



# Happy Hanukkah

## Mountain Views News

Sierra Madre — Arcadia — Pasadena — Altadena — Duarte — Monrovia

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2012

VOLUME 6 NO 50

### THE SPIRIT OF GIVING



Sierra Madre Firefighter Todd Conrad (left) and Chief Steve Heydorff (right) are joined by S/Sgt. Andrew Marsella of USMC and Mayor Josh Moran at the 2nd Annual Sierra Madre Volunteer Firefighter Association's Ball last Saturday where they also collected toys for the US Marine Corp's Toys for Tots program. Photo by B. Coburn

### SIERRA MADRE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

The Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations for the 2012 Citizen of the Year. To be eligible, a person must be a resident of Sierra Madre. The accomplishment(s) or project(s) for which they are being nominated must have been of benefit to the community of Sierra Madre and (cont. on page 3)

### SIERRA MADRE CHRISTMAS TREE COMPANY

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### POLICE OFFICERS AND CITY SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.....FINALLY

By Bill Coburn

The City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sierra Madre Police Association (PA) regarding terms and conditions of employment at Tuesday's Council meeting. The agreement runs through June 30, 2015. This is the first agreement between the PA and the city since the year 2000.

Sierra Madre Police Chief Larry Giannone, said the following about the agreement, which was approved as part of the Consent Calendar for the meeting, "This is the first comprehensive MOU in over a decade and I want to thank the negotiation teams from both the City and the Police Association for coming to an agreement which did not include any raises. Taking over as the new Chief I felt it was important to have the MOU in place so as a Department we can move forward to continue to provide quality police services for the community, without having to worry about misconstrued working conditions behind the scenes." Chief Giannone, as department head for the City, is not a member of the PA.

According to the Agenda posted on the City website, the agreement incorporates changes and clarifying language to the 2000 document that the Council imposed in December, 2011. It inserts new language identifying sections of the Personnel Rules and Regulations that apply to PA members, when complaints are removed from the personnel file (consistent with the penal code), and it inserts a section regarding the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA).

It also inserts the exact language from the Personnel Rules and Regulations regarding the Educational Program/Tuition Reimbursement. It reduces the officers' Uniform Stipend from \$80/month to \$55/month; and the City agrees to provide job related safety equipment. The new MOU bases seniority for those in the association on



Later in the week, SMPOA President Ed Delcours joins fellow officers in presenting Christmas gifts to special students at SM Middle School.

the length of time of uninterrupted service of an employee rather than rank. It also provides \$30,000 for the length of the contract for payment of time and a half for an officer who is held over because another employee has called in sick, and provides that "day trades" can be done within the 28-day work rather than the 14-day pay period.

The agreement also clarifies that to receive the "finder's fee" for recommending a newly hired officer, the employee must be identified on the employment application. Adjusts how employees are paid for special security detail and criminal court, and increases Training Officer, Detective, and Traffic stipends from \$250 to \$275.

It includes language from the Personnel Rules and Regulations regarding sick leave and jury leave and court appearances. Regarding outside employment, it adjusts the verbiage so that employees must notify the department when there is a change in job respon-

sibilities or classification and/or if an employee discontinues his/her employment with an outside agency.

According to the staff report, the agreement as presented will not provide significant increases in costs nor significant savings to the adopted balanced 2011-2013 fiscal budget.

In a statement issued after the meeting, Council member Chris Koerber sent out a press release about the agreement. "I'm pleased that the PA worked so diligently with the City's negotiating team to reach this accord. In spite of the extremely tight budget outlook for Sierra Madre, both sides exemplified the teamwork necessary to reach this mutually beneficial agreement. This new MOU is another step in keeping Sierra Madre 'Sierra Madre'. Neighborhood policing, done through our own Police Department, will continue to be one of the cornerstones of our mountain village."

### THE VILLAGE OF EASTWICKE

A Very Special Place In The Heart of Sierra Madre

by Ron Cooper

Almost hidden in the courtyard of the Renaissance Plaza you will encounter a scene straight out of a Norman Rockwell painting. The sculpted image of an elderly man wearing a traditional red and white Santa's cap is seated next to a woman on a bench. They are both staring intently at a book that is being held in the gentleman's lap. Another sculpted image of a large dog drinking from a fountain can also be seen. An open door adorned with handmade wreaths and a warm glow beckons you to enter.

The Village of Eastwicke is one of those places that you would expect to find on a weekend getaway to some remote, exotic location. A place like Solvang or Ojai, for instance. But, for those of us fortunate enough to live in Sierra Madre, it's right here in our own backyard. Located at 38 West Sierra Madre Boulevard, directly across from Kersting Court, right in the heart of our downtown business district.

Susan Reib is the artist whose creative genius has transformed this art gallery and gift shop into a world of visual enchantment, steeped rich in both color and texture.

On a recent visit I was admiring Susan's amazing ability to turn an ordinary



river rock into a lifelike resemblance of a family pet, or an animal that you might expect to see in the wild. On this particular visit a family of owls stared back at me from a tabletop display.

Dogs and cats. Wolves and raccoons. Rabbits and even a life sized peacock can all be seen in Susan's forest-like setting. Created in large part from logs she had gathered shortly after the windstorm that ravaged so much Sierra Madre last year on November 30th. Each of these animals have been hand painted personally by Susan. Thousands of brush strokes are required to bring each animal to life. Her creations along with more information can also be found at

The Village of Eastwicke will be open late each evening throughout the holiday season. If you've never been there you're in for a real treat! In addition to her pet stones you will also find many other gift items, such as jewelry, clothing, stuffed animals, candles and incense. The list of cool things goes on and on!

This holiday season, and throughout the year, I plan to take advantage of our local merchants and all they have to offer. I hope that you will, too! Susan and her little dog Joey wanted me to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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## Weather Wise

## 5-Day Forecast

Sierra Madre, Ca.

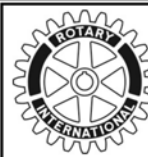
<b>Mon:</b>	Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 50s
<b>Tues:</b>	Rain	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
<b>Wed:</b>	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
<b>Thur:</b>	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
<b>Fri:</b>	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 40s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service



## THE SIERRA MADRE KIWANIS CLUB

A PROUD MEMBER OF KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL SINCE 1927.  
THAT'S 85 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE!  
WE MEET WEEKLY AT THE LODGE (FORMERLY THE MASONIC TEMPLE) AT 33 E. SIERRA MADRE BLVD.  
MEETINGS ARE EACH TUESDAY AT NOON,  
EXCEPT FOR THE 2ND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH,  
WHEN WE MEET AT 7:45AM. VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!  
JOIN US, MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS, HELP YOUR COMMUNITY,  
AND HAVE SOME FUN!



## Sierra Madre Rotary Club

Meets Tuesdays 7-8:30 a.m.  
222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.  
The Hart Park House



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.

Visitors are heartily welcomed to meetings. For more information, please visit our website or contact Peggy Beauregard at [peggybeau@gmail.com](mailto:peggybeau@gmail.com) and visit our Facebook page Rotary of Sierra Madre.

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

CITY OF SIERRA MADRE  
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings listed below are held at City Hall 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre, Ca. 626-355-7135

NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING:  
January 8, 2013 6:30 pm

## HOLIDAY HOURS

The Sierra Madre Public Library will be open to the public on Christmas Eve day, Monday, December 24, and New Year's Eve day, Monday, December 31, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. City Hall and the Community Services Office will be open 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The City Hall, the Community Services Office, and the Library will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

- 12/15 Alverno Holiday Boutique
- 12/16 Congregational Church - Christmas Concert
- 12/18 Community Services Commission Meeting (6:30pm)
- 12/19 Tree Advisory Commission Meeting (7pm)
- 12/20 Planning Commission (7pm) CANCELLED
- 12/20 Community Blood Drive (12pm-6pm)
- 12/23 Community Candlelight Walk
- 12/24 Congregational Church Christmas Eve Services
- 12/24 Volunteer Firefighter Association - Santa & Stocking Give-a-Way
- 12/8, 12/15, 12/22 Sierra Madre Playhouse Cinderella's Christmas
- 12/26 to 12/31 - ROSE FLOAT DECORATING WEEK

Rose Floats Bloom at the Sierra Madre Public Library  
Creativity and fun are in store when children gather at the Sierra Madre Public Library to create mini rose floats on Monday, December 24, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. Children of all ages are welcome to storytime for stories, songs, play and, of course, rose float making. Sierra Madre Rose Float Association Bob Young will be our special guest.

Join the fun again on December 31, 2012, at 10:00 a.m., when the Preschool Story Hour craft will be New Year's party hats.

The Sierra Madre Public Library will be open to the public on Christmas Eve day, Monday, December 24, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and New Year's Eve day, Monday, December 31, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The Library is located at 440 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre, CA 91024, (626) 355-7186, [www.sier-ramadre.lib.ca.us](http://www.sier-ramadre.lib.ca.us)

1630 AM  
EMERGENCY RADIO &  
Free on-air publicity for local events

Sierra Madre's EMERGENCY 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*. The station covers the city of Sierra Madre, plus surrounding areas of Pasadena, Arcadia, and Monrovia. 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).

## RADIO FISHBOWL THIS WEEK



LIVE TODAY - Saturday, Dec 8th at 10:00 am  
**THE BARRY RICH AND LISA SHOW** from the Sierra Madre Christmas Tree Lot  
283 Sierra Madre Blvd  
Come by and meet Barry Rich and Lisa in person while they're on the Web.

TUESDAY - Carol Canterbury's, 'CANTERBURY TALES'  
Tuesdays at noon - This Week: Brian Sheridan

## THURSDAYS

OUR TRAVEL AFFAIR Listen in every Thursday at noon with your hostess, Catherine Adde, Sierra madre resident and Travel Consultant.....Our show will feature all the fascinating aspects of Travel and our love affair with Travel. You can hear the Premiere Broadcast which aired on Oct 25th show on podcast. Go to: <http://www.radiofishbowl.com/#!shows/vstc1=our-travel-affair>

FRIDAY - VILLAGE INTERSECTIONS - Join Gene Goss on Fridays at 12:00 Noon.

Set your smart phone and or computer browsers to [www.RadioFishbowl.com](http://www.RadioFishbowl.com).

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Sat 10:00 – 2:00 pm  
Dec. 24, 10:00 – 2:00 pm  
Closed for the holidays  
Dec. 25 – Jan. 1

*Winter Session Begins*  
January 21, 2013

*Creative Arts Group*

108 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, CA 91024  
626•355•8350 [www.creativeartsgroup.org](http://www.creativeartsgroup.org)

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# SIERRA MADRE

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

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Monrovia

## REMEMBRANCES

### ALICE (ELLEN) HATFIELD BONDS

Alice (Ellen) Hatfield Bonds. 1920 - 2012, Great-grand-daughter of Devil (Anse) Hatfield was born in the small town of Becks-run just outside of Pittsburg with her twin sister Annabelle. Their mother died when the girls were only eleven. They learned how to do housework earl. Alice went to work parking cabs and trucks during WWII in 1940, when she was only 20 years old and 5'2" tall.

The Pittsburg Press put her in the newspaper featuring working women who wore pants and a baseball style cap, (she was well ahead of the fashion curve on that one.) Hearing her Mother say she always wanted to see California and having lost her first husband during WWII, (Gold Star Wife), she moved to L.A. and worked at the V.A. Hospital in the fifties. There she met her second husband, my dad, Jack Bonds. In 1958 she found a job at the Convalescent Home on Baldwin across the street from Bethany Church, she decided she liked it here and after the divorce she brought her two baby boys to Sierra Madre in 1960, where the town would never be the same. In those days, I remember many a neighborhood mother telling my Mom that it was impossible to raise two boys on your own who carry on so wildly.

My Mother never dated during our childhood years, only working as an unlicensed nurse caring for the elderly, sick and doing mundane and menial work. She was involved in that for most of her working career.

Her one passion was to serve Jesus and go to Church like no one I ever saw. She continued to have the 'faith of a little child' to the very end.

One of the last things she said to me was, "I liked this town from the first time I saw it, always have."

She is survived by her two sons, Wade (Sierra Madre) and John Bonds (Morongo Valley); three grandsons, Austin Joe (Minister) of Dallas, Texas, John in Arkansas and Brent in Indiana.

In lieu of flowers, please consider doing something kind for someone less fortunate than yourself during this holiday season; or say a prayer for someone that you are not fond of at all. Mom would like that.

Special thanks to the good people of Paz Naz (The First Church of the Nazarene - Pasadena) and Bethany Church (Sierra Madre) churches that visited, fed, clothed, and prayed with my mother when she was bedridden in the last year of her life. Very special thanks to Ruth Hashimoto.



## CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT SIERRA MADRE'S VILLAGE CHURCH – ASCENSION - *All Are Welcome*

Many special events take place at Ascension during Christmastide. You are invited to join us as we celebrate this glorious season through story, pageant, song, prayer, scripture, and candlelight. This year's schedule of special services for Christmas includes:

December 24th Christmas Eve - Family Service and Pageant at 5:00 p.m. This special family service features the Children's Christmas Pageant during which our youth inspire us with an adaptation of Charles Tazewell's classic story - The Littlest Angel. All children attending this service are encouraged to participate in the telling of the story. The service will also be filled with music provided by the children and a musical quartet.

December 24th Christmas Eve – Carols and Hymns at 10:30 p.m. and Mass at 11:00 p.m. Ascension's late Christmas Eve service features the traditional procession, incense, candles, prayer, sermon, and the great music of the season as the congregation joyously celebrates the birth of Christ. Four anthems new to Ascension will include Fanfare for Christmas Day by Martin Shaw, John Rutter's Angel's Carol, an ethereal arrangement of O Holy Night by Adolphe Adam, arranged by Gary Fry, and a delightfully rhythmic setting of Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day by John Gardner. More familiar anthems include Harold Darke's In the Bleak Midwinter, John Rutter's Star Carol, and the incomparable O Magnum Mysterium by Morten Lauridsen

December 25th Christmas Day - 11:00 a.m. the Celebration of the Feast of the Nativity. Church of the Ascension is located at 25 E. Laurel Avenue corner of Laurel and Baldwin Avenues in Sierra Madre. For more information, please call (626) 355-1133 or visit: [www.ascensionsierramadre.com](http://www.ascensionsierramadre.com).

## Sierra Madre Search and Rescue

During the month of November, Sierra Madre Search and Rescue (SMSR) responded to several calls for assistance. Two notable calls are described below.

**Lost Hikers, Chantry Flat/Big Santa Anita Canyon:** The Team responded to Chantry Flat to assist two hikers who had gotten off trail, become disoriented and were unable to get back to the trailhead due to darkness. Rescue team members began searching along potential routes of travel based on the limited information SMPD had been able to obtain during the initial call for assistance. SMSR Operations Leaders (OL) were able to establish communication via SMS/text messaging and determined the hikers were using an Apple iPhone. Using one of the OLs iPhones they were able to use the "Find My Phone" application to get an approximate location that allowed crews to concentrate efforts near Hermit Falls. Since the "Find My Phone" application was not able to provide detailed location information, rescuer's familiarity with the area was critical in determining the side canyon where the subjects were stranded. Field crews located the hikers several hundred feet up the side of a side canyon. The subjects were cold but uninjured and required the use of a rope "handline" to get back to the trail.

**Missing Hiker, Chantry Flat/Big Santa Anita Canyon:** The Adams Pack Station staff received word from a hiker at Sturtevant Camp that his friend had fallen from a section of the trail between Mt. Wilson and the camp. The hiker reported that he was no longer able to locate his friend. SMPD put out a page notifying SMSR and the Team responded. A so-called "bash crew", equipped to move quickly and evaluate the situation, was immediately sent into the field to make the approximately 4 mile hike to the location where the hiker was last seen. The bash crew reached the location in just over an hour and made contact with the reporting party who escorted them to where he had last seen his companion. After several minutes, verbal contact was made with the missing hiker and the crew was able to locate the subject in the canyon bottom below the trail. After determining that there were no injuries beyond a few scrapes, crews escorted both hikers back to their vehicle at Chantry.

Both of the calls described above were helped by the use of technology. Each took over 3 hours to successfully resolve when the technology was working. Cell phones and other technologies are wonderful tools but should never be completely relied upon in the mountains. There are many areas where cell phone reception is limited or completely unavailable. While there are a series of call boxes in the Chantry Flat/Big Santa Anita Canyon that connect users with the Pack Station, hikers may struggle to locate or be unfamiliar with the use of the system. If there had been no cell phone reception or the call to the Pack Station had not gone through, each rescue could have taken many more hours to resolve.

With the shorter days of winter and increased likelihood of poor weather, hikers and others are reminded that being prepared is crucial for a safe trip into the mountains. Being prepared includes carrying warm clothing and a light source as part of your [10 essentials](#). Remember to make sure someone knows where you've gone and when you will return. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's [Hiker Plan](#) is a good way to document your plans.

For 60 years the all-volunteer Sierra Madre Search and Rescue team has been responding to calls for help in the local mountains and beyond. Funded entirely by private donations, SMSR provides a range of public programs on wilderness safety in addition to its search and rescue activities. The Team never charges for any of its services.

For more information, including how to arrange a wilderness safety demonstration for your school or group, visit [www.smsr.org](http://www.smsr.org).

## Look what just came to town!



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### CITIZEN OF THE YEAR (cont. from page 1)

its citizens during 2012. They must have served without remuneration on the project for which they are being nominated, and members of the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors are not eligible.

If you would like to nominate someone, please e-mail your nominee to Noah Green at [ngreen@ryanattorneys.com](mailto:ngreen@ryanattorneys.com). You can also mail in your

nominations to the Chamber of Commerce at 19 Suffolk Avenue, Suite A, Sierra Madre, CA 91024.

APPLICATIONS MUST RECEIVED BY  
DECEMBER 31, 2012.

The winner will be selected by members of the Chamber Board of Directors, and will be honored at the annual Citizen of the Year/Board of Directors Installation Dinner to be held on January, 25, 2013.

## Sierra Madre Police Blotter

### Sunday December 2, 2012

At 9 am, a traffic collision occurred near the intersection of Baldwin Avenue and Alegria Avenue. While turning into a driveway, a vehicle collided with the left front bumper of another vehicle parked at the curb. No injuries were reported and only minor damage was caused by the collision.

### Friday, December 7, 2012

Police investigated a report of a vehicle being stolen in the 00 block of Monterey Lane. The owner parked his vehicle in his driveway on Thursday night and discovered it missing the following morning. The owner reported that two days earlier, someone had entered the same vehicle as it was parked in the driveway and had removed a set of keys which included a spare key to the vehicle. The vehicle has not been recovered yet.

At 1:30 pm, a resident in the 500 block of East Laurel Avenue observed a male white approximately 18 years of age, walk into his backyard and take a skateboard. The resident gave chase but lost sight of the suspect. The investigators received sufficient information on the suspect to create a photo line-up and show it to the resident. The investigation is on-going.

