

# The Mount Washington Association

Serving the Mount Washington community since 1955.

November 2007

[www.mtwashington.org](http://www.mtwashington.org)

## High School at Taylor Yard

Pat Griffith

The new high school being planned for construction at Taylor Yard, on San Fernando Road, should be well placed to serve children in the Mount Washington area, and it will help reduce overcrowding at Marshall, Eagle Rock, and Franklin High Schools. It should mean that our children will have a much shorter commute to high school.

Unfortunately, LAUSD is still struggling to purchase the planned site for the high school, a vacant property just north of the FedEx building, which was bought out from under them at the last minute last year by a developer.



Aerial View  
Central Region High School #13 | 05.01.06

HMC

Here is an update from our School Board Member, Yolie Flores Aguilar:

The short answer to your question, in terms of the status of CHS #13, is that the judge ordered LAUSD and the developer to go to mediation. Essentially, the judge refused to make a ruling and ordered the two parties to either figure out how to work together or to come up with a mutually agreed-upon purchase price for the property. The two parties have until mid November (I believe the date is November 15).

I have requested another meeting with our facilities team to get a briefing from them on the status of mediation, our strategy, our options, and - more importantly - our commitment to building this school. I expect to have this meeting early next week.

Clearly this project is fraught with politics on all fronts. I am extremely concerned that if we don't stop this craziness we will end up with no school at all to relieve Eagle Rock, Franklin, and Marshall.

Having said all of that, I am very happy to meet with

you and other community stakeholders to hear your views and concerns. I'm especially interested in talking to the "average parent" whose kids will be (or are) impacted by the decisions we make.

Let me know what date/time works best for the folks you're working with. We can schedule meetings in November, but will need to work around the holidays.

Sincerely,

Yolie Flores Aguilar

School Board Member, District 5

Los Angeles Unified School District.

## President's Message

Natalie Seaman



As this is my last message as President of the Mount Washington Association (MWA), I look forward to turning the gavel over to a new leader for the organization and to focus on being part of the support team. While I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in the activities in the neighborhood, the most exciting thing for me is new people coming on board, with new ideas and new directions.

I do want to thank the folks that worked hard this year as the MWA is a completely volunteer organization and it takes a lot of work. I want to make special mention for all that have provided great support this year:

- New board members who brought new thinking and created new energy along with experienced hands that keep things going year after year.
- Cheri Uno, who did a great job this year cleaning up and rounding up membership. Her attention to detail is much appreciated, and we also want to thank her for the “re-do” of the membership brochure. She

## Officers

### President

Natalie Seaman (223-0996)

### 1<sup>st</sup> VP (Action)

Rob Schraff (258-1168)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> VP (Programs)

Chet Hood (221-8626)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> VP (Membership)

Cheri Uno (222-0410)

### 4<sup>th</sup> VP (Hospitality)

Carol Jacques (225-0501)

### Secretary

Pat Griffith (225-8330)

### Treasurer

Benny Padilla (222-3976)

### Past president

Grayson Cook (227-8899)

## Directors

Ann Walnum (222-8327)

Warren Christensen (222-4035)

Julie Nagesh (223-1144)

Margaret Hoyos

Hank Schaeffer (221-9695)

Eliot Sekuler (344-9955)

Bill Rumble (225-0501)

Britta Couris (497-2747)

Lynnette Kampe (221-1782)

## Committee Chairs

### Advertising

Susan Phifer (222-2424)

### Beautification

Lynnette Kampe (221-1782)

### Communications

Eliot Sekuler (344-9955)

### Finance

Susan Phifer (222-2424)

### Land Use

Liz Herron (225-5711)

### Public Safety

Cheri Uno (222-0410)

Webmistress: Donnette Thayer  
(877-581-0833)

Bulletin Board: Nancy Lilly  
(225-7597)

Posters: Paul Girard  
(221-7822)

Newsletter edited by Scott  
Burleigh (319-3534)

© 2007 Mt Washington Association

has also continued to serve as our liaison to the police department.

- Bennie Padilla for his tireless diligence regarding our finances, good thinking on investments, and great work on the business end of things. No President could do it without you.
- Lynnette Kampe and Rob Schraff, who led the project to recognize two long-time Mount Washington Association members who passed away in the last year. Lucy Lemmon (Past President) and Pat Sampson (Historian) spent a lot of the years of their lives involved in the organization. Lynnette and Rob created the plan and got the funding to place a memorial in Elyria Canyon Park. One corner of the park will now have two benches and native landscaping to recognize these two great women.

