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Issue 842 • November 19, 2015 - November 25, 2015

Board of Education approves costly projects at final meeting

Goldberg, Hall bid farewell

Dog park becomes a reality

Council approves MND, hires RTK Architects



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140 South Beverly Drive #201
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SNAPSHOT



BEVERLY HILLS TELEVISION

BHTV City Council and Commission Schedule – Channel 10

- Human Relations Commission: November 19 at 9:00 am, November 20 at 12:00 pm
- Fine Art Commission: November 19 at 4:00 pm, November 23 at 8:00 pm
- Health & Safety Commission: November 23 at 4:00 pm, November 24 at 8:00 pm
- Recreation & Parks Commission: November 24 at 2:00 pm, November 25 at 8:00 pm



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briefs

Did they or didn't they? Contradictions abound in BHUSD's hiring of Clif Smith

Updated from Friday's email blast:

Confusion surrounds the Board of Education's recent hiring of Clif Smith as appellate attorney for the BHUSD in their losing Metro case.

According to Friday's *Beverly Hills Courier*, the Board "unanimously opted to retain Smith" on a "pro bono" basis. The story quotes Board President Brian Goldberg, who questions the accuracy of the *Weekly's* original reporting, which did not indicate whether Smith was being paid.

But in an email to former Mayor Steve Webb November 12, which CC'd several community members, recently reelected Board member Noah Margo said the Board's decision to retain Smith "never received [his support.]"

Later that day, Board Vice President Howard Goldstein backed Margo's assertion in a separate email to former Mayor Barry Brucker: "I can represent to you that neither Mr. Margo nor I voted to have the District retain Mr. Smith."

Since the matter was discussed in closed session, we may never know the exact vote, but one of the accounts is not accurate.

There are two grounds upon which the California Supreme Court will take a case: if the opinion creates a conflict with other decisions of the Court of Appeal or if the case presents an "important issue of law." Relatively few cases are granted review.

According to a Westlaw search, Smith's appellate experience is limited to a 1992 case between Pasadena Unified School District and the State Board of Education.

A petition for review to the California Supreme Court is done entirely on briefs and oral arguments by attorneys; witnesses and experts are not involved. The total cost is shaped by attorney and administrative fees.

Council's first reading of ordinance means upcoming vacancy could be filled by appointment

City Councilmember Willie Brien announced late October that he has accepted a new job in Houston, leading the Council to deliberate their options for filling the upcoming vacancy at their meeting earlier this month.

By the end of the November 3rd hearing, the Council had directed the City Attorney's office to draft an ordinance repealing the provisions in the municipal code regarding Council vacancies, and at Tuesday's meeting, the Council approved the first reading of the ordinance.

Currently, section 2-1-21 of the municipal code requires that the Council call a special

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ORI'S BIG DAY WASHINGTON, D.C.

Human Relations Commission Chair Ori Blumenfeld (far right) was sworn into the United States Supreme Court earlier this week. Blumenfeld is pictured with his father Ben Blumenfeld (far left) and Justice Anthony Kennedy (center).

Beverly Hills Weekly

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Publisher & CEO
Josh E. Gross

Reporter
Mina Riazi

Sports Editor
Steven Herbert

Contributing Editor
Rudy Cole
(1925-2013)

Advertising Representatives
Karen Shilyan
Daniela Nissani

Legal Advertising
Mike Saghian
Eiman Matian

140 South Beverly Drive
#201
Beverly Hills, CA 90212
310.887.0788 phone
310.887.0789 fax
CNPA Member

editor@bhweekly.com
All staff can be reached at:
first name @bhweekly.com
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OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES



briefs cont. from page 2

election within 30 days after the vacancy occurs.

Retracting the provisions means the Council will have the option of either appointing a person or holding a special election within 60 days of the opening.

At a study session earlier this month, Councilmember Lili Bosse opposed an appointment and said a special election allows for the community "to elect who they believe represents them."

In a November 11th letter to the *Weekly*, bicycle activist Mark Elliot echoed Bosse's beliefs, writing that she "weighted in on behalf of democracy."

But Mayor Julian Gold, Vice Mayor John Mirisch and Councilmember Nancy Krasne opted for more "flexibility," and supported making an appointment an option.

