

Mountain Views News

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

Duarte

Monrovia

Pasadena

Altadena

South Pasadena

San Marino

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026

VOLUME 20 NO. 2

St. Rita School

NORTH
ON
BALDWIN



Sierra Madre's
Catholic School



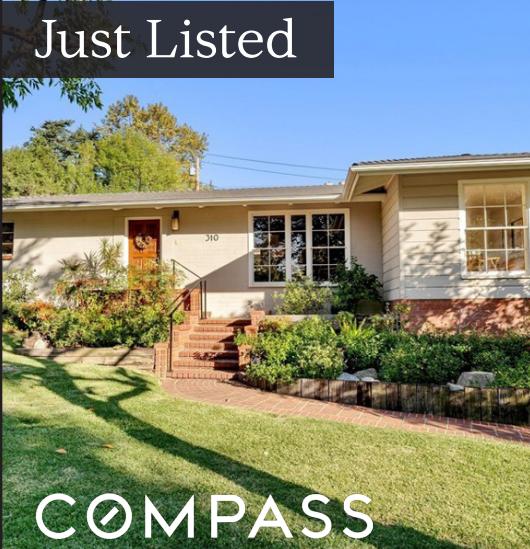
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- Advanced Technology
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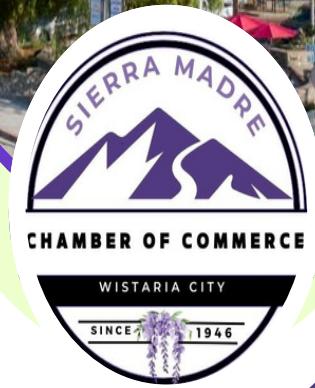
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Sierra Madre Police Chief Barrientos

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Weather Wise

6-Day Forecast Sierra Madre, Ca.



Sun	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
Mon:	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
Tues:	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
Wed:	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
Thur:	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
Fri:	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service



SIERRA MADRE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

January 13, 2026 5:30 pm

THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS!

As part of the City of Sierra Madre's COVID-19 transparency efforts and The Brown Act provides the public with an opportunity to make public comments at any public meeting. Public comment may also be made by e-mail to PublicComment@CityofSierraMadre.com by 3:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

Emails will be acknowledged at the Council meeting and filed into public record. The public may also comment in person at the meeting.

The meetings will be streamed live on Foothills Media website at foothillsmedia.org/sierramadre and broadcast on Government Access Channel 3 (Spectrum)..

1630 AM EMERGENCY RADIO & Free on-air publicity for local events

Sierra Madre's EMERGENCY radio station is now accepting scripts for Public Service Announcements (PSAs) about community events. PSAs will be broadcast on the air at no charge. The station operates 24/7 and can be heard at 1630 on the AM dial.

Any local non-profit or non-commercial organization can have their event information broadcast to the public on Sierra Madre Community Information Radio. The station covers the city of Sierra Madre, plus surrounding areas of Pasadena, Arcadia, and Monrovia.

Your event must:

- Benefit a non-commercial or non-profit entity
- Be open to the public
- Be of general interest to local citizens

Just write a Public Service Announcement that describes your event and e-mail it to radio@cityofsierramadre.com.



*This week at the
Sierra Madre
Public Library
December 29—January 3*

December 29—January 2

Library Closed for Holiday—No Services

Saturday, January 3

Library hours— 10:00am—6:00pm

Saturday, January 31

Last day library is open at 350 W. Sierra Madre Blvd

February 2—May 31, 2026

Library is closed for relocation

Read, Discover, Connect
@ Sierra Madre Public Library
350 W Sierra Madre Blvd.
(626) 355-7186

WALKING SIERRA MADRE: The Social Side

by Deanne Davis

THE ROSE PARADE FEATURED FLOATS DECORATED WITH APPROXIMATELY 18 MILLION FLOWERS!

The 2026 Rose Parade was the best one ever. The bravery of all those people in the marching bands many without rain ponchos was astonishing. To walk 5 1/2 miles in a uniform that was heavy to begin with and then increasingly sodden with the unceasing rain and drizzle was absolutely awesome! It was the 11th time the Parade has been rained on and the last time was twenty years ago.



The horses didn't seem to enjoy the rain and I was so sorry not to be able to see the Rose Court ladies' dresses. That emerald green part I could see was gorgeous. OK, a few totally off the wall comments:

1. Where did they get all those plastic raincoats that so many, not all, of the bands had? There must have been thousands of those things.
2. The off-hand comment about the band instruments, "When the tubas are full of water, they just turn them upside down and dump it out!"
3. It's a really good thing that the current popular hair style of young women is long, straight hair because it worked perfectly in the rain.
4. The flowers really did love the rain. They all looked so bright and vibrant.

The theme of the Parade, The Magic in Teamwork, to honor all the first responders and those who lost everything in the Altadena, Pacific Palisades fires was wonderful. What was not wonderful was that the Grand Marshall of the Parade, Magic Johnson, was stuck in this little covered car and all we saw of him was his enormous hand waving out the window!

Our float, Pancake Breakfast, was fabulous. The picture this week, taken by my official photographer, Leah Davis, shows just part of the float, the firehouse dog in his helmet and the hose which is about to supply syrup to those enormous pancakes. A winner, of course, the Judges Award. Another big thank you to designer, Marcus Pollitz, for this really amazing float, and to all the fantastic people in the Sierra Madre Rose Float Association.

Another impressive group was the Arabian Horse Association of Sierra Madre. These horses are so beautiful and then to find out that they frequently serve as support animals as they are extremely sensitive is even more impressive.

So delighted to see the Budweiser Clydesdale horses. Favorite floats were the Louisiana float with the chef cooking crabs in a big pot and crabs on the sides waving. The Trader Joe's float with the fireworks, UPS with the sea horses (a favorite sea creature of mine). So happy to see animals depicted on so many of the floats. So much talent to imagine these floats, to plan what to put on them and all the animation. I really enjoyed every minute, especially as I was in my nice warm house with all the coffee I wanted and not a drop of water on me anywhere.

