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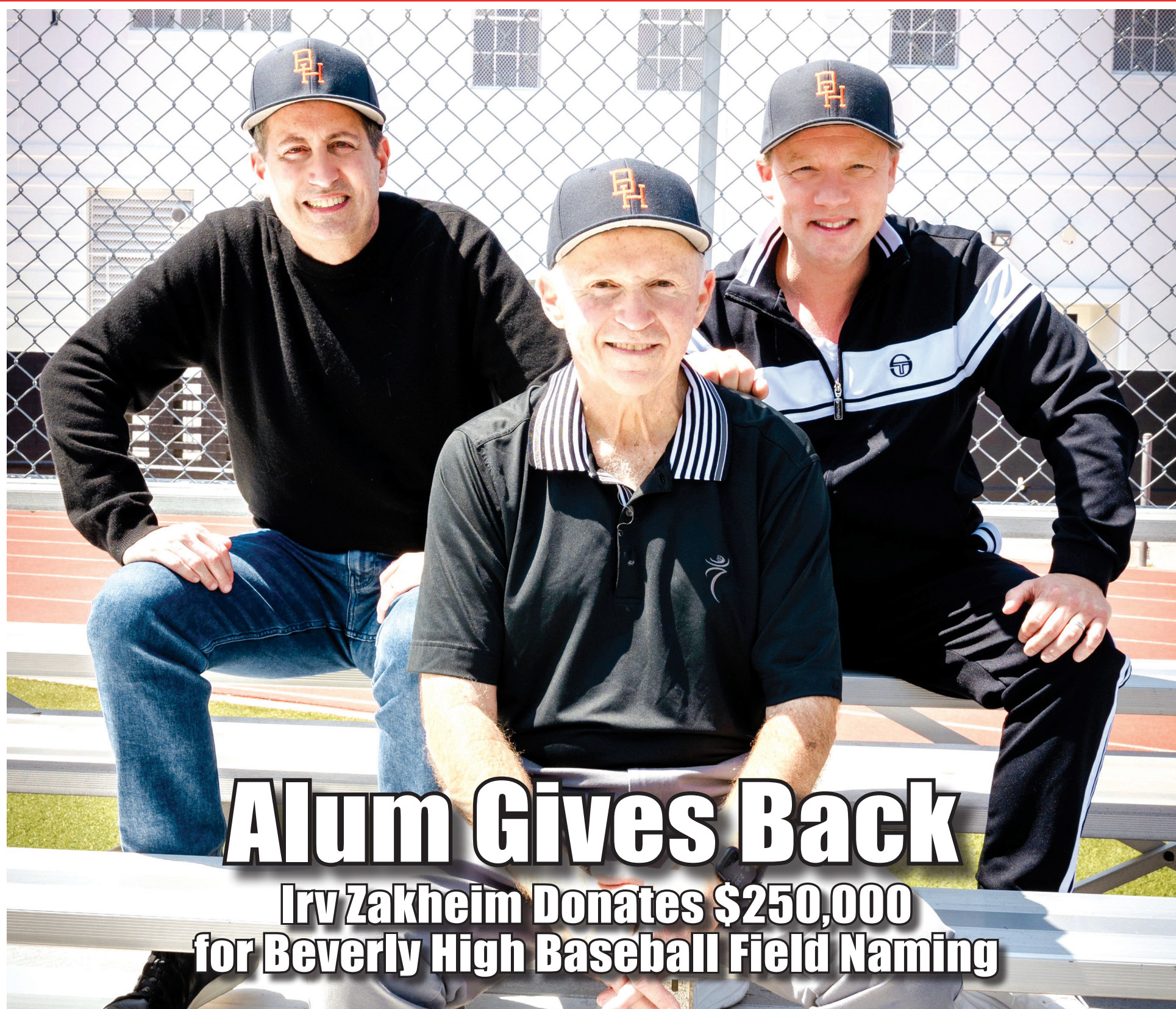
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## Alum Gives Back

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for Beverly High Baseball Field Naming