### Saturday, December 8, 2012

At approximately 2:45 am, police received information on a vehicle driving the wrong way on Foothill Boulevard near Michillinda Avenue. Units responded and located the described vehicle at Baldwin Avenue near Foothill Boulevard. The investigation revealed that the driver (male, 20 years of age) had been drinking and was unable to safely operate a vehicle. He was arrested for DUI.

## COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE

This coming Thursday, December 20th the Sierra Madre Community Services Department and American Red Cross is hosting a Community Blood Drive from 12 noon to 6:00 pm. This life saving event takes place at the Sierra Madre Community Recreation Center, 611 E. Sierra Madre Blvd., and is open to the public. Individuals who are 17 years of age or older, 110 pounds or more and are in generally good health are eligible to donate blood. As a thank you to all donors, the American Red Cross is providing Subway sandwiches plus a coupon from Cold Stone Creamery!

To schedule an appointment, please visit the American Red Cross at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) or contact the Community Services Department at 626.355.7394. Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are encouraged.

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## City Oks \$2 Million Retrofit of Station 39

The city council voted earlier this month in favor of authorizing \$1,959,000 for the project specifications for the Seismic Retrofit and Rehabilitation of Fire Station No. 39— the move comes after accepting a bid by Mallcraft, Inc.

According to a city staff report, the project involves the seismic retrofit and interior remodel of the existing station building, accessibility and technology upgrades, new mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, and construction of a patio deck and emergency generator room. Life safety enhancements include fire sprinkler and alarm systems.

“It’s on schedule and should be opened by this time next year,” City Manager Michael Beck said.

Staff said, required by Pasadena’s pilot Local Subcontracting and Local Hiring Program, Mallcraft’s good faith effort submittal shows outreach to 14 local subcontractors. They also currently employ four Pasadena residents who will be assigned to the project.

“They [the project] will start early next year,” Beck said.

Staff also said during the design phase, last year, the Department of Public Works included a new exterior deck in the plans to compensate for square footage lost due to accessibility/restroom requirements and to enhance firefighter quality of life. The cost associated with the deck construction and the inclusion of furniture and equipment in the project necessitate the request for additional funding in the amount of \$211,000.

Staff also said that the total cost allocated to the project is \$2.4 million.

## Pet of the Week



Nesta is an eight-year-old, large gray tabby. He’s very curious and enjoys being held. He’s a staff and volunteer favorite too!

Nesta’s adoption fee is \$70, 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. New adopters will receive complimentary health and wellness exam from VCA Animal Hospitals, as well as a goody bag filled with information on how to care for your pet. He also qualifies for our Seniors for Seniors program in which the adoption fee is waiver for eligible adopters 60 years old or older. Ask an adoptions counselor for more information during your visit

Call the Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA at 626.792.7151 to ask about A317161, or visit at 361 S. Raymond Ave. in Pasadena. Adoption hours are 11-4 Sunday, 9-5 Tuesday – Friday, 9-4 Saturday. Pets may not be available for adoption and cannot be held for potential adopters from phone calls or email. Directions and photos of all pets can be found at [www.pasadenahumane.org](http://www.pasadenahumane.org).



## Council Flip-flops on 710 Tunnel Project

By Dean Lee

Although it seemed the city council was on track to support a resolution against the 710 tunnel gap project Monday night, with numerous residents opposed to it, the council failed to gain enough votes to pass a resolution, instead opting to send Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority a strongly worded letter.

The council did vote unanimously in favor of sending Metro leaders a statement from Mayor Bill Bogaard saying they are strongly opposed to the idea of allowing truck traffic in any proposed tunnel plans.

Council members, along with Bogaard and opposed residents, said a tunnel would increase air pollution in west Pasadena and could force some drivers into neighborhoods to avoid paying tolls.

They also questioned the high cost of the project as well as the impacts of tunnel construction

and the dangers of earthquakes. The letter would also echo the strong negative views, in the community, against a tunnel project, Bogaard said, something, “They need to keep in mind.”

Along with Bogaard, Council members, Victor Gordo, Steve Madison and Gene Masuda voted to oppose any tunnel plans.

Council members, Margaret McAustin, Terry Tornek, and Jacque Robinson all said they did not support the tunnel option but hesitated to pass an opposing resolution before the completion of environmental review to be released sometime early next year.

Robinson had proposed the idea of sending the issue back to voters in a ballot measure saying that everyone should have the opportunity to participate in the decision.

Gordo blasted Metro leaders saying that for 50 years, Metro had failed to take into account

any solution that involves, “moving people differently,” he said supporting alternatives such as rail or bus.

The council also said they wanted a separate —from the Metro EIR— city funded study to look at the effects of a tunnel on nearby neighborhoods.

Monday’s meeting was held at the Pasadena Convention Center instead of city hall to accommodate a large crowd. Police estimated about 150 people showed of which about 30 spoke, almost all in opposition, with only three members of the public outright supporting the project.

## DISTRICT 3 APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

Applications will be available for two weeks for Pasadena residents living and registered to vote in City Council District 3 who are interested in seeking appointment to fill the vacancy on the City Council due to Chris Holden’s election to the State Assembly.

Applications will be available until Thursday, Dec. 27 from the City Clerk’s Office, 100 N. Garfield Ave., Room S228, during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for Dec. 14 and Dec. 25 when City Hall is closed.

All original applications must be hand-delivered to the City Clerk’s Office no later than 5:30 p.m. No postmarks, email submissions or faxes will be accepted. Applicants must be at least 18 years old; and must be both registered to vote in and reside within District 3 when their application is issued to them by the City Clerk.

Once appointed, the successful applicant will serve until May 6, 2013. By submitting an application, all applicants agree with the Council’s preference that the successful appointee will not be a candidate for the regularly scheduled election in March 2013 to fill the District 3 seat. The appointee also will not be eligible to qualify as a write-in candidate for the same election.

For more information call the City Clerk’s Office at (626) 744-4124.

## Armenian Genocide Memorial Project to Move Forward

The Pasadena Armenian Genocide Memorial Committee (PASAGMC) announced last week that the Committee received a total of 17 design proposals for the Armenian Genocide Memorial project proposed to be located in Memorial Park in the City of Pasadena. (Six (6) of the design proposals are from the students at the Pasadena Art Center College of Design.

The Committee has formed an independent panel of 3 distinguished professional judges to review and rank all 17 design proposals. The review panel’s written recommendations will be forwarded to the Board which will make the final selection.

The design review and selection process will take place in the very near future.

Additional inquiries should be directed to PASAGMC offices at (626) 795-1750 or [pasagmc@aol.com](mailto:pasagmc@aol.com).

## Search and Rescue Save Dog Over 150 Foot Cliff

Earlier this month Montrose Search and Rescue along with the assistance of Sierra Madre Search and rescue, were called to Angeles National Forest approximately 5:45 p.m. to assist with the rescue of a dog that had fallen 150 feet over a hiking trail.

The owner of the dog hiked out of the canyon when he was unable to rescue the dog on his own and drove to the Angeles National Forest Ranger station on Angeles Crest Highway to call for help.

Montrose Search and Rescue team contacted the owner who hiked back to where the dog fell with team members. Working in the rain and fog with 24 rescuers, the teams were able to reel down 150 feet of a steep cliff to retrieve the dog that was stuck in debris. The team was able to calm the dog to rig a hoist around the dog so they could bring the 100 pound dog back up to the trail. Once the dog was on the hiking trail,

they strapped the dog, who had minor injuries, into a litter and hand carried the litter to a point large enough to attached the litter’s wheel. The team members with the help of Sierra Madre Search and Rescue members, used ropes to assist with the hiking out of the litter and members back up the steep hill, out of the canyon.

The dog has minor injuries from his fall and is recovering with his grateful owner.

There are over 150 members of the eight Search and Rescue teams of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, who were activated for over 450 search and rescue missions last year, making it one of the most active counties for search and rescue missions in the nation. Reserve deputies and civilian volunteers are supervised by full-time sheriff’s deputies. If interested in joining our team, call Sergeant Burton Brink at 818-248-3464.



Montrose Search and Rescue team rescue dog

## See Exciting, Olympic-Style Boxing Competition

Come join the Villa-Parke Boxing Club for its Biannual Amateur Boxing Match on Saturday at the Villa-Parke Community Center Gymnasium, 363 East Villa Street. Exciting, Olympic-style boxing begins at 1:00 p.m. and will feature Pasadena club members and pugilistic competitors from throughout Southern California.

Approximately 15 to 20 action-packed, Olympic-style bouts

are scheduled to take place in various weight classifications with boxers from 8 years old to 34 years old. The event is open to the public and a voluntary \$5.00 donation for adults is requested. Children under 12 years old are free.

The show is sponsored by the City of Pasadena Human Services and Recreation Department. Contact Marcus Lee at (626) 744-6532 for more information.

## 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

## ChapCare Health Centers to Get \$2.6 Million Grant

Adam Schiff announced Thursday that Community Health Alliance of Pasadena (ChapCare) will receive a five year federal grant in the amount of \$2,677,501 annually from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This grant was awarded to ChapCare to continue to provide services to tens of thousands of medically under-insured and uninsured residents throughout the San Gabriel Valley.

“For nearly two decades, ChapCare’s work in the San Gabriel Valley has exemplified quality care and attention to the needs of the local community. With these new federal funds, they will be able to continue providing health services to many more low-income families,” said Rep. Schiff. “ChapCare provides healthcare to many who are underserved and lack preventive services. This grant will ensure that their important work can continue and expand.”

“With Rep. Adam Schiff’s generous support, ChapCare was able to secure continued federal funding,” said Margaret B. Martinez, ChapCare’s

Chief Executive Officer. “As a result, ChapCare will continue to provide excellent, comprehensive, and innovative health care that is accessible to residents of the San Gabriel Valley.”

The Health Center Cluster Grants Program is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and is awarded on a competitive basis to applicants with a reputation of quality and competent care to their community. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) oversees the program.

ChapCare is a network of HRSA-funded community health centers that has provided medical services to countless under-insured and uninsured residents of the San Gabriel Valley for almost 15 years. The organization operates 3 health centers in the Pasadena area, and a mobile van in the El Monte region. ChapCare provides over 54,000 primary healthcare visits annually to over 15,000 patients. ChapCare will open a new health center in the City of South El Monte in February 2013.



The Department of Public Works last week removed an Italian Stone Pine tree at 781 N. Hill Ave., one of the largest in Pasadena, because the tree’s health is declining and it poses a safety issue to the public.

As part of the City’s Tree Removal Policy, the Parks and Natural Resources Division of Public Works posted the tree for removal and included the removal on the September 2012 Tree Removal List provided to the City Council. The

Urban Forestry Advisory Committee was informed of the pending removal at its October 12 meeting. Information about the removal has also been provided to adjacent neighborhood associations for distribution.

Kenneth Graham, Forestry Superintendent, is managing the removal of this tree. For more information, contact Mr. Graham at (626) 744-3880 or by e-mail [kgraham@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:kgraham@cityofpasadena.net).

## Sheriff Baca Speaks to Bright Future Scholars in Altadena



Sheriff Baca was a keynote speaker today at the Quality of Life Center’s Bright Future Scholars in Altadena. CEO and Dean of Scholars Dr. Sandra Thomas welcomed mentors Los Angeles Sheriff Lee Baca, Altadena Sheriff’s Captain John Benedict, Senator Carol Liu, Congress member Judy Chu and General Manager of the Pasadena Water and Power Phyllis Currie to speak to Altadena and Pasadena youth.

The Sheriff spoke about growing up in Los Angeles

and his journey to becoming the leader of the largest Sheriff’s Department in the nation, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

Dr. Thomas told the audience that she was extremely proud of the success of the now nationally acclaimed programs; one such being the Bright Futures Scholars Support Program. Participating scholars focus on daily leadership development as well as marketability preparation towards future goals.



“What’s Going On?”  
News and Views from Joan Schmidt



HOMICIDES IN NORTHRIDGE:  
TRAGIC BUT NOT SURPRISING

In the March 17th issue of this publication, I wrote an article, “What were you thinking, Governor Brown?” I had attended an Arcadia City Council Joint Meeting with Supervisor Mike Antonovich, Deputy Chief Reaver E, Bingham and Anna Prmvedjian, LA Probation, and other City Officials. I had been blown away by what I learned about AB 109, regarding transfer of inmates from state prisons to county jails. Supervisor Antonovich began by explaining the Governor had **other options**. The prisoners could have been transferred to out of state facilities at HALF the cost! Also that cost did not include medical, mental health and drug problems. When I went on line, I learned 58 counties in California were dealing with the problem. Riverside Sheriff Stan Sniff Jr. said jails in **36 counties** are already crowded, and his county has a federal court order not to pack too many inmates in!

The last few days this issue has been on the news. Everything that I wrote about then is being reported on now. When I wrote the article, some 5526 **PSP’s (Low level parolees)** were under county probation supervision. 1127 PSP’s had been assessed by the Department of Mental Health, with 262 refusing services. 1993 PSP’s were transferred to substance abuse treatment for assessment, but only 722 had shown up. By February, 1316 PSP’s had been arrested for new crimes! Over these past months, the situation has escalated, as reported in the news the last few days.

Then there were the “**N3’s (Non-violent, non-serious, non-sex offenders)**”. At that time, 3518 had been sentenced to county jails. What really infuriated me was learning that their status was based on their LAST offense, not previous ones! Someone could have committed violent crimes in the past, but it didn’t matter.

I have been heartsick for the Northridge victims and their families. Could this tragedy have been prevented? I believe so. But unfortunately, the general public seems to be unaware or oblivious to the governor’s shortcomings.



HOW TV DISTORTS REALITY

By Christopher Nyerges

[Nyerges is the author of “Self-Sufficient Home,” “How to Survive Anywhere,” and other books. He can be reached at Box 41834, Eagle Rock, CA 90041, or [www.ChristopherNyerges.com](http://www.ChristopherNyerges.com).]

This week, I got a call from a popular TV “news magazine” show. I was told that they were planning to air a program the following day about the December 21, 2012 end date of the Mayan calendar cycle. They were aware that I teach survival skills and they saw my name associated with the Mayan date. “We’d like to talk to you about the Mayan prophecies,” I was informed. “Which Mayan prophecies are you referring to?” I asked. “You know, the end of the world prophecies,” she casually responded. “I’d be happy to talk to your viewers about the Mayan calendar,” I said, “and I’d let them know that there are no Mayan prophecies of doom-and-gloom that anyone knowledgeable is aware of.” I explained that I studied in Mexico and Guatemala with Mayans. “Are you aware of specific prophecies?” I asked. “No, just in general that the world is going to end.”

I explained that all the Mayan end-of-the-world hype was media fabrication. What would be happening on December 21, according to most scholars, is that a large cycle of the Mayan calendar – 13 Baktuns lasting 5,125 years – will end, and another cycle will begin the next day. I told her that I’d be happy to ease her viewers’ fears, and explain that zealous media pundits somehow confused “end of a calendar cycle” with “end of the world.”

The TV show representative explained that she’d seen me on the National Geographic’s “Doomsday Preppers” show, and said she’d really like to see me with my survival gear. (I was offered no compensation for the time I expected to give.) I explained that I was driving to work (yes, I do work!) and that I only had the minimal gear that I always carry, but not my full wilderness pack.

“I’d still be happy to share with your viewers how knowing survival skills is a good thing all the time,” I continued, “considering all the very real problems that we all have to contend with, such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, economic disasters, terrorists, diseases, and so on.”

“Actually, we’re really looking for someone who is seriously preparing for the December 21st date. We really want something more dramatic and sensational,” I was told. It was becoming clear that I would not be on their show.

“Well, if you’re looking for a nut who’s frightened about the Mayan calendar and who is taking radical action based on panic and fear, then I’m not your man,” I told her. “Still, I’d be happy to talk to you to give your show some balance.” I continued, telling her that there is no special planetary alignment associated with December 21, no comet that we know of that’s about to hit the earth, no mysterious planet about to show up, and no heightened sun spot activity. I again explained that we never really know what might happen, but we shouldn’t listen to the fear stories about things that have no relation to the Mayan calendar. She politely listened.

“I tell people that whenever you act out of fear or panic that you nearly always make bad choices,” I added.

“Yes, well, we really want something more dramatic. We want to show people who are very concerned about this December 21 date and who are doing something about it.” She told me she would talk to her producers and might call me back for a taping later in the day for a show that was already planned for the following day.

To no surprise, I never got a return call. This taught me a lesson I’d experienced many times. The modern media are all too often so focused on ratings and sensationalism that they will twist and distort (or ignore) the facts if this helps maintain viewers. Though many of us might view the “quest for truth” to be a high ideal, not everyone does. In this case, it was clear that the producers of this TV program were not concerned about whether or not there were in fact any Mayan “prophecies” at all. It is not just distortion and lies that we should protect ourselves against. We also need to be equally concerned about that the reporters and journalists do not tell us.

Sadly, TV, despite its vast potential, has increasingly become a wasteland.





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4th Quarter Construction Update – 2012

Southern California Edison’s Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project – Segments 6-9, 11

**Project Update** — Southern California Edison (SCE) contractors are continuing construction-related activities along portions of Segments 4-11 of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP). Upon completion, the project will provide renewable generated electricity and help meet California’s renewable energy goals.

