



Where Your  
Community News Comes First

# Mountain Views News

Sierra Madre — Arcadia — Pasadena — Altadena — Monrovia

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2011

VOLUME 5 NO. 52

## Imagine Snow In Sierra Madre For Christmas!



Artist Sonny Salsbury created this painting depicting snow in Sierra Madre at Christmas. His caption, "Wouldn't It Be Nice?" reflects the sentiments of many a child and adult alike. Salsbury is also a Grammy nominated musician who was born in Pasadena. He is the brother of local businesswoman Judith Brandley, owner of Leonora Moss in Sierra Madre.

### THE MERRY AGE OF CHRISTMAS

by Craig Hakola

If ever there was a Golden Age of Christmas, I should think it occurred when the world's night was absent artificial light, and earthly souls drew wholly from the inspiration of heavenly stars. It must have seemed impractical to the people of that period, but this Angelic Age rooted in the most uninviting of season -- a season moored to the first stinging acquaintance of an icy shiver. It was a dreadful sentence of a period pried in cunning craftiness, the once majestic leaves of a proud forest, relegated to the ponderous procession of empty limbs. Of course this scornful season was little satisfied in that mighty triumph alone, and further discharged the landscape of nature's more eloquent beauties. So it fell during this imperious season of death and its dominant reign that the spell could only broken by the forceful charms of the human heart, and that of the Christ Child.

When did this Angelic Age first inspire the spirit of people? I should think it was at least a hundred score of time. From a city that had all but been forgotten, except to those who faithfully marked the prophets, and on a night when the perfect beams of starry light cast a godly glory upon its inhabitants, the people, omit a few, did not conceive the miracle that had befallen them from the heavens. They could not fathom, even on such a reverent night, that they were being ordained to wear a beautiful crown of a new baby. In an age so far distant from ours, it seems improbable that the reflections of that time are still of such redeeming nobility. The miracle of that time, however, has not become any less miraculous, and it gives me hope that it will always inspire the hearts of those that know its secret. I should never

wish the world to wander upon an emptiness of time when it was a stranger to this glorious delight.

Christmas blooms upon the measurement of time when the life-giving conditions of nature suspended to the heralded proclamation of an arriving King. The declaration of a heavenly manifestation of love, and to those wishing to honor the true Spirit of Christmas, are directed to surrender themselves to the virtue and power of this love. Over the collective experience of 2,000 years of beliefs, attitudes, songs, writings and traditions, the celebratory artifacts of Christmas that once indulged and enchanted the imagination of our ancestors of yore have now been entrusted to us. Our forebears were a tribe of people hewn by the strength of nature, and their rugged survival spawned strength of spirit, which they expressed in the purposeful embrace of Christmas. Theirs was a generous age of benevolent affection that welcomed a stranger as tenderly as a friend. They had an untamed attitude of triumph that paraded a festive mood, and empowered the entertainer and the visitor alike to offer up their voices to Christmas song.

A few hundred years removed from our own time, beyond the doorstep of these homes and out on the pure quilts of ivory snow, danced the festive bells that were strung to the reins of horses whose four gyrating legs plowed upon a snowy landscape in the rhythmic beats of a dashing jingle. In the elevated steeple of the church swung a great bell that rang in pitched tones, and erected a mood of celebratory peace amid the emptiness of a winter-drawn night. Sainly discovered in this bold melody of the church bell, was the placid chorus of homes and the chimes of the charging sleigh bells which conferred a reverence to the

(cont. on page 3)

### THE TRADITION CONTINUES.....



Photo by Bill Coburn

More than Forty years ago two wise visionaries, Pastor Bob VanderZaag and Pastor Richard Anderson "Dick," felt their community deserved a momentous celebration. They were responsible for organizing the city's Annual Candlelight Walk that begins at St. Rita Catholic Church and ends in Kersting Court. It is a gathering of people of all faiths, with Pastors of local churches and their congregations participating.

For those that wait below at the bottom of the street, the sea of lights begins its slow, picturesque descent down Baldwin Avenue until they arrive at Kersting Court. As scripture passages are read and the notes of Christmas hymns swirl around the nativity scene.

This year's walk continued the tradition with few exceptions. As with all events, regardless of the good intentions, sometimes there are mishaps. And, as indicated in the numerous letters and com-

munications recieved by this paper from members of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Pastor Cynthia Crowell played a different role than she normally does. We are certain that the changes were not malicious in nature and will be corrected next year. Through it all, it was still the most moving community event of the year.

S. Henderson/MVNews with excerpts from Craig Hakola's 2009 article.



New Japanese erasers have arrived!

### NIKO AND FRIENDS CAFÉ

900 Valley View #6, Pasadena, CA  
On the N Michillinda/Montecito Corner  
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626-510-6151  
[www.Nikoandfriendscafe.com](http://www.Nikoandfriendscafe.com)



Coffee for the Coffee Connoisseur!



## Weather Wise

## 5-Day Forecast

Sierra Madre, Ca.

<b>Mon:</b>	Sunny	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
<b>Tues:</b>	Sunny	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
<b>Wed:</b>	Sunny	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
<b>Thur:</b>	Sunny	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
<b>Fri:</b>	Sunny	Hi 60s	Lows 40s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service

CITY OF SIERRA MADRE  
HOLIDAY CLOSURESSierra Madre City Hall and Community & Personnel  
Services Holiday ClosuresMonday, December 26, 2011 & Friday, December 30, 2011  
Monday, January 2, 2012

## SIERRA MADRE LIBRARY HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The Sierra Madre Public Library will be closed Saturday, December 24 through Monday, December 26, Saturday, December 31 through Monday, January 1. Library materials may be returned in the Book Drop, located on the Library walkway, which will remain open during these days.

## YOUTH ACTIVITY CENTER HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Please note the YAC will be closed Monday, December 26 and Monday, January 2, 2012. YAC Winter Break hours start December 27 and run through January 5, 2012. Winter Break hours are Monday through Thursday, 12:30pm-4:00pm.

## 1630 AM

## Free on-air publicity for local events

Sierra Madre's new community radio station is now accepting scripts for Public Service Announcements (PSAs) about community events. PSAs will be broadcast on the air at no charge. The station operates 24/7 and can be heard at 1630 on the AM dial.

Any local non-profit or non-commercial organization can have their event information broadcast to the public on *Sierra Madre Community Information Radio*. This new radio station covers the city of Sierra Madre, plus surrounding areas of Pasadena, Arcadia, and Monrovia.

In a nutshell, your event must:

- Benefit a non-commercial or non-profit entity
- Be open to the public
- Be of general interest to local citizens

Just write a Public Service Announcement that describes your event and e-mail it to [radio@cityofsierramadre.com](mailto:radio@cityofsierramadre.com).

Sierra Madre's  
Farmer's Market Is Back!

The Sierra Madre Farmer's Market new location is in Downtown Sierra Madre on Hermosa Avenue, south of Sierra Madre Boulevard to Mariposa Avenue. The hours will be from 3:00-8:00 p.m. during the summer with the exception of major holidays. During the winter/Pacific Standard time the market could possibly end at 7:00 p.m.



## JOIN US FOR LUNCH!

The Sierra Kiwanis Club meeting begins at noon at The Lodge (formerly the Masonic Lodge) and the program begins at approximately 12:30.

The program presentation is free. Lunch is \$10.00.

If you would like to meet unlesg call 355-0728 to reserve your space. We look forward to seeing you there.



## Sierra Madre Rotary Club

Meets Tuesdays 7-8:30 a.m.

631 E. Sierra Madre Boulevard  
Sierra Room of the Youth Activity Center

As part of our club's lively weekly meetings, dynamic speakers are scheduled on Rotary's service interests, local community topics and general appeal subjects.

Sierra Madre Rotary operates an active high school service group, the Interact Club, participates in Rotary scholarship, music and essay competitions, raises funds for local and Rotary Foundation causes, recognizes exemplary teachers, offers mini grants for worthy projects, hosts the yearly Elvis in the Park concert and donates hundreds of service hours to community events like the Wistaria Festival, Dickens Village and July 4th Parade.

While all Rotary Club memberships are by invitation, visitors are heartily welcomed to meetings. For more information, please visit our website or contact our membership chairperson at [RudyHayek@gmail.com](mailto:RudyHayek@gmail.com).

[www.SierraMadreRotary.com](http://www.SierraMadreRotary.com)


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Sundays 10-8

## 10% OFF WITH THIS AD

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COMMUNITY SERVICES  
COMMISSION IS SEEKING TO  
FILL TWO VACANCIES ON THE  
SMTV3 COMMUNITY CABLE  
TELEVISION PROGRAMMING  
COMMITTEE

The City of Sierra Madre's Community Services Commission is looking for two motivated, enthusiastic, creative, and a friendly volunteer to serve on the City's the SMTV3 Community Cable Television Programming Committee. The City welcomes any interested residents to apply. SMTV3 Community Cable Television Programming Committee - 2 Vacancies for Community Members At Large.

The SMTV3 Community Cable Television Programming Committee is an eight (8) member committee comprised of a member from the Community Services Commission, Senior Community Commission and six community members at large. The committee is subject to the Brown Act and therefore must meet in a public place with posted agendas. A member of the Community & Personnel Services Department staff will be the liaison to the committee.

The Committee meets regularly at 7:30 a.m. on the first Wednesday of every other month. The Committee has the option of not meeting in January and September of each year. The primary purpose of the committee is to

gather information, weigh public opinion and examine issues in depth in order to render a recommendation to the Community Services Commission regarding the programming on the City's government-education cable access channels. Most often the committee reviews matters such as equipment, productions and events to be covered by Community Mountains of the Foothills.

The Community Services Commission plans to appoint the community members at large at their regularly scheduled Community Services Commission Meeting on December 19, 2011.

Applications for the December appointments are due by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 8, 2011. Applications received after this date will be kept on file until there is another appointment date. Submit applications to the Community & Personnel Service Department at the Community Recreation Center, 611 E. Sierra Madre Boulevard.

For an application, please visit [www.cityofsierramadre.com](http://www.cityofsierramadre.com) look for commission/committee applications. For more information please call (626) 355-5278.

## CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR!



Ring in the New Year with the Sierra Madre Volunteer Firefighter's Association at their ANNUAL BALL.

The event will be held at St' Rita Catholic Church, in O'Malley Hall, at the corner of Baldwin and Grand View on New Year's Eve from 8pm to 1am.

the cost is \$10, and that donation, as well as all drink proceeds, will

benefit the SMVFA.

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is the last volunteer fire department in Los Angeles County and has proudly protected the people living and working in our little town for more than 85 years!

**PUT ON YOUR  
DANCING SHOES  
AND SUPPORT OUR  
FIREFIGHTERS!**

COME SAY GOODBYE TO THE  
CHIEF - MARILYN DIAZ

All are welcome to this community-wide event.

Thursday,  
December 29, 2011

5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Sierra Madre Room at  
the Community Services  
Center  
611 E. Sierra Madre Blvd.  
Sierra Madre, CA 91025



For more information  
please call the Sierra  
Madre Police Department at (626) 355-1414 or to RSVP  
(626) 355-2585

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY  
BOOK SALES

The Friends of the Sierra Madre Library are having another Bargain Book Table Sale, right on the heels of December's Best Used Book Sale, which was moved, due to the weather emergency, to Friday, December 9th (3:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.) and Saturday, December 10th (10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.). The Bargain Book Table Sale will take place inside the Library during open hours Monday, December 12th, through Saturday, December 17th. The featured topics will include Fiction, Thrillers, Sports, Parenting, and books for Children and Teens. Stop by often, as books are replenished daily, and are only \$1.00 each.

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. (626) 355-7186. [www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us](http://www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us).

NEED A LAST MINUTE  
CHRISTMAS PRESENT?  
WISTARIA TICKETS ARE ON-  
LINE, FAST AND INEXPENSIVE!

If you're running out the door and just remembered someone for whom you forgot to pick up a gift, don't worry. The Chamber has just what you need! Wistaria Shuttle Tickets are available online now at [www.WistariaTickets.com](http://www.WistariaTickets.com). You can go online, pick your ticket, and pay for it right there at your computer, and best of all - you print it right there on your printer. In a matter of minutes, you've solved your problem! Tickets are \$10 for adults 16 to 61, \$7 for seniors 62 and up and children 6 to 16. Family four-packs are available (two adults, two kids) at a discount, all four tickets for \$30. Or, team up with another couple couples and buy a six-pack of adult tickets for just \$50!. This year's festival will be held on Sunday, March 25th. Viewing the vine is free, but if you want to ride the shuttle round trip up the hill from the vine to the festival and back, this is how you do it. Order your tickets today!



## Sierra Madre Rose Float Association Events:

**Colorful Imagination : Parade Entry #78**

## Judging:

Saturday, December 31<sup>st</sup> 11:47 AM Inside the Float Barn  
Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup> 11:47 AM at the Volleyball Court

## Float Dedication/Display:

Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup> @ 5:00PM, Float Barn, Sierra Madre  
Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup> @ 5:30PM, Kersting Court Bus Stop, Sierra Madre

## Tournament of Roses Parade:

Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 8AM, Orange Grove Blvd., Pasadena.

## Tournament of Roses Post-Parade:

Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 1PM-5PM & Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 9AM-5 PM, Sierra Madre Blvd, Pasadena.

## Downtown Sierra Madre Float Display:

Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 7:30-10PM  
Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup> @ 8AM-5PM  
Kersting Court, Sierra Madre.

## Float Barn Location:

587 E. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre, CA. 91024

Sierra Madre Rose Float Association • P.O. BOX 603 • Sierra Madre, CA 91025  
[www.sierramadroserosefloat.com](http://www.sierramadroserosefloat.com)  
SMRFA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3)

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Sierra Madre, California

Chris Leclerc

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[chris@canyoncanine.com](mailto:chris@canyoncanine.com)



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Sierra Madre

Arcadia

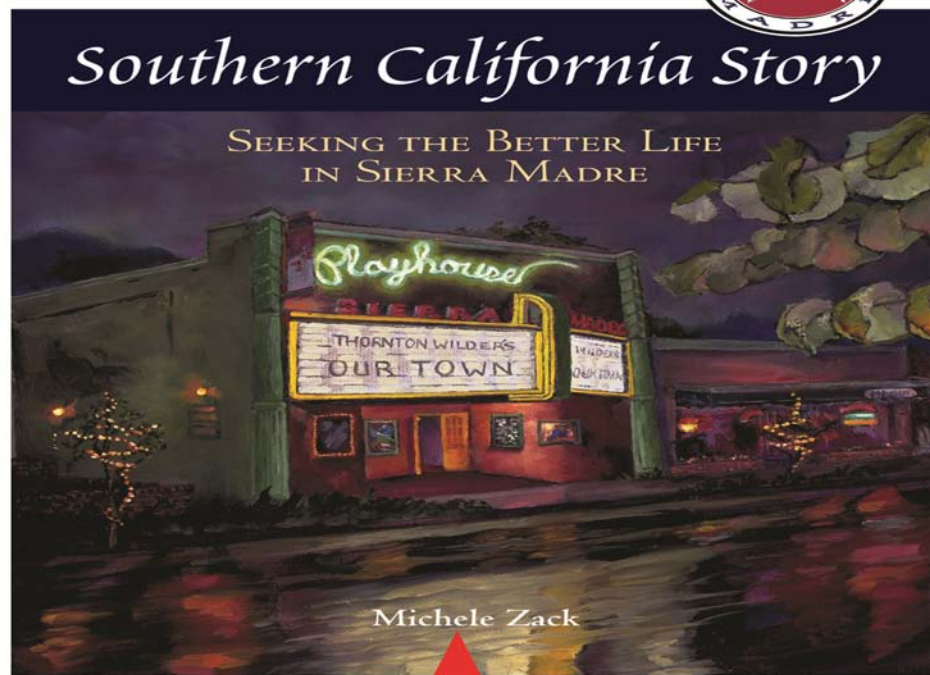
Pasadena

Altadena

Monrovia

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## Sierra Madre Police Blotter

During the week of Sunday, December 11th, 2011 to Saturday, December 17th, 2011 the Sierra Madre Police Department responded to approximately 271 calls for service.

Monday, December 12th  
10:59 AM – Arrest, Unlicensed Driver and Possession of Marijuana, 100 Block S. Baldwin Ave. An officer stopped a motorist for a Vehicle Code violation. Further investigation revealed the motorist was driving without a valid driver's license and was in possession of less than an ounce of marijuana. The motorist was cited for the violations and released on a written promise to appear in court.

Tuesday, December 13th  
2:19 AM – Arrest, Public Intoxication, 100 Block E. Highland Ave. Officers responded to a call of a distressed female pounding at the front door of a residence possibly in need of medical attention. Officers arrived and found the female under the influence of alcohol and unable to care for herself or others. She was arrested for public intoxication and transported to Pasadena Police Department jail for booking.

Wednesday, December 14th  
4:05 AM – Battery, 300 Block W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Officers responded to a call of a physical altercation at the Drop a Load Laundry, between two adult females and the boyfriend of one of the females involved. Each party alleges that the other person pushed a cart into them. Officers found no injuries to either female. The battery investigation was forwarded to the District Attorney Office for filing considerations.  
8:42 PM – Arrest, Suspended License, 100 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. An officer stopped a motorist for a Vehicle Code violation. Investigation revealed the motorist was driving on a suspended/revoked driver's license.

The motorist was cited for the misdemeanor violation and released on a written promise to appear in court.

Thursday, December 15th  
6:50 PM – Arrest, Possession of Stolen Property, Foot-hill Blvd and Santa Anita Ave. An officer stopped a motorist after the patrol car's license plate reader system alerted the officer of a stolen license plate attached to the motorist's car. The motorist admitted to stealing the license plate for the purposed of avoiding to pay the vehicle's registration fees. The motorist was arrested and transported to Pasadena Police jail for booking.

11:02 PM – Arrest, Unlicensed Driver, Baldwin Ave. and Orange Grove Ave. An officer stopped a motorist for a Vehicle Code violation. Further investigation revealed the motorist was driving without a valid driver's license. The motorist was cited for the misdemeanor violation and released on a written promise to appear in court.

Saturday, December 17th  
2:54 PM – Arrest, Unlicensed Driver, Orange Grove Ave. and Lima St. An officer stopped a motorist for a Vehicle Code violation. Further investigation revealed the motorist was driving without a valid driver's license. The motorist was cited for the misdemeanor violation and released on a written promise to appear in court.  
8:23 PM – Theft, 100 Block W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Unknown suspect(s) stole the victim's wallet, \$300.00 in cash, and a cell phone from the victim's unattended purse. The total loss is valued at \$125.00.  
10:42 PM – Theft From A Vehicle, 100 Block E. Mira Monte Ave. Unknown suspect(s) stole a monitor screen from the vehicle's backing up video system. The suspect(s) entered the unlocked vehicle parked in the street and stole the property. The loss is valued at \$100.00.

MERRY AGE (continued from page 1)

world well beyond the attainable acts of nature. Outside the world glowed in an angelic music, and inside, people huddled beside the warm council of a stately fire and a pyramid of wood heaped in the plentiful thought of celebration. For in the meager cottages of the wilderness, the extravagance of the hearth's light often composed a single illumination. Absent was the sight of a solitary candle, and the primitive light wrestled something profoundly passionate, festive, and even spiritual, from the souls that seated in the companionship of the holy light. The ancient embers sparked an ambience that enticed a form of sacred poetry from their hearts.

As the veils of a wintry season challenged our ancestors in this Spartan season and further plunge the world into an isolated confinement by the natural theft of light, mistletoe contested this barren existence with its intrepid leaves of green that sprang as the miraculous water from a white desert. The mistletoe's copious fountain of red berries bloomed as heavenly clouds in the season of death, exhibiting a supernatural power that dutifully became a symbol of God's great provision and grace to the people of that age. Not long removed from the acceptance of this plant's goodwill, a happy ritual of tacking mistletoe atop a doorway attached itself to the Season of Christmas. The ritual, being that for each kiss a berry is to be plucked, a sprig of the plant is often kept by the couple as the testimony and sworn pledge of loyalty to one another under the sight of God. How many relationships embarked under these red spheres, and how many first kisses harvested in the magic of this season must be numbered amongst the stars. One only needs the smallest inclination of imagination to place oneself in observation of a youthful gentleman of a shy and reticent manner, both tormented and elated, in the thought of maneuvering the lady of his heart beneath the mistletoe. For weeks, his mind has participated in a creative game of imagination where his lips communicate the solid declaration of his heart. During those weeks, he has been nagged by a capricious and dubious faith of what is more a dream to him, than any optimism of hope. So as Christmas Eve bids him in the vanquishing hours of celebration, his heart beholds a perfect vision of her, and swells in the genuine distinction beyond any fire that warmed the edifice of man. He reckons each berry pulled from the mistletoe, until there remains but a single magical berry. From that great abundance, his imagined hope lingers upon a precipice of doubt as a sage observer under the full power of the Christmas spirit, takes it upon himself to maneuver the young lady closer to the mistletoe in a frivolous errand of some sort. He dually negotiates his female treasure in an artfully and inconspicuous point below the mistletoe. In a

single dashing moment of courage, the boy's mind suspends to the operation of his heart, and acting out of pure spirit, he leans forward and sets the soft whisper of a kiss upon her lips, the first that either has ever known. The two draw the ritualistic berry from its place in idyllic glee, equivalent only to the enchanting Season of Christmas. Of course Christmas is also strongly framed in the performance of music, and one of Christmas's firmest blessings upon a home is the arrival of a chorus. The custom of Christmas Caroling is nestled in a charity as profound as the belief of a child born in Bethlehem. The gift of music is a language unto itself -- an eloquent key from God that insists upon no philosopher, scholar or interpreter for exaltation. In an age of candlelight, when the stars of the night awaken in man the reverence of his Creator, the people beneath Heaven's countenance elevated their voices in song. The first patriarchs of this tradition discovered themselves trampling out into the cold of a frozen night, stealing as thieves unto the doorsteps of homes. With a merry knock, they did commence a messianic hymn, kindling the sacred tones of the occupants' hearts, and all those that heard these earthly angels.

