



WPRA streams 2020 annual meeting to elect, reflect, protect

Given the current pandemic reality, which has seen a proliferation of virtual city and neighborhood association meetings, the West Pasadena Residents' Association on Nov. 17 followed suit by convening its 2020 annual meeting in Zoom-land. WPRA annual membership meetings are typically convened in April or May, but the emergence of COVID-19 laid waste to that plan.

Election of officers/directors

The chief administrative reason for the annual meeting is to elect officers and directors for the coming year. And that was no different this year. Through the magic of the internet, members cast their ballots to elect a 2020-2021 slate. Among the election highlights are:

- **Dan Beal** will continue to lead the board as president, a position he has held since spring of 2018.
- The role of vice president has been split into two distinct responsibilities: **Evan Davis**, former board secretary, was elected vice president of Administration, while **Avram Gold**, former vice president, will serve as vice president of Communications. The split reflects the growing importance of internal process improvement (administration) and specialized knowledge required to manage WPRA's publications, website and media relationships (communications).
- Former WPRA president **Kenyon Harbison** will take Evan Davis's place as secretary.
- **Blaine Cavena** will continue to serve as treasurer, a role he has faithfully executed over the past 15 years.
- Two familiar faces were newly re-elected to the board of directors: former WPRA presidents **Pete Ewing** and **Geoffrey Baum**.

President Dan Beal's comments

Following his re-election as WPRA president,



■ Top left: Interim Chief Bryan Frieders, Pasadena Fire Department

■ Top right: Public Information Officer Lisa Derderian, City of Pasadena (photo by Avram Gold)



■ Left: Disaster Program coordinator Jennifer Waldron, Huntington Hospital

Are you prepared for the next natural disaster?

BY CHUCK HUDSON
EDITOR, THE NEWS

The theme for the 2020 West Pasadena Residents' Association's annual meeting — "**Pasadena and disasters: just before and just after**" — was conceived prior to the emergence of COVID-19. However, after re-examination, the WPRA board determined that between wildfires, windstorms, earthquakes and the pandemic, this topic continued to have ample relevance to city residents.

"The subject tonight," said WPRA Vice President/Communications **Avram Gold**, serving as master of ceremonies on Nov. 17 during the virtual annual meeting, "is certainly appropriate considering the disaster we've been living through since February. It used to be that when we talked about disaster preparedness we were talking about earthquakes and the occasional windstorm, maybe a wildfire in the hills. But now we've been educated to the fact that disasters can take a lot of different forms, and we should be prepared to deal

Pandemic or not, WPRA continues to be engaged on your behalf

BY DAN BEAL
PRESIDENT, WPRA

On behalf of your WPRA board, I'd like to express heartfelt thanks to our city leaders and staff, our local medical and public health communities, and many other organizations and individuals who are helping us keep safe through this risky and challenging period.

In fact, the WPRA, like many other organizations, has had to adapt and find new ways to do our work. It has become more difficult to inform and interact, obtain vital information, and make decisions. Input and testimony to public governance processes has also changed — and not always for the better. Sometimes we feel there's been less transparency and a slippage of the *Pasadena Way*. But your WPRA has been heavily engaged nonetheless.

Some of the most important issues we're closely monitoring include:

- Preserving, restoring and protecting the Arroyo Seco and the Hahamonga watershed
- Controlling and limiting mansionization

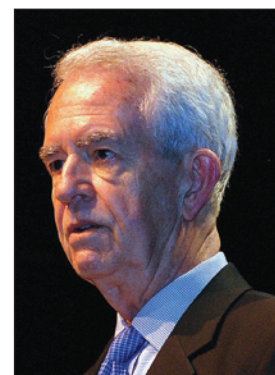
- Preserving our single-family neighborhoods that are threatened by state initiatives to boost housing density and override local zoning
- Dialing back unrealistic regional housing allocations
- Mitigating or rejecting incompatible and oversized development
- Preserving the original vision for our historic Civic Center
- Protecting our trees and encouraging better forest maintenance
- Mitigating traffic on our streets
- Reducing fire hazards in the Arroyo

We continue to value and need your support

It's been difficult to raise funds during these difficult times. In spite of that, the WPRA has given generously to organizations that help those in need of food, shelter and other assistance. Additionally, we postponed our annual spring fundraising appeal. As a result, our financial reserves are low. While our activities are powered by thousands of hours of unpaid volunteer efforts each year, we do have actual business expenses, which are funded only through membership dues and contributions.

In short, the WPRA would be most grateful

if you would renew or start your WPRA membership. And, since the WPRA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public-benefit corporation, contributions and donations are tax deductible.



Dan Beal

Housekeeping

- I'd like to welcome two new board members, Geoffrey Baum and Pete Ewing, both former WPRA presidents.
- Also, we are saddened by the loss of board member Bill Christian, an esteemed colleague, friend and stalwart defender of the environment. [See article on page 6.] He will be sorely missed.

And finally, the WPRA will continue to represent your interests by advocating to maintain the character of our community and enhance the quality of life in west Pasadena. Please be healthy and stay safe.

About us

2020 – 2021 officers

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| ■ Dan Beal | president@wpra.net |
| ■ Evan Davis | adminvp@wpra.net |
| ■ Avram Gold | commvp@wpra.net |
| ■ Blaine Cavena | treasurer@wpra.net |
| ■ Kenyon Harbison | secretary@wpra.net |

Mission: Founded in 1962, the West Pasadena Residents' Association is dedicated to maintaining the character of our community and enhancing the quality of life in west Pasadena.

Area: The WPRA service area is bounded on the north by Colorado Boulevard, on the east by Fair Oaks Avenue and on the south and west by the city limits.

Funding: All WPRA activities are funded through membership dues and contributions. The WPRA receives no public funding and has no paid employees.

2020 – 2021 board of directors

- Geoffrey Baum
- Dave Bise
- Pete Ewing
- Mic Hansen planning@wpra.net
Land use, Planning
- Joan Hearst
- Susan Kinney
- Nancy Walker
- Linda Zinn (membership@wpra.net)
Membership, Open Space & Conservation

2020 – 2021 WPRA Advisory Board

- Justin Chapman
- Vince Farhat
- Tom Seifert
- Catherine Stringer
- Fred Zepeda



The News is mailed each quarter to nearly 8,000 homes and businesses in the 91105 and 91103 ZIP codes and beyond.

