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Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE



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March Madness

By BEN LEE

So what exactly is going on in our neighborhood's real estate market? It's a rather interesting phenomenon that I'm seeing and I'd like to share it with you since, as a neighbor and local real estate broker, this trend affects us all. The prices of homes in our area have increased dramatically and the inventory is extremely low. You don't need to be an expert to know that smaller, less extravagant homes are selling for more money than expected due to the simple fact that there's a popular price point that is essentially vacant from the marketplace.

This may come as an absolute jaw-dropping shock to the residents who have lived in this neighborhood for many years: there are a handful of homes currently under construction that will be soon be sold in the 4-5 million dollar range. Did you ever imagine when you purchased your home decades ago that this would be what the future would hold? Homes in this high price point are the premier properties of the area and will have every imaginable amenity known to a potential homeowner: the perceivable 'best' in finishes, appliances, layout, views, technology, yard and infrastructure. The buyers of these properties want to move in to what they would expect to be the highest possible quality of home and will

certainly accept nothing less than top-of-the line in every detail.

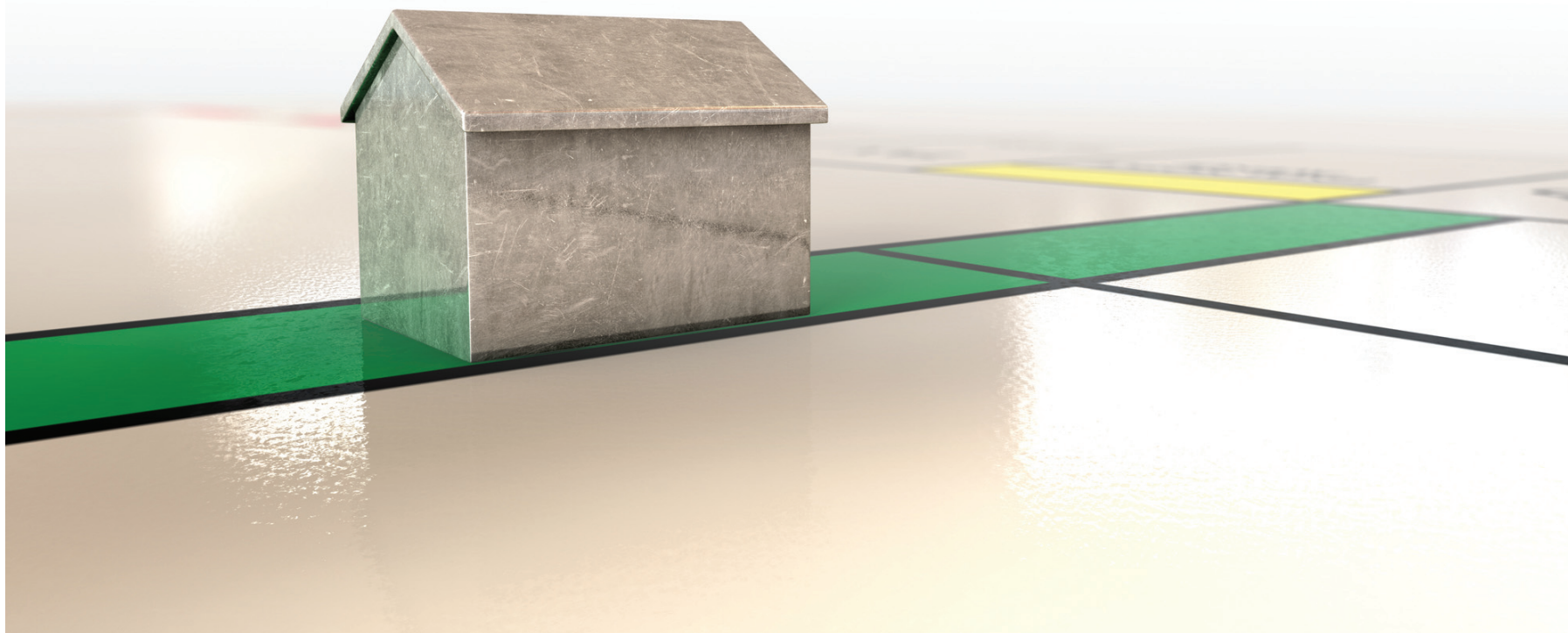
Selling these homes at such a high price point helps all of our home values, however there is still an enormous market for homes of slightly less than superstar status. If you imagine a Monopoly board, I have several clients who are looking for homes that are more St. Charles Place than Park Place but the challenge we're facing is that the "Purples" and "Oranges" are in very short supply. And now that the Reading Railroad (or Expo as the case may be but I was rolling with this Monopoly theme) is coming to town, our neighborhood will most likely experience an influx of even more interested buyers who want to live here but can't afford the top of the pyramid priced home.

