



NO. 87
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Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



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The New Normal

By Ben Lee

Has it really only been a month since this “new normal” of staying at home has been in affect? In a way it feels like a lot longer but, on the other hand, it also feels as though it was only yesterday when we were out to dinner with friends. I think about that night now (March 10. Madeo in Beverly Hills) and realize that was the last time we’ll be able to say we were at a restaurant without really worrying about waiters getting too close or kids sneezing a few tables away. There were no masks or gloves or anxiety about getting sick. In a way it has become like the last time we flew before 9/11, before all the post 9/11 measures were put into place. Our children will be able to tell their grandchildren about what life was like before the pandemic of 2020. They’ll recall times when they could hang out with friends in big groups or go to packed food courts at the mall. They’ll remember with fondness how fun Dodgers Stadium was on Opening Day with 55,000 other people clamoring to get in to watch the game. They’ll talk about being in a crowded classroom or bus or all the parties we used to have at the house and no one was in a mask unless it was Halloween. Not sure when or if life will return to what we knew pre-pandemic days or how indelible an imprint the memories from these weeks/months in quarantine will make. Yes, there are plenty of moments when we get on each other’s nerves. There are times we each need to retreat to separate, private areas of the house just to catch a glorious moment of quiet. We worry about too much screen time for the youngest one, wondering if his brilliant little mind is slowly just eroding away. But then we rationalize that playing a game keeps him a) safe and b) engaged with so many friends he misses. We worry about getting sick while missing our parents and siblings and friends we can only interact with through Zoom. I’m missing Open Houses and showings and shaking hands with clients. And, of course, there is the underlying concern about the real estate market in general. Obviously now is a tense time; but once the stay-at-home orders get lifted and the economy reopens, I’m confident buyers and sellers will resume healthy transactions. I’m projecting about a month from now is when the best deals are to be had.

For all the negatives swirling around us right now, there are plenty of positives to this quarantine, too. My 15 year old is learning how to drive with virtually no traffic. There is virtually no traffic! The air quality is impeccable. We haven’t had to set an alarm clock in months. There is no arguing over who has to pick up which kid from which practice at whatever terrible rush hour time of day. There is no rush hour time of day! We’ve labored over puzzles and laughed hysterically trying to make sense of them. Every late afternoon we head up to our upstairs balcony and chat with neighbors and friends walking by below. We’ve



been given the gift of extra time with our boys who will one day leave home. We are living through history unfolding before our eyes.

And despite all the things we are currently doing without, the one thing we do have besides our health (knock wood) is our neighborhood. Just knowing that we are going through it together as a community helps ease the tensions just a little bit. I wish I could give credit to the neighbors who put up the message we are using for our cover photo this month but I don’t know who is responsible. I do hope you are reading this so you know it is very much appreciated. Not only is it beautiful, heartfelt and true but it is also a great reminder that we are indeed lucky to have each other and yes, we will get through it together. Thank you for doing it and I hope you, your loved ones and all of our shared community continues to stay safe and healthy. Be well!



My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Santa Monica NEW FOR LEASE!



139 Hollister Ave
for lease at \$25,000 p/mo.
5 Bed / 6 Bath Approx. 5,000 Sq. Ft.

A unique opportunity to live in a state-of-the-art masterpiece mere moments from the beach, this absolutely stunning, brand new construction is a seashore adjacent fantasy come true. Sleek and modern, this incomparable property is minimalist in design yet abundant in warmth and luxury. Set in earthy, natural tones of glass and wood, step into the foyer and encounter an impossibly high skylight that basks the entire home in breathtaking sunshine. Properties such as this one are virtually impossible to come by in this enviable enclave of Santa Monica. There is simply no time better than now for your chance to live the ultimate California dream.

Santa Monica PRIME LOCATION!



929 16th St
\$2,495,000
5 Bed / 4 Bath 2,601 Sq. Ft., 7,405 Sq. Ft. Lot

Seller may finance!!!! Live just moments from the beach and feel the cool ocean breezes from either unit of this pristine Santa Monica duplex. Each offers hardwood floors, comfortably sized rooms, closets and living spaces, immaculate kitchens with stainless appliances and oversized windows that let natural light stream into each home. Each unit also offers a wholly private and beautifully landscaped backyard, perfect for summer barbecues or evening cocktail parties. Located in one of the most enviable sections of Santa Monica: nestled an arm's reach between the chic shops and restaurants of Wilshire and Montana Avenue, this unbelievable opportunity is not to be missed.

