



REMEMBER: ALL Fireworks In Sierra Madre Are Illegal

THE MT. WILSON OBSERVER

A DEUXAMIS PUBLICATION

WHERE YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS COMES FIRST

Friday, June 29 - July 5, 2007 Volume 2, No. 26

Volunteers Behind The Scenes Council Appoints New Commissioners

By Susan Henderson

One of the factors that assisted Sierra Madre in clinching the All America City title is the extraordinary level of volunteerism in the city. Thousands of hours are given to the community by citizens from a wide variety of backgrounds through their service on commissions.

Reappointments
Community Arts Commission
Barbara Wamboldt
Library Board of Trustees
Pat Hall
Tree Advisory
Nan Kaeser

New Appointments

Community Arts
Lisa Spagai Perez
Erica Blodgett
Dave Culwell
Community Services
Kelly Hartman (Youth)
Natasha Green
Jennifer Jukie
Planning
William Pepsner
Senior
Alice Hultsman
William Robinson

Commissioners assist with research, planning and development of programs and ideas to help maintain the character and efficient operation of the town. They also help resolve very challenging, difficult and often controversial problems.

Sierra Madre has six commissions:

Arts: The Art Commission promotes the community's interest, appreciation and participation in the arts.

Community Services: Provides oversight of the city's parks and recreation programs including the facilities.

Library Board of Trustees: Provides

oversight on all library policies, programs and finances. **Planning:** Monitors land use issues such as conditional use permits, tract maps, variances, and appeals of staff land-use decisions. **Senior Commission:** This commission attends to the needs of Sierra Madre's senior population including identifying resources and coordinating activities. They also serve as advocates for senior issues to the council.

Tree Advisory - The Tree Commission works closely with city staff including the Director of Public Works in making recommendations on the preservation and care of all city own trees and trees in undeveloped areas.

At the meeting, Councilman Watts thanked all applicants and asked that those not chosen continue seeking appointment in other areas. "Don't feel slighted," said Watts. "We had many fine applicants and making decisions was very tough." Former Mayor John Buchanan agreed and noted that when he first applied for a commission a few years ago, his application was turned down.

There are still several unfilled vacancies on the Tree Commission. A search of applicants who applied to other commissions and were not chosen will be made to see if those vacancies can be filled.

For a complete list of all commissioners and their responsibilities visit the cities website at: www.cityofsierramadre.com



Don't Forget To Get Your 4th of July T-shirt features Centennial Theme
The shirts include a banner with "All-America City"
4th of July T-shirts cost \$18 each, and are now available at The Bottle Shop in downtown Sierra Madre. Proceeds from shirt sales help pay for the 4th of July Parade and other Independence Day festivities in our town.
Contact: Hank Landsberg 626-355-3656

The Good Ole' Days: The Roess Family Strolls Down Memory Lane



The daughters, daughter in law and granddaughters of Mary and David Roess, owners of the old Sierra Madre Roess' Market, came to town last week to participate in the Sierra Madre Historical Society's Oral History project. The Roess family lived here from 1938 - 1984 on Highland Avenue and maintained their market at the corner of Lima and Sierra Madre Blvd. Their trip included lunch at The Only Place In Town and a view of the old family home which is currently on the market again. In town for the project were Granddaughter Michaela Nunn of Santa Barbara, Daughter in Law Patty (Fred) Roess, Capistrano, Granddaughter Kaitlin Nunn, and daughters Joy Roess Van Wickle - Santa Barbara, Ruth Roess of Valencia. Joining the family are long time family friends Georgina "Snooky" Greger, Marjorie "Mama Pete" Peterson and Joanne Walters, Carmen Walters, Julie Walters. Brother Fred Roess was unable to make the trip. Brother Frederic passed away in October, 2000. -Photo by Susan Henderson

City Council Update

The Sierra Madre City Council met on Tuesday with a full council present. Absent was Interim City Manager Don Hopper. Bruce Inman, Director of Public Works, sat in for Hopper. The meeting was convened following a day of interviews by the council for a new city manager. Mayor Joffe indicated that a decision and announcement would be made soon.

The Hillside Management Zone Environmental Impact Report was pulled from the agenda by the Mayor, citing insufficient time to review the contents of the report. The matter will be on the next council agenda.

Citizens Speak Out Against Adult Businesses

During community communications, Sierra Madre resident and father, John Carter, expressed outrage over the soliciting of young women to participate in an adult web site by someone identified as Jim Snider. Carter produced email exchange between a young woman named 'Selma Ritter' and Snider which discusses the production of the site, in Sierra Madre. Carter asked the council to look into the matter. Mayor Joffe then asked city attorney Sandra Levin to review the Adult Business Ordinances and see if they were adequate. Ms. Levin agreed to report back to the council on what is currently in the code for possible amendment. Resident Faye Angus, who has been victimized by Snider on his web site in the past also expressed concerns. "The council would be well advised to make a statement" against (cont. pg. 10)

Protect Your Friends This Week



Brenden, Katie McKiernan show off their pets with sister Gracie.

In our exuberance to celebrate the country's independence, we often create situations that put our friends in danger. Dogs and cats often become frightened and end up in the pound during the 4th of July holiday because of the sound of fireworks. In the photo on the right, with Pasadena Humane Society spokesperson Ricky Whitman, is an adoptable dog wearing his patriotic attire. Below, two Sierra Madre pooches, Phoebe and Annie, discuss their upcoming plans. More stories and pics inside.



Photo by Daniel Bellis;
Photo below by Susan Henderson



INSIDE THIS WEEK

- 1 New Commissioners City Council
- 2 4th of July Celebrations
- 3 NEW: Coffee with Joffe
- 4 Fire Safety Tips SMEAC
- 5 OBSERVER PASADENA
- 6 Opinions
- 7 East Side/West Side Clymer's Close Encounters
- 8 Trisha's Truth PUSD
- 9 Peter Dills Table For Two
- 10 TechKnowledge Unsung Heroes
- 11 One Of A Kind Bird's Eye View
- 12 MSG Tournaments

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Weather Wise

5-Day Forecast for Sierra Madre, Ca.
Longitude W118.0, Latitude N34.2



Friday:	Sunny	Hi 90s	Lows 60s
Saturday:	Sunny	Hi 90s	Lows 60s
Sunday:	Sunny	Hi 90s	Lows 60s
Monday:	Sunny	Hi 90s	Lows 60s
Tuesday:	Sunny	Hi 90s	Lows 60s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service



Let's Celebrate!

Saturday, June 30, 7pm.

Foot-stompin' jazz under the stars with the Crazy Rhythm Hot Society Dance Band! This superb band plays the best hot jazz of the 1920s and 1930s! Grandma's 78s never sounded this good! The downbeat is at 7pm in the Memorial Park band shell, sponsored by the Sierra Madre Centennial Committee.

Sunday, July 1, 10am - 4pm

Band Organ Rally! Remember old-fashioned merry-go-rounds, with that big machine in the middle that plays music? That's a "band organ"! These amazing mechanical music-making machines will fill Memorial Park with marvelous melodies! Hear band organs, calliopes, music boxes, and other turn-of-the-century musical marvels.

Tuesday, July 3, 5pm - 10pm

Celebration Concert In The Park! Food booths and Beer Garden open at 5pm.

At 6pm **The Aluminum Marshmallow** returns to Sierra Madre with an all-new show! Rockin' oldies and lots of classic rock from the 60's and 70's.... and those talented brothers **The Sheds** will also play, for non-stop music till 10pm! Don't miss **The 4th Annual Bubble-Wrap "Fireworks-O-Rama"** on the dance floor...it's cheesy, but loads of fun!

Wednesday, July 4

WOMAN'S CLUB HOSTS JULY 4th PRE-PARADE OPEN HOUSE

Sierra Madre Woman's Club, for the 31st year, extends a very red, white and blue invitation to the community to attend their July 4th Pre-Parade Open House from 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. This will be held at their clubhouse, historic "Essick House", 550 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., corner of Sunnyside Ave., which is also the starting point of Sierra Madre's hometown parade which begins promptly at 10 a.m. A free light breakfast will be served to all who attend. They will also have their popular Patriotic Sing-A-Long. The club was organized 100 years ago. The festive tradition to say "Happy Birthday USA" is the first event to begin their second century.

10am...The 4th of July Parade is led by The Ward Family, our 2007 Grand Marshal in this Centennial year. E. Waldo Ward and Son has been in business in Sierra Madre since 1891!

Postal Stamp Cancellation at Memorial Park

After the parade, it's our **Community Picnic** in Memorial Park. Join the fun with games on the south lawn. More great food, fun and live music! At noon, enjoy fantastic dixieland jazz by **The Night Blooming Jazzmen**.

CIVIC CLUB'S 4TH OF JULY ACTIVITY IN THE PARK

Sierra Madre Civic Club Members, once again, will be going all out to add to the fun on July 4th in Memorial Park. Shortly after our hometown parade rolls by the very popular Games in the Park get underway, again chaired by Theresa Smith and her committee.

The club will also have a booth selling their confetti eggs, a hot sell item among the young set and always a sellout. Providing the eggs is a year long process for the group. The operation begins in their kitchens when eggs are used. Members become skillful in cutting a large hole in one end of the shell, draining the egg, then washing the shell and returning it to the carton. Cartons are collected all year long.

On egg stuffing day, before the holiday, members and anyone who can help, will gather in the cool of Jean Coleman's patio to stuff the shells with confetti. Coleman and Ann Bixel, Ways and Means Co-Chairs are in charge of the operation.

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.



SAVE THE DATE
Tuesday July 10

The Sierra Madre Kiwanis Club will present a fascinating program about falconry. Steve McNall, President and CEO of the Pasadena Humane Society, is an experienced falconer and will present the program. He will bring a falcon, talk about training the birds, and even do a few demonstrations of their capabilities. Mr. McNall has also trained owls.

The Kiwanis Club meets at noon at the Masonic Temple at 33 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. in Sierra Madre.



The public is invited; lunch is \$8 per person. Reservations are required; please contact Paul Neiby at 355-1291.



Volunteers Needed:

We will need any help you can provide to support the July 3rd & 4th Sierra Madre Parade and Community Picnic. Help will be needed in prepping 900 roses on the 3rd and selling them along the parade route on the 4th. Also, help is needed for the hamburger booth on the afternoon/evening of July 3rd and following the parade on July 4th. Please save the dates. Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Contact Bonnie Coulcher
Phone: 626-355-7005 or
sierramadrevolunteers@
yahoo.com

FREE COMPUTER CLASSES

The Sierra Madre Public

Library offers free computer classes year round to the public. If you're contemplating buying your first PC, classes are available in Basic Computer I & II, to help take the anxiety out of learning essential computer functions. Basic Internet I & II will teach you the ins-and-outs of email, and how to navigate smoothly through cyberspace. Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced levels of Word are also offered, as well as classes in Excel and Desktop Publishing.