Finally I want to thank

Councilperson Jose Huizar and several members of the Mount Washington Organization who unofficially worked to create consensus on the Southwest Museum and who are moving forward with the Southwest Society to support the museum.

If has been a fun year and I look forward to serving the new President next year.

## Public Safety Report

Cheri Uno

### Fire Evacuation Plan for Mount Washington

SLO Cooper is planning for those who would need special assistance in the event of an evacuation. If you are disabled, please contact me: [ctuno@pacbell.net](mailto:ctuno@pacbell.net) or (323) 376-9958. I can get your information into a database so that the LAPD can be prepared should we need to evacuate. I need your name, address, the type of assistance needed, and a phone number in case we have questions. Having the information ahead of time can save the LAPD officers time, and in this case saving time could save your life.

### Senior Lead Officers

For Mount Washington residents in the Nob Hill area, SLO Lenny Davis is your new SLO. His phone number is (213) 793-0768. He will continue to have monthly Neighborhood Watch meeting for his area in the Council District 14 offices. Give him or the Community Relations office [(213) 485-2548] a call to find out when they are scheduled.

## The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Discovery Tour

Natalie Seaman

On Sunday, November 18, from 10 AM to 6:30 PM, artists throughout the Arroyo area will open their studios and homes to visitors in this once-a-year Northeast Los Angeles tradition. The Discovery Tour, sponsored by the Arroyo Arts Collective and the Historical Society of Southern California, showcases the artistic riches of our community.

What makes this art tour unique is the combination of history and art. The Arroyo was the city's first cultural center at the turn of the century, and its artistic legacy continues today. Surrounded by hills and bordered by the Arroyo Seco, the Northeast neighborhoods of Highland Park, Mount Washington, and Eagle Rock are home to one of the largest concentrations of artists in Los Angeles.

This year the AAC presents “Now is the Time for the 15th Annual Discovery Tour”. The theme of the Tour is time: have a good time visiting artists’ homes and studios. In time for the holidays, artist-made clocks will also be available for sale at the Lummis Home.

As one who participates every year, I urge all residents to head down to Lummis Home first thing in the morning and map out your route. You will not have time to see all

the artists in one day, but there will be pictures of the art posted to help you plan your tour.

Judging from my own experience, the choices will not be easy ones. While I often have a hard time getting off my own block (Avenue 37 has a lot of creative folks), it is fun to go to other areas such as Eagle Rock or Montecito Heights to see other neighborhoods as part of the cultural experience of the day.

And a Special Preview Party will be held November 10, from 7 PM to 9 PM at the Acorn Gallery, 135 N. Avenue 50, in Highland Park. Samples of tour artists' work will be on display.

## Nominations

The members of the MWA Nominating Committee are: Warren Christiansen, Carol Jacques, Maria Gray, Phil Gray, and David Brunk.

The Committee has nominated the following slate of officers and Board of Directors members for 2008:

President Eliot Sekuler

Action VP Carol Jacques

Membership VP Cheri Uno

Hospitality VP Maria Gray

Secretary Pat Griffith

Treasurer Bennie Padilla

Board of Directors

For the term ending 2008:

Bill Rumble

For the term ending 2009:

LeeAnn Sherry

For the term ending 2010:

Lynette Kampe

Connie Rohman

Corinna Villaraigosa

## Draft Minutes of the September General Membership Meeting

*Pat Griffith*

Natalie Seaman, President, opened the meeting at the new Jack and Denny Smith Community Center at Mount Washington Elementary School.

Jerry Schneider called for volunteers and their time commitment for the Neighborhood Beautification Grant application to establish more trees on Marmion Way.

Lynette Kampe asked for volunteers to help with the cleanup and placement of the new memorial benches at the entrance to Elyria Canyon on Elyria Drive. Those dates are October 13 and November 10 and 17.

