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Beverly Hills Weekly

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Issue 579 • November 4 - November 10, 2010

Beautifying Beverly Hills

The Weekly's interview with
Incoming Recreation and Parks
Commission Chair
Alan Block.



cover story • pages 8-9



letters & email

“Yaroslavsky motions for further study on subway route under Beverly High” [Issue #578]

I use the Metro system, almost daily. Yes, I have a car and am neither impaired nor legally

Corrections, #579:

- Of the number of employees who were absorbed in the city through either elimination or retirement was misstated in the article, “City not on hiring freeze, says they are eliminating positions based on financial need.” In 2007, the City of Beverly Hills had 761 employees and added 11 positions. Due to the economic downturn, in 2008 the City had 772 employees and absorbed 43 positions. Similarly, in 2009 the City had 729 employees and absorbed 25 positions. In 2010, the City has 704 full-time employees. The elimination affected full-time city employees, including the police and fire departments.

enjoined from driving it; my workplace has a carrot/stick arrangement where they charge for parking and chip in for the monthly pass. I am averse to carrots, but more averse to sticks. So I go Metro.

There has been a lot of controversy about the route that the coming subway will take. On one side there are the residents of Beverly Hills who are violently opposed to the idea of Metro tunneling under residences and the High School to get to the alternately proposed stop at Constellation and Avenue of the Stars. On the other side are people who argue that the center of Century City is not at Santa Monica Blvd, the original stop that Beverly Hills residents want Metro to stick to.

I don't know how many people on either side of the issue actually use the system or will use it in future. I think that most people will

frankly be hoping that other people will use it and free up traffic on Wilshire and parking at Century City Mall.

I admit that I am on the side of the Beverly Hills residents, even though there's not going to be tunneling in my neighborhood. If you were going to use a service, like a mechanic or a gardener or a doctor, in choosing them you would go on that persons past performance. Metro can tell us that there will be no issues, and that nobody is complaining about noise and vibration that lives atop their tunnels. I remember the Red Line construction in the 90's and there were people complaining then, long and loud. Like the people who lived in the apartment building in Hollywood that was red-tagged. Ask them how they felt about it. That is, If you can track them down.

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WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

You can write us at:
140 South Beverly Drive #201
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

You can fax us at:
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editor@bhweekly.com



SNAPSHOT



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OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES



briefs

No final decision on subway route

The Metro board approved the Westside subway extension draft environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) Thursday, October 28 with a 10-0-1 vote, County Supervisor and board member Michael Antonovich abstaining and members Lakewood City Councilmember Diane Dubois and County Supervisor Gloria Molina absent. The board approved the draft EIR/EIS and told staff to continue studying different potential alignments along the route. This includes the Santa Monica Boulevard alignment and the Lasky alignment, which will go under Beverly Hills residences, Beverly High and the BHUSD district office.

Metro board member and County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky said he felt the Lasky route was the more appropriate choice because it goes to the center of Century City, as opposed to Santa Monica Boulevard which drops transit riders off near the edge.

"The objective of [Lasky] is sound on its face and you don't have to be a traffic engineer to figure that out," Yaroslavsky said.

MTA will continue to study and plan for both alternatives. The Metro Board will make the decision as to which route during the approval of the final EIS/EIR, to take place next year.

"We need to design both alternatives because one of those two alternatives is going to be the one that we're going to build and we need to know exactly what the pros and cons of each alternative is," Yaroslavsky said.

Southwest Homeowners Association President Ken Goldman said he thinks people around the world would laugh at Los Angeles if they knew there was an extreme amount of tension and divisiveness over one block. People who work in Century City walk more than one block at lunch, he said.

"The Santa Monica fault [has a recurrence rate of] once every 7,000 years," Goldman said. "If the fault is safe enough to build a regional arterial highway for cars and buses and safe enough to hold multiple high rise buildings, it's safe enough for a subway. Metro has an admirable safety record but [has] gotten complacent within the last three years. Unless the experts can guarantee it can be safe but we've seen how wrong experts can be. No one can guarantee there won't be problems. Even though there might be slight change, where does that slight risk belong; under a roadway or under a high school?"

Board of Education Vice President Lisa Korbatov said she was distressed and concerned over the Metro board meeting.

"I think the writing's on the wall, that they have really in essence chosen [Lasky]," Korbatov said. "They're trying to soften the blow and handle it in a manner befitting PR parameters, but I felt what I watched [on October 28] was a dog and pony show. They decided long ago it was [the Lasky Route] and perhaps even before they bothered to mention it to us four months ago."

During the Metro board meeting, Korbatov read a letter from the law firm, Best, Best & Krieger, the BHUSD has hired to represent them to Metro. The letter described, in detail, the aspects of the draft EIS/EIR that the firm found to be flawed, including the lack of mitigation for the high school if the Lasky route was chosen.

"The district is in total opposition to alternative four and the EIS/EIR which would locate the tunnel under Beverly Hills High School, our only high school, with a subway station nearby," Korbatov read at the Metro meeting. "The construction and operation of alternative four's tunnel and nearby subway station would result in significant adverse environmental impacts on the high school's children and staff. These significant impacts have not been addressed nor mitigated in the draft EIS/EIR. The impositions of the extreme risks on the district's students when the subway can serve Century City by run-

ning underneath Santa Monica Boulevard is a violation of state and environmental law as well as bad policy."

At the last Board of Education meeting October 26, the Board of Education unanimously voted to ask the City Council for \$100,000 assistance for joint litigation against Metro. Korbatov said the BHUSD is going to have to regroup and think about all aspects of their campaign against the Lasky Route.

"When I say campaign I use the world loosely, it's an effort to educate MTA that there are no guarantees," Korbatov said. "MTA is neither omniscient nor omnipotent. Reports are only as good as the people who write them. People make mistakes, there are grave consequences for these mistakes. I cannot put the fate of an entire high school population and their staff and employees in

the hands of a far away agency called MTA and I shouldn't have to put all my faith and all my eggs in that basket. That is an unreasonable request on their part."

