



# STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

*Your Advocate for Studio City*

**February 2009**

## **CITY CONTROLLER LAURA CHICK TELLS THE SCRA: CITY COUNCIL IS INEFFICIENT AND NOT GETTING BETTER**

Los Angeles City Controller Laura Chick's message to the SCRA at the January Annual General Meeting was loud and clear. The controller's audits clearly show Los Angeles city managers, the Mayor and the City Council how taxpayer money can be saved and how the City can be run more efficiently. However, according to Chick, there is no political will to adopt her office's recommendations.

Chick provided one glaring example. Her audits showed 500 trained police officers are doing clerical work that could be done by hiring civilians, immediately increasing the number of trained police officers available to patrol the streets. It is much less expensive to hire and train civilians for these desk jobs than to increase the overall size of the police force. The Mayor continues to insist the City hire and train more police officers, without correcting the clerical problem.

Chick also reported the Department of Water and Power (DWP) has done a great job in correcting sewer spillage to clean up city waterways. Environmentally, the DWP has made great strides, but at what cost, Chick questioned. There are no benchmarks in place to determine if taxpayer dollars are being spent wisely for the best results.

Chick also spoke about the City's fleet of cars and the fact there are far too many cars driven home by the LAPD, Fire Department and City Council. Chick suggested these entitlements need to be examined.

In her closing remarks, Chick said action is required by a mayor who can deliver a well-managed city with a city-wide vision and well-run departments as well as a city council that answers to its constituents. According to Chick, most of the Council's focus is on delivering services demanded by the constituents and not tackling the greater administrative problems.

**Note:** The SCRA Board apologizes to all members who were unable to find parking the evening of the Community Meeting, given demand on the hotel, which had booked a number of events that evening. We have asked the hotel to do a better job in informing the SCRA should this occur again.

## **SCRA TO HOST LA CITY ATTORNEY CANDIDATES AT FEB. 10 COMMUNITY FORUM**

The SCRA February Community Meeting will host one of the Valley's only forums with the candidates for the Los Angeles City Attorney's office. This hotly contested race features current City Councilmember Jack Weiss; former Deputy District Attorney and current environmental lawyer Carmen "Nuch" Trutanich; attorney Noel Weiss; Deputy District Attorney David Berger; and Deputy City Attorney Michael Amerian. As of this writing, the SCRA has confirmed participation in the forum from Noel Weiss, David Berger and Michael Amerian. John Thomas, campaign manager, will speak on behalf of Carmen Trutanich, who has a prior engagement that evening.

SCRA members are encouraged to bring guests for the February 10 meeting, which will be an open opportunity to ask questions and grill the candidates about their plans for the City Attorney's office.

In addition, the February meeting will feature a presentation by community activist and former Daily News editor, Ron Kaye, who will update members and guests about Measure B, the solar panel initiative. Kaye will speak in opposition to this measure; as of this writing, the SCRA hopes to also have a representative in attendance to speak in favor of the proposition.

The community forum will be held at Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Theatre, 4222 Vineland Avenue, Studio City. Members and guests are invited for refreshments at 7:00 p.m. with the meeting starting at 7:30 p.m.

# CALLING ALL SENIORS! HAVE A PROJECT FOR THE SCRA?

This year, on May 3, 2009 - known as Big Sunday - the SCRA will take on a pilot social action program to help Studio City seniors, ages 70+, with much-needed "clean-up" type projects. The SCRA is looking for approximately 10-15 projects in such areas as:

- General garden work, including turning over the garden and fertilizing lawns and plants
- Hazardous waste pickup
- Garage clean-up
- Fence and wall painting
- Outdoor window cleaning
- Graffiti paint over

A team of hard-working, enthusiastic volunteer teenagers, supervised by adults, will provide the labor on that day. Email the SCRA with projects or to volunteer at [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org) or call the SCRA at 818-509-0230.

# BREAKING NEWS

## New Plans in Store for Studio City Parking Garage



The City Council has been holding meetings with the Studio City Business Improvement District and commercial establishments on Ventura Blvd. to discuss how to increase the usage of the Studio City parking garage. Some of the ideas under consideration are better signage and a more visible entryway from the street. There is also a possibility of the introduction of valet parking for shoppers on Ventura Blvd. similar to a valet parking pilot program in Eagle Rock. The outcome of that pilot program will help determine if valet parking is viable in Studio City. The program can be run by the City or by a private valet service. Either way a shopper would be able to leave his or her car at a valet station on the boulevard and retrieve the car at any location where there is a station. There would be four to five stations along Ventura Blvd., with cars parked in the Studio City garage.

