

TPOA

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2005
VOL. 42 NO.1

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Helen Itria Norman, TPOA President

Those of us who grew up in a small town can remember; somewhat wistfully, one special characteristic: neighbors. Not just next door or the next block but across town and downtown; people knew us and (ideally) cared about us. They helped one another.

Well, Tarzana's not exactly a small town, but we have that. We have neighbors. I'm thinking of one in particular: the Tsuchiyama family. You know them, either personally or through their business — West Valley Nursery on Ventura Blvd., just east of Fire Station 93 at Vanalden.

Ever since Shigeru "Shig" Tsuchiyama opened the business in 1951, he and, subsequently, his wife and son John, have shown what good neighbors really are. They have done this in many ways, such as adding special touches to their artistic floral arrangements for folks who are ill or celebrating an important landmark in their lives. And they have gone way beyond the personal, as involved partners in the community of Tarzana.

For example: the triangular median at the intersection of Vanalden and Rosita Street used to be an unkempt patch of dirt, weeds and debris. It was cleaned up in the late sixties at the instigation of TPOA's founder, Louise Frankel (it's affectionately known as Frankel Park). She persuaded the DWP to install irrigation and electrical hookups ... and she made a visit to the

West Valley Nursery. No problem. Through their generosity, the area was transformed into a well-designed garden spot; all labor and plantings donated by the Tsuchiyamas. And when, through neglect, it became a dried-up eyesore, they returned and did an entire renovation. Now the city maintains it properly, so it still is a pleasure to see as we drive by.

Remember that huge, overpowering billboard between the nursery and the fire station? Billboard companies pay a good sum of money to property owners for choice locations such as this. The Tsuchiyamas were no exception. But when the contract ran out and the billboard company tried to renew, they met a stone wall. Shig and his grown son John (who now is managing the nursery) decided the eyesore wasn't worth the money they would receive, and said it had to go. Thankfully, it has been gone for about five years. We appreciate its absence from blocking our view...

And . . . there's a beautiful rose garden at the new Tarzana Community & Cultural Center across the street. Yes, of course: courtesy of the West Valley Nursery.

You hardly need to ask; if the need is there, they're there for you... with a warm smile as well.

This is why the Board of TPOA has voted unanimously to recognize the Tsuchiyama Family with an honorary membership in our Association. They have been paying members for years. Now it's our turn. It's our very small way of saying "Thank you" for all you have done for Tarzana. We are so lucky to have you as our neighbors.

**SAVE THIS DATE FOR A COMING
ATTRACTION
TUESDAY MAY 3, 2005
ANNUAL TOWN HALL MEETING at
EL CABALLERO COUNTRY CLUB**

TPOA NEWSLETTER

Published quarterly by the

TARZANA PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
P. O. Box 571448, Tarzana
CA 91357

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Second Monday of each month
Except July and August
At

**THE TARZANA COMMUNITY
& CULTURAL CENTER 19130
Ventura Blvd., Tarzana CA. 91356**

AT LAST, A SENIOR LEAD OFFICER FOR TARZANA

Last year, before his promotion as Assistant Chief Aide in Operations in the Central Los Angeles Division, Capt. James Cansler filled the Senior Lead Officer spot with not one, but two, officers: Kip Jackson and Erik Schick. They will rotate every two months, serving Tarzana, Reseda and Encino until funding is available for a permanent appointment. Both Jackson and Schick have attended a TPOA Board meeting and shared their interest for this type of service.

Officer Schick is not only a resident of Tarzana but also a member of TPOA. The last two of his eight years with LAPD as a Training Officer in the West Valley give assurance that he has first hand experience with problems affecting our community as well as a personal interest in keeping Tarzana a safe, comfortable place to live and work.

Officer Jackson also grew up in the Valley and lives in Woodland Hills. On the force for 15 years, he too has served in other areas of Los Angeles. In January, he reviewed the December crime statistics for the Board, reporting that arrests are up and crime is down except for street crime - theft from businesses and persons. Jackson recommends forming both Business and Neighborhood Watch groups as an important part of crime prevention and maintaining safe neighborhoods. Call him at the West Valley Senior Lead Office... (818)756-9891 ... if you want his help.

