



EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Winter, 2026

BOWLARAMA: The History & Architecture of Mid-century Bowling Alleys

The word “bowlarama” may not be in the English dictionary but we all somehow understand what it means, a period in this country when bowling became the thing to do, a craze that changed our country’s architectural landscape during the middle of the 20th century.

We welcome our formidable guest speaker, Chris Nichols, author of several award-winning books, columnist, editor, and preservationist. He has written the “Ask Chris” column as an associate editor of *LA Magazine* since 2000. He was the former chairman of the Los Angeles Modern Committee of the Los Angeles Conservancy and works to preserve the mid-century architecture of Los Angeles.

In 2024, Angel City Press and the Los Angeles Public Library published *Bowlarama: The Architecture of Mid-Century Bowling Alleys*, an illustrated hardcover book about iconic and exotic bowling centers. More than just a sport or a hobby, bowling became the ultimate modern lifestyle for Americans savoring the boom years that followed World



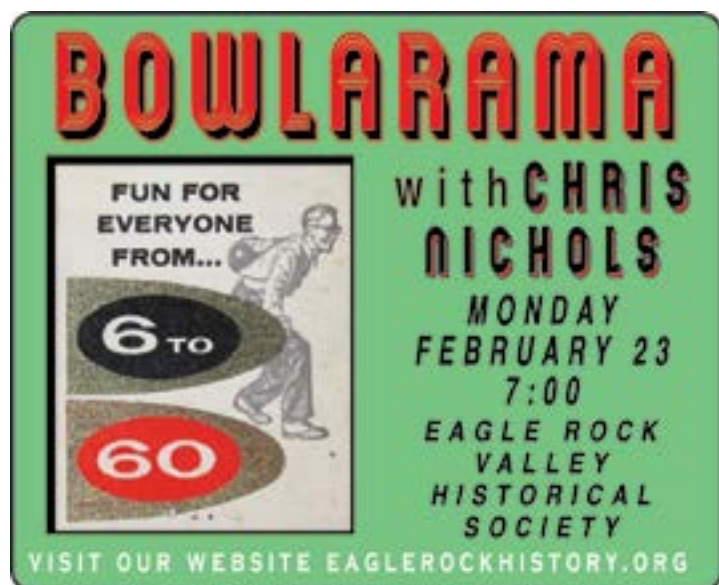
Covina Bowl (1956, Powers, Daley & De Rosa)

War II. Bowlarama highlights these beautiful and unique buildings and their histories, often designed in Modern, Streamline Moderne, and Googie styles showing off their eye-catching architecture to attract patrons. Unfortunately, many of these bowling alleys are no longer standing but their influence and role in American cultural history is celebrated in this book. *Bowlarama* will be available for purchase and signing at this event.

Eagle Rock’s very own bowling alleys fit right into this discussion. Please continue reading this newsletter’s feature stories about those neighborhood haunts! Please JOIN US on Monday, February 23rd @ 7pm Center for the Arts Eagle Rock
2225 Colorado Blvd

This a public program that is FREE and OPEN TO ALL. Hot coffee and homemade refreshments will be served. Street parking only. Please support our organization and spread the word. Come by and meet fellow neighbors, Members, old friends and new. Let’s learn something new together!

SEE YOU ON THE 23rd!



President's Message

Hello Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society members! We truly appreciate your continued support.

As you probably have noticed, despite the extra time and costs we are continuing to mail out black and white physical copies of our quarterly newsletters. Note that while most of the time our historic photos only exist in black and white, some issues feature color photos, as in this issue. To see our newsletters in color, you can download them from our website at <https://www.eaglerockhistory.org/newsletter/> You can also download newsletters back to 2010.

