

Victoria Avenue

Published by Victoria Avenue Forever

Volume 18 No. 2 • July 2010

Honoring the heart of VAF - Hal Snyder

In 1990 Victoria Avenue was under threat of modernization - of citrus, eucalyptus and palm giving way to broad lanes, heavy traffic and stoplights. In response to this threat, Hal Snyder, a dedicated Avenue resident, decided that this just couldn't happen. He invited four others to join him in saving the Avenue - Pati Weir, Mary Humbolt, Rosanna Scott and the late Earl Shade. Gradually more and more residents joined the group and by 1992 they registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, public benefit organization. They encouraged the City Council to develop and implement a blueprint for the care of the Avenue's landscapes and successfully opposed plans for further stoplights, lane modifications and tree removals.



The group not only acted politically, but also worked hard to enhance the beauty of the Avenue.

- Established the Tree Sponsorship program which has added hundreds of trees to the Avenue
- Created the Lorraine Small Rose Garden and the Peter Lewis Garden
- Worked with City staff to design the attractive street signs all along Victoria
- Promoted the Avenue in the attractive and informative kiosk in the Lewis Garden and the colorful brochure which has been widely distributed.

From the beginning Victoria Avenue Forever has had one constant - Hal Snyder. Here are just some of the ways Hal worked for the organization:

- Identified and selected appropriate plants and trees for the varied sections of the Avenue
- Served as treasurer, paying the bills and sending out thank you notes and certificates
- Filed the annual tax return
- Gathered material and wrote articles for the newsletter
- Attended most work days, giving helpful advice as well as physical labor
- Taught and encouraged hundreds of young people in service to the Avenue

We, as VAF members and Riverside residents owe so much to Hal! There will be another newsletter next month with more information about Hal as we move toward the dedication of the Hal Snyder Garden this fall.

Beautiful June. Winter rains bring lots of June blooms. Everywhere you look in the city now, you see the purple clouds of Jacarandas in bloom, many along Victoria Avenue including huge trees near the Arlington Avenue intersection and younger trees in the block from Monroe to Irving. Also blooming are the Southern Magnolia trees.

This has been a busy Spring! In early April and in May we consulted periodically with Interim Parks Planner Randy McDaniel and Valley Crest Landscape about changes to the median and the Victoria Avenue parkway made during construction of the Youth Sports Park at Victoria and Van Buren. On May 15th several of us gathered at Washington Park in support of the Tour de Riverside Bicycle Rally to hand out cool water and snacks including fresh orange slices to the riders out enjoying the Avenue. On June 5, VAF President Dave Roger was one of the speakers at the Riverside Neighborhood Conference at Cal Baptist University, discussing Victoria Avenue Forever, and we had an exhibit table as well.

President's Report by Dave Roger

Victoria Avenue Forever's Board of Directors and members celebrated our 20th anniversary this month. Congratulations to the founders and all the supporters and volunteers of these past twenty years. What a difference you have made!

We hope you have enjoyed the spring flowers and those flowering trees and roses that are bringing us into our summer season.

There are two articles that are especially noteworthy in this newsletter. One has to do with the installation of the garden at

Harrison and one having to do with Hal Snyder, one of the original founders of VAF and the man who over the past twenty years has carried the torch.

We are finishing up our calendar year. There will be a new board come September and I wish to thank all of the board members who have supported me as president as well as the organization. I wish to convey a special message of gratitude to those leaving the board.

If you would like to be involved in Victoria Avenue Forever please contact any board member.

Thank you again for your support!

Contributions & Dedications

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Art and Paddy Miller

In memory of Bob Wyatt
In memory of Barbara Beal
In memory of Liz Woodford

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The VAF board meets at 6:30 on the
2nd Wednesday of each month
(except August).
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Victoria Avenews
is published 4 - 6 times a year
by Victoria Avenue Forever

Contributions to the Endowment Fund ♦ January - April 2010

We have been honored to receive an unusually large number of contributions to the Endowment Fund in the past few months. The income from these funds help us to take on special projects such as the new garden at Harrison and Victoria that we plan to dedicate this Fall to Hal Snyder. Thank you to all for choosing to memorialize your loved ones with Victoria Avenue Forever.

In Memory of Barbara Beal

Lorna Badger	Sandra Lawrence
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Frances Cunnison	In memory of Virginia Mylne
Frances Cunnison	In memory of Bill Stalder
Margaret Fletcher	In memory of Bill Stalder
Margaret Fletcher	In memory of Virginia Mylne
D.E. Johnson	In memory of Ginger Mylne
B. Hutchinson	In memory of B.J. and Bud Swing
Ronald Preston	In memory of Ginger Mylne
Ronald Preston	In memory of Bill Stalder
Richard Taylor	In memory of Mark Schroeder
Margaret Fletcher	In memory of Lucy Hampson
Janet Nicks	In memory of Howard Roberts
William Bailey	In memory of Elizabeth L. Woodford
William Bailey	In memory of Annette Richman
William Bailey	In memory of Mark Schroeder
William Bailey	In memory of Ginger Mylne
Charles Ford	In memory of Dr. Charles Tourtellotte
Frances Cunnison	In memory of Lucy Hampson
Frances and Stephen Cunnison	

The Garden Happens

The Hal Snyder Garden at Harrison and Victoria is almost finished! Contractor Sunshine Nursery began work on March 30 to prepare the ground, install the decomposed granite paths and the irrigation system. The irrigation has smart sensors for water efficiency, and plumbing that can convert to "gray" water when the city begins to use it.

