

Award Winning Community

The theme was created to support ideas and programs that promote the beauty, safety, welfare and maintenance of the Villa Marina community.

Richard Reece

IT WAS ONE SWELL PARTY – THIS YEAR’S ANNUAL BLOCK PARTY FEATURED:

LAPD helicopter gave a heart pounding salute by first making a few lazy circles over the party on Admiral from about 1,000 feet with siren wailing...and the crowd stood up from their eating tables to give a big wave. Then the chopper disappeared. Suddenly from the west – perhaps at less than 500 feet, the chopper swooped down right over the top of the trees and the vibration literally shook one’s attention span to full alert as it swooshed down and then disappeared. Wow!



The theme of this year’s party was – Welcome new neighbors. Last year, you may recall, the party gave special recognition to original homeowners.



Here resident Fred Waltman (who is also the elected neighborhood representative to the Del Rey Neighborhood Council) greets a new neighbor. New neighbors were given a special name badge, a welcome to the neighborhood packet, and a chance to volunteer for various neighborhood

committees, clubs – such as the bicycle club, sewing/quilting club, parents club, etc. New residents also received special drawing tickets where prizes were drawn for just new residents.



Stu Rutkin of the Block Party Committee, far right, introduces us to the newest Villa Marina neighbors – they became officially new neighbors 1 day before the block party. **Welcome:** [Matt Sonnen](#) and [Dana Olsick](#).

The honorable Bill Rosendahl, Los Angeles Councilman and a pretty darn good fan of the Villa Marina Community, stopped by to add his welcome and to say that he and his staff continue to work toward the successful completion of our overnight restricted parking permit application.

Perhaps you have noticed that our neighborhood demographics are changing. Ours is a community that, in the early 1970’s, restricted the Villa occupancy to those over the age of 13. Of course, the By-Laws have all changed when, in the late 80’s, California law said such discrimination was not allowed. Old timers tell us that the restriction was not so much opposition to youth as it was concern over what was then unfenced pools. One historian said that while the \$35,000 purchase price of a condo in the late 60’s and early 1970’s seems cheap now, one could get a pretty nice estate out in the valley for the same price. But times they are a changing, and we are now welcoming young families to the neighborhood.





Face painting was a big hit with the new neighborhood youngsters.



Ok, you want me to do what? The Los Angeles Fire Department welcomed children and adults to take a seat in the big hook and ladder truck.



The colorful balloon guy was also a big hit with the kids. Here kids intently look on as the balloon guy makes a sword.



Ralphs Fresh Fare, a major sponsor, had a very successful booth where residents got to spin the wheel and maybe win a prize. Frankly, more than once it was observed that the Ralph's people made certain that everyone was a winner.



Oh Boy, I'm just like a fireman



A shady hat, a party dress, let's celebrate living life in an award winning community.



Part of the tradition of the block party is the long "POT LUCK" table where residents cook up their favorite family dish and bring it to the block party. The pot luck provides a way for more and more residents to participate in the event. The tummies of the guests are the beneficiaries of some absolutely scrumptious concoctions.



OK Alex, what can I say, "Nice outfit"! Alex Bologna is in charge of the grillers for the preparation of hot dogs and hamburgers and the reports are that the burgers were exceptional. Alex also is the go to guy for absolutely anything needed to make the party a success. He provides all the stuff for the electric power and sound system throughout the event. He provides everything that the grillers need. He has the ladders to put up the signs. He makes trips to suppliers in his van to pick up groceries, water, and soft drinks for the 700- or so people that attend the best block party ever.



There are about 30 booths for those who want to do business with our residents. This is not a street fair, it is a block party – so vendors do not sell anything at this event.



It's hot, smoky, and darn hard work to keep up, but the grillers keep those hot dogs and burgers coming. As you can see, it is very popular – note the line of folks have their plates at the ready.



And the other end of the long line of pot luck food. Imagine the coordination to just get all this stuff organized, delivered

on time to the party, set up, take down, clean up – It's an amazing event with amazing volunteers.



When residents arrive, they are greeted by the registration booth. Here volunteers sign in guests, give them tickets for chances to win an absolutely incredible array of prizes. At the registration entry, new neighbors were instructed to go to the Award Winning Community booth to get a special welcome package and to get special tickets for drawings especially for new residents. Of course people have lots of questions and the volunteers manning the registration booth have the answers and a big smile – welcome to the party.



Here is Tulani Kowalski - left (mom), a board member at her villa, and chair of the new parents club with her mom – right (grandmother) who happens to be a famous several time Grammy and Tony award winning artist – Dee Dee Bridgewater. Grandmother and grandson are having a moment.



Thanks Cheryl and Bob Herrera – For 5 months every year they organize, plan, and implement LA's best block party. We owe you big time Bob and Cheryl.