



Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

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PAID
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*****ECRWSS****

LOCAL
Residential Postal Customer

Princess Anne

By BEN LEE

I first met Anne Puccini many years ago at Castle Heights Elementary School. We each had three kids and our paths crossed on campus when two of those kids found themselves in the same class. My wife met her first and they became quick friends, Anne becoming a fixture at many of the parties we would host throughout the year. When Anne needed a place to live, she became a client. When Anne needed some extra money, she worked for me and for a brief time, became part of my team. But through it all, she was first and foremost a friend. Actually, she was more than that. She was an honorary member of our family. For a time our youngest son, Vincent, was convinced she was royalty and for years insisted on calling her, 'Princess Anne.' When it was discovered one summer that our boys came down with lice, it was Anne who came over every day for a week straight, to methodically comb through their hair until every last one of those pesky bugs were gone. Even when they were lice free, they asked for her to come over just to hang out and stay for dinner.

Anne was honest and straightforward; hilarious and the life of every party. In fact the party would often start when she'd open the front door and make her appearance. She had a magnetic personality and infectious laugh that you couldn't help but match when she was in your presence.

Anne got a job at Castle Heights a few years ago. Between her three kids



and all the work she did as a volunteer, it was a natural fit to put her on the payroll. If our school had a spinal cord, Anne Puccini as its Community Rep was it. She was the bridge between Castle Heights and the outside world. She was in every classroom, knew every student and practically every parent at school. She had a way of connecting with every person to make each one feel like he or she was the only person in the world. Her talent and gift to us was the selfless way she made us feel about ourselves. Would she tell you if you were being an idiot? Yes! But would she give her life for your love and friendship? Yes she would do that, too.

I'm writing about Anne because it was a great tragedy and shock, not just for my family and me but to so many others in our neighborhood, when Anne passed away last month. We are still trying to make sense of it all and it was important to me, as her friend, to write about the beautiful person and amazing mother I knew her to be. To remind myself and to others to look beyond surfaces and facades because how many times do we judge people based on how they look? It's so easy to glance at a gorgeous blonde with a ton of tattoos and assume she's less than what you'd discover if you knew her: a laser sharp, super sweet, outrageously funny person I will always miss.

If there is any silver lining to be

found in Anne's passing, it is the outpouring of love, hugs and support we have shared as a community. When a neighborhood as close and connected as this one is faced with the loss of one of its own, that's when our strength is truly tested. You can tell the difference between a neighborhood that is like extended family and one that is merely a series of houses on a block of streets. The same can be said for a local school. There is no comparison between just a place to send your kids to learn and a school that provides such an iron clad network of support that other parents become honorary aunts and uncles. A place where you can cry into the shoulder of your child's principal and he can make you feel better. Academics can be found anywhere. When you choose a school, you have to look beyond a score on a website because that won't tell you what's really important. Will this place be there for you and really care for you and your family? That should take precedence over everything else.

Wherever you live, hopefully you feel your neighbors have your back. It's a very special feeling to know that you are supported and comforted in times of pain and sorrow. We really suffered a loss upon the passing of our Anne and even though time will help heal the shock of what happened, we take comfort in knowing that at least we are not mourning alone.

Hug your loved ones and remind your friends that you are always there for them. I wish I could tell Anne that today.



My featured listings

BEN LEE - ESTATES SALES

Cheviot Hills

5 Bed / 6.5 Bath

COMING SOON!



2715 Forrester Dr – \$5,595,000

A luxurious Hamptons retreat on the most coveted street in Cheviot Hills, this impeccably designed and newly constructed estate by Diamond West Distinctive Homes will delight the most discerning of design aficionados. Artfully detailed wainscoting, custom mill work, and intricate custom built-ins set the tone throughout this amazing home. Greeted by a formal living room with fireplace and bay window, pass the formal dining room with butler's pantry to enter the gorgeous gourmet kitchen. The great room is overlooked by a bay window-basked breakfast nook. Glass doors fold away to reveal an outdoor room as a seamless extension of the interior, featuring fireplace, kitchen, even TV/audio wiring—perfect for al-fresco living. Admire the lush, private yard with uniquely unobstructed skies (no overhead power lines or wires—all utilities are underground). Back inside, the office sits conveniently adjacent to the great room. Past an elegant powder bath, the elevator transports down to a speakeasy-esque tavern and fun zone. Offering unlimited possibilities (screening room, billiard parlor, poker room...), you'll find walk-in temperature controlled wine storage, tasting area, and beautiful bar with sink, microwave and refrigerator. Also on this level is a spacious guest bedroom with walk-in closet and en suite bath, large laundry room with expansive storage, and additional powder bath. The top floor has four generously-sized bedrooms, all with en suite baths. This dazzling property, unmatched in location is truly an opportunity that cannot be missed.