Students need to prove residency to stay in BHUSD

With the recent change to basic aid affecting the way the district gets paid, the BHUSD is requiring all students confirm residency via residency verification forms. The letter sent to parents from the district said forms are due as soon as possible. However a letter will be sent out next week requesting the forms be returned by November 19, said Superintendent Dick Douglas.

"We're asking people to verify their residence so that we have a proper count of the

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The City Council of Beverly Hills, at its regular meeting to be held on **Tuesday, November 16, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the Council Chambers of the City Hall, 455 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210; will hold a public hearing to consider:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS AMENDING THE UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, 1997 EDITION, AND ADOPTING BY REFERENCE THE 2010 CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA RESIDENTIAL CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA ELECTRICAL CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA MECHANICAL CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA PLUMBING CODE; 2009 UNIFORM SWIMMING POOL, SPA AND HOT TUB CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA ENERGY CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL BUILDING CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA EXISTING BUILDING CODE; 2010 CALIFORNIA REFERENCE STANDARDS CODE; 2009 INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE; AND THE 2010 BEVERLY HILLS PHOTOVOLTAIC INSTALLATION GUIDELINES; INCLUDING CERTAIN AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONS, AND DELETIONS; AND AMENDING PORTIONS OF TITLE 9 OF THE BEVERLY HILLS MUNICIPAL CODE

The ordinance would adopt by reference the 2010 edition of the California Building, Mechanical, Plumbing, Electrical, Energy, Residential, Green Building Standards, Historical Building, Existing Building, Reference Standards, and Fire Codes, as well as the latest editions of the International Property Maintenance Code, Uniform Swimming Pool, Spa and Hot Tub Code, and Beverly Hills Photovoltaic Installation Guidelines, together with certain amendments, deletions and additions.

The City has determined that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the adoption and implementation of the proposed ordinance may have a significant effect on the environment. The ordinance is therefore exempt from the environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

All interested persons are invited to attend and speak on this matter. Written comments may also be submitted and should be addressed to the City Council, c/o City Clerk, 455 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210 and should be received prior to the public hearing.

Please remember, if you challenge the Council's action in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the hearing before the City Council or in written correspondence delivered to the City, either at or prior to the hearing.

If there are any questions regarding this notice, please contact the Community Development Department at 310.285.1141. Copies of the ordinance are available for review or purchase in the Community Development Department, 1st Floor, 455 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, California.

BYRON POPE, CMC
City Clerk



NOTICE OF COMMISSION VACANCY

DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

The Beverly Hills City Council is seeking qualified candidates to fill one (1) licensed residential architect position on the Design Review Commission. The initial term of office is for two years. At the discretion of the City Council, the Commissioner may be reappointed to a second term of four years. The appointee will be required to file an initial and an annual "Statement of Economic Interests" financial disclosure.

In order that we may preserve the integrity of the application and interview process, please direct all inquiries to the City Clerk, City Manager or the Director of Community Development. Please DO NOT contact the City Councilmembers or the members of the Design Review Commission regarding the Design Review Commission vacancies.

Application forms for the Design Review Commission, along with a description of the duties of a Commissioner, and filing details are available for pickup in the City Clerk's Office, Room 290, 455 N. Rexford Drive, or call 310.285.2400 to receive an application and information by mail or by e-mail.

The deadline for filing applications for this Commission vacancy is Friday, November 19, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

BYRON POPE, CMC
City Clerk

briefs cont. from page 3

people who live in the district and attend our schools," Douglas said. "We mailed those forms to everybody and their also available online."

The following information is requested:

- Verification of identity through drivers license or passport with photo ID;
- Verification of residence of legal guardian through a current lease/rental agreement, which lists all occupants including school-aged children residing in the home or a current LA County property tax bill, mortgage statement or grant deed in the legal guardians name showing residence property address;
- A current Southern California Edison Bill, both top and bottom, or verification of electrical service connecting a name and address;

- And two additional forms of residency verification reflecting a name and address including a current gas bill, current cable bill, current property tax or income tax documents, current water, current waste management bill, current payroll stub or current social services documents.

Office managers at each of the school sites are going to be looking at the paperwork and placing it in each students file.

"We've become a basic aid district and it's critical that we have verification of the people who live here," Douglas said. "We're thinking we will have recertification each year."

Board of Education member Brian Goldberg said he feels the BHUSD needs to be vigilant with residency verification. He also said he thinks the district needs to hire an additional residency investigator to double

the amount of investigations that can occur during a month. Currently the district has one full-time investigator who conducts six residency investigations a month.

"This directly impacts the resources we have available for students who are eligible to attend the BHUSD," Goldberg said. "Students who are here illegally are taking dollars directly out of the hands of students who are eligible to go here."

Chamber of Commerce considers "BID" a way to be self-sustaining

In an effort to lessen membership dues and create independence from the city, the Chamber of Commerce will be presenting a plan to create a Business Improvement District (BID) to the city council at today's study session.

A BID is a defined area where businesses pay an additional tax to or fee in order to fund improvements or programs within the area. According to the staff report, the Chamber proposes to implement a Chamber BID within the next four months.

The Chamber has hired CIVITAS, a legal and consultative firm with experience in BIDs, to work with a Chamber Steering Committee to develop resolutions to implement the BID. The steps involved with this process are: project initiation/CBID formation infrastructure; preparation of documents; revision of documents; and city council hearings.

With the passage of Prop 26, all new taxes, surcharges and levy's require a two-thirds vote by California Legislature. The definition of taxes has been broadened to include many payments that were previously consid-



(L to R) Front Row: Randi Capen Lieberman, Karen Greenhouse Schwartz, Laurie Raskin Schuman, Kathy Finley, Gayle Bowman Rosenberg. Middle Row: Dianna Hyman Weiner, Debra Chodos, Patty Roach Finkle, Sari Newmann Ehrenreich, Dale Robin Gross and Ellen Bloom Underhill Back Row: Jim Turken, Rob Feldman, Babette Lewis Walter and Jeff White

Beverly High Class of 1970 Reunion

The Beverly High Class of 1970 reunion was held, Saturday, October 30 at Mountain Gate Country Club in Bel Air.

ered to be fees or charges. Now, more local proposals to increase revenues will require approval by two-thirds of each house of the Legislature or by local voters. Although membership in the Chamber has always been voluntary, creating a BID would force businesses to participate.

