

# Beverly Hills Weekly

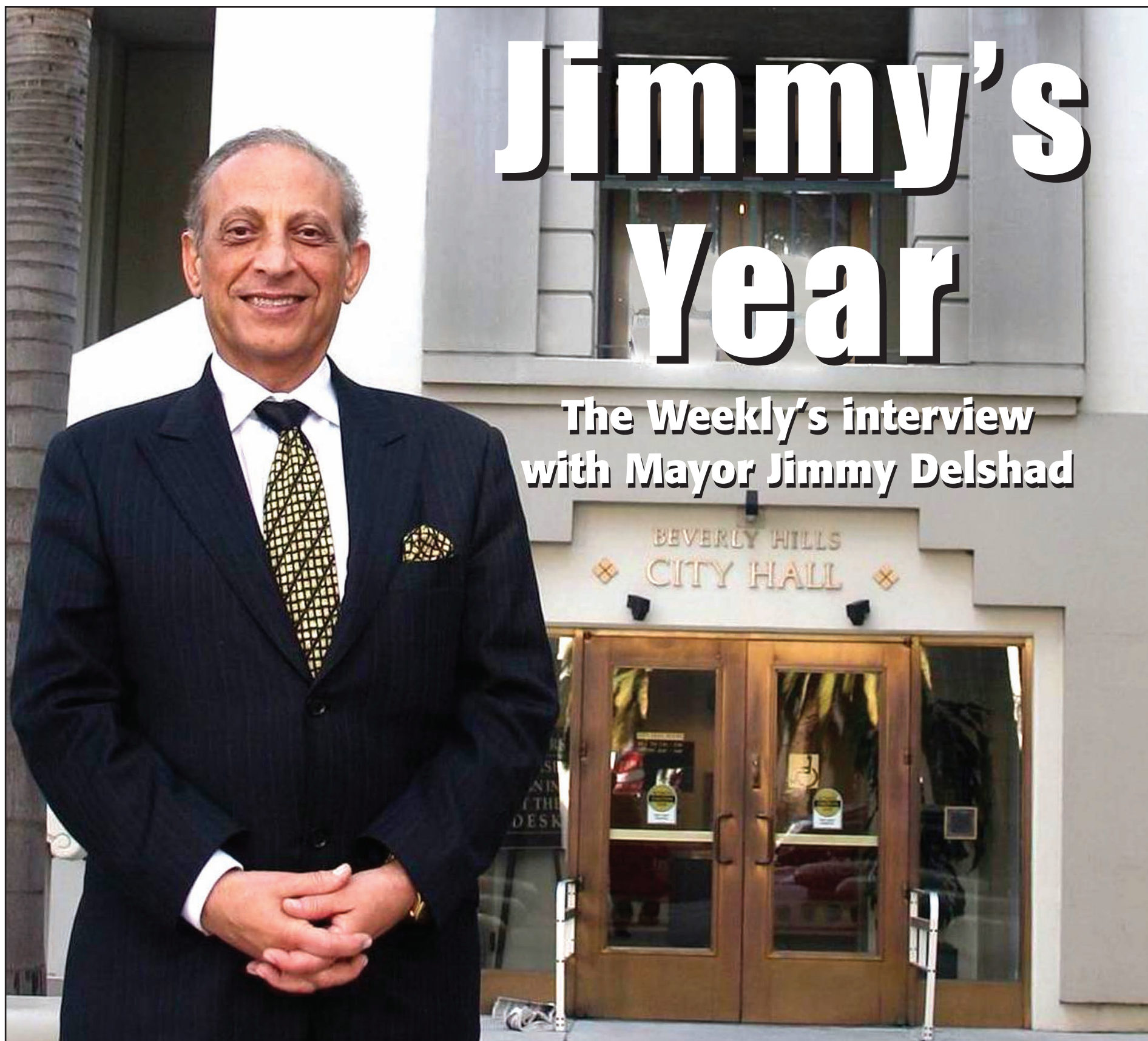
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Issue 547 • March 25 - March 31, 2010

# Jimmy's Year

The Weekly's interview with Mayor Jimmy Delshad



cover story • pages 8-9



## WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

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## SNAPSHOT



EUREKA!

STATE UNIVERSITY DRIVE

Hawthorne middle school students participated in the Los Angeles County Science Olympiad competition Sunday, March 6 at Cal State Los Angeles. They competed in all 23 events from a wide range of science disciplines, placing ninth overall out of 34 middle schools. Individual medals were also won in the Biology Process Lab, Fossils, Pentathlon and Write It-Do It events.

(left to right, bottom row) Victoria Yu, Alexandra Denton, Arielle Shalom, Maya Steinberg, Alexia Anavim, Paloma Bloch, Alanna Montero, Jessica Fischman, Leah Broukhim, Timothy Yadegar, Amir Kashfi, Shawn Adhout, Woo Suk Kim, Min Sung Kim, Bram Geiderman; (back row) Andrew Loewy, Natasha Kashani, Simon Placik, Shabnam Yosefia, Serina Mehran, Young Jung; (not pictured) Andrew Kim

# letters & email

### “Lurie Skips Out on Board Meeting, Facilities Management Firm Presentations” [Issue 547]

On Monday night, Beverly Hills Board of Education member Myra Lurie left the school board meeting early to attend a meeting of non-resident permit parents. I might stand corrected, but Ms. Lurie was elected by the RESIDENTS of Beverly Hills, was she not? Whose interests is she serving?

Noah Margo  
Beverly Hills

### “Contracts of Principals Guidetti, Warren Not Renewed” [Issue 546]

Watching and reading John Millan criticize the current Board of Education for the bold decisions they are making remind me of the pot calling the kettle black. It is the poor hiring decisions and lack of leadership exhibited by Mr. Millan and his board majority that Goldberg, Fenton, Korbatov and Manaster are now cleaning up. Mr. Millan and company brought us Karen Christiansen and Cheryl Plotkin, to name a few, and don't forget Measure K, “over budget and late.” Now Millan wants to bring his “leadership” to the city council?

Adi Hacker  
Beverly Hills

As a member of the senior Class of 2010, I started at Beverly in the same year as [Principal] Joseph Guidetti. And as it turns out, I'm graduating in the same year as him too.

