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Issue 378 • December 28 - January 3, 2007

2006 Year in Review



The Weekly looks back at some of the year's most headline making stories

cover story • page 9-10



letters & email

Moving on... It's part of the plan

I sat here in South Carolina this morning and listened to a CBS Sunday Morning Show story about Irving Berlin's writing of "White Christmas" from his temporary home in Beverly Hills. Despite 20 wonderful years in Beverly Hills, I had not heard that story before. Beverly Hills is a magical place and I feel blessed to have spent part of my life there. I remain in awe of a community and its citizens who have the opportunity to make such positive contributions to the world we live in, and so frequently do. I will always be proud of my connections to you.

After 3 years as City Manager of Spartanburg, South Carolina, I remain pleased with my career choice that caused me to move away, and I believe we have many great things happening in this very different part of the country. Things are not as easy here in some ways. Cities are not

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(Vice Mayor Jimmy Delshad, Santa Claus, and Mayor Steve Webb share a visit at Il Cielo).

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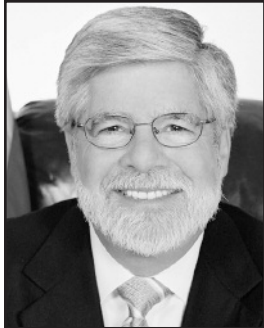
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Turnout Will Be the Key in the City Council Race

More could be less for the two incumbent candidates

By Ryan Vaillancourt



Mayor Steve Webb

With six candidates vying for two City Council seats open in March, history is on the side of incumbents Mayor Steve Webb and Vice Mayor Jimmy Delshad. Not since 1992 when the late Bernie Hecht lost

his seat by the slim margin of 97 votes has a first-term incumbent like Webb and Delshad lost a re-election.

If this year's four challengers have a key statistic on their side though, it is voter turnout – so long as it's high. Almost always when turnout is low, incumbents do well. When a higher number of voters show up at the polls, incumbents tend to be more vulnerable.

In Beverly Hills, the average turnout over the past ten years is about 30%. But turnout



Vice Mayor Jimmy Delshad

is almost always higher when the ballot is loaded with challengers and light on incumbents.

In 1988, an unprecedented 13 candidates, all of them non-incumbents, ran for three open seats. 36.96%

of voters turned out, exceeding the average turnout of the past two decades by almost 7%. By contrast, the 1990 election had only 3 candidates, two of which were incumbents and turnout dropped to 21%.

In 1999, for the first time in the city's history, no candidates surfaced to challenge then incumbents Les Bronte and MeraLee Goldman. In that most extreme example, with turnout a non-factor, the incumbents regained their seats.

But as with most rules, there are excep-

tions.

"Turnout is a tricky thing," said Marcia Lewis Smith, a long-time local campaign strategist who is sitting this election season out.

"Normally, low turnout favors incumbents, but Beverly Hills can be idiosyncratic - if people are satisfied with government, then they aren't motivated to come out and vote, leaving an opening for an insurgent candidate."

The key for challengers then is to mobilize their supporters. Often, one highly contentious issue is enough to mobilize voters. This year that issue could be development.

"Angry doesn't work in Beverly Hills," Marcia Lewis Smith said. "While it might drive up turnout, it does so for both sides."

The Beverly Hills North Homeowners' Association has been highly critical of the current City Council for its allegedly pro-development stance and the group will host the first candidate forum of the season on January 10th. Any challenger to take a hard

stance on development is likely to bode well with North Homeowners' Association members as well as like-minded non-members.

Smith warns though that when things get too contentious, it doesn't always play into the hands of the challengers.

"Angry doesn't work in Beverly Hills," she said. "While it might drive up turnout, it does so for both sides."

At least that's what happened with the Montage. After months of debate and often heated opposition to the project, it was placed on the ballot as a citywide referendum in the 2005 election year. At 38.8%, voter turnout was significantly higher than any election since 1982 and the project passed. Then incumbent candidate Linda Briskman was also elected, beating the next highest vote getter by over 2,000 votes.

There are approximately 20,000 registered voters in Beverly Hills, with the highest turnout traditionally coming from the Northside "flats" (homes between Santa Monica Blvd and Sunset) and the Southwest corner of the city. Usually, around half of voters vote by absentee mail-in ballots.

A high turnout this year could be indicative of a community paying attention. As for now, there at least six people with little more than elections on their minds.

"I think it is a sign of a healthy community that there are people interested in investing their time, resources and energy in running," Smith said.



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2007 BUSINESS TAX RENEWALS

2007 BUSINESS TAX RENEWALS

The City of Beverly Hills announced this week that 2007 Business Tax renewal forms are being mailed to all registered businesses in the city.

Business taxes are due, in full, by the January 31, 2007 deadline. Unpaid taxes become delinquent on February 1, 2007. Penalty and interest charges accrue on late registrations at a monthly rate of 10% and 1.5%, respectively.

Section 3-1-201 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code requires all businesses located or operating in the city to register and pay their taxes each calendar year. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in an estimated tax liability and legal prosecution.

For information regarding business tax renewals/registrations, please contact the City's Administrative Services Department at 310.285.2427.

briefs

November Beverly Hills home prices up; condo prices down in 90212.

November 2006 sale prices for single-family residences in the 90210 area increased 9% on 7 homes from November 2005 statistics, according to a report published by Data Quick Real Estate News (www.dqnews.com). In the 90211 area prices are up 27.9% on 4 homes and in the 90212 area prices are up 23.8% on 2 homes.

Condominium prices in the 90210 increased on one condo by 67.2%, decreased on three condos in the 90212 by 14.5%. Date for condo sales in the 90211 area is unavailable.

The median price for single family residences in the 90210 areas is \$2,175,000; \$1,675,000 in 90211; and \$2,250,000 in 90212.

The median price for condominiums in the 90210 area is \$1,199,000; \$851,000 in 90212 and unavailable in 90211.