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The voters have spoken

While the rest of the nation, if not world, was transfixed on the election results at the top of the ballot, Pasadena had its own share of drama lower on the ballot. Then-current Mayor **Terry Tornek** again faced off against then-city Councilmember **Victor Gordo** in a mayoral runoff. Pasadena voters also elected subdistrict board members (none in our service area) for the Pasadena Unified School District as well as federal and state positions, and expressed their opinions on several measures.

*[Editor's note: Several local races were decided in March. The following candidates won their contests with a majority of votes: incumbent city councilmembers **Tyron Hampton** (District 1), **Gene Masuda** (District 4) and **Steve Madison** (District 6). Also, in council District 2, newcomer **Felicia Williams** will replace Margaret McAustin, who declined to run again.]*

The winners, as reported by the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk as of 11/30/2020, are highlighted below in yellow.

PASADENA MAYOR

	Votes	Percent
Victor M. Gordo (N)	37,184	54.82%
Terry Tornek (N)	30,650	45.18%

MEASURE O: PUSD repair, technology, student achievement measure

	Votes	Percent
Yes	65,275	63.02%
No	38,296	36.98%

MEASURE P: Pasadena City Services Protection Measure

	Votes	Percent
Yes	55,909	83.57%
No	10,990	16.43%

U.S. Representative, 27th District

	Votes	Percent
Judy Chu (D)	211,153	71.44%
Johnny J. Nalbandian (R)	84,398	28.50%

U.S. Representative, 28th District

	Votes	Percent
Adam B. Schiff (D)	244,271	72.66%
Eric Early (R)	91,928	27.34%

U.S. Rep., 33rd District

	Votes	Percent
Ted W. Lieu (D)	257,094	67.58%
James P. Bradley (R)	123,334	32.42%

State Senator, 25th District

	Votes	Percent
Anthony J. Portantino (D)	274,855	65.11%
Kathleen Hazelton (R)	147,267	34.89%

State Assemblymember, 41st District

	Votes	Percent
Chris Holden (D)	135,323	69.55%
Robin A. Hvidston (R)	59,257	30.45%

Gordo rallies community to meet collective challenges

BY VICTOR GORDO
MAYOR, CITY OF PASADENA

Twenty years ago, I came to the Pasadena City Hall as the councilmember from District 5. Last November I was elected mayor to stand up for all of Pasadena and to bring our community together. I am honored by the voters' trust and confidence in me.

My vision for Pasadena is simple:

- All our residents deserve to live in the best Pasadena possible.
- Every child should have the opportunity to be a successful and contributing member of our community.

Despite challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, we can achieve these goals by rolling up our sleeves and, recalling our community's strengths, working through problems together. I will always welcome your suggestions and your support for our city's future.

Pasadena is fortunate to have livable and thriving neighborhoods, good housing, clean and safe streets, strong schools, family friendly parks, and an abundance of quality open spaces. These spaces where we walk, bike, run, play ball and breathe fresh air have helped maintain our wellbeing during the dark days of this pandemic. I am grateful to our dedicated city staff who maintains our municipal services and keeps our community safe.

During the past 10 months, Pasadena's economy has taken a hard hit. Many residents are unemployed or underemployed, and many of our hospitality and retail businesses have suffered terrible blows. I want the city to work hard to support our local businesses and to encourage residents and visitors to enjoy the many delights our city has to offer.

The pandemic has shown us how critically important the built-environment is to our physical and mental health. Going forward, we must ensure our building



Victor Gordo

codes, zoning requirements and design standards incorporate the lessons learned this year.

The complexities of working at home are compounded by the fact that our children have had to become remote learners. Some parents report that their children do not enjoy remote school and that they are not thriving in their learning. There is evidence that many of our children — particularly those in vulnerable families — are falling behind in literacy and subject matter acquisition.

It should be a priority to help our children catch up, and ensure that our libraries and community centers have the resources needed to assist with tutoring and learning-focused activities. I intend urge my council colleagues to join in working with city staff on a citywide educational and social catch-up initiative for our school-age children. In supporting our young people, we should confirm Pasadena's commitment as an Early

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Q&A | with John Perez

Chief, Pasadena Police Department

John Eduardo Perez has served the Pasadena Police Department since 1985. Prior to his appointment as the interim Chief of Police, Perez rose to the rank of Police Commander and Deputy Chief of Police between 2006-2016. He holds a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice, a master's degree in behavior science, and a Ph.D. in public administration. Perez also serves on the Executive Board of the Patron Saints Foundation, which provides grants to public charities that improve the health of individuals residing in the west San Gabriel Valley. Last October, Avram Gold, WPRA Vice President/Communications, had the opportunity to virtually meet with Chief Perez to learn more about the man and the police officer.

What drew you into building a career in law enforcement?
My parents came from Mexico and a couple of my brothers were born there; I was born in Los Angeles. There's eight of us altogether, and I grew up in La Puente [just east of Los Angeles]. The gang violence was pretty high and a couple of families on our street lost kids to gang violence. So, we didn't get into gangs. We were a sports-oriented family, but whenever we played in parks there was a rule my mom had: If the police show up and the gangs show up, we have to leave. So, we grew up disliking the police and the gang members evenly.

As I got older, however, I wanted to make a difference in our communities. So, I became a police officer. I was motivated because my 14-year-old cousin was stabbed and killed by gang members. He wasn't a gang member. He was the nicest kid you could ever meet. We hung out together all the time. So that impacted me a lot. Then, when I had the ability to enter this profession at 18, as a police cadet, I loved the atmosphere, the community, and I loved the interaction and the diversity of the organization.

Why do you think other men and women want to be police officers?

To have a purposeful career. I interview every single one, and what I get back is purpose. They all want to do something that will make a difference.

What are the strengths or weaknesses you try to suss out when you're interviewing new hires?

I'm looking for people with great

character. That's why only one out of 100 gets an interview. When I'm having that conversation, I want to see if they cared enough to research our city. And then I'll ask very specific questions, like, "What has been the most serious challenge you've had?" and "Tell me how you overcame it." I'm looking for individuals with emotional intelligence, compassion, and understanding that it's not all about taking people to jail. I can't always spot implicit bias that might be a problem, but they have to go through six months of Academy and a six-month training program. And then they're on probation for another year. So, I have them for a while to make sure they hit the mark.

You mentioned implicit bias. How do you uncover it?

