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Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world



BEN LEE  **COLDWELL
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A Fresh Start

By Ben Lee

Happy 2025! We made it through the holidays and are now ready to start the year fresh, resolving to diet and exercise more, indulge in all the fun stuff less. But even if you don't strive for change in either direction, there's something very optimistic about the start of a new year. What fun new experiences are just waiting to unfold? What challenges will we face and overcome? It's a calendar full of blank pages which feels like anything can happen- a little scary but mostly extremely exciting.

I like to take this opportunity in the first newsletter issue of every year to share my story, just in case you're not familiar with who I am, what I do or how I came to do it. My name is Ben Lee and I'm a real estate agent & broker, currently crowned the second highest producer in my office (Coldwell Banker, Beverly Hills) and third highest out of thousands of CB agents in all of Los Angeles. I focus my attention primarily in the neighborhood in which I live: Cheviot Hills but am equally busy in its surrounding areas: Beverlywood, Rancho Park and even beyond that. Basically, if there's a home on the market on the Westside of Los Angeles, I likely know about it and am familiar with whoever is selling it.

I've been in real estate for nearly twenty years now, which is hard to believe since I came to it in a circuitous way and it was not my first career. After graduating number two in my class (is this a pattern?) from Santa Monica High, I left LA for a brief time to attend Wesleyan University in Connecticut. While I loved school, I did not love the cold so as soon as I could, I returned home where I got my first job in the music business: first at Motown Records, then later, Warner



Brothers. I dabbled in producing bands and loved being in that creative atmosphere, but it didn't feel like it would be a career that would provide the kind of long term stability I was after. That realization probably coincided with getting engaged to my (then) girlfriend Lilli so I turned to the trade of my ancestors: the law. My parents met at Loyola Law School, therefore it felt almost genetic to attend there as well. I was lucky to get in and thankfully really loved being in school, especially after having worked for a few years first.

I married Lilli, graduated, passed the bar, and we had our first of three baby boys. During this highly charged period, I began a very stable, somewhat lackluster career as a real estate lawyer trying to rack up as many billable hours as humanly possible. It was good work however, I quickly discovered it was a vocation not suited to my personality. I felt trapped being confined to a cubicle, punching the proverbial clock, reading the fine print of complicated contracts day in and day out and missing a creative outlet. I learned a lot, though, and being a lawyer provided a valuable foundation to what would follow: an opportunity to work for a friend's dad who ran a land development company.

There I learned even more about real estate, specifically the intricacies and legalities of building properties on a massive scale. This proved to be another worthwhile experience that contributed to my expanding breadth of knowledge and gave me countless problems to solve. I worked with the city and on an institutional level it was interesting but there was something missing from the work that I really craved: human to human interaction.

Never a shy guy, I was always happiest when connecting with people and I wasn't afforded that opportunity working on these bigger projects. So, when that company folded, it was suggested I try working in residential real estate instead. Being a law school graduate meant I could take the broker's license exam and hang my own shingle but from day one, I opted to work at Coldwell Banker because there's a trust factor that comes with such an established and recognizable brand. This was incredibly helpful when I was first starting out, they've always treated me incredibly well and even though my name is now its own recognizable brand, I've never wanted to leave.

Today, I'm happy to say it really was the right decision to make

the change from music to law to real estate brokerage. I have a fabulous team of agents that work under me and together we have created a business that has handled thousands of transactions worth hundreds of millions of dollars. My legal training and development experience has helped in innumerable ways and I think that has set me apart from other competitors in the field. But I think what has really given me this level of success is the fact that I tapped into what I love: working so closely with buyers and sellers. This business isn't often easy- people are emotional when it comes to purchasing or selling their homes. But I try to help navigate that minefield in such a way that when the deal is done, everyone has come out the other side for the better. It's telling that so many former clients are now counted amongst some of my closest friends.

If this is the first time you're reading this newsletter, I hope you like it. We've been publishing it for almost twelve years and it allows me a creative way to share news in the community, stories about what my family and I are up to, listings I have for sale and events that are happening in the neighborhood. There are usually raffles to local businesses and often stories about the history of the area. It's fun for me to do and I hope you get something out of it, as well. If you ever want to offer ideas as to what to include, we always try to accommodate- just send me a note: ben@benleeproperties.com or a phone call: 310-704-6580

It's been nice to reintroduce myself to you and I hope you won't hesitate to reach out and contact me should you have any real estate needs. I hope you have a very happy and healthy start to 2025 and I look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood!

My featured listings

Cheviot Hills – FOR LEASE!



2855 Club Dr. - \$22,500 p/mo.
5 Beds / 4.5 Bath

Located in the heart of Cheviot Hills, this immaculately renovated custom home sits on a 10,000 square foot lot with a large grassy backyard under a majestic Oak tree. Gated and private, this estate offers a wide array of amenities and design details. Hardwood floors, wainscoting, step down formal living room, and treetop views. Upstairs are the family's sleeping quarters: each bedroom, closet and bathroom generously sized and delightfully adorned. The Primary bedroom offers a fireplace, seating area, leafy tree views, enormous walk-in closet and impossibly high ceilings. Prime location in Cheviot Hills, one of the Westside's best neighborhoods near parks, golf courses, shops, restaurants, expo rail line and studios. A truly beautiful home fit for a king and queen.

Cheviot Hills – FOR SALE!



GREAT NEW PRICE!