If created, the membership cost for the CBID would be equal to or lower than current Chamber membership rates. For example, the Chamber's current annual minimum membership fee is \$400 and can cost upwards of \$5,000. Under the CBID, the maximum annual fee would be \$400 for less than 10 percent of the businesses, \$250 for most businesses and \$25 for the remaining businesses. The Chamber has offered to underwrite the cost of creating the CBID.

ROP Board of Education presentation unclear about finances

A presentation about the Regional Occupational Program (ROP) at the Board of Education meeting Tuesday October 26, brought confusion for board members and teachers. Staff announced the salaries of the robotics and culinary arts teachers.

ROP teachers found a discrepancy from the number that was presented to the Board of Education and the number found on their W-2 tax forms. The salaries from the ROP presentation were from September to June said Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Alex Cherniss.

The presentation showed that robotics teacher Eileen Kahn made \$67,597. Although

it was not mentioned during the presentation, that amount was from September 2009 until June 2010. Kahn worked an unusual amount of hours due to one additional out-of-state competition that the robotics team will not be attending this year.

"I submitted time sheets that were signed off by me, my boss, the principal and then it goes to the district and then it goes to the county and they sign off a check," Kahn said. There is a process in place. Also, the hours fluctuate from year to year depending on how many competitions we go to and how much time is needed."

The ROP is a Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)-funded program that offers career technical education and guidance to meet identified educational standards and industry needs. These classes include communication studies, robotics and culinary arts. Teachers involved in these programs are required to work a minimum of five hours a week and are paid \$39.51 an hour. The money to fund these programs comes from LACOE, grants and donations from BHEF and PTSA.

Since this program is funded by LACOE, the classes earn Average Daily Attendance dollars for the BHUSD. The money comes from LACOE, who in addition to paying ROP teacher's salaries offers support allocation to fund programs. The money left over from the ADA after teachers' salaries goes into a fund to finance the ROP as a whole. The money will go wherever it is needed in the program, said ROP Chair Steve Rappaport.


letters cont. from page 2

I won't argue the point that the center of Century City is at Constellation. But I do have to point out that Santa Monica Blvd links up with six bus lines: three express and three local that serve West Hollywood, West Los Angeles and Santa Monica. Rather than bemoaning the fact that people going to CAAs offices will have to brave the driving sunshine one long-ish block to get to the Purple Line perhaps we could take the long view and think

of those commuters as well.

A bunch of coworkers and I took the Red Line to Universal Studios a month ago. We walked uphill to the subway entrance, boarded, disembarked, crossed a busy street (two lights) and took a very full tram to get there. I don't see that the mall was going begging for riders. I highly doubt that a Century City with a Santa Monica Blvd stop will either.

*Tom Pease
Beverly Hills*



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of the City of Beverly Hills, at its regular meeting to be held on **Tuesday, November 16, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.**, in the Council Chambers of the City Hall, 455 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, California, will hold a public hearing to consider adoption of:

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHEDULE OF TAXES, FEES & CHARGES TO ADJUST THE PARKING CITATION CHARGES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010/2011.

The proposed resolution will amend the Comprehensive Schedule of Taxes, Fees & Charges to adjust the parking citation charges as detailed in Resolution No. 09-R-12665. Generally speaking, the increases are intended to offset fees imposed by the State, and to achieve parity with citation charges in adjacent jurisdictions.

At the public hearing, the City Council will hear and consider all objections or protests to the rate adjustments. If the City Council adopts the resolution, adjustments to the parking citation charges will become effective immediately.

Copies of the proposed resolution are available for review or purchase in the Office of the City Clerk, Room 290, 455 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, California. Any interested person may attend the meeting and be heard. Written comments may also be submitted and should be addressed to the City Clerk, 455 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210. The comments should be received prior to the hearing date.

Please remember, if you challenge the Council's action in regard to this matter in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City, either at or prior to the public hearing.

BYRON POPE, CMC
City Clerk



Beverly Hills Literary Escape Creator Julie Robinson, Medici Winner Colum McCann and Medici Founding Patron Linleigh Richker

Beverly Hills Literary Escape weekend provides mini vacation for book lovers

The first annual Beverly Hills Literary Escape was held October 22 to the 24. A weekend filled with interviews with authors and intellectual discussions, it was a stimulating and intense weekend said Literary Escape planner Julie Robinson.

The Literary Escape was the Brain Child of Literary Affairs owner Robinson. She's owned and ran literary event planning company Literary Affairs for the last 12 years.

"I run books clubs and do author events and literary tours all around the world," Robinson said. "[The Literary Escape] was a natural evolution of what I was doing."

The event took six months to plan. Robinson said she wanted the event to not just incorporate reading but be an experience beyond the books.

Attendees were invited to meet different authors of popular book club books, to listen to them discuss literature and discuss literature amongst themselves.

"Both Saturday and Sunday morning at the Saban Theatre we had what was called café conversations," Robinson said. "Each morning we had six authors, different ones each day and they rotated on stage discussing various topics and issues relating to their work and relating to writing. That was really fascinating because it was free flowing and it was truly modeled as if you were in a Paris café in the times of Hemingway when all of the ex-pats were hanging out together and talking about politics and writing and art and religion and spirituality."

Robinson said that Planning Commission Chair Lili Bosse and City Librarian Nancy Hunt-Coffey helped plan and finance the event. 10 percent of all books sales went to the Friends of the Beverly Hills Public Library.

The last night of the Literary Escape weekend brought the first annual awarding of the Medici Prize, a \$5,000 prize to recognize a distinguished work of fiction that has inspired thoughtful conversation and contributed to a deeper understanding of the human experience. This year's winner, Colum McCann, was selected by a committee made up of the Medici founding patrons, Robinson, Reading Group Choices president Barbara Mead and three writers who are published.

