

## HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

### Nancy Walsh Tells Her Story

By Dean Lee

Nancy Walsh, the now world recognized Sierra Madre resident known for her harrowing ordeal spending 36 hours in a Mumbai hotel room under attack Thanksgiving weekend, gave sound advice Tuesday to anyone ending up in that same jam.

"One of them is, if you are a traveler, keep traveling, and don't let the terrorist get you down," she advised during the well attended Kiwanis Club meeting. "Try to stay calm, assess your situation and your resources, think about what your options are: don't jump out windows; don't take the fire escape unless there is a fire, you might get stuck in the stairwell and you would spend three days there. Remember time is not on the side of the terrorists."

Walsh said always knowing where you are in relation to the terrorists or other significant events, gunfire, bombs, etc., is important. "It helps to have a good travel agent, a good tour guide and above all a good family". During her 40 minute talk Walsh had the audience on the edge of their seats at times. At other times everyone laughed as she told the craziness of the situation starting from the time she first heard a bomb blast below her to the time she and three Canadians were rescued. She was staying on the 36th floor of the Oberi Trident Hotel. When rescuers came, she opened the door so fast that it appeared she startled them. "What we had heard was that when the commandos come, and they say open your door, open your door or they will shoot it off," she explained. When they came, I said, "hello."

Many cringed when, next, Walsh graphically described walking out the lobby and what she saw. "I don't exactly know what had happened there. I knew the windows were blown out, I saw that on TV. I think it was worse than looking at the floor which had a huge path of blood that went all the way across the front and then went down into the street."

Walsh described the impact of seeing the blood as though walking a timeline backwards through someone's death. In certain spots there were splatterings of blood, broken glass and then larger spots and then the long bloody trail. "Walking backward to the place where the person had the encounter," she said later adding that they were told three people had been killed in the lobby. Walsh had also pointed out that most of the Indians killed throughout were hotel workers putting themselves in harms way instead of guests.

Walsh was the first one out of the hotel. "That's why my picture got everywhere," she said. "Because the media had been on blackout, they were just so excited, and I was the first out because I was on the top floor." This newspaper first reported the story having seen Walsh on ABC nightly news the day after Thanksgiving.

Many in the audience said they were amazed at how calm she was. At first, Walsh said she even ignored the first blast. She read from the journal she kept. "I had just gone to sleep, probably 9:30 p.m. and at 9:45 p.m. the whole hotel rocks with

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US TO ALL OF YOU



The Osti Christmas Decorations from Sonny Salsbury's 2009 Sierra Madre Calendar available at Lenora Moss Floral Design and Gift shop at 9 Kersting Court in Sierra Madre.

an enormous blast. So I lay there, we are from Los Angeles after all, so I just lay there thinking ok, no sirens, no people's voices, nothing. So I rolled over and started to go back to sleep." She said she got up after the second blast. In chronologic order Walsh explained all the events as they occurred, including, having to live on snacks from the mini-bar.

She described first looking out of her hotel room. "I went out and tested the elevators and nothing was working," she said. "I knew I didn't want to take the fire escape because if you go into a fire escape you can't get out until the first floor," She did not want to confront the terrorist in the lobby she said.

Taking the service elevator to the 31st floor Walsh said there was a room service cart abandoned and then she new all the staff had left.

"So it was clear the staff had taken off just like that," she said. "The Indians don't just leave things around. All of these hotels are beautifully kept, nothing sits in hallways like that and nothing gets abandoned." Walsh went on to the 27th floor where she said her Canadian friends were. She said 15 minutes into it and they were watching the events on CNN. "We knew there had been a blast in the area and at the train station," she said.

They all decided, after realizing there was no fire danger, to sit and wait. She said they got nervous when hearing that the terrorists where looking for Americans and British. They also got confused seeing reports that the lobby was, and then was not, on fire.

Walsh said at that time she was able to call family at home in Sierra Madre and Pasadena. "At one point I said to my daughter, 'I've got to get off the phone, the doors are rattling. And then I didn't call her back for two hours.'" The door rattled only from the wind she explained. "It was probably a more difficult thing to be here than there."

Walsh said they were not really that worried because, with the elevators out, any terrorist would have a long walk up the stairs to get them.

She did say her travel agent was a little stunned when she called to rearrange her trip. "I was supposed to leave at 6:30 a.m. on Thanksgiving morning to continue my trip and it was pretty clear I wasn't going to get out of there." Walsh went on to Dubai two days later. "I am not going to let terrorist ruin my vacation," she said.

When asked if she would recommend anyone going to Mumbai on vacation she said, "Absolutely."

### Sierra Madre Rose Float Association Needs Your Help!

Volunteers continue to work diligently on completing this year's entry in the Rose Parade.

On Sunday, the second technical inspection will take place.

There will still be much to do including the flowering of the float.

The SMRFA is also still soliciting monetary donations.

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### RESTORATION PROJECT CLOSES MT. WILSON TRAIL Access Limited

The Skyland Slope Restoration Project on the Mt. Wilson Trail will cause the trail to be closed weekdays for the next two months. The Mt. Wilson Trail will be accessible on the weekends and holidays. The public is urged to please use alternate trails out of Chantry Flats or Bailey Canyon during closures.

### Inside The MountainViews-Observer This Week

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## Weather Wise

5-Day Forecast  
Sierra Madre, Ca.

**Mon:** Rain Hi 50s Lows 40s  
**Tues:** Rain Hi 50s Lows 40s  
**Wed:** Rain Hi 50s Lows 40s  
**Thur:** Pt Cldy Hi 60s Lows 50s  
**Fri:** Sunny Hi 60s Lows 50s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service

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10:45 - Christmas Candlelight Service

December 24<sup>th</sup>

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[www.WestminsterPasadena.org](http://www.WestminsterPasadena.org)



## December



Annual Best Used Book Sale  
 Friday from 3pm to 7 pm  
 Saturday 10 am to 2 pm



Flu Shot Clinic  
 1:30 to 3 pm  
 Sierra Madre  
 Recreation  
 Center

9

Arts Commission  
 6:30 p.m.  
 Council Chamber

10



Community Services Commission  
 6:00 p.m. Council Chamber

15



16

Tree Advisory  
 Commission  
 7:00 p.m. Council  
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17



Planning  
 Commission  
 7:00 p.m. Council  
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18

Christmas

25



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Sunday 7 - Jazz lunch with the Mercy Powell Quartet

Tuesday 9 - Jeremy Robyn

Wednesday 10 - Max Buda

Thursday 11 - Pianist &amp; Jazz Vocalist Gaea Schnell

Friday 12 - Jack Sheldon

Saturday 13 - Xmas Blues party with Zola Moon

Sunday 14 - PCC Jazz Improvisation Combos

Wednesday 17 - A evening of Holiday Music with

Errol Le Blanc feat. Danny Guerrero

Thursday 18 - Sean McCue &amp; Michelle Beauchesne

Guitar &amp; Cello Duet

Friday 19 - The Donovan Muradian Quartet

Saturday 20 - The Jane Fuller Jazz Christmas

Wednesday 24 - The Fabulous Gil Bernal

Friday 26 - Swing Dancing with Flat Top Tom &amp; the

Jump Cats

Saturday 27 - BLUES with The Superstitions

Wednesday 31 - NEW YEARS EVE PARTY EL

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Start a Tradition or Rekindle One! By Craig Haikola

What is the true meaning of Christmas, and can it still be found? Amidst all the presents, ceaseless commercial pitches and those clever jingles, can a baby still be found beneath the wrapping paper and twisting bows? This will likely be the first Christmas for some, where they may not have the comforting thought of how many gifts to purchase but will I be able to afford gifts? As workers wonder if they will receive a bonus or a pink slip, and bosses painfully ponder how they can make a difficult payroll with ever decreasing funds. It seems like the proper time to look and ask ourselves, why do we celebrate Christmas and are we any better for it?



2007 Candlelight Walk Photo Courtesy Bill Coburn/sierramadrenews.net

There is a book that is titled, *America Remembers*, which is now a handful of decades out of print. One of the stories contained within its pages is a Christmas story. The story chronicles two Christmas. It is a portrait of a family on the open prairie; financially they are a very poor family as many were on the prairie. The year was 1874 and historians note that, “The winter of 1874-1875 was a time of deep depression.” The grasshoppers had swarmed that summer and the plowed fields only resemble picked bones when they had finished. It should also be added, that the children did not take notice of this point as Christmas was at hand. A bright red scarf was prominently placed outside the house to insure that St Nick would not miss this isolated spot. We are greeted the first Christmas in 1874 with a youthful Mother and Father preparing for Christmas during this deep winter. The Mother has dolls spread in front of her that she is making: a man, a lady and a baby. They are constructed of corn husks and the hair is fashioned of corn-silk. It will be their daughters present this year. A toy gun has been whittled from wood for the baby boy and a bow and arrow has been created for their other son. The Christmas meal is simple but it is heartfelt. It is a meager and homely setting for any outsider looking in; the snow is piled as high on the roof as the grass was upon the hills earlier that spring. The fire is flickering in the stovepipe fireplace and a health supply of wood is at hand but the presents are sparse beneath the cedar tree, which is roundly decorated with popcorn, and the branches supporting tallow candles and finally a star is resting up in the heights upon the top. The piano is eagerly played as Christmas songs push their way out into a cold and snowy night.

The story begins once again 50 years later at Christmas and the boys and girl is now fully grown, and the mother is now noticeably advanced in years. The house is unchanged and no less modest in size. It was the same old and tired piano that they had teased in their innocent days of youth. The keys which were now fully worn from years of use, still respond to commands. It wasn't going to win a single beauty contest but it did recalled the songs of old and those of a youthful age and it had managed to still regale them after so many Christmases. It must be understood for the story to make sense though, their Mother always cooked the same meal each Christmas; a simple mincemeat pie for Christmas dinner, though now oyster soup had been added to the menu, as once in a day of old it represented an indulgence. Many things had not changed to be sure, the popcorn balls where still

to be found at the table and the animal cookies were made individually for each guest.

