

West Adams Matters

The Annual Report Issue

A Year of Preservation Advocacy *by Jean Frost*

Each summer, WAHA takes a look back at its prior year (a term which runs from May 1 until April 30) to review how successfully the organization lives out its mission to "support preservation of the West Adams community's architectural heritage and beautification activities, and seek to educate Los Angeles' citizens and others about cultural heritage and restoration techniques." As you'll see in this special Annual Report issue, WAHA has particularly been engaged this past year in historic preservation advocacy.

West Adams already is home to more individual historic landmarks than any other District in Los Angeles. Even so, there are probably hundreds more West Adams homes and properties eligible for landmark designation. And many of these are endangered, one of the reasons why WAHA has once again been active in the City's process of identifying, researching the history of, and actually achieving designation for new City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments (LA-HCMs).

In fact, there's an acronym that describes what WAHA and other preservation organizations do: "IRNDL" — Identify, Research, Nominate, Designate and (if necessary) Litigate. These components of IRNDL together form the key tools of historic preservation.

WAHA has had a successful year doing LA-HCM nominations and has several pending. You'll note in the Annual Report that we spent some fairly significant funds this past year on the research and preparation of individual and

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Nine Lives for Felix the Cat

West Adams' iconic "Felix the Cat" has garnered national media attention in the wake of a July 12th vote by the city's Cultural Heritage Commission to designate the Felix Chevrolet Showroom and Neon Sign a Historic-Cultural Monument.

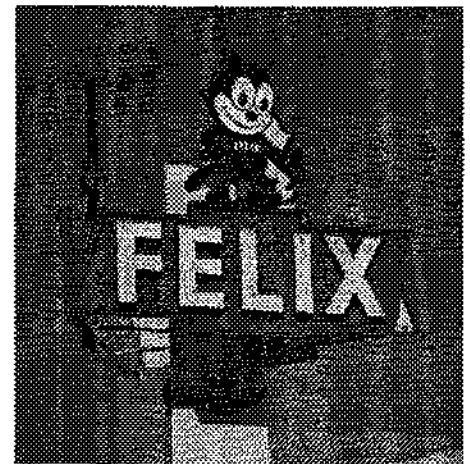
According to United Press International, which sent the story out on the wires, "The three-sided neon sign survived earthquakes, fires, riots and recession to win a permanent place in the city's future." But, the report adds, "Redevelopment in the area put the Felix sign in jeopardy."

In the two weeks before and after the Commission vote, Felix the Cat found himself in news stories and blogs all over town, including the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Downtown News*, *PreserveLA.com*, *L.A. Snapshot*, *Boing Boing.net*, *BloggingLA*, and the blog that started it all, *View From A Loft*.

Even the National Trust's *Preservation Online Magazine* weighed in with a July 24 story:

"LA Commission Recommends Landmark Status for Felix the Cat Sign" -- by Margaret Foster

Proving that cats always land on their feet, a 49-year-old neon sign in Los Angeles inched closer to historic designation earlier this month.



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Newcomers' Dessert *by Don Lynch*

Thursday, August 16, 6:30 p.m.

Robert Leary's House, 2190 West 24th Street (Kinney Heights)

WAHA members are all invited to a "Newcomer's Dessert" on Thursday, August 16 at 6:30 p.m. hosted by Robert Leary in his new home, 2190 W. 24th Street. This house has never before been opened to WAHA for an event, and we know everyone will enjoy the original woodwork, light fixtures, and even tapestry wall coverings of his remarkable home.

Existing members are encouraged to bring a dessert to share with their fellow members. Newcomers, those who have been members of WAHA for less than two years, are invited as our guests. Beverages will be provided.

So please come and meet your new neighbors, and let them meet you. We look forward to seeing you there. ●

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Six Blocks of History: Western Heights Tour

Sunday, September 9, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

You're invited to attend **Six Blocks of History**, the Western Heights Neighborhood Association (WHNA) Homes Tour, on the second Sunday in September. Stroll through the "streetcar suburb" where up-and-coming young professional families built their homes in the early part of this century. Eight historically significant homes will be open for tour.

Located just north of the Santa Monica Freeway between Western and Arlington, Western Heights is an architecturally diverse enclave filled with custom-built homes from the turn of the century. Originally developed outside the city limits, this six-block area was a forerunner to the modern suburb, far from the dusty and noisy center of town. The residential streets are characterized by two- and three-story single family residences in many architectural styles including Craftsman, Tudor Revival, Queen Anne, Spanish Colonial Revival, Monterey Revival, and American Four-Square. Many were designed by some of the most prominent architects of Los Angeles, including John C. Austin, Myron Hunt, Sumner Hunt, Frank M. Tyler, Elmer Grey, Arthur R. Kelley, and Paul Williams.

Much of the community's architectural legacy remains intact in spite of the construction of the Santa Monica Freeway in 1960. To maintain the neighborhood's integrity, the Western Heights HPOZ was created by the City in 2001. It contains 120 Contributing and Contributing "Altered" structures dating from the late 19th century to the 1930s.

Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 the day of the tour. Final tickets will be sold at 3:30 p.m. Tickets for the self-guided tour are available through WHNA, PO Box 191400, Los Angeles, CA 90019 or by e-mailing westernheightstour@mac.com. Proceeds from this event will benefit construction of traffic easements in the neighborhood. Visit our historic neighborhood at www.WesternHeightsonline.com.



The William Miles Residence, designed in 1909 by noted architect John C. Austin, is one of many historic homes in Western Heights.

President's Message

by Lore Hilburg

I want to give you a glimpse into my hopes and dreams for this year at WAHA.

I want all of the charming houses, commercial structures, and multi-family buildings throughout greater Los Angeles saved and restored. I want people to stop putting stucco over wood, to stop demolishing houses to put up McMansions, and to recognize the beauty of wood windows rather than replacing them with vinyl or aluminum.

How does this happen? One owner at a time. Through gentle persuasion, by example, and by creating a culture of preservation and respect for history.

This means outreach. It's always a feel-good experience to sing to the choir because they join in and you know you are not alone. But to really make a difference, you have to talk to those who do not see your vision, understand your perspective, acknowledge your priorities. And you have to talk to them more than once, with many voices, and yet show a sensitivity to their views.

This message is admittedly being presented to the choir, but it is to exhort you as individuals to take the time to talk to your neighbors and try to get them to see things a little more our way. Help them recognize why it is worth it to spend the extra time/money now to preserve rather than replace.

The WAHA committee chairs all need help, so find your particular interest and volunteer. Don't worry that if you agree to do one thing, more will be demanded. You will get great satisfaction knowing you have helped to make a difference.

Thank you. We are looking forward to a great year – with your help.

*Lore Hilburg can be reached via e-mail,
hilburg@ca.rr.com*

Bob Bortfeld Award Recipient

At this year's 4th of July celebration, WAHA honored Ed Troser with the 2007 Bob Bortfeld Award. As you can see by this nomination letter, our winner leaves each of you with some very big footsteps to follow!

I would like to nominate Ed Troser as a well-deserved candidate for the annual Bob Bortfeld Award. He has served WAHA, the West Adams community, and the larger cause of historic preservation for more than two decades, both in word and deed.

He has quietly and unassumingly demonstrated leadership by envisioning and then taking charge of a number of WAHA's enduring events and programs, most particularly the annual Holiday Tour, our most important fundraiser. But Ed has also been involved with numerous other projects and events.

Ed and I have lived in West Adams since 1986, and during this time we have continuously opened our home for all manner of WAHA tours, large and small. We have hosted the National Trust, the Friends of Gamble House, and even Honda America's photography group, among many such activities. Not to mention numerous WAHA house tours and events (see below). Each time we open our doors, Ed works for days (or weeks) in the garden and house, preparing it for visitors.

Twenty-one years ago, Ed had the idea of a festive and food-laden "Christmas Tour" (since renamed "Holiday" tour. He chaired the first tour, which was a resounding success – even though we hadn't yet figured out that the food service should "progress" from appetizers to soup to dinner to dessert (that came in year two). Ed co-chaired and/or was heavily involved in nearly all of the WAHA Holiday Tours of the 1990s, and chaired the 10th Anniversary Tour, which not coincidentally took place on 4th Avenue, where we live.

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Our Website is Moving

This spring we expanded our website, working with programmer Richard McCluskey to move it to a full content management system making it easier to post new materials and update old ones. Last month we learned that Richard was moving to Boston. While we were sorry to see him go, it posed a new decision for us. We were going to have to redo the website to fit the software available from a local hosting company, and as long as we were at that point anyway we reconsidered our suffix.

Back in 2001 when our website was created we thought the best choice was to use the most common suffix, .com, so we named our website www.WestAdamsHeritage.com. Just in case we might change our minds later we also reserved the nonprofit version, www.WestAdamsHeritage.org. Now, with effectively a clean slate as we needed to do a full reconstruction, we reconsidered the suffix. In recent years the use of the .org designation has blossomed, becoming the gold standard for nonprofit and public service organizations of all kinds, while the once universal .com has more and more come to be identified with for-profit commercial websites. So we decided to activate the .org name we had been sitting on all these years. Our webmaster, Leslie Evans, reconstructed the WAHA website and launched it at the end of July as www.WestAdamsHeritage.org. Take a look and visit us there regularly for Laura Meyers' E-News and other updates from WAHA. ●

Around the House

Resources *by Suzie Henderson*

As you see in this annual report issue, there are many ways to serve in WAHA. I am a big believer in participation in any group I am involved with, but we can't all make big time commitments to every organization. Participation in the Resources committee is the easiest of all. There are no meetings or hearings to attend. Just go about your normal life, but when you find a really great service or skilled craftsperson, send me an e-mail at WestAdamsGoddess@aol.com. Don't forget that we also need stern warnings, if someone does not perform adequately. Thanks for your continued help.

This month I was lucky enough to get more referrals than I could fit in one month, so you can look forward to even more next month.

Peggy King recommends City Vacuum, located at the 10/110 freeway overhead crossing. She says that Lawrence Joiner runs the store and does a very nice job of repairing vacuums at a reasonable price. They also carry supplies for all sorts of floor care.

On the subject of cleaning, I have a great recommendation for a cleaning person. Rosario Guzman has worked for one of my friends for many years and comes highly recommended. Failing health of several long-time employers has left her with some free days.

