution. Downtown L.A. needs to clean up their own mess, to which the city has turned a blind eye for many years, not transfer their problems to other communities." Neighboring Blue Star Mobile Home Park has voted to support the URM's chosen location and has been speaking at community meetings in support of their proposal.

The KCCTC is currently awaiting the results of a recent meeting between URM and the office of Mayor Antonovich.

College And Career Convention Scheduled

The City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and the Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board are combining efforts in order to help Los Angeles families access higher education and career opportunities. The 5th Annual College and Career Convention will take place on Thursday and Friday, October 26th and October 27th.

The event is a "one-stop" source for local students who want to achieve their college dreams. The Convention will feature financial aid seminars, college-life workshops and scholarship opportunities for students and their families in Los Angeles County.

They are counting on community organizations such as Neighborhood Councils, Chambers of Commerce, etc. to reach out to their local community members and encourage them to attend this worthwhile event.

They can assist by committing to recruit a minimum of 30 guests, accept RSVPs and maintain a list of attendees. They should have a staff member onsite on their premises that will serve as a buss coordinator and be available 30 minutes prior to pick-up. They should also ensure the appropriate amounts of adult volunteers are present to accompany unsupervised youth

to the event. The city is providing free bus transportation to the Convention Center from your site.

A packet with all the pertinent information will be provided in an instruction packet to interested organizations. Upon receipt of your volunteer registration, your organization will be advertised as an official "Cash for College - College and Career Convention Pick-Up Site." For information and instructions, call Sue Cannon at 562-45/8-9372 or email at scannon@lachamber.org visit their website at www.lacashforcollege.org for full details.

Homeowners *cont. from page 1*

orchestrate a 50% vacancy rate by raising rental fees to an unattainable level for the majority of residents, they can then declare the operation a non-viable business. At that point they could apply for a Change of Use Permit for property redevelopment.

Historically, mobile home owners have experienced average annual increases on their rental spaces of approximately 3%. The companies that are buying up these properties have the "right", with proper notification, to raise rents 18 to 40% every ninety days throughout the year. One

of the California parks saw a rental increase of 400% last year because there are no rent control laws requiring a cap on the amount of rental a landowner can charge for a 20 X 50 foot space. Most mobile home owners can not afford such increases and have few alternatives. They must either pay the higher rent, try to sell their homes at less than market value, or vacate the premises, thereby absorbing huge financial, emotional, and psychological losses. A drive through the Blue Star park reveals one particular mobile home with a

hand written weathered sign planted out front: For Sale--\$19,500. "Last year that home would have sold for over \$200,00", says Bell. "You can probably buy that home today for around thirty five hundred dollars", he added. So, for many mobile home park tenants, like those at Blue Star, it may well be a matter of home owner one day, and homeless the next.

Bell's organization can be reached at <http://www.neighborhoodfrinds.us> or (818) 890-1113

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Nature has Plans of It's Own

Los Angeles County of Public Works attempts to calm the water.

By Jeannine Crowley

During the heaviest rains in February, 2005 the Danielsons had a 15 foot wide river running through their property which is adjacent to the Haines Canyon Channel. As the rains subsided the river narrowed to five feet wide, two feet deep and continued the length of their property for 440 feet. The river progressed washing out a private road stranding five of the Danielson's neighbors.



A family of Egrets keep sharp eyes out for breakfast.

learned of the plans. As it seems what was meant to be a flood channel nature had turned into lovely pond. This natural pocket is now an abundant habitat for many creatures now in danger of losing their environment.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works responded by hosting a meeting in conjunction with the Offices of LA County Mayor Antonovich and the Offices of Councilmember Wendy Greuel which took place August 8, 2006. Arthur Vander Vis, Principal Engineer for the CLADPW discussed with residents attending the meeting the details of the project. Melanie Traxler of Bon Terra Consulting, Mike Shaw from Vector Control and Jaime Jackson from the California Dept. of Fish & Game each explained their part of the project. At the end of the evening it seems that there is little hope for the pond.



Roadrunner hanging out too,

The irony of this project is that even when finished, riverlet straightened, pond gone, it will not solve the problem for the Danielsons. The flood water that damaged their property was from a part of the channel that flows through private property owned by the Angeles Golf Course. Vegetation that has grown thick may again divert water over the Danielsons land. At the time of the August 8 meeting, Angeles had sent their application in to the Dept. of Fish and Game only two days before for a Stream Altering Permit allowing them to clear the overgrowth.

"I would feel more optimistic about a bright future for man if he spent less time proving that he can outwit Nature and more time tasting her sweetness and respecting her seniority."
 E. B. White (1899-1985)

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