

Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

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Lorenzo & Glenbarr

By Ben Lee

If you live in Cheviot Hills or take walks around Rancho Park Golf Course, then you've likely noticed two large houses being built on the corner of Lorenzo and Glenbarr. Construction sites are a little bit like on-location TV productions. Passers-by will often pause to take a look and wonder what's causing all the ruckus. Neighbors want to know the details surrounding the new structure that will eventually be part of their community's skyline. And I totally get the curiosity factor because with construction often comes noise, disruption, extra cars on the block and additional people milling about. After all the headaches associated with building, neighbors want to know what's in it for them? How will the homes affect the community? How is it possible to build two homes on one lot? How much will the homes sell for and how will that affect their own property's values? I hear the questions floating out there but very rarely will anyone pick up the phone to ask me. I'm always happy to share what's happening regarding real estate in our community but stop short when it comes to engaging on Next Door. Clearly, for some, it is easier to smear my name and question my integrity than bothering with the truth because what fun would that be?

Since Next Door is one of those virtual spaces I just refuse to get involved with, I'll use this forum to address some of the misinformation that was getting a handful of folks all in a tizzy.

There had been one single-story home on the corner of Glenbarr and Lorenzo in Cheviot Hills that had been occupied by three generations of a family spanning many decades. As is often the case, when it came time to sell, the surviving descendants contacted me to ask about options. The house was in a state of disrepair and in this current climate, the sellers would stand to make more selling the property for land value versus the home itself, despite its sentimental value. So, in this type of transaction, developers are generally interested in purchasing the land to create a new home with all the conveniences and features of a modern property.

'Developers,' automatically have a negative connotation. Some people not only hate change, but they really hate the thought of an older home being torn down to make space for a new one. I understand this in theory, as older houses often help shape the personality of a neighborhood. However, it's much easier to appreciate an older home from the ease and comfort of a modern fully functional, up-to-date house. Charm and character are treasured features but unless you're willing to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars to bring the house up to date and all the infrastructure associated, these older homes are not the most pleasant to actually inhabit. My family's first house in Cheviot Hills was a 1930's Spanish on Queensbury that we painstakingly restored. We loved it despite its constant need for attention. We brought our babies home from the hospital to that house. We still drive past it all the time and look at it with wistful longing. But it's easy in hindsight to forget the years of expensive upkeep due to a sagging foundation, clogged sewer system and frayed electrical wiring. Labors of love, while worthwhile, are shockingly expensive and incredibly time intensive to maintain. They're called 'Money Pits' for a reason.

The next two houses we moved into in the neighborhood, first a home on Danalda and a few years later, a home on McConnell, were older somewhat rundown houses that needed total rehabilitation. Renovating homes became a creative outlet for me, and I enjoyed the process immensely, starting with the architectural plan and going all the way through to landscaping. Developing a house with the knowledge that you'll actually live there is a different, more arduous and emotional undertaking than designing a home for a potential stranger. When you're building your own home, every decision carries the weight of: will we love this in 5, 10 years? Every choice is personal. How will WE use this space? Is this backyard ideal for OUR growing children? Most developers in the area aren't building for themselves but rather for nameless, faceless buyers; so their design choices, while often beautiful and extremely popular, can



often feel slightly more generic. The question isn't what will be appealing to you as an individual, but what will be beautiful and livable for anyone. Just like fashion, there are trends to building houses. We've lived in a Spanish, a Traditional and a Modern. Our next home may be something totally different.

Now that I've been through this process many times, I've taken what I've learned and segued it into building houses for people other than myself. My insight into the intricacies of home building combined with my law and land use background has given me the tools to know what works on a site and how to utilize the building process to get the most square footage without sacrificing architectural integrity. I try to make my projects special and unique to the site. I have a pretty solid sense of what works and what doesn't, meshed with the trends of today's current market and what buyers are hoping to find. Will the homes I've helped create appeal to everyone? No and that's part of what makes them interesting. But the hope is that whoever buys them will respect the time, expense and craftsmanship that went into their construction. Every fixture was hand selected and chosen with care. Every decision was made with the same deliberation as if I was going to move into the home myself.

So back to the houses by the golf course. What made this project particularly special was the fact that I took on a partner. The seller was intrigued by the fact that my father-in-law, Michael, wanted to design and create the property with me. She liked that my father-in-law grew up on Glenbarr just a few houses down the street. Her parents knew his parents and felt like my father-in-law and I would handle the reconstruction with

the respect it deserves.