Speaking of creativity, January is International Creativity Month. Being creative in the first month of the year can set you up for a year of success, according to one of my favorite columnists, Harvey Mackay. A little more from Harvey about creativity: "Creativity is a fascinating and essential aspect of human potential. Minds are like parachutes, not much good unless they are open!"

"Steve Jobs, Apple's co-founder, envisioned a device that would not only make calls but also serve as a portable computer, music player and camera. Needless to say, this vision required a blend of creativity and technical prowess, pushing the boundaries of what a phone could do."

Thanks to Steve, we all have one of these that lives in our hand, communicating with everybody we care about all day and night, taking pictures (I'm extremely partial to sunrises, sunsets and family members) and we never have to wonder where our kids are, we just text them! Think of days of yore when we had to try to find a phone booth, be sure we had change, the phone actually worked, and we were already late and our parents were already mad! Ah, the good old days!

We have been enjoying the first full moon of the year, best seen last Saturday, the Wolf Moon, so called because this time of year wolves did a lot of howling. See, creativity at its best!

Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes and having fun. Watch any of the shows on the Food Network, especially the ones with kids, and you'll see people fearlessly going where they've never gone before, using amazing creativity.

It's going to be an exciting year, friends and neighbors, and don't forget:

In a world where you can be anything, everything, you want to be, Be Kind! No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.

My book page: Amazon.com: Deanne Davis "Star of Wonder" a delightful Christmas Kindle story, where four lonely people find love following a strange new star on Christmas Eve, is there. A nice love story is never a bad idea, even after Christmas!



A PERFECT VALENTINE'S DATE:

WINE, CUISINE, AND COMMUNITY

Looking for a memorable Valentine's gift? The Friends of the Sierra Madre Library invite couples and friends to sip, savor, and celebrate at their 51st Wine & Cuisine Tasting on Saturday, February 7, 2026, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Held just days before Valentine's Day, the event offers an ideal evening out, whether you're planning a romantic night with a partner or a stylish gathering with friends. The tasting takes place at the Baldwin Avenue Gallery (The BAG), located at 12 N. Baldwin Avenue in the heart of Sierra Madre, where art-filled surroundings set the mood for conversation and connection.

Guests will enjoy a thoughtfully curated selection of wines paired with cuisine tastings, creating a relaxed yet elegant experience that feels tailor-made for a special night. With Valentine's Day just around the corner, it's a chance to toast love, friendship, and community all in one place.

Beyond the romance, the Wine & Cuisine Tasting is an important fundraiser supporting the Sierra Madre Public Library. Proceeds help fund library programs, collections, and services that benefit residents of all ages, making this an evening that feels as good as it tastes.

The Friends of the Sierra Madre Library are known for events that blend culture, community, and celebration, and this annual tasting continues that tradition—offering a meaningful way to enjoy a night out while giving back. Community members are encouraged to secure tickets early for this popular event. All proceeds benefit the Sierra Madre Public Library. Learn more about the 51st Wine and Cuisine Tasting, and learn about the library's Grand Reopening June 6, 2026 at www.sierramadrelibraryfriends.org. Tickets are \$100 each and can be purchased at <https://austria.events/51stWineCuisineTasting>

Wine lovers and Valentine's planners alike are encouraged to secure tickets early for this popular February event, as tickets are limited. All proceeds benefit the Sierra Madre Public Library. Learn more at www.sierramadrelibraryfriends.org.

Pasadena Altadena

News From Your Community For Your Community

PPHD Urges Community to Get Flu Vaccine

The Pasadena Public Health Department (PPHD) urges everyone to protect themselves by getting the flu vaccine as cases and hospital admissions increase across the nation, including California. A new strain of influenza, known as Influenza A (H3N2) subclade K, is spreading worldwide and has been detected in California. Most flu cases in California that have been tested are caused by H3N2.

PPHD encourages everyone to take steps now to protect themselves and their families. Everyone 6 months and older who has not yet received a flu shot is encouraged to get fully vaccinated.

"Getting vaccinated and quickly starting treatment if you are sick are the best ways to avoid serious illness and hospital stays," said Dr. Parveen Kaur, Acting Health Officer.

It's not too late to get vaccinated. The 2025-26 flu vaccine can help prevent severe illness if you catch the flu. Current influenza vaccines are expected to offer protection against severe disease, lowering people's risk of hospitalization.

What To Do If You Get Sick:

- Get tested as soon as possible if you have flu-like symptoms.
- If you are at high risk for serious illness, consult with your healthcare provider and start antiviral medicine right away. Do not wait for test results. Medicines like oseltamivir (Tamiflu) or baloxavir can help you recover faster and avoid potential complications.

- Stay home if sick until you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication to prevent spread of influenza viruses.

"As flu cases rise, we encourage everyone to get vaccinated and seek care as soon as possible if you are feeling sick," said Manuel Carmona, Director of Public Health. "These steps can help keep you and our community healthy."

Stay Informed

You can check flu activity in California by visiting the California Department of Public Health Respiratory Virus Dashboard.

