

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO SIERRA MADRE ON CHRISTMAS EVE
7pm - December 24th at the Sierra Madre Fire Station

Where Your Community News Comes First
Mountain Views News
Sierra Madre — Arcadia — Pasadena — Altadena — Duarte — Monrovia

CANDLELIGHT WALK
Sunday, December 21st

The Candlelight Walk is held each Christmas season to celebrate the journey that Joseph and Mary made to Bethlehem where Jesus was born over 2,000 years ago. The procession will begin at St. Rita's Catholic Church in Sierra Madre, with "Mary and Joseph" leading the way, and other participants holding candles while singing traditional Christmas carols. The procession will end at Kersting Court in the center of town where the Christmas Story will be read from Scripture. The procession begins at St. Rita traveling down Baldwin to Kersting Court. It is recommended that you arrive by 6:45pm, so that the walk can begin promptly at 7:00 pm.

SIERRA MADRE NEWS BRIEFS

OVERNIGHT PARKING PERMITTED
Just a reminder to all Sierra Madre residents, beginning tomorrow December 20th, and continuing through January 4th 2015, overnight parking will be exempt for the Holiday season! Please be sure to help spread the word! Happy Holidays!

BE CAREFUL - BE CAUTIOUS BE AWARE!
Recent rash of vehicle and residential burglary. Be aware! Lock and secure vehicles! Sierra Madre has experienced a recent rash of auto and residential burglaries. With each incident, an unfortunate trend seen in most of them is the victim failing to LOCK and SECURE their vehicle. Each night as you lock and secure your home, take a minute to lock your vehicle and remove any items of value from the car. Remember, if you See something, Say something!

FREE CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING
Athens Services will pick up and recycle your Christmas Tree from December 26th to January 9th. Residents may put their tree by the curb on their regular pick-up day for this free program. Please remove stands, nails, ornaments, lights and tinsel, and place the trees next to your containers. Trees with flocking or fire retardant are acceptable. Trees over 6 feet in length must be cut in half. If you miss the date for recycling, please cut up your tree and place it in your yard waste container, or call Athens Services for a "bulky item" pickup. For additional information, please call Athens Services at 1-888-336-6100 or the Sierra Madre Public Works Department at 626-355-7135.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2014

VOLUME 8 NO. 51

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US TO ALL OF YOU



The Osti Christmas Decorations from Sonny Salsbury's 2009 Sierra Madre Calendar. Salsbury said in 2006, "Sierra Madre is my favorite town anywhere" and many of his paintings, such as the scene above, depict a look into the charm of Sierra Madre that still exists today. For years we have shared Salsbury's works with our readers. This picture originally appeared in 2008.

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SIERRA MADRE SEARCH AND DECEMBER RESCUE LOG



While not a record, 2014 has been a busy year for the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue (SMSR) Team with the Team responding on 98 operations. Thirteen of these operations took place in November and December (to date). Over 3,800 hours of time was logged and 140 people assisted by the Team this year.

In addition to actual search and rescue calls and training, Team members donated over 1,900 hours in support of the Team's mission. This included 30 public preventative search and rescue (PSAR) events where Team members discuss wilderness safety and preparedness with scout groups, schools, and other community groups. Members invested just under 5,500 hours of training in a broad array of SAR disciplines and skills in order to maintain the level of proficiency required to safely perform SAR operations. Probationary members of the Team, better known as "Probies", dedicated almost

1,000 hours of time in 2014 focused on building and refining their foundational mountain rescue skills. In total, Team members dedicated over 11,200 hours of official time in support of the Team's mission. Many additional hours of unofficial time were spent by individual Team members maintaining readiness.

A good example of some of the Team training includes an activity from last weekend. On Saturday, December 13th, the Team spent time training with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Air-5 crew. Training consisted of a "ground school" session where various safety, aircraft familiarization and operational protocols were discussed while the helicopter was not operating. This eliminated the noise and rotor wash typically encountered when the helicopter is running. After ground school was completed the training progressed to evolutions working with the

helicopter in operation. Among a variety of topics, Team members practiced patient packaging, loading/unloading, hoist insertion and extraction as well as rappelling from the hovering helicopter. Events like this allow Team members and the Air-5 crew to refine skills and build familiarity between SMSR members and the helicopter crew that is necessary to safely conduct mountain rescues. Training in a structured environment removes the variability and time constraints associated with an actual SAR operation. Personnel can easily discuss and practice techniques that are often called upon during rescues.

For over 60 years the all-volunteer Sierra Madre Search and Rescue team has been responding to calls for help in the local mountains and beyond. As a Team, SMSR prides itself on stepping up to any challenge. Responding in the middle of the night to a call for help – no problem. Search all night in the rain for a missing hiker – we're there.

SMSR is funded entirely by private donations. We wouldn't be able to do anything without the support of you, our friends and neighbors. Thank you for all of your support over the past year. Whether it is a monetary donation, or a Facebook like, we truly appreciate knowing that the community has our back!

You can find more information on how to support the Team, including how to arrange a wilderness safety demonstration for your school or group by visiting www.smsr.org.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

In the history of the world, what day has been so honored and so recognized as Christmas? The scoffers and skeptics will testify that the enchantment of Christmas is perpetrated by the craftsmanship of our imagination and authored in the same resourcefulness that brought Dickens' ghosts to life. If we are to concede that some of our most genuine moments of life nest in the power of dreams, than I think it is best that we should never wake from the instruments of heaven's peace, where kindness penetrates the heart in a degree which no other activity is equipped to supply.

The world has never read a story as perfectly powerful as the story of Christmas. To suppose a belief that a simple prophet born to the lowly town of Bethlehem could flourish in importance during an age of Roman rule, is an obstacle to an idea that this is but a dream. Once acquainted with the fact that Jesus was never associated with wealth or sought political power, is another piece of information that violates the realms of logic. Jesus is contrary to all that we would anticipate from a famous figure in history. He is even deficient in chronicling his own life as he neglects to author a single line by his own hand, so this raises another question as to how such a story could inspire and endure for 2,000 years. One of the most intriguing aspects of Jesus is contained in the people who detailed his life. Not one of Jesus' biographers professes to be a writer, author or editor. His followers were simple men: identified as fishermen, a tax collector and a traveling doctor. Even Shakespeare in all his imaginative genius did not boast the mental proclivity of fashioning a story as completely compelling as the life of Jesus. If there are miracles, more improbable than any of those performed by Jesus, it would be that such men of undecorated backgrounds could conjure up the greatest story ever told.

As I reflect upon the power of Christmas and attempt to depict the emotion as it is characterized in my mind, I must turn to a single

supernatural event of Jesus to illustrate the passion that fills my heart.

The once quiet town was filled with the chatter of voices as a throng of people trailed Jesus. As he made his way among the streets, a certain woman who was steadily sick for 12 long years, touched the fringe of his cloak and was instantly healed. Jesus turned to the crowd and said, "Who has touched my clothes?" The divine power of God had been transferred from Jesus to the woman.

What a fortune is conferred on to those who can walk through life and appreciate the power of Christmas. Our lives are organized like the day when Jesus advanced along those cobble streets, and all we have to do is touch him.

The story of Christmas still astonishes those who are willing to recognize its meaning, and it remains just as powerful today as it was when angels called upon Bethlehem on that glorious night of antiquity. Christmas is not confined to a single day. It begins with our mind the first moment we establish a belief, and grows in our heart with each passing season. If there exists one verifiable truth in this world, then the thought of Christmas and Christ has added more light to this earthly realm than the dull lit fire of a distant sun. In the full reflection of God's birth and the wonder-filled meditation of a heavenly star, it is my heartfelt hope that you and your family know the power and peace of Christmas.

A Most Merry of Christmas to Each and to All!

Craig Hakola@aol.com



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Weather Wise

6-Day Forecast

Sierra Madre, Ca.

| | | | |
|-------|-------|--------|----------|
| Sun: | Sunny | Hi 70s | Lows 50s |
| Mon: | Sunny | Hi 70s | Lows 50s |
| Tues: | Sunny | Hi 70s | Lows 50s |
| Wed: | Sunny | Hi 70s | Lows 50s |
| Thur: | Sunny | Hi 70s | Lows 50s |
| Fri: | Sunny | Hi 70s | Lows 50s |

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service

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:
Special Meeting Tuesday, January 6, 2015
6:30 pm

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.

SIERRA MADRE HOLIDAY
PARKING REGULATIONS:

Beginning on December 20th and continuing through January 4th 2015, overnight parking will be exempt for the Holiday season. Sierra Madre Police wishes you a safe and stress free Holiday season! Please be sure to like and share to help share with residents!

SIERRA MADRE CITY
MEETINGS

City Council

Special Council Meeting

General Plan

Moratorium on the Demolition of
Older Homes

January 6, 2015 - 6:30 pm

The final agenda and staff reports will be available online no later than Friday night. Enter the date "01/06/2015" for the complete agenda packet.

Can't make it to the meeting, but still want to share your thoughts? You can mail or drop off a written statement to City Hall or email city@cityofsierramadre.com before 5:30 the night of the meeting and your statement will be delivered to all the Council Members.

Upcoming Public Meetings

Agendas and staff reports will be posted online 72 hours before the meeting. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings will take place in the City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

The Sierra Madre Interact Club joined members of the Sierra Madre United Methodist Church to prepare and serve dinner to homeless families in the Family Promise support program.

The Sierra Madre Interact Club is a Rotary-sponsored community service club for young people ages 13-18. The club meets on Monday evenings at 7:15PM, across the hall from the choir room in the United Methodist Church at the corner of Sierra Madre Blvd and Michillinda Ave.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT SIERRA MADRE'S VILLAGE CHURCH
FAMILY SERVICE & MIDNIGHT MASS - 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 Beverly Cleary's story - The Sheep Suit and the Three Wise Persons. 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.

December 24th Christmas Eve - Carols and Hymns at 10:30 p.m. and Solemn Christ 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. This glorious service of congregational and choral song, including the following anthems: Christmas Intrada - David Lantz; Cradle Song - John Rutter; Good People All, This Christmastime - Eugene Butler; Nativity Carol - John Rutter; I Offer My Heart - Aaron David Miller; Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day - John Gardner and Once As I Remember - Eleanor Daley.

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 the parish office at 626-355-1133 or visit: www.ascension-sierramadre.com.



Rotary Club of Sierra Madre

Is known for its camaraderie (ComRotary).

If you have been thinking about making a difference

In your community, please join us for

Breakfast created by Chef Mario at

The Park Hart House,

222 W. Sierra Madre Bl.,

Sierra Madre, CA 91024,

Tuesdays, 7-8:30 a.m.

We have dynamic speakers each week.

For more info go to Facebook or Meetup

SIERRA MADRE ROSE
FLOAT ASSOCIATION
NEEDS YOU!

We are scheduling Volunteers using an online program for the month of December and especially for DECO week (December 26th to 31st).

Walk up volunteers are still welcome, but, if crowded, preference will go to those signed up at <http://smrfa.ivolunteer.com/>

Sierra Madre Rose Float Association
Visit our WEB site at SMRoseFloat.org

FREE CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

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If you miss the date for recycling, please cut up your tree and place it in your yard waste container, or call Athens Services for a "bulky item" pickup.

For additional information, please call Athens Services at 1-888-336-6100 or the Sierra Madre Public Works Department at 626-355-7135.



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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!

<http://issuu.com/mtnviewsnews>

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

Pasadena

Altadena

Monrovia

REMEMBRANCE...

JAKE KUMPAR SIERRA MADRE'S MOUNTAIN MAN

Community celebration informal potluck gathering in his honor. Sunday, December 21 at 1 pm. Bailey Canyon fire pit. Bring a dish and your favorite Jake story

DR. RICK ARTHUR RECEIVES 2014 PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO RACETRACK MEDICINE

Rick Arthur, DVM, a respected and influential voice in racetrack medicine, received the President's Award during the Dec. 9 President's Luncheon at the American Association of Equine Practitioners' 60th Annual Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The President's Award, selected by the sitting AAEP president, honors an AAEP member who has demonstrated a dedication to the association during the past year by contributing a significant portion of time and expertise to benefit the health and welfare of the horse.

Dr. Arthur owns Rick M. Arthur DVM & Associates, a racetrack veterinary practice in Sierra Madre, Calif., and serves as equine medical director for the California Horse Racing Board. In presenting the award, 2014 AAEP President Jeff Blea, DVM, praised Dr. Arthur's representation of the AAEP and racetrack practitioners on the varied and complex issues unique to racing medicine.

"In the past year, Dr. Arthur has been very instrumental in ensuring that AAEP maintained a respected voice as well as a seat at the table regarding racing-related issues through his various activities, ultimately benefitting the horse and racetrack practitioners," said Dr. Blea. "He helped put together a clinical study to benefit practitioners at the racetrack and was influential in involving practitioners in the uniform model rules process, among many of his other numerous activities on behalf of AAEP and the horse."

Dr. Arthur received his veterinary degree from the University of California, Davis in 1976 and joined the AAEP the following year. He served two terms on the AAEP's board of directors, culminating with a term as AAEP president in 1997. Dr. Arthur has been a longtime member of the AAEP's Racing Committee and also serves on the President's Advisory Council. He previously served on numerous other committees, including Biologic and Therapeutic Agents, Educational Programs, Finance, Foundation Advisory, Nominating, Sports Medicine and Student Relations.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners, headquartered in Lexington, Ky., was founded in 1954 as a non-profit organization dedicated to the health and welfare of the horse. Currently, AAEP reaches more than 5 million horse owners through its over 9,000 members worldwide and is actively involved in ethics issues, practice management, research and continuing education in the equine veterinary profession and horse industry.



Walking Sierra Madre...The Social Side

by Deanne Davis

"You can't buy happiness, but you can buy ice cream and that's kind of the same thing!"
"Ice cream is a happy business!"

Karen Klemmens, Mother Moo Creamery

Christmas is just a few days away. Next Thursday to be exact, and I think we're all kind of reaching the point – unless you're one of those people who does your shopping on Christmas Eve – where if it isn't done now, it's just not gonna happen. The tree is up, most of the presents are wrapped, the cards are in the mail and we have some idea of what we're going to have for dinner on Christmas day. I'm thinking ham, and some spiced apple cider, maybe sweet potatoes, and ice cream for dessert.

Speaking of ice cream, I spent a delightful hour in the Mother Moo Creamery, right there in the middle of Kersting Court. If you haven't been in there lately, and you still need a few stocking stuffers for special people, you'll be thrilled with what you find there. Everything at Mother Moo is organic, i.e., natural ingredients, and they make everything from scratch. Owner, Karen Klemmens had spent all morning making chocolate ice cream, always in small batches, as her ice cream maker works in increments of three gallons and requires her constant attendance.

Mother Moo Creamery has been an important part of Sierra Madre life for about three years now. Karen started out with a Journalism background and wrote for newspapers in the Chicago area. Realizing that she was ready for a life and career change and wanting to do something totally different, Karen went to Ice Cream School at Penn State where she immersed herself in: The Science Behind Ice Cream. Some months later she learned the business side of the ice cream business. Her three years in Sierra Madre have been a learning experience beyond anything she learned in school. For instance, Karen and the Creamery survived the windstorm of 2011! Remember? Early December and no power for days. Huge trees uprooted all over town. Karen stayed open, even without power for five days, made ice cream and made many new friends, too, as people came and came needing a little comfort food. After all, if your heart is broken, your plans have all collapsed or a tree has fallen on your house, ice cream does wonders.

The mystery of the missing cow, who used to stand in the planter outside Mother Moo's door has never been solved. But, once again, the community of Sierra Madre showed how nice most of us (except cow rustlers) are and rallied to Karen with cows of every size, color and description. This was a hard lesson for her son, who was then seven, as this was his first brush with stealing and he had a tough time trying to imagine why anyone would steal his mom's cow. I have a tough time with it, myself.

Asking Karen what her favorite flavor is, she said she doesn't make anything she doesn't like, but is somewhat partial to chocolate chip. I said I could get into real trouble with her Rum Raisin and she told me the secret is Myers Rum and Monukka raisins, which are



very different from Thompson raisins, having much more open fiber so the flavors can saturate the raisins. Now there's something you didn't know! Here's another Mother Moo fact you probably don't know: Thanksgiving is their busiest time, much busier than 4th of July!

Mother Moo Creamery was named 2014 Small Business of the Year for Senate District 25 and Karen went up to Sacramento last June to receive her award. Mother Moo was also named one of Los Angeles Top Ten Ice Cream Shops in 2013 by L. A. Weekly, and those are just two of the awards that have come to Karen. She is very proud of Mother Moo and the people who work with her. I met Emily, who is her pie baker, and Rebecca, who is her "everything" person, who also specializes in making marshmallows! Karen loves to teach and has had many classes there at her shop in canning and preserving, pie baking, Soda Jerk Camp – this is where local kids come to learn how to make ice cream, and not only make it, but devour as much as they want, but the sneaky side of Soda Jerk Camp is that they also learn all the math involved in ice cream, how much of various ingredients, the costs, how much goes into a pint, a quart and where the profit margin lies. Which, in the food industry is very small. Karen's employees love working with her and only leave to go away to college but they work at Mother Moo on their breaks. That's loyalty!

Look for Mother Moo's seasonal treats: Peppermint Stick, Candied Ginger, Peppermint Cookies & Cream and Karen had that smile of total satisfaction when she mentioned Salty Butter Caramel. Their cones are all house-made, all toppings made in-house, and the ice cream is beyond delicious. Why not give yourself a pint or two to serve for Christmas, and maybe one just for you to reward yourself for getting it all done! And Merry Christmas to you all!

