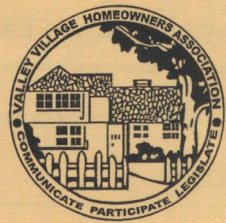


# THE VALLEY VILLAGER

VALLEY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



VOL. 19 NUMBER 2 April 2009

P.O. BOX 4916, VALLEY VILLAGE, CA 91617

## Sign & Billboard Ordinance

### Our Position

- Retain the citywide ban on new billboards in Los Angeles approved in 2002.
- Repeal the exception provisions approved in 2002.
- Prohibit further new digital billboards.
- Prohibit supergraphics signs on the sides of buildings.
- Adopt a policy of no retroactive legalizing of illegal billboards put up without building permits and no more reductions in sign inspection fees.
- Renegotiate the settlement agreements which allow 878 existing signs to be converted to digital billboards.

### Why

Sign and billboard clutter is ugly. The proliferation of billboards, digital billboards and supergraphic signs in Los Angeles has harmed the City's appearance, lowered the quality of life, reduced property values and made the City less desirable as a place to live and for business investment. Excessive signage is also a traffic safety hazard.

### What you should do now!

Contact your elected representatives:

Wendy Greuel, City Councilmember - District 2 Phone: 818-755-7676

E-mail: [councilmember.greuel@lacity.org](mailto:councilmember.greuel@lacity.org)

Jack Weiss, City Councilmember - District 5 Phone: 818-902-3088

E-mail: [councilmember.weiss@lacity.org](mailto:councilmember.weiss@lacity.org)

Urge them: 1. to retain and strengthen the 2002 ban on new billboards;  
2. to repeal the provisions that allow exceptions to the 2002 ban in supplemental use districts, specific plans and in development agreements;  
3. not to approve any lawsuit settlements which legalize existing billboards or allow them to be converted to digital displays.

For the History of the issue see Page 3

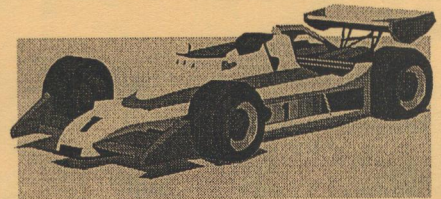
## 170 Soundwall

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors announced that \$4.6 million has been approved to complete the design stage of Soundwall Package 11. This is the next step toward construction of the soundwall on the 170 Freeway through Valley Village. Finally, there is some progress on this high priority project that has been stalled for more than a decade.

## Riverside Speedway

The Department of Transportation has plans to raise the speed limit on Riverside Drive from 35 mph to 40 mph. There is also a proposal to remove crosswalks. Because Riverside is a secondary highway the DOT is required to review the average speed of traffic every 8 to 10 years.

Current traffic moves in the 40 to 45 mph range, therefore the speed limit can be raised and crosswalks could be removed.



It hardly needs to be pointed out that this is a disastrous prospect for communities from Burbank city line to Van Nuys Boulevard. In Valley Village there is a high school, two elementary schools, a school for disabled children, several nursery schools, a temple, as well as business establishments and many residential buildings.

Email the Department of Transportation to be heard on this issue. Address:

[devinder.singh@dot.ca.gov](mailto:devinder.singh@dot.ca.gov)

## Neighborhood Watch

Senior Lead Officer Manny Arreygue is back at his desk after months on disability because of a back injury. He still needs some treatment but will be on full duty soon.

Burglary from motor vehicles continues to be a problem in our area. Active targets such as iPods and GPS devices are still being left in plain sight. Manny reminds us to remove all property from sight and lock them in the trunk.

Please continue to report any suspicious vehicles or persons in your area.

The next Basic Car Meeting will be Tuesday, April 21, 2009, 7:00pm at Victory Elementary School.

The next Police Community Representative Meeting will be Thursday, May 14, 2009, 7:00pm at Maurice Sendak Elementary School Auditorium.

If you would like to become more active with Neighborhood Watch please see our website: ValleyVillageHA.com, click on the Neighborhood Watch button. From there you can view the crime map and block captain information.