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# coverstory

## ALUM GIVES BACK

### Irv Zakheim Donates \$250,000 for Beverly High Baseball Field Naming

By Danielle Berjikian

#### How did this donation come about?

**David:** The best part of what BHAAA has done is reengaging with alumni through our Hall of Fame dinner, bringing people back to campus, and reuniting them with their coaches, teammates, and classmates. Irv was honored at our second Hall of Fame class. Clearly from the beginning, Irv's passion for the high school [was very evident with] the time he spent there, and then his interest in continuing to stay engaged and up to date with what we were doing. That was sort of the reintroduction to Irv. Steven Fenton, who founded the organization, does a great job of staying in touch. He's been in touch with Irv over the years [and with] seeing what the organization's done to help the high school, alumni, and graduates, I think that conversation just evolved between the two of them.

**Irv:** It all started with the Beverly Hills Hall of Fame. I moved up to Spokane, Washington 30 years ago. I sort of distanced myself from all my friends and family. I [would] come back to visit but [we] really don't go there that much. When they started this stuff with the Beverly Hills Hall of Fame for the athletic department [they began bringing us all back]. We had the annual dinner and meetings and then we started grouping together. It [brought] us back to the Beverly Hills campus and what it's meant to do is raise money for the Beverly Hills Athletic Department. So with that in mind, everybody that could, would try to get together not only for the Hall of Fame but, [with the idea] 'What can we do to help Beverly Hills Athletics going forward?' That's really how it all started.

**Irv: You graduated in 1967 and you were on the varsity baseball team. Tell us about that.**

I played basketball, baseball, [and] they talked me into football my senior year. I made all CIF my senior year. I think we went to the CIF playoffs for the first time in either a long time or forever. We had a pretty good team all three years I was there, but we had really good competition in our league as well. I think as

far as going to Beverly, Coach Flanagan coached sophomore and junior years. I played three years on our varsity and then our senior year, [former coach and principal] Ben Bushman coached our team. In basketball Coach [Jack] Riley and Coach [Dick] Schreiber were our coaches. As far as the coaching went, we had good teams while I was there and the coaches were good. Crowley retired my junior year and then Bushman came in. He was a football coach and he didn't have that much baseball experience. So the two lead seniors on the team were Ralph Punaro and me. He looked at us a lot to try to help him learn what to do during practices and things like that. But he did a good job and actually for him to even ask, is better than him trying to coach a baseball team with no experience. So it was kind of a weird senior year, but it was actually beneficial for all of us. I think we all learned from each other. After that, I went to LA

City College for two years and played basketball and baseball there. Then after my sophomore year, I transferred over to Cal State Northridge in 1970 and we won the national championship my first year there. After my second year, we lost in the final game of the regionals, which would have put us in the World Series two years in a row. So at the end of that year, I ended up signing a contract with the Chicago White Sox and played two years in the minor leagues for them.

**David: What will this donation be used for?**

We set up an endowment in Irv's name to continue to support everything that the Athletic Association has done, which has really grown and evolved. I think one of the things that Irv got excited about was something we saw during the pandemic, which was BHAAA Assist. [That] has been funding and supporting alumni who are involved in athletics at the high school through these challenging times and paying everything from insurance to rent, to car payments to kind of help them get by. That was during the pandemic, which has been pretty significant and helped us engage with additional



David Corwin, Irv Zakheim, and Steven Fenton

alums. The main purpose of the organization remains, to pay for uniforms and equipment for all the teams at the high school. Being able to add BHAAA Assist has been a really nice way to diversify and help others that have a really tight connection to the high school. Then we have four annual scholarships that go to graduate student athletes. So to be able to help secure the future of the organization and have an endowment in Irv's name that we hope will grow. Just having Irv being more engaged and involved, he is so well connected with people that grew up in the community that want to help. I think it's going to be great and bring more attention to what the organization's doing and the obviously continuous needs of the athletic department. But we've kind of grown and expanded into helping the community in other ways.