Mother Moo Creamery, 17 Kersting Court, Sierra Madre – Hours: Sun.-Thurs: Noon- 10 p.m., Fri-Sat: 11 a.m. – 11 p.m.

Sierra Madre Police Blotter

During the week of Sunday, December 7th, to Sunday, December 14th, the Sierra Madre Police Department responded to approximately 329 calls for service.

Wednesday, December 10th

At 6:52 am, Sierra Madre Police responded to the 500 Block of Camillo Rd. regarding a residential burglary. Upon arrival, Officers were informed by the victim that the night before, she secured her residence but failed to lock her vehicle. Upon waking up the next morning, the victim noticed the garage door was open and the passenger door to her vehicle was left open. Upon investigating, the victim noticed the glove compartment was open and the paperwork was left scattered on the floorboard. The victim also noticed the garage door remote was missing. Upon investigating the garage, the victim noticed a circular saw and bicycle was missing. Estimated loss of property was \$1,500. This case has been forwarded to the Detectives Bureau.

At 8:51 am, Sierra Madre Police responded to the 1900 Block of Liliano Dr. regarding a residential burglary. Upon arrival, Officers were informed by the victim that the night before prior to going to bed, she secured her residence but failed to lock her vehicle. The following morning, the victim noticed her garage door was open. Upon investigating her vehicle, the victim noticed a pair of sunglasses were missing, along with the garage door remote. When the victim investigated the garage, she noticed the area her roommate kept tools was visibly disturbed. This case has been forwarded to the Detectives Bureau.

At 4:33 pm, Sierra Madre Police responded to the 300 Block of Acacia St. regarding a residential burglary. Upon arrival, Officers were informed by the victim that the night before she parked her vehicle in the driveway at around 9 pm. Upon approaching her vehicle the next morning, she noticed her glove compartment was open and all of its contents had been scattered on the passenger seat and floorboard. No property was found to be stolen. The victim informed Officers she may have forgotten to lock her vehicle as she helped her husband out of the car the night before. This case has been forwarded to the Detectives Bureau.

Friday, December 12th

At 11:36 am, Sierra Madre Police responded to the station lobby regarding a vehicle burglary. Officers were informed by the victim that on the night of Wednesday the 10th, he parked his vehicle in his driveway. On Friday morning, he returned to his vehicle and realized it had been burglarized. The suspect indicated various items from his vehicle were missing, along with a drug

prescription. The victim's property has security cameras, which allowed Officers to review the tape for any evidence. The tape revealed an unknown vehicle parking in front of the victims vehicle, blocking the driveway. A passenger, described as Male Hispanic or White with average build with a height of around 6 feet, exits the vehicle and gains access to the victims vehicle and spend less than 10 minutes within the vehicle. The suspect collects the stolen items and loads them into the vehicle. Both suspects flee the residence. This case has been forwarded to the Detectives Bureau.

Saturday, December 13th

At 11:39 am, Sierra Madre Police responded to the station lobby regarding a vehicle burglary. Officers were informed by the victim that the night before she parked her vehicle in her driveway at around 9 pm. The victim stated she left a baby gift on the passenger seat of her vehicle. The following morning, the victim went to her vehicle to retrieve the gift when she realized the gift was missing and her center console was open. The victim could not recall if she had in fact locked her vehicle but felt that she may not have as the vehicle showed no sign of forced entry. This case has been forwarded to the Detectives Bureau.

At 3:15 pm, Sierra Madre Police responded to the 300 Block of Grove Street regarding a vehicle burglary. Officers were informed by the victim that the night before, she parked her vehicle in her driveway, and her husband parked his behind her. The following day, when the victim entered her vehicle, she noticed that it had been rummaged through. The glove box, center console and other compartments had been opened and all of the contents has been thrown and scattered around the vehicle. Despite the mess, the victim claimed nothing of value had been stolen. The victim stated she may have forgotten to lock her vehicle after parking it the night before as the vehicle showed no signs of forced entry. This case has been forwarded to the Detectives Bureau.

At 3:51 pm, Sierra Madre Police responded to the 200 Block of Grove Street regarding a theft report. The victim informed Officers that the morning before, he removed two car seats and one stroller from his vehicle and left them on the driveway of his residence. The following morning the victim noticed the items were missing and confirmed with his wife that she did not have them. The estimated loss of property was set at \$400. This case has been forwarded to the Detectives Bureau.

Sierra Madre Police Department would like to remind everyone to lock all vehicles upon exiting them, and remove any items of value from the vehicle each night.

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Pasadena News Briefs

Appeal rejected from man charged with murdering girlfriend

A three member justice panel from California's 2nd District Court of Appeal rejected an appeal Tuesday from Corey Lavelle Green, convicted of murdering his girlfriend Maria Donnelly and setting her apartment on fire trying to destroy evidence.

Green confessed to killing Donnelly Sept. 30, 2011, after firefighters found her body during an apartment fire at 59 S. Meridith Ave. Green was arrested in December of that year.

The panel turned down the claim that a judge wrongly denied Green a last minute bid to represent himself as his own attorney.

Green maintained Donnelly's death was accidental. He was sentenced to 36 years to life in prison.

Hundreds Join March to Pasadena City Hall over Police Violence

Pasadena Police Chief Phillip Sanchez was among hundreds of people that took part in a march Sunday led by the Pastor of FAME, First African Methodist Episcopal Church of Pasadena, decrying police-involved killing of black men across the country.

Protesters carried signs, chanting "hands up don't shoot," and "I can't breathe."

Also among the crowd were Councilmember Jacque Robinson and Anya Slaughter, the mother of Kendrec McDade, the teen fatally shot by Pasadena police in 2012.

The Pasadena police union filed an appeal last month blocking the release of a redacted report on the shooting death of McDade.

The group also protested the two grand jury decisions that declined to indict officers, both in Yew York where Eric Garner, died of a heart attack after a police officer used a choke hold and in Ferguson, Missouri where police shoot 18-year-old Michael Brown.

Pet of the Week



Cleo is a 1-year-old female black and white shorthaired cat. She is relaxed and calm and enjoys attention. She is curious, and while she may be a little shy at first, she's affectionate once she warms up to you.

The regular cat adoption fee is \$70 which includes the spay or neuter surgery, microchip, vaccinations, and 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.

Call the Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA at 626.792.7151 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.



New Fire Chief Demos Holiday Tree Safety

Police Chief warns that flying aerial drones at the Rose Parade is illegal and will not be tolerated.

Newly appointed Pasadena Fire Chief Bertral Washington gave Holiday safety tips Thursday that included igniting a Christmas tree to demonstrate how quickly a fire can start — this was the first media briefing by Washington as Chief.

Washington started by stressing the importance of picking a fresh Christmas tree.

"Needles on the tree should be green and should not fall off easily," he said.

He also said not to keep the tree up too long after the holiday and make sure it is watered.

Firefighters showed just how fast a dry tree can burn by igniting one during a controlled demonstration.

Washington also said to inspect any lights that go on trees or other décor. He also said to watch children and pets around the tree. He also cautioned that portable heaters should always be upright.

During the briefing Pasadena Police Chief Phillip Sanchez said The Tournament of Roses has secured permits for the parade route and things like

unmanned aircraft or ships guided by remote control would not be tolerated.

"As has been the issue in recent days, with drones, we're asking our parade goers not to bring commercial drones or recreational drones to the Rose Parade," he said. "It is a permitted event... drones will not be allowed."

Sanchez said officers, including undercover, will attempt to locate the owner and confiscate any drone.

Sanchez said his department has been preparing for New Year's Day, for sometime, working with state, federal and local law enforcement.

"We are well prepared for spontaneous events or other unusual occurrences; we will have overt and covert resources up and down the parade route," he said.

Royal Court to Kick Off Visitor Hotline

The 2015 Tournament of Roses Queen and Royal Court will help kick off the Pasadena Convention and Visitors Bureau's 31st annual Visitor Hotline on Dec. 29 with a ticket prize giveaway to the 2015 Tournament of Roses Parade.

Rose Queen Madison Elaine Triplett and the Royal Court will make a special appearance at the Pasadena Convention Center from 9 -10 a.m. on Dec. 29 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to kick off this year's Visitors Hotline. They will then work the phones and take the year's first calls to the hotline.

Contestants are eligible to win the Rose Parade tickets by following the Visitor Hotline on Twitter at @VisitPasadenaCA on Facebook at /VisitPasadena or Instagram at #VisitPasadena. After the hotline opens on Dec. 29, simultaneous tweets, Facebook postings and Instagram alerts will be sent notifying followers when to respond through social media for a chance to win Rose Parade tickets.

The Pasadena Convention and Visitors Bureau offers information via a toll-free Visitor Hotline (877-793-9911) as a service to assist visitors attending the 126th Rose Parade and the 2015 Rose Bowl College Football Playoff Semifinal on Jan. 1, 2015.

Operating from Dec. 29-Jan. 2, the Visitor Hotline is staffed annually by volunteers from throughout the community who are available to answer questions about the Rose Parade and Rose Bowl Game, parade float decorating, parking, accommodations, dining, directions, other holiday-related events, and more.

CITY BANS SMOKING AT ALL PUBIC LIBRARIES

By Dean Lee

The city council voted unanimously in favor of adding no-smoking on the grounds of all city-owned libraries to an already existing Pasadena municipal code banning smoking in all public parks. The city attorney will return the new ordinance within 60 days.

Pasadena Public Library Director Jan Sanders said the ordinance would broaden no-smoking now in effect at some city libraries.

"We had the ordinance in effect at the La Pintoresca Branch because that is considered park land and it's in the park so are several other libraries," she said. "And so keeping the smokers away, it does interfere with the people coming in and out of the libraries."

Sanders said the new ordinance make all libraries uniform. She said it was a "right to clean air" as well as a litter issue.

During the meeting Councilmember Victor Gordo asked about signage at the libraries worried that if signs were not visible they



would lead to problems similar to no smoking rules at the city's parks.

"I'm getting complaints in my district, of not just smoking cigarettes but other substances as well, at Robinson Park and Washington Park."

Gordo said he was also concerned with enforcement as well as signs.

City Manager Michael Beck said that at some parks they added full time security; he said they are looking at using Public Works Security Rangers and the Health Department to beef up enforcement.

Christmas and New Year's Closures and Reminders

Pasadena City Hall and most City services will be closed on Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25, 2014 and New Year's Day, Thursday, January 1, 2015. Specific closures and exceptions for the upcoming holiday season are noted below.

Pasadena Fire and Police Departments will be staffed during the holidays for all patrol, jail, fire, paramedic and other emergency services. For life-threatening emergencies, always call 9-1-1. For other incidents, "If You See Something, Say Something!" by calling police at (626) 744-4241. Be prepared to speak calmly and know your location.

The City Council has finished its 2014 public meeting schedule and will meet for the first time in 2015 beginning at 6:30 p.m., Monday, Jan. 12 in the Council Chamber at City Hall, 100 N. Garfield Ave.

Pasadena residents and businesses with any power emergencies should call the Pasadena Water and Power (PWP) Department at (626) 744-4673. For water-related emergencies call (626) 744-4138. PWP's regular Customer Service Call Center will be closed for the holidays, but customers can still pay their bills by phone at (626) 744-4005 or on the Web at www.PWPweb.com. The City's Municipal Services Payment Center at City Hall will be closed both holidays.

The Citizen Service Center is closed Christmas Day, but will take your calls at (626) 744-7311 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 26 and Dec. 27. On New Year's Eve, the Center will be open from 8

a.m. to 9 p.m. and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. the next three days—including New Year's Day, Jan. 2 and Jan. 3.

Refuse and recycling collection for Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, will be delayed by one day. All other routes will be serviced per schedule. No bulky pickups will be scheduled from Jan. 15 to Feb. 2, 2015.

On Dec. 25, the City's Area Rapid Transit System (ARTS) and Dial-A-Ride programs will not operate, but will resume regular service on Friday, Dec. 26. All parking meters are free and time limits will not be enforced on Christmas Day. All parking meter enforcement will resume on Dec. 26.

On Jan. 1, New Year's Day, the ARTS buses and Dial-A-Ride programs also will not be in operation, but will resume regular service on Friday, Jan. 2, 2015. All parking meters will be free on Jan. 1 and time limits will not be enforced. Parking meter enforcement will resume on Jan. 2. Red curb violations and blocking fire hydrants will be enforced on both holidays.

All branches of the Pasadena Public Library, including the Central Library, will be closed Dec. 24 and Dec. 25. The libraries also will be closed Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

The City's Community Centers will be closed, except for Winter Camps by reservation only, from Dec. 22 to Dec. 26. The centers will be open 8 a.m. to Noon, Dec. 31, and closed Jan. 1. All parks are open for picnics, fun and play, but no site reservations are accepted for the holidays.

Learn How to Produce Your Own TV Show

New Citizen Journalism training starts Wednesday nights, learn how to report news using social media skills.



PASADENA MEDIA

With the opening of the new Pasadena Media studios at 150 S. Los Robles Ave, they are offering free television-training programs for producers. Plan to attend an orientation to discover the right classes for you. Producers' Training teaches how to produce shows for The Arroyo Channel. Studio Production/ Equipment

training is also offered to volunteer crew members. In addition, on-going training will soon be available in citizen journalism and digital film groups. Call the office (626) 794-8585 or go to PASADENAMEDIA.ORG and explore what Pasadena Media has to offer.

Class offerings days and nights weekly
Station Schedule

Closed - Studio and Administration Office

December 20 through Sunday January 4

Orientation & Tour

Monday January 5 at 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

PCAC Board of Directors - Regular Meeting

Tuesday January 6 at 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Studio Cameras & Floor Manager

Wednesday January 7 at 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Citizen Journalism Training

Wednesday January 7 at 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Mountain Views News

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

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2014

SECTION B

AROUND SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

COUNTY CALLS ON CITIES, AGENCIES, COLLEGES & BUSINESSES TO EXPAND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOSTER YOUTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

To provide young people in foster care with the opportunity to continue their education and find meaningful employment, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a motion by Supervisors Michael D. Antonovich and Sheila Kuehl to engage each of the County's 88 cities, public agencies, and the business community to adopt programs similar to those the County has successfully developed. In approving the motion, Supervisor Hilda Solis included employment opportunities at local community colleges and universities.



Michael D. Antonovich

"The Board of Supervisors initiated the County's Career Development Internship program to provide transitional-aged foster youth with structured on-the-job training and employment within County departments," said Antonovich. "Our next step is to reach out to each of our cities, public agencies, local colleges and the business community to encourage them to develop similar programs. These opportunities are vital in our effort to help young people gain the skills needed to transition to successful and productive lives."

Among the agencies the County will engage in the outreach effort are the Metropolitan Transit Authority, the Southern California Air Quality Management District, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, Metrolink, Southern California Association of Governments, local community colleges and universities, as well as business groups and private companies.

TOURNAMENT OF ROSES FOUNDATION RECEIVES 10K



Photo courtesy of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses®

(from left to right): Rick Jackson, Norma Garcia Kachigian, Jerri Price-Gaines, Tournament of Roses President Rich Chinen, Nancy Neal Davis and Chuck Carroll.



"What's Going On?"

News and Views from Joan Schmidt

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION WITH AUTHOR, MARISELA ADAMS

Duarte may have "Coffee and Conversation with the Mayor", but last week I had "Coffee

and Conversation" with local author Marisela Adams, whose recent Breaking Faith trilogy has been well received. But she has worn "other hats".

Marisela was born in Palau, Mexico. At age two, her family moved to Texas, so she considers herself a very patriotic American citizen-this is where she grew up. However she is very proud of her Hispanic background and loves the culture.

While she was in college, she met James Roland Adams, her husband, a financial planner. He was the student manager for college students and it was "Hate at first sight". But he asked her out anyway and all these years, they have had a great romance; they have two grown children and four very bright grandsons. Her husband Jim, a pilot and photographer encouraged Marisela to pursue her love of writing.

When Marisela was about twenty, her family moved to California for higher education opportunities. Marisela loved to write and has done so since childhood. But there's no guarantee of success. She pursued teaching-earned a degree/credential, taught Spanish and English Literature at Sierra Vista HS, Baldwin Park and had no discipline problems. Although successful in the classroom, she felt a need to help students. After earning a credential and Master's in Counseling, she began her second career.

Marisela enjoyed working as a counselor, but with encouragement from her husband, she realized it was time to stop and pursue writing. Throughout the years she had been writing novels, but had to "clean them up" for publishing. She has written in all genres-romance, science fiction and murder mysteries. The Breaking Faith series takes place in Louisiana. Her husband flew her down to Lafayette, they drove down the Bayou, and met a cop, who took them to a "perfect place" for a murder! (Its picture is the front cover of her book. The Faith Betrayed



Trilogy begins with Faith Betrayed. The second book is Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust. The third book is Death's Mask.

Marisela has also written non-fiction such as a counselor manual for parents and teachers. She mentioned a wonderful English teacher who inspired her at eight years old, and a teacher Miss Pincheau also encouraged her.

When I mentioned my teaching career and the thrill of seeing former students grown up and doing well, Marisela asked me to tell her former students she would love to hear from them. They may contact her through www.roamncecalling.com. Also it's a great way to learn a lot more about a great lady and purchase a good book to enjoy in front of a cozy fireplace!

The Pasadena Tournament of Roses Foundation was presented with a check for \$10K by Citizens Business Bank yesterday, December 17, 2014 at Tournament House.

The funds were the result of the bank's 3rd Annual Charity Golf Classic held on October 17, 2014 at Oakmont Country Club where \$40K was raised to benefit four non-profit organizations

serving the San Gabriel Valley: the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Foundation, Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, Glendale Community College and YMCA of the Foothills. The check was presented by Chuck Carroll, Vice President Manager of Citizens Business Bank to Foundation board members and Tournament of Roses President Rich Chinen.