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Publisher: Peter Sanchez  
 Editor : Breice Reiner  
 Proofreader: Stuart Simen  
 Contributors:  
 Steve Ajalat Leslie Owens  
 Betty Velasco Marc Woerschling  
 Phone: 818-506-5158

## A Letter from the President

Dear Neighbors:

On May 19<sup>th</sup> the runoff election for the City Attorney, City Council District 5 and various Propositions will be held.

In the City Attorney race is Carmen Trutanich and Jack Weiss. City Council District 5, currently held by Jack Weiss, includes a portion of Valley Village. Paul Koretz and David Vahedi are in runoff for that City Council seat.

Also on the May 19<sup>th</sup> ballot are six propositions:

PROPOSITION 1A: State Budget. Changes California Budget Process. Limits State Spending. Increases "Rainy Day" Budget Stabilization Fund. Legislative Constitutional Amendment

PROPOSITION 1B: Education Funding. Payment Plan. Legislative Constitutional Amendment

PROPOSITION 1C: Lottery Modernization Act. Legislative Constitutional Amendment and Statute

PROPOSITION 1D: Children's Services Funding. Legislative Initiative Amendment

PROPOSITION 1E: Mental Health Services Funding. Temporary Reallocation. Helps Balance State Budget. Legislative Initiative Amendment

PROPOSITION 1F: Elected Officials' Salaries. Prevents Pay Increases During Budget Deficit Years. *Legislative Constitutional Amendment*

Please read up, get informed and then vote on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Peter

## Board Election – January 21<sup>st</sup> Results

Biennial election of officers and board of Valley Village Homeowners Association was held at the January 21, 2009 membership meeting. The new 2009-2010 board is:

President:	Peter Sanchez
Exec. Vice President:	Breice Reiner
Vice President:	Stuart Simen
Secretary:	Betty Velasco
Treasurer:	Cynthia Fagin
Past President:	Lori Dinkin
At Large:	Page Adams
	Steve Ajalat
	Jerry Fagin
	Kenneth Hearn
	Leslie Owens

Boardmembers must be paid up members of Valley Village Homeowners Association and willing to serve.

Thank you to the nominating committee: Stuart Simen, Lori Dinkin, Philip Raucher, Steve Simon, Page Adams and Robert Pine.

## Meet Leslie Owens

Leslie Owens, the newest member of the VVHA Board of Directors, brings nearly twenty years of familiarity with our neighborhood. As the local voting precinct for over a dozen years, Leslie knows many Valley Village residents and their community concerns. She actively advocates for neighborhood safety, and has spoken on our behalf at countless hearings and meetings. She doggedly fought a proposed car wash at the freeway entrance, citing its impact on pedestrian safety and increased traffic in an already dense intersection. Instead, an attractive public storage facility is located there. Her commitment to the community remains maintaining its safety and architectural integrity, appropriate use of zoning, and promoting attractive street and landscapes in common areas.

As the parents of two teens, Leslie and her husband remain active with their activities and education. With her daughter, Leslie authors "Dining a Deux," a recurring column in the Sherman Oaks-Studio City News; she is working with its publisher to increase the paper's circulation to Valley Village. Leslie is an active member of the Entertainment Group of Kiwanis International, based in Studio City. Gardening, cooking, reading, and cheering for her son and daughter in their respective sports, occupy Leslie's limited "free" time.

## New Principal at Colfax

After nearly nine great years, Principal Joanie Freckmann retired at the end of January. Under Ms. Freckmann Colfax has been transformed from a little known neighborhood school into a first-rate academic facility. The previous assistant principal, Susanna Gomez-Judkins, who has worked closely with Ms. Freckmann for five years will fill the position of Principal.

In recent years Colfax has set itself apart from other area schools and has become a California Distinguished School earning the Bravo Award for high achievement in arts and music and attaining the status of an affiliated-charter with significant independence in developing programs, academic curriculum, and governing its staff, administration and school operations.