Now to be frank, I've never been the biggest fan of Guidetti. He's done things that have gotten on my nerves and, as an editor with the high school paper, I'm sure I've done things that have gotten on his nerves as well. I, along with many members of my class, would have loved to see Dr. Dan Stepenosky continue as principal. But overall, Guidetti has done a decent job, and in demoting him the board has gone overboard.

But the real crime is what the board is doing with [Horace Mann Principal] Dawnalyn Murakawa-Leopard. Mrs. Murakawa-Leopard is a fantastic administrator with many fans among students and teachers alike, and stuffing her in a behind-the-desk position at the district office is simply wasting her talent. In fact, the only reason the board put her in that position is because she knows that parents are not always right when it comes to the education of their children, and she is not afraid to stand up to them. Simply put, she is more qualified than anyone else inside or outside of the district to be principal of Beverly High, and I can only hope that the board will reconsider her “promotion.”

Actually, let me rephrase that last sentence. She is more qualified than anybody but Dr. Stepenosky to be the principal, but

I'm pretty sure Stepenosky is out of the question.

Eitan Arom  
Beverly Hills

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# Beverly Hills Weekly

Issue 547 • March 25 - March 31, 2010  
Beverly Hills Weekly Inc.

Founded: October 7, 1999  
Published Thursdays

Delivered in Beverly Hills, Beverlywood, Los Angeles

ISSN#1528-851X

www.bhweekly.com

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\$75 payable in  
advance

Adjudicated as a  
newspaper of general  
circulation for the County  
of Los Angeles. Case #  
BS065841 of the Los  
Angeles Superior Court,  
on November 30, 2000.



OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES



# briefs

## Warrant Issued for Former Mayor Charlotte Spadaro

The San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office has issued a bench warrant for the arrest of former Beverly Hills Mayor Charlotte Spadaro after Spadaro failed to appear at her arraignment Feb. 25 for new animal cruelty charges filed Nov. 18, 2009, according to the county's Superior Court Web site, [www.sbcounty.gov/courts](http://www.sbcounty.gov/courts). Bail was set at \$25,000.



Charlotte Spadaro

The charges follow Spadaro's laundry list of legal woes stemming back to Sept. 23, 2004 when Spadaro was charged with animal cruelty and destroying evidence. (See

"Former Mayor's Animal Woes Continue," Issue 393)

The trial originally set for Feb. 22 for the 2004 charges was cancelled because Spadaro was sick, according to court documents dated Feb. 19. A hearing has been scheduled for tomorrow, March 26.

In an unrelated matter, Spadaro has been convicted of nearly 20 traffic violations since 2007, the most recent of which was Dec. 7, 2009 for failure to stop at a red signal. Most of the violations result from her failure to provide vehicle registration or proof of insurance.

About 10 more violations, in addition to those she has been convicted of, are still active. All violations are within Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Spadaro was also charged with 242 counts of not having dog licenses on Feb. 10, 2009 in Riverside County, and 102 counts of having unvaccinated dogs on Aug. 21, 2009 in San Bernardino County. Both cases are still active. The next hearing for the Feb. 10 incident is scheduled for Friday, May 21.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department said there is no record of Spadaro being taken into custody as of press time.

San Bernardino County Deputy District Attorney Jim McGee said he is only assigned to Spadaro's 2004 animal cruelty

case, and was unaware of the Nov. 18 animal cruelty charges or that the court had issued a bench warrant.

Riverside City Attorney Brandon Mercer did not return messages left by the Weekly as of press time.

Spadaro, who is an active attorney representing herself in all cases, could not be reached for comment.

## Lurie Skips Out on Board Meeting, Facilities Management Firm Presentation

Board member Myra Lurie left Monday's Board of Education study session nearly two hours early to sit on a panel discussing the already-resolved, out-of-district permit controversy.

In doing so, Lurie missed the presentation of Bernards Construction, one of two finalists in the district's search for a facilities management firm, and joined Vice Mayor Barry Brucker as a panelist at the Beverly Hills Hotel meeting.

"I was very disappointed that Myra left the meeting early to go over and sit on a panel to talk about permits, an issue that was decided months ago on 5-0 vote," said Board President Steven Fenton. "Hiring a facilities management firm is critical, and for Myra to leave the meeting an hour and a half early was very disappointing. Furthermore, I'm not sure what Vice Mayor Barry Brucker was doing sitting on a panel talking about school issues. The last time I checked, he came off the school board in 2005."

Lurie said she notified the board from the beginning that she would be unable to stay for the entire meeting due to a prior commitment, and pointed out that both Fenton and Board member Brian Goldberg have left study sessions early in the past.

"I participated in the entire meeting to the extent that there was a vote to be taken and mentioned at the beginning that I had to leave at 7 [p.m.]," Lurie said. "In fact, I stayed until 7:20 [p.m.]. The only thing I missed was the presentation of a construction management firm, Bernards."

Lurie said she was part of a team that interviewed Bernards before they were chosen as finalists.

"I even went on a site visit to Rancho Cucamonga," Lurie said. "I extensively interviewed them. I met with Bernards, and I've seen their presentation in the past. That makes me fairly familiar with Bernards in comparison to my fellow colleagues. This was important for them, but for me, it was a repeat of a presentation I



Photo: Kenneth Johansson/PEI

(left to right) Tim Hauser, Hugh Hefner, Alan Paul and Dick Rosenzweig

## Playboy Jazz Festival Press Conference

At a recent Playboy Mansion event to announce the 2010 Playboy Jazz Festival lineup, Hugh Hefner and Dick Rosenzweig, president of the Playboy Jazz Festival, greeted The Manhattan Transfer members Tim Hauser and Alan Paul. The 2010 Playboy Jazz Festival is June 12-13 at the Hollywood Bowl.

Both McCarthy Construction and Bernards Construction vied for the position as BHUSD's new facilities management firm to oversee projects using Measure E bond money.

"Both firms made terrific presentations, and I look forward to continuing the conversation," Fenton said.

had already seen. I did not feel that my missing that portion of the meeting would in any way compromise my ability to make a responsible and informed decision

on the selection between the two construction management firms."

When asked to respond to criticism sur-

*briefs cont. on page 4*

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briefs cont. from page 3

rounding the reason why Lurie left the study session, Lurie said she was happy to be able to contribute to a respectful and transparent dialogue, comparing it to recent town hall meetings.