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CHURCH CAROLERS, CORVETTES AT CHRISTMAS MARKET SATURDAY FINAL NIGHT CROWDS ON DEC. 20 WILL RAISE 3-NIGHT TOTAL TO MORE THAN 2,000

ARCADIA, Ca. – A family of singers from the Southern California Mormon Choir, Jeff, Cindy, Jocelyn, and Emily Combe, along with fellow choir member Beth Stogner of the Arcadia Fire Department, will stroll the Downtown Arcadia Christmas Market singing traditional Christmas Carols in Dickens-era costumes this Saturday, Dec. 20.

And Corvettes of all eras will be showcased by members of the Arcadia-based chapter of Corvettes Limited at the special Arcadia Christmas car show sponsored by Santa Anita Park horse racing, which opens its next horse race season on Dec. 26. Attendees can spin a wheel at the Santa Anita Park booth to win tickets, hooded sweatshirts and more.

It's the final night of the three-night Christmas Market that has already attracted more than 1,500 people the first two nights of the event that is staged from 5-9 p.m. on the closed block of First Avenue from Huntington Drive to Wheeler St.

Anyone with a cool vehicle of any kind is invited to join the car show by arriving no later than 4:45 p.m. at the Arcadia Medical Center parking lot off Wheeler Street between Santa Anita Avenue and First Avenue. The best of the previous two nights will return to entertain crowds, including free visits and photos with Santa Claus in front of a vintage fire truck, blowing snow, and the very popular horse-drawn carriage rides past the holiday tree and decorations at the Arcadia

Transit Plaza. The rides are provided free courtesy of sponsor MW Investment Group.

The crowd-pleasing Lance and Gary Show band also returns with a giant video screen showing inserted speech bubbles of characters from movies such as "The Grinch" and "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" making amusing comments about Arcadia.

Attendees enjoy food, beverages, and gifts at more than 50 vendor booths, including delicious food from Downtown Arcadia restaurants such as tri-tip and pulled pork sandwiches from Matt Denny's Ale House, tapas from Spanish restaurant La Luna Negra, a full menu from Stacked Sandwich, hot spiced cider from multiple vendors, as well as giant baked potatoes with myriad customized toppings, and kettle corn, among other offerings.

The Christmas Market is presented by the non-profit community events group Arcadia's Best Foundation in association with Downtown Arcadia and sponsored primarily by Foothill Gold Line as well as Forest Lawn. Other sponsors include the City of Arcadia, Matt Denny's Ale House Restaurant, April Verlatto – Attorney at Law, and Marie Taylor – NAI Capital. Trash services are provided by Waste Management. The event is produced by Family Festival Productions and designed by GenWay International with equipment from Town & Country Event Rentals.

ARCADIA POLICE BLOTTER

For the period of Sunday, December 7th, through Saturday, December 13th, the Police Department responded to 968 calls for service of which 128 required formal investigations. The following is a summary report of the major incidents handled by the Department during this period.

Sunday, December 7:

At approximately 9:02 a.m., an officer conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle in the area of Baldwin Avenue and Huntington Drive for suspended registration. An investigation revealed the driver, a 33-year-old Hispanic male, and passenger, a 31-year-old Hispanic female, were in possession of a narcotic controlled substance. Both suspects were arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Around 3:09 p.m., an officer was dispatched to REI, 214 North Santa Anita Avenue, in reference to a theft report. Video surveillance revealed a male and female subject concealed several items of merchandise inside a used backpack and exited the store without making payment. A short time later, officers learned the suspects were arrested for shoplifting at REI in Manhattan Beach. The officers responded to that store and arrested both suspects. They were transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Monday, December 8:

At about 1:06 p.m., an officer conducted an enforcement stop on a vehicle for a broken tail light in the area of Santa Anita Avenue and Orange Grove Avenue. An investigation revealed the driver, a 20-year-old Asian female, was never issued a license, the front passenger, a 20-year-old Black male, was in possession of methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia, and the rear passenger, a 19-year-old Black male, was in possession of a controlled substance and had an outstanding misdemeanor warrant. All three suspects were arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

At about 2:20 p.m., officers were dispatched to the area of South Baldwin Avenue and the 210 freeway regarding a three-party traffic collision. An investigation revealed that while Party-1 was handling his GPS device, he collided into the vehicle in front of him, who then collided into another vehicle. The officer determined the driver of Party-1, a 53-year-old White male, was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage. He was arrested

for DUI and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Tuesday, December 9:

Around 9:30 p.m., an officer conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle in the 000 block of West Duarte Road for a partially covered license plate. The officer discovered the driver, a 60-year-old White male, was in possession of methamphetamine. He was arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Just after 9:37 p.m., officers were dispatched to Ralphs, 211 East Foothill Boulevard, regarding a theft that just occurred. Two juvenile suspects stole alcohol and beef jerky, and pushed two employees as they attempted to exit the front entrance. Once outside, the suspects ran from officers and resisted arrest, but were eventually apprehended. The 17-year-old Asian males were arrested, transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking, and later released to their parents.

Wednesday, December 10:

Shortly after 1:44 a.m., an officer noticed a unattended vehicle parked in the Unocal 76 gas station parking lot, 102 East Huntington Drive, with recent and significant collision damage to the passenger side of the vehicle. An investigation revealed a 47-year-old White female parked the vehicle at the gas station after colliding with a city tree while handling her GPS device. The officer recommended a hit and run complaint be filed against the woman.

At about 2:52 p.m., officers responded to CVS Pharmacy, 9952 Las Tunas Drive, regarding a theft report. Officers discovered three Black females concealed numerous bottles of alcohol in one of the suspect's purses. All of the suspects are described as 18 to 25-years-old. They fled southbound on Rowland Avenue in a newer model, black Volkswagen Beetle.

Thursday, December 11:

At approximately 2:21 a.m., an officer responded to the intersection of Santa Anita Avenue and Wisteria Avenue regarding an unknown problem. The officer discovered the victim, a 63-year-old Asian female, had been sprayed in the eyes with an unknown liquid before unidentified

suspect(s) pushed her to the ground and stole her purse. The victim described the suspect as a thin, 6' tall male. No witnesses were located. The investigation is ongoing.

Around 7:14 a.m., an officer conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle in the 100 block of South Baldwin Avenue for speeding. Upon contacting the driver, the officer discovered the driver, a 21-year-old Hispanic male, had a suspended license and an outstanding misdemeanor warrant. He was arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Friday, December 12:

Just after 11:39 a.m., officers responded to the Arcadia Police Department front counter regarding a fraud report. An investigation revealed an unknown suspect withdrew more than \$500.00 from the victim's account using an ATM located in the 600 block of West Duarte Road on December 11th. The investigation is ongoing.

At about 3:53 p.m., officers were dispatched to a residence in the 1700 block of Highland Oaks Drive regarding a male subject trying to open the reporting party's front door. Officers located the suspect nearby in his vehicle. The 31-year-old White male admitted to stealing packages from the victims' porches. He also had an outstanding warrant. He was arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

Saturday, December 13:

Just after 12:32 a.m., an officer conducted an enforcement stop on a vehicle in the area of Peck Road and Clark Street for a broken taillight. Upon contacting the driver, the officer discovered the 37-year-old Hispanic female had never been issued a driver's license. She was cited and released in the field. The vehicle was released to a licensed driver.

At approximately 6:42 p.m., an officer responded to the intersection of Santa Anita Avenue and Wistaria Avenue regarding a vehicle driving uncontrollably and almost colliding with the reporting party. Upon making contacting with the driver, the officer detected a strong odor of alcohol emitting from his breath. Through field sobriety tests, the officer determined the 59-year-old Black male was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage. He was arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

MONROVIA - DUARTE

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

Pasadena

Altadena

Monrovia

MONROVIA POLICE BLOTTER

Following are the weekend's highlighted issues and events. To see a complete listing of crimes reported, go to the City of Monrovia website and click on the crime mapping link. Sign up to follow us on Twitter for police notifications.

Under the Influence of a Controlled Substance – Suspect Arrested

December 11 at 4:40 p.m., officers responded to the 500 block of West Lime regarding a family disturbance. A female subject went to the location in an effort to visit her children. Family members at the location observed the female acting bizarre and called the police. Upon investigation, it was determined the female was under the influence of methamphetamine and she was arrested. The female was taken into custody and later released on a citation after a sobering period.

Theft From a Vehicle

December 12 at 8:53 a.m., an officer was dispatched to the 100 block of North Grand on the report of a theft from a vehicle. Unknown suspect(s) entered the victim's unlocked vehicle and stole identification items from the glove box. The theft occurred sometime overnight. The investigation is continuing.

Residential Burglary

December 12 at 8:54 a.m., a residential burglary was reported in the 200 block of Jasmine. The suspect(s) entered the victim's unlocked garage and forced entry into their vehicle by smashing a window. The victim's purse was in plain view and stolen from the passenger seat. The suspect(s) then left the area undetected. The investigation is continuing.

Possession of a Controlled Substance – Suspect Arrested

December 12 at 4:40 p.m., an employee from a hotel in the 900 block of West Huntington called police to report a guest refusing to leave. The subject was contacted by an officer and found to be in possession of methamphetamine. The suspect was arrested and taken into custody. He had warrants for his arrest and was held for the warrants.

Riding a Bicycle Under the Influence of Alcohol – Suspect arrested.

December 13 at 1:15 a.m., an officer observed a subject riding his bicycle on the wrong side of the road in the 1500 block of South Myrtle. Through investigation, the subject was determined to be under the influence of alcohol and was arrested.

Battery

December 13 at 1:50 p.m., officers responded to a local bar in the 100 block of East Olive regarding a battery report. The fight inside the bar was over a female patron. All parties refused to prosecute.

Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol – Suspect Arrested

December 14 at 1:25 a.m., dispatch received a call from a female subject reporting her husband was intoxicated and led the residence in his vehicle from the 700 block of West Foothill. Officers found the vehicle and stopped the driver. Upon investigation, the driver was determined to be under the influence of alcohol and was arrested.

Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol – Suspect Arrested

December 14 at 3:00 a.m., an officer stopped a vehicle for a vehicle code violation in the area of Myrtle and Foothill. Through investigation, the officer determined the driver to be under the influence of alcohol. The driver was arrested and taken into custody.

Public Intoxication – Suspect Arrested

December 14 at 1:57 p.m., a male was seen walking south in the 100 block of South Myrtle and appeared to be heavily intoxicated, staggering back and forth slowly as he walked. Officers detained the subject and determined his was too intoxicated to care for his own safety; he was arrested.

Petty Theft – Suspect Arrested

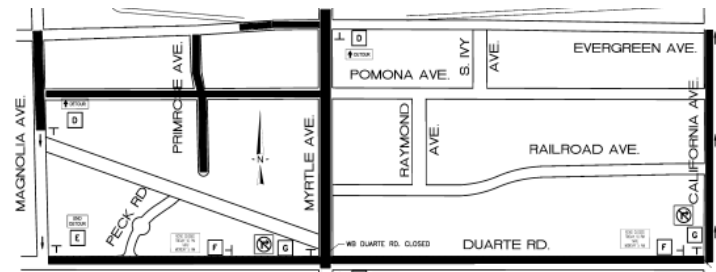
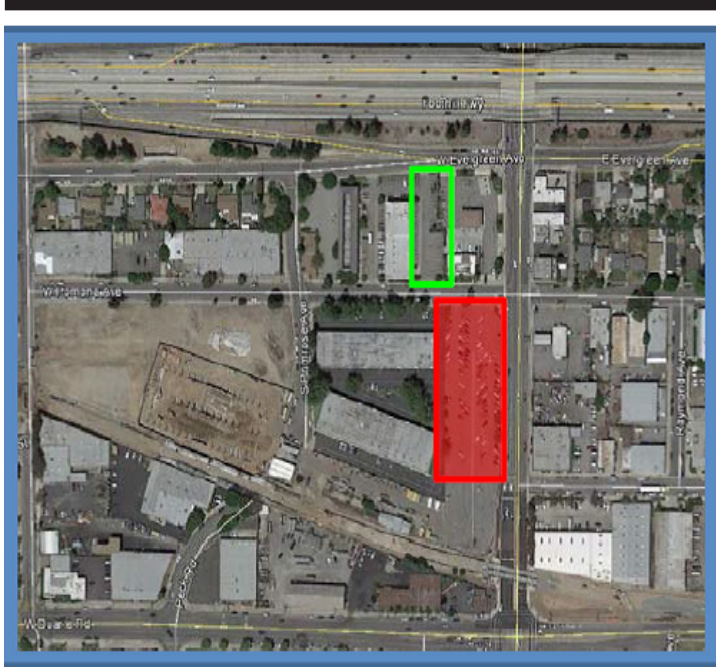
December 14 at 5:29 p.m., a female was detained at a store in the 1600 block of South Mountain by store loss prevention. She had entered the store and stole bathroom items, knowing she did not have enough money to pay for them. Officers arrived and accepted the store's private person's arrest. The female was issued a misdemeanor citation at the store, then released on a citation pending court appearance.

Domestic Battery – Suspect Arrested

December 14 at 6:23 p.m., dispatch received several calls reporting a disturbance in the 700 block of West Foothill. Police then received a 911 call from a female, believed to be the victim, who reported her husband had just beaten her up. Officers responded and determined this was an ongoing marital dispute. The female was taken to a hospital for complaint of pain to her back. The husband was arrested for domestic violence.

Mental Evaluation

December 15 at 5:58 a.m., a caller reported an erratic driver in the 200 block of South Myrtle to police. Officers responded and found the subject in the vehicle. After speaking with the subject, it was determined he was a danger to himself and others. He was placed on a mental evaluation hold and taken to a hospital, where he will be held for 72 hours.



CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY UPDATE

Alert: Magnolia Ave will be CLOSED from Evergreen Ave to Genoa St from December 18th to January 5th. See details below.

Alert: Sidewalks will be impacted along Myrtle Ave, Duarte Ave, and California Ave starting December 18th. See details below.

Holiday Schedule: No work will be performed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

OFF-SITE IMPROVEMENTS (Streets, Medians, Sidewalks and Freeway Underpass)

WHEN: December 18 to December 26, 2014

WHERE: Myrtle Avenue (between Duarte Road and Evergreen Avenue)

WHAT: Sidewalk removal will begin on the west side of Myrtle Avenue on Friday, December 19th. Pedestrian traffic will be routed to the east side of Myrtle Avenue. Crews will be boring in the sidewalks and cutting openings in the curbs as well throughout the week. Traffic lanes will be impacted, but all lanes will remain open. Street parking will not be available. Please observe street delineations and traffic signs for your safety.

WHERE: California Avenue (between Duarte Road and Evergreen Avenue) WHAT: Sidewalk removal will begin on the south side of California Avenue on Thursday, December 18th. Pedestrian traffic will be routed to the east side of California Avenue. Crews will be boring in the sidewalks and cutting openings in the curbs as well throughout the week. Traffic lanes will be impacted, but all lanes will remain open. Street parking will not be available. Please observe street delineations and traffic signs for your safety.

WHERE: Duarte Road (between Myrtle Ave and Magnolia Ave) WHAT: Sidewalk removal will begin on the south side of Duarte Road on Monday, December 22nd. However, the sidewalk will remain open for pedestrian traffic at all times. Crews will be drilling street light foundations and cutting openings in the curbs as well throughout the week. One lane

SANTA'S HOTLINE RESCHEDULED TO DECEMBER 23RD FROM 3:00 TO 5:00 PM

DUARTE, CA, December 18, 2014 – Have no fear, Santa can still hear from all Duarte children for Santa's Hotline, which will be up, and running again on Tuesday, December 23rd. After some minor technical difficulties, the Jolly Old Soul is inviting all Duarte kids ages 5 to 11 to pick up the phone and call him at (626) 358-5425 from 3:00-5:00 pm. It is not too late to partake in this annual Duarte tradition of talking to Santa Claus and telling him what is on your wish list. This event wraps up a month of fun-filled holiday festivities sponsored by the City of Duarte. For additional information on Santa's Hotline, call 626 357-7931.

About the City of Duarte

The City of Duarte was incorporated on August 22, 1957. With integrity and transparency, the City provides exemplary public services in a caring and fiscally responsible manner with a commitment to our community's future. For more information visit <http://www.accessduarte.com> or call (626) 357-7931. Follow the City of Duarte on Twitter @CityofDuarte.

ALVERNO HIGH SCHOOL DEFEATS GLENDALE IN FIRST NON-CONFERENCE GAME OF SEASON JAGUARS DEFEAT NITROS 1-0

Sierra Madre, CA (December 8, 2014) – The Alverno High School Jaguars broke in their new uniforms on a rainy December 3 afternoon against the Glendale Nitros for their first non-conference game of the season. Control of the ball went back and forth between the two teams for the first half. The Jaguars first opportunity to score came late in the first half as Junior forward Emma Cavender pressured the Nitros goalkeeper.

Coach Ken Berry made adjustments in the second half to add more speed to the offense. Senior defender Olivia Rivas was moved to forward and freshman defender Jazmin Rebollo was moved to outside-mid. Rivas scored late in the second half. Freshman Subrina Hamdan defended well in front of the goal and freshman goalkeeper Ayanna Melin made a save from a Nitros corner kick to preserve the lead.