Any thought of tradition and our ancestors must include the oldest holiday traditions dating back to the infancy of Christendom, the Christmas Candle. Its light celebrated the coming of our King, and was prominently set in a window to guide the Christ child from home to home as he traveled on Christmas Eve, symbolically declaring Christ as the light of the world. With the fashionable acceptance of erecting a tree within the temple of the home, the imagination of some resourceful minds must have noted where one candle flickered in monk-like observance; a collection of them must necessitate a miracle. So when a resourceful woman or man beaded a few drops of wax upon a Christmas branch, and fastened the column of a candle to the frightened eyes of their spouse, not halting there, they did what all great parents do, and set their child upon a stool with a bucket of water, instructing them of their great responsibility to the season of Christmas. Their message included that their children need to be ready, should the symbolic Star of Wonder that blazed upon the tree move from its heavenly place.

Our ancestors were the builders of Christmas, and they discerned that it was not exclusively a season for children. With each passing year, its nostalgic importance has grown in consequence for adults because it is the one season best equipped to regenerate the spirit of a child in a fully grown adult...for each of us must receive the kingdom of God as a child.

Merry Christmas!  
[CraigHakola@aol.com](mailto:CraigHakola@aol.com)

City of Sierra Madre

### PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

To: Citywide  
From: The City of Sierra Madre  
Subject: City of Sierra Madre Community Facilities District No. 1 (Stonegate Drainage)  
Applicant: City of Sierra Madre  
Project Location: 1 Carter

City of Sierra Madre Community Facilities District No. 1 (Stonegate Drainage)

On January 10, 2012 at 6:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as practicable in the City Council Chambers at 232 West Sierra Madre Blvd, Sierra Madre, California, the City Council of the City of Sierra Madre will hold a public hearing on the establishment of City of Sierra Madre Community Facilities District No. 1 (Stonegate Drainage) (the "CFD"). The proposed CFD encompasses the planned Stonegate development, located at the intersection of Carter and Baldwin Avenues.

If the CFD is established, an annual special tax not to exceed \$238 per year (adjust annually for inflation) will be levied in perpetuity against each parcel in the CFD. Proceeds of the special tax will be used to fund the maintenance of drainage facilities in the development. Reference is made to Resolution No. 11-95, which is on file in the Office of the City Clerk of the City of Sierra Madre and available for public inspection, for a complete description of the CFD, the annual special tax, and the services to be funded.

At the hearing the testimony of all interested persons or taxpayers for or against the establishment of the district, the extent of the district, or the furnishing of specified types of services will be heard. If the owners of one-half or more of the area of the land in the territory proposed to be included in the district and not exempt from the special tax file written protests against the establishment of the district, and protests are not withdrawn so as to reduce the value of the protests to less than a majority, no further proceedings to create the specified community facilities district or to authorize the specified special tax shall be taken for a period of one year from the date of the decision of the legislative body.

The levy of the special tax will be subject to approval by the landowners of the CFD in a mail-ballot election. In that election, each landowner will have one vote for each acre, or portion thereof, owned within the CFD.

DATE AND TIME OF HEARING  
City of Sierra Madre  
City Council meeting  
Tuesday, January 10, 2012  
(Hearing begins at 6:30 p.m.)

PLACE OF HEARING  
City of Sierra Madre  
City Council Chambers  
232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.  
Sierra Madre, CA

All interested persons may attend this meeting and the City Council will hear them with respect thereto.

For further information on this subject, please contact Public Works at (626) 355-7135.

By Order of the City Council  
Bruce Inman, Public Works Director

City of Sierra Madre

### ORDINANCE NO. 1325

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIERRA MADRE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT WITH THE CITY OF SIERRA MADRE AND THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIERRA MADRE DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1,** That an amendment to the contract between the City of Sierra Madre and the Board of Administration, California Public Employees' Retirement System is hereby authorized, a copy of said amendment being attached hereto, marked Exhibit, and by such reference made a part hereof as though herein set out in full.

**SECTION 2,** the City Manager of the City of Sierra Madre is hereby authorized, empowered, and directed to execute said amendment for on behalf of the City.

**SECTION 3,** This Ordinance shall take effect 30 days after the date of its adoption, and prior to the expiration of 30 days from the passage thereof shall be published at least "one time" in the Mountain Views, a newspaper of general circulation, published and circulated in the City of Sierra Madre and thenceforth and thereafter the same shall be in full force and effect.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 13th day of December, 2011.

AYES: Mayor John Buchanan, Mayor Pro Tem Josh Moran, Council Member MaryAnn MacGillivray, Council Member Nancy Walsh  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None



**Sierra Madre Self Storage**  
130 E. Montecito Ave.  
Sierra Madre, CA 91024  
(626) 355-1837

## Storm Damage?

While we're well known around town as exceptional custom home builders, we're also here to help you recover from San Gabriel Valley's biggest storm in decades. Call on us, lifelong local residents and your neighbors, for free estimates and quick attention to:

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MountainViews-Observer

PasadenaAltadena

News From Your CommunityFor Your Community

## PCN Hires New Executive Director



Keri Stokstad, executive director of The Santa Barbara Channels, was hired to lead the Pasadena Community Access Corporation (PCAC) as the municipal operating company's new executive director. Stokstad is set to start Jan. 3.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Keri Stokstad to PCAC as our executive director," said Phil Hopkins, president of the PCAC Board of Directors. "After a national search, we found a distinguished, enthusiastic administrator who has a track record of professional leadership and the vision to guide PCAC and the Pasadena Community Network into the future."

Stokstad accepted the job in November.

The Pasadena Community Network includes The Arroyo Channel (public access), KPAS (government access) and KLRN-TV and PCC-TV (education access).

"I am confident that I can continue the legacy built by PCAC, which has a strong board, excellent staff and supportive community," said Stokstad. "I am aware of the potential that the medium of television has for creating an informed public and the importance of local programming. Access television is not only a great opportunity to build community but also teaches and empowers people to speak their own voice."

"There are many challenges facing community media and I believe these challenges have only increased my desire to contribute to its strength and longevity," she added.

Stokstad is a Western Region board member for the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) and was vice chair of ACM's national board in 2010.



### Pet of the Week

Meet Jennifer Gray. Jennifer Gray is a two-year-old gray Pit Bull. This girl is a staff and volunteer favorite and has gone out on our Mobile Unit several times. She's a Blue Ribbon dog meaning that she knows "come," "sit" and "stay" commands and will even show off her "Pit Walk" where she crawls across the floor.

Since Jennifer is a Blue Ribbon dog, her adoption fee is \$95, which includes his neuter surgery, a microchip, the first set of vaccinations, as well as a free follow-up health check at a participating vet. Also, new adopters will receive complimentary health and wellness exam from VCA Animal Hospitals. Ask an adoptions counselor for more information during your visit.

Call the Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA at 626.792.7151 to ask about A297950, Directions and photos of all pets can be found at [www.pasadenahumane.org](http://www.pasadenahumane.org).

## The Season For Giving



The Pasadena Armenian Police Advisory Council's (PAPAC) again held their annual Christmas toy drive and distribution at the city's police department lobby.

Pasadena Police Chief Phillip Sanchez, PAPAC resident Hovanes Sarkissian and Assemblymember Anthony Portantino all spoke about the importance of the event. Sarkissian stressed that this time of year was especially had for those hit by the falling economy.

This year's toy drive served as the 16th consecutive year that PAPAC has helped make the holiday special for children within our community.

PAPAC was established in 1995 to help bridge the gap between the Pasadena Police Department and the Armenian Community. The hundreds of toys collected were distributed to charitable organizations such as the Salvation Army and The Door of Hope.

## Police Make Statement on Occupy Rose Parade



Police said Thursday, "for the safety of parade participants and spectators, those marching in the Rose Parade are limited to official entries approved by the Pasadena Tournament of Roses. The Occupy the Rose Parade movement is not such an official entry and will not be taking part in the Rose Parade itself but will follow the Rose Parade at its conclusion. Once the parade has concluded, it is not uncommon for groups to walk the parade route under the supervision of the Pasadena Police Department. Police presence has been increased to assure the 123rd Rose Parade is enjoyed by the millions of fans around the world."

TEAPAC, a local offshoot of the conservative National Tea Party movement, backed off Wednesday from an earlier announcement that they planned to counter the Occupy the Rose Parade march with their own demonstration. Michael Alexander, president of TEAPAC, told KABC News they decided to back off after learning occupy protesters were not an official part of the Parade.

Pete Thottam, event organizer for Occupy the Rose Parade, said they wanted to send a message to the banks, including Wells Fargo, backing the floats, to "stop the foreclosures."

Wells Fargo leads the parade with a floragraph design that duplicates this year's theme poster, "Just Imagine..."

## Fire Department Reminds Folks Christmas Trees Burn



Fires increase during the holiday season due to decorations, candles and Christmas trees. You don't have to give up holiday traditions in the interest of safety if you follow some easy recommendations from Pasadena Fire Department.

Select a fresh Christmas tree that is kept in water at all times. Needles on fresh trees should be green and should not fall off easily. Don't put your tree up too early or leave it up longer than two weeks after the holidays. Dried out trees can ignite easily and create fires by spreading them rapidly to nearby combustible materials.

Place your tree in a safe place away from heat sources such as a fireplace or heat vent.

Maintain your holiday lights. Inspect your lights before you use them to ensure they don't have frayed wires, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets or excessive wear. Only use lighting that is listed by an approved testing laboratory.

Don't leave the lights on when you're not home. Avoid overloading electrical outlets. Don't link more than three light strands unless the directions indicate it is safe. Periodically check the wires; they should not be warm to the touch.

Use only non-flammable decorations that are placed away from heat vents. If you use an artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

If you use candles, make sure they are in a stable holder and place them where children and pets cannot knock them down. Do not leave lit candles unattended and never leave the house with candles burning. NEVER put candles on or near a Christmas tree or wreath.

Always remember to have fresh batteries in your smoke detectors and practice your family evacuation plans.

For more information contact Emergency Management Coordinator Lisa Derderian at [lderderian@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:lderderian@cityofpasadena.net) or (626) 744-7276

## NASA Discovers First Earth-Size Planets

NASA officials Tuesday that the Kepler mission has discovered the first Earth-size planets orbiting a sun-like star outside our solar system. The planets, called Kepler-20e and Kepler-20f, are too close to their star to be in the so-called habitable zone where liquid water could exist on a planet's surface, but they are the smallest exoplanets ever confirmed around a star like our sun.

The discovery marks the next important milestone in the ultimate search for planets like Earth. The new planets are thought to be rocky. Kepler-20e is slightly smaller than Venus, measuring 0.87 times the radius of Earth. Kepler-20f is slightly larger than Earth, measuring 1.03 times its radius. Both planets reside in a five-planet system called Kepler-20, approximately 1,000 light-years away in the constellation Lyra.

Kepler-20e orbits its parent star every 6.1 days and Kepler-20f every 19.6 days. These short orbital periods mean very hot, inhospitable worlds. Kepler-20f, at 800 degrees Fahrenheit (427 degrees Celsius), is similar to an average day on the planet Mercury. The surface temperature of Kepler-20e, at more than 1,400 degrees Fahrenheit (760 degrees Celsius), would melt glass.

"The primary goal of the Kepler mission is to find Earth-sized planets in the habitable zone," said Francois Fressin of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Mass., lead author of a new study published in the journal Nature. "This discovery demonstrates for the first time that Earth size planets exist around other stars, and that we are able to detect them."

### COUNTY CALLS FOR OVERSIGHT OF SURGERY CLINICS

Board of Supervisors approved an amendment by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich to pursue legislation to restore oversight of physician-owned ambulatory surgery clinics to the State Department of Public Health's Licensing Division.

"This responsibility was given to California's Medical Board which has a poor track record and is not capable of providing the kind of comprehensive oversight needed for these clinics," said Antonovich. "Patients undergoing surgeries in outpatient centers deserve to know that they have undergone the same rigorous scrutiny as hospitals and that they are not sacrificing quality of care or safety in doing so."

In 2008, State Licensing was stripped of its authority to license or regulate a surgical clinic that has any degree of physician ownership.

## Foundations Working To Help Renew Wind Ravaged Urban Forest



Two local foundations announced this week they are working together to help renew the public portion of Pasadena's urban forest by replacing thousands of lost trees.

The Pasadena Community Foundation has teamed up with Pasadena Beautiful Foundation to establish the Windstorm Tree Fund for Pasadena to raise money for the purchase and planting of replacement trees on city property.

Community Foundation, a non-profit, tax-exempt public charity created by and for the people of Pasadena, said they will match up to \$10,000 in donations to the fund. All donations to the Windstorm Tree Fund for Pasadena are tax deductible and organizers stress that every penny donated will be used for the sole purpose of planting new trees.

"We all treasure the beauty of Pasadena, and trees are an essential part of that," said City Manager Michael Beck. "Without us having to ask, these two organizations saw the need, came to the city and offered their help. In a time of very tight budgets, this kind of support from our residents is especially welcome and we're very grateful."

The city lost close 1,100 trees of all sizes and species on streets and in parks during the recent hurricane-force windstorm and at least 70 more park trees have been damaged and are being assessed for their chances of survival.

"Trees are one of the blessings of the city that everyone can enjoy," explained Jennifer DeVoll, executive director of the Pasadena Community Foundation. "Partnering with Pasadena Beautiful made sense. They have such a long track record of working with the city to plant trees and protect our urban forest."

Pasadena Beautiful Foundation, a non-profit community organization, has worked with the city of Pasadena for 50 years to plant and protect trees.

"Our urban forest is what makes our community livable," said Emina Darakjy, past president of Pasadena Beautiful Foundation. "Besides adding a natural beauty, trees provide quantifiable economic, ecosystem and health benefits." Donations to the fund may be made at [www.pasadenabeautiful.org](http://www.pasadenabeautiful.org) or mailed to Pasadena Beautiful Foundation, 140 S. Lake Ave., Suite 268, Pasadena CA 91101.

## PUBLIC INVITED TO VIEW ROSE BOWL GAME TROPHY



Rose Bowl Game fans have the opportunity to stop by the Pasadena Tiffany & Co. store to view the official trophy presented to the winning team and have their photo taken.

Tiffany & Co. has designed and crafted the Rose Bowl Game Trophy since 2004; the trophy features a ¾ size football in kicking position rendered entirely in sterling silver.

Created at Tiffany's workshop in Parsippany, New Jersey, master artisans employ age-old techniques including spinning, silversmithing, chasing, etching and polishing to create the iconic trophy. It is comprised of nearly sixteen pounds of sterling silver, stands nearly twenty-one inches tall and takes approximately two weeks to complete.

The Rose Bowl Game Trophy, also known as The Leishman Trophy, is named after 1920 Tournament of Roses President William L. Leishman, who was responsible for the construction of the Rose Bowl Stadium and his son, 1939 Tournament of Roses President Lathrop K. Leishman, who was instrumental in helping establish the Rose Bowl Game as "The Granddaddy of Them."

*Photographer will be available each day from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. and photos will be emailed to guests following the event.*

## Citizen Journalism Meet-up

**Learn not just how to blog but how to report the news**

The Pasadena Community Network and this newspaper are holding a workshop on Citizen Journalism.

This group is the place where aspiring journalists can learn from trained professionals and support their local community by covering what's really happening in their neighborhoods.

We will put the news in your hands. Learn how to find the story, the tools needed to capture the story and the means to tell the story using the power



of video, audio and print along with online social media. The next meeting is Jan. 3 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Pasadena Community Network - Studio G, 2057 N. Los Robles Ave. For more info call 626.794.8585 or visit [pasadenan.com](http://pasadenan.com).

## Share Your Thoughts about, Biking, Walking in the City

Pasadenans participated in four public workshops this fall as part of the update of the General Plan's Mobility Element.

The workshops gave residents and business owners the opportunity to share their thoughts about the future of driving, biking, walking and riding transit in Pasadena.

Those who could not attend can still participate by submitting comments online. Background information and a brief questionnaire are now available on the city's website.

The input received from the workshops and online questionnaire will help shape transportation policies for a healthier and more economically vibrant community. In spring 2012, the draft plan with proposed policies will be presented to the community at another series of workshops.

For more information call (626) 744-7464.



# 'The Spirit of The Season



Even the recent windstorm couldn't damper the holiday spirit in Sierra Madre. During the last month, life has returned to normal, even if it required stepping over tree limbs! From left to right, starting at the top, clockwise we have, Author Michelle Zack and Senior Commissioner Amy Putnam selling the SMHPS's book at Dicken's Village (see their ad on page 3); Also at the village, a few days before the storm was our anonymous Santa In Training.

Just as we were going to press, Frosty the Snowman, who has appeared in Kersting Court every year but one since 1988, returned to Kersting Court Friday thanks to Andrew Graper, Dave Forrester and Augie Eck, and three truckloads of "snow" donated by Pickwick Gardens of Burbank.. (Photo courtesy Bill Coburn)

The Sierra Madre Rose Princesses served as helpers to Santa during Dickens Village while one mystery guest was enamored with the 'Christmas Tree' near the snow hill by Bank of the West. A little later in the evening, the Thomas girls paid Santa a visit.

Sierra Madre's first snow for the season drew a big crowd the Saturday after Thanksgiving courtesy of the Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce. (Actually, the Chamber sponsored the entire Dicken's Village event.)

And amazingly, the Creche figures in Kersting Court have remained unscathed over the past four weeks. The picture above was taken the morning *after* the windstorm and not one piece of straw was even out of place! (Trees and debris were all around it, though.)

And finally, where's Santa going? (Right) Oh, IT'S GEORGE, that's former Mayor George Maurer wishing everyone a very Mery Christmas! (Photo courtesy M. Porretta) Except where noted, all other photos are by S. Henderson/MVNews





**"What's Going On?"***News and Views from Joan Schmidt*

"To be killed in war is not the worst thing that can happen. To be lost is not the worst thing that can happen ... to be forgotten is the worst."

*Pierre Claeyssems (1909-2003)*

This past weekend we traveled to Davis to visit my younger daughter, Kristine and family. On Sunday, Kristine, my hubby Bob and I drove up to Cloverdale to see Cousin Sue and her husband Bob. We "oohed" and "awed" over antique furniture from our late great Aunt Lizzie and then sat down to a sumptuous lunch of HOMEMADE corn chowder, Italian sausage, ravioli! After much reminiscing and discussion of today's economy, we decided to take Bellaire, their recently acquired rescued pup (either Dalmatian or pointer) and a real sweetie, for a walk at the Cloverdale Cemetery.

The cemetery is in very bad shape,



although recent funding has begun the restoration process. When we visited Sue a few years back, we had gone there after touring the town because Sue wanted me to see the Allegrini plot. How many Allegrini's do you know? Although my maiden name is Allegrini and is quite common in Italy, there are NOT a lot of Allegrini's in America! My Italian Nonno (Grandpop) and his brothers learned how to make statues in Switzerland. They left their native San Quirico, Italy to settle in Philly, where they founded the Pennsylvania Statue Company. But sadly, I don't believe the Allegrinis buried at Cloverdale are our relatives.

When we entered the cemetery, Sue excitedly told me that there were wreaths on several Veterans' graves. This is part of the "Wreaths across

**WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA**

America" campaign, which began in Maine. The Arlington Project, of ceremoniously placing a wreath on every veteran's grave on the 2nd Saturday in December, as is done at Arlington National Cemetery, has been the quiet mission of Morrill Worcester and his family since 1992. In 2006 after news of Worcester's



mission was spread across the Internet, he was contacted by the Patriot Guard Riders who have generously offered their help with the project. Since then the Patriot Guard Riders have escorted the wreath trucks down the East Coast for a nine-day trek that begins at Quoddy Head State Park, ME and ends at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. Along the way, there are stops at schools,

Veterans' homes and monuments. Their mission is Remember, Honor and Teach. This "parade" of truckers, supporters and well-wishers has become an annual event and great teaching opportunity to educate what our Veterans have done.

On Saturday, December 3, there was a Wreath Ceremony at Perry Point Bridge, Calais, ME. Afterwards, they continued into MA. There, on December 4, they visited Hermon Elementary School and Cheverus HS. December 5 saw a stop at Topsfield Fairgrounds, NH. December 6 marked arrival in NY with a stop at Orange County Community College, Newburgh and the United States Military Academy, West Point, where a ceremony was held. On December 7, sites included Liberty State Park, NY and the Viet Nam memorial in NJ.

December 8 saw stops at Philadelphia Charter High School and Valley Forge Military Academy in PA. December 9 brought a stop at Middletown HS in Delaware and a Wreath Ceremony at Legion Post # 278 Stevenson, MD. That afternoon there was a wreath laying at the WWII Memorial in the City of Annapolis, followed by a

wreath laying at the Annapolis Naval Academy Monument, and there was an evening rally at the Knights of Columbus Hall, College Park, MD. On December 10, the entourage arrived at Arlington, VA. There was an Opening Ceremony followed by a Flyby of HMX helicopters. Wreath ceremonies followed at many locations. They included President Kennedy's grave, USS Maine Mast, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, WWII Memorial, Korean War Memorial and Viet Nam Memorial.

Because there were wreaths over graves in Cloverdale's Cemetery, I went on line to find out more info. The above information pertains to the main event. However, all across the country, this wonderful event has taken place. If you go to "Wreaths across America", you will find a web site. There is a map of the United States and you can see where this has happened. There are MANY sites across California. In southern CA they include Palmdale, Lancaster, Brea's Memory Gardens Memorial Park, San Diego's Miramar National Cemetery, National Cemeteries in Riverside and Los Angeles, San Pedro's Merchant Marine Veterans Cemetery and cemeteries in Long Beach and Corona Del Mar, just to name a few.

What an awesome tribute to remembering our much-deserving Veterans. Sponsors played an important role in this outstanding tribute across the country. "Thank you" to all who helped in this great effort.

