



The RIVIERA REPORTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE RIVIERA HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

SERVING THE HOLLYWOOD RIVIERA COMMUNITY SINCE THE 1940s—April 2008

City Council Candidate Forum Scheduled

The Homeowners Associations of South Torrance (Riviera, Hillside, Seaside, Country Hills and Southwood) will present a combined candidate forum for the upcoming City Council elections. This will be an excellent opportunity for residents to meet the candidates, to hear them speak, and to ask questions of them prior to the election.

The forum will be held at South High in the Cafeteria on Monday, May 12th at 7:00 p.m. The general election will be held on June 3rd when voters will be choosing four new City Council members. Register to vote by May 19th to vote on June 3rd!

What do those sticks mean?

Driving around the Riviera, one often notices sticks with flags on them that are put up prior to remodeling. Have you ever wondered why some homes have them and some don't? Read on!

The sticks and flags, by the way, are officially called a 'silhouette'. The silhouette delineates the outline of the proposed project and is put up to alert the public that the owner is planning a remodel or complete redevelopment of a parcel that in some way does not comply with the Hillside Overlay Ordinance and that approval from the Planning Commission will be required to proceed. Very often, the silhouette is placed because the owner desires a two-story structure on the property, but there can be other reasons. Once the silhouette is up, a hearing is scheduled at a Planning Commission meeting. These hearings are held on Wednesdays in the City Council Chambers and are open to the public. Comments are taken from the public regarding projects on the agenda, and anyone can speak.

Residents interested in a particular project can go the Planning Department to look at the plans that have been submitted. A copy of the Hillside Overlay Ordinance can be found at <http://www.hollywoodriviera.org/HillsideOrd.htm>.

Safety and Neighborhood Watch

Our general meeting in February was a great meeting, presented for us by the Torrance Police Department. There were more officers than residents, but the officer from community affairs graciously said that the attendees were interested and, indeed, the discussion was lively and many questions were asked of the officers who represented variety of divisions, including traffic, patrol and fraud. Home safety and the Neighborhood Watch Program were also discussed.

The RHA supports the reinvigoration effort of the Torrance Police Department with regard to Neighborhood Watch, which provides a framework

for keeping our neighborhoods safe. The program relies on citizens, who form small committees block by block, and who are taught how to identify anything that might be suspicious and report it. It's a great way for those who are at home during the day to help out.

Neighborhood Watch is a national organization, and has proven to be highly effective in reducing crime. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Officer Luz Aceves, Torrance Police Department, Community Affairs Division: 310-618-6392.

RHA to sponsor Relay for Life Team

A 'Relay for Life' team, sponsored by the Riviera Homeowners Association, is now forming. This event, which is held annually at South High School, will be on Saturday and Sunday, May 3rd and 4th. Relay for Life is held in partnership with The American Cancer Society, and is a great way to be involved in a local community event right on your doorstep. Even better, it's fun! All proceeds go to funding research for a cure for cancer, a disease that has affected all us, one way or another. Everyone has lost someone to cancer. So, how about helping us do something about it?

Sign up to walk for an hour on the South High track, or make a tax-deductible donation by contacting Pamela Maran at 310-375-1423. Secure donations can also be made at www.events.cancer.org/fltorranceca.

Still time to renew your membership and participate. Your dues help defray the cost of our newsletter along with the cost of our general meetings (highlighting important issues to the Riviera), college scholarships, school donations, the annual Concert in the Park, and other community projects

From the President...Hillside Overlay Merits Support



The Riviera Homeowners Association has received many calls asking for the Association to take a stand with regard to the vigorous enforcement of the Hillside Overlay Ordinance. The following comments were written by President Pamela Maran and presented at the City Council meeting on March 25th.

As you know, the Hillside Overlay Ordinance was created to address, among other things, considerations of view, light, air and privacy with regard to construction and redevelopment of properties. Additionally, homes are required to harmonize with our neighborhood, which places limitations on size and design. Part of the intention of the ordinance is to allow homeowners whose properties have historically had a view a mechanism whereby that view will be preserved for them. It is with regard to these issues that I appear before you this evening.

If a homeowner purchases a property that has a view, pays a premium for that view at the time of purchase, and pays higher taxes through the years because they are enjoying a property with a view, fairness demands that this view be preserved. To allow a homeowner who is remodeling to take even a small portion of his neighbors' view for himself or herself simply by putting up a new structure, thereby depriving the neighbor or neighbors of something that they have always had and for which they paid, seems more than unfair. It is wrong.

The RHA favors the enforcement of the ordinance in such a way that all of the protections guaranteed by it are accorded to residents.

We are therefore, once again, asking that the City Council, and therefore also the Planning Commission, to exercise extreme caution in permitting exceptions to the ordinance to go forward. We are asking you to respect the spirit and intent with which the ordinance was created.

