



THE MT. WILSON OBSERVER

WHERE YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS COMES FIRST

Friday, April 27 - May 3, 2007 Volume 2, No.17

It's Unanimous - Congratulations to Mayor Enid Joffe

It's Three Votes - Congratulations to Mayor Pro Tem Joe Mosca

By Katina Dunn

It was a quiet city hall Tuesday night during ceremonies for outgoing Mayor John Buchanan and incoming Mayor Enid Joffe. The city's new Mayor deftly ran the evening from the summation of Buchanan's accomplishments to the last item on the agenda - the Sierra Madre Centennial Car Show to be held downtown Saturday, June 2, benefiting city charities via the Sierra Madre Police Officer's Association.

First, her gift to Buchanan of tickets to the political humor theatrical troupe Capitol Steps at Cal Tech. "I hope they don't come to Sierra Madre," said Joffe. "They'd get a lot of material."

Then, his gifts to the four council members - different books by and about Abraham Lincoln.

Mayor Buchanan exited with an armful of certificates and proclamations from Sen. Bob Margett's office, Congressman David Dreier's office, Assemblyman Anthony Adams' office, the City of Arcadia, the League of California Cities, LA County Supervisor Mike Antonovich's office and Sierra Madre Battalion Fire Chief Steve Heydorff.

Achievements on Buchanan's watch include the new Hillside Ordinance, establishment of paramedic service, the hiring of Police Chief Marilyn Diaz and the new city flag designed by resident Hugh Von Delden.

Others include new programs by the Community Services Commission, such as Friday night films at Kersting Court, another award for the Sierra Madre Rose Float Association, and the near completion of the Senior Housing project on Esperanza Ave. Residents Fred Zimmerman and David Darbyshire later



A smiling Enid Joffe at the Centennial Gala earlier this year.

said the Senior Housing project - which will house seniors chosen at random from all over Southern California - was supposed to be reserved for seniors in Sierra Madre. "That's how it was sold to us," they said.

"We have to decide to come together," said Buchanan from the dais. "Measure V has passed... it's our obligation to do our darndest and make it work." Buchanan referred to one of three petitions which also occurred on his watch - Measure V, which allows for a vote of the people on building plans which exceed existing standards; a second petition that guarantees the police force be paid at least the lowest of any force in the San Gabriel Valley; and a third petition to recall Council Member Joe Mosca, who said during his campaign he would support a vote of the people on the Downtown Specific Plan, and then voted twice against it.

Buchanan addressed the audience saying "The people on the other side are not your enemies. They are your neighbors." He referred to the recent election campaign that could be described as contentious, to put it mildly. Measure V supporters filed numerous reports with local police and notified the FBI regarding incidents of extreme (continued page 3)

Life Lessons With Sister Patrice

A beloved and feared educator retires after 40 years



Photo & Story By Katina Dunn

Joe Aguilar will always remember one of the lessons he learned from Sister Patrice during her 40 years as teacher and then principal at St. Rita's Catholic School. "How to pick your friends," said Aguilar, who is now a high school student at St. Francis.

"She used to tell us stories about what it was like growing up," said Anthony Landis, also at St. Francis. "That showed us how privileged we are now." Those were days growing up in Butte, Montana where Sister Patrice ate potatoes every day, bought clothes at resale shops and took her turn at cold baths in the kitchen. Her father, uncles and grandfather were miners, and were paid via credit at the company grocery store.

"We were happy," says Sister Patrice, who remembers playing outside all day and night until television came into the homes in town. "The streets became deserted, which was sad," she said. These are the tales she tells her students. "She's a fantastic teacher," said Adelaide Marshall, whose (cont. pg. 2)

Arcadia Election Regards "Character Of The City"

By John Stephens



On May 8th Arcadia voters will take part in a special election between two competing measures regarding the expansion of the Rusnak Mercedes

dealership at 55 West Huntington Drive. Measure A limits expansion by imposing new restrictions on the property, while Measure B protects the rights of property owners to sell to whomever they choose.

By way of its city council, the citizens of Arcadia have become largely invested in the Rusnak expansion, to the tune of an \$8 million forgivable loan to the high-end auto dealer for the purchase of two parcels of land amounting to 1.47 acres. The loan is "forgivable" in that it must be repaid by tax revenue generated via automobile sales over the next ten years. The agreement provides that Rusnak must generate at least \$800,000 a year or else be held responsible for the difference out of pocket. Paul Rusnak says that taxes paid to the city will more than double, provided his dealership not be barred (continued page 3)

Election Victory Official



Photo by Hood
Members of Sierra Madre Residents For Responsible Development (SMRRD) at City Hall for the final count.

TOTAL VOTES

YES on V
1,870
(51.5%)

NO on V
1,759
(48.4%)

Overall
Voter
Turnout
49.2%



A Spiritual Community - Page 3

PUBLIC NOTICE

Volunteers Wanted

Gather Signatures for

Equitable Police Salary Initiative

This is not a tax, it would be a budget item

April 28 & 29 May 5 & 6

May 12 & 13 May 19 & 20

May 26 & 27

Saturdays at 7:30 a.m. Sundays at 9 a.m.

Meet at Sierra Juice Company, across from Kersting Court.

Questions: Call Officer Hasmick

Hartunian (626) 824-1353

"No Big Deal" - Ron Brandley Resigns from Planning Commission

By Katina Dunn

Ron Brandley, whose term as Planning Commissioner ends in June, shortened his commitment earlier this month when he was asked to respond to an anonymous query regarding the possibility of conflict of interest. "I walked in and was told I needed to talk to the attorney," said Brandley by telephone last Monday.

"I don't respond to anonymous people. Would you print an anonymous letter in your newspaper? When you don't know who the person is, or where they live?" Brandley said his resignation has been "blown out of proportion." He said his actions were based on his "personal feelings." He also said if a person doesn't have the courage to face him directly, he will not respond.

"Forty years (as Planning Commissioner) people have been calling, writing letters, emailing and getting in my face," he said. "It's no big deal. I just didn't like the call. I don't respond to anonymous calls, period." Planning Commissioner Russell Replogle said he is sorry Brandley left. "He is, in a sense, why I am here," said Replogle. "He's the first one I ever talked to about it, and he encouraged me to be on the Planning Commission. We knew very little about each other. He knew my background and thought I would be valuable..." (see pg. 3)

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Weather Wise

5-Day Forecast for Sierra Madre, Ca.

Longitude W118.0, Latitude N34.2



Friday:	Sunny	Hi 80s	Lows 50s - 60s
Saturday:	Sunny	Hi 80s	Lows 50s - 60s
Sunday:	Sunny	Hi 80s	Lows 50s - 60s
Monday:	Sunny	Hi 70s	Lows 50s - 60s
Tuesday:	Sunny	Hi 70s	Lows 50s - 60s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service



SISTER PATRICE (from pg. 1)

three daughters attended St. Rita's. Rian Feld, 23, remembers Sister Patrice teaching her "Life is too short to be around people who don't support you and don't build you up." Sister Patrice was a strict disciplinarian, according to John Harabedian, 25. "If you didn't give her a straight answer, she was going to get it out of you," said Harabedian. He also remembers she was "always there" for the students. "She would figure out who the underdogs in class were, and she protected them," said John Fitzgibbons, 33-years old. The former students gathered at St. Rita's last Sunday to wish Sister Patrice well on her "retirement" although she says she will still be a presence at the elementary school, on a more relaxed schedule. "It was not how I anticipated this happening," said Sister Patrice the next day, describing difficulties with the electrical functioning of her heart and its defibrillator. "It was like I ran into a wall running 300 miles per hour." She has taught three and four generations of families, and says 25 percent of current parents are graduates of St. Rita's. Her reign has spanned five pastors and three other principals. "When I started, everyone rode their bikes to school. Now we do not ever have one bike. Everything is by car," she said. The biggest change in children 40 years ago to now, she says, is motivation. "The main motivation today is to get the letter grade, the A," she said. "Earlier, they just loved learning. The grade wasn't the end all of everything." She

remembers a recent 6-year old who told his mother he wanted to get into USC. Today's kids are also over-programmed, she said. "They are involved in 50 million things with no downtime," she said. "Children today have a stressful life. You have 700 kids applying for 180 seats at La Salle. They start working on it in second and third grade," she said. The precociousness of children today also startles. A seven-year old boy who was pursuing a girl told Sister Patrice "I'm trying to establish a relationship." She has also endured many tragedies with parents, including the untimely deaths of 35 of St. Rita's graduates, some from drug overdoses. "Bottom line is, an adult is involved, somewhere," she said of these terrible events. "There's a difference between tattling and a difference in being responsible, when you know something wrong is going on," she said, and that is what she taught her students. "They never knew how I knew everything that was going on," she said. "I was tough. I didn't let them get away with anything, but they knew I loved them." Sister Patrice basked in much affection at the party in her honor, attended by hundreds of people of all ages. As familiar as her students are with her, there is one enduring mystery and that is her birth name before her Reception into The Order, when she became Sister Patrice. The winner who guesses correctly wins dinner with Sister Patrice, who is still very fond of potatoes.

Roy Roams' 91024

Tea Time for a Tempest

Interim City Manager Don Hopper said Tuesday he can't comment about a recent scandal brewing at City Hall, because it has now become "a personnel matter." And the matter is this: Council Member Don Watts is being investigated for using harsh language at city hall.

This follows the recent brouhaha regarding five Los Angeles' city council members who filed a formal complaint against Los Angeles Police Chief William J. Bratton. You may recall that Bratton had said two council members "do not know what the hell they are talking about" which got him into hot water. Bratton also said the LA Council was "missing in action" regarding its budget for the police department. Bratton attributed the whole thing to sensitive West Coasters versus the more forthright and blunt East Coasters.

Flashback to Sierra Madre. "I sent an email to the city... warning that if the design guidelines went ahead prior to the election that the city could be sued," said Watts. "I said these design guidelines included three story parking garages and other things that were part of the original Specific Plan that people don't want." Watts said he then visited the Planning Desk, asking "What's the big idea?" Watts said his packet showed guidelines from the Specific Plan and part of the Design Guidelines, which he says the Planning staff denied. "It was in my packet and it made me really angry," said Watts. "Sure as shootin', they were there. To me, it was like - give it to him at the last minute and he doesn't have a chance to look at them and we have a chance to push this through."

Watts also said the Head of Planning told him he works at the pleasure of three council members. "So I don't count," said Watts. The Planning Commission decided to postpone the review until after the election. "The problem is, they become law if they sit there for a long enough period," said Watts.

At sometime during this exchange - and we have just one side of the story right now because it is a confidential personnel matter, though we find Council Member Watts to be a stand-up guy - our Council member uttered the __ss word, as in __ss - or - __ss or some variation thereof.

Memo to Council Member Watts:
Call Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton right away and invite him to afternoon tea.

