



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

## From the President...

### *One of the Greatest*



Happy New Year, Everyone! I hope that your holidays were happy as well. This year, I was one of a hoard of volunteers who descended on the Fiesta Floats warehouse just after Christmas to enthusiastically work on the Rose Parade entry for the City of Torrance. I had never worked on a float,

and so arrived not knowing who would be there or what I was going to do. As I walked into the chilly warehouse, the morning crew already busily occupied and I stood for a few moments, curiously watching the activity around me.

Close by, there were people sitting and standing on low scaffolding gluing what I assumed to be bark on what I also assumed must be trees. Below them, seaweed and saffron were being glued onto the footbridge. Through the network of scaffolding above I could glimpse denim covered legs and multi-colored jackets, while friendly chatting and laughter drifted down from somewhere near the ceiling. At ground level, clusters of people stood close to gigantic fans studiously gluing what I later learned were seeds and lentils onto the surfaces, while others stood at tables working on large butterfly wings. Still other people were sitting at tables, cutting something that turned out to be dried flowers, which later would be glued onto big umbrellas.

It struck me at once that there were all ages, races and types, from early teens through senior citizens, men and women, boys and girls, all working harmoniously together. No one job was more important than another. And, it was everyone's float. As the week progressed, I was struck again and again by the diversity of the people who had come together to make something that none of us could have made by ourselves, all working to make something beautiful.

Just before Christmas, I saw a segment on the evening news about a fantastic local neighborhood display of holiday lights (we all know the one!). At the end of the segment, the anchor said that there was a Torrance neighborhood just

across PCH from the 'holiday lights' neighborhood that was one of the best neighborhoods in the whole world. He was talking about the Riviera. (Continued on Page 4)

## **RHA GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, February 20, 2008**

**7 PM**

**Richardson Middle School Cafeteria  
Torrance Police & Neighborhood Watch**

*This month's program will be presented by the by officers of the Torrance Police Department, and will cover issues of neighborhood traffic, home safety, the Neighborhood Watch program and more. We'd like to revive the Neighborhood Watch program as a basis for disaster preparedness*

## **2008 Scholarships**

The RHA college scholarship awards are given to graduating seniors in the Hollywood Riviera. Awards are based on academic excellence, participation in school activities, teacher recommendations and community service. Interested seniors can get application information from their college counselor at South High. If you do not attend South High or have questions, please contact Gayle Taylor, RHA Scholarship Chair, at: [scholarships@hollywoodriviera.org](mailto:scholarships@hollywoodriviera.org).

## **RHA 2007-2008 General Meeting Schedule**

February 20

April 16

June 18

Wednesdays at Richardson

***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***

## My Point of View:

Author Joe Buck is a longtime Torrance resident and was the speaker at our October 2007 meeting. The following comments summarize his talk at that meeting:

### *The Hillside Ordinance is "broken" and needs to be fixed*

In January, 2000, the City Council "gutted" the Hillside Ordinance by removing the threshold requirement that in order to build a two-story house on a lot, that lot must suffer from "special circumstances" not applicable to neighboring lots. The Council rushed through the deletion of "special circumstances" during the holiday season, refused to give the additional time for consideration that was requested by the President of the RHA and downplayed the significance of their action. The City Attorney offered a misleading and illogical argument in support of the deletion and claimed that "we are not, I believe, changing, in any material way, the provisions for the Hillside Overlay Ordinance."

The Council left in the Ordinance only a vague set of policy goals, i.e., the protection of light, air, views and privacy to control development. The Planning Commission has since been free to interpret these vague goals according to the whim of its individual members. Consequently, the decisions of the Commission have been unpredictable and inconsistent, leaving them open to charges of unfairness. The lack of a clear set of rules invites improper attempts to influence the outcome. The process needlessly generates animosity between neighbors when neighbors' objections appear to influence the result.

Under the present (lack of) rules, only after a lengthy, costly and time-consuming process can an owner find out what he (or she) can build on his property. He is unable to predict what his neighbors may be allowed to construct on the nearby lots. He can only wait and hope.