Brien, who has not yet resigned, will have to step down before February 8 if the Council wants to call an election for June 7. If Brien resigns after that date, then the election will be scheduled for November 8.

District's discussion of hiring a Deputy Superintendent remains under wraps

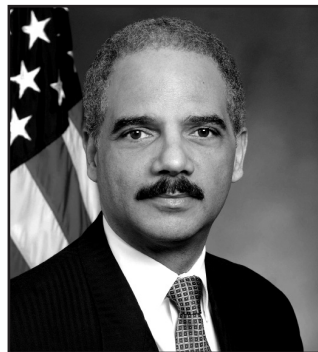
The BHUSD is in talks to hire a Deputy Superintendent, according to the October 29th Board of Education staff report.

The agenda item, which reads "Title: Chief Administrative Officer-Contract Extension/Amendment," indicates that Chief Administrative Officer La Tanya Kirk-Carter may be promoted to the position.

The outcome of the closed-session discussion has not yet been reported out.

Bet Tzedek to honor Holder, Yebri at annual gala

Former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder and 30 Years After President Sam Yebri will be honored at Bet Tzedek's Annual Dinner Gala on January 26



Eric Holder

at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza Hotel.

Attorney Akiko Nishino and UCLA School of Law complete the list of honorees.

Founded in 1974 by a small group of lawyers, rabbis and community activists, Bet Tzedek provides free, comprehensive legal services for low-income individuals and families in Los Angeles.



Sam Yebri

Event tickets are \$500. Visit www.bet-tzedek.org or call (323) 939-0506 for more information.

City to underwrite Wallis event for first time

At Tuesday's study session, the City Council gave direction to underwrite a screening of Phil Savenick's documentary *History of Beverly Hills* at the Wallis Annenberg Center early next year.

The City has never before underwritten expenses for an event at the Wallis, and Councilmember Willie Brien said he felt a "little uneasy" about it setting a precedent.

"It will become a recurrent theme at no fault of anybody's," Brien said.

The Council requested more specific cost estimates; numbers currently stand between \$4,000 and \$10,000.

The cost of hiring a stage crew, cleaning crew, ushers and parking lot attendants will be factored into the final fee.

Though several past events, including the Council installation and Chamber of Commerce symposiums, have used the Wallis at no expense, hard costs were always directly paid for.

History of Beverly Hills is a 100-minute documentary film Savenick produced in celebration of the City's Centennial year. The free screening will be open to the public and held inside the Wallis' Bram Goldsmith Theater, which seats 500 people.

Highlights students win at journalism convention

Nine Beverly High journalism students spent last week at the National High School Journalism Convention in Orlando, Florida.

Joined by *Highlights* and *Watchtower* adviser Gaby Herbst, six *Highlights* members held a joint session for convention attendees. Students later participated in sessions with other industry and scholastic professionals and competed in on-demand writing competitions.

"In addition to write-offs, we submitted our publications to Best of Show," Herbst said in an email. "I'm not sure how many publications entered as they only



Gaby Herbst

announce the top ten, but for the first time in the past five years I have been working at Beverly [High], *Watchtower* took ninth place."

Over 2,000 students competed in on-the-spot write-offs, and 712 received awards. Beverly High students Veronica Pahomova, Guy Ginsberg, Marty Schnapp, Natasha Dardashti, Eleanor Bogart-Stuart and Jamie Kim were among those recognized.

Beverly High seniors Sadie Hersh and Juliette Deutsch received honorable mentions for their front-page design and alumna Karen Shilyan was awarded fifth place for her feature photo.

--Briefs compiled by Mina Riaz

Planning Commission not yet ready to OK L'Ermitage renovations

At their November 12th meeting, the Planning Commission spent nearly two hours deliberating a project that would revamp rooftop amenities at the L'Ermitage Hotel on Burton Way.



The site is neighbored by a three-story multi-family residential building to the west and a new five-story condominium project to the east, so the Commission's discussion focused on potential noise impacts.

"This is a residential neighborhood and I think we have to be very sensitive to the noise issues," Commission Chair Alan Robert Block said.

Proposed physical improvements to the hotel include renovation of the hotel interior and rooftop pool area; reconfiguration of various structures on the existing rooftop, such as the kitchen, restrooms and cabanas; installation of a 15' glass enclosure over the entire perimeter of the rooftop to reduce noise from rooftop use; and upgrading all mechanical systems in compliance with green building standards.