Rancho Park

5 Bed / 5.5 Bath

NEW LISTING!



10646 Esther Ave – \$3,595,000

Welcome to your American dream home! Traditional style new construction by Diamond West Distinctive Homes, this impeccably crafted 5 bed/6 bath, 4378 sq ft home charmingly set on a flat, wide-frontage 9267 sq ft lot is a wonder in design and detail. Bright, open and well-appointed, this home is truly ideal for modern family living. From the lovely front porch, enter the fabulous formal living and dining rooms with exquisite custom millwork and wainscoting. Enormous great room with impressive eat-in kitchen boasts stainless Thermador appliance package with pot filler, walk-in pantry with beverage center, butler's pantry with sink and wine storage, and convenient access to laundry room and guest bedroom/office. Natural light floods the entire space as glass doors open to the enormous 76'x60' park-like backyard. Atop the stairs, a generous central landing with custom built-ins adjoins to an upstairs family room with balcony, perfect for studying, lounging or sharing a fun family game night. Four spacious bedrooms, all with en suite baths, complete this level. Double doors lead to the private master retreat featuring fireplace, custom millwork and built-ins, balcony, and breathtaking master bath with oversized tub, beautiful marble vanities, seated makeup area, and his/her walk-in closets. Fantastic Westside location—walk to shopping, dining, cinema, light rail and highly coveted Overland Elementary School.

Beverlywood

3 Bed / 1.5 Bath

NEW LISTING!



2904 Oakhurst Ave – \$1,149,000

A beautifully maintained home on a large corner lot in one of the Westside's friendliest neighborhoods, this bright and delightful 3 bedroom/1 and 2 bath property is tailor made for the young family who dreams of walking the kids to and from the award-winning Castle Heights Elementary school each day. Features include: Hardwood floors, crowned moldings, detailed ceilings, comfortably sized rooms and brand new Milgard double-paned windows that provide lovely views of the meticulously landscaped backyard. There is a formal living room, large formal dining room and airy, immaculate kitchen that offers stainless appliances, convenient yet attractive butcher block counter tops and a newly installed glass door leading outside. There is a fully converted/insulated detached garage with private access that can provide additional storage or a quiet workspace. The backyard has been fully fenced in and privatized so the children can safely play outdoors either at the front or back of the house. Boasting a brand new roof, washer/dryer, excellent use of space, ample storage and nestled in the heart of a warm and loving community, this home is an absolute must see!

Cheviot Hills

5 Bed / 5.5 Bath 4,205 Sq. Ft., 9,444 Sq. Ft. Lot

IN ESCROW!



GRAND MEDITERRANEAN RETREAT

3087 McConnell – \$3,799,000

A gracious Mediterranean retreat in the heart of Cheviot Hills' Country Club Estates, this exquisite villa offers an air of old-world romance to newly built construction. The ultra-private front courtyard entry featuring mature, Italian-inspired landscaping, fire pit and tranquil water feature sets the tone for the house beyond. There's a formal living room with exposed beams and imposing fireplace. This leads to the handsome wood-paneled study that doubles as a guest room suite. There is a formal, circular dining room with a path through the traditional butler's pantry leading into the chef's kitchen and great room. The kitchen presents three dishwashers, two Subzero refrigerators in addition to the full sized wine fridge. Walk-in pantry, custom copper farmhouse sink, oversized island, two sinks and a cozy breakfast banquette that overlooks the backyard. The suite also includes massive his and hers walk-in closets, a bathroom with two toilet rooms, enormous shower, spa tub and dual vanities. Conveniently located in the award winning Castle Heights School District, this is a truly impressive property that deserves your immediate attention.

Cheviot Hills – ACTIVE!

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

BEVERLY HILLS ALTERNATIVE!



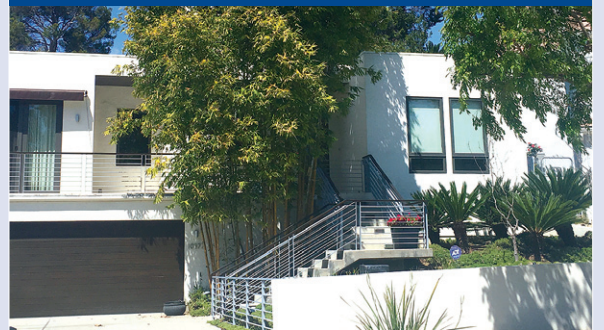
2788 Monte Mar Terrace – \$6,495,000

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 – ACTIVE!

4 Bed/ 4 Bath 3,359 Sq.Ft., 8,707 Sq.Ft. Lot

GREAT NEW PRICE!