"I was invited by a group of residents, including a number of former mayors, who convened an organization for the purpose of having an open, honest, respectful discourse regarding school board matters," Lurie said. "I appeared as an individual not representing the board, and I accepted the invitation. Mr. Fenton was also invited to attend. When I asked Steven why he didn't respond, he told me he threw out the letter without reading it. I suppose he didn't understand he was invited as well."

Goldberg said the study session was scheduled six weeks ago, "before [former Mayor] Robert Tanenbaum scheduled his 'Save the Children' town hall meeting."

"I think it's unconscionable for a board member to leave a study session when we're discussing the hiring of a construction management firm," Golberg said. "Whether or not she participated in an on-site interview with them, this was a formal presentation, and she certainly didn't hear the questions that [we all] asked. Particularly because she was responsible for the debacle of our last management firm, I felt she had a fiduciary responsibility to be at the session."

Goldberg admitted that he has left study sessions early in the past, but "to leave because you want to participate in a panel with a group who are threatening to sue

the district is very different."

"That's the problem I have," Goldberg said. "She can spin it any way she likes, but that's what she did, and she did it as a sitting board member. When you're an elected official, I don't know how you can make the claim that you weren't there representing the school board when you were discussing school board issues."

Brucker said he accepted his invitation as a panelist because of his experience serving on the school board.

"I was invited because I have some institutional history on this subject matter, and I was asked to comment on the financial implications," Brucker said. "So that's why I was there."

Brucker said besides being a city official, he is also a community member and a former school board member.

"I had two kids who went through the whole K-12 system in Beverly Hills so I feel I have every right just like the next person to speak about a subject that I have some strong feelings about," Brucker said. "Secondly, is because, during my almost eight years on the school board, I know what the position was of the school administrators, the superintendent and the school board members with respect to the renewal opportunities for our permit kids."

Councilmember John Mirisch was also present at the permit meeting, though he sat in the audience, not on the panel.

BHEA President Chris Bushée, who was not present at the meeting, said he hopes the city and the district continues to

briefs cont. on page 7



(left to right, top row) Kari Richards, Becky Kisher, Megan Partyeli, Elsa Sultan, Cari Downey, Cherokee Haughton, Kenya James, Jasmine Hajian, Keni James, Clara Nukols, Rita Carbajal, Sara Neiman, Chelsea Woods, Lyric Ontiveros, Emily Robinson, Sarah Gerlis, Joana Trocan, Elvira Spadora; (middle row) Vivian Kim, Maddie Okmin, Joey Safchik, Kaitlyn Artiga, Angel Schwartz, Sophia DuBois, Judith Carbajal, Alexandra Laamas, Rachel Khorshad, Alexa Khorshad, Athena Skarpelos, Vanessa Schwartz, Jansen McNalley; (bottom row) Samantha Ordeski, Amissa Bongo, Chloe Choi, Hayley Geiger, Kaylin Shadpour, Christian Haughton, Katelyn Velasco, Erika Butler, Reina Paysinger, Shayna Dabin, Bennie Safchik, Jasmine Singer

**Beverly Hills Cheerleading Teams Win at Regionals**

The Beverly Hills Competitive Cheerleading Teams, comprised of 46 K-8 boys and girls, competed at a SHARP regional event in Arcadia, Calif. The Pee Wee and Varsity teams both earned second place standings in their divisions, while the Junior Varsity Team earned first place. The teams were also awarded a Grand Champion trophy. Their season will continue with a trip to Las Vegas next month for the U.S. Final Destination National Championship.



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**New Modeling Agency Seeks to Employ, Celebrate Senior Citizens**

Margaret Lauderdale-Barnes, who is "proudly" in her 60s, wants to empower those over 50, and is looking for mature, sophisticated seniors to join her modeling and talent agency, JustAskkme.

"This company is driven to provide seniors the opportunity to display their photos in an arena that is competitive," Lauderdale-Barnes said. "These seniors delineate sophistication, elegance and assured beauty that the years have accentuated."

Lauderdale-Barnes started the company three years ago after attending her son's concert. Her son, who goes by the stage name Mowie Hypnosis, is the lead dancer for Madonna. Lauderdale-Barnes noticed at the concert many older women in the audience, as well as an older woman in a video.

Her son and daughter, Ja-Sada, who is studying to become an attorney, encouraged her to launch the agency, which now manages a diverse group of clients by finding jobs for them in commercials, movies and videos.

"I see myself as bold and beautiful, and there are many senior citizens with pride and dignity who deserve their chance," said Lauderdale-Barnes, adding that she believes there is a demand. "Agencies may have one mature model and 3,000 young ones.

One of her current clients is a former back-

up dancer for Sammy Davis, Jr.

A former model herself who will soon receive her master's degree in sociology from Cal State Dominguez Hills, Lauderdale-Barnes said she is fulfilling a dream.

"A lot of us in our age group have unrested dreams," she said. "In our younger years, we put our dreams on hold to take care of our families. But because you postpone, you don't forget. My clients and I are fulfilling a dream."

Lauderdale-Barnes said physical appearance doesn't matter; she is seeking all types of models. Interested people can apply at the Web site, [www.justaskkme.com](http://www.justaskkme.com) or by fax or mail.

Those accepted will receive a contract, Lauderdale-Barnes' representation and a photo shoot at the company's Los Angeles office with hair, makeup and wardrobe stylists.

Lauderdale-Barnes, who said she would like to see a senior version of Project Runway, is also seeking names of those interested in creating fashion lines for seniors.

The agency is receiving an overwhelming number of calls. An orientation conference will be held at the Marriott Hotel in Marina del Rey. Please call to make your reservations at (310) 538-8903.

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## BHHS Softball Team Gets One Hit, 12 Runs Against St. Bernard

Norman girls', boys' track teams rout Morningside.

By Steven Herbert

The Normans had one hit to Playa Del Rey St. Bernard's two, but capitalized on 10 walks, two hit batters and four batters reaching base on errors for a 12-0 victory in a nonleague softball game shortened to 4 2/3 innings because of the 10-run rule March 9 at Beverly High.

After leaving the bases loaded in the first, Beverly Hills combined three walks and an error for three runs in the second.

Leadoff hitter Solange Levy walked, stole second and home. The next hitter, Erica Hendry walked and scored two batters later when freshman Elena Rust, the Normans' No. 9 hitter, reached base on an error by Vikings freshman shortstop Cimone Pernell. Rust scored the third run of the inning.