B.I.N.G.O. GO GO

Hundreds got rowdy in the recreation center last Saturday night, pelting crumpled Bingo sheets at the winners, and demanding the losers get paddled on their behinds. Presiding over the festivities was the one and only Scott Presley, aka "Belle Aire," who brought the excitement of Legendary Bingo to the Sierra Madre Rose Float Association Crowd. Do not try this at home.



Sierra Madre is Finalist for 2007 All-America City Join the Delegation by Wednesday, May 16 Register with Elisa Weaver, Chair of Delegation (626) 355-5278 Cost: \$100 per delegate. www.cityofsierramadre.com (Group rates available for hotels)

Saturday April 28 and Sunday April 29
Theodore Payne 4th Annual Native Plant Garden Tour
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
See 30 Great Los Angeles Gardens
Attend seminar on butterfly gardens
Saturday 6:30 p.m. Tickets \$20
Visit www.theodorepayne.org

Saturday, April 28, 11:30 am
Centennial Year
Sierra Madre Woman's Club Fashion Show
"The Fashionable Sierra Madre Woman - Then and Now" Tickets \$20 (626) 355-6225

Sunday, May 13 at 6:30 p.m.
"The Journey to Oz"
"MovieTalk" by Leo Brady, English Department at USC
Sierra Madre's Centennial One Book, One City 2007
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum.
Watch the Film after the Lecture
Sierra Madre School Auditorium at 141 W. Highland Ave.
Free - For more info, call (626) 355-7186

Sunday April 29 at 9 a.m.
Spring clean - Drop off outgrown children's clothes to benefit the Child Advocacy Project for Door of Hope. Plastic tubs also needed for clothes storage. Coordinator: PCC student Roxanne Tutundjian.
Door of Hope, a non-profit founded by Steve Lazarian, Sr., provides clothing for homeless families in Pasadena.
Drop A Load Laundry at 370 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Farmer's Market

Every Saturday
8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 9 a.m. Folk Dancing
Dancers from Pasadena & Sierra Madre! Lili's herbs, fresh flowers, honey, artisan chocolates, menuo & tamale stand.
Bring the kiddies.

Café 322

Every Sunday Sing Your Heart Out:
Opera & Broadway
Pianist Danny Guerrero & Friends
322 Sierra Madre Blvd.
Sierra Madre (626) 836-5414

Beantown

45 N. Baldwin
Coffee & Ice Cream
(626) 355-1596

Lucky Baldwin's

21 Kersting Court
Fish & Chips
(626) 355-1140

Mary's Market

Meet New Manager Henore Letourneau
561 Woodland Drive
(626) 355-4534

The Harvey Hyde Show

Every Sunday 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Hard-hitting, high impact sports talk radio
KSHP Las Vegas - 1400 AM
Live! from BURGER CONTINENTAL
535 South Lake Avenue Pasadena

Got Electronic-Waste?

Universal Waste Management, Inc. and La Salle Environmental Sciences will be hosting a FREE drop off event for electronic waste items. The proceeds from the event will benefit La Salle.

April 28 and 29 from 9:00am to 3:00pm both days
La Salle High School is located at 3880 East Sierra Madre Boulevard at the corner of Sierra Madre Boulevard and Michillinda Avenue in northeast Pasadena.

For more information regarding e-waste call La Salle at 626.696.4349 or visit the California Integrated Waste Management Board electronics website at www.ciwm.ca.gov/electronics

Thursday, May 10 at 7 p.m.

Sierra Madre Public Library

Who Is Oz, The Great and Terrible?
Literary Panel on "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz"

- Kent Baxter from the English Department at Cal State Northridge
- Jackie Stallcup, who teaches courses in children's and adolescent literature at Cal State Northridge
- James Kincaid, Aerol Arnold Chair in English and Professor of English at U.S.C.

"One Book, One City" is sponsored by the Friends of the Sierra Madre Library, the Rotary Club of Sierra Madre, the Sierra Madre Playhouse, Random House Audio/Books on Tape, James Kincaid, and Joel Shapiro.

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 or call the Library at (626) 355-7186.

CELEBRATIONS ENGAGEMENT

Chris Jurebie and Taryn Trager

Chris and Taryn met at the Wildlife WayStation about 5 years ago. They fell in love and continue their life's passion of working with animals.

"Chris' sister Lindsey, brother Kevin and I are so happy for their engagement," wrote Chris' mom, Linda Huss. Chris surprised Taryn by taking her up to Santa Barbara and proposing to her on the beach. The couple expect to be married in autumn.



REMEMBRANCES

James Ickes, 65

Devoted Husband and Father

Longtime Pasadena resident, James (Jim) Ickes passed away on Wednesday, April 11, 2007, just weeks after learning he had pancreatic cancer. He was 65. Jim was born on March 30, 1942 in Pennsylvania and grew up in Rochester, New York. After a stint in the Army where he was stationed in Croix Chapeau, France, he made his home in Pasadena.

Jim married Julie Best on November 23, 1985. Julie, who teaches at Madison Elementary School in Pasadena, grew up in Sierra Madre. She attended Alverno High School and UCLA. Her parents, Thomas and Pat Best, still reside in Sierra Madre.

Jim was on the Academic Board of

LaSalle High School, where his son David is a freshman. His son, Michael, graduated from LaSalle last year and currently attends St. Mary's College in northern California. Jim was a longtime volunteer at Don Benito Elementary School, Wilson Middle School, Little League, Boy Scouts, and everything else his sons were involved in.

A memorial service was held on April 19 at St. Phillip the Apostle Parish in Pasadena. In lieu of flowers, the James Ickes Memorial Scholarship Fund has been established to help with Mike and Dave's education.

Donations can be made in care of Pasadena Service Federal Credit Union, 670 North Rosemead Blvd., Pasadena 91107.

Visit Our Remembrance Pages and Sign the guest book for family & friends

The Wild West

With Kyle McClure

Carbonfund.org

I hate flying. A few years ago I made the mistake of reading a portion of the transcript of a black box recording and that was pretty much it for me. Screw safety statistics and probability. I would be happy if I never had to get on another airplane in my entire life. I know that people fly all the time. I know that many people support their families and buy TV sets with the money they earn flying around in airplanes every single day of their professional lives. I am also aware that there are frightening and dangerous prospects facing me when I step out of my front door on my cute little street, or even if I sit in my own living room (have you heard about these meteors that are headed our way?). There is just something about air travel for me - the tight quarters, the white noise, the obvious lack of control (there are, like, two people in the entire machine who are capable of operating the thing), the huge distance between me and the ground. I am a very empathetic person. I have an imagination. I am perfectly capable of putting myself into the seat of one of the passengers strapped to the inside of a plummeting airplane.

Which is why I kind of hate Carbonfund.org. I am not being sarcastic or making light. I am scared to fly. And, my main justification for avoiding air travel has been that, as someone who cares deeply for the future of our planet, I didn't feel comfortable contributing the 2,000 lbs of carbon dioxide that would be produced getting me to Maui or Panama city or wherever. Airplanes are bad for the environment. I can't use this excuse anymore (it just won't fly).

At Carbonfund.org, anyone who intends to travel on an airplane can offset his climate impact with a few mouse clicks and a credit card.

Carbonfund.org is a non-profit foundation that "educates the public about the dangers of climate change and makes it easy and affordable for individuals,

businesses and organizations to reduce their climate impact." The website operated by this organization will help you calculate the exact amount of carbon dioxide generated by an airplane flight. It will also help you determine the carbon dioxide produced by your home over the course of a year, and by your car over a year or its lifetime. Then, the website will accept your donation of \$41.25, \$388.96 or \$6.25 to offset the environmental impacts of the carbon dioxide produced by you.

You can choose how your money will carry out this offsetting. Your money can go to the Ainsworth Wind Energy Facility, which has expanded wind energy production in Nebraska by 400 percent. Or it can go to Chicago Zero Energy Solar Homes, a seven-home affordable housing development in Chicago. Your money can plant red oak trees in the Ozarks, and provide habitat and food for rabbits, deer, fox, bald eagles, and black bear, or it can plant Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine in the Six Rivers National Forest in California, where it will help stabilize soil and protect water sources. The steelhead, Chinook salmon, and Coho Salmon would write you thank-you notes if they could.

Whatever offset you choose, it will be certified, audited and verified by a reputable third party, and you will sleep easier knowing that you have helped create a "cleaner, safer, and more prosperous world for our generation and future generations."

Offsets like these are a legitimate, admirable, and relatively painless way for a person to reduce the environmental impacts of his travel and lifestyle choices. They also support many impressive businesses and environmental efforts across the country. And they are the end of my reasonable excuse for not traveling by plane. Curses.

ARCADIA (cont. from pg. 1)

from their expansion objectives.

This is precisely what Measure A seeks to do. If passed, it would bar a selected area at the corner of Huntington Drive and Santa Anita Avenue from use for the sale, storage, or repair of automobiles. Measure A was authored by Chris Sutton - Pasadena attorney and counsel to Rod's Grill owner Manny Romero - as a response to the proposed expansion of the Rusnak Mercedes dealership at the corner of Huntington Drive and Santa Clara Street. Sutton was also the pen behind the "controlled growth" Measure V which just passed in Sierra Madre, a measure that provides for citizen involvement in development plans for the city's downtown if they exceed current standards.

"My business is across the street from a park in beautiful downtown Arcadia. If I get surrounded by cars, what's the value of my business then?" says Romero. "If this happens, downtown Arcadia will never be the same." "There's something bigger at stake here," says citizen activist Mark Bower, who is doubtful that doubling the size of the dealership's real estate will do the same for its sales. Even more important to Bower and his supporters is the appearance of downtown Arcadia and what he calls the "character of the city."

"We agree that it's perfectly fine for Rusnak to be selling cars where they are right now," said Bower. "What we don't want to see is a mega auto-mall with unsightly mercury-vapor lights drowning out our city street lights all along this stretch of road" - referring to the frontage property along Huntington Drive now occupied by small businesses and shops similar to the rest of downtown Arcadia and opposite Arcadia County Park.

The city's response - the competing Measure B - aims to outstrip A with regards to the protection it affords Arcadians from improper use of Eminent Domain laws for private-to-private land transfers and also by preserving "the rights of property owners to reasonably and lawfully" use or develop their land as they choose.

This explains the barrage of signage touting Measure

B's protection of Eminent Domain abuse; a claim that A supporters see as little more than a redirection of voters' attention and a clear attempt to confuse the voting public.

Adding fuel to this argument is the fact that Citizens Against Eminent Domain Abuse, the prominent financial backing to the pro-B campaign, has been funded to this point entirely by a \$15,000 contribution from Rusnak. Indeed, the only other name on the official paperwork registering this committee is that of Bob Harbicht, an Arcadia City Councilman whose name previously appeared on numerous petitions to the Mayor and City Council to curb the dealership's expansion plans.

"There's nothing behind the scenes here. I don't think I did change my story," said Harbicht. "The citizens were concerned about eminent domain abuse and this is exactly what Measure B addresses. 'We've already bought the three pieces of land. If it passes it looks like the city will be in the public storage business.'"

