

NO. 75
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Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



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Something Extra

By Ben Lee

Imagine if you're anything like me, you work hard with the hope that after life's necessities are taken care of, there's enough left over to enjoy what I call that special 'something extra.' Funding a passion is often the motivation we need on those mornings when the alarm clock sounds especially loud and goes off way too early. Whether it's a vintage car or vacation home or maybe a monthly gym membership, it's nice to have a carrot at the end of the stick or a pleasing goal to work towards, especially when work can often be really hard. I love what I do but a career in real estate is often an excruciating exercise in relinquishing control and for a self-professed control freak, letting go of what you have no power over can be really tough. There are so many intricacies to every deal and you can only do so much before nervously pacing your office waiting for the best possible outcome. For all the sophisticated details we perform in a transaction, there are still a handful of inevitable variables. You can't orchestrate who hires you, who'll buy your listing, what bank will approve a loan (or if that loan gets approved in the necessary time frame), or if clients will heed your advice. As a broker, sometimes it feels like a handful of puzzle pieces are tossed in the air and it's up to you to grasp them as they fall in order to fit all the random pieces back into a cohesive picture.

This is why when the real estate



business feels all-consuming, I focus on my special 'something extra' that is totally removed from the business: travel! I love turning my focus to a fulfilling, creative hobby over which I have some control. I love searching for far off destinations, figuring out how to get there, where to stay, and different activities to pursue. It can be a sobering thought when you count how many vacations you have left with your children before they leave the nest. I realized that our eldest would be off to college three summers from now and there are many family trips I want to take before he leaves. Up until recently, we had agreed that extensive travel with three kids felt like an overwhelming undertaking neither my wife nor I were too enthused about taking on. Long flights, time changes, ambitious sightseeing, even new foods didn't mesh well with having toddlers and tweens. That's not to say we didn't go places when they were little, but up to now, the main criteria for a Lee family vacation included a short,

direct flight and a hotel with a pool (and kids' club if we're being honest). But now our boys are older and had corresponding spring breaks (which rarely happens) so we decided we were ready to take on Europe. We ditched the direct, short flights and hotels with pools in favor of an ambitious itinerary that included visiting three countries in 10 days. We gave our boys a speed version of the history of Western Civilization that included the Tower of London, Sistine Chapel and Notre Dame (of course not realizing at the time what a blessing that would prove to be). We met Mona Lisa, the ghosts of the Coliseum's gladiators and awed at the view from atop the Eiffel Tower. Between Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, the Roman Forum, Pantheon, Montmartre and the Catacombs, it felt like the only time we paused was to sit for an hour while savoring a proper English tea. We walked what felt like a thousand miles and ate tens of thousands of calories but I have to say it was well

worth it. The whirlwind pace kept the kids interested and before anyone got cranky, it was time to go to the next destination. Were we exhausted when we got home? Yes, very. But I'm so glad we took this trip because we all know how life can change so quickly. Just the fact that Notre Dame burned two weeks after we returned home made me realize that nothing lasts forever and even a building that's stood for over 800 years can nearly be destroyed in an instant.

So, if traveling is my 'something extra,' what is yours? In order to help you find it or celebrate it, we are holding a photo contest and giving away \$500 because everyone needs a little something extra once in a while. All you have to do to enter is take a picture with this newsletter anywhere you'd like. If you're taking a trip, take the newsletter along and snap a fun picture of it in a faraway locale. If you aren't traveling, that's fine, too. Our newsletter likes going to your favorite local restaurant, ballpark, or on a hike. The sky's the limit (so, sure, take it skydiving!) and we're not picking a winner until this summer so you have plenty of time. To enter, send your photo to me: ben@benleeproperties.com

In the meanwhile, I hope you have a lovely month of May and hopefully there'll be a day or two in there that you can sleep through the alarm and instead spend the day enjoying your 'something extra' with the ones you love.



My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Beverlywood - GREAT NEW PRICE!



Imagine coming home every night to a home as luxurious and harmonious as the finest 5-star hotel. The fantasy is yours to make a reality should you inhabit this masterfully constructed modern farmhouse on Monte Mar. Intricate details abound creating a vision in tranquil, earthy tones punctuated by black, marble and brass creating a sophisticated, Mad Men-esque quality. Features include: formal dining room, living room, butler's pantry and enormous great room that is overlooked by the gorgeous kitchen. Walking distance to Pico/Robertson and containing all the characteristics of a 'smart' house, it's time you turn your fantasy into a reality and visit this listing today.

9022 Monte Mar Dr – \$4,149,000 6 Bed / 7 Bath 6,458 Sq. Ft., 7,593 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - GREAT NEW PRICE!



Basked in warmth and light, this brand new construction in Cheviot Hills is akin to a relaxed day at the beach. Light hardwood floors and scrubbed white walls set the tranquil earthy tone, a brilliant array of natural light streams in from the front windows, bathing the entire expanse of the home in quintessential California sunshine. The front rooms have such an astounding view that spans so far west, it starts by overlooking the vast grounds of the Griffin Club and continues all the way as far as Marina del Rey. Conveniently located in the heart of Cheviot Hills in the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School district, this home isn't just "Smart" but pretty, too!

3118 Patricia Ave – \$3,295,000 5 Bed / 6 Bath 4,102 Sq. Ft., 7,111 Sq. Ft. Lot

Westwood - GREAT NEW PRICE!