Beverlywood NEW FOR LEASE!



9125 David Ave
for lease at \$8,000 p/mo.
4.5 Bed / 3 Bath 2,392 Sq. Ft.

Be the first to occupy this newly renovated home on a vast, corner lot in the heart of Beverlywood with a view of downtown and a swimming pool. Fresh and clean, the home has been completely remodeled without sacrificing original character. Features include: new hvac, brand new stainless appliances, counters and cabinets in the kitchen, all new plumbing fixtures and tile in the bathrooms, hardwood floors, Bay windows, and a drought resistant backyard with a beautiful swimming pool, ideal for the upcoming summer months. Located in the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School district, this is a unique opportunity to be the first residents of this meticulously remodeled home.

Beverlywood COMING SOON!



9112 Gibson St
\$1,275,000
3 Bed / 2 Bath 1,264 Sq. Ft., 5,001 Sq. Ft. Lot

A delightful Spanish style home on one of the friendliest streets in Beverlywood. The front door, a magical patchwork of color, sets the tone for what exists beyond: a picturesque and private front courtyard that leads to the main property. Inside you'll find all the special characteristics that give this architectural style such unique charm: thick adobe walls, curved archways, coved ceilings, hardwood floors and crystal doorknobs. Located in the award winning Castle Heights school district and a short stroll from the fun shops and restaurants of South Robertson, this house will not be on the market for long so make a point to see it today.

LOCAL RESTAURANTS OFFERING TAKE-OUT OR DELIVERY

John O'Groats

10516 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 204-0692
www.johngroats.us

The Apple Pan

10801 W Pico Blvd. Los Angeles,
CA 90064
(310) 475-3585
www.theapplepan.com

Pitfire Artisan Pizza

2018 Westwood Blvd, Los Angeles
310-481-9860
www.Pitfirepizza.com

La Serenata

10924 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 441-9667
www.laserenatadegaribaldi.com

Nizam Indian Cuisine

10871 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
310-470-1441
www.nizamla.com

Jaipur Cuisine of India

10916 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
310-470-4994
www.Jaipurla.com

FOOD

10571 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
310-441-7770
www.food-la.com

Westside Tavern

10850 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 470-1539
www.westsidetavernla.com

Undergrind Café

2713 S Robertson Blvd, Los
Angeles
(310) 730-6392
www.undergrindcafe.com

The Backhouse

10915 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
310-481-6800
www.thebackhousewestla.com

The Six Chow House

10668 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
310-837-6662
www.thesixrestaurant.com

Marty's Hamburger Stand

10558 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
310-836-6944

Yen Sushi

9618 W Pico Blvd #509,
Los Angeles
310-278-0691
www.yensushiansakebar.com

Overland Cafe

3601 Overland Ave, Los Angeles
310-559-9999
www.theoverlandcafe.com

Del Frisco's

10250 Santa Monica Blvd
Suite 1700 Los Angeles
323-784-0473
www.delfriscos.com/steakhouse/losangeles

Versailles

10319 Venice Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 558-3168
www.versaillescubanfood.com

Madre

10426 National Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 559-4732
www.madrerestaurantla.com

N/Naka

3455 Overland Ave, Los Angeles
(310) 836-6252
www.n-naka.com

Vespertine

3599 Hayden Ave, Culver City
(323) 320-4023
www.vespertine.la

La Bruschetta

1621 Westwood Blvd, Los Angeles
(424) 273-4892
www.labruschettarestaurant.com

Clementines

1751 Ensley Ave, Los Angeles
(310) 552-1080
www.clementineonline.com

Eduardo's Border Grill

1830 Westwood Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 475-2410
www.eduardosbordergrill.com

Natalee Thai

10101 Venice Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 202-7003
www.nataleethai.com

Maria's Italian Kitchen

10761 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 441-3663
www.mariasitaliankitchen.com

