

## 100 YEARS OF NEIGHBORHOOD

By Katina Dunn

Tuesday's city council meeting adjourned for a reception with birthday cake in the lobby, beginning the first of many events marking the city's 100 years. Boy Scout Troops performed the color guard and the triumphant team that created the city's award winning float in the Rose Parade exemplified the best of volunteerism and small town life. The evening also marked the retirement from the Fire Department after 32 years of service by devoted public servant Richard Mays, who is also City Treasurer. Citizen of the Year Bud Switzer was in attendance, with friends John and Mignon Grijalva. So were city historian Phyllis Chapman, author Fay Angus and retired newspaper publisher Jan Reed.

### Visiting Dignitaries

Mark Harmsen, from Congressman David Dreier's office, said this time provides "a chance to take stock and see where you want to go in the future."

Norma Tontello from Senator Bob Margrett's office proffered a resolution and the comment "I wish I had a check for you!" Steve Johnson from Assemblyman Anthony Adams' office reminded the council that the population of Sierra Madre a century ago was 500 people. Rita Hadjimanoukian from Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich's office said "we're sad that you're not incorporated." Arcadia Council Member

Bob Harbicht opened with "greetings from Baja, Sierra Madre," and remarked "Sierra Madre has been a wonderful neighbor for 100 years." Monrovia Mayor Pro Tem Mary Ann Lutz told the crowd "In Monrovia, we have a saying - your success is our success."

### Fire Department Promotions

Earlier in the meeting, Chief Roger Lowe announced the promotion of Battalion Chief Steve Heydorff to Assistant Chief. The first female captain in the department is now Kristine Lowe, the chief's daughter. Jeff Bohn was promoted to Senior Engineer, and Nick Keezer and Andy Lanyi were promoted to engineers.

A new position - Department Safety Officer and engineer - is held by Chris Gaylord. Brent Bartlett was lauded for five years of service. New Paramedic Coordinator Greg Christmas was introduced and new firefighters were announced: Ted Walters, Mario Naranjo, Dino Sarti, and the owner of the Only Place in Town - Mike Kefalos.

Todd Conrad received special commendation and was awarded Firefighter of the Year.

### Centennial Announcement

Centennial Committee Co-Chairs Toni Buckner and Judy Webb-Martin gave the council commemorative pins and 1906 dictionaries available for sale at the library. "We're still fiercely independent and like to (See 100 YEARS Page 3)



Photo by Jacqueline Truong  
Local Boy Scouts salute Flags at Centennial kick-off

## CITY MOVES FORWARD ON DOWNTOWN PROJECTS DESPITE INITIATIVE

By Susan Henderson

Last week, the City of Sierra Madre filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Community Meeting Notice on the proposed Howie's Market project and the Skilled Nursing Facilities project.

Plans for the Howie's Market site at Baldwin and Sierra Madre Blvd. by Montecito Development Group LLC include 72 residential units with

approximately 13,560 square feet of commercial/retail space and 194 parking spaces.

Plans for the "Wisteria Village" by Sierra Madre Land Company LLC at the boarded-up Skilled Nursing Facility at 225-245 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. include 55 residential units, 10,000 square feet of commercial/office space and 150 spaces.

Both EIRs are supposed to address the impact of Land Use and Planning, Transportation,

Noise, Aesthetics and Public Services and Utilities.

The notice was published in a local weekly available at various locations in Sierra Madre and posted at City Hall.

The NOP specifies the City's intent to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report on each of the two projects. The purpose of the notice is to inform all State, Federal, and Trustee Agencies that may be involved (continued on page 3)

### No New Taxes:

## Police Initiative Requires Funding from City's Existing Budget

By Susan Henderson

Sierra Madre residents will begin collecting signatures for another ballot initiative. The measure, entitled Prioritizing Public Safety is aimed at protecting Sierra Madre's Police Department (SMPD). Specifically, the measure, if approved by voters, will:

Establish minimum wages and benefits for the city's Police Officers. Wages would not be allowed to (See Police Page 3)

## Snake Bit

By Katina Dunn

She was long and lovely and he was handsome, tall and strong. They had been together for years. None of that mattered - when he tried to move her back to her cage after cleaning it, she got mad for some reason and lashed out with a bite that almost cost him his life.

Chris Jurebie grew up around animals in Sierra Madre, and his talent for wrangling reptiles has brought him some fame and fortune. He's worked as the reptile keeper at the Wildlife Way Station in Little Tujunga for years, which even brought him to Hef's mansion for its annual Wildlife fundraiser with celebrities; he's worked as a reptile wrangler on movies such as *Snakes On A Plane*, and he's a board member of the Southwestern Herpetologists Society.

"My mistake," he says of that fateful day in early October when his albino diamondback rattlesnake sunk her fangs into his leg "was using a hook instead of tongs." He was tired and not thinking and used a different tool, not wanting to affect her pregnancy. She sort of slipped and that was almost the end of it for him.

Her name was Snowflake. Now it's unprintable.

"It was pretty bad," said Dr. Christopher Tine, who works at Huntington Hospital and has a private practice in plastic, reconstructive and cosmetic surgery. "He took a direct hit from a mature viper."

Jurebie became the star of a physician's lecture on snakebite



The young Chris (above) on the cover in 1981 of the local newspaper. Then-editor Jan Reed wrote "Lizards are fun but rattlesnakes are funner."



Photo by Jacqueline Truong Chris now...

treatment at the Hospital, where his friend Steve Sykes took him that fateful day last October. "The initial bite was the worst pain I have ever dealt with," said Jurebie. "I thought the pain was going to kill me."

His leg swelled twice its size and turned black and purple. He was hospitalized for weeks, and became an expert on Cro-Fab, the new anti-venom made (continued on page 6)

### Inside This Edition

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# Weather Wise

5-Day Forecast for Sierra Madre, Ca.

Longitude W118.0, Latitude N34.2

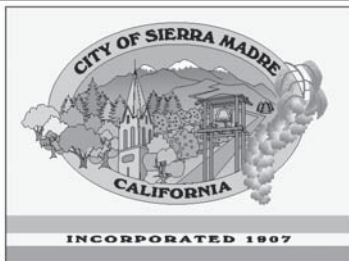


Friday:	Sunny	Hi 70s	Lows 40s
Saturday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
Sunday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
Monday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 40s
Tuesday:	Ptly Cldy	Hi 60s	Lows 40s

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 7:00 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 am         |
| 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 626-355-7135

## Roy Roams' 91024

### Streisand and Switzer

When you can't say enough good things about Bud Switzer, try singing. Here's one from Barbra Streisand:

Now when I remember spring  
All the love that joy can bring  
I will be remembering  
The shadow of your smile

### Kudos to Phyllis Chapman, Sierra Madre Historian

Phyllis Chapman wore a sweater embroidered with canines of all kinds so she could "put on the dog" for the city's centennial kick-off at last Tuesday's council meeting. Phyllis is one of Sierra Madre's greatest treasures, and she keeps herself from catching a computer virus because she types all her stories the old-fashioned way.

Phyllis writes for many of the local papers, where she is much appreciated. We were wondering if Phyllis would be willing to write histories of Sierra Madre and distribute them to the local papers. These stories could then be collected and published in a special edition volume.

The book would then be sold to benefit the city's historical archives. Other great archivists of Sierra Madre's history are John Grijalva and Dr. Paul Neiby. The history book would also immortalize these selfless citizens of Sierra Madre as author and archivists.