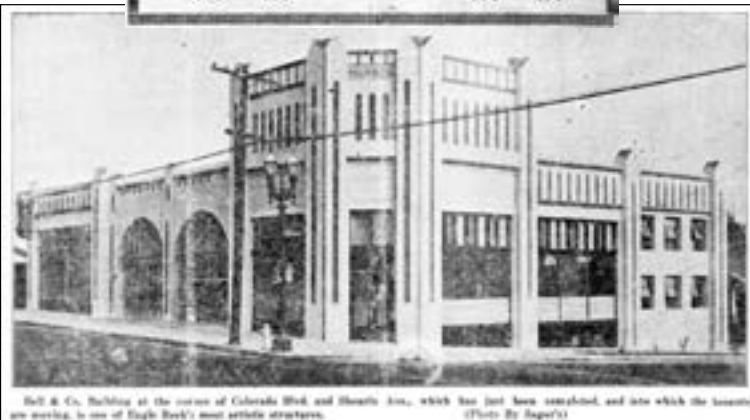
As we look back on the stories that make Eagle Rock such a special place to live, we've got a big milestone on the horizon: the 100th Anniversary of Route 66! Yes, the legendary highway made its way through Eagle Rock for part of the time. As the Eagle Rock alignment (circa 1934-36) was one of many temporary routes used to connect the foothill segment of the route to down-

town Los Angeles, there was probably little opportunity for our merchants to take advantage of the traffic. Little evidence from the period survives. Most of the businesses which catered to the through traffic and which are often cited as "on Route 66" were built after WWII to cater to through traffic on State Route 134.

Accommodations may well have consisted of the tourist camp at Eagle Rock Springs, the Jay Risk Standard Service Station, the now Eagle Rock Muffler Shop and a number of now vanished small gas stations and the Roosevelt Grill, part of the Bell Block, which opened in 1930 at the beginning of the great Depression.

We hope to feature the Jay Risk Station as part of our celebration in November. Permits have recently been issued for its restoration.

-David Dellinger



Photograph and ad.(Eagle Rock Advertiser-Sager's Photo)
Sager's was a long time photo, printing and stationary store in the community.

QR CODE
Scan to access
our website with
your phone.



The objectives of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society

- to preserve, clarify through research and to perpetuate the history of Eagle Rock Valley
- to make this history available to students, researchers, libraries and all interested persons
- to preserve and protect our local landmarks, especially the Eagle Rock

Membership is open to all who would further these objectives

Public Archive Hours 10 to 12 every Saturday
at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock

2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA 90041
for information call 323-257-1357

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The Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society
Editor, Eric Warren

Layout, David Mc Nutt
Contributors, Katie Taylor, David Dellinger

Visit our website at:
eaglerockhistory.org

If your mailing label dates before 2025, it's time to renew your membership. Please take a moment and mail your check now. A dues form and envelope are included with this newsletter.

Thanks, We depend on you

Stars Invest in Eagle Rock Lanes

When Eagle Rock Lanes was built in 1959 at the peak of the bowling fad many of the most prominent television stars of the time invested in the project. According to the Eagle Rock Sentinel; Hugh O' Brian, Dennis Weaver, Amanda Blake, Milburn Stone, Clint Walker, Janis Paige, Pat Conway, Lloyd Nolan, Lloyd Bridges, Nancy Gates, Millie Perkins, Elmer Bernstein and Dean Stockwell all turned out for the opening along with the managers and bankers for the project.

"All 36 bowling lanes, which will be available for public inspection tomorrow night, are backed by the latest in Brunswick automatic pin setting equipment." According to our speaker, Chris Nichols, the postwar development and competition to innovate this equipment and other bowling amenities was one of the drivers of the popular boom in bowling after World War II.