Jennifer Charnofsky warmly recommends Johnny Gonzalez from Best Flow Plumbing. He replaced all the drain pipes in the house and worked very quickly. They were pleased that he always had at least one toilet working for them; always a plus! They have also called him for regular, unrelated problems, and he did excellent work then, too.

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Bortfeld Award

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Ed has continued as a volunteer on the committee and/or with the Holiday Tour activities for all of these years. He has helped with research and docent notes throughout, helped plan menus, consulted on logistics, and shepherded on 19 tours (only missing one due to illness.)

The Holiday Tour is NOT the only fundraising activity Ed has helped organize for WAHA. He co-chaired and was on the organizing committee for the two years that WAHA participated with the Garden Conservancy for the Open Days garden tours, helping liaison with that organization, finding volunteers, doing house and garden write-ups for docents and acting as a "Captain" for the Guasti Villa the second year of our participation (for the first year, the Trosper Garden was on the tour.)

In addition, Ed has been involved with WAHA's annual Garden and Paint Contests from their inception, helping to identify the best gardens and exterior paint jobs in West Adams, a role he continues through this year. He has also contributed garden-oriented articles for the WAHA newsletter.

I've lost track of how many times we have hosted WAHA's 4th of July celebration, but I want to point out that it was Ed who set the bar for decorating our home and garden each time with flags, bunting and other patriotic attire. As the co-host, he also readied the garden each time by planting red, white and blue flowers in many of the flower beds.

Ed is very interested in the history of West Adams. He has lent his research expertise to historic landmark nominations, house and heritage profiles in WAHA's publications, and he even helped research and then portrayed a character, George Zobelein WAHA's 2005 Rosedale Cemetery tour.

Ed has also assisted in the preparation of various nominations for historic landmarks, including the applications for Barker/Walker Mansion and Lycurgus Lindsay Mansion/Polish Parish, along with, of course, our own home, the Gray House. Ed diligently tracked down the entire family history of the Grays – and did so before the era of the internet and ancestry.com, which makes it so much easier now. Afterwards, he wrote an article about his research adventure, and it was published in an arts and crafts magazine.

In addition, Ed has been a volunteer and docent at the Los Angeles Conservancy for nearly 20 years. These days, he leads Art Deco walks, and he has previously led tours of Downtown, USC, and for many of the Conservancy's special one-time events.

Ed has been involved in community activities and advocacy as well. Any time we need an oil expert, he is there, testifying for example at LAUSD hearings against putting new schools on top of active oil fields and sandy soil in Jefferson Park. He has long been involved with the Avenues Neighborhood Association, and now is also an active member of United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council's Public Safety Committee.

Along with many other neighbors, Ed also worked tirelessly to help save the South Seas House in the 1990s. As you know, that is one of our big success stories: the South Seas House is now a restored community center.

While over the years many who have deservedly received the Bob Bortfeld Award have had a higher profile than Ed, and have been perhaps more visible or more comfortable in the limelight, Ed has steadfastly served WAHA and the community with great deal of perseverance and diligence. I would like you to consider now honoring Ed Trosper's more than two decades of service to West Adams Heritage Association and the community.

Thank you very much.
David Raposa

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Annual Report

The Year in Review

As always, WAHA had a very busy year. We supported a variety of historic preservation efforts, presented fun family-oriented 4th of July and Halloween events, donated monies to good causes, and successfully landmarked several endangered houses. Let's walk down memory lane:

- In a change for WAHA, we have had "Modern" on our minds for more than a year. WAHA invested well over 100 hours in research and advocacy to convince the City to not demolish the Raphael Soriano-designed Glen Lukens Residence and to designate this seminal Modernist home as a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM). Members attended hearings at both the Building & Safety Commission and the Cultural Heritage Commission.

- WAHA also provided financial support for the nomination of the mid-century modern Felix Chevrolet Showroom and Neon Sign as an HCM.

- WAHA has been playing a key, ongoing role in the effort to save and/or recycle materials from the LAUSD school site on Washington Boulevard between 2nd and 3rd Avenues. WAHA members attended numerous meetings with LAUSD officials, including site walk-throughs, and helped arrange for construction materials to be recycled. The organization also helped promote the availability of structures for move-off; at press time it still appears as if at least one house will be saved.

- WAHA hosted several special (non-public) tours for Friends of Gamble House, Architectural Digest and a Honda America photography group. Architectural Digest's event was called "Architecture Days" and West Adams was one of the stops, with two of our historic homes opened for visitors.

- In addition, WAHA presented three tours - The Treasures Tour on Van Buren Place, the annual Angelus-Rosedale Cemetery Living History tour, and A Holiday to Remember in Victoria Park, the annual holiday tour and progressive dinner.

- WAHA renewed its memberships with the California Preservation Foundation and the Los Angeles Conservancy.

- The WAHA Board voted to oppose Proposition 90, which would have allowed property owners to sue any person or organization which takes and diminishes the property values based on restrictions or other issues which affect the owner's real estate property. Preservation organizations like West Adams Heritage throughout the state worried that it would have been possible that any historic preservation designation could be cause for a lawsuit. Through these statewide lobbying and advocacy efforts, Proposition 90 was defeated.

