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Beverlywood



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HAPPY GRADUATION

By Ben Lee

It's June and the biggest question on my mind is: how is it possible that my family is celebrating not one but two graduates this month? Between my middle son graduating high school, and my baby graduating middle school, this June is flush with emotion. Everyone says raising children goes by fast, but this feels like lightning speed on steroids. Just yesterday they were carrying lunchboxes to Castle Heights, playing T-ball in Rancho Park, begging for a bouncy house for their birthday parties and dragging stuffed animals behind them wherever they'd go. And now, all of a sudden, it's caps and gowns and diplomas and we're faced with sending another son off to college. Even after nearly 20 years of parenting, we are not ready!

Watching our boys graduate from their respective schools feels like an incredible accomplishment. Spencer, our middle son, attended the Music Academy at Hamilton High and in doing so, carried on a very proud tradition of generations of Yankees. He was the first in our immediate family to follow in the illustrious footsteps of many relatives who came before him: my father, step-mother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, great aunts and great uncles all hail from the halls of Hamilton High. When he accepts his diploma, I know he'll carry the pride of his ancestors and feel confident in his decision to leave his previous school and attend Hamilton instead.

Spencer loved going to Castle Heights. He adored his teachers and classmates and the entire down-to-earth, multi-cultural framework that is the lifeblood of

a local public school. But when he got accepted to attend the new Geffen Academy at UCLA for 6th grade, we felt like it was an opportunity not to be missed. Funded by David Geffen, it promised to be an innovative, academic, creative and wholly new type of school. Spencer's was the very first class to walk through the doors and while the school has only improved over these last 6 years, he wanted to leave after 8th grade for something bigger. His hope was to return to his roots, go back to a public school environment and ideally reconnect with friends he hadn't seen since his Castle Heights days.

His first year at Hamilton, he only got to "see" his old friends via Zoom because 9th grade coincided with the pandemic. They couldn't experience getting to know a new campus, use their lockers, eat cafeteria food or sit in a classroom. But luckily in 10th grade, they had an actual in-person first day of school: in masks and undergoing weekly covid testing but, very happy to be on school grounds to be able to take advantage of everything Hamilton had to offer. There was often live mariachi music or student jazz combos performing during lunch; or fun, random moments when their new principal would show off her dance moves. Students could join clubs, be in the musical and resume sports. High School life, for all intents and purposes, was somewhat back to normal.

And now, in the blink of an eye, Spencer and his fellow Class of 2024 friends are gearing up to leave. Just as they're getting started, it's already over. I'm confident, though, that society's future is in incredibly capable hands, as



these graduates are amongst the best and brightest I have had the pleasure of meeting. Two of Spencer's closest friends are the Class of '24 Co-Valedictorians. One is heading to UCLA and the other received a full scholarship to Harvard. He has friends going to Vassar, U of Oregon, UC Santa Barbara and Howard. As for where Spencer is headed, it's crazy to think that he was faced with the same decision that I had to make 33 years ago when I was graduating from Santa Monica High School. We both were in the same exact boat: needing to choose between two fantastic schools: Wesleyan and Berkeley. Arguably, a good problem to have but no less stressful. We ultimately made different choices- I decided to go to Wesleyan. Spencer, however, picked Berkeley and I couldn't be happier and more excited for him. Not only is it one of the top ranked public universities in the world, but it feels like it shares similar characteristics with the schools he has loved thus far, starting with Castle Heights and ending with Hamilton.

It's the end of an era, though, and while we are thrilled to celebrate the fruition of all his hard work and so proud of everything he's accomplished thus far; we are already missing

him, months before he actually flies the nest. It's that emotional paradox most parents face: a little bit sad about one phase of a child's life ending while simultaneously being so excited for the incredible experiences that lie ahead.

And since Berkeley isn't as close by as UCLA, we won't get to visit Spencer as often as we see his older brother Mason, however we still feel very lucky that he's just a short plane trip (or slightly longer car ride) away. It's also nice that just as he's saying goodbye to Hamilton High, his younger brother Vinnie will be taking up the reigns. Our youngest is graduating 8th grade from the Geffen Academy and will be starting Hamilton High (Humanities Magnet) this fall. Even though time is going by way too swiftly, we couldn't be happier about the Lee family Yankee legacy continuing.

Here's wishing all the 2024 graduates a very hearty congratulations. Wherever the road takes you, I wish you the best and hope for nothing but great days ahead. Just please remember to call home once in a while because I speak for all parents when I say: no matter how old you get, you're still our babies. We love you and will miss you like crazy.

My featured listings

Cheviot Hills – NEW LISTING!



9825 Altman Ave. - \$3,695,000
5 Beds / 6 Bath, 3,638 Sq. Ft.

Nestled within the natural beauty of a rustic, quiet cul-de-sac this brand new construction on Altman Avenue is a hidden neighborhood gem. The private, grand backyard is freshly landscaped, surrounded by trees and has both patio and grass areas, perfect for parties. Located in close proximity to the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School, come see this handsome home today.

Cheviot Hills – NEW LISTING!



3257 Provon Ln. - \$1,795,000
3 Beds / 2 Bath, 1,702 Sq. Ft.

A lovely, single-story, updated home on a secluded cul-de-sac in Cheviot Hills, this traditional-style, Mid-Century house has much to offer. Located in the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School district and a stone's throw from the shops and restaurants in Cheviot Hills, this delightful home will not be on the market for long!

