

NEWSLETTER



Number 171

April 2000

New Local Councils Top West Adams Agenda This Spring

Charter Changes Way Decisions Will Be Made

When Los Angeles voters passed the Charter Reform amendment in 1999, they mandated more local control over land use, development and city services, with the establishment of Area Planning Commissions (to replace the current Board of Zoning Appeals) and Neighborhood Councils, which will be advisory groups representing smaller sections of the city.

The Area Planning Commissions start up on July 1st (most of the historic West Adams District is included in the new South Los Angeles Area Commission, which also includes southeast L.A. and goes as far south as about the 105 Freeway). The Neighborhood Councils will be implemented in 2001, and will be required to include participation from all community sectors: home owners, renters, property owners, institutions and businesses. Each Neighborhood Council will have to be certified by the Department of Neighbor-

Continued on page 8

250 Participate in First Neighborhood Workshop

With over 250 citizens in attendance, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) held its first in a series of sixteen public workshops on March 11 in the historic West Adams District to help plan and develop a citywide system of neighborhood councils (NCs).

Among the attendees were also a number of City officials, other political dignitaries and activists who, stayed the entire meeting to address the participants gathered at Saint Sophia’s Cathedral on Normandie. The Church served as the central meeting point for the Westlake, Wilshire, South LA and Southeast LA areas. These officials were Mayor Richard Riordan, 2nd District Councilmember Joel Wachs, LA League of Women Voters Xandra Kayden, former Elected Charter Reform Commissioner Bennett Kayser, representatives from various Council offices and even former presidential candidate and Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis (who now teaches at UCLA, and attends St. Sophia’s.)

“I cannot tell you how exhilarated I feel, being at the first meeting” for Neighborhood Councils, said Wachs, who strongly lobbied for this charter amendment. “I just want you to imagine Los Angeles as a family of neighborhoods. It’s a shifting of power from the few persons in City Hall who have been making decisions to the people who are impacted by the decisions.”

Board of Neighborhood Commissioners President Lee Kanon Alpert welcomed the participants. The action started immediately with facilitator Catherine Schuster who directed the participants to break into smaller groups, each facilitated by a volunteer staff member from City’s departments (Building and Safety, Bureau of Sanitation, Human Relations Commission and the Mayor’s Office). There were also groups facilitated in not only Spanish, but in Korean as well.

Within the groups, there were a series of discussion topics to be covered each under a broader subject. These

Continued on page 8

A Church Reborn

Join WAHA for a tour of the newly-renovated First African Methodist Episcopal Zion Cathedral and Community Center, plus

a talk by its restoration architect.... AND

WAHA Elections

There’s still time to declare your candidacy for WAHA’s Board of Directors (see page 2)

First AME Zion’s complex of buildings was designed in 1930 by architects H.M. Patterson and George W. Kelham in the Romanesque Revival style originally as the West Adams Presbyterian Church

Saturday, April 8 7 p.m.

1449 West Adams Boulevard

(just west of Vermont)

Potluck

**WEST ADAMS
HERITAGE ASSOCIATION**

2263 S. Harvard Boulevard
Historic West Adams
Los Angeles, California 90018
323/ 735-WAHA
E-Mail: wstadams@aol.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linda Scribner 323/735-1385
President

Jacqueline Sharps 323/766-8842
Vice-President; Membership

Secretary (vacant)

James Meister 323/766-8233
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Greg Stegall 323/734-7725
Co-chairs, Programs & Events

Jennifer Charnofsky 323/734-7391

Tony DuBois 323/732-7768
*Co-chairs, Membership/Community
Outreach*

John Kurtz 323/732-2990
Membership Database Administrator

Publications (vacant)

Jean Cade 323/737-5034
Member at large

Harold Greenberg 323/732-9536
Legal Advisor

Lyn Gillson 323/735-9371
Historian

Newsletter Staff

Laura Meyers 323/737-6146
Editor and Layout

Tom Gracyk 323/731-0987
Circulation

Janice Lipeles 323/737-2370
Advertising

President's Message by Linda Scribner

Spring has sprung and now that the rain has finally stopped (as much as it was needed) things are looking up all over the neighborhood, especially with the face lift of the Pacific French Bakery, the grand opening of the new Washington Irving Library, planting of numerous fruit tree throughout Harvard Heights, the re-landscaping of Gramercy Park and the completed restoration of the First AME Zion Church (WAHA contributed financially to this effort).

In fact our general meeting on April 8th will be held at this beautiful landmark church. The event will include a tour of the church, a presentation by the restoration architect and the election of our Board of Directors for the coming year. If you've thought about contributing now would be the time to step up.

The new Board will meet for their annual retreat all day Saturday, May 13, to determine the goals of the organization for the coming year, elect officers and evaluate the past year's efforts.

WAHA is on the move again. We are in the process of developing a formal grant program which will encourage neighborhood renewal. Two grants per year will be given for exterior restoration, one for commercial structures and one for private residents. The formal guide lines, application process and evaluation criteria are being finalized and will be discussed in an upcoming newsletter. We kicked off this effort with an initial grant for the facade restoration of the Pacific French Bakery, which will serve as a successful sample of this type of project. It's the first step of many which are needed to clean up and revitalize the commercial corridors in West Adams.

I look forward to seeing you all at our very exciting April meeting and don't forget, we need you to consider being a candidate for the WAHA Board of Directors.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

In March, the Membership Committee will be sending out individualized invoices with return envelopes to members to renew their memberships for the 2000 - 2001 year. Memberships in WAHA go from April to April every year. New WAHA Membership Cards will be mailed out enmasse in April, when the current membership cards expire. Typically if you don't renew the membership, you are taken off the Newsletter mailing list in June.

New WAHA Memberships taken out late in 1999 were extended through the 2000 - 2001 membership year, so if you recently took out a new WAHA Membership you will not have to renew now, though you'll get a new membership card in April. If you have any questions about the status of your WAHA membership you can contact John Kurtz, Membership Database Administrator, 323/ 732-2990.

WAHA BOARD ELECTIONS ARE COMING

West Adams Heritage Association needs you! Please consider running for a position on the WAHA Board of Directors. Officers of the Boards are elected by the Board Members at their May retreat meeting after the election of the Board by the general membership. Any of the current members (listed on page 2 of this Newsletter) would be happy to talk to you about Board activities. All positions available **MUST BE FILLED** to keep the organization viable.