- On September 9, WAHA hosted a Members' Reception at the University Religious Center at USC, followed by a walking tour of the historic buildings at USC. Longtime WAHA member Martin Eli Weil, a restoration architect, was honored for his preservation activities.

- Kids of all ages enjoyed WAHA's second annual Halloween Festival in Gramercy Park. Nearly 130 people attended the event, which included a petting zoo and pony rides.

- WAHA also supported the South Seas House Halloween event with a donation, to help pay for entertainment.

- Casa de Rosas had a costume party benefit event on October 28 at the Durfee Mansion. WAHA supported their cause by purchasing tickets several pairs of tickets.

- In November, WAHA brought back Demonstration Event to show members and neighbors how to do all kinds of restoration activities. It was a morning/afternoon event and focus on such things as stripping wood and repairing wood windows. The Painting Contest and the Garden Contest awards were also handed out at this event.

- The efforts of our public relations consultant Flo Selfman paid off this past year with articles about our community and WAHA's holiday tour appearing in Rafu Shimpo (the daily English-language Japanese newspaper), and Beverly Hills People. And in April, KABC-TV's "Eye on L.A." show devoted a segment to West Adams.

- WAHA also established a visible presence on Washington Boulevard with oversized banners depicting historic homes on display in the storefront windows at Gramercy Housing Group's beautifully restored 1920s building at 4th and Washington. ●

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Historic Preservation Report

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historic district nominations. Currently, there are also two pending WAHA-proposed State of California Register Historic Districts, Flower Drive and Fraternity/Sorority Row, researched by architectural historian Pete Moruzzi. In August the L.A. Cultural Heritage Commission will provide comment to the State on behalf of the City of Los Angeles in this matter.

WAHA supports the efforts of individuals and organizations to achieve historic designation, along with taking on the lead role for some properties itself. Last November, WAHA nominated two important and endangered properties – the Raphael Soriano-designed Glen Lukens Residence at 3524 West 27th Street, and the Jasper Newton Preston-designed Joseph Starr Farmhouse, at 2801 Arlington – for Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument status. By January, both had received crucial support from the City's Cultural Heritage Commission, which voted them to designate them as landmark HCMs. Both properties were certified in April by the City Council as monuments.

WAHA also nominated the John Parkinson-designed Waters-Shaw Family Residence (at 2700 Severance) as an HCM, when its longtime and elderly owner contacted us and asked WAHA to help him “save” his house. The Commission supported this nomination as well, and it is headed to City Council in mid-August for final approval.

In addition, WAHA supported through advocacy and testimony landmark nominations for several additional properties, most notably the Henry Obee Cottage (on Washington), nominated by Anna Marie Brooks. The Cultural Heritage Commission voted to designate the Obee Cottage, noting that the building will need to be moved off the site to a new, suitable location. The City Council action to support (or not support) the designation is on hold, while the developer/owner, WAHA and various other parties attempt to find a new home for this cottage.

Meanwhile, the Felix Chevrolet Showroom and Neon Sign, located at Figueroa and Jefferson, has also received a thumb's up vote from the Commission. This property was by ADHOC with support from WAHA and the Conservancy's Modern Committee. At press time, the matter was tentatively scheduled to be heard at City Council in September.

Absent designation, some very fine pieces of our history can disappear and streetscapes become void of historic context. Those were the compelling reasons behind the Historic Cultural Monument designations in 2006 of both the Cline and the Statton residences in the Nevins Tract section of West Adams (between Western and Arlington just south of Pico.) Both properties were in process of sale, one by probate. Much of the interiors were intact and the blocks on which the properties sat would have been bereft of character and history if actions had not been taken to recognize and designate them. It took many people to assist with the effort including Laura Meyers, Charlie Fisher, and Portia Lee – and, of course, past President Jefferson Davis, who raised the alarm bells and ushered these nominations through the political side of the process.

WAHA does have the good fortune of having six historic preservation overlay zones with several more in process, plus the North University Park Specific Plan and seven National Register Districts. WAHA supports the HPOZs and has in the past provided grants for particular purposes including communication and outreach. There are always pressures to develop based on bottom line cost, and our historic neighborhoods are seen by some as a place to build without rigorous design standards. Hence the importance for all the WAHA Historic Preservation Overlay Zones of having certified Preservation Plans. Currently there are only two completed and adopted plans in West Adams: University Park and Pico Union.

With the City's recent approval for increased density near the Expo line light rail, development pressures are running very high along the Figueroa corridor. As a result there are potential impacts to the Chester Place National Register Historic District. There are also development threats in most of the WAHA neighborhoods and WAHA members need to be the eyes and ears for the Historic Preservation Committee and the Board.

We seem to have issues particularly with accessory structures, with demolitions occurring without any CEQA review or permits. Just recently outbuildings of the Starr Farmhouse disappeared. The City has at times invoked the “scorched earth” penalties: a prohibition on development for five years, because of illegal demolition and WAHA is an ardent advocate for those sanctions when appropriate.

Neglect, benign or deliberate, can also cause the destruction of historic properties without review. Such was the case of the National Register Wells House on Scarff Street where after decades of neglect by the owner(s), and the failure of the City to require the owners to maintain this historic resource it was demolished by fire.

