



# Who Has The Best Decorations? Is It You? Or Your Neighbor?

We'll drive to the nominated addresses in our service area on Monday evening, December 14, between dusk and 9 p.m. Then we'll choose two from each community we serve, Sierra Madre, Arcadia, Pasadena, Altadena, Monrovia and Duarte. Winners will be featured in the special Christmas Edition of the paper, so get up on those rooftops with your Holiday Lights, then send us your, or your neighbors, address! Santa also has something nice for the winners! For more information contact Chris Bertrand or call 626-355-2737.

Where Your Community News Comes First

# Mountain Views News

Sierra Madre      Arcadia      Pasadena      Altadena      Monrovia

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2009

VOLUME 3 NO. 50

## SIERRA MADRE ISSUES YELLOW FLAG WARNING

The City of Sierra Madre has issued a Yellow Flag Alert effective immediately. The County of Los Angeles Public Works Department has issued a Phase 1 Mudflow forecast as of 8:00 AM, Saturday, December 12, 2009.

A Phase 1 indicates that small isolated debris and mudflows are possible at specific locations. Streets may once again be flooded or blocked by debris. Woodland Drive, Skyland Drive, and other streets may be closed due to blockage and cleanup efforts throughout the day and night.

Parking restrictions are in effect in the Upper and Lower Canyon during Yellow or Red Flag alerts. Vehicles may be towed at owner's expense.

The affected streets are: Mount Wilson Trail, Churchill Rd., Skyland Dr., Fern Glen, Fern Dr., Idlehour Ln., Canyon Crest Dr., Orange Dr., Woodland Dr., Brookside Lane, Sunnyside Lane, Yucca Trail, Sturtevant Dr., Elm Ave., and Holly Trail.

Residents in the affected areas are urged to be "set" to leave at a moments notice and may choose to voluntarily evacuate.

## Sierra Madre's Best Buy Good Old Fashioned Service Still Exists

By La Quetta M. Shamblee

Wouldn't it be nice to have a neighborhood pharmacy that would not only fill your prescription, but also, deliver it to your home? If you're like most of us, you've had the experience of juggling errands before the end of a busy day, while trying to coordinate the pick-up of medications from a pharmacy somewhere along your travel route.

Well, if you live or work in or near Sierra Madre, you can breathe a sigh of relief while calling pharmacist, Paul Mansour, owner of Best Buy Drugs at 29 N. Baldwin Avenue. Established in 1910, the legacy and tradition of personal service has been maintained by Mansour, who has owned the pharmacy for the past fifteen years. If you call or visit on Saturdays, pharmacist Martha Spriggs, is waiting to serve you. She is a graduate of USC School of Pharmacy.



prepares compounded (customized) prescriptions. Unlike other retail businesses that are able to shop around for the best wholesale prices to offer a wide price range to the public for the same products, the price for prescription drugs are established by pharmaceutical companies. As a result, customers will pay the same retail prices and insurance co-payments as they will at corporate-owned stores like Walgreens, CVS or Wal-Mart.

Paul Mansour is also a Certified Clinical Nutritionist, with formal training and experience to recommend and prescribe natural and nutritional supplements, including vitamins, herbs and homeopathy. This "fit pharmacist" has loved to ski for thirty years and recently began teaching the sport to his two daughters. He is an advocate for healthy lifestyles and encourages customers to, "Stay healthy, make sure you wash your hands and take a good multiple vitamin as part of your daily routine."

If you drop in to wait for your prescriptions at the pharmacy, you're certain to return to enjoy the warm welcome and personal service. You can also pick up greetings cards, vitamins or a variety of products for other health care needs, including over-the-counter cough and cold products. If you're likely to be stuck in traffic, or simply needing to stay close to the stove to finish dinner, give them a call to fill your prescription and wait for your special delivery. Most major insurance plans accepted.

Best Buy Drugs, 29 North Baldwin Avenue in Sierra Madre, CA 91024 (next to Sierra Juice). Hours are Monday thru Friday, 9am - 6pm, Saturday 9am - 1pm and closed on Sundays. Refills may be ordered through their website. Go to: [www.mybestbuydrugs.com](http://www.mybestbuydrugs.com) or call (626) 355-3456.



Born in Windsor, Canada, Mansour attended Santa Monica College after moving to the Los Angeles area when he was seventeen years old. He also graduated from USC School of Pharmacy in 1991. Seven years ago, he decided to eliminate a lengthy and congested commute from Granada Hills and made Sierra Madre his hometown. A member of the Rotary Club and St. Rita's Church, where his children also attend school, he takes an active role in the community. It's no surprise that he is on a first name basis with many of his customers.

There is no additional charge for the personal attention at Best Buy Drugs. This "old fashioned" pharmacy also

## Settlement Proposed In SMPOA Lawsuit? Agreement Would Admit No Wrongdoing by City

By Susan Henderson

According to sources close to the parties involved with two lawsuits involving the City, SMPD Chief Diaz, the Sierra Madre Police Officers Association and SMPOA President and SMPD Officer John Ellins, an agreement may be reached within days.

The first suit, filed in 2008 by the Association on behalf of its members, alleges that Diaz violated the "individual civil rights and liberties" of 4 to 6 police officers when she conducted a search of their lockers. According to Federal Court documents obtained by the Mountain Views News, at least one of those officers was a member of the SMPOA, John Ellins.

In the answer to the lawsuit filed on behalf of the City and Diaz, it is stated that "probable and reasonable cause existed" at the time of the search and that the City and Diaz were "performing their duties with the discretion vested" and as such are "immune from liability".

The second suit, filed in June 3, 2009, is by SMPOA President John Ellins against the City and Chief Diaz. That suit suggests that Diaz has made comments about "contracting out" due to

lawsuits filed by Ellins and the SMPOA. It also alleges that Diaz has attempted to "muzzle" and "curtail" Ellins and the Associations activities. Further, the suit suggests that Ellins attempt to obtain an Advanced Post Certificate were thwarted by the Chief because of his SMPOA activities and lawsuits.

The City and Diaz in their answer to the allegations unequivocally deny the claims. According to court records, Diaz "did not deliberately and intentionally violate" Ellins rights in any way.

Diaz, as the head of the Department has addressed the City Council on numerous occasions regarding the subject of contracting out city services. When interviewed, Diaz expressed no preference, neither pro nor con, on the contracting out of police services.

Should a settlement be reached, it would probably be the most cost effective way of settling the matters said one local attorney not involved in the matters. The legal fees to defend the City and Chief Diaz would probably exceed considerably the cost of settling. If an agreement is reached, it is not likely that the city will admit to any wrongdoing in either lawsuit.

## Marketing Research Firm Targets Residents

Residents of Sierra Madre have recently recieved calls from a marketing research firm soliciting opinions on Parcel Assessment Taxes. After receiving calls from several residents, the Mountain Views News

learned that the company, Mountain West Research Center, is gathering information that may be used to support a parcel tax for the Pasadena Unified School District, of which Sierra Madre is a part.

## Waste Less Living Gets Top Honor

Waste Less Living, Inc., a local, woman-owned business was one of five recipients to receive the Outstanding Recycler Award for 2009 presented by the City of Pasadena's Mayor Bill Boggard and Martin Pastucha Director of Public Works recently. Waste Less Living was specifically honored for its educational outreach efforts at inspiring environmental stewardship.

The business was nominated by last year's award recipient Miranda Marie Allen, a 7th grader at Pasadena Christian School and her mother Stella Franco-Allen. "We believe that in addition to offering compostable products and off-site compost management services, it is the educational component offered by Waste Less Living that sets this company apart," wrote Allen and Franco-Allen.

In the fall, Waste Less Living launched its first comprehensive compost waste management program at High Point Academy School in Pasadena. To date, the school has achieved a waste diversion rate of 76% with over 3,000 lbs of waste diverted from the landfill and composted off-site. "We are thrilled about the results we have achieved thus far and even more excited about bringing this program to other schools in the area so that we can continue to divert even more waste," said Christine Lenches-Hinkel, Founder of Waste Less Living, Inc.

Since its inception, Waste Less



Living has diverted over 10,000 lbs of waste from reaching the landfill. From servicing small parties to large events in the thousands, their service has now caught the attention of such distinguished organizations like the Pasadena Tournament of Roses, the International Documentary Association, the Pasadena Audubon Society and the Sierra Madre Kiwanis Club.

With at least 66% of the waste stream characterized as compostable/biodegradable waste, sending such material to the landfill is counter-productive and not so environmentally responsible. "Since landfills are not compost piles, what compostable materials discarded in landfills merely add to the toxic byproducts that are typically associated with these facilities, namely methane gas and leachate - a toxic wastewater," said Lenches-Hinkel.

### SIERRA MADRE CHRISTMAS TREE COMPANY

283 W Sierra Madre Blvd. in Sierra Madre  
(next to Arnolds Hardware)

**Fresh Cut Noble & Douglas Fir Trees**  
**All sizes 2 feet and up**

**Stands and Delivery Available**

Guaranteed to be more fun than Home Depot!

Bring this ad and get **10% off** any tree purchase.

**Grand Opening December 1st**  
**until the trees run out!**

Sierra Madre Christmas Tree Company is locally owned and operated by the Moran, Alden and Heydorff families.

## Eminent Domain Ballot Measure Unites Council

The Sierra Madre City Council voted unanimously to put a measure on the April ballot that would prohibit the city from participating in the taking of private property for the use of another private person or entity.

The measure, which will also be brought to the council as an Ordinance at the beginning of the year, is being put forth to protect residents from situations that have occurred in other parts of the state and country, where city officials have opted to have commercial development rather than protect individual property owner's rights.

Although the city's Redevelopment Agency has adopted a policy prohibiting such practices, according to Councilman Joe Mosca, "We just want to put a more substantive measure in place that would prevent a future council from changing the Redevelopment Agency's policy."

The measure will be on the April municipal election ballot. Seats currently held by Councilmen Watts, Zimmerman and Mosca will also be on the ballot in April.

Staff/MVNews

## Happy Hanukkah



**SANTA'S COMING!**  
"I'll be here on Christmas Eve to see the boys & girls in Sierra Madre. See you at the Fire Station at 5 pm"

## SIERRA MADRE'S FARMERS MARKET!

Wednesday 3-7: 00 pm

Fresh vegetables and seasonal fruits from California family farms. Specialty foods, vegetarian and vegan dishes, ethnic foods and hot food - Everything you'll find at the farmers market has been made or picked fresh, is pesticide-free and preservative-free. Free public parking on Mariposa.

## Singing In The Holidays!



Students from Sierra Madre School Lower Campus, sang with pride Holiday songs representing Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwaanza during their morning assembly. Pictured above are the 2nd grade students.

New Japanese erasers have arrived!

Drop off a "toys for tots" donation!

I'm getting my latte at Niko's!

**Niko & friends**  
Coffee

900 Valley View Ave ~ Corner of N. Michillinda and W Montecito ~ Phone: 626-510-6151 ~ Open: Mon 7 to 6, Sat 8:30 to 1:30

Read The Paper Online At: [www.mtnviewsnews.com](http://www.mtnviewsnews.com)



## Weather Wise



## 5-Day Forecast

## Sierra Madre, Ca.

**Mon:** Sunny Hi 60s Lows 40s  
**Tues:** Sunny H 60s Lows 40s  
**Wed:** Sunny Hi 60s Lows 40s  
**Thur:** Sunny Hi 60s Lows 40s  
**Fri:** Sunny Hi 60s Lows 40s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service

## RAFFLE

## SIERRA MADRE ROSE FLOAT ASSOCIATION

SEE THE 2010 ROSE PARADE IN PERSON!



TWO FRONT ROW GRANDSTAND TICKETS  
ON ORANGE GROVE BLVD.

PARKING INCLUDED

TICKETS:

\$ 1.00 each 6 for \$ 5.00

DRAWING TO BE HELD FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>

at the Rose Float Barn

Winner need not be present

Donated by Sharp Seating

## BARGAIN BOOK TABLE SALE AT SIERRA MADRE LIBRARY

The Friends of the Sierra Madre Library will have a Bargain Book Table Sale inside the Library, Monday, December 14 through Saturday, December 19, during the Library's public open hours. Featured topics will include Fiction, Politics, Military, Current Affairs, Biographies, Health, and Family. All books are in good condition and will be sold at the bargain price of \$1.00 each. These every-other-month book sales provide funding for Library resources and programs. The Sierra Madre Public Library, located at 440 West Sierra Madre Boulevard in Sierra Madre, is open Monday through Wednesday from Noon to 9 p.m., Thursday and Friday from Noon to 6 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For information on all our Library activities and services, please call (626) 355-7186, or visit our website at [www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us](http://www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us).

SIERRA MADRE PLAYHOUSE  
NOV 27 - DEC 20

THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER!

BY BARBARA ROBINSON

DIRECTED BY STAN KELLY

PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE:

[WWW.SIERRAMADREPLAYHOUSE.ORG](http://WWW.SIERRAMADREPLAYHOUSE.ORG)

## ARCADIA'S Winter Wonderland

Get ready for winter with this Saturday story-time on December 19 at 2:30 p.m., featuring stories about cold weather, winter holidays, and snow. Children ages 5-14 can also create a holiday snow-man to decorate and take home. No registration required.