In Los Angeles County as a whole, sales of single family homes are up 2.9% with a median price of \$540,000. Condominium prices are up 0.7% with a median price of \$410,000

Feuer Introduces Clean Vehicle Legislation

New Assemblymember Mike Feuer (D-Los Angeles) wasted no time introducing

legislation. Last Friday, he introduced AB 99, which would require that by January 1, 2012, no less than 50% of all new cars made available for sale in California are powered by clean alternative fuels.

"The use of clean, alternative fuels will considerably reduce the impacts associated with the use of petroleum fuels and AB 99 is an important strategy for the state to attain its air, water quality, public health and economic goals. Requiring the auto industry to phase in alternative fuel cars will help curb our oil appetite and create new jobs and economic development," Feuer said. "We owe it to the children of my district and our state to have clean air to breathe."

Assemblymember Mike Feuer was elected to the California State Assembly in November to represent the 42nd Assembly District, which includes West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City and other parts of West L.A.

Dutton's Beverly Hills Books to Close

After nearly two years in the City, Dutton's plans to close its Beverly Hills store effective December 31, 2006. Prior to the decision, the Dutton family advised the city of the challenges they faced in operating a small full-service independent bookstore in this upscale market. Both Dutton's and the City sought ways to make the bookstore successful. Regrettably, a mutually agreeable solution with a viable resolution to the economics could not be achieved, according to the office of Communications and Marketing for the City of Beverly Hills.

When Dutton's entered into their lease

with the City, they were given a rental rate 25% below market rate for the retail space and that same rate is now 50% below today's rate, according to the office of Communications and Marketing for the City of Beverly Hills. The City made this accommodation in response to the community's strong desire for a local bookstore.

Dutton's has been behind in their rent since August and currently owes the City approximately \$101,000 in back rent. The City is not legally allowed to subsidize a private for-profit business.

The City alleges that it has attempted to find a solution that would allow Dutton's to continue to operate without jeopardizing the City's legal obligation to the community.

In an official statement from the office of Communications the City states, "The bottom line is if Beverly Hills residents won't support the business by buying enough books, there is not much the City can do. We are however exploring the possibility of leasing the space to another bookstore."

"The City is saddened by the closure of Dutton's Beverly Hills Books. It's unfortunate that the economics didn't work out the way we had all hoped and planned for when the Dutton family originally met with the City," said Mayor Steve Webb. "The City wishes Dutton's all the best at their Brentwood location and appreciates their efforts to bring their unique family-owned and operated bookstore to our community."

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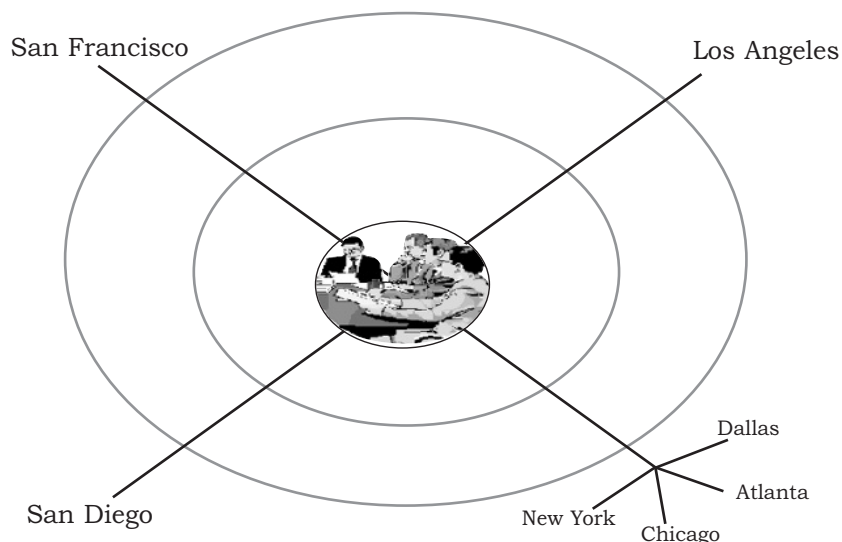
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BHHS Girls' Water Polo Team Defeats Orange

Norman girls' soccer team routs Gardena Serra.

By Steven Herbert

Beverly High scored the game's first seven goals in a 7-1 victory over Orange in a non-league girls' water polo game at Orange Dec. 12, extending its winning streak to four games after beginning the season 0-3.

Michelle Margolin opened the scoring one minute, 22 seconds into the game, then added her second goal 1:17 later. Christine Sun increased the Normans' lead to 3-0 by scoring with 1:59 left in the quarter.

Amanda Yukelson scored the second quarter's only goal 23 second before halftime.

Margolin and Jennifer Horowitz scored in the third quarter, giving Beverly Hills (4-3) a 6-0 lead entering the fourth quarter.

Horowitz scored on a penalty throw with 5:52 to play. The Panthers spoiled Norman goaltender Marissa Srour's shutout bid by scoring with 5:36 remaining.

Srour made 12 saves.

What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to begin play in the Western Tournament next Thursday.

Girls' Soccer

South Bay/Westside Tournament Beverly Hills 9, Gardena Serra 0

Alex Pop scored twice and Becca Gold and Gina Hendron each made one save to combine on the shutout Dec. 11 at Nickoll Field.

Alexa Block, Amanda Brandeis, Tanya Djafar, Jocelyn Karlan, Rachel Kove, Emily Litvak and Sami Pop also scored for the Normans who won for the fourth time in their last five games after starting the season 0-3.

Beverly Hills 1, South Torrance 1

Alex Pop scored her team-leading eighth goal of the season in the 61st minute off Ashley Menzies' assist Dec. 13 at Nickoll Field.

The Spartans tied the score in the 77th minute of the 80-minute game.

Gold made three saves in the first half and Hendron five in the second.

South Holiday Tournament La Habra Sonora 2, Beverly Hills 0

The Normans allowed one goal in each half in a 17th-place semifinal Dec. 16 at South Torrance High School.

Beverly Hills (4-5-1) was outshot, 11-6, and "didn't play particularly well," coach Ryan Franks said.

Hendron made five saves and Gold three.

The Normans played without Nikki Sharaf and Karlan, who had bruised a knee, while Tess Callner did not start because of disciplinary reasons, Franks said.