The ways we pick up on that, are through social media, background investigations and interviews with their friends, teachers, work associates and neighbors. Some biases may be drawn out in the process because they can't be hidden. Also, if they got in any trouble, was it good or bad trouble? That could indicate some of those biases. And other times they may be biased simply because they grew up in a particular neighborhood, and they might not know they have a bias..

Do you have a manual that guides psychological evaluations?

Yes. Our current psychological process is hundreds of questions written in different ways, which are designed to identify implicit biases.

How has your own education and experience in law enforcement changed



Pasadena Police Department Chief John Perez

your perception about human behavior?

Well, growing up the way I did helped me understand the real issues at the core of youth, gang membership and the potential for violence. It really helped set my values and understand the importance of always trying to be compassionate, even in the most-deadly types of situations.

Over the years, being a training officer, working undercover and a drug operative in the 80's watching the crack epidemic and the gang epidemic. Then came 9/11, when I became a Terrorism Lieutenant, traveling the country for our Rose Bowl and other events; all that started the mindset that changed dramatically for me and the new officers hired in the last 20 years.

How are the patrolling assignments to Pasadena neighborhoods determined and managed?

The officers sign up for a patrol beat once a year, based on seniority. We have five beats. And since it's safer here now than any time in my career, many officers seem less concerned about their specific beats and more concerned about schedules or

want to work where the tempo's a little higher.

Do you try to assign Spanish-speaking officers in Latin neighborhoods for better communication?

We used to do that, but the Latino and the African-American communities are intertwined all over the city now. Also, we know that in an given hour or patrol he or she might be dispatched to the another beat where speaking Spanish is irrelevant.

Have you personally been involved in violent arrests? And if so, what thoughts went through your mind?

Those first few incidents, at times my legs would shake, my arms would shake. And I

found out later, it's a lot about the adrenaline we get.

Those times with gunshots, the first couple, you're kind of in shock for a moment. And then you learn, when you have experienced people around you, how to react. You learn to understand the trauma of the first impact of gunshots, or with somebody wrestling you, or with their hand on your gun. You learn to not react so heavily, but react appropriately.

Have you ever been frightened by a life-threatening policing incident?

Oh, without a doubt. But after becoming a supervisor and a lieutenant running units, I would be more concerned and worried about the officers. I'd also worry for the people that

we were encountering. At what point do we move from engaging somebody dangerous to moving into a place of compassion? Immediately?

How would you rate Pasadena's police officers?

I believe the officers we're hiring are the best of the best. My interviews are not about what a great career they're going to have. I tell them how much overtime this city requires of them, that they may be asked to go to community meetings, and get out of the car to meet people. We'll also ask them to learn techniques that are new to this profession and make them ready for positive engagements. Maturity has to be there for our officers.

What life lessons have you learned from your career?

First, we all need to have a positive mindset that's optimistic and understands where things will go wrong and what things will fail, but that the next morning we have a chance to do it again. The second is resilience. We need the resilience to keep coming back and trying to grow. Because at this point, what I see locally, nationally and politically is that nobody is coming to the middle. We need to separate ourselves from our political parties to deal with the problems at hand. We need to think about how can we solve this together, regardless of your values or mine.

With all the strife and trauma in this country, do you still think it's possible to keep Pasadena safe and sane?

Yes. Absolutely.



Chief Perez, trading his police cap for a Dr. Seuss hat, celebrates a moment with students during 2019's Read Across America event at Longfellow Elementary School.

Gordo rallies ...

Continued from page 3

Learning City so that our pre-school children — from birth to age 5 — become ready to learn.

As the pandemic generation, we are both scarred and bound together by our collective challenge. It seems clear that this winter will be difficult, but as we move beyond the pandemic, as the community definitely will, spring will come, the days will get longer, life will be renewed, and once again our spirits will soar, together.

In passing: Bill Christian

William “Bill” Christian — father, husband, friend, lawyer, candy-maker, athlete, woodworker, conservationist, lover of wild places, and member of the board of directors of West Pasadena Residents’ Association — died on December 5, 2020, at his home in Pasadena, after a long battle with cancer.

Bill was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, but raised Hellertown, PA. The summers he spent working in the family candy store on the boardwalk in Ocean City, N.J., instilled two lifelong loves: candy-making and the ocean.

He earned an undergraduate degree at Yale, a law degree at Harvard, and then served as a district attorney in Bethel, Alaska. From there his law career spanned years in government, law firms and corporations, including Atlantic Richfield Company, in various locales including Fairbanks, Anchorage and Pasadena.

Bill discovered his real passion in conservation upon joining The Nature Conservancy. His work for the conservancy was instrumental in ensuring the preservation of the area surrounding the Amargosa River, near Death Valley, for future generations. He was a founding board member of the Amargosa Conservancy. Christian Spring, a water source recently discovered and named in his honor, reflects the life-force he brought to his work in sustaining the wilds of the desert region that he loved. He also served the WPRA as a co-chair of Open Space and Natural Resources, as well as a frequent environmental reporter for this publication.

Bill was a lifelong athlete, a master-remodeler and an environmental law professor at Claremont McKenna College. In addition to the WPRA, Bill was also active in the Arroyo Seco Foundation and Sequoia Riverland Trust. He and Barbara Zimmermann were married for almost 24 years. He is survived by his wife, two children and four grandchildren.

Comments from his fellow WPRA board of directors:

- “Bill was a stalwart defender of the environment, among other accomplishments, and brought those

passions and skills to WPRA, including his fierce defense of the Arroyo Seco. He was also an all-around great guy. He will be greatly missed and fondly remembered here and in many other places.” — **Dan Beal, president, WPRA**

- “When I think about Bill Christian, I remember a smiling face expressing a sense of serenity, even while facing a significant health challenge. On that one occasion we talked about it, he never once suggested even a hint of regret, despair or fear. Rather, Bill carried the self-confident spirit of a 30-year-old — for me, a life lesson I will never forget.” — **Avram Gold, Vice President/Communications, WPRA**
- “Very sad. Bill was great guy, a wonderful asset to the community and to the WPRA. His willingness to do what was needed and to speak up with grace, persistence, and good humor, even when disagreeing, are the characteristics of a gentleman and a good citizen. I will miss him.” — **Blaine Cavena, treasurer, WPRA**
- “Bill was a gracious and accomplished gentleman who contributed so much. We will miss him so.” — **Mic Hansen, Land Use and Planning chair, WPRA**

- “A terrible loss.” — **Geoffrey Baum, current director and former president, WPRA**

- “Bill will be greatly missed.” — **Joan Hurst, director, WPRA**



Bill with one of his best friends

Are you concerned about Green House Gas Emissions & Ocean Pollution?