The members Board of Directors are the heart and soul of this organization, and without a full and competent board WAHA could cease to function. So if you believe WAHA serves a valuable function in the West Adams community or if you have ideas on how the organization should be run, please step up, serve and contribute your expertise!

Inside This Issue

| | |
|---|----|
| Through My Eyes | 4 |
| In the Garden: It's Tomato Time | 5 |
| Neighborhood News | 6 |
| Membership Directory Updates | 10 |
| Bortfeld Nominations Sought | 10 |
| Van Buren Assn. Watches Out for Neighborhood | 11 |
| Resources | 12 |
| April Birthdays | 13 |
| Neighborhood Grants Program | 13 |
| Member Discounts | 14 |
| Classified Ads | 15 |

Community Calendar

All committee meetings begin at 7 p.m.

April

- 4/8 WAHA General Meeting
and
ELECTIONS
First AME Zion Cathedral
1449 West Adams Blvd.
Potluck
- 4/12 Community Relations
Jacqueline Sharps' home
2229 S. Gramercy Place
323/766-8842
- 4/18 Newsletter Committee
Call Laura Meyers for location
323/737-6146
- 4/24 Zoning & Preservation Committee
(LAUSD Issues!)
Contact Tom Florio for location
213/749-8469
- 4/26 Neighborhood Council Workshop
John Burroughs School
600 S. McCadden Place
6:30 p.m.
- 5/13 WAHA Board Retreat
Call Linda Scribner
323/735-1385

West Adams in the News...

Okay, so the press thought the missing Oscars were found in "Koreatown." Other media DO seem to know where West Adams is.

The current issue of Victorian Home features our very own Pink Lady, restored and decorated by Ann and Ed Dorr. Susanne Henderson invited the editor, Erika Kotite, to tour West Adams and this house last year. The Pink Lady, built in the 1880s and moved in 1899 to 1007 West 24th Street, is a fine example of Queen Anne architecture.

And, Architectural Digest's April Hollywood Issue features Busby Berkeley's Beaux Arts villa at 3500 West Adams Blvd., where he lived with his mother from 1937 until her death in 1946.

Garden and Paint Contests Slated

Every June, West Adams Heritage hosts a special gardens general meeting where we learn more about our own garden plots and take a look at our neighbors' efforts to beautify their homes and gardens. This year is no different.

WAHA is looking for entries for the annual Garden and for the Painting Contests. The deadline is April 10. The May newsletter will publish all the nominees of outstanding gardens and/or new paint jobs for the year (perhaps with a map) so members can view each entry. We will announce an official weekend in May when WAHA will photograph the nominated gardens, and that will be the time for members to review the nominees, so Gardeners, Heads Up! Be sure your spring garden is in its best form in May.

Please feel free to nominate any paint job done in the past 12 months, or any outstanding garden in your neighborhood. This is a good opportunity for people outside your immediate neighborhood to not only know about major improvements throughout the West Adams community but also give them a chance to see them.

All nominations, with address and homeowner's name, should go to Ed Trospen (2515 4th Avenue, Historic West Adams, Los Angeles 90018; 323/734-2010 phone, 323/730-0432 fax, or e-mail: edtrospen@aol.com). Look for details about the June garden meeting and contest awards in the next issue of the newsletter.

Candidate Statement

By John Deaven

When I read in Linda Scribner's March column that the Publications Chair of the Board of Directors was available, I thought that maybe I should consider running. I have never considered running for the WAHA Board before. Yet, I have to admit that I do enjoy writing for and reading our newsletter. Thus, I telephoned Linda, who encouraged me to write this "candidate statement."

My wife, Nancy, and I bought our 4th Avenue house in 1987. Nancy was seven months pregnant with our first child, Peggy Sue. We loved our house so much that we just prayed raising a family in the inner city would be okay. So far, so good!

Once my 4th Avenue neighbor Fran Carraway told me that WAHA gives her many ways to feel creative, plus a strong sense of community. I guess that is how I felt about WAHA also. I enjoy writing for the newsletter. That's the creative part for me. And yes, in this vast city, WAHA brings me closer to my neighbors and provides lovely settings to socialize in.

I will always enjoy partying with WAHA people. However, as Linda wrote, maybe it's time to "step forward and be counted."

Through My Eyes Only:**The California Sycamore**

By John B. Deaven and Joe Deaven

Recently our 10-year-old son Joe had to do a fourth grade report on a plant or animal native to California. Being a true WAHA parent, I strongly encouraged him to focus on two California Sycamores in his own yard. They are two of the tallest trees on our property. With the help of the Encyclopaedia Britannica and Dad's reminiscing, he proudly came home with an "A" paper. Joe, therefore, suggested I use it for this column. I decided to take him up on his offer. Here's what was documented

The Sycamore tree is native to North America, Europe and Asia. Here in our own state, we have a type called "The California Sycamore." In fact, two huge California Sycamores grow in our yard at our house on 4th Avenue, here in Los Angeles. The circumference of the trunk of the largest one is 9 feet, and it is over 80 feet tall. Both trees tower over our two-story house, and one can see the top branches from the Santa Monica Freeway (#10). The bark is light creamy brown in color. The "fruit" is a small ball that hangs from drooping stems. The California Sycamore is a broad-leaf tree. Its leaves have 5 points. Some get very large. Once we found one in our yard that was 17 inches wide!

A tree "eats" through its leaves, which gets sap from the roots. The leaves absorb carbon dioxide from the air. From the sun's energy the leaf turns the sap and carbon dioxide into sugar. This is called "photosynthesis." During photosynthesis, the leaves also produce oxygen into the air. Man and animals need oxygen to breath.

Lafayette Square House Tour: An Urban Sanctuary

by Ellen Farwell

The Lafayette Square Association opens seven of its lovely doors for a special home tour on Sunday, April 30, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

George L. Crenshaw, a real estate developer in the early 1900s, subdivided the area and built his mansion in Lafayette Square in 1912. Soon other prominent citizens were building individually-designed homes there. George Pepperdine, of Pepperdine University, "credit dentist" Dr. Campbell, W.C. Fields, Fatty Arbuckle, Princess Pignatelli, society editor for the Herald-Examiner, and Paul Williams, noted African-American architect, all lived in the Square.