L'Ermitage's rooms and public spaces are currently undergoing renovation, a \$40 million+ project slated for completion later this year, according to Regional General Manager Sal Abaunza.

Echoing his colleagues' sentiments, Block said he looks forward to reviewing an amended version of the project.

"I'm concerned about the outdoor access to the elevator, I don't know whether there's a way that could be covered; I'm concerned about the dBA noise level on the roof [and] whether we [would] have to use a stronger STC glass and I'm also concerned about the parking."

Prior to taking formal action, the Commission will revisit the project at an upcoming meeting.



Maple Counseling Center celebrates Kessler

Back row: Isaac Weingart (back on left); Ed Sigall (back in middle); Diana Sabin (back on right) Middle row: LuNel LeMieux (middle on left); Jennifer Halimi (middle in front); Marilyn Rothman (middle in front); Les Bronte (middle) Fran Behrstock (middle on right end) Standing in front of Marilyn Rothman is Maureen Winick. Seated are Fanny Magier and Steve Kessler.

The Maple Counseling Center's Community Circle group held a luncheon celebrating Superintendent Steve Kessler on November 17.

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sports & scores



Three BHHS athletes sign letters of intent

Norman boys' cross country team wins Ocean League finals

By Steven Herbert

Beverly High senior swimmers Amy Okada and Jamie Dodd and tennis standout Martina Bocchi have signed national letters of intent to accept athletic scholarships.

Okada signed with UCLA.

"I went on a recruiting trip and I loved the team, I loved the school and I loved the academics," Okada said.

Okada also made official visits to Arizona, California and USC.

Okada said she is considering majoring in microbiology, psychology or public health, with the latter being an option because of her desire to "help athletes with their health and mental awareness."

Okada said she is interested in becoming a nutritionist or dietician.

Okada won the girls' 100-yard breaststroke and 100 butterfly and 100 in the 2015 Southern Section Division 3 Finals and the 50 freestyle and 100 breaststroke in the 2014 Southern Section Division 3 Finals.

Okada was second in the 100 breaststroke and third in the 100 butterfly in May's inaugural CIF State Swimming & Division Championships.

Okada began swimming when she was 9

years old because "my sister wanted to try swimming so I just tried it with her."

"I didn't like really like it," said Okada, who began swimming with the Swim-Gym-based Beverly Hills Thundersharks and is now part of the Culver City-based Royal Swim Team. "When I first started, I just didn't like putting my head in the water."

After being able to float and kick Okada said she "started to get better at it and I started to like it."

Dodd signed with San Jose State.

"When I went on my recruit trip there, I got along with the team really well," Dodd said. "The coach seemed like he'd be a great fit for me. He seemed he would help me get to where I want to be," the Olympics.

Dodd also made a visit to Nevada Las Vegas.

Dodd said she planned to major in hospitality, with one career option being an interior designer for hotels.

Dodd finished fourth in the 500 freestyle in May's 2015 Southern Section Division 3 Finals.

Spartans coach Sage Hopkins said "the main thing that drew us to her was how

devoted she is, how focused she is, what a hard worker she is."

"She's just somebody we know is going to come in and work her tail off," Hopkins said.

Hopkins said he became familiar with Dodd by "combing meet results," both on the high school and club team levels, during her junior year. Dodd also competes for Team Santa Monica.

Hopkins said he began emailing Dodd towards the end of her junior year and started speaking with her on the telephone last summer.

In recruiting, Hopkins combs meet results, including looking "at certain programs that we know tend to have swimmers that are going to keep improving."

Hopkins then begins communicating with about 100 swimmers, narrowing that list to 30, who receive invitations for official visits. Of the 30 who made official visits, 11 were offered scholarships, Hopkins said.

"We want to find people that are going to be a very good fit for the program in terms of swimmers that are really interested in being part of a very tight team dynamic," Hopkins said.

"We spend a lot of time in a vetting, interview process. We want to talk to a lot of people and really determine who the people are who are going to be the best fit for our program."

Hopkins said he is also seeking swimmers "that are very interested in being a great student."

"I firmly believe that they're here first and foremost for an education," Hopkins said. "We want people who are really going to take

that seriously."

