



Verdugo Woodlands West
Homeowners Association

THE WOODLANDS GRAPEVINE

MISSION To preserve the low-profile, single-family character and unique aesthetics of the Verdugo Woodlands; and provide a forum for discussion of civic issues that may affect our neighborhood and its residents.

Winter 2020

Annual Meeting

The last time most of us gathered was at the 2019 Annual Meeting on October 12 at the bucolic Catalina Adobe. Mother Nature cooperated this year, and with no torrential rain, we enjoyed brunch and socializing, followed by the business meeting. Board member **Cathy Jurca** gave a rundown on local and state issues that affect our neighborhood. Her remarks were so well received that several people requested a copy, and a condensed version is included on page 3.



Councilmembers Vrej Agajanian, Vartan Gharpetian and Paula Devine with some of VWWHOA's board members.

City Councilmember **Vartan Gharpetian** presented our HOA with a proclamation on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. Other Council members who attended were **Paula Devine** and **Vrej Agajanian**. **Sergeant Magtoto** from GPD spoke about Neighborhood Watch.

The membership elected **Cathy Jurca, Marcia Hanford, and Richard Shaw** for two-year board terms. Local merchants donated raffle

prizes that ended up in the hands of lucky winners **Dan Brotman, Charles Cooley, David and Luisa Cole, Melinda Gilman, Gene Gleeson, Cathy Jurca, Sue Lapham, Wendy Lethin, Jim Reichgelt, Laurie and George Sayeg, Mike Shimaji, and Marsha Wong**. The 50/50 winner was **Richard Shaw**. And a special prize was given to **Laurie and George Sayeg** for being the neighbors who have lived in the Woodlands the longest.

Door prizes were donated by **Casa Cordoba, Creamy Spoon, John Sparr Tavern, Novin Spices, Old Fashion Deli, and the Villaseñor family**.

George and Laurie Sayeg (far right) were the neighbors in attendance who have lived in the Woodlands the longest — 41 YEARS!

Have you lived here longer?

Please let us know at vwwhoa@gmail.org



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From the Editor

Happy New Year from your HOA!

Since October's meeting, the board voted **Alice Villaseñor** as a returning board member, and **Rick Stern** was appointed to the Associate Board. To learn more about committee and board participation, send an email to vwwhoa@gmail.com

I don't know about you, but for me it seemed a bit odd to receive election materials during the holiday season. With the primary election date now March 3 (not in June), and mail-in ballots available in early February, this is our new reality. At least we didn't have lawn signs decked with tinsel and lights!

Read about the candidate forum that your HOA hosted on January 23, plus other important topics in these pages. This publication wouldn't be possible without many busy hands behind the scenes. For many years through the last issue, **Mary Jo Hanold** did the layout, and we thank her very much for her assistance.

Between newsletters, we communicate with the membership via email. If you are not receiving our messages, please contact us and ask to be added to the list: vwwhoa@gmail.com

Wishing you the best as we enter the 2020s, and hoping to see you around the neighborhood,

Marcia Hanford
Board Member

Issues and Accomplishments of 2019

*Board Member **Cathy Jurca** delivered an impressive overview of our HOA's issues and accomplishments at the Annual Meeting. Here is an edited version of her presentation. The original version is on our website vwwhoa.org*

I want to say first that, as you may have read in our most recent newsletter, our association was formed 25 years ago out of a sense that there was something special about the character of the Woodlands that residents wanted to preserve. But I also imagine it was formed out of a sense that there is something wonderful about neighbors working together. I have a completely utopian ideal of neighbors and of a neighborhood, a place where people come together to address problems and where they have each other's backs. I think that one of the very nicest things you can say about someone is that he or she is a good neighbor: respectful and considerate and genuinely interested in the well-being of the people around them. That's why I joined the Homeowners Association as soon as we moved to Niodrara Drive in 2011 and why I joined the board a couple of years ago. I want to be a good neighbor.

The role of the HOA is to work on behalf of the neighborhood and to keep residents informed so that they can speak out about the issues that affect us as residents of the Woodlands and of Glendale. Our efforts include monitoring Verdugo Park and the Catalina Adobe — we are so lucky to have these beautiful resources located within our neighborhood — and we thank those of you who help us in that task by notifying us when you have a concern. ...