The Normans added six runs in the third. Leadoff hitter Lexi Silbiger reached first on an error by St. Bernard second baseman Taylor Strong, and eventually stole home. Levy and Hendry walked and scored on Beverly Hills' lone hit, a single by Rust, who later scored. Tylor Fields and Annie Math scored the Normans' other runs of the inning.

The Normans scored three more runs in the fourth. Silbiger led off, reached on an error by Vikings freshman third baseman Sara Dennis Keep and eventually scored. Levy walked and later scored, as did Hendry, who reached base on a fielder's choice.

Beverly Hills starting pitcher Emily Rosen (2-0) was credited with the victory, allowing singles to Strong in the first and Taylor Hicks in the second, striking out four and not walking a batter in her three innings. Reliever Jackie Pop pitched two hitless innings, striking out one batter, walking one and hitting one.

### Santa Monica Crossroads 9, Beverly Hills 8

The Normans stranded the potential tying run on third base in the sixth inning of a non-league game March 10 at Clover Park in Santa Monica.

Silbiger led off the inning with Beverly Hills' first home run of the season, cutting the Roadrunners' lead to 9-7. Pop, the next batter, was hit by a pitch. Levy followed with a triple, driving in Pop. Ore Ezer and Hendry struck out and Ida Trevino grounded out to end the inning.

The Normans had one more batter reach base – Rosen, who walked with one out in the seventh, but her courtesy runner Lauren Siegel was caught stealing. Siegel was safe in her first four stolen base attempts of the game.

Crossroads combined three singles, a walk and two Beverly Hills errors for five runs in the fifth inning, taking a 9-6 lead.

The Normans (2-1) scored twice in the first. Math, their leadoff hitter, walked and scored.

Rosen, who batted second, also walked, leading to a run by Siegel, the courtesy runner.

The Roadrunners had their first two batters in their half of the first reach base on a single and an error. Shannon McQueen followed with a home run. McQueen has signed with Eastern Kentucky.

Silbiger singled in two runs in the third, putting Beverly Hills ahead, 4-3. Rosen walked leading off the inning. Siegel, her courtesy runner, stole second. Tamar Rotstein followed with a single. Trevino was the courtesy runner and stole second. Siegel and Trevino scored on Silbiger's single.

The Normans increased their lead to 5-3 in the fourth as they received four consecutive walks, the last to Pop with the bases loaded, forcing in Siegel, the courtesy runner for Rosen, who walked.

Crossroads combined two singles and two Beverly Hills errors for a run in its half of the fourth.

Rosen (2-1) pitched a complete game, allowing nine runs (four earned) and 11 hits in six innings, striking out four and walking two.

The Normans were out-hit, 11-4.

### What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to play host to the Los Angeles Center For Enriched Studies today at 3 p.m. in an intersectional game.

### Girls' Track and Field Irvine Invitational

Raquel Hefflin won the 800 meters in two minutes, 16.74 seconds, while fellow Beverly Hills senior Kemi Olonade leaped 36 feet, 3 inches to finish second in the triple jump March 13 at Irvine High School.

Kiarra Brown of the Normans finished first in her 100 heat in 13.37 and second in her 200 heat in 27.34

### Beverly Hills 100, Morningside 4

Olonade leaped 37 feet to win the triple jump, 16 feet, 2 inches to win the long jump and won the 100 high hurdles in 16.0 in an Ocean League meet last Thursday at Nickoll Field.

Beverly Hills (1-2, 1-0 in league competition) had three other multiple individual event winners. Brown won the 100 in 12.8 and 200 in 26.9, Ariana Luster won the discus throw (58 feet, 5 inches) and shot put (23 feet, 10 inches) and Gitla Shooster won the 1,600 in 6:07.8 and 3,200 in 12:46.4.

The Normans also got victories from Sydney Gray in the 400 (1:03.1), Melina Nasib in the pole vault (6-6) and Marissa Wells in the 800 (2:31.1).

The Beverly Hills team of Hefflin, Dejah McCoy, Tiffany Moore and Wells won the

1,600 relay in 4:37.1.

All the Monarchs' points came from second- and third-place finishes in the shot put.

### Boys' Track and Field

#### Mira Costa 108, Beverly Hills 31

Julian Sarokin won the 100 in 11.0 and 200 in 22.1 for the only victories for the Normans in a nonleague meet at Mira Costa March 11.

### Irvine Invitational

Sarokin was third in the 100 in 11.32 March 13 at Irvine High School.

### Beverly Hills 116, Morningside 19

Josh Galen won the 800 in 2:10.2, the 1,600 in 5:39.7, finished second in the 3,200, one-tenth of a second behind teammate Ali Hatcher, and ran a leg on the Normans' victorious 1,600 relay team in an Ocean League meet last Thursday at Nickoll Field.

Beverly Hills (1-2, 1-0) won 13 of 16 events.

Camyar Meshkaty won the shot put with a put of 52 feet, five and a half inches, making him the No. 7 competitor in the event in school history, according to records compiled by Simon Langer. Meshkaty was also first in the discus throw, with a throw of 116 feet.

Donovan Dickens won the 110 high hurdles in 15.3 and the 300 intermediate hurdles in 42.5 for the Normans.

Beverly Hills senior Brandon Hale leaped 37 feet, six inches to win the triple jump, cleared five feet, eight inches to finish first in the high jump and was second in the long jump, with a jump of 18 feet, three inches.

Cameron Countryman won the 100 in 11.1, was second in the 200 in 22.9 and ran a leg on the Normans' victorious 400 relay team.

Beverly Hills also got event victories from Sebastian Elghanian in the pole vault (nine feet) and Hatcher in the 3,200 (11:59).

The Norman team of Countryman, Mario Conti, Sarokin and Parsa Peykar won the 400 relay in 42.9. Beverly Hills' 1,600 relay team of Galen, Chanan Batra, Sam Capogrosso and Hatcher won in 4:03.9.

### What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to play host to Santa Monica today in an Ocean League meet beginning at 2:45 p.m. at Nickoll Field.

### Boys' Golf

#### Beverly Hills 201, Peninsula 204

Josh Newman shot a team-low two-over par 37 for the Normans March 9 in a nonleague match at Rancho Park Golf Course.

