

# THE VALLEY VILLAGER

VALLEY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



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## Chandler Median Billboards

In a major accomplishment for the Association, in August and September, Eller Media and Outdoor Systems removed, without compensation, the remaining nine billboards from the Chandler Boulevard median where it intersects with Laurel Canyon Boulevard and with Whitsett Avenue. Gone is the ugly clutter of the billboards which was there. The appearance of the median is substantially improved.



The removals were completed in accordance with a 90-day schedule agreed to at a meeting in June at State Senator Alarcon's Van Nuys office between Eller Media, Outdoor Systems, the MTA, owner of the median, President Lori Dinkin and Marc Woerschling of the Association and Alvin Kusumoto of Senator Alarcon's staff. Eller Media removed its three billboards in exchange for being permitted to erect a replacement billboard on the MTA's right-of-way near LAX. Outdoor Systems removed its six billboards without requiring offsetting replacements.

The community is grateful to Senator Richard Alarcon and his predecessor, Senator Herschel Rosenthal for their help. Early this year, Senator Alarcon resurrected and reintroduced SB 1912 previously introduced by Herschel Rosenthal, to repeal the compensation requirement in State law for billboards removed from publicly owned property. And as Herschel Rosenthal did in 1998, Senator Alarcon obtained approval of SB 1912 in the Senate. This provided an incentive for the billboard companies to negotiate again with the Association.

After seven years and five attempts, the Association was successful in obtaining the removal of the billboards due to persistence, trying again

(Continued on Page 2)

## Take Note

⇒ Persistence pays off once again. There is finally a traffic signal with a left turn arrow at the corner of Riverside Drive and Laurel Canyon Boulevard. The Department of Traffic must have become tired of hearing from VVHA about the traffic snarls at that corner.

⇒ One more eyesore in our community is about to be replaced with an asset. The very rundown, ugly duplex on the southwest corner of Hesby Street and Laurel Canyon Boulevard will be bulldozed very soon. A high-grade townhouse complex will be constructed on the property. Preliminary plans look very attractive.

⇒ Lori Dinkin joined members of other Associations and concerned citizens for a meeting at City Hall about the high level of Chromium 6 in the water system. Our president, as always, held her own in fast company, speaking directly after noted activist Erin Brockovich.

⇒ Residents throughout the City have expressed great concern about the safety of the Department of Water and Power's plan to recycle waste water for home use. In response to many phone calls and letters from constituents, City Councilman Joel Wachs is pressing the City to fund an independent

(Continued on Page 3)

## Billboards

(Continued from Page 1)

and again; pragmatism on both the part of the Association and the billboard companies in agreeing to the approach of relocating the billboards rather than removal without any offsetting provisions and diplomacy. The negotiations between the Association and the billboard companies were civil and businesslike, and the letters sent by the Association to the State legislators were factual, professional and cordial. A final factor was the good fortune of having two State Senators, Rosenthal and Alarcon, who were receptive to and understanding of the Association's concerns about the appearance of the Chandler Boulevard median.

With billboard removal accomplished, the Association will focus on completing the planting of the rows of trees on the edges of the median started in 1998. Presently, there are gaps in the rows of trees where the billboards used to be and in the section of the median east of Colfax Avenue. The Association's ultimate goal is to have the entire median landscaped.

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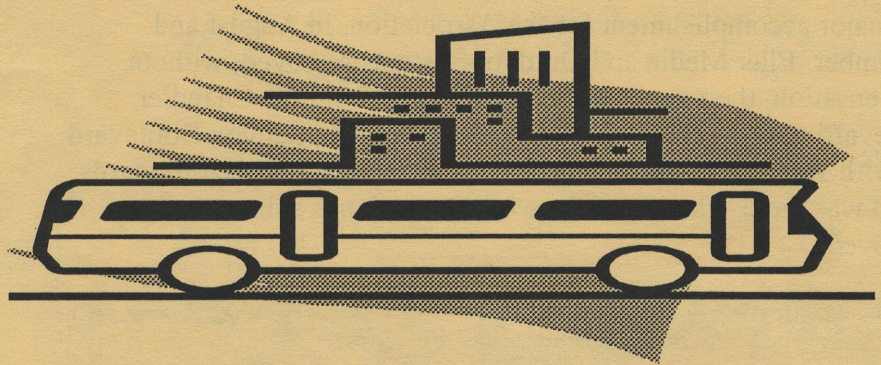
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## Median Busway Opposed

Recently the Board of Valley Village Homeowners Association unanimously voted to oppose plans by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to utilize the Chandler Boulevard Median for a busway to link the North Hollywood Metro Rail station to Warner Center. Rather, the Association favors removal of the useless railroad tracks and landscaping the median, with transportation facilities limited to a bikeway.



