



# Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

BARBS BIRTHDAY DINNER – MARCH 2020



**BEN LEE PROPERTIES • Real Estate Broker • Licensed Attorney**  
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# A Year Like None Other



DINNER AT MADEO – MARCH 2020

By Ben Lee

Welcome to March, 2021. I hope you'll take a moment to pause and give yourself a pat on the back for making it through a whole year during what may have been twelve of the hardest months in our lives. We all had a different burden to bear and our limits were tested in ways we never imagined or predicted a year ago. If you live alone, you might have suffered extreme loneliness and isolation. If you live with your family, you might have gone crazy from the lack of space and privacy. Or maybe you live in a multi-generational home which provided its own level of anxiety since those households often brought about a heightened increase of Covid transmissions. Maybe you lost someone you loved this year. If so, my heart goes out to you.

There are moments in history that change the world forever. The early days of March 2020, (the time before Covid came on with a vengeance), are forever ingrained in my mind. March 1 is my mother-in-law's birthday and last year we had a bunch of family members over for dinner. Thinking about that night now, remembering how we were sitting inside with the doors closed, blowing out candles on cake, posing closely for photographs suddenly feels so reckless and dangerous. Obviously, this was before masks or any mention of Covid

so we didn't realize what we were doing was risky. We had heard rumblings about a virus in China and Europe and saw on the news what was happening in other parts of the world but it all felt so remote. A friend with a business in Italy told us we should start stocking up on food just in case something were to happen in Los Angeles. We bought a few cans of chili and extra boxes of pasta but didn't really dwell on it too much, just stuck some nonperishables on the pantry shelf.

The weekend following that birthday dinner, March 8, we had another party. This time it was a big family tea at our house. More relatives, more food and indoor socializing, but in just one week, this novel corona virus was gaining speed and getting much closer. Two of our sons were in school at the Geffen Academy at UCLA and there started to be murmurings that patients at UCLA were infected, maybe one or two college students had it and would the entire campus have to close down as a precaution? Would that even be possible to do? So we squeezed in that tea at our house, but the disease was definitely part of the conversation and there was a sense of nervousness and dread that this virus was moving at a faster pace than we had originally thought. March 12, a Thursday, our Geffen boys were told to go home and expect to be away from campus for

at least two weeks. Our third son, a student at Mirman, was told to do the same. Two weeks have turned into a year and the three boys haven't been in school at either campus since that day last March. Our middle son graduated from Geffen and started Hamilton High in the midst of all this and has yet to meet new classmates in person or step foot onto his new campus.

March 13, 2020 (Friday the 13th, in fact) we snuck out to dinner with friends. Nothing had officially been shut down yet and the risks of dining indoors were not really known at that point. We went to one of our favorite restaurants, ate and drank with gusto, laughed and enjoyed what has now become known as our version of The Last Supper. Looking back it feels like the end of innocence. We had no idea that it would be the last time we would be in a restaurant with friends, unburdened by the heavy weight such an innocent activity now carries. We clinked glasses to each other to stay safe and well, figuring maybe it would be a few weeks before seeing each other in such a setting (or ANY setting) again.

Now that it's been a whole year, I hope we'll eventually get back to dining with friends or having relatives over for birthday dinners but instead of being nervous about what's coming around the bend, we'll look back on this past year with amazement that we got

through it. We'll go back to clinking glasses and remember with wistfulness the days before masks or when we could hug with great abandon, free from fear of spreading a mystery virus. We'll talk about the miracle of vaccines, admit to enjoying not having to battle traffic or wearing uncomfortable clothes and agree that it's great the kids are finally back in school. One day our dinner party conversations will possibly compartmentalize this entire year to amusing stories, shared experiences and anecdotes. We will likely acknowledge that we were scared at times, but be proud we got through it and now feel lucky to have lived to tell the tale. And that is definitely an accomplishment worth celebrating.

I wonder how our kids will convert this time into the war stories they tell their grandchildren. How will they remember these past twelve months and how will those memories create the history for generations? Personally, fear of the unknown was a large part of what we've endured, but bravery, optimism and looking out for each other's safety should be part of the legacy, too. These twelve months have been a year like none other and thankfully, most of us managed to get through it. Maybe not totally unscathed, but perhaps stronger, healthier and tougher for it in the long run.



# My featured listings

## BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



**2815 Club Dr.** Price TBD  
4 Bed / 4.5 Bath Call Ben for more details!

Beverlywood - FOR SALE!



**2839 Medill Pl** \$3,575,000  
5 Bed / 4 Bath 3,703 Sq. Ft., 7,953 Sq. Ft. Lot

A house unlike any other in the neighborhood, this one needs to be experienced in person to be fully appreciated. Stately, inviting and bursting with personality, this mid-Century Mediterranean, perched high on a quiet cul-de-sac in Cheviot Hills, boasts what are arguably the best views of the city from a variety of different balconies and vantage points. A true tropical escape with an astounding amount of space to run, play or entertain. A much treasured and truly special home that deserves your immediate attention.