Fire Dept. Battalion Chief Al Clarcken, from Fire Station #55 on York Blvd, introduced Chris Logan and Gary Millay, also from their Battalion. The Battalion consists

of 6 stations and 53 people, with 6 ambulances and paramedic resources at each station. The Fire Dept. also has heavy-lift helicopters and super-scoopers to drop water on fires. Red Flag designations have been established in Mount Washington and other areas in northeast Los Angeles because when fires started the LAFD couldn't get to the job and neighbors couldn't evacuate. Wind driven fires can engulf an area and people cannot get out. The Fire Dept. is preparing for a really bad fire season; they know that if a fire gets up into trees, the fire can then run through trees. They urge us to have emergency supplies, have a plan, and clear a defensible space. They showed news coverage of the Oakland Fire to demonstrate how frightening a hillside fire can be. There are two shelters in Mount Washington – at Mount Washington Elementary School and the Self-Realization Fellowship – for people who may not be able to evacuate, but getting down off the hill is the safest.

Kaitlin Drisco, a restoration architect, then spoke and showed slides of some restoration work. She previously worked with Brenda Levin, but has worked through her own company for the past 5 years. Her presentation highlighted areas to address when trying to preserve a building, such as the character and community, the intrinsic value and craftsmanship of the building, the condition. Before work begins, you need to have an inventory of the structure, establish a decision-making process, develop a preservation plan and determine ongoing stewardship. Kaitlin presented examples of properties throughout the Southern California Area.

Ann Walnum announced the Toy Drive.

Carol Jacques announced the Nomination committee for this year.

The meeting adjourned by 9PM.

## Green On Green

*Lynette Kampe*

Elyria Canyon Benches for Pat and Lucy

It's amazing what a few people and a mini-tractor can do. By the time you read this, two memorial benches will have been installed at the top of Elyria Canyon Park to honor beloved community members Pat Samson and Lucy Lemmon. Two more work parties are coming soon, on November 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, and next spring wildflowers will bloom near the benches. But at this time I would like to give you a progress report and thank the people who have made it possible so far.

Once the SM Conservancy had given permission to go ahead we got busy. Jerry Schneider laid out a short trail to the bench area, a short distance down from the entrance on Elyria, and helped select the bench positions: one to have a view down the river valley, and the other looking at the nearby mountain peaks.

The next phase was to rip out deteriorated chain link fencing – fence posts and all! Rob Schraff and I developed new skills with a bolt-cutter, chopping the

chain link and barbed wire into manageable pieces. Luke Parker used heavy equipment to root out the posts and haul away the debris.



Luke Parker clearing away remains of the old fence line in Elyria.

This was all done in preparation for the October 13<sup>th</sup> site preparation work party – Volunteer Day – which came the morning after a rare October rainfall. We cleaned up trash and chunks of concrete, raked up and hauled away dead weeds, and moved scattered cut branches from the fire a few years ago. We pruned up a small Laurel Sumac tree to improve its appearance and fire clearance. Once again Luke brought a mini-tractor and dumpsters from the SRF to handle debris, pull out more posts, and build the short trail to the bench location. We called ourselves the “Brute Squad” and had a great time.

I want to thank Rob Schraff, Luke Parker, Clare Marter Kenyon, Mark Kenyon, Daniel Marlos, Hank Schaeffer, Hugh King, and Nancy Lily. Please visit the park, sit on the benches and remember dear friends.

## ASNC Election Candidates

The following Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council stakeholders are running for positions on the ASNC Board of Representatives:

Hermon Representative (1 position)

Joseph Riser

Montecito Heights Representative (1 position)

Tina Zabala

Monterey Hills Representative (1 position)

Mike French  
Darlene Roker  
Sara Isabel Lopez

Mount Washington Representative (2 positions)

Hank Shaeffer  
Ann Walnum  
Scott M. Folsom  
Averell Eshaghian

Sycamore Grove Representative (1 position)

Sylvia Robledo (write-in)

Retail, Wholesale and Services (1 position)

Efren Chepi (Sycamore Grove)

Faith-based Organization (1 position)

A. J. Mora (Hermon)

Education and Youth (1 position)

Clifford R. Moseley (Hermon)

Recreation, Culture and the Arts (1 position)

J. Michael Walker (Monterey Heights)  
Robert Rakauskas (Mount Washington)

Environment (1 position)

no candidate

Community Non-Profits (1 position)

Ernest Sanchez (Monterey Heights)

Health Care and Seniors (1 position)

Amado Machorro (Hermon)

## A Time For Work At The Southwest Museum

*Eliot Sekuler*

All of us in Northeast Los Angeles – everybody – wants to see the Southwest Museum thrive as a premiere public destination.