### Beverly Hills 196, Santa Monica 209

Brian Song shot a team-low two-over par 37 while Jake Adler and Hyuk Yu both shot three-over-par 38s for the Normans last Thursday in an Ocean League match at Rancho Park Golf Course.

### What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to play Palos Verdes today at Palos Verdes Country Club in an Ocean League match beginning at 2:30 p.m.

### Boys' Swimming

#### Beverly Hills 89, Santa Monica 81

Kevin Suarez won the 200-yard individual medley in one minute, 57.56 seconds, the 100

backstroke in 54.63 and swam legs on the Normans' victorious 200 medley relay and 200 freestyle relay teams in a season-opening victory March 11 at the Swim-Gym.

Sho Emerson and Steven Turnbull were Beverly Hills' other individual event winners. Emerson won the 50-freestyle in 23.33. Turnbull won the 100 butterfly in 58.78.

Suarez, Justin Brezhnev, Turnbull and Kevin Youssefzadeh won the meet's opening event, the 200 medley relay in 1:42.40. Suarez, Emerson, Tracy Ainslie and Youssefzadeh won the 200 freestyle relay in 1:32.52.

### Girls' Swimming

#### Santa Monica 102, Beverly Hills 71

Patty Salgado won the 200 freestyle in 2:06.55 and 500 freestyle in 5:39.20 and swam the opening leg on the Normans' victorious 200-yard freestyle team March 11 at the Swim-Gym.

Young In Lee was the other individual event winner for the Beverly Hills (0-2), winning the 100 breaststroke in 1:12.70.

The Normans' 200 freestyle relay team of Salgado, Arina Levina, Alli Friedman and Lee won in 1:51.79, a margin of 3.1 over the Vikings' top team.

### What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to compete in the finals of the John Marrow Invitational beginning at 5 p.m. Friday in the Swim-Gym.

### Girls' Lacrosse

#### Palos Verdes 10, Beverly Hills 5

The Normans took a 2-0 lead on goals by Judy Naziri and Celine Hadji Elias, then got into foul trouble and were outscored 7-2 in the remainder of the first half in a Bay League game at Palos Verdes March 10.

Chantal Hakim, Naziri and Neda Nickfardjam scored for Beverly Hills in the second half.

Norman goalkeeper Gabby Heffesse made seven saves.

### What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to play at Redondo Friday at 6 p.m. in a Bay League game.

### Boys' Tennis

#### Peninsula 13, Beverly Hills 5

Donovan Suh won two sets for the Normans in a nonleague match at Peninsula March 16.

Playing No. 3 singles, Suh defeated Jake Hoeger, the Panthers' No. 3 player, 6-2, in the first round and Chris Dalton, Peninsula's No. 1 player, 6-2, in the second.

Beverly Hills got one victory each from the Andre Herd-Jon Jason, Eric Busi-Sam Farzani and Drew Freeman and Steven Kim doubles teams.

The Panthers were ranked fifth in the Southern Section Division I coaches pre-season poll released Monday, while the Normans were ranked fourth in Division II.

*Steven Herbert has covered Beverly High sports for the Beverly Hills Weekly since 1999. 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.*

# from the hills of beverly



## A Chance For Peace

And selected subjects

By Rudy Cole

There is a world outside Beverly Hills, honestly. Although I usually leave international and domestic politics to my colleague at that other paper while I toil to understand school board behavior, this week I transgress.

Frankly, there is only one way to describe President **Barack Obama's** administration's response to the proposed new settlement in Jerusalem: total over-reaction.

Israel "embarrassed" Vice President **Joe Biden** by making the settlement plan public during his visit, even calling it insulting? Give me a little break here. If the American embassy in Israel had no inkling this was coming, they need to immediately send home their whole clandestine team.

Certainly, the question of increased settlements and the quandary of how to create a two nation reality, and what that this will mean to Jerusalem, is enormously complex.

But did the settlement proposal, and it was just that, not the start of construction, actually scuttle the peace process? One can doubt the sincerity of the effort if that's all it takes.

No question, when he was Sen. Joe Biden, Israel had few more loyal friends. Israel certainly recognized that and gave him the recognition, the gratitude and the respect he merits.

But back to the more fundamental problem, and all the really missed opportunities by all sides in the Middle East.

First, there seems no willingness to balance today's reality with history. From the date Israel declared independence and was recognized by the United Nations in

1948 to 1967, the Arab nations could have, at any time, created a Palestinian state in the West Bank, and Arab lands bordering on Syria, Egypt and, of course, Jordan. Do we need to be reminded that before Israel captured the Golan Heights, Syria used that "safe" hill for routine target practice against Israeli kibbutz below? Few sovereign states would have tolerated that daily threat to the life of its citizens and intrusions against its territory.

No, those lands remained cesspools of poverty, disease and hatred, and kept that way by the intentional difference of the Arab world. When did life become slightly more tolerable? When Israeli troops began the occupation.

After the Six Day War, the Arab nations could have and should have seized the opportunity of an Israel weary of war, governed by a Labor Party ready to make almost any sacrifice to obtain peace in the region, but instead it only created a culture of hatred, not only in its government, but in schools and religious institutions. The Arabs could have made all kinds of favorable terms with the pragmatic Israeli foreign affairs leader, **Abba Eban**.

One more war, and the supposed restoration of Arab pride because the Egyptian army was not annihilated immediately after a sneak attack in the Yom Kippur conflict, and a visionary named **Anwar Sadat** came to Jerusalem with an offer of peace. The world saw a dream of hope with negotiations instead of hatred and killing. Of course, Sadat paid with his life for the effort. What did endure, and it is not to be minimized, was the establishment of diplomatic relations with Egypt, Jordan and some few other Arab

nations.

What an enormous chance was lost then and since. Every move from Norway to Camp David has, in all fairness, meant Israel making more and more concessions. Just consider one reality: The most "loyal" American allies such as Saudi Arabia, the supposed moderate state of the region, could not be moved to recognize Israel. American influence could not move the Arab theocracies fear of the Arab masses, even though the hatred disseminated in their schools was responsible for their own apprehensions.

Now, Israel has moved to the right. The concessions did not stop the suicide bombers, did not prevent a fanatical anti-Israel Hamas from gaining power and using their new found independence to launch missiles at Israel. Again, what government in the civilized world could accept attacks on its sovereign territory?