**Construction Activities** — Upgrades to the electrical system for the next 3 months will include the following: *(Please note construction schedule is tentative and may change depending on weather and other factors)*

Improvements to structure site access roads:

- Segment 7**  
**Duarte:** Adjacent to Van Tassel Motorway and also northeast of the northern end of Las Lomas Rd in northern Duarte
- Segment 8**  
**In the Tonner Canyon area east of the Orange Fwy (57) and southeast of Diamond Bar**  
**West of the San Gabriel River Fwy (605) in the southern portion of the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area**  
**La Habra Heights:** East and west of Hacienda Blvd

Installation of new foundations and electrical transmission structures:

- Segment 6**  
**Duarte and the southern portion of Angeles National Forest**
- Segment 8**  
**Whittier Narrows Recreation Area:** South of Durfee Ave and west of the San Gabriel River  
**Pico Rivera:** East of the San Gabriel River Trail and west of the San Gabriel River Fwy (605)  
**City of Industry:** East of the San Gabriel River Fwy (605) and west of Peck Rd  
**Hacienda Heights:** South of Punta Del Este Dr and a site south of Cabo Blanco Dr, Pozo Dr, El Greco Crt and Gotera Dr  
**La Habra Heights:** In the Powder Canyon area northwest of Fullerton Rd  
**Rowland Heights:** East of Fullerton Rd and north of Pathfinder Rd  
**Additional areas of unincorporated Los Angeles County:** In the northern and eastern portions of the Rose Hills area and adjacent to Turnbull Canyon

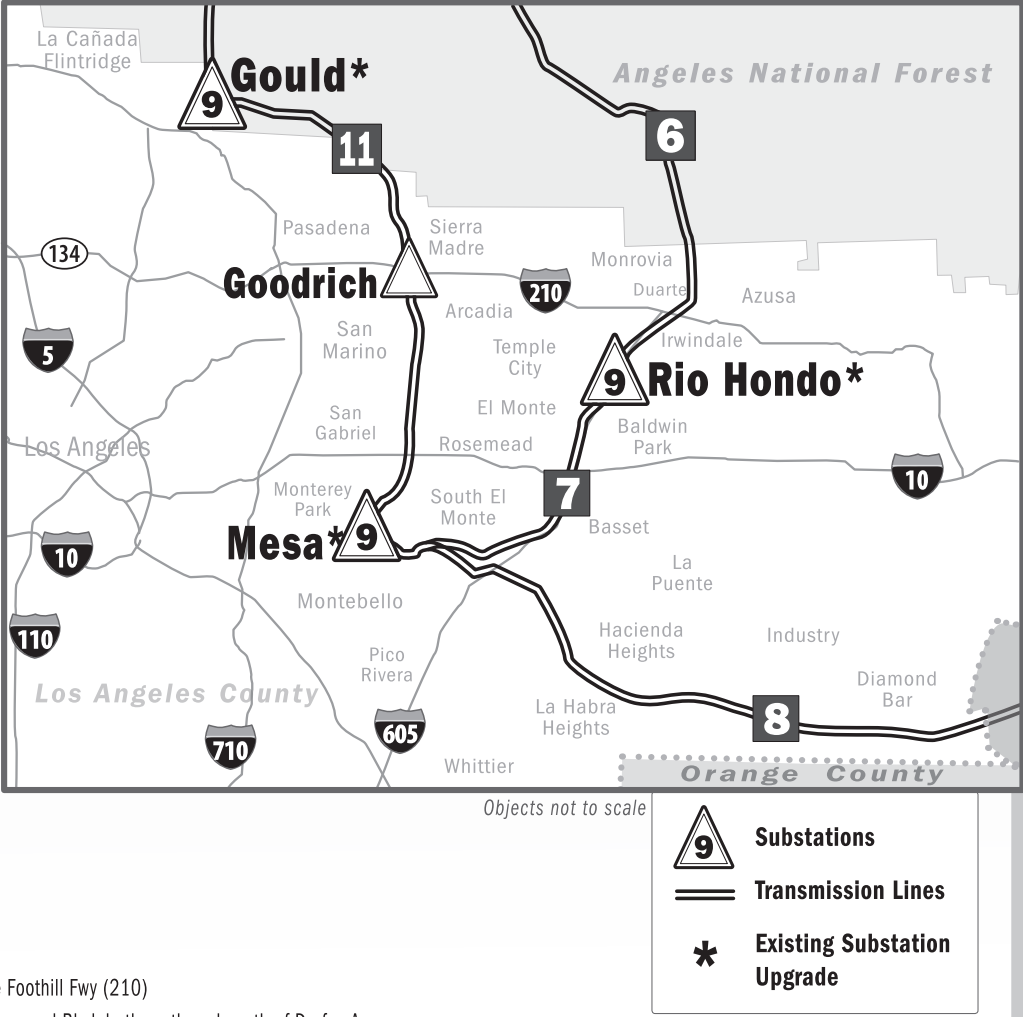
Installation of new electrical transmission wires:

- Segment 7**  
**Irwindale:** West of the the San Gabriel River Fwy (605) between Arrow Hwy and the Foothill Fwy (210)  
**Whittier Narrows Recreation Area:** South of the Pomona Fwy (60) and east of Rosemead Blvd, both north and south of Durfee Ave

Removal of existing electrical transmission foundations:

- Segment 6**  
**Duarte and the southern portion of Angeles National Forest**

**Every effort will be made** to reduce the amount of noise generated by activities related to construction. SCE understands that construction may be inconvenient to local residents. We greatly appreciate your patience as we move to complete construction as quickly and safely as possible.



**Questions?**

The 'Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project' has a new web site address for easier access!  
**[www.sce.com/trtp](http://www.sce.com/trtp)** or call our toll-free line **(877)795-8787**

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TOYS AND CLOTHES NEEDED FOR HOLIDAY DISTRIBUTION TO LOW-INCOME CHILDREN

Foothill Unity Center’s Holiday Food Distribution and Angel Program has become a community tradition. Last year, almost 2,000 pre-qualified, low-income families and 3,000 children received food, toys and clothes to help brighten the Holidays and stabilize the budgets of these families on the edge.

On Sunday, December 16, 2012 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Los Angeles County Arboretum, the Center again will be distributing food, toys and clothes to almost 2,000 families and neighbors in need. But as food prices continue to go up and unemployment remains high, the Center is in urgent need of toy and clothing donations for the children we serve.

Everyone is invited to stop by the Center to adopt paper angels bearing the gift wishes of client children and then shop for those gifts. Entire flights of angels also may be adopted by businesses or service organizations to help meet the need.

Donations of food, turkey certificates and funds also are needed to help with the Holidays.

Foothill Unity Center always welcomes food donations, but never more than during the Holiday Season. All holiday donations may be dropped off at the Center’s Monrovia location between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM on the weekdays. In addition, donated funds will help fill in the gaps, particularly for children whose angels were not adopted. Donors may contribute securely online by clicking the Donate Now Button on the Center’s website at [www.foothillunitycenter.org](http://www.foothillunitycenter.org). Checks may be mailed to Foothill Unity Center at 415 West Chestnut Avenue, Monrovia, CA 91016.



## REMEMBRANCE

### LEISEL ENGEMANN RETURNS TO ARCADIA FOR A FINAL GOOD-BYE

By Joan Schmidt

It's probably been ten years since Leisel and her beloved husband Henry relocated to northern California because of failing health and wanting to be near family. Their youngest son, John had stayed behind and had lived in Altadena for a while in a group home, but he eventually went north too. Leisel had Alzheimer's, and Henry was in assisted living when she recently passed away. About three weeks ago, Annunciation Church learned of her death and all were saddened.

John made many phone calls, and planned a beautiful Memorial Mass for his mom. Leisel was up in years and many of her friends had already passed away. The service was on a Monday morning, but close to 100 attended. Father Eugene officiated at the Mass, assisted by Melkite Archimandrite Jim Babcock. Father Eugene wore white vestments for the celebration and told us Jesus would have a gown for Leisel- she's his bride. Father Eugene told us that Leisel, Lois Babcock, Bob Elwood and Robert Rockenbach had started the Christian Service Center, Annunciation Church. (This ministry is open Saturdays, feeds 100+ families and provides clothing, toys, books- whatever is needed)

Then John went to the Podium. He said, "Mom was a good mom, and kind to everyone. She did the Christian Service Center and had the idea of Christmas gifts. (Each year there is a tree with little angels. The angels have the name and age of a child.) Mom brought Communion to the sick and I did this too. I had crossed eye vision and she provided treatment. She was a very good person. We'll miss her. She showed everyone how to treat people."

John got choked up as he finished and there were no dry eyes. We clapped and Father Eugene told John what a fine job John did and how proud his mom would be of him.

After services, there was a reception in the Parish Center. Bob Elwood came from Vista, Frank Zacharias from Alta Loma, many parishioners and former neighbors came. The Bereavement Committee headed by Gary Cooper assists with the services and does all the planning and set-ups for receptions afterward. They and the music ministry should be commended.

These days, there is so much tragedy and crime reported in the news. But Leisel's life and John's planning this Memorial Service were so inspiring that I needed to tell their story.



## FUN FOR KIDS THIS WINTER IN ARCADIA!

The Recreation and Community Services Department is offering a variety of winter activities this season. A Winter Kids Camp is held at Baldwin Stocker Elementary School, 422 E. Lemon Ave. The camp is open to elementary school age children in grades 1-5 and provides a safe, supervised, kid friendly retreat during winter vacation. The dates are December 26-28, 2012 and January 2-4, 2013 from 9am-5pm for a cost of \$20 per day.

Sign your child up for one day or all six. The camp is filled with fun group activities including crafts, cooking, board games, movies, snacks and more. Supervision is generally on a ratio of one Recreation Leader for each group of 10 children. Groups will be organized by age and grade level.

Kids Night Out held at the Arcadia Community Center, 365 Campus Drive is on Friday, December 21, 2012 (Winter Wonderland) and January 11, 2013 (Happy Penguins). Kids Night Out provides kids a night of fun and play so mom and dad enjoy an evening out or a quiet evening at home. Recreation Staff and Volunteers offer themed games, movies, dinner, snacks and supervision for children ages 4 and above. Accommodations cannot be made for special dietary needs. The cost is \$15 per child and is held from 6-11pm.

Pre-registration is mandatory for all of our activities and a \$2 registration fee is applicable for those participants not registered in any other winter classes. On-line, mail-in, walk-in and fax-in registrations have begun. Go to the city's website at [www.ci.arcadia.ca.us](http://www.ci.arcadia.ca.us) under the Recreation and Community Services Department or come by our office, 375 Campus Drive. For more questions, please contact the Recreation Department at 626.574.5113.

## ARCADIA POLICE BLOTTER

*For the period of Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, through Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, the Police Department responded to 978 calls for service of which 120 required formal investigations. The following is a summary report of the major incidents handled by the Department during this period.*

Sunday, December 2:

- At about 2:12 a.m., officers conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for speeding in the 1500 block of S. Santa Anita Avenue. During their investigation, officers discovered the driver was under the influence of alcohol. The 19-year-old, Asian male was subsequently arrested for drunk driving and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for processing.
- Around 1:35 p.m., officers responded to the area of Santa Anita Avenue and Santa Clara Street regarding a battery. Investigation revealed an argument between two male subjects turned into a physical altercation. One of the subjects sprayed the other in the face with pepper spray, punched him in the eye, and tried to choke him. The 22-year-old, White male was taken to Arcadia Methodist Hospital for treatment of his injuries. Neither of the subjects desired prosecution.

Monday, December 3:

- At about 11:09 p.m., officers were dispatched to Albertson's, 298 E. Live Oak Avenue, regarding a male suspect exposing himself in public. Investigation revealed the male suspect was fondling his exposed genitalia, while urinating in front of the store. Upon arrival, officers identified the suspect, and the 48-year-old, Hispanic male was arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for processing.
- At approximately 9:15 p.m., an officer conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle with expired registration on Baldwin Avenue near Las Tunas Drive. Upon contact, the officer discovered the driver had an expired license. A consensual search of the vehicle revealed the driver was in possession of methamphetamine and meth pipes. The 56-year-old, Hispanic female was arrested for possession of a controlled substance and drug paraphernalia, and was transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Tuesday, December 4:

- Shortly after 1:00 p.m., an officer was dispatched to the Arcadia Police Department in reference to a theft that occurred earlier in the afternoon at 24 Hour Fitness, 125 N. First Avenue. The victim discovered his gym bag had been stolen from a secured locker and left in a bathroom stall. Investigation revealed the victim's cell phone, watch, cash, driver's license and several credit cards had been stolen out of his gym bag. There were no witnesses at the time of the incident.
- At about 9:49 p.m., officers conducted a traffic stop on a bicycle for a missing headlight on Foothill Boulevard near Tindalo Road. During their investigation, officers discovered the male bicyclist was in possession of a hypodermic needle and had an outstanding warrant for his arrest. The 38-year-old, White male was subsequently arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for processing.

Wednesday, December 5:

- At approximately 10:22 a.m., an officer conducted a traffic stop on a red, Chevy Astro Van for expired registration in the area of Santa Anita Avenue and Bonita Street. A records check revealed the driver was unlicensed. The 24-year-old, White male was consequently cited and released in the field.
- Around 9:48 p.m., officers were dispatched to the 1700 block of S. Santa Anita Avenue in regards to a residential burglary. Officers discovered the suspect(s) removed a rear window screen and entered through the unlocked window. Further investigation revealed the bedrooms were ransacked, and cash and several pieces of jewelry were stolen. There were no witnesses or surveillance cameras.

Thursday, December 6:

- Around 2:57 a.m., officers responded to Motel 6, 225 Colorado Place, regarding a possible battery between two female domestic partners. The investigation revealed an argument turned physical and the victim was pushed several times by her girlfriend. A 34-year-old, White female was transported to Arcadia Methodist Hospital for treatment of her injuries. Neither subject desired prosecution.
- At about 3:18 p.m., an officer responded to Rite Aid, 39 W. Las Tunas Drive, regarding a theft. Investigation revealed the male suspect concealed several beer cans in his pockets, and exited the store without paying. Officers located the suspect walking eastbound on Live Oak Avenue near Santa Anita Avenue. The 46-year-old, White male was arrested for commercial burglary and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Friday, December 7:

- At about 12:49 a.m., officers conducted a traffic stop on a bicycle for a missing headlight on Duarte Road and Fifth Avenue. The male suspect failed to pull over and continued riding for about one block. Upon contact, the suspect refused to place his hands on his head, as ordered by officers. Though initially non-compliant, the suspect ultimately complied with the officers' orders, and was arrested for delaying officers in the course of their duties.
- Shortly after 1:00 a.m., officers were dispatched to the 100 to 1 Bar, 100 W. Huntington Drive, in reference to a male suspect waving a gun at patrons. Upon arrival, officers saw the suspect holding a gun, and ordered him to drop his weapon. The suspect complied, and was taken into custody by officers. Further investigation revealed that the suspect was a convicted felon, and had an additional gun concealed on his person at time of arrest. The 26-year-old, Hispanic male was transported to the Arcadia City Jail, and booked for both brandishing a firearm, and being a felon in possession of handguns.

Saturday, December 8:

- Around 12:03 p.m., an officer responded to the area of Huntington Drive and First Avenue in regard to a male suspect exposing himself in public. Investigation revealed the suspect was fondling his exposed genitalia in view of passers-by. Upon arrival, the officers identified the suspect, and the 66-year-old, Black male was arrested for indecent exposure and transported to Arcadia City Jail for booking.
- At approximately 5:22 p.m., officers were dispatched to the Santa Anita Race Track, 285 W. Huntington Drive, regarding a possible suicidal subject. Investigation revealed the 49-year-old male had taken 20 prescription pills, consumed a large amount of alcohol, and called security for help. The subject was transported to Arcadia Methodist Hospital for medical treatment and possible 72-hour evaluation.



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## HOLIDAY HOME DECORATING CONTEST

City of Monrovia residents are encouraged to decorate their homes and enter the Annual Holiday Home Decorating Contest. Applications for the contest are available at the Monrovia Community Center, 119 West Palm Avenue, and the City’s website. The contest judging will take place on Monday, December 17. Award winners will be recognized during the City Council meeting on Tuesday, December 18. The 13 judging categories include:

- Best Still Display
- Best Outdoor Display
- Best Decorated Outdoor Tree
- Best Window Display
- Holiday Spirit Award
- Most Effective Use of Lighting a house
- Toyland Award
- Children’s Choice Award
- Best Neighborhood Effort
- Snowman Award
- Monrovia Area Partnership (MAP) Festivities Award
- Judges Award
- Tim McKeehan “Best of Season” Award

For additional information, please contact the Department of Community Services at (626) 256-8246.

## ANTONOVICH APPOINTS DR. JULES BAGNERIS III TO THE COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

LOS ANGELES COUNTY — Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich has appointed Dr. Jules Bagneris III to the Los Angeles County Commission on Local Government Services.

A resident of Monrovia, Dr. Bagneris is a real estate broker and former public relations and communication consultant. He was previously a member of the Los Angeles County Small Business Commission.

He received his Bachelors of Arts in political science from the University of California, San Diego and his Master of Public Administration in Human Resource Management from the University of San Diego. Dr. Bagneris also holds a doctoral degree in pastoral ministries from the Eternal Word Graduate School.

The Los Angeles County Commission on Local Government Services seeks to find means to improve services, eliminate redundancies among public service providers, and identify areas where economies of scale can be achieved while providing better responsiveness to citizens’ needs. In addition, the Commission reports and monitors on the implementation of its recommendations.

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## LOOKING FOR PLANS TO RING IN 2013? TRY NEW YEARS EVE IN OLD TOWN!

Head to Old Town Monrovia on Myrtle Avenue for the 2nd Annual Monrovia New Years Eve celebration! Ring in 2013 from 7p.m. to midnight with a live band, ball drop and a beer and wine garden. Bring the whole family!

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR - MONROVIA HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Tuesday, December 18, 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24– CHRISTMAS EVE; CITY HALL, CORPORATE YARD, COMMUNITY CENTER & LIBRARY CLOSED

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25– CHRISTMAS DAY, CITY HALL, CORPORATE YARD, COMMUNITY CENTER & LIBRARY CLOSED

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31– NEW YEARS EVE; CITY HALL, CORPORATE YARD, COMMUNITY CENTER & LIBRARY CLOSED

MONDAY, JANUARY 1– NEW YEARS DAY; CITY HALL, CORPORATE YARD, COMMUNITY CENTER & LIBRARY CLOSED

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1 CITY COUNCIL MEETING CANCELLED

Tuesday, January 15, 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting

## Monrovia Police Blotter

Highlighted Activity for the Weekdays of December 10-12, 2012

During the last seven-day period, the Police Department handled 421 service events, resulting in 81 investigations. To see a complete listing of crimes reported, go to <http://www.crimemapping.com/map/ca/monrovia> for crime mapping. For Police Department news and information, visit our website at <http://www.ci.monrovia.ca.us/city-government/departments/police-department-homepage> and follow us on Twitter for police notifications.

Possession of Methamphetamine for Sale - Suspect Arrested  
December 11 at 12:28 a.m., police received a call reporting suspicious individuals in the 300 block of West Palm. When officers approached, they saw a male subject hide something in a bush. Methamphetamine and cash was recovered. The suspect, who is currently on parole, was arrested and taken into custody.

Vehicle Burglary  
December 12 at 5:07 a.m., a vehicle burglary was reported by a resident in the 500 block of Date Court. The vehicle was parked on the second level of a parking structure between midnight and 5:00 a.m. The victim reported that he locked his vehicle. There were no signs of forced entry. Tools were stolen from the vehicle. Investigation continuing.

Hot-Prowl Burglary  
December 12 at 11:26 p.m., a hot-prowl residential burglary was reported in the 1300 block of South Primrose. The victim left for work at 8:00 a.m. She locked her bedroom door before leaving. When she returned at 11:15 p.m., she found her bedroom had been ransacked and her jewelry had been stolen. The suspect had removed the screen from an unlocked rear window to enter the bedroom. The victim’s mother was in the house when the crime occurred, but did not hear or see anything suspicious. Another family member was in the rear house, which faces the point of entry. The family’s dogs were heard barking at approximately 4:00 p.m., but no one checked to see what was disturbing them. Investigation continuing.

### TIP OF THE WEEK

#### DON’T FILL YOUR VEHICLE WITH PRESENTS FOR THIEVES!

It only takes a few seconds for thieves to break into your vehicle and steal your valuables.

It only takes a few seconds to remove your valuables and secure your vehicle.

Don’t Be a Victim!

Auto-burglary prevention starts by limiting the criminal’s opportunity to commit the crime and can be accomplished with very little time and effort. Criminals are looking for something to steal - don’t supply the valuables. Leaving your valuables in your vehicle instantly makes your car a target for thieves.

Take a few seconds to prevent auto-burglary!