There is still work to be done with the City and by the City on the Adobe and its park; there has been fairly routine vandalism, minor but outrageous given the historic significance of this property; the hillside has been compromised by ground squirrel activity and needs to be stabilized; and promised weed abatement hasn't been performed yet. We are in touch with the City to work on all of them.

We also continue to monitor projects within the boundaries of the HOA and sometimes outside its boundaries too. There was recently a project on Opechee that involved the demolition of an older house, the construction of a significantly larger house and the addition of a larger garage in front of the house, within the previous setback, in violation of the norms on the block. ... Unfortunately, it was approved with very minor conditions. This has been an ongoing problem. People can build, and we always hope they do so while showing respect and consideration for their neighbors. We will continue to

review projects for compatibility and to work with property owners and neighbors to see if we can ensure good, or at least improved, outcomes. We also want to remind you how important it is that boards and commissions and Council hear from you.

We have also been commenting more frequently on projects outside our immediate neighborhood. ... The Association has played a particularly large role recently in the appeal of two Planning Hearing Officer decisions to allow new apartment buildings in residential neighborhoods with at-grade parking garages and significantly greater height, floor area ratios, lot coverage, and decreased setbacks. Glendale's tendency has been to be far more generous with these giveaways than our neighboring cities, and far more generous than state law requires when affordable housing units will be built. This is a concern for us because of multi-family zones on Cañada and Verdugo, which are ripe for redevelopment if the sky is the limit for variances.

Unfortunately, some of the biggest threats to our neighborhood are from the state of California. We find that we need increasingly to weigh in on these matters, and you will have to do so too. Senator Portantino successfully blocked Senate Bill 50, after hearing from our members among many other southern California residents, but it is now back. *(See the back cover for the outcome of SB50's second attempt.)*

In the meantime the governor recently signed more legislation into law to override local zoning. Our HOA, along with the Glendale Historical Society, took the lead a few years ago in proposing reasonable standards as allowed by state law for the creation of ADUs, most of which were adopted by our City Council. However, several new state ADU laws have just been signed by Newsom. As of Jan. 1, 2020, ... for all intents and purposes Glendale is now zoned for three units.

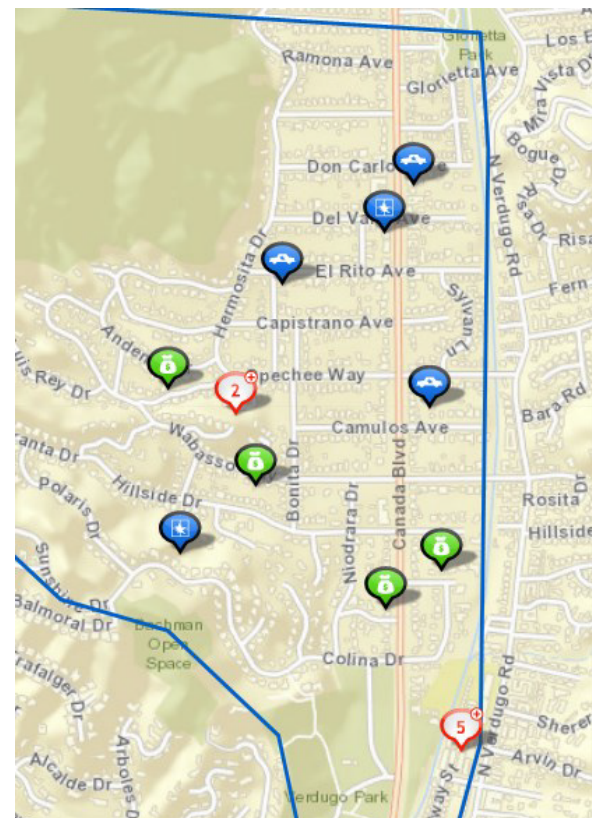
This is a significant issue in a neighborhood that is both at risk of fire and has street widths that are well below current code and cannot accommodate emergency vehicles when cars are parked on both sides of the street. We will be advocating for consideration of these issues to determine whether new ADU construction should be limited to certain neighborhoods in Glendale for public health and safety reasons.

So, busy times. Finally, I urge you to write to boards, commissions, City Council and the State, and to speak at meetings, and also to please consider volunteering with the HOA. It is advantageous to have more people, more minds, more bodies at work to improve the quality of our life and of our City.