K&A Canton

9840 National Blvd, Los Angeles
(310) 202-7209
www.kacanton.com

Harajuku Taproom

4410 Sepulveda Boulevard
Culver City
(310)-398-9000
www.hjtaproom.com

Fred's Bakery

2831 S Robertson Blvd.
Los Angeles
(310) 838-1204
fredsbakeries.com

Café Angelino

8735 W 3rd St., Los Angeles
310-246-1177
www.cafeangelino.com

Cheviot Hills happenings

Westside Stories

Congratulations

By Michael Harris

In these days of quarantine we have the opportunity to look at how things are not so different than in years past. The word quarantine itself comes from a Latin word meaning “forty” because that was how long a victim of infection had to be isolated during the bubonic plague: 40 days. Literature includes many works involving pandemics. Daniel Defoe published his “A Journal of the Plague” in 1722. It was an account of the experiences of those who lived with the London plague of 1665. It was a history but the actual journal of one living through that plague in London was included by the great diarist, Samuel Pepys.

“Love in the Time of Cholera” by Gabriel Garcia Marquez involves the story of an unfaithful husband who is devoted to the eradication of cholera in Latin America. He falls off a ladder and dies and in the old age of his widow loves blossoms with her original love that her father had discouraged. It is also a movie made recently starring Javier Bardem. And for a movie that plots the rigors of life in, and the need to deal with, a plague you might consider the Stephen Soderberg movie named “Contagion.” It is prescient and entertaining but maybe a little too close to reality to be wholly entertaining. Stay safe, isolate and consider that we are reliving history as it repeats itself.

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.

– Photo Contest – STAY-AT-HOME STYLE

By Ben Lee

Summer is right around the corner and usually this is time of year when we present our summer photo contest! Remember last year's winner took our newsletter all the way to the Colosseum in Rome? Since international travel may be tough these days, we are keeping this year's contest nice and easy. First off, we would like to offer you either a brand new Ben Lee Properties baseball cap or beach towel. Email me (ben@benleeproperties.com) with your address (must be local. Please write “ADDRESS” in the subject line). We will wear gloves and leave the

item on your doorstep within a day or two. Then, once you have either the towel or cap, take a picture of a family member using it. Maybe the hat will come in handy taking a socially distant walk around the neighborhood? Perhaps you could use the towel while catching some sun in the backyard? Just take a picture and send to me with SUMMER in the subject line. Everyone who enters gets a small prize. If you rather not take part in the contest but would like an item anyway, that's fine, too! Just email me where we can drop off the item and then enjoy. Thanks and hope you like your new cap or towel!



By Ben Lee

High school and college students set to graduate in 2020 have certainly had to give up many of the fun activities and highlights of their senior year. No prom, no spring musical, no sports banquets, no real sense of closure on this chapter of their lives. Sad for the students, yes, but possibly even more so for their proud parents. For one family in particular, this isn't just about missing an important day. Laura and Luis Lopez have not one but two daughters graduating this month and, the cancelled ceremonies mean no public acknowledgement of their great accomplishments. The “American Dream” as defined by coming to this country with nothing in the hopes of a better life for loved ones, has been realized and deserves to be recognized.

Laura and Luis came to the United States from Mexico in 1991 when they were teenagers. They worked nonstop in often thankless jobs, learned to speak English, purchased a home, had two daughters, Laurita and Kayla, and ultimately earned their American citizenship in 2014. Their girls studied their way through Castle Heights Elementary, Palms Middle School and Hamilton High School. In 2016, Laurita did the impossible: she got a full scholarship to the University of California, Berkeley and this May she becomes the first in her family to graduate from college.

Her sister Kayla is currently a senior at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts at Hamilton High and will graduate this June. She studied the violin, participated in the Associated Student Body and has recently accepted an invitation to attend Cal Poly Pomona this fall, majoring in engineering.

It would've been so special for Laura and Luis (who just celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary) to watch both of their daughters graduate this year: to witness the happy result of so many years of working hard be recognized. They certainly deserved to throw big parties and invite all their friends and family to celebrate and honor these amazing achievements of not only their daughters but of



themselves as well. Because while their daughters worked tirelessly to succeed and certainly deserve every acknowledgement and accolade coming their way, it's fair to say they wouldn't have gotten there if it weren't for the sacrifices, struggles and unwavering support their parents gave them every step of the way.

So, congratulations to Laura, Luis and of course their 2020 graduates: Laurita and Kayla. You may not get to witness the formal ceremonies you had envisioned this year but hopefully, eventually you'll be able to properly celebrate the incredible accomplishments of your daughters as well as your own. Congratulations to you and all the rest of this year's graduates. Well done!