TWO NEW COMMANDERS HEAD WEST VALLEY LAPD

Captain John A Sherman has assumed command of the LAPD West Valley Division. A native Angeleno, raised in the San Fernando Valley, Capt. Sherman is a second generation Los Angeles police officer. He attended Cleveland High School, California State University at Northridge and the University of Phoenix where he earned a degree in Management. At CSUN he was a Police Student Worker with the LAPD, and prior to becoming a sworn officer, served four years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He has served in the Rampart, Hollywood, Wilshire and Central areas, and most recently was commanding officer of Devonshire Operations Support and Patrol Divisions.

Assisting Capt. Sherman is Capt. Joel Justice whose career path has closely followed that of Capt. Sherman. He, too, grew up in the Valley, attended Monroe High, and was a classmate of Sherman's at the University of Phoenix and CSUN, where he earned his master's degree in Public Administration. He will have been on the force for twenty years in April and refers proudly to his police officer father, now a retired Captain. We look forward to developing the same cordial and helpful relationship with Capt. Sherman and Capt. Justice that we enjoyed with Capt. Cansler. Welcome gentlemen!

PLANNING

AND

ZONING

Permit applications are being filed for new residential and commercial developments; remodeling and expansion of existing residential and/or commercial projects at an astounding pace. This level of activity requires constant oversight to assure that these projects are consistent with what is permissible under City Planning regulations as well as what will best serve the residents in the areas where the development is taking place.

Emphasizing the complexity of the evaluation required for projects of any size, Kathy Delle Donne, Chair of Land Use for both TPOA and Tarzana Neighborhood Council recently outlined a list of issues that must be considered. It includes, first, a knowledge of the Community Plan designation for the subject property, and items such as the character of the neighborhood, the prevailing setbacks, slope of the land, drainage for neighboring properties, existing trees on the property and whether they can be saved, landscaping required, street access and street improvements required, traffic impact, etc.

...RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS...

5850 Tampa - Request to subdivide one lot into three. This required a zone change from RA (residential- agricultural) to R1 (single family, residential) and was approved at a Deputy Advisory Hearing in November. Among the conditions required is landscaping on the face of the wall that fronts on Tampa Avenue.

6009 Tampa - Request for subdivision of one lot into three. TPOA supported the residents of Melody Acres in their strong opposition to this project and its impact on the equine keeping, rural character of the neighborhood. At a December 4 public hearing, the application was denied. The applicant has filed an appeal to that decision.

18119-18125 Topham - This is an application to divide two large lots for construction of seven single-family dwellings. Application was approved. Since Topham Street is undergoing major changes because of the new Bus way, the developer is being required to construct street

....18119-18125 Topham continued

improvements on both the north and south side of the street. Traffic and parking problems are expected to increase due to Metro's Park and Ride Station at Reseda and Oxnard/Topham .

5715 Calvin - Application to divide one lot into two for single-family homes was approved by the Deputy Advisory Agency with the requirement of curbs and gutters on Calvin. Melody Acres Neighborhood Association has appealed the decision because these street improvements are not in keeping with the rural character of this neighborhood

5905 Wilbur - Request to subdivide one lot into two for single-family homes. Application approved with the requirement that the Developer/owner construct curbs, gutters and sidewalk on Hatteras.

5220 Topeka - Request to subdivide one lot into two flag lots for single-family homes with entry on Topeka.

19038 Collins - Request for zone change from RA-1 to RS-1 and to subdivide this one acre lot into five lots for five single family homes. A public hearing has not yet been scheduled.

18831 Topham - A request to establish an elderly care facility with 20 beds was denied. Subsequent to that, Columbia College at 18618 Oxnard indicated an interest in purchasing this property for use as a dormitory for their foreign students. Work with the community and college on draft conditions is now in progress.

....COMMERCIAL PROJECTS....

6353 Lindley - Request for Conditional Use Permit by Sprint to install a 52 foot monopalm on city owned property. The community supported project provided that location was moved farther away from homes and additional trees were planted around monopole disguised as a "monopalm." The Zoning Administrator approved the project.