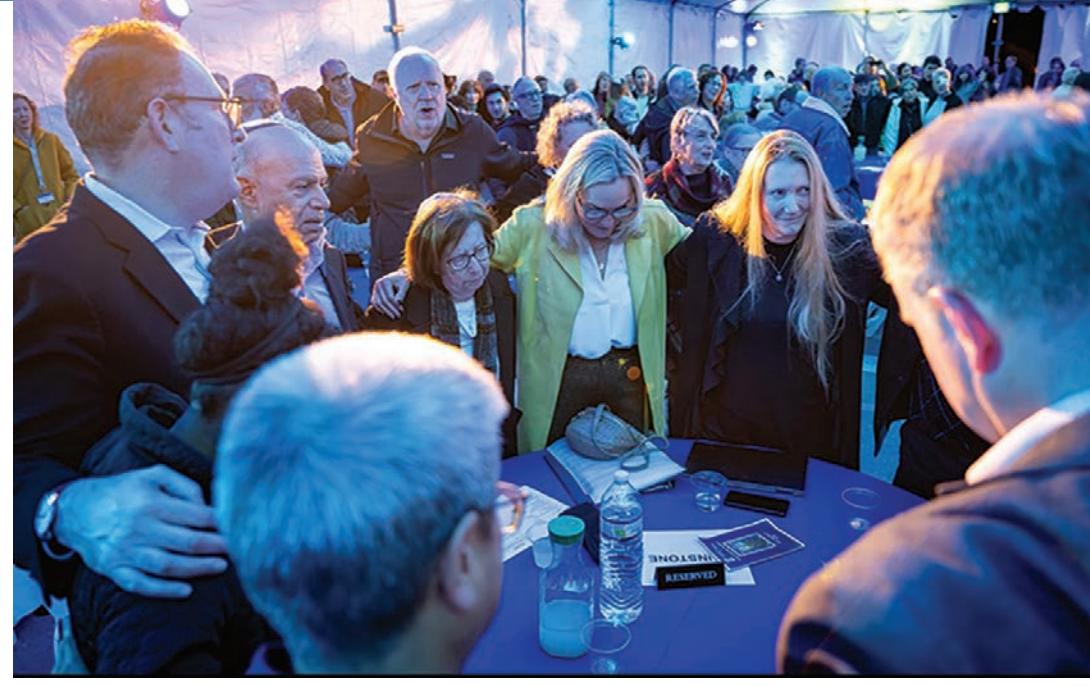
To get your flu shot, contact your doctor, local pharmacy, or visit MyTurn.ca.gov.

South Pas Library Senior Book Club

The South Pasadena Senior Book Club is set to hold a book discussion group for older adults Jan. 21. The club will discuss James City by Percival Everett. A membership registration form is available at:

southpasadenaca.gov. Attendees must be Senior Center members. Membership questions may be directed to Senior Center staff at (626) 403-7360 or seniorcenter@southpasadenaca.gov.

The Senior Book Club meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 10:00 a.m. in the South Pasadena Senior Center at 1102 Oxley Street, South Pasadena.



Barger issues Statement on Loss of Pasadena Synagogue

Supervisor Kathryn Barger announced that she had attended the Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center Commemoration Tuesday evening, standing in solidarity with the community as it marked the one-year anniversary of the loss of its synagogue in the Eaton Fire.

She issued the following statement, reflecting on those shared moments:

"Today is not only a remembrance of what was lost, but a recognition of the resilience of a community that has chosen faith, connection, and hope in the face of profound loss.

The destruction of this synagogue was felt far beyond its walls, touching the entire Altadena and Pasadena community. Sacred spaces like the Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center matter because they are anchors of belonging. Rebuilding is about restoring a gathering place where traditions are carried forward and future generations are shaped.

As recovery continues, my commitment remains clear: to stand with survivors, remove barriers to rebuilding, and ensure the process is people-centered and responsive to what residents need to heal. It is an honor to stand with this community today and every step of the way."

Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center (PJTC) will remain



Supervisor Kathryn Barger accepts an award from Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center Rabbi Joshua Rother honoring her leadership and support in the Temple's recovery after the Eaton Fire (Photo credit: Michael Owen Baker/Los Angeles County)

rooted in Pasadena/Altadena, building on the legacy of our original site while embracing a new chapter for our community. It will most likely remain at 1434 N Altadena Dr. PJTC members said.

According to their website a Rebuilding Committee was put together consisting of Clark Linstone, PJTC President and former COO of a major corporation; member Terry Tornek, former Pasadena Mayor and City Planner; member Todd Levine, Engineer and Project Manager for major companies like Disney and Universal; Jonathan Brier, son of a PJTC member and professional architect; Jonah Dicker, general contractor with expertise in construction and hospitality development and associate of PJTC member Ezra Callahan; Michael Silver, PJTC member and experienced business and legal affairs executive; Rabbi Josh Rother.

For more information visit: pjtc.net.

Pasadena Seeks Input for City Manager Recruitment



Following the announcement of City Manager Miguel Márquez retirement, the Pasadena City Council announced Monday they have initiated a nationwide recruitment for the city's next City Manager. To lead this executive recruitment, the Council has engaged WBCP Inc.

City Council members are also inviting the community for input on the core attributes, leadership qualities, and technical strengths the City should prioritize to support our organization, community partnerships, and culture.

Links to the survey in multiple languages can be found at: cityofpasadena.net/city-manager/news.

Organizers are asking for a response by Monday, January 26. Responses will remain anonymous and will be used to develop interview

questions and provide guidance to the City Council on the selection.

Applications for City Manager will be accepted through Thursday, January 29 and the most qualified candidates will be invited to interviews in early March. For more information about the position, view the recruitment brochure.

If you have questions about the recruitment or would like to provide additional input beyond the survey, contact recruiter Wendi Brown at Wendi@wbcpink.com

Pasadena Heritage Upcoming Events

Jazz Night at the Historic Blinn House

Join Pasadena Heritage January 22 for an evening of live music, French-inspired bites, and festive beverages at the historic Blinn House. The event is set to start at 6 p.m. and end at 8 p.m.

Step into the 1906 Blinn House as we transform it into an intimate Parisian-style jazz club, featuring live music performed by the Art Deco Entertainment group, The Bohemians. Enjoy a lively reception with excellent music, French-inspired hors d'oeuvres, and festive libations in one of Pasadena's most iconic historic homes.

The Blinn House is located at 160 N Oakland Ave. Pasadena.

For more information and tickets visit: pasadenaheritage.org.

Playhouse Village Walking Tour

Join Pasadena Heritage January 24 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for a walking tour of the Playhouse Village Historic District, which traces Pasadena's eastward expansion during the 1920s and 1930s, when the city transitioned from an agricultural hub to a thriving tourist destination. Shaped by the construction of the grand Civic Center, this area features a variety of architectural styles and several notable landmarks, including the Pasadena Playhouse itself.

The tour will last approximately 1.5 hours and cover a walking distance of about 1 mile. Please note, for the comfort of all guests, dogs are not permitted on Pasadena Heritage walking tours.