That’s what brought us together four years ago, when the Museum’s survival was threatened, to form the Friends of the Southwest Museum Coalition.

As a community, we went to war to protect an important and historic resource. All of us agree that the Southwest Museum is, without question, a key element in our cultural landscape

It was a long, hard fight. And as a community, we won most of the things we were fighting for.

We should be thankful for the tenacity of many of the community’s warriors – spearheaded by Ann Walnum and Nicole Possert – who showed up with clenched fists at city hall, at the CD 14 offices, at countless meetings at the Museum and Ramona Hall.

And we can also thank our political leadership, including Jose Huizar, Eric Garcetti, Anthony Portantino and the Mayor for coming through for us when it really counted, to broker a peaceful and productive solution.

Did we win every single item we were fighting for? No, not everything.

But we won – decisively – in the areas that count the most.

No, the collection won’t be stored in Mount Washington. And it shouldn’t be: anyone who saw the stacks of crates piled up like the final scene from “Citizen Kane,” who smelled the mildew and saw firsthand the deterioration of priceless artifacts, would concede that the collection was in jeopardy; it was not being maintained to contemporary standards. It will be maintained and preserved elsewhere, as it must be.

But of those 250,000 artifacts, only a tiny fraction were ever on view at a single time. Much of the collection hasn't been displayed for decades, and some of it has never been seen by the public at all. The collection is vast. It's easily rich enough to sustain two museums: our own in Northeast L.A. and another in Griffith Park.

We wanted a museum that would be a premiere cultural destination in Northeast Los Angeles. We have won that.

We wanted a museum that would retain its own identity, that would serve as a compelling venue for rotating exhibitions of the Lummis collection and other relevant material. We have won that.

In our position statement, we wrote: "Should there be a new Southwest Museum in Griffith Park, the Mount Washington Campus shall be marketed as a distinct entity from the Griffith Park site... The content, programming and identity of the Mount Washington Campus must remain consistent with the original vision of its founder, Charles Lummis." We have won that, too.

We have won the things we deemed essential.

We'll have a revitalized museum in our neighborhood, a cultural destination that will rank among our city's most notable cultural landmarks.

There are some who still insist upon shaking their fists, who see evidence of conspiracy at City Hall, at Griffith Park and in their own neighborhoods. They express their vehement opposition to any agreement among our elected officials and the Autry. Reading some of their remarks, I can't help but be reminded of Eric Hoffer's insight: "Vehemence is the expression of a blind effort to support and uphold something that can never stand on its own."

There was certainly a time for vehemence, a time to be shaking our fists in the direction of Griffith Park.

But we can – we must – put that time behind us.

Because now comes the hard part. There's work to be done.

There's work to be done in building this museum as a great community resource, in helping to fund it, to support it with our membership and our volunteerism.

We'll need partners in our government, in our own community and at the Museum's parent at Griffith Park.

We'll need to remain vigilant, to remain active.

The agreement our elected officials have helped us to win has earned the support of Native American groups, of Lummis family members, and of activists from virtually every neighborhood of the Northeast Los Angeles.

Someone asked, online, why some of us who were fighting the Autry just a year ago would now be so willing to make peace.

And the answer is, as the much-quoted psalm says, "there is an appointed time for everything... a time to tear apart and a time to sew together.... a time for war and a time for peace."

The time for vehemence has passed.

It's time to stop shaking our fists.

It's time to roll up our sleeves.

There's work to be done.

## Come Join the Christmas Spirit!

*Julie Nagesh*

Come join your neighbors and drop off food donations to benefit local families in need at Christmas time. Bring non-perishable protein and veggies – no sweets please – to 3880 San Rafael Avenue, on the corner of Elyria, in front of the SRF main gates on Saturday morning, December 1<sup>st</sup>. Watch the posters for exact times.



Assistants at recent food drive: David Brunk, Rob Schraff, Carol Jacques, Maria Gray & Julie Nagesh

## Marmion Way Cleanup

*Ann Walnum*

On the weekend of October 13-14, Mount Washington volunteers picked up paper and trash along the Marmon Way strip between the Cervantes mural and Monte Vista. 14<sup>th</sup> Council District deputy Zenay Loera had arranged for use of a Department of Sanitation dumpster and ten orange safety cones.