About Alverno High School

Alverno High School is a Catholic, private, college preparatory school for young women dedicated to preparing them to function in a society as informed, knowledgeable persons, who have the requisite skills to make and implement mature decisions about complex problems. Enlivened by the spirit of its Immaculate Heart Community sponsors, and mindful of the Franciscan roots of its founders, Alverno's program—academic, spiritual, aesthetic, social, and physical—is shaped by the staff, trustees, and students in light of the world for which the students are being educated. Alverno's mission is to empower each young woman to be exactly the person she wants to be and since 1960, Alverno has empowered more than 4,100 women to meet that goal. For more information about



Alverno High School, please call 626-355-3463 or visit [HYPERLINK "http://www.alverno-hs.org" www.alverno-hs.org.](http://www.alverno-hs.org)



ALVERNO HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL CANDLELIGHT CELEBRATION REMAINS A CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Candlelight Celebration included choral performance and a live reenactment of the Nativity

Sierra Madre, CA (December 18, 2014) – On Wednesday, December 17, Alverno High School hosted its annual Candlelight Celebration at the Villa del Sol d'Oro on campus. Candlelight Celebration, an annual Christmas tradition at Alverno, celebrates the Christmas story through a live reenactment beginning with the Annunciation and concluding with the Birth of Christ.

Upon arriving on campus, guests were provided with a candle and led to south side of the Villa where the procession began with an introduction by the President and Vice-President of the Alverno Student Union and a tableau depicting the Annunciation of Mary. Guests were then led around the Villa making several stops on their own journey to "Bethlehem" including seeing Mary visit Elizabeth, the first stop at the Inn in Bethlehem, the arrival of Mary and Joseph at the stable, the birth of Jesus, and the visit from the shepherds and wise men. Each stop signified an important part of the Christmas story and guests were invited to join in Christmas carols led by the Alverno choir at each stop.

Once guests had reached "Bethlehem" on the north side of the Villa, they enjoyed two dance performances Alverno's dance students before being invited into the Villa for a final choral performance by both students and alumnae. A festive reception in the Villa followed the procession and performances.

"Candlelight is a time-honored tradition at Alverno that brings our entire community together," said Julia V. Fanara, Head of School. "It is a wonderful way to commence the Christmas season and remind us of the true meaning of the holiday. This event is an opportunity for Alverno to wish all of our friends, family, and community members a wonderful Christmas season."

About Alverno High School

Alverno High School is a Catholic, private, college preparatory school for young women dedicated to preparing them to function in a society as informed, knowledgeable persons, who have the requisite skills to make and implement mature decisions about complex problems. Enlivened by the spirit of its Immaculate Heart Community sponsors, and mindful of the Franciscan roots of its founders, Alverno's program—academic, spiritual, aesthetic, social, and physical—is shaped by the staff, trustees, and students in light of the world for which the students are being educated. Alverno's mission is to empower each young woman to be exactly the person she wants to be and since 1960, Alverno has empowered more than 4,200 women to meet that goal. For more information about Alverno High School, please call 626-355-3463 or visit www.alverno-hs.org.

CELEBRATE Safely

FIVE TIPS FOR PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM FIRE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

COOK Safely

Be careful in the kitchen by keeping oven mitts, towels, and wooden utensils away from stoves and ranges.

OBSERVE Safely

Never leave burning candles unattended and keep your Christmas tree hydrated.

DECORATE Safely

Choose decorations that carry a UL or CSA label, indicating they have been tested for fire safety. The American Red Cross recommends placing Christmas trees and holiday decorations at least three feet away from heat sources.

PLAY Safely

Make sure kids don't play with matches and lighters by keeping these materials out of reach.

ENTERTAIN Safely

Let guests know about fire exits and ensure smoke detectors are spaced throughout your home and functioning properly.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO: www.celebratesafelycampaign.com

www.rebuildingtogether.org

http://ameretardants.americanchemistry.com

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

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

Barnhart School

240 W. Colorado Blvd. Arcadia, Ca. 91007
(626) 446-5588 Head of School: Ethan Williamson
Kindergarten - 8th grade
website: www.barnhartschool.org

Bethany Christian School

93 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024
(626) 355-3527 Principal: James Lugenbuehl
E-mail address: jml@bcslions.org
website: www.bcslions.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

Foothill Oaks Academy

822 Bradbourne Ave., Duarte, CA 91010
(626) 301-9809
Co-Principals Nancy Lopez and Diane Kieffaber
info@foothilloaksacademy.org
preschool@foothilloaksacademy.org

Frostig School

971 N. Altadena Drive Pasadena, CA 91107
(626) 791-1255
Head of School: Chris Schnieders, PhD
Email: Jackykn@frostig.org

The Gooden School

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

High Point Academy

1720 Kinneloa Canyon Road Pasadena, Ca. 91107
Headmaster John Higgins 626-798-8989
website: www.highpointacademy.org

LaSalle High School

3880 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.
(626) 351-8951 website: www.lasallehs.org
Principal Bro. Christopher Brady, FSC

Monrovia High School

325 East Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016
(626) 471-2800 Principal Darvin Jackson
Email: 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

Pasadena High School

2925 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.
(626) 798-8901 Principal: Gilbert Barraza
website: 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

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

Sierra Madre Middle School

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

Walden School

74 S San Gabriel Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91107 (626) 792-6166
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

PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena, Ca. 91109
(626) 795-6981 Website: www.pusd@pusd.us

ARCADIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

234 Campus Dr., Arcadia, Ca. 91007
(626) 821-8300 Website: www.ausd.net

MONROVIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

325 E. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, Ca. 91016
(626) 471-2000 Website: www.monroviashools.net

DUARTE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1620 Huntington Dr., Duarte, Ca. 91010
(626) 599-5000 Website: www.duarte.k12.ca.us

LEGAL NOTICE

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
NO. VS026627

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner ANNA ELIA AVALOS HAS FILED A PETITION WITH THE LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT - SOUTHEAST JUDICIAL DISTRICT FOR A DECREE CHANGING NAMES AS FOLLOWS:

Present Name:
ANNA ELIA AVALOS

Proposed Name:
ANNA ELIA GARCIA

A HEARING on the petition will be held on 02/04/2015 at 1:30PM in Dept. C - RM. 312 at 12720 NORWALK BLVD., NORWALK, CA. 90650.

THE COURT ORDERS that all interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted.

If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

JDC - Mountain Views News December 13, 20 and 27, 2014.

Anna Elia Avalos
Petitioner Appearing Pro Per
5830 Agra Street
Bell Gardens, Ca. 90201



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THE REEL DEAL: by Ben Show EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS



The first trailer that I saw for this film made it look like the 'Lord of the Rings: Return of the King' of Bible movies; it looked very epic. The scope of the movie was huge and it looked very action packed. So, I went into the theater with high expectations.

'Gods and Kings' tells the story of Exodus: Moses (Christian Bale) discovers that he is in fact a Hebrew and is chosen by God to lead his people out of Egypt, which is currently ruled by his brother Ramses (Joel Edgerton). This movie covers everything from Moses' exile, crossing the Red Sea, and the creation of the Ten Commandments.

'Gods and Kings' is a very poor rebelling of the Exodus stories. The visuals are on the level of 'Return of the King' and the production value was obviously very high, but this film is hindered by a very, very weak script, which makes the film move very slowly. 'Gods and Kings' is not a bad movie but it is also not a good movie; it is two and a half hours of gorgeous looking empty shell of a movie.

BEST BURGER AND SPARKLING WINE TIPS

My favorite burger experience is Slater's 50/50, not only do they make arguably the best burger in town, the whole experience is one I look forward to. I have been there three times and Slater's has delivered each and every time. What is a 50/50? It's a burger made of half ground beef and half bacon. On my most recent visit I opted to go all beef. I ordered from the Design It Yourself menu where you pick the size of the burger (from 1/3 lb to 1 a full pound), bread, cheese, toppings, and sauce. I got the 1/3-lb burger on the thick sliced rye bread with pickle chips and roasted red peppers, accompanied by a Munich Pilsner beer -- this kid was in heaven. This burger is truly one that I would go out for and save the time of firing up the BBQ. On this visit I also enjoyed the fried dill pickle chips. The only item that isn't five stars is the french fries. Before you think I'm going soft here, the fries do come with a tangy Slater Ketchup that is good, but with all the work they have done on the burger, a freshly cut order of fries probably would have made me think I was at Spagos.

TABLE FOR TWO by Peter Dills
thechefknows@yahoo.com

The beer selection is vast, with your choice of pilsners, lagers, ales, many names you know, and others that you should get to know. Too many gastropubs offer beer I have never heard of -- I get the idea, but I just might be in the mood for a Pabst!!!

The service at the bar, where I usually do my best eating, was top notch. Bartender George greeted us with a handshake and a hello and asked if it was our first time at Slater's. He explained the process and even asked what type of beer we liked. Nice touch George! You get high marks for service! Prices for beer are in the \$6 range, burgers from \$9 and up. I will return for a 50/50 soon and another Pilsner, please. The Bar has ample room to dine or just have a beer, and features more than 10 big screens for your sporting pleasure. Slater's 50/50 61 N. Raymond Ave. Pasadena (626) 765-9700

Close Second: The Hook on Foothill Blvd. for \$6 you can beat it and the beer prices are very reasonable

Next Week My New Years resolutions. Be sure to tune into my radio show on Sundays at 12 Noon AM 830 KLAA and check out all my weeks food photos at www.peterdillstumblr.com



Pasadena Star News Wine Editor
Peter Dills Recommends

Available at Vons/Pavilions **\$9.99**

Peter Dills KLAA 830 AM Sunday



WHITE CHEDDAR MAC AND CHEESE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound farfalle pasta
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 pound white cheddar cheese, shredded (about 4 cups)
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas, thawed
- 1/2 pound finely diced smoked ham (such as Cumberland Gap)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Coat 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Cook pasta in lightly salted water following package directions, about 12 minutes. Drain.
2. While pasta is cooking, melt butter in a medium-size, heavy-bottomed saucepan (not nonstick) over medium heat. Stir in flour until well blended; cook 1 minute. Whisk in 1 cup of milk and cook, whisking continuously, until smooth. Whisk in remaining 1 cup milk and continue to cook, whisking until thickened and smooth, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in salt, pepper and nutmeg. Whisk in 2 cups of the cheese until smooth.
3. In a large bowl, mix together the pasta, cheese sauce and 1 cup of the remaining cheese. Stir in the peas and ham. Pour into prepared baking dish. Scatter remaining 1 cup cheese evenly over the top.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until bubbly. Remove from oven; allow to cool 10 minutes. May be served warm or at room temperature.



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 Sunday: Open for a minimum of 20 guests

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 (626) 355-0045
www.TheFourSeasonsTeaRoom.com

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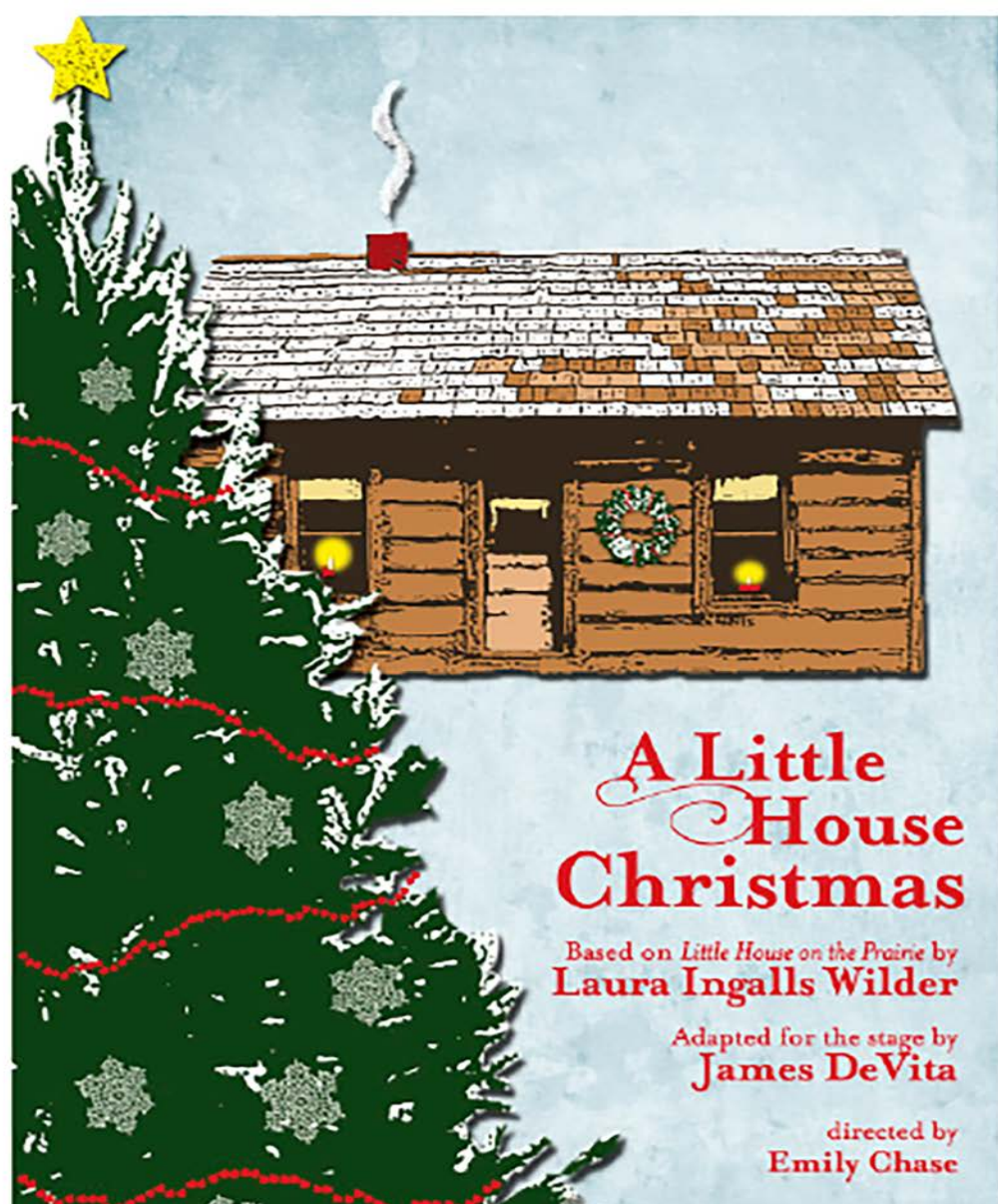
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by Chris Leclerc

LOVING LIFE AND LIVING FREE

During a recent conversation with a client of mine, she told me about an animal rescue group that I immediately became intrigued with. I was actually quite surprised that I had never before heard of the organization, as they are located here in Southern California, and have been in operation for 34 years. Because animals are such a big part of my life, I spend lots of time researching rescue groups, and I support as many as I can, so I was surprised that I'd never come across this amazing sanctuary before.

Living Free Animal Sanctuary is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that I feel is uniquely worthy of support because of their commitment to rescuing otherwise euthanized pets from high-kill shelters and promising them a loving home outside of a cage for the duration of their lives. There are many non-profits that rescue animals and work hard at finding them homes through foster and adoption programs. However, due to limited space and resources, the animals are often kept in cages with no guarantee of a forever home where they can roam freely and receive all the love and attention they need. This is why I was so pleased to hear about Living Free.

Founded in 1980, Living Free Animal Sanctuary was among the first privately funded, no-kill sanctuaries to rescue dogs and cats from imminent shelter euthanasia. The sanctuary's founder, Emily Jo Beard (1923-1989), was strongly passionate in her belief that freedom, reverence and justice should prevail for all life, not only for human-kind, and that philosophy is what drove her to carry out her mission. Beard understood that the human's position of "dominion" over animals means guardianship and stewardship, versus power and tyranny. Inspired by the beliefs of Albert Schweitzer, and with a goal to provide hope and dignity to animals, she chose to devote her life to the cause.

Today, the staff and volunteers at Living Free Sanctuary continue to carry out Emily Jo Beard's original mission with equal compassion. Located at 54250 Keen Camp Rd. in Mountain Center, CA off highway 74, the sanctuary offers animals a gorgeous setting in the San Jacinto Mountains. They are open to the public 11am-4pm daily except Wednesday, for visitors to come and see the good work they are doing with the animals. They also hold various fund-raisers throughout the year, allowing donating supporters the opportunity to socialize and enjoy good food and entertainment, all on behalf of the animals.

Currently, Living Free has a project underway to renovate and expand existing facilities that will allow for more optimal care of the younger furry four-legged friends they take in. As we all know, puppies and kittens have unique needs that require more specialized attention than that of

adult dogs and cats, and the good folks at Living Free recognize what it takes to accommodate those particular needs. The newly renovated facility will provide a safe haven where the babes will be cared for as they grown into mature, less dependant adults.

As part of their endeavor to raise necessary funds for their current renovation project, Living Free is planning a fund raiser to be held at the Heather James Gallery in Palm Desert. The exact date is yet to be announced, but it will definitely take place sometime in January or February of 2015. Be sure to visit their website at [HYPERLINK "http://www.living-free.org/"](http://www.living-free.org/) www.living-free.org for more information, and to get the confirmed date for the fund-raiser. You can also follow them on Facebook, to read updates about their activities and to view adoptable pets. I personally enjoyed perusing their website, and found it very easy to make a "click-and-pay" donation using my Paypal account. Donations can also be made on-line with a credit card, or by mailed check.

Those of you who read my column regularly, know how strongly I feel about adopting and not shopping for pets. While Living Free ensures a life-long, loving home for the animals they take in, they also make it their mission to find loving adoptive homes for the animals they rescue. So, if you think you are ready to share your life with a precious pet, that might be something for you to consider. For obvious reasons, the folks at Living Free are very selective when it comes to placing their animals into forever homes, but in my mind, that just proves that they truly care about the animals they assume responsibility for.