Registration forms are available at the Library's Circulation Desk. A \$20.00 deposit per class is required when you register, which is refunded upon attendance.

The Sierra Madre Public Library is located at 440 West Sierra Madre Boulevard in Sierra Madre.

For further information, please visit the web site at www.sierramadre.lib.ca.us or call (626) 355-7186

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Farmer's Market

Every Saturday to 12:30 p.m.
B-B-Berries. Lili's herbs, honey, menudo & tamale stand. Bring the kiddies. PHS parking lot
2925 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.



Café 322

Sunday Nights
Let's Sing Opera & Broadway
Pianist Danny Guerrero & Friends
322 Sierra Madre Blvd.
Sierra Madre (626) 836-5414

Beantown

45 N. Baldwin
Time for Ice Cream
(626) 355-1596

Lucky Baldwin's

21 Kersting Court
(626) 355-1140

Mary's Market

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

Summer 2007 Concerts in the Park Series

This summer the Community and Personnel Services is offering "Spectacular Summer Sounds" a series of concerts in Memorial Park. These events, every Sunday night starting July 8th, are great for families, couples and friends! Due to high popularity last summer, the concert series are back, with a variety of music ranging from folk to rock and roll to jazz. Bring your blankets and lawn chairs as seating is on the green. Spectators are encouraged to support local organizations who will be providing refreshments. Alcohol is prohibited.

Concerts are Sunday nights from 6:00pm - 8:00pm from July 8 - August 26, 2007 at 222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Thank to all of the sponsors and the Woman's Club of Sierra Madre for sponsoring this event. The concert schedule is as follows:

July 8: The Folk Collection
Friends of the Sierra Madre Library

July 15: Cynthia and the Sweet Potatoes
Sierra Madre Volunteer Firefighters Association

July 22: Jumpin' Joz Band *
Community Services

July 29: Pecos Brother Band
Kiwanis Club

August 5: Ken O'Malley & the Twilight Lords
Civic Club

August 12: Pasadena Crown City Chorus
Centennial Committee

August 19: Elvis and the Heroes of Rock Rotary Club

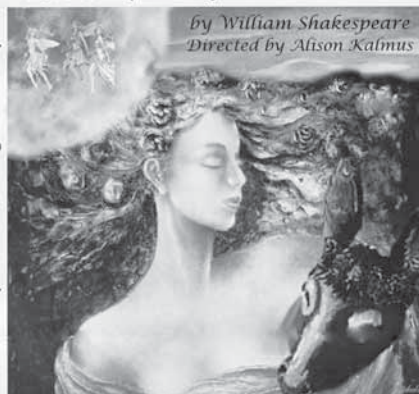
August 26: Fairytale & Fantasy III
Southern California Lyric Theater

*This concert series is sponsored by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and the Recording Industries' Music Performance Fund through the assistance of the Professional Musicians Union Local 47.
For more information, please contact the Community & Personnel Services Department at 626-355-5278

Southern California Lyric Theater
with the City of Sierra Madre presents the Inaugural Shakespeare in the Park

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Shakespeare's Classic Comedy Updated to 1958
with Doo Wop music by the SCLT Troubadours



Memorial Park Bandshell

222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd, Sierra Madre
Saturdays July 14, 21, 28, and Aug 4 at 7pm
Seating on the green. Bring blankets, lawn chairs and a picnic dinner.

Admission Free

For more information, please visit our website at www.socal-lyrictheater.org

The Wild West

With Kyle McClure

HYDROCHLOROFLOUROCARBONS!

It's funny because just the other day I was thinking to myself, "Self, whatever happened to the hole in the ozone layer?" I was pretty sure that I had heard that it was smaller. But where had I heard that? And when? Do you remember when the ozone hole was, for a while there, the number one impending environmental disaster that was most likely to kill us all? This was sometime after nuclear power plant meltdowns, but still before Global Warming became a proper noun written with capital letters. Remember everyone became all agitated and concerned about hairspray and spray-on deodorant?

Now, OK, sorry but I have to interrupt myself here. People, if it requires an end-of-the-world doomsday scenario of the ozone-hole type for a nation to become concerned about spray-on deodorant, there is something deeply, fundamentally, wrong with that nation. There is absolutely, categorically, nothing worse (from a daily hygiene perspective) that you can do to yourself than spray a freezing cold chemical into your armpits first thing in the morning (as if there is athlete's foot in there) and then wait for it to dry and come off in itchy flakes. Oh! that spray-on deodorant is nasty nasty stuff, and I (who was not old enough to vote, or care about issues beyond the design of my Lego fortress for my GI Joe anti-insurgent SWAT special forces football team) refuse to take any responsibility for the fact that you people somehow found this product to be worthy and acceptable. Shame on you. There should have been laws way before the hole in the ozone layer.

So anyway, everyone stopped using the spray-on deodorant and hairspray (and remember, this was back when hairspray mattered) because a vast hole was opening in the fragile layer of our atmosphere that protected us from strong and violent solar radiation. We were all going to die. But we didn't (not all of us), and the ozone-hole issue pretty much went away. Why, you ask, is that "funny" (see paragraph one, first sentence)? Well, it's "funny" because last week

the ozone-hole suddenly came charging back into the news - which is to say that it showed up on, like, page 94 of the New York Times and in a couple of articles written by the mysterious gnomes in the dungeon of the "Associated Press." Apparently a report issued by five American and European (no word on how many of each) scientists in the "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences" shared the finding that the dramatic cutbacks in emissions of ozone depleting gases (like hydrochloroflouorocarbons - the best science word to yell out of your car window at confused pedestrians) have been way more effective at preventing global warming than the requirements of the Kyoto Protocol, which happens to be the very agreement that was actually aimed at limiting global warming.

The Montreal Protocol, negotiated and signed in 1987 somewhere in Canada, reduced the emissions of HYDROCHLOROFLOUROCARBONS! in developed nations to such an extent that it has proven to be 5.5 times more effective than the Kyoto Protocol.

This has prompted a diplomatic crisis between Canada and Japan. Japan has banned the import of all Canadian cars and has refused to take part in any future curling meets. Canada, meanwhile, continues to reluctantly import Japanese cars, but intends to punish the cars by putting lots of salt on the roads from now on, and refuses to take part in the Japanese national pastime of baseball. Montreal has, in fact, already eliminated its team. (Goodbye Expos. Your accomplishments will never be forgotten).

Other than this friction between well-educated industrialized nations whose people eat lots of fish, the results of this whole ozone-hole report thingy are excellent news. Want to fight global warming? Don't worry your little head about carbon neutral life styles. No need to be all vegetarian and depressed. All that is really required is that you stop spraying disgusting white stuff into your armpits. Easy. It's 5.5 times more effective.

Coffee with Joffe

We Are the Champions

The loud cheering you heard coming from Anaheim on June 8th wasn't just for the Ducks victory on their way to the Stanley Cup Championship. It was the roar that greeted the announcement by the National Civic League that Sierra Madre had been selected as an All America City. After only our second application, our foothill village was recognized with what has been called the "Nobel Prize for Constructive Citizenship."

The competition included communities from Clinton, North Carolina to Lewiston, Maine.

The process started with a lengthy application that focused on three community projects. This year we highlighted the Senior Master Plan, Youth Activities Center and the community's commitment to preserving open space.

The twenty finalists participated in an intense three day event that included a presentation to a distinguished panel of judges. Winners were selected in part for their ability to engage a broad cross section of the community, including youth, business leaders, elected officials, city staff and nonprofit groups in civic dialogues leading to tangible results.

Sixty plus volunteers and city staff put their heart and soul into this event and I am proud to say



that Sierra Madre had the largest delegation at the competition. Not only did all of us make new friends from Sierra Madre, we also met engaged citizen volunteers from communities all over the country.

Why do we care about the All American City designation? After all, we know what a great community we have. And we certainly aren't trying to attract chain businesses or big box retailers. For me, it was a matter of civic pride. After all the heated debate about Measure V and the discouraging news about the city budget, it was heartwarming to see our young people, City Council members, city staff and dozens of volunteers come together and work so hard to achieve a goal.

The achievement of being designated an All America City is just the beginning. It provides a golden opportunity for us to showcase what Sierra Madre is all about. The All America City Award is a confirmation that, no matter how difficult the issues and how divisive the debate, we can come together as a community with a common purpose and WIN!

Keeping Pets Safe

By Dean Lee

The Pasadena Humane Society advised this week against taking pets to any of this year's 4th of July festivities including the Sierra Madre parade, The Rose Bowl's AmericaFest, or even the park to see fireworks. The 24 hours after Independence Day becomes the Humane Society's busiest time of the year.

"Leave them at home," said Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA spokesperson Ricky Whitman, "After the fireworks our officers will go around picking up dogs and other animals."

Whitman also said that even the more aggressive dogs can become scared and agitated when they are someplace they don't know. All of their animal control officers will be on patrol July 4 and 5. They will also get extra help from surrounding areas. "I'm not sure how many more officers we will have but every year we get a lot more," she said.

Sierra Madre city staff said the Pasadena Humane Society had also requested a list of all registered dogs in the city and animal owners can now be contacted directly by the Humane Society regarding a runaway pet. Whitman said she was unaware of the list but said she thought it was great. Whitman said having tags on the dog was critical in returning lost pets. She also advised micro-chipping something also required by State law.

"It puts a small chip about the size of a grain of rice in the shoulder blade of the animal," she said. "They can be easily tracked with a computer that way."

Police Chief Marilyn Diaz said police are asking people not to call their local department if animals run away or if they see wild animals. She said they should call the Pasadena Humane Society 626-792-7151. Although Diaz said, "If you think your animal has been abducted or any other crime has been committed in the process of the animal going missing, then yes, call us." You can also visit 761 S. Raymond

Avenue in Pasadena. Whitman said. The Pasadena Humane Society office will be closed on July 4 but will open at 7:30 a.m. on July 5 to reunite pets with their owners she said although, animal Control officers do respond to animal emergencies 24 hours a day, 7 days a week she added.



Here is a list of five easy things to do in keeping a pet safe.

- Keep your pet inside during Fourth of July celebrations. Many cats and dogs are frightened



by the loud noises of fireworks and will be happier safely confined at home. To add to your pet's comfort, play a radio to diffuse the loud sounds of fireworks.

- Make certain that your pet's identification is current. Update your pet's microchip information if necessary. A visible form of identification is the easiest way to ensure that your pet can be returned home to you.