Female swimmers who receive scholarships to NCAA Division I colleges and universities are in the "top percent or so" among high school swimmers, Hopkins said.

Bocchi said she signed with Massachusetts because "the school is great and the tennis team is great" and that it would put her closer to her relatives in Italy.

Bocchi's father Carlo is Italy's trade commissioner in Houston. He held similar positions in Los Angeles from 2009 through July, in Hong Kong from 2000 through 2005 and Tokyo, where Martina was born, from 1996 to 2000.

Bocchi said plans to major in political science and hopes to be a diplomat, like both of her parents.

Bocchi also made official visits to Florida and Texas. She was the 2013 and 2014 Ocean League girls' singles champion.

Boys' Cross Country Mt. SAC Invitational

Junior Jonathan Cohen finished third, helping Beverly Hills to a second-place finish in a Division 3 race Oct. 23.

Cohen completed the 3-mile course in 15 minutes, 54 seconds.

The Normans finished with 104 points. Bella Vista won with 73.

Sierra Vista senior Cesar Burmudez was second in 15:46. Ridgeview senior Anthony Moronez won in 15:42.

Ocean League Finals

sports cont. on page 6

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people & profiles

Leora Kashani Founder of Body Love Athletica

2011 Beverly High grad Leora Kashani looks to make a name for herself in the competitive activewear industry.

What is Body Love?

Body Love Athletica is an activewear line meant to be functional and fashionable. Body Love is comfortable, innovative and keeps you in style. The brand inspires you to live a healthy and active lifestyle.

Tell us why you started Body Love.

I've been very active my whole life and always played sports. I loved being on teams and I loved being active—it was something I did every single day and I was just a very big athlete growing up. I went to Beverly High and I was an athlete there; it was kind of my identity. I played volleyball, basketball and softball, and I was also involved in sports and club teams outside of school. I never really thought I would get into fashion, but the reason I decided to do activewear was because I spent so much time wearing fitness and yoga clothing and I wanted to look good in it. Exercise, the clothes you wear and [the effort] you put into changing your lifestyle are all, at the end of the day, helping you become a more confident person.

What sets your brand apart from activewear labels like Lululemon and Fabletics?

When I first started, the goal was to be very separate and unique from other companies. I envisioned trendy, fashion-forward clothing that was still functional, comfortable and supportive. I'm someone who's in shape and active and always exercising, but what I'm wearing can't look nice if it's not going to do the job. It needed to accomplish both.

We want you to look and feel your best, that's why Body Love Athletica's fabrics hold you tight and keep you looking toned just the way you like it. Our unique fabrics and chic designs gift the freedom of movement and stretch and will keep you dry during each and every workout.

Why the name Body Love?

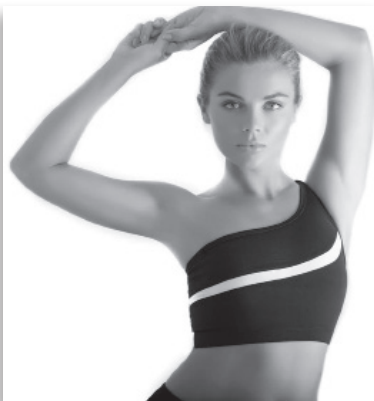
Body image is portrayed so negatively and people have this perception that is not realistic. I see how people can really be so unconfident in themselves and what a big impact that has on their lives, and I've always been someone who's wanted to help people, so I feel like I put all my passions together and came up with Body Love as a way to help people make more of an effort to [improve] their health and make lifestyle changes.



What has been the greatest challenge you've faced so far?

I was kind of thrown into this and I really didn't have any guidance.

Though I did have people who I could ask general questions of, there was nobody I had telling me, "This is how you start and these are the steps." I had to figure it all out on my own. When I was figuring out for myself whether this is something I was passionate about, it was very easy for me to have ambition and be persistent about it. There wasn't a single day when I thought, *Oh, I don't want to do this*. Every day was a challenge; I literally didn't know what I was doing. There are so many steps that you don't realize go into being on your own and setting a goal and



following through with it. The point is, I didn't know what I was doing and I had no experience at all when I started Body Love. I physically knocked on a hundred doors a day and asked so many questions to the point where I knew I had figured out what I was doing on my own. I actually started a one-year program for entrepre-

neur designers at [the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising] one month ago. I'm kind of doing things backwards, but I think I can now better apply my knowledge to the process.