Proactive identification and designation are important tools in preserving our neighborhoods; in addition we all have a duty to require the City's enforcement of those regulations that designation brings to bear. Too often, after very dedicated and successful efforts, the effectiveness of our efforts are hampered by a lack of enforcement and a lack of strenuous adherence to the law. ●

Annual Report

Money Matters: How Does WAHA Make Its Money? How Does WAHA Spend Its Money?

The West Adams Heritage Association (WAHA) is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is supported by the donations and hard work of its members, friends, and many volunteers.

You may be wondering where that effort goes.

In the last fiscal year (May 1, 2006 to April 30, 2007) WAHA received income of \$61,066.17 (before expenses) from a variety of sources, principally membership dues, tour ticket sales, and advertising in our publications.

As always, tour revenues provide the bulk of WAHA's revenues, led by the annual Holiday Tour. The 2006 Holiday Tour, "A Holiday to Remember," was held in Victoria Park and celebrated the 20th anniversary of WAHA's holiday events. It earned \$36,631 and netted just under \$20,000 (\$19,896.)

We held two additional tours. In June 2006, the "Treasures Tour" presented chamber music in four historic homes on Van Buren Place, plus brunch for our tour visitors. WAHA shared revenues with a chamber music organization, and the event broke even after expenses. WAHA also presented the annual Living History Tour at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, which added about \$800 to WAHA's coffers.

Another primary source of revenue for WAHA are the ads in the WAHA Matters newsletter and in our tour brochures, accounting for \$1,985 added to the treasury last year. The combination of WAHA's Patrons, Business members and other friends/supporters/donors with regular memberships accounted for approximately another \$13,941.

Last year, in support of WAHA's mission to provide services and to do preservation advocacy, we actually spent about \$10,000 more than we earned within the fiscal year, relying on the prior year's strong revenues plus savings. It takes about that amount just for administrative costs, which include WAHA's annual insurance premiums (\$2,545), storage of such materials as all of the kitchen and serving equipment we utilize in support of our tours (\$2,852), accounting services (\$1,200), and fees WAHA incurs to both belong to other preservation advocacy organizations and to send members educational seminars on subjects we need expertise in.

Still, the majority of our expenditures go to services to members (including the newsletter, parties and speaker programs such as last March's session with Don Sloper, author of the book *Chester Place*, and Demonstration Day last Fall), community service (with donations to such local entities as the South Seas House and Casa de Rosas), outreach (special brochures and tours for such activities as the Evening Strolls), and historic preservation (research and preparation of nominations, advocacy and education).

During the fiscal year, WAHA spent more than \$5,000 in support of our historic preservation activities, securing landmark status for the Raphael Soriano-designed Glen Lukens Residence in Jefferson Park, the Starr Farmhouse, also in Jefferson Park, and the Cline Family Residence and the Statton Residence, which sit side by side on Gramercy Place, just south of Pico. In addition, we spent monies finalizing the research and submission papers for two potential historic districts in the USC/Exposition Park area (the Flower Drive District, and the Fraternity Row District.)

WAHA sponsored an Evening Stroll in Wilshire Park last October. For each such Stroll, WAHA prints a neighborhood walking tour brochure, at a cost of about \$200, and we also pay for an espresso cart to provide free coffee drinks to many participants, which costs about \$400.

WAHA's publications and website consume a substantial portion of the organization's monies. The WAHA Matters newsletter itself costs about \$900-1,000 for each issue for printing alone. On an annual basis, newsletter postage costs reached \$2,539. We have also incurred \$3,200 in expenses in changing over the WAHA website from the original, more static, version to a more dynamic, content management system. (Subsequently, we have also moved most of our web content from www.WestAdamsHeritage.com to www.WestAdamsHeritage.org – see story elsewhere in this issue.)

Let's not forget WAHA's great parties and other fun events! Last year, WAHA hosted our annual 4th of July picnic, a Members Reception at the University of Southern California, and a late-October kids-oriented Frightful Halloween Festival, attended by about 130 people, with a combined cost of about \$2,780. (The annual Holiday Party budget is a part of the Holiday Tour budget, and costs between \$500 and \$750 – depending how well we can put our leftover Holiday Tour food to use! As those who attended know, this past year we enjoyed wonderful marinated and grilled beef, plus scrumptious chocolate and pink champagne cake, "repurposed" from the tour.) ●

If you would like to see a detailed financial report, please contact WAHA Treasurer Jean Cade at 323-737-5034.



WAHA's Committees: The Heart & Soul of the Organization

WAHA is, as a nonprofit organization well into its second generation of existence, continually "making itself new," or renovating, the vibrant heart of a world city. In the hope that you will consider becoming more active in West Adams Heritage this year, as we continue to renovate, our committees forthwith describe themselves.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION (JEAN FROST, CHAIR; LAURA MEYERS, CO-CHAIR)

The Historic Preservation Committee is involved in the identification, research and designation of historic properties and areas under federal, state and city designation. It monitors and assists survey efforts by official bodies and works closely with WAHA's Zoning and Planning Committee in developing comment on environmental reviews of impacts to historic resources posed by various projects. The committee evaluates impacts to historic properties, most recently (this summer) the impacts of a proposed new commercial/office center at Jefferson and Crenshaw to the historic Bank of Tokyo/Union Banl Building, a mid-century modern structure designed by Tosh Terasawa and Art O'Leary in the early 1960s. The committee supports cultural monument nominations and most recently submitted the successful Waters-Shaw Family residence at 2700 Severance..

