

Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

NO. 109

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BEN LEE PROPERTIES • Real Estate Broker • Licensed Attorney

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PRSR STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

EDDM Retail

*****ECRWSS*****

LOCAL
Residential Postal Customer

Hello March

By Ben Lee

Hard to believe it's been two whole years since that fateful day back in March 2020 when we got the call saying our boys would be sent home for two weeks until this new corona virus could be knocked out. Two weeks and two years later and it's pretty incredible that Covid 19 is still in our lives and at the forefront of the news cycle and conversation. Will it still here be a year or two from now? Who knows but one thing's for sure: none of us will forget where we were back in March 2020 and every day that we move away from that undeniably confusing and terrifying time is one step forward in the right direction. There is a part of me that wants to remember some of what we experienced back in those early days because it's a good reminder as to what we ought not take for granted. Supply chain hiccoughs aside, I'm grateful all these months later when I go into the market and see the shelves stocked with food and toilet paper. And two years ago, our days may not have been considered very 'fun,' however it was a blessing to spend all that extra bonus time with the boys.

I think I'll look back on those days with even more wistful longing now that the meter is running on our eldest son's time left living here at home. How did that happen? I think when we started this newsletter he was around 6 or 7 and now we're focusing on where he may go to college in just a few short months. I'm sure many of you have been through this process and know what it feels like. But for my wife and me, this is uncharted territory. We have had zero experience with college applications since filling out our own 30+ years ago. That was of course decades before electronic portals and passwords; detailed personal statements and glitchy Zoom interviews. Back then it was waiting by the mailbox for either a big envelope (good news!) or thin (not so good!). Today there is a whole new language of "Early Decision," vs. "Early Action," "Early Action II," "Regular Decision," and all the various acceptance rates associated with each scenario. At the risk of sounding like an old fuddy-duddy, it's fair to say you practically need a college degree just to figure out what it all means.

I'm sure every generation is aghast at how the current pool of applicants is so much more qualified than those who

came before them. These seniors must be so accomplished to be competitive, it's as if their whole childhood needs to be focused on what they can do that no one else can do in order to have a fighting chance. It's crazy. I really feel for them. And with all the talk about mental health and how we need to let kids be kids, the reality is: the college application is expecting them to be superhuman. The pressure is enormous and it's so insane that getting great grades and a handful of interests/activities is just the bare minimum. In casual conversation with other parents, we've all agreed that there's simply no WAY we could've gotten into our colleges of choice if we had to apply today!

As far as our son is concerned, we're lucky in that he's taken the lead on navigating this path and we haven't gotten into too many fights or arguments about essays or deadlines as other families have. We've essentially gotten out of his way, let him decide where to apply and then do the work towards getting there. He's so self-motivated that we (maybe naively) didn't deem it necessary to seek outside help. His school counselor seemed fine and we were confident he'd assist with pertinent details to keep our boy on track. Which worked great up until his unexpected departure from school late last month! We were suddenly adrift at sea without a captain and given we really didn't know what we were doing, that was not a great feeling to have this late in the game. But I give our son an enormous amount of credit for handling the blip with ease and plunging forward.

There were one or two other minor snafus during the last few months. We were out to dinner one night and he mentioned that an application was due before midnight and he still had a few finishing touches to complete. He didn't seem too concerned about it so we finished eating, went home and at about 8:45 he asked us if we thought he should answer the optional bonus question. We shrugged and said, "Sure! Why not?" A few laughs and jokes later, he got down to business and we heard the keyboard clicking away. At 9:04 we heard an audible scream followed by footsteps running up the stairs to yell that the midnight deadline he had been unconcerned about was midnight EASTERN STANDARD TIME and his entire application had been locked out of the system because he was four minutes late turning it in.



After a tense hour or two bemoaning his mistake and complaining about the unfairness of it all, he emailed the admissions office, explained his position and asked for an extension. As he would learn the following morning, a great many west coast applicants suffered the same fate. The college determined it didn't specify the deadline clearly enough on its website and told everyone who didn't get it in on time they had until the end of day to do it. Big sigh of relief and major crisis #1 successfully averted.