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## SCRA WATCH: WORKING FOR A BETTER STUDIO CITY

**Editor's Note:** In this space, we will report about things that are "broken" or problems in our community, including information about who is responsible, what has been repaired and who in the city made it happen.



**BROKEN:** Month one.

A Studio City resident reported this broken street light at the corner of Sarah St. and Goodland Ave. This light is located in a residential area and on one of the darkest streets and corners in Studio City. This neighborhood experienced at least three home break-in burglaries within the last month.

**Who is in charge:** Bureau of Street Lighting, Department of Public Works  
Stan Horwitz, Manager: 311 or 213-847-1476 email: [stan.horwitz@lacity.org](mailto:stan.horwitz@lacity.org)

**REPAIRED:** After four months

The handball backboard at Studio City (Beeman) Park had multiple holes punched in it by vandals. It was originally reported for repair by the park's Facilities Director more than four months ago. Despite repeated repair orders and requests from the Studio City Park Advisory Board, no action was taken. This dangerous eyesore has finally been repaired and repainted this month.



**Who got it done:** Ramon Barajas, Dept. of Recreation and Parks, Principal Grounds Maintenance Supervisor II  
email: [ramon.barajas@lacity.org](mailto:ramon.barajas@lacity.org)  
Evan Roosevelt, Council District 2 Studio City Field Director  
email: [evan.roosevelt@lacity.org](mailto:evan.roosevelt@lacity.org)

**Is something broken in your neighborhood and not being repaired?** Call the SCRA at 818-509-0230 or email: [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org).

## (Breaking News, cont'd)

The City Council is also considering use of part of the garage for individual businesses. One proposal by local resident Mark Gelfat was brought to the attention of the Studio City Residents Association at the SCRA's January Community Meeting. If Gelfat can obtain a long-term lease, he has proposed to open a plant nursery business, using the garage rooftop. Plenty of greenery would be on display for the main business area with usage of the floor below for loading cars and parking.

The City is anxious to generate income in light of its current budget problems. The Studio City Parking Garage has been under-utilized since its opening in 2004. The Studio City Residents Association worked for many years with the City to get the garage built, and it is one of only eight in the City. All research pointed to the idea that businesses would use the garage for employee parking, but that is not happening. In addition, residents either are not aware of the garage, which is less expensive than parking meters with the recent increase in meter charges, or they would rather park and move their car to each business as they shop. However, as the population grows and parking becomes elusive, as it has become in nearby communities, the garage may become a more convenient option. Currently the City has issued a notice to study alternative green uses for the Studio City Parking structure. A request for proposal (RFP) has been issued; the City is seeking innovative proposals from interested parties.

## Overlay Update

The SCRA continues to pursue progress on the Studio City Overlay. It turns out the City Planning Department must hold a community meeting to ascertain the needs of the community as part of its planning process. This meeting, to be held in February, will be similar to the Town Hall meeting hosted by the SCRA in 2008. Residents and interested parties are encouraged to participate in this meeting to ensure the voice of the community is heard. Watch for SCRA's "News & Notes" for the specific meeting date. If you are not receiving "News & Notes" via email and would like to, please contact the SCRA by email at [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org).

## ASK THE SCRA

**Editor's Note:** Email your community questions to [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org)

**Q:** What is the function and purpose of the metal grates being installed on the street catch basins?

**SCRA:** The grates capture garbage washed into these drains by rains, sprinkler overflow and other surface waters. They catch Styrofoam cups, other detritus and, at this time of year, leaves, all of which go directly into the Los Angeles



## TO THE MARKET

Residents of Studio City may not realize it, but they are lucky to have the Studio City Farmers Market to shop for so many fresh fruits and vegetables. January is the time to get in shape, and the Farmers Market can help. Food travels an average of 2,000 miles to get to the supermarket – that's not so healthy! Buying from local farms not only assures consumers they are getting the freshest produce, but it boosts the local economy and revitalizes the environment. New vendors include Fuse Catering, who makes a pretty good selection of gourmet soups to go. John, the knife sharpener, will be visiting the Farmers Market periodically to sharpen knives, scissors and gardening tools.

The Studio City Farmers Market is presented jointly by the Studio City Residents Association and the Studio City Chamber of Commerce. Parking is available in the structure at CBS Studios on Radford.

River. The ultimate purpose is to reduce the amount of pollutants going to the ocean by cleaning up the Los Angeles River. The City of Los Angeles is under federal mandate to improve the quality of surface water being discharged into the ocean. The proposed project for Save LA River- Studio City Open Space on Whitsett Ave. will capture more than sixteen acres of storm water and will be significant in efforts to clean up the river's discharge into the ocean.