In one sentence, how do you define loving your body?

How much you put into your health is a reflection of who you are as a person and ultimately, that results in how you're going to feel and what kind of life you're going to live.

Where do you hope to be in one year?

I really like the path I'm on right now and I just hope that in one year I'll know more about the industry, I'll grow a lot more and Body Love will be in more stores. I want to make sure that I'm making a difference and really getting my message out there and changing the way people feel about themselves. I've been getting a lot of feedback from people who say I've helped them a lot.

Visit Body Love Athletica at www.bodyloveathletica.com

Gold Line Extension Opening March 5, 2016



Metro Briefs

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL

Gold Line Extension Opening Date

Metro has set the Gold Line extension opening date for March 5, 2016. The 11.5-mile extension will connect Pasadena to Azusa and make stops in the cities of Arcadia, Monrovia, Duarte, and Irwindale along the way. It is expected to take about 50 minutes to travel between Los Angeles Union Station and Azusa Pacific University. For more information, please visit metro.net/foothill.

Regional Connector Project Closures

If you work or live in Downtown LA, please note that beginning December 4, the Gold Line Little Tokyo/Arts District Station will be closed until spring 2016 for track relocation. A free bus shuttle will take passengers between Union Station and Pico/Aliso Stations. In addition to the station closure, 1st St between Central Ave and Vignes St will be closed. For more details, visit metro.net/regionalconnector.

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coverstory

DOG PARK BECOMES A REALITY

Council approves MND, hires RTK Architects

By Mina Riazi

At Tuesday's meeting, the City Council unanimously approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and an agreement with RTK Architects for consultant design services for the industrial area's upcoming dog park.

According to the staff report, access to the off-leash dog park will be limited to

City residents, businesses and hotel guests, who can enter using keys. Dogs must bear Los Angeles County dog licenses or proof of vaccination and spay/neuter.

Though cost estimates for the park stand between \$400,000 and \$450,000, until the project is put out to bid, the final price tag remains unknown.

Description	Architectural	Plumbing	Electrical	Civil	Landscape	Survey	Total
Design Development	\$7,600			\$3,500	\$3,500	\$2,000	\$16,600
Construction Documents	\$12,000	\$2,000	\$3,500	\$6,200	\$7,000		\$30,700
Building Department & Bidding	\$1,900			\$1,000	\$500		\$3,400
Sub Total Professional Services	\$21,500	\$2,000	\$3,500	\$10,700	\$11,000	\$2,000	\$50,700
Construction Administration	\$5,500	\$750	\$750	\$2,500	\$2,500		\$12,000
Total Professional Services	\$27,000	\$2,750	\$4,250	\$13,200	\$13,500	\$2,000	\$62,700
Add:							
Reimbursable	\$4,200						\$4,200
Design Contingency	\$10,000						\$10,000
Total							\$76,900

Source: November 17th staff report

On October 20, the City Council green-lit plans for a dog park at the corner of Alden and Foothill. In their discussion, the Council considered a wide range of details associated with the new facility, including the Mitigated Negative Declaration document approved earlier this week.

As stated in the staff report, a sizable portion of the \$400,000 budget will go towards remediating the arsenic-tainted soil and

capping an abandoned groundwater monitoring well.

RTK Architects will carry out site analysis and schematic design, projected to take five weeks. The scope of work includes protection and preservation of existing trees; installing a new chain link

fence with access gates, including separate gates for large and small dogs; perimeter site screening; and the installment of drinking fountains with dog bowls.

The cost of having RTK Architects carry out the abovementioned services is \$76,900, which includes a design contingency of \$10,000.

Details relating to the park's design and operation will be presented to the public for further review.

coverstory

BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES COSTLY PROJECTS AT FINAL MEETING

Goldberg, Hall bid farewell

By Mina Riazi

Tuesday night marked the current Board of Education's final meeting before newly elected members Isabel Hacker and Mel Spitz are sworn in December 8.

Characteristically lengthy, the hearing lasted more than three hours, fueled by 19 agenda items pertaining to "Planning & Facilities."