## WHAT MAKES DUARTE CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS UNIQUE?

By Joan Schmidt



What makes my work so interesting is I cover three great cities-Arcadia, Monrovia and Duarte- and attend their City Council meetings. I have found that all three cities have phenomenal staffs who sincerely want the best for their city and its residents.

Their Council Chambers are all different, and long ago, I was surprised by Duarte’s location. Their meetings are held in the Community Center which does have a stage with their City Council Members up on it. But folding chairs are set up which honestly is a godsend to place one’s purse, extra papers, camera, etc. (The movie-type seats in the other council chambers are not geared to put your stuff on!) In addition at the Duarte Community Center, there are two long tables set up along the wall. On the tables are the agendas, previous meeting minutes, flyers, newspapers, refreshments and even coffee and tea!

Because folding chairs are set up, the Mayor and Council Members can walk around and greet people prior to the meeting-it makes for a “homey” setting.

The Duarte Council Meeting begins with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the Moment of Reflection. (This past Tuesday, Mayor Pro tem Liz Reilly moved everyone when she read, “A Marine’s Night before Christmas”.) After the Moment of Reflection, the fun begins with the “Fitness/Mental Warm-up”. This week City Manager Darrel George was chosen for the fitness part, and we all stood, stretched and touched our toes! For our mental warm-up, Mayor Finlay questioned about the North and South Poles- were either actually on land masses, and then what land mass was closest to the North Pole?

Special items at this past Tuesday’s meeting included recognition of Duarte Parks and Recreation “B” Flag Football All Star Team, Rebuilding Together San Gabriel Foothills Program Members and Sponsors, and Kate Knight for receiving Duarte Chamber’s 2012 Outstanding Civic Service Award. There were a Presentation by Cal American Water on the rate structure for 2013, and a Presentation by Mayor Pro Tem Liz Reilly and Council Member Phil Reyes about a recent trip to China.

There were ten members of the B Flag Football Team and they were most grateful to their coaches, Dewayne Owens and Zequoia Williams. Each boy received a special Certificate of Recognition and Mayor Finlay not only congratulated the boys and their coaches, but thanked the parents for their commitment-taking the boys to practices and games.

The second Recognition was for all the sponsors and volunteers for the Rebuilding Together San Gabriel Valley Foothills project. This great organization works with the most vulnerable community members, the poor, elderly, disabled and veterans. Manoj Patel read off the names of ALL twenty-five and told how each helped out. They included Choice Hotels International (Grand Sponsor “2012 Room to Rebuild” project), Rodeway Owners Association (Grand Sponsor, “2012 Room to Rebuild”), Building Worx, Inc., PNC Mortgage, Duarte Employment Group, National Flooring Outlet, Kitchen Cabinets and More, Burrtec Waste Management, Southern California Edison, ABC Roofing Supply, Gentile McCloskey and Company (Julie Gentile made sure they stayed on budget and did tax forms correctly), Marrone and Sons Plumbing, JBP Mechanical, Skyley, Chief Louis Rice and “Food for Thought”(Treating volunteers to a fresh gourmet luncheon), Harik Construction, Brad Patterson, Russ Wafer, Humberto Macias, Manuel Gamboa, Jit, Kris and Ajay Vadukul, Home Depot Monrovia and Duarte Elks Lodge.

Duarte Chamber President Jim Kirchner came up to the podium for the presentation of the Chamber’s 2012 Outstanding Civic Service Award to Kate Knight. (She had been unable to attend the Mayor’s Breakfast.)

Brian Barreto of CAL American Water gave a presentation of the rate structure for 2013. (More info, call 626-614-2542 or go to [www.amwater.com](http://www.amwater.com).)

Lastly, Mayor Pro Tem Liz Reilly and Council Member Phil Reyes reported on their recent trip to China.

Council Meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays each month. Come on down.

## DUARTE CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING PROGRAM COLLECTION FROM DEC. 26 TO JAN. 14

*Extra Holiday Trash and Recycling Program Also Offered*

**DUARTE, CA, December 12, 2012** – 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.

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. Trees over six feet tall need to be cut in half. 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. This year Burrtec will collect excess holiday trash and recyclables beginning Dec. 26

through Jan. 4. Single-family residences may place excess holiday trash/recyclables in bags alongside their containers on collection day. Approximately 80% of holiday trash is recyclable including all gift boxes, wrapping paper, greeting cards and cardboard packaging.

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).

**City of Monrovia**  
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**December 17th - 21st**  
**each evening**  
**starting at 5:30 p.m.**



**Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian**

**Come early! Santa’s Sleigh leaves the Fire Station 101 promptly at 5:30 p.m.!**

Monday, December 17 – will tour city streets south of Huntington, west of Myrtle to Fifth, north of southern city boundaries. Also includes Valley Circle.

Tuesday, December 18 – will tour city streets east of Myrtle, north of Foothill.

Wednesday, December 19 – will tour city streets west of Myrtle, north of Foothill.

Thursday, December 20 – will tour city streets east of Myrtle, south of Foothill, north of Duarte Road, west of east city boundaries.

Friday, December 21 - will tour city streets west of Myrtle, south of Foothill to Huntington between Myrtle and Fifth.





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## PUSD ISSUES STATEMENT ON SCHOOL SHOOTING IN CONNECTICUT

Pasadena, CA – Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) Chief Academic Officer and Administrator in Charge Dr. Brian McDonald issued the following statement regarding the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut today:

"All of us in the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) are horrified by the tragedy that occurred today in Newtown, Connecticut. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of Sandy Hook Elementary School."

"The safety of our students is the top priority at PUSD. The district takes many precautions to ensure that students remain safe while at school. All schools have school safety plans that detail the proper response to a variety of emergency scenarios. Students participate in shelter in place and other emergency drills several times a year. PUSD campuses are closed campuses and any visitors to a school are required by state law to register when walking onto campus. The district has a zero tolerance policy regarding weapons on campus. PUSD can also activate its emergency operations center at a moment's notice to coordinate emergency response efforts. Finally, we maintain a very close relationship with the Pasadena Police Department, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and the Sierra Madre Police Department to provide immediate assistance should any problems arise."

"Crisis counseling and support is available to PUSD students in the wake of this tragedy. Although there is no threat to any PUSD campus, all principals have been instructed to take precautionary measures to ensure student safety. We also encourage staff and principals to re-familiarize themselves with emergency and security policies in light of this incident."

"To keep people informed in an emergency, the district is able to send critical information via text message. Text PUSD to 888777 to receive this service from the district."

"PUSD recognizes the tremendous trust that parents place in us when they send their children to school each day. We take this responsibility very seriously. I want to reassure students and parents that our schools are safe."

"Please join me and the entire PUSD family in mourning the loss of the innocent victims in this senseless tragedy."

## McDonald Appointed PUSD Administrator For Duration of Gundry Absence

At its December 11 meeting, the Pasadena Unified School District's (PUSD) Board of Education named Chief Academic Officer Dr. Brian McDonald as Administrator in Charge until Superintendent Jon Gundry returns from medical leave in January.

The Board also approved the First Interim Budget Report, discussed the process for future school consolidation and/or redrawing school boundaries, and honored Pasadena High School Student and Tournament of Roses Princess Nicole Nalam. To see a video of the meeting, go to [www.pusd.us](http://www.pusd.us).



### Other PUSD News:

The PUSD priority open enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year ends December 18. Priority open enrollment is only for siblings of students already enrolled at a school of choice, children of current PUSD full-time employees and Willard Elementary fifth grade students who wish to continue in the International Baccalaureate program at Blair Middle School. General open enrollment will begin on January 23, 2013. Please visit [www.openenrollment.info](http://www.openenrollment.info) to learn more about the open enrollment process.

College-bound seniors and their families can begin submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) starting in January for state and federal grants, loans and work-study funds. For more information, go to [www.calgrants.org](http://www.calgrants.org). The filing period begins in January and ends March 2, 2013.

Three students from the Creative Arts, Media and Design Pathway at Pasadena High School were winners in the Ten Thousand Villages holiday poster contest promoting free trade. The winners are Nancy Gomez (\$100 gift certificate), Jasmine Reza (\$50 gift certificate) Emmanuel Rebollar (\$50 gift certificate) and Brenda Delgado (\$50 gift certificate).

### CALENDAR

Friday, December 21  
Shortened day schedule at PUSD schools. Dismissal varies by school.

December 24, 2012 - January 4, 2013  
PUSD schools closed for annual winter recess and Christmas and New Year holidays. Many district offices will also be closed.

December 26-30  
It's going to be a winter wonderland at Kidspace Children Museum in Pasadena as 60 tons of snow is trucked in for the 5th Annual Snow Days winter celebration. Snow Days at Kidspace takes place from Wednesday, December 26 through Sunday, December 30, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays and 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekends. 480 North Arroyo Blvd., Pasadena.

Monday, January 7, 2013  
School resumes.

## 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: Brent Forsee  
bforsee@ausd.net

**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: Ethan Williamson  
Kindergarten - 8th grade  
website: [www.barnhartschool.org](http://www.barnhartschool.org)

**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)  
website: [www.bcsliions.org](http://www.bcsliions.org)

**Clairbourn School**  
8400 Huntington Drive  
San Gabriel, CA 91775  
Phone: 626-286-3108 ext. 172  
FAX: 626-286-1528  
E-mail: [jhawes@clairbourn.org](mailto:jhawes@clairbourn.org)  
**Foothill Oaks Academy**  
822 Bradbourne Ave., Duarte, CA 91010  
(626) 301-9809  
Co-Principals Nancy Lopez and Diane Kieffaber  
[info@foothilloaksacademy.org](mailto:info@foothilloaksacademy.org)  
[preschool@foothilloaksacademy.org](mailto:preschool@foothilloaksacademy.org)

**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  
Headmaster John Higgins  
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)  
Principal Bro. Christopher Brady, FSC

**Monrovia High School**  
325 East Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016  
(626) 471-2800 Principal Darwin Jackson  
Email: [schools@monrovia.k12.ca.us](mailto:schools@monrovia.k12.ca.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  
website: [www.pasadenahigh.org](http://www.pasadenahigh.org)

**St. Rita Catholic School**  
322 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
Principal Joan Harabedian  
(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  
(626) 355-1428 Principal: Esther Salinas  
E-mail address: [salinas.esther@pusd.us](mailto:salinas.esther@pusd.us)

**Sierra Madre Middle School**  
160 N. Canon Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 836-2947 Principal: Garrett Newsom  
E-mail address: [newsom.garrett@pusd.us](mailto:newsom.garrett@pusd.us)

**Walden School**  
74 S San Gabriel Blvd  
Pasadena, CA 91107 (626) 792-6166  
[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)

**PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena, Ca. 91109  
(626) 795-6981 Website: [www.pusd@pusd.us](http://www.pusd@pusd.us)

**ARCADIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
234 Campus Dr., Arcadia, Ca. 91007  
(626) 821-8300 Website: [www.ausd.net](http://www.ausd.net)

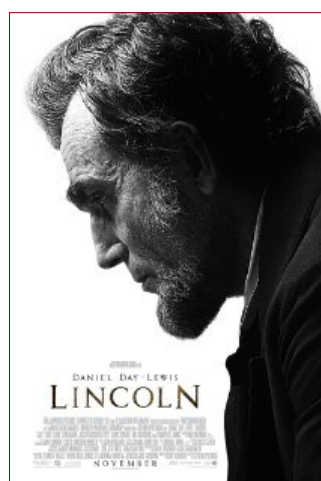
**MONROVIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
325 E. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, Ca. 91016  
(626) 471-2000 Website: [www.monroviashools.net](http://www.monroviashools.net)

**DUARTE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
1620 Huntington Dr., Duarte, Ca. 91010  
(626)599-5000 Website: [www.duarte.k12.ca.us](http://www.duarte.k12.ca.us)

## THE REEL DEAL: by Ben Show

Movie Reviews Especially for Teens & 'Tweens

### LINCOLN



'Lincoln' is a masterpiece. I've seen many other movies about our 16th President, some through school, and some on my own time, and none of them have been as interesting as this or, by what I've been told, as accurate as how it was during the final parts of the Civil War.

This movie covers how Abraham Lincoln handled the damage of the Civil War, not only on the battlefield, but in the hearts of Americans. Against all odds, he is faced with the task of passing the Emancipation Proclamation, which he believes will not only end the war, but also

stop slavery forever.

Unlike other historical films, 'Lincoln' kept me interested the whole time. One aspect about the movie that I did notice, was the comparison between America's Congress back then and how it operates today. It is suspenseful, as well as just an amazing movie that will make every American proud, and leave you with a warm feeling inside.

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Christmas is almost here and we... ..hope to hear jingling on the rooftop!

# Newspaper Fun!

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Color in everything.

## Christmas is Coming!

Christmas is coming! Every day there is something to do to get ready for the holidays. I just finished making Christmas cards with photos on them for my family and friends. Right now I am hanging this wreath I made on the barn door. Symbols of the holidays are all around us - candles show light and warmth and bells joyously peal.

1. gift bringer  
2. heavenly messengers  
3. large burning chunk of wood  
4. town where Christ was born  
5. ring in Christmas with these  
6. kind of tree decorated at Christmas

7. carried the Kings  
8. people kiss under this  
9. three of them brought gifts  
10. tree decorations  
11. lighted to show warmth and joy  
12. ring of greens  
13. marked the place in the sky  
14. birthday of Jesus Christ  
15. songs of the season  
16. written holiday greetings  
17. plant that brightens holidays

ornaments  
angels  
yule log  
Bethlehem  
candle  
carols  
star  
wreath  
poinsettia  
Santa Claus

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## BIG DADDY'S FIRE GRILL ORANGEWOOD PLAZA WEST PASADENA

How many burger joints are there in Pasadena? Answer? Many... I found one that stands apart from the rest. When you first meet partner Dennis Constanzo, I pictured a Motorcycle riding, Red White and Blue Bandana across his forehead, and maybe a few tattoos and a pierced ear. So much imagination I have. You might remember Dennis from the original Twin Palms Restaurant of the late 90's and 2000's.



Daughter Lauren and I headed over last Thursday to the new Big Daddy's in a shopping center in West Pasadena, no fan fare no spotlight of what they want us to order. The menu has many selections as the original location on Foothill Blvd. They added a chicken wing appetizer that are some of the best I have had in the San Gabriel Valley, marinated in a secret sauce and are fresh never frozen, plus Dawgs, grilled sandwiches, salads and of course the burger. Have you noticed the competition in the Hot Dog and burger arena in Pasadena has increased dramatically, although Bob's Big Boy and Wolfe Burger bowed out it seems that Pasadena, well I digress, let's say there are lot of burger joints. How can Big Daddy be a strong contender, can man that partnered with Kevin Costner make a burger? Answer is yes he can. The claim here is that each burger is freshly ground daily and hand formed.

TABLE FOR TWO by Peter Dills  
thechefknows@yahoo.com

On my first visit I had no proof, but after the burger the "The Daddy Burger" (\$6.45) I wanted another burger, let me explain, it wasn't that the burger didn't fill me up, but it was that good. My mind was racing on how I would write a full story on just one burger, it occurred to me that the burger reminded me of a burger that you would have at a backyard BBQ, now I ask you.... where else would you indeed have another burger? Yep, Bingo!!! at a friends BBQ or tailgate. Daughter Lauren had the Lamb Burger 1/3 lb. (\$9.45) and promised to tell every college student about her find.

Hold on Dennis, I explained to him that the burger reminded me of one that you'd have in the backyard, Now, this usually laid back man, acted as if I had just parted the Red Sea and that the sun came out on a cloudy day, he stood up and Said. How Did You Know? I acted as if I was in on it, and said of course I know. What do I know?

He explained that the wife and friends weren't sold on the burger idea, that they were urging him to do a Mexican Restaurant, so to prove to them, he brought his meat, grill and oakwood to his friends yard sale and made burgers for everyone, well they say the rest is history. I returned a few days later to take a picture for this story and Dennis insisted that I try his Filet of Salmon Sandwich, (\$9.45) cooked on the same wood that burger is made, I ate the sandwich so fast that Dennis thought I hadn't eaten in two days. Nope, just that good, I thought about ordering another. Prices are ridiculously competitive, with combos available All and all a burger to love. Many beers on tap, wine by the glass or bottle. Why Big daddy's name? Every dad claims to make the best Backyard BBQ, Dennis might have the claim for the Burger. Another bonus the walls are well.... Wall to wall with nine huge flat screen TV's, much like the original Big Daddy's a great place for a burger and to hang out with friends and watch your favorite sporting event.



Big Daddy's Fire Grill 147 W. California Blvd. Pasadena (626) 356-4900

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The Sierra Madre Farmer's Market hours have changed to 3:00pm through 7:00pm every Wednesday in fall and winter. Vendors include Dry Dock which has fresh and wild caught fish, Rustic Loaf with artisan breads, Cutie Pie with fresh pies and much more!

For those interested in being a vendor contact Melissa Farwell with Raw Inspirations at 818-591-8161 ext. 806.



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### INGREDIENTS

3 large eggs  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup vegetable oil  
1/2 cup buttermilk  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves  
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1 1/2 cups fig preserves  
1/2 cup applesauce  
1 cup chopped pecans, toasted

Cream Cheese Frosting (Betty Crocker Whipped Cream Cheese Frosting works best)

Garnishes: dried figs, fresh raspberries, fresh mint sprigs

### DIRECTIONS

Beat first 3 ingredients at medium speed with an electric mixer until blended. Add buttermilk and vanilla; beat well.

Combine flour and next 5 ingredients; gradually add to buttermilk mixture, beating until blended. Fold in fig preserves, applesauce, and toasted pecans. (Batter will be thin.) Pour batter into 2 greased and floured 8-inch round cakepans.

Bake at 350° for 35 to 40 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool on wire racks 10 minutes; remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks.

Spread Cream Cheese Frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake. Store in refrigerator. Garnish, if desired.

Note: For testing purposes only, we used Braswell's Pure Fig Preserves. Coarsely chop figs, if necessary.

## AVOID WILD MUSHROOMS, STATE PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR WARNS

SACRAMENTO - With seasonal rains promoting the growth of wild mushrooms, Dr. Ron Chapman, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and state public health officer, today warned consumers not to collect and eat wild mushrooms.

"It is very difficult to distinguish which mushrooms are dangerous and which are safe to eat. Consuming wild mushrooms can cause serious illness and even death," Chapman said.

"Wild mushrooms" refer to the many varieties of fungi that grow wild and are not cultivated. They tend to grow in shady, moist and humid environments.

Wild mushroom poisoning continues to cause disease, hospitalization and death among California residents. According to the California Poison Control System (CPCS), 1,602 cases of mushroom ingestion were reported statewide from January 2011 through November 2012. Among those cases:

- Five individuals died (four in November 2012).
- Eighteen suffered a major health outcome, such as liver failure leading to coma and/or a liver transplant, or kidney failure requiring dialysis.
- 903 were children under six years of age. Usually the child ate a small amount of a mushroom growing in yards or neighborhood parks.
- 848 were treated at a health care facility.
- 30 were admitted to an intensive care unit.

