



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.

Fall 2022

Neighbors Raise over \$3,000 as Historic District Effort Moves Forward

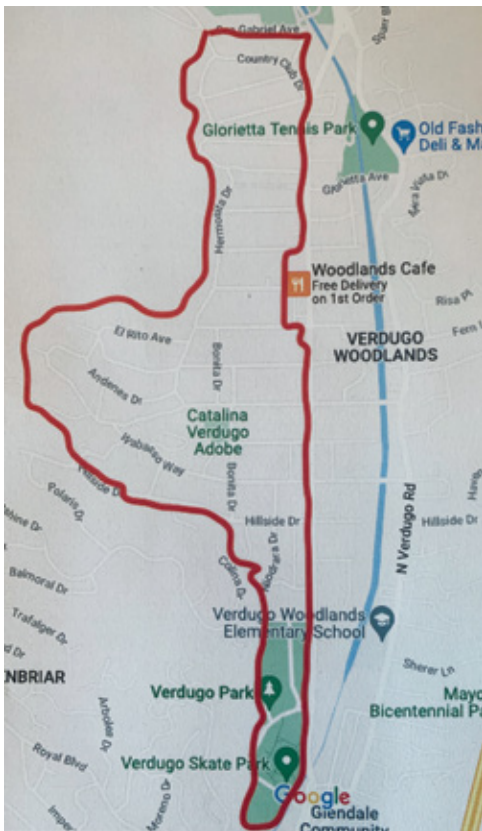
The historic district application has been submitted to the city, as residents seek to create what would likely be Glendale's 11th historic district. Fifty contributors gave more than \$3,000 to help cover the costs associated with bringing the historic district to fruition. A GoFundMe page continues to accept donations at gofund.me/58bdf94.

The Glendale Historical Society also generously contributed \$1,000 toward the City's application fee through its historic district grant program. The money raised in excess of the application fee will be used to fund other programming related to formation of the district, including refreshments and printed materials for educational meetings such as forthcoming walking tours and signature drives.

The process is in its early stages. Last year City Council asked staff to simplify and streamline the historic district designation process, while allowing ample opportunities for public comment. Staff are expected to take the proposed changes to the Historic Preservation Commission for review in September and then on to City Council for their approval shortly thereafter. No matter the changes, it will still be up to property owners to vote on whether to become a historic district. We will continue to update residents as the process moves forward.

The historic district boundaries are shown on the map. They were selected primarily based on data derived from subdivision maps. The district includes the properties from the west side of Cañada Blvd. up

to the south side of San Gabriel that developer **Frederick P. Newport** accumulated from 1917 through 1924 and marketed as *Selvas de Verdugo*, later anglicized to *Verdugo Woodlands*, the name by which the much larger neighborhood is still known. It also includes parcels that predated Newport's ownership, including land originally subdivided in 1909 under the first developer **John Pirtle**, whose marvelous home still stands on Cañada. *Continued on page 6*



Examples of contributors to the historic district

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From the Editor

I am writing this message as our week of terrible heat begins. The forecast today is for a high of 100 degrees (turned out to be 105, sigh). Even worse, the overnight low is supposed to be 80, not cool enough to throw open our windows after dark and let the southern California climate do its miraculous thing.

What I miss most in blistering heat is my neighborhood walk. Good for my body and good for my mind. There is such an eclectic mix of houses, built across many decades. Glendale's fence ordinance, which dates from 1922, ensures that most front yards are open to the street, welcoming walkers with green open space, free from barriers that turn neighborhoods in other cities into a series of walled fortresses. Hermosita has to be one of the loveliest streets in Glendale. With its curves and dips and oaks, it suggests the physical qualities of early twentieth-century suburban living in its quaintest form.

I also miss seeing my neighbors. I'm not especially comfortable chatting up strangers, but before I moved here a decade ago I would never have imagined how much pleasure it gives me to smile and say "hello" to everyone (sometimes perhaps too insistently) and fuss over their dogs (and once, memorably, a pet parrot). Even before Covid made connections with strangers both more fraught and more meaningful, I enjoyed these low-stakes encounters. Everyone seems to treasure this unique place as much as I do.

And so I look forward on October 15 to walking over to the Adobe, to see you my neighbors, at our annual HOA meeting. Last year almost 100 people turned up to eat and drink, connect and reconnect, and appreciate our wonderful home. Every year brings more changes, and the heat wave is troubling in part because of what it portends. It's nice to have rituals to return to, and I very much hope to welcome you there.

