

THE MT. WILSON OBSERVER

WHERE YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS COMES FIRST

Friday, January 19 - January 25, 2007 Volume 2, No. 3

BIG CHILL IN SIERRA MADRE



Photos by Kevin Dunn

The sprinklers at Sierra Madre School at Auburn and Highland created an icy world last week as temperatures dropped to sub-freezing. Art instructor Barbara Wamboldt took her own photographs of the garden's chilly beauty. Across California, damage to citrus, avocados and strawberries was widespread. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger Tuesday asked the federal government for \$1 billion in disaster aid. An estimated three quarters of the state's citrus crop could have been destroyed in the week-long cold snap. Citrus is damaged below 28 degrees. At press time it was snowing in Malibu, California.

CITY'S PARAMEDIC COORDINATOR BEGINS WORK

By Katina Dunn

Sierra Madre's first Paramedic Coordinator, Greg Christmas, is already working toward implementing the city's new Paramedic Program, which has a target date of March 1st.

In the meantime, Sierra Madre residents who call 911 will receive the same service as before with Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

Once the Paramedic Program is in place, paramedics will arrive at the scene in addition to the city's

EMTs.

After March 1st, paramedics will be available every hour of the day, every day of the week. The start date depends on how quickly the paper work for the program is processed by Los Angeles County, according to Sierra Madre Fire Marshal Rich Snyder.

Snyder said about 40 EMTs are currently involved, and the Fire Department is working on adding 20 to 30 paramedics. The paramedics will work in Sierra Madre on their days off from La Habra Heights and from private

paramedic companies.

"The cost will be significantly less than a paid department with benefits, et cetera," said Christmas. "And you'll have the best paramedic care you can get."

Out of the city's more than 700 calls for medical assistance per year, more than half could use paramedic care, Snyder estimated.

The EMT's job is to "stabilize you and get you to the hospital," said Snyder. "Paramedics will start treatment in the field." (continued page 3)



Photo Courtesy SMFD
Paramedic Coordinator Greg Christmas and Rescue 41

OH TO BE A CHICK WITH HAPPY FEET

By Katina Dunn



Photo By Jacqueline Truong

They dance decades off their years, tapping themselves back in time to that younger, chick state of being.

As long as they dance they remain chicks. They don't stop. They keep on dancing.

"It brings a joyful perspective to life," says Nancy Walsh, one of the famed Tap Chicks of the tap dancing revue that originates from the Senior Center in Pasadena.

"Joy is probably the best word," said Walsh. "It's wonderful for memory. For seniors, its particularly good. A lot of seniors suffer from depression. Its hard to be depressed when you're dancing."

The group performs about 30 times a year, and they rehearse three times a week, under the tutelage of Pam Kay.

Kay, who has performed with entertainers from Wayne Newton to Bob Hope, is billed as "a veteran Las Vegas entertainer" in the promotional materials the Tap Chicks generate - showbiz flyers that flutter down the path to the

stage like rose petals from a flower chick.

Who are they? Walsh is Vice Chair of the Senior Community Commission in Sierra Madre, Carol "Snooky" Black - who is 80-plus years old - raises orchids, Sheri Garwood teaches art, Marsha Fee Berger is an actress and nurse, Virginia Burescia Baughman - also 80-plus - likes to crochet, and Monica Waters, who worked for the police department in Kenya, is now an artist.

Walsh has danced with the revue for two and a half years. She is a sight to behold for her granddaughters Erin, 4; Brenna, 7; and Lexi, 8. Walsh now has a leg up on her daughter, Jennifer Dyer, who is a composer, singer and pianist.

The granddaughters delight in their grandmother's impromptu shows, and grab umbrellas to shuffle off with her to "Singing In The Rain."

"Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," and "Twist & Shout."

The chicks just can't help it. Walsh, who loves jazz above all else, says (continued page 2)

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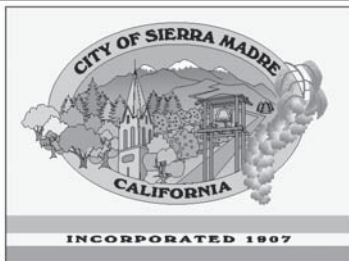


Friday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 30s-40s
Saturday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 30s-40s
Sunday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 30s-40s
Monday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 30s-40s
Tuesday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 30s-40s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service



Citizens' Datebook



City of Sierra Madre January Events

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 - Holiday, City Hall Closed | 17 - Cultural Arts Master Plan Meeting 6:00 pm |
| 4 - Senior Community Commission 3:00 pm | 17 - Tree Advisory Commission 7:30 pm |
| 4 - Planning Commission 7:30 pm | 18 - Planning Commission 7:30 pm |
| 9 - City Council 6:30 pm | 23 - City Council 6:30 pm |
| 10 - Community Arts Commission 6:30 pm | 24 - Youth & Safety Meeting 6:30 pm |
| 12 - SMTV3 Fundraiser to Live TV Taping 3:30 pm | 24 - Library board of Trustees 7:00 pm |
| 12 - Art Show in City Hall 6:00 pm | 27 - Dog & People Walk 9:00 am |
| 12 - Travelers & Collectors 7:30 pm | 31 - All-America City Rally 6:00 pm |
| 15 - Holiday, City Hall Closed | |

The above Calendar of Events has been provided by the City of Sierra Madre. Please confirm meeting dates by calling 626-355-7435



Photo courtesy of Sierra Madre Playhouse

HAPPY FEET from page 1
"Percussion and backbeats are my thing."

Women ages 50 and up are welcome to join the troupe. The Tap Chicks have a Mission Statement: To promote health, longevity and quality of life through dance.

Call the Pasadena Senior Center at (626) 795-4331.

Don't Miss the Big Shoe:
Sunday January 21 at 7 p.m.
Sierra Madre Playhouse
87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. (626) 256-3809 or buy tickets online www.sierramadrepalyhouse.org

Senior Events - Page 9



Roy Roams' 91024

The Return of Sausages and Belgian Ales To Kersting Court

Our sources were way too excited about the pending sale of the **Boulevard Grill** – and the property is in escrow – to **Lucky Baldwin's** people. **Lucky Baldwin** will NOT be moving sausages and ales down the street. However, its owners do plan another eatery for the Boulevard Grill site so we'll wait and see what kind it will be. Our sincere apologies for oversizing the sausage on that news... And if anyone is interested in purchasing the famed **Mary's Market** business in the canyon for \$75,000 call **Denese Leath**, who intends to retire, at (626) 355-4534.

Cell Block 911 or Help! Spend Money Fast

Our cell phone gets blocked so we call Tech. Tech says it cannot be fixed by phone, must be done from the **Cingular** store. **Cingular** store says our phone is "degraded" and we should get new one – since AT&T – which was bought by Cingular – doesn't interface with new equipment. With the new phone, our calling package will also change – from 1,100 minutes down to 480. Then – the **Cingular** guy calls Tech from the store to get the cell phone unlocked.

Having arrived full circle in about an hour's time, we noted something else at the store: Cell Phone Clothes.

You can buy little jackets for your cell phone for only \$39.99

Do you want your phone – and I'm quoting here – to be "Trendy & Hip" or do you prefer the look of "Luxury & Glamour."

After the jackets come off, the cell phone can still be clothed with "Phone Tattoos" for only \$9.99

We can add musical ring tones for \$19.99 for eight of them.

Even if we are not, our cell phone certainly could be acquired in "Ultra Thin."

Three New to SM Community

Foundation

Patrick McKiernan, Jan Reed and former mayor **Rob Stockly** have recently been named as board members to the Sierra Madre Community Foundation, an affiliate of the California Community Foundation. McKiernan is managing partner of the Wexford Group at CitiGroup/Smith Barney. Reed is the famous former publisher of the *Sierra Madre News*, and Stockly is a retired banker working toward becoming a high school English teacher.

The foundation is a philanthropic organization benefiting the community, so don't forget to submit requests for your non profit.

Cribbage Café

"It's a compulsion every day of the week," **Rich Johnson** told us over the cribbage board at Nano Café. "We're trying for World Peace through cribbage."

Johnson was playing with builder **Richard Krier** and author **Harry Kelsey**, who they say sneaked across the border from his hometown of Altadena without a passport. Kelsey's books include *The Doctrina and Confesionario of Juan Corte*, *Frontier Capitalist: The Life of John Evans*, and *Sir Frances Drake: The Queen's Pirate*.

