



# OUR CORNERSTONE

Volume XIV • Issue 2

Summer 2019

## Grease: It Happened Here

by ANTHEA RAYMOND

Forty-one years after its release the movie *Grease* is an even bigger deal. Sing-a-longs and stage revivals are popping up all over the world. And who can forget the “hand jive” scene with Danny Zuko (John Travolta) and his ex-girlfriend, Cha Cha DiGregorio (Annette Charles), the “Best Dancer at St. Bernadette’s”? It’s a number that resonates across the generations.

Cha Cha DiGregorio played another important role in *Grease*: she waved her kerchief to start the drag race in the Los Angeles River. The image of Cha Cha’s raised arms has cemented the riverbed forever in minds around the world. It also earned Cha Cha her own Barbie doll in 2008.

Annette Charles danced and starred in many other movies, but, perhaps most importantly, spent many years teaching at California State University, Northridge in the Chicano Studies Department. When she died in 2011 after a battle with cancer, media outlets around the world took note including NPR, CBS, and *People*.

Less known is that Annette Charles was born Annette Cardona, and lived near the intersection of North Figueroa Street and West Avenue 26 in Cypress Park until she was four. Four gas stations and an aging strip mall awaiting redevelopment now flank the corner. But it once was dotted with single

family and multiple unit dwellings until the 110 and 5 freeways intervened.

Some residents want to name the intersection of N. Figueroa Street and Avenue 26 in Cypress Park in Cardona’s honor. They say it’s an important reminder of Cypress Park’s unsung contributions as well as the impact the freeways and their construction had on the neighborhood. They also like that Cardona’s Italian and Mexican heritage represents an important transition in Cypress Park’s immigrant history.

Charles’s mother, Mary, still lives in the Elysian Valley, suggesting more opportunities to remember this NELA pioneer.



# President's Message

by JAMIE TIJERINA

Dear Members,

The Board of the Highland Park Heritage Trust is hard at work on several initiatives, planning our activities for the remainder of 2019!

In June, we held a successful Sycamore Grove Walking Tour, bringing new friends into the fold to enjoy the history of the area and learn alongside us. The next Sycamore Grove walking tour will be held on October 26th!

Our HCM nomination of the Chicano Arts Collectives of Highland Park is well underway; currently we are awaiting response from the Cultural Heritage Commission. We plan to begin another nomination later in the year and will provide updates in our next issue of *Our Cornerstone*.

A major initiative by the board this year is the modernization of our organization's infrastructure, working to make the HPHT website and our membership service easier for our members - and potential new members - to navigate. We recently implemented a new system online to sign up and renew membership to the Heritage Trust called **JoinIt**. You can visit our website ([hpht.org](http://hpht.org)) and renew your membership via the link. We have also begun using EventBrite to manage signups for events such as our walking tours.

We look forward to seeing you at future HPHT events this year. Stay tuned for details on an end-of-summer event, and make sure you keep up with us on our social media outlets on Facebook and Instagram for the latest updates.

## Advertisement/Sponsorship Packages:

You can now support the Highland Park Heritage Trust  
by advertising with us.

Micro Business/Individual –Great for local artisans!: \$60

Small Business/Small Institution: \$100

Small Business/Small Institution Sponsorship Package: \$400

Corporate/Institutional/Sustaining Sponsorship Package: \$1,000

<http://highlandparkheritagetrust.org/business-sponsorship/>

Advertisements will be accepted for this publication from advertisers who are in keeping with the intention and goals of this organization. Contact Charly Kemp for further information at (323) 908-4127



## 2019 Officers

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# 2019 LA Conservancy Award

## A.V. Walberg Residence

Preserving Historic Fabric while Increasing Density in the Highland Park-Garvanza HPOZ

Nomination By: Highland Park Heritage Trust

Nominees: Good Form Design Build, Louisa Van Leer Architecture & Garvanza Improvement Association (GIA)



Rehabilitation of 1916 Transitional Shingle style A.V. Walberg Residence with Attached Studio Unit

On July 25, 2019, Architect Louisa Van Leer, accompanied by her husband Rodney Asher and Garvanza Homeowners' Association's Rosa Rivas and Tina and Charles Miller will be present at the Los Angeles

Conservancy Luncheon to receive a well-deserved award in preservation.

HPHT was delighted to nominate the three-parcel residential rehabilitation/ infill project for "Preserving Historic Fabric while Increasing Density in the Highland Park-Garvanza HPOZ." This nomination honored 10 years of persistence to find the right buyer for the A.V. Walberg House and adjoining properties at the intersection of N Avenue 66 and Crescent Street in the Highland Park-Garvanza HPOZ.