Help make a better world for all of our Kids !

Shop at your local Pasadena Refill Store

Create a Sustainability Goal for 2021 and let us help you reduce your reliance on single use plastics.

Purchase coffee, soaps, lotions cleaning solutions, & personal care products in reuseable and refillable containers

Shop Online:
www.bansuprefill.com
free local delivery



or visit us at:
25 South El Molino Avenue
covid practices are in place

City staff preparing final mansionization code

Mansionization is sometimes defined as a situation in which a proposed new house or addition appears to be out of scale or character with its surroundings. In response to concerns for the potential for mansionization in Pasadena, and at the direction of city council, city staff undertook an effort to revise the zoning code and include additional protections for single-family neighborhoods in the city.

The changes to the zoning code include:

- Adoption of neighborhood compatibility standards related to maximum floor area
- Establishment of design standards related to exterior finishes, trim and window placement
- New standards related to structure height and story poles
- Updated standards related to accessory structures
- Updates to project notification and a new discretionary review process for projects of a certain size

This past October, city council approved these changes and tasked the city staff with preparing the final code language and processes in advance of implementing the new standards. — **By Martin Potter, Planner City of Pasadena Planning & Community Development Department**

What a difference a .net, .com and .edu make

What a difference an internet domain makes. Some of you may have been surprised when, attempting to visit the West Pasadena Residents' Association website, you instead ended up at the Women's Professional Rodeo Association or the Wisconsin Public Radio Association. The difference is that the rodeo association web address ends in ".com," and the Wisconsin Public Radio Association ends with ".org." So, to visit us, make sure you type wpdra.net.

Accommodating a new reality

BY SUE MOSSMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Pasadena Heritage started 2020 with great anticipation for the programs and initiatives we were planning — a spring home tour featuring the work of legendary architect Wallace Neff; our traditional Colorado Street Bridge party in July; a variety of workshops, walking tours and pub crawls, and an expansion of our Craftsman Weekend in the fall. All that changed quickly and dramatically.

With great effort and a nimble and creative staff, the organization was able to regroup and reimagine our programs, retooling them to a virtual format, and still engage and entertain people throughout the year. We are grateful for all the support of our members and attendees and our sponsors' generosity, helping us stay afloat in these turbulent seas.

Historic preservation issues never stop, and we did our best to discover, engage and influence developments and policy decisions that would affect historic resources. Seeing a mansionization ordinance passed in late 2020 was a major victory. Though the new regulations did not include everything we advocated for, they do address some of the most egregious issues we've seen with new residential development.

A strengthened historic preservation ordinance, newly passed by city council, also helps protect individual historic places and neighborhood character. A whole host of individual projects also received our scrutiny, including the Langham Huntington Hotel's Picture Bridge, projects on South Lake Avenue, the Bank of America building at the corner of Arroyo Parkway and Green Street, new fencing on the Colorado Street Bridge, and certainly the former YWCA site and companion property across Holly Street.

Now in an exclusive negotiation process, developers have been chosen by city council for both these highly prized Civic Center sites. Pasadena Heritage supports hotel



use for the former YWCA building and site — the only use offered by proposers — and a use that is very compatible with the original YWCA building. We remain very concerned that the design of the new portion of the project be all that it should be: a fitting companion to City Hall across the street and a real contributor to the Civic Center as a whole. Clear direction from city council resulted in affordable housing being the preferred use for the nearby Water & Power site. From our perspective, the design and quality of this new building is equally critical to that on the former YWCA site. And we believe it is imperative that a landscape plan be collaboratively developed that embraces both sites, enhances Centennial Plaza, and creates a unified, elegant setting for new and historic buildings in the civic heart of the city. We will continue to be diligently involved in these projects as negotiations and design process unfold.

A new name and a wider frame

Pasadena Heritage expanded its Craftsman Weekend in 2020 to a new and expanded format over 10 days in November. Architectural history sessions were interspersed with personal stories, meet-and-greet sessions with contemporary craftspeople, saving historic playgrounds, and our second annual Dr. Robert Winter Memorial Lecture featuring John Brinkmann, the founder, publisher and editor of *American Bungalow* magazine.

We have discussed the need for Craftsman Weekend to change and grow as we've seen less attendance and generally less excitement about the Craftsman era over several years. Pushed by the pandemic to present all programs virtually, we also attracted a wider audience and tapped into the growing interest in Mid-Century Modern. Look for Preservation Pasadena to continue in 2021 and virtual programs that can be seen coast to coast to remain a key part of our educational programs.

WPRA streams 2020 annual meeting ...

Continued from page 1

Dan Beal addressed the virtual assemblage.

“Who could have anticipated — back when viruses were in computers, masks were only for Halloween, and Zoom was the noise your child or grandchild made with a toy airplane — how dependent we would become on city leaders and staff, our local medical and public health communities, and many other organizations and individuals who risk their lives to keep us safe?” said Beal. “Some of them are joining us here tonight. And if this were a typical annual meeting, I know there would be thunderous applause right now.”

He acknowledged that many of us must adapt to the COVID-19 situation and find new ways to do our respective work. It’s become more difficult to inform, interact and obtain vital and necessary information and data, Beal said, noting that public governance processes have also changed. “Sometimes we feel like the city’s been a bit less transparent,” Beal added. In spite of these challenges, he asserted, “the WPRA remains heavily engaged.”

Beal also called attention to how difficult it has been for non-profit organizations, such as the WPRA, to raise the money necessary to meet their respective mission. Out of respect for those in desperate need of food, shelter or other assistance, the WPRA in the spring donated to local non-profits serving that vital community role. Moreover, the WPRA also postponed its annual spring fundraising appeal to avoid drawing attention and funds away from more vital fundraising. “As a result,” he said, “WPRA financial reserves are low.

While the WPRA’s activities are powered by thousands of hours of unpaid volunteer efforts each year, the association does have actual expenses, and those expenses are funded only through membership dues and contributions.

In short, Beal said, “the WPRA would be most grateful if you would renew or start your WPRA 2020-2021 membership.”

