



NEWSLETTER

Park LaBrea Residents Association

BACK TO THE FUTURE: A PLB HISTORY LESSON

There's a desperate housing shortage. Thousands of unhoused people are trying to figure out where they're going to live after surviving a global cataclysm. City governments and corporations are coming up with innovative solutions, trying to do away with red tape and build affordable housing.

LA in 2021? Nope. It's 1944. LA and other major cities around the country are looking towards the end of World War II, and are trying to come to grips with the soldiers coming home, to create spaces for them to live, form families, and participate in the booming U.S. economy.

Metropolitan Life - yes, the insurance company - stepped into the breach with moderate-income developments not only in LA, but in San Francisco, Manhattan, the Bronx, and Alexandria, VA. In LA, local property owners and insurance policy holders were so opposed to Parklabrea (as it was called), that the case went all the way to the California Supreme Court, where Met Life was backed by the City of LA, and where it won its case.

The plan for Parklabrea included greenery, open spaces, and athletic facilities (including long-lost tennis courts that were destroyed to make way for the Palazzo development). It also included architectural details that would ensure that every unit on the property would be flooded with natural light and access to fresh air. Hence, the townhouses organized around common green spaces, and unique "X" designs of the high-rise towers. It became the largest apartment complex west of the Mississippi River. It became home to generations of Angelenos - both natives and newcomers.



Parklabrea under construction, ca. 1950

Fast forward to 2021. We are once again in the midst of a critical housing shortage after living through a global cataclysm that will hopefully be over soon. The shortage is exacerbated by mind-numbing traffic problems and a worsening wealth divide. LA desperately needs walkable locations, urban infill and more dense housing. Hello, Park La Brea.

We live in a community that was built to create community, in a place that was designed to be accessible to most. Park La Brea's beauty and diversity today is a natural outgrowth of its original vision, and is something that should be celebrated and valued, not dismissed.

That makes it incumbent on us, the current residents, to advocate for our lives here. It also makes it incumbent on current ownership to seek ways to reflect the future: green landscaping and waste practices, easy access to EV charging stations, respect for the development's architecture and design standards. While PLB was built nearly 80 years ago, it remains a viable vision for the future of a more vital, more urban LA. Take a look around, then help PLBRA advocate to get us there.

RESTAURANT REVIEW: EL GRANJERO CANTINA

The Grove's new Mexican restaurant warrants a visit

ENDLESS ROUNDS OF PACKAGE THEFT

Here's how to fight it

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO ASK TED LIEU?

Don't miss PLBRA's monthly Board Meeting on Oct. 5th

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**PLBRA NEWSLETTER
ADVERTISING & EDITORIAL**parklabreara@gmail.com
Subject: "ADVERTISING"**EDITOR'S NOTE: VACCINE CARDS**

As I'm writing, I've just seen the wonderful news that California has successfully managed our COVID transmission rate to the lowest in the nation. Personally, it makes me very happy that 1) the recall election failed so we can maintain our policies, and 2) that most of us seem to believe in science.

Progressive politics aside, I'm going to repeat the message I keep repeating: It ain't over 'til it's over. There is STILL a mask mandate for inside spaces, which includes **lobbies, mailrooms, laundry rooms, hallways** and **gyms**. As the Delta variant of COVID can be transmitted in as little as FIVE MINUTES of exposure to aerosols, it is imperative that you wear your mask. Your community is depending on you.

LA County has also expanded its mandates a bit - again, they're designed to keep us safe. You're required to show proof of vaccination to enter a nightclub or bar starting on October 7th. Large events are also requiring proof of vaccination, as are many venues, such as the Pantages, Hollywood Bowl and virtually every indoor spot in West Hollywood.

If you don't want to carry around your vaccine card, you can get a Digital Vaccine Record from the state to store on your phone. Simply scan the QR code to go to the website.



There is also likely to be news that vaccines are safe for children ages 5-12, so hopefully worried parents will be able to get some coverage for their kids in the near future.

Let's keep it up, y'all. For more updates, make sure you sign up for the PLBRA mailing list at **plbra.org/contact** #CommunityStrong

— Angela Gyetvan

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Robert M. Shore, Esq., President, PLBRA

The Response To Monopoly Pricing

Do you know the movie *War Games*? At its end, an artificial intelligence learns an important lesson about its simulated game of Global Thermonuclear War: "The only way to win is not to play." Well here at Park La Brea, we now find ourselves in pretty much the same position as that artificial intelligence, and PLBRA recommends the same solution.

I'm talking about the pricing of the EV spaces recently offered by Management. Even a quick glance at nearby properties is enough to demonstrate that the pricing is (I'll be generous here) exorbitant. A less generous writer would work in a reference to price-gouging. (Did I say that out loud?) When I signed up for my parking spot in 2018, spaces were offered for prices ranging from \$35-\$65 per month. For the EV spaces, Management wants \$125 per month. That's a premium of \$60-\$90 per month. And as the recently departed Ron Popeil would have said, "But wait, there's more!" The spaces also include a "maintenance charge" of \$20 per month. And you have to pay for the electricity on top of all that. We're still collecting data but it looks like most nearby properties charge \$30-\$50 per month for parking spaces that come with EV access. That's the all-in price. No \$60-\$90 premium just for access. No \$20 monthly "maintenance" fee.