Featured in this comprehensive community-oriented building were; free parking, a coffee shop, banquet

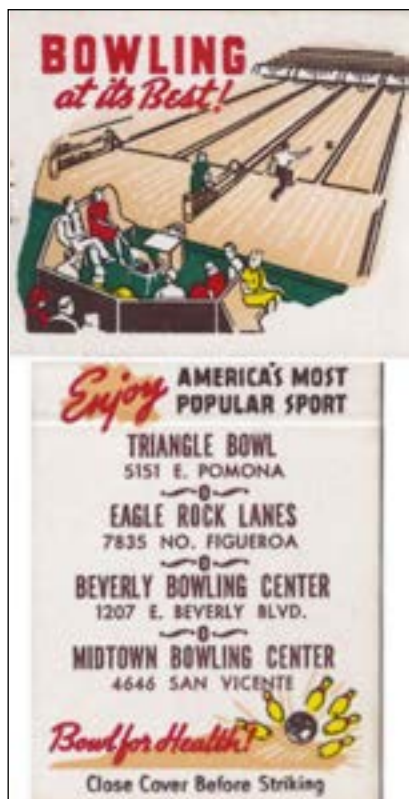


Eagle Rock Lanes opens. (Eagle Rock Sentinel)

room, cocktail lounge, restaurant, billiard room and a nursery where parents may leave small children with trained personnel.

The cocktail lounge was included as an essential feature as drinking had become a much more widespread and socially acceptable phenomenon as a result of the changes brought about by more cosmopolitan American society. Child care allowed women the freedom to bowl and participate in a more open society while nurturing the "Baby Boom" generation. The banquet room accommodated the meetings of the local service clubs and meetings and gatherings of regional business and social organizations. Unfortunately very few photos exist of the building's interior.

In 1987, the building was torn down and replaced by the current Eagle Rock Post office.



This generic matchbook celebrates the role of bowling in postwar life. (Universal Match Corp.-ERVHS)



John Miller photographed the building in 1987 just prior to its demolition. (ERVHS)

Half-Million Dollar All Star Lanes Opens on Eagle Rock Boulevard

"... of contemporary brick design, and will feature air conditioning throughout, coffee shop, banquet room, nursery, locker rooms, billiard room, and cocktail lounge. Other features will include 22 lanes with A.M.F. automatic pinsetters..." (Eagle Rock Sentinel)

Online photos show a facility that attracted a wide-ranging community until fairly recently. The "Red Dragon" a "gourmet" Chinese restaurant occupied the restaurant space and other photos show contests, dancing self help and commercial presentations along with bowling and billiards. Groups, couples and families enjoyed these attractions with people teaching each other and their children how to bowl. Our speaker, Chris Nichols, visited the Lanes a number of times and remains concerned about its fate.



(Ad from All Star Lanes website)



Bowling lanes. (Web photo-Unknown)



Start the ball rolling

At ground breaking ceremonies held this week, Eagle Rock's new bowling alley on Eagle Rock Blvd, got out of the blueprint class, with construction due soon. Ready to roll are: Edwin A. Adams, Eagle Rock Chamber of Commerce president; Henry Kaneko, owner; (back row) Elton Falt, AMF Pinsetters, Inc.; Bill Maynard, contractor and Edwin Arvidson, Continental Bowling.

(Eagle Rock Sentinel)



Exterior in its heyday. (Patch photo web-Unknown)