Adding to the tension is the implication by Rusnak manager Brian Beatt that if the dealership is unable to attain its desired 9 to 10 acres, it will vacate the lot.

"We have had a commitment to Mercedes that we will have at least 9.8 acres at the site since before we even moved there. We're not looking past the initiative; we'll have to take it from there," said Beatt when asked if the passage of Measure A would cause Rusnak to withdraw its interests completely.

"When you come into Arcadia and you see the sign it says 'a city of homes,' that's why we moved here." Says Chi Villa, owner of the school uniform shop in the public storage building sold to Rusnak already. The city has promised to aid in moving Villa's store, covering her relocation expenses and any difference paid in rent for the first two years.

However, Villa is more worried as a resident than as a business owner. "I have three kids I'm raising here in Arcadia. If I had wanted them to grow up in an area overrun with shopping malls and car dealerships I would've just lived in LA like everyone else."

Spiritual Community

Tina and Larry Ogron offer Interfaith Spiritual classes on Sundays for all ages. To join, call Baha'i Faith Community of Sierra Madre at (626) 836-9299. Tina Ogron, a teacher at Sierra Madre school, and her husband, Larry, guide friends and neighbors in spring sessions exploring world religions; and fall sessions contemplating ethics and values. Join the May 6th field trip to the Baha'i Center in Los Angeles, and study Native American spirituality May 20 and June 3. Classes are complimentary and well attended by dozens of children, including teens, and their parents. Music, crafts and snacks are part of the journey.

Visit tinaogron@hotmail.com

Thursday, May 3 at 7 p.m.
National Day of Prayer
Arcadia Interfaith Action Group
"America: United in Prayer" featuring
Christians, Jews, Muslims, Baha'is, Buddhists
Lutheran Church of the Cross
(626) 447-7232
66 W. Duarte Rd. Arcadia

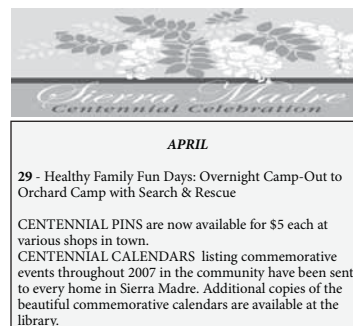
BRANDLEY (pg. 1)

Replogle is an architectural designer specializing in home remodeling for more than 50 years in the area. He recently retired from additional duties as a building contractor. "He is one of the finest commissioners I have ever seen," said Replogle of Brandley. "I've appeared before lots of commissions in my life's work. He always thought things out thoroughly. His decisions, I thought, were well-reasoned. I can't say we always agreed on everything but that's what happens on commissions and councils."

Interim City manager Don Hopper said most queries are reluctant to say who they are. "My

guess is, the vast majority - whistle blowers and concerned citizens - are probably anonymous," Hopper said. The query concerned the amount of business Brandley's flower shop, Leonora Moss, does with the Congregational Church, Hopper said.

City Attorney Sandra Levin evaluated the query and determined it did not constitute a conflict of interest, Hopper said. In the past, Brandley has recused himself from voting on a residence to be built on West Grandview Ave. and the site at 110 E. Montecito.



APRIL

29 - Healthy Family Fun Days: Overnight Camp-Out to Orchard Camp with Search & Rescue

CENTENNIAL PINS are now available for \$5 each at various shops in town.

CENTENNIAL CALENDARS listing commemorative events throughout 2007 in the community have been sent to every home in Sierra Madre. Additional copies of the beautiful commemorative calendars are available at the library.

JOFFE (cont. from pg. 1)

vandalism, attack and obscene web sites - one of which was endorsed by Mayor Buchanan in the Pasadena Star-News as humorous satire - and other forms of intimidation.

Joffe Steps In

Joffe accepted her new position as Mayor to hearty applause. "It's wonderful to be applauded before I've done anything," she said. "That all of you voted for me, that tells me that the healing process has begun. I feel we're on a good path."

Joffe immediately went to work, listing the council's next objectives - and she paraphrased Interim City Manager Don Hopper - "our job is to do the people's business."

First priority, she said, is to hire a City Manager, then continue with the Strategic Plan process and work on the city's budget and financial stability. The down side, she said, is a half dozen or more lawsuits and "four major projects in the pipeline" - One Carter, Stonehouse, Howie's Market site and the Skilled Nursing Facility.

One of her top priorities, she said, is Senior Services. The Senior Master Plan is complete and in the process of final draft.

"I intend to be Mayor of the whole community," said Joffe. "It means I'll be fair and impartial, it doesn't mean I'll give up my opinion."

Joffe thanked her husband, Joel Shapiro and son, Adam, who is a student at UC Santa Cruz. "Joel has been my rock and my moral compass," she said, and thanked him for his patience during "Late nights, missed dinners, long hours." To her son, she said "being the son of a working mother is no picnic."

Mosca Follows with Three Votes

Joffe nominated Council Member Joe Mosca for Mayor Pro Tem because, she said, he won the most votes in the last election - 1,900 - and walked door to door. "Joe Mosca still attends most community events, and is willing to consider all the facts before making a decision," she said.

By telephone from the state of Virginia, Council Member Kurt Zimmerman agreed that Mosca is "the hardest working council member I know." For that reason, Zimmerman said, "I have not signed the recall petition - yet." Zimmerman also said that Mosca's two council votes against the people having a say on downtown development was the impetus for Measure V. "He let me down. He let the community down," said Zimmerman. "There has been a lot of revisionist history from

his supporters... He broke that promise not once, but twice... I'll be cordial and I will commend him for his hard work, but I cannot support him for Mayor Pro Tem." Council Member Don Watts abstained from the vote on Mosca's nomination, which passed 3-2, counting Mosca's own vote.

"Thankyoueverybody, I'm extremely excited about this new opportunity," said Mosca. He said he would work with the mayor "really hard" to bring the community together and work on "the long term financial stability of the city."

The 411 on Mobile Phone Service & Other Business

In other business, the city approved 4-1, with Zimmerman abstaining, the creation of a 60' mobile cell phone monopoly to be disguised as a pine tree and located in the city yards off of Sierra Vista Park on Sierra Madre Blvd. Council Member Watts joked about "plastic squirrels" in the plastic branches.

Interim City Manager Don Hopper said T-Mobile will lease the tower to other cell phone companies and the city will get a percentage of the revenues.

Milt and Harriet Goldberg Park at Sunnyside and Ramona was also approved, at a total construction cost of \$108,000. Land and Water Conservation Funds will partially pay the cost. The park, designed by Ronnie Siegel of Swire Siegel Landscape Architects, features native plants and a Gabriellino Native American hut made of live tree branches twined in a gazebo shape.

During Community Communications, Resident Lori Cooper defended the Pasadena chapter of the League of Women Voters, which took a position against Measure V without asking for any arguments or materials on its behalf. "All the organizations have had the greatest respect for the League," she said. "It's really impartial... really for good government and citizen participation is the rule."

Lisa Spigai-Perez touted the All America City Rally - the next one Wednesday May 30 at the Recreation Center at 611 Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre is a finalist for the second time. Spigai-Perez read from Josh Moran, this year's Chair of the Application Committee. "There's always been a sense of pride in Sierra Madre, a sense of civic responsibility, which is evident in everything that goes on here... The All-American City Award recognizes all of these people working to make this the wonderful town that it is."

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Fire Safe Council TIP OF THE WEEK
From Caroline Brown

The welcomed Spring rain of last weekend brought 1/2 inch of rain but did not help at all to end the disastrous fire season that is already underway. The cool, damp weather is best looked upon as better weather for the hard task at hand of clearing dead brush and tree limbs from your property. Stay busy. Don't wait for the heat of the fire to remind you of this needed effort. The Sierra Madre Fire Department has sent Brush Inspection notices for May 1st for homeowners in the "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone." Note that we are at a low fuel moisture content normally experienced in the month of July. For information on brush clearance remember to check out www.firesafecouncil.org or www.fire.lacounty.gov/forestry/BrushManagement for additional information. Please attend the next Fire Safe Council meeting May 14, at 7 p.m. in the City Council chambers. Your participation and input is needed. For information call: 355-9350, 355-1182 or 355-0741 or e-mail us at: smfiresafecouncil@hotmail.com

Mountain Clymer

By Kim Clymer

Thoughts After The Pack Station Part 5 of 5

Kim Clymer used to own the pack station in the San Gabriel Mountains. Now she is involved in other pursuits, including wrestling with philosophical issues and writing.

Priorities

Our addiction to the extravagance and excessiveness and the self-centeredness of this lifestyle we have allowed our selves to be led into is costing us our planet...our only home...our mother. Global warming is real...it is here...it is now. It will spiral out of control if we do not stop and get a hold on ourselves...open our eyes to see what is happening and how our choices affect our environment...take responsibility for our actions...take back our will from corporate America and for once, tell THEM what WE want instead of them telling us what we need. Make earth-wise choices in our consumption...be responsible to our future generations. Suffer slight inconveniences...take the time and do things the old fashioned way

if it can eliminate waste or save energy. You don't have to become a profit of doom when you decide to care enough to take action...you can leave those rose colored glasses on, (they might help to cancel out that slight green cast of the CFL's) just remember that you are wearing them and to peer over the top from time to time...we are at a time when we can no longer be ignorant of or indifferent to the consequences of our choices.

We need to be smart...we need to take action...we need to reprioritize our lives...we need to take a step back and a deep breath and start living life more simply, and slowly, and gently, and consciously. It will bring peace to our souls, and breathe life into our dying planet.

Planning Commission Stalled Montecito Project

By Dean Lee

The Planning Commission unanimously voted April 5 to postpone a conditional use permit (CUP) until April 19 on a 36 foot high, mixed-use project with a density more than 13 units per acre.

The 110 East Montecito Ave. project also includes semi-subterranean basements making the site visibly three stories according to the commission but only counting as two stories by what commissioner John Hutt said was "goofy standards."

The 9,197 square foot, four unit, condominium complex consists of one commercial, restricted to light office/manufacturing, and three residential units with parking spaces shared by all tenants.

"I just think that after April 17 we will have clearer guidelines," said Commissioner John Hutt. He also said that a variance in height was not necessary but then asked for one anyway saying in was needed "just in case." Over 30 feet is allowed without a variance under what he called "manipulating city code."

Mark Lloyd President of L&P Consultants earlier asked, on behalf of the applicants, that the city go forward that night in what some said was fear of Measure V passing.

Lloyd later said that he had made a bad judgment call. He then asked for them to wait but withdrew, at the request of the city, the third set of plans calling for a five foot reduction to the back of the project, something Hutt said he liked, and wanted to review. At one point

he called them "the forbidden plans," and said they addressed a number of residents' concerns, one being privacy.

The commissioners then asked the developers for a revision to the first submitted plans with a setback of 15 feet allowing for green space and removing a small balcony on the second story windows to further the distance between the project and neighbors.