The jovial group plays a mean game – they've trounced a Monrovia contingent twice already. Few dare to challenge their mastery of the game, although Johnson welcomes newcomers to the Café around 8:30 in the morning. "The thing about cribbage, you can use half your brain to play and the other half to enjoy who you're with. It's mostly luck – the luck of the cards. The skill is in the minutiae – anticipating what cards a person will play," said Johnson, who owns the **Versa-Tape Company** which provides continuing education programs for lawyers.

Their shining star, though, is the lovely **Clodi Vallicella**, The Cribbage Muse.

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Café 322

An extraordinary evening of song
Sing Broadway and Opera favorites Sunday evenings – or just listen.
Pianist **Danny Guerrero & Friends**
322 Sierra Madre Blvd.
Sierra Madre (626) 836-5414

Farmer's Market

Every Saturday
8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, honey and fresh baked bread.
Menudo & tamale stand.
PHS parking lot 2925 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

Beantown

45 N. Baldwin
(626) 355-1596

Sunday January 21 at 7 p.m.

Tap Chicks & Comedian **Hank Garcia**
They'll Dance Right Into Your Heart
Sierra Madre Playhouse
87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.
(626) 256-3809 or buy tickets online www.sierramadrepalyhouse.org

Tuesday, January 23 at noon

The Kiwanis Club
"The State of Spyware" by **Bob Konigsberg**
This program is for anyone who uses a computer for e-mail or surfing the internet.
The Masonic Temple at 33 E. Sierra Madre Blvd.
The public is invited; lunch is \$10 per person. Reservations are required
Please contact Dr. Paul Neiby at (626) 355-1291.

Wednesday, January 24

Sierra Madre Environmental Action Committee
Call **Allison Wesley** at (626) 355-1544 for more info

Friday, January 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Citizen of The Year Dinner
Honoring the Delightful and Remarkable Community Leader **Bud Switzer**
Santa Anita Turf Club Chandelier Room
Contact **Patricia Hall** for tickets at (626) 355-5111
\$45 per person, sponsored by Chamber of Commerce

Saturday, January 27 at 11:30 a.m.

Guest Speaker **Joyce Ride**, mother of U.S. Astronaut **Sally Ride**
Luncheon at Sierra Madre Woman's Club
Tickets \$20 from **Mary Carney** at (626) 355-6225

Saturday, January 27

Birthing Celebration of **Thomas Paine** at Castle Green.
Commemorates the 270th birthday of **Thomas Paine** and is part of a tradition started in London in 1818 at a time when Paine's writings were outlawed by the government and men and women were being imprisoned and persecuted for printing his works.

English Country dancers, buffet dinner, drinks, an American "Town Hall Meeting" with **Thomas Paine**, and **Thomas Jefferson** (actors **Ralph Lister & Dale Reynolds**).

Tickets are \$75 and include dinner and two drinks. The **Thomas Paine Society** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Proceeds from this event benefit the **Thomas Paine Traveling Exhibit** scheduled to open in Philadelphia in 2008.

For information or to order tickets, call **Alaine** at (626) 796-4529 or visit our website at thomaspainesociety.org

Sunday, January 28 at 2:00 p.m.

The Journey to Palomar
The life and work of Mount Wilson Observatory's founder, **George Ellery Hale**, will be presented in a documentary feature film by **Todd and Robin Mason**.
The Masons have interviewed top scientists, historians, and authors about Hale's life and his telescopes. Their research sources included rare home movies from the Hale family, as well as Hale's own scrapbooks.
The Altadena Public Library, 600 E. Mariposa St., Altadena.
There is no charge for this program, and the public is welcome.
Wednesday January 31 at 6 p.m.

Rally to win the All-America City award

Join the Delegation!
Sierra Madre applies again after being chosen a finalist in 2006
Youth Activity Center at 611 E. Sierra Madre Blvd.
Call (626) 355-5278 for more information

Remembrances

Remembering Barbara Heasley

By **Phyllis Chapman**



Longtime Sierra Madre resident **Barbara Heasley** passed away January 9, in Folsom, California, where she moved in 2004 to be near her son. She was 95 years old.

Barbara was the beloved wife – for 66 years – of the late **Jim Heasley**, Sierra Madre's legendary "Mountain Man." Heasley enthralled listeners at **Lizzie's Trail Inn** with his tales of adventure, beginning with his days as a teenager with the mountain pack trains.

Speaking of Jim always meant including Barbara. Theirs was a lifetime love affair, and a love affair with the city of Sierra Madre, their city. They enjoyed a host of fun times over the years and many close friends. In 1999, they were Grand Marshals of the 4th of July Parade.

Barbara was born January 12, 1912 in Sumerville, Mass., and moved with her family to Monrovia. She met Jim on a blind date. He was quickly smitten with the lovely Barbara, and they married June 5, 1935.

They purchased a home in Sierra Madre on Victoria Lane in 1938, which they enjoyed for the rest of their lives.

Barbara gave much time to community activities, was a member of the Junior Women's Club and president of the VFW Auxiliary four times. During World War II, she was in a dance group that raised money for the American Red Cross. She was both singer and dancer in a group which performed around the San Gabriel Valley area. Her rendition of the song "I Don't Care" was a highlight, a song made popular by **Eva Tanguay**.

Barbara also managed the city's first municipal swimming pool across from Mary's Market. Since mothers joined the workforce and left their children in Barbara's care, she became known as "Rosie The Riveter's Babysitter."

The lovely Barbara is survived by her son **Russell** and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Besides her husband, Jim; a daughter, **Janice**, preceded her in death.

A service was held Wednesday at Church of the Ascension, and interment was in Sierra Madre Pioneer Cemetery, next to her husband.

The family suggests donations may be made in Barbara's name to Pasadena Humane Society at 316 S. Raymond Ave. in Pasadena.

The Wild West

With Kyle McClure

Ecology Update

BE VERY AFRAID

I am so confused. This is not the governor I voted for. But, somehow, this is the exact governor I voted for. Do you know what I mean? My candidate of choice was a goofy-looking guy with glasses. He was skinny. He looked like if you took him and forced him to put on skis and then turned him loose on the bunny slope, he would crash and break his femur. He wanted to spend money protecting the environment and providing healthcare for all Californians. He wanted to balance the state budget and lower tuition at community colleges. He wanted to provide funds for public schools to hire more counselors.

Do you remember this guy? His progressive platform of environmental protection, education, and fiscal responsibility was rejected and laughed at and spit upon and finally ignored by the voters of California. He was very very not elected. He was not elected in a landslide. But, California voters, I have uncovered evidence that this was his plan all along. According to my inside sources, "Phil Angelides" (as he has chosen to be known here on planet Earth) is the real science fiction character at the helm of our ship of state. For he is (ominous soundtrack music)... a body-snatching alien that has infested Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Evidence: the complete disappearance of Phil version 1.0. Has anyone seen him since November 2006? No!

Evidence: the press releases being issued by the current "governor's" office. "Schwarzenegger Budget eliminates operating deficit..." "Schwarzenegger tackles California's broken healthcare system," "Schwarzenegger issues directive to establish the world's first low carbon standard for transportation fuels."

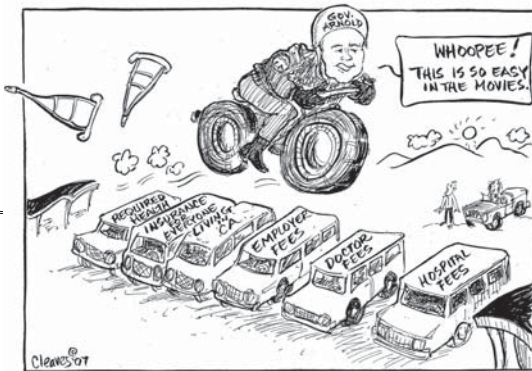
Let's talk about that last one a little. Our current

"governor" has issued an "Executive Order" (which is a legislative title that translates into English as "fancy sounding instructions that no one is required to follow, but which sound important and generate press coverage") establishing a low carbon fuel standard for transportation fuels sold in California. If this Executive Order is taken seriously by our legislature and actually turned into some sort of law or something, by 2020 the gas in your car will have 10 percent less carbon in it. Or, you may be driving one of the anticipated 7 million alternative fuel or hybrid vehicles expected to be on the road. Or, you may be eating a vegan burrito while trying not to get sauce on your dreadlocks as a robot vacuums the commune carpet... maybe... possibly... Anyway, I think we can all agree that such an Executive Order cannot reasonably be the work of our fairly elected (well, fairly elected the second time. Let's not bring up that bloodless coup that brought him to power in the first place).