**SBA OFFERS DISASTER ASSISTANCE TO CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY THE LOS ANGELES HIGH WINDS**

Low-interest federal disaster loans are available to California residents and business owners affected by the Los Angeles County High Winds from November 30 through December 4, 2011, announced U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Karen G. Mills. SBA acted under its own authority to declare a disaster following a December 13 request from Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.'s designated representative, Mike Dayton, Acting Secretary of California Emergency Management Agency.

The disaster declaration makes SBA assistance available in Los Angeles County and the neighboring counties of Kern, Orange, San Bernardino and Ventura.

"The U. S. Small Business Administration is strongly committed to providing Californians with the most effective and customer-focused response possible, and we will be there to provide access to federal disaster loans to help finance recovery for residents and businesses affected by the disaster," said Mills. "Getting our businesses and communities up and running after a disaster is our highest priority at SBA."

"Low-interest federal disaster loans are available to homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private, nonprofit organizations whose property was damaged or destroyed by the disaster," said SBA's Los Angeles District Director Victor Parker. "Beginning Monday, December 19, SBA customer service representatives will be on hand at the following Disaster Loan Outreach Center to issue loan applications, answer questions about SBA's disaster loan program, explain the application process, and help each individual complete their application," Parker continued.

The center will be open on the days and times indicated. No appointment is necessary.

Los Angeles County  
Disaster Loan Outreach Center  
Pasadena Fire Headquarters  
(Across from the Hilton Hotel)  
199 South Los Robles Avenue, Suite 550 (5th floor)  
(Validated underground parking is available)  
Pasadena, CA 91101

Opens Monday, December 19 at 1 pm  
Open Tuesday, December 20 through Friday, December 23  
9 am to 5:30 pm  
Re-opens Monday, January 9, 2012 at 9 am  
Open Monday, January 9 through Friday, January 20  
9 am to 5:30 pm, Mondays through Fridays

Disaster loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property.

Businesses of any size and private, nonprofit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets. SBA can also lend additional funds to homeowners and businesses to help with the cost of making improvements that protect, prevent or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future.

For small businesses and most private, nonprofit organizations of any size and aquaculture businesses, SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. EIDL assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any property damage.

Interest rates can be as low as 2.063 percent for homeowners and renters, 3 percent for private, nonprofit organizations and 4 percent for businesses, with terms up to 30 years. Loan amounts and terms are set by SBA and are based upon each applicant's financial condition.

Applicants may apply online via SBA's secure Web site at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

Disaster loan information and application forms are also available from SBA's Customer Service Center by calling SBA at (800) 659-2955, emailing [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov), or visiting SBA's Web site at [www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance](http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance). Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may call (800) 877-8339.

The filing deadline to return applications for property damage is February 17, 2012. The deadline to return economic injury applications is September 19, 2012.

*For more information, visit SBA's Web site at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).*

**NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**
**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL – to Christians and Pagans alike [and Happy Hannukah, Winter Solstice, and Kwanzaa as well]**

*An exploration of our Deep Winter Commemoration*

by Christopher Nyerges

As a nation with short-term memory, eager for the "next thing," it is no wonder we have no sense of history or a sense of the context in which our current traditions were established. The current Christmas tradition is a good example where we seem to have lost our sense of tradition, history, and the concept of "majority rules."

First off, let's go back to the beginning. Jesus, a Jewish rabbi, did not establish the "Christmas season." It had already been in full-swing for a millennia or more before his time, in the form of the Winter Solstice commemorations of the "old Religion" of Mythraism (et al). Once Saint Paul proactively altered the basic Jewish dietary practices, and made things a bit easier for "new converts," Christianity took root as a distinct sect, apart from its Jewish roots. Whereas Jews called everyone else heathen (those who lived on the heath, or common) or goy, the New Religion of Christianity called everyone else "pagans."

Let's stop a minute and examine that now-derogatory term. The Pagani were originally country folk, those who lived outside the grasp of Roman power. The term had no religious overtones. But gradually, those who chose to cling to their old traditions were then called "the pagans," meaning "anyone else but us". It was no different than Muslims looking down their noses at non-Muslims, the so-called "infidels."

By the time the Fourth Century rolled around, the new Christian Church was also the dominant political power. Church and State were one and the same. And a savvy leader – Constantine – realized that while it was easy to declare Christianity the "official religion," it was less simple to change the hearts and minds of the people. So what did he do? He stole Christmas fair and square from the pagans. He "Christianized" all of the Old Religion Holy Days, and declared that they were now Christian, with new names in some cases. This is why the Druid Feast of Samhain became All Hallows Eve, and the ancient Ishtar became Easter, and why we have the odd St. Valentine's day traditions, a throwback to Roman time. And the ancient Winter Solstice commemorations morphed into The Mass of Christ (Christ-Mass).

Most of the basic symbols of the modern Christmas season pre-date Jesus: the wreath, the mistletoe, the evergreens, gift exchanges, cards, the decorated tree, etc..

Astronomers and historians know with certainty that Jesus was NOT born on or near the Winter Solstice due to the clues given in the New Testament. For example, animals are not in the fields in late December, and there was no comet or conjunction of planets that coincided with that time of the year, and the census that caused

Mary and Joseph to travel did not occur in late December, etc.

Santa Claus is a latter-day addition, from an actual bishop in the church, Nicholas of Asia Minor, who gave gifts to needy families around the already-established Christmas season. Known as Saint Nicholas, his name is rendered into something that sounds like "Santa Claus" when translated into other languages. I have heard some folks who are upset that Santa seems to be "the new Christ" in Christmas, who have even gone so far as to call Santa "pagan." That's silly! "Santa Claus" is based on a real person from the Christian tradition.

So, all this said, why are we afraid to say "Merry Christmas"? We stole the Holy Day fair and square from the Pagans, who are still free to commemorate Winter Solstice. There is no conflict, and there is no real issue in terms of State-sponsored religion. Atheists and sue-happy litigants should attend to their own matters, and keep their long noses out of the business of others that does not in any imaginable way "hurt" them. How do the "stolen from pagans Christmas commemorations" in ANY way hurt or harm atheists, or others of different religions? If Christianity, in whatever form, is the will of the majority of the people, how is that harmful?

No one in the broader society, after all, objects if Japanese celebrate Obon widely in their own communities, or when Muslims commemorate Ramadan as they see fit, or when Jews commemorate Hannukah, Yom Kippur, or any of the other well-established Holy Days. Nor is there any objection as those of African descent celebrate the "new" secular holiday of Kwanzaa.

The Christmas holiday is unique and special for millions of people. It is the time of least light, when our minds and bodies and emotions yearn for "the light." It does not really matter that Jesus was not born on Christmas day, if that is the day millions of Christians choose to commemorate it. What matters is that we use the symbols of these days to remind ourselves of our spiritual heritage – something ALL people share. We are ALL, after all, descendants from the same Spiritual Father and Spiritual Mother.

This should be an uplifting time for all, when we joyously and sincerely embrace others, and wish them a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hannukah, a wonderful Winter Solstice, the best Kwanzaa, and a happy New Year!

*[Nyerges is the author of A Personal Christmas Odyssey and other books and booklets. He also writes a blog, lectures, and conducts classes. For his free newsletter, contact School of Self-reliance, Box 41834, Eagle Rock, CA 90041, or [ChristopherNyerges.com](mailto:ChristopherNyerges.com).]*

**PET OF THE WEEK****Peaches: Animal ID #A4370898**

Meet a dog that melts the hearts of everyone that meets her, the cute and extremely cuddly Peaches (A4370898). Peaches is an outstanding one-year-old black and white spayed female Pit Bull or Am-Staff mix puppy who was found in El Monte on December 2nd and brought to the Baldwin Park shelter. Weighing forty-nine pounds, this volunteer favorite walks extremely well on the leash, can deliver high-fives on command, and is well socialized. She has passed her shelter-given temperament test with flying colors. Peaches is good with everyone, human and canine, and is exceptionally well-behaved. She is a calm, cool, quiet, graceful and gentle puppy. Highly affectionate, she gives tons of kisses and her favorite place to be is in somebody's lap. Peaches makes great eye contact and is patient enough to understand that direction from her handler will follow. A genuinely sweet girl, Peaches melts into people so well and everyone that has met her can attest that she will be the perfect indoor pet for an individual or family living in a private home. To watch a video of the amazing Peaches, please visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfNIIJO9U9c>

To meet Peaches in person, please see her at the Baldwin Park Shelter, located at 4275 N. Elton, Baldwin Park, CA 91706 (Phone:

626-430-2378). She is currently available now. For any inquiries about Peaches, please reference her animal ID number: A4370898. The shelter is open seven days a week, 12 pm-7 pm Monday-Thursday and 10am-5pm Friday-Sunday. This is a high-intake shelter with a great need for adoptions. For more information about Peaches or the adoption process, contact United Hope for Animals Volunteer Adoption Coordinator Samantha at [samanthasayon@gmail.com](mailto:samanthasayon@gmail.com) or 661-309-2674. To learn more about United Hope for Animals' partnership with the Baldwin Park Shelter through its Shelter Support Program, as well as the many dogs of all breeds, ages, and sizes available for adoption in local shelters, visit <http://www.unitedhope4animals.org/about-us/shelter-support-program/>.


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# ARCADIA

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

Pasadena

Altadena

Monrovia

## CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY TO GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA AT CAMINO GROVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN ARCADIA

by Helen Simmons Conroy

It wasn't Santa's reindeer that visited Camino Grove, Friday, December 9, but four-legged creatures of another variety – four adorable pups-in-training, representing Guide Dogs of America (GDA). Accompanied by their puppy raisers, and GDA spokesperson, Mary Monroe, the furry canines lay like mellow jazz players, on the floor of the school auditorium, as Monroe presented students with information on the guide dog program. Students had been provided with educational materials by GDA prior to the visit, tying guide dog awareness in with two pieces of core literature that 4th graders read about people with blindness.

As Monroe highlighted the life-changing services that GDA provides free of charge to people with disabilities, students listened attentively. Occasionally, the pups stole the show -- when one decided to stretch out on its back to take a snooze and another made a low, whimpering cry, as if to say, "Why am I up on this stage, when I could be outside sniffing trees?" Monroe described her role as a puppy raiser, training pups from the time they are 7-8 weeks old until they are a year and a half. To illustrate the challenges involved in training, Monroe asked students to raise their hands if they owned a dog. She then asked students to keep their hands raised if their dog could handle being at Disneyland, refrain from nibbling on popcorn strewn on the floor at a movie theatre, and refuse to move (use "intelligent disobedience") in order to prevent their owner from coming into harm's way. Hands slowly went down as each added challenge was stated. Guide dog etiquette came next: never distract a guide dog in training or working guide dog; talk to the blind person, not the dog; and always ask permission to pet a guide dog.

When addressing the difficulty of having to say goodbye to these pups as a puppy raiser, once they move on to the Sylmar facility for advanced training, Monroe stated, "When you think about the purpose of it, it makes it so worth it. It's a way to give back, to change their lives (people with blindness)." She explained to students that with a



Camino Grove 4th graders present GDA puppy raisers and pups-in-training with donations for the puppies and adult guide dogs in advanced training that reside at the Sylmar facility.

guide dog by their side, people with blindness are no longer afraid to go out into the world. "They are always so grateful that we do this," Monroe beamed.

Next, Monroe talked about the Guide Dogs of America Training Center in Sylmar: its intensive training program; free tours; and need for puppy raisers. She concluded by encouraging all students to talk to their parents about the possibility of being puppy raisers. Students then presented Monroe with an early Christmas present for GDA: donations of blankets, towels, and durable dog toys, for the puppies and adult guide dogs in advanced training that reside at the Sylmar facility. As 4th graders were dismissed, the pups-in-training trotted off like Santa's reindeer, having played a crucial role in spreading awareness about their noble cause. If and when these pups graduate from the program (only 40% make the cut), they'll be giving someone a pretty impressive gift, even by Santa's standards, acting as eyes for someone who can't see -- opening up their world, with a better quality of life.

## Arcadia Police Blotter

For the period of Sunday, December 11, through Saturday, December 17, the Police Department responded to 870 calls for service of which 111 required formal investigations. The following is a summary report of the major incidents handled by the Department during this period.

### Sunday, December 11:

At about 10:57 a.m., an officer responded to Macy's at the Santa Anita Mall, 400 South Baldwin Avenue, in regards to a theft report. A female adult was seen carrying numerous articles of clothing and an empty Macy's shopping bag into a fitting room. The suspect exited the fitting room carrying a full Macy's shopping bag and empty hangers, and left the store without making payment. The 27-year-old Vietnamese female was arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

At approximately 8:03 p.m., an officer responded to the 100 block of West Live Oak Avenue regarding a male adult hiding behind some bushes. Upon contact with the subject, the officer noticed an odor of alcohol emitting from his person. An investigation revealed the 39-year-old White male was under the influence of alcohol. He was arrested for Drunk in Public and transported to the Arcadia City Jail without incident.

### Monday, December 12:

Shortly after 2:30 p.m., an officer responded to the 1000 block of Highland Oaks Drive regarding a suspicious circumstances report. The reporting party explained a White male adult in his late 20's, about 5'5" tall, 165 lbs., wearing a brown beanie and unknown color jacket and jeans, approached her front door and told her that her roof had a leak. The subject stated he was from "Five Star Roofing" and asked if he could come inside. The subject stated he did not have any business cards available and asked the resident if she could provide him a pen so that he could write down his information. The resident refused to open the door. A second White male subject, in his late 30's, about 5'10" tall, thin build, wearing a beanie, green shirt, and blue jeans, was observed standing by a white pick-up truck parked in front of her house. The subjects were last seen driving away northbound on Highland Oaks Avenue. Officers conducted an area check which proved negative.

Around 4:21 p.m., an officer responded to the 000 block of West Lemon Avenue regarding a residential burglary report. The victim returned home after running errands and noticed his front door was open. Unknown suspect(s) smashed a rear sliding glass window that led into the kitchen, ransacked the home, and fled undetected. Several items were reported missing.

### Tuesday, December 13:

At about 7:49 a.m., officers were dispatched to the 200 block of East Haven Avenue in regards to a fire assist. Upon arrival, officers noticed black smoke coming from the vents and made several calls inside the house to no avail. The Arcadia Fire Department responded to the scene and forced entry. The fire was safely extinguished, however two dogs and a cat were found dead. An investigation revealed the resident left some candles burning inside the house.

At approximately 12:04 p.m., an officer responded to the 900 block of Balboa Drive regarding a stolen vehicle report. The victim was doing yard work at his customer's house and left his grey Nissan pickup truck parked to the front of the location with the keys inside. When the victim returned to the front yard, he noticed his truck was missing and observed an unoccupied black Nissan pickup truck still running in the middle of the street. An investigation revealed an unknown suspect abandoned a stolen vehicle out of Los Angeles, took the victim's vehicle, and fled the area out of site.

### Wednesday, December 14:

Shortly after 6:50 p.m., an officer responded to

the 600 block of West Duarte Road regarding a theft report. The victim explained he accidentally left his debit card in the ATM at Bank of America, 627 West Duarte Road. A short time later, the victim returned to the ATM but could not locate his card and discovered a fraudulent withdrawal from his account. A follow-up investigation is being conducted by the Detective Bureau to determine if the suspect was caught on the ATM's video surveillance.

Between 5:50 p.m. and 8:45 p.m., a Cadillac Escalade was burglarized in the parking lot of the Santa Anita Mall, 400 South Baldwin Avenue. Unknown suspect(s) entered the vehicle by an unknown means, took the GPS unit and third row seat, and fled undetected. No forced entry was found.

### Thursday, December 15:

Shortly after 12:40 p.m., an officer responded to the Arcadia Police Department front counter in regards to an identity theft investigation. The victim explained he discovered numerous unauthorized charges and cash advances on his Discover and Chase credit cards. He learned that someone in Texas was added to both accounts and was subsequently issued new access cards. The victim did not authorize the new user and is desirous of prosecution.

Around 5:52 p.m., an officer responded to Sephora at the Santa Anita Mall, 400 South Baldwin Avenue, in reference to a female adult in custody for theft. The 47-year-old White suspect left the store without paying for two fragrances, which she concealed in her purse and a used shopping bag. She was transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

### Friday, December 16:

At about 1:45 a.m., officers responded to the Santa Anita Mall, 400 South Baldwin Avenue, in regards to a fight in progress. A large group of Asian male adult subjects were loitering in the parking lot. When they were asked to leave by mall security, one subject punched a security officer in the face while another subject struck a security officer in the head with his elbow. An 18-year-old and 25-year-old were arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail without incident.

Around 11:18 p.m., an officer conducted an enforcement stop on a vehicle for speeding and lane swerving eastbound on Las Tunas Drive at Baldwin Avenue. Upon contact, the officer noticed an odor of alcohol emitting from the driver's breath and person. An investigation revealed the driver was under the influence of alcohol. The 38-year-old Asian male was arrested for DUI with a blood alcohol level greater than 0.08%.

### Saturday, December 17:

Shortly after 7:50 a.m., an officer was dispatched to the 400 block of Fairview Avenue in reference to a residential burglary investigation. On Friday, December 16th, a White male suspect in his 30's, wearing grey pants and a grey jacket, knocked on the victim's door and explained he was from the "Water Department" and needed to check her water for possible contaminants. The suspect was let into the home, at which time he explained he needed to check all the faucets and proceeded upstairs while the victim stayed downstairs. A short time later, the suspect came back downstairs and said the water was safe. After the suspect left the residence, the victim walked into her bedroom and noticed her drawers had been ransacked. Jewelry and cash were reported missing.

14. At approximately 6:17 a.m., an officer responded to H&M at the Santa Anita Mall, 400 South Baldwin Avenue, in regards to a theft report. Two suspects were seen concealing merchandise in a used shopping bag and left the store without making payment. A 21-year-old Chinese male and 22-year-old Chinese male were arrested for Petty Theft and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

## Santa Anita mounts new marketing

– By Scott Hettrick, Arcadia's Best

As Santa Anita Park prepares to open its 75th winter/spring meeting on Dec. 26, the 77-year-old race track (it was closed for two seasons during World War II) is targeting a new, broader and younger audience, and aiming to capitalize on the new HBO TV series "Luck" with a new Luck Lounge, Luck tours, and VIP Luck contests.

"Our message will be a combination of cutting edge digital technology and an aggressive outdoor billboard campaign designed to engage a younger audience," said recently promoted Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Chris Quinn. "We'll be flooding the L.A. market with 20 traditional billboards and we'll also be a part of the electronic billboard at Angel Stadium, right off the 57 freeway in Anaheim. The total combined views or impressions from all of this is more than 30 million per month."

Quinn said he hopes to introduce the historic sports venue to many thousands of new fans, including more Hispanics.

"We're going to provide entertainment in addition to racing that will appeal to this very important part of our fan base," said Quinn. "The Latino audience is a big part of our on-track business

and we intend to provide them with an overall entertainment package that they will embrace."

As the new HBO TV series "Luck" premieres January 29 (following a sneak preview on Dec. 11), Santa Anita will also dovetail marketing with HBO's promotion of the Dustin Hoffman/Nick Nolte/Dennis Farina series to emphasize the track's connection to the entertainment industry.

"We believe that "Luck" has tremendous potential for us here at Santa Anita," Quinn said. "This is the first time Dustin Hoffman has ever done television and although some are going to find it controversial, we think this is what racing needs in order to break through and attract new fans."

Construction is underway to create a Luck Lounge on the main floor of the grandstand, with a grand opening scheduled for Sunshine Millions Day, Jan. 28.

"Luck" has been shot in large-part here at Santa Anita and many of the characters that appear can be traced to real-life horsemen, fans and employees here," said Quinn.

Editor's Note: "Hettrick's writing for Arcadias-Best.com is not related to his role as Executive Director of the Arcadia Chamber of Commerce."

## UPCOMING SANTA ANITA EVENTS

### Opening Day

Monday, December 26 – Opening Day Calendar Giveaway, Fascinator & Fedora Hat Contest, Guaranteed \$400,000 Pick-4, Strub Series Handicapping Contest Rd. 1, Red Bull Skydivers, Jockey Cam Debuts

### Week 1

Thursday, December 29 – Photography Day  
Sunday, January 1 – Long Sleeve T-shirt Giveaway, ShowVivor Presented by Treasure Island Begins at Santaanita.com  
Monday, January 2 – Holiday Monday Racing, \$2 Beer, Hot Dogs and Soft Drink

### Week 2

Saturday, January 7 – HBO's "Luck" Premiere Ticket Drawing

### Week 3

Saturday, January 14– Kick-off event for College Ambassador Program  
Sunday, January 15 – Santa Anita Walk of Fame Unveiling  
Monday, January 16 – MLK Jr. Day, \$2 Beer, Hot Dogs and Soft Drinks

### Week 4

Saturday, January 21 – Treasure Island Las Vegas Getaway Drawing

### Week 5

Saturday, January 28 – Sunshine Millions Day, Gourmet Food Truck and Craft Beer Festival, Miss Sunshine Millions Bikini Contest, Folding Beach Chair Giveaway, Unveiling of the "Luck Lounge"

### Week 6

Saturday, February 4 – Strub Stakes Day, "The Club" VIP Party, Guaranteed Pick-4, Sunday, February 5 – Super Bowl Sunday, 11 AM Early First Post Time

### Week 7

Saturday, February 11 – Sirona's Pizza Kitchen Grand Opening  
Sunday, February 12 – Early Valentine's Day Turf Club Promotion

### Week 8

Saturday, February 18 – Law Enforcement Appreciation Day  
Sunday, February 19 – Cajun Festival  
Monday, February 20 – Presidents' Day \$2 Beer, Hot Dogs and Soft Drinks

### Week 9

Saturday, February 25 – Jockey Autograph Session

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# MONROVIA - DUARTE

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

Pasadena

Altadena

Monrovia

## PROPERTY DAMAGED BY STORM-POSSIBLE TAX RELIEF AND MORE

By Joan Schmidt

The Duarte City Council Meeting on December 13th began with the Flag Salute, Moment of Reflection and Physical and Mental warm-up. The Public was then given a power point presentation and briefed on the storm damage and the City's action. On December 1, Code Compliance Officers canvassed the neighborhoods to gain visual assessment. Three Special Assignment Deputies supplemented patrols. There were 200 destroyed and 400 damaged trees in the City. Forty lineal feet of sidewalks required repair. Cleanup was aided by Burrtec providing free public drop-off of debris at four sites.