The most serious illnesses and deaths have been linked primarily to mushrooms known to cause liver damage, including Amanita ocreata, or "destroying angel," and Amanita phalloides, also known as the "death cap." These and other poisonous mushrooms grow in some parts of California year-round, but are most commonly found during fall, late winter or spring.

Eating poisonous mushrooms can cause abdominal pain, cramping, vomiting, diarrhea, liver damage and death. Anyone who develops symptoms after eating wild mushrooms should seek immediate medical attention. Individuals with symptoms, or their treating health care providers, should immediately contact the CPCS at 1-800-222-1222.

Local mycological societies offer educational resources about mushroom identification, and may be able to help individuals identify whether mushrooms they have picked are safe or not. For more information about mycological societies in California, please visit the North American Mycological Association's Website.

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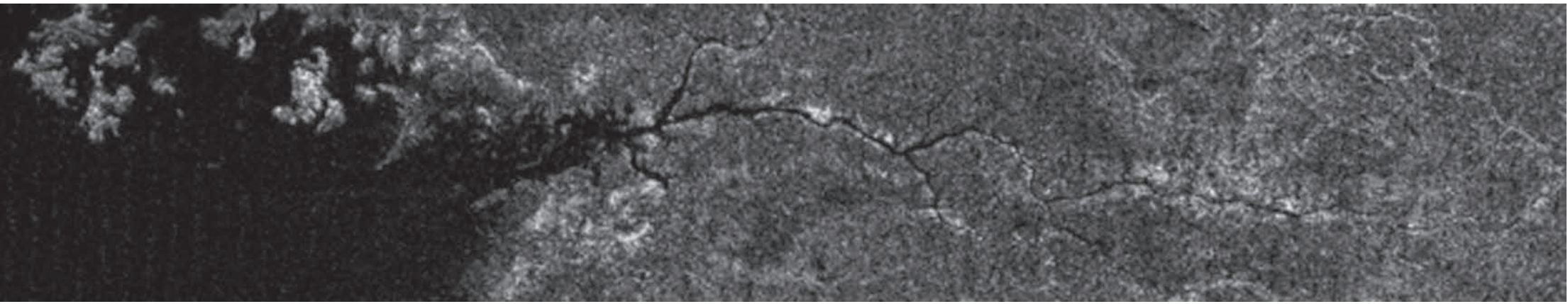
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The international Cassini mission has spotted what appears to be a miniature extraterrestrial version of the Nile River: a river valley on Saturn's moon Titan that stretches more than 250 miles from its "headwaters" to a large hydrocarbon sea.

It is the first time images have revealed a river system this vast and in such high resolution anywhere beyond Earth.

Scientists deduce that the river is filled with liquid because it appears dark along its entire extent in the high-resolution radar image, indicating a smooth surface.

"Though there are some short, local meanders, the relative straightness of the river valley suggests it follows the trace of at least one fault, similar to other large rivers running into the southern margin of this same Titan sea," says Jani Radebaugh, a Cassini radar team associate at Brigham Young University.

"Such faults—fractures in Titan's bedrock—may not imply plate tectonics, like on Earth, but still may lead to the opening of basins and perhaps to the formation of the giant seas themselves," she adds.

Titan is the only other world we know of that has stable liquid on its surface. While Earth's hydrologic cycle relies on water, Titan's equivalent cycle involves hydrocarbons such as ethane and methane (which we know as natural gas).

Images from Cassini's visible-light cameras revealed regions that darkened after recent hydrocarbon rainfall.

Cassini's visual and infrared mapping spectrometer confirmed the presence of liquid ethane at a lake in Titan's southern hemisphere known as Ontario Lacus in 2008.

"This radar-imaged river provides another fantastic snapshot of a world in motion, which was first hinted at from the images of channels and gullies seen by ESA's Huygens probe as it descended to the moon's surface in 2005," says Nicolas Altobelli, Cassini Project Scientist for ESA (the European Space Agency).

Titan (or Saturn VI) is the largest moon of Saturn. It is the only natural satellite known to have a dense atmosphere, and the only object other than Earth for which clear evidence of stable bodies of surface liquid has been found.

Titan is the sixth ellipsoidal moon from Saturn. Frequently described as a planet-like moon, Titan has a diameter roughly 50% larger than Earth's moon and is 80% more massive. It is the second-largest moon in the Solar System, after Jupiter's moon Ganymede, and it is larger by volume than the smallest planet, Mercury, although only half as massive. Titan was the first known moon of Saturn, discovered in 1655 by the Dutch astronomer Christiaan Huygens, and it was the fifth moon of a planet apart from the Earth to be discovered.

The Cassini-Huygens mission is a cooperative project of NASA, ESA, and ASI, the Italian Space Agency. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, a division of the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, manages the mission for NASA's Science Mission Directorate, Washington. The Cassini orbiter was designed, developed and assembled at JPL. The radar instrument was built by JPL and ASI, working with team members from the United States and several European countries.

Photos:

Mosaic of river channel and ridge area on Titan

- Courtesy NASA

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

JUST FOR BEST FRIENDS

Happy Tails

by Chris Leclerc



NOTHIN'S AS LOVIN' AS SOMETHIN FROM YOUR OVEN

*Homemade Holiday Treat Ideas for Your Canine Companion*

foursome - as I like to call her beautiful brood of 4 small dogs, Miss Pimms, Lambic, Sambuca and Marcella all of whom enjoy the home-baked treats Alexia prepares and stores for them in a cookie jar on the kitchen counter. During my weekly visits to their home, I have noticed that her 4 dogs seem to understand that those biscuits are little tokens of love, to be given on special occasions as a reward for good behavior. Believe me, being catered to is nothing new for Alexia's four-legged crew but this doggie-ma of 4 says her pups especially like bones baked at home way better than those bought in the store. Here are the 2 recipes Alexia shared with me. I hope you enjoy making use of them. Happy Holidays to all you animal lovers out there, and bon appetite to your beloved canine companions!

**DELICIOUS DOG BISCUITS**

Source: *Gourmet* / December 2005

**Ingredients:** 1 ¾ cups all-purpose flour, 1 ¾ cups whole-wheat flour, 1 ¾ cups cornmeal, 1 ¾ cups old-fashioned rolled oats, ½ cup toasted wheat germ, ½ cup packed light brown sugar, 1 tbsp baking powder, 1 ½ tsp salt, ¾ cups cold, unsalted butter cut into tbsp. size pieces, 1 cup, plus 1 tbsp water, ½ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, ½ cup chopped fresh mint leaves, 1 large egg

**Special Equipment:** A pastry or bench scraper and a bone-shaped dog biscuit cookie cutter

**Directions:** Pulse flours, cornmeal, oats, wheat germ, brown sugar, baking powder and in salt in a food processor until evenly combined. Add butter and pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal with pea-size butter lumps. Add 1 cup water and pulse until a coarse, dense dough forms. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead in parsley and mint until well distributed. Gather, then halve dough with scraper. Form into 2 balls and flatten each into a 6-inch disk. Put oven racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and preheat to 350 degrees F. Roll out 1 disk of dough into a round (1/3 inch thick) on a well-floured surface with a rolling pin. (If dough becomes too soft to roll out, wrap in plastic and chill until firm.) Cut out as many biscuits as possible and arrange about ¼ inch apart on a baking sheet. Gather scraps and re-roll, then cut out more biscuits. Repeat with remaining dough using another baking sheet. Whisk together egg and 1 tbsp water. Brush biscuits with egg wash and bake, switching position of sheets halfway through, until tops are golden brown, about 35 minutes total. Turn off oven and dry biscuits overnight.

\* Biscuits keep about 1 month, layered between sheets of wax paper or parchment in an airtight container.

**SOURCE: Alexia Nalewaik / 12/16/2007 / <http://www.tastebook.com>**

**Ingredients:** 2 cups whole wheat flour, 1 tbsp baking powder, 1 cup natural peanut butter, 1 cup skim milk

**Directions:** Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees. Combine flour and baking powder. In a separate bowl, combine peanut butter and milk. Add wet mixture to dry and mix well. Turn out dough on a lightly floured surface and knead. Roll out to ¼ inch thick and cut out shapes. Place on a greased baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes or until lightly brown. Cool on a rack and store in an airtight container.

**PET OF THE WEEK: BELLA #A4519486**



Meet a true gem, Bella (A4519486). Bella is a happy-go-lucky one and one half year old brown female Dachshund/Terrier mix puppy who was found in Rosemead on December 5th with her companion Magnolia (A4519489) and brought to the Baldwin Park Animal Care Center. Weighing twenty-eight pounds, this extroverted puppy understands the concept of walking on leash, and will soon master it.

Good with other dogs, especially Magnolia with whom she is quite bonded, she is also good with children. Bella will make a tremendous indoor pet for anyone in any living situation. To watch a video of Bella and Magnolia please visit: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=va3pA9VINLY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=va3pA9VINLY)

To meet Bella in person, please see her at the Baldwin Park Animal Care Center, located at 4275 N. Elton St., Baldwin Park, CA 91706 (Phone: 626-430-2378 or 626-962-3577). She is currently available now. For any inquiries about Bella, please reference her animal ID number: A4519486. 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 Bella or the adoption process, please contact United Hope for Animals Volunteer Adoption Coordinator Samantha at [Samantha@hope4animals.org](mailto:Samantha@hope4animals.org). 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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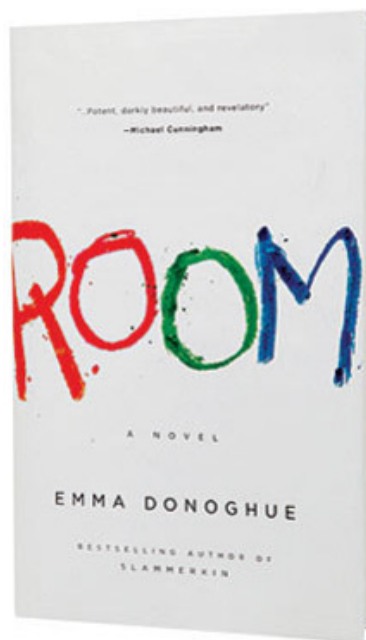
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# JASMINE'S CORNER

Book Reviews by Jasmine Kelsey Williams

## ROOM By Emma Donoghue



This next choice shall take readers back into the works of fiction but it is one that will not disappoint you. 'Room' by Emma Donoghue is one that really challenges the reader to use their insight and sense of perspective at the same time as they will be viewing this whole piece through the eyes of the main protagonist, five year old Jack.

The colorful, childlike scrawl of the title 'Room' holds much more significance than the first impression it makes upon the reader, and as soon as the introduction is made from the narrative of Jack, the reader will be set for an emotional journey that does not just test the simple boundaries that Jack perceives of his world, but also those of his mother and the reader as well. Even if one does not put themselves into Jack's frame of mind, the reader will still be able to experience the tide of emotions, confusion, and the fear of change that is brought when the reader starts to feel the experience of what Jack is going through. Although Jack is the five year old protagonist along with his mother, this novel is meant for mature audiences as there are themes of abduction, abuse, and confinement within a certain amount of space.

The fluidity and tone will not be lost on the reader, and the reader will still be able to comprehend where the seriousness lies in 'Room'; how Jack narrates what goes on through his eyes, how he tries to understand what his mother tells him and what she goes through to protect him, and how they both view the character "Old Nick".

Receiving praise as a national bestseller from sources such as the San Francisco Chronicle and Boston Globe, 'Room' will go on to prove that triumphs, new discoveries, and finding inner strength to move forward in life can be found in many walks of life, even in childhood.



## SEAN'S SHAMELESS REVIEWS: KILLING THEM SOFTLY

Review By Sean Kayden

Have you ever been so amped up to see a movie after initially seeing its trailer? That was the case for me with "Killing Them

Softly." An apparently badass, old school crime movie destined to be a memorable one, if not a classic. On the contrary, I quickly found myself in a theater utterly disinterested by the political undertones, straightforward storytelling, and the way things were heighten so greatly, they simply came across as phony. When writers attempt to tell a tale about the enigmatic crime underworld with the involvement of gamblers, degenerates, and derelicts, most appear to have no real life experience with the potentially dark environment.

That's the problem with Andrew Dominik's adapted screenplay. Perhaps, I'm being too critical, but something is awry when you're shaking your head at characters' choices and feeling a sense of bewilderment by the actions characters would take to solve a problem. "Killing Them Softly" looks beautiful, but physical appearance wears off thin. Underneath the aesthetics, you have a one-trick pony that's riddled with clichés, buried with political drive, and about as monotonous as watching paint dry.

"Killing Them Softly" begins with a man named the "Squirrel" (an owner of a dry cleaner) who hires two lackeys for an easy, "get in-get out" job. They are going to hit up a poker game hosted by Ray Liotta's character, Markie. By the way, Ray Liotta is about as washed up as the cities Hurricane Sandy just pummeled through. He offered nothing and is only associated with this movie because Liotta is a perennial wise guy. As I digress, the reason it's described as an easy, no strings attached job is because a few years ago Markie hired two guys to rob his own game. Not too long after, high on his own supply in a sense, Markie professes what he did at a random poker game to others. They all had a good laugh until word got back to a man named Dylan and his muscle, who apparently are the enforcers at these back alley gamers. They don't take too kindly to the news and rough up Markie a bit. Therefore, if Markie's game gets hit again, all fingers will point to him.

After these two lost souls do the deed, Markie gets some heat from the guys upstairs. This is where Brad Pitt's character comes in. They realize Markie probably didn't do it, but someone must pay. Shortly afterward one of the guys who part took in the poker bust, a heroin addict of all people, gloats about what he did to a guy who works for this mysterious man named Dylan (played by

Sam Shepard). Dylan handles these dire situations where someone must pay for their wrong doings. Long story short, Brad Pitt's too cool for school character must take care of the two guys involved as well as the "Squirrel"

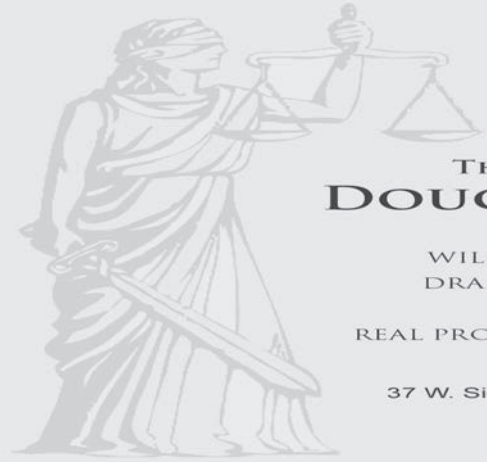
Written and Directed by: Andrew Dominik  
Based on the novel "Cogan's Trade" by George V. Higgins  
Rated R for violence, sexual references, pervasive language, and some drug use  
Release Date: November 30th, 2012

who orchestrated the heist. He brings in James Gandolfini, an old school hitman looking for work by figuring this is a two-man job. With recession prices to boot, they get Gandolfini for less than he normally would ask for. Anyway, his character Mickey is obscene, rude, and a perpetual drunk. He's only in two scenes, but they are the longest and worst scenes in the movie. He goes on a tirade about his previous heydays, women he's fornicated with, and whatever else that is still holding him together. Bottom line, Gandolfini's outing is embarrassing and sadly one that's reminiscent of his old alter ego, Tony Soprano. He's gone from the movie rather quickly, but by that time, you're already feeling the pain from sitting through the first hour or so.

You can argue all you want that the picture is a lot deeper than what appears at face value. However, if you want be reminded about the recession then just open up any US circulated newspaper or better yet take a hard look at your own financial structure if needed. Brad Pitt may be smooth as silk but even is strong presence can't overtake the barebones storytelling, incompetent character decisions, and serious lack of thrills and chills.

The only redeeming quality of the film perhaps takes place in the final scene. Brad Pitt's character Jackie goes on rant about Thomas Jefferson and his hypocrisy and President Obama's outlook on the American people. Jackie boldly states America not being a country but a business. It's definitely a thought provoking claim on how what this country is transitioning into, which is a pitiful scenario nonetheless. This may cause ire for many viewers, but same thing goes for those anticipating a great 21st century crime film this holiday season and instead come away with a big lump of coal. I rather be killed off softly than sit through "Killing Them Softly" for another go around.

Grade: 1.5 out 5



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## THE JOY OF YOGA

## WHAT TO GIVE FOR CHRISTMAS

What to give yourself for Christmas? You thought I would say yoga. BUT, that's just part of it. The best thing you can give yourself or your loved ones is practicing the art of receiving. You may think that you know how

to receive, but basic receiving, Receiving 101, is about learning how to receive your breath and make it smooth.

Receive every breath like the most beautiful gift you could ever be given. Well, it is the most beautiful gift! With gracious receiving of each breath, we train ourselves to receive everything else with grace. All of our life lessons are gifts, even if we don't see them as such most of the time.

Receiving, or cultivating gratitude, is the number one recommended cure for depression. See in yoga, we view depression as an energy imbalance, and the number one way to fix that is with breath practice. The perfect way to prepare for breath practice is - yoga!

It also helps with stress management, weight control, detoxification and sleep. Somewhere in the back of our minds we long for that super carefree holiday of warm fireplaces and loved ones, relaxed days and free time.

So the next best thing to receive is a good diet, one that keeps us light on our feet and nourished. Eastern philosophy looks at overindulgence as toxic. Eating hard-to-digest foods while stressed out is toxic. A natural by-product of practicing yoga is body and diet awareness. Whole, unprocessed foods, good fats and lots of fruits and vegetables are a lovely gift to receive (and leave a little room, don't over-do). Lots of good sleep, nourishing foods and less clutter will make a very happy, receptive and relaxed Santa.

Cranky, stressed out, broke, overstimulated, over caffeinated, over fed, lumps of coal do not make nice elves! If you need help along the way, just call.

With lots of love for The Holidays, Namasté, René

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## One Of A Kind: *Featuring unique homes and gardens and the people who create them*

Story by Chris Bertrand



### DREAMED OF YOUR CABIN IN THE WOODS? *Unplug from City Life Nearby in Big Santa Anita Canyon for \$45k*

Have you dreamed of getting away from it all to your mountain getaway? One of just eighty remaining cabins was just listed nearly in our back yard. No long drive to Big Bear required. A disappearing commodity, Cabin #76 is one of only eighty cabins left in Big Santa Anita Canyon, of over three hundred built between the 1890's and 1920's. The oldest remaining structure was constructed in 1898.

When you step back in time here, there's a long list of modern life you might leave behind, beginning with your car, electricity and municipal water; but the benefits to your soul are, as they say in the Visa commercial, "priceless."

Perhaps you need a place to write that novel, or compose that new hit tune. Mountain vistas, a nearby 55' waterfall, hiking trails are all within reach of this cozy 250 square foot cabin. According to the website for Big Santa Anita Canyon, "A visit to Big Santa Anita Canyon is like a visit to the 19th Century. Although it is only 20 miles from downtown Los Angeles it seems far removed not only in space but also in time from our hectic existence."