### Moving Pains

Brown's Interiors is moving east to the other side of the Buccaneer - from 74 to 64 Sierra Madre Boulevard. That building is for sale, and so is the building which houses the shop Attitudes!

The Chamber of Commerce is also moving to 37 Auburn from its spot on Sierra Madre Boulevard. Call Karma Bell to see if she needs help moving at the Chamber of (626) 355-5111.

### The Planning Commission is PC

Planning Commissioner Ron Brandley said at Thursday's meeting that the PC is "not hostile" to residents. Brandley expanded on a recent comment by City Council Member Kurt Zimmerman, who expressed concern on sending a resident with plans for a swimming pool to be located in the Hillside Management Zone back to face the PC.

The doctor appealed to the council after rejection by the PC. Brandley also said the PC is "not a rubber stamp" for the council's decisions, and the PC has its own mind, thank you very much. Brandley also said the PC is "not pro development."

### If you want to ask a question, press one...

A survey by "Consumer Research" is calling residents and asking their opinion of the following:

(Former mayors) Bart Doyle, Glenn Lambdin, Doug Hayes, Rob Stockley, George Maurer, Clem Bartolai; and (prominent realtor) Judy Webb Martin, Sierra Madre Residents for Responsible Development (SMRRD) and 2-30-13. The caller described the 2-30-13 initiative as a "measure" that "may" be on a future ballot (Election Day is April 17<sup>th</sup>) - and asked what the most important issue in Sierra Madre is: big development, traffic, taxes, crime and police and fire safety. The surveyor from New Port Richey, Florida, said the survey was "un biased." People are wondering who paid for it.

### Mi Casa, Su Condo

House parties continue throughout the town with show-and-tells about certain building projects to select groups of neighbors. We await our invite, too. One neighbor attended one in the canyon, regarding the proposed Howie's site of 72 condos. "I went there with an open mind," said the neighbor. "When I saw it (the rendering) my heart sank. It will change the face of the city drastically... the guy talked about a Cingular phone store and Panda Express... what about our unique stores - Beantown, Leonora Moss, Savor the Flavor?"

It was so Orange County. How come our downtown can't look like downtown Monrovia? Why can't we get some of those people over here? "

## 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

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

Tonight's The Night  
CONGRATULATIONS BUDDY SWITZER CITIZEN OF THE YEAR  
Dinner Honoring the 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

Birthnight Celebration of Thomas Paine at Castle Green.  
Commemorates the 270<sup>th</sup> 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.

MWOA is a public-membership support group for the Mount Wilson Observatory. MWOA's goals include improving the public's awareness of this observatory's rich history and ongoing scientific and educational programs. For information about MWOA membership, call Don Nicholson at (310) 476-4413, or see www.mwoa.org.

### 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

### Be Jeweled

Friday, February 9 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Opening Night - Premier Jewelry Exhibition  
Creative Arts Group  
108 N. Baldwin Ave.

### SIERRA MADRE PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS

#### TRAVELERS AND COLLECTORS SERIES

Adventures On The Black Sea: The Ukraine  
by  
Don and Janet Heins

Friday, Feb. 9, 2007  
7:30 pm  
City Hall Chambers

Admission: Free

For information call:  
626-355-7186  
or go to:  
www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us

### 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.

Saturday, February 3 at 9 a.m.

### Sierra Madre Mountain Conservancy

Winter meeting of the San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy in the City Council chambers.

Sixteen regional conservancies will share their Open Space acquisition programs and accomplishments. Public welcome to attend.

For information, call (626) 355-9350

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Anyone interested in assisting with the signature gathering for the Public Safety Initiative should come to the meeting on Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10 a.m. the Woman's Club at 550 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

Have You Seen Our Friend?



1/23/07  
Lost Weimeraner Puppy  
"CENA"

4 months old, silvery-grey coat, green eyes wearing a multi-colored collar

Please call 355-3246



# The Wild West

With Kyle McClure

## Ecology Update

### ACRONYM

Before you decide to make a bid for a seat in the United States Congress, you need to ask yourself a very important question. The question is not "Can I successfully reach across the aisle to craft bipartisan public policy solutions for the benefit of the American people?" Nor is it "Am I the offspring of a Senator?" Or, "How many millions can I spare for my campaign?"

The question is this: "Do I really have what it takes to come up with meaningful acronyms for every single bill I author?" We need our representatives in Washington to be able to do this: The USA PATRIOT Act = "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism." See? That's how a bill makes it across the desk of a President whose favorite book is (you know this already) The Very Hungry Caterpillar.

I was a little worried that the new democratically controlled congress would start in on the irresponsible naming of bills with long complicated words that have many syllables. The President has, after all, threatened to veto anything he doesn't understand, or can't hum along to. But no, thank goodness, they have gotten the message.

On January 18, the CLEAN Air Act of 2007 (that would be the "Creating Long Term Energy Alternatives for the Nation" Act of 2007) passed the United States House of Representatives with the support of 98 percent of the House democrats and 18 percent of the House republicans. According to the Act itself, this piece of legislation is intended to reduce our dependence on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy sources. To fund this investment, the CLEAN Air Act of 2007 eliminates subsidies for oil and gas companies (to the tune of about \$13 billion) and also closes a loophole that allowed oil drillers in the Gulf of Mexico to avoid

paying royalties to the federal government.

How excited are environmentalists about this bill? They are almost as excited as they are disoriented.

Over the past six years they have grown so accustomed to using certain pages of their thesauri (bad, evil, wicked, iniquitous, reprehensible, immoral, unfair, unjust, discriminatory, biased, unbalanced, partisan, prejudiced...) that now they are not quite sure what to do with themselves.

According to Grist, an online environmental news reporting website thingy, a top lobbyist with the Natural Resources Defense Council said of the bill, "I can't find anything wrong with it. Really there is no catch. It's all good."

Which pretty much tells you how unexcited the oil and gas companies are.

But they are not alone in their chagrin. There are many people who don't stand to lose billions of dollars, who also think this bill is a non-good idea. It will raise gas prices, they say. It is based on emotion and not sound science, they claim. It is partisan, prejudiced, biased, evil and wicked, they contend.

FreedomWorks (a big deal conservative non-profit organization working for "lower taxes, less government, more freedom" - Dick Arney, remember him? He was the House Majority Leader until 2003 - is chairman) wants you to know that the CLEAN Air Act of 2007 is a big mistake. According to Director of Research, Dr. Wayne Brough, "The market has proved to be the best at allocating scarce resources.... Solutions to our energy needs will be met by investment and innovation, not through bureaucratic mandates."

Umm, OK Wayne. But no fair shouting, "government, leave those businesses alone!" when it was government that was subsidizing those businesses in the first place. Subsidized oil and gas production...is that not a "bureaucratic mandate?"

Whatever. At least it's got a fancy acronym.

### 100 YEARS (continued from page 1)

be in control of our own destiny," said Webb-Martin.

The all-city birthday party will be held February 23<sup>rd</sup> at Alverno High School, and costumes from that era are encouraged.

"We can have one heckuva birthday party," said Mayor John Buchanan, who is looking toward the next 100 years. (continued on page 3)

### Fire House Sold

The council approved the sale of the fire house at 744 Vista Drive to brothers Joseph and John Dumbacher. Joe Dumbacher promised to preserve the building in the canyon, and said the property would be used as a photography and art studio. "We really do plan on being good neighbors," he said. "And preserving the history of Sierra Madre."