Other concerns with the project included fire escape access, raising the site's grade for drainage, the height, types of commercial use, and parking. Other commission business included a quick unanimous vote granting another CUP for a sixty foot cell phone tower in Sierra Vista Park to be disguised as a pine tree.

Commissioners laughed as part of a branch from the project's "stealth" tree facility was passed around. T-Mobile users in the city should see a dramatic change in cell phone coverage starting as soon as summer, representatives said. The project was passed along to the city council for final approval and could take up to 45 to 60 days to build.

SIERRA MADRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Cost is \$30.93 per person
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(Cut-off date May 1, 2007)

SIERRA MADRE POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of Sunday, April 15th, to Saturday April 21st, the Sierra Madre Police Department responded to approximately 191 calls for service.

Sunday, April 15th:

7:01 AM - Vandalism, 00 block West Grandview Ave. A resident reported her parked car damaged; left rear reflector and metal panel damaged. The car was parked in front of her house Saturday, 4/14 at 9:30 PM and the damage was discovered Sunday, 4/15 at 6:30 AM. The damage was estimated by the owner at \$3000.00.

5:43 PM - Grand theft, 200 block Algeria Ave. A resident reported jewelry stolen from her home. The missing jewelry was described as a gold band with three diamonds, silver band one diamond and one pair of diamond earrings. The jewelry was last seen Sunday, 4/8 at 8:00 AM and discovered missing Sunday, 4/15 at 6:00 PM. The loss was estimated at \$6540.00.

Monday, April 16th:

5:25 PM - Fire assist: smoke reported, apartment complex 634 West Sierra Madre Blvd. A large amount of smoke was reported coming from an apartment. Officers Ellins, Toribio and Cpl Kamchamnan arrived; fearing the apartment was occupied officers forced entry, cleared the apartment and extinguished the fire. The Sierra Madre Fire Department arrived and ventilated the smoke from food left cooking on the stove.

Tuesday, April 17th:

9:38 AM - Vandalism, 700 block Valle Vista Drive. A resident reported returning from vacation and finding his curbside mailbox slightly bent. The owner was out of town from Sunday, 4/8 returning Friday, 4/13. No dollar value was assignable to the damage.

2:43 PM - Vehicle vandalism, 49 South Baldwin Ave. A resident reported her car fender keyed while in the customer parking lot. The damage occurred Tuesday, 4/17 between 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM. The owner estimated the damage at \$1000.00.

Wednesday, April 18th:

1:47 PM - Grand theft, 665 West Sierra Madre Blvd. A resident reported her mountain bike stolen from the rear of her apartment. The bike; gray Iron Horse Warrior was chained with other bikes Wednesday at 8:00 AM and stolen by 1:15 PM. The owner valued the bike at \$600.00.

Saturday, April 21st:

4:26 PM - Graffiti/Vandalism, Taylor's Meat Market; 14 East Sierra Madre Blvd. A resident reported graffiti; black paint sprayed on an 8' x 5' area. The damage was to a concrete block wall located to the rear of the market. No loss amount was available.

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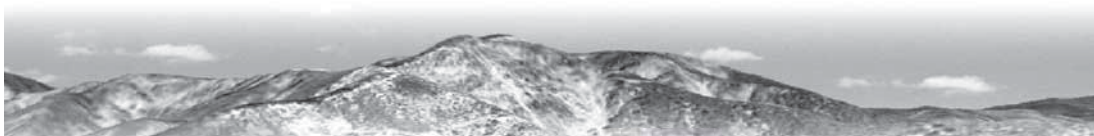
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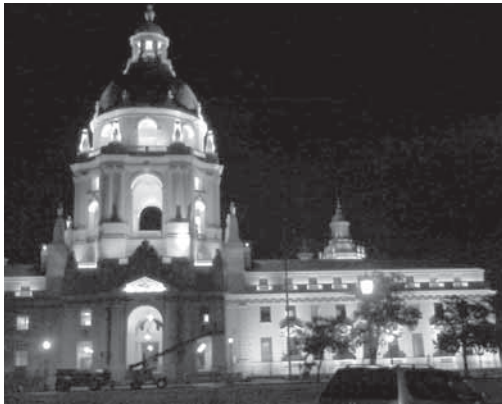
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The Mt. Wilson Observer PASADENA

... And Let There Be Light

Photo & Story By Dean Lee



City Hall Shines Brightly Once Again.

The biggest event of Monday night's Pasadena city council meeting was not scheduled on any agenda, or hushed about, as council members and city staff walked outside when the night was over to the amazement of seeing city hall lit up for the first time since July 2004, after undergoing seismic retrofitting at a cost of \$ \$117.5 million. City Manager Cynthia Kurtz said the city was testing the lighting before its big move back in. Council Member Paul Little was the first out the door as he drove down the street and stood in the middle of East Holly Street, snapping photos. Ironically, Little is one of two council members who will not move back in having given up his seat to Margaret McAustin who won in last week's runoff elections. McAustin has been a longtime member of the city's Planning Commission and easily rose to victory with 61.1 percent win over Jim Lomako for district 2 in which Little now occupies. Little made the choice not to seek another term. "I think 12 years is enough," Little said. "Leaving opens up an opportunity for someone else with different thinking. I have a family and a job. I'm going to go back

to doing that. I will continue to walk my dog, nothing earth-shattering."

Mayor Bill Bogaard thanked the Pasadena Senior Center at the start of the night saying, "I hope we have been good tenants and we will surely miss you." The council had conducted business there since moving away from City Hall for the renovation.

Getting down to actual city business, which included setting a timeline for the pre-application for the Art Center College of Design's Master Plan and looking at changing the Central District Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) controlled by Fuller Theological Seminary.

The agenda put some residents to sleep as they waited long hours through what seemed, to some, as pointless conversations about the Fuller's Master Plan approved years ago. Council member Chris Holden finally interrupted saying that nothing they did had anything to do with the Institute.

"This is not a Fuller proposal," Holden said. "They didn't come here to ask for this and they're probably not even here tonight. You know if they had anything to benefit they'd be here tonight."

The council then flat out opposed the idea to increase the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) within the Fuller Seminary Precinct of the Central District Specific Plan from 1.5 to 2.

But not before some property owners such as the University Club and Pasadena Presbyterian Church voiced opinions saying the proposal was in line with surrounding sites and agreed with Holden saying they wanted to preserve building rights down the road.

When asked, none of them had any projects currently under review, something most of the council said alarmed them. An additional 127,900 square feet of unutilized space would have been opened in the area out of a total of 385,000 unused by Fuller.

Bogaard immediately said the proposal would set a bad precedence for the city opening up unregulated land use transfers saying he would not support it. Council members Steve Haderlein, Victor Gordo, Steve Madison and Sid Tyler soon followed.

The council motioned to hear the subject in June.

The Art Center College of Design's 25 year Master Development Plan was also discussed and would increase landscaped open space there from 167,000 square feet to 190,000 square feet as well as increased building area from 242,512 square feet to 330,786 square feet. The plan also calls for an increased student enrollment and raises the number of faculty by 10.

Bogaard also appointed Aaron Proctor to the human relations commission although Proctor left the meeting early before public comment at which time, he earlier said, he planned to speak. Proctor was Bogaard's only serious Mayoral contender March 6, at which time Proctor received 1,338 votes compared with Bogaard's 10,700.

Air Pollution Levels Will Be Flagged At Schools

"... unhealthy air cuts an average of 14 years off the life expectancy of residents in the area. Pasadena had 86 unhealthy days in 2006." Rainbow Yeung, South Coast Air Quality Management District

Photo and Story By Dean Lee



Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich unveiled a new color coated air quality flag warning system for K-12 schools last week that, if all goes well, will include 50 schools throughout Southern California some of which target unhealthy parts of Pasadena, said South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) spokesperson Tina Cherry. "Each school will be picked based on historical data where air quality can reach unhealthy levels," Cherry said. "We have been in contact with Pasadena school district's health program as well as some of the school nurses there." Cherry said it was still unclear which schools in Pasadena would first implement the program but said they hoped to have them in place by summer. "Children take in more air per unit volume with exertion then do us older people," Antonovich told a group of Burbank school children. "Also kids spend much more time outside and young lungs can get permanently damaged when levels get too high." The two-year Air Quality Flag Program includes a series of brightly colored flags that will fly on each school's flagpole to indicate air quality conditions on any given day. The five flags range in color from green, with "good" air quality to purple signifying "very unhealthy" advising teachers, parents, and school administrators to keep children indoors. "Los Angeles has the worst air in the state and California is the worst in the country," said American

Lung Association of California's Director of Programs, Sondra Widland. "That means people in Pasadena are breathing some of the worst air in the country."

Widland said 14 percent of children in Los Angeles are likely to have asthma. Of that 3,000 students are diagnosed with asthma in Pasadena schools alone, said Carol La Val, PUSD's Coordinator of Health Programs. She said children are listed as asthmatic when they require medication to be on hand at the schools.

La Val also said the district was in the process of looking for ways to fund early asymptomatic detection systems for PUSD children with asthma saying that she thought the city should welcome the flag program but also said it was too early to know.

At the council's regular Jan. 29 meeting SCAQMD spokesperson Rainbow Yeung made clear to the city council that air quality was of serious concern presenting part of a 1,100 page Draft 2007 Air Quality Management Plan. The draft says the city

needed to focus on proposed measures to meet both air particulate matter and ozone standards. Both are also used to determine air quality used by the flag program.

Alice Sterling, Pasadena's Green Building Coordinator, said increasing public awareness of unhealthy days, such as the flag program, is a first step towards achieving better air quality. The program also supports efforts of the broader goal to become a green city.

Yeung also said that mobile sources make up almost 80 percent of the air pollution and that Pasadena's 210 freeway and other roads are a large factor. She recommended that the city stand behind other legislation such as Assembly Bill 32, passed in 2006 by voters which establishes a statewide cap on greenhouse gas emissions.

AB 32 addresses global warming and other smog-related health

impacts including asthma attacks, hospitalizations and emergency room visits for lung illnesses and premature deaths.

In addition to AB 32, Widland also said the lung association will support efforts to establish a "low carbon fuel standard" that limits the greenhouse gas equivalent emissions from transportation fuels and promotes the development and usage of alternative fuels.

Yeung said that, on average, unhealthy air cuts an average of 14 years off the life expectancy of residents in the area. Pasadena had 86 unhealthy days in 2006 she said.

Mayor Bill Bogaard said the city would draft a letter backing the importance of the Draft 2007 Air Quality Management Plan with the city's support behind it. With the flag program, staff at each school will be trained on air quality issues, health impacts and program implementation. Outreach materials will also be provided to teachers, students and parents according to the Lung Association.

Classrooms at each school will also have an air quality index chart and tracking calendars so the data can be used locally throughout the school year.

Air Quality Flag Program for Schools

The Air Quality Flag Program provides information to help protect you and your family from air pollution. By checking that school flag and comparing the colored flag to the index, you can tell what the daily air quality is, and adjust your activities to reduce your exposure to air pollution. This chart is being offered as a limited number of participating schools throughout Orange, and other areas of the Inland Empire, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties at this time. For more information, give us a call at 1-800-438-3468.