3211 Castle Heights Ave. - \$3,295,000
5 Beds / 4 Bath, 2971 Sq. Ft., 8750 Sq. Ft. Lot

Effortless, elegant, exquisite. This home has been created with the needs of today's family in mind. With no design detail spared, an open floor plan with lightly hued hardwood floors creates an easy, breezy flow from the foyer to living room to kitchen. The front two bedrooms provide lovely, far reaching views and the Master Bedroom suite includes a large walk-in closet and a beautiful bathroom with a tub from which one can enjoy a lovely treetop view. Additional amenities include: upstairs laundry room, attached two car garage, a plethora of closet and storage space and is located walking distance to the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School. If you've been hoping to find a beautiful, newly constructed home in a fabulous neighborhood then congratulations- your search is over. Welcome home!

Cheviot Hills – FOR LEASE!



3320 Patricia Ave. - \$9000 p/mo.
3 Beds / 3 Bath, 2641 Sq. Ft.

A picturesque, traditional-style, single-story home in the coveted Country Club Estates section of Cheviot Hills, this midcentury is ready for a family to fill it. With wide planked hardwood floors throughout, the horseshoe shape is anchored by the backyard with access to the outdoors available from virtually every room. There is a formal Dining Room, Living Room with fireplace, den and wet bar, ideal for entertaining. The aforementioned backyard is lushly landscaped, provides absolute privacy and offers patio, grass and an abundance of greenery. Additional amenities include a big two-car garage with additional storage, security system and an enviable location near local shops/restaurants/Metro line and the award winning Castle Heights school system. Make an appointment to see it today!

Cheviot Hills – COMING SOON!



2856 Forrester Dr. - \$8,495,000

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Disclaimer: image is used for illustrative purposes only and may not be exact representation of the final product.

Santa Monica – COMING SOON!



664 Kingman Ave. - \$9,995,000

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Disclaimer: image is used for illustrative purposes only and may not be exact representation of the final product.

Culver City – COMING SOON!



10760 Lawler Street #4 - \$749,999
2 Beds / 2.5 Bath, 1179 Sq. Ft.

Culver City – IN ESCROW!



2852 Motor Ave. - \$2,995,000
4 Beds / 2.5 Bath, 3255 Sq. Ft., 7308 Sq. Ft. Lot

Culver City – SOLD!



5025 Westwood Blvd. - \$2,295,000
4 Beds / 3 Bath, 2115 Sq. Ft., 5005 Sq. Ft. Lot

Mandeville Canyon – SOLD!



3380 Mandeville Canyon - \$2,449,000
3 Beds / 2 Bath, 2112 Sq. Ft., 7840 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills – SOLD!



2811 Oakhurst Ave. - \$3,829,000
5 Beds / 5 Bath + 1 Bed / 1 Bath ADU, 3511 Sq. Ft. + 331 Sq. Ft. ADU, 6249 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills happenings

MLK DAY 2025

By Ben Lee

In 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King spoke in front of about 15,000 Los Angeles residents at the Coliseum, sharing the importance of bettering race relations and extolling the need for a Beloved Community. His vision is still one to be enacted and celebrated and you can honor his legacy by participating in the MLK 2025 Volunteer Festival: Take Action to Support our Beloved Community at the Coliseum on January 20. This free event will offer hands-on activity zones, STEAM education, live performances, food trucks, minority-owned businesses selling



their wares and promises to be a fun and impactful day for the whole family. To register for free tickets and to find out more information, head to the website: lacoliseum.com and go under the events & tickets tab. Enjoy!

RAFFLE

By Ben Lee

To kick off the 2025 raffles, we're offering a \$50 gift card to the most romantic restaurant on Pico, just in time for Valentine's Day! Vicini is a delicious neighborhood Italian bistro and if you haven't checked it out yet, now is a perfect time to go. To enter, simply send me an email (ben@benleeproperties.com) and write 'VICINI' in the



subject line. That's it! We'll draw a name at the end of the month and let you know if you're the lucky winner. Good luck!

LADIES' WINE NIGHTS IN 2025

By Lilli Lee

We had such a wonderful Wine Night last month! Everyone loved getting together and meeting new women from around the neighborhood. We are sorely in need of hosts willing to open up their home otherwise, sadly, the Wine Nights won't be

able to keep going. If you have any interest in hosting, please let me know. These occur about every two months so if you'd like to learn more, please send me an email: lillijlee@yahoo.com or text/call: 310-650-7735 and I can share all the details. I promise, they're easy to do and everyone appreciates it so much!



ATTENTION SINGLES!

By Lilli Lee

Sometimes single friends ask me to set them up with other singles, either for a date or just a companion to play pickleball, take

a walk, go to dinner. The hardest part is knowing who else out there is also single and interested in meeting someone. I was thinking about using this newsletter to try and bring neighbors together! Afterall, nothing says community like meeting new friends. Maybe you like to play poker and need an extra person to fill out the table.

Or perhaps you are in a book club and could use a few more readers to join? Or maybe you are looking to go out to dinner and want to find someone with like interests who may want to go, too. If you are so inclined, send me a note (lillijlee@yahoo.com) and tell me a few details about the type of person you're looking for. I will

keep a private list and only share contact information with those who fit the bill. If it works out, great, if not, no harm in trying? And if you happen to fall in love and live happily ever after, all I ask is for a picture to be put in an upcoming issue of the newsletter because it would definitely make for an awesome story!