City Attorney Sandra Levin said there would be no change in zoning, and the property reverts from public property to private property.

**Public Works Now on Schedule**

Public Works Director Bruce Inman said that a new maintenance schedule will take effect for parks, streets and sewers, and water divisions. One resident said he liked the landscape upkeep in town, and he hoped the department wasn't too busy to squeeze in personal attention to citizen requests. "I want to feel people can call and not be afraid," he said. "They can call and not be on a list."

### Sierra Madre's New "Customer Response Software"

City Manager John Gillison said he has installed new "customer response maintenance software" so the "public can input" and this information "will be routed to the correct person." Gillison said "Once we get past the implementation phase" residents will be able to type in information and "get a response and we have a better way of tracking stuff," he said.

A special council study session is planned for Tuesday, February 6.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, February 13.

### POLICE (continued from page 1)

fall below the lowest paid wages of any of the 10 San Gabriel Valley police Departments.

It would require the city to also provide benefits at or above the average of those departments.

It would prohibit the City of Sierra Madre from reducing the number of officers below the 2004-2005 budgeted level or abolish or contract out police services without voter approval.

SMPD has been without a contract since 2003. Over the years, negotiations have not been successful, primarily because of the great disparity between what other similar departments are paid and what the city is willing to commit to.

According to Councilman Joe Mosca, "It isn't that we don't want to pay the police department, we just don't know where the money will come from."

Attorney for the Sierra Madre Police Officer's Association, Dieter Dammeyer, said that if the city would bring the pay levels up to the lowest paid San Gabriel Valley Department (South Pasadena), the increased cost would be around \$250,000 per year.

Residents Tom and Carol Canterbury sponsored the initiative.

Resident Kelly Ann Tatosian-Toy, who assisted with the public posting of the required notices, said she definitely wants the city's police department to be a top priority. Mrs. Toy, who has a 10 year-old son, Mac, is stunned that people really don't know what is going on. I love the Sheriff's department, but I don't want them to replace our Sierra Madre Police.

A few years ago, citizens brought forth Measure F, an initiative to add a tax specifically to fund Police and Fire. It is widely believed that the initiative lost due to a clause that allowed the funds to be used for things other than police and fire. This measure, however, does not contain such language.

In fact, this initiative does not call for a new tax. It simply requires the city to prioritize public safety out of existing funds.

Prior to the arrival of Chief Marilyn Diaz, turnover in the department was also a challenge. Many officers left for more difficult cities simply because they could not afford to work in Sierra Madre. SMPD officers start at \$3,292 compared to the next highest paid department, South Pasadena whose starting officers earn \$4,040.

Members of the SMPOA understand that they have a tough battle on their hands trying to educate the public on the real issues involved. "This is not a call for a new tax," says President John Ellins. "We love serving the citizens of Sierra Madre, but it is really tough keeping officers with the salaries so low. We hope that the residents will come to the next City Council meeting on February 13, to show their support."

The agenda for the next council meeting does include the Police Department negotiations. It was tabled at the January 9<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

Anyone interested in assisting with the signature gathering will meet Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10 a.m. the Woman's Club at 550 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. If you'd like to help and cannot attend, call Officer John Ellins at (626) 808-5998

### DEVELOPMENT

(continued from page 1)

with either financing or approval of the project and

2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the preparation of the EIR, and/or any environmental and related issues. Agencies responding must do so by February 12, 2007. However, no date has been set for the Public Hearings.

Seth Litchney of the State Clearinghouse at CEQA's Office of Planning & Research, said that after the initial 30 day response period, the city is "free to select the consultant and begin preparation of the EIR. There is a maximum 45 day period for selection of the consultant, however, the city may act sooner than 45 days."

Residents have repeatedly expressed concern over the design of both projects because of the developer's ability to utilize incentives that could exceed the building limits stated in the City's General Plan.

As a result, enough signatures were gathered from residents to put Measure V, the Voters Empowerment Initiative

(2-30-13) before a citywide vote. The election was scheduled by the City Council for April 17, 2007.

If Measure V passes, it would require a citywide vote on any project that exceeds the city's 1996 General Plan - two stories, 30 feet in height and 13 units per acre.

At the January 9<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, City Manager John Gillison assured the council and public that the projects would not be approved prior to the election. However, Litchney says that given the timeline now established by the filing of the NOP, there is a possibility that the projects could be pushed through before the vote.

It was also brought out at that meeting that for both projects, the Design Guidelines would not be subject to an EIR and that the city would be pursuing a Negative Declaration.

Such a declaration indicates that there is no adverse environmental impact in the design of the projects. Opponents of the projects strongly disagree. At the heart of the dissent over the projects are design, density and impact on traffic.



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### LIVE ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

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 Amelee Sextet
Sun. Feb. 4	Opera to Broadway
Fri. Feb. 9	Vocalist Julie Kelly
Sat. Feb. 10	Bobby Braford's MO'TET
Sun. Feb. 11	Opera to Broadway

322 West Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre, CA 94108

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## Time For Utilities To Get Top Billing?

By Katina Dunn

Vern Hensel is a patient man and a meticulous one. He has kept all his letters to city hall since 2005 in his futile attempt to correct 16 years of overcharges on his utility bills.

Since the city is also in litigation with another citizen over utility bill overcharges, Hensel assumed the city would be sending out to all its residents explanation letters and a newly revised utility bill right away.

To date, the city's utility bills do not show the rate that is being charged for water, refuse and sewer services. Residents also are not informed if they are charged for single or multi dwellings.

Hensel, a businessman, wants to know how citizens are informed of the rates they are being charged for water, refuse and sewer, and what is the review system? "Does the city know how many citizens were overbilled?" he asks. He wants to know what "additional charges" means on his bill.

He wants to know why city law provides for one year's worth of compensation on errors, according to Municipal Code section 3.40.020. If a citizen doesn't claim the error within a year, that citizen will not be able to receive a full refund.

Hensel estimates his 16 years of overcharges totals \$6,200 not including interest. The city issued him a credit of \$486.27 on his future utility bills - that's one year's worth of compensation - which Hensel has not used. He says it's the principle of the matter.

"If your goal is to rip me off, you've succeeded," said Hensel about city policy. "You want me to take a 15 year loss."

The city could also be undercharging homes for utilities, though careful assessments of each homeowner's bill, and a bill that showed all charges and rates would clear up any confusion.

In one of Hensel's letters to City Manager John Gillison last November, Hensel wondered about the city's response if a citizen had overcharged the city for 16



Photos by Lynda Ott-Albright  
Resident Vern Hensel has been overcharged by the city for the last 16 years

years?

He also wrote to Gillison that the city developed a "multi-level utility pricing system," chose not to inform citizens of this system, and adopted its own law (Municipal Code section 3.40.020) to limit its liability.

Hensel requested \$5,000 from the city in repayment. He also asked the city to notify all residents on its "multi-level utility pricing system," inform residents which level or classification they are being charged, and how they can apply for a utility bill credit.

Last December, Gillison wrote to Hensel that he cannot disregard the City Code and "our well established, and consistently applied, policies and procedures."

Gillison also attached a "claim for damages" form to the letter.

That brings Hensel right back to the origins of his ordeal with city hall.

"It's absurd," said Hensel. "It's beyond logic."

Hensel met with Gillison on January 8 and sent a letter on January 11 to members of the City Council.

The Mt. Wilson Observer will feature an update next week, including city hall's response to the utility bill issue. There was no response as of press time. Gillison has not responded to telephone calls or visits to city hall. Gillison's assistant Deborah Humphrey said Wednesday that Public Works Director Bruce Inman would respond soon.