- If you think your pet may become extremely agitated or stressed, consult your veterinarian and discuss the possibility of sedatives or overnight boarding. You may wish to call an animal behavior specialist to work with your pet, but do that well in advance.

- If your dog runs away, search the kennels of the shelter closest to you. Many shelters post photos of the animals that come into their facility on their web site. PHS web site, www.phsspa.org, is updated hourly so that lost animals may be quickly reunited with their lost owners. Post signs and call neighboring shelters for the next month.

Dogs can run farther than we imagine when they are badly frightened.

- If your cat is lost, it may stay in hiding for several days or weeks, so put plenty of food and fresh water outside your door. (Pick it up at night so you don't attract unwanted wild animals) Post signs and check your local and neighboring shelters in person and on line; your description of your pet may fit several animals in the shelter.

Diaz also asked that Independence Day/City Centennial parade goers do not throw hard candy, bring water guns, silly string, or anything else that might be considered unsafe.

"Our concern is that kids can get hurt trying to get the candy or cars get damaged," she said. "We have had complaints that silly string or even the water ruins the paint on these unique antique automobiles."

Note: At this week's meeting, council member Don Watts announced this year's city dog licensing reminder. All licenses expire June 30th. Dog licensing is done through city hall and anyone needing to do so should call 818-355-7135. Both city staff and the Humane Society assured pet owners their animals would be taken care of regardless of the licensing status.



Fun - Sierra Madre Style



Glen Springer and Kia Raab enjoy a few visiting friends at last week's Summer Solstice in Bailey Canyon. The event was so successful that there are plans for another in August.



Dane Lenton, Elva Johnson and George Grijalva have a good laugh while collecting tickets for Saturday's Film Fest.



Ben Martin, Camille Bent, and Judy Webb Martin get ready for a little croquet at the Centennial Lawn Party

-Photos by Susan Henderson

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ARMED RESPONSE

Fire Safe Council TIP OF THE WEEK

From Caroline Brown

July 9, will be the next Fire Safe Council meeting, at 7 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. We will be organizing volunteers to work with the Fire Marshall for the Red Flag Fire Patrol. As you may have noticed, Bailey Canyon gates have been closed recently when there were Red Flag Alerts called due to high temperatures, low fuel moisture and expected winds in the canyon passes and foothills. Chantry Flat Road gate will be closed as conditions warrant.

A disastrous fire is burning in the South Lake Tahoe with difficult conditions facing fire fighters trying to gain ground for containment. The news continuously refers to brush clearance efforts, either present or missing, in their reports.

As you work on your property to clear brush pay careful attention to where you put your hands. Rattlesnakes in our foothills will strike in defense or when searching for food. While using their heat sensors a snake will mistake the warmth of a human hand for that of the rodent-sized meal. Keep your hands at the end of a rake or hoe while you scrape away leaves and brush.

Contact us at: 355-0741, 355-7135 or 355-9350, or e-mail us at: smfiresafecouncil@hotmail.com

2007 BRUSH FIRE SEASON IS HERE!

Due to the driest winter on record, the condition of the brush in and around the foothills of Sierra Madre is expected to hit critical levels 2 months earlier than normal. Now is the time to start clearing the brush from around your home.

Brush Inspections start May 1st

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
LIVE FUEL MOISTURE 1981-2007
FOR ALL AREAS - CHAMISE, CANYON, SAGES, SAGEBRUSH

Defensible Space
In order to protect your home during a wildfire, we need 100 feet of clearance between your home and the hazardous brush. Aggressively trim and thin the vegetation from around your home but do not completely remove the vegetation to mineral soil.

Trim you win, strip you slip!

Questions? Please call the Sierra Madre Fire Dept. at 355-7135 extension 651

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on average	10% OFF	on average	10% OFF
COMPLETE	10% OFF	COMPLETE	10% OFF
Application	10% OFF	Application	10% OFF

Se Habla Español

SIERRA MADRE POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of Sunday, June 17th, to Saturday June 23rd, the Sierra Madre Police Department responded to approximately 202 calls for service.

Sunday, June 17th:

1:09 AM – Fight in progress, 70 West Sierra Madre Blvd. Officers were dispatched to the rear parking lot of the Buccaneer Bar regarding a fight in progress. Upon arrival, a crowd of 10-15 was dispersing and one man appeared intoxicated and unable to care for himself. Officers arrested the man for being drunk in public and took him to the Pasadena Jail for remand.

Monday, June 18th:

7:25 AM – Vandalism, 611 East Sierra Madre Blvd. A city employee reported damage to the men's and women's restrooms at Sierra Vista Park. Green and gold paint was sprayed on several restroom fixtures. No loss estimate was available.

7:36 AM – Vandalism/graffiti, 611 East Sierra Madre Blvd. A city employee reported damage to the men's restroom at Heasley Field. The suspect used a blue marking pen to write graffiti on four stalls. The letters "TDAC" were legible. No loss estimate was available.

10:55 AM – Theft from vehicle, 430 North Grove St. A resident reported her Peruvian purse and black Danz shoes were stolen from her unlocked car. The loss occurred between 1:00 PM Tuesday, 6/12 and 9:00 AM Sunday, 6/17. The loss was valued at \$131.00.

4:27 PM – Arrest, 12 West Sierra Madre Blvd. A female pedestrian was stopped and determined to be under the influence of a controlled substance. She was arrested and transported to the Pasadena Jail for remand.

11:57 PM – Traffic collision/DUI arrest, Orange Grove Ave and Mountain Trail. Officers were dispatched to a traffic collision involving a parked car. During the investigation the driver was found to be driving under the influence of alcohol. The driver was arrested and transported to the Pasadena Jail.

Tuesday, June 19th:

9:01 PM – Under the influence of a controlled substance, 50 Auburn Ave. An officer stopped a vehicle for a traffic violation. During the investigation the driver was found to be driving under the influence of a controlled substance (methamphetamines). The driver was arrested and transported to the Pasadena Jail.

6:13 PM – 145 East Grandview Ave. A resident reported a package delivered by UPS was missing. The package, containing two oil drain plugs, gaskets and one injection clamp, was delivered Monday, 6/18 at 1:27 PM and discovered missing 11:00 PM Wednesday, 6/20. The loss was estimated at \$24.00.

Saturday, June 23rd:

12:28 AM – Arrest/drunken in public, Highland Ave and Baldwin Ave. Patrol officers saw a man crouching between vehicles and stopped to investigate. The man was determined to be intoxicated and unable to care for himself. He was arrested and transported to the Pasadena Jail for remand.

9:56 AM – Theft of Mail, 100 block East Highland Ave. A resident reported a package containing her birth certificate and US passport were stolen from her front porch. The package was delivered at 2:37 PM Wednesday, 6/13 and was discovered missing at 6:00 PM

Environmentally Speaking, "Did You Know?"

Aluminum was discovered in the early 1820s and is the most abundant metal on earth. The first all-aluminum beverage can appeared in 1963, and today accounts for the largest use of aluminum. The cans are the ultimate recyclable material as they are 100% recyclable and can be recycled over and over again. They go from the recycling bin back to the retail shelf in as few as 60 days.

Other Benefits of Recycling Aluminum Cans:

- * It takes 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than to create it from raw materials.
- * Recycling one can saves enough energy to run a television for three hours or a 100-watt light bulb for four hours.
- * Recycling 40 cans conserves the same energy as one gallon of gasoline.
- * Recycled aluminum requires less energy, so it produces 95% less emissions, such as greenhouse gases.

It's a win-win situation...you get cash for the energy you expend in your recycling efforts as you help conserve and preserve the environment. Remember...One aluminum can that is thrown away will still be litter 500 years from now! www.recycle.alcan.com

Brought to you by:
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P.O. Box 85
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CLARIFICATION - The Sierra Madre Mountain Conservancy was a co-sponsor with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for acquisition of Proposition A funds that Sierra Madre voted for in 1992, namely: \$3.1 million to acquire natural lands and wildlife habitat and develop scenic viewpoints in the mountains. We did not participate in the transfer of these funds acquired for our stated purpose. The City decided to add a second story to the recreation center, creating the Youth Activity Center (YAC), requesting the transfer from the County Board of Supervisors. This decision came over the Conservancy's appeal to allow us to continue negotiations to acquire two parcels for Open Space. The City Council in 2003, along with the City Administrator, Tammy Gates and the Recreation Director, were determined to redirect the remainder of our Proposition A funds to build a second story to preserve park space. There was no deadline. Many cities are still using their Proposition A funds for their original purpose.

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The Mt. Wilson Observer PASADENA

City Agrees, Chinese Human Right's Violations should be looked into before Rose Parade Visit

By Dean Lee

"Learning Falun Dafa is easy," reads the web site falundafa.org banned in China. "The practice is simple, powerful, and absolutely free." That is unless you live in communist China and have a

council chambers as Chen held back tears. Two of the women had been in the labor camps one year, while Zhao had severed fire years before making the trip to the United States.



Photo By Dean Lee - Pictured left to right, Bin Li, Wen Chen, Yaning Liu, Jie, Li, and Lingyun Zhao. The women made a plea with the city of Pasadena Monday to help alleviate human rights violations in China as Communist leaders are expected to take part in this year's Rose Parade. Pasadena is also sister cities with the Xicheng District in Beijing.

bizarre concept of "free." This is what five women —three of whom are here in exile for the practice,—told the Pasadena City Council Monday night during their regular meeting.

"We have deep concerns over the 2008 Rose Parade inviting the Chinese government here to Pasadena," JPL scientist and Pasadena resident Wen Chen said. "You want to allow them to have a float in our peaceful parade when they have a terrible human rights record."

Mayor Bill Bogaard told the five women the city was not responsible for picking who participates in the Rose Parade. The women also accused China of having a float as a political stunt. Bogaard suggested they contact the Tournament of Roses. "The Tournament goes through a process in which certain participants are invited," Bogaard said.

Councilmember Chris Holden later said the city should look into the matter and suggested that the city denounce the human rights violations even though allowing the float was not "officially" their decision. Other council members agreed including Councilman Victor Gordo. He said from the viewpoint of others the decision looked as though it was ours.

"They are putting as many people in labor camps as they can before the Olympics so when people go they cannot tell anyone what is happening," Chen said. "We are asking Pasadena, with a sister city in China, to help make everyone aware. We ask you to send letters to the Chinese government."

Yaning Liu a resident of Baldwin Park told the council of her mother; Shuying Li, a 63-year-old retired physics high school teacher sent to a labor camp for 2.5 years without any type of hearings, and urged them to help.

"December 15, 2006 at 8 p.m. three policemen broke into my parents' apartment in Beijing..." Liu said. "Once they found Faun Gong materials, they immediately arrested my mother."

