

NO. 48
March 2017

Cheviot Hills

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BEN LEE WAS NAMED
THE #1 REALTOR
IN COLDWELL BANKER
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School Daze

By BEN LEE

For some, the month of March brings the madness of NCAA basketball. For others, it's the bacchanalian anticipation of St. Patrick's Day. But if you have children, March may have a whole other association: it's the month that school acceptance letters are mailed out.

There are so many great choices for a variety of schools in the Los Angeles area, it almost feels as though you're causing your child psychological damage to just go locally without getting a sense of what else is out there. Between the handful of charters, privates, magnets and the plain old local schools, there is a lot to figure out. Taking the journey can be done with the help of a consultant or braving it alone; but either way, you'll likely experience the panic that comes with scheduling all the different tours and deadlines; not to mention the laborious hours that will be spent writing and re-writing applications; selecting tutoring companies, trying to get your son/daughter to prepare for the ISEE exam, signing up for the test before all the seats on the Westside are taken and encouraging your child to take it again when he/she would rather be doing anything but! Then there's debating the merits and negatives of each potential institution and undoubtedly discussing the plan with friends (but in vague brush strokes so as not to give away too many details). There are fierce proponents of public education who turn their noses up at private and an equal number of charter school fans who don't like any other option. Opinions are steadfast, judgement runs rampant and friendships have actually been known to break depending on what side of the fence you stand on.

What my wife and I have discovered in our 12+ years of being parents is that every child is different and has a different set of needs. Where one decides to send one's



children to school shouldn't be taken personally by anyone else, however (and unfortunately), that isn't always the case. People's feelings about various types of schools can be extremely passionate but, in the end, your child's individual needs have to come before toeing the political line within your sphere of friends.

We sent each of our sons to Castle Heights (our local elementary) because it was important to us to take advantage of this fabulous school. It was a blessing for our family. Walking to school in the morning, the ease of play dates in the afternoon, the camaraderie of the families we met; it was the epitome of a true neighborhood school. Academically speaking it was great, too. But when our eldest passed out of 5th grade math while he was still in second grade, we knew we had to consider a change. Teachers with a full class of kids could only do so much to keep his individual needs met. Our youngest also showed signs that he might not last the entire six years. An avid and voracious reader with a penchant for being the class clown, he was starting to get in trouble by secretly telling the other pre-kindergarteners how to use letter blends to create words that, let's

just say, weren't classroom appropriate. His teacher couldn't get too upset with him since he was technically paying attention to her lesson, just using it in a slightly different way. She ended our conference by saying: "He's starting to corrupt the other children." So, Vincent followed his big brother Mason out the door and the two of them have been happy and challenged ever since in a school suited to their needs.

Our middle son Spencer has been absolutely thrilled to stay at Castle Heights for the duration and we couldn't be happier that it was the perfect fit for him. But, alas, middle school beckons and where to go is at issue. His first choice is Palms because he loves the idea of going to a big school with a top-notch music program. Many of the parents who helped make Palms great came from Overland and Castle Heights and I know they've worked tirelessly for the strong and stellar reputation it has. But, that nagging feeling of: 'what else is also out there???' continued to persist, causing us to apply to a few other places for him: a private, a magnet and a charter, in an attempt to cover all of our academic bases. We don't know yet where he'll end up

going but figured it's good to have a few choices from which to select.

In the end, all any of us want is to do the best we possibly can for our children. I think I went to four or five different schools before the age of 12 because my parents kept feeling that the perfect place was just out of reach. I used to think they were crazy for moving me around so much but now I can kind of see why it happened. As nervous first-time parents, they just wanted what was best for me. While it was tough to keep moving from school to school, I think in retrospect it helped me, too. One of the traits I'm most proud of is an ability to be open and friendly to everyone I meet. A skill honed from always being that new kid in class and having to start over so many times in so many new schools.

No matter what happens this March, it's nice to know that wherever your child goes to school, there are always options in our great city to make a change if necessary. And, if you happen to enroll in the perfect place for your family, then consider yourself lucky. But don't relax for too long because those college applications will be due before you know it!

My featured listings

BEN LEE - ESTATES SALES

Cheviot Hills – COMING SOON!

6 Bed/ 7 Bath



2764 Club Drive – \$3,599,000

A tranquil, neutral palate and abundance of natural light help create the Nantucket meets Zen-like atmosphere of this newly built, spacious 6 bedroom/7 bath home in Cheviot Hills. Set behind a gate on a quiet street, this very private property offers understated luxury without compromising taste, elegance and function. This leads to the bright and open kitchen, massive pantry, generously sized island with designer pendants, wine refrigerator and unique breakfast banquette with windows overlooking both the great room as well as the beautiful backyard. Offering an oversized swimming pool, built in BBQ area, fire pit, outdoor shower and pool bathroom. Back inside and upstairs to the second level is where you'll find four of the six bedrooms, all equipped with massive closets and storage capabilities as well as beautifully designed bathrooms. A short distance from both Rancho Park and the award winning Overland School Elementary School.

Cheviot Hills – REDUCED!