Our Town, Our History



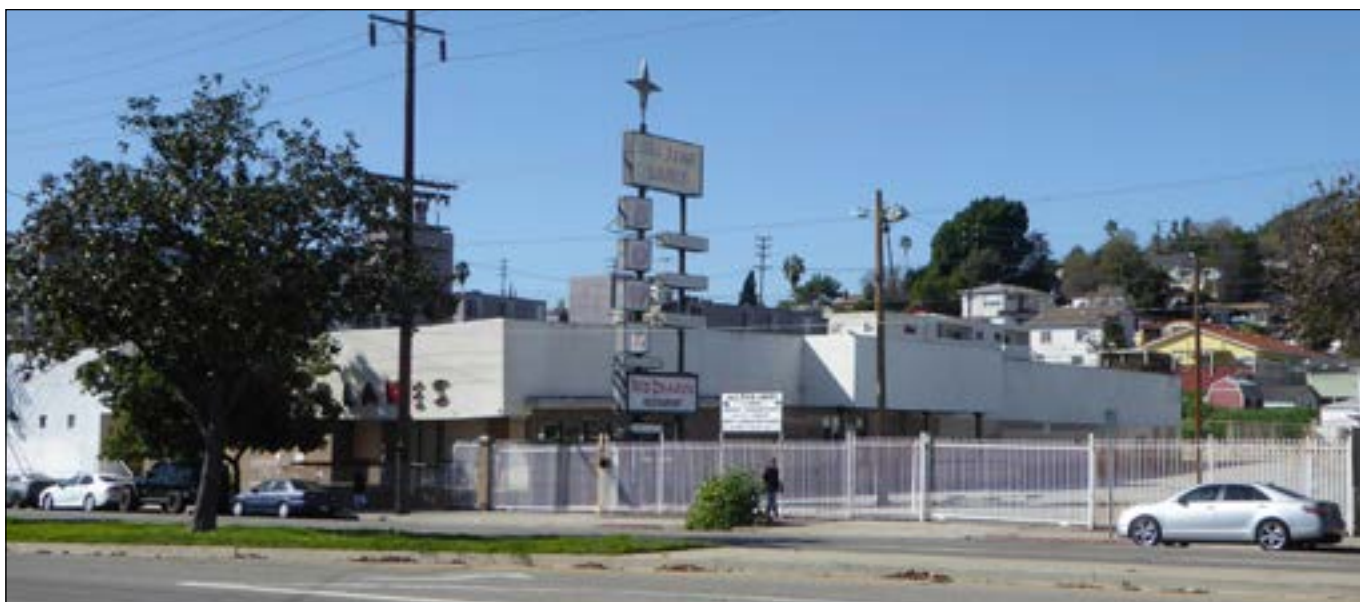
Nighttime sign. (Web photo-Unknown)



Bowling and billiards 1/7/2016. (Web photo-



Restaurant, banquet area 1/10/2016.
(Web photo-Big L.)



All Star Lanes as it appears today. Although the property is well maintained, there is no sign that it will reopen or be otherwise developed 1/29/2025. (ERVHS-Eric Warren)

at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA, 90041
CHRIS NICHOLS, "BOWLARAMA"
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23
2026, 7:00
ALTADENA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
THE PAST AT PRESENT
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 7:00
ICE CREAM SOCIAL
FRIENDSHIP, MUSIC, PRIZES
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 1:00



Member's Corner



Samantha Ochoa

Born in Panorama City, Samantha joked to me that she was a true "valley girl", born, raised, and living through her college years in the San Fernando Valley. Her parents moved to Van Nuys in their youth, met, married and started their family; Samantha was the second child of four. She attended CSUN and majored in Art History. She comes from a family of craftsmen, her father, brother, and husband all are woodworkers. Her appreciation for "old things" started early with family outings to the Gamble House.

She met her husband when they were both employees of Starbucks and moved to Glendale together. After trips to Casa Bianca, they realized Eagle Rock was their hometown match and with a friend moved to Chickasaw Ave in 2007. After years of diligence they found their fixer upper dream home, a 1908 farmhand house. There was a hitch: they didn't get the sale. In 2012 they married and a week before their European honeymoon they got the call that the buyer had pulled out and they could make a bid. They bought their current home while overseas!

Samantha has visited our public archive hours twice now, finding several panoramas from the 1910's of her neighborhood. She became our newest member! Her message: "Be curious, there is so much history and so much we don't know."

I think she might be hooked!

-Katie Taylor

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

E-mail _____

Membership Category:

☐ Individual \$20 ☐ Business \$35 ☐ New
☐ Family \$25 ☐ Life \$300 ☐ Renewal

Will you help with the ongoing activities of the ERVHS ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Archives ☐ Newsletter ☐ Oral history
☐ Meetings ☐ Fundraising ☐ E-mail me
☐ Publicity ☐ Displays to help

Other _____

Clip and mail to : ERVHS

c/o Center for the Arts

2225 Colorado Blvd.

Eagle Rock, CA 90041

Date _____