Louisa, in preparing the nomination on behalf of HPHT indicated, "What we have found at the HPHT is that great preservation is often the result of a collective effort of public and private citizens, sometimes spanning years of advocacy work in order to get results."

Garvanza Improvement Association has never wavered in its quest to represent their community.

Project Area with Three Parcels and Housing Types

Parcel One: 405 Avenue 66

Parcel Two: 6517 & 6515 Crescent Street

Parcel Three: 6511 Crescent Street



Rehabilitation of a 1921 Craftsman with Adaptive Reuse of Original Garage into Studio Apartment



Above: New Single Family Urban Infill with Accessory Dwelling Unit in rear yard and Native Oak Preserved  
Left: Project Area with Three Parcels and Housing Types Identified



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## Highland Park Heritage Trust Bi-Annual Community Preservation Awards 2020

Highland Park Heritage Trust has a reputation for recognizing a wide range of buildings, murals, gardens, special neighborhood people and efforts that are indicative of the preservation ethic of our Arroyo communities.

By celebrating the actions taken by our residents to improve the historic heritage of the communities of the Arroyo Seco, we give deserved recognition and honor to those that best match our mission.

All nominations need to be exterior based as the restoration of the façade, or have the ability to be experienced by the general public in some tangible manner such as in a website or event or actions of an individual.

Each year a community-minded group of member volunteers form an Awards Committee that will be reviewing the nominations and then visiting locations to determine award recipients.

By sending in your nominations as soon as possible you will aid this much-valued group of dedicated individuals to complete this activity.

### Criteria

**Please use these specific criteria in completing your nominations on the form:**

1. There is evidence of significant exterior improvement and preservation of this property in the last year (home, residence, commercial property, historic, non-historic).
2. There is evidence of continued/sustained maintenance and care of this property.
3. There has been preservation, improvement or maintenance of the garden or landscape.
4. There has been a significant contribution by virtue of the impact on the preservation community because of this activity or event.
5. There has been a significant contribution by an organization or individual toward the preservation of our cultural heritage.

Highland Park Heritage Trust  
P.O. Box 30894 • Los Angeles, CA 90050  
(323) 908-4127 • [www.info@hpht.org](http://www.info@hpht.org)

HPHT is an all-volunteer, nonprofit 501c3 organization (#95-4034485) that is dedicated to the historic preservation of Los Angeles' Arroyo Seco communities of Highland Park, Garvanza, Mt. Washington, Hermon, Montecito, Heights and Cypress Park. Our mission is to advocate and educate the community about our historic neighborhood by hosting walking tours and programs, and sponsoring events that feature our rich cultural and architectural heritage.

# HPHT 2020 Awards Nomination Form

The form is also available online at [www.hpht.org](http://www.hpht.org)

*Please use a separate form for each nomination*

Name and contact information of the HPHT member making the nomination:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT INFORMATION (PHONE) \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT INFORMATION (EMAIL) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to nominate this:

- property
- place
- activity/event
- organization
- individual, for a HPHT Community Preservation Award

Contact information for nominee:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

Use the *criteria* to explain why you are making this nomination.

For a building or a place: What has happened here that deserves recognition by HPHT?

For some action or event, an organization or an individual, elaborate specifics about the nomination so the judges best understand the context of the nomination.

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Submit via mail to P.O. Box 50894, Los Angeles, CA 90050-0894

Or submit via email to [info@hpht.org](mailto:info@hpht.org)

**Submission Deadline: Wednesday, January 15, 2020**

HPHT message line: (323) 908-4127



## Compass Rose at Oxy Arts Complex

The *Compass Rose* exhibition consists of a large-scale stained glass installation by artist Debra Scacco based on a deconstructed map of Northeast Los Angeles, a large-scale artist book, inspired by the historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Atlas, redrawn to reflect the memories of the community, audio interview clips, and the opportunity to listen to or read each of the interviews in full.

The project was a unique year-long collaboration launched by Oxy Arts, the College's community based arts hub, bringing together multiple departments at Occidental College in collaboration with 31 community members.

Open through August 16, *Compass Rose* confronts the singular lens of the original map: undoing its finality, and celebrating the deep connections that make a collection of streets a community.