With literally no address, the rather simple and interesting directions for Cabin #76 on the multiple listing read: "Santa Anita Rd north in to Angeles Forest till it ends. Park and walk to cabin approximately 1.75 miles. Best to go Friday to Sunday and stop at pack station at top of road - they will provide a map."

Only accessible by foot, mountain bike or mule, one follows the creek to one of the last of this group of cabins in this mountain enclave. Once you're unplugged, enjoy your wood burning fireplace and kerosene lamps and the outhouse. One needn't leave *all* the modern conveniences behind, however, as propane can run your cook stove, oven heaters, barbecue, lighting and even a refrigerator.

The local lore tells of gold discovered during the 1850's. Though no significant amounts of gold were ever obtained, the discovery led to construction of the first of the many trails that crisscross the area, including logging trails. Wilbur M. Sturtevant cut a trail even further during the 1890's, and established his Sturtevant Camp, still there today. Over the next four decades, during the hiking craze in Los Angeles, many other hikers' lodgings were built, though this is the only one that remains, as the others have succumbed to fire, flood, decay and neglect.

The first ever Sierra Club establishment in Southern California, Muir Lodge, was built below Sturtevant Falls.

Hikers today will still see mules, (Yes, that was mules!) and horses along the trail hauling supplies into the various camps.

Maps are available at Adam's Pack Station, a seventy year tradition in the canyon, open on Friday to Sunday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. only. The station's website indicates, "Today there are 80 cabins left in Big Santa Anita Canyon, and of the five resorts, only Sturtevant's is still with us. The only road in this canyon is the one to Chantry Flat. One must hike to all of the cabins. The cabin nearest Chantry is 3/4 mile in and the most distant are 4 miles in. There is no electricity, no municipal water, no septic, no garbage service and no address. The only 'utility' is the old crank-phone system. All supplies must be packed in and all garbage packed out. Cabin owners are bound by all ecological laws and generators are frowned upon. The only universally accepted technology in this canyon is propane."

When one buys a cabin here, they are issued a 'Special Use Permit' to keep the improvements on Federal land. No new sites are being permitted, now or ever. The Forest Service archaeologists have determined that the entire cabin tract should remain intact."

Visit their website at [www.AdamsPackStation.com](http://www.AdamsPackStation.com) or call 626-447-7356. An important access detail: Sierra Madre Police Department locks the access road gate at 8 p.m., so a little planning is required for your ingress and egress. For more history of the area, visit [www.BigSantaAnitaCanyon.com](http://www.BigSantaAnitaCanyon.com).

Cabin #78 is listed at \$45,000, with a U.S. Federal land lease of \$400 per year. For more information in this particular cabin, contact Darren Hubert of Blue Pacific Property at 323-898-2991 or [Darren@UrbanHillsides.com](mailto:Darren@UrbanHillsides.com). View the property online at [www.UrbanHillsides.com](http://www.UrbanHillsides.com). Information for this article was obtained from Hubert and all three websites listed.



### Tips of the Trade: Real Estate Revealed

by Luther Tsinoglou Realtor®

### DON'T GIVE IT AWAY

While indicators show that housing is making a comeback, the glut of negative reporting is still making people skittish about buying a home. This has created a hot rental market, with few places available to lease and rising rent rates. Consider some reasons why it's always better to own than to rent.

First, as owner, you are your own landlord. You won't be kicked out for any reason other than not making your mortgage payments. You control every other aspect of how you choose to live in your home.

Even more important, those monthly payments are a kind of forced savings, helping you to build equity. Although it's possible that home values could fall further, the same could happen to your 401(k). But over the long term, both types of investment are more likely to see gains.

Right now, interest rates are still very low, which means that if you choose a fixed-rate mortgage, that rate will never change, and you will build equity at an even quicker pace. Another reason to opt for the ownership route is that you'll find – particularly now with so few leases available – that the nicest homes in the safest neighborhoods with the best schools will be offered for sale and not for rent. Consult with an agent and turn that rent payment into savings and security instead.

*Luther has been licensed and practicing real estate since 1992. He specializes in residential and income property in the Greater San Gabriel Valley. Luther Tsinoglou has again been named a top producing sales agent with Podley Properties for 2011, making the top 10% at the company overall. Luther can be reached at his direct line (626) 695-8650 or at [luther@tsinoglou.com](mailto:luther@tsinoglou.com)*

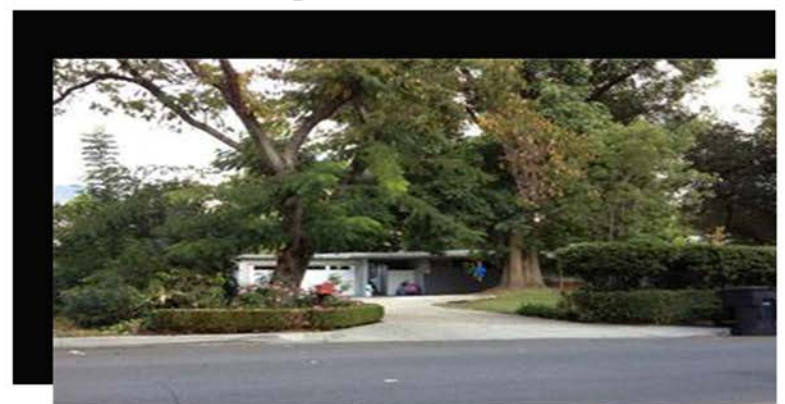


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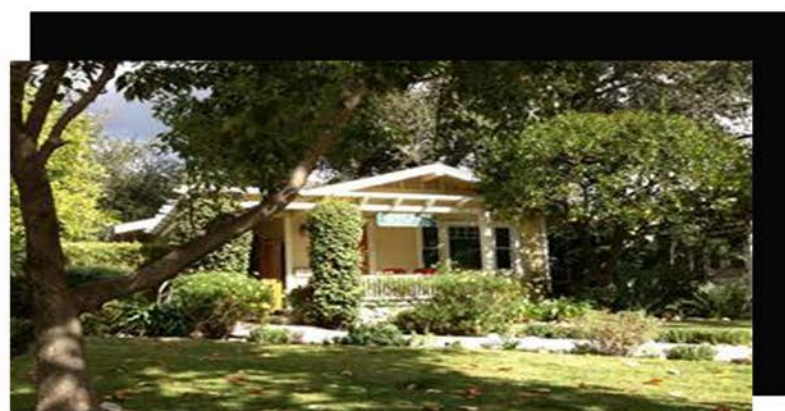
### 615 E. Orange Grove Sierra Madre



**\$859,000**

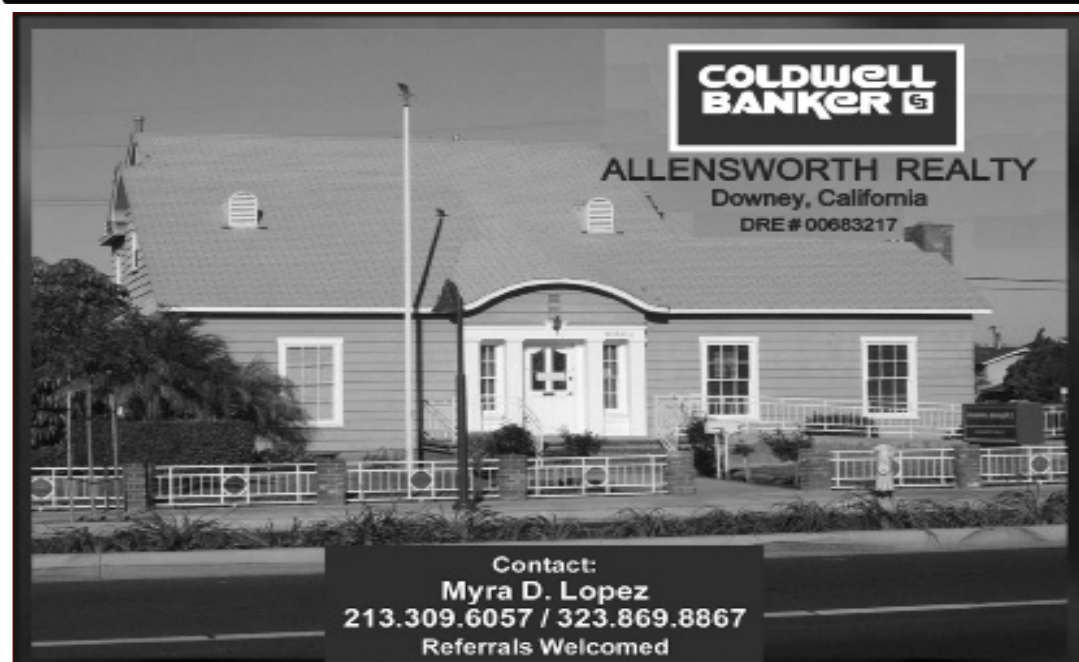
This home is in need of some 2013 pizzazz! The lot is tree lined with mature landscaping. There is a pool in center of yard with a fully permitted over 600 square foot guest house/maybe office! You also have a large garage and a driveway that can hold many cars. The main house is 3 bedroom 2 bath, there are hardwood floors and some vinyl flooring. This would be a great project for the right Buyers!!!

### 373 W. Sierra Madre Bl. Sierra Madre



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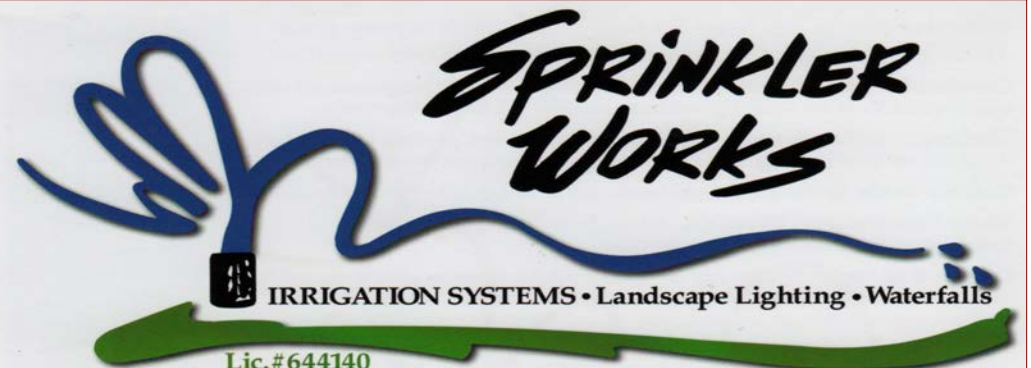
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By Pat Birdsall

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR REMARRYING LATER IN LIFE

*Dear Savvy Senior:**What are the financial issues that come with remarrying later in life? I've been seeing a wonderful man for two years, and we've been talking about marriage, but I want to make sure we understand all the possible financial consequences before getting hitched.**Single Senior*

Dear Single:

That's a great question. Getting remarried later in life can actually bring about a host of financial and legal issues that are much different and more complicated than they are for younger couples just starting out. Here are some common problem areas you need to think about, and some tips and resources that can help.

Estate planning: Getting remarried can have a big effect on your estate plan. Even if your will leaves everything to your kids, in most states spouses are automatically entitled to a share of your estate – usually one-third to one-half. If you don't want to leave a third or more of your assets to your new partner, get a prenuptial agreement where you both agree not to take anything from the other's estate. If you do want to leave something to your spouse and ensure your heirs receive their inheritance, a trust may be the best option.

Long-term care: You may be surprised to know that in many states, spouses are responsible for each other's medical and long-term care bills. This is one of the main reasons many older couples choose to live together instead of marrying. Staying unmarried lets you and your partner qualify individually for public benefits, such as Medicaid (which pays nursing home costs), without draining the other one's resources. But, if you do remarry and can afford it, consider getting a long-term care insurance policy (see [longtermcare.gov](http://longtermcare.gov)) to protect your assets.

Real estate: If you're planning on living in his house or vice versa, you also need to think about what will happen to the house when the owner dies. If, for example, you both decide to live in your home, but you want your kids to inherit the place after you die, putting the house in both names is not an option. But, you may also not want your heirs to evict him once you die. One solution is for you to give your surviving husband a life estate which gives him the right to live in your property during his lifetime. Then once he dies, the house will pass to your heirs.

Social Security: Remarriage can also affect the benefits of many divorced or widowed seniors (especially women) who receive Social Security from their former spouses. For instance, getting remarried stops divorced spouse's benefits. And getting remarried before age 60 (50 if you're disabled) will cause widows and widowers to lose the right to survivors benefits from their former spouse. Remarrying at 60 or older, however, does not affect survivors benefit. For more information, see [ssa.gov/women](http://ssa.gov/women).

Pension benefits: Widows and widowers of public employees, such as police and firemen, often receive a pension which they can lose if they remarry. In addition, widows and widowers of military personnel killed in duty may lose their benefits if they remarry before age 57, and survivors of federal civil servants that receive a pension will forfeit it if they remarry before 55. If you're receiving one of these benefits, check your policy to see what the affect will be.

Alimony: If you are receiving alimony from an ex-spouse, it will almost certainly end if you remarry and might even be cut off if you live together.

College aid: If you have any children in college receiving financial aid, getting married and adding a new spouse's income to the family could affect what he or she gets.

To get help with these issues, consider hiring an estate planner who can draw up a plan to protect both you and your partner's interests. Also see [elderlawanswers.com](http://elderlawanswers.com), a contributor to this column and a great resource on many other legal topics.

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.



## KATIE Tse .....This and That ART -LITE

I try to keep my column friendly and non confrontational. But every now and then I get an urge to "let it rip" and air my thoughts on issues I wouldn't usually discuss. "Issues," might be too heavy a word to use in regards to this week's topic --art, artists, and the wannabes that parade as artists.

Don't get me wrong. By no means do I claim to be an art expert. I used to dabble in it during high school and college. There remain a few scattered bits of trivia in the recesses of my mind, like the difference between Doric and Corinthian columns. But I'd be hard pressed to correctly answer any art question on Jeopardy. Nevertheless, I feel as if I have some small notion of what is good art and what is fodder for greeting cards and coffee mugs. Both my parents are artists (though they had actual "day jobs"). Their talent filtered down to me. And, while I'm not an artist, I do appreciate a nice painting or sculpture.

Which brings me to my subject --those cheesy artists whose works grace greeting cards and velvet paintings. There are many, but one stands out in particular. We'll refer to him as Kilroy. Why don't I like him? In a word, his stuff is sappy. Yes, the man had a talent for perspective and lighting. But 99.9% of his stuff had all the same hues of pink, yellow, and violet.

I'd even pardon Kilroy if he had satisfied himself with just producing sappy paintings in his garage and selling them at art fairs and gas stations. But the man had to go and open franchised galleries featuring prints of his works. And then he had to hi-jack the Christian market, slapping his cottages and lighthouses on everything from Bible covers to blanket throws and coffin medallions. Now you, too, can cuddle up in the warmth of a Kilroy coverlet throw. And if that's not enough to turn your stomach, you can also get snow globes, neck ties, night lights, and who knows what else stamped with similar saccharine-sweet images.

The man is dead now, so I should be gentler on him. In many cases, artists starve their whole lives, only to receive recognition when they're six feet under, (the only one that comes to mind is Van Gogh, but I'm sure there are others). The point is, they let their art speak for itself, rather than prostituting it on every commercial product they could find.

I've always had the opinion that whenever the majority of people are crazy for something, it can't be that great. I cite P.T. Barnum's observation that "nobody ever lost a dollar underestimating the taste of the American public." Case in point: there was a brief time (about a week) when I was interested in possibly reading the Harry Potter books. As soon as Hollywood, Oprah, and everyone else jumped on the Potter band wagon, I hopped off and haven't looked back since. Maybe it's a silly way of judging things, but it works for me. So, what I find even more surprising than Kilroy's success are the individuals who like him.

What typically happens is that I'll be talking with someone, or listening to them on the radio, agreeing with everything they're saying, thinking how intelligent and cultured they are. And then they say that they adore Kilroy's paintings. Suddenly all the nice things I thought about them fizzle out with that one statement. What makes these situations even worse is when I'm with someone who shares my disdain for Kilroy. For example, my mom and I will be talking to an old family friend we think we know pretty well. The conversation goes along peachy until, usually from out of the blue, our friend says how great they think Kilroy's paintings are. Instinctively, our guard goes up --we must repress our incredulous smirks and maintain a cool poker face. "Oh, yes," we say, not daring to look at each other for fear of cracking up. "He is quite... prolific."

## PASADENA SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE CHANGES HOURS

Since November, the Pasadena Social Security office is open to the public Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. – a reduction of 30 minutes each weekday. In addition, beginning January 2, 2013, the office will close to the public at noon every Wednesday.

Most services do not require a visit. Applying for retirement, disability or Medicare benefits, signing up for direct deposit, replacing a Medicare card, obtaining a proof of income letter or a change of address or telephone number can be done online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or by calling 1-800-772-1213. Hearing impaired may call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778.

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## FYI: TIPS TO BEING ALONE BUT NOT LONELY DURING THE HOLIDAYS:

If you are separated from the people you love during this holiday season, here are a few things that can help you find happiness and *perhaps* some joy!

1) Write letters to each of the people you miss, whether they are living or not, write them a letter. Tell them how much you appreciate them, and how much you wish they could be with you during the holidays. 2) Give a gift to charity. No matter how broke you may be, you can come up with *some* amount to give to a charity. 3) Write as many letters as you can to military personnel who are serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, or some other faraway places. Tell them how much you appreciate their service and thank them for it. 4) Call everyone you miss on Christmas morning and just wish them a Merry Christmas. Hearing their voices can be remarkably satisfying. 1-800-806-1191.



**There are many spaces left for new plaques at the Veteran's Memorial Wall.** If you or a friend, family member or neighbor served in any of the United States military branches the criteria for inclusion is simple: You must have lived in Sierra Madre for at least one year sometime in your life and have a picture of yourself in uniform. **Please call Dave Loera, Commander of VFW Post 3208, to be included and for more information: (626) 355-3382. We'd be proud to have you!**

**You can help: This week the Veteran's group is: Operation Freedom Paws.**

I was watching *CNN Heroes of the Year*, last Saturday evening and **all** ten selected are doing phenomenal things. However, one of them stood out for me...Her name is Mary Cortani and she created Operation Freedom Paws. She initially wanted to stop the appalling number of veteran's suicides, but somehow, it has now become her life's work. She thought pairing a veteran with a shelter dog who has been trained to sense the apprehensions and tensions the veteran is feeling, and calm them, would benefit both the veteran and the shelter dog. Her idea is working! The web site is uplifting and guaranteed to bring a tear to your eye...*Please visit: [www.operationfreedompaws.org](http://www.operationfreedompaws.org)*

**HELPFUL HINT:** Cleaning bathtubs: Use a cheap shampoo and a scrub brush. If you have difficulty bending over, use a long-handled brush.

