

BRENTWOOD HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 49495 · Los Angeles, CA 90049

www.brentwood-hills.org

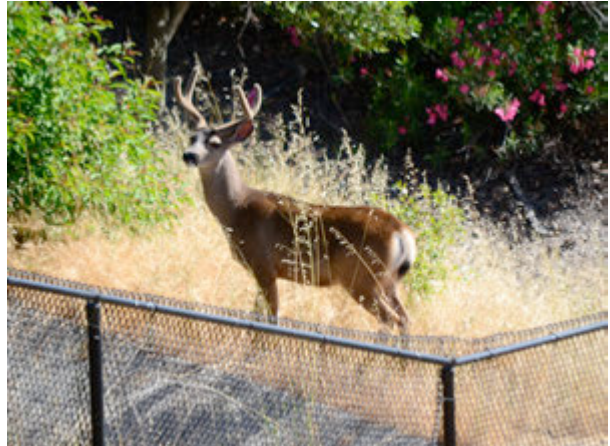
Brentwood Hills Homeowners Association Newsletter — Summer 2013

CRITTERS

By Eric Edmunds, BHHA Vice-President

Summer has arrived in Brentwood Hills (although you might not know it from some of the gloomy weather we've had). As the temperature warms up and the days are longer, a few tips about our flora and fauna are timely.

Situated at approximately 1,000 feet above sea level, and commanding brilliant panoramas over the city basin and Santa Monica Bay, our community is in many ways unique. We are both urban – with streets, sewers and curbs – but also countrified, lying at the gateway to the 18,000 acre “Big Wild,” a massive expanse of wilderness stretching north to the Valley and west to Topanga. Two major, and very popular, trailheads are located in our community: the top of Westridge Road, gateway to “Westridge Canyonback Wilderness Park, ” and Queensferry Drive, gateway to upper Sullivan Canyon. Fire-roads and single-track trails extend for miles. After two or three bends in the road, suddenly there are no more buildings, roads or evidence of civilization – just wilderness. (*Warning: some of that foliage you see is poison oak.*) *CRITTERS, continued on p. 2*



No Smoking in Brentwood Hills

By Michael Leslie, BHHA Vice-President

Homeowners, please be reminded that there is no smoking outside your home as we live in a fire area. Please do not smoke when you are walking in the neighborhood. It is against the law and you will be cited. It is common to see cigarette butts on the sidewalk, in the gutter, and under bushes with dried leaves or pine needles.



In addition, if you are having construction at your address, remind the contractor to explain to the workers not to smoke as it is against the law. Construction workers can be seen daily smoking during their breaks. Workers have been asked not to smoke, but the next day you find them smoking again. You, as the homeowner, must exert your authority with those employed by you. This applies to gardeners and other service personnel, so inform them as well.

Please report anyone that endangers our neighborhood.

CRITTERS – *continued from page 1*

The reason it is called wilderness: it's *wild*. We are home to, and encroach upon, numerous critters you won't find in the flats of the city. Mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, mule deer, roadrunner birds, scorpions, raccoons, rattlesnakes, king snakes – all are found up here. Red-tailed hawks, golden eagles, crows, and flocks of colorful but screeching conures (parrots) circle overhead. Although none of these fauna seek out humans, any more than we seek contact with them, encounters do occur. That means it is incumbent on each of us to be alert and vigilant in ways our “flatland” cousins need not.

Mountain-lion sightings are rare. These animals require vast territories, and scientists estimate there are less than a dozen in the entire Santa Monica Mountains (from Camarillo to Griffith Park). They will spot, and elude, you long before you become aware of their presence. Occasionally there's a sighting in Mandeville Canyon, sometimes in someone's backyard. Pumas have tubular tails; coyotes' are bushy. If you encounter a lion in the wilderness, don't turn your back or run away. Face it. Keep children and animals close to you, as lions seem to be attracted to them.

Rattlesnakes are seen not only on the fire-roads and trails, but also on our streets and backyards. They tend to be active in the early morning and late afternoon. Like rats, squirrels and bunny-rabbits (their favorite food), snakes like the cover provided by ivy, tall grass and plantings. Rattlesnake bites are rarely fatal, but one *will* ruin your whole day. Many adult bites are “dry,” but baby rattlers are the most dangerous: they inject all their venom every time. Also, they lack developed rattles to warn you away. Dogs are often victims of rattlesnake bites, usually on the nose. If you encounter a rattler in your yard, call the Fire Department. They will dispatch an engine and often cut off the head, leaving the rest with you (for those with a ghoulish desire to cook it). **Tip:** when outdoors, watch where you are walking, and carry a flashlight at night. And, if you see a black stick in your driveway or yard, *don't step on it*.

Coyotes are the size of medium dogs, and ignore (and are unafraid of) humans. However, they pose a special menace to your pets. They are especially fond of cats and small dogs, although I once saw an organized pack ganging up on a Great Dane. Coyotes are cunning and ingenious. A female in heat will lure your dog to the edge of the yard or into the brush, where two or three males then pounce. You will never find a trace of your lost pet, and that's not how you want it to end its life. *Outdoor cats have very short life-expectancies in Brentwood Hills.*

If you have pets, don't keep food or water outside. You'll just be attracting and feeding the critters, and alerting the coyotes that tasty morsels await inside.

Deer pose a threat to your garden. They love your flowers, especially roses, and singly or in groups will munch contentedly on your garden. Netting, and deer-repellant products designed to smell like mountain-lion urine, are generally ineffective. A six-foot or taller fence is more effective.