"It's the first annual national prize given to acknowledge the tremendous impact that book clubs elections have on readers," Robinson said.

Robin said that even though she felt the event went well, it was the first event and it will only improve next year.

"I had no major expectation on numbers," Robinson said. "I am a business person. I have a complete understanding that you have to create the product, build the entity, everyone sees what it is and they jump on board. As long you build it, it will come. The word of mouth now is out, we were lucky the first year we had some good sponsors that trusted us and knew us and came on board."

The robotics program generated \$104,168 in ADA and approximately \$72,000 in corporate and private sponsorship. In addition to the teacher's salary, the robotics program spent \$69,591 on supplies and competition costs. The ROP program paid \$5,000 towards competition entry fees and \$1,500 for transportation for competitions.

The culinary arts program generated \$67,596 and spent \$52,820 on the teacher's full-year salary from September 2009 to June 2010 and \$20,740 on supplies, paid for through ROP funds and support allocation from LACOE. Money to fund these programs does not come out of the BHUSD general fund.

Unlike credentialed salaried teachers, ROP teachers do not receive benefits.

While some throughout the community are critical about how much the ROP teachers are getting paid, Superintendent Dick Douglas said he doesn't see the problem. They work hourly and are compensated accordingly.

"Some [have the] feeling something's out of whack," Douglas said. "I don't see that at all."

Douglas said he believes the district needs to find parity in the way they compensate all teachers who take students to competitions outside of school hours.

"What I want to make sure is that if we have teachers involved in competitions, whether they be in performing arts, robotics or athletics, that there is equity in terms of how they are compensated," Douglas said. "So it's not the teaching, it's the stipend or



Event Co-Chair Sandra Olivencia, Event Chair Corinne Verdery, Stella Feuer, Honoree Mel Feuer and Event Co-Chair Gail Millan

Haunted Crystal Ball considered a scary success

The Maple Counseling Center's Haunted Crystal Ball took place Wednesday October 27 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Andy Cohen was awarded the Crystal Award for Community Excellence, Peter Garland of Porta Via Beverly Hills was awarded the Crystal Award for Community Spirit and Mel Feuer, a longtime volunteer for the Maple Counseling Center's Community Circle Program, was given the Maple Leaf Award.

the amount they receive for competitions."

The issue of stipends will be taken to the negotiating team, who meets on a monthly basis.

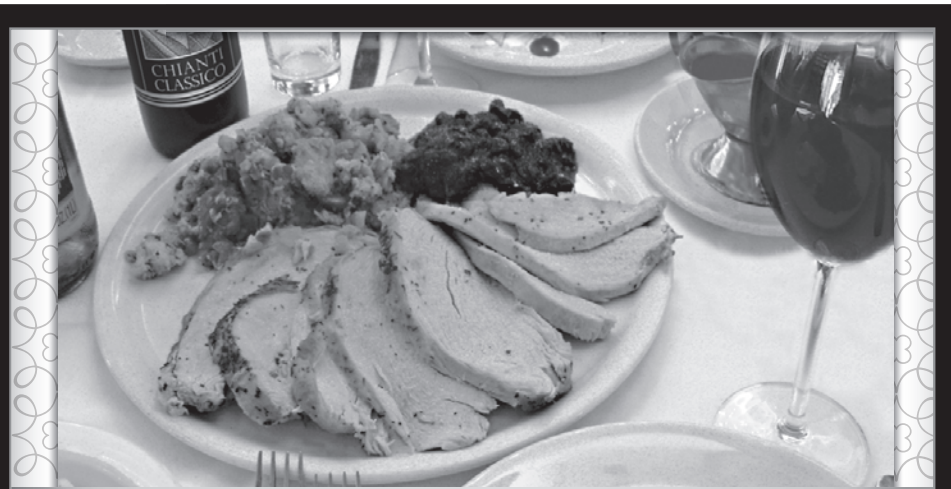
"I want to make sure that whether it's a K-8 school or high school or any particular subject area, that we treat everyone the same," Douglas said.

Board of Education President Steven Fenton said he agrees with Douglas that there needs to be parity amongst coaches.

All extracurricular stipends should be equal across the board.

"I know how hard our robotics coach works and I believe she deserves a extra stipend, I just think it should be the same amount as all of our other coaches, whether it's an athletic team or the academic decathlon team," Fenton said. "This should really be all about the kids and the majority of the money that comes into ROP, should stay in ROP."

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from the hills of beverly



Feeling blue is good

And promote from within

By Rudy Cole

“California, the Great Exception” was the title of an outstanding history of our state written by the late, very brilliant **Carey Mc Williams** in the 1940s, and Tuesday the voters proved his premise right one more time.

If you can explain our electorate in rational terms, please share with me, because all the conventional wisdom pointed to a Republican year in our state.

If it was the “economy, stupid,” we have one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. “Illegal immigrants?” The hospitality industry would have to close its doors without them. Education? We rank near the bottom in spending and test scores. Even on such litmus test issues as gay marriages, the death penalty and health care reform, our voters have demonstrated a consistent posture of political conservatism.

And yet, as **Gilbert** and **Sullivan** so aptly put it: “In spite of all temptations,”

we remain a very Blue State. Incidentally, who picked those colors? How did Republicans actually become “Reds?”

The good news is that you simply cannot deceive all the voters all the time, and take Prop 23 as the best case study. Despite being overwhelmed in television spending, this transparent effort by some by big Texas oil interests to demolish years of effort at environmental protection, the voters “got it.”

Overwhelmingly.

I’m not complaining about the results, far from it. Almost every single ballot measure and candidate I hoped would win and endorsed, for what that’s worth, won. Compared to my right wing friend at that other publication, I look like a savant.

So, why the big Republican victories between the coasts? First, the frustration of the voters on Washington grid lock simply turned against the party in power, this time the Democrats. Second, the last

presidential election was more a **George Bush** loss than a **Barack Obama** win and, third, the Democrats, and mainly this administration, failed to give the people a sense of hope. The Obama team, and congressional Democrats, pulled this country from the brink of a major depression and yet could not make that stick with voters.