AQMD AIR QUALITY Flag PROGRAM

For pollution in our region affects us all. It can be harmful to the elderly, people with lung or heart problems, and children whose lungs are still growing. Air pollution can damage trees, crops, outdoor sculptures, and outdoor recreation systems. Breathing when the air is bad can help to all avoid avoidable outdoor physical activities during bad times.

Did you know that about 800,000 children in California have asthma?

Your school is participating in a program to help protect children from air pollution. A flag will be placed on each school flag to show you how bad the air quality is on any given day. Schools on the program can opt to adjust their outdoor activities according to the level of pollution. Helping to protect the health of children.

Since your children are aware that your family lives in an area with air pollution, or understand indoor air quality, school can be seen on major days. Even though school air is better than outside air, it is still not as good as the air outside. So, when the air is bad, it is best to stay indoors.

Is the air getting to you? If you feel like this, tell your teacher and parents.

- Shortness of Breath
- Coughing
- Rhinitis
- Headache
- Tire and/or Irritation
- Wheezing
- Run When Running & Stop Breath

© 2006 Air Quality Management District

AQMD AIR QUALITY Flag PROGRAM

Check our Air Quality Index (AQI) to see how bad the air is. The AQI is a number from 0 to 500 that tells you how bad the air is. The AQI is divided into five categories: Good, Moderate, Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups, Unhealthy, and Very Unhealthy. Each category has a corresponding color and a description of the health effects. The AQI is updated every hour.

Good 0-50
Air is clean and healthy for everyone.

Moderate 51-100
Air is okay, but there may be some problems for people with lung disease.

Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups 101-150
People with lung disease or other respiratory problems should avoid outdoor activities.

Unhealthy 151-200
Everyone should avoid outdoor activities.

Very Unhealthy 201-300
Everyone should stay indoors.

South Coast Air Quality Management District
Website: www.aqmd.gov or call 1-800-438-3468

Only the AQI flag program is the only way to know the air quality. For more information, give us a call at 1-800-438-3468.

THE MT. WILSON OBSERVER

OPINION



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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.

Around The Town With Sir Eric Maundry



"FIDELITY, n. A virtue peculiar to those who are about to be betrayed."
- Ambrose Bierce *'The Devil's Dictionary'*

Is Joe Mosca being left to twist in the wind? With the sudden shuttering of the controversial **Downtown Dirt** blog, has **Beth Buck** effectively declared that the fellow whose virtues she and her minions praised so often is now on his own? That Beth should fold up her tattered tent now that the financial support of the development and realty trades has expired is not all that surprising. But what about the fate of the guy who scuttled a promising political career in order to support her "No on V" agenda? Something for the councilman to reflect upon as recall petitions begin to make the rounds... For a hilarious take on the melodramatic denouement of **Ms. Buck**, allow me to recommend **The Sierra Madre Cactus**. This inspired piece of umbrage is found at <http://sierramadrecactus.blogspot.com> ... One more **Downtown Dirt** related item has just hit my mailbox, so to speak. Original member **James Carlson** has been quietly dropped from the **Dirt** sponsor list. More on this as it develops ... And yet the still flies. A new blog that calls itself **A View of Sierra Madre from the Canyon** has this to say: "V is for Vile. Regardless of the side that you took on Measure V, it is clear that if something could split this town in two, this was it." I wonder if the author might care to consider that perhaps the \$170,000 spent on a near daily barrage of bogus anti-V propaganda might have played a role? ... So how are the

pro-development people going to carry on in what is now a **Measure V** world? Despite their assurances that all involved will be working hard to "make this thing work," our sources from deep inside their inner circle have uncovered something quite different. It appears that a new set of talking points and protocols have been quietly issued to the remaining faithful in hopes of raising the fallen flag. They are as follows: 1 - **Multiple-level buildings** should now be described as being 2 story structures with bonus floors and windows. 2 - **Condominium complexes** over 30 feet high can be fitted out with large plastic tree limbs to give an appearance not unlike a delightful grove of pines, thus returning **Sierra Madre** to its primeval mountain glory. Those questioning this must be accused of **hating nature**. 3 - **Buildings that might appear to be covering entire city blocks** are actually multiple co-joined adjacents designed to foster closer community relations. 4 - **Large structures** do not necessarily have to be constructed in traditional square or rectangle. If they are built in rounded igloo shapes and painted green they can be viewed as resembling the foothills we love. Those opposed to buildings of this kind need to be accused of **not caring about our mountains**. 5 - **If none of this works**, state that if it wasn't for all the thankless work WE do for this town, there wouldn't be any mountains to look at anyway ... Something that I found troubling: **Police Chief Marilyn Diaz** was quoted in this publication as admitting that those responsible for maintaining the police blotter had been negligent in reporting the vandalism visited upon Measure V supporters. She then goes on to say, "I think we have trained them wrong to be more inclusive." By this did she mean that the needs of Measure V supporters were not considered a priority for her force before this issue was raised? ... As always I am happy to hear from you. Write me at sir.eric.maundry@yahoo.com ... Cheers!

Cops or No Cops - That is The Question

By Hail Hamilton



Do we want to have a police department or not, that is the question Sierra Madre residents should be asking themselves. The answer is a simple yes or no. Not answering is not an option. My answer is a resounding and unqualified YES. Here are four reasons why I want to keep the SMPD.

- Local law enforcement is more responsive to the special needs of Sierra Madre and the visitors who frequent our little foothill community.
- Local law enforcement is more efficient than the LA County Sheriff Department would be because it focuses solely on Sierra Madre.
- Local law enforcement is the primary reason for having a city government at all; it is one of the most important services a city provides.
- Local law enforcement is the "goodwill ambassador" for Sierra Madre; the SMPD is the organization most responsible for our image as a community.

What is the SMPD ballot measure? The Minimum Police Wages and Benefits and Prohibition on Staff Reductions or Contracting for General Police Services without Voter Approval is what it says it is.

"If approved by a majority of the voters of the City of Sierra Madre at an election, this measure would establish minimum wages and benefits for the City's police officers to

be calculated annually after a survey of the wages and benefits paid by 10 San Gabriel Valley police departments. It would also require the City to budget for a specified number of positions in the police department and prohibit the City from contracting out general police services without voter approval..."

In other words, should this measure become part of the Municipal Code, the City of Sierra Madre would be required to keep the police department properly compensated, equipped and staffed. Furthermore, once enacted, the ordinance would protect the SMPD against outsourcing police services to other agencies. Finally, as a matter of law, the City would be required to hold an election and get voter approval to change the ordinance.

The measure would not alter the City's or the SMPD Association's duty to negotiate labor agreements as it does currently under state law, but the City could not make an agreement which did not comply with the terms of this measure without voter approval. Moreover, the SMPD measure does not require a tax increase. It is simply a BUDGET MEASURE!

If you want our local cops to continue serving the residents of Sierra Madre, then your answer should be like mine, a resounding and unqualified YES. Our cops need a substantial raise. They need decent benefits. They need the future job security this measure affords.

So the next time my wife Norma or someone else asks you sign the SMPD petition, SIGN IT. And if you happen to see my wife getting the petition signed, tell her our kids are fine and dad is heating up a Dominos Pizza.



Déjà vu

By Susan Henderson

Déjà vu (n): a feeling that one has seen or heard something before

When I opened my computer this week to begin this article, something unusual happened. While my mind was thinking about what to write, my fingers opened a document that I had written and published several years ago. It took me a moment to figure out what happened, because the title of the piece would certainly be appropriate for this week's column. Yet, something wasn't right. I didn't think I had already written on this topic, at least not in Sierra Madre. After further examination, I realized that I was correct on both counts. First of all, the topic was perfect for the state that our city is currently in and secondly, the article was not previously written about this town.

The article was entitled, "Let The Healing Begin." Sounds like it was written just for this post Measure V era, but it wasn't. Yet, after reading it again, déjà vu, I knew I had been in that space before. You see, "Let The Healing Begin" was a piece about moving on after experiencing abrupt and often unexpected changes in life. Sometimes these losses can be as mundane as losing a long anticipated golf match or as serious as losing a best friend. Regardless of the magnitude, there is a part of human nature that requires us to grasp the reality of what happened and move on.

The election is over and we must move on. Former Mayor John Buchanan said it best at Tuesday's council meeting, "...it wasn't a war, it was a campaign." Campaigns are not supposed to be so painful but

this one seemed to be. A lot of the mean-spiritedness had absolutely nothing to do with the initiative.

This week, a colleague that I have known for almost 17 years passed away. She was just a few years older than I, and she gave the last two decades of her life to serving others. She and her husband raised five children, then she went back to school to earn her degree at age 42 and entered into politics for the specific purpose of helping her community.

She spent the last eleven years as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 37th Congressional District. Her name is Juanita Millender-McDonald.

This is where the déjà vu comes in. I distinctly remember a time when the Congresswoman and I were at political odds over a nominee to a political position. When we saw each other, we were always polite, but clearly did not agree. Truth is, we didn't speak much for about a year. Then one day something happened. Surprisingly (I know, hard to imagine) I was under a very vicious personal attack. I was about to enter a room and speak to a couple hundred people who were probably armed with tomatoes to throw my way. While I stood at the back of the room adjusting my hair and clothing so that I would appear picture perfect, the Congresswoman walked up to me with a hug and words of encouragement. I looked very surprised and she said something that I will never forget.

"Susan, being on opposite sides of the fence isn't important. What's important is knowing how and when to move on," she said.

Congresswoman McDonald passed just five days after the Sierra Madre election. I heard her words, however, right after the preliminary election results were in and someone was screaming at the top of their lungs about what they felt I should or should not have done.

Suddenly, it was déjà vu all over again. I heard those words. "What's important is knowing how and when to move on."

Thanks Juanita, I'll share your words with my friends and neighbors.

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.

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor,

The measure to save downtown Sierra Madre from overdevelopment by strengthening the height and density limits of the 1996 General Plan won. A costly effort pushed hard by an experienced public affairs firm hired to manage the No vote in this election lost.

The majority win may seem close, but proponents of Measure V consider the win a big one. Apparently this firm had previously lost only three other elections of the 34 that it was hired to either win or defeat in Oregon, Nevada, Washington, Arkansas, Colorado, Michigan and California, as per their website www.schubertflintpa.com. These were not all local elections—many of them were statewide measures.

Who in Sierra Madre chose to use such tactics against their friends and neighbors who placed a ballot measure in front of the voters for what they thought was right for their city? I think the discussions and disagreements would have been far different if both sides were

talking neighbor to neighbor within the context of a city issue. Instead, the tactics of outside professional elections managers bombarded us week in and week out. Of course, we know that this is not just a local issue when we see where the No on Measure V money came from.

