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# Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



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Residential Postal Customer



# Road tripping

By Ben Lee

I think it's safe to say most of us fall into one of two camps: those who took road trips with their parents as kids and those who did not. My wife and I realized we were in opposite categories when she simply couldn't relate to or share in my starry-eyed, gleeful recollection of that time honored American tradition of being trapped in a car for an extended period of time, otherwise known as forced family togetherness. I would recall with sugarcoated nostalgia the wacky misadventures I had experienced as a child, bouncing up and down the highway from the back seat of our giant station wagon (were we even wearing seatbelts?), cruising all the way up to Oregon to go river rafting or heading over the mountains to go skiing. My parents taking turns behind the wheel, Sony Walkman headphones trying to block out whatever weird music was coming out of the radio, my brother annoying me but ultimately making me laugh with whatever MadLib he insisted on completing, stopping along the way for non-organic, gluten-filled, artificially-colored junk food snacks and spending the night in funky, questionably safe motels- all four of us crammed into a room that would often smell like it hadn't been cleaned in a while. I tried explaining to my wife that while traveling by airplane gets you to the destination faster- you're sacrificing all the benefits of confinement! The simple act of being together, possibly stuck in traffic, potentially getting car sick, definitely engaging in off key, five-part harmony sing-a-longs... these are history making memories you just can't create from 30,000 feet above ground.

So, brimming with idyllic optimism, we decided to take a family road trip to Yosemite. The car ride was eerily close to how I remembered my family

trips of yesteryear. Although, instead of being in the back with my brother, I was in the captain's seat, steering the proverbial ship down the freeway. With my wife as co-captain and our three boys in the backseat (safely belted in), we were on our way. Fancy ear buds have replaced bulky headphones, however, we told them they weren't allowed to tune us out unless daddy got a work call. As it turned out (and probably to the boys' satisfaction), I got a lot of calls. Every time that phone would ring, the three boys would revert to whatever video or song they were enjoying and I would be able to conduct business without adolescent noise or interruption. I think I had three different deals that were needing my attention on that particular Friday so the boys got plenty of time to do their own thing while I was putting out a variety of real estate related fires. It was all just dandy until we were going around the mountain with a 5:00pm deadline looming, client on the phone deciding how to proceed and, just like that, I lost all reception and the call was gone. Luckily my team was back in the office and they could pick up where nature had forced me to drop off. It actually ended up being perfect timing because just as I lost the call, we could make out the world-famous El Capitan in the near distance. Even my somewhat jaded, city boys stopped what they were doing and used their phones to take pictures of the awe inspiring natural landscape up ahead.

Cruising into Yosemite at sunset was remarkably beautiful. As hard as we'd crane our necks, we couldn't even see the tops of some of the momentous rocks from the car, they were that huge. We set up 'camp' at the historic Ahwahnee Hotel and it was truly majestic. Who knew, though, that the interiors inspired the hotel in the movie the Shining? We didn't until we stepped into the lobby and my



wife and I were both struck by how it looked exactly the same! High ceilings, creepy chandeliers, tuxedoed piano players and red-door elevators. Our boys hadn't seen the Shining, however, now they'll probably want to watch which is probably not the best souvenir from an otherwise family-friendly trip. Although, what's a few nightmares here and there? Builds character.

The Ahwahnee was decidedly a step up from the motels we frequented as a kid but, just like my roadtrips from yesteryear, the whole family was crammed into one room. That was just as fun as I remembered except when the rest of us were trying to sleep and my 10 year old was up before the sun, tripping over suitcases and rooting around in the dark for his Ipad. Older brothers used to sleeping until noon being awakened by their younger sibling crashing around made for real, authentic bonding time. The 'city of brotherly love,' this was not but maybe one day they'll look back on this particular memory and laugh.