Cathy Jurca, Editor

Woodlands Loses More Mature Oaks on Bonita

Drought, age, and other difficulties have resulted in the demise of two mature Coast Live Oaks on Bonita. Both Bonita and Hermosita are lined with several magnificent oaks, and residents are concerned about the loss of cooling shade as well as the negative impacts on the aesthetics of our neighborhood.

City Council recently approved funds to increase the number of trees planted in public rights of way in Glendale each year from 300 to 750. But given the number of trees lost, these plantings would, after a decade, only get us to the coverage we had in 2010. The majority of new trees are proposed for South Glendale.

Please help maintain our Woodlands character. Although Glendale limits sprinklers to 10 minutes per station, two days a week (Tuesday and Saturday), **you are allowed to use a**

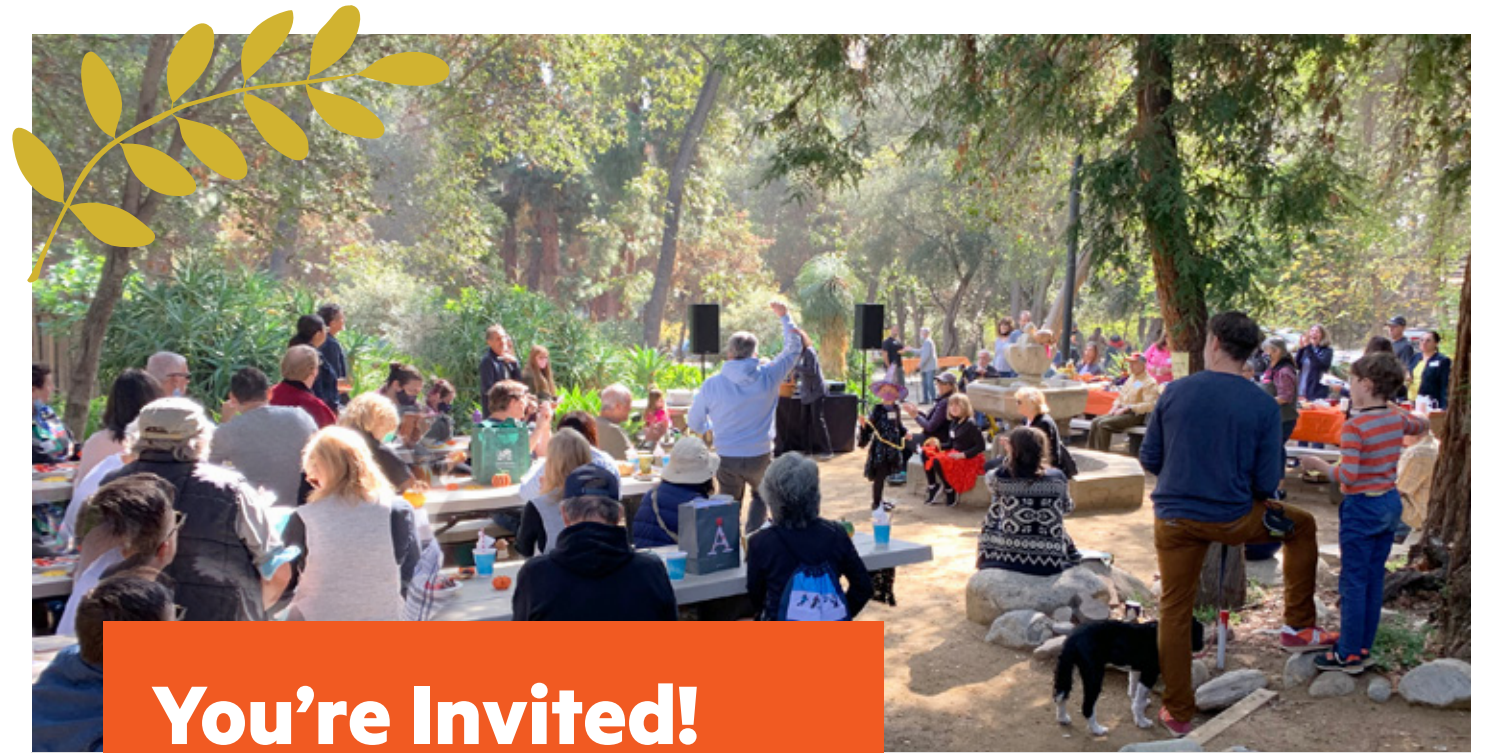


A dead oak awaits removal by the City

regular hose, drip irrigation, or a soaker hose to provide additional water to trees.

Water them slowly and deeply once a month, especially if you have removed formerly irrigated landscaping or you see signs of drought stress (loss of leaves, wilting foliage). With large trees, water three feet out from the trunk, being sure to water multiple spots under the canopy, so that the top six inches of soil are moist.