I have often dreamed of starting an animal sanctuary myself, but so far my life's path has not taken me there. Meanwhile, I am pleased to have the opportunity to play an important role in giving animals a second chance at life with the resources I am able to share, and I hope to inspire other animal lovers to do the same. The domestic pets that are under our "dominion" need us to help them find their way in life, so let's all do our part to make that happen for them. I trust you will do what you can to help out, and as I always say - love and let live - freely!



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Chris Leclerc

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LOOKING FOR A BEST FRIEND??

To sit by the fireplace waiting for Santa? Luna is an adorable Chihuahua mix girl, about 8 years old and weighing 6 pounds. She has a sleek, shiny black coat that is very short and easy to care for. She has white tips on all four paws that make it look like she is wearing little shoes. She is larger than most Chihuahuas, and has very long slender legs, so she has some other breeds mixed in her ancestry.

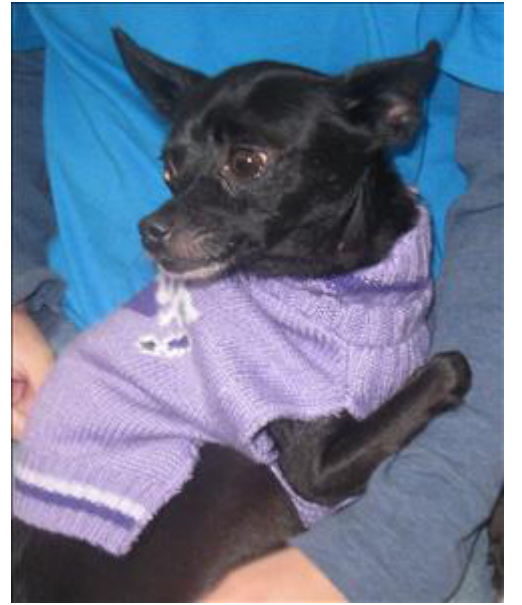
Luna has calm, gentle energy and is very easy to walk on leash. She has a dainty prance and is light on her feet. She likes to explore and sniff her surroundings, and also enjoys relaxing and rolling on the grass for a belly rub.

Luna loves people and is an affectionate dog who loves cuddling in a lap. She likes the company of other dogs, but prefers those who do not have a high energy level.

Come in and meet the lovely Miss Luna and see if she would fit into your family. She would love to have a "Home for the Holidays". She would probably do best in a quiet home with an individual or couple who are looking for a gentle companion. Luna qualifies for our 'Senior For Senior' reduced-fee adoption program.

She currently resides at the San Gabriel Valley Humane Society located at 851 E. Grand Avenue in San Gabriel with her roommate. We are located off San Gabriel Blvd., north of Mission and south of Las Tunas.

To arrange a 'Meet and Greet' with Luna, please stop by any time from 10:00am to 4:30pm Tuesday



thru Sunday.

Her adoption fee is \$120 which includes her spay surgery, a microchip, first vaccinations and a free wellness check-up at a participating veterinarian. Feel free to call us at (626) 286-1159 for more information on Luna.

See our website at www.sgvhumane.org for information and photos of all our wonderful pets.

PET OF THE WEEK

Jesso: Animal ID #A3591759

Meet the cutest pup in town, Jesso (A3591759)! Jesso is a loving 10-year-old white-and-tan altered male Shih Tzu whose owners left him at the Baldwin Park Animal Care Center on December 10th because they felt Jesso was "too old." Jesso may be a senior, but that's no real drawback: Seniors make outstanding pets! Weighing 16 lbs, Jesso has many of the desirable assets typical of senior dogs: He already knows how to walk perfectly on leash, is well-socialized with people and other dogs, and has a calm, relaxed energy. Jesso loves to be out and about to meet new people and dogs, and is also happy to spend the day lounging at home. He does seem to have dry eyes that should be evaluated by a vet to see if he needs eye drops. Jesso will be a fantastic indoor pet and best friend for anyone looking for a calm, wise pet, and he will repay you for giving him the good life in his golden years with his wonderful loyalty and humorous antics. To watch a video of Jesso, please visit the following link: <http://youtu.be/SBm3p9b9e2Q>

To meet Jesso in person, please see him at the Baldwin Park Shelter, located at 4275 N. Elton, Baldwin Park, CA 91706 (Phone: 626-430-2378 or 626-962-3577). He is available now. For any inquiries about Jesso, please reference his animal ID number: A3591759. 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 Jesso or the adoption process, contact United Hope for Animals Volunteer Adoption Coordinator Samantha at 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/>.



If a Cat or Kitten is on your Christmas List, look no further!



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851 E. Grand Ave. San Gabriel
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sgvhumane.org

Gooden

Where Academics & the Arts Come Together



Events

December 9
Information Session
9:15 - 10:15 am

December 17
Lessons and Carols
7:00 pm
St. Rita Church,
318 N. Baldwin Ave.
Sierra Madre

January 10
Open House -
Orientation 10:00 am
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SEAN'S SHAMELESS REVIEWS: BIRDMAN OR (THE UNEXPECTED VIRTUE OF IGNORANCE)

By Sean Kayden

The most original film of 2014 comes in the form of Alejandro González Iñárritu's "Birdman." Michael Keaton stars as Riggan, a one-time A-list movie star that's attempting to recapture his glory from twenty years ago with his own Broadway production. He's washed-up and is trying to overcome his ego and family distress as his play, which he adapted, directed and starring in is about to be underway. A colorful list of actors round up the cast including Zack Galifianakis, Naomi Watts, Emma Stone, Amy Ryan, and Edward Norton. On paper, Birdman may not seem all that original, but you have to see it to believe the true wonder of it all. Supplying one of the finest ensembles of any motion picture this year as well as the best camera work I've seen all year, "Birdman" truly sets itself apart from the majority of films released this year. The one-two mighty punch of the Michael Keaton and Edward Norton combo alone is easily worth the price of admission. Fortunately, there's so much more than just that to astound you. Riggan's play, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" based on the story by Raymond Carver is going to be a disaster. Various calamities keep occurring in the production. To avoid even further setbacks, they decide to still roll out with the scheduled previews. As Riggan is trying to come to terms with his own existence, he seems to be living in two realms at once—the current one and his past (with the Birdman character being his alter ego). His present reality consists of battling it out with Mike, the new actor that comes on board right before the first preview. Mike, portrayed by the electric Edward Norton, was to replace another actor who is out of commission due to an accident on set. He is absolutely on fire with this character. A supporting actor nomination is practically guaranteed. In addition, Emma Stone plays Riggan's daughter/personal assistant, who is out of rehab for drug use. She and her father aren't on

the best of terms, which has Riggan contemplating if he was actually a decent father all these years. "Birdman" explores the inner depths of what it means to be relevant, important, and noticed. In the world we live in that is rapidly changing and expanding, how long can one hold onto relevance? In fact, most are trying to obtain it, let alone hold onto it for as long as they can.

The way the movie was filmed gives the illusion it was one continuous shot. Obviously the editing is magnificent. Needless to say, this film should take home the film editing, sound editing, and

Directed By: Alejandro González Iñárritu
Written By: Alejandro González Iñárritu, Nicolás Giacobone, Alexander Dinelaris and Armando Bo
Rated R: Rated R for language throughout, some sexual content and brief violence
Release Date: November 14th, 2014

cinematography awards at next year's Oscars. I've never seen such a film with so many close-ups on the actors. You honestly feel right there behind the scenes of a real Broadway play. Things become even more surreal and unconventional in the third act when Riggan hits rock bottom. He's having a meltdown and his comic book character persona a.k.a. alter ego only drives him closer to the edge. As for the ending, the film leaves the audience to their own interpretation. Love it or hate it, it should still be considered an all around original conclusion to a superbly crafted motion picture. The film is also quite humorous, dark, and surprisingly heartfelt. Beautifully shot, spectacularly acted, marvelously executed from screenplay to screen, "Birdman" takes flight right from the beginning and soars its magical wings for the entire two-hour duration. What a ride!

Grade: 5 out of 5

Jeff's Book Picks

By Jeff Brown

THE CHRISTMAS BOX

by Richard Paul Evans

More than 7 million people have been touched by the magic of The Christmas Box, a holiday classic that is as beloved in our time as A Christmas Carol was in Dickens's. The Christmas Box was intended as a private expression of love for his two young daughters, Jenna and Allyson. Though he often told them that he loved them, he didn't feel that they could ever really understand the depth of his feelings until they had experienced the joy of rearing their own children, and by that time their relationship would have changed forever. In writing The Christmas Box, he hoped that at some time in the future they would read the book and know of their father's love. He was amazed at the inspiration that flowed into his mind and heart. He completed the moving story of a widow and the young family who comes to live with her in less than six weeks, and bound twenty copies to give as Christmas presents to family and friends. Those twenty copies were shared and passed along from family to family, from friend to friend, and what began as a tale for two little girls became a message of miracles, hope, and healing for people throughout the world.

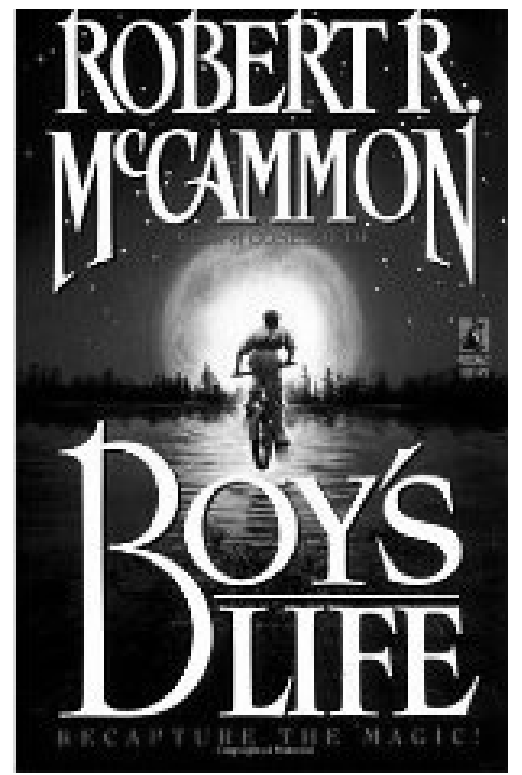
BOY'S LIFE by Robert McCammon

Don't miss this wonderful novel (a favorite book of many) from bestselling award-winning author Robert McCammon, in a book that Publishers Weekly calls "both a mystery that will satisfy the most finicky aficionado and a boisterous travelogue." Zephyr, Alabama, is an idyllic hometown for eleven-year-old Cory Mackenson—a place where monsters swim the river deep and friends are forever. Then, one cold spring morning, Cory and his father witness a car plunge into a lake—and a desperate rescue attempt brings his father face-to-face with a terrible vision of death that will haunt him forever. As Cory struggles to understand his father's pain, his eyes are slowly opened to the forces of good and evil that are manifested in Zephyr. From an ancient, mystical woman who can hear the dead and bewitch the living, to a violent clan of moonshiners, Cory must confront the secrets that hide in the shadows of his hometown—for his father's sanity and his own life hang in the balance.

THE CHRISTMAS SWEATER

by Glenn Beck

Radio and television host Glenn Beck delivers an instant holiday classic about boyhood memories, wrenching life lessons, and the true meaning of the gifts we give to one another in love. If You Could Change Your Life by Reversing Your Biggest Regrets, Sorrows and Mistakes...Would



You? We weren't wealthy, we weren't poor -- we just were. We never wanted for anything, except maybe more time together... When Eddie was twelve years old, all he wanted for Christmas was a bike. Although his life had gotten harder -- and money tighter -- since his father died and the family bakery closed... Eddie dreamed that somehow his mother would find a way to have his dream bike gleaming beside their modest Christmas tree that magical morning. What he got from her instead was a sweater. "A stupid, handmade, ugly sweater" that young Eddie left in a crumpled ball in the corner of his room. Scarred deeply by the realization that kids don't always get what they want, and too young to understand that he already owned life's most valuable treasures, that Christmas morning was the beginning of Eddie's dark and painful journey on the road to manhood. It will take wrestling with himself, his faith, and his family -- and the guidance of a mysterious neighbor named Russell -- to help Eddie find his path through the storm clouds of life and finally see the real significance of that simple gift his mother had crafted by hand with love in her heart. Based on a deeply personal true story, The Christmas Sweater is a warm and poignant tale of family, faith and forgiveness that offers us a glimpse of our own lives -- while also making us question if we really know what's most important in them.

Happy Holidays

Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!

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SANTA'S WORKSHOP

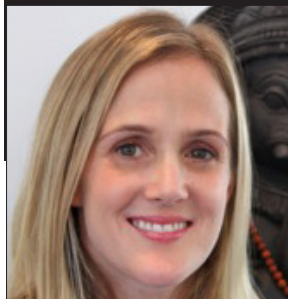
Merry Christmas!

Read the clues to fill in the puzzle with things you may see in Santa's workshop:

1. soft, white blanket of this, frosting the top of buildings
2. elves making upgrades to this in the garage
3. a huge scroll of paper listing these of every girl and boy
4. station overflowing with ice cream and every topping
5. elves hang up their own on the special night
6. wrapped toys tossed into a magic ____ for delivery
7. elves travel by this and magic
8. elf checking each ____ to make sure its jingle is ready to jangle
9. elves using ____ to make hand-crafted wooden toys
10. haywire ____ - making machine, covering shop with silvery strands
11. dispensers mounted on the walls, complete with marshmallows
12. a massive stone ____, but Santa enters through the front door
13. Mrs. Claus' special kitchen always has a batch of ____ in the oven
14. the ____ is a chilly place, but the workshop is always toasty
15. each room has a working ____ that never runs out of firewood
16. each of the ____ cared for by at least 3 animal-loving elves
17. a special closet just for Santa's ____ - with a tailor elf on hand...just in case
18. ____ eating big meals to have energy to power his nose through that special night
19. giant rolls of ____ paper hanging from walls - every color and design!
20. every refrigerator has at least 2 gallons of ____ - Santa's favorite drink

Print out free puzzles: **Christmas Puzzling Bookmarks, Holiday Fun!, Spreading Joy,** and the reading log and certificate set @ www.readingclubfun.com

THE JOY OF YOGA KEEPING UP YOUR PRACTICE



alone during the holidays. Yet, it's during this time that we need our yoga practice the most! In fact, making room in the schedule for our practice is what can give us more energy to do all we need to. Feeling centered and balanced is what allows us to be present in each moment. So how, in fact, can we make room for our practice during one of the busiest times of the year?

Finding a specific time of day for a home practice is extremely helpful and effective. Whether you can commit to 5 minutes or 60 minutes, try and keep it consistent. There may be some days when only 5 minutes is possible, and other days when more is possible. If you have a meditation practice, make sure to do that no matter what. Keep it simple! A steady 5-minute everyday practice is better than 60 minutes once a week. The physical practice of yoga, or asana, is

undeniably amazing, but the meditation practice can provide that lovely stability we crave. So, if you have to omit a part, keep the meditation.

When traveling to visit family or friends, bring your mat! There are very thin foldable travel mats that pack well in a suitcase. Upon arriving at your destination, opening your suitcase to find your yoga mat can only bring a feeling of comfort. Maybe there's a local yoga studio you might drop in on during your travels! Attending a class could provide the perfect break needed while staying with family.

There are many treats to enjoy and much visiting to be had during the holidays. Make it point to attend class and show the same spirit of giving with yourself. Acts of self-care and love, not only help us, but translate directly to the people whom we love the most. It's a win-win!

Much Love and Happy Holidays,

Keely Totten
Yoga Madre



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WEAR OUT, DON'T RUST OUT



Dr. Tina is a traditional naturopath and nutritionist at Vibrant Living Wellness Center

Each time we eat, our bodies create free radicals as part of the process of breaking down our food. This means that in order to counteract the oxidation caused by the metabolism of food, we need to eat antioxidant-rich foods with every meal. In order for this to happen, every meal we eat should contain whole plant food. Nature created antioxidant compounds when it

that is high in fat or refined carbohydrates these antioxidants may help counterbalance the negative effects of the pro-inflammatory food. Consuming foods which are high in phytonutrients increases the antioxidant capacity of the blood. The foods with the most phytonutrients are fruits. And the fruits with the highest concentration of phytonutrients are berries. In my opinion, it would be best to not eat the high fat or highly refined carbohydrate meal altogether. However, if you should succumb to the temptation, then I recommend chasing the bad food with some berries.

Berries are not the only good source of antioxidants. Legumes, especially red beans are very high in antioxidants. Apples are also good choice but even better than apples are artichokes, cinnamon and purple cabbage.

If we are talking about one single meal, the oxidative stress to the body may seem trivial. But over time, these daily insults can lead to problems such as heart disease and more. Don't let oxidation rust you out.

created plants.

Fruits, especially berries are a great source of antioxidants. When we eat berries with a meal



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WHO SHOULD BE SCREENED FOR LUNG CANCER?

What can you tell me about lung cancer screenings? My husband was a long-time smoker, but quit many years ago, so I'm wondering if he should be checked out.
Concerned Spouse

Dear Concerned,
According to recent recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force – an independent panel of medical experts that advises the government on health policies – if your husband is between the ages of 55 and 80, is a current smoker or quit within the last 15 years, and has a smoking history of at least 30 pack-years, he's at high risk for lung cancer and should talk to his doctor about getting screened.
Pack years are determined by multiplying the number of packs he smoked daily by the number of years he smoked.

You'll also be happy to know that lung cancer screenings – which are recommended annually to those at risk – will be covered by all private health insurance plans starting in 2015, and Medicare is expected to begin coverage this February or March. The Medicare screening, however, will only cover high-risk beneficiaries through age 74.

Lung cancer kills around 160,000 Americans each year making it the most deadly of all possible cancers. In fact, more people die of lung cancer than of colon, breast and prostate cancers combined.