So, the question becomes: where does your home fit into all of this and is now a good time to sell? The homes that would fall into the 1.5-2.5 million category are those that have some but not a whole lot of significant updates. These homes have been loved and lived in for quite some time and don't offer an abundance of modern features. They may be a bit more modest in square footage and lot size and probably follow a one-time popular floor plan: slightly smaller somewhat more formal, segmented rooms for the living and family areas with bedrooms split between the top and bottom

floors. These homes often offer a great deal of original charm and beauty that some buyers would bend over backwards to buy and appreciate as much as the original or second or third owners likely once did. Developers are not the only ones who are looking to buy, rebuild and resell. I get calls daily from young couples and new families who love our area and want to raise their children here, in simple homes without all the bells and whistles and who aren't afraid to do some updating themselves. They love the schools, the shops and the neighbors- if only they had an affordable home to buy.

So, the answer to part two of the original question, 'Is this a good time for me to sell?' is a pretty solid Yes. If you've been contemplating a change anyway... maybe the house feels too big now that the kids have gone to college or maybe you're fed up with LA traffic and you have family you're anxious to see more of in Small Town, USA... today is a pretty good time for you to sell and without a doubt maximize your original real estate investment.

Is this a challenging time in Cheviot Hills and Beverlywood real estate? Without a doubt! But to every problem there is always a solution and from one resident to another: living in an extremely desirable and very popular neighborhood is a pretty good problem to have.



My featured listings

BEN LEE - ESTATES SALES

Cheviot Hills – ACTIVE!



A classic Spanish style 5 BR / 3.5 BA home in the heart of Cheviot Hills. Once in the foyer you'll notice exquisite Travertine tiled floors throughout and Spanish style nuances including exposed beams, stately fireplaces and curved archways leading from one room to the next. The remodeled kitchen offers all the amenities one could hope for: Sub Zero refrigerator, Viking range, plenty of counter and storage space, wine fridge and separate breakfast nook. The kitchen flows right to the family room, complete with built in media-friendly cabinetry and drenched in light thanks to the abundance of windows and easy access to the backyard. Back indoors and up the stairs you'll find all four of the home's bedrooms, some with both delightful rooftop views in addition to romantic Romeo and Juliet balconies. With large walk in closets and immaculately designed and updated bathrooms, the living quarters of this home are quite remarkable. Offering additional features such as separate laundry room, formal dining room, recessed lighting, plenty of storage and built-ins, this nearly 3300 square foot home located in the award winning Castle Heights Elementary school district is the property you've been looking for. Your search is over.

10269 Dunleer Dr – Offered at \$2,399,000

Beverlywood – ACTIVE!



A spectacular home in Beverlywood, this 5 bedroom/3.5 bathroom, recently remodeled, two-story traditional is a sight to behold. Originally built in 1941 but fully updated just a few years ago, this home offers sumptuous details such as: all hardwood floors, crowned moldings, large and spacious bedrooms, sweeping views, Bay windows, formal wainscoting, and so much more. The chef's kitchen has stainless Viking appliances, beverage and wine refrigerators, granite countertops with designer backsplash and a convenient breakfast bar. There is an attached formal dining room, great family room as well as a picture-perfect fireplace that anchors the formal living room. Up the dramatic staircase, one will find the master bedroom suite complete with high peaked ceilings and a bathroom with dual sinks in the marble topped vanity and a sunken spa tub. There is a whimsical children's wing with bathroom and every inch of this home had a designer's eye in mind. This philosophy extends to the outdoors where you'll experience a highly stylish outdoor black and white covered patio in addition to a lovely stretch of grass for kids to use and enjoy. Located in the Canfield school district, this home just may be your next dream come true.

9500 Sawyer St – Offered at \$2,318,000

Castle Heights -ACTIVE!