Each year they returned and new customers (children) would look forward to going to Grandma's house. There was no room for them of course and a bathtub became a dining area for the new additions but grandmother made the finest cookies they always said. The boys had grown to be fine and distinguished men, as one was now a bank President and the other a prominent Congressman. They could have taken their Mother anywhere in the world and effortlessly offered opulent selections for the Christmas table and to be sure they could have afforded the grandest piano with new ivory keys

for their lovely Mother and her prairie home. She wouldn't have any of it though. For to her, Christmas and the family meant the sound of an old piano. Though the meal was not fancy; its importance was in the familiarity it offered and spoke volumes without uttering a single word. The piano beckoned a reminder too as each note codified the recognition and leant a comfort – You are home

The story may have been recounted in similar detail for innumerable pioneers. Some of those pioneers we may count as our ancestors but we as Americans can count all them as examples. For they knew the miracle of Christmas is not in some expensive material gift but are to be found in the hearts of people. Maybe it is best to remember this Christmas, that the greatest gifts will always be those that bind a memory to the heart.

Candlelight Walk

It is an idea that began nearly Forty years ago from the mind of Pastor Bob VanderZaag and is still burning bright and has solidly become a beloved tradition. I would not expect the arrival of a magical snow this year but there will be magic. You won't find a better night all year to meet your neighbors. Watch as children's eyes grow in delight with enchantment excitement as the parade of lights waltz through the city as we prepare for Christmas night. It is a nostalgic night to retrieve an inner child and rekindle a flame in the gray hairs. It just may be the one place where you will be able to find the baby that changed the world this Christmas.

Each Christmas season, local churches invite their parishioners to join in a candlelight procession from St. Rita's Catholic Church at Baldwin and Grand View down to Kersting Court. Those in the procession sing Christmas Carols and hymns during the procession. The procession is led each year by two local children in costume, playing the roles of Mary and Joseph, carrying a statue of baby Jesus. When the procession reaches Kersting Court, Mary and Joseph place the statue of Jesus in the creche, and then the pastors of the various churches read scripture from the gospel, interspersed with more singing of hymns. One last round of “We Wish You A Merry Christmas” is the traditional final song.

***This year's event: Sunday, Dec. 21, 6:45pm - 8pm, meet at St. Rita's Church Bring a candle!***

MERRY CHRISTMAS

City of Duarte to Provide Residents with Easy-to-Use Program to Help Save Money on Prescription Drugs Beginning Jan. 10

DUARTE, CA, December 16, 2008 – Residents of the city and county area of Duarte will soon be able to save an average of 20 percent off the retail price of commonly prescribed prescription drugs through a program provided by the City of Duarte in collaboration with the National League of Cities (NLC).

The City is making free prescription drug discount cards available to all Duarte residents through the NLC sponsored program. The NLC program is administered by CVS Caremark. The discount cards may be used when purchasing prescription drugs at any of the many local participating pharmacies and more than 59,000 pharmacies nationwide. There are no restrictions based on the resident's age, income level, or existing health coverage, and no enrollment fees. There are also no limits on the number of times the card can be used. Duarte residents and their family members can use the card any time their prescriptions are not covered by insurance. As part of the program, residents will also be eligible for higher discounts on select medications.

“In the current economic climate, where many people are watching what they spend, the NLC prescription discount card will offer significant savings on the purchase of prescription medications for our residents,” said Duarte Councilwoman Tzeitel Paras-Caracci who is also a member of the National

League's Board of Directors. “Whether or not an individual has prescription coverage, this program can make it easier for our residents to afford the drugs they need to deal with a short-term illness or stay healthy by managing a chronic condition,” said Paras-Caracci. Duarte will roll-out the prescription discount card program on Jan. 10. The City will make the free, personalized cards available to residents at a number of convenient distribution points throughout the City including Duarte City Hall, Duarte Senior Center, all school sites, Duarte Chamber of Commerce and Duarte Public Safety office. Residents also have the option of going online at [www.caremark.com/nlc](http://www.caremark.com/nlc) and printing an ID card from their own home computer.

The discount cards are easy to use. Residents only have to show their card, along with their prescription when purchasing medication at one of the participating pharmacies that locally include: CVS/pharmacy, Rite Aid, Cantwell Medical Pharmacy, Target, and Wal-Mart in Duarte; Costco in Azusa; and Walgreens and Sav-On in Monrovia. Residents can learn more about the program by calling toll-free 1-888-620-1749, or by visiting [www.caremark.com/nlc](http://www.caremark.com/nlc). Additional information is also available on the City of Duarte website: [www.accessduarte.com](http://www.accessduarte.com), or by calling City Hall (626) 357-7931, ext. 220

Djibril N'Doye Open Studio and Gallery Fundraiser December 20-21 in Sierra Madre



Artist N'Doye by C. Bertrand

The final weekend of the fundraiser kickoff for artist Djibril N'Doye's will occur this weekend at the artist's Sierra Madre home and studio. N'Doye works in many media, including pen and woodburning, and will exhibit an extensive collection of his works. He will be joined by violinist, Jean Sudbury, and other musicians, plus Saving the Race author, Anthony Asmad, who will be available to sign his current book, subtitled *Empowerment Through Wisdom: Daily Affirmations for Young Black Males*. N'Doye has undertaken a fundraising effort to build an art gallery in his Senegalese hometown. The land has been already donated by local government. Handmade baskets from Senegal will be sold to start the building fund for the gallery. **Saturday, December 20 and Sunday, December 21 from 11:30 to 7:30 at 333. N. Sunnyside, Sierra Madre. For more information call 1-877-Djibril or visit his website at [www.DjibrilNDoye.com](http://www.DjibrilNDoye.com)**

GET OUT! GET ACTIVE! VOLUNTEER!

Join the Team!



The City is looking for motivated, enthusiastic, creative, and friendly volunteers to serve on these important committees which help plan for the City's future

What is the role of the Canyon Zone Advisory Committee?

Regulations pertaining to the development of a Canyon Zone have been discussed and studied in the past, but have never been finalized. The formation of a 5-member Committee will assist City staff in reviewing the draft zoning provisions that were previously developed, review the goals and objectives for the Residential Canyon land use designation, analyze its relevance, and provide input in to the process of developing new zoning guidelines for the Canyons. The Committee will be staffed by the Development Services staff and legal counsel. Developing zoning guidelines will require review of residential development standards, technical in nature, such as building massing, height, setbacks, building square feet, lot coverage, parking, design, and landscaping. Also topics such as allowable deviations or exceptions from standards, permit process, and preservation and design relating to the unique residential setting and rural character of the Canyon areas, may also be reviewed by this Committee. The Committee will also provide input to the General Plan Steering Committee in their review of the Residential Canyon land use designation of the General Plan. The Committee's role is solely advisory. Final approval of the new guidelines can only be granted by the City Council acting upon the Committee's and Planning Commission's recommendations.

How much time is involved?

The recommendation of draft zoning guidelines could take approximately 6 to 8 months. Participation on the Committee will require a commitment to attending monthly meetings during this period. Initially, in order to gain as much public input from Canyon area residents, a public workshop may be held. Attendance at a Planning Commission and at a City Council meeting to report on progress and to recommend zoning guidelines will also be expected. All regular Committee meetings will occur at pre-set meeting dates and times (pursuant to Brown Act requirements), and would be expected to last approximately two hours.

For an application, visit [www.cityofsierramadre.com](http://www.cityofsierramadre.com) look for Commission application For more info call Danny Castro, Development Services Director. (626) 355-7135

The Sierra Madre City Council is seeking volunteers to serve on the upcoming Canyon Zone Committee!

COURAGEOUS ROSE PARADE RIDER



Genevieve Miranda of Baldwin Park (left) is one of 14 Kaiser Permanente patients who have been selected to ride on the healthcare provider's Rose Parade float on New Year's Day. She is shown here with Rose Queen Courtney Chou Lee. Genevieve and the others were chosen to ride due to their heroic and inspiring fight against life-threatening health conditions. “You were born with wings -- so don't choose to crawl through life.” This is a motto that Genevieve, 14, lives by, a positive outlook that helped her cope when, at age 9, she was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), a cancer of the white blood cells, the cells in the body that normally fight infections. She underwent three years of grueling treatment and is currently in remission. With the love of her grandparents and parents and her faith in God, Genevieve has come back. She maintains a 3.5 grade point average in a college preparatory program. In her afternoons, she serves as a teacher's aide to kindergarten and first grade students. Genevieve and her parents also participate in leukemia charity walks and other fundraisers, raising a cumulative total of over \$15,000 through the years. The young fighter's dream is to enroll at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and one day become an oncologist. Kaiser Permanente's playful and entertaining float is entitled, “Propel Your Dreams.” The float is a colorful and imaginative flying vehicle powered by inspiring children who cycle, row, and jog above floral clouds of solid roses. The images and the riders represent the importance of exercise and lifestyle in achieving and maintaining total health, a central theme of Kaiser Permanente's ongoing “Thrive” message.

On January 1st, turn on your TV and look for Genevieve Miranda on Kaiser Permanente's Rose Parade float!





## Economic Downturn Shakes City

By Dean Lee

City Manger Michael Beck Monday night outlined drastic measures the city must take immediately in dealing with a widening structural deficit and a down economy that includes possibly not implementing staff raises next year, as well as, reducing travel and training expenses and cutting overtime.

"We've got to cut \$13 million out of the budget this year," Beck said. "And then another potential \$13 or \$14 million next year." He added the first cut of 6.5 million immediately could include salaries.

He said they look at everything, even reducing brush clearance in the city and changing the way they fund street sweeping. They also considered cutting some park services and cleaning, reducing vender rates, in particular legal services, and possibly buying out retirement contracts.

"I know that in other cities, the city of Los Angeles for example, is providing some credits for people that are at retirement age," said Councilmember Victor Gordo. "There's a cost allocated with that, but the saving, at least in LA, are tremendous."

Beck said not implementing raises, approved by the council earlier this year, could save the city \$5 million next year, something he had discussed with heads of departments and union representatives this week.

Councilmember Chris Holden took a different approach saying they should also look at how to generate revenue.

"What strategies have we put together that look at the enterprises of the city," he said, "Understanding that the enterprises are by nature revenue generating? And we can list off all of the enterprises, obviously the Rose Bowl is one that comes to mind but you also have others, Water and Power has the potential?"

This was "thinking out of the box," he said adding that they were working within a very constrained area.

Councilmember Sid Tyler suggested they look at fees possibly not being collected. "We've talked about this with respect to business licenses tax and vehicle mobile operations," he said.

Tyler was also critical about controlling labor costs and said that in order to do that they needed to control open positions something city staff did not have an answer to. Acting Director of Finance Steve Mermell said he was not sure how many open positions there were. He explained they looked it as cost, and to that he said open slots amounted to about \$5 million.

Before the council got into a lengthy discussion on what to do Beck went over some of the numbers starting with the city's office vacancy rate which he said was up from 5 percent two year's ago to 11 percent now. He also said the Transient Occupancy Tax (hotel tax) was down 7 percent.