Lung cancer also occurs predominantly in older adults. About two out of every three people diagnosed with lung cancer are 65 or older, and the risk of lung cancer peaks at age 71.

Lung Cancer Screening

The goal of annual screenings is to detect cancer early before symptoms appear, so it can be cured. The five-year survival rate among people with lung cancer when it's caught in its earliest stage is 77 percent, versus only 4 to 25 percent for people whose cancer has spread.

To get screened for lung cancer, your husband will need a low-dose computed tomography (CT) chest scan, which is a painless, noninvasive test that generates detailed three-dimensional images of his lungs.



For the screening, he will be asked to lie on a table that slides through the center of a large, doughnut shaped scanner that rotates around him to take images. Each scan takes just a few seconds, during which time he'll be asked to hold his breath, because movement can produce blurred images. The entire procedure takes only a few minutes from start to finish.

You also need to be aware that a lung CT screening has its downsides. First, it exposes you to some radiation – about the same as a mammography but more than that of a chest X-ray.

Lung CT screenings aren't foolproof either. They can produce a high rate of false-positive results, which means they frequently detect small spots (abnormalities) on the lungs that are suggestive of cancer but aren't cancerous. These false alarms lead to more testing and sometimes lung biopsies, as well as unnecessary worry and anxiety.

Prevention

Because smoking causes 80 to 90 percent of all lung cancer cases, the best way to avoid lung cancer is to not smoke, and if you do smoke, quit. Even if you've been a smoker for a long time, quitting now still decreases your risk. Other factors that can increase the risk of lung cancer include exposure to secondhand smoke, radon, asbestos and other toxic chemicals or fumes.

For more information on lung cancer screenings, call the American Lung Association at 800-586-4872, or use their online tool (LungCancerScreeningSavesLives.org), which will help you determine if your husband needs to be screened.

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

SENIOR HAPPENINGS

SPECIAL HOLIDAY LUNCH

Thursday, December 18 at 12:00PM

The annual holiday lunch is here! Join us on December 18 as the YWCA is providing a special menu of Cornish game hen, fresh sweet potatoes, corn, tossed salad and apple pie. The Senior Community Commission will be on hand to hand out raffle prizes! Be sure to make your reservation early, as seating is limited. Call the Senior Lunch Cafe at 626-355-0256 to RSVP.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY! ... December Birthdays

Pat Karamitros, Joan Hufnagel, Mary Alice Cervera, Carol Horejsi, Shirley Anhalt, Mignon Grijalva, Helen Reese, Levon Yapoujian, Toni Buckner, Lottie Bugl, Pat McGuire, Sheila Wohler, Nan Murphy, Eleanor Hensel, Sylvia Curl, Elizabeth Levie, Gayle Licher, Cindy Barran, and Melissa Stute. * To add your name to this distinguished list, please call the paper at 626.355.2737. YEAR of birth not required



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

Free Balance Class: Every 3rd Monday, from 11:00 to 11:45 am with Shannon. All ability levels are encouraged and welcomed.

Hawaiian and Polynesian Dance Class: Every Tuesday morning from 10:00am to 11:00am. Join instructor Barbara Dempsey as she instructs you in the art of hula.

Bingo: Every Tuesday beginning at 1:00pm. Cards are only \$0.25 each! Everyone is welcome to join. May be canceled if less than 5 people. Canceled on August 5th and 12th.

Free Blood Pressure Testing: Held 2nd Tuesday of the month from 11:00am to 12:00pm. No appointment is necessary.

Free Legal Consultation: Wednesday, August 27th from 10:00am to Noon. Attorney Lem Makupson is available for legal consultation. He specializes in Family Law, Wills, Trusts, Estates, and Injury. For an appointment call 626-355-7394.

Chair Yoga: Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:00 to 11:45 am, except on the third Monday of the month when the balance class is held. A suggested donation of \$5 at one of the classes is requested, but is not required.

Birthday Celebrations: Every second Thursday of the month the Hart Park House Senior Center celebrates birthdays of our patrons. The free birthday cake is provided by the Sierra Madre Civic Club.

Game Day: Every Thursday starting at 12:45pm. A regular group of seniors play poker. Other games available for use.

Free Strength Training Class: Every Friday from 12:45pm to 1:30pm with Lisa Brandley. The class utilizes light weights for low impact resistance training. All materials for the class are provided.



UPCOMING EXCURSIONS

Los Angeles Central Library (Los Angeles)
Date: Friday, January 23, 2015 Time: 9:30am to 3:30pm

Meeting Location: Hart Park House Senior Center - Cost: \$5.00 (does not include lunch)
A visit to the Los Angeles Public Library's state of the art Central Library located in Downtown. A docent led tour will introduce you to the art and architecture of the Goodhue Building with its distinctive sphinxes and rooftop pyramid followed by a walk through the high-tech Bradley Wing, designed by famed architect Norman Pfeiffer, where participants will gaze at the 8-story atrium and whimsical chandeliers. Finish the tour learning about the library's comprehensive book, magazine, audio and videotape collections as well as its extensive network of formational databases. Lunch will be on your own at Grand Central Market where you can enjoy tasty treats or a leisurely meal from a variety of local vendors. Participants should bring money for lunch and souvenirs. Last day to register is Monday, January 12th. Level of walking: Medium to High

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KATIE Tse.....This and That



ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS MY FINGERNAILS!

There's less than a week before Christmas. And if you have kids on your gift list, good luck! Hopefully you made it through Black Friday and Small Business

Monday without any black eyes or police bookings. Kids these days expect the latest technological products with all their bells, whistles, and hi-def resolution. A year or so ago I remember one of the tech guys at work jokingly informed us of the "iPotty," a toilet seat with an iPad installed in front. It was supposedly intended to lure toddlers into toilet training, but it was just a matter of time before they came out with the adult version, complete with cup holders.

Ahhh... Remember the good old days when life was simpler, and kids just wanted their two front teeth? While I'm not lusting after a new pair of upper incisors, I do wish I had fingernails, if only for a day. I don't want "glamour nails" with rhinestones. Nor do I want nails that are long enough to fit an intricate reproduction of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Just normal, healthy-looking nails would be fine for me.

Since my early childhood, the ends of my nails have never extended beyond my fingertips. Of course this is entirely my fault, and I take full responsibility. You've heard of people who grind their teeth, pull out their hair, or engage in other compulsive behaviors. Well, I rip up my nails. I'm not proud of it, but it could be worse.

The only time I made a conscious effort to grow out my nails was for my wedding. And then, the only reason was because I knew our photographer would take pictures of our hands wearing our rings. I was able to leave my nails alone for two weeks. Then there was a stressful meeting at work close to the wedding date. I could feel my fingers

drawing together into rip position beneath the table.

"Don't do it! You've worked so hard!" I told myself. And I did resist the urge to tear my newly grown nails --for about five minutes. Unable to stand it any longer, I yielded to the impulse and feverishly tore the tops off all 10 fingernails. Weeks of patience and restraint were undone in a matter of minutes. But oddly, I felt better.

At the wedding, our photographer did arrange our hands for a couple close-ups of our ringed fingers. I tried to curl my fingertips inward to avoid exposure of my miniscule nails. (As a wife, it's embarrassing if your husband has nicer nails than you do.) Somehow those photos never made it into our album...



I used to think nail-biting (or nail decimation of any sort) was a sign of some deep-seated personality imbalance. Children might bite their nails, but adults are supposed to be above such things. Those were my thoughts until I met a very smart, very "put-together" intern at our company. We'll call her Lois.

Lois was in the midst of grad school, a scary shadow land pitted with academic quick sand ready to swallow students whole. At least that's my memory of it. Nevertheless, Lois was composed, confident, and cool as a cucumber. She also came to work every day with flawless makeup and not a single coiffed strand of hair out of place. Sigh... I supposed that's how the other confident half lived --until I saw her fingernails.

Looking past her perfect hair and makeup, Lois's fingernails (or lack thereof) betrayed the secret anxiety of all nail-biters. I never brought up nail biting as a commonality between Lois and myself. But at least I knew that I wasn't alone in the world; there were other normal, functioning people with

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Dental: Toothache, TMJ dysfunction.

Harmony: Increase energy, strengthen immune system.

Neurological: Headache, migraine, vertigo, stroke residuals.

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FAMILY MATTERS

By Marc Garlett



'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING GIFTS: HOW TO DO IT RIGHT

There are so many things to love about this time of year. Holiday cheer and generosity of spirit flow freely. But if you're not careful, giving gifts could actually land you on the naughty list (at least the naughty list kept by the IRS). So here are some guidelines to follow when gifting to charity or even your own family members this season:

- Charitable Donation Rules

Household items. Unless you are donating an item with a value over \$500 and have a qualified appraisal, household items must be in good condition or better to qualify for a deduction. And if the value of your donated items exceeds \$250, you must have a written receipt from the charity that describes the items. If the total of your non-cash contributions exceeds \$500, remember to complete Form 8283 and attach it to your tax return. Money. You must have a written receipt or bank statement for any donation of money to a charity, regardless of the amount. You can gift via cash, check, credit or debit card. If you donate via credit card in December, keep in mind that even if you don't actually pay it off until January, you can still take the deduction on your 2014 tax return. Also, if you donate via payroll deduction, you'll need a W-2 wage statement or other documentation from your employer that shows the total amount donated in 2014.

Qualified charity status. Only gifts to eligible charities qualify for a deduction. You can check the eligibility on the IRS website.

- Family Gifting Rules

Annual exclusion. You are allowed to gift up to \$14,000 in cash, property or other assets to any one person without having it count toward your lifetime gift tax exemption (\$5.34 million). If you are married, you can donate up to \$28,000 as a couple to as many people as you want, as long as the total given to each does not

exceed \$28,000. You do not even have to be related to the recipient. Plus, limits on gifts to spouses don't apply. Funding for college plans. Contributing to a child or grandchild's college education is a gift that keeps giving forever. Contributions to a Section 529 education savings plan can be made up to the annual exclusion amount of \$14,000 (\$28,000 for married couples). Money in these plans grows tax-free and is allowed to be withdrawn tax-free as long as the funds are used for educational purposes.

Other gifts. If you pay someone's tuition or medical expenses (including health insurance premiums) directly to the service provider, this will not count against your annual exclusion or lifetime gift tax exemption. As long as it is paid direct to the provider, you won't have to file a gift tax return. By all means, be generous this holiday season. There's nothing better... except being generous AND availing yourself of the IRS tax advantages for charitable contributions and gifting. If you need advice on specific gifts or anything else, please give me a call.

To you family's health, wealth, and happiness,

A local attorney, father, and CASA volunteer (Court Appointed Special Advocate for Children), Marc Garlett is on a mission to help parents protect what they love most. His office is located at 49 S. Baldwin Ave., Ste. G, Sierra Madre, CA 91024. Call 626.355.4000 to schedule an appointment to sit down and talk about ensuring a legacy of love and financial security for your family or visit www.GarlettLaw.com for more information.



Social Media Tips, Tricks & Ideas



by: MJ Finstrom

Email marketing is still important. Some people thought it might go away when other social media strategies started coming on strong. Email is not going anywhere. In fact, more and more businesses are finding that email campaigns build lasting relationships with customers.

The email campaigns that produce the best results are simple. Emails with a single clear call to action with easy to consume content drive results.

If email marketing seems overwhelming, break it down in 12. Look at 2015 and build a simple editorial calendar with 12 email campaign ideas (one for each month). Think about each month. What holidays and events you can leverage? What do you need to promote? After you send out your first email, you'll realize the value. When you use a tool like Constant Contact, you'll be able to measure your results. You can see who opened

your emails and what they clicked on. You can also schedule your emails in advance.

Email is not going anywhere. It's something we all use and it's an important part of cultivating relationships.

About MJ: MJ and her brother David own HUTdogs, a creative services business that specializes in Internet Marketing strategies and Social Media. They offer social media management services and help their clients build a strong on-line presence. "Like" them on Facebook for trending news in social media, internet marketing and other helpful tips, www.facebook.com/hutdogs.

Sign up for their upcoming classes, webinars and presentations at: www.hutdogs.com/workshops/schedule



LIFE LINES

by Amanda Rogers

Get this...when we're born we feel content with ourselves. We have no negative self-talk. In other words, we're not pulled from our mother's womb apologetic for having taken 22 hours to make our way

down the birth canal. We don't chastise ourselves for dripping placenta on the doctor's shoes. We don't worry that the crying woman holding us is disappointed by the size of our ears.

Yep, babies enter this world with a clean self-image slate. The newborn feels that all is right in his world and experiences a sense of warm satisfaction with the first infusion of the mother's milk. It's not till later that we exchange a natural animal sense of our basic worth, for a contrived symbolic one.

Man has become the only animal in nature that vitally depends on a symbolic constitution of his worth. And the rest of his life is devoted to the protection, maintenance and aggrandizement of the symbolic edifice of his self-esteem.

At first he nourishes it in the appraisal of his playmates, later it may depend on good grades, a baseball trophy or scoring the lead in the High school production of Oklahoma. Finally in our 20's one comes to earn his self-esteem by performing in the roles that society provides; doctor, lawyer, struggling actor who goes from obscurity to being the Verizon guy on TV... Then we get our vital sense of who we are by repeating, "I am a good doctor

because I heal people," "I am a good lawyer because I help people," "I am a good actor because, heck, I'm the Verizon guy!"

How do we let go of the symbols society gives us to evaluate our worth and get back to the basic natural worth we were given at birth? How do we stop the images and inner monologue and embrace our worth on the fact that we just "are." That simple. And we are satisfied.

I'd like to suggest a few ideas...

- 1) Meditate yourself back in time and recall what you enjoyed doing before you did the things necessary for a strong college application.
- 2) Talk to your parents or an older sibling. Ask them to describe what you were like right out of the chute – your temperament, interests, and quirks.
- 3) Start protecting your current accomplishments from the evaluation of others. Paint a beautiful picture, play a piano sonata, write a poem, run a 10k in thirty minutes. Then keep it to yourself. What does that feel like? Can you give yourself enough praise and validation that you don't need the approval and opinion of others?

This is our birthright... to be who we are. To not make life decisions based on the level of approval we get from others. What kind of life would open up for us if we could all maintain that innate sense of satisfaction with ourselves?

You can contact Amanda at amandarogerscoaching.com

There are two apparently attractive options for buyers scoping out a deal. One type is the "short sale," where sellers have made an agreement with their lender to sell the home for less than they still owe on the mortgage.

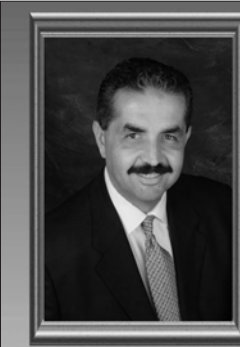
The second type is the REO (bank-owned) home, which has fallen back into the hands of the lender after the sellers defaulted.

While these properties may be appealingly priced, buyers need stomach and smarts to take proper advantage. If you're considering a short sale purchase, focus only on those with a price pre-approved by the lender. Otherwise, you may be wasting precious time in negotiations that may still ultimately fail.

Also seek out foreclosures that are protected by the Cash For Keys program, which offers the current (or former) owners a cash incentive to prevent them from neglecting the property before vacating it. Either way, inspections are crucial, especially if the house has been vacant for some time. Talk to your agent about having the utilities temporarily reconnected for the inspection, so you're sure all is in working order.

And finally, don't focus on the asking price alone. Location in a declining neighborhood or extreme maintenance and repair issues will eclipse any perceived value in a low price. Great homes are out there at bargain prices, but let an agent guide you through potential pitfalls.

Luther Tsinoglou has been a top producing sales agent at Podley Properties Sierra Madre office for years. Luther has been licensed and practicing real estate since 1992. He specializes in residential and income property in Southern California. Luther can be reached at his direct line (626) 695-8650 or at luther@tsinoglou.com.



Tips of the Trade: Real Estate Revealed

by Luther Tsinoglou

TAKE A GUIDE ON YOUR HUNT



What do you want to create this holiday? Consider now. Before it's too late.

If you're like most, you want to create something special. Something meaningful. Even magical. This kind of experience requires the heart. More than "doing," it requires "being." Being in peace. The more peace, the more memorable the holidays become. Mostly because you're present. You're experiencing the moments with attention. Not running lists in your head.

The right brain is the place of peace. Of expansion and love. Away from the pressure of the left brain. With its judgments, rules and ridicule. The "right" way leads back to the real you. How to get there? Slow down. Breathe. Be here right now. What do you smell? What do you hear? What do you taste?

BUSINESS TODAY

The latest on Business News, Trends and Techniques

By La Quetta M. Shamblee,

THE SMALL BUSINESS SELF-ASSESSMENT – ANNUAL CHECK-UP

It is a well known fact that it is to everyone's advantage to have routine medical check-ups at least once a year for basic health, dental and vision. Whether it's the more widely-accepted practices of Western Medicine practices that are sanctioned by the American Medical Association, or the growing sector of holistic and alternative medical practices, each discipline has established a set of basic screening tools. These annual check-ups are considered an important part of preventative care as the interim monitoring system to determine if key health indicators are within ranges that are considered healthy. More importantly, it is the most constructive way to identify problems or potential problems in their earliest stages. By the same token, every business should undergo a basic check-up at least once a year.

For a business, the annual check-up may be

tool designed to guide the timely selection of the overall objective for a business. The objective will be determined as to its appropriateness AFTER the SWOT analysis has been completed. Especially since the SWOT will help highlight the extent to which internal and external factors are favorable or unfavorable for the objective to be accomplished. This will allow the business owner to adjust the objective appropriately so a solid plan can be developed for it to be achieved.