Biannual Report from GPD

JULY 1 – DEC 31, 2019

1700-Blk N Verdugo Rd	7/15	Burglary of subterranean garage
1700-Blk Camulos Ave	8/3	Burglary from motor vehicle
1700-Blk Hiawatha Dr	8/23	Petty theft other
1400-Blk Opechee Way	9/27	Petty theft from yard
1600-Blk El Rito Av	9/28	Burglary from motor vehicle
1500-Blk Camulos Av	10/15	Petty theft from yard
1700-Blk N Verdugo Rd	10/28	Petty theft from motor vehicle
1700-Blk N Verdugo Rd	10/28	Petty theft from unlocked vehicle
1700-Blk N Verdugo Rd	11/19	Burglary from motor vehicle
1400-Blk Sunshine Dr	11/28	Residential burglary
1700-Blk N Verdugo Rd	11/30	Residential robbery
1500-Blk Camulos Av	12/5	Petty theft from yard
1500-Blk Wabasso Wy	12/5	Petty theft package
2600-Blk Cañada Blvd	12/7	Burglary from motor vehicle
2500-Blk Cañada Blvd	12/26	Attempt commercial burglary
1800-Blk Cañada Blvd	12/30	Petty theft of exterior car part



WE ♥ TREES

Amazing Power of the Woodlands

If you live in this natural woodlands, you already know what a growing body of scholarship is confirming — that trees are deeply tied to our economic well-being, health, safety and happiness. They increase the value of our property, reduce pollution in our Woodlands' microenvironment, and their shade and moisture evaporating from the leaves' surfaces lowers the temperature and reduces our Glendale Water & Power bills.

Glendale's Arborist Technician Katherine Williams provided the great news that you can help restock our Woodlands with Glendale's Tree Power Free Shade Trees program which continues this year.

FREE shade trees!

Properly planted shade trees can help you save up to 50% on air conditioning costs and keep our natural woodlands woody! Glendale's Tree Power Free Shade Trees program can provide professional assistance and financial savings with your project. Beginning with an arborist's visit, advice on appropriate tree types and planting information for each site is provided. You might qualify for as many as three free semi-mature trees from the City. FREE. Um, yes, that's FREE!

To participate in our program call the program arborist at 818-957-4425 or fill out the form at glendaleca.gov/tree-power-free-shade-trees

The Tree Power Free Shade Trees program is provided to qualified customers on a first-come, first-served basis until program funds are no longer available.

A cooler home and lower GWP bills are as easy as 1-2-3:

- 1 Peruse the list at glendaleca.gov/tree-power-free-shade-trees
- 2 The program's arborist will help you find the most favorable planting location for your new trees, ensuring that the trees provide the energy-saving shade once they are fully matured.
- 3 The trees are delivered semi-matured, complete with stakes, ties, arbor guards, and an instructional DVD on tree planting and maintenance — again, all FREE!

It's often wise to hold off until late summer or fall to plant most trees and shrubs. That milder time of year allows roots to become established before hotter summer months create stress on vegetation. If natural rainfall in the cooler months doesn't happen, supplemental watering will be less than it would be in spring/summer when plants are more stressed by the heat. Loren, our Urban Forester, provided this link for further information on tree planting: pacificoutdoorliving.com/blog/best-time-year-plant-trees-shrubs-southern-california

So Many Choices!

If you're itching to do other springtime planting Andres Azarian, Community Outreach Associate with GWP provided these helpful websites to please your aesthetics while reducing your water bill and lowering the greenhouse gas emissions used to pump and move water.

Conservation doesn't mean rocks and cactus which can have the opposite effect by creating heat islands. Check out GWP's water-wise landscaping website at mysmartgarden.com/glendaleca for examples of different California friendly and native plants, shrubs, trees, and grasses.

Another resource is the Metropolitan Water District's Native Plant Profiles website bewaterwise.com/california-native-plant-profiles.html for more California friendly plants, plus links to other resources.

Thanks to Our Members



CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FORUM

VWWHOA and The Dads' Club teamed up to co-sponsor a City Council Candidate Forum on January 23. Councilmember and former Mayor Frank Quintero was the moderator. The free event attracted over 80 people who heard all eight candidates speak on a variety of issues from campaign funding to development and infrastructure. Individual conversations took place before and after the forum. We notified our membership via email and asked for suggested questions to include. The evening was engaging, informative and mind-changing thanks to members who submitted thoughtful questions. We also thank neighbor Burt Culver for summarizing the candidates answers in real time on Nextdoor.com. For more, visit nextdoor.com and enter *Glendale City Council* in the search field.