If you would like to invest in the future of your community by having a beautiful new street tree planted by your property in the winter, call **818-548-3950** and speak to someone in Public Works Maintenance Services. The City provides three years of supplemental water during the summer for free. You can also reach out to us at **vwwhoa@gmail.com**. We are happy to put the arborists at Public Works in touch with you.



You're Invited!

2022 Annual Meeting on October 15

Date:
Saturday
October 15, 2022

Time:
10 am Brunch

Place:
Catalina Verdugo Adobe
2211 Bonita Drive

RSVP by Oct 7
Please let us know names of you and any others who will be able to attend by emailing us at **vwwhoa@gmail.com** as we will be providing brunch

Jump start your weekend with a neighborhood social! Enjoy an al fresco brunch with sandwiches from local favorite Gio's, fun activities, and some Woodlands history while chatting with great neighbors.

In our brief annual State of the Neighborhood presentation, we invite you to learn about issues affecting our neighborhood during our annual update, including the status of the Historic District application process and new local policies and state legislation. And we will share what the VWWHOA does for you.

- BYOV. Bring your one VESSEL: a cup, travel mug, adult sippy cup, canteen, stein? We're environmentally dialed in, so no disposable cups or bottles are provided.
- FREE to members — including those who join at the social. Non-members \$5.



- And bring a little cash for your chance to win the 50-50 drawing.

Join us today!



Join instantly at vwwhoa.org

Or return this form along with a \$30 check payable to: VWWHOA, P.O. Box 343, Verdugo City, CA 91046

Email *VWWHOA will not share your information*

Name

Address

Cell Home Phone

Your Priorities

As needed, would you be willing to attend occasional City Council or Design Review Board meetings to show support for the position that the Association has taken? Yes No

Comments and/or Suggestions

Since 1994, the Verdugo Woodlands West Homeowners Association has preserved the single-family characteristics and aesthetics that make our neighborhood beautiful and unique. Together with your support, our HOA:

- > Represents Verdugo Woodlands West before the City Council, Design Review Board and at various City departments
- > Provides a forum for discussion of civic issues that directly affect us
- > Represents Verdugo Woodlands West at the Glendale Homeowners Coordinating Council
- > Focuses on protecting our trees, hillsides, parks, and air quality, preserving our historic architecture, and maintaining property values
- > Keeps you up to date with regular notifications, newsletters and vwwhoa.org website
- > Hosts Annual Meeting and Brunch, a Summer Wine Tasting and other fun events to deepen your connection to your neighborhood

Woodlands Home Added to Glendale Register of Historic Resources

The owners of this Spanish Colonial Revival property on Santa Barbara love their home, and they wanted to find out more about it. They had the original building plans and decided to see if an architect was listed. They found the name **S. Charles Lee**. A quick Google search revealed that their house



magnum opus on Broadway is the French Baroque Los Angeles Theatre, which seats more than 2000 people and features a lobby modeled after the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. Across his career Lee designed or remodeled more than four hundred theaters in California and Mexico. His best known contribution in Glendale is

was, in fact, designed by one of the most important and prolific movie theater architects in the world.

Lee was born in Chicago in 1899. The 1926 home was built early in his career and just one year before he did his first movie theater, the Tower Theatre in downtown LA (which was adaptively reused and reopened last year as a beautiful Apple Store), part of the Historic Broadway Theatre District. Lee's

the tower and marquee of the Alex Theater, which he designed in 1940.

The owners were thrilled to learn that their house has such a remarkable pedigree. They have listed the **Robert and Florence Dick House**, named after the original owners, on the Glendale Register to ensure that it will be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Wine-Tasting Party Resumes!

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, Verdugo Woodlands neighbors gathered for our annual wine tasting on a stunning Southern California June day. The beautiful backyard setting was just right; it included grape vines—yes, grapevines, not one or two but dozens!

For a few hours, we were transported back in time, when the Woodlands had wineries and people gathered to socialize. It was wonderful to meet new neighbors and catch up with old friends.



This year, we tasted varieties of **Opolo Wines**, thanks to **Christine Saucedo's** connection. Our docent and sommelier-in-training **Laura Crook** engaged us in a colorful conversation as we tasted various flights. We left a bit wiser because of her. Volunteers **Andrea** and **Charles Meier**, **Mary LaCroix**, and **Jennifer Weissmuller** worked alongside our Board of Directors to plan for a lovely display of charcuterie boards, desserts and non-alcoholic beverages. We could not have done it without their support. As a bonus treat, **Kara Handy** and **Avo Akmakjian** of the Baklava Bar donated sweet and delicious baklava. We thank them for their donation.

