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Will Broad Build In Downtown?

By Abbey Hood

The Courier learned exclusively this week that the Eli Broad Art Museum looks like it will be built, if at all, as part of Los Angeles' Grand Avenue Project just south of the Walt Disney Concert Hall. That decision, taken privately by Broad earlier this week and with other terms negotiated at a closed session of the Grand Avenue development commission, rules out Beverly Hills and Santa Monica as prospective sites.

The Grand Avenue Project, of which Broad serves as a co-chairman of its the Board of Directors, is an effort by LA to transform vacant publicly-owned land downtown into a "vibrant, new regional center that will showcase entertainment venues, restaurants and retail mixed with a hotel and up to 2,600 new housing units." Terms call for the museum to lease 82,000 square feet of the

(see 'BROAD,' page 7)



THE NIGHT OF THE BLOWOUT – Barry Manilow, Monica Mancini and Dave Koz rocked the roof off the Ahmanson Theatre during the Los Angeles County High School of Arts gala celebrating the school's 25th anniversary. More photos in George Christy's column on Page 6.

Milestone Photos

Billion Dollar Pension Time Bomb About To Explode On Taxpayers

By Abbey Hood

Current public office holders throughout the state of California identify public pensions as the \$500 billion financial time bomb about to explode on taxpayers' checkbooks.

Many Californians are well aware of the dynamite and are beginning to question the amount of public funds being used to pay for pensions as many City services are being cut to pay for employee benefits.

Resentment is also on the rise as these taxpayers are losing their own 401ks and fear they may soon be living on food stamps and fast food, yet public employees are guaranteed benefits to maintain their same quality of life after they retire.

Yet, because of the defined benefit pension program, the City employees don't pay into their retirements. Instead, it is left to their

employer, ultimately the taxpayer.

"Taxpayers who saw their 401k decline still carry the burden of paying for public pensions, that is an issue," said Rancho Santa Margarita Councilman Neil Blais.

Some employees can retire at as early 50; some take a job in the private sector after they retire and still receive full benefits from taxpayers' money, this is a practice known as double dipping.

Other employees have their salaries spiked right before retirement in what is called, "pension spiking," which has occurred in Beverly Hills.

The worst abuse is derived from overtime. It is the custom and practice among some departments for employees nearing retirement to seek overtime from their colleagues to boost the final year's compensation to form the highest possible base on which retirement pay is calculated.

These factors only add fuel to the taxpayers' fire.

(see 'PENSION,' page 25)

Steven Fenton's Actions Condemned At Public Meeting

Steven Fenton's honeymoon as Beverly Hills Unified School District president is over. His attempt at one-man rule brought out dozens of vocal opponents to a public gripe session at the Science and Technology Center on the Beverly High campus Monday night. Topping the list of controversial decisions led by the neophyte president was the hiring process for the high school's new principal. Fenton, who is known to harbor ambitions to join the Beverly Hills City Council, has been accused of using his office to promote

one inside candidate instead of conducting a comprehensive search to fill the critical position.

A number of board members have privately complained to *The Courier* about Fenton working with current interim Superintendent Jerry Gross on many matters without including the other board members in the decisions or even discussions. Gross's contract to head the district ends June 30. The so-called "reform slate" of board mem-

(see 'FENTON,' page 8)

Kasikci On Beverly Hills Tourism, CVB

Beverly Hills hotelier, Ali Kasikci, waxed eloquent about his recent promotion to vice president strategic planning of Montage Hotels, "This is my dream job. I cannot imagine anything that I would rather be doing." He quickly changed the subject to his role as the volunteer chair of strategic planning for the Beverly Hills Conference & Visitors Bureau.

"We will soon receive our

(see 'KASIKCI,' page 8)

Brown Says California Is Not 'Ungovernable'

By Marcia Hobbs

Jerry Brown, former Governor of California, former Mayor of Oakland, and now Attorney General pulled up a chair to talk informally with a small group of reporters at the California State Democratic Convention a week ago. He wanted to talk about "the big issues" but was soon bemoaning the "the poisonous feelings "in Sacramento and wishing for "greater civility". He noted that the "legislature has a 9 to 13% public approval rating" and that it will be hard for substantive changes to be made for the benefit of Californians. But he said he "would work with the legislature in an inten-

(see 'BROWN,' page 14)

Tops Docs Will Be At Sunday's Health Expo

By Abbey Hood

Hundreds of Beverly Hills residents and Angelinos are expected to turn out for the City's annual Health Faire where visitors learn health and wellness tips from some of Beverly Hills' most respected doctors.