Each No vote came at the expense of at least \$170,922 or \$100.36 per vote, of special interest money—from the building industry and state and national real estate associations. On the other hand, the cost of the Yes campaign was achieved through local citizen donations of \$29,000 or \$16 per vote. These figures will likely change when final election finance reports are filed. I expect the disparity to increase.

For those who voted to oppose the measure, I imagine these truths would be unsettling. Such undue influence from outside money and hired experts is not something Sierra Madre should ever have to endure again.

Caroline Brown

Prop V wins!

Sierra Madre thinkers trumping Sierra Madre greed bags in spite of all their dirty (imported) loot and slickster propaganda! Yonder the millennium!

Joe Scalzo

Dear Editor,

Your April 20 article concerning the Opponents of Measure V deserves a correction.

In that article, Susan Henderson reported on an interview with me at City Hall during which she asked me what I thought would happen as a result of the passage of Measure V. I responded that I thought the city would face legal issues due to non-compliance of the city's housing element with state law. Ms. Henderson then confronted me regarding the validity of my statement, at which time I asked her why she was arguing with me when she was supposed

to be a reporter and declined any further interview. In addition to misquoting me and implying that I knew something about a specific lawsuit, which I don't, Ms. Henderson reported that I then "stormed out of city hall, yelling." Its one thing to misquote someone or misconstrue the meaning of what they said, quite another to fabricate a story of an event that did not happen. Several people were with me when I left the City Hall a long time after my speaking with Ms. Henderson, and they can all validate that Ms. Henderson's version is fiction, not fact.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter.

Fred Wesley

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed the rendition of the "victory" party begun by No on Measure V supporters after the absentee ballots were cast under the mistaken maxim that absentee ballots reflect the voting of the regular ballots. In this election that was not to be the case because it was well into the absentee ballot voting that the true origin of funding for the slick No campaign was revealed. Naturally, Measure V opposition hoped that the outside, big-business nature of the support would go unnoticed. Once it was revealed, the "confusion" generated by wrongly calling for No votes to "preserve" Sierra Madre diminished drastically. So ultimately, the Yes votes prevailed by 93 as of the count now, and likely more when the provisional ballots are finally counted. The notion that this is a close election outcome is just more propaganda bought and paid for by the development interests. A look back over the years will reveal that there have been quite a few elections won by just a few votes. In a voting base the size of Sierra Madre, with the level of participation often experienced, 100 votes is not particularly a close race.

For example Measure F had 2,143 votes in favor and 2,135 against. The measure however needed 2/3 to pass and so it failed. Campaigners in Sierra Madre should note however, that when Measure F was initially proposed, a City-sponsored survey (that would mean at taxpayer's expense) indicated only 56% support for it, the City threw its weight (and money) behind Measure F, stopping short of actually advocating in writing for the vote. Just as with Measure V, slick mailers went to every home with pictures of firemen helping children, etc. Instead of creating the

needed 11% support, the measure's support diminished. That should say something about Sierra Madre voters' response to that kind of strategy. But I digress. The point of this letter is to identify an earlier election that was another narrow win—8 votes in favor of Bart Doyle, defeating incumbent Lee Cline. Bart did not go around pointing out how close it was. Instead, he rewarded his backer the Building Industry Association (who had donated about \$2,500 and a campaign coordinator to his campaign) and set about methodically making it easier for development in Sierra Madre to be approved. He rewarded his supporters by working to see that historic preservation was put out of business, the tree ordinance was repealed and was drastically narrowed, weak CEQA guidelines were put in place, lot splits could be granted easily, "minor" variances could be granted over the counter; etc., etc. ad nauseam. The City's planning department prophetically was renamed Development Services Department. He even proclaimed in a public hearing "density is good for the city." Nobody ever slowed him down one bit, or called into question the long term effects of this kind of policy. It was never mentioned that he might not have a mandate. He acted as if he did have a mandate and the council still conducts itself under his guidance. The reality is that there is now enough popular support to take the BIA out of Sierra Madre and I urge the council members to do so immediately and reclaim our small town. As Joy Louise Harte-Smith said just before her death, this place looks like Disneyland.

Respectfully submitted, name withheld upon request



Time For A New Measure

By Rich Johnson

Thank God the election is over and done with. Now we can all sit back, relax, and get to the traditional American pastime: Litigation. Time to let the courts decide Measure V.

Modern politics, especially when it comes to measures and propositions, has become a two-step process. The first step is where we sit around and decide who hired the best public relations people. And the second step is where we let a judge sit around and decide who hired the best lawyers. "My lawyer can beat up your lawyer."

I think it's time we organize our city by scheduling political skirmishes way out in advance. I'm sure there are several good ideas we could run with. I have one. I think it's about time we put speed bumps on Sierra Madre Blvd. between Sunnyside and Canon. Don't you?

A few months ago I was minding my own business driving up Baldwin to Starbucks when a bicyclist comes sailing through the intersection at Sierra Madre Blvd. and plows right into my front bumper. He really hurt ... my feelings. What's more he dinged my car. What happened to him? Thank goodness he had a helmet.

Speed bumps would help curb the reckless activities of rogue bicyclists. Come to think of it, we should also limit gang cycling. Have you been on our main

thoroughfares on the weekends? Out-of-town bicyclists need to be restricted to traveling in packs no bigger than 3. And let's put a toll booth at the corner of Sierra Madre Blvd and Mountain Trail. Yeah, that's it. Charge 'em. Generate revenue while simultaneously limiting unrestricted access to our streets. And let's ban those stupid colorful tight's bicyclists wear. They're indecent especially when guys wear them. We can rent out overcoats and ponchos at the toll booth. Big Bucks.

Just how long will it be before Martin Scorsese or Quentin Tarantino hear about our "cycling problem"? The next thing we know Sierra Madre's image will be tarnished by yet another blood and guts exploitation movie about a small town terrorized by punk cyclists. After fifty years we're just now getting over the unfair reputation of having aliens take over our bodies.

But that's just one idea. I'm sure you have one or two. I'd like to hear from you. Please email me with yours. The more half-baked the better. I'll list them in next week's column. Please let me know if you want credit for it. Write to me at Rich@versatape.com.

Finally an update on the Cumquat Kid: I'm working with him. I think there is hope and he can be rehabilitated. I've just about got him to the point where he will make a few sincere and earnest apologies... to every resident of Sierra Madre. It's a great day in America when a poor, pathetic, reprobate like the Cumquat Kid can make one teeny baby step out of his downward spiraling quagmire of a misguided existence.

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Another Day, Another Deadline, PUSD Puts Charter School Off Once Again - Lawsuit Follows

By Dean Lee

Pat Huff was so mad she walked out of Tuesday night's PUSD meeting in the middle of public comment saying she could not even speak. Huff, a Rhythms of the Village board member and one of the few people there on behalf of the school, said outside she thought the PUSD did not care that they had just filed a lawsuit against the PUSD for violating state law.

"They did not even mention that, or the possibility of locating at the vacant Armory building on Fair Oaks," Huff said. "How do we know what they want?"

In a letter drafted by the Law Offices of Spector, Middleton, Young & Minney on behalf of Rhymes of the Villages they threaten that the district "must provide the Charter School with a written preliminary and final offer of reasonably equivalent facilities in accordance with Proposition 39 and its implementing regulations by no later than April 24, 2007."

Something the district on Tuesday failed to do.

Prop. 39 was passed by voters in 2000. The letter also outlines the legal significance with rejection of numerous other locations for the school, one of which was the original Linda Vista site now being offered to All Saints Children's Center. According to board member Ed Honowitz the Children's Center was a better fit saying they did not did need to use the entire site something Rhymes would have to do.

Education Code Section 47614 which allow "a school district to lease/rent its facilities only allow a school district to do so if the facilities are 'surplus' (i.e., the facilities are not needed to house and educate in-district students)," the letter reads also adding the district cannot determine if facilities are surplus or can be leased to the Children's Center.

Honowitz is also named in the letter saying the PUSD was considering co-locating Rhythms on the former Edison Elementary site with Nia Charter School or at John Muir High School. The law firm said both options are counter productive to the schools educational goals. Nia staff said they were strongly opposed to sharing facilities. So much so the idea was referred to as, "pinning two pit bulls together."

The PUSD further tied their own hands by voting in March to place Nia along with two

other Charter schools as "preferred occupants," something that would now have to be amended.

Blair IB Magnet School was not mentioned in the letter although Tuesday night's original sudden plan was to offer space at Blair using empty bungalows on the school's north village. The idea was scrapped after Superintendent Edwin Diaz said the PUSD failed to understand the use of the buildings.

Diaz apologized for the lack of understanding saying "What ended up happening caught the Blair community off guard."

Diaz said at the time the PUSD charter school sub-committee saw little impact on Blair but the school's principal Rich Boccia earlier said they saw a projected growth to 1,400 students through next year. Diaz further said more portables would then have to be used with a cost of \$500,000.

Boccia said over 100 people had come out in support of his school and the issue was not whether they wanted the charter school there but the actual notification process. He said they were none.

"If you're dating someone you want to get to know them, right?" he said, "So you don't just suddenly marry them. What we are asking for is time. That's it. That's what we came here for tonight."

Everyone at the meeting said they thought moving the final decision of placement off again until May 3 and using Tuesday's meeting for public comment was a good idea, everyone except Rhymes of the Village.

Huff blatantly said she thought the board offered them Blair so they would refuse, buying them time, but said at this point they were willing to accept anything. The Board never asked.

Huff said legally they asked for "reasonably equivalent" space at 965 N Fair Oaks Ave, the vacated Armory Northwest Gallery, "We would be happy with that," she said Board member Prentice Deadrick said the district did not own the Armory building and there for could not offer it although Rhymes said its owned by the city and easy enough to work out. Diaz said he would continue working along with district staff until a solution was found.

"We have been very patient up until now," Huff said. "This is a school sponsored by Bill Gates. He wants to see the future education of our children and they want us to have to give back Bill Gate's money."



Parents, Educators, and concerned citizens listen to PUSD Board intently.

Photo by Danny



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626-797-0204
Lisa Feldman Head of School

Auditions

The Theater Arts Committee of First United Methodist Church in Pasadena, announces auditions for its summer youth musical program. The production, Cole Porter's "Anything Goes," will be held at 9:30 a.m. on May 19. Bring a song to sing, if you are interested in any solo work. All youth entering grade 7 through first year college are welcome to participate regardless of audition.

The FUMC summer musical program has been operating free of charge for over 25 years. Students rehearse weeknights and Saturdays throughout July with the performances taking place Wednesday through Saturday in early August. Young people are encouraged to participate and bring friends.

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YOUTH Needed to Serve on the Community Services Commission.

Interested in local City Government? Volunteer to sit as the youth member of the Sierra Madre Community Services Commission, an advisory team to the Sierra Madre City Council. It meets once a month on the 3rd Monday at 6:30 p.m. As a member, you would serve as a communication link between the community, City Council and the Community and Personnel Services Director regarding recreation and community service items. Serving as a youth commissioner is a one year commitment from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. Work on the City's Youth Master Plan. For more information, please contact Michelle Keith at the Community & Personnel Services Department at 626-355-7135.