**Irv: What made you want to make a donation of this caliber?**

It started out with them wanting to do the baseball field and I asked where it was and all those kinds of questions. Then when it came to, 'How is it going to get funded?' That's when we started talking about it. I said I'd be interested in donating money to help fund this. When it comes to Beverly Hills High School, everybody thinks that we have the best of everything. At the time when I played there, we had probably the worst baseball field not only in our conference but in the city. It was all grass infield at that time and they very rarely mowed it. It was a tough field to play on. You'd think that they would have had something much, much better than we did. We started talking about that and I said, 'Yeah, we've needed a new base-

ball field for a long time.' So that actually got my interest there as well. Even though it's 50-plus years later, it's better late than never that we started providing some of the athletic facilities that our kids are playing on.

**Irv: You currently live in Spokane, Washington. How did you get up there?**

I started Zak Designs in 1976 in LA and my office was in South Central. We did children's dinnerware with Disney characters on it. So Little Mermaid or Pocahontas, all those kinds of things through Disney, Warner Brothers, and Mattel. In 1992 when the Rodney King riots happened, it started in South Central, LA even though it was all over the City. All the buildings around us on Crenshaw and Slauson got burned down. When

that was done, I started thinking about moving [and] my wife is from Spokane. I went to the banks up here and said, 'Here's my bank loan that I have in LA, if you can match it, I'll be looking to move up here.' The bank immediately signed to give me an even better deal. That was in April of 1992 [and] by November, we [had moved] to Spokane.

**Irv: You were inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame with your teammate Ralph Punaro. Tell us about that.**

Ralph and I grew up together on the playground at Beverly Vista. We lived

about a block apart from each other. We always kicked everyone's butt. Ralph and I, through Little League and everything else, always played against each other. So the beauty when we got to high school, we now were teammates and we played together. We were the two short guards. He's 5'6 and I'm 5'9. We were very fast and quick. They called this the dynamic duo. Growing up, everybody knew who we were and we played all sports together. So we both played basketball and baseball. He was a great guy. He passed away having cancer and fought it hard but didn't win that battle.



***"The best part of what BHAAA has done is reengaging with alumni through our Hall of Fame dinner, bringing people back to campus, and reuniting them with their coaches, teammates, and classmates"***

—David Corwin



I miss him every day. Usually, when I came down to LA, he would be one of the first people I would go and see after my mom and sister.

**If another alumnus reading this wants to make a large donation. What should they do?**

**David:** BHEF is sort of the steward for the naming rights within the District. They are actually the right contact. I think there's a specific list of opportunities. We have sort of carved out and developed the naming of a few different athletic facilities which weren't part of that initial list. But I know they're in the midst of putting together some really effective market-

ing tools and a website that has the five campuses that will identify what naming opportunities there are. For those donors who have already been generous enough to have certain facilities named after them and want to participate, we will be able to kind of highlight and learn about those people and their connection to the school. I think it's great and it has been a long time coming. Certainly, if there are any athletic facilities that haven't already been contemplated by the district, we would be glad to talk to them and sort of facilitate something happening. It's been a bit of a process, but we all want to help with the financial stability and add modern amenities to the high school. We

specifically focus on athletics but there are a lot of opportunities there. It would be great to have more engagement from alums like Irv and even current families. So I would encourage that. I think it's a great way to give back, especially to alums, to show your appreciation for what the school district, and the high school in particular, did for us, that we still value.

**Irv:** These things are not built by an individual, it's by many people coming in and helping. So it's a community and Beverly Hills is a wealthy community. It would be nice to see people stepping up to do more. The few people that we do get involved in this are going to see a greater amount of people getting involved and

improving the facilities, not only on the athletic fields, but at the school, making everything better for the kids that are going to school in Beverly Hills.

**David:** I hope they're more proactive about getting some of the plans out there so people can see and know what's being planned. I know there are a lot of steps and things that have to happen and there seems to be a lot of positive momentum. They've already done some work obviously on some of the campuses, but the high school needs it. I think it will be great when it's done and hopefully, there aren't any significant hiccups.

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property located at 227 Tower Drive, at last Thursday's meeting.

The project site currently consists of an existing two-unit multi-family residential building and detached three-car garage. Of the ten units proposed, one unit would be dedicated to a very low-income household.