What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to conclude play in the Palm Desert Tournament today and play host to Lawndale Leuzinger Wednesday in a nonleague game at Nickoll Field beginning at 3 p.m.

Boys' Soccer

South Bay/Westside Tournament Beverly Hills 1, Los Angeles Windward 1

Diego Guardia scored his first goal of the season for the Normans off Alex Lichtenberg's assist in the 75th minute in a pool play game Dec. 12 at Windward.

The Wildcats scored the game-tying goal in the 79th-minute of the 80-minute game, capitalizing on what Beverly Hills coach Steve Rappaport called a mistake.

The Normans led 19-6 in shots, and failed to score on seven breakaways by seven players, Rappaport said.

Beverly Hills goalkeeper David Roston made five saves.

"We played really well, we just didn't do the most important thing — put the ball in the back of the net," Rappaport said. "We totally controlled the game, but in soccer you don't score, you don't win."

Rappaport called allowing the tying goal with just over a minute to play "very" frustrating.

"We had so many easy chances to score, we should have never been in that situation," Rappaport said.

When asked who played well, Rappaport responded, "Almost the whole team," later singling out Lichtenberg, a midfielder, for playing his "best game."

In nonleague games:

Manhattan Beach Mira Costa 5, Beverly Hills 0

The Normans allowed three goals in the first half and two in the second at Mira Costa Dec. 14 in a game Rappaport called "a nightmare."

"That was the bottom of the bottom," Rappaport said. "We were just so flat. It was like my frosh-soph team playing the varsity game."

Four of the Mustangs' five goals came off throw-ins, Rappaport said.

Mira Costa led 11-9 in shots. Roston made six saves.

"There really wasn't any difference in the game other than the throw-in plays," Rappaport said. "We never adjusted to it. Nothing went right."

The "only thing that came out of the game that was positive was that we found a marking back," Jonathan Elbaz, usually a forward.

Steven Herbert also covers sports for the Los Angeles Times and The Associated Press. He welcomes feedback and suggestions. He can be reached by e-mail at StvHerbert@aol.com, by telephone at (310) 275-7943 or by fax at (310) 273-4519.



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from the hills of beverly



Interesting Times Changing Worlds

By Rudy Cole

We live in interesting times, as the past few years amply prove. Who could have imagined that following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the surviving nations competing to see which could more quickly adopt to western economic life, the world would not be a safer place.

Gone, or so it seemed, was the threat of nuclear devastation. Instead we face an even more uncertain future as some madman in some hidden cave plots a possible new attack on our soil or that of our allies. The Japanese only managed to strike a naval base and military facilities on an American possession and the Germans never came close to targeting our mainland. Now, a good portion of our national product goes into a whole new kind of defense we call Homeland Security.

Our world has changed, following 9/11 and it will be some time before we fully understand all the implications. Of course, we are a people committed to denial. To do otherwise may make it impossible to live in any sane manner. However, a visit to any airport brings us back

to reality.

It is fascinating to consider how daily existence can and does change because of some freakish behavior by movements, nations or even loners. We accept as standard practices the safety sealing of food products, but that is a fairly recent phenomena. Not too long ago some wacko and copy cat crazies decided to poison or otherwise spoil food containers. Now every glass or plastic bottle has a safety seal with a warning that, if removed, do not use contents. Consider the added costs on consumers.

As for our little village, it has been a fairly good year, touched by some sadness and loss. The death of **Lona Stone** touched many people in Beverly Hills and not only her very close family.

Two of our veteran staff members, **Mahdi Aluzri** and **Tony Dahlerbruch** decided to see if the grass was greener in other civic pastures. Mahdi, under the reorganization plan of City Manager **Rod Wood**, headed both the planning and building safety divisions, now one depart-

ment. Tony, a local boy who grew up in our community and whose parents have long been real community leaders, had worked in almost every department on what could have been a path to the city manager's job. If and when Wood retires, Tony might still be a viable candidate for the third floor venue.

A new fire chief, **Dale Geldert**, has quickly become an accepted and respected member of the community. He recently told me he was most pleasantly surprised by what he felt was an enormous sense of family in our city and how quickly he had been made to feel a part of that family. The veteran firefighter, who had held one of the top jobs in his field in state service, also said this is the first place he had ever served where he had not been asked, by someone new to his life, to reveal either his religion or his politics. With **Dave Snowden** as police chief and Geldert in Fire, the city has two leaders with credentials and abilities that will well serve our city.

As more frequent readers know, we have long argued for promotion from within. Interesting that Geldert sees that as one of his primary goals: Training of our own staff people so that one day, hopefully not too soon, his successor will be someone who worked up the chain of command and has the ability to become chief.

City Manager Wood made it even more clear. He told me earlier this year that Geldert would be the last chief from outside the department.

Good news for the men and women who serve our city.

Chief Geldert also had an interesting plan. He wants to make casual visits all over the city with Chief Snowden. Only in Beverly Hills could that happen without scaring the hell out of people.

While we're at it, something my readers might consider doing. This is a rough time to be working holidays. But the firefighters, paramedics and police officers are on the job serving and protecting through holidays and away from families. When you see them, take a moment to express your appreciation. It wouldn't hurt, but don't jay walk while doing it.

Mostly, this council makes good decisions and has had a reasonably amicable year, with some notable exceptions. But although their motives may be understandable, it was not in the interests of democratic process for the council to insist on approving the format of debates by such groups as the Beverly Hills North Homeowners Association and the Beverly Hills Municipal League who are sponsoring a joint forum.

Yes, the council has a fiscal responsibility to determine whether city funds should be used to pay for a remote taping and later viewing, but not to predetermine the ways and means the groups conduct candidate forums. The reasons were simple: In a previous campaign, candidates were personally attacked by members of the organizations – and not in the form of questions from the audience. Not in good taste or even fair, but that is the responsibility of the sponsoring group, not the council. It comes too close to thought control and government management of free speech and should not be part



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of the debate process, no matter the reasons.

On the other hand, the city manager correctly reminded the council and sponsoring groups that the city cable station can only be used for government purposes. To do otherwise converts them to public access and the loss of program control. In fact, only one non-government use changes the rules completely.