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Holidays!

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December 31

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Live from Burger Continental  
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535 So. Lake Ave. Pasadena (626) 792 - 6634  
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Hard-hitting, High impact sports talk radio  
KSHP Las Vegas - 1400 AM

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December Sierra Madre					4	5 Sierra Madre Little League Registration
6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8 City Council Meeting	9 Arts Commission Meeting	10 Barks and Books	11	12 Arts Commission Excursion First day of Hanukkah
13	14	15	16	17 Third Thursday Book Club Planning Commission Meeting	18	19 Last day of Hanukkah
20 Community Services Commission Meeting	21 City Council Meeting	22 Library Board of Trustees Meeting Tree Advisory Commission Meeting	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 First day of Kwanzaa
27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December Arcadia					4	5 Breakfast with Santa Holiday Decoration Award Judging
6 Holiday Decoration Award Judging	7 Holiday Decoration Award Judging Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8 Holiday Decoration Award Judging Senior's Holiday Breakfast Planning Commission Meeting	9 Recreation Commission Meeting Foreign Film Evenings	10	11	12 Brag About Your Bag First day of Hanukkah
13	14 Special Teen Program	15 City Council Meeting	16 Santa Squad Visits Tonight	17 Teen Movie Matinees	18	19 Barks & Books Family Fun Days Winter Wonderland Last day of Hanukkah
20	21 Winter Solstice	22 Modification Committee Meeting Teen Zone Planning Commission Meeting	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 First day of Kwanzaa
27	28	29 Teen Zone	30	31 New Year's Eve		

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December Monrovia					4	5 Holidays in Old Town Starts How to Thrive (Not Just Survive) During Changing Times
6 Golden Age Club	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8 Time for Two's Santa Visit Community Services Commission	9 Munchkin Visit Santa Planning Commission School Board	10 Blue Star Families	11 Family Festival	12 First day of Hanukkah
13 Santa Tours Monrovia Starts	14	15 Teen Gift Workshop	16 Youth Commission	17 Monrovia Historic Preservation Group	18 Family Festival Santa Tours Monrovia Ends	19 Last day of Hanukkah
20 Golden Age Club	21 Winter Solstice	22	23 Historic Preservation Commission	24 Blue Star Families Library Board	25 Christmas Day	26 First day of Kwanzaa
27 Golden Age Club	28	29	30	31 Holidays in Old Town Ends New Year's Eve		

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December Duarte					4	5 Moonlight Basketball
6 Mayor's Youth Council Meeting	7 City Council Meeting Greeting Card Workshop	8 CDBG Advisory Committee Meeting	9 Santa Visits Beardslee Park	10	11	12 Moonlight Basketball First day of Hanukkah
13 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting	14	15 Public Safety Commission Meeting Call Santa	16	17	18	19 Moonlight Basketball Last day of Hanukkah
20 Planning Commission Meeting Youth and Family Master Plan Advisory Committee Winter Solstice	21 City Council Meeting	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Moonlight Basketball First day of Kwanzaa
27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		

MONROVIA'S ROSE LEAF RAGTIME CLUB, will convene on Sunday, December 27, 2009 at the Aztec Hotel's Mayan Restaurant from 2:00 to 5:00 PM.

The Aztec Hotel, a marvelous historic building built in 1925, is located at 311 W. Foothill Boulevard in Monrovia, 3½ blocks west of Myrtle. Plenty of free parking at the west side of the hotel. Suggested donation -- \$2.00 (performers are not asked to donate). Ragtime and related types of music, classic and contemporary, played on one or two upright pianos, as well as on other instruments. Attendees are encouraged to support the hotel (which does not charge the club) by partaking of the reasonable all-you-can-eat buffet. Beverages including beer and wine are available for purchase. Performers, listeners and dancers (there's a small dance floor) are always welcome. *Call Hal Leavens (626) 359-8648 or Ron Ross (818) 766-2384*

*Margit Holakoui*  
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*Beautifully Decorated  
24" Fresh Wreaths  
\$35.00 plus tax  
(includes free 10 mile delivery)*

1012 NORTHVIEW AVE.  
ARCADIA, CA 91006  
(We are located behind Yoga Madre)



## Duarte



Duarte Mayor Margaret Finlay, holding grandchildren Gavin and Brielle, is aglow after ceremoniously lighting the City's official Christmas tree, a 38 foot high living Redwood, assisted by Santa and Mrs. Claus and young dancer, Rosanna Rico. More than 200 residents turned out to celebrate the annual tree lighting and fiesta at the Duarte Community Center that included musical entertainment provided by the City of Hope singers and folklorico dancers.

## Arcadia

### Establishing A Tradition: Local Group's 22nd Trip to The Union Rescue Mission

On Monday December 14<sup>th</sup>, Dean Griffith and a group of real estate agents from Coldwell Banker's Arcadia Regional Office will make their annual holiday trip to the Los Angeles Union Rescue Mission. Dean and his fellow agents are collecting clothes, blankets, toys, and any cash or checks that you would like to donate to the mission. Last year they collected 5 truckloads of clothing & blankets and \$2500 in cash donations for the mission.

The annual "Trip to the Mission" was started 22 years ago by Bruce Pfeiffer, an agent in Coldwell Banker's Arcadia Regional Office. After 20 years of leading the trip to the mission, Bruce handed over his duties to Dean for the first time last year. The Union Rescue Mission's efforts are focused on reducing homelessness throughout LA County and specifically Skid Row. Currently, Los Angeles County has 3% of the nation's total population, but 10% of its homeless population.

Coldwell Banker's Arcadia Regional Office is located at 15 E Foothill Blvd in Arcadia and you can bring your donations into the office until Monday December 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am. If you need assistance or would like your donations to be picked up you can contact Dean Griffith at (626) 664-9163.



## Around Monrovia

by Pat Ostrye

### Recession In Action, Yet

I have finished my Christmas shopping, all accomplished in Monrovia, thanks to the really fantastic Kohl's. However, I wonder if any of the stores can possibly break even this year. One thing we do realize is that mark-ups over the past ten years at least have been ridiculous. Just one example from Kohl's: I made a purchase from the toy department, totaling \$25 plus tax, which ultimately, with three different discounts, cost me \$2.22. Everywhere, in every dept., 60%, 75% off. Even Smart and Final has 50% off on many items. Which reminded me of a column I wrote for this newspaper on January 31st, 2009 and am now repeating because it would be just as timely today!

"Last February President W. Bush said that we might be experiencing some "slow growth" but no recession, Alan Greenspan following up on 60 Minutes with, "well, we didn't have a recession after all!". At that time I ventured to say that what was happening would be much worse than the Great Depression because the country was dealing in millions and trillions instead of thousands. . . During this financial meltdown, everyone's fears are coming true a day at a time. So far we haven't seen anyone jumping from office windows, but there have been horror stories of quiet suburban suicides here and there on the back pages of newspapers.

Last week (remember this was a year ago) I witnessed the stark reality of the meltdown as I made a visit to the AMVETS super thrift store in Azusa. . . I could not believe the throngs of people, surely a sign of the times! To start with, every car had to wait until another pulled out to get a parking space. The place amounts to being one huge department store rolled over an unbelievable warehouse floor. Positively everything one needs or wants is available at lower than bargain prices.

The first rack visible as my sister and I entered, was lined with the most beautiful, beaded wedding gowns from \$26.95 to \$59. There are unlimited quantities of clothes and shoes out there for every age group at almost nothing in price. The toy department is breathtaking, also the furniture area. I spotted two really solid maple dining chairs for \$3.95/ea and an octagonal maple coffee table for \$9.95. . . People have two and three heaped baskets as they make their way to the well-organized check-out. I bought 2 gorgeous large dolls with full heads of hair, China faces, eyes that opened and closed and beautifully clothed from head to shoes and stockings. They must have been for display purposes, each one \$2.95. My three-old granddaughter will be in seventh heaven, one at a time!

Bottom line, literally, the entire nation is out to save every nickel while trying to cope with this "slow growth" recession and hopefully save their homes." Back to now, unemployment is at 10.2%, how will the country survive?!! postrye@netzero.com

## Monrovia

### Monrovia's Y.E.S. Program Collaboration for Youth Employment Honored with Golden Bell and CCS Partnership Awards

Bells are ringing in Monrovia for the highly successful collaboration between the Santa Anita Family YMCA, Monrovia School District, City of Monrovia, and Monrovia Chamber of Commerce that is the Youth Employment Service (Y.E.S.) program.

The Y.E.S. summer internship program that gives at-risk students practical job skills and experience and provides the mentoring and incentives they need to stay in school and succeed, was honored last week with two prestigious statewide awards.

The Y.E.S. program was presented with a Golden Bell Award in the category of "Partnerships and Collaboratives" from the California School Board Association at the organization's Annual Education Conference at the San Diego Convention Center. M.U.S.D. School Superintendent, Linda Wagner, Mayor Mary Ann Lutz, and Santa Anita Family YMCA Chief Executive Officer, Damon Colaluca, were among community officials on hand to accept the award.

On the same evening, the Y.E.S. program also received the 2009 "Cities, Counties, and Schools Partnership Award" which recognizes excellence in building communities through collaboration. The award is presented by the CCS Partnership, a joint effort of the League of California Cities, California State Association of Counties and California School Board Association.

"It is very exciting to have the Y.E.S. program singled out as a shining example of what a community can accomplish when it works together to help youth succeed," said Colaluca. We are very proud of the collaboration that has made it possible to positively impact the lives of some 70 students who have benefited from the program since its inception in 2007," he said.

The school district provides students with counseling and training assistance. The SAFYMCA handles the employment skills portion of the program and some of the job placement. The City of Monrovia provides the majority of the jobs that have students working and earning wages for nine weeks during the summer. The Monrovia Chamber of Commerce partners in the program by coordinating speakers from the business community and providing participants with future job referrals.

To participate, students are required to attend an orientation meeting with their parents, participate in a Job-College-Life seminar, file applications and pass both an oral interview and physical exam. Once accepted in the program, participants meet weekly with a program mentor to discuss topics related to workplace behavior, appropriate dress and community tools and techniques. At the end of each workweek, they meet again to discuss how they were able to apply the techniques.



Standing with a Golden Bell from the California School Boards Association, and the 2009 Cities, Counties Schools Partnership Award are, from left: School Board member Chris Rich; SAFYMCA Chief Executive Officer, Damon Colaluca; City Council Member Becky Shevlin; School Board Member, Alex Zucco; Board Clerk, Clare Chesley; Mayor Mary Ann Lutz; Council Member Clarence Shaw; Board Member, Ed Gilliland; School Board President, Bryan Wong; Board Student Representative, Pedro Almaraz; and M.U.S.D. Superintendent, Linda Wagner.

### Celebrate Advent and Christmas with St. Rita's!

*All are welcome...*  
to take a little time from our harried shopping and back-to-back holiday parties to rejuvenate our spirits in the true meaning of Advent and Christmas!



#### Advent Concert of Lessons & Carols

**The Community Chorus of Redlands:** Back by popular demand! This 80 member chorus, which has toured extensively, will perform their moving choral and instrumental music, with seasonal anthems, readings and carols, joined this year by Ensemble XXI, a camerata of 20 voices. Director Jeffrey Rickard, longtime choral director at University of Redlands, grew up here in Sierra Madre, and was Ascension Episcopal Church organist during the 1960's. **Sunday, Dec. 13, 5 pm.** Freewill offering benefits the chorus. St. Rita Church

#### 8th Annual Men's Club Pancake Breakfast and Visit With Santa:

A Sierra Madre holiday tradition! Pancakes, eggs, sausage, juice, milk and coffee breakfast followed by a low key visit with Santa for the little ones. **Sunday, Dec. 13, 8 am-Noon.** Tickets at the door: Adults \$10, Children 6-13 \$5, Under 6 Free. Discounted presale tickets available before Dec. 11. *O'Malley Hall, lower level of St. Rita Church*



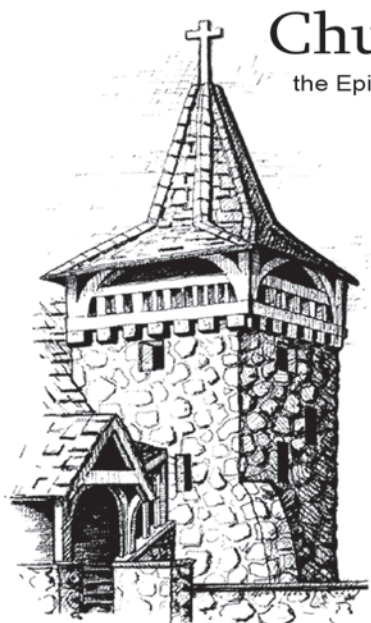
**Christmas Pageant:** St. Rita School presents their annual, all-school musical production plus a beautiful, live "tableau" presentation of the Nativity. **Thursday, Dec. 17, 6 pm.** All ages are welcome. No charge. St. Rita Church

**Candlelight Walk and Christmas Caroling:** A special Sierra Madre community tradition! Bundle up, bring a sturdy candle in a cup, and meet on the steps of St. Rita's. The group gets larger block by block as hundreds carol down Baldwin. At Kersting Court's Nativity scene, readings and more carols conclude this wonderful evening! **Sunday, Dec. 20, 6:45-8 pm.** Meet on St. Rita Church steps.