Beverlywood - IN ESCROW!



**9320 Oakmore Rd** \$3,995,000  
6 Bed / 4.5 Bath

A stately Mediterranean style manor on a tree lined, quiet street in Beverlywood masterfully combines sophisticated elegance with familial warmth. A grand foyer opens to two rooms at the front of the home: an intimate formal living room with fireplace and lovely view of the neighborhood and a handsome private office. Each bedroom is bright and airy with generously sized closets and the front two bedrooms also have balconies. Please visit this gorgeous home today as it certainly won't be on the market for long!

Beverly Hills - IN ESCROW!



**ROBBIE ROBERTSON'S BEVERLY HILLS ESTATE**  
\$3,995,000  
5 Bed / 5 Bath 3,219 Sq. Ft., 43,542 Sq. Ft. Lot

Mere moments from the Beverly Hills Hotel yet a world away from the busy city, find your peace in this gorgeous sanctuary of a modern home - sleek and chic with a minimalist, mid-century aesthetic. High ceilings, open floor plan, dark walnut floors, clean lines and walls of glass set the tone for the formal living room and dining room open to the state-of-the-art kitchen. Utterly private with long gated driveway and room to park at least eight cars. Quartz floored and temperature controlled garage.

Beverlywood - SOLD!



**9124 Beverlywood St** \$1,595,000  
2 Bed / 2 Bath 1,513 Sq. Ft., 4,861 Sq. Ft. Lot

This Spanish style home in Beverlywood is the perfect blend of romantic charm and modern living. This beautiful home originally built in 1931 has been meticulously updated to reflect the needs of today's buyer. The bedrooms are both generous in size with ample closets and attached designer bathrooms. Step outside to the private and sophisticated backyard and enjoy patio dining surrounded by mature citrus trees, overflowing flowerbeds. New central air system.



# Cheviot Hills happenings

## Westside Stories

By Michael Harris

The month of March is named after Mars, the Roman God of war. It was originally the first month on the Roman calendar until it took third place when January and February were added. The ides of March on the 15th day of the month was a day for religious

observance and the deadline for settling debts. It was also the day when Julius Caesar was assassinated. Hence the Shakesperian admonition to beware the ides of March. Since the IRS tax date was changed from March 15 to April 15, the ides of March should not be scary, but beware anyway as we have lots to concern us in these times of uncertainty.

*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.*

## Its For the Birds!

By Ben Lee

Calling all local bird watchers. Dust off those binoculars because a group is being formed of neighborhood ornithology hobbyists who are fascinated by the onslaught of interesting species of feathered friends flying all around us. Cheviot

Hills resident Michael Lester will be leading the effort and he is currently gathering names of interested neighbors to join in a Covid-safe, socially distant, bird- watching group. If you would like to participate or find out more information, please contact Michael via email: [birders.west.la@gmail.com](mailto:birders.west.la@gmail.com)



## Raffle News

By Ben Lee

Thank you to all who entered to win the gift card to neighborhood favorite John O'Groats. Congratulations

to Charlotte Ashmun. You are the lucky winner this month! Moving from British fine dining to Irish (and in honor of St. Patrick's Day), next we are raffling off a \$50 gift card to The Irish Times Pub and Restaurant on Motor. With a variety of daily specials and revamped outside dining, enjoy an



## Neighborhood Buy Nothing Project

Perhaps you've unearthed a long-forgotten-about relic during a Covid-inspired closet cleanout and realize you've lived this long without it, maybe a random neighbor might like it instead? What about a book you've been wanting to read but don't want to purchase it or wait to check it out from the library? The landfills have long been collecting many of our unwanted items and the Neighborhood Buy Nothing Project is the ideal way to put into practice the idea that one man's trash is another man's treasure. If you are on Facebook, you can find your chapter by searching for the Buy Nothing Project group and see where you fall within

the map. Groups are kept localized so recipients don't have to travel far to pick up items. It's all done in a Covid-safe contactless way (we picked up beautiful wine glasses from the porch of a neighbor in Beverlywood!). It's a mix of people who want to give something away and people who would like to receive it. The items run the gamut from clothes to kitchen items, baby seats to petcare and everything in between. It's a lot of fun and a nice, effortless way to not spend a penny but make somebody's day. You can learn more about the organization here: [www.Buynothingproject.org](http://www.Buynothingproject.org)

evening courtesy of Ben Lee Properties. To enter, just send me an email: [ben@benleeproperties.com](mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com) and write 'IRISH' in the subject line. That's it! We'll pick a winner at random at the end of the month. May the Luck o' the Irish be with you.