Liu also said the police wanted to know if she was practicing Falun Gong here in the United States. Liu said this was the second time her mother was kidnapped. The first was in 2000 when she was taken on her way to Tiananmen Square. She was then imprisoned for three years.

Liu said she has also sent a letter to Bogaard asking personally for his help. Three other's currently in exile, Bin Li, Jie Li, and Lingyun Zhao all sat in the

Chen said the Chinese Communist Party considers the practice of Falun Dafa to be "free thinking" and therefore a threat to their system. The teachings have been described as spiritual, religious and metaphysical. Some say it is similar to Yoga and although it is not known how many practitioners there might be, it has been estimated at 70 million she said.

Falun Dafa is also more commonly known as "Falun Gong." She said. "They are the same thing."

The Xicheng District in Beijing China is a sister city to Pasadena and Beijing is slated to host next year's Olympic Games. A float is also set to ride down Colorado Boulevard New Year's morning honoring the Chinese and the Olympics. Li is being held in the Daxing District which is next to Xicheng. Both are in Beijing.

Although this year's parade is themed "Passport to the World's Celebrations," Chen told the council of something that sounded more like the novel "1984." She spoke of China's Ministry of Public Security Secret Directive to investigate and bar Falun Gong practitioners from the Beijing Olympics. All paraphernalia for teaching the practice is prohibited and those found accessing it simply "disappear in the night." She later said after the meeting.

The directive lists 43 categories including Falun Gong and others. Listed are, The Dalai Lama and all affiliates, Roman Catholics (not sanctioned by the state), key individuals in ideological fields, overseas hostile forces, counter-revolutionary figures and individuals who instigate condemnation toward the Chinese Communist Party through the Internet among other non specific groups.

Chen said she is also part of Pasadena Amnesty International Group 22 and said Amnesty's findings released this year show that China's Communist Party has harvested organs from living Falun Gong practitioners, 3,000 of which have later died she said.

"Here it takes months if not years to find an organ donor," Chen said. "In China it takes less than 24 hours because they know who the Falun Gong practitioners are."

Bogaard apologized later for not having enough time to hear all the speakers and agreed with Holden that at a later time the issues should be fully looked into and an appropriate stand be taken.

Senior Pets and Senior People, a Good Mix for Pet Adoption

By Dean Lee

Now in its fifth year, the Pasadena Humane Society's Seniors for Seniors free pet adoption program is going strong as ever although there were a number of older dogs and cats just this week, droopy eyed, pushed up against their cages and begging to go home with someone, anyone.

"What we offer is free adoption for any dog or cat that is five years or older to anyone 65 or older," said Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA spokesperson Ricky Whitman. "All the fees are paid and they get free mandatory microchip and registration. Cats get the first set of shots, also free." Owning dogs and cats promote health for seniors and psychological well being as well as social interaction according to Humane Society handouts. There are also the practical benefits of walking dogs such as encouraging owners to get up and exercise Whitman said.

Whitman said they have a number of senior dogs ready to be adopted including a 14 year old Shepherd mix who was found as a stray. Whitman said most of the dogs are not give names due to the short time they are with them. The Shepherd mix has a microchip and she said walks well on leash and even knows "sit" and "shake."

She also said they had another six year old, German Shepherd mix who walks really well on a leash and loves people. This dog may prefer to be the only dog in the home and has been neutered. All dogs and cats are spayed and neutered before leaving the Humane Society she said.

Whitman said anytime a dog or cat goes up for adoption they first evaluate the animal's personality. Runaways left after five days become their property and matching the pet with a good owner becomes their priority she said.

"What we don't want is a bad match because then the dog will end up back here," Whitman said. "What you

don't want is a 70-year-old adopting a puppy that's going to be very high energy and they can even become very destructive."

She said at first what happens is someone will come and look and see if there is a dog or cat they like and then they will come back to see if anyone else is interested. Then the potential owner will set down with an adoption counselor to ask any questions. They then meet the dog or cat spending time to make sure they are right. If all goes well the new owners take the animal home.

Whitman said the Humane Society has other animal up for adoption including rabbits which she said make good pets but cautioned that rabbits are very different from owning a cat. "They are prey where a cat or even a dog is a predator," they are very jumpy."

She also said they have senior cats but at the time there was only one cat adoptable through the Seniors for Seniors program. Whitman said cats were the reverse of dogs having way more kittens than people to adopt them. "This is kitten season," she said. "everyone wants to adopt a puppy when they first come in."

She also said they update their website hourly showing the most current lost pets. "We try to make it easy for people to find their lost pet, she said. "I also encourage people to come down and take a look."

Regular (non senior) adoption fees go as follows

- Dogs - \$85 (+\$20 for optional microchip, includes 1st year registration)
 - Cats - \$65 (includes mandatory microchip and registration)
 - adopt a 2nd cat for just \$10 more
 - Rabbits \$25
 - Guinea Pigs/ Hamsters \$10
- For more information call 626-792-7151 or visit them on the web at www.phspca.org. Or in person at 361 S. Raymond Avenue in Pasadena.

MTA FARE INCREASE

By Dean Lee

As of July 1 MTA bus and rail fares will change with the most notable being a Day Pass now costing \$5, up from \$3, which to most riders said makes it worthless. Bus riders said the New Day Pass price is not worth buying now for simple two round-trips in which one other transfer may be needed. Although, Seniors and Disabled persons are now free during off peak hours. Weekdays 9am - 3pm and 7pm - 5am; All day on weekends and Federal holidays. The base fare of \$1.25 will stay the same.

MTA trip facts:

If You Buy A: Day Pass (\$5)
You Save Money: after 4 boardings per day

If You Buy A: Senior Day Pass (\$1.80)
You Save Money: after 3 boardings per day

If You Buy A: Weekly Pass (\$17)
You Save Money: after 13 boardings per week

If You Buy A: Monthly Pass (\$62)
You Save Money: after 49 boardings per month

If You Buy A: Student K-12 Monthly Pass (\$24)
You Save Money: after 19 boardings per month

If You Buy A: College Monthly Pass (\$36)
You Save Money: after 28 boardings per month

If You Buy A: Senior Monthly Pass (\$14)
You Save Money: after 25 boardings per month
(Senior base fare is 55 cents)



-Photo by Daniel Bellis

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THE MT. WILSON OBSERVER

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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.



"Reach for the Stars" Congratulations Class of 2007 By Hail Hamilton

I know when I was 12 or 13 years old it was impossible to believe that my parents were ever kids themselves. I mean parents were so "out of it". They didn't know what was "happening" or what was "cool". They didn't approve of the way we dressed or the music we listened to, and particularly the "friends we chose". They "worked" because they were parents and that's what parents did—and they "liked it". We "went to school" because we had to—not because we "liked it"—our parents made us go to school! We were all lectured by our parents about the importance school, about how important getting an education is to our futures, but we lived in the "now". We were kids—we stubbornly knew better! The fact of the matter is everything we do as kids in the "moment", every day is a new adventure to be experienced with friends—yesterday is gone and tomorrow hasn't happened yet. That's what makes being a kid such a wonderful and carefree time. But even as kids we knew deep down in our hearts that someday we would grow up and become "adults"—just like our parents did so many years ago. Someday the world would be ours!

Wednesday, June 20, 2007 I witnessed the birth of a new generation of adults—well, maybe not adults yet—but kids successfully crossing that bridge from middle school to high school. One step closer to college and one step closer in their "reach for the stars." When the 8th Grade Singers performed their rendition of "Seasons of Love" from the Tony Award winning Musical and motion picture Rent, tears welled up in my eyes—tears of sadness because my son was becoming a man and I knew that someday I would have to let him go to live out life on his own terms. But also I shed tears of joy that my son

was beginning to learn those important lessons my father lovingly taught me:

- life is a gift to be cherished and that every day should be lived to the fullest;
- cheaters don't prosper—in the real world, there are no shortcuts to success;
- respect is something you earn by your example—a person's word is their bond;
- all of us have a duty to leave the world a better place than we found it.

I was proud of all our kids who culminated from Sierra Madre Upper Campus. Just walking the stage is a big achievement, especially in today's world filled with so many distractions. Success in school is an achievement that should be rewarded and encouraged every day by parents and teachers. I was proud of the high achievers like Student Council President and Vice President, Olivia Horowitz and Alex Mercier. I was proud of the performers by the 8th Grade Singers and Junior Thespians. I was proud of the Valedictorian Speeches by Austin Crocketiere and Shawn Wi. I was proud of Aysa Hollins for winning the Jeff Van Memorial Mathematics Award. I was especially proud of my son, Kenny Hamilton, because he is my son and I love him dearly.

I want to thank Principal Gayle Bluemel, Assistant Principals, Garrett Newsom and Ruth Richardson, and the contributions by teachers Janet Graff, Daniel Martinez, Jim Lauritsen, Debby Combs, and Patrice Yocum. I want to thank Police Chief Marilyn Diaz for being this year's Guest speaker, Principal Emeritus Ty Gaffney's for his words of wisdom, and Pasadena Women's Civic League Armine Aghajani and Sierra Madre Rotary International Ron Stockley for their Character Awards. Most of all, I want to thank all the parents who chose to attend this year's culmination and personally congratulate you for your kid's success this year. "It takes a village to raise a child"—GOOD JOB SIERRA MADRE!