Remember what he was like before his body was invaded? He was busy backing ballot initiatives that alienated (Hah! Get it?) teachers and firefighters and union members everywhere. That's the governor we elected. Not this wimpy, physically vulnerable, consensus-seeking post-republican.

There is evidence that Arnold is struggling against the horrible alien that has viciously wrested his consciousness away from him. No new taxes have been proposed, only "fees." And, so far, all of these new proposals are "market driven" and "new job generating."

But, good citizens, be afraid. Be very afraid. California continues to strengthen its reputation as a global leader in environmental regulation. Community college fees are down. And the middle school where I work has opened a position. It's for another counselor.



PARAMEDIC continued from page 1 Christmas, 39, was thoroughly excited when he learned he was chosen for the job, not only for the professional challenges but also because he is returning to his home turf. He grew up in Arcadia and attended Arcadia High School, where he played on the golf team. Now he will be back with family friends after years working in El Centro, California near Yuma, Arizona. He also teaches paramedic courses at Imperial Valley.

Medical emergencies he's handled include field workers exposed to crop dust pesticides, people escaping from Mexico who died in the desert from extreme heat or extreme cold, and accident victims from vehicles that flipped over into irrigation ditches. He's brought four babies into the world and tended to and transported injured Americans handed over the border from Mexican paramedics.

One place that stands out in his mind are the Imperial Sand Dunes known as Glamis, site of up to 400,000 people on a holiday weekend. "People falling in fire pits, head-on collisions between motorcycles and dune buggies, you

name it. If you can think of an injury, it was there," said Christmas.

He also put in time working ER as well as being a Reserve Officer for Mountain Rescue in San Dimas.

Last week was his first week on the job in Sierra Madre, and Christmas discovered he had a bond with Snyder that goes back a long, long way. When they were kids, both were rapt followers of the 1972 TV drama *Emergency!* based on the lives of Los Angeles County Firefighters.

"That show made the public aware of what paramedics do," said Christmas. Both he and Snyder could not resist naming in unison their TV heroes of long ago: "John Gage and Roy DeSoto!" Snyder began as a full time firefighter 20 years ago, under a real life hero, Fire Chief Ed Tracy, now retired.

Christmas and Snyder continue to swap stories of valor, and both spoke of the importance of having the scientific knowledge, instinct and valor it takes to do right in every emergency.

"This will be history in this city," said Snyder. "Everybody on the department is just thrilled."

Possum Cards "Hasty Notes"

By
Katrelya

To order
call
(626) 355-7837
or visit Iris Intrigue Boutique, 49 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

Sierra Madre Auditions for All-America City

By Dean Lee

Last year Sierra Madre made finalist in the National Civic League's All-America City competition and in the spirit of this year's centennial, delegates want to go all the way to win.

The new application needs another entry for what promotes harmony in the city, since last year's entry of the Downtown Specific Plan is not listed in that category this year.

That was the question the 2007 All-America City Awards Steering Committee wrestled

The city had promoted the DSP heavily during a presentation in Anaheim for last year's award explaining how Downtown 101, an "immersion" series of community input meetings that offered mixed results, had united the city, something most residents today simply agree is not true.

This year's committee members themselves said they all thought being an All-America City could "bring together a divided town." Through cooperation of the residents, property owners,



The Mayor at the 2006 Event

with Tuesday night after agreeing to use both the Youth Activity Center and The Senior Housing Project as recent accomplishments for the award. Committee members left a big question mark in place of a third project, going so far as to ask local media for advice.

Mayor Pro Tem Enid Joffe first suggested the city's new paramedic program even though it was not currently operational, which City Manager John Gillison said should be up and running by the time an application is filed for the city award.

"This could also be a good opportunity to show off our volunteer fire department as a whole as well," Joffe said. Gillison suggested the volunteerism behind Bailey Canyon Wilderness Park. "That's been going on for years," he said. "In fact it's still going on and has big impacts on the surrounding communities."

business owners and civic leaders the Sierra Madre community worked together to build consensus and arrive at a vision for its downtown.

Kurt Christiansen, the city's former Development Services Director, said last year. "As the Downtown Specific Plan is taking shape it will preserve our small town atmosphere to insure that the final result will be a shared vision of the city's future."

Deputy Director of Community and Personnel Services, Elisa Weaver, explained the ground rules for applying, the economic benefits and community pride associated in winning.

"They are not looking for the perfect community," Weaver said. "They're not looking for the community that doesn't fight, that does not have disagreements (continued on page 4)"



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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

Fri. Jan. 19 - Fuzzy Logic Bopset
Sat. Jan. 20 - Blues Harp virtuoso Mitch Kashmar
Sun. Jan. 21 - Opera to Broadway
Thurs. Jan. 25 - Baritone Sax Man Adam Schroeder
Fri. Jan. 26 - Kevin Krabbs & Friends
Sat. Jan. 27 - Vocalist Leslie Howell
Sun. Jan. 28 - Opera to Broadway
Fri. Feb 2 - Jazz Vocalist VR Smith
Sat. Feb 3 - Dave Amolee Sextet
Sun. Feb 4 - Opera to Broadway

322 West Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre, CA 91108



CENTENNIAL BEGINS

Hoisting of wistaria-draped banners around Kersting Court and along Sierra Madre Boulevard heralds the beginning of Sierra Madre's Centennial Celebration. The banners and a City Council ceremony and reception for the public will officially launch the year's festivities Jan. 23, 6:30 p.m., at City Hall.

Unfurling the colorful new city flag, a color guard from Boy Scout Troop 110 will lead off the opening ceremony. Centennial co-chairs Judy Webb-Martin and Toni Buckner in period costumes will set the stage for the Centennial Opening Night Gala in February and a host of other community activities.

Webb-Martin will present centennial pins to each council member and outline some of the community events listed in a commemorative centennial calendar that was sent to every home in Sierra Madre. Cake and punch will be served following presentation of resolutions from elected representatives honoring Sierra Madre on its 100 years as a city.

The City Council ceremony culminates a resolution passed in 2005 under then Mayor Rob Stockly, authorizing the celebration of the city's 100th anniversary of incorporation. Stockly and his wife, Wendy, are co-chairing the centennial Opening Night Gala on incorporation day, Feb. 23. It will be held at the historic Villa del Sol on the Alverno High School campus, 200 N. Michillinda Ave.

Tickets for the opening gala go on sale Jan. 19 at the Sierra Madre Public Library, 440 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., and The Bottle Shop, 58 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Only 300 tickets are available for the party, which will include champagne, a wine bar and buffet. The tickets, which are souvenirs in themselves, cost \$50.

Banners will fly until the closing event: the Rotary Community Picnic Oct. 21, when Huell Howser, host of California Gold on PBS, will preside as honorary mayor.

Free centennial calendars also are available at the library.

Contact: Jacqueline Knowles 626-355-6781



ONLY ONE EARTH

Sierra Madre's Solar Pool Heater

by Chuck Havard

Back in October 2004, the City of Sierra Madre installed a thermal-solar pool heating system. The intentions were to significantly reduce the amount of natural gas needed to heat the pool, thus saving the City money, and to improve the environment by reducing the amount of emissions released into the air.

This also permitted the City to comply with Air Quality Management District (AQMD) Rule 1146.2, which establishes stringent new nitrogen oxide (NOx) emission standards for commercial water heaters and small boilers in the South Coast District.

The thermal-solar system, by pumping cold water through solar panels atop the Public Works Yard carport, enables the City to use the gas-powered boiler approximately 73% less throughout the year, and to use it primarily to supplement the thermal-solar heating system. On bright sunny days, especially during the summer, the system can maintain the pool water temperature at a comfortable 80 degrees. On colder days, if the sun is shining, the solar system assists the less efficient, natural gas-powered boiler in heating the pool. The system does not work well on overcast days. The City plans to replace the gas-powered boiler with a low NOx emission heater. Actually, the City has already prepared a grant proposal requesting funding support to purchase the heater and is eagerly waiting for the AQMD to publicize their new program guidelines, hopefully in February 2007.