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TABLE FOR TWO by PETER DILLS



Taylor's Steak House Break The Piggy Bank

I love a good steak!! A nice bone in Porterhouse and I am truly in heaven. Where to go? There are a couple of good places in Pasadena, JJ's Steakhouse and The Arroyo Chop House come to mind. But we here at the Mt. Wilson Observer are on a budget. No freebies here, it's out of my pocket; so where did I go to find my readers an above average steak at the right price, Edwards in Rosemead. No way!! Monty's? Too inconsistent. Taylor's in La Cañada, now we talking. Taylor's originally started on 8th St. in downtown LA; Tex Taylor started the clubby namesake restaurant location over 40 years ago. The downtown location is still going strong. His son, Bruce Taylor,

has since taken over the reins and opened the second location in La Cañada. Red leather booths, full bar and veteran servers, just like the good old days.

I have to believe that no matter what a restaurant owner will tell you, that all Beef comes from pretty much the same purveyor. Newport Meat Company seems to be the top choice. Some owners may brag that they buy the top 2% of the cow. So going on my theory, I rank Taylor's right there with the best of them. Prices, even with a late increase, are still very reasonable. It is accepted now that the entrees are a la carte at the high end steakhouses; Taylor's still offers a dinner salad with each entrée. Go for the Molly Salad - it's a wedge of lettuce with tomatoes, onions and bleu cheese dressing, it's the best in town. Yes, I said the best in town.

The menu includes starters such as a Chilled Jumbo Shrimp Cocktail for \$12.75. Weekday specials, Monday through Sunday include Baby Back Ribs, Sand Dabs, and a Roast Rack of Lamb. Prices range from \$15.95 to \$29.95 for the Filet Mignon Bordelaise. The regular menu features all prime and choice cuts including Prime Rib (dinner cut for \$24.95 or full for \$27.95), The Coulet (two cuts per cow) \$28.95, New York Cut \$28.95 and a free range chicken for \$17.95.

On our last visit I ordered the Boneless Rib Eye for \$26.95 and had the Deep Dish Apple Pie for dessert.

*** Three and a half stars

Reservations are suggested, open for Lunch and Dinner, Full Bar
Taylor's Steakhouse 901 Foothill Blvd. La Canada (818) 790-7668
Log onto www.taylorsteakhouse.com for complete menu and prices

The Rating Criteria:

****By train or plane I would find a way to get to this restaurant

***I would drive anywhere in the city to get to this restaurant

**If I am in the neighborhood I would go to this restaurant

*If I got a flat tire in front of this restaurant, I might go inside

Watch Peter Dills every Sunday Night at 8 PM on KJLA TV...

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e-mail Peter at chilipete@aol.com



What's New For You At www.mtwilsonobserver.com

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Foliage On Other Planets May Not Be Green



Photo by Jean Boenish

Yellow, orange, or red foliage? On Planet Earth, we associate these colors with autumn leaves that are about to drop off. But on Earth-sized worlds around other stars, these could be the natural colors of trees, plants, and grass. It all depends, say scientists at Caltech's Virtual Planetary Laboratory, on the color of the star the planet orbits and the stuff that makes up the planet's atmosphere. In two papers for the journal *Astrobiology*, the Caltech researchers announced results from a series of computer models designed to explore the possibilities of photosynthesis under a variety of conditions and thus help guide the future search for plant life on other worlds.

Lead author Nancy Kiang, a biometeorologist at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies and currently a visitor at Caltech's Spitzer Science Center, points out that determining the range of possible foliage colors is important because scientists need to know what to look for when they begin getting spectra of light from faraway Earth-sized planets.

"The dominant color of photosynthesis could be yellow, or orange, or maybe red," Kiang explains. "I think it is unlikely that anything will be blue—and, of course, green plants are also a possibility, since that's what we have here."

"What makes this study unusual is the highly interdisciplinary method by which planetary scientists, atmospheric scientists, biologists, and others have pooled their efforts in modeling the possible spectra," notes Vikki Meadows, an astrobiologist at Caltech and lead scientist of the Virtual Planetary Laboratory. "No single astronomer or biologist or atmospheric scientist could

have attacked this problem individually to get the simulation."

The researchers focused on the way plants use light for energy to produce sugar—which is pretty much the definition of photosynthesis—because photosynthetic pigments must be adapted to the available light spectrum. The amount of light available in a particular color, or portion of the spectrum, is a key factor. On Earth, plants absorb blue light because it is energetic, and red light because light in that wavelength is plentiful. There is more than enough energy available from the blue and red in sunlight, so plants do not really need more. Therefore they reflect away relatively more green light—which is why plants appear green to us.

A planet orbiting a star with the size and temperature (and therefore color) roughly like our sun, and with Earth's particular mix of oxygen and other gases, would tend to have plant life that soaks up more of the red and blue light and less of the green, therefore having green-appearing vegetation. But the situation could be different on other planets whose parent stars are of different sizes, temperatures, and colors. There, a color like red, for example, might not be so useful to the plant life, and the plants might reflect the red light—thus appearing to observers as mostly red.

Meadows believes her team has developed a powerful tool for use in looking for life on other worlds. "We once thought that planets around other stars were exceedingly rare," she adds. "But every time telescopes have gotten better, we've been able to find more and more Jupiter-sized planets. So there's no reason to think that there aren't a huge number of Earth-sized planets out there as well."

"We may not find anything like ourselves, but it's possible that bacterial life is prevalent on Earth-like planets," she adds. "If we have the environment for life to exist, then we think that it's likely that life will emerge in these conditions."

Meanwhile, back in California, I saw a tiny, bonsai-sized tree in someone's yard this morning that made me wonder for a moment if I was on another world. It was radiantly red—not with fall foliage either, but apparently thriving happily on Planet Earth with all-red leaves and not a bit of green anywhere. Which only goes to prove what Shakespeare said, some 400 years ago: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy, Horatio."

"You'll Wish You Had"

The Importance Of Backups

Paul the Cyberian

Have you ever done something that you consider stupid? Most of us have when we honestly think about it. The truly special stupid events happen in slow-motion and we get the best seat in the house as we watch ourselves on instant replay. And, there is nothing in the world that feels as bad as we feel when we realize how powerless we are to change the outcome.

One such example is the 'locking-away-of-the-keys.' Whether we lock them in the house or in the car, that moment of cognitive dissonance that happens when we slowly come to our senses two seconds too late is the stuff of high-comedy. When the deed has reached its conclusion the thought that puts it all in perspective taps us on the shoulder: I knew better than that.

Such incidences frequently plague us through our computers. We don't lock our keys in the car, but we do engage in similar behavior despite the fact that computing these days is far less precarious when it comes to data preservation than it used to be. We now have more ways to protect important data. We can set programs to automatically save the document or spreadsheet as we work on it to lessen the danger of having to do a lot of typing all over again or losing entire files forever. Basically, we have everything we need at our fingertips to 'save' ourselves. But true to form, our enigmatic machines, with our unwitting assistance, have the power to foil any failsafe device set before it in a seeming conspiracy to make us cry.

A good friend of mine was typing an important document that had the potential to boost her career if delivered on time and in good order, or seriously hurt the same career if not delivered on time and in good order. The prep work was done and she was applying the finishing touches to her masterpiece. And then my phone rang. After she stopped sobbing long enough to explain what

happened, I didn't need to ask if she had any backups available.

I rushed over and applied every trick that I knew or had even heard of but it was to no avail. The evil computer had won. Her eyes had that same glazed look of 'I knew better than that.'

They looked identical to mine the last time I locked my keys in the car.

Please take this story as a lesson in the importance of backing up your computer data. This includes documents, pictures, music and any other hard to replace things you store on your computer. The simplest way to accomplish this is to regularly copy the data to a CD or DVD for offline storage. All modern versions of Windows and Mac OS's come with a backup utility to facilitate this for you.

In short, if it's important to you, make sure you have a good backup on hand just in case the worst happens.

Trust me. The time will come that you will really wish you had.



BiblioFile

with Jeff Brown

Opening Day: The Story of Jackie Robinson's First Season

By Jonathan Eig

Jonathan Eig, author of the popular *Luckiest Man* (2005), a biography of Lou Gehrig, writes about another great American baseball player, Jackie Robinson, and chronicles his first major-league season (1947) with the Brooklyn Dodgers and the impact it had on the whole country. There is lots of action and detail in this well written historical book.

In *Opening Day*, Levy states, "Sixty years ago there was a blue sky and a soft breeze, a perfect day for the first day of the baseball season. Jackie Robinson trotted out to the field and took his position at first base. As he is the first African American in the major leagues all eyes were on him. The first batter for the Boston Braves slapped a ground ball to third base, Dodger third baseman Spider Jorgenson scooped it up and tossed it to Robinson in time for the out. It was now official, Major League Baseball was integrated."

On opening day, reactions were mixed. The stands were 3/5 full of black fans and 6,000 seats were empty as many white fans refused to come. The black papers were filled with stories that day and the white media virtually ignored the historic event.

Jackie Robinson was not the most talented black player in America at that time but Branch Rickey picked him because he was very intelligent, competitive and strong in that he felt Robinson could stand up to the scrutiny and racism from the fans, players and media and show the country that black players were here to stay. There was a concerted effort to quickly drum him out of the game. Some players wouldn't play with him, other teams taunted the Dodgers. He started slow that season but later took off with powerful hitting and base running. He led the league in stolen bases, had a .295 batting average and helped put the previous losing Dodgers in first place as well as all the way to the World Series against the Yankees. He won not only the game but also his teammates and the fans. His wife

Rachel one of the real heroes who was his rock through it all. One of the book's best parts is how well he explains just how much Robinson meant to Black America. Robinson's first season was years before the Montgomery Bus Boycott and Brown versus Board of Education. Eig explains how revolutionary it was for Black people to have one of their men to be able to simply slide into the leg of a white man in public in the famous national game, and not only not be jailed, but be hailed as a hero!

Eig draws on extensive interviews with sportswriters, eyewitnesses, and surviving players, as well as newly discovered archival material from around the country. He presents a great, thorough portrait of a tough competitor who embodied integration's promise and helped begin the modern civil rights era. The author also discusses the role of influential individuals such as Branch Rickey, Leo "The Lip" Durocher, Pee Wee Reese, and many others in this wonderful story.

On why he wrote the book Eig states, "I felt that we have been hearing the myths rather than the truth and I wanted to strip back the mythology that has come to surround Robinson and look at exactly what happened and crystallize his story into one season so you could really see his impact on America. The book is filled with stories of people whose lives were changed, not sixty years later, but in the moment in that season when they saw Robinson hit the ball." Enjoy!