It has also been active in advocating to save the last remaining Victorian on the Washington Boulevard site between Magnolia and New England (1410 W. Washington). Historic Preservation Committee.

Please contact Jean Frost to join; the committee would like to have one representative from each of WAHA's neighborhoods to track developments and opportunities for historic designation. Meetings wilkl be held as called by the chair.

Goals:

- Continued designations of historic districts on a proactive basis
- Continued designation of HCM's
- Preserve the integrity of the HPOZ Ordinance and its application
- One preservation member event (usually in May)
- Assemble and have participation by a designee from each neighborhood for the committee

MARKETING COMMITTEE (GENA DAVIS, CHAIR)

The Marketing Committee's purpose is to bring awareness of WAHA and its activities via publicity, communications, and branding. We would like to eventually do a marketing plan, publicity campaigns, perhaps some direct mail. Support special events. Brenda is co-chairing. Needs: other publicists and/or writers who would like to learn about marketing, who could write press release for the different events. Exciting and energetic people! We are still considering how we will do standing monthly meetings (your house? Or by conference call? But we promise it will be fun. How to contact: _msgenad@yahoo.com (mailto:msgenad@yahoo.com) or call 323-731-3110.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE (ROLAND SOUZA, CHAIR)

The committee has been working hand in glove with the historic preservation committee for the past few years, to help save individual houses by getting them declared monuments and also advocating for historic districts. For example, we worked with the Leo Politi Neighborhood Association in Westmoreland Place to negotiate a successful outcome that saved the Vosburg Residence and identified parking for the church. We have also worked with LAUSD to try to save houses and also recycle architectural fragments into the community. In fact, we have the first truckload of these materials. This year it is our intention to continue to work with the Planning Department as it revises our local

(continued on page 10)

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Annual Report

WAHA Committees *continued from page 9*

community plans (South and West Adams). Washington Boulevard task. We need committee members who understand land use and/or WANT to learn about such things as ICOs and FARs and CEQA (yes, it is a technical soup.) This is a very important committee that also needs people to take time during the work week to attend public hearings, usually Downtown in City Hall. Do you have a flexible schedule?

EVENTS COMMITTEE (MICHAEL MEDINA, CHAIR)

We sponsor many of WAHA's programs and events throughout the year, with an emphasis on preservation and fun. For example, we organized last Spring's Don Sloper book signing at Chester Place (the book is also titled Chester Place.) And, of course, we are the folks responsible for the annual 4th of July festivities. We'd like to do more of these events, large and small, but we need your help! Would you like to host a potluck or larger event at your home? Can you help organize an event, and/or purchase food and supplies for one? (Of course you will be reimbursed.) Do you have an idea for a program/panel discussion that you can implement? The annual Halloween Fest also falls under the auspices of this committee - if you want to help out, please contact Karen Ide. If you would like to get involved with this committee, please e-mail Mike at michaelmmedina@aol.com or Judy Tedrick at judy@victorianhomes.com.

TOURS COMMITTEE (LINDSAY WIGGINS, CHAIR)

WAHA tours each have a style and a history - much like our homes. The Cemetery Tour is renowned for our presentation of early West Adams in a "living history" format. Originally started in conjunction with the LA Historical Society, our tour is now uniquely WAHA. The Holiday Tour recently celebrated its 20th year and has become our signature event, frequently featured in the LA Times, Eye on LA, KPCC and other outlets. The June Tours are each special in their content and focus. Each year we feature a different neighborhood or singular topic (for example, several years ago WAHA sponsored a Religious Architecture Tour for our June event.) The 2006 June Tour brought chamber music to Van Buren Place and confirmed that our homes are designed for music. Tourgoers started their day with a scrumptious brunch prepared and served by our volunteers.

In December we celebrated the beginning of the Holiday season with our "Holiday to Remember" 20th Annual Tour. Over 600 people attended the progressive dinner and walking tours, put on by 300+ volunteers. It raised nearly \$20,000.

Each Tour is organized by a tour committee who are responsible for all logistics and recruiting and training volunteers for the day of the event. The Cemetery Tour committee begins meeting regularly in August - please contact Laura Meyers or Judy Tedrick if you'd like to be involved.

The Holiday Tour Committee meets on Sunday evenings, bi-monthly until November, then weekly until the Tour. Each Tour Committee benefits from volunteers with

all kinds of skills and interests - no experience necessary, but enthusiasm and a good sense of humor required. Contact Lindsay at wigginsla@sbcglobal.net.

The Holiday Tour requires the talents of all kinds of volunteers.