Note: since the WPRA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, contributions and donations are tax deductible. — by Chuck Hudson



- Top row left: Dan Beal, WPRA President
- Top row right: Evan Davis, WPRA Vice President/Administration
- Middle row left: Avram Gold, WPRA Vice President/Communications
- Middle row right: Blaine Cavena, WPRA treasurer
- Right: Kenyon Harbison, WPRA Secretary



Are you prepared ...

Continued from page 1

with all kinds of disasters.”

Addressing that topic were three representatives of our community’s first-responder units and the city’s Public Information Officer, all well-prepared to help us get ready for natural disasters and then survive them. The panel moderator was WPRA Secretary and former WPRA President **Kenyon Harbison**.

[Editor’s note: By the time this newsletter goes into the mail, one of the panelists, Pasadena Fire Department Interim Chief Bryan Frieders, will have retired from that role. The WPRA applauds his many years of valued service to the city and wishes him a well-deserved retirement.]

Interim Fire Chief Bryan Frieders Vital questions. Your answers?

After expressing confidence in the city’s emergency operations plans, Frieders announced that his presentation would comprise a series of questions.

“What would happen if I said to you: “We have a wildfire coming to your city or your neighborhood, and I need you to evacuate your house right this second”?

He suggested that everyone pause for a moment to reflect before answering the questions. He continued:

- Do you have extra clothing?
- Do you have food and water for the next couple of days?
- How are you going to get out of the area?
- And if you can get out, where are you going?
- Is there gas in your car?
- What are you going to do with your pets?
- What do you need to take — right now — that is crucial to your life? And are they within reach at the moment?

He asserted that if you’re not prepared in a moment’s notice to get out of your home with those you love and things you need for a period of time, then you’re not prepared.

“We’ve talked for years about catastrophic earthquakes and wildfires,” Frieders said. “They are inevitable. We’ve seen them up

and down the state for the past several years.” He cited the fact that the city and state have introduced many measures to try to prevent loss and minimize risk from catastrophic wildfires, but “when the winds come up and the fire starts it’s still inevitable that something catastrophic is going to happen. You need to be prepared for that,” he said.

Turning to earthquakes, he asked:

- Do you have a pre-arranged location to meet up with your family?
- Do you have a place to go if you can’t communicate because, for example, cellular service in the area will be overwhelmed?
- Do you have a contact somewhere outside of this general area, someone you could call to let people know where you are and that you’re OK?
- Do you have an escape plan for your house?
- If you live in a multi-story house and it collapses, how you going to get out?
- Have you thought about how you’ll get your car out of the garage if the power’s out and your garage door doesn’t work? *[Editor’s note: The city building code now requires new homes to install a battery backup for garage door openers.]*

These are things you need to think about before this happens, he said. “And if you haven’t planned for an emergency yet, you’re well behind the curve. Forgive me for being blunt and abrupt, but this is important: If you’re not ready, get ready.”

Lisa Derderian, City of Pasadena Public Information Officer

What you need to know and where to get it in an emergency

Communications, of course, are at the core of a public information office’s role. Fortunately, Derderian said, the city has “a very robust communications platform.”

The city’s digital media platform includes the city’s website, of course, as well as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram — all to get important information out as quickly as possible to as many as possible.

“But,” she said, “We also have an older population that may not subscribe to social media. That’s why we also turn to more traditional media to share information. These

include mainstream television, radio and newspapers. And even though fewer people are subscribing to newspapers, more are reading them online.”

The problem, however, is that in a major disaster various electronic media may not be available. This could be because power has gone out, batteries have run down or, more likely, data and voice media may be overloaded and crash. “That’s when hand-cranked radios or even your car radio can help you tap into the information stream,” Derderian said.

Beyond these communication methods, “we also can take advantage of house-to-house canvassing and police and fire public-address systems.”

Also, Derderian urged all to visit the city’s website to sign up for emergency notification from PLEAS (Pasadena Local Emergency Alert System) and NIXLE for police alerts.

“We use PLEAS when we need to share important information such as directions for evacuations or notice of imminent danger. The social app, Next Door, can be useful to get information, but don’t forget that in an emergency you can also call 911 or text to 7444241 for the police department, said Derderian.

“We also have KPAS television, on our local government cable, and Channel 55 for those of you who have the cable television,” said Derderian. “And the fire department offers great emergency-response training programs.

The city offers a “Map your neighborhood” program, which provides a step-by-step process to help neighborhoods (generally 18-20 households) better prepare for disasters and know what to afterwards. Visit cityofpasadena.net/fire/community-programs/map-your-neighborhood.

Jennifer Waldron, Disaster Program manager, Huntington Hospital
Take comfort from our city’s flexible, scalable disaster response plans
Over her 33 years of service at Huntington

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Local, national leaders join WPRA annual meeting

BY CHUCK HUDSON
EDITOR, THE NEWS

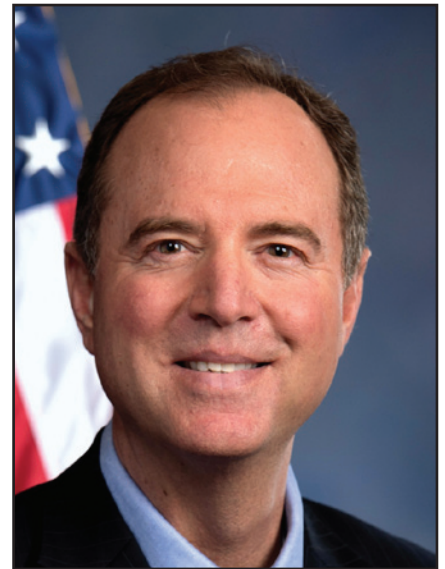
As is customary, the 2020 annual WPRA meeting welcomed several city and national elected dignitaries. This year, the cadre of pols who attended the meeting included former Pasadena Mayor Terry Tornek; current Pasadena Mayor Victor Gordo; District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison, re-elected in the spring; and U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff (D-28), re-elected in the Nov. 3 general election. City Manager Steve Mermell also joined the virtual meeting.

Terry Tornek, outgoing Pasadena mayor
“As you know,” said Tornek, “this will be the last meeting that I attend as your mayor.” He expressed his gratitude for having the opportunity to serve as mayor for the past five years. “I’ve enjoyed it very much, and I hope that I’ve served you well.” Tornek also wished incoming mayor Victor Gordo the very best. “He’ll need your help in getting through this next bumpy patch.”