**Christmas Eve: 4 pm** Children's Mass. Families invited to bring an unwrapped children's gift donation. **Christmas Eve: 10 pm** Carols and meditations followed by 10:30 pm Vigil Mass with Full Choir and Brass **Christmas Day: 8:30 am and Noon Masses**

**For more information, call 626-355-1292 or visit our website: www.St-Rita.org!**



## Church of the Ascension

the Episcopal church in Sierra Madre--Your Village Church.

*A place to meet God and your neighbors*

### Schedule for the Season

Opportunities for Confession: By appointment.  
The Third Sunday of Advent, December 13th:  
Eucharist 8:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 20th:  
Eucharist 8:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.  
Candlelight Walk 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24th:  
Family Service (with a Pageant) 5:00 p.m.  
Hymns and Carols 10:30 p.m.

Solemn Christ Mass (Rite I) 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day, Friday, December 25th:  
Eucharist 11:00 a.m.

First Sunday after Christmas, Dec. 27th:  
Eucharist 8:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.

Second Sunday after Christmas, January 3rd:  
Eucharist 8:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.

The Epiphany, Wednesday, January 6th:  
Eucharist 6:00 p.m.

Corner of Baldwin and Laurel  
(626) 355-1133 \* [ascension-sierramadre.com](http://ascension-sierramadre.com)

### Alverno's Candlelight Celebration December 16 at 7 pm

Don't miss one of Sierra Madre's favorite Christmas traditions, as Alverno High School's beautiful Candlelight Celebration leads you through a live reenactment of the story of Christmas from the Annunciation to the birth of Jesus.

The lovely candlelight procession begins at 7pm and includes Christmas carols and live tableaux. A festive Christmas reception with music and refreshments will follow.



Put on your coziest winter outfit and join us on December 16 at 7 pm for what is sure to become one of your favorite Christmas traditions. Alverno High School is located at 200 N. Michillinda Ave. in Sierra Madre. The Candlelight Celebration is free and all are welcome.

### "Geography of Hope"



Some things take time, like obtaining an education or becoming wise. We may prefer more immediate rewards. During Advent, Christians remember that waiting is essential because God's transformations take time. The hope of faith even goes beyond the possibilities inherent in the situation. If you're looking for something you haven't yet found, maybe it's time to exchange the

immediate for something more lasting. The best things in life take time.

#### 9:15 am Traditional Worship

Choir, youth worship, Sunday school (K-5), childcare provided

#### 10:30 am Adult Spiritual Formation

11:15 am "The Gathering" worship service  
Casual worship, multi-voice ensemble, childcare provided

#### San Marino Community Church

1750 Virginia Road, San Marino, CA 91108

For more information call: (626) 282-4181

connect with us online: [www.smccpbpy.com](http://www.smccpbpy.com)



# Mountain Views News Pasadena Altadena

News Form Your Community For Your Community

## PCC Trustees Elect 2010 Board Officers

The Pasadena Area Community College District (PACCD) Board of Trustees held its annual organization meeting on Dec. 9 to elect officers for the 2010 calendar year and to welcome newly elected board members.

Dr. Hilary Bradbury-Huang, who represents South Pasadena, San Marino, and a portion of Temple City (Area 5), was elected board president. She succeeds Dr. Jeannette Mann, 2009 president and Northeast Pasadena, Northeast Altadena, and Sierra Madre (Area 2) Trustee. Bradbury-Huang has been a member of the PACCD since 2005. By profession, she is a research professor at USC and the director of sustainable business research at the Center for Sustainable Cities. She is also the founder and principal of ARSECC.net, a non-profit organization that helps community activists utilize social science research. Her work focuses on the human and organizational aspects of sustainable development.

William Thomson, who largely represents Pasadena (Area 4), was elected board vice president. Geoffrey Baum, who represents the city of La Cañada Flintridge, the west Pasadena neighborhoods of San Rafael and Linda Vista, and the western portions of Altadena (Area 1), was elected board clerk. Pasadena City College President, Dr. Lisa Sugimoto, was elected board secretary. The board also welcomed Area 3 representative Berlinda Brown and Area 6 representative Dr. Anthony R. Fellow.

Brown will now represent Northwest Pasadena. An immigrant from Costa Rica, Brown first mastered English at Pasadena City College by attending night classes. She later earned an associate in arts degree at East Los Angeles College.

Fellow will represent the city of Arcadia. He is chair of the Cal State Fullerton (CSUF) Department of Communications, the third largest department of its kind in the United States.

The board also voted to keep the day and time of regular board meetings to the first and third Wednesday of the month, with open sessions beginning at 7 p.m.



## Castle Green Tour Celebrates the Holidays

Story/photo by Dean Lee

Critically acclaimed actor Martin Sheen could be found Sunday among hundreds of people moseying though the 111-tear-old Castle Green as part of the historic landmark's holiday tour. Sheen welcomed visitors as they entered Ramón Estévez, his son's, residence.

Sheen said Estévez had been living at the castle for less than a year. He also said this was the first time he had seen the tour. "This place really is something," he said. Sheen is no stranger to Pasadena having filmed many movies and TV shows in the city including "The West Wing" in which he plays the President of the Untied

States. The Castle itself is also on stranger to TV and film.

The castle opens its doors twice a year showing off one of the oldest standing historic landmarks in Los Angeles County. Self guided tours started at the top of the Spanish and Moorish style complex working down to the first floor.

At the top, visitors got a 360 degree view of Pasadena from the roof garden. Mt. Wilson could also be seen to the north.

A 12-foot Scotch pine and holiday music welcomed visitors as they toured the Grand Salon. Visitors also saw the Moorish and Turkish Rooms, the Palm Room, Sunroom and Veranda.

Many of the over 20

apartments open to the public were decorated for the holidays. One residents told guests it takes a different kind of person to want live there but said he would not trade it for anything with the hand carved fireplace mantles, grills and wood moldings, balconies, plus various sizes and shapes of windows.

The semi-annual tours of the Castle Green are organized by volunteer members of the nonprofit support arm, Friends of the Castle Green, whose mission is to provide and implement restoration to the building. All funds raised through the tours and merchandise sales are dedicated to the preservation of this landmark building.

## Police Respond to OIR report on Shooting

During a presentation Monday night to the city's Public Safety Committee, acting Police Chief Vicino Christopher disagreed with some of the recommendations made by the Office of Independent Review including that officers should have used felony traffic stop procedures during the incident of Leroy Barnes in February.

"This is an opinion by OIR and I respect it," Christopher said about using a felony stop. "But I think this would be problematic if we asked officers to do this."

He then explained, "A felony stop would entail three or four more police cars, guns drawn and everyone told to lie in the street."

The recommendation was made with the idea that

officers lost site of the suspect, Christopher said, added that officers saw Barnes duck down in the back seat of the car.

"Each officer should be able to independently assess that," he said. "The suggestion by OIR is that there is a cookie cutter approach to these incidents."

Of the 14 recommendations made, Christopher said 12 have already been incorporated including using better communication to the public and media. He said during an incident they would give out information every four hours allowing them to vet it first.

Do to time the Safety Committee was not able to respond to the report voting to continue the subject in a special meeting Dec. 21.

## Richard Bruckner Approved by Board of Supervisors

Richard Bruckner, director of the Pasadena Planning and Development Department, was approved yesterday by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor to become the county's planning director effective Feb. 1.

"It has been an honor to serve the Pasadena community for the past 10 years," he said. "I am continuously impressed with the commitment of city staff, elected officials, appointed commissioners and local leaders to the betterment of this community."

Bruckner has been with the city of Pasadena since July 1999. He previously was deputy executive director of the Anaheim Community Development Department and principal planner of the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency.

"Under Richard Bruckner's leadership the number of historic districts in Pasadena has doubled, the Green City Action Plan has been adopted and many other accomplishments have been achieved," said City Manager Michael J. Beck. "It is with mixed emotions that I congratulate him on this



Richard Bruckner

promotional opportunity. He will be missed in Pasadena."

Additional accomplishments include adoption of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, completion of Paseo Colorado including restructuring of finances, revision of the Pasadena Zoning Code, establishment of three property-based business improvement districts, updating several specific plans, preparing the Central District Specific Plan and acquiring Annandale Canyon. Many of the department's accomplishments have been recognized with national, state and regional awards.

## Let the Season Begin

Everybody counted, four, three, two one. Then without so much as a flinch, Mayor Bill Bogaard threw the switch lighting the 20-foot Washington Noble Fir officially kicking off the Pasadena holiday season. The McKinley After-School Performing Choir, under the direction of Robin Turrentine, sang songs of the season.

It all happened Tuesday night at the grand entrance of City Hall.



Public information officer, Ann Erdman said all the colored lights were energy-saving, light-emitting diodes (LED) that use about 90 percent less energy than incandescent tree lights. They also do not produce any heat she said. The tree was



put up and decorated by the Pasadena Public Works. The LEDs were donated by Pasadena Water and Power Erdman explained.

Pasadena Fire was also on hand promoting the Spark of Love Toy Drive. Officials said everyone can still bring new, unwrapped toys, sporting equipment or gift cards to any fire house through Dec. 24. All the gifts will be distributed to needy children and teens they said.

For more information call (626) 744-4755.

## Pet of the Week



Shadow, a lovely, two year old cat is such a sweetheart! She loves to be held and is always there to greet you at the front of her kennel. Shadow would make a wonderful companion for someone in an apartment or condo that allows pets. Come visit her today!

The regular dog adoption fee is \$120, which includes medical care prior to adoption, spaying or neutering, vaccinations, and a follow-up visit with a participating vet.

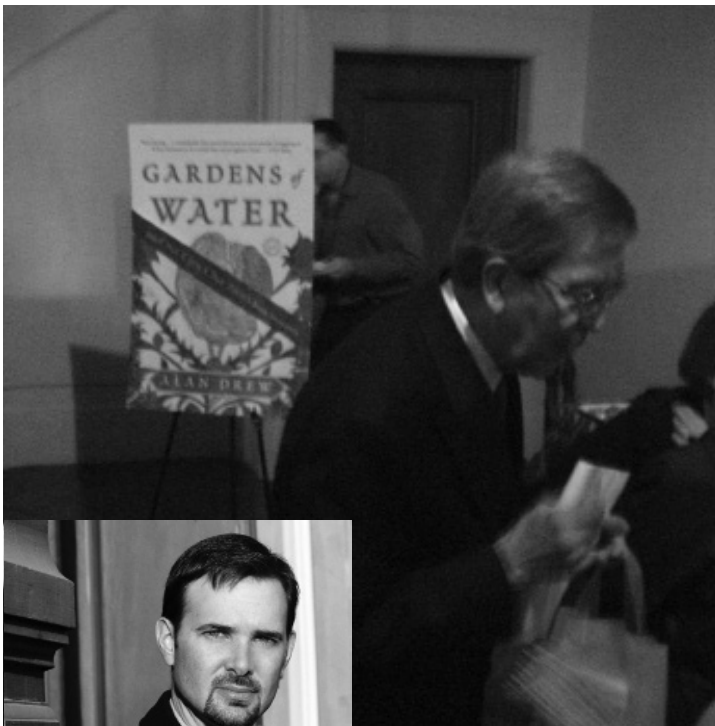
Please call 626-792-7151 and ask for A259416 or come to the Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA, 361 S. Raymond Ave., Pasadena CA, 91105. Our adoption hours are 11-3 Sunday, 9-4 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and 9-3 Saturday. Directions and photos of all pets updated hourly may be found at [www.pasadenahumane.org](http://www.pasadenahumane.org)

## Pasadena's One City, One Story is 'Gardens of Water'

The book selection for Pasadena's eighth One City, One Story community reading celebration is Alan Drew's 2008 novel "Gardens of Water."

The novel tells the story of two families – one Kurdish, one American – and the sacrifice and love that bind them together.

In a small town outside Istanbul, Sinan Basioglu, a devout Muslim, and his wife, Nilüfer, are preparing for their nine-year-old son's coming-of-age ceremony. Their headstrong 15-year-old daughter, İrem, resents the attention her brother, İsmail, receives from their parents. For her, there was no such festive observance – only the wrapping of her head in a dark scarf and strict rules that keep her hidden away from boys and her friends. But even before the night of the celebration, İrem has started to change, to the dismay of her Kurdish father. What Sinan doesn't know is that much of her transformation is due to her secret relationship with their neighbor, Dylan, the



Drew photo by Sharon Kinder-Geiger

17-year-old American son of expatriate teachers.

One City, One Story activities and events will be scheduled in March 2010. A community dialogue with the author is scheduled Sunday, March 14, at the Pasadena Convention Center. Details of book discussion groups, film series, lectures and other events will be announced in the near future.

"This year's One City,

Mayor Bill Bogaard talks with guests moments after anouncing the city's book choice Photo D.Lee

One Story selection focuses on family, culture, faith and tradition and is particularly relevant in today's world," said Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard. "It is certain to spark conversation and dialogue among the community."