We opted to divide the nearly 17000 square foot lot into two separate lots, preserving the beautiful olive tree in the front. We actually designed the two homes using the olive tree as a makeshift middle point between the two. Given the current building codes, we could create two separate (roughly) 7400 square foot homes. Each has a unique architectural style yet both offer subterranean parking, an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), pool, golf course views, elevator and finished basement with light wells. We're asking 8.750 for Glenbarr and are still thinking about the price for Lorenzo but will be somewhere in that range. I'm extremely proud of these two homes and I think they enhance and compliment the neighborhood.

My father-in-law passed away before our project together was able to be completed. He never got the chance to see how the homes turned out but up until he got too sick to visit the sites in person, he was actively and thoroughly engaged with the process. I'd like to think he would be happy with how they turned out and would take pride in having played a role in creating properties for the street on which he was raised.

The Glenbarr property will have its first Open House mid-May and the property on Lorenzo will be ready to be shown about month or so later. I look forward to presenting them to you and sincerely hope that you like them.

I also hope that if you ever have any questions or curiosities about properties in the neighborhood, you reach out to be directly: 310-704-6580 or ben@benleeproperties.com. I'm always here to answer any questions you may have.

My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



2848 Motor Ave \$4,695,000

5 Beds/4.5 Bath 4,246 Sq. Ft., 7,485 Sq. Ft. Lot

An extraordinary property in Cheviot Hills: with the glamour and design of a palatial estate without sacrificing the warmth and charm of a beloved family home, this stately Mediterranean is a masterpiece of craftsmanship and detail. Additional amenities of this beautiful home include: Sonos central smart panels to control tv, sound system, lighting located in the family room, impossibly high ceilings, sweeping views, multiple fireplaces, front balconies and generous storage space. A truly exquisite property that will make an impression.

Beverlywood - NEW LISTING!



2339 Castle Heights Ave \$7,500/Month

3 Beds/2 Bath 1,703 Sq. Ft., 5,209 Sq. Ft. Lot

Thoroughly updated home for lease on Castle Heights has everything you've been looking for! With a fully remodeled kitchen, this property offers all new infrastructure (heat/ac system, pipes, windows, closets) as well as artistic touches that are sure to appeal to your discerning eye: polished hardwood floors, large marble fireplace, plenty of open space and light. Located on a lovely tree-lined street in a family friendly neighborhood just a stone's throw to the award winning Castle Heights Elementary, this is an opportunity not to be missed.

Marina Del Rey - FOR SALE!



4275 Corinth Ave \$2,650,000

4 Beds/4 Bath 3,763 Sq. Ft., 11,388 Sq. Ft. Lot

Situated on a massive corner lot in a quiet Culver City neighborhood. Surrounded by an orchard of mature trees that include guava, avocado, pomegranate and a variety of citrus, the foliage provides both privacy and farm-to-table nourishment. The house has a vast entertaining space on the entry level as well as convenient/private office scenarios for those who opt or need to work from home. With limitless appeal in an enviable location conveniently located near the shops, restaurants and studios of Culver City, seize this phenomenal opportunity to reimagine a true showplace.

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.

Westwood - FOR LEASE!



1323 Club View Dr Offered For Lease

Furnished or Unfurnished \$28,000/month

6 Beds/7 Baths 4,839 Sq. Ft. - 11,742 Sq. Ft.

A breathtaking property that effortlessly blends a contemporary style with old-school Hollywood glamour. The large bedrooms are en suite with walk-in closets and stylish bathrooms. This home provides additional possibilities for at-home offices, and/or gym and if more space is needed, there's a convenient finished basement with built-ins for storage.

Santa Monica - FOR LEASE!



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.

Cheviot Hills - SOLD!



10440 Lorenzo Pl \$4,995,000

4 Beds/5 Bath 4,585 Sq. Ft., 9,001 Sq. Ft. Lot

Stunning Mediterranean style home has been completely remodeled and is absolutely gorgeous. Sweeping, unobstructed view of Rancho Park Golf Course; this home's vast interior is open, masterfully constructed and basks in the glow of an abundance of natural light. The backyard boasts a swimming pool, an antique outdoor shower, designer tile artwork, covered patio with TV for al fresco dining and entertaining, built-in BBQ.