We respectfully request that you carefully consider the ramifications of granting a waiver in a particular case. If waivers are granted more often than not, the purpose of having an ordinance is defeated because waivers become the rule instead of the exception to the rule. Also, once a precedent has been set by granting a waiver, be it for size, mass, bulk, non-harmonious design, setbacks or encroachment into someone else's view, it becomes very difficult to justify not granting the same sort of waiver in subsequent cases.

It is incumbent upon the petitioner to prove unequivocally that a proposed project will not adversely impact neighbors. Those who buy property or live within the Hillside Overlay area are aware long before the commencement of a project that they are constrained by the Ordinance as to what kind of development can be done on a given property. Every lot is different, but all lots share the requirements that the configuration of any new construction not impinge upon the view, light, air

and privacy of neighboring homes, that the new construction be harmonious with the neighborhood, not with current trends in redevelopment, and that the applicant exhaust all options, including under grounding, before he or she be allowed to have even consideration of a design which will increase the height of the existing home. Cost of said options is not a consideration.

I would like to urge the Council to deny projects that are clearly going to adversely impact the surrounding neighbors. Even if only one neighbor is adversely impacted, that is too many. It is up to the petitioner, up to the applicant, to come up with a plan that will not harm his or her neighbors or adversely affect them. Instead, the surrounding neighbors are being put in the position of mobilizing a defense and proving that they are being wronged. Given the number of beautiful homes that have been created in the Riviera without making recourse to waivers from the Planning Commission or City Council, we know that it is possible, when architects exercise the creativity of their profession within the guidelines and restrictions of the Ordinance and homeowners respect the feelings and rights of their neighbors, to create wonderful and admirable projects that hurt no one.

We hope that the City Council, and therefore also the Planning Commission, will do their best to ensure that any new construction does not infringe upon the rights of homeowners, particularly those who have historically enjoyed a view. Once again, let me remind you that the enjoyment and value of one person's home should not be sacrificed to increase the enjoyment and value of another person's home. Nor should residents who wish to alter their homes to increase their own views or enjoyment be allowed to do so at their neighbors' expense.

2008 Scholarships

The Riviera Homeowners' Association is continuing its long tradition of offering four \$500 scholarships to high school seniors who are residents of the Riviera and who are planning to attend a four-year college. If you are interested in applying, please see your high school college counselor. Applications should be submitted by April 30.

June Meeting Arranged

Our next general meeting is scheduled for June 18th, and we hope to see you there. Our program will be presented by long-time resident Marshall Stewart, who is also the nephew of the 'creator' of the Hollywood Riviera. This should be a very fun evening, and will be a great opportunity to both see rare old photos and memorabilia, and to have questions answered.

Annual elections for open RHA Board positions will be held at our general meeting on June 18th. Per our bylaws, a slate has been recommended by a nominating committee, and we have nominees for all open positions. This is great news!

What's happening at Riviera Elementary?

I am excited to announce that Riviera Elementary School is a Statewide Nominee for California Distinguished School Recognition. 301 schools were eligible to apply in Los Angeles County; 200 schools submitted applications; and 77 elementary schools were selected as Statewide Nominees. The Validation visit on March 24th was a great success! A team of administrators from surrounding districts visited Riviera classrooms, met with staff, parents, students, and district personnel and reviewed Riviera's varied curriculum and activities. It was an exciting day validating Riviera's exemplary learning community. State Superintendent Jack O'Connell will announce the 2008 Distinguished Schools on April 15th.

Kindergarten Round-Up sessions are April 28th, 29th and May 1st. If you have a Kindergarten age child, please contact the school (310-533-4460) or stop by to request enrollment paperwork and your child's Round-Up date.

Mark your calendar for Riviera Retirement Celebrations for Mrs. Jeanine Pagarigan and Dr. Patricia Harpole. On Friday, May 30th from 3:30 – 5:30, the careers of these outstanding educators will be celebrated. Past students and families come to join in the fun!

Submitted by:

Christie Forshey,
Proud Principal of Riviera Elementary

The Riviera Homeowners Association invites Riviera residents to submit articles of interest for inclusion in the newsletter. Submissions are subject to editing and will be published at our discretion

Are you concerned about the Proposed State Budget Cuts for Education?

The current proposed State budget cuts for education are \$4.8 Billion dollars = \$400 million cut from 2007-08 and \$4.4 billion cut from 2008-09. For 2008-2009, the Governor proposes that the Legislature suspend Proposition 98 (the minimum funding guarantee for schools) and cut \$4.4 billion dollars (more than 9%) in education funds. That equates to Torrance Unified School Districts (TUSD) portion this school year (2007-08 school year) of \$720,000 with additional cuts of \$8.7 million (2008-09) next year.

Did you know that California ranks 46th in the nation in per-pupil funding and is trailing the national average by nearly \$2,000 per student? (Source: Education Week Quality Counts 2008)

Did you know that 85% of Torrance Unified School Districts budget goes toward salaries, with the balance to programs? A cut this big will touch every level of our students' education; it will affect every child in Torrance Schools.