One City, One Story is designed to broaden and deepen an appreciation of reading and literature in the community, engage participants in dialogue and bring Pasadenans together by promoting greater understanding of differing points of view.

## Public Health Director Accepts Position In Santa Barbara



Dr. Takashi Wada has accepted the position of public health director and health officer for Santa Barbara County after a nationwide recruitment.

His appointment was announced during a meeting of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors yesterday. Hired by the city of Pasadena in December 2003, he will begin his new position in March.

"This was one of the most difficult decisions of my life and I have only wonderful things to say about Pasadena," Wada said. "While this move is a certainly a step up in responsibility from

## Parsons To Host 34th Annual Children's Holiday Party

On December 14, Parsons will host its annual Children's Holiday Party in the main lobby of its Pasadena headquarters. About 80 children from Five Acres in Altadena and Hathaway-Sycamores in Pasadena will participate in the party, which will include a holiday performance led for the seventh consecutive year by Rachael Worby, the Music Director of the Pasadena POPs Orchestra. The performance, entitled "The Joys of Music with

Rachael" will feature David Pitts and the Chamber Choir from Marshall

Fundamental Secondary School in Pasadena. The choir, called "sotto voce," performed at the previous two parties. Chuck Harrington, Parsons' Chairman and CEO will welcome the children as well as Maestra Worby and the choir. Following the performance, the children will be treated to pizza and cookies and will be visited by a special guest from the North Pole.





## Environmentally Speaking, Did You Know? Helpful Holiday Hints for Waste Reduction

Do you know that Americans throw away

25 percent more trash or about 1 million extra tons each week during the Thanksgiving to New Year's holiday period? In fact, 38,000 miles of ribbon alone are thrown out each year--enough to tie a bow around the Earth we're trying to save!

Reduce your waste and reduce your stress by keeping the "green" Holiday spirit alive by following some of these simple yet helpful holiday hints:

### For Dinner Preparations:

Buy baking goods and snack food in bulk or large volumes.

Plan meals wisely and practice portion control to minimize waste.

After a big dinner, you'll have leftovers galore. Plan for leftovers in advance.

Pack and send leftovers home with guests. You can also donate food to local food banks or charities.

Compost your food waste. Fruits and vegetables and their peels, pits, and seeds are perfect for composting - a great natural fertilizer.

Use reusable rather than disposable tableware.

Cut up last year's holiday cards and use as place cards.

Place easily identifiable recycling containers at your celebration so guests can recycle their cans, bottles, etc.

Shopping for the Holidays:

Send an electronic greeting card.

As you shop, consolidate your purchases into one bag. Better yet, bring your own shopping bags.

For online purchases, request that items be shipped together.

Use shredded paper or newspaper instead of conventional packing "peanuts".

Recycle foam "peanuts" at a local drop-off or buy-back recycling center. For a location near you, call 1(800)CLEANUP, a service provided by Earth 911.

Buy rechargeable batteries to accompany your electronic gifts.

Find out how to recycle your old cell phones at [www.recyclewirelessphones.com](http://www.recyclewirelessphones.com)

### For Gift Wrapping:

Avoid metallic colored wrapping paper as they cannot be recycled.

Purchase recycled wrapping paper.

Purchase sturdy cloth ribbon that can be reused year after year as most ribbon cannot be recycled.

Give a present in a present (for example, a hat in a matching scarf, jewelry in a wooden box, cookies in a reusable tin or cookie jar, barbecue grill utensils or picnic supplies in a tablecloth, kitchen gifts in an oven mitt or kitchen towel).

Reuse scarves, old posters, pages from a child's coloring book, old sheet music, newspapers, sports pages, or old maps to wrap boxes.

Have your children create personalized wrapping paper by decorating reused brown paper grocery bags with drawings, stickers, or even stamps.

Reuse last year's holiday cards for gift tags or write your greeting on the box.

For Decorations:

Use trimmed branches from your yard for decorating around the home or making wreaths.

Use reusable glass icicles instead of disposable tinsel (keeps tree clean for mulching).

Reuse your tin cans as luminaries.

After Opening Your Presents:

Consider donating your old appliances, toys, games, or clothing, as you received new ones, to a local charity or thrift store.

Use leftover gift wrap to line shelves and dresser drawers.

### For the New Year:

Do something "green" for your New Year's resolution, such as using reusable cloth shopping bags, switching to compact fluorescent lights to save energy, planting a tree, etc.

For Your Christmas Trees:

Approximately 33 million live Christmas trees are sold in North America every year. Recycle your Christmas trees by contacting your city recycling coordinator or visiting 888CleanLA.com for more information.

Check out [www.reduce.org](http://www.reduce.org) for more ideas to reduce waste during the holiday.

Keep the "green" Holiday spirit alive and make a conscious effort to help save the environment and reduce waste this year!

Highland Ave. A school employee called the police department to report that sometime over the long holiday weekend unknown suspects entered the school property by jumping the chain fence and vandalized the school. Four class room windows were broken as well as a door and window were etched with an unknown sharp object.

### Wednesday December 2<sup>nd</sup>

1:18 PM - Residential Burglary, 2000 Block North Santa Anita Ave. The victim called the police department to report that unknown suspects broke a rear sliding glass window to his residence and stole multiple items from inside the residence. Total loss is estimated at \$2,350.00. No suspect description is available at this time. Detectives are currently handling the investigation.

### Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>

11:11 PM - Arrest, Public Intoxication, 100 Block W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Officers were dispatched to the location regarding a combative woman who was arguing with two other people. The woman was intoxicated. Officers arrested the woman for public intoxication and took her to the Pasadena Police Department Jail for remand.

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## Sierra Madre Police Blotter

*During the week of Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009 the Sierra Madre Police Department responded to approximately 294 calls for service.*

### Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>

7:41 AM - Vandalism, 200 Block West Montecito Ave. The victim called the police department to report that sometime between 7:00 PM on 11-28-2009, at 7:00 AM on 11-29-2009, unknown suspects broke out the rear window of her vehicle with rocks. The victim did not see or hear anything and no property was missing from the vehicle.

### Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>

6:24 AM - Vehicle Burglary, 200 Block Auburn Ave, The victim called the police department to report that sometime between 9:00 PM on 11-29-2009 and 6:00 AM on 11-30-2009, unknown suspects broke the window of her vehicle and stole her black leather purse from the front seat. The loss included personal identification, cash, a checking book, and other personal items. The total estimated loss is unknown.

11:30 AM - Vandalism, 100 block West

## Arcadia Police Blotter

*For the period of Sunday, November 29, through Saturday, December 5, the Police Department responded to 883 calls for service of which 131 required formal investigations. The following is a summary report of the major incidents handled by the Department during this period.*

### Sunday, November 29:

A home invasion robbery occurred in the 100 block of West Forest around 7:20 a.m. Three male Hispanic suspects, ages 25-30, confronted a male resident in the driveway and forced him inside the house at gunpoint. The suspects bound the hands and feet of the husband, wife, and nine-year-old child. The male adult victim was choked until he told them the location of the cash and a handgun. After taking the property, the suspects fled the scene by unknown means.

2. Units responded to East West Bank, 1300 South Golden West, around 1:19 p.m. in reference to a male suspect trying to cash a fraudulent check. Further investigation revealed that the suspect transferred non-existent funds from a closed account at another bank into his East West Bank accounts. He then purchased cashier checks and subsequently requested refunds for the cash value. The 49-year-old Asian was taken into custody for commercial burglary and grand theft.

3. Around 8:14 a.m., a robbery occurred in the 1400 block of Carmelita. A male suspect pried open a door to a guest house and turned off the power by switching off the circuit breakers. When the male resident went to investigate, the suspect demanded cash and jewelry and threatened to shoot the victim if he did not comply. Fearing for his safety, the victim gave the suspect two watches and cash.

### Monday, November 30:

4. Units were dispatched to the 700 block of Carriage House in reference to a 9-1-1 hang-up call around 8:26 p.m. When officers arrived at the location, a man was about to leave the scene and was detained. Investigation revealed that during an argument, the 39-year-old Asian had struck his wife repeatedly about the face and head and caused visible injury. The man was arrested for inflicting corporal injury to spouse. An emergency protection order was obtained and served; however, when the suspect was released from jail, he returned to the house and was arrested again for violation of a court order.

### Tuesday, December 1:

5. Around 2:23 p.m., a battery incident occurred in a parking lot located at 234 South First. Two male subjects were involved in an altercation regarding a parking situation, and a 37-year-old male Asian suspect punched the male victim in the face. When the victim was on the ground, the suspect continued to punch the victim in the head several more times. The suspect then fled the scene in a white Lexus SUV after picking up a child from a nearby school.

6. Officers were called to Macy's around 5:22 p.m. regarding two employees detained for embezzlement. Loss prevention personnel determined that two 18-year-old Hispanic suspects, boyfriend and girlfriend, made fraudulent returns and concealed money during cash transactions with customers. Private

persons' arrests were made, and they were taken into custody without incident.

### Wednesday, December 2:

7. A solo traffic collision occurred at 46 East Huntington around 2:21 a.m. An intoxicated 30-year-old male Asian driver struck 2 trees and was arrested at the scene for DUI.

8. Around 11:20 a.m., loss prevention personnel from JC Penney advised that a male suspect had left the store with stolen merchandise. An area check was conducted and the 42-year-old Hispanic was found in a nearby parking lot. The suspect was intoxicated and additional stolen property from Macy's was also recovered. He was taken into custody for commercial burglary, disorderly conduct/drunken in public, and petty theft with prior conviction.

### Thursday, December 3:

9. A forgery report was filed at the police station around 2:26 p.m. An elderly victim wrote two checks and placed them in her mailbox. She later discovered that the checks were altered by unknown suspects and cashed for over \$1,200.

10 Around 5:00 p.m., a witness notified police that a car was seen swerving in the roadway and striking the curbs. Officers responded to Foothill and Rodeo and found the vehicle stopped at the location with a flat tire. A 50-year-old male Caucasian driver was contacted, and it was determined that he was operating the vehicle while under the influence of an alcoholic beverage and was arrested.

### Friday, December 4:

11. A grand theft from auto occurred between 11:30 p.m. on December 3 and 9:00 a.m. on December 4 in the 100 block of West La Sierra. Unknown suspect(s) entered an unlocked vehicle and stole \$725 in property.

12. A robbery was reported at Rite Aid, 39 Las Tunas, around 4:57 p.m. A male Hispanic suspect, 20-25 years of age, stole cologne and alcohol from the store. When an employee confronted him outside, he indicated that he had a gun and threatened to shoot her.

### Saturday, December 5:

13. Around 2:50 a.m., a traffic stop was initiated at Colorado and Rosemead on a vehicle matching the description of a previously reported suspicious vehicle. A male driver and female passenger were contacted, and a consent search of the vehicle revealed a baggie containing a white crystalline substance resembling methamphetamine and credit cards and other paperwork belonging to nine different individuals. The 42-year-old male Caucasian was arrested for possession of a controlled substance, receiving stolen property, and felony parole violation.

14. Units were dispatched to the 200 block of West Lemon regarding a domestic dispute around 9:00 p.m. During an argument, the wife threw a television remote control at her husband and he threw her laptop computer at her feet. The computer broke and she sustained cuts to her ankle. A 45-year-old male Asian was arrested for inflicting corporal injury to spouse.

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## PUSD News This Week

**Marshall Fundamental Secondary School** was named one of *America's Best High Schools* by the 2010 U.S. News & World Report. A silver medalist, Marshall was selected from among 21,786 public high schools in the country. U.S. News uses a three-step process that analyzes first how schools are educating all of their students, then their minority and disadvantaged students, and finally their college-bound students based on student scores on statewide tests, Advanced Placement tests, and International Baccalaureate tests.

The Board of Education approved two tiers of reductions in order to meet a projected deficit of more than \$20 million as part of the preparation of a multi-year balanced budget proposal that is due to the State later this month. Severe cuts in state funding for public schools have already resulted in a \$31 million reduction in PUSD's budget in the last few years; additional cuts would cripple the academic progress PUSD students have made. Another meeting is scheduled for December 15. The Board has asked for community input as it grapples with decisions that range from laying off teachers to closing schools. Surveys are available in English or Spanish at [www.pusd.us](http://www.pusd.us).

PUSD announced the appointment of a Strategic Plan Steering Committee, composed of parents, community leaders, employees, and representatives of the higher education, business and faith-based communities. Strategic Plan Steering Committee appointees will assist the District's efforts to involve parents and the community in shaping the future of the district. Committee members will advise on the design, schedule, and coordination of community engagement activities; identify individuals and/or groups to include in targeted and broad discussions of strategic plan elements; help convene meetings with others to solicit input into the strategic plan; and synthesize community

input and staff recommendations to revise the draft strategic plan for Board approval. Members were selected based on a proven ability to act as a bridge to multiple stakeholder groups, and for their current constructive engagement with public education in our community and expertise in areas that will add value to the strategic planning process. More than 30 individuals applied for membership on the committee.

Four PUSD schools were named 2009 Honor Roll Schools by California Business for Education Excellence, a statewide association of businesses advocating for public school improvement. Hamilton Elementary, Longfellow Elementary, Willard Elementary and **Sierra Madre School** were recognized for superior academic achievement and closing achievement gaps.