MORE COMMERCIAL PLANNING & ZONING

18719 Calvert - Request by Discovery School (K-6) to expand their campus to 280 students. The neighborhood is participating fully in review of this request as there is great concern about the potential traffic effect. Applicant has been asked to provide more information about the various phases of proposed construction.

18819 Topham - Under consideration since last summer is this request for 10 condo units. It has been approved with the requirement that the developer construct street improvements on both north and south sides of the street. Again, this will help with future traffic and parking impacts on this neighborhood.

4475 Azalia Drive -AT&T application to attach antennas to DWP transformer tower and place equipment cabinets beneath tower.

A New Face on Ventura Blvd.- Last but far from least, Brown Center from Mann Theater on the east through the GAP on the west is about to undergo a massive face lift.

The new Brown Center owner recently presented to business owners and community groups his proposal for complete restructuring of this property to be accomplished in a series of three separate projects.

Phase one will address only Ventura Blvd. frontage and provide well designed, two-story retail and restaurant space with Yolanda as its focal point midway between Mann Theater and the GAP. Phase two and three will extend changes of use further south into the neighborhood and include much needed underground parking and residential space. It is hoped that in creating a more inviting space on the south side of Ventura that owners on the north side will be encouraged to upgrade their properties in a balanced, coordinated manner.

The proposal was well received, but not without some regret that in the process Tarzana will no longer have a theater. TPOA will be interested in how you feel about this.

COMMUNITY CENTER NEWS

. . . . Severe Rains Damage TCCC roof

The recent rains hammered away at the Tarzana Community & Cultural Center roof, finding every opening and creating even more. . However, despite the deluge, TPOA and other community groups continued to hold meetings..

President Patti McManus reports that the Center will soon have a new roof made possible by contributions of \$10,000 from the Tarzana Neighborhood Council and \$9,900 from Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. The TNC contribution will also cover replacement of windows so deteriorated that they were being held together with electricians' tape. New roof and windows will go a long way to conserving energy.

Completion of the bathroom for handicapped is under way, and additional development on the site is planned, such as paths and grassy areas. The growing attractiveness of the Center has so captivated one couple that you may be seeing a wedding in the rose garden this Spring.

A variety of classes will be renewed in March. Be sure you are on their mailing list so you can receive their newsletter, the Tarzana Bulletin.

The Center is a repository for a substantial number of photos and documents pertaining to Tarzana history. Among them are two handsome, framed certificates: dated 1987, they are from former Mayor Tom Bradley and then Supervisor Michael Antonovich congratulating TPOA on its twenty-five years of service to the community.

TCCC is vibrant and growing. If you're not now a member, be sure to get on board. Call: (818) 705-1286.

COYOTE TASK FORCE SEEKS NEW CONTROLS

In response to community requests, Councilman Dennis P. Zine has assembled a task force to review neighborhood complaints about coyotes to determine whether present control regulations are adequate and appropriate. Holding its first meeting in January, the Task Force expects to complete its review within three months. We'll keep you informed.

SACRAMENTO NEWS

-----SACRAMENTO continued

. . . LOCAL COMMUNITIES WIN BIG IN STATE LEGISLATURE

Assembly Bill 2702 (Steinberg), dealing with second unit housing, moved deliberately through various committees this year, reaching the Governor's desk at the end of the Legislative Session. Its most objectionable condition was the requirement that cities adopt ordinances including 2 units in all residential zones, such units not limited to size.

Fortunately, the Governor did not sign the bill and returned it to the Legislature with the observation that it would have removed virtually all local control over the construction of second unit housing. He said that the bill, in effect, dictates unilateral decisions by the state regarding what type of development is appropriate for local communities without any community participation. The bill language also left unanswered the question of whether or not it might actually override homeowner association CC&Rs that do not allow second units.

TPOA vigorously opposed this bill during its year-long consideration, writing letters to our representatives, Assemblymember Pavley and Senator Kuehl as well as to the Governor.

. . . . AND ON THE OTHER HAND, PRESCRIPTION DRUG BELLS DID NOT FARE WELL

Prescription drug bills by various legislators were uniformly vetoed by the Governor. "Unfortunately," said Assemblymember Fran Pavley, "the only winners from this action are the drug companies who successfully protected their 'bottom line' including against Canadian competition."