But the meeting opened with outgo-

ing Board members Brian Goldberg and Lewis Hall reflecting on their years in elected office.

"Not very many people know that before I decided to run for school board, I met with a columnist [from] the Beverly Hills Weekly named Rudy Cole," Hall said. "He liked me and he took me under his wing and showed me and explained

to me how politics were here in Beverly Hills."

Goldberg, elected in 2007, and Hall, in 2011, have both been controversial figures.

Later on in the meeting, the Board moved forward with many costly projects, including the modernization of several "historical features" at Hawthorne.

The design and construction improvements at the K-8 school, spearheaded by architectural design firm DLR Group, are estimated to cost anywhere from \$3 to \$5 million.

Recent "visual inspections" at Hawthorne have revealed "serious structural issues with the exterior architectural features," the staff report reads. This includes the dome's decorative tiles, which have fallen off on several places.

An amended budget of \$1.14 million for construction improvements to Horace Mann's building B will cost the district an extra \$160,000. Fronted by Leighton Consulting, Inc., the "unanticipated supplemental work" encompasses four on-site projects and one off-site task.

A project at El Rodeo estimated to cost around \$8 million received opposition from Board member Lisa Korbatov, who

called it a "big uptick" from the original price tag, which was about \$4.9 million.

Rick Panos, Construction Management Director at Totum, said the number will be further refined, pending "general discussion with consultants."

The staff report states that "numerous areas on [El Rodeo] buildings require evaluation."

Consultants are expected to survey the site, produce a report and offer their recommendations. The first step is to prepare a report assessing the condition of the existing historic cast stone on buildings A, B and C.

"If we're not moving at the right speed, the other money will get soaked up," Korbatov said.

Following a recommendation by Beverly High Principal Dave Jackson, the Board gave direction to postpone the date that high school students are moved into portables to late January.

The arsenic remediation, currently slated for November 23, has delayed the contractor from carrying out the rough grading in the contaminated areas. The Beverly High administration is concerned about relocating to an area that may still be undergoing construction.

sports cont. from page 4

Beverly Hills 36, El Segundo 45, Santa Monica 70, Culver City 72, Lawndale 136, Hawthorne 170

Cohen was third in 16:57, while teammates Jason Cohen (17:12.50) and Shimon Dubner (17:30.10) finished fourth and sixth, helping the Normans to the league championship Nov. 4.

The meet was held on the 3-mile course at the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area in Baldwin Hills.

Girls' Cross Country
Mt. SAC Invitational

Junior Jillian Dveirin was the top Beverly Hills finisher, finishing 59th in 23:02 in a Division 3 race Oct. 23.

The Normans were 12th in the team competition with 301 points. Wasco finished 11th with 273. Cathedral Catholic won with 30.

Ocean League Finals
El Segundo 25, Santa Monica 36, Culver City 84, Beverly Hills 97, Lawndale 150, Hawthorne 165

Sarah Wolchin was the top Norman finisher, finishing 13th in 22:33.02 over the 3-mile course at the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area in Baldwin Hills on Nov. 4.

Kasia Krzyzanowski of Santa Monica won in 19:35.09.

Boys' Basketball
Beverly High, the defending Southern

Section Division 3A champion, is scheduled to open its season Tuesday by facing Verbum Dei in a pool play game of the inaugural Joseph Frazier Thanksgiving Classic at Calabasas High School. The opening tipoff is set for 5 p.m.

The Normans are also scheduled to play a pool play game Wednesday at 5 p.m. against Viewpoint. They are also scheduled to play Friday and Saturday, with their opponents and start times determined by the results of their opening two games.

College Basketball

Chance Comanche, who graduated from Beverly High in May, grabbed three rebounds in seven minutes in his college debut in

Arizona's 79-61 victory over Pacific Friday in a nonconference game in Tucson.

Comanche was scoreless, missing all three of his shots.

Comanche scored one point, making one of two free throws, and pulled down one offensive rebound in the Wildcats' 90-60 victory over Bradley Monday in a nonconference game in Tucson.

Steven Herbert has covered Beverly Hills High School sports for the Beverly Hills Weekly since 1999. He has also covered college and professional sports for The Associated Press, Los Angeles Times and Washington Post. He can be reached at (310) 275-7943 or by email at stvherbert@aol.com.

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