"We do have the expectation and a hope that as the convention center does get completed, that a demand for our hotels will increase."

Also down 10 percent he said was sales tax. Construction tax was also down 31.1 percent. Property tax remained the same and he said if it was not for voters passing the Utility Users Tax the city would be in far worse shape than it is. Beck also said that if things went unchecked the city would be "out of cash," by 2012.



One Colorado has Santa on hand helping out

## New Ice Skating Rink Funding in Jeopardy

By Dean Lee

The bad economy was the running theme during Monday night's council meeting compelling the council to take a serious second look at ways to fund a new \$26.6 million Pasadena ice skating rink suggesting they might cut down the size of it or put it off altogether. The council did however agree that the project should move forward no matter what.

At issues was the lack of any alternative funding plan. The council was given information on a complicated proposal that included issuing bonds and then reimbursing the city for funds advanced. Staff said such internal borrowing would involve advancing money needed for the project from various funds of the city. The amount needed would be determined after a competitive bidding process for the project something Councilmember Sid Tyler was concerned with.

"We are about to have a discussion about funding priorities, and I don't know where this is going to fit in at the end of the day?" Tyler said. City Manger Michael

Beck said the key issue was to make refinements to keep the project moving forward so it could go out to bid.

Acting Director of Finance Steve Mermell said they only had a conceptual funding plan with no agreements yet for an operator. The said details for negotiations needed to be worked out.

Tyler along with other said they needed to look at other funding options, "I read this as being one way



## Christmas Whimsy At The Majestical Roof Courtyard

By Teresa Baxter

The Majestical Roof, located in a quaint courtyard at 88 N. Fair Oaks Ave, will be the location for an eclectic debut of artistic whimsy

that is just in time for the holiday shopping season. The local artisan's boutique is setting center stage this weekend giving customers an opportunity to meet their newest designer, Marcel DeJure—of the Cinnamon Roll Gang—on Dec. 20 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., and unconventional gift givers are invited.

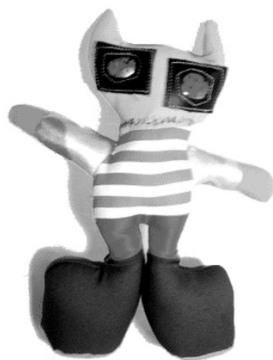
Marcel DeJure, a Los Angeles based filmmaker, comic artist and handbag designer will be releasing his new line of "Mutant" bags made of vintage materials. DeJure creates specific characters in a collage effect that serves as bags that mixes functionality with the ridiculous. DeJure has been making the Cinnamon Roll Gang Dolls, and bags for twelve years as a reaction to what he perceives to be the homogenization of children's entertainment and merchandise.

The Majestical Roof co-owners, Yvonne Russo and Christina Bernal, elaborate on the idea of a "No Mass Manufactured Products" market as an alternative to a stale business model that plagues our current

economy. They provide a venue where customers and artists make a direct connection with over 150 local designers represented.

"All the products in the shop are made or conceived of by a local set of hands," said Russo. "Marcel is a true talent, and his eclectic style releases the inhibitions in all of us. His bags and dolls are fun and kids love them."

DeJure's styles of the dolls are an amusing addition to his latest seasonal collection. Every piece is one-of-a-kind, made from a variety of fabrics and accessories for a unique character every time. These dolls have been involved in various art shows and gallery exhibitions in Los Angeles, San Diego, Dallas and Cleveland.



# Christmas in Pasadena



Bad economy does not stop some from lighting up holiday cheer



in which we could finance the rink, not the way we're going to finance the rink."

Beck earlier said through a private/public partnership the city would get back most of the investment. He said only \$5 million to \$6 million would be lost over a 20 year period. He also said they could look at using private capital to make it a private/public partnership.

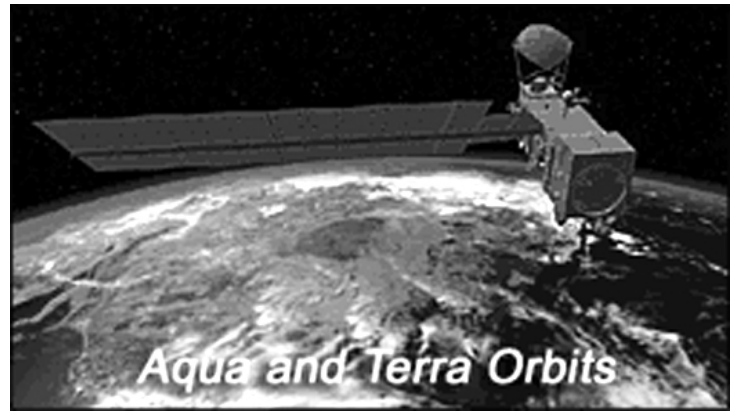
Most of the council, including Vice Mayor Steve Haderlein, said that because the rink was a recreational area it would be hard to put a money value on its significance to the community. Councilmember Chris Holden asked if it was possible to build only one rink instead of the proposed two.

"I'm curious, why do we need two rinks?" he asked. "In light of the fact that we are talking about this in the context of a tuff economy how do we justify two?"

Martian Pastucha, Director of Public Works said the economics of running two rinks was better because of the ability of having two hockey games running at once, the main propose for building a new rink.

A number of people came out to support building a new rink behind the Pasadena City College Community Education Center off Foothill Boulevard. The Pasadena Ice Skating Rink in the convention center will remain open until the new one is built staff said.

## NASA Study Links Severe Storm Increases, Global Warming



Credit: Jesse Allen, NASA Earth Observatory

The frequency of extremely high clouds in Earth's tropics -- the type associated with severe storms and rainfall -- is increasing as a result of global warming, according to a study by scientists at JPL.

In a presentation Friday to the fall meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco, JPL Senior Research Scientist Hartmut Aumann outlined the results of a study based on five years of data from the Atmospheric Infrared Sounder (AIRS) instrument on NASA's Aqua spacecraft.

The AIRS data were used to observe certain types of tropical clouds linked with severe storms, torrential rain and hail. The instrument typically detects about 6,000 of these clouds each day.

Aumann and his team found a strong correlation between the frequency of these clouds and seasonal variations in the average sea surface temperature of the tropical oceans.

For every degree Centigrade (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) increase in average ocean surface temperature, the team observed a 45-percent

increase in the frequency of the very high clouds. At the present rate of global warming of 0.13 degrees Celsius (0.23 degrees Fahrenheit) per decade, the team inferred the frequency of these storms can be expected to increase by six percent per decade.

Climate modelers have long speculated that the frequency and intensity of severe storms may or may not increase with global warming. Aumann said results of the study will help improve their models. "Clouds and rain have been the weakest link in climate prediction," said Aumann. "The interaction between the daytime warming of the sea surface under clear-sky conditions and increases in the formation of low clouds, high clouds and, ultimately, rain is very complicated. The high clouds in our

observations—typically at altitudes of 20 kilometers (12 miles) and higher—present the greatest difficulties for current climate models, which aren't able to resolve cloud structures smaller than about 250 kilometers (155 miles) in size."

Aumann said the results of his study, published recently in Geophysical Research Letters, are consistent with another NASA-funded study by Frank Wentz and colleagues in 2005. That study found an increase in the global rain rate of 1.5 percent per decade over 18 years, a value that is about five times higher than the value estimated by climate models that were used in the 2007 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

For more information on AIRS, visit <http://airs.jpl.nasa.gov/>.



A Weekly Spotlight on  
Sierra Madre Volunteersfocus  
CAROLINE BROWN

## Woman of Multiple Talents

Caroline Brown's conversation is sprinkled with her volunteer experience. "Causes are always good." "You meet so many neat people." "Citizen involvement is the beauty of this town." "What's wrong with L.A. is that it's too big... What's right with Sierra



Commission where she served two full terms simultaneously with other venues, such as the Sierra Madre Mountain Conservancy, later serving on the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy, where Caroline represents the City of Sierra Madre on the Advisory Board. She joined the local Tree Commission so Sierra Madre "would choose trees wisely so they'll be here for a lifetime." The International Oak Society has asked her to join the board and edit their newsletter. Caroline is on the Stewardship Committee for Western Cave Conservancy and gives slide shows for Bats Conservation International. In December, 2005, she started the very active Sierra Madre Fire Safe Council. The growing and enthusiastic group meets the first Monday of the month. How does Caroline handle all of these activities? Quick answer: "After a teaching career in physical education and dance, and French and Spanish, I retired four years ago." This year she started a Sierra Madre phone bank for Camp Obama (President-elect Barack Obama) and traveled to Nevada to "get out the vote." This activity led her to national voter reform. "We're thwarted by the vast array of differences (in voting in the 50 states)." Caroline has taken on that cause recently. "Sierra Madre is like a layer cake -- there's an opportunity to volunteer and to join organizations at all levels. Some only volunteer for one layer. Others go for all the layers, the whole cake."

Caroline and Roger have a son, Forrest, who is 27 years old, and who, along with her husband, also volunteers with the Sierra Madre Fire Safe Council.

**Volunteers are needed to help in a wide range of activities in Sierra Madre. Please contact De Alcorn at 626-355-4793 or dalcorn@cityofsierramadre.com for more information.**

Madre is that it's just the right size." She should know. Caroline Brown has tasted a whole menu of volunteer activities around the world. Caroline and her husband, Roger, were in the Peace Corps, located in Malaysia for two years. After they moved to Sierra Madre in 1973, Caroline joined a newly formed Sierra Madre Environmental Action Council (SMEAC) and is still a member. Back in 1988, she and the late Verna Chilton organized the Coalition for Hillside Preservation, obviously to eliminate building in Sierra Madre's mountains. Two years later the Hillside Ordinance Task Force was formed. Then former City Councilman Roy Buchan suggested that Caroline apply for the Sierra Madre Parks and Recreation

## Sierra Madre Police Blotter

During the week of Sunday, December 7th, to Saturday December 13th, the Sierra Madre Police Department responded to approximately 335 calls for service.

## Sunday, December 7th:

5:17 PM – Arrest for driving with a suspended driver's license and for unlawful display of registration tabs, 00 block West Sierra Madre Blvd. A motorist was stopped for a traffic violation. A records check revealed his driver's license was suspended/revoked and the vehicle's registration had expired. The car he was driving displayed current registration tabs however the vehicle's tab had expired. The driver was arrested for driving with a suspended driver's license and for fraudulently displaying registration tabs and transported to the police station where he was booked and released on a written promise to appear.