One entertainment note: Don't miss the world premier of "Atonement" a new play by the award winning **Richard Martin Hirsch** at Theatre Forty opening on February 26 at the Reuben Cordova Theater in the high school. More about this later, but save the date.

Still time to make arrangements to be part of JVS' tribute to **Betty and Chuck Wilson** at a "Winter Wonderland" dinner tribute on January 20 at the Beverly Wilshire. Former mayor **Donna Ellman Garber** is event chair and information can be quickly obtained by calling 323.761.8888.

You may have heard about a recent survey on the effectiveness of the city's communications programs: The one that said that more people receive information about Beverly Hills from the Los Angeles Times than The Weekly.

There were so many flaws in the survey, not only in the conclusions, but in its methodology, as to defy reason. To ask the generic question: What newspaper do you read to know what is happening in your city is neither scientific or measurable. What news? The city wanted to know how to more effectively reach residents. The survey obviously should have used the common technique of measurement by remembered impressions. What did you read in the newspaper about your city that you remember?

Yes, more people read the Los Angeles

Times for news, sports and features, but when did that newspaper become the source for information about the city council or, for that matter, the schools?

Can any responsible surveyor actually claim that the Times has more news on city government, unless it has very broad universal appeal, than a community newspaper?

Now, I think, despite the internal turmoil at the Times, it is still one of the best newspapers in the country and the reporters assigned to the city are first rate. But since The Times discontinued, many years ago, publishing a Westside twice weekly supplement, coverage of our city and other communities in West Los Angeles has diminished greatly.

I did my own survey and here's what I found. In the four day period the only news about Beverly Hills was to be found in the classified section with very prominent mention of an estate sale, of course a paid notice.

As to how the "other" paper ranked, it is older and much fatter, but since the findings on the Times was so unprofessional, it is reasonable to assume the entire survey was lacking. We do note that many of the stories in our competition are derivatives, sometimes too obviously, of what is first offered here.

As for school news, no surveys are needed: The Weekly is the bible for the education community. While we're at it, how dare The Times drop "Momma" a prototype of all things motherly?

Rudy Cole served for eight years as a member and chair of the city's Recreation & Parks Commission. He was also President of the Greystone Foundation and served on three other city committees. Rudy can be reached at: Rudy@bhweekly.com.

letters cont. from page 2

endowed with resources in the same way we were in California and our poverty levels remain a daily concern. However, we seem to work closely, side-by-side to address our needs. I am grateful to be part of this.

And, I am grateful for the years of learning and collegiality that I enjoyed in Beverly Hills. I am pleased to hear that three of my (many) favorite City teammates are moving on to exciting new opportunities. I applaud Mahdi Aluzri, Tony Dahlerbruch and Keone Kali for their accomplishments and contributions.

To the Beverly Hills community, I wish the happiest of New Years, and I wish for y'all the capacity and time to appreciate all that God has graced you with. I hope for you the willingness to put aside judgment in your discourse and to appreciate that your richness lies in the diversity of thought that you enjoy, as well as in the goodness in your hearts to tend to your neighbors as you tend to your own families. For all the movie and show business lore that attaches itself to you, those are the attributes that seem to me to represent the best of that very special place called Beverly Hills that I grew to love so much.

*Mark Scott
Spartanburg, SC*

"City Rejects Request to Sponsor Outside Candidate Forums"

The City Council wrongfully seeks to influence the election (in which two incumbents are being challenged) by attempting to control the Candidate Forums. The Council

favors the two incumbents, Webb and Delshad, by denying access to Channel 10 unless the Forums are placed under their "control" and held in their chambers, a venue beneficial to the incumbents because it will make them appear more authoritative and credible.

The Council has confessed that they seek to control the Forums:

Besides being expensive, Brucker said the city would not sponsor a forum that it would have no control over.

Although, they attempt to justify their power grab on the grounds of excessive cost (of a mere \$2,400 per Forum), they continue yearly subsidies of \$2 million to the Chamber of Commerce and rent City properties, including the old Post Office, for a fraction of its fair market value. Their justification is exposed as vacuous when they refused to telecast a video tape paid for entirely by the BHNHOA.

Their true motive is control, control over speech, behavior, and conduct. Two-fifths of the Council have the self-interest of appearing in the most favorable venue. The Council carefully controls public comment in its televised sessions by restricting the public's time, ignoring troubling inquiries and responding autocratically only to those which serve their self-interest. They will be denied that control in a homeowner's Forum.

Councilmember Briskman's threat to withhold access to Channel 10's television audience respectfully, should be withdrawn.

*Louis Lipofsky
Beverly Hills North Homeowners
Association*

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December 26, 2006

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Occurred between 1400 and 1600 on 12/19/06 in the 400 block of South Doheny Drive. Unknown suspect(s) used force to gain entry to the location. Suspect(s) removed property and fled the location undetected.

Loss: \$1,712.17

Grand Theft: Occurred between an unknown time on 06/01/06 and 1300 on 12/20/06 in the 200 block of Lasky Drive. Unknown suspect(s) removed victim's property and fled the location undetected.

Loss: \$27,550

Occurred at 1700 on 12/19/06 in the intersection of Santa Monica Blvd. and Canon Drive. Suspect #1: Male White, 21-22, 5'10", 145 lbs., blond hair and blue eyes. Suspect #2: Male Black, 31-32, 6'4", 165 lbs., black hair. No further description. Suspects grabbed the victim's cellular telephone out of his hand and fled the location.

Loss: \$22

Occurred between 1400 and 1530 on 12/19/06 in the 8900 block of West Olympic Blvd. Suspect: Male White, 50's, 6'0", thin built with brown hair. Suspect removed victim's wallet from her purse which was left unattended at the location. Suspect then removed cash from an open drawer and fled the location.

Loss: \$2,270

Occurred between 0800 and 1745 on 12/19/06 in the 300 block of North Maple Drive. Unknown suspect(s) removed victim's wallet from her purse which was left unattended at the location. Suspect(s) fled the location undetected.