**Saturday, January 27, at 2 pm**

**Respect for Nature**

A Special Presentation and Lecture by  
Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker  
Shumei Hall, Pasadena  
2430 E. Colorado Ave. (near Sierra Madre Blvd)  
(626) 584-8841

Views of nature from the world's religions are richly varied and most frequently expressed in the particular arts and culture of the world's civilizations. From Zen gardens in East Asia to western landscape painting, the quality of nature's beauty shines forth. We will explore different cultural perspectives for respecting nature that may lead us toward a more inclusive global environmental ethic.

Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker is a visiting professor of religion at Yale University and an associate in research at the Edwin Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard University. She and her husband, John Grim, direct the Forum on Religion and Ecology. Together they organized a conference series at Harvard and edited a ten volume book series on world religions and ecology from Harvard University Press.

### Sweets on the Street

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- Iris Intrigue Boutique
- La Bella Rouge
- Leonora Moss
- Once Upon a Time
- Provisions
- Savor the Flavor

## SIERRA MADRE POLICE BLOTTER

From Sunday, January 14th to Saturday, January 20th, the SMPD handled 191 calls for service.

**Sunday, January 14th:**

8:05 AM - Vandalism, 100 block East Highland Ave. A resident called the station to report the drivers side windows of her Toyota smashed. The car was parked Saturday, 1/13 at 3:30 PM and the damage was discovered Sunday 1/14 at 8:00 AM. Loss estimates were not available.

3:30 PM - Residential burglary, 400 block Mountain Trail Ave. A resident called to report her home was burglarized. The resident said she left her home unlocked Sunday morning, 1/14 at around 11:00 AM. When she returned that same afternoon she discovered the loss. The loss included: one Apple computer, a Sony digital camera, an I-POD, a Fire Light hard drive, a gold Tiffany (necklace, bracelet, and cross), a black Coach purse, a brown Coach wallet and an Olympus 35 MM camera. The loss was estimated at \$2635.00.

4:52 PM - Defrauding an innkeeper, 322 West Sierra Madre Blvd. A Café 322 Restaurant employee called the station to report two female customers left without paying for their lunch. The two females were last seen driving eastbound on Sierra Madre Blvd.

11:15 PM - Auto burglary, 200 block East Laurel Ave. Suspect(s) smashed the victim's car window and took an I-Pod (\$350.00) and \$40.00 cash. The car was parked Sunday at 6:00 PM and the loss was discovered 11:00 PM.

**Monday, January 15th-**

6:33 AM - Auto burglary, 400 block Manzanita Ave. The suspect(s) smashed a car window and took a black 9-West purse, a Hewlett Packard camera, an Olympus voice recorder and a pocket bible. The loss was estimated at \$500.00.

**Tuesday, January 16th:**

9:52 AM - Vandalism, 38 West Sierra Madre Blvd. A store owner reported graffiti on a sign at the complex. The damage occurred between 6:00 PM Monday, 1/15 and 9:30 AM Tuesday, 1/16.

10:14 AM - Grand theft, 200 block South Mountain Trail Ave. A gardener reported a Honda leaf blower and a Steal Red Weed Eater stolen from a job site. The tools were valued at \$500.00.

3:17 PM - Theft of U.S. mail, 00 block Esperanza Ave. A resident reported that a package delivered last week was taken from her front porch. The package contained "The Greatest Story Ever Told" valued at \$14.00, was taken between Thursday, 1/11 at 3:30 PM and 11:00 PM.

5:40 PM - Petty theft, 00 block Windsor Lane. A resident reported missing five lawn pottery crafts, pigs and birds from her front yard. She said she last saw the pottery crafts Monday, 1/15 at 5:30 PM and discovered the loss Tuesday, 1/16 at 8:30 AM. The loss value was estimated at \$50.00.

**Saturday, January 20th**

9:59 AM - Vandalism/Graffiti, 348 West Sierra Madre Blvd. A resident reported graffiti sprayed on a brick wall at the business.

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## Fire Safe Council TIP OF THE WEEK

From Caroline Brown



January 22nd, 2007 - headlines from Ventura County, homes threatened and everyone is on alert. Those of us living in the "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" of Sierra Madre were on alert, too. We were listening to the reports of Red Flag Alert, the weather projection for high winds. Clearing brush from your property following the Sierra Madre Fire Marshal's guidelines, reducing the fuel load from within 100 feet of your home and other structures is mandatory.

Cut back all dead and dying brush and tree limbs and listen to the weather report.

It is important to evaluate the history of fire in your neighborhood. This will add to your knowledge of how our fires started and from what direction the fire threatened your neighborhood. The topography of Sierra Madre is different from other areas. Fire history here is different from Malibu or Ventura. Many residents are new and if you have not lived through a fire or an evacuation from a fire threatening your home in Sierra Madre talk to your neighbors that have lived through our disaster scenario.

Attend Fire Safe Council meetings to work with us to protect our homes and neighborhoods.

The next Fire Safe Council meeting will be February 12 at 7 P.M. in the City Council chambers. For information call: 355-9350 or 355-1182 or e-mail us at: [smfiresafecouncil@hotmail.com](mailto: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

## Academic Achievement Soars at Willard Elementary

By Nancy Rose Dufford

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell recognized Pasadena Unified School District's Willard Elementary for its academic achievement with a visit to the campus on Monday.

O'Connell acknowledged Willard's success in raising their 2005-2006 Academic Performance Index (API) score to 837 which was an increase of 47 points from the 2004-2006, and their accomplishment of receiving a Title 1 Academic Achievement Award for the third consecutive year.

The Academic Achievement Award recognizes schools that exceeded Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years or significantly closed the achievement gap among numerically significant subgroups. The rigorous criteria also requires eligible schools to double their Academic Performance Index (API) growth target for two consecutive years and to have met a designated median API score in both English/Language Arts and mathematics.

"We talk about closing the achievement gap, and this is a school that has closed the achievement

gap," said O'Connell during the staff's professional development meeting. "I've never been to a great school that doesn't have a great principal and staff."

Joining O'Connell was newly appointed Superintendent Edwin Diaz who is expected to take the reigns of PUSD in March. Following a performance by the student chorus, O'Connell and Diaz visited several classes.

"The PUSD schools have seen tremendous growth and success over the last few years, but it is particularly exciting to be recognized for achievements for three years in a row," said Dr. Kathy Onoye, Willard's Principal. "I credit our school's success to the hard work and commitment of our teachers, the implementation of our International Baccalaureate Program, and the district's focus on a consistent standards-based curriculum, ongoing professional development and teacher collaboration, and the use of data to drive our instruction."

Other PUSD schools receiving the Title 1 Achievement Award were, Franklin, Burbank, McKinley and Norma Coombs.

## Alverno Food Drive Feeds the Hungry

By Lauren Hogue, Alverno Junior State Governor



Alverno Junior State Lt. Governor Daniele Yturvide and Governor Lauren Hogue with a few of the 3,000 cans collected for charity.

At Alverno High School, each class is required to do two community service projects a year. This past holiday season, the Junior State held a canned food drive. Our original goal was to collect 1,100 cans, but with the help of all Alverno students and staff, the junior class managed to raise an amazing number of cans, totaling over 3,000!

The cans along with other non-perishable food items and hygiene products such as toothpaste were donated to the Los Angeles Food Bank, where they will be distributed to families in need throughout Los Angeles.