Also coming up is the 12th Annual Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, the country's largest celebration of the written word at UCLA main campus. Tickets are sold at Ticketmaster. Saturday, April 28 • 10 am to 6 pm Sunday, April 29 • 10 am to 5 pm

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Story and Photos By Chris Bertrand
Artist and Designer Jana Cervenka

Jana Cervenka fine tunes the placement of 1200 tiles
for a public art project in North Hollywood



Jana (at back) with tile mural

On my way to meet this self-professed installation artist with a huge love for the ceramic tile medium, I knew I had to be in the right place. The address, beautifully imprinted into a wonderful tile at the edge of the driveway, offered but a small clue to the ceramic and other treasures in Jana Cervenka's home.

We wander past a garden gate and home doors harvested from the demolition of the original Mater Dolorosa retreat house. Nothing would dare exist as merely functional here. It seems each piece has a history about how it came to its present use.

Fenestration allows air, light and color to filter through the fence.

Tiles in the yard's centerpiece fountain were once test-fired samples for another artist's project, now combined to form the color palette of water's many moods. Norman slabs, turn of the century art glass produced in England find another life in a sidelight window at the front door. A fence by Jana cannot merely separate homes; this one reflects the outdoor walls of Europe, keeping the space mostly private, perforated with beautiful fenestration - translation: windows, to allow air, light and color to circulate, through these portholes. The inspired walls, mosaics and natural stone work of mason Joe Lopez, is that of an old world artisan, only one of many projects they collaborate on at her home



Jana pointing to cutout of tile

and in the public eye.

She sees herself as a designer of three dimensional art, be it a floor, a garden, a bath, a public art project or merely an outdoor barbecue surround. She has that ability to take vision to reality, collaborating especially with contractor/artist Ken Smith, artists, artisans, and most of all, with her clients. She comments that the best solutions come from careful listening and collaboration, and only then applying the creative juices to the project.

As Cervenka chats about her favorite projects, public, private and personal, we peek into a room with pale and deep-colored terracotta patterned floors, custom cut into a dizzying yet cohesive abstract art piece. Another room takes different styles and cuts of

tile to simulate water flowing out of the shower into the room, and onto the stairs. The tile surfaces around the built-in barbecue grill form an intricate jigsaw puzzle of outline-cut shapes, a current favorite presentation. She learned this labor intensive, time-consuming process slowly and painfully, using a wet saw to cut circular and irregular shapes, with help from Brazilian artisans Fabio Ferreira and Carlos Doria, to hone the steps involved to create each piece.

Cervenka hand cuts the intricate shapes, forming an intricate, grouted jigsaw puzzle of tile and stone. She stresses the importance and synergy of coordinating a complementary relationship between the color and texture of plants with the tile work, exemplified in a recently completed project revamping the courtyard, gardens and foyer of a 1920's 4-plex in the



Fenestration Fence

Fairfax area of Los Angeles. Cervenka now eagerly awaits the next step in a long-winded public art mural project at North Hollywood's Strathern School. Cervenka and ceramicist, Marcella Ciszewski designed and implemented the huge project in collaboration with Strathern teacher, Whiteley. They taught second grade artists to capture themes from The Hungry Caterpillar, affixing them to the dimensional art of 1200 painted and fired tiles. The project grew and grew, evolving from a much smaller scale venture into the whimsical, 16-foot mural it will be, as soon as construction work around it is completed at the school.

Teachers will be able to use the murals as writing prompts and colorful visualization. The children learned much about the transformation of glazes after firing, turning various shades of dusty pink into a myriad of bold colors, and more about the concept of layering subjects within a tile, creating depth in two dimensions. For now, as she awaits permission for mason Joe Lopez to install this final chapter in the project, she stores the mural on immense boards, supported by sawhorses and tarped against the elements. This allows her to fine tune the placement of each tile, so that color, texture and theme flows seamlessly. Just as the ideas and dreams flow from Jana Cervenka to her finished projects. Though that which appears seamless is really the result of serendipitous accidents, careful planning, collaboration, inspiration and lots of hard work.

Jana Cervenka can be contacted at CervenkaDesigns@Yahoo.com 626-836-3706

Have an interesting idea for a story? Please contact Chris Bertrand at C.Bertrand@TheMtWilsonObserver.com

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

By Pat Birdsall

Sleep Tight...

The other evening I had the television on more for the background noise it provided than anything else, while I worked on a project. Then I heard it. "It" was an ad for a sleep inducing product that promised the viewer a slumber-filled night, but of course, in this litigious society, they had to list the side effects. The warnings included, "may cause drowsiness." HELLO! Isn't that the point?

I have a similar product in my medicine cabinet so I went to get it and read the entire list of ingredients and warnings. Good grief! You have your active ingredient Diphenhydramine HCl and your non-active ingredients: carnauba wax, cellulose, croscarmellose sodium, dibasic calcium phosphate, titanium dioxide, to name a few.

We now move on to the "Warnings" portion...Again, "drowsiness may occur," and "do not drive a motor vehicle or operate heavy machinery," as if... Finally, "If sleeplessness persists, stop use as insomnia may be a symptom of serious underlying medical illness." Quite frankly, just reading the back

of the box would give one pause and make for a sleepless night or two. Aren't we just a trusting group of folks! I don't think any one of us, unless possibly those of you who are chemists or physicians, would pick up a package of Diphenhydramine HCl, and say, "Gee, I think I'll take a couple of these." Obviously, the commercials and the packaging picturing the moon, stars, clouds, and occasionally, even a few sheep jumping over a fence, divert our attention from what we would actually be ingesting.

Instead of pills, I have a sure-fire cure for insomnia. Maybe I shouldn't just give it away.

Well, Okay... Get a tape recording of Shaquille O'Neal reciting in that perfect monotone of his, Einstein's Theory of Relativity. If that's not handy, just rent any Kevin Costner film. Gosh, just writing this last paragraph has me yawning and ready to catch some zzz's, but yikes, it's only 4:00 in the afternoon!

Sweet dreams...

CRYPTOGRAM- Answer for last week's Cryptogram

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Mary Jane

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SPORTS

Larry Hom's

NewsFlash From the Field:

'Cats and Spikes Tie 5-5

Playing without their ace pitcher for a third game, the 12-Under "Sugar And Spikes" avenged a lopsided defeat from earlier in the season, and salvaged a tie with the second place 12U "Diamond Cats" in Sierra Madre Girls Softball action at the LDS Church field in Pasadena on April 14th.

Starting at pitcher for the first time ever, Meaghan Allen earned the complete game victory for the 'Spikes, striking out five. Allen stole home in the first inning, and teamed with Angela Gevrikyan to score all five of their team's runs. Shortstop Gracie Gaspara had three RBI and catcher Haley Austin drove in the only other run.

'Cats pitcher Toria Baltazar put in another solid performance, striking out 14, and scoring two runs. Additional runs were scored by Arianna Haft, Jordan Harris and Devny Osuna. Shortstop Claire Fitzgerald doubled for two RBI, and catcher Katrina Palffy sparked a late-inning 'Cats rally with a triple that knocked in the tying run.

The game was close throughout, with many lead changes. In an exciting final inning, Jessica Vargas of the Diamond Cats led off with a single, and stole two bases, putting the potential game-winning run at third base, only sixty feet away, but Allen struck out the final 'Cats batter to end the game, and preserve the tie.

'Ribbets Hand B-52s its First Loss

Pitcher Karlie Buller scattered nine hits and catcher Mia Hernandez doubled twice to drive in four runs as the 12-Under Rockin' Ribbets defeated the previously unbeaten B-52s in Sierra Madre Girls Softball action at the Sierra Madre School Upper Campus last Saturday.

Consistent defense by the "Ribbets repeatedly stifled B-52s run-scoring threats. Gian Ryan, Ashley Meechan, Lindsey Arnett and Sammy Jo Cox anchored the right side of the infield on one play after another. Buller also played flawless defense in the circle.

The B-52's offense was led by Marissa Melendez with two hits, including a triple, Shelby Dreyes with two base hits, McKay Weiler with a single and a double, Rachel Albright with a triple and a run scored, and Brooke Jones, who scored twice. The B-52s attempted to rally in the late innings, but Buller retired the side in order in the bottom of the seventh to secure the win.

Photos By Lynda Ott-Albright



Ashley Meechan, of the 12U Rockin' Ribbets braces herself on second



McKay Weiler of the 12U B-52s beats the tag of the Rockin' Ribbets' Lynda Carrera, at 2nd.



Mia Hernandez slams another 2-run double, bringing Ashley home in a 6-4 win over the undefeated 12U B-52s.

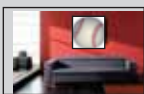


12U Diamond Cat's Katrina Palffy (above) pops one into the infield against Sugar 'n Spikes.

(Right) 12U Sugar 'n Spikes Meaghan Allen delivers a pitch against the Diamond Cats in what ended as a 5-5 tie.



12U Diamond Cat's Claire Fitzgerald (#10) races for home as Sugar 'n Spikes Angela Gevrikyan (#5) fields the ball at third.



View From The Couch

By Stanley J. Forrester

Places Called Home

I was reading the Los Angeles Times on Tuesday and saw a quote attributed to the New York Yankees' short stop Derek Jeter. When told that the new ballpark of the Minnesota Twins' scheduled to open in 2010 would not have a roof he said, "What are they thinking? They're kidding right?" Jeter must have been thinking about the games that the California Angels and the Cleveland Indians played in Milwaukee the first of April, due to that snow storm in Cleveland.

The changing faces of ballparks are unbelievable. The Astrodome, built in 1965 was the original ballpark with a roof. It was called one of the wonders of the world. It is no longer in use having been replaced in 2000 with Minute Maid Park. Not only has the Astrodome been replaced, its' successor is sporting what is another new phenomenon. It bears the name of a corporate sponsor,

Minute Maid, instead of the name of the hometown or the hometown team. San Francisco's Candlestick Park was replaced with the Pacific Bell Ball Park which is now, thanks to corporate takeovers, AT&T Ballpark.

Our own beloved Dodger stadium, built in 1962 is one of the older ballparks still around.

That is a sad fact. The older stadiums had charm and character which most of the new parks lack. The one exception is the Baltimore Orioles Park at Camden Yards. Though relatively new, (1992) it has all the characteristics of an older field.

This weekend I was watching the Yankees and the Bo Sox's. They were playing in Boston at Fenway Park (originally built in 1912; renovated in 1934). Now that's a field with character, the Green Monster, the closeness of the fans, and the corners make for some unusual plays. These irregular parks require your full attention, because something different could occur on any given ball hit.

Going to a baseball game in Chicago is also a guaranteed old-fashioned good time. Wrigley Field (1914) with its ivy covered walls, is unique and the surrounding area is as much of the experience as attending the games. Announcer Vince Scully called it "the friendly confines of Wrigley Field."

Yankee Stadium, the third oldest major league baseball stadium (1923 - closed in 1973, reopened in 1976) is about to be replaced. The new stadium is scheduled to open in 2009. Although it will be housed right across the street from the original ballpark, when it opens, a large part of baseball history will be lost. On opening day 2009, the Yankees will no longer be playing in "the house that Ruth built."

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