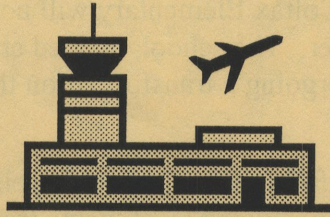
On September 20<sup>th</sup> Lori Dinkin and Tom Paterson attended a meeting at the Shaarey Zedek Temple on Chandler Boulevard east of Coldwater Canyon Avenue to protest the MTA's plans for the busway. Speakers at the meeting voiced concerns about noise, air pollution, danger to children, the visual impacts of berms and walls, and a perceived division of the community. One of the speakers noted that the busway is similar to the proposal made in the mid 1980's for a surface light rail line in the Chandler Boulevard median. That proposal for a light rail line was killed as a result of protests led by the Shaarey Zedek Temple. In the early 1990's State Senator Alan Robbins obtained passage of a law prohibiting surface rail transit in the Burbank/Chandler right-of-way between the Hollywood Freeway and Hazeltine Avenue and requiring that it be placed underground.

With local funds for the previously planned westward extension of the Red Line subway no longer available, the busway is being proposed by the MTA as an alternative in their recently released "Major Investment Study". The report analyzes several transit alternatives for the right-of-way. Besides a busway, a light rail line and Metrolink-type diesel trains are being evaluated and considered.



## Flyers About Flying

The City of Burbank is required to conduct a study to evaluate noise impacts created by the airport. Meetings are being scheduled to give the communities impacted an opportunity to be heard. At the meetings in August, Valley Village residents showed up in



substantial numbers. The informative flyers sent by the Association to all members alerted everyone to the importance of a large turnout. There will be other meetings and we will need to show up at them, too. Vigilance is an important tool in protecting our community from the noise and pollution of an LAX style airport.

We will continue to fight any terminal expansion which does not include an enforceable nighttime curfew and a real cap on flights.

### Take Note

(Continued from page 1)

study by qualified scientists before going forward with the plan to recycle waste water for drinking.

⇒ Valley Village Homeowners Association elections will be coming up in January 2001. The requirements to run for the board as stated in the Association by-laws are very simple. Candidates must be residents of Valley Village and paid-up members of the Association. Anyone interested in serving on the nominating committee or in seeking a position on the board please write to P.O. Box 4916, Valley Village, CA 91617.

⇒ The Valley Village Homeowners Association had more new members join this year than any other year. Continue the good work of telling your friends and neighbors about the Association. If you want membership information for a friend or neighbor call the Association at 506-5158.

## Beware!

### *The Scammers Are Afoot Again*

A group of at least three people are operating a complex and potentially dangerous scam in Valley Village.

A Valley Village couple was taken advantage of by a very sophisticated operation. On his way into the bank the husband was greeted by a woman who seemed to know him and inquired where his wife was today. She identified herself as a teller at the bank. After some innocent seeming conversation she elicited enough information to cue her partners in crime. One man phoned the wife at home telling her he was from DWP, had spoken to her husband as he left for the bank and had been given permission to check inside for a water problem. He had a convincing story about a break at a construction site that was releasing contaminated water into the system. When he came to the door, he appeared legitimate and unsuspecting. While he kept the wife busy at the kitchen sink turning on water, his partner ransacked the other rooms. This person got a call on his cell phone, came into the kitchen to say they were through and they both left by the front door. The husband drove up and came in by the back door almost immediately. As soon as they compared notes, the robbery was discovered. When they checked at the bank, of course the woman was not an employee.

There are probably other variations of this being tried, so take the advice of these sadder but wiser Valley Village residents, and be on your guard!



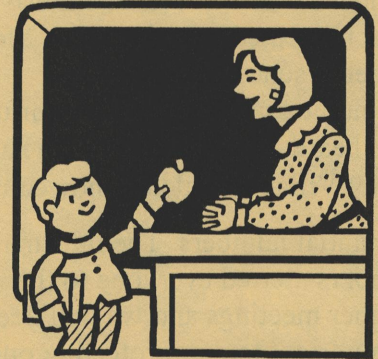
**November 7th**

## Colfax Elementary School

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If PTA president Gail Acosta has her way, Colfax Elementary will not be "the valley's best-kept secret" for much longer. The school, located at the corner of Addison and Colfax streets, is undergoing a transformation that will make it the heart of Valley Village.

Principal Joanie Freckmann, now in her first full year at Colfax, dispels the common misperception that the school is populated by students from other areas. "We only have about 60 to 70 children coming from two other schools immediately adjacent to our area. We have some Special Ed. students who come here from a variety of areas. But most of our 530 children live in Valley Village." She added that the busses parked by the school are due to the presence of the dispatch office at the corner of Colfax and Houston streets. Among the various projects now underway at the school are: a school orchestra, a computer lab available to all students, a holiday musical, "Annie," afterschool homework, playground and sewing groups, a "latchkey" program and a parent center. The fundraising organization for the school, Parent Association of Colfax Elementary (PACE), hopes to rebuild the kindergarten playground and eventually install a permanent sound system in the school auditorium.



The school has ambitious plans, but very limited funds. The Valley Village Homeowners Association supports close ties between the school and our community. Valley Village residents can help the school in a variety of ways, such as saving the "Boxtops for Education" on General Mills products and contributing recyclable cans and plastic. Those who shop at Target and Vons can register with those stores' donation programs and designate Colfax Elementary as the recipient. From October 1 through May 31, 2001, Sherman Oaks Fashion Square patrons may take their store receipts to the concierge desk to help Colfax Elementary win points in the "Shopping for Students" program.