While picking up the cans, two employees of the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank informed us that Alverno had collected the most cans they have ever received from one place. The Junior State government would like to thank our moderators, Ms. Gonzales and Ms. Lancey, for their constant help and support. We would also like to thank everyone who participated, especially the senior class, which donated the most cans.

## Full Contact Parenting

by Rich Johnson

I was a much better parent before I had kids. Just ask my friends. I had the right answers for those who already had kids and I wasn't too shy to voice my opinion. I'm certain those opinions were well received and acted upon because many of my friends stopped feeling the need to come around. (If any of my old friends read this, please call. I really miss you guys.) I didn't limit my parenting advice to close friends either.

Going where the need is I regularly found myself advising young mothers at Howie's and the old Crystal Farms Market on Lima and Sierra Madre Blvd. What a difference I could make in our community. A young mother with a screaming child in a shopping cart really needs us to jump in and offer a little "tough love." Often young mothers were so affected by my advice they would be moved to emotion, sobbing uncontrollably and immediately storming out of the store. Undoubtedly on their way home to implement my suggestions.

Good for them. It's just too bad those stores closed. It was inevitable and I suspect pre-ordained that someday I would become a parent. Society demanded it. The community would now have the opportunity to see, in tangible ways, how parenting should be orchestrated.

I have to admit I would have been more successful if my wife had fully recognized my special gifts and talents and deferred to me. I guess this true:

A prophet without honor in his own country. And today my two children are: daughter Olivia 16, and son Alex 18. They have taught me that I didn't know quite as much as I thought I did. I did ask them if there were any of my parenting tips or skills worth mentioning in this article. They suggested three:

1. Fake it! I would pretend to get real loud and menacing to get my kids' attention and then turn around and smirk to my wife. I stayed in control.
2. Default to Yes! When your kids ask you to do something try not to say no just because you don't want to be bothered, at least not all the time. Let yourself be inconvenienced, oh say, every other time. They'll remember. And that's a good thing when you get old and crotchety and want your kids to come see you.
3. No good cop, bad cop! Make a deal with your spouse that the parent who does out the discipline also initially does out the comfort. Think of discipline more as discipling.

Well that's it. I am pretty much out of the parenting advice business. I will leave that to the new experts. You know, those without kids.

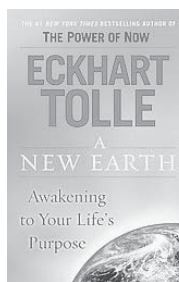
*Rich Johnson was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He and his twin sister were the first of two sets of twins born 13 months apart to the Johnson family. The family moved to Van Nuys California in time for Rich to begin and finish high school at Van Nuys High. Rich has owned his business, Versa-Tape Company, Inc, since 1983. The company produces continuing education tapes and CDs for attorneys in California. The company also produces telephone messages and music on hold for 200+ credit unions nationwide. He is single with two children aged 16 and 18. And he has lived in Sierra Madre since 1995.*

## BIBLIO FILE

with Jeff Brown

### A New Earth: Awakening To Your Life's Purpose

by Eckhart Tolle



This is a truly magnificent book. In a clear, concise and loving way Eckhart Tolle, also the author of *The Power of Now*, shows us the cause and way out of personal suffering. We also learn the reason behind the madness and problems that we see every day in the news that engulfs the entire world and has done so for centuries. Terrorism, religious and cultural hostilities, pervasive personal unhappiness and feelings of unease are all caused by one thing, humanities over identification with thought and the various problems with the ego.

He shows us the nature of the ego and its many manifestations. We see how all humans including our so-called enemies are lost in this collective and personal false illusion.

As we learn about it we can be released from it into a new consciousness and then live in peace, love, and connectedness to everything. Awareness & understanding is the key and way out of all this vast human sorrow. We will then know our true purpose and come to experience who we truly are, which is infinitely greater than anything we currently think we are.

This is the profound message within the teachings of Buddha, Jesus and all great spiritual personalities and writings. This book can be life changing. This transformation within us will inspire a new consciousness.

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Pasadena High School  
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Pasadena

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## 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.*

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# Looking Up

With Bob Eklund



Photo by Jean Boenish

Can you remember a time when you could actually see the Milky Way? I can. As a child growing up in the 1930s in a small Wisconsin town, I was treated nightly to the sight of a thousand or more stars overhead. Now, on a typical clear night from our Los Angeles home, Laura and I are lucky to see a few stars—and perhaps a bright planet or two—showing through the orange-pink sky-glow. The reason for the difference: a vast proliferation of outdoor lighting, much of it either unnecessary or poorly designed without regard for its effect on the darkness of the sky overhead.

The adverse effect of this light pollution to astronomers is obvious. But why should the rest of us care whether the night sky is starry or just a murky glare? In an article titled "Light Pollution Harms Our Ecosystems," published in the Nov. 21, 2006 issue of *UCLA Today*, co-authors Travis Longacre and Catherine Rich note that our overabundance of nighttime artificial light not only wastes prodigious amounts of energy but can be a health hazard. "Light is a drug, and our 24-hour society abuses it," they point out. "Humans produce the hormone melatonin in the dark. Without darkness, production is diminished. This partially explains the greater incidence of breast cancer in women who work the night shift and never sleep in complete darkness."

A recent nighttime photo of the Earth from space vividly showed how brightly lit the developed parts of the globe have become, prompting the Evening Standard in Britain to comment that it was "a picture

## Reclaiming Our Starry Nights



Photo Courtesy of D. Jarusevich

of environmental madness" showing "how profligate and polluting...the Westernized world has become." The view from space is, in effect, a visual record of the squandering of our natural capital and disrupting of our ecosystems. Excessive night lighting affects wildlife as well as humans, as the *UCLA Today* article points out: "Night-migrating birds attracted to light collide with structures." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that 4 to 5 million birds die this way every year.

The good news is that light pollution can be easily ameliorated, by properly shielding outdoor lights and extinguishing unnecessary ones. Spreading the word about what we can do to preserve our night skies is the mission of the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA), which has some 11,000 members in more than 70 countries. The IDA suggests five things you can do to help: (1) Shine outdoor lights downward; (2) Use time controls to ensure that lights are on only when needed; (3) Use outdoor lighting fixtures that minimize glare; (4) use the right amount of light for the task—don't over-illuminate; and (5) Use energy-efficient light sources. A nice side effect of several of these ideas (2, 4, and 5) is that they save energy—thereby lowering your electric bill and also mitigating global warming by reducing carbon in the atmosphere. Visit [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org) for more information.

**SNAKE BIT** (continued from page 1) from sheep's blood. He was given 24 vials of Cro-Fab in one 24-hour period. The hospital ran out, ordered more, and then used all of that up.

After weeks of surgeries, including skin grafts, Jurebie was released to recuperate at home.

He remembers his early fascination with snakes growing up in Sierra Madre, after he caught his first one—with bare hands—in Bailey Canyon. "As a kid, I thought I was the greatest snake handler," he said. He has hunted snakes and lizards for as long as he can remember. "I never thought it would turn into a career," he said.

Naturally, his home is full of animals, and included an iguana—until it bit him. "Iguanas are horrible pets," he said. Reptar used to sit with him on the couch until another fateful bite. Jurebie bears a scar on his arm that looks like a healed hatchet slice.

"He was being the alpha male. He was telling me he is the boss and I'm not the boss anymore," said Jurebie. "He was stalking Chris," said Sykes, who is a biologist. "He would go through the house looking for Chris."