Victor Gordo, incoming Pasadena mayor.
[Editor’s note: Gordo was sworn in as mayor on December 7.] Gordo started on a gracious note by thanking Tornek for his service to Pasadena. “He and I,” he said, “have had the honor and privilege of serving together in the past on the city council, and have always agreed on wanting nothing but the best for the city.” He acknowledged that the current period was a very challenging time and noted that he was looking forward to convening a city council retreat early in the new year to help set the priorities for the city.

Steve Madison, District 6 Councilmember
“COVID-19 has dominated everything we do at City Hall,” Madison said, “and we’ve done a lot.” He called attention to the fact that Pasadena, as one of the three city-operated public health departments in California, continues to support and maintain our public health department. “This,” he noted, “is the city’s commitment to public health.”

“Also, we introduced an eviction moratorium,” said Madison, “and helped run different meals programs for needy folks.” He was particularly proud of the city for creating new business possibilities by permitting restaurants and other businesses



Top left: Victor Gordo, Pasadena mayor Top right: Terry Tornek, former Pasadena mayor
Above left: Steve Madison, District 6 councilmember Above right: U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff

to serve customers outdoors, sometimes in newly created parklets and shutdown roadway lanes. “We should consider maintaining those options permanently, where it’s safe and appropriate,” he said.

Beyond the virus pandemic, Madison called out the city’s efforts to adopt substantial police oversight and reform in Pasadena, adding that “we should be appointing a citizen oversight commission in the coming months.”

“We’re also working hard to help the Rose Bowl Stadium with some creative and unique initiatives, and we’re planning on restoring the Lower Arroyo Seco.” Additionally, he called

out the “huge opportunity the city will have when we repatriate the land in the cancelled 710 project. Deciding what to do with this found and undeveloped land will require lots of outreach and work on all of our parts.”

U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff

COVID-19, wildfires and earthquakes were on Schiff’s mind. Specifically, about the pandemic, Schiff said “we’re going to have to follow the science, in a way that we haven’t in recent times.” He urged all to wear masks, socially distance and limit our social get-togethers. “The good news is,” he said, “we now have very promising vaccines that appear to be effective. But it’s going to take time.”

City appeals RHNA allocation

BY MIC HANSEN
CHAIR, WPRA LAND USE AND PLANNING

Every eight years Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) numbers are assigned to California municipalities mandating that the cities have the capacity to construct a specific number of new housing units. These requirements — commonly referred to as “RHNA numbers”—are assigned to Pasadena and other California cities by the Southern California Council of Governments (SCAG).

In the cycle that is coming to an end, Pasadena’s allocation was 1,332 housing units. The upcoming cycle mandates that Pasadena produce 9,408 units, a seven-fold increase. If Pasadena is unable to meet the given targets, developers would be permitted to bypass existing regulations and override the zoning code.

The West Pasadena Residents’ Association, the Linda Vista-Annandale Association, and Madison Heights Neighborhood Association — in a joint letter — urged Pasadena City Council to appeal the assigned numbers. The joint letter may be viewed at our website wptra.net under “Publications” at the top of the homepage.

The majority of the Planning Commission and Councilmembers agreed that these are not feasible numbers. “It’s not achievable,” indicated then-District 5 Councilmember Victor Gordo, now our current mayor.

At its Oct. 26 meeting, city council voted 7-1 to file an appeal. At that meeting, then-Mayor Terry Tornek said: “We do have an obligation to produce more housing, but the problem we have is many communities have been unwilling to participate in that production. The reward we are getting is having their lack of production applied to us.”

The appeal, which was required to be based on narrow parameters, such as methodology, changed circumstances, or recently changed conditions in the city that could affect the fulfillment of the numbers, asked for the reduction of 2,047 units, though this still means that Pasadena has to produce 7,362 units, which is more than a five-fold increase from the immediately past cycle.

The RHNA appeals board is expected to determine the outcome of Pasadena’s appeal by February 4



This house on Wentworth Avenue was approved for a new addition and interior renovation, but the entire facade and roof were effectively demolished.

Council revises ordinance to further preserve heritage

BY ANDREW SELIMIAN
PRESERVATION DIRECTOR
PASADENA HERITAGE

In December, city council approved revisions to the Historic Preservation ordinance meant to strengthen the citywide regulations. Though Pasadena has had great success in preserving our historic resources, several deficiencies in our ordinance have led to the loss of some historic resources.

Pasadena’s original Cultural Heritage ordinance was signed into law in 1976, predating the formation of Pasadena Heritage, and was written in large part by the late Dr. Robert Winter. The ordinance was substantially rewritten in 2002, with targeted revisions in 2005, 2007, and 2009, sometimes led and always supported by Pasadena Heritage. These earlier versions arguably paid too much deference to property owners.

Over the past few years, we’ve seen some property owners find ways around the ordinance and, as a result, irreparably harm historic resources. One of the most glaring deficiencies is that the Historic Preservation Commission has not had the ability to prevent the demolition of a structure that is eligible, but undesignated, but can only delay the demolition for 180 days. After the delay, a demolition permit must be granted. In the revised ordinance, the commission will be able to deny a Certificate of

Appropriateness for the demolition. And then, before demolition is permitted for any historic resource, the applicant must also show proof of severe structural damage, documented by two independent experts.

In addition to preventing the outright demolition of eligible resources, Pasadena has seen a few instances of historic resources, or eligible resources, that have been so drastically altered that they barely have any historic fabric remaining. Projects have stripped structures to the studs in order to “repair” stucco or siding. Other projects have worked around code language and had major renovations approved without appearing before the Historic Preservation Commission.

The latest revisions clarify and adjust which projects are “major,” thus requiring commission approval, and what is “minor” and can be approved by Design and Historic Preservation staff. Also established is an important step in the process: Any project can be determined major or minor at the discretion of the Director of Planning.

There are many more technical changes in the ordinance update, but Pasadena Heritage believes that these revisions will improve community input, increase transparency for neighborhoods, and better protect our historic resources.

Rising to the pandemic challenge with ingenuity

Pasadena Senior Center turns 60

BY ANN ERDMAN

Pasadena's population is aging at a faster rate than most cities. The number of older adults here has more than doubled since 1960 when the Pasadena Senior Center opened its doors. Just last year there were 16% more older adults, and a growing number of them now live below the poverty line.

Akila Gibbs, executive director of the Pasadena Senior Center, and an active board of directors have provided innovative and energetic leadership to make the center the vital community asset it is today. They are working on a new five-year strategic plan for 2021 to 2026, examining how services can best be provided in the future.