Around The Town With Sir Eric Maundry



"I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed."
- Jonathan Swift

It would appear that Sierra Madre's very own (Jim Snider), proprietor of the controversial (Cumquat) blogsite, has not been quite forthcoming about the true nature of his day job. On his site Jim claims to be a producer of "animated films, TV spots, web animation, fine art, comic strips," which may or may not be true. I personally think it's a stretch. But what we can now add to this list without any fear of contradiction is the profession of (pornographer). We here at (Maundry Muckraking Inc.) now possess e-mails unwittingly sent to us by Mr. Snider soliciting a ("Selma Ritter") for possible ("adult site") appearances. A XXX site apparently being developed by none other than Mr. Snider himself ... Let's set this remarkable story of local infamy up, shall we? ..During the recent (Measure V imbroglio) Mr. Snider became something of a hero to many (No on V) Sierra Madre dignitaries. In an article that ran in several local dailies, including the (Pasadena Star News) and penned by (Molly Okeon) herself, the praise for both Jim Snider his Cumquat blog was effusive. "Dripping with satire... written in the vein of the satirical newspaper (The Onion), with a touch of the sort of humor found on (Comedy Central's 'The Daily Show')," gushed a dazzled Molly. And apparently then (Sierra Madre Mayor John Buchanan) got caught up in Cumquat fever as well. Molly Okeon: "Sierra Madre Mayor John Buchanan answered Snider's online request for an interview, producing a piece that Buchanan called 'light-hearted and fun.'" More Molly: "Buchanan was a fan of the site even before he was chosen as the subject of one of its posts. He said a political environment like Sierra Madre's, where 'substantial tension' exists, is exactly where websites like the Cumquat can flourish. "They provide a kind of comic relief that all human beings need to cope with life on a day-to-day basis," Buchanan said. "A little humor and a little poking fun is good for politicians so we can maintain a perspective." The Mayor's strong support for the Cumquat was also evident when, upon being questioned about whether or not he was aware of the site's oftentimes lewd and defamatory content during a City Council Q&A session, fired back "I refuse to let anyone tell me what is funny." (Beth Buck), former (Mountain Views) publisher and outspoken hostess of the now defunct (Downtown Dirt) blog, also supported Snider's efforts,

awarding him with considerable praise and moral support. This site, which listed such local luminaries as former mayors (Clem Bartolai), (Bart Doyle), (Doug Hayes), (Glenn Lambdin), (George Maurer) and (Rob Stockly) as sponsors, became a place where the Cumquat's fans would gather to voice their support and vilify critics. Jim Snider has also been an outspoken supporter of embattled City Councilman (Joe Mosca), offering free "I Support Mosca" lawn signs to anyone asking for one. The offer remained on the Cumquat site for months and was only removed after Mosca took some pointed criticism about it at a City Council meeting ... At the time this article was written The Cumquat sported a banner ad with the following offer: "Website Seeks Models - Do your girl-next-door looks hide a restless spirit? - Contact Us And Learn More. Talent@Rock.Com." If you click on this banner ad your e-mail is activated with the "talent@rock.com" address as the recipient. "Selma Ritter" took the challenge and typed in the following message: "OK, I'll bite. Restless? Sure, who isn't? Girl next door? Depends on what door you're talking about. So tell me, what door is it?" The reply came back, and it was from none other than Jim Snider himself. "Selma, we're not looking for Angelina Jolie types. If you look like her, fine. But what we'd rather see is more of a 'good looking girl who you might run into in the grocery store' kind of look. And you must provide us with valid proof of your age. We prefer you to be at least 21. If you're 18 or younger, please don't reply to this response. And if you live in the San Gabriel Valley area, that's a plus. The San Fernando Valley is full of adult sites. We want to make our site the first legitimate FIRST CLASS adult site in the Pasadena/Sierra Madre/ Arcadia area. If this interests you, please respond to talent@rock.com ... Just what Sierra Madre needs, right? A XXX "adult site" with a politically well-connected pimp working hard to coerce local young women to appear on it. And honestly, shouldn't John Buchanan do this town a favor and just resign for all the support he has given to this guy's disreputable career? Talk about a serious lapse of judgment. This is unethical and reckless behavior in an elected official. What's next, John Buchanan is going to cut the thong at the Grand Opening of Sierra Madre's "very first legitimate adult site?" And it's not like he wasn't warned about Jim Snider ... Note: a subsequent e-mail from Mr. Snider has been received. We cannot reprint it here as its content is entirely too descriptive of what it he expects of "Selma Ritter." ... I was going to write this week about Senator Bob Marget's take on our local SCAG issue. I will cover that next time ... As always, your very own Lt. Columbo can be reached at eric.maundry@yahoo.com ... Cheers!

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The Mountain Clymer

By Kim Clymer Kelley

Close Encounters of the Furred Kind

The Welcoming Committee Part 2



On the second night we spent at the station, my boyfriend at the time (a native American man named Xoxa... pronounced ho'ha) and I had gone to bed at about 11 pm... "bed" at that time, was a mattress on the living room floor since we had gutted the bedroom for renovations. It was a very warm night so, after trying unsuccessfully to get to sleep for a bit, Xoxa decided to get up to get a drink of cold water. The refrigerator that was left behind at the station by its previous owner, Dennis Loneragan, had been moved to the front porch so that we could paint the kitchen. The front porch of the house was home to a little country store that served the hikers, bikers, picnickers, and cabin owners of the canyon. The fridge sat in a corner of the store and was to hold cold beverages for the store... unfortunately it had decided not to work once it was moved. We had ordered a new one for the house from Sears, but it had not yet been delivered. Consequently, the only cold storage we had were the antique coke cooler and a small, and almost as ancient, commercial freezer chest... they were both left behind for the store and still functioning. We had stored all of our food and water in them. Xoxa got out of bed waking me from a sound sleep.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"To get some water from the cooler," he answered as he opened the door and stepped out. I heard something that sounded like a lawn sprinkler turning on and then Xoxa yelling, "Oh Sh**!!!"

"What?" I asked as it began to dawn on me exactly what it was that I was hearing.

"Stay there!!!" he ordered.
"Oh, my god!!! A snake???"
"Just stay there!!!"

The sound continued, growing more intense and angry. I tentatively tiptoed toward the door to take a look. "Where is it?" I asked through the open window on the door.

"It went under the refrigerator," he answered from the storage room off of the porch. I opened the door and cautiously stepped outside, keeping a healthy distance between me and the hissing fridge. Xoxa immersed from the back with the "snake stick" that Dennis had left behind. The "snake stick" was a broomstick rigged with a collapsible wire loop at the end of it. It was operated by lassoing the snake with the loop and tightening the noose by pulling a

string that was threaded through the eyes running up one side of the stick. After climbing up on a nearby bench, he shook the fridge hard and the snake darted out the back of it rattling loudly. It curled up in a corner in a defensive posture... head raised, fangs bared, tail in the air rattling frantically. I shrieked and ran in the house and slammed the door in anticipation of the next move.

Xoxa, perched on the bench overlooking our visitor, reached out with the stick and slipped the loop around the snake and quickly pulled the cord. Caught!!! He gingerly stepped off of the bench, arms fully extended, keeping the snake as far from his body as possible. As he carefully made his way to the steps, and headed down them, I stepped out the door to get a closer look, peering over Xoxa's shoulder as he left the porch with the snake writhing at the end of the stick. The snake's struggle to free itself finally paid off and it dropped from the noose, sliding quickly under the bench at the bottom of the steps. I screamed and again ran back into the house... sure that the snake would leap back onto the porch and bite my bare toes. "He's not going to hurt you... just stay away!!!" Xoxa scolded... with just enough panic in his voice to puncture his fearless, "tough guy" façade. Standing on the steps he bent over to see where the snake had gone. Having located it, he slipped the noose back around it and got a firmer grip on it than he had before. Again he hoisted it up and headed off across the parking lot, down the driveway, and out to the public parking lot near the ranger station where he dropped it over a wall and down the hillside... far away from the station.

"Poor thing", I lamented upon Xoxa's triumphant return, "probably just stopped by to welcome the newcomers to his neighborhood and he's met at the door by some surly bouncer, escorted from the premises at the end of a stick and tossed over a wall." My remark was met with an icy stare.

"I could have been killed and you are worried about offending the neighbors?" he replied.

"He lived here first," I answered. "This is his home, we are just visitors. YOU were the one who told ME that, remember?"

I never thought that I would ever feel sorry for a snake... especially a rattler... but it was becoming clear to me the importance and the truth of that bit of wisdom... it was one of the Mountains' most valuable lessons. Living in closeness to the Earth has a way of making this lesson more understandable... a way of illustrating the place we humans hold in nature... a way of humbling a person. As beings of higher reasoning, we tend to think of ourselves as a mightier and more important part of our world because we have the ability to use our gift of intelligence to obtain power over nature. But we overestimate that power greatly. Anyone who has spent time alone in the wild cannot leave without being much more aware of their place in this world and much more respectful of the place of others. It is forever imprinted on one's soul.

East and West Sierra Madre

By Rich Johnson



It has come to this reporters attention that there is a group of local citizens currently on a mission in Washington D.C. This group, led by local activist minister Barney Hamady, has petitioned the federal government to establish a partition dividing our small hamlet into East and West Sierra Madre. They claim this action is desperately needed to help quell the brewing ill will and stave off anticipated violence between the Yes and No on V factions. These concerned citizens have further recommended the erection of a 28 foot high concrete wall to run along Baldwin from Carter to Orange Grove. This wall, running down the middle of the street, would have the added benefit of eliminating the rampant u-turning that plagues the downtown business district. Reaction to this news has been swift. In a hastily arranged press conference in the alley behind Bean Town, Yes on V spokesperson, Billy Hatfield announced his group has retained the law firm of Montague and Capulet. "We believe this may be a sinister plot devised by the enemy, err, I mean No on V people." Over at No on V headquarters in the Belfast Building, spokesperson Randy McCoy thought the idea of a partition was a good idea. He went on to say,

"Let's be reasonable. The Yes people can have the canyon. They're already mostly all there anyway! And it would take a lot less concrete to seal off Sturtevant Drive." Local activist attorney and longtime Canyon resident Stuart Tolchin worried about being cutoff. "I suppose we could airlift food and other supplies into the canyon if necessary", stated Tolchin from the patio of the Nano Café in Hastings Ranch. "We'd need an airport though", he pointed out. Tolchin also voiced concerns about the environmental impact hundreds of helicopter take-offs and landings would have on the canyon's delicate ecosystem. "Preserving wildlife in the canyon must be a priority," snickered Mr. Tolchin's wife Irene. Sierra Madrean Richard Krier, known as Dick in some circles, enthusiastically supports the Baldwin Wall. Krier, coincidentally, is a concrete contractor and has volunteered to give us a really good deal on the construction of the wall. Krier further volunteered to build a sun deck on top saying it could be accessed by all the Sierra Madreans who were undecided on Measure V. Finally, local hack blogger Jim Snider totally gummied up the discussion asking, "Why does it have to be East and West? That's so European. Let's make it North and South in true American tradition. Wouldn't that be the 'Civil' thing to do?" What's my position? All I can say is, "Ich bin ein Sierra Madrean." You may contact me Rich@versatape.com

Scene One, Take One - DVD Reviews

This new review will cover available DVD's for home viewing that I feel are well done and good entertainment!!

The award winning Picket Fences is one of the greatest American TV series ever produced. Created by David Kelly who also produced Ally McBeal, The Practice, Boston Legal, Chicago Hope,



Doogie Howser, as well as worked on L.A. Law for many years. Picket Fences ran from 1992 - 1996 for 87 episodes, and has something for everyone: drama, comedy, family moments, moral questions, children, teens, funny moments, emotional moments. Week after week this show tossed out thought provoking questions in all areas of our society and routinely tackled complex and controversial issues, including abortion, homosexuality (and homosexual adoption), trans-sexuality, belief in God, medical ethics, polygamy, cryogenics, the Holocaust, sexual issues, moral issues, law and constitutional rights. Illustrative of the subject matter is that the regular cast included a judge, two lawyers, a sheriff, a doctor, and a coroner. Religious issues were frequently discussed by the town's Catholic priest and Anglican priest. Any aspect of our society and life were fair game!

