

Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

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BEN LEE  COLDWELL
BANKER

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Happy New Year!

By Ben Lee

Is it possible that we are actually living in the year 2023? Thanks to a childhood spent in large part watching the Jetsons on TV, I was expecting more flying cars and living on the moon by this point. But sci-fi modernizations aside, life in 2022 was pretty good and I'm hoping 2023 will be even better. I hope you had a good holiday season. This was the first year in quite a while we opted to stay home vs. travel. Our son was home from college and he was happy to see his friends also back for the holidays instead of leaving town. Did I miss the hustle and bustle of airport excitement and the enjoyment of a change-of-scenery for a week or two? Yes I did. But a quiet, peaceful time with the family can be re-energizing, too. Sometimes I need a vacation from a vacation and don't feel refreshed enough to tackle the tasks at hand after traveling. And let's face it: the best part about the start of a new year is the optimism and commitment to doing something new each day with energy and vigor! I love starting fresh by making some earnest resolutions and goals and then working each day to see them through. And by "resolutions and goals" I really mean that sometimes at the start of a new year I clean off most of the clutter from my desk and make a mental to-do list of things I had put off doing because, let's be honest, no one likes to buy or sell properties during the holidays.

Just before Thanksgiving I opened up the doors to my new listing on Lorenzo Place in Cheviot Hills. We threw a big party and invited the entire neighborhood to come by. There was an ice cream truck in the front yard and a gourmet coffee cart in the back. Our three sons manned the gift table and we gave away a whole slew of fun little items. The best part was how many people told my wife or me that they've enjoyed watching our boys grow up through the pages of this newsletter. Better still, though, was the community coming out for a lovely day in the sunshine- gathering together and catching up with one another over an ice cream cone or cup of coffee (or both).

Houses are very rarely sold this way. It would be pretty remarkable if a buyer were to happen upon an Open House during such a festive affair and actually buy it. But putting on such an event is less an effort to get a house sold than it is to thank the neighborhood for putting up with many months of noise, added traffic and mess of construction. The upshot of a new home being built and sold is it increases everyone's property values. But people are less likely to appreciate that while hearing the back-up sensors of a cement truck at 7am! So these big splashy



Opens are my way of me saying "thank you" to the neighbors. In addition, I really do enjoy meeting people curious about what was being built. It's always funny to me when neighbors come in, preemptively apologizing, explaining that they have no interest in buying- they just want to see the finished product. I always tell them: "I get it! I'd be that person, too. Come on in and tell me what you think!"

Happily, the reception was positive across the board. Visitors expressed delight in the sweeping, dramatic staircase that spans three levels. They loved the storage, intelligence of design, pretty views, expansive kitchen, pool, elevator and guest suite.

I'm particularly proud of this home on Lorenzo because each decision was made with such thoughtful intent. Each fixture, surface and design detail were created to be appealing but also to mimic nothing else on the market. The house would be fantastic if it offered nothing but the phenomenal golf course view however its unique character and personality is precisely what makes it so special.

I received a great many compliments that day (and I don't think it was just because of the free ice cream and coffee!) and that makes all the work put into the home worthwhile. Better than the

accolades, though, was just seeing how much fun everyone was having together. I think the one thing I miss about the pandemic was seeing so many families taking refuge from being stuck inside and instead being outdoors, walking up and down the streets. This supersized open house reminded me a bit of those days- it was an activity people could share together.

While the holidays are notoriously a dead zone for real estate transactions, there's no doubt that the market has slowed down considerably. The home sale frenzy we were dealing with a year ago has significantly changed from a sprint to a jog. It hasn't stopped, not by any means, however it has mellowed out in its intensity. But such is the nature of the business. Sometimes it's up, sometimes it's down. The best way to weather the current storm is to recognize that Westside real estate is always a solid investment and one can never perfectly predict where the market is going with 100% certainty. In other words, my advice is: don't let current conditions necessarily dictate the choices you make when it comes to buying or selling. If now is your time to take action, that's what you should do.

Here's to a fabulous, fun-filled and

healthy year ahead. I look forward to seeing you in flying cars, Open Houses or just wandering around the neighborhood. Happy 2023!



My featured listings

– Cheviot Hills –
Dream Home - JUST REDUCED!