**Q:** Why did the "No Parking" signs appear on the bridges over the river on Laurel Canyon Boulevard?

**SCRA:** Given the numerous complaints about car sales on Laurel Canyon and the inability of the LAPD to cite or move the cars, the City Council office (CD2), with the help of the Department of Transportation, discovered it is illegal to park on any bridge in Los Angeles. As a result, the signs were erected, and the problem has been diminished to some extent.

**Q:** Now that the new parking meters are installed on Ventura Boulevard and the hours for fee parking extended (including Sundays), will there be evening and weekend monitoring?

**SCRA:** The City has always had 24-hour parking

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**The SCRA congratulates and thanks Studio City Senior Lead Officer Mike Lewis and the North Hollywood Division for their success in capturing the suspect responsible for two recent armed robberies in Studio City – one on Vantage, south of Ventura Blvd. and the other on Valleyheart next to the footbridge adjacent to the Los Angeles River.**

## (Ask the SCRA, cont'd)

enforcement and will continue with the same number of enforcers. However, their routes will be redistributed to account for the extended parking hours. The SCRA was told longer meter hours were implemented, since after 6:00 p.m., many cars stay on the street for several hours, not allowing others to park. Also, the restaurant valets are using street parking and tying up the spaces for long periods of time. Surveys show 30 percent of the traffic in this area is generated by people driving around looking for parking.

Registration to park at the new parking meters and be able to renew parking via cell phone is available at [www.MParkUSA.com](http://www.MParkUSA.com). The hot line for the new meters is 877-215-3958.

## IT'S HAPPENING IN STUDIO CITY

### Studio City Branch Library

**Suspenseful Saturday Cinema:** February 21, 2009, 3:30-5:30 p.m. "Beat the Devil," a 1953 classic starring Humphrey Bogart

**Free Classical Music Concert,** February 28, 2009, 4:30-5:30 p.m., featuring UCLA Gluck Cello Quarter with Jennifer Li, Christopher Ahn, Bryan West and Hillary Smith

**Book Sale:** February 28, 2009, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Early admission at 9:00 a.m. for Friends' members. Please bring your own bags or boxes for purchases.

**Book Donations:** Every Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Books accepted in good enough condition to be resold.

## WHEN WENDY'S DONE... WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN COUNCIL DISTRICT 2?

On March 3, 2009, there will be an election for the office of City Controller. Should no candidate get a majority of the votes, there will be a run off. Assuming current City Councilmember Wendy Greuel is the successful candidate – Council District 2 (CD2) – then who will represent her district?

When Joel Wachs was the council person for this district, he resigned before the end of his term to take a position in New York with the Andy Warhol Foundation. Wachs' resignation left CD2 without representation in council chambers for quite a while. Residents of CD2 may be facing a similar situation should Wendy Greuel take the Office of Controller on July 1, 2009.

At that point, while there will be no elected representative from CD2, the day-to-day functioning of the district will be managed by the office of the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA). That office will oversee administrative functions but have no legislative authority. However, some members of the CD2 staff will remain to assist. Requests, queries and other

concerns, during that time, can be directed to the CD2 field staff or the CLA's office. There will be a "point person" in the CLA office for this purpose.

An election for the CD2 seat is subject to many variables and is set by the City Council. One consideration is the cost of an election and whether such an election can be tied into another. At present there is no definite answer as to when the election would be held, but the SCRA will endeavor to learn more about the process after March.

The SCRA has learned there will be a transition period and that meetings will be held to address outstanding issues and other matters of concern to CD2. The SCRA board will keep Studio City residents updated on developments as they occur.

## BEAUTIFUL STUDIO CITY

A hearty thank you to all who are contributing during the current 2008-2009 Studio City Beautification Association (SCBA) fundraising effort to make Studio City more beautiful!

### Oasis

The SCBA's plans to revitalize this area along Ventura Blvd. across from Marshall's are on schedule for spring adoption. The application process is going smoothly. The SCBA met with LA Public Works Engineering to finalize plans and is the proud recipient of a \$10,000 Community Beautification Grant award. The SCBA expects to start demolition by March 2009, with project completion by summer.

### Moorpark Parkway

The SCBA has secured the necessary political approvals and is moving actively to improve the two neglected side panels opposite Moorpark Park. This project will take one of two directions: either a conventional median adoption or a green streets project with the help of the City's Public Works Department and North East Trees. If the green streets project gets the nod, the project will require extensive engineering and take considerably longer, but the results could be spectacular and particularly helpful to the health of the Los Angeles River and Santa Monica Bay. If a green streets approach proves not to be viable, the SCBA will file applications and plans to improve the side panels with trees

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*Bill Harmond, Director, SCBA, updates residents on new plans to revitalize areas of the community.*

## (SCBA, cont'd)

and landscaping designed to work in harmony with Moorpark Park. Either way the improvements will be something in which Studio City residents will take pride.

