



NO. 70
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Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



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PAID
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The Music never stopped



By Ben Lee

Is the year really drawing to a close already? It feels like just yesterday when I sat down to write this wrap-up for 2017 and now twelve months have just zoomed right by. As the curtains close on 2018, it's always nice to look back on the last year with one eye focused on what I hope 2019 will bring.

When I think about 2018, what stands out most is when my family moved into our new home. While it was only about three blocks from where our former house stood, it felt like a rather large undertaking. Maybe because it took so long to plan and build and was the focus of our attention for so long, when we actually physically moved from one home into the other, it felt like a huge deal. To me, the act of moving can be compared to when a doctor suddenly becomes a patient. Realtors undertaking a move gives us insight and empathy and reminds us what our clients go through every day. Moving is often not a relaxing, pleasant experience. It's exhausting, it's uprooting, it's often pretty expensive and can be frustrating. Not to mention emotionally draining.

But thankfully, the struggles associated with a move are usually forgotten once you settle into your new home, put your feet up on top of that coffee table, let out a relaxed sigh of relief and enjoy what all of your hard work has been for.

I feel like I've worked very hard this year. Being in this business is mostly fantastic, but many transactions are complicated and come with a surprising amount of problems and headaches. It's just the nature of the business. But despite the trickier deals, I've been blessed with meeting hundreds of new, truly fabulous people and seeing how happy they are after an escrow closes makes all of the bumps in the road worthwhile.

Working hard this year allowed me to achieve the status of being the number one agent in the busiest Coldwell Banker office in the world: Beverly Hills North. I think about that and am kind of stunned that it happened especially because this year I really made a concerted effort to make more time for myself and my family. What's the phrase about being on one's deathbed and never wishing for

more time spent at the office? That was basically my guiding principle this year and it really paid off.

What's nice about this line of work is "the office" can basically be anywhere with a phone and computer so this year I've been lucky to work from home a lot. I love that I am often there when our boys get out of school so I can check in about their day while it's still fresh in their minds. I love

being able to take the dogs for a walk around Rancho Park midday, saying hi to neighbors and friends along the way. Afterwards it's pretty great to be able to return to my desk that overlooks our front yard and make calls before it's time for dinner.

I feel ridiculously fortunate that my commute from Cheviot Hills to Beverly Hills is so short but the journey from our kitchen to my home office is even shorter. When I gave up a career as a real estate attorney, part of the reason I did so was because I anticipated missing much of what would make me feel happy and fulfilled at home. I didn't want to be in a cubicle calculating billable hours, causing me to miss the milestones of my young boys' day-to-day lives. Real estate has afforded me the ability to be more present. Yes, it's a job without set hours and I'm required to be available at various times throughout the week/month/year but I'm learning how to shut it off when I need to and I do feel incredibly blessed when I'm able to unplug a bit.

As we approach 2019, I'm looking forward to more of what I experienced in 2018 (minus the moving part. I'd like to stay in this house as long as humanly possible). I hope for continued health and happiness for my loved ones and for an enthusiastic, energetic and fulfilling year of work. I hope for more exotic travel destinations, more meals shared with friends, and the satisfaction that comes from mastering a great guitar lick or harmonica solo.

With all the stress and energy that the holiday season often brings, I hope you, too, can find those pockets of time to step away from the craziness and enjoy a quiet moment with the ones you love. I sincerely wish you all the best for a happy and healthy new year. See you in 2019!



My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



10637 Northvale Rd – \$1,579,000 4 Bed / 2 bath 1,500 Sq. Ft, 6,233 Sq. Ft. lot

Traditional in Cheviot Hills with great curb appeal. Living and dining rooms with hardwood floors. Remodeled kitchen boasts stone counters and stainless appliances. Spacious master has vaulted ceiling and sliding doors to spacious rear yard. New master bath with dual sinks. Central air and heat, detached 2-car garage, updated electrical and plumbing, and security system. A short distance to the Expo line & highly rated Overland Elementary School. Move-right-in condition!

Beverlywood - ACTIVE!



9447 Beverlywood St – \$1,995,000 3 Bed / 3 Bath 2,400 Sq. Ft., 8,399 Sq. Ft. lot

Cheviot Hills - ACTIVE!

