

Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

Cover art by Nick Yokich -
read the story behind
Nick's art on the back page.

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All Aboard!

By BEN LEE

With summer officially underway, I thought: what better way to celebrate the sand and surf than to visit the beach by testing out our neighborhood's new Expo line? For the first time in decades, a train will pick us up in Cheviot Hills and take us all the way to the ocean. With the added bonus of practically door-to-door service without the headaches of sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic or paying insanely high fees to park our car, I figured taking a train would be a terrific vehicle to enjoy Santa Monica in a whole new way.

So, we set out on our adventure but by the time my family got ready to go, it was a bit late in the day to enjoy the beach. Undeterred, we decided to just head west and not go all the way to the ocean. We discovered it was an easy walk to the Palms Station from our house, especially because we weren't lugging any bags, toys, boogie boards or gear. Unencumbered, even with three kids in tow, the walk was a pleasant one. Once we arrived at the station, we needed to purchase tap cards to board and having to figure out the automated kiosk system with the added pressure of people waiting behind us in line, was a bit stressful. The thought of missing our train due to our inability to navigate all the options and swipe a credit card effectively was nerve-racking. My last experience with taking public transportation to the beach was when I was a kid and it was so easy to just hop on the Big Blue Bus, toss two quarters



in the driver's slot and pull the cord when he was nearing my stop. The train's reliance on tap cards was slightly more daunting but eventually we managed to figure it out and, amazingly, a minute or two later the train pulled up and we got on. It was pretty cool to see the Westside by train. Our boys in particular loved seeing stores and intersections they recognized from tracks high above. My wife and I were mentally trying to figure out how many years it would be before the boys would be old enough to take the train by themselves and how fun it would be for them to experience the same level of

independence we both felt when we were younger and took a bus to meet up with friends.

About 10-15 minutes after leaving Palms, we neared our exit at Colorado by the pier and there was a certain satisfaction seeing how much miserable traffic there was clogging up all the streets in Santa Monica, knowing we were whizzing right past it all. We also felt like we were doing a small part to help the environment by being on public transportation vs. adding our pollution with the rest of the commuters. The fact we didn't have to deal with the stress and anxiety of looking for parking among all that congestion was also extremely liberating.

After the train came to its stop, we got off, strolled a bit onto 3rd Street Promenade and had a relaxing dinner at Ye Olde King's Head before walking back to the Santa Monica station to re-board the train to come home.

From a financial standpoint, at a fare of 1.75 per person each way (plus an extra dollar to purchase each card), for a family of 5, it probably would've

cost the same amount of money to valet park our car somewhere, however, the experience was still worth it. It was rather nice to all sit together in the train and make conversation, without needing to concentrate on the road and other vehicles, all while pointing out sights to one another that are often missed while stuck in a car. Would we opt to do it again? Probably not too soon because the bottom line is: driving five people from point A to point B at non-congested times of day is still pretty easy. It's one thing if the train takes you exactly where you want to go but most of the stops are still a ways away from other destinations within the greater Westside area and transferring from the train to a bus to complete the journey feels onerous.

I will, however, take the train again if I have a Friday night concert downtown or basketball game at the Staples Center. Given the choice between spending hours stuck in rush hour traffic or hopping on a train and speeding all the way through town—I'd pick the train in a New York minute.



My featured listings

BEN LEE - ESTATES SALES

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. A grander expression of the Traditional style, and set back but flush with the street allowing for access with ease, the beauty of this nearly 5700 square foot, 6 bedroom/7 bathroom 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. An impressive kitchen with walk-in pantry will have only the finest in appliances and finishes. There are two bedrooms downstairs, ideal for maid and/or guest, each with an adjoining bathroom. All of the shared living spaces downstairs flow together in harmony, punctuated by elements that give the home its character: Bay windows; a computer alcove;

fireplaces; even a cozy library with built in bookshelves.

Travel up the dramatic, curved staircase to behold the second story that includes a master suite like none other! Enormous does not even begin to describe the scope of the master bedroom, walk in closet and en suite bathroom. There is also a terrace so that when the French Doors open, the inhabitants can enjoy a sprawling view. Down the hall from the master is the entertainment loft and children's bedrooms, each with their own conveniently attached bathroom.

The backyard will provide the paradise a buyer of this caliber has come to expect and deserve. Complete outdoor kitchen, dazzling swimming pool and spa, covered patio for entertaining.

Situated on an over 10,000 square foot lot in the award winning Castle Heights School District and including the most state-of-the-art technological advancements in home security, lighting, sound and CCTV equipment, this property will be nothing short of an architectural triumph that will make any family proud to call home.



Please call for Private showings! Watch my social media for open house information!