Even though the Middle East is no longer a testing ground for the Cold War and the threat of a major power conflict with the former Soviet Union over Israel is gone, America has simply not used its full influence to force a peace settlement. We saved Iraq at enormous costs in American lives and resources, but when an Iraqi political leader had the temerity to actually visit Israel, he nearly landed in the pokey. Some influence we have.

Inexorably, as the insecurity of life in Israel continued, voters turned even further away from the peace makers of the Labor Party, and insisted on security instead of more "giving in" to the demands of both the so called moderate or more extreme Arab world leaders. This Israel is not the nation of Abba Eban.

But missed opportunities are not the property of the Arab world alone, and what Israel and its supporters in the United States and the world face is the imperative of finding some new road to peace under the leadership of President Barack Obama.

This president, for whatever reasons and whether or not we approve, has more credibility in the Arab world than any president since **Dwight Eisenhower**. That is the real world possibility of a Middle East settlement – the Obama standing

among the Arab nations.

Of course, through decades of striving for peace, Israel has made the hard choices and for what? Just to be recognized and to live without fear of war or terrorism. No annexation of Arab land, return of mammoth junks of hard won land to Arab neighbors, frequent responses to attacks with restraint and more

Just as the Arab's lost opportunities for peace, we now must hope and work for an Obama Middle East policy that brings an end to conflict and instead finds real peace, economic, technological and cultural cooperation and security to Israel and its neighbors. President **George Bush** gave us great rhetoric, but no solutions. Obama could.

\*\*\*

Back to more familiar territories, the hills of Beverly. Last week we reported on the history making ground breaking for the Annenberg Cultural Center

Now, for some next steps, but first some history you may not know.

Almost two decades ago some now totally forgotten man with an idea came to a meeting of the Government Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Commerce. His proposal: Buy the Beverly Hills Post Office and create a two fold use, a theatre and a visitor's center for the Chamber.

I had not even heard that the post office was even going to close, much less be up for sale. But a quick check with then Postmaster **Koula Fuller** confirmed what the man, whose name I can not find anywhere, had told us.

At about the same time, I was named to a five member study group by the city council to seek out some alternative for a Sports Center that could either save the Beverly Hills Y or make it a municipal facility. The post office seemed like a great possibility.

Fortunately for the community, then Councilmember **Vicki Reynolds** and other civic leaders such as the late **Ellen Byrens** preempted our efforts and perceived the property for a much better use: Cultural Center with a possible Visitor's Bureau. The latter somehow vanished from the planning stage in the process.

Years later, an abortive effort to create a sports center on civic property in the then Industrial Area also vanished.

Next week: Time to involve the whole community in the Annenberg dreams:



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Some thoughts on uses and programs.

\*\*\*

Our city has an outstanding team focused on responses to major disasters, but too few of us know about the available resources. This newspaper is considering a city-wide forum – public meeting to help us know what we can and should do in the event of any emergency. We'll keep you posted.

However, some personal first steps: Most important, have a family plan. Where will you go, and there are city facilities, parks and schools designated as

shelters in the event of a disaster. All family members must understand where they can find each other and where they will be.

Second, check vital needs such as batteries, water, first aid tools, exit clothing and non-perishable food supplies in a readily accessible place. Be absolutely certain your radio works and you have functioning flash lights – do it today!

Get the best advice you can on the safe places to be in your own home and make certain every family member knows it too. Do you have an accessible carry-all for pets?

Not the most pleasant dinner conversa-

tion, but if a disaster comes it will be too late to plan or prepare. Study, talk to your family and learn as much as you can about responses and safety.

I simply don't have sufficient readers to spare any of you.

\*\*\*

Rational steps by the school board: Supt. **Jerry Gross** will not be leaving at the end of next month, the board reversing an earlier plan. Keeping him in place while the board begins the process of finding a replacement makes enormous good sense. Now, the board should also

slow down on too many radical moves until the district has a school leader. However, this board seems committed to actually finding the right fit for our district, and that's good news for everyone in the education process. The perception and reality of chaos needs to come to an end.

*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.*

*briefs cont. from page 4*

maintain a "strong, harmonious relationship."

"We certainly don't want to see any tension develop between the city and the district on the permit issue or any other issue," Bushée said.

### Board Reverses Itself: Superintendent Staying

BHUSD Superintendent Jerry Gross has agreed to significantly reduce his work days effective now through the end of his contract on June 30, according to an e-mail sent to the community by the five-member Board of Education.



Jerry Gross

The news arrives after Weekly columnist Rudy Cole reported last week [Issue 546] that the board voted in close session to end Gross' contract early at the end of April.

The reduced work days aim to offset costs of the district's superintendent search, currently under way, as well as the shortfall in the BHUSD budget recently reported to the board by the Interim Assistant Superintendent of Business Mary Anne McCabe.

"Superintendent Gross will be present at all board meetings and with the support of the district's senior staff will continue to guide the district forward until a new superintendent is hired," read the e-mail signed by all five members. "As always, Jerry is putting the needs of the district first. He is a class act and we are extreme-

ly grateful for the contributions he has made to the school district over the past year and a half."

Individual Board members would not comment, citing a personnel issue.

### Board of Education Approves Contract with Superintendent Search Firm Morris & Berger

The Board of Education approved a contract with executive search firm Morris & Berger during Monday's study session.

"I'm very excited that Morris and Berger will be leading our search," said Board President Steven Fenton. "I think they will do a fantastic job."

According to the contract, BHUSD will pay Morris & Berger a flat professional fee of \$60,000, paid in three installments of \$20,000.

The contract also includes a proposed search timeline, which marks July 30 for the final candidate selection to fill the district's superintendent position. Morris & Berger will launch outreach programs to attract prospective candidates beginning Monday, April 5.

"I am very pleased that we have been able to conclude successful negotiations with Morris & Berger," Board member Brian Goldberg said. "And we can begin moving forward in the very important work of hiring a new superintendent for the [BHUSD]."

### Fine Art Commission Chair Appointed Chairman of California Council for the Humanities

The California Council for the Humanities has named Curtis Shepard, Ph.D., as the new chairman of its Board of

Directors. Shepard was recently elected at the council's March meeting, and will serve a two-year term as chairman.