For more information and tickets visit: pasadenaheritage.org.

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Pasadena Neighbor Day



The City of Pasadena Economic Development Division and The Nextdoors (Pasadena Band pictured) invite the community to the fourth Annual Pasadena Neighbor Day on Sunday, January 18, 2026, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., at Wild Parrot Brewing Company, 2302 E. Colorado Blvd. We encourage residents and local businesses to participate in spreading the mission of getting to know their neighbors better and encourage local gatherings.

The event in the Lamanda Park neighborhood will feature four music acts from Pasadena and surrounding communities. Whether the folks next door, the owners and employees of local businesses, or community representatives, it's a day to remember that we are happier, closer, and safer when we know and appreciate our neighbors.

District 4 Councilmember Gene Masuda notes, "Pasadena Neighbor Day is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our community, strengthen connections, and support local businesses. It's a day to come together, have fun, and remember the power of being good neighbors."

"We are always looking for ways to bring more vitality into our neighborhood commercial districts, and Lamanda Park is a perfect neighborhood to host the main event of the day. We are excited to support Pasadena Neighbor Day which brings business and community together," said City of Pasadena Economic Development Director David Klug.

Pasadena Neighbor Day and Nextdoors co-founder Russell Mark says "the main event at Wild Parrot has become a wonderful tradition and centerpiece to the event. In 2025 the day also served as a de-facto Eaton Fire day of healing and community support, featuring several bands booked pre-fire who lost their homes but still rallied

Performances include The Nextdoors, Licata Brothers, Nina Lares, and Jason Heath and the Greedy Souls. For the event schedule and details, and to register your own event visit: PasadenaNeighborDay.com

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AROUND SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

NEWS BRIEFS

ROSE BOWL LAWSUIT

LOS ANGELES (CNS) - The Rose Bowl Operating Co. and the city of Pasadena state in new court papers that the UC Regents have no basis for seeking to compel arbitration of their lawsuit alleging that UCLA is wrongfully exploring options for a new home football venue, specifically SoFi Stadium in Inglewood.

In court papers filed Thursday with Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Joseph Lipner, the RBOC and the city contend that the regents are focusing on an alternative dispute resolution provision of the agreement that is "deliberately and particularly narrow" and does not take into consideration the contract as a whole.

"Taken together, these provisions reflect an ADR [alternative dispute resolution] mechanism that clearly and expressly is not applicable to an attempted termination that threatens hundreds of millions of dollars in public investment and long-term municipal revenue," the RBOC/city attorneys state in their court papers.

The provision instead is limited to expeditiously resolving routine, curable performance disputes, according to the RBOC/city lawyers' court papers.

"The parties clearly intended that the ADR provision would not cover termination disputes such as the one here and thus the motion must be denied," the RBOC/city lawyers further contend in their pleadings.

The arguments by the city and the RBOC contrast with those of the UC Regents' lawyers who, on behalf of UCLA, state that the plaintiffs are bound by an arbitration agreement and that "no exceptions apply to RBOC's claims."

The UC Regents attorneys say UCLA did not deny talking with SoFi Stadium.

"After all, UCLA has a duty to constantly assess what is best for the university, its football team, its fans, its alumni and its students," according to the UC Regents' attorneys' pleadings. "Rather, as UCLA simply informed RBOC, the agreement does not prevent UCLA from having discussions with other venues."

When UCLA promptly responded to the RBOC's concerns and said it would work with it in good faith to try to resolve various issues between the parties, the RBOC instead sued and lost in an attempt to get a temporary restraining order, the UC Regents lawyers further state.

The RBOC and the city also are opposing a separate motion by newly added defendants Kroenke Sports & Entertainment LLC and Stadco LA LLC to compel arbitration, arguing in their court papers that the operators of SoFi Stadium are "complete nonsignatories to the governing contract" and that their request "fails at the threshold."

A hearing on the motions to compel arbitration is set for Jan. 22.

The suit filed Oct. 29 seeks to enforce the terms of a lease agreement the plaintiff claims locks UCLA into playing football at the venue until 2044, which the UC Regents attorneys acknowledge in their court papers.

According to the lawsuit, UCLA has expressed its intent "to abandon the Rose Bowl Stadium and relocate its home football games to SoFi Stadium in Inglewood."

"This is not only a clear break of the contract that governs the parties' relationship, but it is also a profound betrayal of trust, of tradition, and of the very community that helped build UCLA football," the lawsuit states.

MONROVIA OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARDS \$50,000 GRANT TO THE CITY OF MONROVIA FOR BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY PROGRAM

Monrovia, Calif. - The City of Monrovia announced today that it has received a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to support its Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program. The program will promote safe practices for pedestrians and bicyclists and emphasize drivers' responsibility to look out for other people using roads and paths. The grant program runs through September 2026.

City Councilmember Edward Belden shared, "Our community is really excited about this and can't wait to share our great ideas to help lead to more walking, biking and 'rolling' throughout our pedestrian-friendly community."

"What began as an idea from community members turned into bi-annual events involving everyone including the Monrovia Unified School District, Police Department, Public Works and others. We are very grateful to the California Office of Traffic Safety for this opportunity to expand and enhance the program!" said Monrovia City Manager Dylan Feik.

Grant funds will support various activities focused on bicycle and pedestrian safety, including but not limited to the following:

- Participating in bicycle and pedestrian safety campaigns such as California Pedestrian Safety Month and National Bike Month
- Participating in National Walk, Bike, Roll to School events
- Planning and hosting demonstration events, like bicycle rodeos and community bicycle rides, that encourage and teach safe riding skills
- Community bicycle "audits" of local streets
- Community safety presentations and distribution of educational material
- And more!

"Through safety programs and strong partnerships, we are working toward a future where everyone walking and biking in California can travel safely," OTS Director Stephanie Dougherty said. "By supporting projects that encourage people to prioritize safety in their daily choices, we are creating a strong road safety culture together."