The next part of the meeting gave a brief presentation about Duarte's Promise: The Alliance for Youth. Back in 2000, Duarte's commitment to youth through a host of character building programs and a promise to do more to promote a better future for young people earned the City an official designation as a Community of Promise from America's Promise-The Alliance for Youth, the national organization chaired by Retired General Colin Powell. Duarte was the first city in the San Gabriel Valley to join the national movement. The five promises are:

- Ongoing relationships with caring adults-parents, mentors, tutors, coaches.
- Safe places and structured activities during non-school hours.
- A healthy start and future.
- Marketable skills though effective education.

## Monrovia Police Blotter

*During the last seven-day period, December 8-14, the Police Department handled 496 service events, resulting in 96 investigations. Following are the highlighted issues and events. To see a complete listing of crimes reported, go to <http://www.crimemapping.com/map/ca/monrovia> for crime mapping.*

### Dog Bite

On December 8 at 10:27 a.m., an animal control officer responded to a residence in the 100 block of Encinitas on the report of a dog bite. During the power outage on December 1, an 80-year-old female subject was in her front yard when a dog approached her and bit her on the arm. The dog owner tried to stop the dog, but failed. The woman fell to the ground and was assisted by the dog owner. The woman refused medical attention and no call was made to police to report the incident. On December 8, the woman was taken to a doctor and discovered she had sustained a broken wrist. The woman's daughter then called police to report the incident. An animal control officer was dispatched to investigate.

### Robbery

On December 8 at 10:30 a.m., a male victim was walking in the 1100 block of Norumbega when a dark colored sedan stopped ahead of him and a male suspect exited the vehicle. The sedan drove up the street and the victim continued walking. The suspect then approached the victim and pointed a black handgun at him and demanded his property. The victim handed over his binoculars. The suspect demanded the victim's wallet and then reached for the victim's rear pocket, but the victim slapped the suspect's hand away. The suspect then fled south on Norumbega and got back into the sedan, which was waiting down the street. The vehicle was last seen heading south on Norumbega out of sight. The victim did not call police until 5 p.m. that evening, after being encouraged to report the incident by family members. The suspect is described as a male Black, 20 years old, 6'1", weighing approximately 200 pounds. Investigation continuing.

### Vehicle Burglary

On December 9 at 4:09 a.m., officers were dispatched to the 100 block of West Cypress regarding a vehicle burglary. The victim parked his car at approximately 6 p.m. and went to work with his co-worker. On his return at about 4:05 a.m., he discovered a window on his vehicle smashed and his stereo missing. A screwdriver was found on the front seat. Investigation continuing.

### Driving Under the Influence - Suspect Arrested

On December 11 at 2:33 a.m., an officer on patrol observed a subject drive through a stop sign at Myrtle and Walnut. The officer stopped the driver and noticed a strong odor of alcohol and, after investigation, determined the driver to be under the influence of alcohol. The driver was arrested.

### Traffic Collision - Vehicle vs. Pedestrian

On December 11 at 6:04 a.m., a woman was walking to work and crossing in the crosswalk on a green light when she was struck by a driver whose windows were fogged up. The driver did not see the pedestrian in the crosswalk. The pedestrian complained of pain in her arm and side and was taken to a hospital for treatment.

### Stolen Bicycle Recovered - Suspect Arrested

On December 11 at 7:21 p.m., an officer took a report on a bicycle that was stolen from the 700 block of West Walnut. At 8:11 p.m., another officer stopped a bicyclist in the 100 block of West Maple for not having a light during darkness. The bicyclist had a

· Opportunities to give back to the community.

During the meeting, several youths received certificates and said how gratifying it was to work with Senior citizens.

Most recently, the City of Duarte held its 10th annual "Holliday of Promise" which benefitted 450 families! Besides Duarte's Promise, The Alliance for youth, many businesses, schools and non-profits worked together on their great undertaking!

Also during the meeting the "Junior Hawks Teams" and its coaches were honored. There were MANY Certificates handed out and there were SEVERAL volunteer mothers honored. It was a great City meeting. Much information was given out and many awards presented!

At the last Duarte City Council Meeting, I sat next to Carol Wong Quan from Los Angeles County Assessor John Noguez' office. Ms. Wong addressed the Council to relay information that if any property owners who have been affected by recent high winds to contact his office as soon as possible to seek information about potential tax relief if wind related storm damage amounts to \$10,000 or more.

For more information about MISFORTUNE/CALAMITY REASSESSMENT FORM, please contact Office of the County Assessor at 213-974-8658 or 626-258-6001.

warrant for his arrest and was taken into custody; the bicycle he was riding was brought to the police station. The officer who took the stolen bicycle report noticed that the bicycle matched the description of the victim's stolen bicycle. The victim came to the police station and positively identified the bicycle. The suspect was additionally charged for receiving stolen property. He claimed the bicycle belonged to a family member and he borrowed it without their knowledge or permission.

### Outside Assist - Possible Attempt Suicide

On December 11 at 10:20 p.m., the Monterey Park Police Department called to report a suicidal female subject, possibly driving a black Honda in Monrovia. The female was text messaging her boyfriend in Monterey Park and told him she took 30 sleeping pills because she wanted to die. The female told her boyfriend she was in the 400 block of East Evergreen. The boyfriend called Monterey Park Police Department and reported the incident. Monrovia officers searched for the female, but she was not found. Approximately two hours later, Monterey Park police called back and reported the female was now possibly in the 300 block of North Myrtle. Monrovia officers began a second search and an officer eventually located the female subject in the 300 block of North Melrose. She claimed to have taken 20 sleeping pills and was taken to a hospital by ambulance.

### Residential Burglaries

On December 13 at 8:23 p.m., two residential burglaries were reported that occurred on a lot in the 500 block of West Maple. In both cases, the unknown suspect(s) gained entry by prying open the rear door of the residence. The front house was ransacked and jewelry was stolen. There was minor ransacking in the back house, but nothing was taken.

### Mountain Lion

On December 14 at 2:37 a.m., police received a call reporting a mountain lion in the 800 block of East Lemon. Officers responded and found an adult mountain lion, possibly a female, in a yard in the 800 block of East Lemon. It appeared to have an open wound next to its left eye. The officers fired two beanbag rounds, which motivated the mountain lion to move back into the hills.

### Drug Violations

On December 14 at 2:56 p.m., Monrovia Special Enforcement Team officers on patrol stopped a vehicle for a traffic violation. This encounter led to the officers conducting a search of the vehicle, which revealed hidden drug contraband under the pad of a child seat. The driver was arrested and booked for numerous drug violations.

### Grand Theft Auto

On December 14 at 5:51 p.m., police responded to McKinley Place and Foothill regarding a stolen vehicle. The victim reported that he parked his vehicle on the street. When he returned to where he had parked it, the vehicle was not there and he could not find his keys. The vehicle is a white, two-door, Lexus SC300. Investigation continuing.

### Grand Theft Auto

On December 14 at 6:12 p.m., officers responded to a business in the 700 block of East Central on the report of a stolen vehicle. The theft occurred between 6:45 a.m. and 6 p.m. The victim parked and locked his vehicle on the street and went into work for the day. When he returned at the end of the day, his vehicle was missing. The vehicle is a black, 2004, Chevy Silverado pickup truck. The victim reported that there was an unloaded handgun in the vehicle at the time it was stolen, but there was no ammunition in the truck. Investigation continuing.

## THE LAST WORD - MONROVIA'S OUTGOING CITY MANAGER SCOTT OCHOA'S FINAL REPORT

Well, after nearly eight years, my tenure as City Manager is coming to an end. I've actually been with the organization for 19 years. Beginning as an intern while I was still attending Claremont McKenna College, it has been my honor to serve Monrovia since January 1993. Over the years, I was given opportunities to contribute to this team and to this community. I did my best and tried to make a lasting and positive impact on the people around me. I am happy with the successes we've enjoyed and grateful for the lessons I've learned. As I move on to the next chapter in my career, I know I will always rely on my experiences in Monrovia. To all of the residents, business leaders, elected officials and staff members, thank you for making me the City Manager I am today.

On January 2, 2012, Scott Ochoa will officially resign his position as Monrovia's City Manager. He will move on to become the City Manager of Glendale, a much larger city. Glendale's population is approximately 192,000 compared to Monrovia's approximate 37,000.

Ochoa began working for the City of Monrovia as an intern 1993, while in his senior year at Claremont McKenna College.

Raised in nearby Azusa, Ochoa was very familiar with Monrovia's amazing story – the urban decay of the 1960's & early 1970's, its renaissance in the 1980's, and finally, the community's blossoming into a highly desirable Los Angeles suburb in the 1990's.

After graduating from CMC with a Bachelor of Arts in Government in 1993, Ochoa earned a fulltime position with the City. He continued to work for Monrovia during the day while pursuing a Master's Degree at the USC School of Public Administration at night. In 1996, Ochoa earned his MPA with an emphasis in public sector entrepreneurship.

By 1999, Ochoa had continued to rise through the organization and was appointed Assistant City Manager working directly under the City Manager Don Hopper and working closely with all City departments. He was directly respon-



sible for a wide variety of areas of administration ranging from Public Information & Community Outreach, to working on economic development programs for Old Town Monrovia, to administering the City's Solid Waste Management program, to coordinating Monrovia's federal lobbying efforts. In 2003 Ochoa's duties expanded to include those of Assistant Executive Director of the Monrovia Redevelopment Agency, helping lead the community's redevelopment efforts and administering an \$18.8 million budget. When Hopper announced his pending retirement in November 2003 the City Council launched an extensive nationwide search for his replacement. In March 2004, Ochoa was appointed by the Monrovia City Council as Monrovia's new City Manager.

As City Manager, Ochoa is responsible for the day to day operations of the City, under the general direction of the City Council. During his tenure, Monrovia has continued its aggressive economic development program, worked to balance quality of life issues with fiscal constraints and development pressure, and he has restructured the organization to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing business environment. His management philosophy is predicated on exceptional customer service, values-based management, and precision execution.

He is very active in the economic development of the San Gabriel Valley, serving on the Board of Directors of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, and he is the vice chair of the Gold Line Foothill Extension Technical Advisory Committee. He is also currently the President of the San Gabriel Valley City Manager's Association, President of the Monrovia Kiwanis Club, and is an active member of the Boys & Girls of the Foothills Board of Directors.

Scott and his wife live in Monrovia with their two children.

*Excerpts taken from the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership/Photo courtesy Business Life*

## Christmas Tree Recycling Program Collection from Dec. 26 to Jan. 14

DUARTE, CA, December 19 2011 – The City of Duarte through its franchised trash hauler, Burrtec Waste, will provide a Christmas tree collection service for residential customers in conjunction with Sanitation districts of Los Angeles County annual Christmas Tree Recycling program. The trees will be ground up for composting or used for the County Sanitation Districts' landfill Cover Project.

Christmas trees will be collected on regular trash collection days from Dec. 26 through Jan. 14. All decorations, tinsel and stands must be removed. Flocked trees or trees coated with a fire retardant will be accepted.

Christmas tree collection will also be available in the county area of Duarte. The County of Los Angeles has contracted with waste haulers serving the unincorporated areas to provide Christmas tree recycling services to residences,

multi-residential complexes and commercial, institutional, and industrial entities.

As part of green waste recovery, the Districts have offered a special Christmas tree recycling event since 1990. Last year, 79 out of 88 cities and the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County participated in the Districts' Christmas Tree Recycling Program. A total of 443,065 trees were collected with the majority of the trees recycled at the Districts' Puente Hills Landfill.

*For more information about the Christmas tree recycling program in the City of Duarte, call City Hall at (626) 357-7931 or Burrtec at (1-800) 325-9417 or visit [www.accessduarte.com](http://www.accessduarte.com).*

*More information on the County's Christmas Tree Recycling program is available by calling 1-562-908-4288 ext. 2444 or on the web at [www.lacsd.org](http://www.lacsd.org).*

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## Interested in Serving your Community?

## The Monrovia Arcadia Duarte (MAD) Town Council is look for you!

The MAD Town Council is committed to helping the unincorporated areas of Monrovia, Arcadia, and Duarte. The Council links County Services, Sheriffs Dept., Pamela Park Staff, Cities and the Supervisors office to better serve our community. The MAD Town Council is looking for interested community members to serve as Board Members.

**Meetings 7pm:**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month**  
**Pamela Park odd number months**  
**Annunciation Parish Hall even number months**

**If you are interested or you know someone who would be interested in serving our community and lives in the unincorporated part of Monrovia, Arcadia, or Duarte please contact:**  
**Council President David Hall at (626) 616-9332**



## SIERRA MADRE POLICE OFFICERS HELP SANTA



Photo courtesy SMPD  
Even though it wasn't his normal delivery schedule, when Santa Claus received letters from the students in Ms. Melanie Kobayashi's 6-8th grade class at Sierra Madre Middle School, he dispatched some of his local elves to handle the job. Members of the Sierra Madre Police Officers Association helped Santa and delivered the specific requests in each child's letter earlier this week. Above, Officer Lisa Volpe shares a moment with a very happy student at Sierra Madre Upper Campus.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES DURING SCHOOL RECESS

(NAPSI)—Schools are closed, it's the winter break. You've watched TV, played video games, baked cookies. Now what? Schools are closed for several more days.

But a break from school doesn't have to be the equivalent of a learning-free time for kids.

For children who have been struggling in school, a school recess can be their opportunity to catch up on key skills and feel more confident when they head back to class. For students who do well, it's an opportunity to keep their enthusiasm high for learning.

Parents can play a key role in reinforcing learning on an ongoing basis. Here are some tips, suggested to make sure that every holiday is a good balance of free discovery, play, leisure and learning for kids.

Read. Everyone has his or her favorite book, so read them to each other. It's fun for the older kids to read their favorite childhood books to their younger siblings. Act out your favorite scenes for the enjoyment of everyone.

Play games as a family and, for some quiet time, as individuals. Some mind-engaging activities include board games, crossword puzzles, Sudoku, jigsaw puzzles, coloring,

finger painting, watercolors, scrapbooking.

Keep up the lessons. Check those spelling words—If there aren't any from school, assign your own. Practice math facts. Read the next chapter in the social studies book.

Practice. Practice. Practice. Workbooks and learning kits can help fill in the gaps and provide the practice needed to excel in school. For example, supplemental education companies like Sylvan Learning provide a wide variety of exercise books that include fun, teacher-reviewed, age-appropriate games and activities. These resources offer chapter books with grade-appropriate vocabulary, flash cards, CDs and games that can equip families with fun, effective and grade-appropriate learning tools during the holidays.

Keep writing. As a family, keep a holiday journal. Have everyone write a few lines each day about important and not-so-important events. The weather, the rainfall, the consecutive sunny days, the growth rate of the tomato plants. Favorite movies, TV shows, sporting events. People you've visited or who have visited you. Neighborhood news and events. New friends. School plans for next year.

Try to keep up normal routines. Yes,

the snow throws everything off, and that's okay. It's good to take a break (or have one thrust upon you) from time to time. But try to keep bedtimes, mealtimes, study times and other important personal routines (medications, for example) as close to normal as possible. When you know schools will reopen again, start to get back into the swing of things right away.

Organize. Take this found time to organize notebooks, planners, backpacks and study areas at home. Make sure everyone's up-to-date on assignments that will be due when school starts again.

Keep it informal. You don't have to recreate a classroom experience at home. You shouldn't, as a matter of fact. Kids will soon "get it" that they can be learning new things, remembering old ones and using their knowledge as a simple matter of course. Keep up the holiday fun. Just keep up the learning, too.

A recess or day off from school is no excuse to put kids' brains on hiatus. It's for a different kind of learning.

For additional resources and information, visit [www.randomhouse.com/sylvanlearningbookstore](http://www.randomhouse.com/sylvanlearningbookstore).

## PUSD News this Week

Pasadena Unified School District campuses will dismiss early on Thursday, December 22 for the start of the winter break. Check with schools for specific times.

PUSD schools and offices will be closed Friday, December 23 through Wednesday, January 4, 2012 for work furloughs and holidays. Central offices reopen on Thursday, January 5. Classes resume on Monday, January 9, 2012.

At its regular meeting on Tuesday, December 13, the Board of Education heard a report on the impact of midyear budget cuts from the state. PUSD will use reserves to cover \$2.5 million in midyear cuts triggered this month by the Governor, and will instead make deeper cuts of an estimated \$7 million in 2012-2013. The Board also voted to move the start time of its regular meetings an hour earlier to 5:30 p.m.

Marshall Fundamental Secondary School student Jacob Tragarz worked to raise awareness about the suffering in Darfur. Read his story...

The Weeks Ahead

### Thursday, December 22

Times Vary Shortened day schedule. Check with your school for dismissal time.

### Friday, December 23 - January 6

All day Schools closed for Winter Recess. School resumes on January 9, 2012.

### Thursday, January 5, 2012

8:00 a.m. PUSD central offices reopen after the winter furloughs and holidays.

### Saturday, January 7

9:00 a.m. - noon El Centro de Accion Social will hold its annual Dia de Los Tres Reyes Magos event, and distribute toys to socio-economically disadvantaged students. Villa-Parke Community Center, 363 E. Villa St., Pasadena, CA 91103

### Monday, January 9

Varies PUSD classes resume after the Winter Recess.

### Wednesday, January 11

8:00 a.m. PUSD's Annual Open Enrollment application period begins. Applications are accepted online through February 1. Visit [www.pusd.us](http://www.pusd.us) for more information. Computers are available on these dates and times.

### Thursday, January 12

6:30 p.m. PUSD's Welcome Center hosts Kindergarten Prep, an informational session for parents. Kindergarten teachers, education experts, and other parents will present information on age

eligibility, skills, school visits, and more. Light refreshment and childcare provided. Rose City High School Great Room, 350 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena. Contact: 626.396.3600 x88340.

### Saturday, January 14

8:00 a.m. Volunteers will spend the morning on beautification, landscape, and planting projects at Madison Elementary School for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day On, Not Off Action Day. The project is sponsored by Pasadena's Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Coalition. For more information, call 626.798.6667.

### Monday, January 16

All day PUSD schools and offices will be closed in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

### Tuesday, January 17

5:30 p.m. The PUSD Board of Education will meet in regular session. This will be the Board's only regular meeting in January. The new starting time for all regular Board meetings is now one hour earlier. Agendas are posted in advance at [www.pusd.us](http://www.pusd.us). Spanish translation provided. Watch it live on KLRN-TV and at [www.pusd.us](http://www.pusd.us) Board Room, 351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena, CA.

## SCHOOL DIRECTORY

### Alverno High School

200 N. Michillinda Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-3463 Head of School: Ann M. Gillick  
E-mail address: [agillick@alverno-hs.org](mailto:agillick@alverno-hs.org)

### Arcadia High School

180 Campus Drive Arcadia, CA 91007  
Phone: (626) 821-8370, Principal: David L. Vannasdall

### Arroyo Pacific Academy

41 W. Santa Clara St. Arcadia, Ca,  
(626) 294-0661 Principal: Phil Clarke  
E-mail address: [pclarke@arroyopacific.org](mailto:pclarke@arroyopacific.org)

### Barnhart School

240 W. Colorado Blvd Arcadia, Ca. 91007  
(626) 446-5588 Head of School: Joanne Testa Cross  
Kindergarten - 8th grade  
website: [www.barnhartschool.com](http://www.barnhartschool.com)

### Bethany Christian School

93 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-3527 Principal: James Lugenbuehl  
E-mail address: [jml@bcsliions.org](mailto:jml@bcsliions.org)

### Carden of the Foothills School

429 Wildrose Avenue, Monrovia, CA 91016 626/358-9414  
626/358-5164 fax office: [cardenofthefoothills.com](mailto:cardenofthefoothills.com)

### The Gooden School

192 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-2410 Head of School: Patty Patano  
website: [www.goodenschool.org](http://www.goodenschool.org)

### High Point Academy

1720 Kinneloa Canyon Road  
Pasadena, Ca. 91107 626-798-8989  
website: [www.highpointacademy.org](http://www.highpointacademy.org)

### LaSalle High School

3880 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.  
(626) 351-8951  
website: [www.lasallehs.org](http://www.lasallehs.org)

### Mama Pete's Nursery School

71 Suffolk Avenue, Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-9567

website: [www.mamapete.org](http://www.mamapete.org)

### Monrovia High School

325 East Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016  
(626) 471-2000,  
Email: [schools@monrovia.k12.ca.us](mailto:schools@monrovia.k12.ca.us)

### Norma Coombs Alternative School

2600 Paloma St. Pasadena, Ca. 91107  
(626) 798-0759 Principal: Dr. Vanessa Watkins  
E-mail address: [watkins12@pusd.us](mailto:watkins12@pusd.us)

### Odyssey Charter School

725 W. Altadena Dr. Altadena, Ca. 91001  
(626) 229-0993 Head of School: Lauren O'Neill  
website: [www.odysseycharterschool.org](http://www.odysseycharterschool.org)

### Pasadena High School

2925 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.  
(626) 798-8901 Principal: Gilbert Barraza, Jr.  
website: [www.pasadenahigh.org](http://www.pasadenahigh.org)

### Pasadena Unified School District

351 S. Hudson Ave. Pasadena, Ca. 91109  
(626) 795-6981 website: [www.pusd.us](http://www.pusd.us)

### St. Rita Catholic School

322 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-9028 website: [www.st-rita.org](http://www.st-rita.org)

### Sierra Madre Elementary School

141 W. Highland Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
Phone: (626) 396-5890 - Fax: (626) 355-0388  
Principal: Esther Salinas

### Sierra Madre Middle School

160 N. Canon Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
Phone: (626) 396-5910 - Fax: (626) 836-2964  
Principal: Garrett Newsom

### Walden School

74 S San Gabriel Blvd  
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[www.waldenschool.net](http://www.waldenschool.net)

### Weizmann Day School

1434 N. Altadena Dr. Pasadena, Ca. 91107  
(626) 797-0204  
Lisa Feldman: Head of School

### Wilson Middle School

300 S. Madre St. Pasadena, Ca. 91107  
(626) 449-7390 Principal: Ruth Esseln  
E-mail address: [resseln@pusd.us](mailto:resseln@pusd.us)



## BREAK

No more closed rooms, hand cramps, long essays and endless minutes from exams. Only late mornings, warm cups of coffee or tea, and hours of lazy bliss plopped on the couch in front of the television with a Harry Potter or Gilmore Girls marathon. Kind of.