Then there was the time he was going to be interviewed by a graduate from a college he was very eager to attend. He set up the appointment with the alum's assistant and then got to work researching the intricacies of the university and creating lists of potential questions to ask his interviewer, as well as compiling additional points of interests in case he needed to share what he knew about the school and its wide range of programs. He was ready!

So, imagine his shock and horror when he received an email from the alumni's assistant saying her boss "...was on the Zoom and waited as long as he could but finally had to leave since you never showed up." WHAT?!? After all that excitement at being granted an interview followed by hours of work preparing, our boy got his dates messed up and thought it was scheduled for Thursday instead of Tuesday. Whoops. It happens! We've all done it and probably more than once but that certainly didn't make him feel any better about it at the time. He was embarrassed and mortified and figured he had ruined any chance he had at getting into the school.

But true to form, he immediately

apologized, owned his mistake and asked if there was any way to reschedule (and of course promised to write down the right date this time). Luckily another time was mutually agreed upon and the interview occurred, this time without a hitch. After apologizing yet again for his regretful mistake, they had a robust and enthusiastic chat. Major crisis #2 averted as well.

As of this writing, we don't know if he's been accepted to either of these schools but regardless, I'm proud of how he's handled himself throughout the process. Even if he gets rejected from these and others, he certainly learned a few valuable lessons that will probably be more impactful than what he'll eventually learn in college. Namely: when you fall down, you get back up again. You take your lumps and you just keep going. Not everything will go your way and in fact, many times you'll face crisis's that won't get fixed so easily. The trick is to just do your best and hope things work out. Or as the British like to say: Stay Calm and Carry On. This can be said for college application mishaps, parenting fails... and even real estate transactions. Because mistakes happen all the time but it's how you handle them that is really the true test of character.

A tip of the hat to all of you currently going through this challenging time, too. May your fights be few and acceptances ample. And if your kids are anything like mine, might I suggest a nice appointment book as a graduation gift?

My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Beverlywood - NEW LISTING!



10440 Lorenzo Pl \$4,995,000
4 Beds/5 Bath 4,585 Sq. Ft., 9,001 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - FOR SALE!



- GLENBARR -
Best Location in the Neighborhood!
6 Beds/8 Bath 7,500 Sq. Ft., 8,500 Sq. Ft. Lot

You may be curious about the new construction home being built on Glenbarr. Call Ben tel:3107046580 or send him an email mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com to learn more about this spectacular property.

Cheviot Hills - FOR SALE!



- LORENZO -
Best Location in the Neighborhood!
6 Beds/8 Bath 7,500 Sq. Ft., 8,500 Sq. Ft. Lot

You may be curious about the new construction home being built on Lorenzo. Call Ben tel:3107046580 or send him an email mailto:ben@benleeproperties.com to learn more about this stunning property.

Santa Monica - GREAT NEW PRICE!



141 Hollister Ave for lease at \$30,000/month
5 Beds/6 Baths 5,000 Sq. Ft.

Steps from Prime Santa Monica Beach! Gorgeous new 2020 construction, state-of-the-art masterpiece mere moments from the beach. The kitchen opens to the sophisticated and drought-resistant landscaped backyard. There are sliding pocket doors that completely open to an outdoor side deck dining area, ideal for parties al fresco. Luxe master has treetop views, walk-in closet and 5-star bath. 900 sq. ft. rooftop deck with firepit and hot tub.

Beverlywood - IN ESCROW!



2030 Castle Heights Ave \$1,995,000
3 Beds/2 Bath 1,980 Sq. Ft., 7,281 Sq. Ft. Lot

Classic traditional style home beautifully maintained with hardwood floors and crown moldings throughout. Generous open plan kitchen with breakfast area and stainless-steel appliances. 3 bedrooms and 2 original tiled baths. Central heat and air. Laundry room with newer washer/dryer. Light and bright with large windows in every room. Lush private backyard with fruit trees, natural bluestone patio and grassy yard.