Outraged does not begin to describe my reaction, but it'll have to do. Three things are important to remember here. First, electric vehicles are an important part of the solution to crucial environmental issues, not least of which is global warming, so Management should be doing what it can to encourage and support residents who choose this path. Instead, it's trying to use monopoly pricing power to impose a very substantial do-the-right-thing tax on our residents, making it that much harder for our residents to do the right thing. Second, if Management gets away with this, it will continue to levy these charges month after month after month, long after it has completed amortizing whatever expense it may have borne for

the spaces. Third, under current law, every new car sold in California starting in 2035 will have to be a zero-emissions vehicle so eventually, we'll all be a captive audience for these tactics. Better to stand up now, while we still have leverage.

Based on the economic terms Management is offering, **PLBRA recommends that residents boycott these spaces.** We will continue our efforts to engage Management and negotiate more reasonable terms, terms that are more consonant with the pricing offered by nearby buildings. Help us work on your behalf by demonstrating, with your actions, that you will not sign on the dotted line until we give the green light. And if you have a conversation about this subject with Management, please be vocal about your support for PLBRA.

If you are considering acquiring an EV but don't know the logistics of charging it off property, reach out to us. We'll help you figure it out. And as we figure out the how-to of other options, we'll put an "explainer" on our Web site (plbra.org) so you'll all know what we learn.

Switching subjects, I want to report a quick success story. Last year PLBRA asked Management to identify the tower number (nothing more) of residents who reported a positive COVID test. This month, Management listened. I got an e-mail earlier in the month, telling me that someone in my building (not just someone somewhere within Park La Brea) had tested positive. That report changed my behavior by making me more cautious about entering elevators when others aren't masked. We know that a number of residents share our frustration with Management's refusal to engage PLBRA. This change of policy is evidence that we can make progress by staying the course.

We at the Residents Association would love to hear your thoughts. E-mail us at ParkLaBreaRA@gmail.com. See you next month.

Creepin' It Real with The Rhythm Coffin

Deep in the heart of Park La Brea lies a haunted mansion, where a gruesome band of ghouls gathers in their ghostly studio to howl in chorus, turning out MONSTER ROCK AND ROLL.



No, of course there's no mansion, but there IS a gruesome band of ghouls who call themselves **The Rhythm Coffin**. Best described as a cross between the B-52's, the Ramones and KISS (look them up, youngsters), TRC pumps out guitar-driven, bass-inflected beats that make dance parties absolutely crazy. Most recently featured at the Orange County Expo, this band is great for the young, the old - and the dearly departed. And you can dig them up, right here in our own backyard.

Check out TRC on Facebook and Instagram to stay, um, a-head of their upcoming

appearances. And if you're looking for a Halloween soundtrack, get their Spotify playlist by scanning the QR code.



The Endless PLB Package Wars

Yes, we keep asking. Delivery folks: Put packages in secure places. In the towers, bring them upstairs. And it keeps not happening, making package theft rampant. So here's our primer for fighting this battle. It's important that we all do it, so we get some response:

1. Alert your neighbors right away when you see package(s) addressed to them that are at risk of being stolen. If you can, take the package(s) to them.
2. If you have an Amazon package that is not properly delivered, do two things:
 1. Take a photo of the delivery label.
 2. Email the photo to reilskyl@amazon.com or aafshar@amazon.com (or both).
 3. Respond with a negative rating on the Amazon app or website.
3. If your Amazon delivery is stolen, immediately request a refund from Amazon on the app or website.
4. If any of your packages are stolen, go to the LAPD online site to report the theft, as LAPD currently does not believe we have a problem with package theft: lapdonline.org



Looted packages in Tower 36

New at Farmer's Market: El Granjero Cantina

By Susan da Fonseca

I'd been dying to try the new Mexican restaurant, El Granjero Cantina, at the Farmer's Market. I finally got a chance recently and was so happy to discover my new favorite hangout!

My friend and I were seated under a fan outside at a table of our choosing. A bowl of fresh, crispy chips and a thick and delicious guajillo chile salsa were presented, along with a carafe of water and some glasses. We were offered the regular menu and the happy hour menu. We had several questions for our server, who answered all in a very knowledgeable manner.

We ordered from the happy hour menu - available Monday through Friday from 3 to 6. There were several interesting cocktails and a classic Margarita. The Margaritas were refreshing and really hit the spot on a hot afternoon. I had two of those!

Tacos on the Happy Hour menu come two to an order, so it is fun to try different items and share.