Finished, furnished and ready to sell! A stunning remodel of a traditional Beverlywood home. This open and inviting 3 BR / 2.5 BA home has been meticulously updated with every attention to detail. Past the spacious front porch and across the threshold, walk down the wide hallway to find the great room that extends to the chef's kitchen with stainless steel appliances, enormous island and copious amounts of cabinet space. The large master suite employs a wall of closets as well as a generous walk-in. The 2nd and 3rd bedrooms are joined by a Jack and Jill BA that has been completely redone. This CALgreen certified home is located in the award winning Castle Heights school district and must be seen to be fully appreciated!

3013 S Beverly – Offered at \$1,375,000

Castle Heights -IN ESCROW!



This utterly cheerful house on a corner lot in the Castle Heights neighborhood has all the elements for a fine, family home. Original California oak hardwood floors, new moldings and fixtures, windows in every room to create spaces basked in brightness and light, this extremely livable 3 bedroom/1.5 bath is flush with amenities. Outside you'll find a private fenced-in yard, an oversized two car garage. Nestled within one of the Westside's friendliest neighborhoods a short distance to shops and transportation as well as the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School, be impressed with this delightful home soon as it won't be on the market for long.

9402 Hargis St – Offered at \$1,095,000

Santa Monica -ACTIVE!



Welcome home! Located on the border of Santa Monica and minutes from Brentwood, this bright and inviting condominium is the perfect fit for a young professional. Clean, updated and basked in light, this 2 bedroom/2.5 bath unit also offers an open floor plan, gorgeous flooring, bright kitchen with arched window and breakfast bar, crown molding throughout, fireplace and patio. Upstairs you will find the laundry plus a pleasant balcony with a treetop view. Located near many fun shops and restaurants in this highly desirable Westside location, this will indeed be a welcome retreat to come home to.

1457 Centinela Ave #3 – Offered at \$599,000

Westwood -ACTIVE!



This one bedroom/one bath condominium in a highly coveted Westwood Charter Elementary School neighborhood is the perfect property for a starter home. This special unit offers such amenities as hardwood and vinyl floors, intriguing light fixtures, new windows and doors including a custom made barn door for privacy, extra storage space in the underground parking lot, large, spacious rooms basked in light and ease of access to the shops and restaurants of Westwood, Rancho Park and Century City. Located on the second floor of a building with only sixteen units, this unit is extremely comfortable and has only one wall in common with another unit. This condominium is private, quiet and deserves your attention today.

1925 Overland Ave #206 – Offered at \$475,000

Cheviot Hills - NEW CONSTRUCTION!



Imagine an idyllic oasis in the heart of Cheviot Hills. Featuring brand new, top-of-the-line construction that is setting the standard of excellence for homes in our area. This work of art (in progress) from Diamond West Distinctive Homes promises to be nothing short of exquisite. This nearly 5700 Sq Ft, 6 Bedroom / 7 Bath home will stun you from the onset. Featuring a formal living room, formal dining room, family room and entertainment loft, the soaring, vaulted entryway will bask the entire two-story home in light. This property will be nothing short of an architectural triumph that will make any family proud to call home.

29214 Cavendish Dr – Offered at \$5,250,000

Cheviot Hills - NEW CONSTRUCTION!



This brand new 4,449 sq. ft home in the Cheviot Hills area sits on a 7,567 sq. ft. lot. This two story home is designed with a Cape Cod inspired facade featuring colonial windows with shutters and planter shelves, paneled french doors, a trellised upstairs balcony and a covered downstairs porch. Inside is an expansive and modern floor plan with central air conditioning, a study, playroom and a gourmet kitchen with island. There are four bedrooms upstairs and another bedroom downstairs. The master suite has a fireplace, access to the upstairs balcony, his and hers walk in closets, dual vanities, a free standing tub and a spacious shower. Located on a corner lot adjacent to Rancho Park Golf Course with city skyline views.

10452 Lorenzo Pl – Offered at \$4,500,000

Beverlywood -IN ESCROW!



Nestled in a picturesque nook this warm and inviting completely renovated 3 BR/2 BA home is brimming with character. In the kitchen you'll find state-of-the-art stainless appliances, granite counters, breakfast bar and designer backsplash. Each BR is generously sized and has ample closets. The master leads to the yard where you'll find mature fruit trees and absolute privacy. The yard is also accessible from the den and has a flat grassy area and patio perfect for entertaining. The fully finished, detached garage is currently used as a home office/gym. Additional amenities include tankless water heater, central AC/Heat, recessed lighting and proximity to the award winning Castle Heights Elementary.