– OPEN HOUSES –
January 8, 22, 29, 1-4 pm

*This three-level home that includes an elevator,
swimming pool, spa, movie theater and the best view
of Rancho Park golf course imaginable.*

10422 Lorenzo Pl. - \$8,995,000
6 Beds/8 Bath 6,600 Sq. Ft., 8,100 Sq. Ft. Lot



Beverlywood - FOR LEASE!



9601 Cattaraugus Ave \$7,950 per/mo.
3 Beds/2 Bath - 1,941 Sq. Ft., 7,945 Sq. Ft. Lot

This warm and inviting home in the Castle Heights neighborhood of Beverlywood has much to offer. Immaculate, remodeled and tastefully designed, there is a dramatic fireplace in the formal living room and hardwood floors throughout provide an effortless flow from each vast and generously sized room. With mature foliage surrounding the drought resistant backyard, enjoy dinner outdoors while enjoying absolute privacy. Located mere moments from the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School, this home is a must-see.

Cheviot Hills - FOR LEASE!



3142 Queensbury Dr \$7,900 per/mo.
3 Beds/3 Bath 2,319 Sq. Ft., 9,749 Sq. Ft. Lot

Amazing Mid-Century house on a huge corner lot. Prime Cheviot Hills location. Light and bright living room with soaring ceilings, clearstory windows and dramatic fireplace. Updated gourmet kitchen with newer appliances. Both open to enormous grassy backyard with patios and gazebo for great indoor/outdoor entertaining. Large master suite on one side of the house, 2 bedrooms and 2 additional baths on the other side. Available for immediate occupancy

Mar Vista - IN ESCROW!



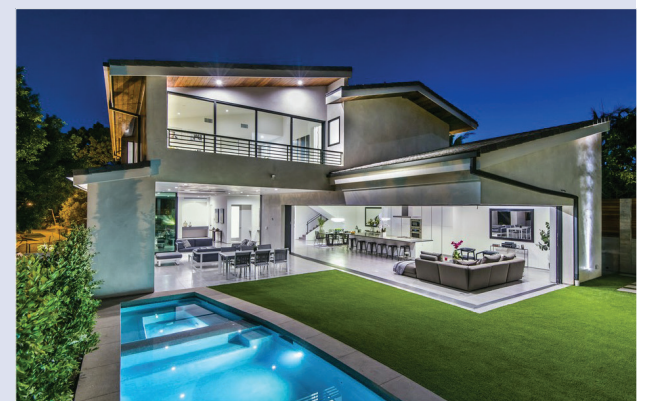
3430 Barry Ave \$2,750,000
4 Beds/4 Bath - 3,635 Sq. Ft., 6,009 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - SOLD! Off market pocket listing.



3161 Ivy Glen Way \$2,475,000
3 Beds/2.5 Bath - 1,920 Sq. Ft., 7,704 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - SOLD! Off market pocket listing.



3142 Dannyhill Dr \$4,850,000
5 Beds/6 Bath - 4,236 Sq. Ft., 8,707 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills happenings

When Dr. King came to Town

By Ben Lee

This month marks what would have been Martin Luther King Jr.'s 94th birthday. An interesting fact you may not know is Dr. King came to Los Angeles a few years before he was assassinated and spoke to the Temple Isaiah congregation. While Temple Isaiah has always been a “home at the intersection of tradition and innovation,” with a special effort toward the pursuit of justice, Jewish learning and ritual; the reform congregation not only embraces its own families but has built a history of reaching out to the community at large with ways to get involved in social action and progressive pursuits. So, while it's notable that such a famous and historical figure as Martin Luther King Jr. visited the temple in 1960 to share his thoughts and ideas, his appearance fits in well with the kind of place Temple Isaiah takes pride in being.

Rabbi Albert M. Lewis introduced Dr. King to the congregation by comparing him to another remarkable figure in history, particularly to the Jewish people: He stated, “I'm aware, it's a great deal to Martin Luther King to compare him to Moses. And yet, it isn't done



lightly in any sense of the term. We have been dormant for many years. Since the Civil War, there has been no single action that has so galvanized the Negro people and so stirred up the conscience of the Western country as the direct positive action, which Martin Luther King, Jr., initiated in Montgomery, Alabama.”

Dr. King thanks the temple for its invitation to speak and then addresses the gathered crowd to share his thoughts, “There can be no gain saying of the fact that a great struggle is taking place in our world today. And this struggle grows out of the quest for freedom and

human dignity on the part of millions of people who have been forced to walk for centuries through the long night of oppression. Wherever you turn, whether it's in Accra, Nairobi, Johannesburg, New York, Los Angeles, Montgomery, Alabama to Little Rock, Arkansas, the cry is for freedom.”