Curtis Shepard

Shepard, profiled recently in the Weekly's issue 542, previously served as the chair of the Council's Development Committee, and was appointed to the volunteer board in 2006 by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Shepard was also recently appointed chair of Beverly Hills' Fine Art Commission.

"It is a great honor to be elected as chair of the California Council for the Humanities at this exciting and critical juncture," Shepard said. "The council has

recently completed a comprehensive strategic plan for the future, and I am excited by the work that lies in front of us as we seek new and innovative ways to connect Californians to the humanities."

Shepard is currently the director of Children, Youth & Family Services at the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, and oversees all of the agency's youth-related programs, including drop-in services and three residential programs for homeless lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth.

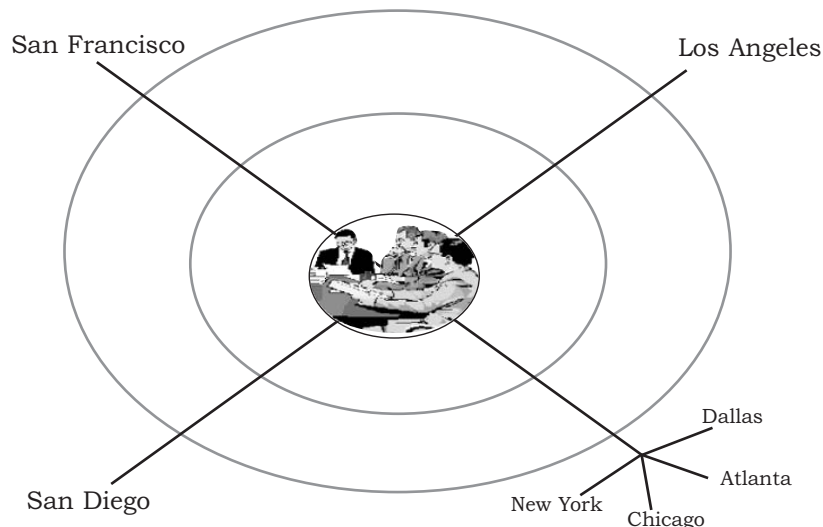
"Curt is a remarkable California leader with a unique set of talents, expertise and perspective," said Ralph Lewin, president and CEO of the council. "We are proud to welcome him as our new chairman, and we look forward to his participation in furthering our mission of connecting the people of California to our shared cultural heritage and creating a better future."

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# coverstory

## JIMMY'S YEAR

The Weekly's interview with Mayor Jimmy Delshad

By Kimberly Cheng

**How is your second term as mayor different from your first?**

My second term is different mostly in two areas. One: I am very well-experienced, and I'm a delegator. I know how to delegate, and I use my experience to delegate some of the work that I did myself the first time around. So I have created many more committees, and I put all the council members on more committees so they'd do a lot of the homework. Therefore, I can then concentrate on what I think is more for the mayor to concentrate on, and that's working on the vision. And my vision this time for Beverly Hills is very different from my vision the first time. The first time my vision was to make Beverly Hills known as a "Smart City." To me, it feels smart to do a lot of things, but I started from technology. Beverly Hills is now known as a "Smart City" as a tagline. And we've registered and trademarked that.

Now the question of the economic situation comes where we have to really concentrate on two areas of Beverly Hills. The economy is the key point in this second term, but that's the underlying factor. How I deal with it is very different than the normal way of dealing with the economy. My way of dealing with the economy would be to brand Beverly Hills so that we will have much more of the right types of visitors that will spend a lot of money here, and with that, to bring up the income of the city. Our studies show that this year we'll probably have a projected \$8 million deficit. But most of that deficit projection comes from lack of visitors and hotel tax, so the hotel tax is the one that has hit us most. In order to compensate for that, rather than just cutting staff and cutting expenses, which we will do, we will also increase the number of visitors that come to Beverly Hills through several means.

As I've mentioned, another means is to be a "friendly city," so we will coin Beverly Hills as a "friendly city." I'm working actively to create awards for the friendliest businesses in town and also to give awards to employees of Beverly Hills that are the friendliest, to create an atmosphere and nurture the friendly side of Beverly Hills.

**How is being mayor different from being a councilmember?**

Mayor sets the agenda and sets the vision for the city. Council members go along or disagree or modify that vision. So as a mayor, those are the agendas that are set for us: to continue being the smartest city, to continue being a green, sustainable city and a friendly city. So the council will go along and hopefully help and modify it, and see how it works and try to put those into play.



Daniel Delshad, Lonnie Delshad, Mayor Jimmy Delshad and Debra Delshad-Banks.

**What lesson did you learn as mayor the first time that will help you now?**

I don't have to do everything myself. There are other very capable council members that can do a lot of the work; therefore, I will delegate a lot more of the work to them, and I will work more on the vision. It's not necessary to micromanage. What I've learned is I could even give more delegation to council members and to city staff. We have a wonderful, great city staff, and I have to trust them to give them the work.

**In your interview with the Weekly in 2008 [Issue 441], you said you weren't finished with your idea of bringing more nightlife to Beverly Hills. Will this be one of your focuses this year?**

Yes, I wasn't finished, but things have happened. One of my dreams came true by having the Wallis Annenberg Center come true, and when we have that open in a couple of years, that will definitely bring great nightlife to Beverly Hills because it will have performances, live music, live shows and the kind of quality nightlife that I wanted to see.

Also, I'm encouraging businesses to apply and get permits to have more music, so after dinner people can enjoy a little bit of music and dance. One of them started up now — it's called Bar210 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. And that just opened up two weeks ago, and that's a great place to go visit and have fun. It's a very high-class lounge for nightlife.

**What is it like to be the highest ranking Iranian-American elected official in the nation?**

It's a pride issue. I'm very proud to be that person, but also I feel a lot of respon-

sibility, and the responsibilities that I have to share myself are a lot more than just the local community of Beverly Hills. So my responsibility as that high elected official is to show up at occasions that are not necessarily Beverly Hills occasions, to go to New York, to go to Washington, to go to other cities and represent that position.