LEON'S CAFÉ

The permit for this establishment on Cañada Boulevard was up for renewal, and VWWHOA informed the membership and submitted comments for the hearing based on members' concerns. Leon's application was approved with conditions. One was our suggestion that signage be posted urging patrons to be quiet as they are departing.

THE ADOBE

Alert members continue to notify the HOA and/or the City when things are amiss at the Adobe. Missing window screens, unstable hillsides due to ground squirrels, and weed abatement have been recent topics that are being addressed. Thanks for keeping your eyes and ears alert!

Maybe February is NOT "window replacement month."

If you're tempted by mailers claiming that "February is Window Replacement Month," it's worth a few moments to explore repairing such a vital element of the character of your home. Despite claims that replacing windows can increase your home's value, it can just as easily *decrease* your home's value.

Repairing windows can solve most operation and insulation problems. Not only is it less expensive than replacements, but repairs do not require a permit from the City of Glendale —new windows do.

If your home was built before 1950, your windows will likely have old-growth-timber frames. The wood is more durable and stable than today's plantation-grown stock and can actually outlast wood windows installed nowadays.

Scientific studies and details about alternatives to window replacement abound. Here are two:

savingplaces.org/stories/preservation-tips-tools-retrofitting-historic-windows

and

savingplaces.org/research-lab

Also, the Glendale Historical Society lists restoration resources on their website:

glendalehistorical.org/restoration-resources-2019

ECO INFO

Noisy, but That's Not All

According to a study by Edmunds*, the hydro-carbon emissions from running the kind of two stroke, gas-powered leaf blower for just 30 minutes is equivalent to driving a Ford Raptor pick-up truck from Texas to Alaska. These are the leaf blowers most gardening crews in the Woodlands use. Perhaps even more worrisome, the gas engines release high concentrations of microscopic ultrafine particles (UFPs)*.

Ultrafine particles are 0.1 of a micron, or roughly one-thousandth the width of a human hair, and are not stopped by covering your nose and mouth, or by the masks and bandanas some gardeners wear to try to protect their health.

"...the smaller the particle, the deeper it can be inhaled into the lungs, and the more potential it has then to cause health problems" such as lung cancer, heart disease, strokes, asthma and other respiratory ailments, said **Jo Kay Ghosh**, an epidemiologist and the health effects officer for the South Coast Air Quality Management District. Ultrafine particles also can pass through cell membranes and slip into the bloodstream.

Because of the danger to everyone's health, especially children, gas-powered leaf blowers are banned in at

least 20 of the most desirable California cities, including Newport Beach, Santa Barbara, and West Hollywood.

But how can we get the job done? Consider replacing your gas-powered leaf blower with a broom. Well, that may not be feasible, but you can at least go electric. If your crew won't make the switch, do as some Woodlanders have done: purchase your own electric blower, leaf sucker or leaf collector that the crew can use when working at your home. Think of it as keeping that Ford Raptor off your street.

* Sources:
edmunds.com/car-reviews/features/emissions-test-car-vs-truck-vs-leaf-blower.html

fairwarning.org/2017/09/leaf-blower

Free Recycling Tote



Make separating your recyclables from trash easier. Just request a free tote bags for yourself or for your entire multifamily property by emailing the city's Integrated Waste Management Division at recycle@glendaleca.gov.

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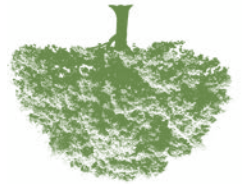
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Senate Bill 50

Things have been happening in Sacramento at a pace that filled your in-boxes more than we usually deliver. Senate Bill 50 proposed, among other things, multi-family projects of up to four units in single-family neighborhoods with exemptions from design and environmental reviews. Multi-family buildings of up to 45 to 55 feet tall would be allowed in any residential or mixed use zone that is within $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of light rail or high frequency bus lines. Mind you, these were to be *statewide*. There was no guarantee that any neighborhood housing would be affordable, and Senate Bill 50 was widely seen, even by many tenants rights groups, as an incentive for hedge funds and investment companies to further increase their portfolios in single-family neighborhoods.

A Senate vote in late January did not receive the necessary 21 votes to move SB50 ahead, but these efforts in Sacramento are not going away. Your HOA understands the need for affordable housing and homelessness solutions, but SB50 did not guarantee any remedies to address these concerns.