Sightseeing in Yosemite did not disappoint. We took a tour to visit both El Capitan and Half Dome. Seeing "Free Solo" on TV didn't compare to standing in the shadow of that giant rock in person, just picturing Alex Honnold climbing up its face without any equipment. It was hard

to imagine anyone doing it with ropes and harnesses, let alone just their hands and feet. It's safe to say, the five of us appreciated the feat from a distance and didn't attempt any major rock climbs this trip. However, the following morning we woke up early (not too early since we made Vinnie use his ipad in the bathroom if he woke up before dawn again) and set off to take a few hikes. The weather was perfect- chilly but sunny. We were armed with a few trail maps, a vague idea of where to go and excited at the prospect of commuting with nature. We were hoping to see a few bears but had to settle for big, fat country squirrels instead. There were lots of broken branch sword fights, skipping stones into rivers, selfies trying to get all five of us in the frame and just a few complaints of being tired, hungry or both.

Once we successfully hiked around, it was already time to pack up and get in the car to start the five hour drive to come home. No work calls this time, just the satisfied sigh of relief that we had endured, enjoyed and survived a family road trip, hopefully making some good, long-lasting memories in the process. Maybe one future day the boys will take this trip with their respective families and remind them that there will always be a way of doing things faster... but getting there is half the fun.





# My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Represented Seller



9833 Vicar St – \$2,590,000

BEN LEE WAS RANKED #8 OUT OF 94,000 COLDWELL BANKER AGENTS ACROSS AMERICA FOR 2019 THANKS IN LARGE PART TO THE RESIDENTS OF CHEVIOT HILLS, WHO CHOSE HIM TO REPRESENT A STUNNING 58% OF PROPERTIES SOLD, PER THE MLS!

Represented Seller



2751 Motor Ave – \$3,675,000

Represented Seller & Buyer



3001 Cavendish Dr – \$5,999,000

Represented Seller & Buyer



3029 Cavendish Dr – \$2,599,000

Represented Seller & Buyer



3225 Club Dr – \$2,499,000

Represented Buyer



3043 Earlmarr Dr – \$4,795,000

Represented Seller & Buyer



3062 Earlmarr Dr – \$2,575,000

Represented Seller



2880 Motor Ave – \$2,995,000

Represented Seller



3118 Patricia Ave – \$3,295,000

Represented Buyer



3049 Queensbury Dr – \$2,149,000

Represented Seller & Buyer



9832 Vicar St – \$1,699,000

Represented Buyer



1954 1/2 Manning Ave – \$1,649,000

Represented Seller



3217 Castle Heights Ave – \$1,895,000

Represented Seller



10637 Northvale Rd – \$1,549,000



# Cheviot Hills happenings

## Westside Stories

By Michael Harris

The origins of local street names are of interest and importance. Sepulveda Blvd is named for the original family of that name. The family owned the Rancho Palos Verdes which included San Pedro. Those land barons had a dispute with the Dominguez family which also owned a Rancho which included the area of what is now Carson. A judicial decree before 1848 was issued by the then governor, Jose Figueroa to settle the claims but it was not quite concluded. After that decree the matter was finally resolved by the later governor, Pio Pico which granted Rancho de los

Palos Verdes to Jose and Jean Sepulveda. Later, one of the Sepulveda heirs, Ignacio Sepulveda (1842-1916) was one of the first two judges of the Los Angeles Superior Court. His grandfather, Francisco Sepulveda became the owner of Rancho San Vicente another swath of land on the westside. So in this early history we see that Sepulveda traces its name to a pioneer family, helped along by an early governor named Figueroa and finally resolved by the last governor of California before it became a street, named Pico. This history should give a little trace of nostalgia when recalling that well-known song from the 1940's: "Pico and Sepulveda."