Parent Project® classes are offered every Friday at the PUSD Education Center. These parent classes offer concrete solutions to help parents stop arguing with their children, improve school attendance and academic achievement, and prevent or intervene in the use of alcohol and other drugs. The 10-week series is free, with a \$30 fee for materials. Classes are held every Friday at 6:00 p.m. in English & Spanish in the Lower Level Conference Room, 351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena. To register, call 626.396.3600, ext. 88238. [flyer attached.]

Priority Open Enrollment for the 2010-2011 academic year ends this Friday, December 11. Applications for siblings of students who currently attend a school through open enrollment and for the District's signature programs, such as dual language immersion or college and career pathways, are accepted during this period. Specific criteria for priority enrollment are available at [www.openenrollment.info](http://www.openenrollment.info). The general open enrollment period begins January 11, 2010.

More than 50 PUSD teachers and principals received almost \$60,000 for use in their schools and classrooms from the Pasadena Educational Foundation's Teachers and All Schools Grants program, which is now in its 35th year. Awards ranged from \$300 to \$5,000 and will bring books, computers, and even a climbing wall to PUSD children. Funds are especially critical to educators in the face of ongoing state budget cuts to education. Funds were provided with major support from Girardi & Keese, the Parsons Corporation, and the Helen & Will Webster Foundation, as well as gifts from individuals and businesses. The Pasadena Educational Foundation is a non-profit, community-based organization created in 1971 to support public school educational programs of the Pasadena Unified School District. For more information about the forum or PEF, visit [pasedfoundation.org](http://pasedfoundation.org) or call (626) 396-3600 ext. 88350.

### CALENDAR

*Monday, December 14*

7-9:00 p.m. PUSD's Community Advisory Council will hold its monthly meeting. This month's featured speaker, Aubri Hathaway, MA, OTR/L, will talk about "The Family that PLAYS Together, LEARNS Together!" Pasadena Adult Learning Skills Center, 119 W. Palm Avenue, Altadena. Located at the former Edison School campus. Free Childcare and translation Contact Blanca Siebels, CAC Chair, 626-536-4105 or [blancasiebels@sbcglobal.net](mailto:blancasiebels@sbcglobal.net).

*Tuesday, December 15*

6:30 p.m. The PUSD Board of Education will meet in a special session to act on more than \$20 million in budget reductions over the next two years. Board of Education, 351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena

*Wednesday, December 16*

6:30 p.m. Sierra Madre School stages its annual holiday play. 141 W. Highland Ave., Sierra Madre

7:30 p.m. Pasadena High School students present the annual winter concert. 2925 E. Sierra Madre Blvd., Pasadena

## Picture Problems

With Christmas comes cold nights, mistletoe, staff parties, and most importantly, family Christmas photos. Ever since my little sister was born, my family and I have participated in the American family tradition, complete with color coordinated outfits and stress. Who knew so much preparation was involved, all for a one-second shot? Well, I knew, but I clearly had forgotten the previous year because I was mentally unprepared for that one-second-shot.

Rule #1 in family photos: everyone must coordinate. This is a difficult rule to follow given that a toddler, two adults, and a teenager don't usually wear the same colors or the same style of clothing. Nonetheless, a color or "theme" is produced, centered around the main attraction, the baby. If the baby's dress is one color, we all have to wear that one color. So before we had even reached the picture studio, mayhem was already brewing concerning our holiday attire. Me, playing the role of the rebellious teenager, naturally wanted to wear one thing while everyone else didn't. Of course, I ended up wearing what was given and set off to the studio with a frown.

Rule #2 in family photos: choose a good photographer. Our photographer was not a good one. Many times I found my family staring at her, waiting for her to direct us, position us, do her job. And she stared back. Occasionally she would adjust the fake Christmas tree in the background until finally my mother took charge, and began placing people here and there, suggesting things to our awkward photographer.

Rule #3 in family photos: always smile...even if it's forced. During our photo session, our photographer got into the spirit and began speaking, but only to the baby. Once again, the baby is the center of the photo, and so her smile is imperative. While the rest of us were straining our "holiday-happy-faces", the lady was doing all she could to keep my sister smiling. Constant hand gestures and high-pitched sounds filled my eyes and ears until finally it was over. She had enough pictures. The hard part was over. All this for a Merry Christmas!

## Trish's Truth

By Trisha Collins

## New Book Helps Young Readers Cope with Growing Pains

PALMDALE, CA – Have you ever wished you could tell your childhood self a thing or two about growing up? Would the knowledge you know now have saved you from learning things the hard way?

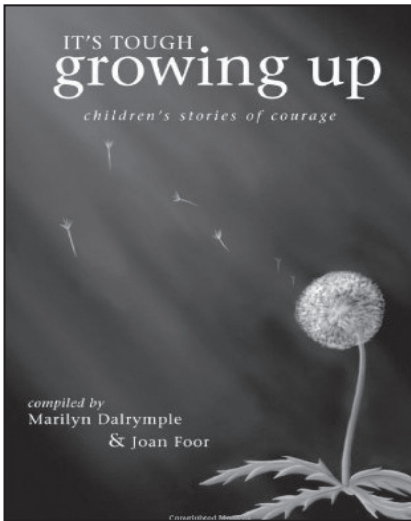
In their new book, "It's Tough Growing Up," local authors Marilyn Dalrymple and Joan Foor acknowledge just that: the lessons kids learn growing up can seem unbearable, but the authors bring hope with this compilation of true stories penned by adults who were young once but now offer their knowledge and experience to let young readers know they aren't alone. From encountering a bully at school to dealing with leukemia, the authors want readers to know that they can triumph no matter what battles they have to face.

Published by Tate Publishing and Enterprises, the book is available through book-

stores nationwide, from the publisher at [www.tatepublishing.com/bookstore](http://www.tatepublishing.com/bookstore), or by visiting [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com) or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

Foor earned a master's in nursing from UCLA and has served as a Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Administrator, and Nurse Educator. She lives in Palmdale, California, where she is involved with many local organizations and also teaches at Antelope Valley College part-time.

A photographer and writer, Dalrymple resides in Lancaster, California, where she serves on the board for "Write Often Read Daily Antelope Valley," is a member of the Lancaster Museum/Art Gallery Associates, is a Master Photographer with the Lancaster Photography Association, and contributes to the Antelope Valley Anthologies each year.



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E-mail address: [agillick@alverno-hs.org](mailto:agillick@alverno-hs.org)

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### Sierra Madre Middle School

160 N. Canon Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 836-2947 Principal: Gayle Bluemel  
Contact person: Garrett Newsom, Asst. Principal  
E-mail address: [gbluemel220@pusd.us](mailto:gbluemel220@pusd.us)

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(626) 449-7390 Principal: Ruth Esseln  
E-mail address: [resseln@pusd.us](mailto:resseln@pusd.us)

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## Teen Matinee

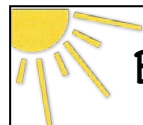
Come to the Teen Matinee at the Arcadia Public Library to see "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" on December 17 at 3:15 p.m. This free program is open exclusively for ninth through twelfth graders only.

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## TABLE FOR TWO

By Peter Dills

### Happy Eats To You!

Glad to report I am running on all cylinders, I now have my computer back and am able to give you my fresh, biased, and paid for reviews. Just kidding, wanted to make sure you are reading this. What's the most common questions I hear from you my adoring public? It has to be, "What is the latest you know about the new kid on the block, the hip place to eat?" Well, my friends I can say that more restaurants are closing than opening. So I decided to check out a restaurant that is new and continues to update their menu. Roy's of Pasadena.

I can't say Roy's is new, because it's been around for over twenty years, but recently I was invited to a Champagne tasting that celebrated the 20 years and I was enticed to go to a Sushi and Champagne tasting because my love affair with Moet Chandon. Events like these are never big money makers for the restaurants; in fact they are usually confined to a small room at the restaurant. The restaurants are hoping that the thirty or so patrons that attend these events are influential enough to spread the word. I think that I would bore you with the play-by-play analysis of the evening. In fact, I'm no Vin Scully, but I do like Roy's!! The Chef prepared dishes, in this case Sushi, that he felt would match up well with The Champagnes of the night. My feeling is that Champagne goes well with anything and everything, but here are a few of the featured dishes and glasses of the bubbly. Kinmedai (Golden Eye Snapper) Carpaccio with hot olive oil, kinome with sea urchin and caviar was paired with M&C Grand Vintage Blanc 2000. How about some Rose Imperial - it goes great with Roy's Rare Wagyu Beef Tataki lakailau "Roll". Desserts ... yes, on this evening the chef presented a Frozen

Peach Cream with fruit, nuts and butterscotch all paired with a Moet Chandon Nectar Imperial. These types of events are great for "foodies" and first timers. Events like this usually run in the \$75 range - so call your favorite local restaurant and see if they have any wine maker dinners planned.

Join me on Saturday December 12<sup>th</sup> at the Pavilions on Alameda St. in Burbank at 12 Noon. My Chef's demos continue on with The Market City Caffe of Burbank. Please email me at [thechefknows@yahoo.com](mailto:thechefknows@yahoo.com) if you can make it.

Watch Peter's TV Show every Saturday afternoon at 3 p.m. on KJLA / LATV.

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Tues 8 QUIZIDGE TRIVIA NITE WITH QUIZ MASTER MIDGE  
Wed 9 8:00 PM - 11:00 PM The Jennifer Leitham Trio  
Fri 11 8:00 PM - 11:00 PM Jack Sheldon  
Sat 12 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Jazz Vocalist Judy Platt  
10:30 PM - 10:30 PM LATE NIGHT ROCK SHOW with OJOS ROJOS & BLACK MATH HORSEMAN  
Sun 13 1:30 PM - 5:00 PM New Astro Turf  
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Opera to Broadway with Danny Guererro  
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Wed 16 8:00 PM - 11:00 PM SONG SIRENS a collective of LA's female singer songwriters  
Thur 17 8:00 PM - 11:00 PM Jazz Vocalist Jules Day  
Fri 18 Nine + One Band featuring Harry Smallenburg on Vibes  
Sat 19 8:00 PM - 11:30 PM Errol Le Blanc's holiday show  
Sun 20 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Opera to Broadway with Danny Guererro  
Tues 22 QUIZIDGE TRIVIA NITE WITH QUIZ MASTER MIDGE  
Wed 23 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM CAFE 322 XMAS PARTY featuring the Chuck Manning Quartet,  
9:00 PM - 11:30 PM Mercy & the Marketts Xmas Dance party !!  
Thur 24 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM XMAS Eve with The Danny Gurrero Trio & the Cafe 322 Singers  
Fri 25 CLOSED ~ HAVE A MERRY XMAS !!!  
Sat 26 8:00 PM - 11:30 PM Dirty Dave Osti and TNT  
Sun 27 1:30 PM - 5:00 PM New Astro Turf  
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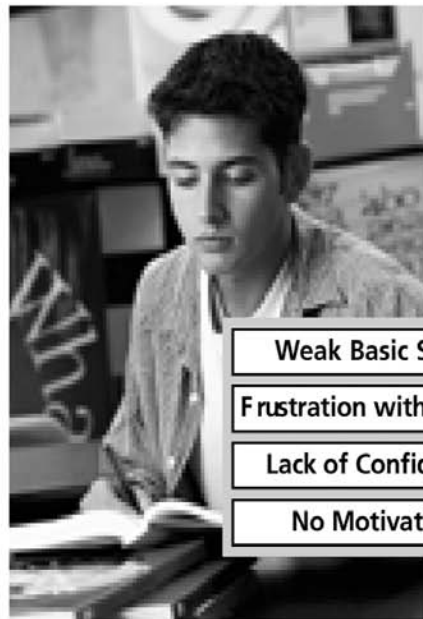
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**Mountain Views News** formerly MountainViews Observer has been adjudicated as a newspaper of General Circulation for the County of Los Angeles in Court Case number GS004724: for the City of Sierra Madre; in Court Case GS005940 and for the City of Monrovia in Court Case No. GS006989 and is published every Saturday at 31C East Montecito, Sierra Madre, California, 91024. All contents are copyrighted and may not be reproduced without the express written consent of the publisher. All rights reserved. All submissions to this newspaper become the property of the Mountain Views News and may be published in part or whole.

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Letters to the editor and correspondence should be sent to:

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The traditions of the community newspaper and the concerns of our readers are this newspaper's top priorities. We support a prosperous community of well-informed citizens. We hold in high regard the values of the exceptional quality of life in our community, including the magnificence of our natural resources. Integrity will be our guide.

## HAIL Hamilton



### House Passes Bailout Bill for Health Insurance Companies

Now we know what Congress means by "health care reform". They mean guaranteeing the rights of insurance and drug companies to their profits. They mean making health insurance like car insurance, with everyone compelled by law to purchase it from a private vendor, except for the very poorest among us, who will be offered a "public option" so limited and expensive as to discredit the word "public" when used in association with health care at all.

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 3962 (Affordable Health Care for America Act) known here as a bailout for private insurance companies, in what is lauded as a victory for Obama and health care in America.