A SWOT analysis can be used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses/Limitations, Opportunities, and Threats of a business, but it can be used for many different situations. Albert Humphrey (1926-2005) was an American business and management consultant who is credited with creating the SWOT technique, which was evolved as a standard business tool in the 1960's and 1970's

| SWOT Analysis | | | |
|---------------|--|--|---|
| Internal | Favorable | | Unfavorable |
| | STRENGTHS | | WEAKNESSES |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 years experience Good reputation Specialize in rare tropical plants | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak marketing; little to no money for advertising One-person staff limits the jobs I can take |
| External | OPPORTUNITIES | | THREATS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market services as a landscape "designer" Create a "design" for a high-profile location or client | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-priced competition from "blow and go" gardeners Lower cost of do-it-yourself options |

referred to as an organizational assessment and is often performed by a professional business consultant. A SWOT analysis is a tool commonly used as part of this process. The good news is that small business owners willing to invest a few hours can learn how to use this tool to conduct a "quick" analysis to determine the most feasible goals to pursue. The SWOT is a strategic planning

as it was used in conferences at Stanford University to analyze data from Fortune 500 companies. The genius of the SWOT Analysis is its simplicity. It can be used by owners of Mom and Pop businesses to gather basic information, as well as by professional consultants trained to conduct more indepth analysis of departments, processes and other operational components. Each of the letter in SWOT is used to prepare a list of responses in each quadrant as described below:

Strengths – will include a list a characteristics of the business, department or team that will give it an advantage over competitors

Weaknesses – will include a list of characteristics that have the business, department or team positioned at a disadvantage when compared to other competitors

Opportunities – will include a list of factors in the environment external to the business that provide a chance to strengthen or improve performance

Threats – will include a list of elements in the environment external to the business that may likely result in trouble or challenges to the progress of the business or project

The tool is designed with four quadrants as noted in the example below. It includes a partial list of items that might be listed in each quadrant of the SWOT analysis for a landscaping business operated by a sole proprietor:

Having and knowing how to use the right set of business tools often means the difference between progress and stagnation, net profits or net loss, success or failure. Every business should undergo a basic check-up at least once a year, and for those with limited resources to engage in a comprehensive planning process, the SWOT is a great place to start. It is one of the most user-friendly business tools that can provide information that is relevant and timely for small businesses.

Reprint MVNews 2010

Looking Up

with Bob Eklund



CURIOSITY FINDS ACTIVE ORGANIC CHEMISTRY ON MARS

NASA's Mars Curiosity rover has measured a tenfold spike in methane, an organic chemical, in the atmosphere around it and detected other organic molecules in a rock-powder sample collected by the robotic laboratory's drill.

"This temporary increase in methane—sharply up and then back down—tells us there must be some relatively localized source," said Sushil Atreya of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, a member of the Curiosity rover science team. "There are many possible sources, biological or non-biological, such as interaction of water and rock."

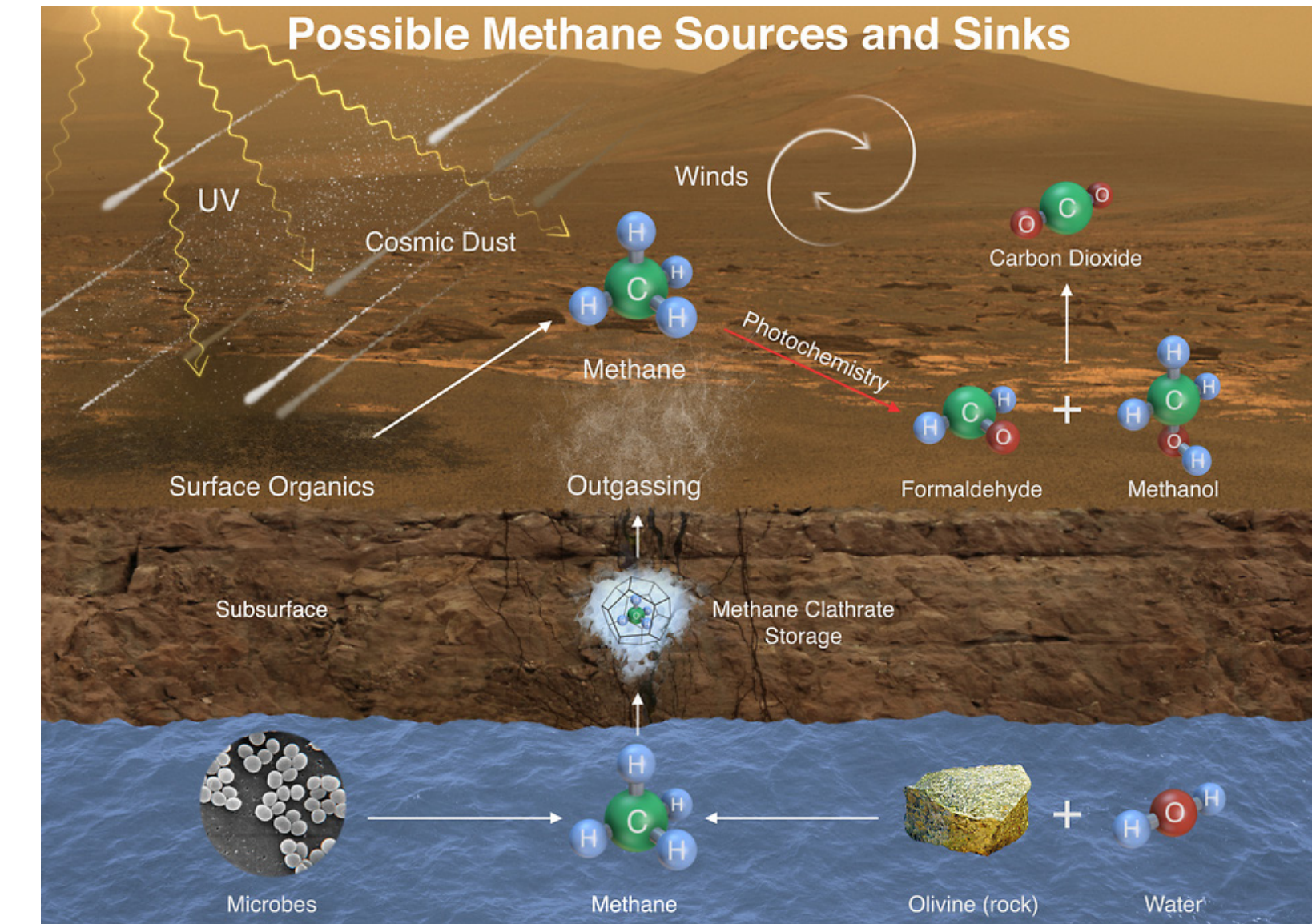
Researchers used Curiosity's onboard Sample Analysis at Mars (SAM) laboratory a dozen times in a 20-month period to sniff methane in the atmosphere. During two of those months, in late 2013 and early 2014, four measurements averaged seven parts per billion. Before and after that, readings averaged only one-tenth that level.

Curiosity also detected different Martian organic chemicals in powder drilled from a rock dubbed Cumberland, the first definitive detection of organics in surface materials of Mars. These Martian organics could either have formed on Mars or been delivered to Mars by meteorites.

Organic molecules, which contain carbon and usually hydrogen, are chemical building blocks of life, although they can exist without the presence of life. Curiosity's findings from analyzing samples of atmosphere and rock powder do not reveal whether Mars has ever harbored living microbes, but the findings do shed light on a chemically active modern Mars and on favorable conditions for life on ancient Mars.

"This first confirmation of organic carbon in a rock on Mars holds much promise," said Curiosity Participating Scientist Roger Summons of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. "Organics are important because they can tell us about the chemical pathways by which they were formed and preserved. In turn, this is informative about Earth-Mars differences and whether or not particular environments represented by Gale Crater sedimentary rocks were more or less favorable for accumulation of organic materials. The challenge now is to find other rocks on Mount Sharp that might have different and more extensive inventories of organic compounds."

Researchers also reported that Curiosity's taste of Martian water, bound into lakebed minerals in the Cumberland rock more than three billion



years ago, indicates the planet lost much of its water before that lakebed formed and continued to lose large amounts after.

SAM analyzed hydrogen isotopes from water molecules that had been locked inside a rock sample for billions of years and were freed when SAM heated it, yielding information about the history of Martian water. The ratio of a heavier hydrogen isotope, deuterium, to the most common hydrogen isotope can provide a signature for comparison across different stages of a planet's

history.

The ratio of deuterium to hydrogen has changed because the lighter hydrogen escapes from the upper atmosphere of Mars much more readily than heavier deuterium. In order to go back in time and see how the deuterium-to-hydrogen ratio in Martian water changed over time, researchers can look at the ratio in water in the current atmosphere and water trapped in rocks at different times in the planet's history.

Martian meteorites found on Earth also provide

some information, but this record has gaps. No known Martian meteorites are even close to the same age as the rock studied on Mars, which formed about 3.9 billion to 4.6 billion years ago, according to Curiosity's measurements.

You can contact Bob Eklund at: beklund@MtnViewsNews.com.



CHRISTMAS CHEER By Christopher Nyerges

Memories of Christmas Season 2008

[Excerpted from Christopher's Kindle book, "Til Death Do Us Part?", available from Amazon or as a pdf from the Store at www.SchoolofSelf-Reliance.com.]

In the days after Dolores died, I still spent my evenings with Nami and Fikret and Nellie (the little dog that Dolores boarded), cooking dinner, sharing dinner, talking over television. Both Nami and Fikret were living in rooms in the front part of

the duplex. Nami was from Tokyo, working at a Japanese firm in downtown Los Angeles while she earned her CPA license. Fikret was a student from Germany who'd be going home in a few days.

That December was dark, pressing, my mind a constricted box of sorrow and loss.

A close friend had earlier suggested to Dolores that she take Nami and Fikret to see the annual Griffith Park festival of lights, and Dolores had mentioned it to Fikret. I brought it up to Fikret and he wanted to go. I think he was more concerned about me getting out and "getting normal" than he was about seeing some electric light display. Anyway, he arranged with Nami to go one evening after Nami got home from work, and I drove.

I had never seen the light show either, and though I was in no mood for "joy," I wanted Nami and Fikret to feel happiness, and the joy of the American Christmas season that the youth can best appreciate.

My mental state was very constrictive, narrow, even subdued horror. It was as if I'd been hit in the face with a 2x4, and I could not see beyond my shocked pain. But I tried, with great effort, to "enjoy" an evening out with Nami and Fikret as best I could. It was the weekend after Dolores died. Nami got home early from work, and it was already dark. Fikret made a very light meal – more of a snack – for everyone before we drove off to Griffith Park in my Jeep. I was preoccupied with now living a life turned upside-down, with no perception of light at the end of my tunnel.

Fikret and Nami were noticeably happy, upbeat, and they seemed to be happy to be doing something with me. Fikret had come on a few field trips with, but I'd only gone out rarely with Nami. I know they were both fully cognizant of my pain and I think they were being happy because they wanted me to be happy. To me, the lights of Griffith Park were a very minor attraction.

As we drove, we spoke about their day, and other light matters. I always enjoyed talking with Nami over dinner about what sort of day she had at work, and what new English words she learned. We drove into the large expansive parking lot east of the Los Angeles Zoo, and

drove around until we saw where to park for the festival of lights. People parked their cars, and then boarded buses which set sail every 15 minutes or so, or until the buses were full. The three of us were the first to enter a bus, so we got the seats we wanted. A few adults filed in, and then a whole group of school children came in and filled the bus. The driver turned off the lights, and we were off down the two miles or so of the electric light display.

The children spontaneously sang Christmas carols at the tops of their voices. Nami and Fikret tried to follow along: Jingle Bells, Rudolph, Silent Night, all the classics. Mostly, the children sang enthusiastically and loud with lots of laughter for the first verse until the song faded as the children didn't know the words. After loud laughter, another song would begin.

I could tell they were all having great fun, though I was barely there. I had to shut off most of my painful feelings and emotions and turn on only that part of me that was needed for ordinary interactions with others. I was glad that there was so much happiness in the world, but I was in pain.

I was in a darkness of my own, alone, as if I was severely and suddenly cut off from all that was important to me. Which was, in fact, what happened. After the light show, we returned to the Jeep, and I drove on in a stupor. I asked Nami and Fikret if they wanted to see more Christmas lights, and they said yes. Christmas Tree Lane was impressive, but monotonous to me. Nami and Fikret just said "Oohh," and "Ahhh," and "Look at those, wow!" I tried to explain the history of Christmas Tree Lane, how I grew up just around the corner, and I drove by our family home on North Los Robles.

I didn't want to go home quite yet. "Going home" would mean that I would go back home alone, would sit there for awhile listening to music or watching TV, feeling the full grief of losing Dolores, by myself. It meant I would go to sleep with my grief, unable to find solace in music or TV. I would turn off the TV and music, and in the darkness I would fall into my abyss of sorrow until I awoke the next day. No, I didn't want to go home yet.

I told Nami and Fikret that I knew of another Christmas light display and we drove across town looking for it. We never found it, but they got a tour of East Pasadena and Sierra Madre before we stopped for some snacks and finally went home.

We then went into the front kitchen when we got home, and enjoyed some cookies and coffee. We all laughed together and we watched a little bit of a Christmas movie on TV. It was a good evening overall, but it would be a long time before I could feel joy again.

That was six years ago this December. Life goes on. I learned to love again, and I realized that one does not want to "forget," as we often hear. For me, it was a truly unique and special time to assist one in their final days. It made me feel the value of each day, of each breath, of each moment.

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To register, please call the Education Office at 626-821-4623

The final month of the year often finds us in a frantic state of shopping, decorating, traveling and other high-energy activity. Yet, instead of having fun, we often end up feeling ill, anxious or depressed. The reason, according to Taoist philosophy and traditional Chinese medicine, is that the action-packed schedules we keep at this time of year fall out of sync with the earth's natural cycles.

This workshop is designed to aid us through the next few weeks, helping us conserve and increase our energy and stay balanced and centered. It will be a lovely gift to give yourself!

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'Tis the Season

Merry Christmas!

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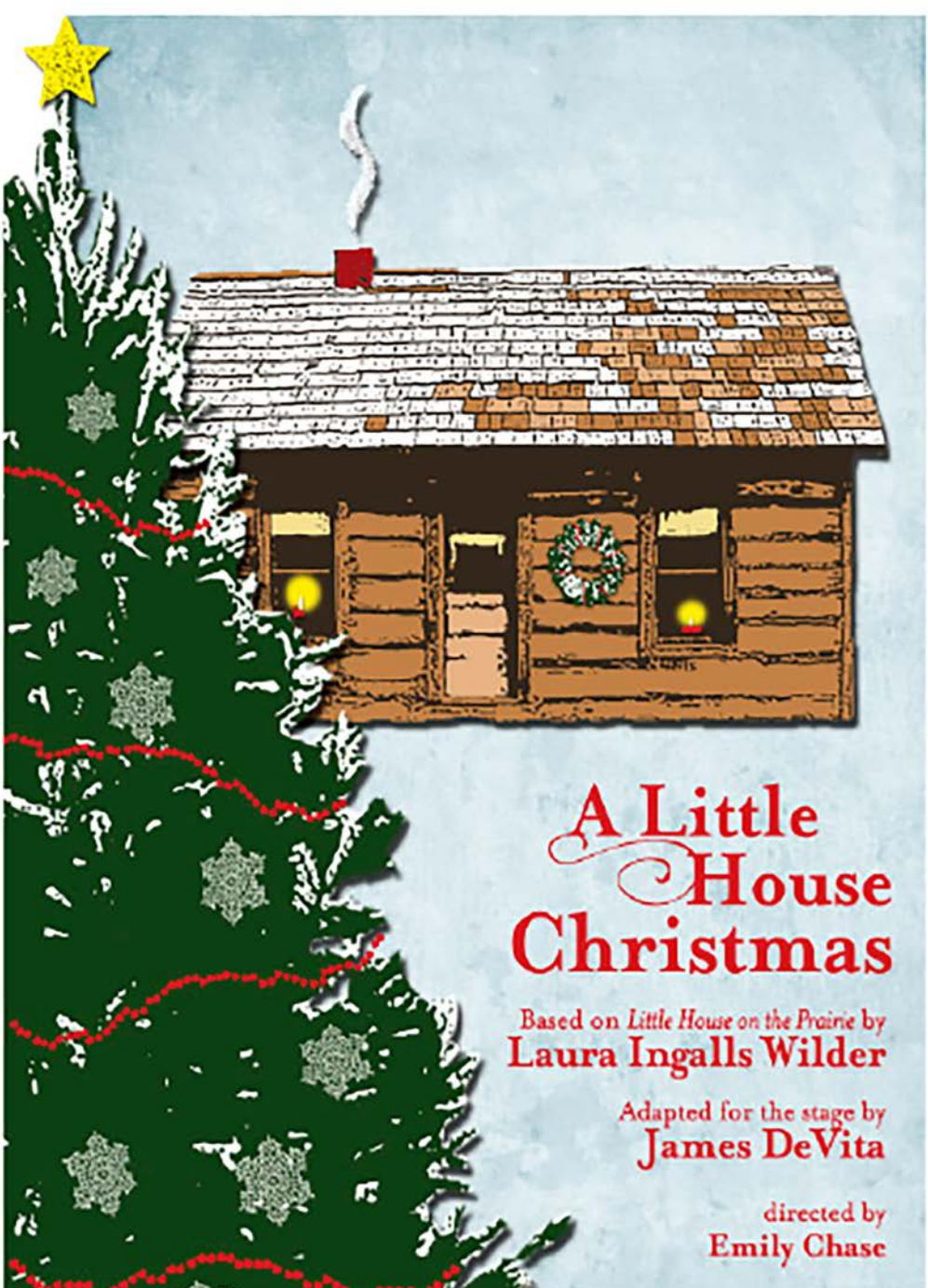
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| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| JUDY WEBB-MARTIN | KATIE ORTH |
| C 626.688.2273 | C 626.688.0418 |
| P 626.507.3028 | P 626.507.3034 |
| judywm@podley.com | katieo@podley.com |
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Mountain Views News

PUBLISHER/ EDITOR
Susan Henderson

CITY EDITOR
Dean Lee

EAST VALLEY EDITOR
Joan Schmidt

BUSINESS EDITOR
LaQuetta Shamblee

PRODUCTION
Richard Garcia

SALES
Patricia Colonello
626-355-2737
626-818-2698

WEBMASTER
John Avery

CONTRIBUTORS

CoCo Lasalle
Chris Leclerc
Bob Eklund
Howard Hays
Paul Carpenter
Kim Clymer-Kelley
Christopher Nyerges
Peter Dills
Dr. Tina Paul
Rich Johnson
Merri Jill Finstrom
Lori Koop
Rev. James Snyder
Tina Paul
Mary Carney
Katie Hopkins
Deanne Davis
Despina Arouzman
Greg Welborn
Renee Quenell
Ben Show
Sean Kayden
Marc Garlett

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Letters to the editor and correspondence should be sent to:

Mountain Views News
80 W. Sierra Madre Bl.
#327
Sierra Madre, Ca.
91024

Phone: 626-355-2737
Fax: 626-609-3285
email:

mtnewsnews@aol.com

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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.