## Monday, December 8th:

6:00 AM – Arrest, 500 block Woodland Drive. A disturbance attracted calls from residents reporting hearing a woman crying and asking for help. A driver believed to be involved was stopped leaving the residence. A records check revealed the driver's license was suspended / revoked. The driver, a parolee, was under the influence of a controlled substance. The driver was arrested and booked at the Sierra Madre Police Jail. He was later transported to the LA Sheriff's Jail due to an outstanding arrest warrant. The disturbance was unfounded and caused by a woman yelling while she slept.

9:48 AM – Vandalism, 93 North Baldwin Ave, Bethany Christian School. Damage to one wooden bench was reported by the schools custodian, the damage occurred between 6:00 pm Friday, 12/5 and 9:00 am Monday, 9:00 am. The loss was estimated at \$250.00. The bench had a wooden slat broken off at the center and two wooden slats broken off from the bench's metal frame.

1:56 PM – Threats, 440 West Sierra Madre Blvd, Sierra Madre Public Library. A man was reported in the library on Saturday, December 6th, mumbling to himself profanities and threats to library staff. The man left before police could respond.

3:29 PM – Residential burglary, 800 block Skyland Drive. Suspect(s) entered through an unlocked door and stole a Dell laptop computer, XBOX and an MBA 2K9 game. The crime occurred between 7:30 am and 2:45 pm, Monday 12/8. The loss was estimated at \$1500.00.

## Wednesday, December 10th:

11:48 AM – Residential burglary, 400 block E. Orange Grove Blvd. Suspect(s) shattered a glass window after they cut a window screen to gain access into the residence. Two flat screen TVs and a lap top computer were taken. The crime occurred between 2:00 pm Thursday, 12/4 and 11:45 am Monday, 12/10. The loss was estimated at \$4699.00.

## Thursday, December 11th:

10:51 AM – Arrest, 200 block East Sierra Madre Blvd. A motorist was stopped for a traffic violation. During the investigation the driver, an Altadena resident, was found in possession of a controlled substance. The driver was arrested and transported to the Pasadena Jail for remand.

4:28 PM – Arrest, Sierra Madre Blvd and Orangewood. A motorist was stopped for a traffic violation. A records check revealed the Monrovia resident's license was suspended / revoked for DUI. The driver was arrested and released on a written promise to appear.

## Friday, December 12th:

5:27 PM – Arrest, Sierra Madre Blvd and Baldwin Ave. A motorist was stopped for a traffic violation. A records check revealed his license was suspended / revoked. The driver was arrested and released on a written promise to appear.

## Saturday, December 13th:

1:13 AM – Arrest, Mariposa parking Lot. Patrol officer saw a man passed out, in the Mariposa public parking lot. The man, who had just left the Buccaneer Bar, was intoxicated. He was arrested and transported to the Pasadena Jail for remand.

4:17 PM – Residential burglary, 300 block Toyon Rd. The suspect(s) entered through an unlocked kitchen door and stole an Olympus digital camera, a LCD Samsung TV and cash. The crime occurred between 12:15 pm and 4:15 pm, Saturday 12/13. The loss was estimated at \$1040.00.

## Arcadia Police Blotter

For the period of Sunday, December 7, through Saturday, December 13, the Police Department responded to 873 calls for service of which 117 required formal investigations. The following is a summary report of the major incidents handled by the Department during this period.

## Sunday, December 7:

Units responded to the 100 block of Fano regarding shots fired around 1:00 a.m. The reporting party advised that a woman was heard crying and then three gunshots were heard. Officers found three spent shell casings at the location, but no victim or suspects were located during an area search.

Between 8:00 a.m. and 3:20 p.m., an auto burglary occurred in the 400 block of South Santa Anita. Unknown suspect(s) gained access to a locked trunk and stole a laptop computer and digital camera for a total reported loss of about \$3,700.

## Monday, December 8:

A residential burglary occurred between 9:00 a.m. on November 26 and 2:30 p.m. on December 8 in the 1600 block of Melanie. The victims were on vacation and returned to find their rear door was pried open and rooms ransacked. The unknown suspect(s) stole five revolvers. A witness advised that during the previous week, a female Hispanic was seen going to the front door and then left shortly thereafter in a silver Mercedes. During the same time, there was a white van parked across the street.

Around 10:33 p.m., units responded to Macy's regarding three Hispanic women detained for theft. The women took clothing items into a fitting room, removed the sensor tags, concealed the items on their persons, and then left the store without making payment. Private persons' arrests were made, and the women, all 19 years of age, were taken into custody. One suspect was also wearing four stolen t-shirts from JC Penney.

## Tuesday, December 9:

Shortly after 1:30 p.m., officers were dispatched to the 800 block of San Simeon regarding a forgery report. The victim checked her bank account online and discovered a fraudulent check made out to an unknown individual, and the check was cashed for \$8,420. Between 10:00 p.m. on December 8 and 8:20 a.m. on December 9, an auto burglary occurred in the 500 block of South Santa Anita. Unknown suspect(s) pried open the driver's door and stole a car stereo and a BlackBerry cell phone.

## Wednesday, December 10:

While on routine patrol around 12:47 a.m., a DMV check on a vehicle at Huntington and the 210 Freeway revealed that it had a felony want attached to the car. The record indicated that two male Hispanics associated with the vehicle were wanted for an attempted robbery. A high risk traffic stop was made, and two male Hispanics, 34 years of age, were apprehended. LASO deputies responded to the station to take custody of the suspects.

A strong-arm robbery occurred at Golden West and Arcadia around 12:15 a.m. A male Hispanic suspect, about 18 years of age, grabbed an 80-year-old woman's purse from behind and fled the scene on foot.

## Thursday, December 11:

Officers responded to the 99 cent store parking lot, 140 East Duarte, around 4:12 p.m. in reference to a robbery that just occurred. The victims advertised cell phones for sale on Craigslist and made arrangements with a potential buyer to meet at the location. A male African-American suspect showed up and the victims took him to their vehicle where the cell phones were kept. At that time a second African-American suspect approached, displayed a handgun, and took

a box containing 15 cell phones. The victims chased the suspects and were able to grab one of them. The suspect dropped the box and the victims were able to recover 10 phones. The suspect displayed the handgun again and told them not to follow them. The total loss was about \$2,000.

Around 7:35 p.m., units were dispatched to the Peacock parking structure located at Westfield mall regarding a non-injury traffic collision. An intoxicated driver collided into two other vehicles. A 31-year-old male Asian was taken into custody for driving while under the influence of alcohol.

## Friday, December 12:

A commercial burglary occurred in the 900 block of South First between 6:00 p.m. on December 11 and 10:05 a.m. on December 12. Unknown suspect(s) gained access into the closed business by cutting open a small portion of a security door and then prying open the rear door. The suspect(s) removed tools and boxes of vinyl flooring for a loss of about \$2,900.

Units were called to Embassy Suites around 11:02 p.m. in reference to a fight in progress in the parking lot. Investigation revealed that family members were trying to prevent an intoxicated man from driving, and the man had also tried to punch a security guard with a closed fist. When officers arrived at the scene, the 28-year-old male Hispanic failed to comply with directives, displayed an assaultive demeanor, and advanced towards an officer in a threatening manner. The taser was deployed to gain compliance, and the subject was transported to AMH for treatment; however, he continued to be combative and belligerent even while at the hospital. He was charged with obstructing/resisting, disorderly conduct/drunken in public, and two outstanding misdemeanor warrants.

## Saturday, December 13:

A residential burglary occurred in the 200 block of Joyce around 10:00 a.m. Two elderly victims, ages 77 and 80, returned home to find a beige car parked in front of their home with a male Hispanic occupant. Their front door was kicked in and when they went inside, another male Hispanic ran out of the house and entered the beige car. Cash was stolen during the burglary.

Around 6:55 p.m., units responded to Westfield mall regarding a man with a gun call. Witnesses advised that a male Caucasian was being chased by three other men; one of the men, an African-American, was carrying a gun. The subjects were last seen running towards the Peacock parking structure. A perimeter was established and mall management and mall security decided to lock-down the facility pending the outcome of the investigation. An area search was conducted and five occupants in a vehicle were located. The men, matching the witnesses' descriptions, were detained but no weapon was found. Further investigation revealed that the men were participating in a church event called "The Net Amazing Race," where they had to locate various items in a timed scavenger hunt. The African-American indicated that he had dropped his cell phone and he was actually holding the cell phone in his hand while he was running, which may have been mistaken for a gun.

Fire Safe Council  
"Announcements and Observations"

All homeowners in Sierra Madre's "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" now include the entire area of the city between Michelinda Dr. on the West to Santa Anita Ave on the East will qualify for the FREE "Chipper Day" program to begin in February. You will be all receiving a direct mail information packet that will outline this program. The homeowner will be responsible for contracting and paying their own gardner or tree trimming service to thin and reduce fire hazardous plant materials from their property (both native and landscaped ornamental plants) and bring this material, properly stacked, to the curb on a predetermined schedule. The Fire Safe Council "Chipper Day" program will chip the green waste and haul it away from your property.

This Free service is being provided to you by a grant from the California State Fire Safe Council through a program co-ordinated with the US Forest Service. Surveys will be conducted within the target area and with the homeowners consent to assure the participants are within the target to qualify for this service. January 5, 2009 is our next regularly scheduled Fire Safe Council meeting at City Hall, 232 West Sierra Madre Blvd. at 7 p.m. We will begin our fourth year of community preparation for fire safe living in the chaparral covered foothills of our community and other areas of hazard preparation. Have a safe and happy holiday season until then. To volunteer for Sierra Madre emergency preparation, call Police Chief Marilyn Diaz, 355-1414 or Sierra Madre Fire Safe Council, 355-0741.

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**MountainViews-Observer****Mission Statement**

The traditions of the community newspaper and the concerns of our readers are this newspaper's top priorities.

We support a prosperous community of well-informed citizens.

We hold in high regard the values of the exceptional quality of life in our community, including the magnificence of our natural resources. Integrity will be our guide.



Rich Johnson

I hope you are having a wonderful holiday season. Yes, I know the economy is tanking. And we can certainly come up with a lot of reasons why we shouldn't bother celebrating Christmas this year. It makes perfect sense. However, I'm hoping we can enjoy Christmas through the eyes of a child. It certainly was easier to celebrate in our youth when we didn't have to be concerned about the mortgage and all the other bills. Not to mention health issues accompanying our middle age and later years. If you can't find that place to celebrate the holiday as a child, try celebrating it through the eyes of young children you know. Rent 'em if you have to.