The present chaotic process is leading to uncontrolled development in the Hillside that few people want.

New members were recently elected to the City Council and the change in the Council makes a careful and thoughtful review of the Hillside Ordinance now possible. However, the Council needs a strong expression from the Riviera Homeowners Association of the Association's desire to have the Council hold hearings on the Hillside Ordinance and to have the Council then adopt a clear set of rules to be consistently applied in order to achieve the broad policy goals expressed in the Ordinance, namely the preservation of light, air, views and privacy in the Hillside. The Council should also readopt the "special circumstances" requirement so that exceptions will apply only to a few unusual lots and will not spread through the Hillside, "swallowing" the rules.

Please ask the Directors of the Association to initiate this process.

*Joe Buck*

RHA members are invited to direct concerns or comments to the Board by sending an email to [president@hollywoodriviera.org](mailto:president@hollywoodriviera.org), telephoning President Pamela Maran at 310-375-1423 or speaking briefly at the beginning of a General Meeting.

February 2008

## Riviera Landscape Awards



January - The Ganalon Family at 4910 Calle de Arboles

This is a brand new garden that beautifully enhances one of the most stunning remodels in the Riviera. This landscape was designed and installed by Scott Martin of Scott Martin Designs. It has a curving border laid out on a gentle slope to accent the Mediterranean style of the home. A handsome flagstone entry path is flanked by a variety of plantings, such as *dodonaea purpurea*, kangaroo paws, *loropetalum*, *salvia*, golden *diosma*, *lavendula*, *heuchera*, daylilies, and rosemary. An olive tree, 3 crape myrtles, a *prunus* and many fruit trees provide a graceful architectural balance as they meander across the slope.



December - The Antongiorgi Family at 545 Calle Mayor

This new landscape, conceived by landscape architect Brian Ackerman and installed by Martinez Bros., was born out of a need to repair drainage issues, as well as provide some private space, buffer the home from a busy street and add curb appeal. The result is a handsome combination of earth toned concrete pads and steps and a mini forest of mature and stately trees with an under story of shrubs, grasses and groundcover. The main trees are birch, white crape myrtle and deciduous western red bud, which will be a blaze of bronze and maroon when leafed out. Other plants when blooming in spring will be white Indian hawthorn, white agapanthus, chartreuse euphorbia, Japanese blood grass, pennisetum fountain grass, *heuchera* "coral bells" and *myoporum* ground cover.

*Pictures by Julian Chasin, Descriptions by Ruth Vogel*  
Landscape Awards are presented by Ruth Vogel and Mary Lenihan, RHA, and Shelley Lubinsky, Riviera Garden Club

## Riviera News

*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*

### A Chinese New Year Celebration

Celebrate the Year of the Rat with stories, folk dancers, crafts, and food! Wednesday, January 30 at 4:00 p.m., El Retiro Library, 126 Vista del Parque.

### Relay for Life Kickoff Celebration

Relay Rally 2008 is being held on Wednesday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the South High School Library. This is the kickoff celebration for Relay for Life, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, which is scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> to raise money for cancer research. *Pamela Maran*

### Theft in the Riviera

The RHA got this note from a homeowner in December: My husband and I live on Calle de Felipe. We don't know if you keep track of thefts in the neighborhood, but in case you do we thought we'd let you know that last week we had \$700 of tools stolen out of our open garage. We were home at the time of the theft, but obviously not watching our garage carefully. Just an FYI for everyone in the Riviera to be alert! *Provided by RHA Webmaster*

So it is quite timely that the meeting subject is the Neighborhood Watch program.

## City of Torrance News

### Torrance General Plan Workshop #15 Planning Commission

The next Planning Commission General Plan Workshop will be on Wednesday, January 30, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Torrance City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard. The purpose of this workshop is to present an overview of the General Plan update process, previous workshops, and the rough draft of the Community Resource and Safety Elements and receive comments from the Planning Commission and the public.