The series follows the lives of the residents of the small town of Rome, Wisconsin, where unusual things happen to say the least. Attempting to keep order in this strange community is a very talented cast consisting of Sheriff Jimmy Brock (Tom Skerritt) who is

married to the town doctor, Jill (Kathy Baker), his second wife. They attempt to bring up their three children, Kimberly (Holly Marie Combs) Matthew (Justin Shenkarow) and Zachary (Adam Wylie), normally. Lauren Holly and Costas Mandylor play impulsive and young sheriff's deputies. Then there is the bombastic lawyer Douglas Wambaugh (Fyvush Finkel), who usually irritates Judge Henry Bone (Ray Walston), whose rulings seemed to be directed more by his own moral thoughts than by the law. Other actors include the wonderful Don Cheadle, Kelly Connell as the medical examiner, Carter Pike, Zelda Rubenstein as the police dispatcher Ginny, and Marlee Matlin. The show in it's short run was nominated and won many awards including 2 Emmy's for Best Drama. Season 1 was just released and a bit hard to get, but is currently available on DVD at Netflix and Blockbuster Home delivery and for purchase on Amazon.com. Netflix and Blockbuster Home delivery represent a new system where for a monthly flat fee, depending on what plan you set up, DVDs are delivered to your home with no mailing charges. I started with 3 DVDs. When I'm done with one I send it back in a pre-stamped envelope and two days later I have another one. The advantage to this system besides the gigantic catalogue to choose from is you don't have to drive to get them. However, one advantage Blockbuster has over Netflix is you can exchange your DVD at a store location if you want it quicker. Any recommendations of favorite movies or productions you'd like to share with readers please send to jab3jab@verizon.net

The Book Report

with Jeff Brown

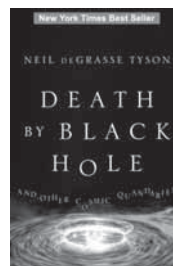
Death by Black Hole: And Other Cosmic Quandaries

By Neil deGrasse Tyson (2007)

For those of you looking for some good enjoyable science writing here it is! Neil deGrasse Tyson is an astrophysicist with the American Museum of Natural History, where he serves as director of the world-famous New York City's Hayden Planetarium. He has written a wonderful account of the evolution of the universe: its past, present, and future, from the beginning with the big bang to its probable ending with a whimper. In *Death by Black Hole and Other Cosmic Quandaries*, Tyson sees the universe "not as a collection of objects, theories, and phenomena, but as a vast stage of actors driven by intricate twists of story line and plot." Tyson introduces a diverse company who perform on the universal stage: solar systems, stars, galaxies, quasars, black holes, supernovas, comets, asteroids, planets, moons, and meteorites. He takes us from Earth's hot springs, where extremophiles flourish in hellish conditions, to the

frozen stretches of the Oort Cloud and the universe's farthest reaches, in both space and time. These cosmic happenings emerge as a strange, awesome, mind-boggling, bizarre, and dangerous cast of characters. He also discusses some of the great names in the history of astrophysics: Nicolaus Copernicus, Galileo Galilei and Johannes Kepler, Sir Isaac Newton; Albert Einstein, Max Planck, the founding father of quantum mechanics, and Werner Heisenberg, proponent of the uncertainty principle. Tyson in the 320 pages divides his work into seven sections: "The Nature of Knowledge," "The Knowledge of Nature," "Ways and Means of Nature," "The Meaning of Life," "When the Universe Turns Bad," "Science and Culture," and "Science and God." Tyson in discussing astrophysics, chemistry, cosmology, and other scientific areas, conveys his knowledge easily to the non-specialist, with lots of wit and humor. He is a bit of a showman and is well known for his enthusiastic fun

lectures at the Planetarium. Each of the book's 42 chapters first appeared, on the pages of *Natural History* magazine under the heading "Universe" and span the period of 1995 through 2005. Tyson states, "Each of these essays that form these chapters were handpicked from the last 12 years. Each essay was the sum of everything I knew at the time as an astrophysicist, educator and all I could bring together to make it real. Writing these essays was one of the greatest pleasures of my life. My goal was that you could read any paragraph in this collection and feel good!" Enjoy!!



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Ed

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

KIDS IN THE COURTYARD A MONTH OF FUN FOR KIDS

Thursdays in July at 11:00 a.m. Free!!!!

One Colorado and the Armory Center for the Arts are ready to celebrate the summer with the acclaimed children's series Kids in the Courtyard, which consists of participatory, live performances followed by art workshops led by the Armory Center for the Arts every Thursday in July. All performances and activities take place under the big umbrellas in the One Colorado Courtyard, and are free and open to the public. Children of all ages are welcome. Free baby stroller parking is provided.

Each week children will be treated to great entertainment including juggling, magic, music and comedy. Following each performance, children are invited to create their own artwork, supervised by expert instructors from the Armory Center for the Arts. Workshops begin at approximately 11:30 a.m. and are inspired by the theme of that day's performance, with a new program each week. Art projects run until approximately 12:30 p.m. Each child can take home their artistic creations!

JULY 5 - Michael "Tuba" Heatherton Things get into a delightful mess when Tuba discovers what's inside his suitcase. Kids will be delighted by the things he finds. What does he find? Juggling? Magic? Live music? Come see for yourself. You'll find him hilarious!



JULY 12 - Drumtime - What happens when you mix kids with drums and percussion?...The magic happens when Drumtime Drum Circle, a hands-on, total-audience participation rhythm-based event, leads everyone in an expressive drum circle.



JULY 19 - Suzanne Haring aka the Soozi Show! "Bubble Trouble!" Physical comedy, slapstick & magic combine in a high energy show based around a slightly inept adult having trouble with bubbles. Kids are empowered as they help solve "problems" that arise.



JULY 26 - Hope Street Youth Circus The fast-paced Hope Street Youth Circus show features talented kids who juggle, ride the unicycle, stiltwalk and tumble. You'll be fascinated and inspired when you see all the amazing things that kids can do.



The One Colorado Courtyard is located on Colorado Blvd. between Fair Oaks Avenue and DeLacey Avenue. Convenient parking is located in the adjacent multi-level structure at Fair Oaks and Union. Call 626.564.1066 for further information.

The Armory Center for the Arts is a Pasadena-based community arts center that offers innovative approaches to creating, exploring, and presenting the visual and performing arts to students of all ages. In addition to providing an outlet for contemporary art exhibitions and performances, the Armory offers studio art classes and a variety of educational outreach programs to schools and the community.

For more information about the Armory Center for the Arts, visit www.armoryarts.org

\$400,000 in Legal Fees as Part of this Year's Adopted PUSD Budget, Charter School Once Again Denied Location

By Dean Lee

The PUSD board unanimously passed this year's budget Tuesday night with total revenues adding up to \$195 million but not before someone first asked why they budgeted over \$400,000 in legal fees for special education needs prompting many to ask for a full review of all district litigation costs with an annual amount only given as "significantly more."

This year's budget was down from almost \$212 million last year, a drop of 7.8 percent. Not only was there no explanation as to why? PUSD business manager Cherie Moreno said Wednesday any explanation would have to be sought through the Public Records Act.

Many in the district have also been asking why the only copy of the budget, available to review, is in the district office and not online, or a summary thereof, as well as why the video minutes for the last three consecutive meetings, with some pertinent information to this years budget, have not been archived.

The districts IT department has failed, since May, to return any phone calls or respond to emails regarding the situation but did respond at press time this week only saying that a web person was on vacation? The missing videos were posted Wednesday night after a complaint was made. Moreno also failed to return any phone calls asking again for a budget summary. PUSD parent Monica Watts, and mother of a special needs student, said at Tuesday night's meeting she received a summary after paying \$25 for a copy of the budget.

Another parent at the meeting also mumbled that it was ridiculous they charged \$25 to look through a budget that included hidden purchases of things like bras made by PUSD employees with unaccountable credit cards. Allegations by an anonymous Target employee claimed that district employee spent thousands of dollars at a local Target store buying everything from Coca-Cola to R rated movies to the bras.

Someone also said that any interested board members should investigate all purchases made at local Costco after personally watching two district employees fill shopping carts full of stuff and then drive away in



TRISH'S TRUTH



Cell Phones: A Teen's Best Friend
By Trisha Collins

It's a device that can occupy any teen for hours at a time. It can have almost anything a person would find at a local Best Buy. One would think this piece of technology would be huge. No, they're no bigger than your hand, and in almost every teens hand in America. They call it a cell phone, aka: every teen's life.

Some adults would say, "Don't be so dramatic!" or sigh and comment, "Kids these days..." Odd as it may sound to some, cell phones play a big role in teen's lives. They are not only used for communication, but also for entertainment. Though some may be expensive, cell phones can have everything from internet to MP3 players. Often, it's cheaper to get a cell phone with everything on it, than to buy all the technology separately.

Different cell phones have different things that apply to different teens. No matter the differences, there are standard requirements every phone must have: text messaging. This is one of the many things that can keep any teenager's hand glued to their cell phone. Texting is a fun, fast, and easy way to chat with a friend or a group of friends. Many juicy secrets and events go through texts which is what makes it so much fun and sometimes addictive. Some teens can text for hours at a time. Joy, a teenage girl, said,

"...I text everyday, like, all the time. Whenever I'm bored, I just break out my Sidekick 3 (a cell phone complete with a hand-held keyboard, camera, and internet) and text somebody, its fun."

Another thing you can do on your phone is surf the web. A popular website that teens go on continuously is the infamous MySpace. So when you combine the internet with a phone with texting, the result is addictive. "It's like, you can be on MySpace at home, and then go to the store and get on it again in the car, it's cool," said Eric, one teenage boy. Some people can't put down their phone because so much can happen. Break-ups, make-ups, news, and more all happen on MySpace and AIM and teens don't want to miss out. Things spread fast and teens want to be "in the know" all the time. All this as close as the palm of your hand or as far as your pocket, amazing.

Aside from pictures and music downloads, cell phones are also (can you believe it?) good for talking. It's not as fun as instant messaging but it is faster.

As technology advances further, cell phones will probably become less and less known for talking. As for now, cell phones are a big part of our social and economical lives. But hey, we're teenagers what do you expect?

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Weizmann Day School
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Pasadena, CA 91107
626-797-0204
Lisa Feldman Head of School

Sierra Madre's 2nd Annual Kid's Public Safety Academy

Have you ever wonder is my child safe? Does your child know what to do in an emergency? Is your child safe? Really Safe? Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Sierra Madre Community Foundation a free program for kids and their parents is happening this summer throughout Sierra Madre.