Loss: \$800

Arrests: MARCEANO, VICTOR THOMAS, 23, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/22/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

CASAS, STEVEN LEE, 26, of Panorama, arrested on 12/22/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

CARTER, DIANNE LYNN, 39, of Valley Village, arrested on 12/22/06 for a felony warrant.

JOHNSON, WALTER ARTHUR, 48, transient, arrested on 12/22/06 for a traffic

infraction.

GARNICA, CESAR, 27, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/21/06 for a felony warrant.

KIM, STELLA HYUN JUNG, 29, of Torrance, arrested on 12/21/06 for a misdemeanor warrant.

WRIGHT, TARAN DONELL, 36, of Missouri, arrested on 12/21/06 for burglary.

CLAUSE, LINDA LAURIE, 40, of Michigan, arrested on 12/21/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

MAGEE, DAVID BACKHOUSE JR., 49, of Beverly Hills, arrested on 12/19/06 for possession of a controlled substance.

FREEMAN, LARRY EDWARD, 41, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/19/06 for grand theft auto.

PEREZ, SOSO ANTONIO, 23, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/19/06 for possession of a controlled substance.

December 19, 2006

Armed Robbery/ Occurred between 1404 and 1406 in the 100 block of North

Kidnapping: La Cienega Blvd. Suspect: Male Black, 25-30, 5'10" to 6'0", 180 lbs. to 210 lbs., black hair. No further description. Suspect entered the location and ordered victims to the ground using a handgun. Suspect removed prescription drugs and victim's property and fled the location.

Loss: \$905+

Robbery: Occurred between 1850 and 1900 on 12/15/06 in the 300 block of South Elm Drive. Suspect #1: Male White, 18-22, 5'6", 150 lbs., black hair. No further description. Suspect #2: Male White. No further description. Suspects walked up to the victim on foot and demanded money. Suspects physically assaulted the victim and removed cash. Suspects fled the location.

Loss: \$500

Occurred between 1155 and 1200 on 12/14/06 in the 500 block of North Camden Drive. Suspect: Male White, 45-60, 6'0", 180 lbs. to 200 lbs., gray hair. No further description. Suspect approached the victim from behind and put a gun to her back. Suspect led the victim into her location and used force to remove victim's property. Suspect fled the location.

Loss: \$300

Burglary: Occurred between 2130 on 12/17/06 and 0900 on 12/18/06 in the 450 block of South Roxbury Drive. Unknown

suspect(s) entered the victim's location through a side gate and removed property. Suspect(s) fled the location undetected.

Loss: \$1,500

Occurred between 1915 on 12/13/06 and 0900 on 12/14/06 in the 9400 block of West Olympic Blvd. Unknown suspect(s) used force to gain entry to the location. Suspect(s) removed property and fled the location undetected.

Loss: \$13,000

Grand Theft: Occurred between 1715 and 1730 on 12/18/06 in the 100 block of North La Cienega Blvd. Suspect #1: Male Black, 25, 6'3", 160 lbs., black hair. No further description. Suspect #2: Male Black, 25, 5'7", 150 lbs., black hair. No further description. Suspects selected merchandise and concealed it in a bag and fled the location.

Loss: \$781

Occurred between 1930 and 2300 on 12/17/06 in the 8600 block of Wilshire Blvd. Unknown suspect(s) removed victim's property which was left unattended at the location. Suspect(s) fled the location undetected.

Loss: \$50,000

Occurred between 1255 and 1309 on 12/12/06 in the 9700 block of Wilshire Blvd. Suspect: Female White, 39, 5'6", 120 lbs., blonde hair and hazel eyes. Suspect selected merchandise and concealed it in a shopping bag. Suspect was arrested.

Occurred between an unknown time in 06/2006 and 0900 on 12/11/06 in the 200 block of South Beverly Drive. Suspect: Male White, 30's, 5'6", 250 lbs., black hair and hazel eyes. Suspect obtained goods over time and charged them to the victim's account.

Loss: \$8,000

Larceny/Forgery: Occurred between 1230 and 1240 on 12/14/06 in the 200 block of North Rodeo Drive. Suspect: Female Black, 27, 5'8", 135 lbs., black hair. No further description. Suspect used two stolen credit cards to make purchases.

Identity Theft: Occurred between an unknown time on 12/11/06 and 0945 on 12/12/06 in the 9900 block of Durant Drive. Unknown suspect(s) attempted to open a credit card account using victim's information.

Arrests: MALE JUVENILE, 17, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/17/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

HOSMANN, LUKE MADDEN, 18, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/16/06 for a misdemeanor warrant.

MALE JUVENILE, 15, of Whittier, arrested on 12/16/06 for driving without a license.

SANDOVAL, ANGIE, 18, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/16/06 for driving without a license.

NARAGHI, KAMRAN, 50, of Sherman Oaks, arrested on 12/16/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

CASTRO-BARRERA, ERICK EDUARDO, 22, of South Gate, arrested on 12/16/06 for driving without a license.

PASHAIE, KAMYAR, 33, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/16/06 for a misdemeanor warrant.

LIMOUDIM, DAVID, 25, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/16/06 for a misdemeanor warrant.

SALAS, EVERARDO, 23, of Winnetka, arrested on 12/16/06 for driving with a suspended license.

MESTA, JOSE DANIEL, 35, of Bell, arrested on 12/16/06 for forging a state seal.

MARZBAN, AMIR MEHDI, 28, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/16/06 for a misdemeanor warrant.

FINO, MICHAEL JOSEPH, 34, of Santa Monica, arrested on 12/16/06 for possession of narcotics.

KIM, MIN KYUN, 48, of Canoga Park, arrested on 12/16/06 for grand theft.

RIVERA, RAYMOND, 37, of Inglewood, arrested on 12/16/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

FERLAND, NORMAND EDWARD, 43, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/15/06 for driving under the influence of drugs.

CARPIO, VIRGINIA ARACELYS MARTINEZ, 35, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/15/06 for driving without a license.

JUAREZ, GUALBERTO HERRERA, 27, of San Ysidro, arrested on 12/15/06 for driving without a license.