*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, just search for Westside Stories by Michael Harris.*

## Happy St. Patrick's Day

By Ben Lee

Everyone knows that the traditional meal to eat on St. Patrick's Day is corned beef and cabbage. This, however, has not always been the case. In the 1700s, those living in Ireland mostly ate pork and potatoes. Pork was an inexpensive meat back in Ireland but quite costly in America. So when Irish immigrants came to New York in the 19th century, most had to swap pork for beef as they settled in neighborhoods populated by other European newcomers, namely Jews and Italians. Irish people were inadvertently introduced to foods belonging to these other cultures, notably the Jewish delis where they sampled corned beef for the first time.

Cabbage, also due to its low cost, replaced potatoes as the Irishman's American vegetable of choice. A love of the meal that started in New York City (also, ironically, the birthplace of the first St. Patrick's Day Parade in 1762), spread across the country. Corned Beef and Cabbage became so popular, Abraham Lincoln allegedly requested it for his inauguration dinner in 1862! We're still enjoying this 'traditional' delight over 150 years later, not only because it's affordable and delicious, but also because it's so easy to make. In fact, I'm including a recipe so on this St. Patrick's Day, you can crack open a bottle of Guinness and enjoy some Corned Beef and Cabbage (with potatoes if you're feeling extra extravagant!) at home.

### INGREDIENTS:

**PACKAGE OF  
CORNER BEEF WITH  
SPICE PACKET INCLUDED**

**HEAD OF CABBAGE**

**10 WHITE POTATOES  
(OPTIONAL)**



TAKE THE MEAT OUT OF THE PACKAGE AND PLACE IN A BIG POT, COVERING IT WITH COLD WATER. CUT OPEN THE SPICE PACKET THAT CAME WITH THE MEAT AND SPRINKLE IN THE WATER. BRING TO A BOIL AND THEN SIMMER FOR ABOUT 2 OR 3 HOURS. TEST WITH A KNIFE AND IF IT'S NICE AND TENDER, IT'S DONE. LIFT THE MEAT OUT OF THE WATER (SAVE THE WATER) AND TRIM THE FAT. CUT AGAINST THE GRAIN BEFORE SERVING (WITH A SIDE OF MUSTARD!). NOW TO MAKE THE CABBAGE: BRING THAT SEASONED MEAT WATER BACK TO A BOIL. CUT THE CABBAGE INTO QUARTERS AND

POP IN THE BOILING WATER FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES- UNTIL IT'S SOFT BUT NOT MUSHY. DRAIN AND PLACE THE COOKED CABBAGE NEXT TO THE CORNER BEEF. FOR THE POTATOES, IT'S SMART TO START THESE WHEN THE MEAT STILL NEEDS ABOUT 1/2 AN HOUR MORE TO COOK. TAKE A SEPARATE POT OF BOILING WATER AND ADD QUARTERED POTATOES (OR KEEP THEM WHOLE IF SMALL) AND COOK UNTIL SOFT- ABOUT 25 MINUTES. DRAIN, SEASON WITH SALT AND PEPPER, AND ADD TO THE PLATTER OF MEAT AND CABBAGE. ENJOY!

## Raffle News

By Ben Lee

Thank you so much to everyone who sent in a guess to last month's Valentine's Day riddle raffle! We received so many terrific answers and most everyone got the riddle right (... an apple a day keeps the doctor away!). This month we are raffling off a \$50 gift card to the delicious new shop on Robertson called Edoughble. Started

by pastry chef and Beverlywood resident Rana Lustyan, Edoughble features a variety of fun flavors of cookie dough, made with all natural ingredients and safe to eat raw! Located on Robertson Blvd and part of the SORO renaissance of shops and restaurants, now you can enjoy \$50 worth of delicious, addictive cookie dough on us. Simply send me an email: [ben@benleproperties.com](mailto:ben@benleproperties.com) and write 'DOUGH' in the subject line. That's it! We will pick a winner at random at the end of the month. Good luck!

COOKIE DOUGH  
SWEET Edoughble SHOP  
ICE CREAM

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Vegan & Dairy-free options available - Party Favors - Catering - Events



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