The bills variously would have established a website allowing consumers to compare prices between American and Canadian pharmacies; set up a state drug purchasing pool for the uninsured and small employers to negotiate with drug companies for bulk discount savings; helped employers negotiate for better benefits contracts by increasing the pricing disclosure they receive from middlemen and permitted the Department of General Services (DGS) to enter into prescription drug contracts with Canadian sources with such contracts being required to meet safety standards.

. . . . TRANSPORTATION TAX CONSIGNED TO SCRAP HEAP

Assemblymember Fran Pavley viewed the recommendation to charge California drivers on mileage driven to be the worst idea to come out of the Governor's California Performance Review. "Allowing the government to track Californians' movements everywhere they drive is a totally unacceptable Big Brother type intrusion that I will fight," she said.

. . . . AUTOMAKERS FIGHT CLEAN AIR VEHICLE EMISSIONS

AB1493 is Pavley's landmark "global warming bill" which went through the Legislature in 2002. She prefers to call it the "Clean Car Bill" and was gratified that its regulations were adopted by the Air Resources Board in September and supported by the Governor. In addition, in November she was invited by Canada's Environment Minister Stephane Dion and Natural Resources Minister John Efford to discuss California's regulatory approach to reducing vehicular greenhouse gas emissions. Just to prove that "no good deed goes unpunished," we are now informed that a number of American and foreign automakers have just filed suit to overturn her bill. Ironically, the suit was filed in Fresno where it is reported that one in every seven children carries an asthma inhaler to school.

COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS EXTENDS PROTECTION IN SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky informed TPOA that the Board has approved a new ordinance directed to minimizing the amount of grading and ridgeline development allowed in the Los Angeles County portion of the Santa Monica Mountains. This action was taken in recognition of the fact that, under current regulations, far too much of the mountains has already been irreparably scarred. The ordinance does not prohibit development, but it does establish thresholds beyond which projects are required to undergo an additional level of scrutiny through public input and environmental analysis pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

FILMING IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

How to maintain the best elements of both is the challenge that brought Brewster/Topeka Avenue neighbors together at a recent meeting in Councilman Dennis Zinc's office. It was not an issue of whether filming should be allowed; it was a question of how can filming and the safety of narrow, winding streets keep from colliding.

The area is within walking distance of both Wilbur Avenue Elementary and Portola Middle Schools. This accounts for more than the usual traffic from work-bound residents and children walking or being driven to school, with no police presence to facilitate what became a huge traffic and personal safety problem.

Some twenty residents attended the meeting. They made a forceful power point presentation with pictures that clearly depicted the hazards faced during fourteen days of filming from July through November

Also in attendance were two representatives from the Entertainment Industry Development Corporation: Michael Bobenko, Sr. Vice President of Operations, and Susan Yackley, Community Relations Director. They opened the door to cooperating with residents on resolving problems. Let's face it. Filming, though intrusive under the best of circumstances, is an industry important to the economic health of Los Angeles and helpful to the property owners where shoots take place. This does not mean, however, that safety and other concerns must be sacrificed. And that's where EIDC comes in.

Among their services is a notification program that advises communities of upcoming film shoots. This opens communications with the individuals who will be most directly affected. An in-house team of monitors works to improve the interface between production companies and communities regarding permit terms. Tracking and responding to complaints is a 24/7 service. Their telephone number is (323) 957-1000; Fax: (323) 463-0613.

JOIN TPOA
IT'S THE BEST BUY IN TOWN

PARKING FEES IN PUBLIC PARKS

As was noted in the August Newsletter, parking fees are now being charged in local, state and national parks. This was brought painfully to the attention of a TPOA member who did not notice a sign in the Marvin Braude Park at the end of Reseda Blvd. calling attention to this relatively new \$3.00 parking fee. A Park Ranger happened to be present and gave him a citation which cost him \$60.

A parking fee is charged in all eighteen State parks in Los Angeles and Ventura counties which are under the jurisdiction of the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority. MRCA works in a joint powers relationship with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in maintaining and protecting these parks.