The Snake Formerly Known As Snowflake is now in hibernation. "She still has all the love she had before," said Jurebie. "The only person who was at fault is me. She is a wild animal doing what wild animals do."



The San Gabriel Valley Chapter of the Southwestern Herpetologists Society meets the third Thursday of every month at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center at 1750 N. Altadena Drive in Altadena - 626-398-5420. Chris Jurebie is also available as a speaker on reptiles and pets for school children.

### ASK CHRIS

Questions about your pets? Ask Chris. Call him at (626) 355-2737 or email animal questions to: [deuxamispub@aol.com](mailto:deuxamispub@aol.com)

# TechKnowledge

Technology Science Business

## WorkForce with Madeline

**Q:** I'm 60 years old. I just retired after working as an engineer for the same company for more than 30 years. Retirement is just not for me. I'm bored plus my wife's list of chores for me seems to be getting longer by the day. I would love to return to work on a part-time basis. Do you think anyone would hire me at my age?

**A:** Absolutely. Baby boomers are a wonderful commodity. They have a wealth of work experience as well as wisdom in the ways of the world. They're usually more level-headed and able to cope with problems.

Part-time work is out there. These are the types of jobs that are perfect for retirees. Whereas younger people are interested in full-time jobs with high salaries and benefits, returnees to the workforce are usually interested in just keeping busy, being productive, and, of course, adding a little extra income.

According to my survey of baby boomers, many have either returned to work or are considering doing so. I've also been told that this population would like to do something totally different than what they've been doing or related but still different.

The following is a list of professions and "retirement" jobs that my research has led me to.

An engineer who compiles a weekly technical journal for a university research center.

A computer specialist who is now creating websites.

A company CEO who was asked to revamp a failing business.

A social worker who has her own Internet talk show on marriage and family issues.

An attorney who was elected to the office of town councilman.

A mortgage loan officer who has become a residential real estate agent.

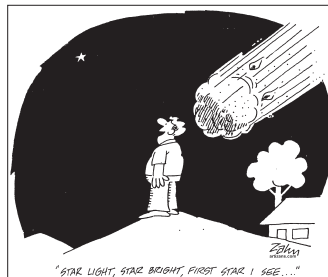
An elementary school teacher who is an adjunct professor in education courses.

A school principal who is working for a gardening company as a landscape designer.

A retail store manager who is a waitress at her friend's restaurant.

Good luck with your job search. I'm glad you're taking seriously the old saying, "An idle mind is the devil's playground."

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



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# THE MT. WILSON OBSERVER

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## INTOXICATED OR JUST PLAIN DRUNK?

By Susan Henderson

**intoxicated: (v)** to excite or stupefy to the point where physical and mental control is markedly diminished; **drunk: (adj)** having faculties impaired by power

Believe it or not, I am a very positive person. I always try to see the brighter side of things. I always look for an explanation, especially when it comes to how and why people do the things they do. There are very few people I have ever met whom I truly dislike. And I hope there aren't that many who truly dislike me, but I guess it really doesn't matter. My parents did a terrific job of instilling in me a good sense of self worth so when I run into those who prefer that I didn't exist, it doesn't destroy my world. Nevertheless being well thought of and appreciated is gratifying.

Having said that, I just have one question to ask today. Are they intoxicated or just plain drunk?

People who are intoxicated generally are superficially diminished and can recover. Remember being intoxicatingly in love? When you sober up, you get on with your life. However, when you are drunk, the road to recovery is much, much more difficult. You have ingested way too much. So I ask, are they intoxicated so that we can look forward to their sobering up in the near future or are they totally wasted, drunk with power? Who? Well, here is a list:

**President Bush:** By the time you read this more than 3,063 men and women will have lost their lives and another 47,657+ will have been wounded in a conflict that has lasted longer than World War II. And yet, in his State of the Union address, he wants to escalate the war against the will of the people. *He's not intoxicated. He's drunk.*

**Governor Schwarzenegger:** Just a little out of it when he paid his gubernatorial staffers almost a quarter million dollars to help with his campaign. At least the money was raised specifically for his re-

election and the donors knew that's what he was going to use it for. From the looks of his poor chief of staff in recent days, she really did work two jobs 24/7. *He was just a little tipsy. He'll get better.*

**Certain Sierra Madre City Officials:** Without question there is a lot of stupefied behavior going on here. Is the intoxication impairing their ability to hear? Or, as it appears, are they just drunk with power?

When people ask questions, they obviously want answers. Most people are not demanding the answers that they want to hear, but they are asking for a response. When people are ignored they are forced to fend for themselves.

In the context of our city government, that always makes us spend money that could be better used on something else. Only officials drunk with power would continually ignore the public and force their hands.

What was the city thinking when it pushed the Police Officers to demanding a public vote in order to protect themselves? Are they so drunk that they don't know that Public Safety ought to be our No. 1 Priority?

Why did they move for a special election on the Voter Empowerment Act (2-30-13) when the signatures clearly indicated people in Sierra Madre wanted some say over what happens in our town?

More importantly, are they now so drunk with power that they don't recognize their actions of late appear to be an attempt to approve the two downtown projects before the vote on April 17th?

Do the telephones to the City Attorney's and the City Manager's Office not work? Or do they ignore the calls because they are totally wasted with all of their power?

So I guess you can figure out the answer to the question yourself.

Too many of the leaders of this community are not going to give the public answers. It just isn't going to happen. They believe they don't have to. Their capacity has been diminished.

Then again when I think about it, it has always been difficult to talk to someone who is just plain drunk.

## RISKY BUSINESS

By David Smith



Dataquick, the company that supplies the *LA Times* with housing activity statistics, released their report for December last week. The headline was "Southland home sales: New price peak, slowest December in ten years". Now that doesn't sound too bad until you look at the numbers in detail.

Home price appreciation was 3.3% for the 6-county, Southern California region. However, when corrected for the 2006 inflation rate of 3.24%, home price appreciation was .06%, not exactly the stuff headlines are made of.

What's more disturbing, though, is the data for San Diego County. Most economists consider San Diego to be the region's bellwether. And the median home price there declined at an inflation-adjusted, annual rate of -9.6%. Ventura's decline was -9.1%. Orange and San Bernardino counties just about broke even. Only LA and Riverside showed modest gains of 3.3% and 1.9% respectively. And according to the experts, we have a couple of years to go before the market begins to stabilize.

The correction has begun. Affordable housing is on the way. We don't need government intervention or greedy downtown property owners, developers, and real estate brokers to aggravate the problem. Lower prices and a record supply of vacant, available homes are already here according to the Wall Street Journal. Things are going to be bad enough without further over-development making it worse.

If you want to see what could happen, go to [www.dqnews.com](http://www.dqnews.com).

Go down the left side of the home page and click on "ARCHIVED ARTICLES". On the page that comes up, click on "1995 Releases". Then click on the first article under "1995 Releases," "California Homes Being Sold at a Loss."

The article, Dataquick's first press release, says that, in May of 1995, 30.7% of the homes sold went for less than what the sellers had paid for them. That's an improvement over April, when 32.4% were sold at a loss, or May of 1994 when the figure was 35.4%. The personal tragedies in those figures are unimaginable for those who did not go through it. It should be noted, however, that one of the cardinal rules of economics is that history repeats itself.