217 S Bentley Ave – \$4,649,000
5 Bed / 6 Bath 4,700 Sq. Ft., 8,303 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



3036 S Beverly Dr – \$1,299,000
3 Bed / 4 Bath + GH 1,260 Sq. Ft., 4,999 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



2858 Motor Ave – \$2,995,000
3 Bed / 4 Bath 2,949 Sq. Ft., 10,919 Sq. Ft. Lot

THE RESULTS ARE IN FOR 2018 AND BEN LEE IS TOPPING THE CHARTS!*

- #1** in total sales volume for buyers and sellers in 90064
- #1** in total listing value in 90064
- #1** in listings sold in 90064
- #1** agent in the #1 Coldwell Banker office in the world
- #6** Coldwell Banker agent out of 92,000 agents worldwide

**All statistics per the mls*

Cheviot Hills happenings

Westside Places

Steps That Care

By Michael Harris

For the full Hollywood experience and a throw-back to the days of lots of cigarettes and the two martini lunch a visit to the Formosa Café on Santa Monica Blvd would be worth a visit. It is located West of La Brea Ave on Santa Monica Blvd and immediately east of the studio lot once known as the Goldwyn Studios. That studio space was developed in 1919 by Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks and was originally known as the Pickford-Fairbanks. It was later known as the United Artists lot and then the Goldwyn lot until it became the Warners Hollywood lot and finally it is now known simply as the Lot. It is

still an active studio and its next-door neighbor is the Formosa Café which opened in 1925 to capture the business of the stars and talent who made the Formosa an infamous hang-out. At one time it would have been common to see such luminaries as John Wayne, Clark Gable, Elvis Presley, and Marilyn Monroe eating and greeting. Alas the business closed in December 2016 but it is soon to reopen with new ownership but we believe it will still maintain the red façade and black and white striped awnings with the narrow passage way to the booths which we expect will evoke the old Hollywood era of hi-jinks and booze the decline of which undoubtedly led to the closure of the original.

CHANCE TO WIN \$500 DOLLARS

Don't forget to enter our photo contest! Take a picture of this newsletter anywhere you'd like: at a restaurant, on a trip, at the dog park or Grand Canyon! Email the photo to ben@benleeproperties.com and we'll pick a lucky winner in July. Good luck!

Local Authors

By Ben Lee

We all know that our neighborhood is the greatest place in which to live, but were you also aware of how it is a considered a fertile breeding ground for literary genius? You're likely already aware of Michael Harris (my father-in-law's) book Westside Stories: a chatty and delightful memoir/historical recollection of events and monuments

stemming from his childhood growing up in Cheviot Hills. However there are two additional, local authors you may not be aware of but have written books that deserve your immediate attention. Beverlywood resident Farrell Hirsch has written a dishy, informative and wildly engrossing nonfiction book recounting his years working in the entertainment business: What I Learned from 50 Celebrities: (By Screwing Up in Front of Them). Hirsch presents life's lessons gleaned from countless interactions with a variety of A-listers compiled in a book that is impossible to put down. For a completely different kind of

book, you may be fascinated to read Rancho Park resident Lori Gottlieb's Maybe You Should Talk to Someone. It debuted on the New York Times' bestseller list (an astounding #5!) and has been overwhelmingly well reviewed by Entertainment Weekly, People Magazine the New York Times and Katie Couric among others. Gottlieb, an author and psychotherapist, takes an emotional yet witty look at the complex relationship between a therapist and his/her patients. Gottlieb gives a true insider's look at what the patient as well as the therapist goes through in the most engaging, humorous and



approachable way. To read more about Westside Stories, What I Learned from 50 Celebrities and Maybe You Should Talk to Someone, visit www.Amazon.com today!

Volunteer Police Force has arrived

By Michael Harris

Did you know the West Los Angeles LAPD has begun a new Volunteer Community Patrol to act as additional sets of eyes and ears for the police? Since it is always better to be proactive rather than reactive, some of your neighbors have graduated

from the ten week program at the LAPD Community Police Academy and are now patrolling Beverlywood and Cheviot Hills streets looking for anything out of the ordinary. The LAPD has supplied two BMW i3 all electric cars and the volunteers patrol in pairs. Marci Sandell, Rick Solomon (pictured here), Lisa and Andy Vidikan

from Beverlywood are the first in our neighborhood to take this on so if you see them, feel free to report anything suspicious or just give them a smile and a wave! If you're interested in learning more about how you can get involved, the program is always looking for new volunteers. Simply contact our local community relations



officer for West Los Angeles: 310-444-0730 to learn more about this valuable program.



By Annie Casady, Castle Heights Elementary School Teacher

Castle Heights Elementary School understands the importance of service learning in our students' lives. We also want to continue our commitment to finding a cure for cancer. This disease has impacted many of the lives of our CHES friends and family.

Last year we raised over \$5,000 for Stand UP 2 Cancer. This year we hope to raise over \$6,000.

Come join us on Saturday, May 11th from 9-11am, we will be hosting our 5th

annual 5K Steps That Care walk from school up to Cheviot Hills Recreation Center and back. It is a great time to get fit, have fun, and spend time making a difference in your community.

Join our team, if you will be walking with us on Saturday. Please make a donation to support our cause and spread the word to your friends and family. Checks can be made to Stand Up to Cancer and dropped at CHES (9755 Cattaraugus Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90034) or donations can be made by visiting www.crowdrise.com and searching for Steps that Care under fundraisers. Every bit helps. Thank you!