I used to wonder how a world that

**Merry Christmas**

has, by and large, relegated God to the back burner, could make such a big deal about the Christmas season. We routinely kick the ten commandments out of our schools and simultaneously celebrate the birth of Jesus. What gives? Well, one day while lost in some existential thought, I realized that just maybe God, in His/Her sovereign majesty, decided the world WAS going to celebrate the birth of His son. It was that important to Him/Her. Maybe that's why we are so amazed at how different we become at Christmas? And of course, the most amazing display of the effects of Christmas in our time centered around World War I. During the winter of 1914 there was fierce fighting between the Germans, and the French and British on the muddy fields of Flanders, Belgium. Soldiers on both sides of a field holed up in six-eight foot trenches

shooting at each other. Well, on Christmas Eve, German soldiers fashioned little Christmas trees and put them outside their trenches. Then they started singing Christmas Carols. The French and British started singing on their side of the battlefield. Soon a truce was suggested and both sides cautiously stepped up and out of the trenches, came together and shared Christmas shaking hands instead of firing weapons. Some even played soccer on the battlefields. And, sure enough, on the next day both sides retreated back to their trenches and commenced to shooting at each other again. That night displays the power of Christmas. And to those of us who believe it displays the fact that God really is in charge.

On a personal note, local musician Jane Fuller and I packed the house at Fresco's Restaurant for our first

ever Christmas Concert. There was standing room only, at least until I got up to sing. Shortly thereafter tables miraculously became available. Jane's marvelous performance was accentuated by her friend, Michael, who accompanied her on the guitar (Geesh, both of them play guitar better than I do.) We also had special music as a group of 3rd graders sang several songs. They were wonderful. Visit Jane's website at [www.Janefuller.com](http://www.Janefuller.com). She would love to get your email so she can let you know when and where she is performing. Also, she has three CD's out, (one a Christmas CD) and the latest CD is a tribute to Cole Porter called Night and Day. You can actually order them through my company, Versa-Tape by calling (626) 791-8907. Have a wonderful Christmas holiday.

**Stuart Tolchin On..LIFE**

Even in these tough times it seems that the malls are still pretty busy (yes I know it is right before Christmas) and the restaurants still seem pretty full. Everyone still seems to be talking about going on some vacation but maybe it's all wishful thinking based on the assumption that Obama will fix everything and that we can just keep living our life as we always have. I submit that it's unlikely that Obama can fix everything and that, furthermore, it would be a great tragedy if Americans did not take this opportunity to look at their lives and kind of reassess their priorities and their practices.

I think one of the most important things in any society is the way in which children are raised. It's pretty tough to raise children in a household that's falling apart. I guess about half of all marriages fall apart and another significant percentage is so stress-filled that there is an immense negative impact on the kids. What can be done to help families to stay together and, as importantly, to stay together happily. Any ideas? Over the years I went to a few counselors but this always turned out to be a precursor to some sort of break-up. I think a part of the problem is that many of us are more wedded to the experience of dissatisfaction than we are wedded to our spouses and the experience of happiness. Maybe the truth is that probably most fathers and most mothers have little idea of what it is to be a good parent. Probably, most of us follow the patterns of our own parents and make the same mistakes they did with the added pressure that we all strive to be permanent adolescents who don't show our age and have our own lives to live. Maybe, that's part of the problem within marriages—that is individuals really have no idea how to parent and can take little joy in their parenting because they don't know whether or not they are doing a good job or are just functioning as printing presses to provide their kids with the same toys and vacations that the other kids have. I know it seems a lot easier for most people to love their dogs than to love their families. At least it often looks that way.

I propose the within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare or some other Department there be established a division of Marriage and Family Concerns. It shall be the duty of this department to study different cultures and sub-cultures and to make public any conclusions which can be reached as to what makes a successful marriage and what kind of parental behavior actually helps children to grown into successful, productive, and happy to be alive adults.

**A Christmas Story**

By Gregory J. Welborn



When we think about Christmas, a fairly idyllic scene probably comes to mind. We might imagine a small-town main street recently dusted by snow and quaintly decorated with lights, wreaths and garland, or we might imagine a more crowded major city center overwhelmingly decorated with a larger-than-life Christmas tree. People hurry about, but they are friendly, smiling at one another. It's easy to see that the Christmas spirit is alive and well. But this year with a war raging, the economy in turmoil, unemployment growing and foreclosures accelerating, many people are finding the Christmas spirit more elusive. I want to dedicate this week's article to those who are hurting and to the rest of us - their neighbors and friends - to remind us all that Christmas is a time for joy even when the landscape seems dark and hopeless.

I would like to share a story from a Christmas season long ago which was also buffeted by turmoil. A very costly, and seemingly endless, war raged on, and the country's very survival was in question. It was also a time of scandal, and the economy limped along. The occasions for joy seemed few and far between. The year was 1863, the civil war was in full carnage, it had badly impacted the economy, and it had already cost hundreds of thousands their lives, maimed even more, and the end was not yet in sight. Casualties were reported in the newspapers, but it had gotten to the point where most people took in the information with little outward emotion. So many deaths had been reported that people had grown jaded. It was only when they learned that their own son, brother or father was among the dead that the news truly struck with the horror it deserved. It was just such news of personal tragedy that struck a middle-aged poet who had already lost a wife merely two years before. He was already well on his way to cynicism, having not yet finished mourning his first loss. Now on this cold December morning he had to face the prospect of losing his son, whom he had learned was gravely wounded at the front. This poet had loved his wife and son dearly. They were the center of his life, the very reason for his life, or so it seemed to him.

Not unlike the rest of us I imagine, this widower and father was shaken to his core. With the people he loved most gone, he asked himself what was the point of life. Where was there a reason to believe in goodness? How could he embrace his faith or take solace from it when so much pain had already crossed his path and still more seemed ready to envelope him? We can scarcely blame Henry Wadsworth Longfellow that an early stanza of the poem he wrote that day took a solemn and depressed tone. "And in despair I bowed my head: 'There is no peace on earth,' I said, 'For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good-will to men'".

Had the poem continued in that vein, it is doubtful we would remember it today. It might even have ended his career so deep was the darkness that he began expressing in verse. But if hatred, self-pity, and depression gripped him, they did not last for long. Something else filled his heart that day. It may have started with the vagueness of a long-forgotten memory fighting for recognition, but soon it had sufficient

strength to lift his spirits and remind him of the central promise of his faith and most specifically of the Christmas season in which he found himself.

As our poet heard the bells ringing that Christmas day, he remembered that God Himself had experienced great loss. God had given a son of His own. God also had suffered previous loss in the separation from the people He had created and loved dearly. Mankind's sin had caused that separation. It was our responsibility to repair it and atone for it, but it was an impossible task, so great was the void. Instead, God chose to sacrifice more, to give up a son who would take on that sin and die for it. The price was paid. God provided the atonement. He gave up His son in order to reclaim relationship with us.

Our poet remembered that God's spirit could dwell within us, and that with it we could never be defeated. Even during the darkest of times, we could stand fast in the face of great human evil, knowing that the ultimate battle had already been won, and good would ultimately triumph. In the darkest moment of his life, God's promise offered Henry Wadsworth Longfellow hope and strength far surpassing anything he or any of us could muster on our own. So with a renewed spirit, his faith encouraged him to persevere, and our poet continued.

"Then peeled the bells more loud and deep: 'God is not dead: nor doth He sleep; The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men'. Till ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from night to day, A voice, a chime, a chant sublime, of peace on earth, good will to men!"

Today, more than 130 years later, we find ourselves in another war whose end is not yet in sight. We face a struggling economy, and many have lost their jobs. Some readers may be facing personal loss in their lives as I have in Christmases past. I am sure that there is ample human reason for sadness and cynicism right now, and I know that it is easy to wallow in it. It is easy to see ourselves the victim and to think that the darkness which surrounds us will not end.

But I am reminded of Longfellow's message that God is not dead, and he does not sleep. He cares for us deeply, has walked where we walk, suffered what we suffer. He offers us His undying love and to walk with us into the shadow of the valley of death. He offers us a reason to celebrate this Christmas no matter the course of our earthly journey. So, I offer you a heartfelt Merry Christmas and a promise to pray that you will find peace and strength in the face of your adversity and that God's spirit will fill your life today, this season and for the rest of your life. Take heart for God is not dead nor doth he sleep.

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

**SO, HOW MUCH DO WE HAVE TO CHANGE?**

Perhaps patterns can be found that help married people actually enjoy one another without the necessity of prescription drugs, or illegal drugs, or even alcohol. I admit to some prejudice against addictive behavior but maybe I'm wrong. Maybe some study of the problem would help us all. In fact, I think that helping us with our social relationships, helping us to be responsible to ourselves and our families is as important as anything else the government can do to restore confidence in the ability of the society to meet the needs of its citizens.

So one final message. Even if the economic downturn lingers for a while let's not blame each other. Sure, we'll have to change some plans and we might have to relive the fifties or even the thirties but our parents and grandparents got through it okay and so can we. Let's just remember who our friends are and let's keep caring about one another.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS EVERYONE***The Staff of The MountainViews-Observer*  
*Susan Henderson, Publisher & Editor***Trish's Truth**  
by Trish Collins**Give the gift of going away . . . in your own living room**

I never really considered myself to be the vampire-love-story type. When it comes to books, I generally steer towards the non-fiction and mystery novels. You could say I was a little close-minded when my good friend from school rushed over to me raving about this book. "It's amazing! I mean this book is really something, you have GOT to read it," she exclaimed, thrusting the thick book into my arms. I explained to her that the book probably wasn't my cup of tea, but she insisted I take it home and at try reading a little. After claiming that this was "the best book ever" I took the book home, promising I'd at least try and read a few pages.

When I got home, I immediately set Twilight on my dresser and started my homework. Geometric shapes and mathematic formulas started to take a toll on me. I needed a break and it seemed as though the book was calling my name. After sitting there for a few moments, I finally reached over and grabbed the book. I must admit, I wasn't hooked by the first page. Actually, it wasn't even the second page that got me. But, somewhere on the third page of the book, I was hooked. All of a sudden I plunged, head first, into the complicated lives of the main characters, Bella and Edward. "Oh my goodness" I kept repeating over and over, "This book really is good..." The next thing you know, 2 hours of non-stop reading had gone by and my homework still wasn't done. Darn. Too tired to do anything else I went to sleep, anxiously waiting for the morning so I could continue

reading Twilight.