Are you prepared ...

Continued from page 9

Hospital, many of which she spent as an RN in the emergency department, Waldron has seen her share of infections, injuries and health threats — “very good training for my current role at the hospital as disaster program manager.”

Her job, she said, is to assess which sorts of events or disasters or emergency situations pose the highest risk for the hospital. “And I can tell you” she said with a heavy dose of humility, “that a pandemic was never, ever on the top 10.” In spite of that, Waldron expressed her confidence in the plans the city, along with Huntington Hospital, have since developed. “Those plans are flexible and scalable. We can use them for a variety of different situations.”

“We created [those plans],” said Waldron, “because we were concerned about risks” such as the 210 freeway in our background backyard and the high probability of a multi-vehicle accident or collision with multiple injuries. Terrorism is also a possibility considering so many outsiders come to the Rose Bowl Stadium and because Caltech is just down the street.

Over the past several months, while most senior centers in the U.S. have had to close their doors and cancel most if not all programming until further notice due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Pasadena Senior Center has simply decided to do things differently under the circumstances. Most senior centers, whether they are run by government entities or are independent nonprofits, serve as community focal points and are among the most widely used services by America's older adults.

The Pasadena Senior Center serves tens of thousands of older adults every year. This is not your grandmother's senior center where bingo, shuffleboard and sitting around in rockers reminiscing about the olden days were *de rigueur*. Older adults today want to be engaged, enriched and empowered, improve or maintain their health, enjoy active lifestyles and social interaction, take classes relevant to today's world, access resources for social services and so much more.

During the pandemic, most events, social hours, classes and other Pasadena Senior Center activities are virtual via Zoom. They are available to members as well as non-members of the center, and participants do not have to live in Pasadena. As in past years, most activities are free, while some are fee-based.

Because the Pasadena Public Health Department has deemed the center an essential service for older adults in the greater Pasadena area due to concerns about the emotional welfare of lonely and isolated older adults and food insecurity among low-income older

adults, the doors of the physical building at the south end of Memorial Park are open Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the pandemic for social services and other critical assistance to older adults in need. Masks are required inside the building, and social distancing is maintained.

The year 2020 was the 60th anniversary of the Pasadena Senior Center. The diamond anniversary year began with a plan for dozens of celebratory events and activities throughout the year, and that plan came to a screeching halt just two months later when the entire focus shifted from celebration to challenge.

Unlike most senior centers that are operated by recreation departments in the municipalities in which they are located, the Pasadena Senior Center is an independent, donor-supported nonprofit that does not receive any government funding. Throughout its history, the center has been dependent on individual donations as well as foundation and corporate contributions. The revenue stream of donations is just a small fraction of what it was before the pandemic hit.

“Throughout our history, we have always answered the call whenever our programs and services were in jeopardy due to natural disasters and other issues,” said Gibbs. “While the board of directors and I appreciate donations during the pandemic from the bottoms of our hearts, we really encourage individual donors to dig a little deeper by making recurring monthly donations that will help us continue to respond to urgent needs and stay in business for the long haul. Giving



These folks are, of course, dancing during a folk-dancing class.

is simple: Just go to pasadenaseniorcenter.org and click on the orange 'Donate' button."

Throughout its own history, the Junior League of Pasadena has helped establish iconic and important institutions in the Pasadena area that eventually take on lives of their own, including Kidspace Children's Museum, Elizabeth House, Cornerstone Cottage – and, 60 years ago, the Pasadena Senior Center.

In the mid-1950s, after much research and collaboration with other Pasadena entities, it was decided that a place was needed for older adults to gather and help them lead more active lives. The city of Pasadena provided the land at Memorial Park, and the Pasadena Board of City Directors (today's city council) – approved a bond issue for the construction of a dedicated building.

Funds to staff the center and provide services, programs and resources were not covered, so the Pasadena Junior League came to the rescue, raising funds necessary to support the center. Beginning in 1960, when the Pasadena Senior Center opened its doors, dozens of Junior League members over 10 years volunteered thousands of hours of their time, which enabled the center to take root and eventually operate on its own with a full component of staff as well as countless volunteers from the greater Pasadena area. It was the first independent nonprofit senior center in Southern California and one of the first in the nation.

In 1998, after an extensive renovation that tripled its size, a new and improved center opened its doors with a billiard room, fully equipped gym, video production room, computer lab, library, more meeting rooms,



Several members enjoy coffee service in 1960, when the center opened.

a larger multipurpose room, industrial-size kitchen, intern and counseling offices and more employee work space. A capital campaign, led by the center, provided the funding for the renovation. In 1999, the center was awarded accreditation by the National Council on Aging's National Institute of Senior Centers, making it the first nationally accredited senior center in California.

Generation Xers began turning 50 in 2015 and now are joining Baby Boomers and the Greatest Generation on the older-adults landscape. Whether their favorite music as teens was performed by The Bangles, The Beatles or Benny Goodman, most of today's older adults have one thing in common: They want to enjoy long, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Add to this mix the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it's clear that life has become very complicated for older adults and their families. Aside from sickness and death, one of the most obvious downsides of the pandemic is that so many who used to come to the Pasadena Senior Center every day for activities and camaraderie are now isolated alone at home.

The center's Telephone Reassurance Program has seen a 30% increase – nearly 400 additional calls every week – to older adults who are isolated as a result of the pandemic. The calls serve as wellness checks and loneliness-reducing conversation lifelines. Anyone may call (626) 685-6732 to place themselves or loved ones on the list for the calls. Recipients must be 50 or older.



A joyous birthday celebration for one of the center's 96-year-old members.

Coming together as a community is what will help everyone get through these trying times and keep people's feelings of loneliness in check. Let us all stay safe, listen to the infectious-disease experts and take care of one another, even if that means limiting visits to telephone calls and Zoom get-togethers.

For more information about programs and services of the Pasadena Senior Center, visit pasadenaseniorcenter.org or call (626) 795-4331.

Ann Erdman serves as the public relations consultant to the Pasadena Senior Center.



The home of Calvin Brown in 1897, on the northeast corner of Orange Grove and Bellefontaine. On the back of the photo is a note that Walter Brown is with dogs named "Sox" and "Toddy." Even the fashionable South Orange Grove would not be paved until after the turn of the century. The street sign at the Calvin Brown home at 818 S. Orange Grove appears to be wood, next to a metal mail box. "Bellefontaine" is spelled "Belfountain St" on the sign, perhaps due to space limitations.