What the proposed budget cuts will look like for TUSD?

- Cutting \$8.7million of the \$190million TUSD budget for the upcoming year.
- Laying off more than 87 out of 1300 teachers
- Increasing TUSD class sizes by more than 10%
- Reducing spending by over \$348 per student, equivalent to cutting approximately \$9,000 per classroom
- Reducing music, art, career technical, counseling services and elementary physical education programs by about 7%
- Laying off over 35 bus drivers, janitors, food service workers, maintenance workers and other education support professionals
- Laying off over 7 administrators

More information is available at

http://www.capta.org/assets/managed/whatsnew-pdf/CAPTA_Press_Statement.pdf

We need your help! There is a letter writing campaign underway right now. Sample letters, phone scripts and a list of key contacts in Sacramento can be found on several websites: www.torrancecouncilofptas.org , www.tusd.org and www.torranceparents.org

Let them know that this proposed budget won't work. Prop 98 was passed in 1988 to create a minimum funding for our schools and it is not okay to ignore that. Education should be a priority.

Please help us! Our students and district stand to lose Millions if we do nothing! Take a stand, get involved, speak up and be heard TODAY! (Other Sources: Torrance Council of PTAs Legislative Chair)

Thanks for your help.

Submitted by: Pam Milroy, Riviera Elementary PTA President

RHA MEMBERSHIP FORM 2007-2008

If the information on the mailing label is correct, please indicate by marking the appropriate box below and updating label on opposite side:

- Continuing Member**—mailing label personal info is accurate (no need to fill in personal info).
- Continuing Member**—Modifications and/or comments.
- New Member**—Please fill in information.

TELEPHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Please add me to your email alert system for important updates

COMMENTS: _____

PAYMENT DETAILS

Make checks payable to "RHA" and mail to:

**RHA Membership
P.O. Box 1074
Torrance, CA 90505.**

Or use *PayPal* at our website

Annual Dues 2007-2008: \$ 25 .00

Riviera Landscape Awards



March - Mario and Kelly Vargas at 144 Camino de las Colinas
 Picture by Julian Chasin, Description by Ruth Vogel
 Landscape Award is presented by Ruth Vogel and Mary Lenihan,
 RHA, and Shelley Lubinsky, Riviera Garden Club

This is a graceful garden that nestles along the front of their stately, historical "old Spanish", and one of the first homes built in the Riviera. It is a mixed planting of arctotis, stock, grasses, coleus, shrubby princess flower, an elegant orchid tree, and a dramatic bronzy euphorbia cotinifolia. A raised bed of a similar mix of colors continues along the far side of the driveway. A striking yucca tree punctuates the

front lawn. Kelly and Mario are grateful to gardener, Ramon Ramos, 310-534-2947.

RHA logo items at

www.cafepress.com/RivieraHA

There's a selection of merchandise to choose from including shirts, sweatshirts, coffee mugs, canvas tote bags & baseball caps — all of which prominently display our new "Jewel of the South Bay" logo. A portion of the proceeds go to RHA

April Meeting Cancelled

The City Council Candidate Forum being held at South High in May will replace the April meeting of the RHA. See you at the Candidate Forum!

Candidate Forum
Monday, May 12, 2008, 7 PM
South High Cafeteria
Featuring 14 City Council Candidates
4 to be elected

Visit The RHA Website at www.hollywoodriviera.org

The following RHA Board Officers can be contacted through their e-mail:.

rhapres@hollywoodriviera.org	newsletter@hollywoodriviera.org	treasurer@hollywoodriviera.org
membership@hollywoodriviera.org	traffic@hollywoodriviera.org	landscape@hollywoodriviera.org
scholarships@hollywoodriviera.org	dues@hollywoodriviera.org	photog@hollywoodriviera.org
	concert@hollywoodriviera.org	

Riviera Homeowners Association 2007-8 Officers and Directors

President	Pamela Maran	310-375-1423	Immediate Past President	Michael Cotton	310-791-1985
1st Vice President (Programs)	Darcey Earhart	310-529-1870	Scholarship Chair	Gayle Taylor	310-375-7038
2nd Vice President (Membership)	OPEN		Traffic Liaison	Mike Guidry	310-373-1944
Secretary	Roberta Blowers	310-930-1322	City Council Observer	Pam Popovich	310-375-8729
Treasurer	Art Wong	310-795-0289	Planning Commission Observer	Steve Gerhardt	310-614-0258
Newsletter Editor	Geneva Martin	310-378-9767	Historian	Suzanne French	310-375-1390
Webmaster/Photographer	Julian Chasin	310-373-6314	Mailing Chair	OPEN	
Landscape Chair	Ruth Vogel	310-375-4702	Special Programs Chair	Pamela Maran	310-375-1423
Hospitality Chair	Judy Brunetti	310-378-5636			

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