Finally, a big thank you to **Robert Grossman** and **Traci Locke** for opening their stunning backyard to us this year. We are already looking forward to next year's tasting!



Goats in Glendale—Again!

If you had the opportunity to head up to **Via Saldivar** in July and then looked south and west, you would have seen some 200 goats grazing in the steep canyon below you. They not only satisfied their insatiable appetite, but the goats helped us by consuming fuel for a potential wildfire.

A guard dog shared the fenced enclosure with the goats. She was raised alongside them and sees the goats as her family. The fencing has a low-voltage charge, which is normally effective at keeping coyotes out, although they have been known to jump the fence. If that happens, the guard dog goes into action, chasing the coyote through the fence to get away.

The goats are part of an ongoing pilot program, first advocated by the VWWHOA, to find an environmentally friendly way to help us manage wildfire risk. Our thanks to the **Glendale Fire Department** for providing the funding and arranging for them to come.

The City hopes to expand their use in future, but we need to plan earlier, to compete with other local agencies who have similar plans, and to ensure that the goats arrive when there is still greenery for them to consume. Because the canyon under Via Saldivar is so shaded, summer wasn't too late to give these goats a feast and protect our neighborhood a little better.



Goats near Branta Drive and Polaris Drive



We never want to experience an emergency, but...

Have you looked at the details on your latest bill from GWP (Glendale Water & Power)? Is there an item under "Service by other City Departments" for \$5 per month for "Paramedic Membership Program"? If so, you can stop reading here and enjoy the other articles in this newsletter.

If not, you might check out something that could benefit everyone in your household. The Paramedic Membership Program is voluntary, and those who join and who have insurance and/or Medicare receive paramedic services and emergency ambulance transportation at no additional cost beyond what is billed to those entities. If you do not have medical insurance, you will receive a 50% discount on your emergency ambulance bill.

There is also a program for businesses.

We all hope that nobody will ever need these services, but for \$60 per year, you might find some peace of mind. For more information, call **818-548-4041** or visit glendaleca.gov and in the search field enter **Medic Membership Program**.

Historic District *Continued from the front page*

The district encompasses some 800 residences, with architectural styles that include Craftsman, Period Revivals that were especially popular in the 1920s, Traditional and California Ranch homes, and some distinctive examples of Mid-century Modern.

The district also encompasses two city-owned properties. The Catalina Verdugo Adobe is a city park and neighborhood landmark, a reminder of the area's rich Mexican and Spanish past. Verdugo Park has been a popular regional picnicking destination since the late nineteenth century. After the City acquired it in the 1940s, the park was designed by **legendary landscape architect Ruth Shelhorn**, whose other public landscaping projects in southern California include Disneyland and branches of the iconic Bullocks department store.

The effort is going to need volunteers, to help communicate the benefits of historic districts to neighbors and gather signatures. If you are willing to volunteer, please email vwwhoa@gmail.com, and we will forward your email to the applicants.

You can read the submitted application and watch a presentation on historic districts in Glendale and the process for creating them at vwwhoa.org.



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Verdugo Woodlands West Homeowners Association

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See page 3!
Plus more Woodlands hot topics including proposed **historic district** inside...

ECO INFO

Alternatives to Hardscape/Fake Grass

Many of us are rethinking our landscaping given the ongoing drought. We want to promote a fabulous area resource, the **Theodore Payne Foundation** theodorepayne.org, whose knowledgeable staff and volunteers can help you select the right native plants for your yard. They also offer classes at their nursery in Sun Valley for those who want to bring an ambitious idea to fruition. The photo shows what just a \$5 packet of their wildflower seeds can do for your yard without much water!



Hard surfaces such as pavers or gravel can significantly increase the temperature of your property.

Similarly, heat radiates off artificial turf which gets 86.5° hotter than grass and 37° hotter than asphalt. And you may want to think twice (or three or four times) about the toxicity of the materials that go into it. There's a reason the

first artificial turf, from Monsanto, was named Chemgrass.

Artificial turf contains toxic PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, which are called “forever chemicals” because they remain a health risk for generations.

Even low chronic levels of PFAS exposure have been linked to an increased risk of cancer, liver damage, low birth weight

and reduced immunity.

When artificial turf gets hot PFAS become volatile, released into the air.

So, what's the alternative for those who want to do the right thing and get rid of their grass lawns? Native species planted in good, healthy soil are the very best all round — cooling your air through transpiration and enriching your yard's soil.