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From The Publisher  
**MARCIA WILSON HOBBS**



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

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I have much respect for our school district's teachers and for teacher union representative Chris Bushee. However, his recent attempt to justify the BHUSD's new teacher salary formula is flawed on a number of levels. While the current formula linking teacher salaries to property values is undoubtedly a great deal for his union, Bushee posits the argument that it's actually also a great deal for the residents and taxpayers of Beverly Hills.

I won't mince words here: the school board's decision to link teacher salaries to Beverly Hills property values is possibly the single most boneheaded fiscal move in our district's history.

There is no doubt that our teachers—and all teachers in fact—deserve to have salaries and benefits which are both fair and sustainable. But linking salaries to factors over which one has no direct control is the very definition of fiscal imprudence.

At various candidate forums, outgoing school board member Lewis Hall tried to justify the district's contract with the teachers by claiming that the City did the same thing in salary negotiations with its employees. What's true is that former City Manager Rod Wood instituted a salary formula based on total compensation which did indeed link police and fire salaries to what other cities were paying. This took the ability to effectively manage our own budget out of the City Council's hands. However, the current council went to great pains several years ago to eliminate this linkage of salaries and benefits to what other cities were paying. To quote my grandmother: "just because everyone else is jumping off a bridge, doesn't mean you should."

While linking municipal employee salaries to those paid by other cities is poor fiscal management, it is even worse to link salaries to something which has absolutely no connection nor bearing on the work being performed. While I am personally not in favor of linking teacher salaries to performance metrics, it would at least make more logical sense to link salaries to, say, test scores or college admissions than to property values in Beverly Hills.

The new school board needs to make it clear that this poorly conceived and fiscally unsound linkage of salaries to property values will be rescinded as soon as possible. They need to make it clear that our teachers will be paid fair and sustainable salaries and benefits, but that it is neither fair nor sustainable – nor logical – to link salaries to extraneous factors such as property values.

And while I understand why Chris Bushee would defend the deal which his union made, he should tell it like it is: "we support the deal because it's a great deal for our members." Nothing wrong with that. But trying to sell it as a "good deal" for the community not only ignores the basic principles of fiscal responsibility, unfortunately, it also creates the feeling that someone is trying to sell us a bill of goods.

And that is definitely not a good thing when it comes from those who are supposed to be instructing our kids.

**John Mirisch**  
**Beverly Hills City Councilmember**  
**and Former Mayor of Beverly Hills**

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I grew up in the same Philadelphia neighborhood as Rabbi Jacob Pressman, of blessed memory. Our small synagogue located in the southwest section of the city, about 25 blocks from the University of Pennsylvania, was led by Rabbi Morris Goodblatt. He spoke often with great pride of the first young man to become a rabbi who had grown up in that congregation, the same Jacob Pressman.

I did not know "Rabbi Jack," for he was much older than I, but knew his name as I heard it often mentioned in the rabbi's comments.

Several of us, educated in that synagogue, continued on to rabbinical schools; but it was Jacob Pressman who had been the trailblazer.

Jumping ahead many, many years, I found myself in San Jose and met a colleague there by the name of Pressman, Jacob's son. I told him how his father "had been my hero." It was in San Jose at a family gathering when I finally got to meet in person with Jacob Pressman and he was thrilled to hear my story.

This past September my wife and I relocated to Beverly Hills. Alas, before I could reconnect with him, he had passed and I read in *The Courier* of the many things he had accomplished for this City and his people in Israel.

His messages, serious and lighthearted, were a regular feature of *The Courier* for more than two decades.

The synagogue that he served was named by him, Beth Am. Let it be known to all readers that he chose that name with much pride and consideration for the training he had received as a child in Philadelphia.

The congregation that educated him was called Beth Am Israel. In gratitude to his first rabbi and his home synagogue, he chose that name for his "new home" in Los Angeles.

And now you know the rest of the story.

**Rabbi Simcha A. Green**

**POLICE BLOTTER**

*The following assaults, robberies burglaries, and grand thefts have been reported by BHPD. Streets are usually indicated by block numbers. Losses in brackets.*

**ASSAULTS**

11/17 400 South Bedford Drive  
 11/20 400 Foothill Road

**BURGLARIES**

11/17 400 North Palm Drive  
 11/19 300 North Palm Drive (\$3,295)  
 11/19 North La Cienega Boulevard  
 11/19 300 North Maple Drive (\$600)  
 11/19 400 North Beverly Drive  
 11/20 100 North Robertson Boulevard  
 11/20 1900 Loma Vista Drive  
 11/20 400 South Bedford Drive (\$104,000)  
 11/20 400 South Almont Drive (\$20,000)  
 11/21 200 North Crescent Drive (\$430)  
 11/21 200 North Crescent Drive (\$510)  
 11/21 200 North Crescent Drive (\$20)  
 11/21 200 South Stanley Drive (\$20)

**GRAND THEFTS**

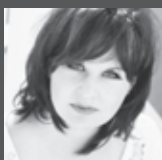
11/08 400 South Doheny Drive (\$27,100)  
 11/09 400 North Rodeo Drive  
 11/14 600 North Maple Drive (\$2,680)  
 11/16 400 North Camden Drive (\$2,000)  
 11/17 8900 Wilshire Boulevard (\$4,895)  
 11/19 500 Arden Drive (\$11,200)

**ROBBERIES**

11/16 Elevado Avenue/North Rexford Drive  
 11/19 400 North Canon Drive



Cartoon for *The Courier* by Janet Salter



**Astrology**  
 By Holiday Mathis

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 27).** Connecting with your spiritual core, which is infinite and eternal and part of everything, you release the need to prove your status. Being unworried of your standing, you are able to connect with great bounty. You'll make decisions for love in December. February brings beauty and change to your environment. Aquarius and Scorpio adore you.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Henry David Thoreau suggested that a person "beware of all enterprises that require new clothes." What you're planning falls into the category, but all will be well as long as you don't forget the "old you" in the process.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** If you can do it just about as easily as another person could, don't involve the other person. This is a time for reminding everyone just how independent you are. You'll be about as happy as you are self-reliant.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** You're tougher than your circumstances have allowed you to prove. It might help you now to think of yourself as forged titanium, built solid from the ground up—no shortcuts, no alloys.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20).** Your water-sign nature will connect you with a social tide. You might not be sure you like where it's headed, but swimming against it will tire you out. Besides, there's an opportunity here.

**ARIES (Mar. 21-Apr. 19).** As you tend to your life consciously you will be aware of much going on with your subconscious. Your inner world is active and interesting, speaking to you with such clarity that you'll find it extremely hard to ignore.

**TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20).** You won't feel motivated to do today's work, but you'll do it anyway. Sometimes it frustrates you that others don't share your sense of duty, but you can appreciate how this also sets you apart as a leader.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You'll get as much attention as you give. Enjoy this rare moment of perfect mutuality and balanced affections. You can relax into the idea that fair is fair.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** The day will be shaped by the age-old question of what to eat. The same foods can be made in hundreds of ways. There are more than a few people who like the way you make it best!

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** You may feel that agreeing with those around you is part of your job. It certainly is a lot easier than disagreeing, and yet today it won't serve your project to go along when you know there's something wrong in the plan.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** You might be initially stumped by today's relationship problem, but don't give up. What seems difficult will actually be rather simple when you're willing to go at it from another angle.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** There's such a natural, easy pace going with what you're doing now. It's nice when you can make progress without pushing yourself or anyone else. Bonus: You've increased immunity to stress and illness.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Figure out what you want before you start the discussion. People will listen carefully to what you say and take you quite literally. Now is a time to be very careful about how you word things.