MOGUEL-SALAZAR, MIGUEL ANGEL, 20, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/15/06 for driving without a license.

IRWIN, PAULA LOUISE, 40, of Sherman Oaks, arrested on 12/15/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

MESHELL, DAVID BROOK, 37, of Studio City, arrested on 12/15/06 for smoking marijuana while driving.

ROMAN-JUAREZ, HECTOR PARIS, 23, of Anaheim, arrested on 12/15/06 for driving without a license.

MACIAS, RICARDO ROMO, 23, of Anaheim, arrested on 12/15/06 for owner allowing unlicensed driver to drive his vehicle.

ZUNIGA, ANA ELIZABETH MARRON, 22, of Torrance, arrested on 12/15/06 for driving with a suspended license.

coverstory

2006: A YEAR IN REVIEW

The Weekly looks back at some of the year's most headline making stories



Stern to Leave Beverly Vista
Longtime teacher and principal to retire
at the end of the school year.
Issue 334, February 23, 2006

In a surprise announcement last Tuesday, Beverly Vista Principal Irene Stern told district administrators and teaching staff that she will leave her position at the end of the school year, to the dismay of some of her colleagues who said she was “forced into retirement.”

A standing room only crowd of parents, teachers and students arrived en masse to speak in support of Stern at Tuesday’s Board of Education meeting and to express their feelings about her departure and to urge the board to reconsider its decision.

According to Beverly Vista teachers, the news of Stern’s retirement was announced when she called a special staff meeting in the library.

Stern reportedly gave an emotional speech explaining that she was offered the position as Director of the Adult School but not offered the opportunity to return to Beverly Vista. Stern declined and submitted her resignation effective at the end of the school year.

“I asked our leadership team to stay behind [after the meeting] and I wanted to talk to them about the future of our leadership team and the entire staff stayed and it was very emotional. It was high charged, people were very upset; what do we do? At the same time, we don’t know what we can really do about this,” BV math teacher Mark Frenn said.

Update: Stern’s lawsuit against the BHUSD is pending. Her lawyer did not return the Weekly’s e-mail request for comment on the case.



Steve Webb Installed as New Mayor, Issue 338, March 23, 2006
 Steve Webb was installed as Beverly Hills’ mayor, succeeding Linda Briskman for a one-year term. Webb, an attorney, was elected to the City Council in 2003 and served on the Traffic and Parking Commission from 1992 to 1997 and the Planning Commission from 1997 to 2003.

After being administered the oath of office by California State Senator Debra Bowen (D – Marina Del Rey), Webb gave a speech focused largely on development issues highlighting some of the priority projects facing council in the coming year.

The City’s General Plan was at the top of Webb’s list. He called the current revision process a “historic and critical” opportunity for the community to develop its goals and said the updated plan would hinge on high environmental standards with an eye toward developing recreational facilities, maintaining open space and increasing mobility in the city.

Another of Webb’s top priorities in the coming year is the continued development of a proposed recreation center at the intersection of Third Street, Foothill Road and Alden Drive. He called the project an “essential component” of the city and announced that on May 7-9, city staff will host meetings for residents to discuss the project with its planners and developers.

The proposed recreation center has garnered criticism from some residents because of its high cost and Webb made it clear that council will assess all costs and impacts of the project before proceeding.

Webb also defended the council’s controversial decision to revoke two-hour free parking in most of the city’s parking lots. “Two-hour parking has been abused,” Webb said, adding that council will revisit its decision in June to determine the effectiveness of the change.

“It is impossible for this council to please everyone,” Webb said, “But [the council] promises to approach everything with an open mind.”

Update: After three years on the City Council - one of them as Mayor - Steve Webb is gearing up for another election in March. If he wins, Webb will step down from the Mayoral seat, leaving it open for either Vice Mayor Jimmy Delshad, who must first win his re-election campaign, or Councilmember Barry Brucker, who is next in line behind Delshad.



Will the Last Person to Leave the School District Please Turn Off the Lights?
Observations on the unprecedented exodus of BHUSD administrators
Issue 346, May 18, 2006

Beverly Hills school administrators no longer stay for decades. Beverly Hills Unified School District faculty members cite several factors as to what might be causing this year’s unprecedented exodus of BHUSD administrators.

Beverly Vista principal Irene Stern is retiring; Beverly High principal Dan Stepenosky is moving to Las Virgenes Unified School District; Hawthorne principal Nancy Lynch is moving to the district office; and Supt. Jeff Hubbard accepted the superintendent position at the larger Newport-Mesa Unified School District.

One reason for the mass exit is that administrators are being enticed to move to other districts due to a shrinking pool of apparent qualified administrators in the state, according to BHEA president Chris Bushee. Because of the discrepancy with supply and demand for qualified administrators, some administrators are literally being lured by districts willing to give better offers.

“It’s hard to put your finger on, but talking with enough people, there’s a shortage of qualified administrators in California. You’ve got a lot of districts looking for administrators but a very small pool of good administrators [to choose from],” Bushee said. “Any time you’ve got multiple districts after what you have to offer, than you’re in a better position to bargain and naturally salaries go up. There’s a lot more pressure to only be in a district for a short time because you’ve been there for a few years and then you look out and there’s all these other opportunities.”

Beverly High social studies teacher and former BHEA president Stewart Horowitz agrees with Bushee that other districts can offer administrators better salaries than BHUSD.

“There are good opportunities at other places,” said Horowitz, who has taught in the district for 21 years. “At one time, Beverly Hills offered substantially higher salaries than other school districts and that’s no longer the case. People are frustrated at the direction of our district. This is also a poor reflection on the Board of Education.”

What the district should do to remedy what has occurred this past year is unknown at this point.

“Even in my own department, for the first 15 years, a job opening rarely happened. People that were here stayed here. Now, every year there are two or three people who come in and they leave and come in and leave. And every once in a while a veteran teacher retires and we can’t fill the positions permanently anymore,” Horowitz said. “As I talk to my colleagues who have been here even longer [than me], this kind of turnover has never happened before. It’s very upsetting to people overall.”