I'll be damned. The only worthwhile compromise is that the bill requires insurance companies to cover pre-existing conditions and does not include

## PLAYED, BETRAYED, HEALTH CARE REFORM DELAYED!

a 5-year bar for legal immigrants.

Here's my problem with the bill:

Mandates that all Americans, including undocumented immigrants, buy health insurance from predatory for-profit insurance companies, giving them an additional \$70 billion in new annual revenue.

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A watered-down public option plan after the loss of a "robust public option" tied to Medicare rates.

Provides no coverage for transgender care.

Final bill stripped an amendment that would have allowed states to have their own single payer health care because of the obvious threat to private health care insurance companies.

Prohibits federal funding for women's

reproductive health except in dire circumstances and blocks insurance companies from providing any abortion coverage.

Congratulations America! The right-wing spin artists would like you to believe that you are "socializing medicine" when you are actually doing "defensive healthcare and stepping towards more privatized health care on the backs of taxpayers. With a weak public option plan, we will be back here within a decade to argue why the United States needs to catch up with the rest of the industrialized world in providing single payer health care, Medicare for all Americans.

Next up is the Senate and then a "tough" conference to hammer out a compromise that will further weaken the bill. Considering the Senate proposal, you can bet - if the insurance companies get their way - all "reform" will be eliminated from any health care reform legislation that reaches the President Obama's desk.

The legislation squeezed out by the House was a giant step away from ensuring the kind of quality, affordable, everybody in, nobody out health care that polling shows most Americans

favor. Apologists for the White House and its party of course insist that while imperfect, it's a giant step forward, providing health insurance coverage to millions who didn't have it before, and that in any case it was the best they could do under the political circumstances. It's hard to see how anyone can believe this.

Instead of recognizing a human right to health care, the White House and congressional Democrats have enshrined into law a corporate right to profit on the delivery or the non-delivery of health care. Health insurance will be mandatory, like car insurance, and government subsidies will enable everyone to purchase the shoddy, deceptive and defective products of the private insurance industry, which already rakes off fully one out of every three health care dollars in tolls for nothing more than standing between patients and their health care.

There's no polite way to put it. If you're one of millions who voted Democrats into Congress and the White House last year to enact universal health care, you've been played and betrayed; the real health care reform you were promised has been indefinitely - perhaps permanently - delayed.



## STUART Tolchin On...LIFE

Last week I bemoaned the truth contained in the movie 'Blind Side' which depicted the rich White folk of Memphis as being completely unaware of what happens "on the other side of town". Well, the front page of the Los Angeles Times of December 5, 2009 informed its remaining readers that this situation is being corrected in Los Angeles. Yes, under the headline: "The 'hood as a tourist attraction" the article explains "that a group of civic activists.....is preparing to offer bus tours of some of the grittiest pockets of the city, including decayed public housing, sites of deadly shootout and streets ravaged by racial unrest".

Apparently these tours have been in the planning stages for months but the article states that, "It wasn't long ago that organizers decided against a plan to have kids shoot tourists with water pistols, followed by the sale of T-shirts that read "I got shot in South-Central". Shucks! I'm not making this stuff up and, although it makes me nauseous to write about it, I am trying to present the

material as objectively as possible. There has been debate in the City Council, as one councilwoman has argued that "It's not right to put people on display." A staffer with the Los Angeles Human Rights Commission has asserted that it (the tours) could come across like a zoo or something. "You're being carted about: 'Look at that *cholo* over there!' It could be perceived as demeaning for the people who are living in these conditions." No kidding! Nevertheless, other council members maintain that there could be great value in "sensitizing people, connecting them to the reality of what's on the ground". Much as I hate to say it, the whole thing may boil down to money. As an organizer of the plan explained, "What matters to me is that kids get fed and families get help". Really, there is a need to sensitize all of us that deplorable conditions exist within our major cities. We need to know this and we need to do something about it. My own reaction reminds me of a trip to a museum with a Hindu exchange student from Malaysia who was living with my family at the time. The student's reaction to a display within the museum depicting articles

contained within a Hindu household was to run out of the museum in horror. At the time I didn't really understand his reaction and thought it strange. After all I was younger then and thought myself so much wiser. "It's only a display", I said. "I don't want my family to be on display," he said.

Well, there's the dilemma. Several times I have been to the Taos Pueblo in New Mexico and have paid the entry fee and wandered around the pueblo peering into peoples living spaces. I always feel a bit creepy about the whole thing, but I also understand that the money received as entry fees help to maintain the Pueblo. It's a balancing test and certainly in many situations the loss of privacy is outweighed by the need for money. In Sierra Madre we do offer a tour pointing out the houses that were strangled by the wisteria. But that's only one weekend a year and it really does not affect many Sierra Madreans, especially we canyon dwellers. What would it be like if daily tours were offered carting people up into the canyon to closely scrutinize us, walking around smiling and saying hello? Actually, I've heard that canyon-folk at one time didn't even lock their

doors; or maybe that's changed now that the cabins have all been enlarged during the recent (but almost forgotten) affluent times.

I guess that's the real point. The perceived need for money changes our behavior. Lives are run in the pursuit of money and perhaps the loss of personal dignity and privacy are, at times, worth a certain price. Fame and celebrity invariably result in a loss of privacy. If Princess Diana can be hounded by paparazzi then shouldn't poor people have this same privilege? After all, isn't this a land of equality? Well, all in all, the whole thing is pretty confusing but, after thinking about it, I don't even like the idea of peering at animals through the bars of their cages. Animals and people should not live in such squalid circumstances and there must be a way of bringing about change without paying for the privilege of watching their respective suffering. It's weird, isn't it, that we prohibit tourists from digging up graves even if they are willing to pay for the privilege? Oh no, I hope I haven't given someone an idea for another tour.

## Left Turn / Right Turn

### HOWARD Hays As I See It



I hesitate addressing the same topic three weeks in a row, but I feel the need to help calm Greg down; to assure him that no, the Taliban isn't likely to be advancing across borders to "destroy everything in its path". This isn't to suggest I find them anything but contemptible; I recently came across an article in which the Taliban are described as "the most virulent anti-American violators of human rights in the world today", operating "in the name of madness masquerading as Islam." The article, by liberal columnist Robert Scheer, appeared in a May 2001 issue of "The Nation"; and decried the Bush administration's decision to award the Taliban government in Kabul \$43 million for their poppy-eradication efforts. This came despite their hosting al-Qaeda training camps and refusing to turn Osama bin-Laden over for the 1998 bombings of American embassies in Africa.

Less than three years earlier, President Clinton launched attacks on those camps, declaring, "Our mission was clear -- to strike at the network of radical groups affiliated with, and funded by, Osama bin-Laden, the pre-eminent organizer and financier of international terrorism in the world today." Sandy Berger warned of "very specific" information that bin-Laden's network planned further attacks. Republicans in Congress, however, dismissed Clinton's offensive and warnings from his National Security Advisor as no more than attempts to divert attention from the urgent matter that consumed them - getting to the bottom of the Monica Lewinsky affair.

Despite warnings of imminent attacks by Taliban-guest bin-Laden, President Bush decided that confronting the Taliban in a War on Terror was not as important as handing them \$43 million in a War on Drugs. Barely three months after the attacks of 9/11, the Bush Administration apparently didn't see the Taliban as the threat Greg makes them out to be, declining to provide the 2,000 troops thought sufficient to ensure the capture of Osama bin-Laden and continuing the pursuit of Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders.

In this ongoing debate, a term frequently used but never adequately defined is "victory". Against whom? If the Taliban is our enemy, it would follow that their supporters would be, as well. When the Taliban held power, though, it didn't affect our relations with Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates - the only three nations to recognize the Taliban regime. If the enemy is al-Qaeda, the approximate 1,000-to-1 ratio of allied troops to al-Qaeda insurgents in Afghanistan resulting from the additional deployments should be sufficient.

As I see it, the problem in Afghanistan, as it was in Vietnam, is when a populace determines that however much they loathe an insurgency, it's still preferable to a corrupt, puppet regime installed by an invading superpower. Early on, the Obama Administration seemed to get it. During her confirmation hearings last January, Hillary Clinton described the regime of Hamid Karzai as a "narco-state ... plagued by limited capacity and widespread corruption."

Reporting from Afghanistan, Washington Post correspondent Griff White reports that "... in many areas, Afghans have decided they prefer the severe but decisive authority of the Taliban to the corruption and inefficiency of Karzai's appointees." Shopkeepers complain of government agents demanding bribes in return for permission to stay in business, and who won't allow international aid projects to proceed until hefty kickbacks have been skimmed off the top. Wheat, oil, flour and other commodities intended for refugees are stolen by provincial officials to sell on the black market. A one-time supporter of Karzai states, "When I see what this government is doing, it makes me want to join the Taliban", where low-level officials are fired for "even the whiff of corruption". It's estimated that \$10 million in cash leaves Afghanistan each day for out-of-country deposits in the accounts of corrupt officials.

Britain's Prime Minister Gordon Brown, whose country has lost 230 servicemen in Afghanistan since 2001, made it clear that "I am not prepared to put the lives of British men and women in harm's way for a government that does not stand up against corruption," and that if the Karzai regime doesn't clean up its act, "... it will have forfeited its right to international support." "Cronies and warlords ... should have no place in the future of Afghanistan."

Most disturbing to Greg and others in President Obama's West Point speech was the announcement that troop withdrawals would begin in mid-2011. They decry the "message" this might give our enemies, but seem to miss the more important message intended for Hamid Karzai. The decision to include this message probably stemmed from the recent election, where a third of the votes cast for Karzai were deemed fraudulent and the opponent withdrew from the run-off when Karzai refused to remove election officials implicated in the vote-rigging.

Karzai responds that "the international community must have also the patience with us." He plans on having Afghans leading some security operations in two years, and throughout the entire country in five (ten years after he took office), though he says it would be another 15-20 years before they could operate without international aid.

John Burns, chief foreign correspondent for the New York Times, describes Karzai when they first met twenty years ago as "eminently decent and modern", but who since taking office developed a "peevish, self-serving, recriminatory disposition." He describes a meeting between Karzai and NATO officials at which they suggested that perhaps his stepping aside, rather than seeking a second term, might be best for Afghanistan. Karzai replied by hinting he could find allies elsewhere - such as Russia.

Burns points out that not more than 7-10% of Afghans would welcome a return of the Taliban. They've grown weary, though, during thirty years of occupation by superpowers promising competent, accountable government to serve their interests. Hopefully, that mid-2011 drawdown date might encourage the sort of attitude-adjustment the Karzai government needs to help ensure another thirty years isn't required to have that promise fulfilled.



## GREG Welborn Climate Science Is Really Political Science

The most important issue being discussed by the world leaders assembled at the Copenhagen Climate Conference is not the one on which the delegates are focusing their most earnest and dire warnings. The critical issue is not the earth's climate. The leaked Climategate e-mails should tell us that much; apparently we don't know whether the earth is heating up, cooling down or just taking us on a joy ride. The most important issue in Copenhagen is how much power and freedom is to be stripped from citizens and transferred to central governments, international agencies and unelected bureaucrats.

As comedian Jon Stewart quipped the other day, "pity Al Gore. Global warming completely debunked via the very internet he invented. Oh, oh, the irony!" While the joke provided a much needed laugh in the midst of the on-going disclosures of climate scientists run amok, it nonetheless offers insight into the manipulation and fraud which permeates this wing of "science".

Consider just a few of the more straightforward leaked e-mails from the scientists. Temperature data was "adjusted", temperature graph codes had "very artificial corrections" applied so as to counter evidence that the middle ages were actually warmer than our current earth temperatures, and "fudge factors" have been added. Judging by recent polls, I am not the only one upset by what supposedly respectable scientists have been willing to do in order to advance a political objective. Such antics would have earned a high school science student an F, and in a just world they should be sufficient to earn these scientists pink slips and free career counseling services as the seek work in other professions.

Nonetheless, the pressure remains overwhelming among our elected, and not-so-elected, elites to pass comprehensive climate legislation. Why this is happening is the real focus of this week's article. Climate change was never the issue. The core truths in all the climate studies to date are relatively simple: first, we don't know if the world is cooling or warming; second, regular climate changes are not caused by humankind but by the normal earth temperature cycles over thousands of years; and third, if we really could control temperatures, it would be better to prevent global cooling than global warming because more illnesses and deaths are attributable to colder temperatures than warmer temperatures.

The reason that the world's leaders are most interested in promulgating a theory of man-made global warming and its attendant disasters is as an excuse to convince the rest of us to hand over more power and more control over our lives than we would willingly do for any other reason. Think about the ruckus raised by many who claimed the war on terror was being used an excuse to restrict civil liberties. Without debating the reality or merits of that tradeoff, it is still illustrative of how difficult it is to strip the population of their hard-won freedoms.

The world's political elites needed something bigger, more threatening than global terrorism. Czech President, Vaclav Klaus,

recently pointed out that even before Communism the world's political class, along with the many who root for the elite political class in order to curry favor, have been searching for a unifying concept on which to build the "super-state". One of the greatest ironies in all this is that many of the attendees at the Copenhagen conference are claiming that climate change threatens our very civilization all the while proposing supposedly curative rules and regulations which would in fact destroy the civilization we now enjoy. That's a strong claim, I realize, but consider a few of the affects from the proposals that are being considered and the actions already taken.