Still early morning because of water polo practice and hectic hours because of Christmas gift shopping at the ever increasing population shops. But, aside from those minor setbacks, I am ready to soak up all that this Winter break has to offer. And to kick off this break I have a few splendid ideas and snacks that should be attempted to make your break even more blissful.

Brownies! – warm, gooey, chocolatey, a must; try some York Patty Brownies or get creative by making Cookie Brownies (cookie dough on bottom, brownie mix on top).

Classic Films – sit back and watch It's A Wonderful Life or Serendipity to help you get in the mood,

Exercise – this goes against the grain of my other two tips, but trust me, a nice brisk stroll, easy jog or bike ride can do wonders for your energy and help burn off those holidays calories!

Have fun! Don't stress about shopping, crazy family or end of the year stress too much, it's the holidays!

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# Mountain Views News

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## Mountain Views News

Sierra Madre Arcadia Pasadena Altadena Monrovia

**\$19 Million Dollar Budget Approved**  
Mayor Directs Staff To Investigate Costs of Constructing Out Police, Fire and Paramedic Services

**Hometown Parade, Vintage Planes, Celebrities, Food, Drinks, Games, and BIG Fun in Sierra Madre on July 3rd & 4th**

**Desert Water Zeros**  
The 1992 water audit was a landmark event in the history of the City of Sierra Madre. It was the first time that the city had a water audit.

**Inside This Week...**  
NEWS: PASADENA Page 4, ALTADENA Page 4, MONROVIA Page 4, SIERRA MADRE Page 1

**FEATURES:**  
Cinderella's Story Page 1, The World Around Us Page 1, The World Around Us Page 1, The World Around Us Page 1

**Great Coffee or Great Sandwiches**  
Great Cookies

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## Trees of Christmas

I'm going to build a merry nest in there!

Do presents go on the tree or under the tree?

Both! But mostly under.

Words that have the same long "e" sound as in the word "tree:"

people, see, need read, keep, needles, peace, greens, least, remind, evergreen, even

4 words have a "y" that have a long "e" sound:

easily, city, bushy, cleverly

Words that have 3 syllables:

untangled, favorite, cleverly holidays, capital, Washington, national, beautiful, yellowish, gathering, syllables, decorate, evergreens, animals

**What Kind of Tree?**

**SCOTCH PINE**

**COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE**

**DOUGLAS FIR**

Last year we heard...



## Newspaper Fun!

[www.readingclubfun.com](http://www.readingclubfun.com)

Animills LLC © 2011 V8-N51

...Santa's sleigh jingling on the roof!



## The Night Before Christmas!

The night before Christmas is an evening filled with wonder and surprises. Each family has its own way of celebrating as they wait for Christmas morning to arrive: trimming a tree, joining in Christmas caroling or sharing hot chocolate and Christmas cookies. One fun family custom is the hanging of stockings by the fireplace in hopes of finding small candies and treasures in them – from the tops to the toes – on Christmas morning!

What might Santa tuck into a stocking to be found on Christmas morning? **Can you find and circle the surprises listed in the stocking?**

**Merry Christmas to you and your family!**

### It's Christmas Eve and...

- one family is putting up its Christmas \_\_\_\_\_ and decorating it.
- when Mary and Joseph could not find a room in Bethlehem, an innkeeper offered his \_\_\_\_\_.
- lighted \_\_\_\_\_ are in our windows.
- children hang their \_\_\_\_\_.
- families attend church \_\_\_\_\_.
- kids remember to leave cookies and milk for Santa Claus and \_\_\_\_\_ for his reindeer.
- a family's favorite Christmas \_\_\_\_\_ is being read aloud.
- in one story, animals can talk at midnight; they are given the gift of \_\_\_\_\_ for one special night.
- friends and families join together to stroll the block and sing Christmas \_\_\_\_\_.
- Santa Claus is busy delivering \_\_\_\_\_!

**tree**

**sugar**

**stockings**

**story**

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## 2011 - THE YEAR THAT TESTED THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

Sweeping almost every industry this past year have been the trials of an age. The restaurant industry also claimed its share of failures during this time of tests. On both a national and local level, the restaurant landscape changed and endured setbacks. Let's look at the shifting scenery and reminisce for a moment about the ones we lost. I am sure that I am going to miss a few of these. Here is to what memories they left us with: Masa Restaurant has closed its doors, this sushi restaurant with upscale food lasted for about three years, which is good for

TABLE FOR TWO by Peter Dills  
*thechefknows@yahoo.com*

an industry that averages two! I see the GAON Authentic Korean BBQ Restaurant has taken its place. Burger King on Rosemead, renowned for their flame-grilled burger is now going to be a Mamma Pizzeria. Boston Market has fled the coupe and now is The Habit, which I wrote about right here in the Mountain View News just last week. After they had expanded and the economy receded they let the chickens out the back door.

Big Daddy's is new and in full flight right next to In 'n Out Burger on Foothill. I promise to get in there real soon. A brand new culinary experience is The Vol. 94, located at 239 E. Colorado Blvd. I understand that it is part wine bar and part fusion Bistro. Not sure what that is but it's also on my list wish list for next year. I have heard positive reviews, however, one email to me noted that

they have a two drink requirement for all glasses of wine, seems they don't want to open a bottle of wine unless there is some type of understanding that you will have two glasses. The single and commitment- stressed men of the world may want to stay away from this entanglement.

Red White Bluezz is still flying high, but they are closed for lunch these days. Their backdoor brother, Point 08, is now the Dog Haus Biergarten. Hot Dogs and Beer, without a cramped Dodgers seat is fine in my book. The AKA Bistro has almost reached a year in the former Gordon Biersch Spot. The Old Crown City Brewery is now host to the Congregation. Carmines in South Pasadena is now a lounge for you Lizards. Tender Greens, with its fast casual organic salads, grill and comfort soups, is on Colorado Blvd. Did I miss a few?



Email me at *thechefknows@yahoo.com*. Please listen to me on Sunday at 12 Noon. KABC Talk radio 790 AM

## FRESH COOKING AT THE ARBORETUM

*The Market on Holly*

A Modern Food Market & Café - Located in Old Town Pasadena

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With Mary Pat Brandmeyer  
Wednesday, January 11  
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\$45 Arboretum members / \$50 non-members  
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There's a lot of culinary buzz about The Market on Holly--one stop for eat-in, take-out tasty gourmet foods as well as hand-picked specialty items. Chef and co-owner Mary Pat Brandmeyer says she likes to make food that people love to eat. "I strive to make beautiful, very simply presented

delicious food." From the delightful menu designed by Brandmeyer, and hand-picked retail items from around the globe, chosen by owner Marty Davich, The Market on Holly is THE place to explore new and exclusive culinary frontiers.

Please join us for a presentation by Mary Pat where she will demonstrate several of her favorite dishes from the inviting menu of this new and wonderful café and market. The offerings will range from breakfast goodies to luscious sandwich and salad fare, with a special entrée from her catering menu.

www.themarketonholly.com  
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### IN THE KITCHEN

*Our Favorite Recipe of the week*

## PRIME RIB AND OVEN-ROASTED POTATOES WITH BAY LEAVES AND SAGE

*Rub the roast with the herb mixture the day before you cook it; the roast needs to be refrigerated overnight.*

### INGREDIENTS

15 dried bay leaves, crumbled, plus whole leaves for garnish  
1/3 cup coarsely chopped fresh sage leaves, plus whole leaves for garnish  
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
Coarse salt  
1/3 cup finely grated orange zest, (from 3 oranges)  
Freshly ground pepper  
1 (about 7 pounds) three-rib prime rib of beef, trimmed and frenched  
3 pounds russet potatoes, peeled and halved lengthwise

### DIRECTIONS

Stir together bay leaves, sage, oil, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and the orange zest in a small bowl. Season with pepper. Rub herb mixture all over the roast. Refrigerate roast, covered, overnight.  
Put potatoes into a large pot of water. Bring to a boil; add salt. Cook 5 minutes. Drain. Score lines lengthwise in potatoes using the tines of a fork.  
Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Transfer roast, fat side up, to a metal roasting pan; let stand until it comes to room temperature, 30 minutes to 1 hour. Roast 15 minutes. Add potatoes; roast 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 350 degrees. Roast, turning potatoes after 30 minutes, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into meat (away from bone) registers 115 degrees for rare, about 1 hour. Let stand 20 minutes (temperature should rise to 125 degrees., and slice. Garnish with bay leaves and sage.

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WHERE: Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre, CA 91024. Ample free parking behind theatre.

Fridays at 8 p.m. : December 23; January 6, 13.

Saturdays at 8 p.m.: January 7, 14.

Sunday at 2:30 p.m.: January 8.

Wednesday at 8 p.m. on December 21.

Thursday at 8 p.m. on December 22.

ADMISSION: \$25. Seniors (65+) and students (13-17), \$22. Children 12 and under, \$15.

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For the past 5,000 years, China has amassed a diverse legacy of heroes, myths, and values that still resonate in the present. Today, Shen Yun Performing Arts is reviving the essence of traditional Chinese culture in full color on stages around the world. In January, the company will be back at Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Music Center, Los Angeles, and Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Costa Mesa.

“It was an extraordinary experience,” said Academy Award-winning actress Cate Blanchett after watching Shen Yun, “the level of skill, but also the power of the archetypes and the narratives were startling. And of course it was exquisitely beautiful.”

Gorgeous backdrops extend the stage, transporting the audience to distant lands and eras. An orchestra that combines Western and Chinese instruments like no other accompanies the dancers with stirring scores.

Ride with Mongolians across endless steppes.

Recall the grandeur of an ancient Tang Dynasty palace. Down in the valley, ladies of the Yi ethnic group dance in rainbow skirts by the river. High up in the heavens, celestial fairies glide with their silken sleeves trailing through the clouds. Resounding drums awaken the dusty plateaus of the Middle Kingdom.

Shen Yun strives to capture the spirit of traditional Chinese culture and its beliefs. Ancient literary classics extol the compassionate, courageous, and loyal values embodied by the most memorable characters. Thrill in the triumph of the great General Yue Fei; cheer on the Monkey King as he tricks a stubborn foe; and witness how these values still endure in contemporary China.

Shen Yun bridges past and present in an uplifting, inspiring, and indelible performance.

On January 11-12, 2012, Shen Yun returns to the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa for two shows, and on January 13-14, 2012, Shen Yun returns to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles for three more shows. Tickets available at 800-880-0188 or [www.LASpectacular.com](http://www.LASpectacular.com)

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SEAN’S SHAMELESS REVIEWS:

My Favorite Albums of 2011

You won’t find any Bill-board Top 40 songs here. This is a collection of my favorite albums of 2011.

Quite a few records missed the cut, but as for the top five, there’s no denying them as my highest choices of the year. All of the records listed are deeply personal and deserve a look even if this isn’t your type of music preference. One thing is certain, each album is unequivocally beautiful, dense, engrossing, and passionate. You never know what you’ll discover if you don’t give them a chance.

10. Snowmine – “Laminate Pet Animal”
9. Minks – “By The Hedge”
8. The Drums – “Portamento”
7. Craft Spells – “Idle Labor”
6. Yuck – “Yuck”

5. The Antlers – “Burst Apart”

“Burst Apart” is an often subtle, perceptive, and emotive display of music. The record isn’t perfect, but The Antlers easily deliver some of the most personal, compelling, and heartbreaking songs of the year. Founder/vocalist behind The Antlers, Peter Silberman’s voice is as soothing as they come by these days. It’s the kind of tone that can mend a broken heart. He sings in a crooning manner that floats on top of the delicacy and intimacy of the often times majestic arrangements. It is very easy to get immersed into the incontestable beauty of the songs. There is a very special feeling you’ll experience while listening to “Burst Apart.” It will effortlessly tug on the strings of your heart and gently guide you back to previous moments in life. “Burst Apart” will lift those heavy eyelids, alleviate that tiresome mind, and facilitate a wounded heart. If you’re in need of all or any of the aforementioned, do yourself a solid and pick up this amazing record.

4. Bon Iver – “Bon Iver”

While the direction is faintly down a different path than his debut, Bon Iver’s music has never sounded so tranquil, transcendent and heart-rending. Justin Vernon has taken some new liberties with his own artistry and yet nothing presented here feels false or misguided. Every song significantly matters and holds something vastly consequential. Instead of purely creating a beat-for-beat sequel to his debut, Vernon adds more instruments, higher production values and focuses his songwriting on an entirely different theme. All of this translates to a bigger and arguably more well-rounded soundscape. Bon Iver never overstays his welcome, yet at the same time, you wish he wouldn’t leave. That’s how this new album feels. At just shy of forty minutes, I don’t think there’s anything else you can be utterly inspired by in that period of time.

3. Destroyer – “Kaputt”

Glossy, new wave, retro, and even jazzy, “Kaputt” is pure 80s velvetiness. However, it’s not another replica of wannabe 80s inspired tunes from a contemporary band with a taste of nostalgia. The lyrics are sophisticated yet complicated and outspoken. The listener gets a real sense of comfort hearing Dan Bejar’s smooth vocals. However, you can still feel the pain, envision the tragedy, but contain a belief in the optimism throughout. This is a rare album where not only do the words tell a story, but the instruments speak as well. The arrangements of these songs are powerful, boisterous, and often magical. You get lost and found emotionally with every song. Destroyer helps me believe that music can once again be thought provoking, rapturous, and deeply personal.

2. Wild Beasts – “Smother”

“Smother” is dazzling, vividly trenched with imagery and transcendental intoxication. It’s tightly produced, atmospheric and a grand showcase of utter originality and creativity beyond the means of anything currently polluting the airwaves. Such brilliance and bravado are soaked within the confines of this record. The album will speak volumes to you in ways most compilations could only imagine to ever do. The heart and pulse of “Smother” beats methodically, gently, and cautiously. However, there is always a sense of impending doom on the horizon. A feeling of something imploding feels very close on the verge. To listen to the album in its entirety (the way it should be experienced) will place you on a voyage of awe and wonder. It unravels slowly, but what becomes fleshed out is something persuasively beautiful, terrifyingly imaginative, and artistically innovative. Arguably tied for album of the year with the #1 spot.

1. Future Islands – “On The Water”

Future Islands return with their third LP, “On The Water”, a carefully crafted and slow burning album that exudes love, loss, and life. Exploring these common themes may evidently be cliché in rock music, however make no mistake, Future Islands are everything but ordinary. There is something mythical ingrained in this compilation. “On The Water” probes for the wonders of life’s mysteries by beginning with the past and looking into the future. There is so much beauty to be found if you let the album seep inside of you. It will carry you to another time and place, but remind you that the only way of moving forward is looking onward. Dreamy, passionate, and perceptive, these songs will pull you in and frankly, never let you go. A rare and majestic feeling that shouldn’t be missed by anyone that’s a fan of this music persuasion. While it will impact any listener in numerous different ways, one thing is for certain, you’ll be surprised of how deep it sinks into your mind, body, and most of all, soul. Future Islands also proves that mind, body, and soul are all super-connected.

Jeff’s Pics The Book Report

by Jeff Brown

THE MAN IN THE MOON (Guardians of Childhood) by William Joyce

Twenty years in the making, William Joyce’s enchanting new picture book, The Man in the Moon, is worth the wait. In the first of his new Guardians of Childhood series, Joyce introduces the original guardian, MiM, the Man in the Moon. In glorious, colorful detail, readers are invited to imagine the Earth’s moon as a space age shipwreck, and the origin of bad dreams as the work of Pitch, King of the Nightmares. MiM’s fondest memories are of his devoted friend Nightlight, who sprinkled him with Dreamsand as an infant, and it is Nightlight who inspires MiM to become guardian to the hopes and dreams of all the children of Earth, but of course MiM will need help--from a toymaker, a fairy, a rabbit, and others like them. The Man in the Moon captures the wonder of childhood in a visual masterpiece that is to be treasured by readers of all ages. --Seira Wilson

LION OF LIBERTY: PATRICK HENRY AND THE CALL TO A NEW NATION by Harlow Giles Unger

In this action packed history, award winning author Harlow Giles Unger delivers a “vivid biography of the Virginia firebrand” (Wall Street Journal) Patrick Henry, who roused Americans to fight government tyranny, both British and American. Remembered largely for his cry for “liberty or death,” Henry was actually the first and most colorful of America’s Founding Fathers, first to call Americans to arms against Britain, first to demand a bill of rights, and first to fight the growth of big government after the Revolution. And as Unger makes clear in this epic biography, Henry’s words continue to echo across America, inspiring millions to fight government intrusion in their daily lives. A wonderful read of not only the man but also the turbulent times of America’s birth.

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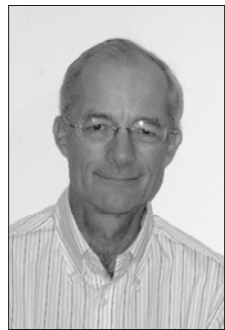
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## HOWARD Hays As I See It



*"Truth and love must prevail over lies and hatred."*  
- Vaclav Havel (1936 - 2011)

"Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men". We embrace such sentiments at Christmas, and nod in agreement as they're espoused from the pulpit on Sunday mornings; but that's usually as far as it goes.

Many who partake in those late-December and every-Sunday rituals scoff at the notion of actually incorporating such principles into our daily lives. (Imagine a candidate speaking of love and forgiveness, let alone truth, at one of those Republican debates.)

What's often overlooked is the fact such ideals have proven to be the most powerful forces in moving the world.

According to Scriptures, Jesus of Nazareth was not taken too seriously by many of his fellow Galileans. But Pontius Pilate, the prefect in Judea representing Roman Emperor Tiberius, took the threat of this self-proclaimed "king" quite seriously indeed.

Five hundred years earlier, it was predicted if a newborn prince, born into a royal family in the southern Himalayan foothills, were to follow his father, he could subjugate the world. But if he followed a religious path, he could become its savior.

It's doubtful we'd remember that prince had he succeeded his father; but following the latter path, he became the Buddha.

The dominance of the British Empire came to an end not through superior might but through the convictions of Mohandas Gandhi. Unprecedented carnage was abated at the Appomattox courthouse with signatures from Gens. Grant and Lee, but resolution didn't come until a hundred years later through the leadership of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Vaclav Havel had the good fortune of being born into a well-off family, but the misfortune of growing up under Communist rule. That background of affluence made him ineligible to pursue his desire of a university education in the humanities, so instead he studied economics in night school.

As witness to the Prague Spring of 1968, Havel recognized that the Communists, in power in Czechoslovakia since 1948, were most threatened not by armed insurrection or outside invasion, but by words. He described living under "a system in which words are capable of shaking the entire structure of government, where words can prove mightier than ten military divisions."

His first major political involvement was with the group, Charter 77, formed to defend the Yuppie-inspired Plastic People of the Universe, a band which shouted out its defiance ala Frank Zappa (whom Havel regarded as a hero). Over here, their music would get the scorn of a disapproving establishment. Under Communist rule, it got them prison terms.

*"Work for something because it is good, not because it has a chance to succeed."*  
- Vaclav Havel

In 1975, Havel expressed his concerns directly

in a letter to the head of state, Gustav Husak. He described a national despair where "everyone has something to lose", from the highest fearing loss of power, to the lowest fearing how they'll survive to the next day.

As the result of government devoid of principles, Havel observed: "Seldom in recent times has a social system offered scope so openly and so brazenly to people willing to support anything as long as it brings them some advantage; to unprincipled and spineless men, prepared to do anything in their craving for power and personal gain; to born lackeys, ready for any humiliation and willing at all times to sacrifice their neighbors' and their own honor for a chance to ingratiate themselves with those in power . . ."

" . . . States grow ever more machinelike; people are transformed into statistical choruses of voters, producers, consumers, patients, tourists, or soldiers, (where) in politics good and evil, categories of the natural world and therefore obsolete remnants of the past, lose all absolute meaning (and where) the sole method of politics is quantifiable success."

The plays of Vaclav Havel were banned. He continued writing essays through four years in Communist jails.

In 1988, thousands of mostly young demonstrators marked the twentieth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion by swarming the streets of Prague, many shouting Havel's name.

Another demonstration in January 1989 brought Havel's arrest, but the massive outcry over the ensuing trial led to his release five months later. That November, the Berlin Wall fell and police brutally broke up a demonstration by thousands of Czech students. This brought hundreds of thousands to the streets.

By the end of the year, Vaclav Havel became the first democratically elected president of Czechoslovakia. Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones came to Prague Castle. (Posters read, "The tanks are rolling out - the Stones are rolling in.")

Three days after being sworn in, Vaclav Havel delivered a New Year's message to the nation: "Let us teach ourselves and others that politics should be an expression of a desire to contribute to the happiness of the community . . . Let us teach ourselves and others that politics can be not simply the art of the possible, especially if this means the art of speculation, calculation, intrigue, secret deals and pragmatic maneuvering, but that it can also be the art of the impossible, that is, the art of improving ourselves and the world."

The "truth and love" Havel spoke of were not sentiments for a season, but principles guiding his life's work: "I favor politics as practical morality, as service to the truth, as essentially human and humanly measured care for our fellow humans."