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS, EXPANDING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION

Sierra Madre, CA — January 8, 2026 — Cancer Support Community Greater San Gabriel Valley (CSC) announces the appointment of four members to its Board of Directors: Dr. Marwa Kilani, Melissa Alcorn, Kandice Lin, and Valerie Mendoza. Each brings exceptional leadership, expertise, and a passion for CSC's mission to ensure that no one faces cancer alone.

CSC continues to welcome more women leaders into its governance. The addition of these four accomplished women underscores CSC's ongoing commitment to fostering inclusive leadership and strengthening its ability to meet the evolving needs of various demographic groups facing cancer in the greater Pasadena area.



Melissa Alcorn

Melissa Alcorn, a long-time supporter and returning leader within the organization, reflected on CSC's growth:

"I'm excited to move forward and see what the next six years bring. I look back to 2010 when the 'Wellness Community' came close to closing its doors and here we are 16 years later—we own our own building, we're serving more and more than we ever have, and the calendar is loaded with free support groups, education workshops, and activities! We've come a long way!"

Kandice Lin, an Attorney with Aguirre, PLC in San Marino, shared her personal motivation for joining the Board:

"I would like to serve on the CSC BOD to stand with and help strengthen an organization whose goals and vision I profoundly relate to—a desire to help those impacted by cancer with strength, connection, and hope."



Kandice Lin

Valerie Mendoza, the Chief Administrative Officer for Rusnak Auto Group emphasized her dedication to community engagement:

"I want to facilitate more community partnerships with CSC and other local nonprofit boards I sit on to make a bigger impact in helping those who are served by CSC."



Valerie Mendoza

Serge Melkizian, CSC's Board President, expressed his enthusiasm for the new Directors and the future of the organization:

"We're thrilled to welcome Marwa, Melissa, Kandice, and Valerie to our Board. Their leadership and passion will help guide CSC as we expand our programs and strengthen our impact across the community."

Continuing Board Directors include Steve Ralph (Vice President) Sandi Mejia Ramirez (Treasurer), Vicki Laidig (Secretary), Ellen Knell, Ph.D., George Mack, Mark Meahl, Susan Reynolds, Elliot Sainer, Charlotte Streng, Ronald Valenta, Jay Wagener, and Kristin Windell.



Marwa Kilani

CSC remains steadfast in delivering high-quality support, education, and resources to ensure that every individual impacted by cancer finds connection, empowerment, and hope, at no charge. For more information about CSC's programs or leadership, please visit www.cancersupportsgv.org.



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Mountain Views News

Sierra Madre Arcadia Duarte Monrovia Pasadena Altadena South Pasadena San Marino

5

Good Reasons To Support Your Community Newspaper!

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2 We have something for everyone!

News and events in Sierra Madre, Pasadena, Arcadia and around the San Gabriel Valley. Special Sections on: Education & Youth Senior Living Food & Wine Best Friends the 4 legged kind Life, Health, Good Living and of course...OPINIONS!

3 Every Week Since 2007

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www.mtnviewsnews.com

HELPING FIRE SURVIVORS ACCESS NEW SUPPORT

California has passed new laws to help Eaton and Palisades Fire survivors get back on their feet. These laws provide assistance with important topics like housing and temporary shelter, rebuilding homes, and access to resources and services. Use this page to learn what each law means for you.



Aerial view of construction in Altadena.

PROTECTING HOMEOWNERS AND TENANTS AFTER A DISASTER

AB 299 (Gabriel)

The bill allows people displaced by disasters to stay in hotels, motels, or short-term rentals for up to 270 consecutive days without being considered tenants, helping survivors remain housed while making it easier for operators to extend stays.

SB 610 (Perez)

Strengthens disaster protections for tenants, mobile home residents, and borrowers by requiring landlords to clear debris and maintain habitable conditions, guaranteeing tenants the right to return at pre-disaster rents, and providing mobile home residents with rent refunds, evacuation relief, and relocation benefits if parks close.

AB 851 (McKinnor)

Strengthens disaster protections for tenants, mobile home residents, and borrowers by requiring landlords to clear debris and maintain habitable conditions, guaranteeing tenants the right to return at pre-disaster rents, and providing mobile home residents with rent refunds, evacuation relief, and relocation benefits if parks close.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF AND MORTGAGE FORBEARANCE TO WILDFIRE SURVIVORS

AB 238 (Harabedian)

Requires mortgage servicers to offer up to 12 months of forbearance to borrowers facing financial hardship from the January 2025 Los Angeles wildfire disaster.

AB 245 (Gipson)

Extends the time for households to rebuild homes or businesses after a disaster without triggering a property tax increase and prevents owners from being taxed on the higher, undamaged 2025 assessed value.

SB 293 (Pérez)

Extends the deadline for homeowners affected by the 2025 Los Angeles fires to update property ownership records and apply intergenerational transfer exclusions (Propositions 58, 193, or 19) from six months to three years, helping them avoid unintended tax penalties.

SB 663 (Allen)

Clarifies property tax exemptions for low-income veterans, churches, and nonprofits rebuilding after the 2025 Winter Fires.

HELPING WORKERS RECOVER

AB 338 (Solache)

Provides funding to support wildfire recovery in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties by investing in workforce development, education, high-road training partnerships, and supportive services for underemployed and unemployed residents.

MAKING IT EASIER TO REBUILD

AB 462 (Lowenthal)

Streamlines accessory dwelling unit (ADU) approvals in the Coastal Zone by requiring coastal permit decisions within 60 days, removing unnecessary Coastal Commission appeals, and allowing ADUs to receive occupancy certificates before a primary home is rebuilt in disaster areas.

AB 818 (Ávila Farías)

Speeds up local permitting after disasters by requiring decisions within 10 business days for manufactured, modular, or detached ADUs placed on private lots during home reconstruction.

SB 625 (Wahab)

Prevents homeowners' associations from delaying or blocking the rebuilding of homes destroyed in disasters based on design differences.

SB 676 (Limon)

Expedites administrative and judicial reviews under CEQA for projects that repair, restore, demolish, or replace wildfire-damaged properties in state-declared emergency areas, beginning January 1, 2027.