First, taxes alone would rise to unprecedented levels, never sustained by any great power - or poor one for that matter. The U.S. Treasury stated that the current Cap-And-Trade bill would hike personal income taxes by 15% for every American family. The U.S. Senate further estimated that the gas taxes in the proposed legislation would increase taxes another 10% for American families. The independent Heritage Foundation has estimated that the legislation would lead directly to 2.5 million in job losses. Our economy would be destroyed.

Second, the climate control measures lead directly to increased control over the economy. The U.S. EPA just announced its finding that carbon dioxide is a pollutant, forcing the agency to regulate its production. One respectable estimate indicates that the level of EPA involvement will now stream down to your neighborhood diner, the local school and regional hospitals - not to mention every medium sized manufacturer in America. The unelected bureaucrats who staff the EPA have already told the U.S. Congress that they will not brook any interference in the design and implementation of these regulations. There will be very little, if any, accountability imposed on these civil servants as they seek to cleanse our planet of gasses that come from the rear ends of cows.

Third, the poorest of the poor around the world will be further impoverished. If you've ever been to Bangladesh, you would know just how desperate is the day-to-day living conditions of these 150 million souls. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal pointedly described how Bangladeshis wanted only for wood (instead of cardboard) to build homes and a sewage line to eliminate the human excrement that often floats in streams in the middle of their streets. There is not enough money in the world to solve all its problems. Money devoted to curing global warming will inevitably be pulled from money currently spent trying to cure Malaria and dysentery. Water-born diseases are already the leading cause of death in the world, and climate change legislation will only increase mortality and suffering among the poor.

What Climategate alone has shown us is that fraud and deceit have infected the scientific world. The hard sciences used to be accorded almost unquestioned credibility and stature by lay people. Sadly, that is no longer the case. What Climategate, the EPA and Copenhagen combined have shown us is just how much political science threatens our liberties and civilization. The world need not fear the thermometer, but politicians are another matter entirely.







# Looking Up

## On the Wings of the Wind

with Bob Eklund



AS A COLLEGE STUDENT, I had the good fortune to spend a winter at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Its campus is situated right on the shore of beautiful Lake Mendota, which froze over deeply and solidly that December with ice as smooth as the best skating rink. I soon found that a great way to unwind after an evening of study was to put on my skates and spend an hour under the stars.

There was usually a good breeze blowing, and I soon figured out how to "sail-skate," using a sail I made from a pair of crossed sticks and a bed-sheet. Sail-skating, I found, was the simplest thing in the world - you just tuck your arm around the cross-sticks, lean into the wind, and you're off. The first thing I learned was that if you headed crossways to the wind (rather than going directly downwind), you could achieve a speed considerably

faster than the wind speed itself. I never quite figured out the geometry and math to know exactly how that could happen, but it did, and I had some wonderful experiences skimming over the frozen lake with my sail (including seeing an incredible display of the Northern Lights one night when far from shore). What a winter to remember!

NOW, FAST-FORWARD TO 2009 for another innovative kind of sailing - not on a frozen lake but in the vast reaches of interplanetary space. The Pasadena-based Planetary Society's "LightSail" project will send a spacecraft across the Solar System, propelled not by jet engines but simply by a by the pressure of sunlight against a giant sail.

Solar sail propulsion is simple in concept: As each photon of light from the Sun strikes a mirror-like aluminized Mylar sail, its momentum is transmitted to the spacecraft. Photons have

no mass but lots of energy, so a solar sail space probe needs no onboard fuel. The force acts continually, meaning a solar sail can eventually reach speeds five to ten times greater than any chemical rocket.

Russia, the U.S., and the European Space Agency all started solar sail missions, but cut them back when money got tight. Japan is now moving ahead to develop an innovative solar sail and solar-powered ion-driven hybrid spacecraft.

The Planetary Society has long championed efforts to prove the value of this largely neglected technology. Their first solar sail, Cosmos 1, was lost when the Russian rocket launching it failed to reach orbit. But the Society points out that technology has advanced enormously since then, allowing them to do more in a fraction of the size, with a fraction of the weight and at a fraction of the cost.

Their program - called

"LightSail" - begins with the LightSail-1 mission, which will demonstrate that sunlight can propel a spacecraft in Earth orbit. LightSail-2 and -3 will reach farther into space. Ultimately, sailing on light-pressure (from powerful lasers rather than sunlight) is the only known technology that might carry out practical interstellar flight, helping pave our way to the stars.

LightSail is a privately funded project. One million dollars donated by a generous Planetary Society member provided three-fourths of the funds needed for LightSail-1, and the Society is seeking donations for the rest. For more information, including ways you can participate on the LightSail team, go to: [http://www.planetary.org/programs/projects/solar\\_sailing/](http://www.planetary.org/programs/projects/solar_sailing/)

You can contact Bob Eklund at: [b.eklund@MtnViewsNews.com](mailto:b.eklund@MtnViewsNews.com)



## On Line

By PJ Carpenter

### How to un-ring a bell ...that is the question.

The bell in this case is the hypothetical state of privacy that existed prior to the widespread use of the Internet as a given in everyday life and the ready availability of copious amounts of data about nearly everything and everyone under the sun. The ringing in this case is the current state of digital affairs characterized by the dizzying pace of technological progress and the very personal ways in which this progress touches upon nearly every facet of our lives. It seems that every age bracket or interest group capable of defining itself can find representation in some form or another on the Internet. Somebody ...somewhere...cares about the same things that you care about and wants to connect with you. That's not necessarily a bad thing since we humans are by our very natures social creatures. We live and express ourselves, our natures and our ideas most fully through interaction with others. The modern version of this interaction takes on a more decidedly digital nature to the degree that we share information about ourselves and our activities on and through digital media, specifically media shared in a public forum. In addition to this voluntary flow of information that we release about ourselves and our lives there exist adjacent flows of data about us that are often controlled by other people and entities. In some cases this data is far more detailed and descriptive than we might have imagined. Viewed and interpreted through the correct filters, a fairly detailed image of the observed subject begins to come into view. How this digital representation of ourselves is treated, what rights this digital self has (if any), and what recourse we have for any abuses our digital selves may have been subjected to has been and will continue to be weighed and debated for such time as it takes for the law to recognize that what happens to our digital selves often has very real repercussions for the physical person that exist in the here and now.

A few powerful factors have come to shape the way we experience life online.

Most prominent among these is the reality of a truly interconnected digital planet. Where we can now get from nearly any physical Point A to nearly any physical Point B on the face of the Earth in a 12 - 24 hour time frame, we can now establish contact across that very same distance in the digital world in a matter of seconds. The ever-increasing speed, complexity and redundancy of these networks ensure a state of near-total connectivity. All of this hi-tech connectivity must be managed and coordinated and this job falls to the various Internet Service Providers that provide the access. These ISP's are in turn regulated by higher levels of bureaucracy that dictate policy concerning the data that flows through their collective infrastructures and the data stored on their servers. Another of

these factors is economic in nature and consists of the implementation of advanced consumer marketing models that provide an online platform for a widely disparate range of goods and services that would be impossible to replicate in a single physical marketplace. This digital marketplace also provides merchants and other

business interests the opportunity to collect data about consumers of their services and their habits to a degree not possible until very recently. This data in its raw form is quite valuable and has birthed new areas of study concerning ways in which to extrapolate advance knowledge of consumer trends and predicting future behavior based upon past activity. This ability is worth nothing less than pure gold to whoever possesses it and can successfully transform the mountains of collected data into guaranteed sales. Data permanency, which assures that a lasting record of every transaction exists for future retrieval, aids in the analysis process and is cheaper than ever thanks to dramatic advances in storage technology. The 'permanent record' that some of us were threatened with as schoolchildren is now a reality.

Coupled with the relatively recent explosion of social networking technologies that provide users with a place to express themselves in a ways that used to be reserved for the most intimate of settings and even then only with a few trusted friends, we now have in place a data collection apparatus of unprecedented size and scope that encompasses us all in some form or another. What we don't have in place is a consistent and trusted way to control who has access to all of this data, especially when it pertains to us as individuals. In this highly digitized world there simply are no real mechanisms in place that protect the individuals right to privacy for his or her digital person. Any real reform in the area of user data privacy simply must take into account the fact that there are often very real consequences for what happens to our digital selves and as such these digital persons need to be accorded legal protections similar to those given to other non-human entities such as corporations.

The simple fact of the matter is that the direction of progress is always forward and that a bell can't be un-rung.

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Current work includes writing the column, "Looking Up with Bob Eklund," in Mountain Views News, and writing newsletters for the Mount Wilson Observatory. I recently published a book, First Star I See Tonight: an Exploration of Wonder, and am finishing a second book, Winds Aloft.

For writing samples and resume, see my web site: [www.bobeklund.com](http://www.bobeklund.com).  
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# The Senior

By Bruce Lamarche

## The “Good Old Days”

... or were they!



We tend to live in the now, as it's all we have, except for our memories and the stories of how our parents and grandparents lived. Ah, for the simple life! Life 100 years ago (shall we say 1908?) was definitely a more simple time. Life moved slower, people were more polite, and traffic was ... well, there were few cars at all. Mom was baking fresh bread and harvesting vegetables from the garden. Folks didn't waste like we do today. Sunday was a day for church and picnics.

As we look back longingly at this simple time, we chafe under the pressures of the fast paced society we live in now and wish for that “other” time ... no cell phones for constant “connectivity”, no TV running all day with constant commercials, and the traffic!

I think it is prudent to “count our blessings”. We live in a time of stress as well as a time of many things that make our lives much better than existed in 1908.

Consider the following:

Only 14% of homes had a bathtub. A three-minute call from LA to Denver cost \$11, assuming you were one of only 8% of the population who even had a phone.

In 1908, life expectancy was 47 years. The five leading causes of death in the US were pneumonia, flu, TB, diarrhea, heart disease and stroke. Imagine the “stress” created when there was a serious medical condition at home. The doctor had a three-hour response time and then he showed up with only a small black bag. Also, he had not

graduated from college but from a medical school which the government had labeled as substandard. Consider this when we realize that now, paramedics are usually no more than 5 minutes away at any time and a hospital is located nearby. Also, realize that 95% of births in 1908 occurred at home. Complications that are routine today were often fatal then.

Travel was difficult and expensive. Roads were a problem, as there were less than 300 miles of paved roads in the entire country. Certainly we enjoy the ability to travel in our cars for distances that would never be considered practical then. Most families, in 1908, never took a vacation.

Perhaps the theme of this article is to encourage people to quit grouching and complaining about the world as it is and adopt a feeling of gladness for the time we live in. While we certainly don't have a choice in this, we can adjust our attitude and follow the very old-fashioned saying, “count your blessings!” We have much to be thankful for ... today!

You can contact Bruce by phone - (626) 335-3412 or e-mail: [blamarche@verizon.net](mailto:blamarche@verizon.net). This article is provided by Bruce Lamarche, a member of Society of Certified Senior Advisors®, [www.csa.us](http://www.csa.us). Bruce's company, R & B Reverse Mortgage Services (Glendora) helps seniors make an informed decision about obtaining a reverse mortgage. [www.LASeniorMortgage.com](http://www.LASeniorMortgage.com)

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## A Christmas Story

by Dorothy White



As Christmas neared, it promised to be a dismal holiday in Story Book Town. Everyone had quarreled with someone and many were not even speaking to each other.

Then some really bad news! The Old Woman in the Shoe had fallen on hard times. She had no income and badly needed food and clothing for her family. On learning this, the Story Book people got together and forgetting their

differences, made a plan to help the Shoe family. They arranged a party to be held at Old King Cole's.

Everyone would contribute something. The Queen of Hearts brought tarts; Jack donated a bean casserole from his beanstalk; Scrooge brought turkeys. Little Miss Muffet had made girls' dresses from silk spun by her spider. Bo Peep donated blankets made from her sheep's wool and Old King Cole provided entertainment with his Fiddlers Three. The jolly Old King also arranged for TV coverage of the event.

By working together to

make the party a success, everyone had once again become friends, and a success the party most assuredly was. The Shoe family was so appreciative and touched by the kindness of their friends; they began to sing Christmas carols. What glorious voices they had! Their singing of the old familiar songs brought a tear to many an eye. Upon hearing them, the TV people held a brief conference and then signed up the Shoe family to appear on a weekly show at a generous salary. They would never be hungry again.

As people left the party, they were filled with good cheer and said this had been the best Christmas ever!

### FYI:

#### How To Beat The Holiday Blues

It's a time of celebration, parties, and get-togethers, but sometimes, the holiday season can also be a source of the blues, especially for those away from their families or the elderly. Sometimes we may think about how quickly time has passed, or miss loved ones more during this time of year. Health conditions or concerns about money can also make it harder to enjoy the holidays. Fortunately, there are ways to help cope with the melancholy

*If you feel blue, try to:*

**Get out and about:** Ask family and friends for help traveling to parties and events.

Invite family and friends over.

**Volunteer:** Helping others is a great mood lifter. To volunteer contact your local United Way (it's listed in the phone book or check [www.unitedway.org](http://www.unitedway.org)): or call local schools, churches, synagogues or mosques and ask about volunteer opportunities in your neighborhood.