*Programming related to exhibit:*

Documentary Film Screening: "Resurrected Histories" (Thursday, July 11 | 7-10pm)

NELA Stories Walk (Sunday, July 28 | 4:30-7pm)

Closing Reception: *Compass Rose* (Friday, August 16 | 6-8pm)

Open through August 16, 2019

Exhibition Hours: Monday–Friday 11am to 5pm

4757 York Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90041

Excerpts provided by Oxy Arts

Media Contact: Jim Tranquada, [jtranqua@oxy.edu](mailto:jtranqua@oxy.edu), 323 259 2990

*The Exhibition is made possible by the Arts and Urban Experience Initiative, which is generously funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.*



## Membership with HPHT just got easier. We've instituted JointIt for online registration and renewal.

You may join or renew online at <https://www.joinit.org/o/hpht>  
or by sending your tax deductible check to:

Highland Park Heritage Trust • Attn: Membership • PO Box 50894 • Los Angeles CA 90050-0894

- |   |  |                                     |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20  | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal   | <input type="checkbox"/> New Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$30      | My preference for contact: <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email   |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5      | <input type="checkbox"/> My employer or my spouse's employer matches gifts to non-profits. |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$50     | HPHT is a 501c3 Non-Profit Corporation, Tax ID #95-4034485                                 |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Please contact me about creating an endowment                     |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angel \$200      |  |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime \$500   |  |                                     |

*I am interested in working on the following activities:*

- Walking Tours:  Docent  Reception  Archiving  Awards Ceremony  Mailing Assistance  
 Oral History  Email  Fund Raising  Marketing & Publicity  Restoration Workshops  
 Cornerstone Articles  School & Education Programs  Membership Events  Operation Save

## Preserving the Natural Environment

On Tuesday, July 5, three stalwart HPHT members, Keiko Miller, Erica Wilder and Carmela Gomes, attended the quarterly meeting of the Arroyo Seco Foundation at the Pasadena Central Library. Founder and managing director, Tim Brick, presented experts who explained the process being employed to confront the way in which LA County Flood Control managing the "Big Dig" program.

The last presenter was attorney Mitchell Tsai said, "It is a good day for the Arroyo Seco," after Judge James C. Chalfant's stinging tentative decision in favor of the Arroyo Seco Foundation and Pasadena Audubon Society in their lawsuit against County Flood Control's Big Dig sediment program in Hahamongna Watershed Park. Settlement discussions are now underway for a July 30th hearing.

"We have never opposed the County Flood Control District's sediment removal from Hahamongna Watershed Park. The Arroyo Seco Foundation has been urging the Flood District to do a slow, steady sediment management program for more than thirty years. The County's irresponsible delay of their maintenance responsibility has necessitated the Big Dig and compounded its negative impacts.

We only sought a safe, careful plan, but as the trucks

begin to roll and the grinders and excavator dig deep into the Arroyo Seco streamzone, it is now apparent that the Flood Control District has failed on that score too.

We urge those who love Hahamongna to not forget its importance and to redouble your efforts to help restore it for future generations." <https://www.arroyoseco.org/>

## character PROJECTS

**Jonathan Silberman**

Design, Vintage Lighting & Hardware,  
and Real Estate for Historic Homes in Los Angeles

characterprojects@gmail.com • 818-599-5568  
characterprojects.com

BRE# 01491001

**Do you have a historic home or preservation story you want to publicize? Please contribute articles, photos and anecdotes to HPHT. Email to [info@hpht.org](mailto:info@hpht.org).**

## SAVE THE DATES

Join the HPHT team as we discover and celebrate our regional history at the 14th annual **Los Angeles Archives Bazaar**, presented by LA as Subject and the USC Libraries. On **Saturday, October 12, 2019 between 9:00am and 5:00pm** the Doheny Memorial Library on the USC University Park Campus will host several dozen local institutions and archive experts, each sharing their portion of our areas rich history and heritage. For more information on the event (and parking), or if you'd like to volunteer, visit <https://laassubject.org/archives-bazaar>.

**Saturday, October 26, 2019: Sycamore Grove Walking Tour.** <http://highlandparkheritagetrust.org/sycamore-grove-walking-tour/> or by mail, HPHT, P.O. Box 50894, Lo Angeles, CA 90050 no later than Wednesday, October 23. Information (323) 908- 4127

**Monday, November 11, 2019: Membership Meeting** will include a presentation as well as the annual Board of Directors elections.

**Monday, December 9, 2019: Holiday Party, from 6:30 to 9:30** hosted by Hillary Danner at the La Boheme House, one of the historic homes visited on the Sycamore Grove Walking Tour.



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Address Correction Requested

## What's Inside

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