Anyone with questions, or interested in providing other contributions, should contact Bruce Neckels, PACE president, at 508-6789, or VVHA board member Paula Humerick, at 753-7518. The school's website is: [www.lausd.k12.ca.us](http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us).

## The Fourth of July Remembered

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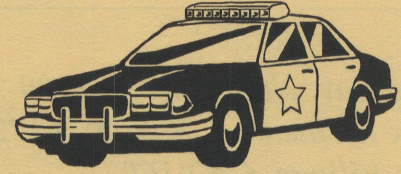
The annual Valley Village Homeowners Association's Fourth of July Parade and Celebration was fun for all. The attractions included military vehicles courtesy of the Army Reserve, a Police escort, a fife and drum and the now famous Gentry Street float. (Gentry Street challenges any other street to try and out do them next year!)

Many new members joined the Association after the parade and were entered into a raffle for a gift basket. Thanks to Association member, Mimi O'Keefe for making and donating the gift basket that made our Fourth of July membership drive a huge success. Congratulations new members Karen Loop & Howard McCain, winners of the gift basket.

Keys were found at the park after the celebration. If you lost your keys during the parade or at the park please call the Association at 506-5158.

## Welcome News

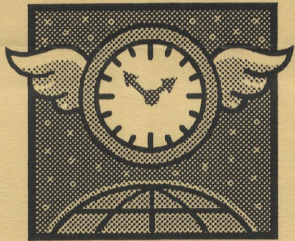
Yielding to pressure from community activists (including Valley Village Homeowners Association) Mayor Riordan and Police Chief Parks have announced plans to restore the Community Policing Program which had been eliminated in 1999. The Mayor said the new plan will bring back community policing without reducing field or patrol resources. The decision delighted community leaders such as City Councilman Joel Wachs, who noted that support of the program ran deep in the Valley for many years.



On the recommendation of the Christopher Commission in the early 1990's Senior lead officers were assigned to work as liaisons to Neighborhood Watch groups, homeowners associations and business leaders, with the goal of addressing local criminal activity. The program proved popular and effective, and there was an outcry from community activists when Chief Parks reassigned the lead officers to routine patrol duties.

Captain Bruce Crosley of the North Hollywood Division said he expects the changes in assignment to be put into effect at the end of October.

## Is There A Curfew?



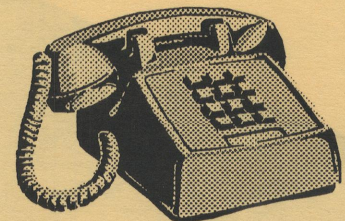
Control of the noise from nighttime flights has been an important issue in reaching an agreement for a new terminal at Burbank Airport. Proof of how insubstantial the voluntary curfew is was brought home by the announcement that starting Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> United Airlines will schedule regular service from San Francisco arriving at 11:15 pm nightly.

Although the Airport Authority urges airlines to comply with a voluntary curfew between 10 pm and 7 am, it cannot currently ban flights during those hours.

If there is no mandatory curfew in place before the terminal is enlarged, nothing will prevent the airlines from operating flights 24 hours a day. With a larger terminal and more gates, why wouldn't they?

## Some Useful Phone Numbers

Burbank Airport Noise Complaint Number:	800-441-0409
Van Nuys Airport Noise Complaint Number:	800-560-0010
Abandoned Shopping Cart Pick Up:	800-252-4613
Abandoned Vehicles on Public Property:	800-ABANDON
Bulky Item Pick Up:	800-773-2489
Gas Leaks:	800-427-2200
Graffiti on Public or Private Property:	818-SPARKLE
Household Hazardous Waste Hotline:	800-98-TOXIC
Problem Street Lights:	818-994-LITE
Street Lighting:	800-303-5267



## Homeowners Association Meeting

*Wednesday, November 8, 2000 7:30pm*

*Colfax Elementary School, 11724 Addison Street  
Valley Village, CA 91607*

The featured speaker at the meeting will be **Antonio Villaraigosa**, who is running for Mayor of Los Angeles. As a freshman legislator in the State Assembly he served on the powerful Appropriations and Budget Committees. In 1997, he was appointed Assembly Majority Leader, and in February 1998, was sworn in as the 63<sup>rd</sup> Speaker of the California State Assembly, serving as Speaker until April, 2000. Mr. Villaraigosa is a lifelong resident of Los Angeles and is a graduate of UCLA. He lives with his family in Mt. Washington and has four children and one granddaughter.

**Jill Barad**, who is running for retiring City Councilman Michael Feuer's seat will also address the meeting. She is a resident of Sherman Oaks and an active member of the Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce.

Also featured at the meeting, **Lorraine Lopez**, Community Affairs Manager for Mayor Riordan, **Fire Captain Rod Wilmont** and **Police Officers from North Hollywood Division**.

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**NOTE:** On page 2, PP-2  
**Marc Woershing**  
attended Sept. 20th meeting