5 Bed / 6 Bath 4,032 Sq.Ft. 23,416 Sq.Ft. Lot



2789 McConnell Drive – \$5,999,000

Step over the threshold of this phenomenal estate in Cheviot Hills and be transported to an era of grand Hollywood glamour. From its perch high atop one of the most enviable streets in the neighborhood, this magnificent Mediterranean style, 4,032 square feet (per public records) mansion on a 23,416 sq. ft lot was originally built in 1926. This home has all the makings of a fine castle on the hill. This remarkable estate includes a full, finished basement. There is also a detached and beautifully updated guest house/mother-in-law or maid's suite, garage space for 5 cars and a picturesque swimming pool that is the sparkling jewel in the ultra-private backyard crown. The master suite has his/her walk-in closets, designer bathroom, balconies and a tranquil sitting area~ the perfect spot to sip a morning coffee while glancing at the paper. Also upstairs you'll find handsome, at-home offices that could be used as-is or easily be transformed to a nursery, gym or any space of your imagination.

Cheviot Hills – ACTIVE!

6 Bed/ 8 Bath 7,374 Sq. Ft. 10,521 Sq. Ft. Lot



2788 Monte Mar Terrace – \$7,500,000

Considered to be one of the most prestigious properties in all of Cheviot Hills, this impressive 7,374 square feet architectural masterpiece has many astounding attributes. The Claes Oldenberg inspired sculpture of a giant flower pot sets the tone for this modern style estate, in which every square inch of livable space has been thoughtfully utilized in the most intelligent way. An elevator and central staircase unites each of the four floors, harmonizing the living and recreational spaces with the 6 bedrooms, 8 bathrooms, two offices and professional grade gym. Honey-hued hardwood floors, impossibly high ceilings, surround-sound speakers in every room, five separate zones for heating/air- every detail to the construction of this custom-designed home has been thoughtfully considered and executed with the highest quality craftsmanship. Three car garage, two fireplaces and incomparably pristine city views, this is the absolute statement home of the neighborhood.

Encino – IN ESCROW



15921 Royal Oak Road – \$5,500,000

6 Bed 7 Bath 7,886 Sq.Ft. 54,324 Sq.Ft Lot

A traditional, Tudor style English manor on one of the most desirable streets in Encino, this massive yet tasteful property gives new meaning to the word impressive. Stately mansion exudes a warm, southern charm mixed with old world sophistication. The ground floor offers a vast, formal living room with impossibly high ceilings, formal dining room with butler's pantry, wood paneled wine room, a bright conservatory/sun room, immaculate kitchen, and breakfast room with cozy brick fireplace. There is a den/study/library with wet bar and fireplace and a large en suite bedroom with his/her walk-in closets, separate vanity, and a bathroom with a sauna, sunken tub and three-headed shower.

Pacific Palisades – ACTIVE! LEASE



1145 Corsica – \$15,500 p/mo.

4 Bed 4.5 Bath, 3,652 Sq.Ft 12,000 Sq.Ft Lot

Lower Riviera section of Pacific Palisades. 4BD 4.5BA, 3,652 sq ft on a 12,000 sq ft lot. Private & updated home has a plethora of features to offer. Just off the entrance is the formal, stately living room with high coved ceilings & wood burning fireplace: a perfect spot for entertaining or to just spend a quiet afternoon. Down the foyer, an arched entryway leads into the grand study with tall wood beamed ceilings & into the adjacent formal dining room. A family room sits just beyond the study & dining room & connects to the kitchen, forming a great room with a wall of french doors & windows. Indoor/outdoor flow is effortless in the great room as it looks onto a brick patio & large private grass yard.

Cheviot Hills – PENDING



10574 Bradbury Road – \$2,899,000

4 Bed 3 Bath 3,708 Sq.Ft.

This stunning, Spanish style, 5 bedroom/5 bath, newly built home is nestled in the heart of Cheviot Hills and presents the utmost in luxury living. The formal living room has a dramatic, wood-burning fireplace and view to the enclosed front yard. The kitchen overlooks the vast and comfortable Great Room which leads to the lush and private backyard: an entertainer's dreamscape complete with salt water pool, Jacuzzi, built-in barbecue refrigerator and patio/grass space. A stone's throw to the award winning Overland Elementary School, this property is as impressive as it is practical and is ready to welcome you home.

Rancho Park – COMING SOON!



2801 Dunleer Place – \$1,699,000

3 Bed 3 Bath 2,500 Sq.Ft. 8,100 Sq.Ft Lot

Basked in light and warmth, this nearly 2,500 square foot, mid-century house is the embodiment of a true family home. Fully renovated with high, vaulted ceilings and an open floor plan make this already large and airy space feel even grander. A meticulously remodeled kitchen employs Kitchen Aid, stainless steel appliances and granite countertops. Just off the kitchen, there is a formal dining room, great for parties or just weeknight finer fare. Only a four minute walk to the award winning Overland Elementary school and offers additional amenities such as: hard wood floors, wainscoting, a brick fireplace and central air/heat. This is a home that truly has it all.

Now is a good time to sell.

Please call me to find out how to prepare your home for market and learn how my team and I use the latest tools of technology to market your property better than anyone else working in real estate today.

