

# Cheviot Hills

*The greatest neighborhood in the world*



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# The Robert Frost Dilemma



*Robert Frost House, New Hampshire*

By BEN LEE

I've been thinking a lot about choices lately. I've heard many people say having choices is a good thing. I have to say, yes, I agree, however, there is pressure that comes with making a choice and how do we know the path we choose is the correct way to go?

My family had to make a decision recently about where to send one of our sons to middle school next fall. We were in a unique situation in that he had a handful of really strong options to consider but that didn't make the decision any easier. In fact, the choice became harder. We knew whichever school he picked would be strong academically, but there was a Robert Frost dilemma at hand: one school was extremely innovative and brand new and he would be the very first class to attend while the other was a proven, tried and true, respected institution of middle school learning. Both schools were tough to get into- one, an acceptance came after a series of essays, interviews and teachers' recommendations. The other school admits by lucky lottery and our son's number happened to be called. For days we all (my son included) weighed the pros and cons of both schools and what they had to offer. We didn't have the luxury of talking to anyone with experience regarding the new school, simply because no one in the universe has ever attended before. Choosing this

school would be based on blind faith that it would be something really original and wholly special.

On the other hand, we have had many friends whose children are either currently enrolled or have attended the other school and they were universally enamored with it. Generations, in fact, have graduated from this institution and went on to the finest universities in the nation. These students credit their time at this school as some of the happiest years in their lives.

So, ultimately it came down to picking between something we knew nothing about and a proven commodity. It was a decision that was weighted in the knowledge that turning down either one meant giving up on what could be our son's next great and incomparable opportunity.

But while we were mulling over this decision, it struck me as something similar to what I'm dealing with now as a real estate broker. When buyers have more than one option before them, sometimes the heavy weight of making a choice gets in the way of the bigger picture. They get bogged down in certain minuscule details that prevent them from realizing that a lot of these issues aren't as important as what the original goal was in the first place: buying a new home. So maybe the garage isn't as wide as one had hoped. Maybe the master bedroom isn't in the most ideal location. So the buyers move on and wait for the 'perfect' home to be dropped at their proverbial

doorstep. But while they're waiting for something that very well may not even exist, opportunities for new home ownership go to the next highest bidder.

That is, unless you opt to custom-build a home which these days is a very viable option. I included a note last month about this very subject. Getting in on a project from the earliest stages can be the perfect plan for those who really are specific when it comes to what they want and need in a home. Entering into this kind of transaction is the only way to really ensure that you're getting the floor plan you want, the fixtures you want, the appliances you want, the windows you want... and I am lucky in that I know of many of these new-build projects that are just getting started, waiting for eventual owners to start making the choices to create their very own personalized dream home.

Ultimate customization isn't always everyone's preference, though. Some people gravitate towards entering into a project that has been already completed. Maybe choices were made by someone else and were not the same as those that you would've selected but that's OK. You can live with it. Maybe it's easier to have had the road paved by someone else and now you can coast right down the front walkway in comfort with the confidence that the decisions were already made. In other words, sometimes having choices can be liberating, but they can often be a bit daunting, too.

In the end, we never really know what the 'right' thing to do ever is, we just have to try and trust our gut and hope for the best. From what we've learned, though, it's always better to have options than to be faced with none at all. And whether it's choosing between homes or schools or vacations or even jobs—these are good problems to have because when choosing between two or more good options, you can't go wrong.

As far as which path we picked to start the journey towards our middle son's next school, we ultimately opted for the proverbial road less travelled and chose the new school. We were happy with the decision but it was certainly hard to say no to the more established and respected institution. We arrived at this choice with the understanding that every day for him will be different, untested and potentially a little bumpy. But along with all the uncertainty also comes a healthy dose of excitement from trying something new. I came across this quote while we were deliberating about what to do and it really resonated with me during this time of uncertainty: Deepak Chopra said: "Every time you are tempted to react in the same old way, ask if you want to be a prisoner of the past or a pioneer of the future."

It's not always easy to make a decision or to do something new but hopefully the greater the leap, the more exhilarating the reward. Fingers crossed!



# My featured listings

BEN LEE - ESTATES SALES

Encino – IN ESCROW



**15921 Royal Oak Road** – \$4,995,000  
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. 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, and immaculate kitchen. There is a large en suite bedroom with his/her walk-in closets.

West Hollywood – ACTIVE!



**960 Larrabee Street #111** – \$449,000  
1 Bed/ 1 Bath

Super cute Pied-A-Terre in prime West Hollywood location, just a stone's throw from The Strip, cafes, restaurants and shopping. Open floor plan, with an enclosed patio. Sleek flooring, recessed lighting and an abundance of natural light throughout. Includes pool, rooftop deck with city views and secure entry. Unit includes one secure parking space and deeded extra storage.

Cheviot Hills – COMING SOON!



**10538 Butterfield Road** – \$1,625,000  
3 Bed/ 2 Bath

Rancho Park – COMING SOON!



**2637 Midvale** – \$1,600,000  
3 Bed/ 2.5 Bath

Cheviot Hills – ACTIVE!

6 Bed/ 7 Bath



**2764 Club Drive** – \$3,499,000

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.