True, the far right Tea Party contenders had some significant wins, but in some states the contentious Republican primaries and the extremist views of their winners so divided voters, that Democrats benefited and won. Nevada is the best example, followed closely by Delaware.

As for **Sarah Palin**, even if her hand-picked candidate does finally prevail in Alaska, the people who know her best slapped her future big time by supporting an unlikely write-in effort of her number one enemy in the state, Senator **Lisa Murkowski**.

The electronic media focus on her, election night, was beyond reason. At times CNN had more “expert” analysts on camera than voters. And if I hear **Wolf Blitzer**, one more time, finish a sentence with “right now” I could switch to Fox News. Well, maybe not that drastic a move.

I backed **Steve Cooley** because I thought he was the best lawyer for the job and put my Democratic partisanship aside. Mainly, he lost (at least as of this writing) because of the Democratic sweep and **Jerry Brown**’s big win over **Meg Whitman**, pulling the rest of the slate with him. But he followed some bad advice by attack ads on his opponent, instead of projecting his own image as a non-political, straight arrow law enforcement professional. He gave her name recognition in Southern California she could not have achieved on her own and negative television spots by Whitman and **Carly Fiorina** turned against them both. (We knew what they hated, not what they proposed doing.)

We are developing an immune system about attack television spots. They will always carry some weight, but voters are simply less trustful of one-sided electronic messages as they once were.

Although it may not have been produced by **Barbara Boxer**, the singing commercial critical of Fiorina bordered on a form of nationality prejudice.

It was tasteless. But, glad she won. We have seldom had a harder fighter for our state than Boxer and one absolutely free of special interest control. It was this tenacious posture that made her distracters so enraged.

However, the most creative television spot of this or any campaign, and even though it was a kind of attack, was the brilliantly researched and edited comparison of Whitman and Gov. Arnold’s exact words and postures on issues, including precise errors in syntax.

As for blaming the governor for the problems his own party created: using the two thirds vote to prevent passage of a state budget, when a more dispassionate review of his eight years is undertaken, he could have some redemption as a leader of an impossible period in state history. His predecessor, **Gray Davis**, too may need some historic revisionism.

Although it never really surfaced in Republican campaigns, when wife **Maria Shriver** appeared at an Obama for president rally at UCLA in 2008, GOP rightists did not forget or forgive, at least inwardly.

A not so accurate and snarky online publication supporting Democrats, used Beverly Hills to prove that only “the very rich” supported Whitman. They cited the Beverly Hills Courier endorsement of Whitman as proof. Even a small amount of research would have put that argument to rest. We have voted for Democrats for 40 years for almost every office in every election, and we did this year too. In fact, while George Bush was defeating Al Gore nationally, our city supported the Democrat by nearly a two to one margin. Was that voting our pocketbooks as the author argued? (A quick look at our column in the two weeks prior to the election would have shown my own recommendation of Jerry Brown, and almost every other Democrat.)

The most anti-Democratic, anti-Roosevelt newspaper in the nation was the old Chicago Tribune, the largest circulation publication in the Windy City, and yet the voters turned out 80 percent for Democrats – with some help by the vote counting Kelly-Nash machine.

Briefs has a story about a quixotic campaign for state senate, a Democrat running in a heavily Republican New York area, that has a fascinating Beverly Hills connection.

rudy cont. on page 7



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rudly cont. from page 6

The late **Don De Witt's** daughter, **Didi Barrett**, was the candidate for state senate in a district that elected **Franklyn Delano Roosevelt** to his first office. Over 100 years have passed and no Democrat has duplicated that fete. (see brief page 8)

Didi lost even though she had the endorsement of the New York Times. Historical twist? Don was one of our longest serving members of the city's Planning Commission, and we have seldom had a more conscientious or straight arrow member. Through the years, many friends and community leaders had urged Don to run for city council, an office he ran from not for.

With the help of his well connected, able and charming wife, **Marian De Witt**, still a very active civic leader, he could have won quite easily.

Elective office simply did not interest him. Somehow, the daughter found an interest in running, even in that hopeless district. (You may also remember the younger **Mike De Witt's** great documen-

tary on the Delta Mississippi Jewish golfers and their lives.)

Parking and Traffic Commission today honors **Maynard Brittan** for his very generous and effective funding of the improvement of Little Santa Monica at our western entrance, making traffic far more manageable. A Los Angeles City Council resolution will follow.

We give city managers a reasonable honeymoon era before finding too much fault during their learning process. City Manager **Jeff Kolin** now has been here long enough to handle some criticism. No, this is not quite going to rise to the level his predecessor faced from another newspaper, but he has an opportunity to both save money and keep the troops content.

There are two enormously qualified staff members who have applied for the position of Director of Community Services. That's the agency former City Manager Rod Wood created, combining many inter-related city services from parks, youth

sports, library, art shows, Greystone, pre-school to the Farmer's Market.

When veteran city staffer and the first leader of the new division **Steve Miller** retired this year, it did leave an enormous void. Miller was the ultimate professional, working well with his bosses – the city manager and the city council, and the men and women in his department. He also had the assistance of the equally experienced and respected **Pat Agnitch**, who had retired the year before.

Now, the division is being led by a duo: **Steve Zoet**, Miller's top assistant, and **Nancy Hunt Coffey**, librarian. Although they both are well qualified and are sharing the top job, for some reason the city manager has opted to go outside the city and invite applications with a costly head hunter firm doing the processing and outreach.

Not a good use of city money, not in these times and not when the choice is simple: Appoint either. Or, what the city manager might consider is a dual leadership divided into two departments: one

parks and park programs and the other culture and education, with equal status.

Sometimes we need to go outside the city to fill a top management job, but when we don't, it is supportive of city employee morale when the boss comes from within.

Separating into two departments with two co-equal directors inside the Community Services Division may be the Solomonlike solution. Parks and park programs in one, with cultural and education in the other.