Political debate and the "Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men" sentiments of the season are kept separate, as if that debate and those sentiments were entirely irrelevant to each other. And as long as we continue to regard them that way, those sentiments will have no meaning at all.

Merry Christmas

*"None of us -- as an individual -- can save the world as a whole, but . . . each of us must behave as though it were in his power to do so."*  
- Vaclav Havel (1936 - 2011)

## GREG Welborn



## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

The oral tradition has always been very strong. Before there were written words, there were still stories: tales of what had transpired related orally from one generation to another so that history would not be lost. Humans have also always been moved by music. Often, when the simple story wouldn't stir the heart to action, the song would. So it's not unexpected that the Christmas story would be put to music and that carols would be among the songs that touch hearts most deeply. Let us take a moment to reflect on the meaning behind a couple of relatively new compositions which have touched the hearts of millions already.

"In the space of the beginning, was the living Word of Light.

When this Word was clearly spoken, all that came to be was right."

The first lines of Michael W. Smith's Anthem For Christmas remind us that we are not accidents of biology, chemistry and probability. Before there was anything physical, there was God. He was, is and will be, always and forever, and when He spoke, creation happened, and it was all good.

"All creation had a language, words to say what must be said.

All day long the heaven whispered, signing words in scarlet red."

God gave us a perfect world, complete with signs and evidence amongst the wonders of His creation that told us of the reality, the beauty and the goodness of the creator. No group, tribe or people - however isolated they may be - is without clear evidence of the creator's existence and His hand in our world. One only needs to look at the language of nature.

"Some have failed to understand it, so God spoke His final word.

On a silent night in Judah's hills, a baby's cry was heard.

Glory, sang the angel chorus; glory echoed back the night.

Love has come to walk among us, Christ the Lord is born this night."

A loving God also gave us free will, and from the beginning there have been those who have missed, or more accurately, rejected God. To remove all doubt as to His intentions, as to His desire to reconcile with those whom He created, He sent His son to take on human form, not as

a high king born in a prosperous region, but as a peasant in a backwater station of the Roman empire.

All creation sing His praises, earth and heaven praise His name.

All who live come join the chorus; find the words His love proclaims.

From the lowliest of the low, came the king of kings - the incarnate God whom all of nature will praise. Open to all who seek, Christ offers to those who believe in Him redemption and restoration: the gifts of a loving God who knew His people would never be able to pay the price their sin demanded.

Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene marveled at the incomprehensibility of all this in their song song, 'Mary Did You Know?'. They simply ask through the eyes of Christ's mother if we really understand what Jesus means to the world.

"Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?

Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?

This child that you delivered will soon deliver you."

Mary, did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?

When you kiss your baby boy, you kiss the face of God?

That your baby boy is heaven's perfect lamb: The sleeping child you're holding is the Great, I Am."

The story of Christmas in song once again reminds us that our significance and value come from the God who made us in His image, allowed us the freedom to turn from Him and then sent His son to once again redeem that relationship. So let the soul feel its worth and let a weary world rejoice. Merry Christmas to all.

Gregory J. Welborn is an independent opinion columnist. He writes and speaks frequently on political, economic and social issues. His columns have appeared in publications such as The Los Angeles Daily News, The Orange County Register, The Wall Street Journal and USA Today. He can be reached at gwelborn@mvbserver.com.

## BUSINESS TODAY

The latest on Business News, Trends and Techniques

By La Quetta M. Shamblee

## THREE-POINT SMALL BIZ SELF-ASSESSMENT

Now is a great time for entrepreneurs to conduct a quick assessment for key areas of their business operations over the past twelve months. Everyone who has achieved greatness in their respective field has learned to incorporate this process into their respective profession or passion. From Beethoven to Spielberg, from the ancient gladiators to modern day superstar athletes, they all became masters at their crafts by assessing, evaluating their most recent performances - again and again.

The same process can be applied to all businesses on an ongoing basis. To start, it is important to identify the areas and functions that are most critical for the business to be successful. A "quick self-assessment method" is described below and can be completed in a few as 30 minutes. It provides a partial list of business components relevant to most businesses, but may be supplemented by adding additional components to the list for specific businesses (i.e. Sales, Inventory Management, Facility Operations\*). When completed, it will provide the business owners with information to make changes that can lead to more success over the next twelve months.

Step 1 - Determine who needs to complete the assessment: It should be completed by the individual(s) with ultimate responsibility for the financial success of the business. This process can also be completed using a team approach, by going through the questions in a group setting or by giving questions for a specific categories to the manager or staff persons with responsibilities in that area.

Step 2 - Schedule the assessment: Schedule a time for the assessment to be completed. Inform all participants and ask them to be ready to provide their perceptions and

honest opinions. Prepare copies of the assessment, which should include your list of business components and the questions in Step 3 below.

Step 3 - Conduct the assessment: Review the list of key components, which include: \*1) Customer Service, 2) Financial Systems (i.e. cashiering, recordkeeping, bookkeeping/accounting), 3) Management, 4) Marketing, 5) Planning (i.e. annual, monthly, weekly, daily, seasonal), 6) Human Resources (i.e. staff recruitment, hiring, training, compensation, sufficient staffing), 7) Equipment (i.e. maintenance, updated) and 8) Technology (i.e. computer equipment, software and use of digital resources like iPads\* or similar devices). Add other major components to the list that are specific to your business.

Individuals can record their responses, or select an individual to document all the responses in a group setting. Follow this three-point process for each key business component and record the response(s) - Point #1 What are the three things that the business does best in this area?, Point #2 What are the three things in this area that would make the biggest improvement in the day-to-day or overall operation of the business, and Point #3 What are three things that I can do (as an individual) to contribute to improving the business in this area?

Next Steps: Review the responses and be willing to consider the accuracy of each one, whether it is complimentary or critical. Then determine which ones can be addressed immediately, including who will do it, the timeline for doing it and the resources that will be needed to get it done. Let this process serve as a starting point for an ongoing cycle of assessment and improvement to strengthen your bottom line.

## CURBING BAD BEHAVIOR



Ron Carter

## BEING YOUR BROTHER'S KEEPERS

In the midst of all the political rhetoric, reality shows and prognostications on Cable and Network TV, it's wonderful to observe the amazing programs produced last week by CNN and CBS 60 Minutes. CNN's "Heroes"

profiled the stories of everyday people who are changing the world by doing extraordinary work on a global level. CBS "60 Minutes," my favorite television show, followed-up their reporting on the pandemic poverty in The United States of America. As I watched both shows full of hope, faith, emotion and concern, I pondered the nuances of the conflicted world we are currently living in.

The CNN Hero of 2011, Robin Lim, became a midwife after her sister died during pregnancy. Since 2003, she and her team have helped thousands of poor Indonesian women to realize healthy pregnancy and child births. The program also featured Derreck Kayongo, a Ugandan native, who collects soap for his Global Soap Project. Kayongo collects the used soap - which is usually thrown away at the end of the day - from hotels across the United States of America. He reprocessed and shipped the soaps to impoverished countries around the world. Amy Stokes, whose

non-profit organization, Infinite Family, is connecting hundreds of South Africans teens with mentors around the world was also a CNN Hero. For at least half hour each week, the volunteer mentors and the teens meet virtually on what's called Ezomndeninet, the Zulu words for 'everything related to family.' There were seven other CNN Heroes. They all had incredible stories. CBS 60 Minutes reported on a prior story they did on teenage poverty. The amazing results emanating from the earlier story was inspiring. People from all over the United States of America donated funds to the families who were featured in the story and some of the teenagers received scholarship offers from several American universities. The demonstration of kindness to these families was heartwarming.

I believe when called upon to help others, there is no other country or people in the world like the United States of America and Americans respectively. Most Americans volunteer and donate their resources to non-profits and charitable organizations of all stature. Americans believe in giving back to the society which blessed them. And, because of this behavior many individuals globally are beneficiaries of American's largess. As the end of the year 2011 approaches, Americans should remember there is much good taking place in the world. We must continue to lead the way by behaving appropriately helping our fellow citizens.

## Independent's Eye by JOE Gandelman



## Yes, Virginia, America Does Have a Political Center

"DEAR COLUMNIST: I am 8 years old.

"Some of my little friends say there is no political center in America.

"Papa says 'If you see it in THAT CAGLE COLUMN it's so.'

"Please tell me the truth: is there a political center in America?"

"P.S. My friends say there are no elves. Is that true?"

"P.S.S. And Last year AFTER Santa left the Christmas gifts some grey-haired fat man in a Santa suit slid down our chimney, took our food stamps away and left. Was that Santa?"

"VIRGINIA SCHMIDLAP  
"285 East 33rd Street"

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been impacted by listening to too much left and right talk radio, watching too many ideological cable shows, falling into political and ideologue bubbles by only reading websites they totally agree with before they read a single word of content -- and by an America divided by ambitious politicians who accentuate division to attain power. If your little friends study American history they'll see that once upon a time consensus, honorable political compromise, and aggregating interests by building broad political coalitions were considered strengths and virtues -- not weaknesses and sins.

All minds, Virginia, are little (don't tell that to Newt Gingrich). Political minds used to try and go beyond immediate, tactical considerations for scoring political points, but today's political battles are firmly-anchored 24/7 by political parties and politicos involved in perpetual campaigns. Many Americans now view our anger-fueled politics as a kind of fun political version of political wrestling. It's no longer about issue solving and policy. It's mostly about winning one for your political sports team, giving high fives when the other side loses and gleefully rubbing your defeated, personally hated foe's face in it.

Yes, Virginia, America does have a political center. Proof that it exists is seen by polls showing that the bulk of Americans reject the crackpot of ideas of birthers who suggest Barack Obama wasn't born in the United States or that the American government was somehow behind 9/11. The center exists as certainly as thought, analysis, and balance still exist. Alas: how dreary and dangerous American politics would be if there was no center. It'd be as dreary as if there were no Virginias.

The center's existence is profusely documented in historical detail by John Avlon in his lively

book "Independent Nation: How Centrism Can Change American Politics." It is also documented in "Leading from the Center: Why Moderates Make the Best Presidents" in which historian Gil Troy classifies Ronald Reagan as a moderate. Why? Because even with Reagan's strongly conservative principles Reagan upset conservatives by compromising and working with Democrats. He didn't dig in his heels and focus on power plays, ideological purity or obsess with political domination. And, in the end, Reagan redefined America's center.

The center may shift to the left or the right as it has in recent decades -- but it is there. And those who seriously ignore it risk being swept away by the broom of political history. Sen. Joseph McCarthy was finished when he alienated the center. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s eloquence and protests won the center. The noisy 1960s antiwar protests angered the center and helped elect Richard Nixon. Democratic Sen. George McGovern was too extreme for the center. Ronald Reagan won by reassuring the electorate's center. Bill Clinton successfully veered right after losing the center. And the winning candidate in 2012 must capture the center.

Those on the left and right ridicule the center as wishy-washy or wimpish but centrists read, decide, study, take strong stands, and, most assuredly, vote. Just because you see mostly left and right wing ideologues on cable shows doesn't mean the center does not exist. The center is an intermediate point between passionate conservatives and passionate liberals. It's an oasis that bares political fruit.

On your Christmas related questions:

You don't believe there are elves? Have you seen Dennis Kucinich?

And about that grey-haired fat guy in the Santa suit who slid down your chimney and took your food stamps away. That doesn't sound like Santa. That sounds like Newt Gingrich.

Joe Gandelman is a veteran journalist who wrote for newspapers overseas and in the United States. He has appeared on cable news show political panels and is Editor-in-Chief of The Moderate Voice, an Internet hub for independents, centrists and moderates. CNN's John Avlon named him as one of the top 25 Centrists Columnists and Commentators. He can be reached at jgandelman@themoderatevoice.com and can be booked to speak at your event at www.maverproductions.com.

This column has been edited by the author. Representations of fact and opinions are solely those of the author.



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### Mountain Views News

#### Mission Statement

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 My Turn



### A VISIT FROM ST. NICK

“The Night Before Christmas,” also known as “A Visit from St. Nicholas” and “Twas the Night Before Christmas,” is arguably the best known poem written by an American. It was first published anonymously in 1823 and generally attributed to Clement Clark Moore, although the claim has also been made that it was written by Henry Livingston, Jr.

The poem is largely responsible for the conception of Santa Claus from the mid-nineteenth century to today, including his physical appearance, the night of his visit, his mode of transportation, the number and names of his reindeer, as well as the tradition that he brings toys to children.

So in the spirit of St. Nick this Christmas Eve, share this bit of American Yuletide with your kids or grandkids or if, you don't happen to be a parent or grandparent, share it with your significant other. And don't forget to leave out some milk and cookies, along with your Christmas stockings, for the jolly big guy with the white hair, beard and the funny red suit.

#### The Night Before Christmas

‘Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse; The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there; The children were nestled all snug in their beds, While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads; And mamma in her ‘kerchief, and I in my cap, Had just settled down for a long winter’s nap, When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash, Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash. The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below, When,



### OUT TO PASTOR A Weekly Religion Column

#### MERRY IS AS MERRY CELEBRATES

**Rev. James L. Snyder**

Although I may look a little stodgy on the outside with a few gray hairs blossoming on the top, I still know how to celebrate, and this is the time of the year to do that sort of thing. I love a good

Christmas celebration.

For the last few years, I have never had to check my calendar to know when it is time to celebrate the Christmas season. It seems that the Thanksgiving turkey always gives rise to what I shall refer to as the Holiday Turkey. No sooner is my Thanksgiving turkey resting snugly inside of me when the Holiday Turkeys begin their assault on Christmas.

Do not let this get out, but I love it.

Some people are quite offended when these Holiday Turkeys begin their assault on Christmas. I would be insulted if they did not. I expect them to attack anything to do with Christmas. It just goes to show that the Christmas story has not lost its offense.

Those of us who celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ embrace this time of the year with a great deal of joy and praise. After all, we are celebrating the fact that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. What better message to celebrate at this time of year when most people are having a difficult time.

Don't get me wrong here. I believe in celebrating Jesus Christ every day. There is something special about setting aside one day out of the year to recognize his birth. I do not worship the manger nor do I venerate the three wise men. I do, however, appreciate the fact that Jesus Christ came into this world and it certainly is my privilege once a year to celebrate His birthday. I know He was not born on December 25, but it is the thought that counts.

Even those who do celebrate Christmas sometime celebrate the wrong thing. People who do not have much money spend themselves poor getting Christmas presents for their family, and then they spend the rest of the year trying to pay off those purchases. That is a nice gesture but that is not the reason for the season. Instead of spending money this year for your family, why not spend a little time with them. That will do more good than something you buy in the store that will be obsolete by the time they open it Christmas morning.

Then there are those who take this time of the year to do nothing but party, party, party. By party, I mean getting so inebriated they have no idea what they are doing or saying. Many people will die during the celebration of Christ's birth because of some intoxicated driver.

This is not the reason for the season.

You can always tell the quality of a person by

what to my wondering eyes should appear, But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer, With a little old driver, so lively and quick, I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick. More rapid than eagles his coursers they came, And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name; “Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen! On, Comet! on Cupid! on, Dunder and Blitzen! To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall! Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!” As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly, When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky, So up to the house-top the coursers they flew, With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too. And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof the prancing and pawing of each little hoof. As I drew in my head, and was turning around, Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound. He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot, And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot; A bundle of toys he had flung on his back, And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack. His eyes -- how they twinkled! his dimples how merry! His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry! His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow, And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow; The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth, And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath; He had a broad face and a little round belly, That shook, when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly. He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf, And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself; A wink of his eye and a twist of his head, Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread; He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work, And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk, And laying his finger aside of his nose, And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose; He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle, And away they all flew like the down of a thistle. But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight, “Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!”

what they celebrate and how they celebrate. Of course, the Holiday Turkeys will accuse me right here of being judgmental. Perhaps they are right.

What is wrong with a little bit of being judgmental?

Why is it we can be judgmental in every area of our life except those areas that are matters of life and death.

My doctor is so judgmental that sometimes I would like to punch him in the nose. What right does he have to tell me that I have something wrong with me? Well, he's the doctor. How many people have shortened their life by not listening to their judgmental doctor?

Some alcohol-saturated person will challenge me and say, “You have no right telling me what to do. I'm going to have a good time. Don't you judge me.” Then they get smashed, jump in their car and end up killing some young family coming home from a Christmas party.

That certainly is not the reason for the season.

The Christmas season is not the season to get so drunk you do not know what you are doing that you hurt other people and it is not the season to spend yourself into the poor house for the next year or so.

The Christmas season is the season to celebrate God's answer to man's incurable dilemma. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16 KJV). The answer to all of man's problem is Jesus Christ.

The Christmas season is the season to join with family and neighbor and sing of God's amazing Grace. Go ahead. Deck your halls with Holly but in the midst of it all, give God the glory in the highest. This is the season for our streets to echo with the joyous celebration of Christ coming into this world.

Then there are those who object.

I have a proposition for all of the Holiday Turkeys who object to me celebrating Christmas or trying to call it something other than what it really is.

You do not have to celebrate the Christmas season; just allow me to celebrate it in a way that I see fit. Then, I will not celebrate April 1 or Halloween but will allow you to celebrate your holidays anyway you want to. I think that is fair. It is a two-for-one deal I am not sure anybody could ever pass up.

Celebrate your holiday, and I will celebrate the Christmas season and wish all my friends a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

*The Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, PO Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail [jamesnyder2@att.net](mailto:jamesnyder2@att.net). The church web site is [www.whatafellowship.com](http://www.whatafellowship.com).*

### RICH Johnson



#### MERRY CHRISTMAS 2011

Wow, it's Christmas time again? Happy Holiday season to you all. Christmas seems to be coming with increased

regularity the older I age. Quite a switch from the Christmas season of my youth. When you are young the longest night of the year is Christmas Eve night. That is, if your family is in the open gifts Christmas morning camp. My parents insisted we open presents on Christmas morning. What does your family do? We all had friends who were lucky enough to be in the open gifts Christmas Eve camp. They got to open their gifts the night before Christmas. I guess Santa used UPS to pre-deliver gifts to those families. My brother and sisters and I finally wore down my Mom and she agreed we could open one gift on Christmas Eve. But she had a trick up her sleeve: She got to pick the gift. So what did I get to open

on Christmas Eve? Socks, a bathrobe, or slippers. Not exactly what I had in mind.

Yes, you may ask, I am still an open gifts on Christmas morning person. But pay close attention to me, parents. If your kids get up at 5:30 am on Christmas morning shaking you awake, and start badgering you to roll out of bed I have a suggestion for you. A suggestion that will permit you to sleep in...guaranteed. Here it is: Let your kids open a cool gift on Christmas Eve. And let them stay up and play with whatever they open. Pretend to tell them to go to sleep knowing full well they will play with their new toy under the blankets with a flashlight. They will finally fall asleep (possibly passed out on their bedroom floor). My wife and I made a practice of this technique with young Alex and Olivia. The net result? We had to shake them awake at 8:30 Christmas morning to open presents.

This reminds me of the three stages of man (or woman): 1. You believe in Santa Claus. 2. You don't believe in Santa

Claus. 3. You become Santa Claus.

As regular readers of my column know, I like to give you little bits of trivia and such that you can pass on, amazing and delighting your Christmas guests. The following is a funny recitation (which means it is funny IF you read it out loud word for word and exactly as it is written):

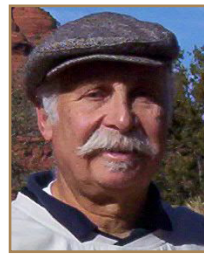
Grandpa's Christmas Fruitcake Recipe  
You'll need the following: a cup of water, a cup of sugar, four large brown eggs, two cups of dried fruit, a teaspoon of salt, a cup of brown sugar, lemon juice, nuts, and a bottle of whiskey.

Sample the whiskey to check for quality.

Take a large bowl. Check the whiskey again. To be sure it's the highest quality, pour one level cup and drink. Repeat. Turn on the electric mixer, beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of sugar and beat again.

Make sure the whiskey is still okay. Cry another tup. Turn off the mixer. Beat

## STUART Tolchin.....On LIFE



### THINKING BACK

A couple of days ago, as I walked to the mailbox to gather the mail, my next door neighbor called out to me. He is just eighteen years old and is having a tough time getting into college and finding the classes he wants. “Has your life always been this easy-just sailing along?”, he said. I guess he hadn't noticed that I had just been released from the hospital and was a bit short of breath. I thought about how involved he was in his own life and how unaware he was about what else was going on in the world as I walked back into my house. It's Christmas time and the day's mail contained a couple of cards from old friends who I had not seen for quite awhile. .

As I look back on it now all my friends were pretty bright guys who, much like me, were socially - let's call it - delayed. Few of us actually dated and we had plenty of time to talk to one another. Occasionally we talked about free-will and wondered whether everything in life was pre-determined. We were all worried about the draft and talked about strategies for staying out of the service. Now that I think about it there was a moment when a few of my friends were upset about Castro and thought about enlisting to go fight Communism. The guy who talked about this changed his mind and met a girl and was soon married.

Even though the rest of us were not dating, we were all very worried about inadvertently getting some girl pregnant. How could we be sure that the baby was ours and how did you actually arrange one of those dangerous illegal abortions and how much did they cost? This was what it was like in the early 1960's. The thing I think about now is how rarely we talked about anything that really mattered. Never in any of our conversations did any of us ever contemplate how difficult it would be to stay married, or keep a commitment, or raise a family or deal with a disabled child. Probably we kept away from even considering difficult subjects, even if we became aware of the possibility of such things actually happening to us. By the way, in time all such things happened.

I recall now that one year, one of my friend's parents got divorced and that somebody else's father died. The rest of us avoided these guys for a while and then when they came back into the group, we never talked about their losses. Off we all went to college and then attended each other's weddings. When divorces started to crop up it was all very secretive and it was really rare for anyone to reach out and give much comfort to anyone else. I remember a time when my own father died and, after a couple of days, a friend came over to comfort me. He hung around with me for a while and we didn't say much and he got kind of bored and asked if I wanted to go to a movie. I said I didn't and he acted like he didn't understand and said, “What's wrong - you're acting like somebody died.” This really happened - the guy wasn't kidding - he just kind of forgot about my situation; after all it wasn't his father who died. By the way this guy was the valedictorian of his high school class and is still my good friend.