The next day in Geometry I was paranoid. Sure, it was kind of worth ditching my homework to read my new favorite book, but what was I going to tell my teacher? I'm sure he wasn't going to buy the story that, "...well, you see, Mr. M, Stephenie Meyer, you know, the lady who wrote the Twilight book? She just made me read that book last night and forced me to abandon my homework! Yeah...you know, I didn't even want to read the book, it's really not my type..." Somehow I squeezed my way out of that one and quickly finished reading the addictive book.

Now, I'm on the third book of the series (Eclipse) and am so thankful to my friend. Of course, when she heard about my newfound love for the book, she was ecstatic and immediately came in with the "I-told-you-so's. So this holiday when you're struggling to find the perfect gift for that special someone, why not get an old-fashioned book? Take a much-needed trip to a Barnes and Nobles and I know for sure you'll find something they'll like. Trust me, there's no better feeling than getting lost in a book and never wanting to be found. And don't limit yourself to what you think their "type" of book is. Like relationships, opposites attract in books and people. Don't be afraid to get them a book that may seem a little "out there"; the best ones are the ones that involve situations far beyond our everyday occurrences. Believe me...there's nothing farther from my day-to-day life than vampires and creepy myths...  
- Trish Collins





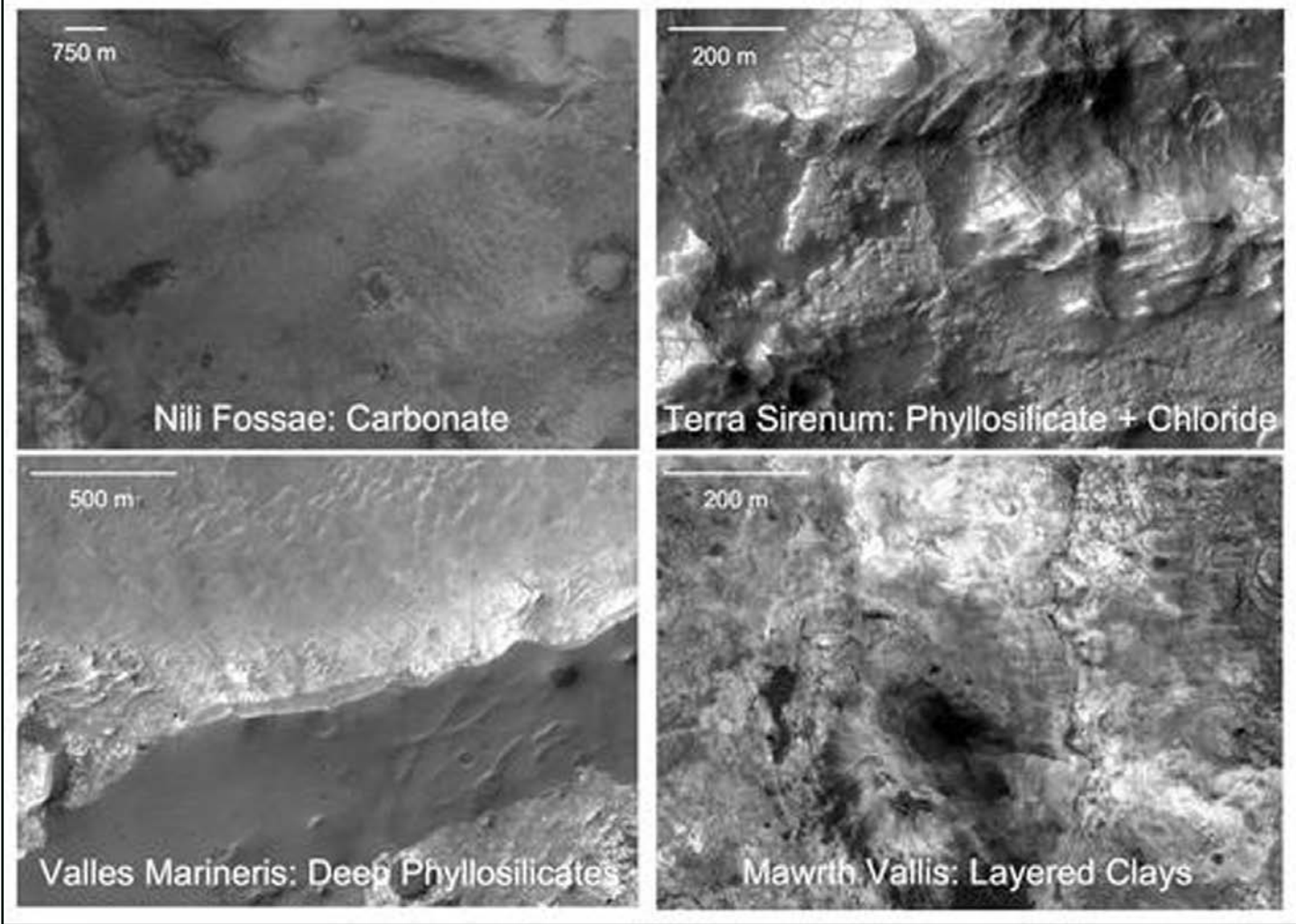


Looking Up

With Bob Eklund

NASA Orbiter Finds Martian Rock Record With 10 Beats to the Bar

Climate cycles persisting for millions of years on ancient Mars left a record of rhythmic patterns in thick stacks of sedimentary rock layers, revealed in three-dimensional detail by a telescopic camera on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. Researchers using the High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment camera report the first measurement of a periodic signal in the rocks of Mars. This pushes climate-cycle fingerprints much earlier in Mars' history than more recent rhythms seen in Martian ice layers. It also may rekindle debates about some patterns of rock layering on Earth. Layers of similar thickness repeat dozens to hundreds of times in rocks exposed inside four craters in the Arabia Terra region of Mars. In one of the craters, named "Becquerel," bundles of a 10-layer pattern repeat at least 10 times, which could correspond to a known 10-to-one pattern of changes in the tilt of the planet's rotation axis. "Each layer has weathered into a stair step in the topography where material that's more resistant to erosion lies on top of material that's less resistant to erosion," said Caltech's Kevin Lewis, lead author of a report in the Dec. 5 edition of the journal Science. The camera, called HiRISE for short, took pairs of images of each site from slightly different angles in orbit, providing the stereo information needed to determine each layer's thickness. Geologists commonly find "rhythms," or repeating patterns, in sedimentary rock layers on Earth. Determining the source of the rhythms can be difficult. Some result from annual or tidal cycles, or from episodic flooding that may not be periodic at all. But the role of longer-term astronomical cycles has been debated. One step in showing that astronomical cycles can leave their mark in sediments came from finding repeating five-layer sets in some terrestrial bedrock, matching a known five-to-one ratio of two cyclical variations in Earth's orbit. Lewis and colleagues found something similar on Mars: "Our findings suggest that cycles of climate change led to the patterns we see recorded in the Mars rock layers today, possibly as a result of similar variations in Mars' orbit," he said. "Mars has a 10-to-one ratio in cycles of how its tilt changes—smaller wobbles within larger packages. Sure enough, we see a 10-to-one ratio in one of these layered deposits. It's like trying to identify a song—it's easier if there are multiple instruments playing different parts, rather than just a single rhythm." AND SPEAKING OF SONGS, the Holidays have crept in on us, almost unnoticed (at least by this writer)—and just when we all needed a little cheering up. So let's all "deck the halls with boughs of holly," and not let doom and gloom take over, even if the sky seems to be falling (it won't). Two important events happen this weekend: the Winter Solstice on Sunday 12/21, and Hanukkah beginning that same evening. The "festival of lights" couldn't come at a more appropriate time—the darkest evening of the year.



Each of these four panels shows a close-up view of a different type of geological deposit formed with the involvement of water, based on observations by NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. All four date from the earliest period of Martian history, called the Noachian Period.

The upper-left panel shows carbonates overlying clays in the Nili Fossae region of Mars. The view combines color-coded information from infrared spectral observations by the Compact Reconnaissance Imaging Spectrometer for Mars (CRISM) with an underlying black-and-white image from the High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) camera. Beneath a rough-textured capping rock unit (purple) lie banded olivine-bearing layers (yellow), which in some places have been partially or wholly altered to carbonate (green).

The upper-right panel shows phyllosilicates and chlorides in the Terra Sirenum region, observed by CRISM and HiRISE. Medium-toned, finely fractured rocks containing chloride salts either underlie higher-standing, light-toned phyllosilicates or fill in low spots between them. Both sit on dark, eroded volcanic material.

The lower-left panel shows the upper portion of canyon wall in Coprates Chasma, observed by HiRISE and CRISM. The chasm rim cuts across the middle of the image. The wall slopes down to the top of the image and continues outside the region shown, exposing multiple phyllosilicate-bearing layers in a section of rock 7 kilometers (4 miles) thick. Two of the layers shown here are finely fractured aluminum clays that dominate the lower half of the image, underlain by thin beds of iron-magnesium clays at the top of the image. The dark material is a remnant of an overlying layer of basaltic sand that has been partly eroded away by the wind.

The lower-right panel shows phyllosilicates with vertically layered compositions in Mawrth Vallis, observed by HiRISE (presented in enhanced color) and CRISM. The brown-colored knob in the middle of the scene is a remnant of cap rock that overlies aluminum clays (blue-gray), which in turn overlie iron-magnesium clays (buff).

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, a division of the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, manages the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter for the NASA Science Mission Directorate, Washington. Lockheed Martin Space Systems, Denver, is the prime contractor for the project and built the spacecraft. The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory led the effort to build the CRISM instrument and operates CRISM in coordination with an international team of researchers from universities, government and the private sector. The University of Arizona, Tucson, operates the HiRISE camera, which was built by Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp., Boulder, Colo. Photos courtesy nasa.gov

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If you'd like to learn more, you can contact Bob at [b eklund@mvoobserver.com](mailto:b eklund@mvoobserver.com)

(Unless otherwise noted, poems used in this column are by Robert L. Eklund and copyrighted by him.)