**Do you think being a minority has changed your politics at all?**

Being a minority started me into politics. I wanted to make sure that all minorities, regardless of the numbers, are treated equally in the eyes of law, in the eyes of government. So yes, it has [changed my politics], and I'm still using that position to equalize all minorities in the eyes of

law. By that, I mean that they will not be differentiated in what they want and what they need just because they're a different religion or a different ethnic group or come from a different country. I want to make sure they're all treated equally and all accepted in the city equally because I wasn't when I was a kid. As a kid when I was in Iran, I felt like I was a second-class citizen because of my religion, so I was not accepted as one of the people being a second-class citizen. But once I got to America, I wanted to make sure if I have anything to do with it, no matter where I am, that everyone is accepted as equals. I wanted to make sure Beverly Hills life, Beverly Hills government, Beverly Hills as a city was a very accepting and tolerating and welcoming city, and that's what I created the idea of the "friendly city" that is welcoming for everyone regardless of religion or ethnicity or any other restrictions.

**Tell us about the "Smart City" initiatives, which you mentioned.**

The "Smart" technology that we started at least five years ago is almost 90 percent done. So we have accomplished what I set out to do five years ago, and luckily when I had the chance to be mayor three years ago, that gave me a lot more [opportunities] to accomplish [what I wanted]. So what I have done is I have taken a technology committee that was working on that and elevated that technology committee into what I call the "Smart City" Committee. The committee has a lot more people on it. They have people from a technology background, from former mayors, from city council members, from venture capitalists, and from people from different departments from the city to find out how every department can do something small. I think that will continue going even after I'm the mayor. [Vice Mayor Barry] Brucker indicated to me that he wants to continue that. He's on that committee with me. [Councilmember] Nancy Krasne has been very, very supportive of that concept, so even after my mayorship, that will continue. Now our brochures, business cards and letter heads all indicate the name "Smart City." We will have to live up to that.

**What can you tell us about "Celebrate Beverly Hills" festivities?**

Several celebrations will come out this year. I believe in celebrating anything that's good. If you want to see more of anything that's good, you better celebrate it. I'm always amazed with how well the 90210 ZIP code is known. It was in my mind all along that when the real 90210 comes, which is Sept. 2, 2010, we should do something really important to take advantage of it. So I talked to several people and said what about celebrating that day and what we can do. We're talking about having a song written for Beverly Hills and sung that night as the inauguration of 90210, and we will be doing a lot of celebrating of what's good in Beverly



Hills, probably bringing in some of the old stars of the 90210 show. [It'll be] like a city anthem. Like "I left My Heart in San Francisco," "New York, New York." Why not Beverly Hills?

**Tell us about your family.**

I love my family. They're very, very supportive. I got involved in working with the community mostly because of my wife, [Lonnie]. When I married her and soon after we had our children she told me, "Jimmy, you're very successful in business. You're a great husband. Now you need to also be involved in the children's lives by volunteering at their schools." So I started volunteering at schools and helping out, and that got me going. So they're very support of what I have done. Maybe I went a bit further than they thought I would go. I became chairman of committees. I became vice president of organizations. Then I became president of several organizations, and my family has been very supportive, very loving and very much involved with my life.

I love my wife. As it's said in the song, "I feel strong when I'm on your shoulders. You raise me up to be better than I can be." That's a Josh Groban song.

My children have been very supportive of what I do, and I have a daughter named Debra, [who is] married to Cedric [Banks], and for the first time, I have a grandson [Jonah]. He's 19 months old. I didn't have that the first time I was mayor. It feels fabulous [to be a grandfather]. It

feels fabulous to have a toy to play with. He's bringing joy in my life and my wife's life. He's an absolute blessing to all of us. I'm reliving my life as a father, and I play with him, and I do things that I didn't even do with my own kids: playing with him, changing him, being like a little kid with him. So it's a very different kind of responsibility. Not having the responsibilities as I did before but having all the pleasures of fatherhood.

My son, Daniel, married his wife, Caroline, and they all live close by here. And they're all very successful in their own businesses. I'm very proud of them.

**What is your proudest moment?**

It's not one or two. I'm just proud of the kind of people that they are, and I'm proud of their thinking, that they are very accepting of the time, the sacrifice that they give because I'm so involved in the community. I'm very proud of them for giving me the strength to do what I'm doing without complaint without worrying about that they don't see me as often as they should.

**What's something you've always taught your children to live by?**

To be a giver to the community and not a taker. For the blessings that we have, that we live in this country and this city, to always be willing to give back to the community, and by doing what I'm doing, I've set an example for them to do the same as they grow up and they become more

involved in the community.

They're very much involved. They're helping out in organizations, in communities, so they're very much in tuned with that. They're involved with young leaderships and helping with elections. They're involved with areas of fundraising and entrepreneurship as well as supporting philanthropy. I'm on the board of a number of nonprofit organizations, and my kids help out in that area.

**What advice does Lonnie give you?**

She always tells me to smell the roses. Enjoy life as it goes by. It will not come back, and enjoy every moment, and live in the moment.

**In our interview with Lonnie in 2007 [Issue 410], she said philanthropy and politics are very similar. Do you agree?**

I think so. Both require a lot of politics because when you are in philanthropy, you're dealing with people who have a lot of ego, and you need to be very gentle, and you need to be very aware of people's ego in order to do fundraising and be able to do the philanthropy. And of course in politics, you have to be a bridge maker. If you want to get your work done, you can't do it alone. A mayor cannot do anything alone in Beverly Hills or anywhere. So if you want to be successful, you need to have the cooperation and that means there are times when you have to give something to take something. So working

together with all the council members is very high on my agenda. I cannot do anything without them, and I appreciate the support that they have given me. I depend on their support, not only their support but their advice. That's important to politics. And what I've learned to be a good mayor and politician, I really learned by being involved in philanthropy.

**In that same interview, Lonnie said your last re-election campaign was difficult on the family. Have you decided if you're going to run for re-election at the end of this year?**

I have not decided and a lot of that depends on how Lonnie feels about going through that because it's a lot of sacrifice for a family to go through re-election or election. I'm not sure at this point. I haven't decided. I just want to enjoy my year as a mayor, accomplish what I want, and if I decide to run or not decide to run, it shouldn't have any affect on what I do right now in office. So I'll put that aside for a much later decision.

**A year from now, what will you be happy you've accomplished?**

I think if Beverly Hills is more well-known in not just glitz and glamour. I want to Beverly Hills to be known as a friendly city, as a "Smart City." If that's known to other communities outside Beverly Hills, I will be very happy.

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