Based on the natural gas rate in 2004, the City hoped to be able to keep the pool open year-round. The major rate increase by SoCalGas, around 75% in late

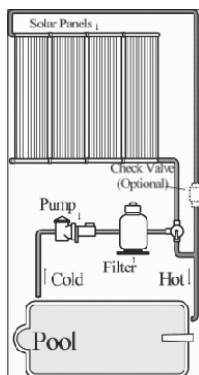


Diagram Courtesy of Pool Center (VA)
The above diagram illustrates how a typical pool solar heating system works.

2005, put a hold on this hope. For the time being, the City pool is open to the public during the summer only - from mid-June through Labor Day. Currently, from September to May, LaSalle High School rents the pool for their swim activities, paying all of their own expenses.

SoCalGas, as a major donor of the solar heater project, continues to regularly monitor the system's natural gas usage, as well as its emissions output. The Gas Company must be pleased with the results so far - they frequently refer other municipalities to contact Sierra Madre to "see how they're doing it."

SIERRA MADRE POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of Sunday, January 7th, to Saturday January 13th, the Sierra Madre Police Department responded to approximately 245 calls for service.

Sunday, January 7th:

4:07 AM - Recovered stolen vehicle, 00 block West Laurel Ave. Officer Krongchana recovered a stolen 1990 blue Acura Integra. The car was reported stolen January 2nd in El Monte.

Saturday, January 13th:

10:31 AM - Vandalism, 82 West Sierra Madre Blvd. An employee of Hygeia Labs called the police department to report a damaged concrete block wall at the rear of the business. The wall was damaged between 5:00 PM Friday, 1/12 and 8:00 AM 1/13. The cost of repair is unknown.

11:23 PM - Vandalism, 200 block Ramona Ave. A resident reported the driver's side windows smashed on a parked car. The owner told officers she parked her car that evening around 6:50 PM and discovered the damage when officers notified her at 11:40 PM.

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ALL AMERICAN (cont. from page 3)
and doesn't have problems because that community doesn't exist."

She went on to say they look for a community that (continued on page 4) plans well and works with its residents, its businesses and nonprofits, along with the government to make accomplishments. The committee's application chair Josh Moran outlined some of the reasons the League rejected Sierra Madre last year saying they wanted more quantifiable examples. He said the YAC was a good example of what they want. "We're going to retreat that one this year," he said.

"Since we have opened the new youth center we have shown through surveys that kids don't do what you don't want them to if they have a place to go," Moran said. "It's not just us; this has been shown through national surveys as well."

The steering committee also went over budgeted expenditures totaling \$15,525 with the largest chunk \$3,100 going to marketing and publicity. Other costs included lodging at the All-America Expo, postcard printing and mailing and the application/presentation for the award among many other things.

Weaver stressed that the money will be raised through donations to the Sierra Madre Foundation and not through General Funds although the committee is still working out the details she said. In the end she said the money comes back through the perks of being chosen.

Every year only 10 cities in the country are given this title. In the last two years, two California cities have been named All-America Cities - last year the city of Lincoln in Northern California and in 2005, the Los Angeles suburb of Canoga Park.

Fire Safe Council TIP OF THE WEEK

From Caroline Brown

During the recent high winds you no doubt noticed all the downed tree branches, especially the palm fronds, in your yard and on the streets. Imagine them all as burning embers flying through the air, heading your way. Many of us were awake on and off all night batting down the hatches against the wind.

Did you notice where all the openings were into your crawl spaces under the house, at the porches and decks, under the eaves of the roof, the vents to the attic and the kitchen and bathroom exhaust vents? These are construction designs to keep your home dry but they are also entry points for burning embers that can move miles ahead of an oncoming brush fire.

In the Malibu Bluffs fire of January 8, 2007, the homes that were lost were ignited by burning embers pushed by 40 mile per hour winds far ahead of the advance of the brush fire.

The PCH Press, Malibu's daily newspaper, www.pchpress.com/malibufire has a succinct article on this fire of interest to the residents of Sierra Madre.

If you are in the process of securing your home against a firestart from burning embers, please see the University of California Fire Center for information: firecenter.berkeley.edu/people. Link to Steve Quarles and his "Vulnerable Parts of Your Home." There is another link: firecenter.berkeley.edu/homeassessment where you can answer questions and get an immediate evaluation of the vulnerable parts of your home and suggestions for improvement.

The next Sierra Madre Fire Safe Council meeting is February 12, 2007 at 7 p.m. in the City Council chambers. Call 355-1182 or 355-9350 for information. E-mail us at: smfiresafecouncil@hotmail.com

Ed Alverno, Arroyo Pacific Academy, La Salle, Pasadena High School, St. Francis, Sierra Mesa Middle School, The Barnhart School, The Gooden School, Sierra Madre Elementary School, Bethany Christian, St. Rita's, Wilson Middle School, Odyssey Charter School, Norma Coombs Alternative School, and the PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

But Teacher, The Bus was Late...

By Dean Lee

Welcome to 2007. It's back to school but oops... there's no bus!

Or, if you can find one, it now takes three connections to go two blocks.

And for that gift this year you can thank the new Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Metro Connections program saving them up to \$34 million over the next three years through massive bus route changes.

MTA Service Development Manager, Jon Hillmer, said Metro Connections is aimed at streamlining and simplifying some of Metro's long routes throughout Los Angeles County. The lines now affected include 85, 201, 255, 487, 268 and 751 in the San Gabriel Valley.

Of these, for any student at Pasadena or La Salle high schools, the routes you want to pay attention to are the 268, 487 and the new 267.

Line 487 was broken into two segments; one from El Monte to Pasadena ending near Colorado Boulevard renamed the 287, the other now goes from Downtown LA to Sierra Madre and this segment is still the 487.

But all is not lost and now all three bus lines, 287, 487, and 268 go directly to the Metro Gold Line giving the city of Sierra Madre, for the very first time ever, access to the station with the exact same name.

But these changes did not come without their battles and for good or bad that included the possibility of Sierra Madre losing all its public transportation overnight. So what happened?

An earlier move in September by the MTA's San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council voted not to cut lines 268 and 487 out of Sierra Madre but the move only came after a number of riders, including two visually impaired persons and a non English-speaking housekeeper, said the route was a lifeline for them.

"Right now I get off the bus and walk four blocks," said a rider through an interpreter. "If you take out the bus I can't walk all the way up the hill. I don't know what I will do."

City council member Joe Mosca sits on the Governance Council and pushed to keep the lines in the city. He said that a number of people depend on the MTA in Sierra Madre because of the geographical location of the city. He also said that kids take the bus from Sierra Madre to Pasadena every day because the city is part of the Pasadena Unified School District.



"The city sits on a very steep slope and not too many people are willing to walk the mile up or down the hill," Mosca said. "The students, seniors and disabled in the city depend on this line to get around."

Former Sierra Madre Mayor Bart Doyle, who also sits on the board, said that he agreed that the city was isolated, and said that even though ridership was low it was vital to the city. Doyle voted in favor of all changes. He then explained why.

"When I was part of the city one of the reasons it was thought that people were not taking the Gold Line was that they needed to go east and west," Doyle said. "With the expansion east of the Gold Line, now is the time to have the 487 go to that station. Things are changing."

Proposed cuts on line 268 to JPL were taken out of Metro Connections proposal after a number of JPL employees complained during the Aug. 8 public hearing.

BOOKS

with Jeff Brown

Stolen Voices: Young People's War Diaries, From World War I to Iraq (Paperback) by Zlata Filipovic and Melanie Challenger

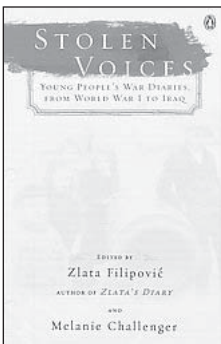
Zlata Filipovic, a globally recognized spokesperson for children affected by military conflict is famous for Zlata's Diary (1994), about her teenage years in wartime Sarajevo. Now she and her co-editor combine excerpts gathered from fifteen diaries of young people coping with war. They are young civilians and soldiers in World War I Germany; World War II Russia, Austria, New Zealand, Germany, Singapore, and the U.S.; Holocaust Lithuania and Poland; Vietnam; Israel and Palestine; and Iraq. Each entry is framed by a brief historical introduction and an afterward. Profoundly affecting testimonies in gripping historical narrative whereby war stories are told not through facts and dates but through the honest impressions of youth.