9436 Hargis St – Offered at \$1,249,000

Cheviot Hills – FOR LEASE!



Located on a quiet, tree-lined street in the Country Club Estates area of Cheviot Hills, this nearly 2600 sq. ft, 4 BR/3 BA lease is stylish and functional. The recently updated kitchen offers granite counters, plenty of cabinetry, a pass through window perfect for entertaining and a breakfast nook with access to the backyard. The flat and immense backyard includes a uniquely designed swimming pool, spa, meditative sauna and BBQ. The bedrooms are ample in size and the closet in the master is big enough to double as another room! With plenty of storage space, a 2 car attached garage and located in the award winning Castle Heights Elementary school district, this welcoming house will make your family feel right at home.

3044 Danalda Dr – Offered at \$6,500 Per Month

Cheviot Hills happenings

Neighborhood Memories

By Michael Harris

Part five of an on-going series about memories of our neighborhood from the old days.

There were always many celebrities that graced our neighborhood beginning in the post-war years. There was Joe Valentine who had been a captain in the army doing propaganda films who returned to be the ace photographer on Joan of Arc. Stan Laurel lived on a big house on a double lot on Glenbarr. There was a big house on Forrester backing onto Hillcrest where a heart throb of the day lived named, John Payne. Johnny Weissmuller who was an early Tarzan lived on Lorenzo and his mesne successor as Tarzan was Lex Barker who lived on Glenbarr with his then wife, the very beautiful, Arlene Dahl. There was also the character actress named Mary Treen who was in many

a film as a comedic sidekick. There was also June Haver who lived on Forester near Motor in a big house overlooking the California country club where she celebrated her nuptials to a trumpet player named Jimmy Zito before she freed herself of him to marry in a more stable situation to Fred McMurray.

These were a few of the celebrities, but would I not be remiss to name a few of the less celebrated but equally important locals that gave fabric to the neighborhood in days of yore. There was Jimmy Miller, Jack Fadem, Jerry Korngold, Don Searle, Bill Von Wittenberg, John Heffernan, the Aiken brothers, Fred Rutberg and of course the stalwarts Bill Pines, Skippy Felber, Bob Solton, Frank Shiells, Jimmy Johnson and Norm Ross and Peter Frumkess. That was the male contingent but we cannot forget the likes of Sheila Fenton, Agnes Gossil,



Johnny Weissmuller as Tarzan

Sue Vogel, the Gross sisters, the Sidebotham sisters, Patsy Kurtsy and Babs Bystrom. Where are they all now, only Facebook and Google may know for sure, but these are what

those years of Eisenhower prosperity relied on to make a geographic area a real hometown.

Marching Forward



By BEN LEE

Mark your calendars for three important events in March! Baseball has officially begun! Come on out for Opening Ceremonies at Rancho Park at 10:30am on March 5th and cheer on all the young ballplayers of the Cheviot Hills Pony Baseball Association. Nothing is more pleasantly all American than neighbors coming together to sing the National Anthem, enjoy a hot dog and watch a ball game featuring fine young players.

Then, later that same evening, you're invited to attend Overland Elementary School's fundraising auction held in Santa Monica. The

following weekend (3/12), Castle Heights Elementary School will be holding its auction and you are also warmly welcome to attend. These local schools rely heavily on the funds made as a result of these auctions (and great deals are always available to the buyers!). If you are curious about either of these schools, the auctions are also a great way to meet current parents, teachers and the principal.

I'm a proud sponsor of both schools (of course a bit partial to Castle Heights at which I'm a current parent, too) and I encourage you to support their efforts, as well. Strong local schools benefit all homeowners, regardless of whether or not your family is affiliated.

Raffle Is back!

By BEN LEE

Back by popular demand, Ben Lee Properties presents your chance to win a \$50 dollar gift certificate to a local business! This month, in honor of neighborhood baseball starting up again, we are raffling off a \$50 gift certificate to everyone's favorite post-game wrap up burger joint: Islands! Enjoy fifty dollars worth of all that fine food served with a

festive Hawaiian flair. Simply email me: ben@benleeproperties.com and write 'ISLANDS' in the subject line. In the body of the email, let us know the best way to reach you. That's it! We'll pick a winner at random at the end of the month. And here's a hint if you really want that competitive edge: You can double your chances to win by liking Ben Lee Properties on Facebook. Mahalo and good luck!