Lafayette Square's residents are dedicated to preserving the history and integrity of the community. Their commitment has been instrumental in creating an urban sanctuary that is a culturally diverse oasis within the city. The association is in the final stages of being designated an Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. So please, come enjoy the day with us!

Cost: \$25 in advance, \$30 day of event
Ticket info: 323/692-7737

My family has watched squirrels on our California Sycamore branches. One had its home in the trunk. We have also watched California Blue Jays and other birds resting on the shady branches. Once we witnessed a Blue Jay fighting hard with a squirrel on the tree. The bird was defending its nearby nest of eggs from the rodent.

The California Sycamore loses all of its leaves every year. They go from green to brown, and fall off. Fresh new light green leaves appear on them every spring.

Reproduction is possible because the tree contains both male (stamens) and female (pistils) "flowers," which grow on different parts of the tree. Insects and wind bring the male pollen to the female part to create a seed. Next to our huge California Sycamore is a tiny, baby tree that started from a dropped seed. We put bricks around it to protect it.

Studies show that one tree can consume up to 48 pounds of carbon dioxide build-up, which is the culprit in the global warming. Thus, the planet needs its trees, especially in major places like Los Angeles.

During our extremely hot summers, our house is greatly shaded by the two California Sycamores, making it naturally one of the coolest place in town with fresh oxygen surrounding it. After traveling across town in hot air, our family always delights in the feeling of returning to the cool, fresh air under our large California Sycamore trees. Do you have a favorite tree on your West Adams property?

Volunteers Sought

The organizing committee for the upcoming Lafayette Square house tours is seeking volunteer docents. Seven homes will be showcased and refreshments will be served to ticketholders. Docents, of course, will be able to see the homes at no charge. On the tour will be a Paul Williams designed home, a Japanese craftsman, and the rectory for the Episcopal Church of the Advent. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Ellen Farwell, 323/737-2528, email:Farwellenr@aol.com.

Mayor Richard Riordan & Nate Holden invite you to

La Cienega Farmers' Market Grand Opening

Thursday, May 4 3 - 7 p.m.
at La Cienega and 18th Street

**Fresh picked fruits, vegetables, honey, flowers,
eggs, kosher bakery products**

open every Thursday, rain or shine, 3 - 7 p.m.

In the Garden: It's Tomato Time

by Laura Meyers

As the spring days get longer, gardeners' (and cooks') thoughts turn to fresh, juicy, flavorful tomatoes. Not that tasteless modern hybrid you can buy at Ralphs — and not even the hothouse and "vine-ripened" varieties available at Pavilions, but the dense, intense, just-picked-from-the-vine tomato grown — easily — in one's own garden. Many gardeners, if they could choose but one vegetable to grow, would opt for the tomato.

None of the vegetables discovered in the New World took as long to catch on in Europe as the tomato (technically, it is a fruit). Used for centuries in Latin America and Mexico, it was first cultivated in France, Spain and Italy in 1544 but it was regarded as a curiosity (or, perhaps, even venomous: during the Renaissance, tomatoes were nicknamed "love apples" but were thought to be deadly poison) in England and its American colonies until the early 1800s. In 1835, the *Maine Farmer* finally recognized tomatoes as "a useful article of diet."

These days, tomato-crazed gardeners have myriad choices of plants and seeds to select from. They are pink, burgundy, orange, yellow, white, green, purple-black — oh, and red. Some even are striped. They are pear-shaped, and pointed, small and pound-sized large.

A new book, *100 Heirloom Tomatoes for the American Garden*, by Carolyn J. Male (Workman Publishing, 1999; \$17.95) describes old, rare and rediscovered varieties, and The Cooks Garden seed company (P.O. Box 5010, Hodges, S.C. 29653; 800/457-9703; www.cooksgarden.com) sells many heirloom tomato varieties.

One local nursery (Hortus, of course) boasts it has more than 150 varieties for sale, including some 60 organics and past Tomato Taste-Off Winners "Black Krim," "Yellow Brandywine," "Enchantment," and "Sungold" cherry tomatoes. Not that you should give up on stalwarts "Celebrity" (a vigorous, disease-resistant plant), "Early Girl" (bears early and all summer long), "Better Boy" (sturdy plants that produce large slicing tomatoes), "Roma" (plum tomatoes), and "Big Beef" (the 1994 All American selection, a beefsteak tomato with oldtime flavor). But be careful that you are not seduced when looking over all the choices: You are bound to grow too many tomatoes (unless you do a lot of canning, or have a very large family) if you set out more than six or eight plants.

When choosing varieties to grow, consider whether you want "determinate" or "indeterminate" plants. Determinates are bushier, shorter and set out all their fruit at once — great for canning or making spaghetti sauces to freeze. Indeterminates have long, sprawling vines and continue to set out fruit all summer long, until the first frost (and since we often never have that frost, you can sometimes pick tomatoes all winter long in Southern California from plants placed in the soil in April or May).

You can't make a poorly-bred hybrid tomato taste good, but with good planting and growing techniques you can refine and improve the flavor of an already-great tomato variety.

Tomatoes can be planted all spring, but usually will not set fruit when nighttime temperatures fall below 55 degrees. They need full sun for at least eight hours a day, and soils should be well-drained, with a good source of phosphorus. Choose a very sunny spot, preferably where tomatoes and related plants of the nightshade family (potatoes, eggplants, peppers) have not grown recently. Unless you purchased heirloom seeds, you'll find it easiest planting transplants purchased at the nursery. Set the transplant deep, with the first leaf just above soil level. The easiest way to train the plant off the ground and upward is to place a wire cage around the small transplant (the cage will support the later weight of the tomatoes), but you can grow tomato plants on trellises or stakes. It's especially important to keep heirloom varieties off the ground and with lots of air circulation,

Continued on page 7

Garden Tour

Peek into some of L.A.'s best private gardens at Hortus' annual garden tour, Saturday, April 29, benefitting the Los Angeles County Arboretum. The self-guided tour costs \$40, and will include a variety of gardens in and near Pasadena. Purchase passes at Hortus or by phone, 626/792-8255.