People will say, "It's different this time. Back then, cutbacks in defense spending caused a recession, and Southern California lost thousands of jobs." My answer to that is the same one Christopher Thornberg gives in the closing remarks of his video presentation. There has never been a real estate boom in history of a magnitude like the one we went through in the first half of this decade. Never! And there's no historical precedent for the exotic financing that supercharged it.

We are in dangerous, uncharted waters. All I am suggesting is that we proceed with caution rather than "full speed ahead," like council members Buchanan, Joffe, Mosca, and the rest of the pro-development clique are dictating. They must be insane, or else, utterly ruthless.



## Is Memorial Park Unfriendly Territory?

By Hail Hamilton



It appears as though our public officials refuse to act to restore this community asset to the neighborhood.

I've asked Mayor John Buchanan and Police Chief Marilyn Diaz about the illegal use of Memorial Park and their answer is the same: "The city's policy is basically to ignore the day laborers as long as they aren't being a nuisance or committing crimes"

I also received a response to my "Citizen Complaint" from City Manager John Gillison and a lengthy reply from Police Chief Marilyn Diaz.

I was told mine was only the second complaint heard at city hall regarding the park. Both offered excuses about the police department's lack of manpower or its "limited resources."

Here is the Sierra Madre Municipal Code:

Title 12, Chapter 12.24 defines "Public parks, recreation centers and public places." Section 12.24.010 makes clear that "every park, playground, public recreation facility and such other public places as are owned and operated by the city for the general benefit of the public for recreation, park or playground use."

Section 12.24.050 (A) states it is illegal for any person: "To engage in loud, boisterous, threatening, abusive, profane or indecent language,

or engage in any disorderly conduct, behavior tending to breach the public peace..."

Section 12.24.050 (D) states it is illegal: "To engage in commercial activities of any nature without written permission granted by the parks and recreation commission..."

Section 12.24.100 (E) (1) states it is illegal to: "Use any portion of a park or recreation facility for personal profit, private business or enterprise or to provide for any sale or service to others without specific written permission and authorization from the parks and recreation commission..."

Finally, Section 12.24.110 provides for the enforcement of the Municipal Code as it applies to Sierra Madre's parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities. Subsection (A) provides: "The recreation director and/or any authorized representative of the parks and recreation commission shall, in connection with their duties imposed by law, diligently enforce the provisions of this chapter." Subsection (B) provides: "The recreation director and/or any other authorized representative of the parks and recreation commission and the police, shall have the authority to seize any person acting in violation of this chapter, and to seize and confiscate any property, thing or device in the park, or used, in violation of this chapter..."

No other city in the San Gabriel Valley allows its parks and recreation facilities to be used as outdoor employment offices. Neither should Sierra Madre.

If you want to reclaim this part of our community heritage, call City Hall and make your voice heard. Call Mayor John Buchanan and the other City Council Members; call City Manager John Gillison and City Attorney Sandy Levin. Call Police Chief Marilyn Diaz and Parks and Recreation Director Michelle Keith. Call them at (626) 355-7135.



## VOTE YES ON APRIL 17TH AND GIVE SIERRA MADRE A PRESENT FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

Measure V - The Voter's Empowerment Ordinance gives the power to decide on major building projects to the citizens of Sierra Madre.

Measure V is also called the 2-30-13 Initiative. The city's General Plan, adopted in 1996, is the basis for 2 stories, 30 feet in height and 13 units per acre.

The General Plan of 1996 states "The fundamental principal behind the land use policy of the general plan is to maintain the existing low density village character of Sierra Madre in the same urban development pattern that exists today."

Don't let big money and special interests change this town. If any changes are to be made, let the citizens say so.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### What It Is

My home town, your home town, our home town. Whichever fits you, we all know how lucky we are to live here. Mignon and I have been here for over 70 years.

Last Sunday Mignon fell and broke her arm... practically within the hour people arrived with food and the offer of any help they could provide.

Nan and Jerry Carlton, Joan and Bruce Crow, John Johnson and Theresa Smith, Peggy and Jerry DePalma, George Sipos, Hal Burney, Shirley McGillicuddy, Earl and Margaret Lalone, Judy Webb, Marlene Enmar and all of Sierra Madre Civic Club...

We are so grateful. And this is what makes our town what it is.

On another subject completely, I truly hope our City Council will find a way to come to a meeting of the minds and do what is best for all of us in Sierra Madre, including themselves and come out of this situation looking like the council we voted for.

Mignon & John Grijalva

### Memorial Park Is A Beautiful Asset

Mr. H -- Good column in this week's paper. I totally agree. Memorial Park is a beautiful asset to this community. It is a great place for little kids to play, for seniors to gather, for summer concerts. When I lived in Pasadena, my friends and I used to come up here with our toddlers to play in the playground - it was clean and free from the usual loitering we found in our Pasadena parks.

Arcadia doesn't have this problem because they enforce the laws. It doesn't take much, does it?

Just a note of support here.

Bette Solomon  
Sierra Madre

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](mailto: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.

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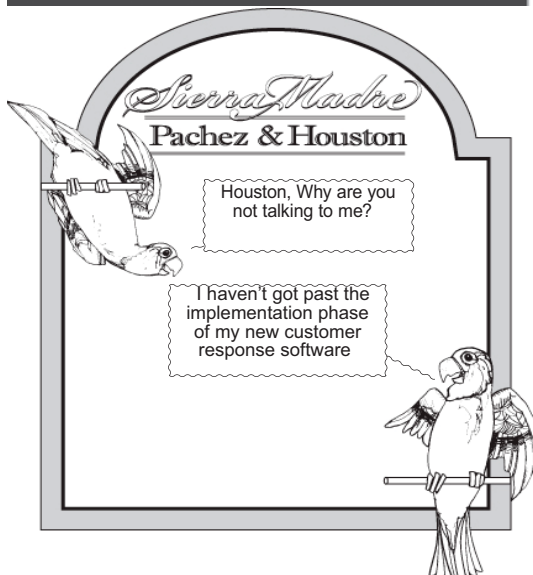
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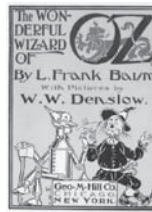


## BIRD'S EYE VIEW

By Pat Birdsall

Pat Birdsall is still 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.

## "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" Selected For Sierra Madre's Centennial 2007



The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum has been selected as Sierra Madre's Centennial "One Book, One City" community read for 2007.

Everyone is urged to read this classic, first published in 1900, in preparation for events to take place in May as part of Sierra Madre's Centennial Celebration. Copies of the book and audiobook will be available for check out at the Sierra Madre Public Library.

Sierra Madrean James Kincaid says of the selection, "In an effort to capture the unbuttoned and even miscellaneous brilliance of our town, we have chosen for the Centennial book the timeless, reaching-across-the-boundaries classic, L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. This work is a literary (and cinematic) masterpiece that doesn't look like one on the surface. Both a children's classic and a work of unabashed fantasy, it also speaks to the desires and deep fears of every adult. It is a mysterious work that includes us all within its sweep; we can't expect to uncover those mysteries, but we can spread them amongst us." "One Book, One City" is sponsored by the Friends of the Sierra Madre Library, the Rotary Club of Sierra Madre, the Sierra Madre Playhouse, and Books on Tape. One Book, One City projects exist in cities across the country to encourage community reading and to join people together in a mutual experience through discussions and a variety of educational and recreational events.

The Sierra Madre Public Library is located at 440 West Sierra Madre Boulevard. For further information on services and programs please use the Library's web site at [www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us](http://www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us) or call the Library at (626) 355-7186.