**Limit the eggnog:** Too much alcohol can lower your spirits.

**Accept your feelings:** There's nothing “wrong” with not feeling jolly; many people get the blues during the holidays.

**Confide in someone:** Talk about your feelings; it can help you understand why you feel the way you do.

**Recognize warning signs of depression:** Holiday blues are usually temporary and mild but depression is more serious and can linger unless you get help.

*Look for these signs:*

■ sadness that won't lift; loss of interest or pleasure

■ changes in appetite or weight or sleeping a lot more or a lot less than usual

■ crying often

■ feeling restless or tired all the time

■ feeling worthless or helpless or guilty

■ slowed thinking

■ thoughts of death or suicide

**Start the healing:** If you're depressed, see your healthcare provider. Depression is very treatable.

*For more on depression in older adults visit the Web site of the American Geriatrics Society's Foundation for Health in Aging (FHA). Go to <http://www.healthinaging.org/>*

### Recipe of the Week:

#### POTATO LATKES

*Latkes are traditionally eaten at Hanukkah, but they're a treat anytime you crave crispy, savory potato pancakes. Latkes are traditionally made from potatoes and onions, but many recipes call for shredded sweet potatoes, apples, carrots, garlic, parsnips or zucchini. Just be sure that the majority of the mixture still consists of potatoes; other vegetables do not contain enough starch on their own to make the mixture stick together.*

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups potato, cubed
- 3 Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and shredded
- 1 onion, shredded
- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons matzo meal
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 6 tablespoons vegetable oil

#### Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add potatoes and cook until tender but still firm, about 15 minutes. Drain, cool and mash.
2. In a medium bowl, mix shredded Yukon Gold potatoes, mashed potatoes and onion. Add in eggs, matzo meal and salt; mix well.
3. Feel consistency of the dough; mixture should hold together without being sticky. If it sticks to your hands, add more matzo meal until dough is no longer sticky.
4. In a large skillet over medium heat, warm enough oil or butter or margarine to cover 1/4 inch of the skillet.
5. When hot, drop mixture by heaping tablespoon to oil; flatten with a spatula and cook on both sides until golden brown. Serve.

### December Birthdays



Shirley Anholt, Mary Alice Cervera, Sylvia Curl, Rose Fafach, Lucile Flanders, Bonnie Garner, Arlie Hahn, Eleanor Hensel, Carole Horejsi, Joan Hufnagel, Elizabeth Levie, Gayle Licher, Nan Beverly Murphy, Marie Pedersen, Pat McGuire, Helen Reese, Levon Yapoujian

### Helpful Hints:

#### From the Bendixon Clan

1. Use vertical strokes when washing windows outside and horizontal for inside windows. This way you can tell which side has the streaks. Straight vinegar will get outside windows really clean. Don't wash windows on a sunny day. They will dry too quickly and probably streak.

2. Permanent marker on appliances/counter tops can be removed by using alcohol on a paper towel.

3. To remove a white ring from a wood table, a bit of salad oil on a cloth does the trick.

4. For fresher smelling blankets: before tucking your heavy winter blankets away in the spring, place a fabric softener sheet between the folds. They'll smell nice and fresh next winter when it's time to put them back on the beds.

5. For longer lasting flowers add a mixture of 2 tablespoons vinegar and 1 teaspoon sugar to 1 quart of vase water. The vinegar kills the bacteria and the sugar nourishes the flowers.

6. No more tears: put onions in the freezer for 15 minutes before you're ready to slice them. The cold reduces the vapor released from the onions when you cut them, so you won't cry.

7. Ring-free tub: pour a capful of baby shampoo into your bath as the water runs. The shampoo eliminates the ring around the tub, plus you'll have a bubble bath.

8. Fresher spices: store paprika, chili powder and ground ginger in the refrigerator. Once opened, they tend to lose their flavor quickly.

9. To cut a freshly baked cheesecake, use a long string of dental floss and bring it down slowly through the cake. It makes perfect slices, and keeps the cake looking great.

### Pasadena Highlands Sponsors Bingo Prize

Pasadena Highlands, an independent and assisted living community, is proud to provide a special gift basket on the first Tuesday of each month. Bingo takes place every Tuesday at 1:30 pm in the Hart Park House / Senior Center in Memorial Park. The game begins at 1:30 pm but those wishing to play must arrive 10 minutes before to secure your Bingo cards. Join us on the first Tuesday of each month for your chance to win this special prize and learn more about the Pasadena Highlands.

### Activities:

*Unless listed differently, all activities are at the Hart Memorial Park (Senior Center) 222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre*

**Lunch Program:** Monday- Friday at the Intervale Café -12:00 Noon-Call (626) 355-0256 to make your daily reservation. Suggested donation \$2.00 for seniors (60+) and \$3.75 for visitors.

#### Monday:

1:00 pm to 1:45 pm: Strength training with Lisa Brandley. FREE class of stretching with light hand weights while you sit.

#### Tuesday:

2nd Tuesday of each month FREE blood pressure checks by Methodist Hospital; 11 am to 12 noon 3rd Tuesday of each month FREE financial consulting; 10 -12 noon call 355-7394 for an appointment

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm: BINGO; cards are only 25 cents each so stop by & play 5:30 pm to 7 pm: Yoga; \$7.00 - 50 & over. Please call 355-5278 for more information

#### Wednesday:

11 -11:45 am: Balance Class with Teryl. FREE class designed to improve balance & refresh the joints

2nd Wednesday of the month: FREE Legal



### Senior Excursions

*Thursday, December 17th - Christmas Show - 10:30 am to 4 pm Join us at the Candlelight Pavilion Theatre in Claremont*

To register for future excursions, please call (626) 355-7394. \*Payment required to reserve space\*

Consultations: 10-11:30 am. Appointments call 355-7394

Wii Wednesday - 1:00 pm or call the senior desk at 355-7394 to arrange another time & day to learn how to play. No previous experience or skills required and it is great exercise.

#### Thursday:

1:00 to 3:30 pm: Game Day. Join us for UNO and Poker with Bridge on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays; so please call for more information. 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm: Yoga; \$7.00 - 50 & over. Please call 355-5278 for more information

#### Friday:

1:00 pm: Ping Pong

Saturday: 11:30 am: Senior Club brown bag lunch and BINGO at 12:30 pm

**Free Lawn Bowling Lessons:** The Santa Anita Bowling Green Club will have beginning lawn bowling lessons each Saturday morning starting at 10:00 AM.

Located just north of the golf course at 405 S. Santa Anita Ave.< free parking> For information call Gene at 626.351-5327.

### Meals-On-Wheels

Meals are delivered to home-bound seniors by volunteer drivers through the YWCA Intervale Lunch Program M-F (with frozen meals for the weekend.) Call the YWCA at (626) 214-9460 or Darlene Traxler at (626) 355-0256 for more information.

**MEALS-ON-WHEELS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS TO DELIVER MEALS TO OUR HOMEBOUND NEIGHBORS \*\*ONCE A MONTH OR WEEKLY\*\* Please contact Darlene Traxler at 626.355.6220 or (626) 355-0256.**

### SIERRA MADRE'S FARMERS MARKET!

Wednesday 3-7pm

Fresh vegetables and seasonal fruits from California family farms. Specialty foods, vegetarian and vegan dishes, ethnic foods and hot food - Everything you'll find at the farmers market has been made or picked fresh, is pesticide-free and preservative-free. *Free public parking on Mariposa.*





Chris Bertrand

## One Of A Kind:

Featuring unique homes & gardens and the people who create them

Story and Photos By Chris Bertrand

## Granite Fabrication from A Woman's Point of View

Angela Woods started her professional life in the airlines and banking industry. She never considered leaving banking until she took a two week leave from her position after her father's passing. Her brother asked for help at his granite fabrication shop. Woods told herself and him that it was only temporary. She stayed on, learning this very hands-on business bit by bit, incorporating her customer service priority into her new career. She only once considered returning to banking. After interviewing, she was finally convinced that stone work should be her life's work.

Fifteen years later, she's made a name for herself in the

Southern California design industry, working with interior designers, general contractors, tile and design showrooms and individual homeowners. Almost every year, her work has been integrated into high end, showcase and design tours, like Assistance League's Design House tours and Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts, which featured the Descanso Garden's estate home remodel recently.

Woods and her team create finished countertops, tub and shower surrounds and fireplaces of slab granite, marble, limestone and popular quartz products like CaesarStone which is a "93% natural quartz (product with) aggregates, a small amount of pigments and enhanced polymer resins (that's) harder than granite, yet four

times more flexible and resists staining, chipping and cracking," according to the CaesarStone website.

"The process is intricate, and requires careful measurement, planning and a sharp eye toward creating a finished countertop that appears nearly seamless with the movement and color in the slabs matched as closely as possible," says Woods.

Early in the design process, the team often consults on the number of slabs required for a job, before a customer or designer even goes shopping for just the right stone. When the cabinetry and job is far enough along, they visit the site to create full size templates, also planning where to apply seams between two slabs. They check the level of the cabinetry and inspect the walls for bows. Both can affect the



final appearance of the counters.

Then the fabricating begins, with careful color matching of the stone pieces and a custom mix and testing for the epoxy glues that bind the multiple pieces that together form the slab's finished edges. Sometimes the fancier scalloped edges fit three or four different sizes and shaped pieces together to create an intricate edge profile.

"Creating a custom inset sink of something like CaesarStone presents its own challenges,"

muses Woods. "The slopes need to be correct to drain properly, the size needs to accommodate whatever piping and other equipment is under the sink, and the drains have to be tight and leak-free, but in the end, the final product is gorgeous and appears seamless."

"We plan, plan, plan, then check it all again, crossing every 't' and dotting every 'i'. There are no shortcuts. The pieces are so big and heavy that even the transportation becomes a careful ballet of sorts," she comments.

Woods and her team have worked together for many years, so each one plays their part in the production, anticipating each other's movements and needs as the huge pieces move through narrow doorways, up and down stairs and get hauled up and down for fit checks.

I visited a home under remodel in San Marino recently, the day Set In Stone installed the kitchen's slab granite counters. General contractor, Jim Le Veque of Le Veque Construction commented, "We know we sometimes have to wait to fit into Angela's schedule because she's in so much demand, but I've learned it's the safest, actually most economical choice."

"Slab fabrication and installation is a tricky business that goes in late in the construction process, after other parts of the job, like the cabinets, are

already finished. In a custom home we built on Highland in Sierra Madre, the counter slab had to be installed between two vertical cabinets, with literally no room for error. The slab had to be perfectly measured and cut, and the installation had to be inserted with surgical precision, or my solid cherry cabinets could easily have been damaged, delaying the job completion."

"I've had other fabricators break slabs during the fabricating or installation process, again delaying our whole construction timetable. One actually broke two slabs on the same job. It was a nightmare. At that point, time and costs escalate quickly, and what few dollars might have been saved with a less expensive fabricator fly out the window with weeks of lost time, starting over to choose new slabs, escalating everyone's frustration. I never worry when Angela's crew comes through the door with thousands of pounds of granite or marble or CaesarStone."

Angela Woods and her well-oiled team look with satisfaction on a job well done after a long hard day. All the measuring, planning, measuring again, gluing, matching slabs and uber-care were well worth the effort. The sleek black granite counters look perfect.

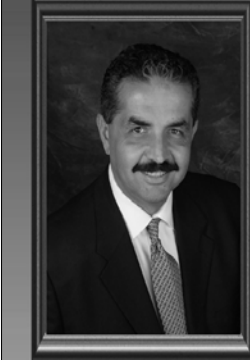
Set In Stone Marble and Granite, Inc., is located at 13208 Satcoy Street in North Hollywood. They can be reached at 818-765-5055



## Tips of the Trade: Real Estate Revealed

by Luther Tsinoglou

## A First Time For Everything



An article appeared recently in the New York Times that beautifully illustrates the opportunities today's real estate market offers. A mother working two jobs saved up for a downpayment and managed to buy a large home with a pool for \$187,000. Three years ago, that same home had sold for \$370,000!

While sellers are still feeling pressure, buyers with stable incomes and good credit histories are beginning to spread a "feel good" vibe throughout the industry. Conditions have literally never been better for first-time buyers. Affordability has seldom been higher and interest rates have hardly been lower. Selection of inventory is vast, and sellers are highly motivated.

As more buyers enter the marketplace, the ripple effect will be felt far and wide. When they purchase a highly affordable foreclosure or "short sale," they have removed a distressed property from the listings, improving values for other homes in the area. When they buy a "traditional" listing, that in turn sets off a chain reaction whereby the sellers in turn will purchase another home, from sellers who will in turn buy another home, and so on and so on.

You probably get the picture now. As we approach some stability in real estate, all indications are that prices will begin rising again. As the market approaches recovery, don't miss your opportunity for the buy of a lifetime.

Luther Tsinoglou has been licensed and practicing real estate since 1992. He specializes in residential income property in Southern California. Luther can be reached at his direct line (626) 695-8650 or at [luther@tsinoglou.com](mailto:luther@tsinoglou.com).



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# What is the mystery of the Christmas Eve Star?



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