2921 Cavendish Dr – Offered at \$5,250,000

Beverlywood -



Open House Sunday JULY 10th 2pm-5pm

9720 Beverlywood St – Offered at \$1,299,000

A warm, comfortable, extremely livable home in Beverlywood, this three bedroom, two bath home has many enviable features: A newly remodeled kitchen with stainless steel appliances and granite countertops that overlooks the living room, creating an effortless flow and vast extension of space. Hardwood floors extend from room to room. French doors allow for light to stream in as well as a view of the rustic inspired backyard complete with towering privacy hedges, mature fruit trees, lawn, enormous deck and pergola. Back inside, the Italian Travertine fireplace keeps the cozy family room warm. The very bright master bedroom boasts two big closets (one being an oversized walk-in) as well as sliding doors that lead out to the backyard. A brand new, tastefully redecorated bathroom offers a fir ceiling above and more Travertine tile below. Additional highlights include: a new roof, new windows, air conditioning, a separate laundry area with ample cabinetry, storage space and granite countertop for folding. Conveniently located a hop, skip and jump from the neighborhood park and award winning Castle Heights Elementary School, this much loved home is ready to move into today.

Cheviot Hills -



Open House Sunday JULY 10th 2pm-5pm

2864 McConnell Dr – Offered at \$3,895,000

First time on market in over 50 years, rare opportunity to own one of the most iconic homes in Cheviot Hills. Perched atop a hill with views of the neighborhood from virtually all directions, this 3,670 square foot home is a stately nod to Cheviot Hills' unique architectural past with a door open to future possibilities. 4BR+3.5BA plus study. A formal living room with tremendously high ceilings, over-sized fireplace & exquisite French doors that lead to the rather majestic backyard. Formal dining room leads to the kitchen that overlooks the enormous great room. This great room, with an assortment of built-ins & play space also offers direct access to the backyard. Travel up the grand staircase & be entranced by the different views that await you from each direction from the variety of rooms. Each bedroom has ample closets & the sizes of the rooms are so generous that they could be newly configured. Great lot of 11,400 sq. ft, the backyard offers pool, mature landscape & pergola covered dining. Castle Heights Elementary.

Beverlywood Adjacent – OFF MARKET



8954 Helms Place – Offered at \$899,000

In one of the most up-and-coming neighborhoods for young families, this Beverlywood Adjacent, traditional style, 3 bedroom/3 bath, 1771 sq. ft home is conveniently nestled within a stone's throw from downtown Culver City and the SORO arts district with easy access to the Expo lines. Amenities of this lovely home include: new central heating/air, upgraded kitchen with new appliances and granite counter tops, hardwood floors, drought tolerant landscaping, double pane windows and hardwood floors. The spacious rooms and living spaces have been adorned with new crown moldings and doors and there is an enviable large walk-in closet in the master bedroom. Boasting a charming backyard, perfect for entertaining and outdoor barbecues, this home is tailor made for a family looking to put down its roots in style.

Cheviot Hills -



Open House Sunday JULY 10th 2pm-5pm

10615 Rountree Dr – Offered at \$1,999,000

A recently remodeled family home on Roundtree, with three bedroom/three bath, on a 2000+ square foot property. New closets, new hardwood floors new bathrooms, crowned moldings and a new kitchen are just a handful of the improvements made to this already charming home. The formal living room offers intricately leaded glass cabinetry as well as a cozy brick fireplace. A terrific flow is created by how the den (with an abundance of built-ins and display cases) leads to the breakfast nook and stylish kitchen. Granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, country farmhouse sink and Wolf range will inspire any at-home chef. Throughout the house, you'll find stained glass windows in a variety of places, offered like unexpected, jewel-wrapped gifts. The exquisite master bedroom suite has an enormous closet, and beautiful master bath with sunken tub and marble flourishes. Complete with two additional bedrooms, a separate office, two-car attached garage and located in the award winning Overland School district, this delightful home is ready for your family to move in today.

Pacific Palisades - NEW LISTING!



1145 Corsica Dr – Lease \$16,000

Beverlywood -



9032 David Ave – Offered at \$1,299,000

Cheviot Hills -



Open House Sunday JULY 10th 2pm-5pm

10271 Bannockburn Dr – Offered at \$1,699,000

Cheviot Hills -



10367 Cheviot Dr – Offered at \$2,095,000

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Cheviot Hills happenings

Ahh... Memories

By Michael Harris

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

These recollections are of a miscellaneous kind. A present throwback to the days of yore is the little clapboard office building still standing at the southwest corner of Beverwil and Pico. I believe it housed an insurance agency and real estate office through the years but it is no different now than in the 1940's.