- Interested in architecture? - Volunteer to write docent notes
- Love talking about the neighborhood? - Volunteer to docent in a house
- Can't get enough of the Cooking Channel? - Volunteer to prepare food in advance or during the Tour
 - Go over the top decorating for the Holidays? - Volunteer to decorate
- Juggle life with ease? - Volunteer to be a House Captain
- Live to shop? - Volunteer to shop for the dozens of items necessary for a Tour

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COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE (JIM ROBINSON, CHAIR)

Through monthly newsletters and a growing website, WAHA's Communications Committee is the lifeline that connects members - explaining recent and current issues, announcing coming events, educating on preservation, and rallying us together when urgent matters arise. But our message doesn't just go to WAHA members. Our website, and a select mailing list, allow us to spread the word to others and, we hope, to attract more members to the WAHA cause. Of course, it takes more than newsletter editor Laura Meyers and website editor Leslie Evans to keep things humming. So here's the pitch. If you can wield a pen, a keyboard, or a camera, stuff an envelope, sell an ad or deliver a few newsletters door-to-door, there's a future for you in communications. Our committee holds brainstorming meetings at 10 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. For more information, please contact committee chair Jim Robinson at 213-663-3022, or by e-mail at jim@robinsonresidences.com.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS (CLAYTON DELEON, CHAIR)

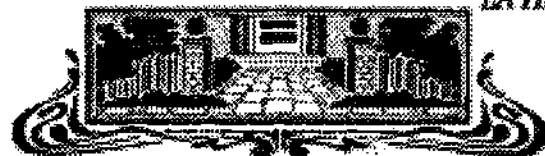
WAHA is a great community organization, but it isn't the ONLY one in West Adams, so our Community Relations committee maintains contact with the rest. That means keeping in touch with, and sometimes attending meetings of, community groups such as the North University Park Alliance, the Van Buren Place Community Restoration Association, and the various Historic Preservation Overlay Zone boards throughout the area. Community Relations Committee members also represent WAHA at local events, such as last year's celebration of WAHA-provided window treatments at Gramercy Housing Group's historic building at Fourth Avenue and Washington Boulevard. But WAHA members may be most familiar with this committee's signature responsibility - the popular Evening Strolls held in various neighborhoods throughout the year. If you'd like to help out with the Strolls, or could maintain a WAHA presence at some other event, please contact committee chair Clayton DeLeon at 213-747-3770.

MEMBERSHIP: CANDY WYNNE (CHAIR)

The Membership Committee has several functions. Its primary function is to maintain the WAHA database, which is used to notify members of upcoming events and produce labels for the newsletter. The Membership Committee is also responsible for mailing out the annual dues notifications. We also keep the WAHA Mailing List updated throughout the year, incorporating changes as received after tours, phone calls, mail requests or special events. Last year we decided to raise member dues to reflect that the costs of producing member services, particularly our publications, exceeded WAHA's dues revenues. As a result, dues collected increased to more than \$14,000 and now covers membership general meetings as well as the cost of publishing and mailing the newsletters throughout the year. If you need more information about this committee, or if you wish to volunteer, please contact Candy Wynne at candywynne@yahoo.com or at 323- 735-3749. ●

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Preservation Matters

Felix the Cat's Nine Lives

continued from page 1

The city's Cultural Heritage Commission voted 4-1 on July 12 to recommend the Felix Chevrolet sign for designation as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. At the meeting, however, representatives of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and a city councilmember opposed the designation, saying it could impede development of the area.

Because lofts and condos are planned nearby, local activists nominated the three-sided sign with a 180-page application last August.

"I truly believe that politicians will be surprised by the public response," says Jim Childs, chair of the Adams Dockweiler Heritage Organizing Committee, a preservation group he formed in 1988. "Everybody loves the Hollywood Sign, but this [sign] makes people smile. I haven't met anybody who doesn't get excited by Felix the Cat."

Winslow Felix, a prominent businessman of Mexican descent, opened Felix Chevrolet in 1920. Felix, a friend of animator Pat Sullivan, who created the "Felix the Cat" movies, borrowed the popular character to jump-start his new business. In 1958, a new owner hired Wayne Heath, who designed signs for Denny's and Winchell doughnuts, to create the existing sign, whose Plexiglas-and-neon letters measure 15 feet tall.

Felix Chevrolet's current owner, Darryl Holter, son-in-law of the owner who erected the sign, is willing to donate the sign to the Neon Museum, but has said little about the moderne showroom.

"The commission found that the showroom and the sign were two integral parts to the whole and should not be separated from each other or relocated from its prominent historic location," says Mike Buhler, director of advocacy for the Los Angeles Conservancy, which testified in support of the nomination at the July 12 meeting.

Now the commission's decision goes to the city's Planning, Land Use, and Management Committee, which in September will pass a recommendation to the city council for a final decision.

Although the potential designation doesn't protect the sign or the showroom, it would trigger a review process that makes it more difficult to remove or demolish the structures.

In the meantime, Childs and his committee will try to get the word out about the threat to the Felix sign.

"When political pressure can deny the people's right to their legacy ... it's wrong, but wrong things happen," Childs says. ●

Jim Childs and co-applicant Charlie Fisher have also written this urge-to-action letter:

F.O.F. (FRIENDS OF FELIX) ALERT NOTICE

Felix Chevrolet Showroom & Neon Sign City Council File No. 07-2308 / CHC2006-9335-HCM

Dear FRIENDS OF FELIX:

The time for action is here. On July 12, the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission rejected the demands of Mayor Villaraigosa and Councilwoman Perry and recommended in favor of the designation of the Felix Chevrolet Showroom and Neon Sign as a Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument. A battle victory, yes but the war continues.