From skin cancer screenings to nutritional and skin care consultations, even adrenal stress and toxicity screenings, dozens

(see 'FAIRE,' page 8)



GEORGE CHRISTY

Milestone Photo



Arts High Foundation president **Marcia Wilson Hobbs** with honoree **Ginny Mancini** during LACHSA's 25th Anniversary Gala at the Ahmanson Theatre



Honoree Dr. Ed Kantor with Harriet Hochman



Honoree Flora Thornton with husband Eric Small



Presenter Josh Groban

"I can take care of that," offered **Barry Manilow** when the Los Angeles County High School of the Arts that serves our talented youths in Los Angeles was without much-needed musical instruments for its classes. He immediately donated half a million dollars for new instruments that now accommodate thousands of students. We discovered this during the jubilant evening of the Arts High Foundation's gala at the sold-out Ahmanson Theatre when the LACHSA celebrated its 25th anniversary to a rapt audience, raising more than \$600,000.

From the prologue of the LACHSA students harmonizing and high-stepping to the *Jellicle* number from **Andrew Lloyd Webber's** long-running Broadway musical, *Cats*, we anticipated a pumped-up show. Right on we were, with celebrated artists performing, and cloudbursts of applause following Barry's blow-out finale, after he sang his signature songs, *It's a Miracle*, and *One Voice*. Our BH Courier's **Marcia Wilson Hobbs**, who presides over the fundraising Arts High Foundation, informed that Barry also entertained during LACHSA's first graduation class — "he's incredibly loyal and supportive."

The evening's first Champion of Arts Education honored philanthropist **Flora Thornton**, who was introduced by opera star **Marilyn Horne** in a personal musical tribute. Video accolades followed, with tenor **Dominic Domingo** (guess who his grandfather is?) and soprano **Julie Adams** performing in Flora's honor.

"That piccolo-playing pixie from Aliquippa, Pennsylvania" was composer **John Williams'** nod to the prolific composer Henry "Hank" Mancini, whose film and TV

music embraces generations, and whose legacy, thanks to wife **Ginny Mancini**, has enriched the arts in our town. John and architect **Frank Gehry** acknowledged donor Ginny with her Champion of Arts Education tribute, followed by saxophonist **Dave Koz** interpreting Hank's catchy *Pink Panther* theme. Daughter **Monica Mancini** performed two of her dad's favorites, *Charade*, from the witty and suspenseful film starring Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn, and the immortal *Moon River* from *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.

Music critics debate about **Josh Groban** being a tenor or a baritone, but Josh himself told the *New York Times* that he's "a tenor in training." Whatever, his appearances filled every arena during his not-long-ago 81-city tour. An LACHSA graduate, Josh introduced Beverly Hills' beloved doctor **Ed Kantor**, the otolaryngologist who protects the voices of professional singers concerned about the "show going on." **Natalie Cole** praised Dr. Ed for being there when her voice was in need, and sang *The Very Thought of You* in his honor. **Bob Newhart** then had the crowd in stitches with his collection of "all true" country music titles that included *When the Phone Doesn't Ring Tonight*, *It'll Be Me*.

Joining Marcia Hobbs were BH Courier publisher **Clif Smith**, wife **Candace** and teenage daughter **Dorothy Catherine**, Marcia's cousin **Bonnie McClure**, **Dody Vaughn** and **Bea Lavery**, chief of protocol with Mayor Tom Bradley's administration. During Queen Elizabeth II's 1983 visit to Los Angeles, Bea supervised the

formal dinner in the Founders Room of the Music Center, where the Queen asked if Bea would accompany her to the ladies room. She then requested that Bea hold on to her handbag, with Bea wondering what the contents might be, but held back from taking a peek. Money? Cosmetics? Doubtful, since there are ladies in waiting, although we couldn't help joking, after Bea described her experience: "A pistol, maybe?" Bea added that the Saudi royals find visiting Los Angeles irresistible. "No secret that they like our girls."