## FOR YOUR FUNNY BONE

A boy, climbing a forbidden tree, tore his pants. His furious mother removed his pants in order to mend them and sent her son to his room for the rest of the day as punishment. Fifteen minutes later, she heard a noise in the basement. Thinking he had sneaked out, she called out- "You bad boy, are you down there without your pants?" A man's deep voice came up from the cellar- "No, ma'am, I'm just reading the electric meter!" *Contributed by Loyal Camacho in 2005 for Senior Moments*

Two neighbors appeared in court, each woman accusing the other of causing trouble in their building. "Let's get the evidence," the judge said in an effort to end their bickering. "I'll hear the oldest woman first." The case was dismissed for lack of testimony.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

... December Birthdays...

Pat Karamitros, Joan Hufnagel, Marie Pedersen, Mary Alice Cervera, Carole Horejsi, Shirley Anhalt, Mignon Grijalva, Helen Reese, Levon Yapoujian, Toni Buckner, Bonnie Garner, Lottie Bugl, Pat McGuire, Sheila Woehler, Arlie Hahn, Nan Murphy, Eleanor Hensel, Sylvia Curl, Elizabeth Levie and Gayle Licher. \*To add your name to this distinguished list, please call the paper at 626.355.2737. YEAR of birth not required.

**Quote of the Week:** *There is no greater loan than a sympathetic ear. ~ Frank Tyger ~*

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

YMCA San Gabriel Valley Intervale Senior Café: Monday-Friday at 12:00 Noon

(Participants are urged to arrive no later than 11:45 A.M.)

All seniors 60 and up can take part in the lunch program. There is a suggested donation of \$2.00 for those 60 and over and \$3.75 for non-senior guests. Daily reservations are necessary as space is limited. Please call 24 hours in advance...626.355.0256

LUNCH CAFE CLOSED

The Intervale Lunch Cafe will be closed for the holidays on the following days:

Monday, December 24th  
Tuesday, December 25th  
Tuesday, January 1, 2013

Free Blood Pressure Testing: On the **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday** of the month from 11:00 am-12:00 pm: A nurse from Methodist Hospital, Arcadia volunteers to do the readings. No appointment necessary.

Bingo: **Every Tuesday** afternoon from 1:00 pm- 3:00 pm Cards are only .25c each!

Free Chair Yoga: Every **Wednesday** morning from 11:00 am-11:45 am Volunteer Teryl Willis offers this class that focuses on senior yoga techniques. It is geared toward gentle movements, breathing techniques and balance improvement. No reservations are necessary.

Free Legal Consultation: Pasadena attorney Geoffrey Chin volunteers on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday** of the month. He focuses on estate planning, trusts, wills, probate, conservatorships and business law.

**\*Appointments are a must!** Please call: 626.355.7394 to make yours. *\*Conflicting court schedules can occasionally cause cancellations.*

Birthday Celebrations: The **2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday** of the month the Senior Center celebrates the birthdays of our patrons at 12:30 pm. Please join us for free cake and ice cream and **"celebration."** (The cakes are provided due to a generous donation from the Sierra Madre Civic Club.)

Game Day: **Every Thursday** at 1:00pm. Poker is usually the game of choice, or should I say chance? Board games and other card games are also available. Outside, on the patio, a beautiful, one-of-a-kind chess table is anxious for players.

Free Strength Training Class: **Every Friday** from 1:00 pm -1:45 pm Conducted by long-time volunteer Lisa Brandley. The class utilizes light weights for low-impact resistance training. Weights are provided by the Sierra Madre Senior Center. It's a great way to stay in shape and to socialize with your peers. (Gossip included)

**Senior Citizens Club:** Every **Saturday**-at the Hart Park House (Senior Center) Brown bag lunch at 11:30am; Club meeting at Noon; Bingo 12:30- 3:30 pm Only .25c per card... For more information call Pat at 626.355.7290



**NEW! On the Move Physical Therapy-** Join local physical therapist, Shannon Vandeveld, at the Senior Center on **Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM for a free consultation.** Shannon will be volunteering her time once a month to help seniors identify any possible physical therapy needs as well as providing basic tips. To make an appointment call the senior services desk at (626) 355-7394.



**Senior Movie Program: Free Movies are shown on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month.** The films, one contemporary and one vintage, are chosen by the seniors themselves. **This month's selections are:**

**December 12- White Christmas** (1954) An American Holiday musical film starring Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye and Rosemary Clooney. It's about a successful song-and-dance team who become romantically involved with a sister act who team up to save a failing Vermont inn. (Songs by Irving Berlin)

**December 26- Mamma Mia** (2008) a musical/romantic comedy film adapted from the 1999 Broadway musical of the same name; based on the songs of pop group ABBA. Meryl Streep heads the cast, playing the role of single mother Donna Sheridan. Pierce Brosnan, Colin Firth and Stellan Skarsgard play the three possible fathers to Donna's daughter, Sophie (Amanda Seyfried). **Start time: 1:00 PM** in Sierra Madre's City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

## Leonora Moss

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# EXTRAORDINARY CUSTOM FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS



DOLLARS AND CENTS

By Carl Davis, CIMA

TAX PLANNING IN A LOWER TAX ENVIRONMENT

A review of your finances before the end of the year is always a good practice, and often assessing tax-saving strategies is part of the process. This year is a particularly challenging year to do this because of the last-minute negotiations taking place around the “fiscal cliff.” This is the combination of tax increases and spending cuts at the federal level set to kick in on January 1, 2013.

We usually know how tax laws will change as we conduct year-end planning, but this year is different since many believe that laws currently scheduled to go into effect at the start of 2013 will, in fact, be altered before or soon after they take effect.

Changes that could happen

Here is a broad overview of some of the key tax changes that are set to take effect at the start of 2013 unless policymakers in Washington agree to a different approach:

- Higher income tax rates will apply to all taxpayers (other than corporations).
- The employee’s share of payroll taxes (in this case, the Social Security tax) will return to the standard 6.2 percent rate from the 4.2 percent rate that applied in 2011 and 2012.
- Investment income such as capital gains and dividends will be subject to higher tax rates, and for certain higher-income taxpayers, will be subject to a new 3.8 percent tax on net investment income.
- Some tax credits and deductions will disappear or be limited.
- Estate and gift taxes will rise and apply to far more taxpayers.

Consider that the higher your income, the more significant the tax changes are likely to be. There is speculation that Congress and the President will agree on a plan to scale back or postpone many of these tax hikes, but it isn’t clear when or if such an agreement will occur.

Timely opportunities to consider now

Making tax-efficient moves before the end of the year is particularly challenging given the question mark surrounding the tax landscape. But uncertainty doesn’t preclude the importance of considering steps that can help you be as prepared as possible regardless of what comes out of Washington. Keep in mind that the “fiscal cliff” situation may not be limited to 2012 – the following action steps to consider apply to most economic landscapes in which consumers are anticipating a rise in taxes the following calendar year.

Though you should never make financial decisions based only on tax efficiency, here are five potential moves to consider making now if they fit into your overall short-term financial plan:

#1 – Convert retirement savings to a Roth IRA

You can convert some or all of your workplace savings plan dollars, if the plan allows, or traditional IRA assets to a Roth IRA. Dollars in a Roth IRA grow on a tax-deferred basis, and withdrawals can qualify for tax-free treatment if holding period requirements are met. Since a Roth conversion is a taxable event, 2012 may be the best opportunity for those who are considering it since tax rates for many people are likely to be lower in 2012 than they will be in the coming years. Another advantage of converting to a Roth is that you can change your mind, and “re-characterize”

the dollars converted back to a traditional IRA before October 15, 2013. In short, any decision made to convert today is not final, but waiting until after the New Year will make the conversion subject to potentially higher tax rates.

#2 – Accelerate income

In most years, individuals try to find ways to reduce taxable income and accelerate deductible expenses. This time, it may make sense to accelerate income as much as possible into 2012 and defer deductible expenses to reduce your 2013 income, if you have the flexibility to do so. One note – higher income people may not want to overdo it on deferring deductible expenses as new tax policies being considered could limit deductions in 2013 and beyond for those reaching certain income thresholds.

#3 – Sell appreciated assets

As the law stands today, the tax rate on long-term capital gains realized when an asset is sold (such as a stock or mutual fund) will rise to a top rate of 20 percent in 2013. In 2012, the top long-term capital gains tax rate is just 15 percent. Investment income could also be subject to an additional 3.8 percent net investment income surtax in 2013 (related to the Affordable Care Act) if you reach certain income thresholds, adding to the tax burden. There is an important caveat to mention – don’t sell an asset simply for purposes of potentially reducing the tax impact of the sale. You must first determine whether selling the asset is a beneficial move for you and makes sense as part of your overall financial plan regardless of the tax consequences.

#4 – Take advantage of gift tax savings

In 2012, the lifetime gift tax exclusion amounts are \$5.12 million for individuals or \$10.24 million for a couple. These rules have not been extended beyond 2012, so this may be the best opportunity for those with accumulated wealth to reduce their estates in such a tax-favorable environment. Be sure any gifting is consistent with plans you already have and is not done simply due to 2012’s more favorable tax environment.

#5 – Accelerate medical expenses into 2012

If you anticipate costly medical procedures and can get them completed and fully paid for in 2012, there may be a better chance for tax savings. In 2012, taxpayers who itemize deductions can claim unreimbursed medical expenses that exceed 7.5% of adjusted gross income (AGI). Only those expenses that exceed 10 percent of AGI in 2013 will be deductible.

As always, any tax-related decisions should be made only after consulting with your tax advisor. Meeting with a financial professional can help you assess financial strategies that are most suitable for the uncertain tax environment that exists as 2012 comes to a close and 2013 begins with new changes in place.

1 Self-employed taxpayers face a similar 2 percent increase in their self-employment tax rate.

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5 APP IDEAS FOR YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE

The apps that are available for Facebook pages make it possible to shop, view YouTube channels, sign-up for emails, run contests and so much more right in a Facebook page. Here are 5 app ideas, (they are also know as tabs):

1. YouTube Tab: A Facebook page is a great place to promote YouTube videos. There are several apps that allow you to feed a YouTube channel into a Facebook page. In the Facebook search bar, type in the word “YouTube” and several options will come up under apps.
2. Guest Book App: If your business is doing email marketing, you might install a Facebook app that allows people to join your list. If you use Constant Contact, you can install and customize their app in about 5 minutes, find it at [www.facebook.com/ctct.jmml](http://www.facebook.com/ctct.jmml)
3. Pinterest App: If you want to showcase your Pinterest presence on Facebook, you might install the free Pinterest app at [www.woobox.com/pinterest](http://www.woobox.com/pinterest)
4. Shop tab: There are several ways to set up a shopping tab that will feature your products on your Facebook page. If you use Amazon, you might install the amazon items app ([www.facebook.com/AmazonItems](http://www.facebook.com/AmazonItems)). Ebay and other carts also have apps for this. If you type in “shop tab” in Facebook’s search bar, you will find lots of options.
5. Custom apps: Once you start adding apps, you might find that you want to build some custom apps. For example, we’ve added a custom tab called “The News Room,” (look for it at [facebook.com/hutdogs](http://facebook.com/hutdogs)) it searches the web and pulls in trending news about social media and email marketing. These news rooms can be set up for any topic, you just have to decide what type of news would be valuable for your audience.

Depending on the type of business, there are many strategies for adding Facebook apps. These Facebook pages are serving as interactive web pages for the businesses that have taken the time to customize them. Take a look at your Facebook page and ask yourself if you have interesting tabs/apps for people to interact with when they visit your page. Think about the audience you serve and what would be interesting to them.

About MJ: MJ and her brother David own HUTdogs, a creative services business that specializes in Social Media Education for business owners. Join their conversation on Facebook and get good tips and tricks about social media, [www.facebook.com/hutdogs](http://www.facebook.com/hutdogs). Sign up for their upcoming classes and presentations at: [www.hutdogs.com/workshops/schedule](http://www.hutdogs.com/workshops/schedule)

BUSINESS TODAY

The latest on Business News, Trends and Techniques



THERE IS TIME LEFT FOR YEAR-END CHARITABLE GIVING

Spread a little cheer with a donation of cash or other useful resources to support a group or organization that supports your community. Your gesture of generosity will serve as a much needed vote of confidence for the great work they do all year long. Your donation may also qualify for a tax deduction if you file an itemized tax return; so you can actually benefit by giving to others.

Any organization that relies on volunteer support to operate some aspects of its programs is always in need of donations. Cash is, by far, the most welcomed donation. Most organizations have websites accept online donations to make it easy for you to give using a credit card or electronic check. If not, just put a check into an envelope and send it to the mailing address posted on their website. If they are located within driving distance, they will gladly receive your donation in person.

Non-cash donations should meet two criteria. First, it should be something that they actually need, and second it should be something they actually want. With the exception of donating items to thrift shops, be sure to check with an organization before donating any used items. Make sure that your gift is appropriate and useful, not a convenient way for you to unload worn and obsolete items that really belong in the trash. Some agencies have “wish lists” in their newsletter or on their websites.

It is great if you can make a cash donation, large or small. However, these organizations are in constant need of resources to serve their clients and to support the work of staff and volunteers. We encourage you to add a local charity to this year’s holiday shopping list. A short phone call or e-mail inquiry to determine their most pressing needs is a great place to start. We have prepared a sampling of some creative ideas in the following table.

Type of Organization	Sampling of Donation Ideas for Small Budgets
Food Pantry	Bags to package food for clients; Gift certificates for 10 pies from a local restaurant
Local Clinic or Hospital	Annual subscription to magazine(s) for the waiting areas; potted plants for office area
Local school	Gift certificate(s) for a local office supply or art supply store to give to teachers; flash drives for students
Various nonprofit agencies	Small appliance for staff kitchen; one month supply of supplies for bathroom(s)

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## HOWARD Hays As I See It



"... we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as 'right to work.' It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone. . . . Wherever these laws have been passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer. . . . We do not intend to let them do this to us. We demand this fraud be stopped."  
- Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1961)

I framed my column last week with references to the subject of history; how knowledge of it is vital to understanding the present, and making sound decisions for the future. I opened with a quote from Howard Zinn, which made the point that if you don't have such knowledge, you'll fall for anything – over and over again.

Last week in Michigan, the conflict was over legislation referred to as "right to work." For those wondering what the fuss was about, one only had to recall the history as spoken by the Rev. King over fifty years ago. If one wondered what was wrong with affording workers the freedom not to join a union if they didn't want to, not to pay union dues if they didn't want to – anyone familiar with history knew this argument is bogus; that workers have had this freedom since 1947, when the Taft-Hartley act banned the "closed shop".

History teaches that whenever legislation is rushed through behind closed doors, with no opportunity for debate or public input, there's an unpleasant odor to it. This was how the Michigan legislation was rammed through; legislation which had nothing to do with union membership or dues payments, but which banned the nominal "agency fee" charged employees to cover the cost of negotiations on their behalf. Everyone could share in better pay, benefits and working conditions resulting from collective bargaining, but there'd be a "right to freeloader"; workers could opt to let others pick up the tab for negotiations everyone benefited from.

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder (R) claimed this would be good for workers and good for the economy, but one could look at the history of where it had been tried before. Moses Harris of the Detroit Free Press looked at the 23 states which already had similar "right to work" laws on the books and saw how they stacked up with those that didn't. Of the ten states with highest per capita incomes, only one was a right to work state, while seven of the ten with the lowest per capita incomes were. Only three of the ten states with the fastest-growing economies were right to work states, while six of the ten states with the lowest percentages of residents with health coverage were right to work.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the major victim of union-busting is the middle class. In 1968, when 28% of U.S. workers were union members, 53% of our national income went to the middle class (the middle 60% of income earners). By 2010, when union membership dropped to 12%, the middle class share of our income dropped to 46%. As to where that middle class share went, over the past thirty years the share of our nation's income going to the top 1% grew from less than 10% to almost 25%. For the richest one/thousandth of our population, their share grew from less than 3% of our national income to over 12%.

In dollar terms, the Economic Policy Institute figures the average union worker earns \$1,500 more per year than a non-union worker – not to mention health insurance and other benefits. Comparing right to work states with those that aren't, the Congressional Research Service finds the average wage-earner in a state that isn't right to work earns \$7,000 more per year than a worker in a state that is – whether union member or not.

The origin of the Michigan right to work law matches the history of similar legislation in other states. It has nothing to do with homegrown efforts to improve the economy, but everything to do with payback for the nation-wide corporate front groups that purchase Republican seats in statehouses throughout the country. In the case of this Michigan legislation, it was copied nearly verbatim from "model legislation" offered by the American Legislative Exchange Council ("ALEC"), a group funded by the Koch brothers and other corporate interests, dedicated to voter suppression and gutting environmental and gun control laws in addition to union-busting.

The history of such groups shows a marked change in efficacy coming with the "Citizen's United" Supreme Court ruling in 2010, which made it easier for corporations to buy legislators who'd work to ensure there being a dirt-cheap labor force available here at home, alleviating the need to relocate to a third-world country to find one.

That history goes back to 2010. The Rev. King remarked on "right to work" legislation over fifty years ago. In his column last week, Greg Welborn traveled back in history for over a century to evoke a Victorian (and decidedly un-American) sentiment, that "our betters" must be relieved of common taxation, and those of us less worthy must consign ourselves to rely upon their benevolence.

If lower taxes on the wealthy meant job creation, then the Bush years would've seen the greatest economic expansion in our history. Greg sounds the alarm that raising taxes would hurt small business, while history (and the S.B.A.) shows small business job growth averaging 1% a year with low taxes under President Bush, but more than twice that, at 2.3% a year, with higher taxes under President Clinton.

Over the past year, Americans who know their history heard arguments from the Republican presidential nominee advocating low tax rates on the wealthy and entrusting power to corporations rather than the American people. And we know what happened to that nominee, Mitt Romney: He's history.

## TIME FOR HONEST ANSWERS GREG Welborn



This week I'd like to pose a question to the liberal readers of this paper. Conservatives may read along – there's no need to turn the page – but I really want those who profess a liberal political ideology, or even a "progressive" one, to seriously consider a question: what would you do in the following situation?

Let's say that you earned \$100,000 and I taxed you at 35%. That would mean I take \$35,000 and you get to keep \$65,000. But when you want to spend that money, I tax you another 15%. That means I'd take approximately another \$10,000.

So, in my little example, you would earn \$100,000 but you'd only get to actually spend \$55,000. Your total tax rate would be 45%.

Now suppose, I told you that I didn't feel this was enough and I want to take the same 35% with the first tax above, but then I want to take 43% as the second tax. That would mean I would tax you \$35,000 the first time and about \$28,000 the second time. You would be left with only 37% of what you earned and would have paid a total tax of 63%.

The final part of my example is to tell you that all this can be avoided by simply doing whatever business you do overseas instead of in the U.S., and it would all be perfectly legal – no tricks, shams or slights of hand. It's all written in plain English in the U.S. tax code, as it is in almost every other country's tax code, by the way.

So, would you voluntarily pay \$45,000 if you could legally avoid it? Or if I'm trying to increase the rates, as I described above, would you voluntarily pay \$63,000 if you could legally avoid it? Perhaps there are a few of you out there who would voluntarily surrender your hard earned money, but I doubt there's more of you than could fit into a phone booth.