2864 McConnell Drive - Sold
10366 Cheviot Drive - Sold
10367 Cheviot Drive - Sold
2921 Cavendish - Sold
9402 Hargis - Sold

FLEXIBLE ALL CASH BUYER | LOOKING FOR 8,000 SQFT+ LOT. | CALL BEN IF INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING!!

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Cheviot Hills happenings

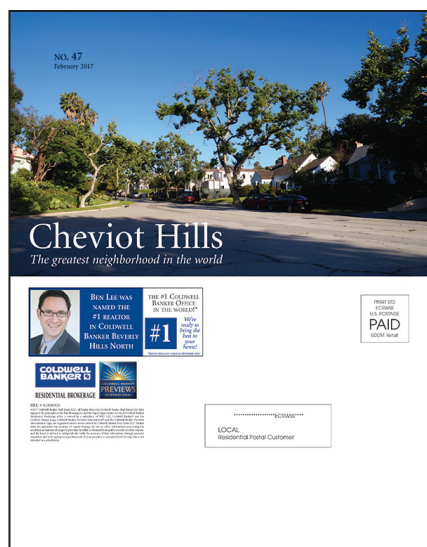
This month you choose your prize

amazon.com

By BEN LEE

Thank you to all those who entered this month's raffle- it was truly an overwhelming response. There are a lot of neighbors who love Yen's Sushi, but alas, there can only be one winner and that lucky person is Cheviot Hills' resident Carole Latter. Congratulations, you are the recipient of a \$50 gift certificate to this local Japanese restaurant!

We are excited about what we are offering up for our readers, neighbors and friends next. It's a photo contest and the winner will receive a \$100 Amazon gift certificate! All you have to do is take a picture while holding any issue of the Ben Lee Properties newsletter. Lightweight and easy to pack before your upcoming spring vacation, pose with the newsletter on an exotic get away or somewhere close to home if you don't have travel plans. The more creative the better and the sky's the limit. Submit the photo to my



email: ben@benleeproperties.com and write 'AMAZON' in the subject line. You have until after Memorial Day Weekend to submit your entry and we will choose a winner the first week in June. Hope you have fun with this one-- we can't wait to see the amazing places to which our newsletter will travel. Best of luck!

West Side Stories

By Michael Harris

We should now heave a sigh for the dearly departed. What ever happened to these West Side stalwarts? Restaurants: Love's BBQ on Pico; Mr. H on the top of the Hilton; Jimmy's in Century City; Monty's atop the Monty's Building in Westwood; Italy's Little Kitchen on Wilshire; Will Wright's on Beverly Drive; Romanoff's, and Scandia; Frascati's and the Hamlet and the Tail of the Cock and the Brown Derby and Perino's and Chasens and where else did Cheviot Hills and Beverlywood dine? You can't go home again. But what about your banking and financial needs: If you liked Liberty Savings, or Westdale Savings, or Security Pacific Bank or Home Savings or Enterprise Savings, Allstate Savings, or Great Western or Gibraltar Savings or Lytton Savings or Washington Savings and so many others you must now forego those names from the past and deal with the new behemoths which are maybe but not necessarily too big to fail. The old idea of the community savings and loan or the neighborhood banker who knew the depositors and could

help in a pinch has given way to the new mega institutions. The Newspapers that used to be in the neighborhoods but which are all departed include the Examiner, the Express, and the Mirror. The professional sports teams long gone are the Hollywood Stars, The Los Angeles Angels of the baseball minor leagues and the football teams were the Los Angeles Bulldogs and the Los Angeles Dons. The departed theaters are the Huntington Hartford and the Carthay Circle. There are many others in every field which we will miss and that touched our lives but progress does not concern itself with nostalgia.

If you are a fan of the West Side Stories you've read over the last few years here in this newsletter, perhaps you'll be excited to learn that these essays, musings and recollections written by former Cheviot Hills resident (and my father-in-law) Michael Harris, have been compiled into a book. A perfect gift for the neighborhood history enthusiast in your life! Keep reading this area of the newsletter to find out when the book will be available and how you can get a copy.

Need help navigating the world of summer programs?

By BEN LEE

It's not too late to call Cheviot Hills resident Jill Levin with Tips on Trips and Camps, a FREE Advisory Service for families looking for overnight camps and programs for their children and teens! Tips on Trips and Camps provides information on over 600 overnight camps, trips and programs for students ages 8 to 18+. In addition to traditional and specialty camps, TIPS represents programs offering student travel, language immersion, cultural exploration, outdoor adventure, community service, internships and academic study on college campuses in the US and abroad. Through interviews with directors, personal

visits to camps and programs in session and feedback from families of recent participants, TIPS on TRIPS gathers information to share with the families they advise – offering parents a thorough selection process and saving them valuable time.

Jill Levin has been part of the Tips Team for the past 15 years, evaluating and recommending overnight summer programs. She offers suggestions, provides websites and brochures, and then assists parents in distinguishing among programs to select the one that is right for their child. She is able to provide a wealth of information to Los Angeles families! You can contact her at: 310-202-8448 or Jill@TipsonTripsandCamps.com.



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