10377 Monte Mar – \$3,095,000

With a beautiful view of the golf course beyond, this modern and minimalist 3 bedroom/3 bath home in Cheviot Hills embraces its inhabitants with both peace and tranquility. The formal dining room has a balcony and view of the neighborhood's treetops. The unique, Poggenpohl designed kitchen utilizes all the stainless appliances an at-home chef has come to expect including Miele, Wolf and Subzero appliances, yet the aesthetics offered here are unique and all its own. Custom wood cabinetry, midnight black granite countertops, oversized island and window wrapped breakfast nook with banquette seating will make preparing and enjoying meals a welcome respite from restaurant dining. This level of the home also has an additional bedroom, currently used as an office with a view. Wholly private and impeccable mother-in-law's suite complete with kitchenette, walk-in closet, storage room, bathroom and access to the two car garage with laundry facility. With a strong emphasis on style as much as function, this simply glorious home in the award winning Overland School District is precisely what you've been looking for!

Mar Vista

5 Bed / 5.5 Bath – Represented Buyer

JUST SOLD!



11830 Allaseba Dr – \$3,629,000

Beverlywood

6 Bed / 5.5 Bath – Represented both Buyer & Seller

JUST SOLD!



2232 Bagley Avenue – \$3,195,000

Cheviot Hills

2 Bed/ 2 Bath

IN ESCROW!



10290 Cheviot Drive – \$1,525,000

Cheviot Hills happenings

Raffle Fiesta



El Nopal

By BEN LEE

It's time for another raffle! Every month or so we like to highlight a neighborhood restaurant or shop and offer a gift certificate with the hopes of getting our community together to support local businesses. This month we are offering a \$50 dollar gift certificate to El Nopal on National at Motor. Fully remodeled with an authentic and delicious Mexican menu, this spot is the perfect place to meet friends for a margarita or take the family to dinner. To win, simply email: ben@benleeproperties.com and write 'EL NOPAL' in the subject line. That's it! We will pick a winner at random at the end of August and let you know soon after. Good luck! And speaking of winners, we wanted to offer our sincerest apologies for misidentifying the name of our raffle winner last month. The winners of our \$100 Amazon Gift Card are: Norton and SANDY Giffis. We accidentally wrote that her name was Nancy and that was a mistake. Sorry!



Norton and SANDY Giffis

amazon.com

The Innocence Project

By BEN LEE

Legal icon and tireless crusader for justice, Cheviot Hills' resident and Loyola Law professor Laurie Levinson recently hosted a reception for the organization she founded: The Loyola Law School Project for the Innocent (LPI). In existence since 2011, Levinson, fellow attorneys and LPI's volunteers have investigated scores legal cases in which men and women have been falsely accused of heinous crimes. In the short time since its inception, LPI has miraculously freed seven individuals, all of whom were falsely accused and in most cases, spent over two decades in jail for crimes they did not commit. A handful of exonerates were on hand at last month's reception and it was a meaningful exchange between those individuals and the men and women who helped gain them their freedom. It was truly inspiring for me to meet one gentleman in particular, Hamilton High alum Kash Register (yes, his real name), arrested at 18 and sent to prison for a crime he didn't commit.

Register was in prison for 34 years yet never wavered from his assertion that he didn't do anything wrong and every day from behind bars insisted he was innocent of the crime for which he was wrongfully convicted. Levinson and her associates at LPI reviewed



Register's case after it had been discovered that the eyewitnesses whose testimony had helped put him in jail had actually lied. The Innocent Project's law student volunteers spent countless hours researching intricacies of the case, unearthing a plethora of new evidence and ultimately caused a judge to overturn Register's conviction. After 34 grueling years, he was finally able to leave prison. After 34 terrible years, he was finally a free man.

While Kash Register and other falsely convicted individuals will never gain back the time they lost while in prison, it's comforting to

know that as long as an organization like the Innocence Project is funded, innocent victims of an imperfect judicial system will have a voice and hopefully, justice can ultimately prevail. After meeting Kash Register, our son decided to give a portion of his bar mitzvah money to the Innocence Project. For more information about how you can help with this worthwhile organization, please contact Laurie Levenson by phone or email: (213) 736-1149 Laurie.Levenson@lls.edu. You can also visit LPI's website to learn more: www.lls.edu/giving

Westside Places

By Michael Harris

Pink's Hot Dog Stand has been a fixture in Hollywood since 1946 although before that for many years it rented the space selling hot dogs from a cart. It is located on La Brea Ave just north of Melrose. It serves a variety of sausages with chili toppings and uniformly long lines at lunch times. There is a next door neighbor Chipotle restaurant so that a group of devotees who wish to eat at Pink's can still have a vegetarian join them for a sunny lunch on the Pink's outdoor patio. The many celebrities and movie stars who have eaten there are featured in a photo gallery on the premises, but they are too numerous



Pink's

to mention. Pink's has been used as a location in various movies including Mulholland Drive. The fare may be

worth a visit as a throwback to food before the time of kale.