At the historic Wilshire Boulevard Temple that morning, we were privileged to be invited by **Susie** and **Brad Krevoy** for their daughter **Olivia's** call to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah. Brad's the chairman and CEO of the Motion Picture Corporation of America and the producer of acclaimed films, having played a key role in the finance, development, producing and distribution for more than 100 projects (these include blockbusters *Dumb and Dumber*, *Kingpin*, *Beverly Hills Ninja*). Upcoming is *Beverly Hills Chihuahua 2* for Disney.

Among Brad's successes is HBO's Golden Globe-win-

ning film without any war action.

Rabbi **Steven Leder** conducted the Bat Mitzvah service, with the glorious tenor voice of cantor **Don Gurney** filling the hallowed sanctuary. Cantor Gurney, were he interested in opera, most likely would be an international superstar. His assistant, **Nancy Daum**, kindly shared facts about the Temple, built in 1928, with MGM's president of production Irving Thalberg financing the dome's interior design. MGM's L. B. Mayer funded the stained glass windows, and was vying in pledges with the brothers Warner (Jack, Henry and Albert), who commissioned art director Hugo Ballen to create the Biblically-themed murals surrounding the sanctuary. Both the filmmakers and pioneering families forged this Jewish identity for their burgeoning community, with Rabbi Edgar Magnin establishing one of the most respected Reform congregations in the world. Rabbi Leder is spearheading a \$100 million restoration for the Temple.

At the luncheon reception in the Temple's dining hall, Olivia and her younger sisters, **Sophia**, 11, and **Alexandra**, 10, welcomed guests. As did Brad's mom and dad, **Cecile** and **Norman Krevoy**, his brother **Philip** with wife **Kellie** and their beautiful daughter **Phebie**, Susie's mom and dad, **Reni** and **Syd Belzberg**, who flew in from Vancouver, and Susie's

sisters **Tammi Kerzner** and **Michelle Mandel**.

Congratulating Olivia, a youthful fashion plate in ruby-red silk taffeta finery, were **Julie** and **Roger Corman**, **Steve Stabler**, Lionsgate CEO **Jon Feltheimer**, WME's **Adam Venit**, **Donna** and **Peter Schlessel**, **Linda** and **Bob Gersh**, **Leslie** and **Doug Robinson**, **Lori** and **Steve Ransohoff**, **Marshall** and **Patricia Geller**, **Laura Fox** and **Ben Van de Bunt**, attorneys **Larry Kopeikin** and **Mickey Mayerson**, MPCA's **Mike Callaghan**, **Reuben Liber** and **Francisco Gonzalez**.

Dogwood blossoms and lilacs, tulips, orchids decorated the dining hall, where the luncheon of Caprese salad and porcini-dusted John Dory was catered by **Michele Gan's** Serves You Right. After the main course, friends were dazzled by two glamorous serving ladies, suddenly appearing in towering Marie Antoinette coiffures and bejeweled hoop-skirted, white satin gowns. Round tables were tucked under their huge 18th century-esque panniers of the royal court dresses. The tables were topped with trays of sweets, as the rouged ladies ambled hither and yon in their gowns with this unique presentation. Reminding us, if you will, of Ernest Hemingway's popular Paris memoir, *A Moveable Feast*.

Online at www.bhcourier.com/georgechristy.cfm



The Krevoy family en route to Olivia's "kids" party after the Bat Mitzvah.



The Krevoy family having fun during the Bat Mitzvah luncheon in the Temple's dining hall.

ning *Taking Chance*. **Kevin Bacon** won the Golden Globe and was voted SAG's Best Actor for his performance as the officer accompanying the body of fallen Marine **Chance Phelps** home to his birthplace in Wyoming from the Iraq war. A convoy he was escorting came under heavy fire. Nominated for ten Emmys, *Taking Chance* is the most watched HBO original film in over five years. Lauded as a classic, this is a deeply affect-



Cindy Gold

MPCA's chairman and CEO **Brad Krevoy** with wife **Susie**, daughter **Olivia** (right) before her Bat Mitzvah and sisters **Sophia** and **Alexandra** at the Wilshire Boulevard Temple.