The point is, I guess, that each of us was so wrapped up in our own life and secret problems that it was almost impossible to notice very much about anyone else. We compared ourselves and competed and maybe sometimes were secretly envious; but how much about other people's lives did we actually notice? Today, one of these old good friends lies in a bed fighting a brain tumor. He refuses to exercise and his muscles are atrophying and now he can't get out of bed. I have gone to visit a few times, frequently at first and now less and less. It is uncomfortable to visit, because all I do is urge him to do stuff that he doesn't feel much like doing. We both get annoyed and it's been a month since my last visit.

After the little exercise of writing this article, it is clear to me that I am in absolutely no position to criticize my neighbor or the members of his generation for being overly self-involved. Maybe it's just the human condition to see things from only a limited point of view and to avoid discomfort whenever possible. Maybe we all just pretend to care when all we are doing is protecting our vulnerabilities. Maybe sometimes it's better not to look too closely or remember too much about our actual behavior. Probably, as far as animals go I guess, human beings are not much better or worse than other species. Well, I guess its time for me to go back to just sailing along like I always have. Merry Christmas!

















## One Of A Kind: *Featuring unique homes and gardens and the people who create them.* Story and Photos by Chris Bertrand.



### Arcadia Holiday Decorations Awards

*Two awards given: Mountain Views News AND City of Arcadia*

This year, as is tradition, the City of Arcadia took nominations for exemplary holiday decorations in December. City staffer, Connie Schacatano, assembled the list and checked it twice, releasing the list of award winners on December 19th.

The city's Santa Squad, including Arcadia Mayor, Gary A. Kovacic, Santa Claus & members of the Arcadia Beautiful Commission made the presentations at each winning home. The Santa Squad joined the motorcade of lighted sleigh complete with snow machine, a bus full of volunteers, staffers and officials and the official "support" vehicle on its joyful duties. Award winners received a yard sign and goodie bag from the city, as well as an official photo to be published in the city's newsletter and online at the city website, [www.ci.arcadia.ca.us/](http://www.ci.arcadia.ca.us/).

The city of Arcadia's list of Holiday Decoration awards, in no particular order (just like American Idol) is:

1. 107 Santa Ynez Drive
2. 870 San Vicente Road
3. 416 Catalpa Road
4. 426 Columbia Road
5. 1049 Heritage Oaks Drive
6. 1244 N. Santa Anita Avenue
7. 100 White Oak Drive
8. 503 W. Duarte Road #3
9. 7 W. Magna Vita Avenue
10. 85 W. Longden Avenue
11. 911 Magnis Street
12. 1421 S. Fifth Avenue

Our own Mountain Views News list included one winner from the City of Arcadia list, 1244 N. Santa Anita Avenue. Congratulations!

The complete list of winners, nominated by our readership is:

1. 1244 N. Santa Anita Avenue
2. 1505 S. Baldwin Avenue, Offices of Dr. Dino Clarizio
3. 1601 S. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia Health Care
4. 1412 Orlando
5. 1455 Orlando
6. 915 Fairview (The Florentine)
7. 1400 Oak Meadow

Enjoy... and happy viewing! It's guaranteed to put you in the holiday mood!



**Live the dream ☐ Stunning mountain & city views with extraordinary privacy!**



### **Just Listed ☐ Rare in Sierra Madre!**

**Mountainside Custom Single Level ☐ Remodeled to Perfection!**

Gorgeous, pristine remodel with a seamless indoor to outdoor lifestyle surrounded by miles of LA and San Gabriel Mountain Views! Step into your own peaceful and private paradise! This is the home and the lifestyle you've dreamed of ☐ That needle in the haystack!

Nearly completely rebuilt in 1990. Since 2006, the owners & LeVeque Construction have lovingly created a unique environment for comfortable & seamless indoor to outdoor lifestyle, with many rooms opening to the breathtaking yard...for BBQ under the covered patio, croquet on the lawn, or a cool drink on the deck to watch the sunset!

Soaring ceilings, upscale materials, artisan workmanship and meticulous maintenance all combine for the ultimate mountainside experience! Maple flooring, custom cabinetry, gorgeous kitchen and master bath, Andersen windows, solar, granite and flagstone patios are just the beginning! Easy wheelchair or handicapped access. Three car garage with extra side driveway parking, too! **\$1,788,000**

For more photos and information, visit

**[www.625OakCrest.com](http://www.625OakCrest.com) and  
[RealLiving.com/Eileen.Benson](http://RealLiving.com/Eileen.Benson)**

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### Holiday Specials



**Studio sitting with 50 photographic Christmas cards: \$49.00\***

**50 photographic Christmas cards FREE with \$100.00 minimum purchase\***

**\*(includes design fee)**

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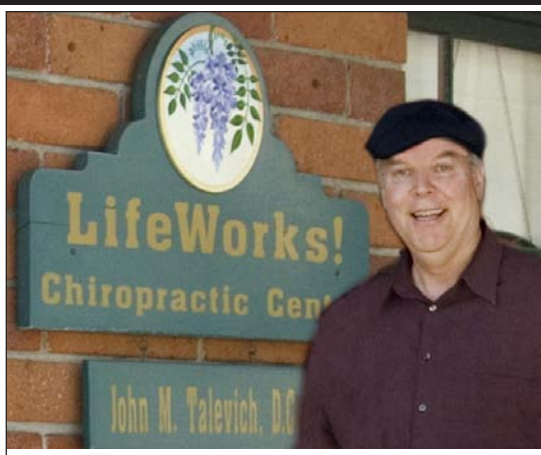




## YOUR HEALTH MATTERS

Today's Subject:

COMING IN FOR A LANDING



Dr. John Talevich, D.C. has practiced in Sierra Madre for thirty years. His clinic, LifeWorks! Chiropractic, offers patient-specific approaches to the alleviation of pain and individually tailored wellness programs.

With Christmas close at hand and the New Year up ahead, we may find it necessary to pause and consider a few things.

First, we might have eaten too much. Perhaps we are at our wits' end with all those holiday feelings and relatives we've been around. Maybe even a sense of emptiness and fatigue are chewing at us. Rather than go heroic, let's gentle ourselves back to center. Here are a few ideas to help do just that:

For digestion: A plant-based digestive enzyme is helpful to fire up the sluggish upper digestive tract. Orange peel extract, slippery elm or marshmallow root can be helpful with heartburn. Most importantly, a fiber formula such as psyllium seed husks can keep things moving.

For emotional stress: Watch out for too much caffeine consumption, and remember it is in chocolate as well as the usual suspects. The combination of too much sugar and a cranked up nervous system can lead to the blues, big time. The Bach flower essence "Rescue Remedy" is helpful.

For the spiritual level: Everyone enjoys a different relationship to the deeper meaning in life. Perhaps lighting a candle to do a quiet meditation, or going for a walk up the trail or in Eaton Canyon is your style. Making a commitment to show up at your church if you've been missing for a while might fill the bill. Writing down gratitudes or a list of people (including yourself) to forgive is powerful. Extending an act of spontaneous kindness toward someone.

Take a day off from media and enjoy the peace.

All of these can help us bring the year to an end in good stead. Those feelings of not living up to one's own expectations? Fuggetaboutit and move on, just as the sun does each day.

Enjoy your life! Dr. John

**John M. Talevich, D.C.**  
**CHIROPRACTIC: Simple, Elegant, Effective**  
**31 S. Baldwin Avenue Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024**  
**626-355-4710**

## HOW TO FIND AND RESEARCH DOCTORS WHO ACCEPT MEDICARE

Dear Savvy Senior,  
What resources are available to help seniors locate and research Medicare doctors? My husband and I are approaching age 65 and need to find a new internist or primary care doctor who accepts Medicare. Our current doctor is not enrolled with Medicare and will not continue seeing us as Medicare patients. Looking For Care

Dear Looking,  
Depending on where you live, finding a new primary care doctor or specialist that accepts Medicare patients can be challenging. Because of low reimbursement rates and greater paperwork hassles, many doctors today have opted out of Medicare or they're not accepting new patients with Medicare coverage.

With that said, Medicare is now offering a service that makes finding Medicare-approved doctors a little easier. And, there are a number of good resources available today that can help you check up on prospective doctors for free. Here's what you should know.

### Medicare Doctors

The government's new online "Physician Compare" tool is one of the easiest ways to locate doctors in your area that accept traditional Medicare. Just go to [www.medicare.gov/find-a-doctor](http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-doctor) where you can do a search by physician's name, medical specialty or by geographic location. Or, if you don't have Internet access you can also get this information by calling 800-633-4227.

Keep in mind, though, that locating a Medicare-approved doctor doesn't guarantee you'll be accepted as a patient. Many doctors limit the number of Medicare patients they accept while others have a full patient roster don't accept any new patients. You'll need to call the individual doctor's office to find out.

Another option you may want to consider is to join a Medicare Advantage plan. These are government approved, private health plans (usually HMOs and PPOs) sold by insurance companies that you can choose in place of original Medicare. These plans may have more doctors available than original Medicare does. See [www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan](http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan) to research this option.

### Doctor's Check Up

After you've found a few Medicare-approved doctors that are accepting new patients, there are plenty of resources available today that can help you research them. Some of the best include HealthGrades, Vitals and RateMDs. These are free doctor-rating websites that



provide important background information as well as consumer comments and ratings from past patients. Here's a breakdown of what each site offers:

- Healthgrades.com provides in-depth profiles on around 750,000 U.S. physicians including their education and training, hospital affiliations, board certification, awards and recognitions, professional misconduct, disciplinary action and malpractice records. It also offers a 5-star ratings scale from past patients on a number of issues like communication and listening skills, wait time, time spent with the patient, office friendliness and more.
- Vitals.com provides some basic background information on around 720,000 U.S. doctors along with unedited comments from past patients and ratings on things like promptness, bedside manner, accurate diagnosis and more.
- RateMDs.com primarily offers ratings and anonymous comments from past patients.

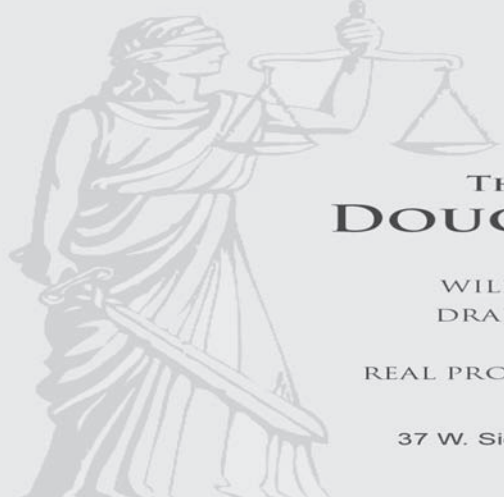
It's a good idea to check out all three doctor-rating sites so you can get a bigger sampling and a better feel of how previous patients are rating a particular doctor.

### Fee-Based Help

Another good resource to help you gather information is at [angieslist.com](http://angieslist.com) (888-888-5478). This is a fee-based membership service that also offers doctors ratings and reviews from other members in your area for \$7.60 for one month or \$25 for the year.

Or, consider purchasing a copy of the "Consumers' Guide to Top Doctors." Created by Consumers' Checkbook, a nonprofit consumer organization, this book will help you find top-rated doctors that have been recommended by other doctors. Their database lists 24,000 physicians, in 35 different fields of specialty, in 50 metro areas. The cost for this guide is \$25 plus shipping and handling (call 800-213-7283 to order a copy), or you can view the information online at [checkbook.org/doctors](http://checkbook.org/doctors) for \$25.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](http://SavvySenior.org). Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.



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[SierraMLaw@cs.com](mailto:SierraMLaw@cs.com)

## SENIOR HAPPENINGS

### DECEMBER ACTIVITIES

#### WE'RE BACK!

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19th

Senior Programs return to the Hart Park House enior Center, 222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. in Memorial Park - Come by and see the changes!!

MONDAYS: City Hall & Lunch Café

Closed December 26th - Happy Holidays!

12 noon: Intervale Lunch Café: Come enjoy a hot meal with others. Donation for seniors (60+) of \$2.00; visitors \$3.75. Call 355-0256 to make your daily reservation.

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

TUESDAYS:

FREE blood pressure checks by Methodist Hospital Nurse; 11 am to 12 noon.

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm: BINGO; cards are only 25 cents each so stop by & play

5:15 pm to 6:45 pm: Yoga; \$6.00 - 50 & over. Please call 355-5278 for more information

WEDNESDAYS:

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

12 noon: Intervale Lunch Café; daily reservations needed 355-0256

2nd Wednesday of the month: FREE Legal 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 Poker with Bridge on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays; so please call for more information.

FRIDAY: City Hall closed on Dec. 16, 23 & 30 and Lunch Café closed on Dec. 23

12 noon: Intervale Lunch Café; daily reservations needed 355-0256

Saturday: 11:30 am: Senior Club brown bag lunch and BINGO at 12:30 pm. The Senior Club will return to the Senior Center starting on Saturday, January 7, 2012

### 2012 EXCURSIONS

SAVE THE DATES

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26TH - Bowers Museum in Santa Ana. Join us as we return to Orange County to visit the Warriors: China's Enduring Legacy exhibit as well as the museum's ongoing exhibits like California Legacies.

Cost per person is \$22 (includes transportation & museum entrance with audio tour). Lunch will be on your own.

Bus will depart from the Hart Park House Senior Center at 9:30 am and return around 3:30 pm.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH - San Antonio Winery Tour & Tasting. Come enjoy a tour of this historic Los Angeles Winery, taste their wine, visit the gift shop and savor the flavors of their onsite restaurant.

Cost per person is \$10 (includes transportation, tour & tasting). Lunch will be on your own.

Bus leaves the Hart Park House Senior Center at 10:30 am and will return around 3 pm.

SATURDAY, MARCH 3RD - Community Whale Watching Trip; \$28 per person. The bus will leave the Community Recreation Center at 10 am and return at 3:30 pm. Cost includes transportation and a 2 1/2 hour charter boat tour out of Long Beach.

Registration can be done either in person or online at [www.cityofsierramadre.com/online/registration](http://www.cityofsierramadre.com/online/registration)



### December Birthdays

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



### 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.)

Meals are delivered to the home-bound seniors by drivers through the YWCA Interval Lunch Program M-F (with frozen meals for the weekend.)

Call the YWCA at (626) 214-9460 for more information.



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**Dave Felt 355-8315**

## LUNCH & LEARN

Join the Senior  
Community Commission  
at the  
Sierra Madre Recreation Center  
for a FREE presentation. Lunch is  
available for a  
\$2 donation  
Call (626) 355-0256 by  
12 noon the day before.

## DIAL - A - RIDE TICKETS

Tickets can now be purchased at:  
Sierra Madre City Hall  
Sierra Madre Recreation Center  
Sierra Madre Library

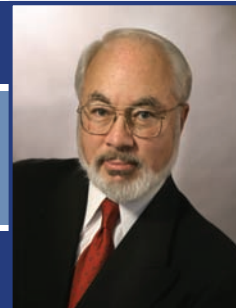


Pasadena Highlands, an independent and assisted living community, is proud to provide a special gift basket on the first Tuesday of each month. Accredited In-Home nursing care will provide a special prize on the 4th Tuesday of each month. Bingo takes place every Tuesday at 1:30 pm at the Sierra Madre Recreation Center while the Hart Park House is under remodeling. 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 1st & 4th Tuesday of each month

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## Joy to the World!

### Christmas Day at San Marino Community Church



San Marino Community Church welcomes you to worship on Christmas Day! Pastor, Rev. Jeffrey O'Grady preaches at this special family-friendly

service held at 10:00 am. Childcare for younger children will be provided.

Join us New Year's Day for one service of worship and communion at 10:00 am. (Our 9:15 am Traditional Service and 11:15 am "Gathering" service resume on Sunday, January 8, 2012.)

**San Marino Community Church**  
1750 Virginia Road, San Marino, CA 91108  
Call: (626) 282-4181 or visit us online: [www.smccpb.com](http://www.smccpb.com)



Looking Up

with Bob Eklund



NASA Discovers First Earth-Size Planets Beyond Our Solar System

NASA's Kepler mission has discovered the first Earth-size planets orbiting a Sun-like star outside our solar system. The planets, called Kepler-20e and Kepler-20f, are too close to their star to be in the so-called habitable zone where liquid water could exist on a planet's surface, but they are the smallest exoplanets ever confirmed around a star like our Sun.

The discovery marks the next important milestone in the ultimate search for planets like Earth. The new planets are thought to be rocky. Kepler-20e is slightly smaller than Venus, measuring 0.87 times the radius of Earth. Kepler-20f is almost exactly the size of Earth, measuring 1.03 times its radius. Both planets reside in a five-planet system called Kepler-20, approximately 1,000 light-years away in the constellation Lyra.

Kepler-20e orbits its parent star every 6.1 days and Kepler-20f every 19.6 days. These short orbital periods mean very hot, inhospitable worlds. Kepler-20f, at 800 degrees Fahrenheit (427 degrees Celsius), is similar to an average day on the planet Mercury. The surface temperature of Kepler-20e,

at more than 1,400 degrees Fahrenheit (760 degrees Celsius), would melt glass.

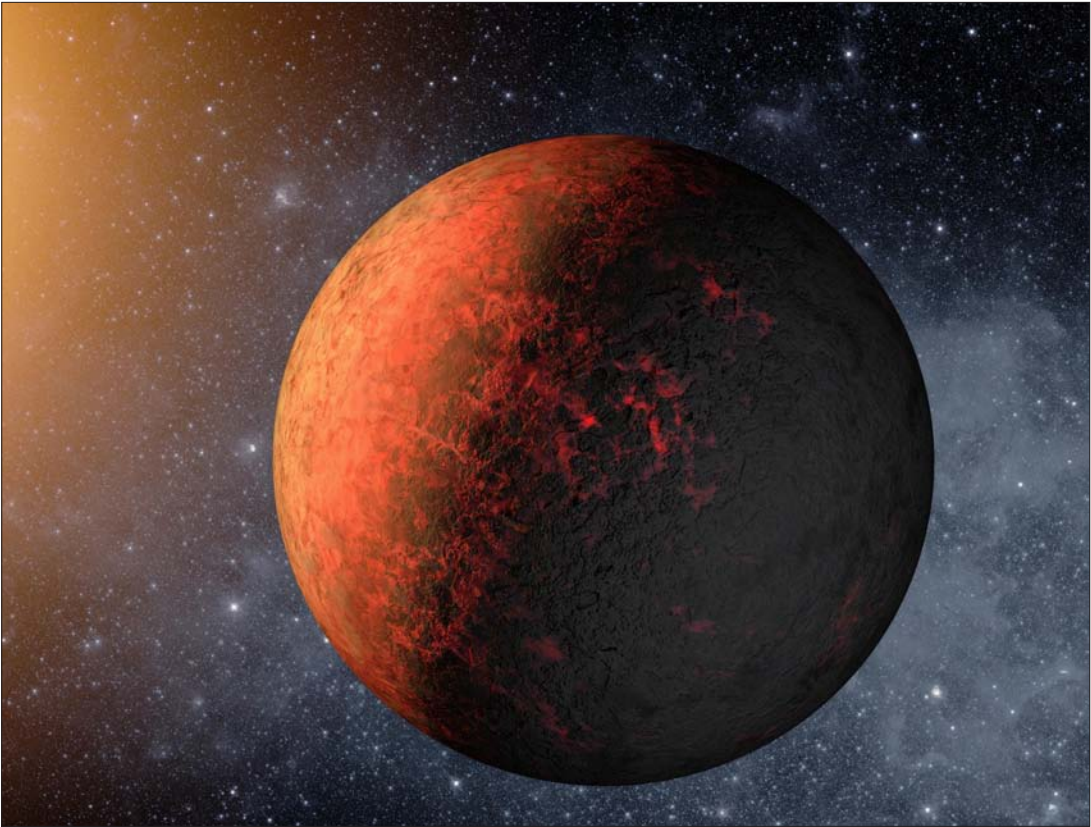
The Kepler-20 system includes three other planets that are larger than Earth but smaller than Neptune. Kepler-20b, the closest planet, Kepler-20c, the third planet, and Kepler-20d, the fifth planet, orbit their star every 3.7, 10.9 and 77.6 days, respectively. All five planets have orbits lying roughly within Mercury's orbit in our solar system. The host star belongs to the same G-type class as our Sun, although it is slightly smaller and cooler.

The system has an unexpected arrangement. In our solar system, small, rocky worlds orbit close to the Sun and large, gaseous worlds orbit farther out. In comparison, the planets of Kepler-20 are organized in alternating size: large, small, large, small and large.

"The Kepler data are showing us some planetary systems have arrangements of planets very different from that seen in our solar system," said Jack Lissauer, planetary scientist and Kepler science team member at NASA's Ames Research Center in Moffett Field, Calif. "The analysis of Kepler data continues to reveal new insights about the diversity of planets and planetary systems within our galaxy."

Scientists are not certain how the system evolved, but they do not think the planets formed in their existing locations. They theorize that the planets formed farther from their star and then migrated inward, likely through interactions with the disk of material from which they originated. This allowed the worlds to maintain their regular spacing despite alternating sizes.

The Kepler science team uses ground-based telescopes and the Spitzer Space Telescope to review observations on planet candidates the Kepler spacecraft finds. The star field Kepler observes in

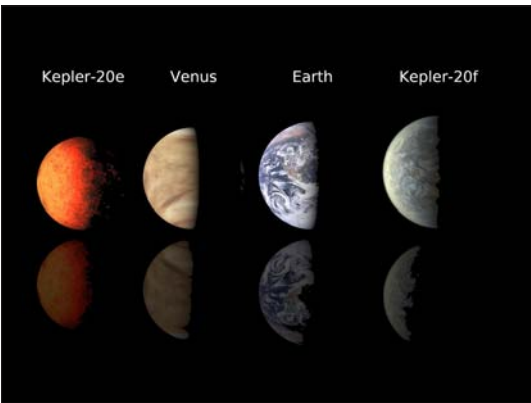


the constellations Cygnus and Lyra can be seen only from ground-based observatories in spring through early fall. The data from these other observations help determine which candidates can be validated as planets.