SB 782 (Perez)

Streamlines the creation of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing and Climate Resilience Districts to speed up funding for disaster recovery projects and programs.

MAKING INSURANCE WORK BETTER FOR HOMEOWNERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

SB 495 (Allen)

Requires insurers to pay 60% of personal property coverage, up to \$350,000, without an itemized claim after a total loss in a declared disaster and extends the deadline to submit proof of loss from 60 to 100 days.

SB 547 (Perez)

Prohibits insurers from canceling or refusing to renew commercial property insurance for one year after a state of emergency if the property is within or adjacent to a wildfire-affected area.

CRACKING DOWN ON LOOTING AND FIRST RESPONDER IMPERSONATORS

AB 468 (Gabriel)

Increases criminal penalties for looting in evacuation zones, applying enhanced penalties for one year after an evacuation order and for three years while a damaged residence is being repaired or rebuilt.

SB 571 (Archuleta)

Makes it a crime to fraudulently impersonate a first responder to access evacuation zones during an emergency, aiming to prevent looting and related crimes.

REDUCING THE RISK OF CATASTROPHIC WILDFIRE

AB 888 (Calderon)

Establishes the California Safe Homes Grant Program to help low-income homeowners replace roofs with fire-safe materials and fund defensible space vegetation clearing projects.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH

Mountain Views News Saturday, January 10, 2026



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(626) 355-3463
Head of School: Joanne Harabedian
E-mail address: jharabedian@alvernoheights.org

Principal: Aimee Dyrek
holyangelsarcadia.net

High Point Academy
1720 Kinneloa Canyon Road
Pasadena, Ca. 91107
Head of School: Gary Stern 626-798-8989
website: www.highpointacademy.org

La Salle College Preparatory
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(626) 351-8951 website: www.lasallehs.org
Principal Ernest Siy

Monrovia High School
325 East Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016
(626) 471-2800 Principal Darvin Jackson
Email: schools@monrovia.k12.ca.us

Odyssey Charter School
725 W. Altadena Dr. Altadena, Ca. 91001
(626) 229-0993 Head of School: Lauren O'Neill
website: www.odysseycharterschool.org

Pasadena High School
2925 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.
(626) 396-5880 Principal: Dr. Eric Barba
website: <http://phs.pusd.us>

St. Rita Catholic School
322 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca.
91024
Principal: Jon McMaster (626) 355-6114
mcmaster@st-ritaschool.org
Website: www.st-ritaschool.org

Sierra Madre Elementary School
141 W. Highland Ave, Sierra Madre, Ca.
91024
(626) 355-1428
Principal: Dr. Jodi Marchesso
E-mail address: marchesso.jodi@pusd.us

Sierra Madre Middle School
160 N. Canon Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024
(626) 836-2947 Principal: Garrett Newsom
E-mail address: newsom.garrett@pusd.us

Walden School
74 S San Gabriel Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91107 (626) 792-6166
www.waldenschool.net

Weizmann Day School
1434 N. Altadena Dr. Pasadena, Ca. 91107
(626) 797-0204
Lisa Feldman: Head of School

Wilson Middle School
300 S. Madre St. Pasadena, Ca. 91107
(626) 449-7390 Principal: Ruth Essel
E-mail address: resseln@pusd.us

Pasadena Unified School District
351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena, Ca. 91109
(626) 396-3600 Website: www.pusd@pusd.us

Arcadia Unified School District
234 Campus Dr., Arcadia, Ca. 91007
(626) 821-8300 Website: www.ausd.net

Monrovia Unified School District
325 E. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, Ca. 91016
(626) 471-2000 Website: www.monroviaschools.net

Duarte Unified School District
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(626) 599-5000 Website: www.duarte.k12.ca.us



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www.CancerSupportSGV.org
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Ms. Rose Navarro, Principal

2660 East Orange Grove Blvd.

Pasadena, Ca 91107

626-793-2089

https://school.abvmpasadena.org/

Barnhart School

240 W. Colorado Blvd Arcadia, Ca. 91007

(626) 446-5588

Head of School: Tonya Beilstein

Kindergarten - 8th grade

[website: www.barnhartschool.org](http://www.barnhartschool.org)

Bethany Christian School

93 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024

(626) 355-3527

Preschool-TK-8th Grade

Principal: Jonathan Hawes

[website: www.bcsliions.org](http://www.bcsliions.org)

Clairbourn School

8400 Huntington Drive

San Gabriel, CA 91775

Phone: 626-286-3108 ext. 172

FAX: 626-286-1528

Marianne Ryan

administration@clairbourn.org

E-mail: jhawes@clairbourn.org

Foothill Oaks Academy

822 E. Bradbourne Ave., Duarte, CA 91010

(626) 301-9809

Principal: Nancy Lopez

www.foothilloaksacademy.org

office@foothilloaksacademy.org

Frostig School

971 N. Altadena Drive Pasadena, CA 91107

(626) 791-1255

Head of School: Jenny Janetzke

[Email: jenny@frostig.org](mailto:jenny@frostig.org)

The Gooden School

192 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024

(626) 355-2410

Head of School, Jo-Anne Woolner

[website: www.goodenschool.org](http://www.goodenschool.org)

Holy Angels School

PK-8th Grade

360 Campus Drive

Arcadia, CA 91007

626-447-6312

office@holyangelsarcadia.org

Clairbourn School

8400 Huntington Drive

San Gabriel, CA 91775

Phone: 626-286-3108 ext. 172

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<a href="mailto:office@holyangels



Peter A. Dills
<https://poldlink/1116885432>

HAVE YOU MET JOEY?

WELL, YOU SHOULD.

Joey runs The Diplomat (Lemon and Myrtle), and judging by the steady stream of calls and comments I get on my podcast (Dining with Dills), plenty of people already believe the Diplomat is the best place to eat in Monrovia. Enough people said it, so I checked it out—and I'll say this right up front: what I had wasn't just good, it was great. Hold on, I'll get to that.

Joey has been in the restaurant business for years. As we talked shop, he mentioned several former spots, including Mediterranean Garden Grill, a restaurant on Foothill that my father reviewed years ago—back before I taught him everything he knew. LOL.