Santa Monica– NEW LISTING!



2431 3rd St #7 - \$1,595,000
2 Beds / 2 Bath, 1,265 Sq. Ft.

Bright and beautiful, this newly remodeled, sleek modern-style condo with picture-perfect ocean views and sun-drenched balcony is a quick stroll to the beach and minutes from Ocean Park's Main Street. Also included is a two-car tandem garage space with electrical vehicle charging. This unit's convenient location and designer features provide an ideal living and entertaining space to complement your idyllic Ocean Park lifestyle!

Santa Monica– NEW LISTING!



2405 34th Street #27 - \$1,049,000
2 Beds / 3 Bath, 1,297 Sq. Ft.

Seize the chance to live in the highly desirable Sunset Park neighborhood. This thoroughly remodeled condominium is beach-adjacent living at its best! A brand new kitchen offers a Farmhouse sink, new quartz countertops, new custom cabinetry, stainless appliances and designer tile backsplash. Located near the markets, shops and nightlife of Pico Boulevard, this special opportunity to live in Santa Monica is not to be missed.

Cheviot Hills – NEW LISTING!



3221 Provon Ln - \$3,400,000
4 Beds / 3 Bath / 2,830 Sq. Ft.

A newly constructed, single-story modern farmhouse on a quiet, cul-de-sac in Cheviot Hills is nothing short of exquisite. Beautiful hardwood floors, fireplace and built-ins. Each of the bedrooms are spacious with beautifully designed bathrooms. This home, located close to the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School and the shops/restaurants of Cheviot Hills is a true work of art. Call to see it today!

Bel Air – FOR LEASE!



2115 Linda Flora Dr. - \$7,995 /mo.
3 Beds / 2 Bath, 1,803 Sq. Ft., 10,054 Sq. Ft. Lot

A new home that lives up to its name, this newly remodeled Ranch-style property in Bel Air is indeed a beautiful flower. Immaculately designed with attention to style and comfort. Embracing its tranquil and serene setting, the home has an unobstructed and breathtaking view of mountains and canyons. Situated in the highly coveted Roscomare Road Elementary School district, come visit this beautiful home today.

Cheviot Hills – LEASED!



10422 Lorenzo Pl.
6 Beds / 8 Bath

Cheviot Hills – SOLD!



2771 Forrester Dr. - \$6,650,000
5 Beds / 6 Bath, 4,473 Sq. Ft.

Beverlywood – SOLD!



9701 Oakmore Rd. - \$2,495,000
3 Beds / 3 Bath, 2,086 Sq. Ft., 6,920 Sq. Ft. Lot

Beverlywood happenings

Westside Stories



By Godfrey Harris

Consider the southern corners of Overland Avenue and Pico Blvd. It's now a bank and an office building. But Michael Harris remembers it in his book, *More Westside Stories*, as one of the locations for the Clyde Beatty Railroad Circus. It would arrive in summer on the railroad tracks behind Overland Avenue School, and then march the equipment and animals along side Overland Avenue to set up its rides, midway and Big Top on that corner. The corner was also the home, for two months each autumn, of Chuck's Christmas Trees. In the 1950s and early '60s few who lived in

or surrounding Cheviot Hills would have thought of buying a Christmas tree anywhere else. But Chuck's disappeared, as did the circus and an occasional weekend amusement park, when larger and more permanent commercial developments eventually arose on the parcel of land.

To read more stories pertaining to the history of Los Angeles' Westside, Michael Harris' three books are for sale (would make a great Father's Day gift for the Westsider in your life!). For information how to purchase, contact Godfrey Harris at www.Americasgroup.com or 310-476-6374

RAFFLE

By Ben Lee

Thank you to everyone who entered the raffle to win \$50 to California Pizza Kitchen. Congratulations, Marilyn Linder! You are the lucky winner this month! Most of us were shocked by the untimely passing of Los Angeles iconic entertainment news reporter Sam Rubin last month from a heart attack at age 64. Sam grew up in Rancho Park and I believe he went to Overland Elementary School, Emerson Jr. High and graduated from University High before attending Occidental for college. Sam may have been born in San Diego but clearly was a true Angelino at heart and no doubt his sudden

death has left a void in the hearts of those who knew and loved him. In honor of Sam Rubin, we are raffling off a \$50 gift certificate to one of his favorite restaurants: The Apple Pan. Sam once said of this special neighborhood fixture, "My grandfather took me here once or twice, my dad took me here. I've come here my entire life." To enter, simply send me an email: ben@benleeproperties.com and write "APPLE PAN" in the subject line. That's it! We'll pick a winner at the end of the month. And to fans, family members and former neighbors of Sam Rubin, you have my condolences. The Los Angeles entertainment news landscape won't be the same without him.



June Wine Night

By Lilli Lee

A heartfelt thank you to Beverlywood resident Sari Goodman for generously offering to host a Ladies' Neighborhood Wine Night on June 12! It's not too late to join the fun and everyone is welcome to attend. Send me an email: lillijlee@yahoo.com and I'll send you

all the information (FYI, you don't have to be a wine drinker to come. Plenty of other food/drinks available to enjoy). These gatherings are simply casual get togethers to meet new friends/neighbors and reconnect with old ones. It's rarely the same group twice and if you'd like to join, we'd love to see you there!