Our volunteers were Beverly Oda, Nancy Lilly, Shauna Turner, Brett MacKnight, Will Simms, Steve and Cameron Bagish, Ann Walnum, and Eric Brown and Crisanta Velazquez and their children Erin, Ix-Chef, and Kosey.

Three suggestions for future clean-up and beautification efforts emerged from this experience: promotion via posters and flyers, getting direct help from Mount Washington School families, and the start of a community service project by Lynn Sosa and her Mount Washington School class students – and their parents – to work on Mount Washington Drive downhill from

Canyon Vista. A more extensive beautification plan for Marmion Way has been submitted by Jerry Schneider through the Community Beautification Grant program.

The light fixtures planned for the area will be delivered in the near future. Forty Electrolier lights will be installed on Marmion Way, at the Avenue 43 bus stop, and along the Museum/Glenalbyn stairway.

## Moon Avenue Closure

*Ann Walnum*

Slope repair on Moon Avenue near San Rafael will improve safety on the Heidelberg Park side of the road. Twenty-one piles will create a "soldier pile" wall similar to the bulkhead widening of San Rafael that occurred six years ago. Street closure will occur in two stages: a ten-day period beginning November 6 for installation of the piles, followed shortly thereafter by a three-closure for repaving.

## Eighth Annual Toy Share Drive

*Ann Walnum*

The eighth annual Mount Washington School and Community toy drive is in progress. There is a collection box in the rotunda of Mount Washington School. Toys may be brought to the school or to the November 9 event, or you can call (323) 222-8327 for pick-up or for directions to a collection location.

New or almost-new toys will be sorted and cleaned, and batteries will be tested. Recipients of the toys will include the thirty agencies served by Congressman Xavier Becerra's toy collection drive, the three hundred children served by St. Mary's Center in East Hollywood, and Good Shepherd Center. If you wish to volunteer to help process, clean, or deliver toys, please call us.

## 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual NELA Christmas Parade

*Eliot Sekuler*

This year's Northeast Los Angeles Christmas Parade, set to kick off at 1:00 PM on Sunday, December 2, 2007, continues to be one of the city's most durable holiday traditions.

The Northeast Los Angeles Christmas Parade (formerly known as the Highland Park Christmas Parade) began 63 years ago when members of the Highland Park Commercial Club organized neighborhood merchants and community groups to stage an event designed to highlight the area's businesses and bring community

groups together for a holiday celebration. According to a newspaper account from the era, the 1935 parade thrilled onlookers with a "Santa Claus Float" that carried a truck-sized bungalow and a live Santa Claus "caught in the very act of descending a spacious chimney." A 25-foot-tall Christmas tree and three 14-foot-high candles towered over the traffic island at York and Figueroa.



The 2007 parade, which now ranks as the city's longest continuously-running holiday parade, is presented by the Highland Park Chamber of Commerce in association with the North Figueroa Association. KLVE's popular morning personalities Omar Velasco and Argelia Atilan will serve as Grand Marshals.

Parade producer Rosamaria Marquez and her co-producers promise that this year's parade will be the liveliest in the event's history, representing diverse cultures and dazzling parade-goers with more marching bands, equestrian units, dancers and musicians, drill teams, floats and celebrities than ever before.

A "Winterfest" event will follow the parade at 3 PM at Sycamore Grove Park on Figueroa Street at Avenue 45. Family rides and live music will be provided by Ramona Hall Music School and vendors will offer a cornucopia of local delicacies. Parade prize winners will be announced at 3:30 PM.

Want to be part of the celebration? Rosamaria is seeking volunteers who can devote time during November to create artwork for community floats and other vehicles. Rosamaria can be contacted at [rockroseart@yahoo.com](mailto:rockroseart@yahoo.com).

### Coming up...

- November 18 Arroyo Arts Collective *Discovery Tour*, starting at Lummis Home. 10 AM to 6:30 PM.
- November 26 *Mount Washington Association General Meeting* at Ramona Hall. 7 PM.
- November 26 *ASNC Election* at Ramona Hall. 7 PM.
- December 1 *Food Drive* collection at the corner of San Rafael and Elyria. Morning – see posters for exact time.
- December 2 Northeast Los Angeles *Christmas Parade*. 1 PM.
- December 2 NELA Parade "*Winterfest*" at Sycamore Grove Park. 3:30 PM.