We visited MRCA headquarters and learned that park users may bypass the fee by obtaining an annual parking permit. The cost for an annual weekday five (5) day permit is \$60.00; for an annual seven (7) day permit, \$100. An application may be obtained by calling or writing to the MRCA at 2600 Franklin Canyon Drive, Beverly Hills, 90210 - (310) 858-7272. Wouldn't it be nice if that \$60 fine could have been transformed into a parking permit.

REFUSE COLLECTION VIOLATIONS

Refuse containers placed too far in advance of collection time; empty refuse containers left out too long after refuse has been collected and refuse containers left out from one collection date to another are all violations of L.A. Municipal Code Sec. 66.27 and represent misuse of our public streets. On a more personal level, the continued presence of containers is an eyesore in the neighborhood and a serious traffic hazard, particularly on narrow, winding, sloping streets.

The regulations state, in part, that where refuse is scheduled to be collected between the hours of 6:00 AM and 6 PM, containers should not be placed out before 6:00 PM of the day preceding the scheduled collection nor left out after 8:00 PM on the day of actual collection. Violation of these regulations may result in citation, followed by fines and even confiscation of containers.

Please help your neighbors and do your part in observing these regulations.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

.....Newsrack Ordinance Passed by City Council

Communities all over the city, working under the umbrella of the Clean Coalition brought this long desired ordinance to completion in January. It will be administered by the Board of Public Works and fulfills the desire for uniformity of size, color, safety, identification lettering and other aspects that affect the appearance of our communities. Don't look for immediate improvement. Implementation will be gradual.

In general, the ordinance allows no more than one group of four newsracks in every 50 feet of sidewalk, located no less than 18 inches from the curb. No more dents as you open your car door, let alone being unable to open it due to the current placement of some racks.

Maintenance in safe, clean, sanitary condition is required. Permits will not be issued for newsracks in areas deemed by the City Cultural Heritage Commission to be of historical/cultural significance such as the Hollywood Walk of Fame, City Hall area, Music Center, Olvera Street.

Violations are clearly defined and the public needs to be as involved in calling attention to violations of this ordinance as it is with others. If you want a copy of the ordinance, let us know. There will be more information in the next Newsletter about when to expect the current proliferation of newsracks to start disappearing.

WILBUR AVENUE MEDIAN FACE LIFT

Last year, in July, member Michael Povar called to talk about the median on the east side of Wilbur Avenue just north of the freeway and across the street from Tarzana Elementary School. Planting, where there is any, consists of scraggly and dead bushes. It's an eyesore on the west border of this attractive, well maintained neighborhood of single family homes bounded by the median, Martha St. to the south (next to the freeway), Yolanda on the east and Miranda on the north.

At a November Board meeting, Povar discussed ideas for improving the median and asked TPOA for support. To be involved in such a project was reminiscent of one undertaken years ago by founder, Louise Frankel, when she marshaled local

ISSUES

. continued: Wilbur Avenue Median

and city support for creation of a median-island at the intersection of Vanalden and Rosita Street. Enthusiastic about this potential for community improvement, TPOA is happy to assist. Board members Cheryl Crane and Beth Nelson volunteered to help.

It is important to Povar that this be a neighborhood project, and a questionnaire is being prepared for circulation in the area, seeking ideas and consensus for the project from the residents. Already a number of meetings have been held - --- with a landscape designer, the city architect responsible for oversight of all median projects, Tarzana Elementary School and others. All this, not to determine whether to proceed with plans, but how best to carry them out.

DOG WALKING ETIQUETTE

First mentioned in the Summer Newsletter last year, the subject of limiting the health hazard of dog feces by making plastic bags available along well traveled paths has not been forgotten. While the equipment is available, approval of both the Public Works Department of Engineering and Street Division is necessary. As a result of discussion now under way, more definitive information should be available in the next Newsletter.



TAX RETURNS - HELP FOR SENIORS

**Again, TPOA Vice President Cheryl Crane is volunteering her expertise to help seniors with their tax returns. She is available Wednesday and Thursday in the Mayor's Small Business Center
19040 Vanowen Street
Reseda**

**Call for an appointment:
(818) 756-8217**

(You may recognize this address as that of Councilman Dennis Zine at the corner of Vanalden and Vanowen)