Garden Calendar

Things to do in April

Spring is here!

PLANT

* Warm-season vegetables (eggplants, peppers, tomatoes) and herbs (basil, chives, sage, parsley)

* Summer- and fall-blooming perennials

CHORES AND MAINTENANCE

* Thin citrus, apple and peach trees, eliminating all but the largest and best fruit

* Mulch 1 to 3 inches of bark chips, compost, wood shavings or other organic material under shrubs and trees, and around flowers and vegetables, keeping it away from stems and trunks.

-- Courtesy The Garden Calendar
Fulcrum Publishing
www.fulcrum-gardening.com

BLOCK CLUB & NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



Western Heights Neighborhood Association (WHNA)

Western Heights was awarded a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant from Operation Clean Sweep to plant trees along the freeway sound wall on 21st Street between Gramercy and Manhattan Place. With the support of Sylvia Lacy and Councilman Holden's office, along with generous donations from WAHA and other neighborhood businesses, we will be having a Tree Planting and Karaoke Party on April 8, 9AM-3PM. We see this as an opportunity to not only beautify our neighborhood, but to contribute to the urban landscape of the City of Los Angeles. Join us for tree planting, lunch, and a whole lot of singing!

The day before, on April 7, a hearing examiner for the City Planning Department will review the application for Western Heights' proposed Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ),

Block Club and Neighborhood News is an important and integral part of the WAHA Newsletter -- a place for us to share ideas, information, and upcoming events. To publicize future events, you must provide the information to the newsletter well in advance, no later than the first of the prior month (eg: August 1 for the September issue). To submit "News from Around the Blocks," please contact Michael S. Smith at 323/734-7725. You may also e-mail information to mikegreg@pacbell.net, or fax to 213/894-5335 (please address to Mike Smith).

with public testimony scheduled for 1:30 p.m. at Figueroa Plaza, 201 N. Figueroa Street, Room 170.

Gramercy Park

Gramercy Park Homeowners have started with the relandscaping of Gramercy Park project. All funding for the project is in place and a contractor has been hired. During the first part of March all the existing planting not in the plan were removed in preparation for sprinkler installation and for the planting of the shrubs/bushes and a new lawn. Everyone is invited to drive by and see the changes taking place in Gramercy Park.

Adams-Normandie Neighborhood Association (ANNA)

About 35 members attended the March meeting. The good turnout could be due to a number of things:

Meetings hosted at the Gomez house always means fantastic tamales, we held our election day drawing for those who brought their voting stubs, we heard about extraordinary women in honor of Women's History month, we took reservations for our tour of the Costume Institute and a screening of FANTASIA at Disney's IMAX.

Upon hearing about Kathleen Salisbury work, through the WAHA Newsletter, ANNA voted to send \$250 to help get her kids to Washington DC.

We also discussed the possibility of encouraging a block club to form just west of Normandie between Adams and the Freeway. If any WAHA-onians live in that area and are interested, please contact ANNA president, Marianne Muellerleile by calling the ANNA hotline: 323/ 957-4657, or by Email: MarianneMu@aol.com. Our September meeting will be devoted to this subject.

West Adams Avenues

This is one of the West Adams districts' newer neighborhood organizations, bringing together several block clubs within the boundaries of Arlington to Crenshaw north of Adams, south of the 10 freeway along "The Avenues." Last month, nearly two dozen community members turned out to a zoning hearing and successfully challenged the construction of a new two-story house on a substandard (25-foot-wide) lot on 6th Avenue. The developer had purchased a large (75-foot frontage) vacant parcel just north of 25th Street, and though he was told that the zoning was R-1 single family, he had divided it (illegally, as it turned out) into one 50-foot and one 25-foot wide lot, and built a new house on the 50-foot lot. The city stopped his construction on the smaller parcel, and forced him to apply for a variance. At the hearing, neighborhood residents presented information about the history of the area, historic maps and the fact that it is part of a potentially-eligible HPOZ, demonstrating that substantially large lots were part of the protected landscape of the Avenues. The zoning administrator tenta-

Continued on next page

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Around the Blocks

Continued from page 6

tively ruled in the neighbors' favor.

North University Park Community Association (NUPCA)

NUPCA headed to City Council in March, where our new University Park HPOZ was approved!

Meanwhile, we are once again fighting a demolition battle, helping our neighbors to the north. A developer did not receive the appropriate permits and approvals from the CRA before attempting to demolish three historic quad-plex buildings at 1351-59 South Alvarado and 1342-44 South Hoover, properties which are adjacent to the Alvarado Terrace National Register Historic District and several individual landmarks. The properties in question are themselves considered potentially eligible for landmarking. And apparently thereason the developer is trying to demolish them is to provide parking for a recently completed grocery store, an attempt to "split the project" to as to avoid the appropriate level of environmental review.

Preservation Begins At Home



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GREAT HOMES FOR SALE:

Restored Arts & Crafts: Original wood and fixtures, upgraded systems in Frank M. Tyler-designed 4-bedroom residence. In proposed Harvard Heights HPOZ. 2892 W. 15th St. \$289,000.

Harvard Heights Craftsman: Tyler-designed 4-bedroom, 2 1/2 baths in area pending HPOZ. Restored but needs cosmetics. 2192 Cambridge. \$235,000.

Craftsman: Original woodwork, beamed ceilings, china cabinet, original murals. Exterior undergoing restoration now. Property is in proposed HPOZ. Coming soon in mid-200s.

Plus.... Preservationists are planning to acquire Victorian homes for restoration in the proposed University Park HPOZ area near Union and 23rd streets. Interested parties please call me!

SOLD - AND WELCOME TO WEST ADAMS!

1805 S. Hobart - Scott Garner and Herb Rowe
2525 7th Avenue - Gavin Glynn and Juan Lopez

Our New Offices are in the Victorian Village
2316 1/2 Union Avenue Suite 2 * 213/747-1337

In the Garden: It's Tomato Time

Continued from page 5

because they are not as resistant to fungal diseases as modern hybrids. Tomatoes need uniform watering, especially after the fruit has set. Alternate wet and dry spells can result in either rot, or stunting, or both. But in the early stages of the plant's growth, a little less moisture can actually put on stress that can lead to fruit production. But too much drought will inhibit flavor production.