NEXT WEEK A summary of all the major projects now being considered by the city council or planning commission.

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.



Caitlyn Halfon, Sonya Gluckstein and Audrey Labib

El Rodeo students give books through service-learning project

The El Rodeo fourth graders collected 3,611 books this year for the BookEnds Service-Learning Project. El Rodeo sixth graders contributed 544 books to the fourth-grade project. Tuesday October 26, El Rodeo fourth graders went on a field trip to the school they were paired with through the BookEnds community partner organization, delivered the books and read with their peers.

briefs cont. from page 5

Fenton said the Board of Education and district staff are going to work together to achieve the equal stipends amongst the extra-curricular activities.

"It's our fault as a school district for not looking at this closely enough," Fenton said. "We discussed it as a board that things are going to change. The superintendent said things have to change. [Douglas] brought this to our attention and I know he is committed to finding a positive resolution."

Overall Rappaport said they will be looking at the way the ROP can generate more money for the program, such as advertisement on KBEV. Proposals are in front of Douglas and he hopes will those proposals will be going before the Board of Education soon.

"My interest is to grow the program and to take the stress off of the school district to

see where the money's going to come from," Rappaport said. "There are ways and we have ideas of how we can help our program and the academic programs with some of the things we'd like to do."

Potential cell phone tower at Hawthorne disrupt learning frequency

With unreliable cell phone reception in northern Beverly Hills, the City of Beverly Hills has asked the BHUSD to consider putting an AT&T cell phone tower at Hawthorne school to provide coverage to the area. The Beverly Hills fire and police departments wrote a letter to the BHUSD discussing how better cell coverage would assist the safety of residents who live in the area.

"Their primary concern is community members trying to call 911 and not being able to," Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Alex Cherniss said.

Although Board of Education Vice President Lisa Korbakov and member Brian Goldberg were not present at the discussion, Board of Education President Steven Fenton and members Myra Lurie and Jake Manaster were unanimous in their desire to keep a cell tower away from Hawthorne School.

"I would like to avoid a cell tower if possible but I don't want anyone getting bent out of shape," Manaster said. "It seems strange that there isn't any other public access place

that could accommodate this better, so we don't have high frequency radio waves in close proximity to classrooms.

The BHUSD will discuss cell phone towers with the city at the next city liaison meeting and will be meeting with the police and fire departments at the next Board meeting November 9 to discuss the affects a cell tower could have on the community.

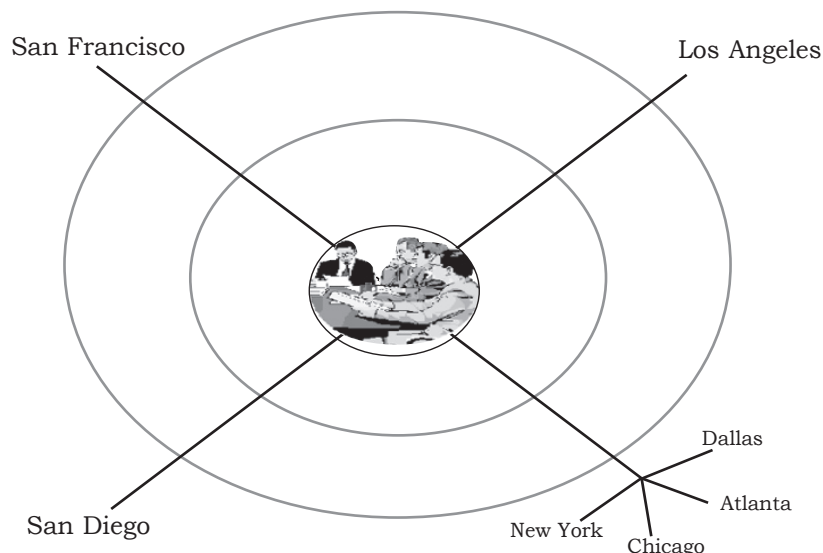
briefs cont. on page 8

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BEAUTIFYING BEVERLY HILLS

The Weekly's interview with Incoming Recreation and Parks Commission Chair Alan Block.

By Marla Schevker

Tell us about yourself.

I was born in Los Angeles and am 64 years old. I graduated from Hamilton High School. I received my undergraduate degree from USC in 1969 and my law school degree from the University of San Diego in 1972. Upon graduation from law school I was employed as a Deputy Attorney General for the Office of the California Attorney General for seven years, with a one year leave of absence while I worked for Norton Simon when he took over the Pasadena Art Museum. When I left the Attorney General's office

in 1979, I was the lead attorney for the California Coastal Commission. I gave them advice during their meetings and represented them in their litigation. I was also the attorney for numerous other state agencies that dealt with real estate and environment, including the Air Resource Board, Water Quality Control Board, and the Department of Park and Recreation. I've lived in Beverly Hills with my wife Jan since 1984. We moved to Beverly Hills because of the school system. Jan and I were married in 1976. We have two kids: Justin is 32 and David is 23. My son

Justin married Larissa two years ago and they had their first child on September 28. Her name is Jaelyn. Both of our boys went to El Rodeo and Beverly High School. Jan attended Beverly Hills High School and my parents moved to Beverly Hills in 1972, so we knew how great it would be to live in Beverly Hills.

You practice law with your son. Tell us about that.

Justin passed the bar in 2005 and we've been practicing together since he graduated. We specialize in real estate and

land use and we get along great together. When Justin graduated law school he was interested in sports law but I think I won out. He worked for a company that did sports marketing for a short time but decided to come in and practice with me. I also told him the door was open for him and he took me up on my offer. I thought we'd have a good relationship and we do. We are good sounding boards for one another and we see things from different aspects. I think Justin looks at me as being his mentor and I look at him as being my successor. We have a great

briefs cont. from page 7

Beverly High grad leaves Hollywood for the clergy, New Zealand

Class of 1987 Beverly High grad Rabbi Dean Shapiro has recently settled into Temple Beth Shalom in Auckland, New Zealand. Shapiro spent a month in Auckland during his final year of rabbinical school, leading the High Holy Day services. When the congregation decided to hire a full time rabbi, they asked Shapiro.