(Red Bull was absolutely kicking in.)

Walking in, I had my eye on the lulu kabob. I'm a kabob guy and I'm rarely disappointed, no matter where I dine. But Joey was there, took one look at me, calmly removed the menu from my hands and said, "Bring Peter the lamb chops."

Smart move.

Not good. Great.

New Zealand export lamb, under 25 pounds—which means tender, flavorful, and cooked just right. This is the kind of dish that makes conversation stop.

If lamb or kabobs aren't your thing, don't worry. The menu has range—well-executed proteins, familiar comfort dishes, and enough variety to keep both adventurous diners and traditionalists happy. This isn't a one-note kitchen.

The room itself may surprise you. If you're expecting traditional Middle Eastern, Lebanese, or Armenian décor—photos of the homeland, flags, that sort of thing—you won't find it here. The Diplomat feels more like a modern distillery or upscale neighborhood spot. Joey summed it up best: "Great food and sinful drinks."

Alright then. Sign me up—just as soon as Dry January is over.

I did spend some quality time with the drink menu. If you're into high-end bourbons and gins, The Diplomat is a serious contender. And if you're more of a Coors Light person? Five bucks. That same beer runs nine dollars just about everywhere else.

I rounded things out with a side of eggplant and rice and walked away more than satisfied. Again, you'll find plenty of Pita sandwiches, chicken and that sort of familiar food plus Baklava!.

Is it the best restaurant in Monrovia?

I won't pretend I've eaten everywhere. But I will say this: what I had was excellent, the prices were fair, the drink menu is legit, and Joey clearly knows what he's doing.

Check out The Diplomat soon.

And if Joey takes the menu out of your hands—let him.

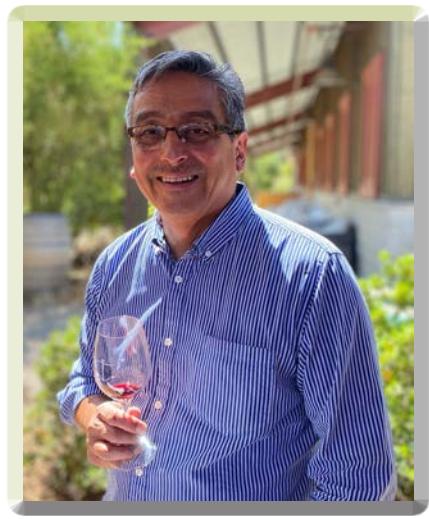
Hey All Pizza Week is coming up, shoot me an email on your favorite spot. thechefknows@yahoo.com

THE TASTING ROOM

TRYnuary!

I'm Gustavo Lira, Tasting Room Manager and Wine Buyer at The Bottle Shop in Sierra Madre with another wine and spirits selection.

It's January and for lots of people that means giving up alcohol during the month. We've all heard reports on studies of the health effects of alcohol consumption. Unless you do a deep dive into the various studies, you probably don't have a clear understanding of the evidence. To help sort things out, I advise you to read Robert M. Kaplan's article on why he is skipping Dry January after weighing the scientific evidence. Google it online.



My take on this is the same as my viewpoint on tasting wine – balanced and in moderation. I adore wines that are balanced. I adore wines that exhibit alcohol in moderation. By balance I mean that a wine has good fruit – not too rich and not too austere. The wine has a balance in the acidity that is present. There's a balance throughout the wine that is pleasing and attractive. In addition to the balance, I love wines that aren't blockbusters with regards to alcohol. I can feel the alcohol coursing through my body when the wine is running hot. That is not pleasant at all. I prefer wine that shows moderation. Wine such as this goes much better with food. And for me, wine shared over food with friends is the focal point of enjoying wine.

People think I drink wine every single day. I don't. In my job capacity I taste a lot of wine that I spit out. However, when I do drink wine, it's usually with friends and it's with a meal. So, when I do drink wine, I make damn sure it's a good and balanced wine. I am not going to waste my window for enjoying good wine on Meiomi which is crap and loaded with sugar. I am not going to waste my time with Josh or Justin. Those wines are everywhere and they're not that good. I search for well made, small-production, sustainable wines that are produced by passionate winemakers.

When I find a good wine, I enjoy it in moderation. Do I have wine with every meal? No I don't. I enjoy wine tremendously, but when you overindulge, it isn't enjoyable. We all hear stories about people who drink until they puke. Where is the enjoyment in that? If you drink to the point of getting a headache or not feeling well – maybe it's best to drink in moderation. Sure, I'd like everyone to drink every single day as that would be great for the wine industry. That's not what I am espousing here. I want people to enjoy wine. I want people to take the time and pick a wine that is damn good and not pick a wine off the grocery shelf because it's there and everywhere. I want people to enjoy wine over a meal with friends. Spend some extra time enjoying friendships with fellow wine lovers. After years of isolation, spending time with people is very positive and healthy. But do this in moderation so you don't feel like you must abstain for a month. When a doctor tells you to change your diet to better your health, they aren't telling you to cut out all food for a month. They are telling you to choose wisely by not eating highly processed foods and to find better alternatives. They are telling you to eat in moderation. They are telling you to find balance.

For me, Drynuary is not an option. If you think it is for you, bless you and good on ya for trying. Instead, I am taking the path of TRYnuary – where we explore new wines or wines that might have gotten pushed aside over the years that should be revisited. All these wines will be balanced. All these wines will be family run, small-production, and sustainable. They won't be highly processed or formulaic. They'll be damn good. Join me all this month to share good wine with good friends. Come together for wine. Wine is food. Wine is sustainable. Wine is historical. Wine is social. Wine is discovery. Wine is artisan & family.

Here's the TRYnuary schedule for The Bottle Shop Tasting Room this month....

Thurs and Fri	Jan 8 & 9	Orange Wines Explained!
Thurs & Fri	Jan 15 & 16	Wines We've Forgotten About
Thurs & Fri	Jan 22 & 23	Never Bored with Bordeaux
Thurs & Fri	Jan 29 & 30	Guess The Wine Blind Tasting!