"In the cosmic game of hide and seek, finding planets with just the right size and just the right temperature seems only a matter of time," said

Natalie Batalha, Kepler deputy science team lead and professor of astronomy and physics at San Jose State University. "We are on the edge of our seats knowing that Kepler's most anticipated discoveries are still to come."

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



On Line

By PJ Carpenter

I MISS NAPSTER ALREADY - PART 2

Short recap for those of you who didn't get a chance to see "I Miss Napster Already - Part 1"

I was a 5-year customer with Napster, amassing a library of over 2000 songs during that time. On December 1st of this year Napster was acquired by the online music service Rhapsody and all existing user accounts for Napster were converted to Rhapsody user accounts.

this year converted Napster users lost the ability to play legally purchased content on their computers and their mobile devices as soon as soon as the devices were connected to the internet.

The Rhapsody user support forums soon blew up with thousands of disgruntled ex-Napster customers looking for explanations. None came. Napster users were left with the option of getting used to the new service or

While Rhapsody did a sufficient job of acquiring Napster's customer base they didn't do such a great job of acquiring the music licensing base to go along with the music that Napster's subscribers had purchased. This meant that on December 2nd of

looking elsewhere.

Some users (no names need be mentioned here) sought out other solutions. There are many products that purport to remove DRM (Digital Rights Management) protection from various music subscription files so that the user can move the files freely between various computers and mobile devices. Some of the programs promised users that they could rescue the libraries orphaned by the Napster-Rhapsody merger in no vague terms. Promises are one thing and reality is often another.

One of these products, called DRM-Removal, promises users full conversion capabilities with Napster, Rhapsody and other music subscription service files. Thousands of desperate users turned to this program which promised to resurrect their now-dead music libraries and for the low price of only

Happy Tails

by Chris Leclerc.

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THE MONOGOMOUS LIFESTYLE OF THE MAGNIFICENT SWALLOW

As far back as I can remember, I have always been fascinated with the behavior birds. I was born in Florida, raised in Alabama, and finally moved to Southern California at age 21 where I have lived ever since. Wherever I lived, throughout the various stages of my life, I have always found myself seeking out the indigenous birds in that particular area. I suppose I am what you might call a bit of a bird nerd. You know, one of those people who go around gazing up at the sky, or staring into the treetops in hopes of getting a good look at an interesting flying feathered friend. There is just something about the beauty and consistent balanced behavior of a bird that gives me a strong sense of security and serenity. Those small, seemingly delicate yet amazingly strong and resilient little feathered beings have absolutely no idea what a positive influence they have on my daily walk of life!

One thing I really respect and appreciation about birds, is that they have remained consistent to their 'calling' on earth. They have been true to their 'God-given position in the system' so to speak. Although they have had to be flexible enough to acclimate to some pretty major changes over the centuries, they have stayed true to their purpose by maintaining the same behavioral patterns from one generation to the next. The migratory and mating habits of the birds in existence today are for the most part the same as they were hundreds of years ago. In spite of the of varied weather patterns and alterations to the earth's topography, birds have stayed consistently 'on course'.

Not all of earth's creatures can boast such consistency throughout the ages. Take the human, for example. Within only a few short decades we have 'morphed' immensely into a nearly unrecognizable new being with regard to behavioral habits, daily activities and cultural norms. Furthermore, our incessant need for constant change has resulted in undesirable alterations to the earth that sustains us as well as our relationships with other creatures. In fact, if you consider the history of human culture since man first walked on earth, compared to now, you would be hard pressed to find more consistent patterns of behavior than you could count on one hand. We humans like to call it progress, and I agree that many of the changes we've made for ourselves have been

positive, however there are numerous aspects of what we call progress that come with a hefty price to pay. Time will only tell which changes the human has chosen to make, will indeed prove to be beneficial versus destructive in the long run.

Among the many amazing species of birds that can be found residing in Southern California, one of my favorites is the Swallow. The Swallow is a relatively small, delicate looking, beautifully decorated bird known for it's strong migratory and monogamous mating habits. Wait amminute, did I say monogamous? Now there's a lifestyle change we humans could have lived without! It is a known fact that the male Swallow uses his colorful feathers, mainly his brilliant tail feathers, to attract the female who eventually becomes the literal "love of his life". Once these two love birds unite, they occupy a common nest that they build together and they are committed to each other for rest of their lives. They nest together, migrate together and raise their spawn together as a family. Swallow couples share the responsibilities associated with mating and nurturing their hatchlings. When the time comes for the female to lay her eggs, the male appoints himself as the official security guard, protecting their home. Parent Swallows are even know to fly out and attack a potential predator who might pose a threat to their nest. They are willing to do whatever it takes to protect their family. It simply amazes me how strong and enduring the bonds are between a married Swallow couple!

Those of us who are fortunate enough to have an innate love and appreciation for nature are truly the lucky ones. I don't know what I would do without being able to go outside and enjoy the beautiful trees, and other remarkable living things that surround me. I learn something new every day from the animals and from nature, and sometimes a simple reminder of the basic principles that make life great, such as the monogamous mating habits of the Swallow, can teach me the most important lessons in life. I thank my God above for using the simplest things to teach me how to live life more graciously. It is my belief that every human can learn some valuable lessons by simply observing the consistent, loving lifestyle of the Swallow.

KATIE Tse.....This and That



Wardrobe Malfunctions & Other Embarrassments

We've all known that time when, after enjoying a salad lunch, we return to work only to have a sympathetic coworker discretely inform us that there's a glaring spinach leaf wedged between our front teeth. This is an insignificant experience on the continuum of hygienic and fashion faux pas. I remember when I worked as a checker at Howie's. A coworker had just brought out a tray of fresh, warm chocolate chip cookies. She offered me one and I scarfed it down en route to my register. At least five customers came through my line before my next door neighbors arrived carrying a basket of produce. While making small talk, I caught a glimpse of myself in a reflective surface, only to discover a giant globule of chocolate streaked across my cheek. How it got there I do not know. "Oh my gosh!" I exclaimed, wiping the caked fudge off my face. After some embarrassed laughter I asked my neighbors, "Why didn't you tell me I had a huge dark smear on my face?" They politely apologized; perhaps they thought the chocolate was intentional.

More recently, Barbara, my carpool buddy, experienced a small wardrobe malfunction during our ride to work. She has the energetic capacity to accomplish five times the number of tasks the rest of us are capable of completing in the same length of time. Yet this heightened drive does not come without its drawbacks. Barbara has accidentally grabbed other people's keys, worn clothing inside out, and committed other minor infractions. The first time I experienced this was when she was driving and I was about to compliment her on the attractive sheer blouse she had on over a dark tank top. Then I noticed that the seams were inside out. "Uh, Barb," I said, "I think your top might be inside out." She looked down, laughed, and deftly changed it at the next red light. Good thing she had something under it! About a week later, Barbara told me on the way home that she had worn her shirt inside out and met with several clients before realizing it. That same day some of the board members visited our department, taking notes on their intimidating clipboards. "I don't remember if I had my sweater on when they came in!" she exclaimed. "Why didn't you tell me my shirt was inside out?" "I was driving," I said, "--focused." Hey, at least she didn't have her shirt inside out with the tag in front!

Yes, things could've been worse, as was in case of my other friend Jill, a die-hard Dodger fan who never misses a game. I'm not familiar with the bathrooms at Dodger's stadium, but there must be something adhesive about their toilet seat covers. Jill had walked out of the bathroom, and even returned to her seat, before she discovered the fluttering white paper seat cover trailing behind her.

I had my own wardrobe malfunction last week at work. I had a pair of those little calf-length nylon stockings that offer some buffer against the frigid winter air. Two of them went into the washer and only one came out. I didn't worry, figuring it would turn up in another load. The following day, I put on a pair of pants, one leg of which felt somewhat bunched. Again, in my early morning stupor, I paid little attention. At work, I noticed a crumpled pinkish thing near the vending machine. "Ew! What's that?" a coworker asked, pointing at the U.F.O. (Unidentified Fabric Oddity). "Beats me!" I said. Then came the sick recognition of my M.I.A. stocking, trodden and cast away on the lunch room floor. I tried to remember when the lump in my pant leg had drifted out. I hoped no one saw it, especially a board member. It might've been nice if someone, maybe Barbara, had warned me at the first sighting of nylon peeking out by my heel. Anyway, I wasn't going back for it!



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# HUDDLE UP!



## By Harvey Hyde BOY, HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED

Way back when I was in school at Pasadena High, Pasadena City College and the University of Redlands, girls who wore jeans were called tom boys, and young women who participated in athletics belonged to what was called GAA, which stood for Girls Athletic Association. Actually, GAA was little more than a glorified intramural program.

These days it is okay to wear jeans just about anywhere. I like the look, so I'm not complaining.

In fact, I bring this up because this weekend reminded me of how far athletics for young women have come, thanks to Title IX, a law that was enacted by Congress in 1972. The law states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

To be honest about it, I initially did not embrace Title IX. I thought it put too much emphasis on women's athletics and diminished the importance of money-making sports such as football and men's basketball. It was generally not popular because of what it did to men's sports budgets.

Although change certainly did not come "overnight," Title IX created a turn-around with lots of positives. Young women have a chance to get full college scholarships, our women's Olympic teams are better, and I believe many more women have learned how to compete, which these days is necessary in any profession. And I must admit that

women's sports are among my favorite television choices.

Being a true sports fan is no longer a men's only group. Perhaps because women have had more opportunities to be participants, women are now more involved as sports spectators. They are able to go to a sporting event and actually enjoy it along with husbands, mates, brothers and fathers. They are able to talk intelligently about the competition. It is great to see them involved in sports broadcasting, P.E. administration and even as athletic directors.

Women have come a long way in sports. Women's sports such as volleyball, softball, basketball and swimming have become important television events and they are great to watch. Tennis is not bad either and our women's soccer teams have done the USA proud over many years. The competition and athleticism is absolutely amazing. Better be careful before you challenge a female to a race or a match. If you are a golfer, better not give any strokes away to a female.

The talent in women's athletics was demonstrated this past weekend, during the women's college volleyball Final Four tournament. The Pac-12 had UCLA and USC facing the Big Ten's Illinois and the SEC's Florida State in the semifinals. UCLA ended up beating Illinois in five sets for the national championship. All the matches were a great example of teamwork and skill.

I think another benefit of the rise of women's athletics as well as general fitness is the impact on relationships and marriages. How often do you see couples jogging together, riding bikes together, walking together and watching sports on TV together and having fun at it?

A lot of people I know thought Title IX would turn out to be a big zero. The big picture certainly proves that wrong.

## SANTA ANITA TO OFFER MOBILE WAGERING ON-TRACK; 'SANTA ANITA MOBILE' OFFERS WAGERING CONVENIENCE, NEW TECHNOLOGY WILL BE AVAILABLE DECEMBER 26

—Santa Anita Park has announced that beginning opening day, Dec. 26, it will offer all fans attending on-track the convenience of remote wagering via Santa Anita Mobile, a state-of-the-art mobile wagering application.

On-track fans can access the new mobile wagering site at: <http://mobile.santaanita.com>. This one-stop, one source mobile application brings customer service literally to the palm of the customer's hand and among its features are: On-track mobile wagering, streaming of live races, race replays, Cybertote (real time results, odds, will-pays, scratches, etc.) a betting calculator and a Santa Anita events and concerts calendar.

"This is the direction we need to be going," said Santa Anita Vice President of Sales and Marketing Chris Quinn. "Technology is making our sport much more accessible and this mobile wagering platform is going to provide our on-track fans with a level of convenience that we haven't been able to offer before. This is an exciting time and we feel these types of technologies hold great promise for the growth of our sport and the enhancement of our on-track experience."

Santa Anita mobile wagering comes with a very simple sign-up process. Patrons can visit the sign-up booth located in first floor grandstand (Just West of the THOROUGHBREDS Center in Mainline 2) or in FrontRunner restaurant. Fill out a one page form to set up your THOROUGHBREDS mobile wagering account. Signing up for THOROUGHBREDS is free and easy to do if you are not already a member.

"Currently, we are working to provide the best infrastructure to support the mobile wagering platform," said Nina Zukin, Santa Anita Director of Information Technology. "With the addition of numerous wireless towers and commercial access points, our customers can be assured of a convenient and secure mobile wagering experience."

The following is a list of six potential questions likely to be posed by new customers:

### Q: How do I sign up?

A: Take your THOROUGHBREDS Card to the mobile wagering sign-up booth located on the first floor grandstand (Just West of the THOROUGHBREDS Center in Mainline 2). Fill out a brief one page form and you are ready to go.

### Q: How can money be deposited to open a Santa Anita Mobile Account?

A: Santa Anita will dedicate Self Service terminals where money can be deposited. These terminals will be adjacent to Information Windows throughout the facility. Deposits with a voucher can be made on any self service terminal that accepts printed tickets.

### Q: Do customers have the ability to change their PIN number?

A: Yes. From a security standpoint you must change your PIN number before being issued a new

card. Customers can change their PIN at any time on any self service terminal and should change their PIN when making their initial deposit.

### Q: What if the customer forgets his or her PIN number, can that number be retrieved?

A: PIN numbers are easily retrieved at any Information Window. Customers must provide photo identification that matches the name on the account.

### Q: Once the Santa Anita winter/spring meeting is over, where can account money be withdrawn?

A: Customers can withdraw monies by voucher from any self service terminal at any Southern California racetrack or off-track betting facility.

### Q: If a Santa Anita Mobile card is lost, can someone else access the account?

A: Your account can not be accessed without a pin number. If you have lost your card, please go to an Information Window. You will be asked security questions from your sign-up information and your old card will be cancelled and you will be issued a new card, immediately.

Santa Anita's 75th winter/spring season will open on Monday, Dec. 26, with first post time at 12 noon. For more information, visit [www.santaanita.com](http://www.santaanita.com), or call (626) 574-RACE.

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How about draws or fades? Or out of deep rough or off hard pan lies? Do windy conditions hurt your scores? These are conditions that we have all faced on the course. They're part of the game, and they're part of what makes golf so tough... and so incredibly satisfying when we can navigate the course effectively. To get around the course effectively though, you'll need to have what we call "Trouble Shots" mastered. We've come up with a 66 minute video that will give you the tools needed to hit these shots... and lower your scores.

Here's a summary of what you'll learn:

### Trouble Shot: Hard Pan – Hitting off hard ground with no grass or turf.

What typically happens: The leading edge of the golf club is rounded. So, when it comes into the ground it won't dig. When you have a hard pan lie (since the ground is so hard), what happens is that the back end of the golf club bounces off of the ground and hits into the back of the golf ball. It won't glide through the turf because the ground is too hard. As the bottom edge of the golf club comes into contact with the ground, it bounces up into the air. When you have a hard pan lie, you will very often top the golf ball. The ball flight is very low, and the ball generally doesn't go very far.

What the video is going to teach: We're going to show you specific changes to implement in your setup and mechanically with your golf swing that will ensure that you will catch a more of the bottom of the ball. The changes will help you get loft on the golf ball, more distance, and play the shot as it meant to be played. We're going to make the swing steeper, which will turn the club into more of a digging tool than one that was meant to bounce.

### Trouble Shot: Deep Rough – Hitting where the ball is buried deep in the grass.

What typically happens: When the golf ball lies too deep in the rough and the leading edge cannot get to the bottom of the golf ball, this would be considered deep rough. The problem is that you usually can't get the golf club on it. The rough gets between the clubhead and the ball so the club can't make good contact, and also, this slows down the clubhead. If the rough is too deep, the grass will grab the hosel of the club and twist the clubface at impact.

What the video is going to teach: First of all, you will not believe the solid contact you'll start making. We're going to make adjustments to your setup in order to make the golf club swing more vertical. And the reason is you're swinging so vertical is to catch ball first and you're not going to catch any grass in the hosel. Since you won't be catching grass, your clubhead speed won't be slowed down either. This will give you the distance you are used to from the fairway, but out of the rough.

### Trouble Shot: Punch Shots – When you need to hit the ball low.

What typically happens: If you don't have this shot in your bag, you don't have much choice but to take your regular swing. So you can't go directly at the target, you've got

to aim left or right instead.

What the video is going to teach: We're going to show you how to hit the ball low so you can attack the target. Aiming left and right isn't the best option is the vast majority of cases. You are much better hitting the ball under the obstacle and letting the ball roll up to the target.

You'll also learn all of the below:

### Trouble Shot: Into Wind

- \* The #1 mistake most amateurs make in club selection. I'll show you which club and why.
- \* Why it isn't about swing speed. Hitting harder isn't the answer. I'll show you what is.
- \* The last thing you want to do when hitting against the wind. And how to avoid doing it.
- \* Why a full backswing is a no-no. And how to positively alter yours.

### Trouble Shot: Down Wind

- \* How to avoid choosing the wrong club. It's the most common mistake amateurs make and it can cost you big time.
- \* How to modify your swing to take maximum advantage of the wind. Your regular swing won't help you here.
- \* How to keep the ball from running past where you want it to stop.
- \* What you want the ball to do in a downwind situation. It's the exact opposite of hitting into the wind.

### Trouble Shot: Flop Shots

- \* You'll learn when to flop and when to stop and think it over.
- \* You'll learn how to add loft to your flop shots. Without sacrificing accuracy.
- \* I'll show you the club to use and the technique that goes with it.
- \* I'll teach you how to modify your swing. It's a subtle change but it makes all the difference between a good flop and one to try to forget.

**Trouble Shot: Uneven Lies (when the ball is above your feet, when it's below them, when the ball is uphill and when it's downhill).** I give each lie its own special segment. Because each one is a different situation.

- \* How to hit like you're on level ground – even if you're halfway up a hillside. (The secret? Your shoulders.)
- \* The technique to use for each lie. It's different for each one.
- \* The club to use for every uneven lie you face. No more second-guessing yourself.
- \* How to modify your grip. Same grip, different location.

### Trouble Shot: Draws and Fades

- \* When to hit a draw and when to go for a fade. You'd think it would be obvious, but for some golfers it isn't.
- \* The changes you need to make to your grip for both shots. Naturally, it's a little different depending on whether you're going for a draw or a fade.
- \* Why it's important to visualize your shot. You won't get where you want to go if you don't.
- \* Why so much depends on your club face. And what to do about it.

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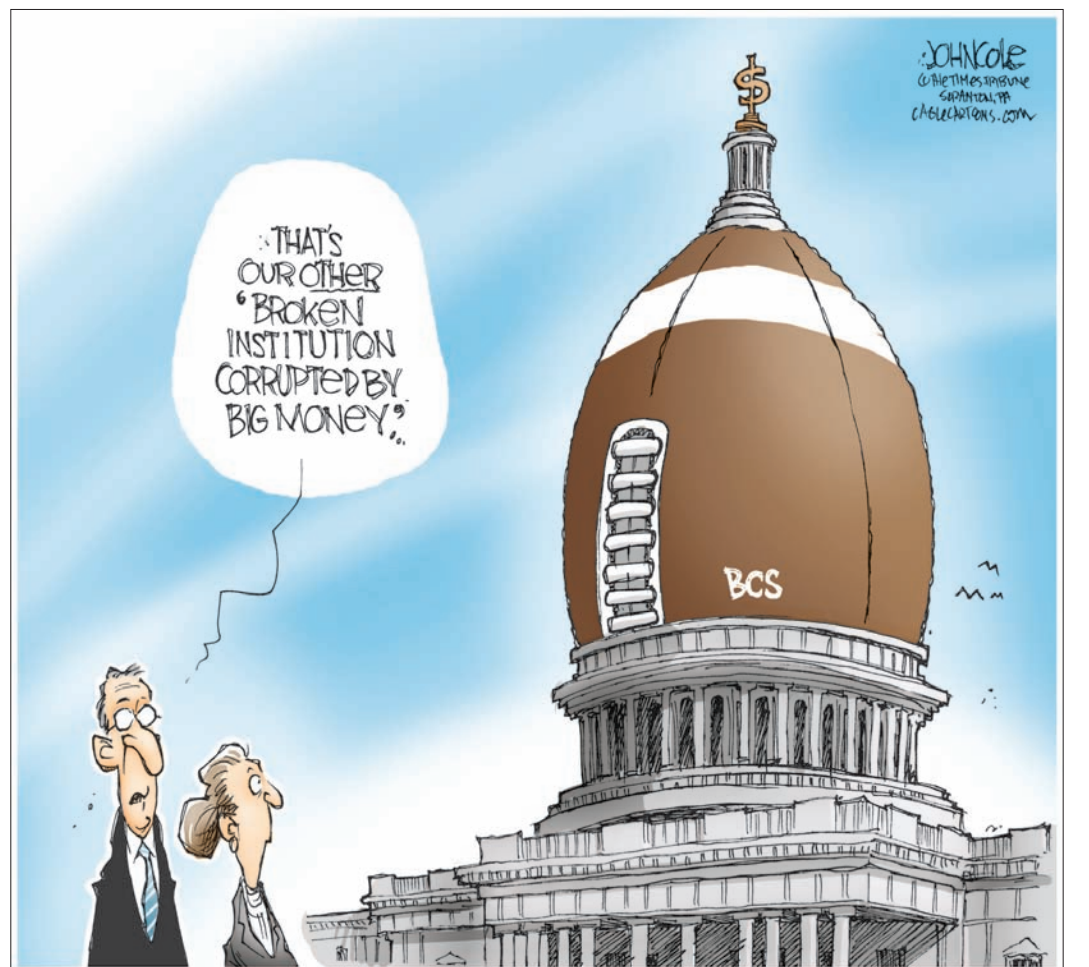
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