Update: New Superintendent Kari McVeigh has taken Jeff Hubbard’s role and Dan Stepenosky’s position was filled by Hamilton principal J. Guidetti.



Taking the Helm, Kari McVeigh Named New Superintendent, Issue 363, Sept 14, 2006

Kari McVeigh’s belief in working in a school district with goals and values that speak to her, has taken her from San Francisco to Boston all the way back to California to become the new superintendent for the Beverly Hills Unified School District.

In her inaugural speech to the community on Tuesday night, McVeigh compared what she described as her call to teaching to the same overwhelming desire actors, artists and musicians often express.

“Teachers really don’t have a choice,” McVeigh said. “We are compelled to be educators.”

It was the district’s goals and values that attracted McVeigh and convinced her to apply after spending five years in the San Diego Unified School District.

Although she knew she wanted to work for Beverly Hills, getting the job was not a quick and easy process. From the time she applied, to when she was hired, McVeigh estimated that it was about three months full of paperwork and interviews.

“It’s a very humbling process,” McVeigh said.

In 2000, after spending the first 23 years in the same school district, McVeigh said new administration was bringing about changes in the school system that she did not fully support, so she looked for a school with values that interested her. She then took a position with the project for Whole School change in Boston.

“What attracted me to it was what they were doing over there and the reform,” McVeigh said.

After spending nearly two years there, the curriculum again began to change and McVeigh was once again drawn to a reforming district. She moved back to the West Coast to take a job
cover storycont. on page 10

in the newly reforming San Diego Unified School District.

“The biggest thing I’m going to be stressing is listening and learning,” McVeigh said.

New Superintendent Kari McVeigh says she has indeed done a lot of listening over the past few months, visiting each school in the district to host “Conversations with Kari.” The hour-long sessions are platforms for parents to voice education concerns and ask McVeigh questions.

But after three months of listening, the first sign of reform came two weeks ago when McVeigh issued a district-wide directive requiring teachers to release tests to parents.

The test release policy never quite took hold mainly because teachers have largely opposed the idea, on grounds that it jeopardizes test security. And though teachers, led by president of the BHEA teacher’s union Chris Bushée, oppose the directive, it is backed by the board of education and has considerable parental support.



Ethical Decisions Finally Made: Council Votes Unanimously to Adopt Ethics Ordinance. Issue 366, October 5, 2006

The Beverly Hills City Council voted unanimously last night to approve a Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy, which stipulated that any elected officials, city officials and Planning Commissioners who are part of a decision to approve a development application or a contract, except for those required to go to the lowest bidder, must wait three years from the date of the decision to lobby for or receive any compensation from the applicant exceeding \$500.

The newly adopted ordinance would prohibit former Councilmembers, city officials and Planning Commissioners from representing a party on behalf of the issue which they submitted to the city or brought before the council. This would include any formal or informal appearances by either oral or written contact to the City, any Commission, sub committee or City member if the communication is intended to influence any decision regarding that issue.

They would also not be allowed to receive compensation in excess of \$500 for three years after the decision. This compensation including any gifts or payment of money.

Although the Council unanimously supported the Ethics Ordinance, Vice Mayor Jimmy Delshad’s proposed blanket two year amendment was voted down once again. Delshad had proposed the amendment at the Sept. 19 meeting with Councilmember Barry Brucker in support as well.

Councilmembers Linda Briskman, Frank Fenton and Mayor Steve Webb had all been opposed to the two years and at the meeting, Webb instead proposed the three year abstention from the time an item is voted on. That is what passed Tuesday night.

Briskman said that it didn’t matter if the amendment was one, two or three years. The real issue is whether the city has honest officials, which she assured it does.

“A crook will find a way around it, and an honest person won’t,” Briskman said.



Not Shipping Out...Yet Tensions flare as local animal hospital fights eminent domain Issue 366, October 5, 2006

Following an earnest and often animated show of opposition from community members regarding the proposed plan to purchase Anthony Shipp’s property at 351 North Foothill Drive by way of eminent domain, the City Council opted unanimously on Tuesday to delay its decision.

The City Manager’s office claims that the purchase of Shipp’s property is necessary to the public good, as it allegedly inhibits the ingress and egress of City vehicles at the Public Works facility.

Tuesday’s meeting and the proposed use of eminent domain comes after the City had made two previous requests for a negotiated purchase of the property, both of which Shipp denied.

The City attempted to negotiate a compromise with Shipp, offering in private meetings to purchase only the parking lot, which is on a separate parcel of land from the building that houses both the animal hospital and the Amanda Foundation.

“Dr. Shipp felt that they couldn’t operate the veterinary hospital without a parking lot, so it was not an acceptable alternative in his eye,” Project Manager for the City Daniel Cartagena said. “So now we move forward with the original request for both parcels.”

Update: The City is currently in negotiations over the Shipp property, opting to hold off the use of eminent domain. The City has allegedly offered a vacant piece of land at the Southwest corner of the Public Works building to the Amanda Foundation at a \$1 a year lease. There is no building on the parcel however and President of the Amanda Foundation Terri Austen said last month that the group cannot afford to build a new building.



Subway Update: Can You Dig It? With widespread community support, plans for a Subway through Beverly Hills move forward. Issue 371, November 8, 2006

The Beverly Hills Mass Transit Committee is inching its way toward a recommendation to the City Council regarding a subway in Beverly Hills.

Though a final recommendation is not slated until January 9th, the committee announced on Thursday at a Town Hall meeting that it has decided on a specific route alignment for the proposed subway and determined two ideal station locations.

The “subway to the sea,” if it does get built, will be an extension of the existing Metro Red Line subway, which currently runs along Wilshire Boulevard between Union Station in downtown Los Angeles and Western Avenue.

“The entire Wilshire Boulevard alignment all the way from Wilshire and Western, all the way through Beverly Hills does contain relatively high density development, relatively high public transit usage, [and] lots of public transit service,” Kaku said.

Some community members, however, are not convinced that a subway anywhere in Beverly Hills is a good idea. Critics cite security and terrorism among their concerns.