The City of Sierra Madre KIDS Safety Academy, an eight week program for KIDS ages 5 to 11 and their parents to learn about safety in the following areas playgrounds, internet, bikes and skateboards, mountain animals, hiking, water, as well as recycling and so much more. Presentations will be made by the Sierra Madre Police Department, Community & Personnel Services Department, Department of Public Works, Sierra Madre Search & Rescue, and Sierra Madre Volunteer Fire Department.

Parents and children will meet at different locations throughout the City on seven consecutive Saturdays, beginning July 7 - August 25, 2007 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Registration for the program is now being accepted for this amazing program with the Community & Personnel Services Department. Space limited to 30 kids and their parents and remember it's FREE. Please call 355.5278 to register - TODAY or come by and see us at 611 East Sierra Madre Blvd. A week before the program begins all confirmed participants will be mailed-out the class schedule with locations.



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TABLE FOR TWO by PETER DILLS



sandwich? Two of my favorite places in Pasadena are in East Pasadena. One being Whole Foods, yes they make a great sandwich, and you can pretty much direct the maker to fix it any way you like. The sandwiches run about \$7.50.

The second spot I like is The Pasadena Sandwich Shop. You can sit down or go right to the deli case. I usually go directly to the case. Steve the owner and head sandwich maker is always an ear shot away so after ordering the sandwich from one of the employees you can see Steve making your sandwich.

The Pasadena Sandwich Shop has done what Jerry's Deli and Ben's Deli weren't able to do. Stay in business. The restaurant itself is small; in fact it is located in a small office building, sandwiched between a dry cleaner and a real estate office and across from Bed Bath and Beyond.

The prices range between \$6 and \$8. I have never

finished an entire sandwich on my own. Here are a few of my recent lunches: The Big "B" Roast Beef - cheddar, lettuce, tomato with Russian dressing on a French Roll; The "Chicago" Corned Beef - Pastrami, Swiss, cole slaw (it's triple decker on rye); and again, good luck in finishing one!!! The Shepherd - Corned Beef, Pastrami, Turkey, Salami, Swiss - it's another triple decker on Rye.

You can mix and match meats and breads or you can even order "Trust The Cook" whatever Steve feels like making. My suggestion is bring a friend to share. Platters are available, and the restaurant offers chips and soda. Eat In or take out is available.

Peter's Tip: They have spicy beaver mustard, it's a must!!

All and all a pretty good place for lunch

Pasadena Sandwich Company 259 Sierra Madre Villa, Pasadena (626) 578-1616

Hours: Open daily at 9 AM closes at 3PM No dinner. Saturday opens at 11AM closes at 3PM.

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Our own food critic Peter Dills judging the Lawm Party Pie eating contest in Sierra Madre.

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Looking Up

With Bob Eklund

Unsung Heroes of the Sky



Photo by Jean Boenish

In my June 15 column, I mentioned that the International Space Station (ISS) and Space Shuttle Atlantis were expected to be visible from the L.A. area the following week. As it turned out, they were visible on three nights after their undocking: on Tuesday, June 19, they were just far enough apart to see their separation, and on Wednesday and Thursday nights, Atlantis was leading the ISS by increasing amounts.

Around 1 p.m. on Friday, June 22, as Laura and I were preparing for our own venture into thin air, Atlantis landed at Edwards Air Force Base (diverted there from its planned Florida landing by bad weather). At the time, we didn't even know that the astronauts were landing, preoccupied as we were with packing for our annual vacation weekend to Northern California. In the rush of it, we threw our little AM/FM radio (which we had intended to use to track the progress of the Atlantis) into the largest of our suitcases—forgetting that this radio has an annoying tendency to turn itself on at the slightest touch.

On completing our flight from LAX to San Jose, we went to the United baggage claim area only to discover that our larger suitcase was not there. Inquiring, we were told that the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) at LAX had detained that bag for a hand-search. After being told that the bag would be delivered to our hotel later that night, we went on to our destination in Palo Alto—driving a brand-new rented Prius with only 16 miles on its odometer. (Learning to drive the hi-tech car was an adventure in itself, but that's another story.)

At our hotel, I was pondering why TSA could possibly have considered our bag "suspicious," and settling into a peaceful night's sleep (with unbrushed teeth and wearing a pair of my wife's pajamas) when, at about 1:30 a.m., the bag arrived at our door. The strange thing about it was that the suitcase was emitting a loud noise—something between a buzz and a hiss. Did we dare open it? We did, and there, giving off static in considerable volume, was our radio. We could only guess that the radio must have turned itself on before it went through security at LAX. I had to admit that even I would have insisted on hand-searching a bag that made such a noise.

For our trip home, we rode an American Eagle plane, which seemed not much bigger than a Lear Jet. The small size of the plane—with what looked like very tiny wings, seemingly too small to be able to hold us all up—left me feeling quite exposed to gravity. I could sympathize with the fears of the young girl in the seat ahead of me, as we accelerated toward takeoff speed. After all, air is so thin!

The girl's mother was incredibly wise and helpful in the way she comforted the child, helping to turn fears into thoughts of high adventure. I thought: She is a hero! As we approached LAX, on the final glide-path only a few hundred feet above the ground, the plane suddenly lurched, tilting its wings sharply right and left before regaining its normal attitude. Perhaps we had hit a wave of turbulence in the air caused by a larger plane ahead on the same flight-path. Scary! The little girl, who had been airsick before the shock, now redoubled her crying, while the mother continued to comfort her. That little girl is a hero too, I thought, facing her maiden flight toward a wider universe as bravely as she can.

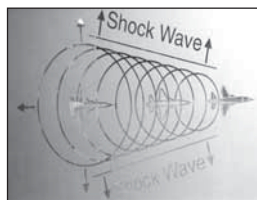
Then the thought came to me: But aren't we all heroes—all of us passengers, who have faced down our fears enough to go out into that third dimension called sky?

As Laura and I stepped off the plane onto the comfortably solid ground, we walked into the remote terminal at the west end of the airport, which services the short-range American Eagle flights. On the terminal's windows we saw, etched into the glass as though it were a blackboard, the mathematical equations that govern an airplane's flight. I thought: All of us who have flown—ever since the Wright Brothers—have trusted our lives to the faith that these equations won't let us fall.

If I, like the Wizard of Oz, could give out "hero" medals, I would pin one not only on each of the Shuttle and Space Station astronauts—who face incredible risks to give all of us a foothold in the future—but on every one of those unsung heroes Laura and I saw on our weekend venture into the sky.

For Flatland dwellers, Trying a new dimension Takes a lot of heart.

(Unless otherwise attributed, poems used in this column are by Bob Eklund and copyrighted by him.)



COUNCIL (continued from pg. 1)

the proliferation of such businesses in Sierra Madre. "I have lived in this town for 45 years and to my knowledge we have never licensed such an entity." Angus feels the site is in violation of the community standards of Sierra Madre. Mayor Joffe when asked for a response to the events at Tuesday's meeting said, "Certainly I think pornographic material has no place in our community, but we must deal with it within the boundaries of the law."

Stonehouse Development

Resident Angelin Moore asked the council to include the homeowners bordering the west side of the property, along Val Vista, be considered in negotiations. Inman agreed and also agreed to make site visits of the residents yards in an effort to understand their concerns.

Transportation

Michelle Keith, Director of Community and personnel services presented the council with staff recommendations to continue the city's transportation contract with Laidlaw. The contract was approved by the council unanimously. Sierra Madre currently has three transit programs: Dial A Ride, which takes residents by appointment to specific door to door locations; The Gold Line

shuttle, which operates mornings and evenings between the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line stop and the city; and the 'Loop' which goes to sites such as the library, youth center and parks. Keith indicated that over the next few months there would be a review to see how we can improve these services and expand the public's knowledge of them. Resident Heather Allen asked that instead of the three part time drivers that handle our current services, that at least two full time drivers be hired specifically for the Dial A Ride for seniors.

Ad Hoc Committee on Finance

The council voted unanimously to establish an Ad Hoc Finance Committee to explore remedies to the city's current financial challenges. The committee will consist of the City Treasurer, Richard Mays, Councilmen Zimmerman and Buchanan, and five residents, one appointed by each councilperson. The council also agreed that the top priority for the committee will be the funding of the city's police, fire and paramedic programs. Appointments for the committee will be announced at the next council meeting. Anyone interested in serving should contact city hall.

WorkForce

with Madeline



Q: I'm a workaholic. I say that in a negative way. Even when I'm away from the office, my thoughts are on my work. My strong desire to succeed is causing me to spiral out of control. This is beginning to negatively affect my marriage and young children. Can you give me some suggestions for getting my life in order? I really enjoy your column and respect your advice.

A: First, you need to organize your life and set priorities. Of course, work is important, but so are your wife and children. You have to learn to say to yourself at 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening, "Okay, I've put in 10 hours of work. Now it's time for my family." Life does pass by quickly and children grow up too fast. You don't want to look back in 30 years and regret all the things you've missed.

Are you sure you need to do everything you're undertaking at work? Is there someone else in the office who can take on some of your job tasks and ease your load?

Q: Learn how to say "no." According to Carl Selinger, author of *Stuff You Don't Learn in Engineering School: Skills for Success in the Real World*, there are people who feel that saying no shows a weakness or lack of team spirit. However, if it would be too difficult to assume another assignment, then assert yourself. Respond to a request by answering, "I'm really busy now. Can it wait until later when my work load eases up?"

Don't be a perfectionist. As a perfectionist myself, I know how much time is wasted on trying to get things perfect when a little less than perfection will do just fine. Perfection is usually in that person's eyes and generally not noticed by others. Many workaholics eat lunch at their desk or claim they don't have time for lunch. Get away from your desk. Go to a nearby restaurant for lunch. Take a walk. Talk with co-workers (but not about work). You'd be surprised at how 30 minutes away from your desk will raise your spirits.

A: Treat yourself to a vacation. Clear your mind of your job. When you start thinking about work, divert your thoughts to something else. I'm certain you will return to your desk with a healthier and more productive attitude. Think about that wonderful Harry Chapin song, *Cat's in the Hat*.

I've long since retired; my son's moved away.

I called him up just the other day.

I said, "I'd like to see you if you don't mind."

He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time."

You see my new job's a hassle and the kids have the flu.

But it's sure nice talking to you, Dad.

It's been sure nice talking to you."

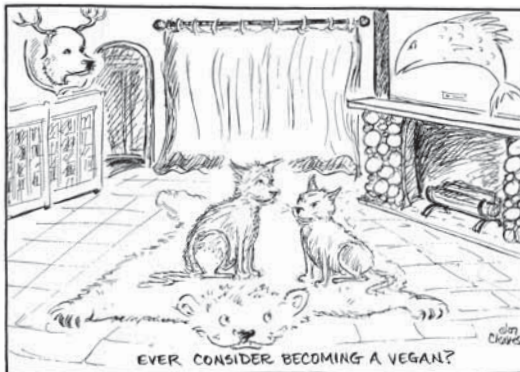
And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me

He'd grown up just like me.