OUT TO PASTOR

A Weekly Religion Column by Rev. James Snyder

NAUGHTY IS AS NAUGHTY DOES

It is the time of the year when the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is busy doing 101 things in as many directions: cookies to bake, presents to buy, Christmas cards to address and send and a thousand other things I probably am not aware of. My job is to make her job easier by staying out of her way.

Usually I am rather good at my job. It has taken many years to perfect my job and I am proud to say I have achieved somewhat perfection. But this week I was caught unawares.

During this time of year, I make it a practice to stay away from the kitchen area as much as possible. This past week, I do not know what I was thinking, but I went into the kitchen to pour myself a cup of coffee. On the surface, it looked rather innocent.

I finished pouring my coffee and turned to exit the kitchen area as quickly as possible when I ran into you know who.

"I'm so busy I was wondering if you might do me just a little favor." The seductive sound of her voice caught me off guard and I stopped and said the unthinkable. At the time I forgot that a "little favor" has nothing to do with "little."

"I will be glad to help anyway I can." After those words tumbled out of my mouth, I could not believe that it was me actually saying those words. In my right mind, I would never respond in that fashion.

"That's wonderful. I knew I could count on you."

I knew I was in some serious trouble. I did not quite know what kind of trouble I was in but I was going to find out in very short order.

"I don't have time to go to the shopping mall and pick up a certain item. I was wondering if you might do it for me? It would help me out so much and I would be so grateful."

I do not know any politician that has anything on my wife. She can smooth talk better than anybody I know. The only problem is, all the smooth talk was directed in my direction. How in the world, and I say this from a husband's perspective, can I turned down this kind of request?

"You want me to go to the mall?" I said as carefully as I could, "you do know I don't like the mall?"

"I know. If I don't get that item at the mall today, I'm going to be in serious trouble. You wouldn't want me to be in serious trouble, would you?"

In order for me to keep her out of serious trouble, I must put myself in serious trouble. "Okay," I said as dryly as possible. "I guess I can go to the mall and pick up that item for you. Just give me the details and I will be off." I was off, alright. Off my rocker and did not know when I would be able to get back on that rocker.

Then a thought came to me.

"This will necessitate four apple fritters to give me the energy to do this little favor of yours."

She looked at me with one of those looks that penetrated deep into my soul.

"Okay," I said with a nervous quiver, "how about three apple fritters?"

The stare intensified.

I cleared my throat, picked up the keys to my vehicle and headed for the mall. A lot of things I do not like to do and this has to be at the top of that list. However, being the terrific husband that I am (I have no documentation proving this, just trust me) I put my life in harm's way.

I got to the mall and found the store where I was to pick up the aforementioned items. I paid for them, which I did not know was part of the bargain, but a guy's got to do what a guy's got to do. Then I set my face like a flint toward the exit door.

Then I saw it. I had forgotten about this facet of the shopping mall at this time of the year. But there he was, Mr. Santa Claus in all of his ho, ho, ho-ness. It dawned on me at the time that he was the one responsible for knowing who is naughty or nice. This was my opportunity.

The line to sit on Santa's lap was finished and he was sitting there by himself. I took the opportunity to go up and greet him.

"Do you know me?" I asked him with the broadest smile I could slap on my face.

"No," he said thoughtfully, "I don't believe we've ever met."

"Well, do you know my wife?"

"No," he said, stroking his beard.

I flipped him a "thanks," as I turned around and headed toward a little bakery I knew had some apple fritters. Due to the sensitivity of the situation, the place will remain anonymous.

Eating my apple fritters I thought about what Solomon said, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goes" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

It is not naughty unless someone connected with my wife sees me. Because I firmly believe, one person's naughty is another person's apple fritter. No names revealed.

Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, Ocala, Florida. E-mail jamesnsnyder2@att.net or website www.jamessnyderministries.com.



"OUR TOP STORY TONIGHT: FINALLY, SOME GOOD NEWS OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST!"

RON Carter



THE NFL'S LOOMING CONCUSSION ISSUE

The National Football League (NFL) has a looming major problem and it is not domestic abuse. The NFL's major issue in the coming years will be the massive amount of concussions the players sustained while playing this popular American sport. I have written about NFL's players' issues with brain trauma in prior blogs, but recently I have been contemplating following up on my prior remarks. A few years ago, I intimated to a very good friend of mine that the NFL will probably be banned in the next 20 years. I am not a prophet, but the head injuries some of the game's greatest players have sustained have been my beacon light. Too many of these talented men are suffering debilitated lives after playing in the NFL.

Yesterday I was conversing with my colleague, Everett Glenn, an attorney and former Sports Agent who represented NFL players such as Hall of Famers Richard Dent and Willie Gault, about NFL games. Everett has started a campaign to advocate for college students rights to receive pay for playing in the NCAA football program (I'll blog on that topic in another post). I told him that whenever I look at NFL games, recently, and observed a player being injured from severe contact with another player, I often wondered what will happen to the players after their careers are over in the NFL. Mind you, this is no way to watch and enjoy this high contact sport. But, since there is no such thing as a "mild concussion," there is no other way for me to surmise this issue while looking at NFL games on Sundays, Monday Nights and Thursday Nights.

Two weeks ago, I was chatting with two of my fraternity brothers, Anthony Samad and Lys Boverly, about NFL players' head injuries NFL. We all agreed that this was a major issue which is about to become front and center in the NFL, because too many NFL players in retirement are suffering from the injuries they sustained during their playing days in the NFL. Take for example Terry Tautolo, a former San Francisco 49ers linebacker, UCLA Bruin standout player and a 1981 49ers Superbowl Champion, his family has blamed his tragic decline and battle with substance abuse on the many concussion he sustained during his nine-year career in the NFL. Terry, one of the "first" Samoans recruited from college to play in the NFL, has spent a significant time of his retirement from the NFL in and out of homelessness. There are other players such as Ray Lucas of the New York Jets, Jim McMahon of the Chicago Bears and Lawrence Marshall of the New York Giants who have all been affected with head trauma from playing in the NFL.

I am not certain what is going to happen in the immediate future in the NFL, but this I can assume with 250, 000 young athletes being injured, from some form of head injury, every year playing football in the United States, it is sure going to be a huge task for the NFL to curb the concussions which playing in the NFL predicates. The players are giving so much joy to NFL fans year after year. It is only fitting they deserve to have lives full of dignity and enjoyment after their playing days in the NFL are over.

RICH Johnson



HOW HARD DOES SANTA REALLY WORK ON CHRISTMAS?

Santa Claus does not get his due. I was reached by his Public Relations Department who asked me to help make the public aware of the sheer scope of his job. I am focusing on the tip of the iceberg so to speak. The days immediately surrounding Christmas.

Though the data for this article was accumulated twenty years-four ago and should be adjusted for population growth, these 1990 numbers will give us a peek into Santa's Herculean efforts.

There are roughly 2 billion children under the age of 18 in the world. Fortunately for Santa, he need deal with only 15% of that number. He doesn't have the franchise to deliver Christmas presents to Muslim, Hindu, Jewish or Buddhist households. That leaves him responsible for roughly 378 million children or roughly 92 million homes.

Traveling east to west and considering the time zones and rotation of the earth, Saint Nick has only 31 hours in which to deliver his gifts. Do the math and he has to visit 822.6 households per second (less if we discount the houses that have no children that have been good.) This gives Santa 1/1000th of a second to park, hop out of the sleigh, jump down the chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the presents, eat the snacks, back up the chimney, out and on his way. If the average distance between houses is .78 miles he has a total trip of 75.5 million miles. (I'm not counting the occasional rest stops for him and the reindeer.)

Santa's sleigh must be capable of moving 650 miles per second, or roughly 3,000 times the speed of sound. That's a mere 2,340,000 miles per hour. That's fast.

While we're at it let's consider the weight of the Christmas gifts and how it affects Santa's trip. If each child gets a gift averaging 2 pounds, the sleigh is carrying 321,300 tons not counting our roly-poly driver. Now, if a typical reindeer were pulling a sled, that reindeer could pull ten times their weight. We would need 214,200 reindeer to pull Santa's sled. Thank God they're not your average reindeer. Add the weight of the 214k reindeer to the overall weight and we have a whopping 353,430 tons (more than two times the weight of the Queen Mary.)

But wait! There's more. 353,300 tons traveling at 650 miles per second creates enormous air resistance. In other words...heat. The lead reindeer, if they were normal would absorb 14.3 quintillion joules of energy. They would burst into flames instantaneously creating deafening sonic booms in their wake. The rest of the reindeer team would be vaporized 4.26 thousandths of a second later. And Santa is not off the hook. He will be subjected to centrifugal forces 17,500.06 times greater than gravity. He would be pinned to the back of his sleigh by 4,315,015 pounds of force.

All this to say we need to appreciate the effort Santa Claus puts into his job. If you run into him on Christmas Eve and he seems a bit rushed...well now maybe you'll understand.

Merry Christmas everyone!



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EMPTY SEATS AT THE CHRISTMAS TABLE

I'm writing one of my infrequent serious columns, because I realize there is more to Christmas than non-stop holly jolly mirth.

There will be many freshly vacant spots at Christmas/holiday gatherings this year, whether because of death, hospitalization, relocation, work schedules, military service, estrangement or incarceration.

(My nuclear family remains intact; but in the past year, death has claimed my brother's mother-in-law, the preacher's wife, a co-worker, several classmates' loved ones and an alarming number of customers at my day job.)

I can't fill your stocking with any game-changing advice for coping with loss or distance at this festive/stressful time of year, but I'll rehash what others have said. Share warm or funny memories of the departed. Make a charitable donation in their name. Invite a widow or bachelor who has NOTHING BUT empty seats to share the holiday with your family. Stop being a technophobe and avail yourself of the tools for communicating with those who must be far away.

Mostly, I'd like to offer advice to see that YOU don't become one of those being mourned or missed. "Through the years we all will be together, if the fates allow," sang Judy Garland. But sometimes we go out of our way to tempt Fate.

More power to you if you can't meet an arbitrary December 25 deadline because you've traveled cross-country to improve yourself academically or professionally, if you're defending our great nation or if you're overseas performing humanitarian work. But a lot of reasons for being absent are less noble.

Put things in perspective before you let petty squabbles create a yuletide vacuum this year or in the future. Thinking about that babe in the manger should help us do away with some more of the frivolous reasons for being a "no-show" or barring the door. That babe grew up to ask forgiveness for those who sent him to his death. How can we refuse to associate with someone who voted for the wrong party?

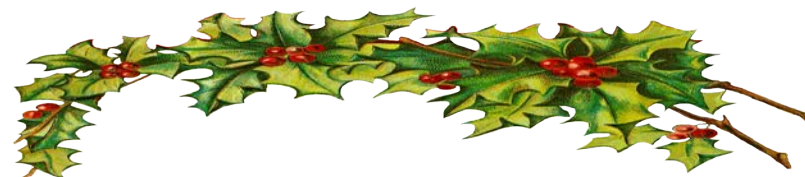
That babe grew up to be infamous for associating with tax collectors and sinners. How does one justify writing off a friend or relative whose lifestyle is either too old-fashioned or too ultra-modern?

That babe grew up to be an itinerant preacher who eschewed worldly possessions and had not even a place to lay his head. Isn't it silly to form a permanent family rift over how great-aunt Matilda's crochet bathroom plunger holders were divided up?

Yes, each and every one of us will SOMEDAY merit an empty place at the holiday table. But we don't have to rush the eventuality.

Get those brakes and tire treads inspected. Replace those smoke alarm batteries. Wean yourself from cigarettes. Find a doctor you can trust, have those checkups and heed the advice. Stop texting and driving, running red lights and trying to beat trains to the crossing. Spend a little time pondering whether those guys you hang out with are really your friends or just some bozos who will split once they've made you a candidate for a squad car or an ambulance. Learn to count to 10 before venting your righteous indignation on someone who just might be "packing" and itching for a chance to blow someone away.

The perfect holiday gathering is a myth; but before you Rest In Peace, take a few steps to maximize holiday peace and good will.





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Christmas is a time

For laughter and Joy,

You might even get your favorite toy.

Christmas is a time for Buying and Listing.

It's also a time to know why you're living.

Christmas is a time to decorate your house

And wear your favorite Christmas blouse.

Christmas is a time to cook and bake,

You can't forget about the infamous Fruitcake!

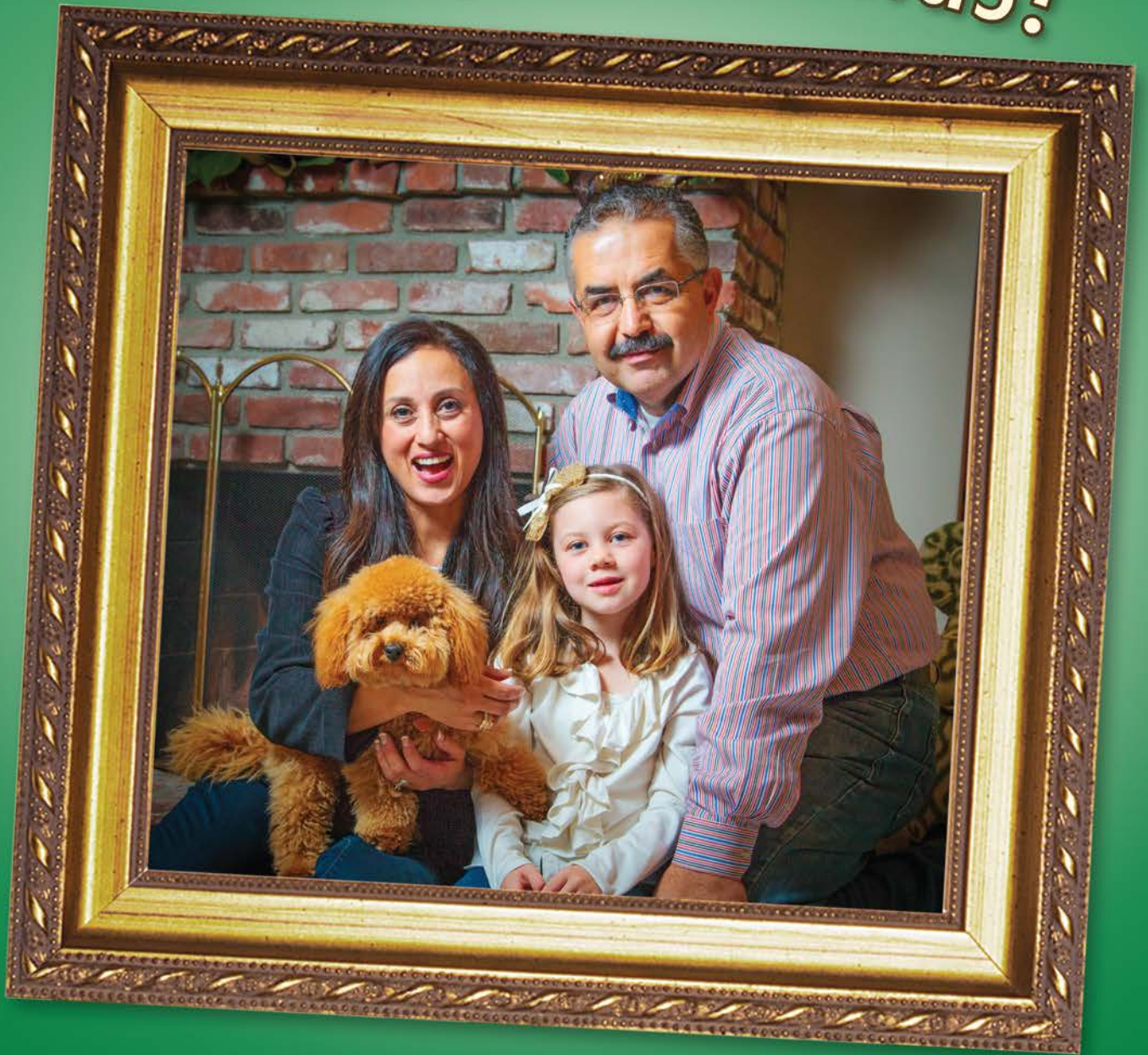
Christmas is also a time to

Remember the Reason for this Season!

— Luther, Georgina, Lidia and Rocket



Merry Christmas!



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