Once the mass transit committee, which was appointed by Mayor Steve Webb in April of 2006, makes its final recommendation, the city will start to lobby for route alignments and ideal station locations. Other communities are likely to lobby for different alignments.

“I fervently believe that we need a subway system that goes from downtown to the Westside,” Webb said. “Where the alignment is and where the stations are is not my primary concern; my primary concern is for the city to take an official position so we can get out there and make sure that when money is allocated, money is allocated for the Westside.”

Update: The mass transit committee is slated to present its final recommendation to the City Council on January 9th. The committee, which meets every third Thursday, is expected to support a subway in Beverly Hills. If approved, the recommendation will likely serve as a guideline for how the city should lobby the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which has ultimate say over the future of the project.

If an extension of the Red Line subway – what Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has dubbed the “Subway to the Sea” – does become an MTA priority, Beverly Hills is expected to push for two stops in Beverly Hills, one at La Cienega at Wilshire Blvd and the other between Beverly and Rodeo Drives on Wilshire.



Judge Dismisses Oil Well Lawsuit Issue 373, Nov 23, 2006

After over three years of highly contentious litigation surrounding claims that

an oil well on the site of Beverly High allegedly caused cancer in students and faculty, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Wendell Mortimer Jr. ruled in favor of summary judgment motions made by the defendants.

Defendants, including the City of Beverly Hills, the Beverly Hills Unified School District and Venoco Inc, the oil company that owns and operates the facility, issued 12 summary judgment

motions claiming that “there’s no medical evidence to link the oil wells or the central plans facility to the cancers that have been suffered by the plaintiffs,” City Attorney Larry Wiener said.

Mortimer granted all twelve of these motions and canceled all future calendar dates. The decision is considered a significant victory by city officials. “This ruling validates the school board and the city’s position that there were no health risks either in the past or currently to any of the students at Beverly Hills High School from the oil well on site,” Mayor Steve Webb said. Legal fees to the city and the school district have accumulated beyond \$1 million Webb said.

“This case was a tremendous financial and time burden for both the school district and the city,” Councilmember Barry Brucker said. Brucker served on the Board of Education when the case was first filed in 2003. “I’m so happy that now we can get back to the business of educating our kids and running our city services,” he said.

Board of Education President Myra Lurie concurs. “I’m very grateful to Judge Wendell Mortimer for having made a wise and courageous decision and we are thrilled, relieved and very grateful to our defense team,” Lurie said. “It’s a real victory for families, for children and for our community.”

Update: After ruling in favor of the defendants’ in the Beverly High Oil Well case on November 22nd, Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Wendell Mortimer issued a detailed ruling on the same matter last Tuesday. Calling the plaintiffs’ allegations that the oil well on the Beverly High campus caused cancer “speculative and scientifically unreliable,” Mortimer echoed what has been the city and the district’s main line of defense.

“Plaintiffs’ experts do not have reliable evidence to establish that the plaintiff’s exposure to any or all of the chemicals was a substantial factor in causing any of the diseases,” the ruling states, “thus the defendants’ motions were granted.”

The City of Beverly Hills had issued 12 motions for summary judgment, denying the link between the oil wells and plaintiffs’ illnesses.

Leading the Plaintiffs case for Dallas, Texas based law firm Baron and Budd, Attorney Al Stewart said they will appeal the decision.

“We disagree fundamentally over what the law is in California,” Stewart said.

Wiener does not expect an appeal to succeed.

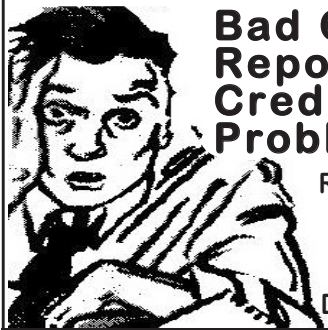
“I think [Judge Mortimer’s decision] is a very thorough and thoughtful opinion,” Wiener said. “If the plaintiffs choose to appeal it, I believe it will be upheld by the court of appeal.”

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 262-Painting
 264-Pet Sitting
 265-Photography
 266-Plumbing
 267-Piano Tuning
 268-Roofing
 270-Sandblasting
 272-Security Services
 274-Stained Glass
 276-Tile
 278-Tree Service
 280-Tutoring
 282-TV/VCR/DVD Repair
 284-Video Systems
 286-Windows
 288-Word Processing
 289-Lessons
 290-Trainer
- 300-399 Rentals**
 300-House Furnished
 302-House Unfurnished
 304-Apartments Furnished

- 306-For Rent
 308-Condominiums
 309-Recreational For Rent
 310-Rooms
 312-Rentals to Share
 314-Hotels/Motels
 316-Garages Storage
 318-Office Space
 320-Commercial
 322-Resort Property
 325-For Lease
- 400-499 Real Estate**
 400-Homes For Sale
 401-Real Estate
 402-Condominiums
 404-Commercial/Industrial
 406-Mobile Homes
 408-Income Property
 410-Lots For Sale
 412-Farms/Ranches
 414-Resort Property
 416-Lakeshore Property
 418-Oceanfront Property

- 420-Out-of-State Property
 422-Real Estate Exchange
 424-Real Estate Wanted

- 500-599 Employment**
 500-Employment Opportunities
 501-Help Wanted
 505-Work at Home
 510-Employment Agencies
 515-Business Services
 516-Business Opportunities
 520-Jobs Wanted
 521-Personal Shopper
 522-Drivers

- 600-799 Merchandise**
 600-Garage Sales
 610-For Sale
 615-Business For Sale
 700-Antiques
 705-Appliances
 710-Medical Supplies
 715-Coins & Stamps
 720-Computers
 725-Furniture
 726-Miscellaneous
 730-Musical Instruments

- 735-Office Furniture
 740-Television/Radio

- 800-899 Financial**
 800-Real Estate Loans
 801-Financial Services
 802-Money to Loan
 804-Money Wanted
 806-Mortgage & Trust
 808-Escrows

- 900-999 Transportation**
 900-Autos For Sale
 905-Trucks & Vans
 910-Motorhomes/Campers
 915-Motorcycles
 920-Trailers
 925-Classics
 930-Auto Leasing
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