For more information, please contact the General Plan staff at 310-618-5990 or visit the website at

[www.tornet.com/8691.htm](http://www.tornet.com/8691.htm). *Provided by Steve Gerhardt*

### City Maintenance

The city maintenance department is planning a slurry seal project for the western Riviera for June or July. The project will cover all streets from Calle Mayor to Calle de Arboles and from Via Monte d'Oro west to PV Blvd. No other street maintenance projects are currently planned.

The recent winter storms resulted in many potholes and cracks throughout the city. Repairs were made within a few days of the storms. Thanks & good job to our city workers! The maintenance department welcomes reports of any street problems and their goal is to complete repairs within 2 days. Please call the city at 310-781-6900 and ask for the maintenance department. *Provided by Mike Guidry*

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### RHA MEMBERSHIP FORM 2007-2008

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**If the information on the mailing label is correct, please indicate by marking the appropriate box below:**

- Continuing Member**—mailing label personal info is accurate (no need to fill in personal info).
- Continuing Member**—Modifications and/or comments.
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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Please add me to your email alert system for important updates

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
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#### 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

#### Membership Renewal Guidelines:

Each newsletter has the most recent dues payment info above your mailing address. The current RHA fiscal year runs from September to August.

Our email distribution is used to notify residents of dates or issues important to the Hollywood Riviera. All of your personal information is kept private and will not be distributed to anyone. To register go to: [www.hollywoodriviera.org](http://www.hollywoodriviera.org) and click on "Join Our Email List".

(Continued from Page 1)

It occurred to me that our neighborhood is like the float. It's a project that requires all of us. A house, yard and homeowner do not a neighborhood make. A neighborhood is created by all of the houses, all of the yards and all of the people together. Just like it was everyone's float, it's everyone's neighborhood. It takes everyone to make the whole, and no one homeowner is more important than any other.

One of the reasons that the Riviera is great is that the homeowners who came before us took the trouble to create it and then worked to preserve what they had created. However, that 'greatest' generation is aging and many of them are gone. There are relatively few 'original' owners in the Riviera anymore, and so it is now up to those of us who are here to get involved. To step up. To take part in something that belongs to everyone and to help preserve it.

So, if you haven't been to an RHA meeting, come. If you haven't paid your dues, contribute. If you think you don't have enough time, remember that you have as many hours in a day as everyone else does. Get involved! Do your part! Let's keep our neighborhood one of the greatest! *Pamela*

## Open Positions

The RHA is currently seeking applicants to fill the following Board positions: **Membership, Secretary and Mailing Chair**. This is a great chance to learn more about Torrance issues, especially Riviera issues. If you are interested in becoming more involved in the RHA, please give Pamela Maran a call

Concert in the Park committee forming. Call Pamela Maran to help.

## RHA logo items at

[www.cafepress.com/RivieraHA](http://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

**Save Water By.....fixing leaky faucets. Daily Savings: 20 gallons**

Visit The RHA Website at [www.hollywoodriviera.org](http://www.hollywoodriviera.org)

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

<a href="mailto:rhapres@hollywoodriviera.org">rhapres@hollywoodriviera.org</a>	<a href="mailto:newsletter@hollywoodriviera.org">newsletter@hollywoodriviera.org</a>	<a href="mailto:treasurer@hollywoodriviera.org">treasurer@hollywoodriviera.org</a>
<a href="mailto:membership@hollywoodriviera.org">membership@hollywoodriviera.org</a>	<a href="mailto:traffic@hollywoodriviera.org">traffic@hollywoodriviera.org</a>	<a href="mailto:landscape@hollywoodriviera.org">landscape@hollywoodriviera.org</a>
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	<a href="mailto:concert@hollywoodriviera.org">concert@hollywoodriviera.org</a>	

## 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	OPEN		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			

## The Riviera Reporter

P.O. Box 1074 - Torrance, CA 90505

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