

Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



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Like all good things, summer too must end

By Ben Lee

Happy September! Happy to have the kids go back to school? I'm right there with you, however, the shift from summer to school can be tough on all of us. Especially when the summer was so much fun. I can't speak for everyone but this summer in particular was a great one for our family. I know not everyone wants or needs insight into our personal family life. That is perfectly understandable. However, I guess when it's all said and done, this newsletter has become a journal as much as a way to highlight new listings. I imagine I write about non-real estate related matters because at the end of the work day, (which doesn't actually exist because those calls don't stop coming in at 5pm), my brain needs to take a break from stats, figures, new mortgage rates, home values, disgruntled neighbors, construction projects... you get the picture. From the moment I wake up to when I go to bed, as long as my phone is functioning, I am living and breathing real estate.

So, for me, it's nice to have an outlet to think about something else for an hour or two. I guess some might call that a hobby? In any case, thanks for indulging my need to step away from my work for 1000 words or less once a month. It's fair to say we all could use a mental break from our day jobs once in a while.

Last month our family celebrated a special milestone, the bar mitzvah of our middle son, Spencer. We wanted to give him a special day without going too overboard or crazy. We were proud, of course, of how hard he worked to get there- those services are not easy and anyone who has either had to do it or had a child going through it can attest to the commitment, time and effort it takes to stand in front of a congregation and read/chant in a foreign, unfamiliar language. Then to go on and teach a whole roomful of people about one passage in particular, adding an interpretation thoughtfully crafted by the mind of a 13 year old, was rather remarkable. Spencer's summer was pretty much devoted to weekly tutoring sessions, studying and practicing. Meetings with the rabbi and cantor



took the place of heading to any sleep away summer camps. As an unofficial bar mitzvah project, he (with his older brother) volunteered at the senior living facility in Cheviot Hills: Terraza. They passed out popcorn and called Bingo games and every time they'd visit with these elder members of our community, they'd have terrific stories to tell. I can attest that, at least for my son Spencer, this summer was more work than relaxation, but when the big day came, he was ready. After the 5pm service at Temple Isaiah, we headed straight to the Griffin Club for a fun and uproarious celebration. Clearly, we are big fans of staying local! And in addition to the glorious proximity, both venues offered ideal backdrops for the occasion. The staff and clergy at Isaiah do such a great job of making you feel like you are part of a familial community.

Whether or not you're a fan of



organized religion, there's something to be said about a group of people who you feel you can lean on and rely upon if you need to. Ever since my mom passed away a few years ago, I really feel like the clergy is there for my family and that is a comfort. As far as the party is concerned, we all had a blast at the Griffin Club. We hadn't had a party there since it's recent facelift and I don't think we've attended an event since our boys were in pre/elementary school when the Beverly Hills Country Club seemed to be the only place in town to hold a school fundraiser.

This new, shinier version of the BHCC definitely made for a much swankier affair. I can confirm that the food is much better than in the past and the staff really bent over backwards to ensure a flawless event. The only restriction seemed to be that the music had to shift inside starting at

10pm so the neighbors wouldn't be too bothered by a Saturday night shindig. But that noise limit didn't affect the revelry of our guests and, in my opinion, that outdoor terrace with its view of the city is the best spot in our neighborhood to have a summertime evening celebration.

So, now that we can let out a sigh of relief knowing this milestone can be checked off our family to-do list, we can relax into the next chapter: conquering a successful back-to-school transition. Two out of three boys still recognize September as the start to the school year so with the three of them beginning 4th, 8th and 10th grades respectively, it's safe to say this month will prove to be just as busy as the summer has been. But being late to day camp drop off isn't quite as stressful as missing the morning school bus pick up. I'm not sure I'm quite ready for the early wake up calls, nor am I geared up for going back to being the bad cop when extra Ipad time is snuck in over the chance to complete homework instead. But to all of you whose children are up and out, you may think about September with a fondness and long for the days we are now experiencing. So, with every faraway track meet that runs long or science project that's started the night before it's due, I'll try to embrace the school year with patience and presence, knowing that I, too, will be among those who will one day miss these back-to-school days. I hope you have a happy September!



My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



3001 Cavendish Dr – \$6,495,000 6 Bed / 8 Bath 7,858 Sq. Ft., 8,756 Sq. Ft. Lot

A newly constructed palatial estate; grand in scale yet welcoming and warm, this breathtaking traditional style, state-of-the-art home is a premier example of what other new constructions aspire to be. Fully basked in light and following an airy and open floor plan, from the first step over the threshold, visitors and inhabitants would agree that this home is an enviable work of art. There are three floors to the property and the entry level, surrounded by natural light and views of greenery, includes a formal living room with fireplace, formal dining, private office, guest bedroom suite, exquisite kitchen, breakfast nook and great room. Additional features include two laundry rooms, a convenient mudroom, attached two-car garage, walk-in pantry, butler's pantry and a multitude of storage rooms. This home is an architectural triumph and you deserve to see it for yourself today.

Beverlywood - NEW LISTING!