In the tradition of Anne Frank these selections leave powerful impressions about their life and times in close up details of everyday life in crises. One Israeli girl and a Palestinian confront the same question: "I don't understand why people want to kill me."

Austrian Jew Inge Pollack, who was separated from her parents at age 12, writes of homesickness and her growing love for her foster father.

Filipovic, aged 11 when the war in the Balkans broke out, describes playing dress up in the one room available to her, amid sniper fire and without electricity or water.

Many of the diaries have not survived, but we are fortunate that their stories, many previously unpublished, still remain and are shared in this wonderful collection.



PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL GUIDE AND OPEN ENROLLMENT BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

Open Enrollment Period Begins January 15, 2007

The new Pasadena Unified School District School Guide is available for families interested in learning more about PUSD schools and the programs offered. The booklet also includes Open Enrollment information and an application. Applications for Open Enrollment may be submitted between January 15 and February 9, 2007.

As an Open Enrollment district, families have the option of applying to any school in the district regardless of whether it is located within their neighborhood.

A highlight of the booklet is the test scores section which shows the significant growth PUSD has experienced in the California Standards Tests and Academic Performance Index (API). This past year, the number of PUSD schools with API scores over 700 increased to 21, including three scoring over 800.

The School Guide also includes a description of the PUSD core curriculum, arts, sports, and after school programs, and special enrichment offerings. There is a section about each of the schools and school tour information.

The School Guide is available at the PUSD Ed Center, 351 South Hudson Avenue, Pasadena, in the Office of Student Support Services in Room 121, or at any PUSD school. They are also available online at www.pusd.us/schoolguide. People interested in having a School Guide mailed to them, should contact the Superintendent's Office at (626) 568-4553.

Pasadena High School Math Tutoring Academy



For Algebra 1 Students
Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays
3:15 to 4:30 pm
Beginning January 17, 2007

Applications available in the counselor's office.
For more information see Mrs. Barragan in 1-108.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Arroyo Pacific Academy
41 W. Santa Clara St.
Arcadia
(626) 294-0661

Alverno High School
200 N. Michillinda
(626) 355-3463

The Gooden School
192 N. Baldwin Ave.
(626) 355-2410
www.goodenschool.org

LaSalle High School
3880 E. Sierra Madre Blvd.
Pasadena
(626) 351-8951

Pasadena High School
2925 E. Sierra Madre Blvd.
(626) 798-8901
Pasadena

Sierra Madre Elementary School
141 W. Highland Ave.
(626) 355-1428

Sierra Madre Middle School
160 N. Canon
(626) 836-2947

St. Rita's Catholic School
322 N. Baldwin Ave.
(626) 355-9028

Bethany Christian School
93 B. N. Baldwin Ave.
(626) 355-3527

Odyssey Charter School
725 W. Altadena Dr.
Altadena, CA
(626) 229-0993
www.odysseycharterschool.com

High School Senior Education Awards

By Phyllis Chapman

The Sierra Madre Civic Club announces sponsorship of its 2007 Education Awards. Applicants must be:

- *A senior in high school and
- *Be a resident or employee in Sierra Madre
- or
- *Have one parent working in Sierra Madre or
- *Have a relative who is a member of the Civic Club
- * Provide two letters of reference - one from a teacher or school administrator and one from an adult leader from applicant's volunteer activity or employer

The Awards Committee considers a student's volunteer activities, interests, talents, hobbies, accomplishments of recognition and educational and career plans.

Applications are available from high school counselors or Awards Committee Chair Amy Putnam at (626) 355-4198.

The application deadline is March 1, 2007 and awards will be announced Thursday, May 19 at the Civic Club's General Meeting held at the Senior Center in Memorial Park.

The Monetary Education Awards are part of the Club's philanthropic support of young people, which is one of the Club's priorities.

Career and Technical Education Information Fair

for the parents of 9th and 10th grade students in the Pasadena Unified School District

Saturday, January 20 from 9 a.m. to noon
Pasadena City College
Creveling Lounge
1570 East Colorado Blvd.
Deadline for Registration Friday, January 12, 2007

Purpose: To inform parents of Career and Technical Education learning opportunities

Contact: Dr. Eddie Newman
(626) 795-6981

Sponsored by PUSD and PCC

Looking Up

With Bob Eklund



Photo by Laura Eklund

An earlier column (Dec. 8) described how astronomy briefly came to Mt. Wilson in 1889, with the installation of Harvard College Observatory's 13-inch telescope—the centennial of which was celebrated in Sierra Madre's 1989 rose float (see Dec. 15 column). The rigors of mountain life proved too much for these pioneers, who removed the telescope from the mountain the following year, in 1890. Meanwhile, the University of Southern

Pathway To The Stars

use of the mountaintop property; brought Yerkes Observatory's newest instrument, the Snow Solar Telescope, from Wisconsin to Mt. Wilson; and built—with the help of noted Pasadena architects Myron Hunt and Elmer Gray—a comfortable living quarters for the astronomers, which Hale dubbed "the Monastery." For all of this, Hale had put up at least \$30,000 of his own funds, which he had borrowed on the gamble that funding for the new "Mount Wilson Solar Observatory" would soon be forthcoming from the Carnegie Institution of Washington, just established in 1902 by steelmaker Andrew Carnegie to promote scientific research.

On December 20, Hale's gamble paid off. As Helen Wright describes the historic moment, "Hale was on his way up the mountain, riding a mule. He had reached Martin's Camp. There, unexpectedly, he was called to the old single-wire telephone. The operator said she had a telegram from Washington. Hale, trembling in spite



Photo courtesy of MWOA

California's plan to place a 40-inch telescope on Mt. Wilson fell through when funding evaporated, and in 1897 the 40-inch became the centerpiece of the University of Chicago's Yerkes Observatory in southern Wisconsin.

Fast-forward to January 1904: George Ellery Hale, the brilliant young Chicago-born astronomer who had been the dynamo behind the creation of Yerkes Observatory, had arrived in Pasadena with his family the month before. His intention was nothing less than to carve out a world-class astronomical center in the wilderness of 5,700-foot Mt. Wilson. In the first week of January, he climbed the mountain, armed with a 3-inch telescope and accompanied by 14-year-old Seward Simons, and proceeded to set up the telescope near an old log cabin known as The Casino.

Hale biographer Helen Wright later interviewed Simons and describes the events of that memorable trip in her book *Explorer of the Universe*: "From the beginning he [Hale] treated the boy as an equal, even asking his opinion on astronomical questions. In retrospect, Seward concluded that Hale was 'the most vivid character, the most interesting personality I have ever known.'"

Wright describes how Hale—who was passionately interested in understanding the physical nature of the Sun—scaled a yellow pine tree on his first day at Mt. Wilson, dragging his telescope with him, making observations of the Sun at various heights above the ground to test the "seeing," or steadiness, of the atmosphere. In his diary, Hale recorded his observations: "Tested seeing in tree at 32 feet and 68 feet above ground. Apparently some improvement..." Perhaps he already realized the possibilities of a telescope raised high above the ground where heat waves would not distort the sun's image—an idea that later became the basis for the design of Mt. Wilson's 60-foot and 150-foot solar tower telescopes.

Before the year was out, Hale had signed a 99-year lease with the Mt. Wilson Toll Road Company for

of himself, asked her to read it. From her voice, which was difficult to hear, he gathered the wonderful news that the [Carnegie] Executive Committee had appropriated \$150,000 a year for two years."

That date—December 20, 1904—marks the founding of the observatory that was to dominate astronomy for the next half-century. As the site of discoveries like the magnetic nature of sunspots (Hale, 1908), the first direct measurement of stellar diameters (Michelson and Pease, 1920), refinement of the speed of light (Michelson, mid-1920s), and the first measurement of the Universe's expansion (Hubble, late 1920s), Mount Wilson Observatory literally became "the center of an expanding universe."

George Ellery Hale's brilliant career comes to life in *The Journey to Palomar*, a new feature-length documentary by Los Angeles filmmakers Todd and Robin Mason. In a special pre-release screening, the film will be shown Sunday afternoon, January 28, at the Altadena Library. Sponsored by the Mount Wilson Observatory Association, the screening will begin at 2:30 p.m., with refreshments preceding it at 2:00 p.m. The program is open to all, and there is no charge. The film traces the tumultuous beginnings, technical challenges, and personal drama involved in the creation of Hale's three groundbreaking observatories—Yerkes, Mount Wilson, and Palomar—and the ensuing discoveries that changed science in America and revolutionized man's understanding of the Universe. For more on the film, see www.journeytopalomar.org.