The current parking restrictions near the project site is as follows: "No parking any time except by permit; and no parking on the east side of Tower Drive, Wednesdays, 8 A.M. to 10 A.M. or on the west side of Tower Drive, Thursdays, 8 A.M. to 10 A.M. for street sweeping."

The Commission was not able to mandate any parking as a condition due to state law prohibiting Cities from imposing any minimum parking requirement on certain residential, commercial, or other development projects that are located within a half mile of a major transit stop.

Since the project will be providing one affordable unit, set aside for a very low income household, the total density bonus to which the applicant is entitled to is 42.5%, resulting in a total of 12 units permitted by density bonus.

### ArtWalk Guided Tours to Take Place Aug. 6

ArtWalk Guided Tours will be continuing on Aug. 6 at 11 am with a new series focusing on the Civic Center Campus Collection of artworks.

This collection will include Center Obelisk by Joan Brown, Home by Charles Arnoldi, Iron Root by Ai Weiwei and El Camino Real by Millard Sheets. This walk also includes a special architectural look at the 360 Crescent Drive building by architect Paul R. Williams.

The ArtWalk meeting point is at the 911 Memorial Garden park on the corner of Burton Way and North Rexford Drive.

Visit <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ejrt22sada5cb51e&oseq=&c=&ch=> to

register.

### Pro-Life Activists Petition Council to Stop Future Late Term Abortion Clinic

Pro-life activists petitioned the City Council in an effort to prevent DuPont Clinic from opening up in Beverly Hills in the fall, at Tuesday's meeting.

DuPont Clinic offers elective abortions during the third trimester through 31 weeks and 6 days gestation.

DuPont Clinic's website states: "If you are 26 weeks or later into your pregnancy, we can still see you, regardless of your medical history, background, or fetal indications. We do not require any particular "reason" to be seen here – if you would like to terminate your pregnancy, we support you in that decision."

According to one activist, this will be the first "at-will" third trimester abortion clinic in the history of Calif.

A petition at [https://www.change.org/p/stop-elective-third-trimester-abortions-in-california?recruiter=1308956987&recruited\\_by\\_id=506e8040-f9fb-11ed-9710-1df4b-9be810a&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=copylink&utm\\_campaign=p petition\\_dashboard](https://www.change.org/p/stop-elective-third-trimester-abortions-in-california?recruiter=1308956987&recruited_by_id=506e8040-f9fb-11ed-9710-1df4b-9be810a&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&utm_campaign=p petition_dashboard) has 663 signatures, as of press time.

[org/p/stop-elective-third-trimester-abortions-in-california?recruiter=1308956987&recruited\\_by\\_id=506e8040-f9fb-11ed-9710-1df4b-9be810a&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=copylink&utm\\_campaign=p petition\\_dashboard](https://www.change.org/p/stop-elective-third-trimester-abortions-in-california?recruiter=1308956987&recruited_by_id=506e8040-f9fb-11ed-9710-1df4b-9be810a&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&utm_campaign=p petition_dashboard) has 663 signatures, as of press time.

### Alligator Beach to Perform Tonight

Alligator Beach, a high energy funky NOLA party band will be performing as part of tonight's Concerts on Canon.

A stylistic mashup of The Meters,



*Councilmember Lili Bosse, Vice Mayor Les Friedman, Vartan and Mayda Kemanjian, Mayor Julian Gold, Councilmember John Mirisch, and Councilmember Sharona Nazarian*

### City Council Recognizes Euro Caffè

Last night, Mayor Julian Gold and the City Council recognized Euro Caffè for the Mayor's 60 Second Shout Out. Euro Caffè has served the community for over 20 years and is known for its Italian coffee, cappuccinos, pastries, made-to-order paninis and salads.



*Alligator Beach*

Tina Turner and Tower of Power, they play New Orleans standards, a handful of originals from their album Throwin' A Party, and popular songs everyone knows with a giant, New Orleans, Alligator Beach twist.

--Briefs compiled by Danielle Berjikian

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