From the Inside Out:

'Tis the Season for Light

By Mary Carney

Winter is here - but it does not begin to compare with memories of central Pennsylvania, to shine more than the long dark, for the days to be longer and warmer, for freedom from sweaters, and boots, scarves and gloves. When it is darkest, that's the time to dig deep inside and affirm the knowing that life is here, and that it's time to emphasize the importance of light, and of the light of the soul. Sunday started the Festival of Lights for our Jewish friends - one more candle each night to remind them that there was a miracle of light from an oil lamp when no light seemed possible. Thursday others celebrate the birth of the light of love into the world, the one who said that the Eleventh Commandment that Love is more important than anything else in the world. That of all endeavors at which anyone can succeed, the greatest is living in and with and spreading love. Science is confirming that truth. However, the words used to verify "religious truth", when coming from the "scientific point of view", often cause what I myself have experienced as a "gag response." I mean, even after 30+ years of being in the healing field, and of spending countless hours in seminary, and in studies, and in practice, and in reading scientific articles, and in slowly absorbing the concepts, there are still times when someone says something that causes my stomach to clench because I've been used to describing the concept one way. I mean, who wants to think that the love we have been taught about in church, and encouraged to learn to focus on with our hearts and to create with our prayers, might also be describable as being a specific range of "frequencies" that can be created with man-made tools? Even after 30+ years in the field, that even makes me want to gag - how dare we think that we can recreate God's love with machines? And yet we pray, meditate, surround ourselves with music or soundwaves to enhance our own peacefulness. We use perfumes and essential oils to help connect us to our love-filled, scent-based memories. When sharing special moments our hearts and spirits rise above the usual day-to-day level of emotions to levels that we call "love". And we know in our deepest hearts that when we act from love we can move mountains. How wonderful to have a time that mankind uses to rekindle a spark of light and life in anticipation of beginning a "new" year. How wonderful to, as a common humanity, give ourselves the gift of not only starting each day anew, but to recognize that there are recurring cycles, and that we are all encouraged to let the past go, and as a community to begin anew. To look ahead with hope, with action to create something new, to move beyond historical ways of living our lives, to move out of our ruts, to change our patterns, to go beyond tired thoughts and to remind ourselves that no matter what the outside looks like, we are each endowed with the creativity to make our lives something extraordinary in our own eyes. Remember, even those who live in the driest deserts, or deepest rain forests, those who live there with none of our "things" still live, love, work, laugh and play and find meaning in their daily lives. As the co-creator of your life, my prayer from the inside out for you is that this Holi - Day season bring you the gift of using your personal light, gifts, talents and creativity to overcome all obstacles and challenges that seem to stump "everyone else". And in that light, I wish you a Merry Christmas.



Paul the Cyberian:

Safer Online Shopping

Another malicious web threat that exploits a programming flaw in Internet Explorer 7, and all versions of Internet Explorer, made headlines this week by infecting millions of computers around the world. This is especially significant as Internet Explorer is the dominant web browser on the Internet and accounts for just about 72% of all web browsers currently in use on the Internet today. This represent a huge target for hackers who wasted no time in posting code that exploited the new vulnerability. This particular exploit is made all the more malicious in that it requires almost no interaction by the user in order to cause a machine to be infected. All that is required for an unprotected user to become infected is to visit a website already loaded with the malicious code. Once a user's machine has been compromised the exploit can be used to steal credit card information, license keys, account numbers, user credentials or other sensitive personal information stored on the affected computer. Microsoft issued a patch on December 17, 2008 to protect users from this vulnerability but some industry experts that user might want to take the additional step of using an alternate browser, such as Firefox, Safari or Google's Chrome, in order to avoid falling prey to this latest web threat. Online shoppers are encouraged to protect themselves this season by following the online shopping basics: ensure your computer has been updated with the latest service packs and security updates, ensure that your computer has an updated and fully operational antivirus and anti-spyware packed installed and ensure that your computer has sometime of firewall software or appliance protecting you from the Internet).

Here are a few more tips that will help to ensure that your online shopping will be as safe as possible:

1. Make sure that your transactions are as secure as the vendor claims they are: Most online vendors use Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology to encrypt credit card transactions. The website will have a URL starting with "HTTPS" rather than the usual "HTTP" during credit card transactions (eg. <https://amazon.com/order>). Most browsers will also display a padlock on the address bar when SSL technology is being used to complete a secure connection.
2. Only give your credit card information to a vendor in a secure connection to a web site, not to in an ordinary email. Be extremely careful when responding to any request for personal information including passwords, social security numbers, account numbers and credit card numbers especially if the request was made by phone, fax or email. To ensure that the request is legitimate call the vendor back and ask to speak to the requestor directly.
3. Passwords - If you use a password to log onto your computer use a different password for placing orders on those site that require a user account to place orders. Create a special password for these and other sensitive sites such as your home banking sites.
4. ...and as always. If it's too good to be true, it ain't! Use your best judgment when wading through the waves of 'deals' that you will surely encounter online this year before sending them your very real cash over the Internet. A vendor you've never heard of offering a price that is just too good to be true for a hard to find item might be more than just a bargain. It might just be a real steal.



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## TABLE FOR TWO

By Peter Dills

### Day Tripping and Thinking of You

I headed down to Laguna Beach for Sunday Brunch this past weekend. Gas prices have lowered their sword and made traveling more appealing for everyone, so I thought a celebration was in order; a trip to the coast for a pleasant afternoon was the vision I entertained after a hard week of work. California in winter, down comes the top on the convertible and off to Las Brisas Restaurant. Laguna Beach is my favorite spot in Southern California. If I had not placed all my eggs in one basket" and waited for the stock market to trend just a little higher, I might just be living there. Okay, maybe I would have needed some lotto numbers too, so what! Who wouldn't want to be in paradise though? There are many days that I leave a hazy sky above Pasadena in the rearview mirror and, by the time I hit shores of Laguna, the sun is waiting for me, saying, "Welcome, Peter."

Last Sunday was another chapter in that recurring story. I started off on their patio with an artfully made Margarita superbly blended with Hornitos Tequila for (\$10.50). Do you want some chips and salsa? They charge you here, but with a view like this I may just try to live on this diet. From the name Las Brisas, you may naturally think of this as a Mexican Restaurant, but don't let the Margaritas and Chips falsely mislead you. In fact, my recommendations focus on the fresh seafood, beef and chicken entrees.

I have found the wisdom of my old man to be fairly adroit over the years. He told me time and again, "the closer to the water the worse the seafood." For the most part, everyone essentially gets their fish from the same or similar purveyors. No matter if the restaurant is the 909 or 999. Las Brisas though is an insurrectionist to this notion. For me it tenders thoughts of being in the Mexican Rivera, only with Valet Parking.

Let's eat!!! The Brunch is (\$33) per person, less for kids. I discovered here that I am a critic of consequence, as I was encouraged to sample a few more of the dishes. After a wide variety of dishes, here is what I recommend. I started off with the Soup of the Day - Sopa del Dia; Cream of Asparagus started my meal with a flavorful dance. There are omelets, crepes and other brunch items. I sampled the Sand Dabs and was excited at making the correct choice. These are lightly sautéed and topped with real king crab meat; my companion's Pollo Milanese and brought an approving smile to the face. So enthusiastic was our response that there were no doggie bags left for Mom. Brunch does include a California Sparkler and juice, or milk for the kids. I will not forget the fresh and warm pastries that awaited us at the table. The dessert menu rotates from Sunday to Sunday, all in all a great and picturesque deal!!!

History: Opened in 1938 as the Victor Hugo Inn, name change to Las Brisas in 1979.

My Tip: Try to get a window seat

Value: B+, worth the drive!!

Valet Parking: Yes

Street Parking: Metered, don't take the chance

Las Brisas Restaurant, 361 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach, (949) 497- 5434

Check [www.lasbrisaslagunabeach.com](http://www.lasbrisaslagunabeach.com) for hours and updated prices

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# The Senior

By Bruce Lamarche

## Spot

Get Ready -  
Become an “Unconsumer”

“These are times that try men’s souls.” (Women too!) Uncertain economic times can be scary. Investments of a lifetime lose value and bank interest rates on savings drop to near zero. Future increases of income are in serious question. What can a body do?

We are a consumer driven society. We spend a lot of money on bigger and better using the all-consuming principle of “more”. I think of the times I went backpacking with all my needed possessions in a thirty-five pound pack and discovered that for 4 days . . . it was enough! So what is the difference between a simple existence with the beauty of nature to awe our senses and our cluttered lives filled with “stuff” that we move from spot to spot in a vain attempt to organize? What does “stuff” have to do with happiness and the real meaning of life?

Since we cannot control the actions of the economy, perhaps we should look to ourselves. Our spending habits and so-called necessary expenses are worthy of a close look in these times. This part we can do something about and perhaps with surprising results. With an effort to reduce our outgo and to simplify our “inventory” of possessions, life can be made less expensive and simple.

Do you have a written budget? If so do you stick to it? Getting out the checkbook and bank statements from the last six months and making lists of the items separated into categories can be revealing. What is really necessary? How do you manage your utility usages? Are you using efficient appliances? Utility companies provide credits for efficiency. Do you turn off lights in rooms not used? Are you heating or cooling rooms you never use? What areas of spending are new compared to two years? Were they really necessary?

Look around the house and into closets and note things that you haven’t used in a year. Why have you not utilized them? Perhaps listing them on Craig’s List for sale or donated them to the Salvation Army would be appropriate? What needs to be put into the trash? How much “stuff” is really used, let alone important? What could you gift to family members? I find it interesting to discover something in my home that I have not seen in a long time. I wondered, if it had simply disappeared if I would even remember it. So who do I bother to keep it . . . and for what purpose?

As you get rid of unused items in the house, think the circumstances that had you purchasing them originally. The next time you are wondering the isles in the discount store and are tempted to buy something, think of what you just got rid of. Save your money.

Between the thinning process of possessions and careful control of unnecessary spending we can substantially reduce our expenses. This is just like getting an increase in income. Certainly the simplifying of life can allow for more appreciation of the simple things. So . . . who controls our life, the stuff we “manage”, advertisers who want our money, or do we? Become an un-consumer and keep more of your money for the important things of life.

Got a question? Ask Bruce by phone-(626)335-3412 or e-mail: blamarche@verizon.net

This article is provided by Bruce Lamarche, a member of Society of Certified Senior Advisors®, www.csa.us. Bruce’s company, R & B Reverse Mortgage Services (Glendora) helps seniors make an informed decision about obtaining a reverse mortgage. www.LASeniorMortgage.com

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**See the “Senior Spot” column weekly!**

### The Night Before Christmas

By Dorothy White

‘Twas the night before Christmas  
And all through the house,  
Not a creature was stirring  
Not even a mouse.

“Twas not surprising that no one was stirring because, due to the potency of the eggnog, all members of the household had passed out,(Let me assure you that they were all over twenty-one years of age.) Though they were not stirring, they were most certainly snoring, even the mice who had lapped up the spills.