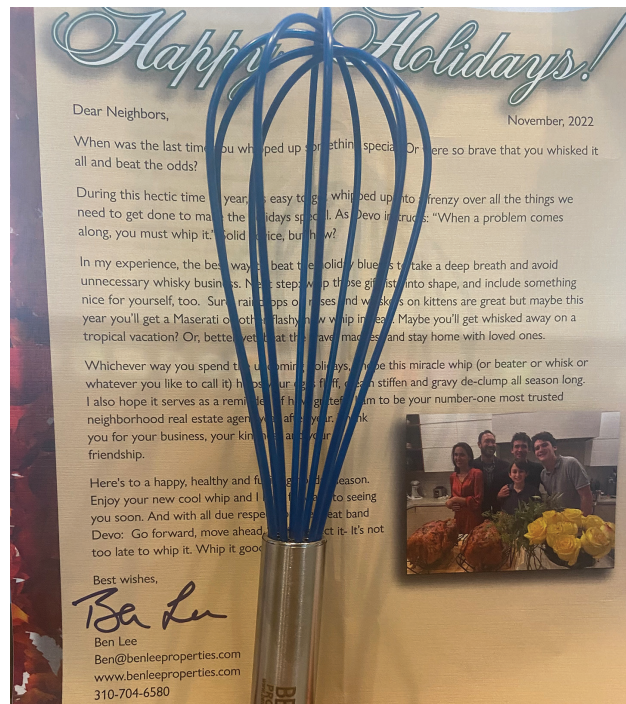
The entire audio portion of his speech and its transcripts have been preserved on Temple Isaiah's website. What better way to honor Dr. King's life and legacy on the eve of his birthday than to hear his words in his own voice. The link is here: <https://www.templeisaiah.com/MLK>

Temple Isaiah continues to invite notable guests to speak in an effort to further the community's education, exposure and understanding of the major issues of the day. Later in the month E. Randol Schoenberg (the lawyer featured in “Woman in Gold,” credited with helping retrieve stolen artworks from the nazis after World War II) will make a presentation and the Braid Salon theater group will be performing enlightening original pieces as well. For an upcoming roster of programs and ticket information visit: <https://www.templeisaiah.com/calendar.php>

HOLIDAY GIFT

By Ben Lee

The holidays may be over but our gift this year will keep beating and whisking all year long! I hope you all received and are enjoying this year's holiday gift. It's always fun to come up with something both fun and useful while spreading joy across the neighborhood. Once in a while a house accidentally gets skipped during distribution. If for whatever reason you didn't get your whisk and would like to receive one, please send me an email (ben@benleeproperties.com) or give me a call: 310-704-6580 and I'll be happy to drop one by in the next day or two. A handy tool that won't scratch up your pans. Nothing beats that!



Book Signing

By Ben Lee

It was bittersweet yet heartfelt to host a posthumous book 'signing' for my father-in-law Michael Harris's third and final book that he was working on before he died. His brother Jeffrey helped him finish “More Westside Stories,” and saw to it that it was published after his death. So, while Michael never got to see it in print, we celebrated the accomplishment by hosting a gathering at our house where Jeffrey described the process of how Michael (at that point no longer able to write) would dictate articles for the book and Jeffrey would clean them up before printing. The party consisted of friends, relatives and fans of the first two of Michael's books: Westside Stories and Westside Stories Too. Though an attorney by trade, I'd like to think Michael would be happy knowing so many people came out to support



his work as an author and admire his keen insights regarding Los Angeles' Westside. The first two editions are available on Amazon however if you would like to buy his latest book, More Westside Stories, please contact his brother Jeffrey who can send you a copy. Readers of our newsletter can purchase at a reduced price, so tell him you read about it here: hrrmg@mac.com

RAFFLE

It's the first raffle of the year and what sweeter way to say 'Happy Valentine's Day' than to give your loved one (or yourself!) the gift of delicious See's Candy? We're raffling off a \$50 gift certificate for whatever you'd like from See's! To enter, email me: ben@benleeproperties.com and write CANDY in the subject line. That's it! We'll draw a winner at the end of the month, in plenty of time to get the chocolate to you before Valentine's Day. Good luck!