Rabbi Dean Shapiro

"My partner, Haim Ainsworth, [was born in New Zealand]," Shapiro said. "Haim was eager to live in New Zealand again and I was up for the adventure. We were hoping to have a child and thought that New Zealand would be a good

place for him to spend his first few years."

Shapiro's son Jacob is nearly two years old. Shapiro said he doesn't think that right now there is a large difference between Auckland and the United States, except for the parks.

"Auckland has so many beautiful places for a child to run and play," Shapiro said. "English is [Jacob's] primary language, but he also knows some words in Hebrew, from us, and [the Polynesian language,] Maori, from day care."

Shapiro decided to become a rabbi after 12 years in the movie industry. As an executive for International Film Distribution, he oversaw the foreign sale and marketing of movies including My Big Fat Greek Wedding

"I had been a part of a big hit film and didn't want to spend the rest of my life chasing that success," Shapiro said. "In syna-

gogue, I had found a life of the mind, a life of the heart and a life in the community and I wanted that richness of experience for myself and my family. We live in troubled times and I believe that Judaism has an important contribution to make."

Shapiro estimated that out of the 4.5 million people who live in New Zealand, 7,000 of them are Jews. There two denominations, Progressive and Orthodox, make up the nearly invisible minority. Because the Jewish population is so small, the New Zealand Jews have to take responsibility for their religion.

"Jews here make it happen themselves," Shapiro said. "There's no one to do it for them. Volunteer parents. Volunteer parents teach in our Hebrew School, train our b'nei mitzvah students, and prepare our dead for burial. They read the Torah and organize learning conferences. They also dig and plan our garden, landscape our property and paint our fences! The dedication of Beth Shalom's members is very beautiful."

The two denominations creates a polarizing effect that Shapiro said he wasn't used to.

"Unlike Los Angeles, more people are affiliated with the Orthodox synagogue than the Progressive," Shapiro said. "The Jews of New Zealand are more traditional, and at the same time less observant, than the Jews of Los Angeles."

His mother, Lynne Shapiro, was a long-time Spanish Teacher at Beverly, now retired.

"Some special memories [of Beverly Hills include] the fountain with the kneeling native American and the colored lights on Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevard," Shapiro said.

Although there are many similarities between Auckland and Los Angeles, Shapiro said overall New Zealand is different but by no means exotic.

"Since it's on an isthmus, there are beautiful bays on both sides of the city, and there's lots of green space," Shapiro said. "Like Los

Angeles, it's incredibly spread-out. Like Los Angeles, Auckland is culturally diverse, but the mix is different. Instead of Latin American cultures, we have a wide mix of Pacific Island cultures. Auckland is much less commercial than Los Angeles and the pace is slower—although that's not saying much."

BHHS Football Team Loses to Inglewood

Beverly High's hopes of winning the 2010 Ocean League football championship substantially diminished with last Thursday night's 28-18 loss to Inglewood at Coleman Field.

The victory left the Sentinels as the last remaining team undefeated in league play and only needing victories over Hawthorne and Morningside in their final two games to be assured of the title. Hawthorne and Morningside have a combined 3-13 record.

While the Beverly Hills defense played well, essentially limiting Inglewood to one touchdown and recovering three fumbles and making two interceptions, its offense "stunk up the place," Normans coach Donald Paysinger said.

"We just couldn't get anything going," said Paysinger, whose offense committed eight turnovers. "We weren't in synch."

The Beverly Hills punting game was also a factor in the loss. One punt that was supposed to go out bounds was returned 76 yards for a touchdown by Derrick Woods in the first quarter that put the Sentinels ahead 21-0. The return for a second punt that was supposed to go out of bounds led to a second touchdown, Paysinger said.

Inglewood (6-2, 3-0 in league play) took a 14-0 lead on a 20-yard touchdown pass from Sean Simmons to Patrick Onwuasor and Kyle Evans' two-yard run.

The Normans (5-3, 2-1) scored their first touchdown on Josh Newman's 28-yard pass to Cameron Countryman in the second quar-

ter. The Sentinels increased their lead to 28-6 later in the quarter on Evans' 10-yard touchdown run.

Newman threw 10- and 20-yard touchdown passes to Madison Moore and Countryman in the fourth quarter.

The victory was the Sentinels' third over Beverly Hills in their past five games following a 14-game losing streak from 1985 to 2005. The loss was the Normans third in their three games this season against teams that currently have winning records.

Beverly Hills is scheduled to play host to Morningside (1-7, 0-3) in their homecoming game Friday at Nickoll Field beginning at 7 p.m.

The Monarchs have been outscored 122-15 in their last four games. The high school sports website Calpreps.com projects that the Normans will win, 44-0.

Beverly High grad runs for office in New York



Didi Barrett

1968 Beverly High grad Didi Barrett was the Democratic candidate for the New York State Senate in the 41st District in Tuesday's election. Of 68,288 votes, Barrett lost to incumbent Republican Stephen Saland, 27,327 votes (40 percent)

to 40,961 votes (60 percent). The District includes Poughkeepsie, Beacon and Hudson cities, Dutchess and Columbia counties. Barnett is daughter of the late Don DeWitt, a Beverly Hills Planning Commissioner and a founding member of Stephen S. Wise Temple who died in 2003, and Marian DeWitt. Barrett had the endorsement of the New York Times in a largely Republican district.

relationship.

How did you get involved with the Recreation and Parks commission?

Ever since I lived in Beverly Hills, I was always active in coaching little league or soccer. We live in close proximity to Roxbury Park and I always loved the atmosphere of the parks and the open space. Getting involved with recreation and parks was very easy. I've been on the commission about three years and I was appointed in October 07. I initially became interested in being on a commission upon my graduation from Team Beverly Hills. I was a member of Team Beverly Hills and when I saw there was an opening for Recreation and Parks I applied for it. It was something I was interested in. As I stated previously, one of the agencies I previously represented while at the Attorney General's office was the California Department of Parks and Recreation. I didn't think it would conflict with any type of work I did and knew it to be a "feel good" commission because it was so inclusive dealing with kids in preschool all the way up to senior citizen programs. Almost every facet of the city is included in Rec and Parks, including the library, city trees, city parks, art programs, concerts and team sports.