Now while the Cheviot Hills real estate brokerage king is Ben Lee in the old days it was dominated by Heyler real estate which has now disappeared along with the

freight trains that used to make nightly runs along the Exposition tracks waking up the neighborhood as it traversed the bridge atop

Motor Ave which was a narrow street under the trestles until it was widened just as Beverly Glen and Santa Monica has been greatly expanded in recent years.

Repairs of the bicycles in those days was dominated by the Hans Ohrt bike store in Beverly Hills with the iconic sign by the ex-Olympian who founded the store "mankind would be better off if everyone rides a bike." I agree with the sentiment and the actual sign lives on in an obscure corner of present day Helen's Bike Store on Broadway in Santa Monica.

In the 1940's the Herald Examiner sponsored an annual swim meet at the Coliseum Olympic Pool. The people who participated from Cheviot trained at the West Side Tennis Club which is still there at Motor and Manning although through the years many different owners and names have graced the facility but thankfully it has not yet succumbed to the temptation of a housing development.

More names from those years include the wonderful moniker Argyle Nelson whose name can still be seen on old movie credits on TCM; there was and is the house on Lorenzo facing the golf course that was known as the Spreckel's house because its



The Pacific Red Car rolls through our streets in the 1940s.

owner was a member of the famous family that founded the sugar empire of that name; and there was David Mirisch and Steve Sobol and Marjorie and Bob Solton on the corner of Cheviot and Patricia.

Many of us would attend the UCLA big bonfire that was built by the pep team at the college before the big game

with USC where Westwood Blvd now enters the campus.

That was usually a dangerous and smoggy stunt that was banned pretty early on. But of course Westwood in those days really was a village where we would go occasionally to shop and to ice skate at the Sonia Heine facility.

Artist rendering

By BEN LEE

When an art teacher at Overland Elementary asked 5th grader Nick Yokich to draw an example of anything showing perspective last month, I was very happy to see his finished masterpiece! What better way to show it's a street than by placing a 'Ben Lee Properties'



bus bench along side of it? Thanks, Nick! I'd like a copy of this one for my office!

Ramen raffle recipient

By BEN LEE

Thank you so much to everyone who entered the raffle. An overwhelming response!! Congratulations to Brian Adler the lucky winner of a \$50 gift certificate. Hope you enjoy a delicious ramen bowl on Ben Lee Properties. To all those who entered and didn't win this time, don't worry- there will be another



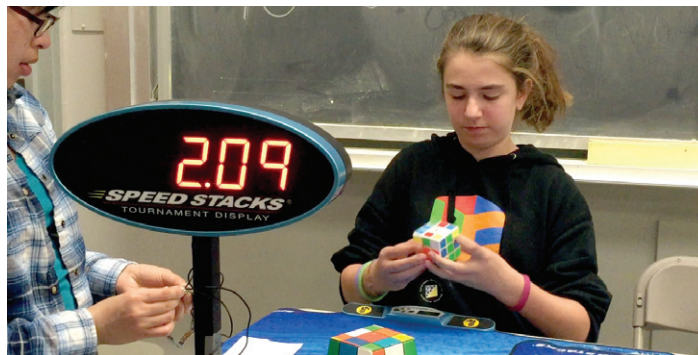
raffle soon. Keep checking back here for more information next month.

Sophie Berman, Cubemaster

By BEN LEE

Remember the Rubik's Cube from the 80's and how impossible it was to solve?

Well, Beverlywood resident and recent Palms Middle School graduate Sophie Berman has proven not only is it solvable, but it's possible to be a champion! Thirteen year old Sophie was inspired to pick up a Rubik's Cube after a teacher at religious school bragged he could solve it in 25 seconds. Sophie purchased her brother's old, dusty cube for 75 cents, studied various methods for solving it online and the next thing she knew, she not only learned how to do it, she discovered she was pretty good at it, too! Sophie's only been working with cubes for about a year and has achieved her personal best time solving it in an astounding 8.24 seconds. Like a true champion, she rarely rests on her laurels and hones her craft all the time. Says



Sophie, "I always bring a cube with me in the car and use my phone to time myself... Cubing is really all I do in my free time, so I practice a lot. I also do it when I'm supposed to be doing homework."

Sophie tries to attend competitions as often as possible and says even though she admits it's fun to win an event or two, that's not why she goes. "I go to have fun and to be around people who have the same hobby as me." Sophie balks at the title of 'champion' and readily admits that she has a long way to go before coming close to earning

that title, despite how quickly she can solve a puzzle.

Next up will be attempting to solve it blindfolded! But until then, Sophie is happy attending competitions and is even fine with them being mostly a boys' club. She hopes, though, that won't be the case for long. "I don't really mind the fact that there are very few girls who do this, but I definitely hope that more girls start cubing." Until then, Sophie is content to keep working at getting better, secure in the knowledge that it's hip to be square. Or cubed, as the case may be!