## 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.

### PNEUMOVAX IMMUNIZATION CLINIC

Protect against pneumococcal infections

If you are 65 years of age or older and have not had prior immunization

or  
If you are over 65 and have had a single pneumococcal immunization 5 years ago or more.

If you are an adult with chronic pulmonary or heart disease.

If you have malignant disease or a compromised immune system for any reason.

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

### Living Trusts, Wills & More

With Attorney Geoffrey D. Chin

At Sierra Madre Senior Center

222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

Free of Charge and By Appointment Only

Call Rosemary Garcia at 626-355-5278

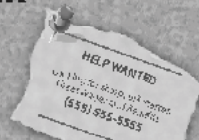
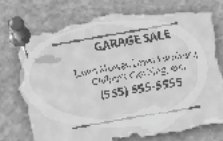
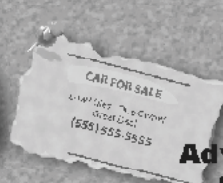
And don't forget Ping-Pong every Friday from 2 to 4 p.m.

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# SPORTS

## SUNSHINE

Hopes on Gallagher and Dollase at Santa Anita

By Larry Bortstein

Two Sierra Madre residents, both leading thoroughbred trainers, will participate on opposite coasts in the fifth annual Sunshine Millions series tomorrow, Saturday Jan. 27.

They are Craig Dollase and Paddy Gallagher, who will be represented in two of the biggest races on the \$3.6 million, eight-race program for California- and Florida-breds at Santa Anita Park in Arcadia and Gulfstream Park in Hallandale Beach, Fla.

Gallagher, a native of Strabane, Ireland, appears to have the better chance of success in the Sunshine Millions.

He will send out Armenian Summer in the \$1 million, 1 1/8-mile Classic at Gulfstream Park after the California-bred 5-year-old was narrowly defeated by Dixie Meister in the San Pasqual Handicap at Santa Anita on Jan. 7.

Dollase, the son of trainer Wally Dollase, will send out Super Strut, who will be a longshot to heavily favored Lava Man in the \$500,000 Sunshine Millions Turf, to be contested at 1 1/8 miles on Santa Anita's grass course.

Lava Man will run on the turf this year after launching his 2006 season by winning the Sunshine Millions Classic at Santa Anita. Valentine Dancer is the only runner to win two Sunshine Millions races—capturing the \$500,000 Filly & Mare Turf in both 2004 and 2005.

The Sunshine Millions, first run in 2003, is the brainchild of Frank Stronach, the Canadian auto parts magnate who owns both Santa Anita and Gulfstream Park. The event represents America's richest day of state-bred racing. On Monday, Stronach was named the top thoroughbred owner in North America for the third year in a row.

The eight races are divided into two four-race blocks which rotate between the two tracks each year. The races in Arcadia this year are the Turf, the \$500,000 Distaff, the \$300,000 Sprint and the \$250,000 Oaks for 3-year-old fillies.

The four Gulfstream Park races this year are the Classic, the \$500,000 Filly & Mare Turf, the \$300,000 Filly & Mare Sprint and the \$250,000 Dash for 3-year-old colts and geldings.

Of the 32 Sunshine Millions races run in the event's first four years, Florida-breds have won 21. But Cal-breds won



Photo Courtesy Benoit Photos  
Sierra Madre's Craig Dollase

five of the eight races run last year. Lava Man will be seeking his second Sunshine Millions victory, as will Bordonaro, who at Santa Anita will attempt to defend the Sprint title he won last year in Florida.

Gallagher and Dollase have each won a previous Sunshine Millions race.

Gallagher won the 2003 Turf with Administrator, who scored the only victory by a Cal-bred in that year's inaugural running of the event. Dollase won the 2004 Dash with Florida-bred Saint Afleet.

Armenian Summer drew the No. 11 post position in the field of 12 which will run in the Classic and will be ridden by John Velazquez. The favorite figures to be Florida-bred Sweetnorthernstain, who went off as the favorite in last year's Kentucky Derby, in which he finished fourth, and two weeks later, was second in the Preakness.

Super Strut has drawn the far outside 12<sup>th</sup> post in the Sunshine Millions Turf and will be ridden by Tyler Baze. Lava Man and rider Corey Nakatani will be one stall over in the starting gate in post 11.

There is a special early first post time of 11:45 a.m. Saturday for the Sunshine Millions.

## GOING FOR THE GOLD



Ivana Hong embodies our dreams for the new year. Sierra Madre resident Despina Arzouman would like to assist Hong in her goal of representing the United States in the 2008 Olympics. Arzouman and Hong's father, Mike, became friends when both studied at the American Academy of Reflexology.

Ivana, 14, moved to Kansas City, Missouri, to practice at the Great American Gymnastic Express for the next four years ([www.gagecenter.com](http://www.gagecenter.com)). A member of the USA National Team, she works out about 40 hours per week, and also attends high school with an A average.

Expenses for travel and training are about \$15,000 per year, and Arzouman is fundraising for this "wonderful young athlete." If you are interested in helping out, send checks to:

Mike Hong  
PO BOX 2601  
Laguna Hills, CA 92654



## View From The Couch

By Stanley J. Forrester

### WHAT DO YOU WANT?

In the seventies Aretha sold over a million copies and won a Grammy demanding it. Rodney Dangerfield built an entire career complaining that he never got any.

The road to the Super Bowl has been filled with athletes complaining that the media, the public, and their opponents are not giving them any either.

I was talking to a member of the PHS basketball team the other day and he was quite happy. It seems that they (PHS) played Muir this past week and won. The young man then told me that the PHS team - after winning - stomped on Muir's symbol on the gym floor.

Was that a show of respect or was that disrespect?

That caused me to think about LaDiamian Tomlinson and the actions of the New England Patriots celebrating on the Charger symbol and doing the Shawn Merriman dance after beating the Chargers.

LaDiamian lost his cool and went after a Patriot player. His complaint was that the Patriots were not showing the Chargers any respect. The home team had lost, so why rub salt into the wound? Their actions made this otherwise respectful running back want to fight. He had to be restrained. He felt disrespected.

Tomlinson had more touchdowns than anyone else in the league, but he never celebrated in the end zone. Somehow he knew that getting touchdowns was his job and there was no need to celebrate in the end zone because you had done what you were

hired to do. He always showed other teams respect and in the process showed himself to be a classy individual.

The Patriots, however, did not reciprocate - once again, no respect.

The talented rookie of the New Orleans Saints, Reggie Bush, went from "The Pres" to "Bush League" with his actions this past Sunday. In case you did not see it, Bush took a reception all the way to the house. The play covered some eighty-eight yards, the majority of which was his spectacular running. It was beautiful. Then Reggie spoiled it. At the end of the play when Reggie was in the end zone he did a little River Walk dance. Even before the dance, instead of running into the end zone, Reggie decided to summersault into it (I guess that is just showing off). What Reggie did on his way to the end zone was certainly not what this young man should be known for. As Reggie was going into the end zone he taunted the Bears' defenders in a sort of "You Can't Touch This" type of way.

To Reggie's credit he did apologize. It's a good thing he did.

Well, the mother of all opportunities for respect is coming up - The Super Bowl. Much has been said about the fact that the coaches of both teams this year are African-Americans. However, my concern is whether or not these two, heretofore respectful men who know the meaning of sportsmanship, will demand the same from their players.

Respect - just a little bit?

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## 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.

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