Rancho Park – ACTIVE!

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



**2801 Dunleer Place** – \$1,689,000

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. There is a vast family room which boasts skylights and hand crafted built-ins for storage or displays. 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. There are beautiful bay windows throughout this 3 bedroom, 3 bathroom house allowing for sunlight to stream in to almost every room. In addition to the living and sleeping rooms, there is also an office/den and the entire home has ample closet and storage space. Situated on an 8100 sq. foot lot, this home is only a four minute walk to the award winning Overland Elementary school.

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.

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 presents the utmost in luxury living. The kitchen overlooks the vast and comfortable Great Room which leads to the lush and private backyard. A stone's throw to the award winning Overland Elementary School.

Cheviot Hills – GOLF COURSE VIEWS!



**10377 Monte Mar Drive** – \$3,395,000  
4 Bed/ 4 Bath 3,359 Sq.Ft., 8,707 Sq.Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills – COMING SOON!



**10585 Butterfield Road** – \$2,149,000  
4 Bed/ 4 Bath 3,122 Sq.Ft., 6,995 Sq.Ft. Lot

**FLEXIBLE  
ALL CASH  
BUYER  
LOOKING  
FOR 8,000  
SQFT+ LOT.  
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INTERESTED IN  
DISCUSSING!!**

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# Cheviot Hills happenings

## Coyote Ugly

By BEN LEE

There has been some concerned chatter amongst neighbors lately about what feels like an influx of coyotes, often brazen ones, in our neighborhood. It used to be a coyote would be spotted once in a while during what would be dusk or other somewhat predictable times during the day. Lately, though, that hasn't been the case and we've seen more coyotes than usual and they haven't seemed as fearful of humans as we would like and expect. Why is this the case and how can we keep ourselves and pets safe? Coyotes will wander around a neighborhood for one big reason: they're hunting for food. So, the first thing you can do is make sure your trash cans are closed with food particles safely inside. And this should go without saying but if you see a coyote, never feed it! Here are a few more tips about how you can

protect yourself, your children and your pets should you encounter a coyote around town:

- Keep unattended cats and dogs indoors or in completely enclosed runs, especially at night, and do not assume that a fence will keep a coyote out of your back yard.
- Accompany your leashed pet outside. Make sure you turn on lights if it is dark to check your back yard for unexpected wildlife.
- Keep dogs on short leashes while walking outside; the Division of Wildlife recommends a leash no longer than 6 feet.
- Leave noisemakers on hand to scare away coyotes that may enter your yard, such as whistles and horns.
- Don't run away or turn your back on a coyote.
- Do not allow a coyote to get in between you and your pet or child—keep children close to you.



Yell, clap hands, blow a whistle and try to make yourself look larger if you have a close encounter with a coyote.

These are tips meant to keep you and your loved ones safe but try not to be too worried if you do come within

close proximity of a coyote. Apparently you have a higher risk of being killed by an errant golf ball or flying champagne cork than a coyote attack but it's always better to err on the side of playing it safe.

## West Side Stories



By Michael Harris

The names of buildings, cities, monuments and streets often evoke the person behind the name. For example, there is the Mark Taper Forum. How many people now remember that he was a young real estate agent from England who moved to California for the weather after a successful career in London? He often came to dinner to my family's house on Glenbarr where he marveled at the open spaces in Long Beach. He decided to build Lakewood there, made a fortune on that project and then started American Savings and Loan which he



Mark Taper Forum

sold for a huge sum to Washington Mutual. He then started his foundation which lent the name to numerous buildings and institutions in the city.

Then there is the Arthur and Rosalind Gilbert foundation which funds lots of good works around the neighborhood. Arthur Gilbert also was a British ex-pat who came to our home for dinner and marveled at Mark Taper's artistry with money and then made his own fortune developing office buildings and amassing a gigantic collection of silver and mosaics on display at the LA County Museum.

Pico Blvd is named after an early governor of California so while he never dined on Glenbarr his namesake street does still course through the neighborhood. As for the Huntington

Gardens and Museum it was so named because it was originally the home of Henry Huntington who had made a fortune in railroads.

How many people recall Lucky Baldwin whose name is the reason for Baldwin Hills, and Baldwin Park? Lucky Baldwin was another big time developer of land in the old days. Of course Cheviot Hills is not named after a person, but rather a place on the border between England and Scotland in which many street names of the neighborhood are duplicated. Finally, how about Sherman Oaks, and Sherman Way named after the Civil War Hero General Sherman whose family had many ties to California and owned lots of property here and there in Los Angeles.

## RAFFLE/PHOTO CONTEST Win an Amazon Gift Card!

By BEN LEE

We are excited to bring you our Spring Raffle/Photo Contest! We're giving away a \$100 gift card to Amazon to the most amazing creative contribution we receive. Simply take any issue of our newsletter and take a photo of it in a fun locale. Easy to pack for your spring vacation or weekend get-away, bring a newsletter with you and snap away. We will take submissions through the end of the Memorial Day holiday weekend and choose a winner the first week of June. Please submit entries to my email: [ben@benleeproperties.com](mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com). You can also share to our Facebook page and find us on Instagram to share there, too. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call: 310- 858-5489. Thanks and good luck!

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