Cheviot Hills - SOLD! (over the list price in multiple offers)



3029 Motor Ave \$2,999,000
5 Beds/5 Bath 3,010 Sq. Ft., 6,985 Sq. Ft. Lot

Seize the unique opportunity to be the second owners of this luxurious home that is less than a decade old. State-of-the-art craftsmanship and fine attention to detail created this stately 5 bedroom/5 bath exquisite estate in Cheviot Hills. Surrounded by lush foliage and totally private, this immaculate home in the highly coveted Overland Avenue School District must be seen to be believed!

BUYERS' NEEDS!

I held an open house in Beverlywood a few weeks ago and after about 300 people came through, I stopped counting. It was so busy and we entered into multiple offers within a day and by the end of the week, sold it for over asking. This means one thing: it's a seller's market and people are very anxious to buy! Please take a look at what one of my clients is looking for. Perhaps your home fits the bill? If so, give me a call!

IF WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR SOUNDS LIKE IT COULD MATCH WITH YOUR HOME AND YOU'D BE OPEN TO TALKING MORE ABOUT IT, PLEASE GIVE ME A CALL: 310-704-6580 OR BEN@BENLEEPROPERTIES.COM

I have a lovely couple who is looking for a 4 bedroom/3 bathroom home that is about 3,000-4,000 square feet in either Rancho Park or Cheviot Hills. Single story or two-story is fine and doesn't need a pool (but if it has one, that's OK, too). They'd like the house to have some personality/character and, no offense to developers, not be a "modern box." Doesn't have to be brand new and could even need some work but would like the home to be on a quiet street with a lot that's about 6,000 square feet or larger. Price point: 3-4 million.

Cheviot Hills happenings

Trains Crossing Over Motor

Michael Harris, my father in law, passed away in December. He dictated this article before he died while working on his third book about the Westside that will be published posthumously. -Ben

By Michael Harris

Hello Longtime residents of Cheviot Hills may remember the evening noise that disturbed everyone's peace and quiet. That was the 8:20 freight train that rumbled along the tracks, roughly along Exposition Right of Way. The train carried some industrial

products but it essentially blew its evening whistle and traveled on the tracks to preserve its legal right to do so. It was most prominently seen on the rickety overpass above Motor Avenue. At some point the tracks were removed and the daily train noises were nothing but a memory.



Neighborhood Ladies' Wine Nights

By Lilli Lee

For many years, once every couple of months, neighborhood ladies would get together to enjoy a little wine, delicious snacks and lots of laughs! Of course we had to take a pause for the last few years due to the pandemic but now that Covid numbers are (hopefully) waning and the weather is warming, now seems like a great time to bring the "Wine Nights" back! Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join. The first one in this post-pandemic world will be held on April 12 from 7-9pm.

If you would like to come, please send me an email and I'll forward you the invite. If you are interested in hosting on in the future, that would be great as we need hosts to keep the party going. No pressure for anything fancy! These get-togethers are really just an excuse to get out of the house for a few hours, see old friends/neighbors and hopefully meet some new ones. In the past we've included jewelry shopping, book readings and other special guests in the festivities. I hope you'll join us in April! Here's my email to get all the details: lillijlee@yahoo.com



RAFFLE

By Ben Lee

Thank you to all of you who entered to win the \$50 gift card to Holy Cow BBQ restaurant. Congratulations to Jack Wetter. You are the lucky winner this month and I hope you enjoy all the delicious bar-be-qued delicacies this neighborhood

restaurant has to offer. To everyone who entered but didn't win, don't worry as there is always another raffle right around the corner. This month we are offering the chance to win a \$50 gift card to Pitfire Pizza. Thank you for the suggestion, Rancho Park resident Michelle Helmer! Pitfire is always so generous to help out local schools and organizations with their various fundraisers so we'd like to

repay their generosity by encouraging everyone to try and win this raffle! To enter, simply send an email to: Ben@benleproperties.com and write 'PIZZA' in the subject. That's it! We'll draw a winner at the end of the month and notify you via email. Thanks for playing and congratulations, again, to Jack for winning last month's raffle to Holy Cow.