We have had a few cases of raccoon infestation. Although cute, like the Bandido, these are nasty and disease-bearing animals. They dig holes in your backyard and mark your roof with urine. If a raccoon family takes up residence on your property, you may need a trained professional to remove them. Don't even think about shooting or harming any of these animals yourself. There's heavy penalties for doing so.

We are privileged and lucky to live where we do, but watch out for the critters. And please protect your own.



Board of Directors Elections

Yes, it is that time of year again – the annual election of the BHHA Board of Directors. Your 15 Directors each serve for three year terms. The terms rotate, so each year the terms of 5 of the Directors expire.

Often, the Directors choose to run again. Incumbent Directors who are up for re-election this year are: Sheila Greenberg, Jerry Adomian, Gary Landau, and Sandy Wallace, plus one vacant Board seat. If there are no other BHHA members who are interested in serving as Board members, these incumbent Directors will be re-elected by acclamation at the Annual Meeting.

However, we do encourage all members to run for the Board if they are interested. If there are others interested in running for these Board seats, we will hold an election at the Annual Meeting. If you are interested in running, please contact our President, Mike Leslie, at president@brentwood-hills.org. Also, we occasionally have vacancies on the Board, and replacements are appointed by the President, with confirmation by the Board of Directors. So if you are interested in serving on the Board, please let Mike Leslie know.

Only members who have paid their dues for this fiscal year are eligible to be Board members or to vote, so **if you haven't renewed your membership for 2013, be sure to send in your dues right away!** You can now do so by *Paypal* on our website, or by using the *convenient self-addressed envelope included with this Newsletter*. **Thanks!**



Community Update E-mail List: If you're not already on our email list, please sign up! Send an email with subject line "join" to communityupdate@brentwood-hills.org today!



Got Kids?

*Adapted from an article from LAPD Senior Lead Officer Maria Gray**

Recently, during a large community event held at a local park which numbered in the thousands of participants, officers noted how often children wandered away from their parents and became lost. Here is a reminder of what all children should know:

- Their full name, address and parents' full name and telephone numbers — if they're too young, the information can be placed in their pocket when attending large, chaotic events such as festivals, carnivals, etc.
- They should know to never go to a parking lot if they get separated from parents.
- They should never go into a public restroom alone.
- They should be able to recognize the difference between strangers and public safety personnel. It's a good idea to practice this when the opportunity arises. Please feel free to approach police and fire personnel and introduce your children to them and explain that they are here to help them.
- If kids are lost and cannot find a uniformed person to help them, they may approach a cashier, or other employee behind a counter, etc.
- Kids should stay in one place when lost.

Talk to your children and practice safety measures ahead of time.

* Contact **Senior Lead Officer Maria Gray** at (310) 444-0744 or 30469@lapd.lacity.org.

Your 2013 Membership in BHHA

BHHA keeps our community informed through email notices, our website and our annual block party. We also undertake initiatives to help preserve our community's quality of life. Here are some specific things that we've done over the past year:

- ◆ Contracted with Palisades Patrol to patrol Brentwood Hills common areas;
- ◆ Worked with the Fire Department to ensure fire safety in our community, including the grading of the Westridge fire break in such a way to preserve the hiking trail and wildlife habitat, to the extent possible;
- ◆ Joined the Hillside Federation and continued collaborating with sister homeowner associations to ensure our natural areas are protected from commercial encroachments, like the currently proposed 180 foot communication tower on San Vicente Peak, which is proposed to have 23 microwave dishes and an 800 watt blinking red light;
- ◆ Ensured SoCalGas sufficiently restored Sullivan Canyon after their Pipeline work was completed;
- ◆ Protected local parklands, such as protecting the Backbone Trail from being turned into a dirt road;
- ◆ Encouraging Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training of Board members and members of the community, in order to act as points of contact if there is a regional emergency;
- ◆ Contributed to the holiday lighting of the bridge on Westridge Road.
- ◆ A great Annual Meeting with catered food and open bar!
- ◆ Represented the neighborhood on legislative issues and regarding development projects and local ordinances;
- ◆ Served as the community's interface and contact point with state and local elected leaders;
- ◆ Over the past 30 years, with your help, BHHA's Legal Defense Fund has fought and won battles at City Hall and in the Courts to preserve our community, and to require prospective developers and speculators to strictly comply with City codes and CEQA (the California Environmental Quality Act).

BHHA relies on your contributions in order to maintain these programs. Dues are only \$40 per household to help fund these valuable initiatives. Please send in your membership for 2013. Please mail a check to: BHHA Membership, P.O. Box 49495, Los Angeles, CA 90049. Alternately, feel free to pay online; instructions can be found at: <http://www.brentwood-hills.org/membership.html>. ***Thank You for Your Support!***



Brentwood Hills Homeowners Association Initiatives for 2014

Some of the initiatives we're hard at work on for 2014 include:

- Restoring the block captain program to our community (we need volunteers!);
- A marquee sign to post BHHA & Brentwood Hills notices on activities and issues;
- Improving "No Smoking" signs around trails;
- Improving the BHHA Website to make it more useful to our members—this will cost money, so please send in your dues!

Additionally, we would like to know about *your* concerns — all you need to do is send an e-mail to president@brentwood-hills.org. If there are any issues you would like to help with, remember that *BHHA is an all-volunteer organization* — we can always use more help!