Tomatoes require soil that is slightly acid (ideal pH is 6.5 to 7.0) amended with compost. Ease transplanting shock with a B1 booster, and fertilize with special tomato formulations ("N" nitrogen-"P" phosphorus-"K" potassium formula of 2-3-3 or 5-3-4 — too much nitrogen produces big plants but less fruit).

Don't forget to mulch, to keep down weeds and retain moisture in the soil. Hay or straw is one option. Hortus sells Tomato Booster Mulch, a specially-engineered red plastic mulch developed by the USDA and Clemson University.

The fruit on "early" tomato varieties will start ripening about 65 days after planting. Never, ever put your tomatoes in the refrigerator. A large part of their flavor comes from the fruit's aromatic volatiles, which are destroyed by cold temperatures. So, slice, stew, can, saute and simmer your way to summer happiness with fresh from your own vine tomatoes.

PETS

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Sunday 10 am-12 Noon

First Neighborhood Workshops Continued from page 1

broader subjects were:

- Defining Your Neighborhood
- Organization of Neighborhood Councils
- Success of Neighborhood Councils

Each topic was discussed at length by all of the groups. There was a wide variety of responses ranged from keeping the neighborhood councils' area to just a few blocks to the need for transportation to the NC meetings. A popular concern expressed at each of these groups was a need for the Councils remain an autonomous and independent from the City's governing bodies, fearing that the NCs might become another political bureaucracy instead of truly engaging the neighborhoods.

Following an hour and a half of these discussions, Mayor Riordan addressed the participants. The Mayor commended the participants in attendance and stressed the importance of their roles. He thought they were "the heroes who will take control of (their) neighborhoods."

Councilmember Wachs praised those in attendance for being part of "a fantastic beginning in the greatest reform of government of all time."

With final comment was Governor Dukakis who expressed his excitement at the process being very much like a "New England town hall meeting" and stated that his "first elected office was as a representative of a neighborhood council in New England."

The overall sentiment of the night's meeting was positive, with the turnout being a strong plus. Commissioner Pat Herrera Duran was pleased with the number who attended but also expressed her concern that the youth of the City be more involved as well stating that they need to, "push to get young adults involved with these workshops. This Charter is going to very much affect their lives longer than it will with us."

Also expressing some concerns with the meeting was Paula Grimm of the Melrose Neighborhood Association who pointed out that while the workshop was "really well organized" there was a lack of participation by the business community. Grimm pointed out that part of the goals of Neighborhood Councils should be to "build alliances" with the business community to take part in working with the neighborhoods that these businesses affect, even if the owner doesn't live there.

The workshop organizers left the meeting with stacks of poster paper and post-its generated from the breakout groups and energized by the meeting. If the diversity of opinions in this meeting foreshadows the remaining meetings, those writing the plan have a Herculean task.

At a subsequent workshop, DONE General Manager Rosalind Stewart emphasized to the participants that, although this was a workshop for their region, that they should not limit themselves to just their own community's meeting, but rather attend other workshops as well. "You are invited to any of the workshops!" exclaimed Stewart. "Find

Changes Will Affect West Adams Continued from page 1

hood Empowerment (already known by the acronym "DONE"). Neighborhood Councils can cross City Council District boundaries (and probably should, since those boundaries will change, perhaps dramatically, after the U.S. Census and resulting re-districting to reflect population changes).

With that in mind, moves are already being made that may impact how the various neighborhood groups in the Historic West Adams District will ultimately be able to participate in the Neighborhood Councils.

DONE has begun holding workshops to get community input into what Neighborhood Councils ought to look like (large or small) and what issues they ought to tackle, so that the department can present a proposal to be implemented by the City Council so the neighborhood groups can be certified.

The City's Planning Department, meanwhile, is beginning to think about what general manager Con Howe has described as "clusters" of Neighborhood Councils, possibly in the longer run replacing the current 35 community plan boundaries with perhaps 40 new community plans that adhere to actual neighborhood boundaries (right now, the historic West Adams District is divided into two community plan areas, South Central and West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert, while Country Club Park falls into the Wilshire plan and Alvarado Terrace is governed by the Westlake plan).

In Council District 8, Mark Ridley-Thomas established the Empowerment Congress nine years ago, which is one model for the new Neighborhood Councils but which also — if it is continued as a boundary — would split up parts of West Adams.

And over in Council District 10, deputy Sylvia Lacy has brought together a large group of residents to look at a very tentative ("very, very preliminary," she emphasized) map of possible Neighborhood Council areas that would also split the historic West Adams District into pieces. But immediately, several representatives of block clubs and neighborhood groups in the West Adams area banded together and redid some of these tentative lines.

"We should probably consider Neighborhood Council lines that do not split up our historic area," says Odel Childress, past president of Harvard Heights. Childress and other neighborhood leaders plan to bring together representatives of block clubs and neighborhood organizations to discuss these issues (expect phone calls in early April).

out what your neighbors in the City are thinking!"

Later in March, a much more raucous crowd — again, of nearly 250 people — greeted the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment as it held its third of sixteen regional neighborhood council (NCs) workshops at Logan Elementary School, covering the Echo Park, Elysian Park, Hollywood and Silver Lake regions of the City.

Continued on next page

First Neighborhood Workshops Continued from page 8

There was contentious debate, with many people yelling over the voices of one another and individuals rising out of their chairs to express their opinions. And this was before the workshop even officially began.

In stark contrast to the structure of the last two workshops, the participants of this workshop were especially opposed to separating into smaller groups and opted to stay in one large group. Citing the importance of staying in one large group in order to hear the needs of each and every participant, participants protested the facilitators breaking down the group into smaller more intimate sessions.

Another issue that sparked strong debate among the participants was having facilitators in different languages. One after another rose to oppose having the groups separated by their native language, with many participants expressing concern that they were being "segregated."

Solomon Rivera of the Community Coalition, a neighborhood organizing group, stated that the citizens of this community were not going to easily accept the DONE style of adhering to peoples of many languages: "These are people from a progressive street and (they are not going to accept) being broken up into pieces."

George Abrahams of the Beachwood Canyon Homeowners Association pointed out that not breaking out into smaller groups would "take far too much time. Without having breakout groups, intelligent discussion (is lost)."