The Altadena Library is located at 600 E. Mariposa St. in Altadena, at the corner of Santa Rosa Avenue ("Christmas Tree Lane"). Heading north on Lake Avenue, turn left on Mariposa, go to the second stop sign, turn left on Santa Rosa, and then turn into the parking lot at the first driveway on your right. The program is in the library's Community Room. For more information, see www.mwoa.org.

TechKnowledge

Technology Science Business

Your Old Computer

From Paul The Cyberian

If you were one of the many people who have recently purchased or received a new computer you may be wondering just what to do with your old one. There are many non-profit organizations that welcome your donations of old computer equipment. Many of these organizations will give you a tax-deductible receipt in exchange for the donation.

There are a few steps you'll need to take before you let that old computer out of your possession. If you think of your computer as a kind of VCR or other recording device

you will see that it can hold quite a bit of information about you even after the power has been turned off. Most operating systems have directories that hold cached files the system uses to control, direct and coordinate active processes being used by the computer.

Some of these files can be viewed directly with programs on the computer. Others need a little more effort in order to access the contents. Either way you will want to insure that any computer you have previously owned has been properly sanitized before it is disposed of.

The fastest and surest way to make your computer safe for donation is to delete the partitions (hard drive divisions) and recreate them without installing any other software.

This will guarantee that the hard drive is ready for use by the new owner and that your information has been permanently removed from your computer. This can be accomplished by booting your computer from the Operating System CD (XP Home, XP Professional, etc.) used to set your system up.

WARNING**

The process listed above will permanently delete ALL programs and files on your computer. This process is not reversible. Be sure that this is your intention before taking this action.

Prior to processing your computer for donation be certain that you have backed up or transferred all important programs and files to your new computer. After you have given up possession of the computer you will not be able to retrieve any forgotten information as the donation processing center will most likely re-format and re-program the computer for use by the new owner.

Check the attached link for a list of charitable organizations willing to accept your computer donations. <http://www.usedcomputer.com/nonprof.html>

For questions, concerns or column ideas please email me at p.carpenter@mtwilsonobserver.com

JPL Sponsors High-Tech Conference for Small Business

By Natalie Godwin

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., will host the 19th annual High-Tech Conference for Small Business on March 6 and 7, at the Radisson Hotel near Los Angeles International Airport.

The two-day conference will focus on subcontracting and marketing opportunities for small, minority, women-owned and veteran-owned businesses in high-tech industries. It includes several "how-to" workshops featuring information on major programs, small business initiatives and other topics.

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet with approximately 250 corporate, federal, state and city government representatives to discuss potential contracting and subcontracting opportunities. One-on-one counseling to discuss potential business opportunities is available with more than 100 exhibitors. There is no fee to exhibit; however, due to space limitations, exhibitors are limited to prime contractors and government agencies.

Contact Martin Ramirez at 818-354-6093 for exhibit information. A registration fee of \$130 per person is due no later than Feb. 17, 2007. Pre-registration is advised.

Online registration is available at:

http://acquisition.jpl.nasa.gov/boo/2007ht/jpl_conference_db/index.asp

For more information, contact Amber Norton at 818-354-7531, or Jasmine Colbert at 818-354-8689.

WorkForce with Madeline

Q: I've applied for a job as vice president of marketing at a large theme park. I was quite surprised at what happened during my interview. After waiting for the interviewer for about 5 minutes, he appeared huffing and puffing. He was dressed in a full moose costume. He made no mention of his attire and acted as if nothing was out of the ordinary. Truthfully, I had trouble maintaining eye contact. I just can't imagine why a moose would be interviewing me. Do you think there was some underlying reason?

A: Just proves that you have to be prepared for anything at an interview. Perhaps, this is the moose's everyday attire at the theme park and he didn't have time to regain human form before the interview. As you say, he came in quite out of breath.

Maybe, he was en route to a photo shoot advertising the park and needed to be in costume.

Possibly he was just testing your reaction to a rather bizarre situation. He might have wanted to see if you have a happy personality and if you would fit in with the rest of the team.

In any event, aside from your lack of eye contact, I hope you conducted yourself with as much decorum as possible. I do have to admit that it certainly is not within the realm of normalcy to be questioned by a moose.

Direct your questions to Madeline at comptype2@aol.com or 888-489-8372 (8 AM - 6 PM, Monday - Friday).

THE MT. WILSON OBSERVER

OPINION



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The Mt. Wilson Observer is a publication of Deux Amis Publishing, Inc. established and copyrighted in 2006. This paper is published weekly with offices in Sierra Madre, California. All letters to the editor and correspondence should be sent to: Mt. Wilson Observer
280 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. #327
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Printed on Recycled Paper

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We honor the traditions of the community newspaper and place our readers above all other concerns. We deliver local, state and national news every week. 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.

The Mt. Wilson Observer welcomes your comments, letters to the Editors and Stories. Please send your submission to:

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Photo by Jacqueline Truong

Fighting Fires in Sierra Madre

By Stefan Bund

This week's column is going to be short, because I've only got two points to make. One is small and the other is big.

Start with the short point. Recall Joe Mosca. You're all talking about it. Go and do it. It's easy. Someone register the recall, then spread out and collect signatures. And if you're among the ones who want him shut down, sign it. A few strokes of ink and it's done.

And yes, sure, the recall month will require energy and some thought. But so will watching him fumble around up there, and so will wondering how the city will end up.

Which brings me to the second point. Sierra Madre residents create drama within City Hall, and indirectly bring it to its knees by not carefully selecting the City Council.

It's a pattern of self-governance in America.

Each election, the most ambitious people show up and put their names on the ballot. And those poised to reap

the benefits from the win put clout behind one candidate. It sounds like a fair process, but it's really an alternative to what should be happening.

Citizens should be putting certain candidates forward, and creating that political base, and identifying people they would prefer run the city. This can't just take place within the run-up to the election.

The problem is America, and our cultural position. Most people haven't been expected to acquire an education. So really, only a minority of people go through with the process of bettering themselves, up to this point. This may change with time, but it's generally observed that a small group of people rise to influence in the society. Why? People let them.

But what is also changing is the ability for individuals to do research, read diverse news sources, and create a sophisticated opinion. Some call this netroots, others call it the search-engine revolution. But the age of allowing people to take control of the political system has got to end.

Those with the most to gain will take control of the political system. It is not a phenomenon.

Sierra Madre is a three square-mile plot of land that contains the kind of person who can do the political thinking required of the modern citizen. They are people who read the news, consider politics, and attend public meetings when issues arise.

What the average person here has to do is simply get involved in the identification, and cultivation, of future leadership.

The average Sierra Madrean needs to become proficient in selecting the right governors, and evolve from this situation where we're always fighting fires.



Selling (Out) Sierra Madre

By David Smith



10% of those 5.7 million vacant homes The Wall Street Journal reports are in California.

We are awash in empty, available homes. So why are the developers so anxious to build high-density condominiums in downtown Sierra Madre, in the slowest real estate market in a decade? The answer is simple. During the real estate boom, home prices got driven to levels far beyond what the economic fundamentals, i.e. incomes, jobs, etc., would support. Exotic financing also helped. But the phenomenon that drove the boom was psychological. People paid outrageous prices for homes because they expected them to go even higher. So now we have a bubble, and our economic salvation lies in letting the air out slowly.

The UCLA Anderson Forecast expects home prices in California to remain constant for the next 5 years, a soft landing. Their one exception is for homes in areas where there's new construction. And

their reason is, with highly inflated prices, developers can sell new homes in existing neighborhoods at deep discounts and still make obscene profits, while pulling the rug out from under current home prices.

The effect is two-fold. The developers make a fortune off the condos while crashing the market and providing a buying opportunity for speculators.

What bothers me most, though, is that certain members of our City Council and City Administration keep acting in favor of developers and speculators while placing the interests of Sierra Madre homeowners in greater and greater peril. They justify this by saying they need more revenue.

But property tax revenues went up right along with the median home price and record home sales during the boom. It's been a revenue windfall for the government. So, what's up? Why are some of our city officials throwing caution to the wind?