What else are you involved in around the city?

My wife was past president of BHEF and we were very active with that organization while our kids were in school. We support our schools, as well as our great police and fire departments. We also support the Maple Center. We have lived in the city for 26 years and Jan and I enjoy giving back.

Your wife, Jan Block, is on the Charitable Solicitations Commission, what it is like for both of you to be involved with the city?

We both enjoy being able to give back to the city. Jan is past chair of solicitations. She has been active in the city, particularly with regards to the schools, since we moved here. She's also a past [PTA] president of the high school. I think part of her involvement rubbed off on me.

What are your goals as commission chair?

I think one main goal right now is to get the construction plans for Roxbury Park's new recreational center building complete and hopefully, with the City Council's approval, out for bidding and possibly under construction while I'm chair. I'm also looking forward to the first Gateway Signage project being erected on Wilshire Boulevard as you enter the City traveling east by the Beverly Hilton. Also the use of the Greystone Mansion as a more viable venue for family celebrations than it has been in the past. It may be a pipe dream, but I'd also like to see a dog park in the city.

What projects are the commission working on?

We've got so many things we're working on. We have, like I said, the gateway project and the construction plans for the recreational center building at Roxbury. We have capital projects going forward at Greystone. We just finished the catering kitchen and will be interviewing potential caterers. The most recent landscaping grounds improvements are almost complete at Greystone and the Mansion will be getting a new Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system. We also have a concert series that will be taking place at Greystone as well as the second Greystone Concours d'Elegance car show. We will also be working with the Fine Arts Commission regarding the placement of art in our city parks, the continual replacement of city trees, when necessary, and a hybrid of other matters.

When the Weekly spoke with [outgoing chairperson] Jill Collins in November 2009 Issue #527, she spoke about putting a hold on community centers and focusing on a gateway project. Is the gateway project still a focus for the Rec and Parks Commission?

The city has approved the go ahead with the new gateway on Wilshire. When you're going east on Wilshire, there's going to be a new gateway when entering the city, which is going to be an architectural feature with the Beverly Hills logo. We've selected various locations throughout the City, including on Olympic going east by the high school; Wilshire going west by San Vicente; and Santa Monica going west at Doheny. The City Council recently its approval for the first gateway project on Wilshire going east near the Beverly Hilton and it is being reviewed by the Traffic and Parking Commission for safety issued relating to a left hand turn lane traveling west by the 76 gas station. We want people to know that they are

entering the City.

What does a gateway signage project have to do with Recreation and Parks?

The gateways will be located on city landscaping strips and areas that come under our domain. Recreation and Parks are responsible for all the landscaping areas and trees in the city .

Have there been any movement in the Roxbury Park upgrades?

We have the contractor preparing the construction plans that the city council approved and we are hoping to have those prepared within the next six months. After the plans are prepared, they'll go back to the city council for their review and approval and if they are approved, there will be a bidding process. I assume that will take at least another six months. If the city council approves and hires the contractor, I think the construction will approximately take a year to 18 months to complete. As such, if the construction drawings are approved, and out to bid, I think within three years the recreation center could be completed.

What is the commission's involvement with the Preschool?

The preschools have always been under the jurisdiction of Rec and Parks. I know there was some controversy about it recently but I think our preschool program has been a very successful program. [The program] comes up for review and the commission is advised on enrollment issues and status of the programs. We view our program as being more child development and social. The pre-schoolers are taught the elements of math and English, but I think the focus is really on child development and social ability.

I think BHUSD and Rec & Parks will be working together to discuss issues involving the pre-school program and we will do so. I think the commissioners right now

are very satisfied with the preschool program. We think it's been working well.

What role does the commission play around the city?

I think the commission, because it's so all inclusive, plays a major role in many facets of what is going on in the city. For example, when I applied to the commission, I don't think I realized that the commission was responsible for the library. As a resident I was involved with our city parks more as a little league coach. Our commission is actually responsible for our farmers market, the placement of art in our city parks in conjunction with the Fine Arts Commission, our gateways, improvements to Greystone and the mansion, the master plan for our parks, city tree replacements, our seniors and teen programs, as well as our special events and concert series. We just had our Affair in the Garden in October and we had a wonderful concert series at the Beverly Gardens adjacent to the Montage this past summer.

Who does the commission work with throughout the city?

Steve Zoet is the Assistant Director of Community Services and Recreation and Parks, and we rely heavily on Steve's sound advice. We work with Cindy Brynan, Teri Angel, Brad Meyerowitz, and Ken Pfalzgraf, as well as all of their staff.

What role will the commission play in picking the next Director of Community Services?

That's a good question. I hope a substantial role. I personally believe the city has very qualified personnel in the department and I would be nice to see continuity and the promotion from within the department.

Have you gotten any advice from the current Recreation and Parks commission chair?

I plan to. I just returned from vacation and I plan to speak with Jill as well as Michael Blumenfeld and Kathi Rothner. Although both Jill and Michael will be retiring from the commission this month, Kathi will remain on the commission and I will look to her for some advice, if needed. We'll have two new commissioners, Susah Gersh and Robert Anderson, appointed in November when I become the chairperson and we will still have one vacancy. Kathi's term will be up next year and we will have another vacancy. Our commission is going to be a young commission with a lot of work ahead of us.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Hopefully in good health enjoying the benefits of living in Beverly Hills. I don't know whether I'll be on the commission in five years but I will be enjoying our parks. Maybe with the grandchildren in the new rec center at Roxbury Park.



(Clockwise L to R): Justin, Jan, Alan, David and Larissa Block.

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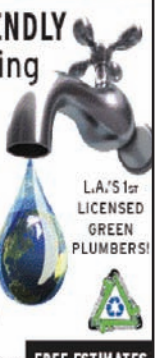
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