There is little doubt that under Ms. Gomez-Judkins, Colfax will continue to excel and be an asset of the Valley Village community.

### **CERT Class Forming**

Community Emergency Response Team  
You Can't Predict But You Can Prepare!

To sign up for CERT training one weekend in June 2009 contact [dorothyapple@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dorothyapple@sbcglobal.net)

## **History of the Issue – Billboard Ordinance** (continued from page 1)

In 2002 the City Council approved a ban on new billboards. However, along with the ban the City Council allowed three exceptions: (1) within supplemental sign districts, (2) in specific plan areas and (3) in projects that had development agreements. This breached a 50 year old ban on billboards facing the freeways. In August 2008 a Federal trial court invalidated the 2002 ban on new billboards because the lack of standards in the exceptions granted the City too much discretion. The Court stated the City Council would have the power to arbitrarily pick and choose which billboard companies were subject to the ban and which were granted exceptions to it, which could lead to the regulation of content in violation of the First Amendment.

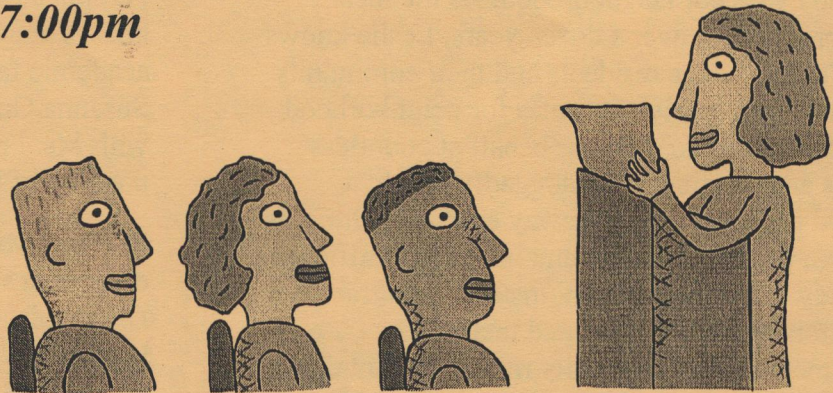
In 2006 and 2007, the City Council approved settlements to lawsuits filed by five billboard companies. The settlements favored the companies and retroactively legalized any previously illegal signs that the companies had put up without building permits and allowed up to 878 existing billboards to be converted to digital billboards. These very bright billboards generated immediate protests in neighborhoods where they were placed.

On March 26, 2009 the City Planning Commission approved a sign and billboard ordinance which continues the 2002 ban on new billboards and also bans digital and supergraphics signs. However, the Commission, while deleting the exception provisions for specific plans and development agreements, also approved two new exception provisions; comprehensive sign programs for large development projects and a sign modification procedure that can be used by smaller projects.

## Homeowners Association Membership Meeting

***Wednesday, April 15, 2008 - 7:00pm***  
***Colfax School Auditorium***  
***11724 Addison Street***  
***Valley Village, CA 91607***

Light Refreshments  
will be served at 7:00 pm.



\*\*\*\*\*

### Earth Day Fair in Valley Village

Where: Riverside Drive & Ben Avenue (on the lot of the former Steven's Nursery)

When: Saturday, April 25, 2009 from 10:00am to 4:00pm

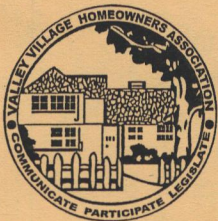
There will be recycle programs, free trees, Tree People volunteers, live music and food. Information will be available from City service departments and the Valley Village Homeowners Association. Also face painting and book readings for kids.

Please bring non-perishable food to benefit the local Senior Center & Food Banks.

For information call Neighborhood Council Valley Village 818-759-8204 or visit [myvalleyvillage.com](http://myvalleyvillage.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

## VALLEY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



P.O. BOX 4916  
 VALLEY VILLAGE, CA 91617  
 818-506-5158  
[www.ValleyVillageHA.com](http://www.ValleyVillageHA.com)

*Neighbors Working Together To Improve The Quality Of Life*