At 9:00 am on April 17th some 35 volunteers gathered to begin planting the garden.

The morning began with ceremony as the Boy Scouts of Troop 270 arrived in their uniforms and presented a flag ceremony. The Troop donated the sycamore tree that centers the garden, and dedicated the tree to the 100th anniversary of Boy Scouting in America. Dave Roger welcomed everyone and pointed out that this special day also celebrates Arbor Day and the 20th anniversary of Victoria Avenue Forever.

After the ceremonies, the boys stripped off their decorated uniform shirts to reveal t-shirts, and started digging. Ward 5 City Councilman Chris MacArthur joined the group to praise the boys and offer encouragement. The 10' tall sycamore tree was soon transferred from its 2' x 2' box into its permanent home and looks very handsome. (See species description on the right.)

The planting moved into high gear, with a number of students from La Sierra High School National Honor Society and adults joining in. Hal could be seen answering earnest questions from the youngsters, working with inexperienced volunteers, and generally overseeing the activities as he has done for 20 years.

Many of the chosen plants could not be obtained in time for the first planting, so on May 8 we gathered again and did more planting. As plants continue to become available, volunteers will add them to the park.

Landscape architect Jim Montgomery designed the garden to be drought tolerant. The flower colors are predominantly yellow and blue, with many already blooming. The garden also contains smaller trees, including a purple leaved Smoke Tree 'Notcutt's Variety', Texas Mountain Laurel, a coral tree and two crape myrtles that will ultimately shade the lovely bench ordered by Public Works and crafted and installed by West Coast Arborists.

Thank you to everybody who made this garden possible. Please take time to stop by and admire the result.



Sycamore Tree

By Darleen Demason

The California Sycamore (Platanus racemosa) is a rugged native of the California foothills and Coast Ranges. It is fast growing up to 75-80 feet, often with spreading or leaning, multiple trunks. Major branches are often twisted at odd angles and spread 40 or 50 feet. Sycamores are best identified by brown, gray and white patchwork bark, large, deeply-lobed, fan-shaped leaves, and dangling, round "cottonball" seed clusters.



Sycamores are deciduous, the leaves turning brown or yellow brown before dropping. They tolerate heat, sun and wind, and attract nesting birds, hummingbirds and butterflies.

See this species at Harrison and Victoria, as the centerpiece of the Hal Snyder garden. Mature sycamores rise above the orange trees on nearby properties.

Wasting Water?

**Is your sprinkler system wasting water?
Here are a few tips to consider.**

- Set the timer for your sprinklers for the early morning hours when the temperature is low, the air quiet, and the humidity high. This will minimize evaporation, give time for the water to settle into the soil and the plants to take up the water before the day's heat.
- Water penetration in our dense soils is more readily accomplished with two short watering cycles than one longer cycle. This will help reduce run-off.
- Dry spots? Don't over-water the rest of the yard because of dry spots. There are several types of sprinkler heads that might provide better coverage or apply the water at a different rate in order to get the greatest efficiency. If the problem is tree roots, periodic deep soaking during warm weather can help satisfy the thirsty

We regretfully report the death in late March of Mark Schroeder, retired U.S. Forest Service Meteorologist and longtime VAF Board member. Mark rarely missed a meeting or a work day. A good man with a shovel, he "retired" from planting trees at the age of 91 at the insistence of his wife Eva. Mark was 94.



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Work Days
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off, but be ready to
work in the fall.

JOIN VICTORIA AVENUE FOREVER
(Current members will be notified when their membership expires)

Victoria Avenue Forever (VAF) is a non-profit organization founded in 1990, dedicated to the preservation and beautification of Victoria Avenue. Through fund raisers and membership support, VAF has purchased plants and trees, organized tree planting parties, planted over 600 trees, organized tree care activities, and informed our members about the history and value of the plantings on the avenue. Present goal is to take cuttings and fill in missing 'Ragged Robin' roses which frame the trees and larger plants in the medians.

To find out more about the history of Victoria Avenue, to find out how you can become a member, and to volunteer for activities, please fill in the form below and mail today. We'd love to have you join us!

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS _____

Make your tax-deductible checks payable to Victoria Avenue Forever
and mail to PO Box 4152 • Riverside, CA 92514

\$10.00 Individual \$20.00 Family
 \$50.00 Sustaining I would like to volunteer

\$ _____ for VAF Endowment Fund in honor/memory of _____

Please mail to Victoria Avenue Forever • P O Box 4152 • Riverside, CA 92514