Echoing Abrahams was another participant who left the meeting due to the mass opposition to breaking into smaller groups. Walter Blackman of the Hollywood Hills/Beachwood Canyon stated, "We came with ideas to share with our neighbors, and it is impossible for a group of this size to get each and every person's input. We wanted to meet our neighbors!"

But this was not to be as a show of hands persuaded facilitators to stay within the larger group and begin their input into the NC process and what they wanted from their NCs.

Former 13th District Councilmember Mike Woo was in attendance and observed the, "high level of energy in the room," but also acknowledged that, "it will take a while before people will agree on a plan (for NCs)."

Facilitating the last two meetings and comparing them to the issues at this meeting was Gary De La Rosa of the City's Human Relations Commission who observed that the issues of this region centered on "Renters, CBOs, church involvement and the separation of citizens by language." He noted that these participants are "used to being fired up, and they seemed organized."

The turnout and participation was boosted through the efforts of Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg. Her staff alerted community-based organizations, particularly in the latino parts of her district, on the importance of active participation in the neighborhood council process.

With three down and thirteen to go, these DONE

workshops will be a testimonial to the implementation of NCs in the year to come, and as one citizen put it, "We aren't going to wait until January 1, 2001. We want action NOW."

The workshops continue through July 6 throughout the city. Call the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (213/486-1360) for a complete schedule, but several are scheduled nearby the West Adams area. They are:

* April 5 at the Crenshaw Christian Center, 7901 S. Vermont Avenue, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

* April 26 at John Burroughs School, 600 S. McCadden Place (Hancock Park), 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

* June 7 at DWP Building, Portland Room, 111 N. Hope Street, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Article courtesy: CITY WATCH

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Mark Siegel - Editor

Michael Sakamoto - Assistant Editor

Viet Tran - Writer

For more info or to subscribe:

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West Adams Historic Plaques

WAHA has established a grant program to purchase markers for homeowners whose residences are:

- * National Register Historic Monuments
- * Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monuments
- * Contributing Structures to a Historic District (local or national)

Please contact Tom Florio (213/749-8469) for further information.

Membership Directory Updates

The following are changes to the 1999 WAHA Membership Directory. Please update your copy of the directory if you want to keep it current.

New Address or Phone Number

Timothy M. Reilly, 1557-B Silverwood Terrace, Los Angeles, CA 90026-1445 323/663-1122

Add (and Welcome) New WAHA Members

Sandra & Robert Elliot, 17069 Knapp Street, Northridge, CA 91325 818/349-1275

Carole Hanley, 32012 Paseo de Alessandro, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675 949/248-5962

Larry Leker & Tom Rozelle, 2101 S. Gramercy Place, Los Angeles, CA 90018 323/733-4565

John Neuhalphen, 7138 Glasgow Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92404-6330 909/889-1687

Judy Newton, 43061 Larwood Street, Lancaster, CA 93536 661/943-4852

Darryl Theirse, 2829 Dalton Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90018 323/731-0064

Neil Weikel, 550 Marie Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90042-1306 323/258-6277

WAHA Is Invited...

RON JARMAN'S
NIGHT AT THE MOVIES
"MY NEW YORK
VACATION PART I"

SATURDAY, APRIL 8
7 P.M.

AT THE HOME OF
HAROLD AND GEORGIA
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Bortfeld Award Nominations Sought

WAHA's highest award, the Bortfeld Award, is presented to a member who has given special service to the West Adams community. Nominations now are being sought for this annual award. The nominee must be a member in good standing who demonstrates the following qualities: 1) consistent and visible leadership in WAHA and the preservation community, 2) an obvious commitment to preservation, 3) leadership in deed, not just title, 4) notable accomplishments/contributions over a range of activities, not just in one particular activity, and 5) an ability to bring people together to address issues and resolve problems.

The award has been presented in the past to Kathleen Salisbury (1988), Harry Anderson & David Raposa (1989), Harold Greenberg (1990), Lindsay Wiggins (1991), Jodi Seigner (1992), Jon Rake (1993), Lana Soroko (1994), Norma Latimer (1995), John Kurtz (1996), Audrey Arlington (1997) and Jim Meister (1998). As you can see by this listing all former Honorees have had leadership roles in WAHA and have undertaken a diverse range of activities in the organization and in the community at large.

Nominations should be submitted to Linda Scribner, WAHA President, 1749 Bronson Avenue, Historic West Adams, Los Angeles, CA 90019. Please submit nominations with names of candidates and a brief written explanation about why the candidate should be chosen. The winner will be selected by WAHA's President, the Membership Chair and last year's winner, Jim Meister.

Neighborhood Watch

As most longtime West Adams residents and WAHA members know, watching over your neighborhood involves more than crime prevention. Zoning and building & safety violations can cause communities to deteriorate, property values to decline, and ultimately blight. Recently, the Van Buren Place Community Restoration Association sent the following letter to a real estate broker who was improperly marketing a property in their neighborhood for higher-than-allowed density use. The Association thanks Mike Lee, Laura Meyers, David Raposa and Tom Florio for their help with this matter.

Van Buren Place Community Restoration
Association
2657 S. Van Buren Place
Los Angeles, California 90007

Jose O. Gomez
Century Plus Investments
11903 Downey Avenue
Downey CA 90242

Dear Mr. Gomez,

It has come to our attention that you are in process of selling the home at 2635 S. Kenwood Avenue, Los Angeles 90007, and that escrow is scheduled to close in a few days. We regret in this single family community that you have chosen to market this historic home as an income property aimed at an absentee owner, a condition that frequently leads to blight.

In particular, however, we note that in your sales flyer you describe the house as "ideal for two families." As you know, the property already contains a small apartment block behind the house that has 3 units of 2 bedrooms each. You as a real estate professional must also know that this block and property are zoned R2-1-0. That is, the 2635 S. Kenwood property is zoned for a maximum of one duplex or two single family homes. It is possible that the apartments are not illegal, as they may have been constructed at some time in the past when the block was zoned differently. However that may be, under today's zoning law it would be illegal to locate two families in the main house, or to convert the main house into a duplex, as the property is already far above the legal limit of housing units and occupancy permitted under Section 12.09 of the Los Angeles Municipal Planning and Zoning Code.