### Studio Oaks

The SCBA received a huge boost from Councilmember Jack Weiss with his award of \$375,000 toward Phase I of Studio Oaks Neighborhood Park improvements. Phase I & II planning is underway by the Studio Oaks steering committee and LA Public Works Engineering. There will be a community meeting at Bistro Garden on January 28, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. to present a design overview and a strategy to complete and maintain the park.



*More than 700 guests participated in the January 18 official open house of new Fire Station 78 on Whitsett Ave. north of Ventura Blvd. Pictured are members of the crew and Fire Chief Douglas L. Barry.*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*by Alan Dymond*

"It takes a village." This well-known phrase gives the basic outline of what it takes to raise a child. The same principle, however, can be applied to Studio City: it will take all of us here in our village at one level or another to get what is best for the present and future of our village. But let's not stop there. How about the village of Los Angeles? The task appears enormous, but if we can achieve a mind-set change, then things can only get better. The "business as usual" attitude in the inner halls of city government could just become irrelevant in the coming years. How about starting from the point that our elected officials should understand they have to be concerned more about the people who vote for them, rather than merely about "getting along" with their colleagues or looking to fund their future campaigns? Los Angeles is close to becoming dysfunctional, and City workers are not to blame. For example, we hear so much about how the City is broke and the typical reaction is what "fee," a.k.a. "tax," can be imposed to fill the coffers. So how about looking for cost savings and collecting outstanding monies owed to the City? And has the LA City Council ever acted on the audits and recommendation of the City Controller? Has the City adopted any of the cost savings that have been suggested? I am sure our members would like to know how many reports have been filed by the controller and what recommendations contained in the reports have been adopted. Anyone taking bets? We will have a new City Controller later this year. To what extent will the new controller conduct his or her duties to the fullest authority of the Office of Controller? Can the City Controller be effective and bring the City Council closer to more fiscal responsibility and accountability to the people who live, run businesses and work here?

On another note, Measure B is on the ballot next March. It addresses solar panels on our roof tops, using the gift of the sun and the free energy it provides. Who doesn't agree this is an idea that finally will come into being? But, and there is a but, is it what it appears to be? Some suggest there is a Trojan Horse aspect to this proposition. The SCRA will host a discussion at our next community meeting. See details in this newsletter.

The February Community Meeting will also feature a forum of the candidates for city attorney, responding to the interests of our members who agreed this would be a valuable meeting. The SCRA is collecting questions in advance of the forum to make the evening a highly productive one. Please email questions to the SCRA office at [SCRAboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:SCRAboard@studiocityresidents.org).

The election for the councilmember for Council District Five (CD5) will take place in March. Some SCRA members reside in CD5, and, therefore, they have an interest in this election. Under the auspices and organization of Jeff Berk, each candidate running for this office met individually with a local group and three board members of the SCRA. The one-on-one discussion was very informative as the group asked questions and queried the past and future actions of the candidates. Should any SCRA member like to get involved in the election for the CD5 seat or learn more, contact Jeff Berk at [Greenleafwatch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Greenleafwatch@sbcglobal.net). Other sources to check are [www.ronkayela.com/cd5interviews.htm](http://www.ronkayela.com/cd5interviews.htm) or [www.ronkayela.com/cd5survey.htm](http://www.ronkayela.com/cd5survey.htm).

*Alan Dymond*



# MONTHLY COMMUNITY MEETING

Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009

Meeting Starts at 7:30 p.m.

## Agenda

- 7:00 p.m.** Light refreshments
- 7:30 p.m.** - Presentation on Measure B  
- Community Forum featuring  
candidates for LA City Attorney

## Meeting Location

**Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Theatre  
4222 Vineland Avenue, Studio City**

*When entering the hotel driveway, turn left and go through the parking turnstile. Drive on and turn right and go to the large back lot. Exit at the southwest corner of the lot and signs will direct you to the Beverly Garland Theatre. Your parking will be validated at the sign-in table.*



### SCRA Committees

Civic  
Crime and Safety  
Membership  
Overlay  
Planning and Land Use  
Studio City History Project

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Co-Chairs  
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SaveLARiverOpenSpace@studiocityresidents.org

### School Liaisons

Carpenter - Bonnie Goodman  
Oakwood - Tammy Lundgren  
Walter Reed - Bonnie Kalaf

### Studio City Farmer's Market

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