What I've described is the situation that American corporations face today. That's why Google, Starbucks and Amazon, to name just a few, have all routed much of their profits through Bermuda. That's also why it is estimated that \$1.7 trillion of profits for U.S. companies are kept offshore. America is not the only country on this planet, nor are our tax rates the only ones on this planet. Companies have the flexibility to put their profits where they want, and corporate management, just like the liberal progressive readers whom I addressed in the beginning, will take every legal means to reduce their taxes.

The United States today has among the highest corporate income tax rates of the industrial countries (35%). Corporate profits are taxed at this 35% level, but then if the corporation gives those profits back to the company's owners in the form of dividends, those dividends are taxed at 15%. When/if we go off the fiscal cliff, those dividends will be taxed at up to 43%. This is nothing but double taxation – once at the corporate level and then again at the individual level. By the way, these corporations we're discussing are owned by you and me – regular Joes. The smaller corporations are owned by individual businessmen and women – plumbers, carpenters, or flower shop owners in our communities. The larger corporations are typically owned by all of us regular Joes through mutual funds. One way or the other the double taxation lands right at your door and mine.

What's amazing is the level of hypocrisy being demonstrated by the left. The very same rational, common sense move that any sane person would take (trying to save money) is somehow condemned as evil and immoral simply because a big-name corporation does it in Bermuda. The screaming became so loud and angry that Starbucks "voluntarily" donated about \$16 million to the government in order to look better in the court of public opinion.

Pathetically, the same people who were calling Starbucks nasty names would do the very same thing if they had the chance. Now that they've read this article, I'm sure they will. Taking steps to save money, or to reduce your taxes, is a very natural, legitimate, and moral thing to do. Nobody – and no corporation – is under an ethical obligation to pay more in taxes than is required.

Lastly, let's consider the practical economic affects of this in our country. Approximately \$1.7 trillion that could otherwise be put to use employing people, expanding businesses, starting new product lines, etc., is sitting in some foreign bank account because U.S. tax law is over burdensome and our current President wants to raise those rates even more.

If you thought the last 4 years were great, be prepared for more of the same – 8% unemployment (or higher), 1.5% annual economic growth (or less) and lots of unused money sitting in Bermuda. Just spare us the hypocrisy; we all try to save our own money.

*About the author: Gregory J. Welborn is a freelance writer and has spoken to several civic and religious organizations on cultural and moral issues. He lives in the Pasadena area with his wife and 3 children and is active in the community. He can be reached at [gregwelborn2@gmail.com](mailto:gregwelborn2@gmail.com)*

## ALONG THESE LINES

by Nick Thomas

of the Earth's demise.

There are even people claiming that if something does happen, science may play a role. That's because scientists have now turned on the world's most powerful atom-smasher, to study the building blocks of the universe.

## END-OF-WORLDS GONE WILD

If you're waiting until December 22 to start Christmas shopping – just in case the Mayan end of the world December 21 prediction comes true – this is a reality check. Think about it. If the Mayans were that good at predicting the future, why didn't they foresee the Spanish Conquistador invasion of the 16th century?

The truth is that historians are unanimous in their belief that the Mayans never did actually predict the world would end in 2012. But somewhere along the way, their ideas became entangled with Western nitwits who have been pushing end of the world prophecies for centuries.

The most recent example was U.S. preacher Harold Camping who, twice in 2011 and once in 1994, predicted a world-destroying, cataclysmic event. But as far as most experts can tell, the Earth – such as it is – is still in existence.

Over the centuries, various nutty characters have predicted a less-than-eternal fate for the Earth. Many of these world-ending prognostications had their origin in religious doctrine which, for some reason, attracts leaders who delight in making depressing predictions of Armageddon.

Consider the actual case of New Yorker William Miller who – modest man that he was – founded the Millerite Church back in the 1800s, and predicted the end of the world would come on April 3, 1843. When the world failed to disintegrate, the disgruntled preacher revised his predictions and foreshadowed earth's demise on several more occasions over the next year. But, much to Rev. Miller's continued annoyance, the Earth stubbornly held together each time.

Oddly enough, despite his failures, Miller (like Camping) was revered by many in his Millerite gang, which is a bit hard to fathom. I mean, if you're going to follow someone "to the ends of the Earth," at least wait until the guy gets the date right before you begin worshiping him, right?

As it turned out, some of the Millerites eventually became disenchanted with their doom and gloom leader. It's just a pity they didn't form a splinter group, the Miller Lites, which surely would have been a merrier, relaxed bunch.

As for the Mayan apocalyptic predication now just a few days away, those clever, ancient, lads from South of the Border are making some folks a little nervous with their December 21 forecast

Known as the LHC, or Large Hadron Collider (as opposed to the Small Hadron Colliders available through mail-order from Lands End), this multi-billion dollar contraption is designed to investigate dark matter, extra dimensions, string theory, subatomic particles, and search for the ever elusive Higgs boson. (If you're curious what that is, it's a hypothetical massive scalar elementary particle – just wanted to clear that up for you).

Built 600 feet underground on the French-Swiss border, there is some concern that when the LHC is operating at full power, it could malfunction just a tad. Are we talking about fusing out a few villa toasters in the Alps? Blowing out the street lights in downtown Geneva? Melting down the European power grid?

Nope. How about spawning a hungry, black hole that could swallow up the entire Earth, maybe on December 21?

Fortunately, the physicists reassuringly swear there is nothing to fear. They've even calculated that the chances of the Earth being vaporized by the LHC are about the same odds as winning Lotto.

But I'm not sure how reassuring that is since, when it comes to planetary meltdowns, I personally find a probability of ZERO to be a little more comforting. But who knows, maybe the Mayans knew their particle physics long before Einstein realized that E = MC Hammer.

Perhaps what is most amazing about all these predictions is the degree of accuracy that these End-of-Worlder wackos claim. Harry

Camping, for instance, had calculated the exact time (6 pm) that the world would end on May 21 in 2011.

Along these lines, perhaps in future (assuming we have one), these end-of-worlders could channel their powers of prognostication for something much more practical for humanity –like predicting the exact time the Cable repairman will show up.

So relax folks. Even the feds have spoken up on the Mayan prophesy, declaring in a formal announcement that the world will not end in 2012. And knowing how we all trust our leaders, isn't that reassuring?

(Thomas' features and columns have appeared in more than 250 magazines and newspapers, including the Washington Post, LA Times, Chicago Tribune, Boston Globe, San Francisco Chronicle, and Christian Science Monitor. He can be reached at [alongtheselines@yahoo.com](mailto:alongtheselines@yahoo.com)).



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### Mountain Views News Mission Statement

The traditions of community newspapers 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



### WHY AMERICA NEEDS A UNIVERSAL LIVING WAGE

This coming year, 3.5 million people will experience homelessness. The federal government says 42% of them are working at some point during the week. Clearly, the work ethic is there, but the wage to afford basic housing is not. These folks come from our 10.1 million minimum wage workers. Minimum wage jobs, the ones that can't be outsourced, were once stepping stones. Now they are the jobs raising whole families, when coupled with subsidies.

The opposite of being housed is homelessness. What needs to be done is to fix the Federal Minimum Wage by indexing it to the local cost of housing and living expenses throughout the United States. The Universal Living Wage (ULW) would end homelessness for over 1,000,000 minimum wage workers and prevent economic homelessness for all 10.1 million minimum wage workers.

The concept is really quite simple: A living wage is the wage that can meet the basic needs to maintain a safe, decent standard of living within a particular community and have the ability to save for future needs and goals. The living wage comes from the basic premise that anyone in this country who works for a living should not have to raise a family in poverty.

**This process must begin** with a clarion call at the national, state, and municipal levels that institutions, agencies, hospitals, the criminal justice system: "Discharge no one into Homelessness" and that the federal government provide the necessary funding to make that possible.

**Second**, the federal government must provide livable incomes for persons who have been deemed disabled and eligible to receive Supplemental Security Income, which currently provides a monthly benefit of only \$623.00, and that it cease its practice of destabilizing marriages in which both members receive disability benefits but receive fewer dollars than if they were living separately as individuals.

**Third**, we must ensure that there exists a National Health Care System\* so that when the working homeless exit homelessness and again become the "working poor" and they are no longer eligible for health care from our local clinics, that they do not end up returning to a state of homelessness due to illness.

**Fourth**, we must create a National Housing Trust Fund that will ensure an adequate national supply of housing at all income levels beginning at a level that is below 30% of median family income.

**Fifth**, the federal government must fix the federal minimum wage and establish a Universal Living Wage by ensuring that anyone working a 40-hour week will be able to at least afford basic rental housing, food, clothing utilities, and access to affordable health care wherever that work is done throughout the United States.

**Finally**, all discharge planning should begin at the time of intake into any facility or institution. Also, healthcare naturally includes an adequate amount of substance abuse treatment and beds that are available "on demand." This means availability within three hours of request.

#### Who Benefits from a Universal Living Wage?

1. Workers and their families  
Their living standards rise when ULW becomes law. Gain access to better health care. Paid days off can be enjoyed as a family. Rely less on government subsidies such as welfare and food stamps. Families have greater access to loans and other sources of credit (used to buy homes and cars) or finance higher education leading to better jobs
2. Businesses  
Workers are being paid more, thus morale increases and turnover and absenteeism decrease, leading to an overall increase in productivity. In addition, firms also experience a better quality of work from their employees, better cooperation with management, and more flexibility in the operation of business.
3. Communities  
Brings increased spending power to the community through increased disposable income. Leads to a higher rate of home ownership, education, and opportunities for business investments for local residents.

#### Other Ways People Benefit

1. Families have greater access to loans and other sources of credit (used to buy homes and cars) or finance higher education leading to better jobs.
2. Workers will earn a high enough wage that they will be dependent on food stamps or on other government aid. This will increase their sense of dignity, and increase their pride in their jobs, making them feel that their work is worthwhile, and hope for a better future.

## RICH Johnson



### Obamacare and ME!!

Well, if you haven't heard of anyone directly affected by the "Affordable Care Act" aka Obamacare yet, pencil me and my family in.

A little background. My company's health care coverage has been group coverage through my business landlord's group health program. Here's the drill. We do some business with the landlord and business with many of the other tenants. That made us a "collaborating agency" and qualified us to be included in their group health insurance coverage. This is not uncommon. Big companies like Lockheed, for example, may extend their group insurance programs to their vendors and subcontractors.

Well this is what we were told by our plan administrator: "...Provisions in the new ACA (Affordable Care Act aka Obamacare), require employers to have additional reporting and financial responsibilities for their employee's health insurance plans. We will be at risk for financial penalties if our health plans are not properly administered. Therefore because a true employee to employer relationship no longer exists with your employees and (insert landlords name) we can no longer offer your employees access to our benefit programs as of January 1, 2013."

I have to go out and try to find coverage. So... we will find out whether pre-existing conditions will render us uninsurable. And also, what we might find out there pricewise. And if we can even qualify for coverage, I suspect it will be "less" affordable under the Affordable Care Act.

I will keep you updated as to how this plays out.

As troubling as this new unknown future regarding insurance coverage is, it is certainly nothingness wisps of air compared to the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newton, Connecticut. My heart aches for the families who, one moment, were cheerfully planning for the holiday festivities and now struck down with the worst of all evils. Next to celebrating the birth of Jesus, Christmas is a celebration of family and friends. I strongly suggest each one of us reevaluate our quality of relationship with friends and family, particularly those from whom we are somewhat estranged. You see, in the twinkling of an eye they could be gone.

Finally if, like me, you could use catharsis (relieving of emotional tension) please make plans to come see Cinderella's Christmas at the Sierra Madre Playhouse. There are performances Saturday the 15th of December and Saturday, the 22nd of December. Time is 11:00 am at the Sierra Madre Playhouse. (626) 355-4318. The interaction between the cast on stage and the young kids in the audience is endearing and priceless. The Playhouse is located at 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Tickets are \$18.00 for adults and \$12.00 for children 12 and under.



## STUART Tolchin.....On LIFE QUESTIONS



Maybe you would have done the same thing. Yesterday I had lunch over at Russell's on Fair Oaks. I gave the waiter my credit card and waited for him to return with the bill and the card. I had a lot on my mind. My son was home recuperating from the detached retina surgery. He's healing well but the vision is not returning as quickly as we had all expected. Additionally I was concerned about properly using the validation card which the waiter had stamped. I left the restaurant, walked into the parking structure and placed the validation card into the proper slot. Next, coming to me in my continual disbelief was Stephen Hawking's computer-simulated voice, Swedish accent and all, directing me as to the proper procedure for exiting. I have pointed out to many of the strangers who surround the payment machine that the voice coming out is a perfect imitation of Hawking and no one ever seems to care.

As most of you know, and the rest of you should know, Hawking is about the most famous scientist now living. He happens to be a man who is completely paralyzed and who only has the use of a couple of facial muscles. Through miracles of scientific technology Hawking can utilize this muscle to begin the activation of a voice simulator which produces a voice. This produced voice has a pronounced Swedish accent as a playful homage to Hawking's desire to be awarded a Nobel Prize.

If a man with his problems and his responsibilities can find the time to enjoy this possible spoof it is an inspiration for everyone. Somehow even if he's not in on the joke I find the whole thing kind of entertaining.

Anyhow, after getting my card validated found my car and the proper exit and was soon on the street heading home to my son when I realized that I held in my hand the leather booklet that contained the record of my payment. I thought I had left it on the table but I had not. Now I was out on the street, absolutely bewildered as to what to do. I could just go home and bring the check in the next time I went to Russell's. I could go home and call the restaurant. Certainly there was ample excuse to keep on going but I couldn't do it. I drove around crowded Old Town looking for a parking space. Of course, at first look there were no spaces. For some reason I could not bring myself to return to the Parking Structure, which is mainly automated, and go hunting for an attendant and try to explain my predicament.

I did not want to pay another parking fee to enter the structure. As I made the turn on to Fair Oaks I saw a car pulling out of a space located behind the structure. It was almost a full block away from Russell's but it would do and I headed for the now empty space. A little parallel parking brought me into the space but as I pulled in I noticed that on the ground the space was marked as being available for only handicapped drivers. I decided to take a chance and parked the car and did my best to run the block to Russell's while I clutched the signed bill in my hand. I was certain that I would receive some horrible expensive ticket for parking in the handicapped space so I tried to go as fast as possible.

Unfortunately, I failed to realize that it had been quite a while since I had taken very many running steps. I have been diagnosed with congestive heart failure and atrial fibrillation which made running close to impossible. I arrived at the restaurant covered with sweat and close to fainting. I gave the check to the cashier saying I took it out of the restaurant by mistake. The cashier took the check and acted as if he couldn't have cared less. I walked briskly back to the car and, after catching my breath, drove home.

I got home and told my wife the story and her response was a simple and fitting, "Are you nuts?" I admit she had a point but I blame the whole thing on Stephen Hawking. He was on my mind the whole time and I think the connection that I made was something about not letting surmountable obstacles stop one from doing the right thing—and just about everything is surmountable.

Sure I was preoccupied by my son's condition and I worry if he will regain enough vision to work and drive; but there is still the question, "Am I nuts?" Are my decisions invariably based on irrelevant considerations? My only defense is that I am doing the best that I can and just hope that that is good enough. Anyhow, I've lasted another year and written 263 consecutive articles without missing a week. It ain't Stephen Hawking, but it's enough to impress me. See you next week.

## OUT TO PASTOR

A Weekly Religion Column by Rev. James Snyder



### I'LL HAVE A "RED" CHRISTMAS, THANK YOU.

The Christmas holiday season is always ablaze with beautiful colors. I find it hard to be gloomy or grumpy this time of the year. I must confess, not everybody belongs to this "Holiday Cheer Club." It is an exclusive club but open to anybody who is tired of being grumpy.

Colors abound throughout the season and the Christmas songs highlight this. "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas." "I'll have a blue Christmas without you." "Rudolph the red nose reindeer."

Oh, the wonderful colors of Christmas.

One of the most obvious colors of Christmas is green. Right at the center of this Christmas holiday is the Christmas tree decked from top to bottom in beautiful colors and lights. Nothing says Christmas quite like an old-fashioned Christmas tree.

My thoughts along this line are, let the grumps and grouches complain about the Christmas tree. For myself, I will look with admiring wonder at the beauty of the Christmas tree. Then of course, who could forget good old Santa Claus dressed in his red suit. I never could figure out why Santa's suit was always red. Throughout the years, I never gave it too much thought and assumed it was a fashion statement from the North Pole.

I had some time this week to do a little rummaging through my old thought gallery. For the most part, we only celebrate Christmas once a year. I think Charles Dickens had it right with old Mr. Scrooge, after his conversion, celebrating Christmas every day of the year. I wonder what kind of world this would be if all of us would celebrate Christmas every day of the year?

If I were president of the United States, I would enact a law that would set aside one year to be a year of celebrating Christmas all 365 days. I think I would only have to do it once and nobody would want to go back to the old grumpy times of celebrating it only one time out of the year.

I was thinking about this the other night when the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage jarred me back to reality.

"Have you," she queried most seriously, "finished with your Christmas shopping?"

Christmas shopping! I had forgotten about it. I know we celebrate Christmas every year but I sometimes get so caught up with celebrating Christmas I forget about buying Christmas presents. After all, that Christmas tree would be somewhat naked if there were not Christmas presents to litter around the bottom.

I had to look at my wife and say, "No, I haven't even started."

By the time the dust of that thought settled I had to ask her, "How many Christmas presents do I have to buy?"

"Silly boy," she said with a chuckle that could compete with good old Santa Claus any day of the week, "you got to buy Christmas presents for everybody in our family." Then she chuckled some more just to set that thought into my cranium.

Everybody in our family? Now I am beginning to see red.

Santa's red suit has nothing to do with a North Pole fashion statement; it has everything to do with my financial statement.

I got a piece of paper and together my wife and I jotted down all of the members in our family. A few members I wanted to veto, but my wife vetoed my veto. By the time we were done, I would have to purchase Christmas presents for hundreds and hundreds of family members. Boy, did I see red!

At the beginning of the month of December, my checkbook is in the black, but each day of the month the black begins to fade into expanding shades of red. By the time the 24th of the month comes around my checkbook is a solid, brilliant, scarlet red.

I sighed quite deeply as I closed my checkbook. I almost said to my wife, "Remember the day...?" I stopped short of vocalizing that thought. I thought back when we first were married, which seems like hundreds of years ago, we only got presents for each other. I bought one present for her and she bought one present for me. What a Merry Christmas we had back in "the day."

A few days later as we were wrapping those presents I began thinking of another color. I looked at my wife and said, "This must be what they mean when they talked about the golden days." She laughed, and I thought some more.

My thoughts centered on the fact of what a wonderful family we have. After all those years, we have accumulated a marvelous family. Thinking about all the ones in my family, I began to retract those thoughts of veto.

"You know," I said to my wife quite thoughtfully, "red becomes my checkbook." All that red means all that family.

The Christmas holiday season means family. There is no family more glorious than the family of God. The Bible says, "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 whole spirit of Christmas has to do with giving, and God started it all.

I do not mind a "red" Christmas because everyone in my family is worth it. As Tiny Tim said, "God bless us all, everyone."





















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