At the very minimum, there is an appearance of impropriety in their behavior. I'll go into that further next week. In the meantime, I suggest you watch an informative and entertaining presentation by Dr. Christopher Thornberg that's available through Google Video. Just go to video.google.com and search on the name "Christopher Thornberg". It's called "Economic Roundtable".

Watch it, and you'll get an excellent education in real estate economics. If you have trouble finding it, send an email to me at SierraHombre@verizon.net, and I'll send you a direct link.



It's a Dog's Life but it's a Wonderful Life!

By Hail Hamilton

My dog just died the other day. Her name was Maggie. She was good dog and I loved her very much. She lived 17 years, which is a long time for a dog. She gave me joy and made me laugh. She was a happy, big hearted, loving pet. I will miss her dearly.

No one will probably ever write a book or make a movie about Maggie. She wasn't celebrity material. She was just a good natured mutt—a yellow spotted Labrador mix—the kind of goofy dog you see everyday at the Pasadena Humane Society. In fact, that's where I got her back in 1990. She even predates two of my three kids. So she really was a big part of my family.

What was so important about Maggie, however, was what she taught me. This is the reason for the old saying: "A dog is a man's best friend." A good dog has a lot to teach its master. Some lessons were easier for me to learn than others. For example, it was much easier to learn anger and blame than to learn compassion and love. But Maggie was a patient teacher. She had to be with a stubborn student like me.

Maggie taught me that real friends are loyal and honest; that they speak their minds without fear of recrimination. Friends never have to worry about saying what they mean and meaning what they say. Most importantly, she taught me that real friends stay friends through good times and bad—they stick together like family and support each other no matter what. These were hard lessons for me learn. But again, Maggie was a patient teacher.

I don't know how Maggie lasted so long. Maybe she was just waiting for me to grow up. But she lived long enough to see me mature into a good husband and father. She taught my kids kindness and love. She taught our family that life is about progress, rather than perfection. Had she lived longer, I know she would have continued teaching me to be a better husband, a better father and a better human being.

More than anything, Maggie taught me to love the outdoors and its natural beauty. On our walks around Sierra Madre she taught me to go slow, smell the flowers, admire the trees and enjoy the views. She taught me how fragile our environment is and how easy it could be lost. Maggie taught me that given time, all of God's wonders would be revealed.

Maggie taught me all these things without saying a word. She taught with a friendly bark, a shake of her head, a soulful glance, and a wag of her tail. But she spoke to me just the same. She was my best friend. She never judged or condemned me for my faults. She loved me unconditionally, without reservation and without regret. Maggie lived a dog's life, but it was a wonderful life!





Photo Courtesy of SMMC
Yale Peak - 4,760' Sierra Madre Historical Wilderness Area

Saturday, February 3 at 8:30 A.M., the Sierra Madre Mountain Conservancy will host a meeting of the San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy in the City Hall Council Chambers. The public is invited to attend this free event. The Regional Conservancy has member organizations from the entire foothill region from Claremont to Altadena.

I learned from Ann Croissant, the director of the Regional Conservancy, that our conservancy was the oldest local conservancy in the region.

Incorporated as a 501 © 3, non-profit public benefit corporation in 1989, the Mission Statement has guided the all-volunteer Board of Directors in the purchase of properties identified as completing their goals of acquiring Open Space in our foothills.

The Conservancy is independent of the City of Sierra Madre has no power of eminent domain, employing a "willing buyer, willing seller" approach to acquire property to complement the Sierra Madre Hillside Ordinance by the acquisition and management of conservation easements or purchase of properties currently classified as "hillside." Hillside property acquired by the Conservancy is managed to preserve the scenic open spaces that make the Sierra Madre mountainside a unique resource of the San Gabriel Valley.

The Conservancies accomplishments will be highlighted as they host this meeting.

We hold conservation easements on land we purchased with Proposition A funding, on parcels generously donated by the Jan Maddox family, and on land that the city acquired for watershed protection in the 1940's, where the public now enjoys hiking opportunities on the Mt. Wilson and Bailey Canyon Trails.

Sierra Madre is the eastern boundary of the Rim of the Valley Corridor, a program of the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy, and our efforts in keeping the trailheads open to hikers has been successful though these land purchases and conservation stewardship. We hope to see the residents of Sierra Madre at this meeting so they can better appreciate the land that has been conserved and support us in the future.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How about taking the following to heart as the mission statement of your newspaper?

I love small town "newsy" newspapers and try to read them wherever I go. We seem to have an oversupply in our neighborhood, but I really like your little newspaper.

Kyle's article last week once again caught my eye. I really like the logo. But again, where is the "ecology" in the article? Is this news? Is this a well researched, timely article? No. His column might be better titled: "What I read in other newspapers last week".

Illegal immigration is one of the most important issues of our time, yet I have yet to see an article that clearly explains the problem, the reasons for the problem and offers some comprehensive short and long term solutions to the problem. Why not? It is so very easy to criticize, but oh so difficult to do proper research and go out on a limb offering well thought out solutions.

I came across the following in a book the other day. Although it is newspaper oriented, just think what a different world we would have today if the same principles were followed by all media outlets. I had lunch with several local gentlemen the other day. All of us had canceled our subscriptions to The LA Times. And we all had the same reasons: there is simply no news. The opinion section has moved to the front page.

How about taking the following to heart as the mission statement of your newspaper?

On June 1, 1933, Eugene Meyer purchased The Washington Post at

a bankruptcy auction for \$825,000 and turned it into one of the greatest powerhouse institutions in the world.

He felt a newspaper was a public trust, meant to serve the public in a democracy and wanted a paper that would advance beyond what it had achieved even in its previous heyday and "take a leadership which could be achieved only by exceptional quality".

In a March 5, 1935 address he spoke about the principles that he insisted on from the beginning, outlining them as follows:

1. That the first mission of a newspaper is to tell the truth as nearly as the truth may be ascertained;
2. That the newspaper shall tell ALL the truth so far as it can learn it, concerning the important affairs of America and the world;
3. That as a disseminator of news, the paper shall observe the decencies that are obligatory upon a proper gentleman;
4. That what it prints shall be fit reading for the young as well as for the old;
5. That the newspaper's duty is to its readers and to the public at large, and not to the private interests of its owner;
6. That in the pursuit of the truth, the newspaper shall be prepared to make sacrifice of its material fortunes, if such course be necessary for the public good;
7. That the newspaper shall not be the ally of any special interest, but shall be fair and free and wholesome in its outlook on public affairs and public men.

Jim Pepping

If you would like to send a letter to the editor for publication, you may do so via fax - 626-604-4548, email - deuxamispub@aol.com or U.S. Mail - 280 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. #327, Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024. Please include your full name and telephone number for verification. All materials submitted become the property of The Mt. Wilson Observer and are subject to editing.



Photo by Jacqueline Truong
Scotty & Primo Will Be Seen By You Now
Elsa Saldana showed off her beautiful Labradors one Saturday after their session at Dog Wash Express.

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Driver's Ed Class in Sierra Madre

If you are 15 years and older winter is the perfect time to take Driver's Ed. The class costs \$280 which includes the 30 hours of required classroom time and the 6 hours of behind the wheel driving. The classroom portion takes place in Sierra Madre's Youth Activity Center for four consecutive Sundays starting February 25 through March 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more information or to register, contact the Community & Personnel Services Department at 626-355-5278.

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BIRD'S EYE VIEW

By Pat Birdsall

Pat Birdsall is suffering from ill health and will resume her column next week. Thanks to Pat's good friends & neighbors, Caroline Brown and Joan Spears, for helping her get through some tough times.



"I also enjoy going for long walks and ball sports."

What's Up at Hart Park House Senior Special Events

Brought to you by The Senior Commission of Sierra Madre

Wednesday, January 31, 2007

9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

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Questions? Call 355-1291.

Thanks to the Los Angeles County Health Department and Dr. Paul Neiby with the Sierra Madre Senior Community Commission.

Thursday, February 8, 2007

10 a.m. to Noon

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With Attorney Geoffrey D. Chin

At Sierra Madre Senior Center

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SPORTS

La Salle's Gallagher is Coach of the Year



Story and Photo By John Blackstock

Pasadena, CA --La Salle High School's varsity football coach, Ealar Gallagher, has been named San Gabriel Valley Coach of the Year by the Pasadena Star News.