My boy was just like me.

Remember, it's up to you to change bad habits and establish a happier and more meaningful life.

Direct your questions to Madeline at comtype2@aol.com or 888-489-8372 (8 AM - 6 PM, Monday - Friday)



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Story and Photos By Chris Bertrand

Late blooming gardener has more than just a green thumb



The golden gates lead to the Springer's gardens, revealing only a little at a time, like a delightful package to be unwrapped slowly.

Every week, I ask for suggestions from our readers for interesting subjects for this column. When I go for an interview, sometimes I'm not sure what to expect when I arrive at the door. I got an email recently from local resident, Joe Springer, saying I might be interested in his wife's beautiful garden... So I opened the golden gates to their garden on Lina.

Marie Springer just married Joe seven years ago. She joined her new husband here in Sierra Madre at his family's home, after pursuing a career as a psychologist took her from Costa Rica, to Europe, to Florida and finally Sierra Madre to be near her son. They soon began revamping many things at the property, expanding and updating the home to accommodate two families, and, this part is *really* understated, landscaping the property. As Marie says, "It was dirt and big trees. Just dirt."

In her late fifties at the time, Marie had never, ever gardened in her life, focusing her energies on her psychology practice and family life. But being the do-it-yourselfer that she is, she bought books, she got to know the garden staff by name at the neighborhood Home Depot, and she dug in... literally. She quips that she didn't know any better at first, and planted grass everywhere. Which mostly died.

Little by little, her knowledge grew, and she drew on a lion-hearted dose of courage somewhere and took it all on. Today, a scant six years later, I can safely say she has developed not only a green thumb, but green hands and arms. It seems just about anything Marie touches grows, except perhaps the ill-fated grass that just wasn't meant to grow under those trees. As we slowly toured her garden, she mentioned that this or that tree came from a piece of fruit that she or her family enjoyed, deciding to grow one from the seed. At least twenty fruit trees, most happily bearing their exotic fruit, many of which are unfamiliar to this American palette. She fondly remembers her Costa Rican childhood, where they drank an array of fruit juices diluted with water, instead of the American style, nutritionally devoid sodas. A practice she follows today with Central American and Caribbean varieties of citrus, guava, cherimoya, kumquat, loquat and more. She crushed and offered me leaves from her sweet lemons used for a tea, and sour oranges used by Cubans for marinating pork. Absolutely heady!

Marie is pragmatic about the deer that happily and voraciously chomp whatever unprotected fruits they can, though she now utilizes an organic

spray to discourage the animal diners. She took it all on... Trucks full of dirt, creating her own compost, planting, pruning, harvesting, and even the hardscape. Since she had watched concrete workers in her childhood, Marie surmised that she could just as easily read the directions on the bag, and do it herself. Brick, concrete, stone patios, ponds. You name, and it seems she's done it. Sometimes with help; sometimes on her own. She needed a meditation garden with the sound of water, so she created one. Now a gurgling pond and massive ferns create a private place to think and pray under the towering Deodar. The list goes on... multiple vegetable gardens tucked in the few places with enough sunshine, the arbor, the chicken coop (did you know that city code allows a few of these?), the poolside garden, the dining patio, the back yard pond and waterfall. I'm sure I forgot a few. The unusual part is that the design of the half acre parcel reveals itself only a bit at a time, like rooms in a pleasant maze, or a delightful gift to be unwrapped very slowly.

She laughs that all her garden plans stay in her head, as she doesn't have the inclination or patience to do a drawing first. She just looks and thinks and looks some more. She ferreted out how to obtain permits to "harvest" big Arroyo stones in Azusa, then delineating transition areas with stones loaded in the back of a pickup. How very fitting that this gardener would ask for a boulder as a recent birthday gift!

The Thompsons, gardener neighbors



One of many trees grown from seed towers over Marie Springer after only six years.

who have since passed away, noticed her joyful toil, and presented her with a magnificent purple magnolia and orchids from their extensive garden. Marie's one self-perceived deficiency, it seems, is the Latin names for her special plants. Somehow, though, she manages beautifully without them. She's been too busy planting and caring and learning from each one personally to keep those names in her head. Marie speaks very highly of the guidance and encouragement she received from Sherry and the staff at Home Depot's garden department in Monrovia. I, too, have sought her advice on several occasions.

Wonder what email will bring me to another hidden garden treasure next week! Keep 'em coming!

Have an interesting story idea? Contact Chris at Chris.Bertrand@MtWilsonObserver.com

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

By Pat Birdsall

One Stop Shopping . . .

I have an appointment this week with my doctor to discuss what medication he wants to put me on to lower my blood pressure. Actually it won't be much of a discussion, as I will probably just pick up a nearly illegible, little piece of white paper that I will be forced to take to the pharmacy of my choice.

Knowing that this was looming, I thought I would go to the Costco web site to get some information on these types of medications since they have a pretty comprehensive list of all types of drugs. After logging on, but before clicking "Pharmacy," something else caught my eye...the word "Funeral." FUNERAL! Curiosity overwhelmed me and I clicked on the button. I couldn't believe it... I was looking at a variety of caskets available for purchase! After I got over my initial shock, my warped sense of humor took over.

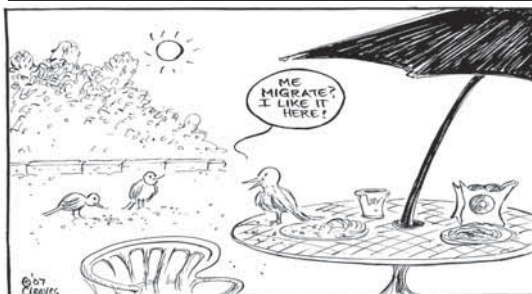
The top-of-the-line caskets were priced at only \$2,999.99. There is a little something for everyone. They offer "The Mother Casket," "The Lady of Guadalupe," and the ever popular "In God's Care Casket" which, by the way, is on special this week for the low price of only \$924.99! If cremation is an option, urns are also available for people and pets. They leave no stone unturned,

pardon the pun. Costco also offers food and beverages, so how far off can the actual "Funeral at Costco" be?

I frequently shop online at Amazon.com and after choosing something I want to purchase, I just click "Add to Shopping Cart." Guess what? Costco has the same option! You can add a casket or an urn to your cart and even request expedited shipping. Who delivers these things? I'm sure that most will go to a funeral home of one's choice, but what if you are preparing for your own inevitable demise and want to plan ahead so the kids won't be traumatized by the experience. Alas, I hardly think UPS will prop a casket up by your mailbox if you're not home.

Throughout the entire experience, especially after seeing the prices...only \$2999.99 and \$1299.99 for example, I could only think of one person. That person for those of you old enough to remember, was Earl Scheib of the "I can paint any car for only \$29.95" fame. This would be perfect for him. Then I remembered that Earl is no longer with us. You know what? He just might have chosen the "In God's Care Casket" ... with expedited shipping.

R.I.P. Earl.



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SPORTS

Sierra Madre Girls Softball Pump It Up

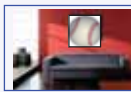


The SMGSA 10 and Under Girls and 12 and Under Girls will play July 6-8, 2007 in the 'B' State Championships. The games will be played at the "Big 8 Softball Complex" and Skytower Park in Lancaster, CA AND Best of the West Softball Complex in Palmdale. For more information visit their website at www.smsgsa.org.
- Photo By Lynda Ott-Albright

The Important Things In Life



Photo Courtesy of The Tiger Woods Foundation
Clockwise from right: Taz (Border Collie), Tiger Woods, Elin Woods, New Arrival Sam Alexis Woods and Yogi (Labradoodle)



View From The Couch

By Stanley J. Forrester

RETHINKING

The tragedy of this past weekend of the murder-suicide of a pro-wrestler Chris Benoit and his family has caused me to pause, reconsider, and revisit the issue of the use of steroids by professional athletes. Many would even challenge the WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) being considered a sport. Nonetheless, those deaths in Fayetteville, Georgia have caused a shock wave throughout the nation and the entire sports' world. Did the use of steroids contribute to the actions of the well respected athlete? That is a question which must be answered. The taking of human life, your own or someone else's is always a tragedy of epic proportion, but what happened at the Benoit home defies comprehension.

Many of the commentators have been discussing the high numbers of deaths of members of the WWE under the age of 47 in the last decade. From the reports that I have heard it seems that the number is just under 30. A very high number for a very small group. Congressional concerns are legitimate but if steroids are at all involved in the actions of this man, then they should be taken out of sports, but not by Congress.

Owners of professional sports teams make millions of dollars based upon the abilities of the professional athlete. Therefore, the health and well being of the athlete should be their primary concern. Unfortunately, in most instances that is not the case.

Just this week we saw a former

professional football player testifying before Congress regarding the need to improve benefits for the retired player. Badly needed medical benefits are not being provided. Young men who make their teams millions tell tales of how they no longer stand up without assistance, a malady caused by playing pro football and yet medical benefits are not provided.

This is wrong. Whatever the sport, each player when he retires should have life time health benefits. Congress should not have to tell the owners to take care of their own. The action to clean up professional sports, monitoring the use of drugs and provide for the injured athlete should come from the owners. Everyone knows that pro sports can be dangerous. In football, for example, the life expectancy of a player is shortening depending upon the position that he plays.

The owners are lagging in meeting their responsibility. This behavior from owners is not new. When it came time to pay players, in baseball, the owners took their time causing Curt Flood to sue. Many took offense to Flood's statement when he said that when playing professional ball, one was a slave - a well paid slave, but a slave nonetheless. Even though they are well paid, for owners to ignore the needs of athletes and turn a blind eye to drug abuse for the sake of a dollar is unconscionable. The health and well being of the players is a matter which must take the highest priority.

A word from Sierra Madre Fire Marshall Rich Snyder:

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Also, when cooking outdoors:

- Watch Kids - No Playing Near Grills
- Watch for Grease Flare Ups
- Place Lid Back on BBQ
- Don't Wear Long Sleeves



After enjoying your charcoal barbecue, remember the briquettes remain extremely hot, even after you are finished cooking. Hot coals can result in severe burns if not handled properly.

When disposing of your barbecue briquettes, always make sure that they are completely cooled. Use water to make sure that briquettes are completely extinguished and never bury hot coals or place them into a trash can. Store unused charcoal in a Cool Dry Place

If you catch fire, don't run - stop-drop and roll to smother flames



Don't Forget: Bands Will Rock Memorial Park

See Page 2 details

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