We enjoyed tomatillo chicken and cheese dorados from the happy hour menu, served with a wonderful salsa verde, sour cream and cotija cheese. Dorados are golden fried, crispy tacos. We also sampled spectacular crispy fish tacos with a spicy cabbage slaw, avocado sauce and Tajin. The tacos were served with a side of herbed rice and black beans.



The menu has plenty of choices, from appetizers to burritos, quesadillas, tacos and dorados, salads and bowls. Many of the dishes at El Granjero Cantina are vegan and gluten-free. They also have a Keto Bowl served with your choice of meat and cauliflower rice, avocado, cheese, cabbage slaw and kale.

We discovered there is also a special brunch on Saturdays and Sundays, served from 10 to 3. There are sweet options like pancakes and griddled concha bread pudding; savory options with eggs, bacon, house-made chicken sausage, and many of the tacos, salads and bowls from their regular menu.

I hope you have a chance to try this fantastic new restaurant soon. The wait staff are friendly and helpful and they make you want to come back often! You can find their menus at www.cantinala.com. Order for takeout or sit in their outdoor dining area. This is a wonderful place for people watching!

JOIN PLBRA NOW and get THREE extra months! If you pay in October, your membership will be good until the END of 2022.

PLBRA

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ACADEMY MUSEUM UPDATE

We got a sneak peek at some of the breathtaking exhibits at the **Academy Museum of Motion Pictures**, which will open to the public on September 30th. (If you didn't get your special grand opening offer for Park La Brea residents in the September newsletter, please let us know.) During the first two months of its opening, the Museum will offer more than 115 film screenings, discussions and programs for movie lovers of all ages. Screenings will include *The Wizard of Oz* accompanied by the American Youth Symphony; *Malcolm X* with special guests Denzel Washington and Spike Lee; the complete works of Hayao Miyazaki; an "Oscar Frights" series for Halloween; the films of Hollywood's first Asian superstar, Anna Mae Wong; and a retrospective of the work of Indian director Satyajit Ray. Check the Museum website for the schedule (and whether popcorn is offered!): academymuseum.org



Costume from *Black Panther*



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PLB's Favorite Chef, Carrie Bonfitto, Has a New Cookbook

For those PLB residents who remember the “before times,” you may have been fortunate enough to attend one of Carrie Bonfitto’s monthly wellness talks and cooking demonstrations here at Park La Brea since 2015. She also led an 8-week “Cool Summer Cooking” class at the



Pumpkin Pecan Mug Muffin

2 Servings

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups of canned pumpkin puree
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 tablespoons coconut flour
- ⅛ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 tablespoon pecans, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

Instructions:

- In a microwave-safe mug, mix the pumpkin puree and the egg with a fork.
- Add the remaining ingredients and mix well. Microwave on high for 3 minutes or until cooked through (a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.) Note: Color will not change.
- Let cool for 5 minutes. Invert the mug and shake the muffin onto a plate (or eat it directly from the mug).
- Toast and top with grass-fed butter, if desired.

Activity Center in 2017. Recipes included *Thai Beef Salad*, *Spinach Basil Pesto*, *Red and White Gazpacho*, *Shrimp and Wild Rice Salad*.

Hungry yet? Well, you’re in luck, because Carrie just published her first cookbook, *What to Cook, Why to Eat It*. As Carrie describes it, it’s “part cookbook, part handbook,” a guidebook to wellness through food and an instruction manual for making it a healthy and delicious part of your life.

What to Cook, Why to Eat It is full of freshly sourced, quick-to-make recipes that will help heal your body while filling your belly with dishes such as *Orange Hummus*, *Apple Sage Sausage*; *Cauliflower Chickpea Curry*; *Seafood Jambalo*; *Apple Pecan Crisp* and *Chocolate Banana Nut Ice Cream*.

The cookbook is now available to order on Amazon, Barnes & Noble and other booksellers. At \$25, it’s an affordable and easy way to start eating a bit healthier.

To celebrate the book’s release and her long relationship with Park La Brea, Carrie presents this special fall recipe for PLBRA Newsletter readers: **Pumpkin Pecan Mug Muffin**

Oct Board Meeting: Ted Lieu

We’re delighted to confirm that our Congressman Ted Lieu will be attending our Zoom Board Meeting on **October 5th at 6 pm**. The meeting will start on time, and he will be first on the agenda.

We welcome questions for the Congressman, but ask that you submit them in advance in the interest of time management. Send your questions to parklabreaRA@gmail.com, with the subject line “Ted Lieu.” Any questions should be submitted by 3 pm on October 5th. Questions will be screened and curated by the PLBRA Board, and it’s quite possible that we won’t be able to present all questions at the Board meeting - but let’s give it a shot!

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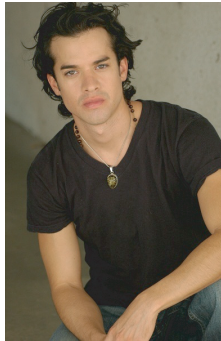
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