After an inauspicious 0-5 start of the Lancers' "rebuilding year" Gallagher turned around the team with a 21-14 win over undefeated Temple City and went on to eight straight victories and a spot in the CIF Mid-Valley Divisional Championship game. "The Temple City game was the day it all changed," said Gallagher. The Lancers went on to beat undefeated Cantwell-Sacred Heart and then Verbum Dei 37-36 before a packed stadium at homecoming to capture the Del Rey League title. "I'm really proud of these never-say-die-guys," quipped Gallagher.

Gallagher, a former football player, teacher and coach at Bishop Amat High School in La Puente is a graduate of UCLA. He started at La Salle as the JV football team coach and Latin teacher then worked his way up through the ranks until he was appointed varsity head coach in 2003. Gallagher finished his first season at 2-9, but followed with 9-3, 8-4 and 8-6 seasons including this season's CIF championship game loss to Verbum Dei 32-10 on a rain soaked field in Compton.

Gallagher remarked that "It's a great honor being named Coach of the Year, but after such a great turn around, I really feel that this truly is an award for the team, the coaches and even the administration for giving us so much support this past year."

Mr. Lopez and the Valiant 5

La Salle Girls' Soccer Aim For Championship

By Larry Bortstein

They may be led by a princess, but to Sal Lopez, the coach of the girls' soccer team at La Salle High School, all five of his key senior players are rulers of their domain.

"They came here together as freshmen and now they are the leaders of a team we hope can bring us a CIF championship," says Lopez, 35, who is in his second year as the Lancers' coach and also teaches mathematics.

With a 3-1 home victory over Notre Dame Academy of Los Angeles on Saturday, La Salle moved closer to a spot in the Division IV playoffs. The Lancers top the five-team Del Rey League.

The princess on the roster is Kasey Johnson, who was one of four Sierra Madre girls selected to represent the city on its award-winning float in the Rose Parade.

She also is the Lancers' chief offensive weapon who is a threat to score with

either foot. She will play at USC next year under new Trojans' coach Ali Khoshroshian.

"My parents will be able to watch my games," says Johnson, who has trained with the Olympic Development Program and aspires to play for the U.S. in the 2012 Games in London, if not next year's Beijing Olympics.

Sara Turcios, a midfielder who is one of the other key seniors is originally from Seattle. Turcios will return next fall to attend the University of Washington on a soccer scholarship. She also has been asked by soccer officials in Argentina to compete for that country's national team.

Erin Smith, one of the Lancer backliners, has dual American-Canadian citizenship. She hopes to attend either Queen's University in Toronto or McGill University in Montreal.

Laura McAulay, another senior defensive specialist, thinks this season's Lancers are far better than the team that

finished 11-6-6 a year ago.

"One of the reasons is that we have the same coach for the second year in a row," she points out. "Before this year, we had a different coach every year. The others kept leaving for other jobs and from year to year we were playing different positions."

The most courageous Lancer senior may be goalkeeper Makenzie Pedrotti. She was a backup in the goal and at several field positions in the past, but underwent surgery last summer to repair a ligament and still is rehabilitating her knee.

"I like being in goal because I don't have to run as much back there," Pedrotti says modestly. Thirteen of the Lancers' 15 victories have been shutouts, helped by Pedrotti's stellar work as the last line of defense. She says that next year she will attend either the University of San Diego or Westmont College in Santa Barbara.

Lopez, the La Salle coach, is a Monrovia resident and a father of three little girls. He allows his upperclassmen to call him by his first name at practice but insists they call him "Mr. Lopez" inside the school's halls.



Photo By Jacqueline Truong
Sierra Madre Princess Kasey Johnson

Irwindale Speedway Opens in March

By David Johnston

In a few short weeks, we'll be able to step outside in Sierra Madre and hear the light drone of engines as they race almost 12 miles on Saturday evenings from the Irwindale Speedway.

If only we could smell the burning rubber of the screeching tires... to some of us...that rivals the homey cooking smells from Mary's Market.

NASCAR Grand National racing returns to Southern California on March 24th at the Irwindale Speedway with the opening night of the 2007 racing season.

Located just off the 605 freeway, the one-half mile oval track features a wide range of weekly racing, including the AutoZone West Series of part of the NASCAR's Grand National Division.

Grand National cars are similar to those used in the NASCAR Busch series. Notable drivers that have graduated from the Grand National series to Nextel Cup include Kevin Harvick, Brendan Gaughan, Martin Truex Jr. and Ricky Craven.

Irwindale Speedway features 19 different racing series, including the highly popular "Turkey Night" which closes the racing season on Thanksgiving evening. Turkey Night features the USAC Midget and Sprint racing series. In its 67th year, Turkey Night attracts notable drivers such as Tony Stewart, who won the event in 2000.

Midget race cars are 350 horsepower 900 pound brut racing machines that create heart stopping racing action. Turkey Night typically sells out a month in advance, so plan on ordering tickets early.

Irwindale Speedway is also known as the "House of Drift", with four major drift events in 2007.

For those unfamiliar, drifting is a high-skill level sport in which drivers control a car while it slides from side to side at high speed through a fixed course. Irwindale is one of the most popular stops on the professional circuit.

Drifting originated in the late 1960's in Japan, it evolved from a form of illegal street racing held on windy mountain roads called "touge" (pronounced toe-geh).

Original "touge" racers were called "rolling zoku" (zoe-koo) and brought their sport from the mountains to the urban jungles of Japan. In drifting, a driver's skill, execution, speed and showmanship are judged.

This August, a charitable drift event, hosted by Kasey Kahne and pits NASCAR Nextel Cup drivers competing against the top stars of professional drifting.

Tickets for all events go on sale this month. Visit www.irwindalespeedway.com for details.



Photo by David Johnston
This Ford Fusion Is Ready To Go



View From The Couch

By Stanley J. Forrester

The Curses That Ended The Season

In our first issue we talked about fall and winter being football season, and how as fans we lived and died with our chosen teams. Well the season is winding down. The college champion has been crowned. Within the professional ranks there are only four teams left.

Only two of those teams will be playing in the Super Bowl.

Is your team in the running?

My team has been eliminated again. I was rooting for the San Diego Chargers. They are a Southern California team; they had the Most Valuable Player LaDainian Tomlinson, the running back with all the moves, but most of all I was cheering for the Chargers because they were the underdogs. The betting line from Vegas had the Chargers to win. If Vegas had the Chargers, why did I know they were the underdogs?

It was really quite simple. There were things against them. Things they could not ward off, first of all the MVP played for them. The MVP curse has been well documented. Somehow if the best player in the league plays for you in the big game your team's chance of winning is diminished. Even though the game was played in San Diego they were playing New England, and that team does not know how to lose in the playoff season.

According to the Sportscaster and his results, Tom Brady cannot be beaten. He is the man of steel during the playoff. He has made many fans of other teams cry. Curse No. 1.

The Chargers may have been able to overcome that. But Curse No. 2 loomed, spelling disaster more than anything else. Curse No. 2 is Marty Schottenheimer's playoff record. This is a coach that has 200 regular season wins and a dismal playoff record. Other than Marty only four other coaches have had 200 regular season wins and each of those guys have championship rings. There it was, Marty's playoff record staring the team and all of America in the eye. Could he do it this year? Is this the year you take the team which is clearly the best in football to the big show? Sadly for Marty, the Chargers, and the city of San Diego, the answer was no. It was to be another loss, the curse remained.

You know, I want to write Marty and tell him it's not his fault, who could know that during a crucial drive when your team had stopped the opposition that one of your defensive players would head butt a player giving New England a first down.

Or how about the smart play of getting an interception and then fumbling the ball?

If the defensive player had just knocked the ball to the ground the Chargers would have had the ball near the fifty-yard line.

Most of all I want to tell Marty, it's not his fault, it's my fault. I should not have been rooting for the Chargers, not one of my teams has been able to get the big prize. That was Curse No. 3.

Marty forgive me, let's get them next year and I promise not to root for you.

TERMS OF ENDEARMENT

Send A Valentine Message To Your Loved One, Best Friend or Sweet Patooty

Your message will appear in the February 9 issue of the Mt. Wilson Observer.

Deadline for submissions is Thursday, February 1.

Messages from children under 12 and Seniors 65 and over are free.

\$5 for 1-5 Lines

\$10 for 6-10 Lines

Add a photo or graphic for \$10

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