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!

Cheviot Hills happenings

In Memory of Heidi Adler

By Ben Lee

Today I write with a heavy heart, mourning the loss of a dear friend and treasured member of our neighborhood and community. Heidi Adler: designer, mother, wife, sister, aunt, daughter and friend was diagnosed with cancer in February, 2020 and for two+ years she miraculously managed to beat the odds, enduring punishing treatments to survive well past the initial four month life expectancy of a diagnosis so dire. I think her relentless love and devotion to her family helped give her the strength to forge through unimaginable discomfort just to see it to another day. Thanks to the unwavering support of her husband Brian, sister Holly, children Izzy and Xan and a host of close, loving friends, Heidi continued to forge ahead and did so with humor and grace; an enduring sarcastic wit and stubborn unwillingness to wallow in complaints or self-pity. If you are a Castle Heights family and have ever admired that great dragon mural at the entrance, that's thanks to Heidi. If you have ever spent the night at the famous Castle Heights Camp Out, that's thanks to Heidi and Brian, too. They started that tradition nearly a decade ago and in doing so prompted other schools to follow suit, providing a lifetime of memories for countless families who popped a tent



and slept on an elementary school campus overnight. The Adlers were founding parents of The City School and when the high school closed its doors, they found a new home at New West Charter. If you're familiar with the custom-made furniture store La Bella Cosa, a fixture in the Helms Bakery complex for many years, that was the Adler's. Together, Brian and Heidi would create beautiful custom pieces for thousands of happy clients in Los Angeles and beyond. She left her artistic mark in so many ways—whenever there was a party to host,

she would always be in charge of creating the most exquisite bouquets of flowers. She had an eye for detail and always knew the perfect shade of paint to use or how to arrange a table or hang a piece of art. She was as opinionated as she was kind with a boisterous laugh that made every gathering more festive and fun. And while her time on this earth wasn't nearly long enough, those of us who knew and were touched by her in some way feel blessed to have been in her life. She is loved and will be missed by all who knew her.

Jelly's Last Jam



By Ben Lee

You don't need to battle traffic and spend a fortune to see great local theater! The Academy of Music and Performing Arts Magnet at Hamilton High School is proud to present the Tony Award winning musical: "Jelly's Last Jam." Telling the story of Jelly Roll Morton—credited with being one of the driving forces behind introducing jazz to the American public in the early 20th century—the show features singing, dancing, drama—everything you could possibly want from a night at the theater, right in our own backyard. For tickets and showtimes head to: www.Hamiltonmusic.org

Ladies' Wine Night

By Lilli Lee

It was so nice seeing so many of you at our first semi-post-pandemic Ladies' Neighborhood Wine Night! This was a tradition that started decades ago: women from around the neighborhood would walk to a hostess' house, enjoy a bit of food and conversation and then head home. I hosted the gathering in April and of those who came by, I only knew about half. Most women in attendance didn't know each other but therein lies the beauty of these events. Come as strangers, leave as friends (or at



least friendly neighbors!). If you are interested in hosting a future party, please send me a note. They can be as casual or fancy as you'd like but no pressure to make it fabulous. It's really just an excuse to get together, meet some new people and visit for an hour or two. If you would like to be added to the list to learn of the next one, let me know and I'm happy to add you to the invite: Lillijlee@yahoo.com

RAFFLE

By Ben Lee

We received an unprecedented number of entries for last month's raffle to everyone's favorite (prime) rib joint Lawry's! Congratulations to Rachel Marcus. You are the lucky winner of a \$100 gift certificate to enjoy all the delicious meat, potatoes, spinning salad and Yorkshire pudding that Lawry's has to offer. To everyone who entered and didn't win this month, don't worry as there is always another raffle right around the corner. For May, we are honoring all of the mothers by offering a \$50 gift card to where my mother-in-law and mother-of-my-



BAY CITIES ITALIAN DELI & BAKERY

children enjoy Mother's Day lunch every year (and happens to be the home of the greatest sandwich of all time, the GodMOTHER): Bay Cities Italian Deli! To enter, simply send an email to ben@benleeproperties.com and write "BAY CITIES" in the subject line. That's it! We'll raffle off a gift card at the end of the month. Good luck and Happy Mother's Day to all.