5 Bed / 7 Bath



2719 Forrester Drive – \$5,199,000

Rancho Park - SOLD

4 Bed / 3 Bath 2,949 Sq. Ft., 6,253 Sq. Ft. lot

Cheviot Hills - IN ESCROW

6 Bed / 8 Bath



2463 Patricia Ave – \$3,995,000

Cheviot Hills - SOLD

5 Bed / 7 Bath 4,449 Sq. Ft., 7567 Sq. Ft. Lot

Beverlywood - IN ESCROW

8 Bed / 10 Bath 9,068 Sq. Ft., 8,564 Sq. Ft. lot



2250 Guthrie Circle – \$6,795,000

Kenter Canyon - SOLD

5 Bed / 3 Bath



10575 Cushdon Ave – \$2,299,000

Cheviot Hills - SOLD

5 Bed / 5 Bath 3,842 Sq. Ft., 7,444 Sq. Ft. Lot



10452 Lorenzo Place – \$4,855,000

Cheviot Hills - SOLD

5 Bed / 5 Bath Large Corner Lot



500 Hanley Pl – \$2,999,000

Cheviot Hills - SOLD OVER ASKING

4 Bed / 3 Bath

Cheviot Hills - SOLD

5 Bed / 6.5 Bath



2742 Forrester Dr – \$2,625,000



3035 Queensbury Dr – \$2,999,000



10523 Dunleer Dr – \$2,250,000



2715 Forrester Dr – \$4,999,000

Cheviot Hills happenings

Westside Places

By Michael Harris

The Beverly Hills Hotel built in 1912 predates the incorporation of Beverly Hills. Its Polo Lounge was installed by one of its early owners Hernando Courtright who later operated the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. The Beverly Hills Hotel is well known for its many years in existence and because it has been visited by and resided in by all of the top stars of the golden age of movies. Marilyn Monroe as well as Howard Hughes maintained the use of the famous bungalows on its grounds and a visit to the hotel will conjure the days of glamor and excitement in the era of the Warners the Zanucks and the other moguls of the silver screen. Alas, the politics of the current ownership has made the Hotel something of a hot potato. The ownership has changed through the years and at one time was at least co-owned by Ivan Boesky the

well-known wall street trader who made a substantial fortune by the sale of the hotel to the Sultan of Brunei the proprietor of a wealth fund largely derived from oil but which owns a number of upscale hotels including The Bel Air Hotel. The Sultan in his role as a leader in his country has sought to institute Sharia law in that country and because Sharia law can impose a rather harsh way of treating women and unconventional lifestyles there has been a suggestion that the Hotel be avoided. The other side of the story is that the staff and employees ought not to be made to suffer by the actions of an owner who is governing a land in the South China Sea closer to Borneo than Beverly Hills. No matter your politics a visit to the Polo Lounge should not be missed. The many movies filmed at the Hotel include The Bad and the Beautiful, The Way We Were, Shampoo, and my personal favorite, Hanna and her Sisters.



If you enjoy reading these vignettes each month, you may want to check out my father-in-law's book, Westside Stories. It's a memoir/history of growing up on the Westside of Los Angeles in the 1940s and 1950s with great photos, anecdotes and stories. Perfect for the history buff/enthusiast in your family! It's available for purchase on Amazon, search Westside Stories by Michael Harris.

Protecting your home over the holidays

By Ben Lee

You may be traveling this holiday season. Enjoy! Before you leave, though, you may want to consider the following tips about keeping your home safe while you're away. According to the website Ordinarytraveler.com, here are ten suggestions to safeguarding your home and valuables in your absence.

1. Use a monitoring system/ alarm: if you don't have one yet, now's the time and if you're planning on purchasing an alarm, it's a good idea to have one with a camera like Ring.
2. Keep up regular home



maintenance: if you regularly use the services of a pool man, gardener, housekeeper, etc. you should keep them scheduled on their regular day. Potential thieves scoping out homes will notice if they don't come when they usually do.

3. Give your key to a friend/ neighbor/family member: there may be a random flyer or a package you may have ordered that have since forgotten about. Best to ask this person to swing by every few days you're away to keep your front door area clean.

4. Hold mail and pause newspaper: unless you have your trusted friend coming by daily to take these items inside, you probably should cease delivery until you're back in town.

5. Keep a low profile on social media: as tempting as it is to share every beautiful sunset and wild animal you encounter, you might want to curtail advertising that you are away. Now is also a good time to make sure your phone number and address are erased from all social media accounts.

6. Get a safe: there are a variety of different sizes of safes on the market,

so it's a good idea to purchase one to keep valuables, well, safe while you're away.

7. Don't leave a hide-a-key: thieves know the ol' fake rock trick of leaving a key underneath one in the yard. You're better off leaving it with a friend instead (see number 3)

8. Light right: try to install a motion sensor light for outside (Amazon sells very simple ones that work) and have a few of your interior lights on a timer. Thieves prefer a dark house so smart lighting can be a very easy deterrent for would-be robbers.

9. Disconnect your automatic garage opener: thieves are so savvy they can sometimes know how to open your garage with a universal remote. You may want to disconnect your automatic opener and use a manual lock instead.

10. Advertise your security system: be obvious that you have a security system. Even if you don't, you should advertise as if you do. You can buy stickers warning potential robbers about what an extensive home security system you have (even if it's not true).

We hope our gift "apeels" to you...



By Ben Lee

Did you receive your brand new, ultra-sophisticated, state-of-the-art vegetable peeler yet? Just a little something we wanted to give to our friends and neighbors to be of use during all the holiday cooking (and beyond). Please let me know if you did not receive and would like one. Just send me a quick email or call: ben@benleeproperties.com or 310-704-6580 and I will personally deliver to anyone would like to add this flashy and fancy utensil to your kitchen tool drawer.