We wish to inform you that we will take every possible legal action to prevent the new owners from any attempt to break the law by subdividing the main house or moving more than a single family into it. We have consulted the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety in regard to the Kenwood property and they have assured us that no permits will be issued for any conversion of the main home to a duplex without an application by the new owner

for a variance—issuing of which we can assure you would meet with strenuous opposition from the community. Building and Safety has further told us that any attempt to undertake construction on the site without permits will be met with an immediate stop order and the issuance of citations. We are also informing the office of Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas of this situation and we have in the past seen the Councilman to be energetic in efforts to prevent illegal modification or usage of homes in our area to the detriment of the life of our community. You should also be aware that active members of the Van Buren Place Association live in the homes immediately adjacent to 2635 S. Kenwood on both the north and the south and will be instantly aware of any attempt to undertake illegal remodeling on this site.

Should it be the case that your client is expecting, on the basis of your sales information, to be able to move two families into the front house or to create an illegal duplex out of the front house, you should promptly advise them that the property has been misrepresented to them and see if they are still interested in completing the escrow. Should you fail to so inform them, and should they have any complaint when they are stopped by the city from carrying out their mistaken plan, we will certainly inform them that your company has misrepresented the property to them and encourage them to seek legal redress from Century Plus Investments.

In the future if you want to do business in this neighborhood we suggest that you become more familiar with its character as one of historic single family homes. Stressing this in your literature can potentially increase the sales price, and where additional units do exist this can be a plus for an owner-occupied home.

The Van Buren Place Community Restoration Association has been active in community beautification and historical preservation work in the area from Budlong to Normandie and from Adams to 29th Street for more than twenty years and has strong ties throughout the community and with many city agencies. We are always pleased to work with real estate brokers who respect the residential character of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Leslie Evans
For the Association

cc: Noel Pallais, North Area Coordinator,
Council District 8, office of Councilman
Mark Ridley-Thomas
Mike Lee, South Region Principal Inspector,
Los Angeles Department of Building and
Safety.
Enclosure to Pallais and Lee: copy of "Just
Listed" flyer from Century Plus Invest-
ments

Resources by Judie Schoening

Hurrah. By the time you read this, all the work on the new Resource Guide will be completed and it will be on the way to the printer. We will include this in the May Preservation issue of the Newsletter. This is appropriate as we are all working in one way or another to preserve, restore and renovate here in West Adams.

I want to thank everyone who has continued to send resources in spite of the column not appearing. I have now put on my computer all of the old and new resources so that when you call here, I can respond quickly to your need. I have included the referral names although they will not appear in the Guide. I must thank Norma Latimer and Natalie Neith for calling all of the old Guide entries and confirming eliminating these resources. I also personally checked on all of the Resources since 1997. John Kurtz is my computer whiz

and this new Guide would not be possible without him.

Remember, I really need to know when you come up with a great new resource or have a good or bad experience with one already listed. Please send these to my FAX 323/733-3541 or e-mail schoening@earthlink.net (no jokes please). If you are calling for a resource, please do so on the business number (323/734-8123) My personal phone is in another room not close to the computer.

A word of caution: no matter how much you know or how careful you are, it seems as if every new project is a "live & learn" experience. I recently got around to reading 'Under the Tucson Sun'. This woman left the house in a foreign country for 9 months and expected all this major work to be completed correctly while she was gone!! I hold my breath when I go out to the store and there are workmen here. I thought today, maybe can add a field entitled "average-blood-pressure-during-job" as an evaluation tool for new resources. We can only hope the new Guide will help keep your Stress Levels within bounds.

Board Report

The WAHA Board February meeting was held at Eric Bronson's and Darby Bayliss's house on Thursday February 24, 2000. Besides the normal reports on status of upcoming events, treasurer's reports, membership status, etc., the WAHA Board also:

- * Approved a motion to pay to have the minutes typed by an outside transcriber for the rest of the membership year, (since WAHA has no official secretary until the next elections).

- * Approved a motion to have the WAHA brochure translated into Spanish

- * Will write a letter to Los Angeles City Council supporting the Harvard Heights HPOZ.

- * Support and will write a letter supporting Alvarado Terrace's efforts in questioning the categorical exemption for demolition of several four-plexes

- * Started a restoration grant program for commercial buildings by approving a \$2,000 grant to the Pan Pacific Bakery (at Bronson and Washington) for the restoration of the exterior of the building. (see President's Message for more details on grant program)

Museum of Natural History Highlights for Kids, And Kids at Heart

Mother Nature's Gardenfest takes place at the Page Museum and Hancock Park on April 28 and 29. This special event celebrates Spring and the plants of today and yesterday. Buy plants and gardening supplies at the giant "Ice Age Plant Sale."

The weekend also features the planting of the Pleistocene (Ice Age) habitat made possible by the Los Angeles Urban Resources Partnership.

Then, on May 7 and 7, comes the nation's largest insect fest, with more than 60 exhibitors from around the world displaying both living and preserved bugs, held at Exposition Park. The Insect Fair is hosted by the Museum's permanent Insect Zoo.

This is where anything "buggy" can be found, including insect-themed books, toys, jewelry, clothes, educational tools, artwork and crafts.

Ever wondered how insects taste? Here's your chance to find out with chocolate-covered crickets, cricket

lollipops and other insect treats.

Children can come face to face with rare and endangered insects, and even touch some bugs from the Museum's Insect Zoo, including the Madagascar Hissing Cockroach, Giant Walking Stick and African Millipede.

If you're still interested after this description, call the Museum for more information on these and other events at 213/763-DINO.

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Egg Hunts, and other April Celebrations

by John Rentsch

The Easter Bunny and various religious events aside, this month sees at least 10 of our members having their own special feasts and occasions for celebration. Yes, it's birthday time for Bernard Steppes on the 10th, Lana Soroko and Tommy Spencer both on the 13th, Mark Reilly and Robert Totten both on the 14th, Irene Grant on the 20th, Diana Weihs on the 23rd, Lauren Schlau on the 24th, Paul Hulse on the 26th and Ellen Farwell on the 28th. Congratulations to you all and we hope there will be many more.