The CHC decision now moves procedurally forward to the City Council's Planning & Land Use Management committee for their recommendation (tentative date, 09/18) and then on to the City Council for a majority vote. The CHC validation of our nomination application ends the debate on the merits of the case and it now becomes a political action decision.

To Save the Cat we must ask the elected officials to support CHC and declare Felix Chevrolet a monument.

Mayor Villaraigosa and Councilwoman Perry care more about supporting future plans for massive residential housing on the site at the expense of our landmark Cat. They will not scale back the project nor design around it if Felix is not a City Monument. They will demolish Felix. Stop them now by letting them hear your voice, your family's voice, your neighbor's voice, your co-workers voice, your cat's voice. Please write, e-mail, fax, call, blog, website, you-tube, talk-radio, whatever it takes to be heard.

We are asking that you act and that you ask three others to act and that each of those three also ask three others and so on and on and on. If this simple chain letter paradigm starts with just three -dozen and is followed out to only seven levels, City hall will be buried under nearly 80,000 e-mails. Should it rise to an 8th level there would be 236,556 e-mails, a tsunami hit. But it must start and at each level every sender must ensure that the chain is unbroken and that each of his or her three has sent more letters so they need a cc for follow up.

Help forge this unbroken chain of public resonance. Passion for the Felix the Cat icon is not limited to just the residents of LA so please tell your people statewide, nationwide and worldwide to help

Save the Cat by joining the Friends of Felix movement. (Make sure to include the City Council File Number)

This is the 40th anniversary of the Summer of Love — help also make it the Summer for Felix.

Thanks on behalf of ADHOC and WAHA, the sponsors of the application. -- Jim Childs & Charlie Fisher

FRIENDS OF FELIX CONTACTS:

Please address your e-mails, faxes, and letters to: City Hall / 200 N. Spring St. L.A. 90012. Tell your own Councilmember as well if you live or work in L.A.

Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor

(213)-978-0600 / Room 303 / Mayor@lacity.org

Jan Perry CD-9

(213)-473-7009 / Room 420 /
councilmember.perry@lacity.org

Eric Garcetti, Council President

(213)-473-7013 / Room 470 /
councilmember.garcetti@lacity.org

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Ed Reyes CD-1, Chair (213)-473-7001 / Room 410 /
councilmember.reyes@lacity.org

Jose Huizar CD-14 (213)-473-7014 / Room 465 /
councilmember.huizar@lacity.org

Jack Weiss CD-5 (213)-473-7005 / Room 440 /
councilmember.weiss@lacity.org

Barbara Greaves / Legal Assistant (213) 978-1068 /
barbara.greaves@lacity.org

FELIX CHEVROLET 3330 S. Figueroa St. L.A. 90007 Darryl
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<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-felix13jul13,0,873810.story?coll=la-home-center>

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Chesterfield Square Craftsman Bungalow – Adam Janeiro (Buyer's agent) – Welcome, Jessica Talmadge

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West Adams Avenues Craftsman – 2425 9th Avenue - Adam Janeiro (Buyer's agent). Welcome, Michelle and Kesshann Cortez

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Please DO NOT include my name, address, e-mail, or telephone in the WAHA membership directory.

We support preservation of the West Adams community's architectural heritage and beautification activities, and seek to educate Los Angeles' citizens and others about cultural heritage and restoration techniques.



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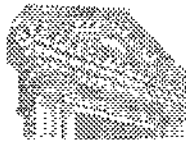
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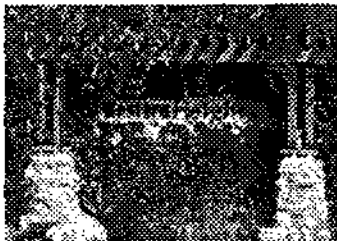
If you frequent a local business — retail store, restaurant, service provider, etc. — ask them if they would offer a discount to WAHA members. Explain that they'd benefit from the increased exposure to local consumers, and be listed in the WAHA monthly newsletter. Or, call me at 323-733-6869 and I'll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

Calendar ✓

WAHA August/September Calendar

WAHA Newcomer's Dessert, Thursday, August 16, 6:30 p.m.: Meet your neighbors (see story, page 1)

Heritage Square Summer of Love, Saturday, August 25: Hang with the swells as they celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Summer of Love (visit www.heritagesquare.org for more information.)



Western Heights Home Tour, Sunday, September 9: A walking tour of one of our historic neighborhoods (see story, page 3)

Angelus Rosedale Living History Tour, Saturday, September 29: Mark your calendar to meet five of L.A.'s most colorful historic personages.

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 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 Bo Advertising is subject to the approval of the publishers. Although the Association appreciates its many fine advertisers, the Association does not accept responsibility 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 Ad Heritage Association. Copyright 2007. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for perm



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Angelus Rosedale Cemetery Tour Saturday, September 29

WAHA's annual Living History Tour of the West's most historic cemetery is just around the corner. Don't miss out!



WAHA Newcomers' Dessert Thursday, August 16, 6:30 p.m. 2190 West 24th Street

Meet your neighbors, new and old! (see page 1)