There they all were, mice flat on their backs on the floor and humans in recliner chairs, when Santa squeezed himself down the chimney. That chimney thing was becoming more difficult each year and he resolved (as he had done every Christmas for the past half century) to stick to his diet in 2009. If only Mrs. Claus didn’t make such delicious buche de Noel!

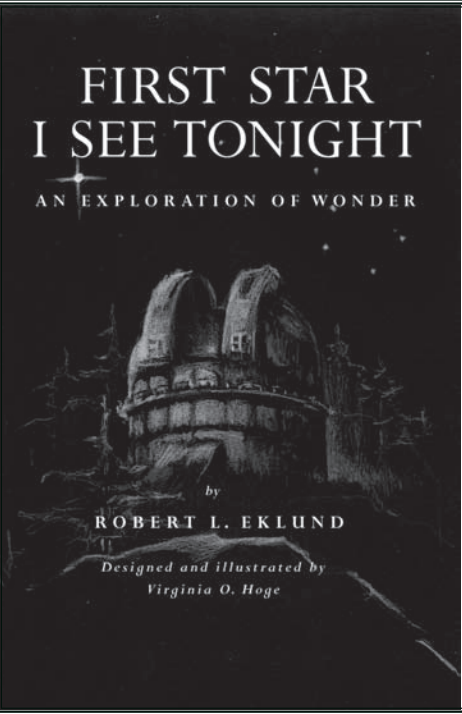
Santa took in the scene immediately and was not at all surprised for he had encountered this situation many times and knew just what to do. Into each stocking, along with other gifts, he slipped a package of antacid tablets to be taken the next morning.

His work completed in that house he looked for the obligatory milk and cookies. Finding none, he proceeded to finish off the eggnog (half a punch bowl.) He then departed, this time wisely using the front door. Fortunately his reindeer knew all the stops to make because Santa was in no condition to drive (Oh, that eggnog) and everyone received their presents on time.

What Mrs. Claus said when he reached home, I leave to your imagination. It cannot be printed in a family newspaper.

## FIRST STAR I SEE TONIGHT

AN EXPLORATION OF WONDER



by  
**ROBERT L. EKLUND**

Designed and illustrated by  
Virginia O. Hoge

### THIS YEAR, FIND YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS STAR— AND SHARE THE WONDER.

Stroll through a starry night with astronomer-poet Bob Eklund and artist Virginia Hoge.

Available in paperback and hardcover editions at Sierra Madre Books, and online at Amazon.com and LilaQualityBooks.

## SENIOR HAPPENINGS...

By Pat Birdsall

### FYI:

Please don’t forget seniors in nursing homes this holiday season—many of them have no family of their own and this time of year can be rough, especially when other residents are being visited by loved ones who lavish them with gifts and treats. **Here are a few appropriate gift ideas to brighten their holidays:** (All can be a combined effort by many) **Warm socks**-Nursing homes usually issue booties that are thin and unattractive. A nice pair of thick, colorful socks with skid proof bottoms is a wonderful gift. Check at the front desk for the number of people living at the nursing home, and buy socks for everyone. **Toiletries**-Quality hand lotions, shaving cream, shampoos, and scented soaps are also great gifts that seniors appreciate receiving. Buy an assortment and take them for distribution to all. **Lap robes**- They are typically 30x40 blankets that fit over the shoulders or over the lap to keep a person warm. For people who crochet, one can be completed in less than 3 hours using scrap yarn. **Time**- Your time visiting with them is the most precious gift of all.

### ~Helpful Hints~

Club soda to the rescue this holiday season! Use it to clean grease stains from double-knit fabrics and to remove stains from the carpeting. Overindulge? Club soda with a dash of bitters will work wonders on an upset stomach caused by indigestion or a hangover.

### Recipe of the Month:

#### Cranberry Cream Pie



- 2 ½ Cups whole-berry cranberry sauce
  - 1 pastry shell (9 inches), baked
  - 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
  - 2/3 cups sugar
  - 2 eggs, lightly beaten
  - 3 Tbs all-purpose flour
  - 1 tsp vanilla extract
  - 1- Spread cranberry sauce over the bottom of pastry shell. In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs, flour and vanilla on low speed just until combined. Pour over cranberry layer.
  - 2- Bake at 350 for 35-40 minutes or until center is set. Cool on a wire rack. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours before cutting. Serves 8
- RD.com



### Happy Birthday

December Birthdays: Rose Fafach, Levon Yapoujian, Bonnie Garner and Helen Reese

### For Your Funny Bone

It’s so rare to be offered a meal on an airliner these days that I was surprised to hear the flight attendant ask the man sitting in front of me, “Would you like dinner?” “What are my choices?” he responded. “Yes or no,” she said.

~ ~ ~

Flying to Toronto at Christmastime, I arrived at the airport check-in. As the security guard cleared my bags, I noticed a sprig of mistletoe dangling above him. “What’s the mistletoe for?” I asked. “That?” He smiled. “That’s so you can kiss your luggage goodbye.”

### Quote:

From a commercial point of view, if Christmas did not exist it would be necessary to invent it. ~Katharine Whitehorn~

### Activities:

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

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

**Monday:** Free strength Training Class with volunteer Lisa Brandley 1:00-1:45

**Tuesday:** Bingo- 1:30PM- 3:30 PM .25c per card  
Yoga- 5:30 PM- 7:00PM Instructor Andrea Walsh- \$6.50 for seniors (50 and over.) Call 355-5278 for more information.

**Wednesday:** 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday-Community Lunch & Learn Program

**Thursday:** Game Day- 1:00PM- 3:30PM- Poker, UNO, Scrabble, Cribbage, Chess, Checkers, Backgammon, Pinochle...you name it.  
Yoga- 5:00 PM- 6:30 PM \$6.50 for seniors (50 and over) Call 355-5278 for more information

**Friday:** Ping-Pong 1:30 PM

**Saturday:** Senior Club for those 55 and older- Brown bag lunch at 11:30AM Meeting at Noon- Bingo at 12:30 PM- only .25c per card

### Monthly Excursions:

\*For reservations and further information call Susan Clifton at (626) 355-7394 or stop by and see her at the Hart Memorial Park House- 9:00 AM- 2:00 PM

**Thursday, December 18- 9:30 am to 4:00 pm- “Christmas Around the World”** - The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum’s annual holiday exhibit featuring 30 beautifully decorated trees representing the countries that President Reagan visited while in office. Menorahs given to him while he was in the White House will also be on display. There will be time to tour Air Force One, and to see other parts of the Library & Museum as well. \$16.00 per person for transportation, admission & audio tour. Lunch is on your own at the Café. Menu prices range from \$4.95-\$7.95 for soup, burgers, sandwiches and salads. For more information or to register, please call the Senior Desk at 626.355.7394.

**January 15, 2009- Senior Day at the Races- Santa Anita Park-** More information to follow.

**Free Blood Pressure Clinic-** Second Tuesday of each month 11:00 AM- Noon No appointment necessary

**Financial Consulting- Financial Consulting- 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month** at the Hart Memorial Park House from 10:00AM- Noon. Please call (626) 355-7394 for an appointment.

### Meals-on-Wheels:

Meals are delivered to homebound seniors by volunteer drivers through the YWCA Intervale Lunch Program M-F (with frozen meals for the weekend.) \$2.00 suggested donation per day. Call Susan Garcia at (626) 858-8382 for more information.



**MEALS-ON-WHEELS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS TO DELIVER MEALS TO OUR HOMEBOUND NEIGHBORS \*\*ONCE A MONTH OR WEEKLY\*\*** Please contact Darlene Traxler at 626.355.0256.

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## One Of A Kind:

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## Thanks for the Christmas Memories!

Many around Sierra Madre make our Christmas a little brighter and merrier by decorating with lights, ornaments, animation and more. Driving around, one can't help but find a little more Christmas spirit with the aid of the many hours some take to install their holiday offerings.

A special thank you goes to the Ostis on Auburn. Christmas always starts early there, and Tim Osti provides music, hot beverages and even a tour. Another thank you goes to one decoration that needs to be appreciated live, the hilltop decorated tree by George Enyedi up on Sunrise Hill. Best viewing from Grandview at the bridge just West of Foothill by the settling fields, but Enyedi's lighted tree can be seen for miles! Thanks, Sierra Madre! Next week... Christmas in Pasadena, Monrovia and Arcadia!



Take a drive around Sierra Madre and catch a glimpse of these wonderful holiday sights. Above: Grandview Avenue Below: Oakcrest Drive



The Osti Home (above) is also depicted in the 2009 Sonny Salsbury Calendar. Below is another wonderfully decorated Grandview home.



View all of Chris Bertrand's Sierra Madre Christmas homes (yes, there are more) in full color online. Go to: [www.mvobserver.com](http://www.mvobserver.com)

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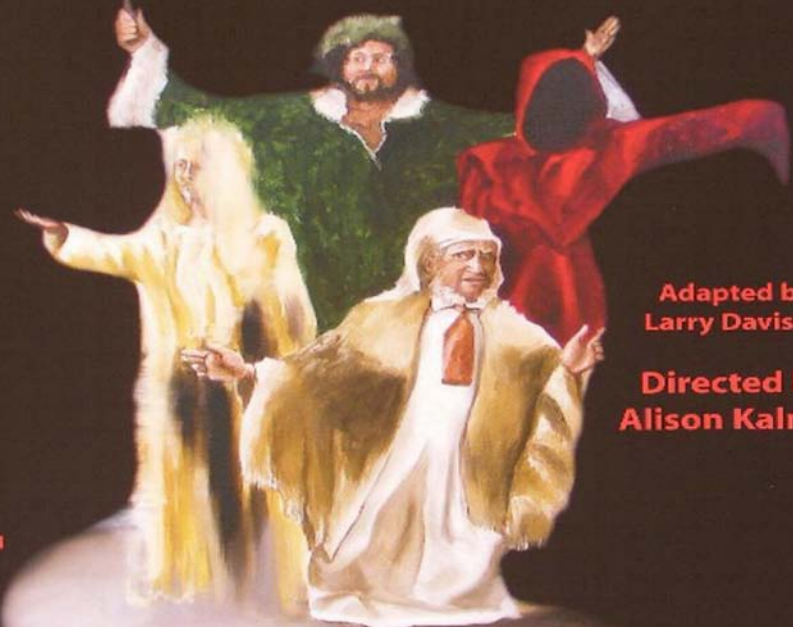
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