Speaking of more, there probably are more members celebrating birthdays, anniversaries and other special events (such as the date they got enlightened and moved to West Adams) but unless you let me know about them, they'll sadly go unmentioned. To correct any oversights, and to make sure you are listed for any other month, please call me on 323 /735-3500 and if I'm not around, please leave a message with all the details. With the number of members we have, we should almost have a reason to celebrate every day of the year!

Neighborhood Matching Grants Available

The LA Board of Public Works, Operation Clean Sweep, has announced that it will again offer the Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) this year. For those who may be unfamiliar with this program, it is a \$250 to \$5,000 matching grant, that any neighborhood organization can apply for. Projects that "bring the community together," such as murals, community gardens, and streetscape projects will be considered. Applications scoring is based on the project's community benefit and involvement, and feasibility.

If you would like more information you can call Operation Clean Sweep at 800/ 611-CITY, or visit their website at www.cityofla.org/bpw/ocs/nmf. You may also call me (Michael Smith) at 213/894-3616.

Below is a list of application deadlines, by council district.

| <u>Council District</u> | <u>Council Member</u> | <u>Workshop</u> (dates to be determined) | <u>Letter of Intent</u> | <u>Application</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1st | Mike Hernandez | June, 2000 | July 11, 2000 | August 9, 2000 |
| 8th | Mark Ridley-Thomas | July, 2000 | August 8, 2000 | Sept. 13, 2000 |
| 10th | Nate Holden | July, 2000 | August 8, 2000 | Sept. 13, 2000 |

Member Discounts

Reminder: The following companies and organizations offer discounts to WAHA members. Show your WAHA membership card when you make your purchase.

Best Lock and Safe Service contact: David Kim
2203 W. Venice Blvd. Los Angeles 323/733-7716
10% discount on lock and safe labor and materials

Washington Dog & Cat Hospital
1692 W. Washington Boulevard Los Angeles, CA 90007 323/735-0291
50% off office exams

Meyers Roofing
5048 W. Jefferson Blvd. 323/733-0188
10% discount

The 24th Street Theater contact: Jon White-Spunner
1117 24th Street Los Angeles, CA 90007 213/667-0417
\$2.00 off ticket price

Cafe Club Fais Do Do
5257 West Adams Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90016
323/954-8080
No cover charge at door

Sherwin-Williams
1367 Venice Blvd. L.A. 90006 213/365-2471
20% discount off regular product price (you must have a special discount card)

Washington Tire & Wheel
1951 W. Washington Blvd. Los Angeles 323/731-0781
Dealer's pricing on all tires and full line of custom wheels (See Bill Fuqua, Jr. for this discount)

Papa Cristo's Taverna
2771 West Pico Blvd. Los Angeles CA 90006 323/737-2970
10% discount on catered food orders

Vintage Plumbing Bathroom Antiques
9939 Canoga Avenue Chatsworth, CA 818/772-1721 (hours: by appointment only)
10% discount on purchases at Chatsworth facility

A Call to Members

If you frequent a local business -- retail store, restaurant, service provider, etc. -- ask them if they would like to offer a discount to WAHA members. Explain that they would benefit from the increased exposure to many local consumers, and would be listed monthly in the WAHA newsletter. Or, call me at 323/733-6869 and I would be happy to contact them.

-- Steve Wallis

Become a member (or renew)! You can do it today!

Membership through April 2001

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

____ New Membership
____ Renewal

Membership classification (check one)

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____ Patron \$100.00
____ Benefactor \$ 250.00
____ Senior/Student \$ 17.00
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False Heather (Cuphea) - We have many surplus False Heather bushes. These beautiful plants are approximately 18" high by 18" wide and have tiny white or fushia flowers. They make a wonderful border and will nicely complement most any plant material you have. \$5 each. call 323/733-6869.

Antique oak crank telephone. \$250 OBO. Call carmen after 6 p.m. at 323/735-6216

For sale - Thirty 2' by 2' cobblestones. Look beautiful. \$50. Call Jim at 310/209-4614.

Need front door for Craftsman home. 48" by 79." Call Anna at 323/939-6459.

Antiques For Sale. One decorative metal grate/floor heater vent and a solid oak old schoolteacher's desk. Call Lucy 323/735-2636.

Old doors and windows for sale, going cheap. Call John Deaven at 323/737-7761.

Handmade wool rugs (kelims) for sale. Traditional Macedonian designs which resemble Navajo rugs. Two colorful runners, never used: one is 26 1/2" X 110" (\$160) the other is 20" X 74" (\$90). You can see them on my web page at www.geocities.com/RodeoDrive/Boutique/1605. Call Zoya at 323/731-5222.

Wouldn't you love to own Mugsy? He's a big (BIG -- 77 pounds) baby boy white bulldog/pit/mutt mix who's looking for someone to receive his slurpy love. About two years old, has had one round of shots. Laura 323/737-6146.

Roommate Wanted? Vintage Stove for Sale? Garden Plants in Search of New Home? Place your classified ad here to reach preservation-minded readers. Contact Advertising Director Janice Lipeles (323/737-2370) NO LATER THAN the first of the prior month.

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Neighborhood Council Plan

- * What size should your
Neighborhood Councils be?
- * How should communities
determine their boundaries?

When: Wednesday, April 26

Time: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Where: John Burroughs School
600 S. McCadden place

For more information, call 213/485-1360

WAHA April 2000 Calendar

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|----------------------------|--|----------|--------|---|
| See Community Calendar On page 3 for details on these meetings! | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 WAHA General Meeting & Elections at First AME Zion |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 Membership Community Relations Committee | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 Newsletter Committee | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23/30 | 24 Zoning & Planning/Preservation Committee | 25 | 26 Neighborhood Councils at John Burroughs | 27 | 28 | 29 |

The *WAHA Newsletter* is a publication of the West Adams Heritage Association. Members and supporters of WAHA are invited to submit articles to the *Newsletter*. Letters will be published subject to space constraints and will be cut for length if necessary. Articles will be published subject to acceptance by the editors of the WAHA Board. Advertising is subject to the approval of the publishers. Although the Association appreciates its many fine advertisers, the Association does not accept responsibility for claims made by advertisers. Services and products are not tested and appearance of advertising does not imply, nor does it constitute, endorsement by the West Adams Heritage Association. Copyright 1999. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permissions.

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