1895: The streets of west Pasadena

BY KIRK MYERS
ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST

In 1895 Dr. Hiram Reid, M.D. published "History of Pasadena," a remarkably thorough study of the Pasadena area. With more than 650 pages, it was said to be "a complete and comprehensive history-cyclopedia of all matters pertaining to this region." Dr. Reid traced in detail the city's history from Native American settlements to the Pasadena of 1895.

If one could be transported back to west Pasadena in 1895, how much would be familiar?

The Colorado Street Bridge and the Wrigley Mansion have yet to be built, and only a few of the mansions that would later give fame to South Orange Grove as "Millionaires' Row" had been built by that time. A few homes scattered throughout the area might be recognizable, and perhaps some buildings on South Fair Oaks. There was still a lot of open space and orchards, as compared to today.

Clearly, west Pasadena in 1895 was very different in many respects from the present. But one constant would be familiar to us: the streets of west Pasadena. That is, for the most part, some of the

streets had different names. One major east-west artery did not exist in 1895. And none were paved, except a portion of Colorado. The streets of Pasadena were very dusty when dry, and muddy when it rained, and horses made their own contributions to the mix.

As a result of the dust, many homes had a feather duster or brush hanging up by the front door to remove dirt from shoes and clothing after a carriage ride or walk.

"In the early days, Orange Grove Avenue was always dusty, and sprinkling carts went up and down and not too often, as a rule," recalled Dorothy Dobbins Freeman in an oral history interview.

Another early resident, Earle Simpson, added more details.

"When the streets were unpaved, sprinkling carts pulled by horses came along and got their water from standpipes which stood up quite high. The water came out of the cart through two pipes at the back end. Usually the tanks ran over and made a puddle wherever the truck had stopped. We had one old codger on the sprinkling cart who would get a couple of kids to wrestle out in back of the sprinkling cart, and then he'd get up on the seat and put his foot on the

pedal and spray the water on them. He wasn't popular with the mothers around the area."

Although the streets were not paved, many had curbs, which consisted of stones cemented together. There were board sidewalks, some were of cement, and some sidewalks appear in period photographs to be dirt paths. Early photographs also show the street signs on wooden poles, with names lettered in black on a white background.

In his "History of Pasadena," Dr. Reid devoted a few pages to "Who Named the Streets, and Why." Several west Pasadena streets were opened up in 1885, including Arlington Drive, about which Dr. Reid wrote "... just why this name was given I failed to learn." Bellevue Drive, Congress Street, Palmetto Street and Waverly Drive were also opened in 1885.

"Bellevue is French for beautiful or lovely view, and is a smooth, easy, pleasant sounding word; and for these reasons it was applied as a name for this street." Congress Street was named for Henry H. Markham (who later became Governor of California), a U.S. Representative at the time. Palmetto Street was "named from palmetto trees planted along its borders,"

and Waverly Drive was “named from Sir Walter Scott’s ‘Waverly’ novels.”

And though Bellevue may have been chosen because it was euphonious, late 1894 property owners along Kansas Street objected to that name as “harsh sounding” and “otherwise inappropriate” and petitioned the city of Pasadena for relief.

“To the Mayor and Council of the City of Pasadena, California. Gentlemen: We, the undersigned, property owners on Kansas Street, are not satisfied with the name ‘Kansas Street’ for this important thoroughfare. The word ‘Kansas’ is harsh sounding and otherwise inappropriate, as we view the situation. We therefore very earnestly request you to change the name ‘Kansas’ to the name Green Street, and thereby grant the prayer of your petitioners.”

One of the largest signatures on the petition was that of G.G. Green, of the Green Hotel. In February 1895, the request was granted, and what had been Kansas Street from South Vernon (now South St. John) to Marengo became Green Street. Dr. Reid noted that in 1884 he had built the first dwelling on Kansas Street, at the corner of Pasadena Avenue, and that “the city council changed the name to Green Street, in deference to Col. G. G. Green and his great hotel.”

In 1895, Green Street did not extend to South Orange Grove. What is now Green Street west of South St. John (South Vernon) was then known as Howard, a one block street named after the son of O.H. Conger, one the first residents in the area. It would be decades before Green Street would extend to S. Orange Grove and become one of the important traffic arteries of the city.

Del Mar was another street with a different name in 1895. Originally opened up in October, 1886 as Berkshire Street, it was soon changed to Elevado (Spanish for elevated or high) for practical reasons: Berkshire was the name of a well-known breed of hog, and “everybody who sees the name of this street will at once think ‘hog!’ and we don’t want people to think hog on our street.” Elevado was considered to be “more euphonious, and befitting the elevation.”

On February 21, 1928 the *Pasadena Evening Post* reported that “Pasadena city directors officially changed the names of 45 Pasadena streets today by passing the street name ordinance on its first reading. ...Elevado Drive, between Fair Oaks and Orange Grove avenues, changed to Del Mar Street.”

In early Pasadena, most transportation was by horse and carriage, and photographs show the ruts in west Pasadena streets. Bicycles became very popular in the 1890s. But there was also another way to get

around on South Orange Grove.

Dorothy Dobbins Freeman remembered that: “They had a bus with seats on the side, a horse-drawn bus with two horses. It would go up and down Orange Grove Avenue every hour-and-a-half or two hours. ...it was an open bus. But the seats were length-wise. It might have been that in the rain they would put up something on the sides.”

Dependence on horses for local transportation was not without risk. Early Pasadena newspapers were filled with tales of runaway horses. There were frightening accidents at times, as people were thrown from their carriages onto the street.

Not wanting to maintain a horse, and finding that it took too long to walk, Hiram Reid used a bicycle to get around while researching his book. Today, 125 years later, navigating the streets of west Pasadena is a very different experience than he would have known. So much has changed.

But the streets of west Pasadena would be somewhat familiar to him in their names and location, with a few reminders here and there of a time that seems so remote to us now.

*Pasadena Museum of History |
pasadenahistory.org*



Colorado Street looking east toward Fair Oaks. The site of the home on the right is now occupied by Wells Fargo Bank, and beyond its hedgerow is a street sign for Terrace Drive.



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RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**
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Visit our website @ wpra.net

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Councilmember Victor Gordo will be
appointed by city council

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Harris will be appointed by CA Gov.
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