9408 Kramerwood Pl – \$1,349,000 3 Bed / 2 Bath 1,459 Sq. Ft., 5,344 Sq. Ft. Lot

An elegantly manicured home with an abundance of light, this 3 bedroom/2 bath in Beverlywood makes efficient use of space without sacrificing character. Situated on a quiet cul-de-sac, the open floor plan in the front section of the home is tailor made for entertaining. The cozy living room is overlooked by the spacious and inviting kitchen. Here you'll find important design details set against a tranquil backdrop: architecturally inspired pendants, stainless Wolf oven/range, built-in Subzero refrigerator/freezer, a stone accent wall, and an oversized island with Farmhouse sink. A skylight above and windows all around bask the entire space in natural light. The entire yard is hugged by tall trees and hedging, providing absolute solitude and privacy. Additional amenities include: Nest temperature control, Ring doorbell, separate laundry area, hardwood floors and a detached two car garage. Located in a friendly neighborhood and a stone's throw from Castle Heights Elementary School, this delightful home is a must-see!

Beverlywood - NEW LISTING!



9139 Hargis St – \$2,200,000
4 Bed / 4 Bath 2,500 Sq. Ft., 4,989 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - IN ESCROW!



9833 Vicar St – \$2,590,000
5 Bed / 3 Bath 2,686 Sq. Ft., 9,749 Sq. Ft. Lot

West Hollywood - IN ESCROW!



1414 N Harper Ave #4 – \$1,615,000
4 Bed / 3 Bath 2,290 Sq. Ft.

Beverlywood - IN ESCROW!



9417 Beverlywood St – \$2,049,000
3 Bed / 3 Bath 2,754 Sq. Ft., 8,212 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - SOLD!



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

Cheviot Hills - SOLD!



2922 Castle Heights Ave – \$1,349,000
2 Bed / 2 Bath 1,405 Sq. Ft., 7,342 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - SOLD!



3029 Cavendish – \$2,575,000
4 Bed / 3 Bath 2,592 Sq. Ft., 8,750 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 Stories



By Michael Harris

The Los Angeles County Central Court House is located at 111 N Hill St and 110 N Grand in Downtown Los Angeles just across the Street from Disney Hall the architectural landmark by Frank Gehry. Foreign visitors can not get enough photos of the Gehry undulating metal panels and pose with it to remember their trip to this City. But they should take a moment as well to consider the imposing building dispensing justice across the way. The Courthouse has nine floors, but two entrances. On the Hill Street side it tops out at six floors because it follows the grade of First St as it climbs from Hill to Grand. The building was designed principally by the well-known architect Paul Williams who was responsible for many buildings and residences throughout Los Angeles and Beverly Hills from the 1920s to the 1960s. He worked in an era when African American professionals faced many hurdles which he overcame because of his obvious talent. The court house was completed in 1959. It was lavishly

appointed with terrazzo floors and interior marble as wall clad throughout the halls and passageways. No expense was spared in the construction and fit and finish because the trade unions, a powerful force when public buildings were involved, insisted that no expense be spared. Alas, over half century later it appears there may be asbestos in the insulation, and the earthquake protections and other features are not up to present building code requirements. There has been talk of removing the court house to make more room for the planned development of shops and residences across from Disney Hall where the “erector set” parking structure is now located. There may not have been many movies shot in the building but of course many a drama plays out there every day open for the public to see in each court room. Just watching the proceedings involving Sumner Redstone the Chairman of Paramount Pictures, or Frank McCourt battling to preserve from his wife the billions from his sale of the Dodgers would make the visit both entertaining and fodder for a screenplay.

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 at <http://www.americasgroup.com/Westside-Stories-Book.html>

House Party

By Ben Lee

We hope you were able to join us for our first-ever supersized Open House party extravaganza! A house this fabulous begged for a party to go with it. There was the world famous grilled cheese truck offering delicious sandwiches, drinks and tater tots. We also had neighborhood favorite King Kone providing sweet ice cream treats the whole family could enjoy. Between the back yard bounce house and temporary tattoo artists working their magic; neighbors, children, parents and friends spent the day having fun at this fabulous property.



If you missed this one, no worries! We'll be sure and let you know about the next one we have.

Free In & Out... Seriously!

By Ben Lee

If you're in the mood for free, delicious hamburgers and fun for the whole family then save the date of October 6. Ben Lee Properties is one of the sponsors for the annual Country Club Estates Block Party! That same weekend is also Castle Heights' all school camp out so if you happen to be driving by the schoolyard and notice a lot of tents pitched on the grass, don't worry- it's not a protest! Every year, families spend the night under the stars and it's gotten more and more popular with every year since its inception back in 2010. And, speaking of Castle Heights- there will be a new family picnic on September 8 at Shechter

Park. Bring your own lunch and let the kids play while you get all your pressing questions answered by fellow parents and school administration. One more date in October to consider: on 10/16, my wife is hosting the neighborhood ladies' wine night. Email her if you would like to come or if you'd like to be added to the list for future get-togethers: lillijlee@yahoo.com.



Raffle and Photo Contest News

By Ben Lee

We were so overwhelmed with how fabulous your photos were for this contest. It was amazing to see all the fun places our little newsletter traveled to this summer. Now that the deadline is past, we are going to go through all the entries, pick the winner(s) and publish names/winning photos in the October issue. Thank you so much to all those who entered!



We'll let you know about the next fun raffle next month.