Until next time – Salud!

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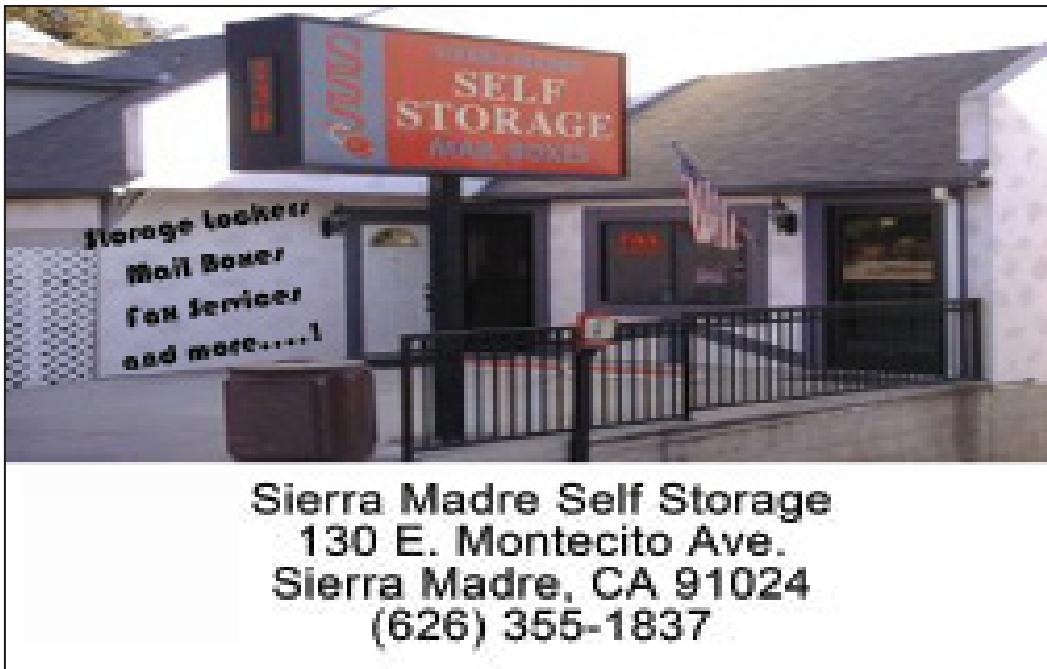
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BRINGING IN THE NEW YEAR FOR SENIORS: A YEAR OF JOY AND CONNECTION IN 2026

As 2026 unfolds, seniors have a wonderful opportunity to embrace the year with positivity, connection, and well-being. Rather than focusing on big parties or extravagant celebrations, the new year can be about reflection, small joys, and meaningful connections. Here are a few ways seniors can make the most of the year ahead.

1. Embrace New Hobbies and Interests

The start of the year is an ideal time for seniors to explore new hobbies or revisit old interests. Whether it's learning a new craft, taking up gardening, or trying a new form of exercise like yoga or swimming, engaging in activities can boost both mental and physical health. Seniors may find that dedicating time to a new interest not only keeps them engaged but also provides opportunities to meet new people and form bonds.

2. Connect with Loved Ones

One of the greatest joys of life is connection. In 2026, seniors can make a conscious effort to strengthen relationships with family and friends. Whether it's regular phone calls, weekly video chats, or simple handwritten letters, staying in touch with loved ones provides emotional support and combats loneliness. These connections can also be an anchor of joy throughout the year.

3. Focus on Health and Wellness

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is crucial for seniors, and the new year provides a perfect opportunity to prioritize wellness. This might mean regular check-ups with doctors, taking prescribed medications as directed, or incorporating a daily walk into one's routine. For many seniors, participating in local fitness programs or senior wellness groups can also promote both physical health and a sense of community.

4. Reflect and Set Personal Goals

As the year progresses, seniors can take time to reflect on their personal achievements and goals. Whether it's adopting a more positive outlook, learning something new, or simply spending more time in nature, setting small, attainable goals helps foster a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

5. Create Meaningful Traditions

Rather than focusing on grand gestures, seniors can create their own traditions that bring comfort and joy. This might include sharing a favorite book with a grandchild, organizing a monthly coffee date with a friend, or reflecting on happy memories. These rituals can become a cornerstone of the year, giving it structure and meaning.

For seniors, 2026 is a chance to live with intention, embrace well-being, and cherish relationships. By focusing on small but significant moments, the year ahead can be one filled with happiness, growth, and connection.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PREPAID FUNERAL PLANS



Dear Savvy Senior,
I have been thinking about planning my funeral in advance so my kids won't have to later but would like to inquire about prepaying. Is it a good idea to prepay for a funeral that you might not need for a while? Aging Annie

Dear Annie,
Planning your funeral in advance is definitely a smart move. Not only does it give you time to make a thoughtful decision on the type of service you want, it also allows you to shop around to find a good funeral provider, and it will spare your adult children the burden of making these decisions at an emotional time.

But preplanning a funeral doesn't mean you have to prepay too. In fact, the Funeral Consumer Alliance, a national nonprofit funeral consumer protection organization, doesn't recommend it unless you need to spend down your financial resources so you can qualify for Medicaid. Here's what you should know.

Preneed Arrangements

Most funeral homes today offer what is known as "preneed plans" which allow you to prearrange for the type of funeral services you want and prepay with a lump sum or through installments. The funeral home either puts your money in a trust fund with the payout triggered by your death or buys an insurance policy naming itself as the beneficiary.

If you're interested in this route, make sure you're being guaranteed the services you specify at the contracted price. Some contracts call for additional payments for final expense funding, which means that if the funeral home's charges increase between the time you sign up and the time you sign off, somebody will have to pay the difference. Here are some additional questions you should ask before committing:

Can you cancel the contract and get a full refund if you change your mind?

Will your money earn interest? If so, how much? Who gets it?

If there is an insurance policy involved, is there a waiting period before it takes effect? How long?

Are the prices locked in or will an additional payment be required at the time of death?

Are you protected if the funeral home goes out of business or if it's bought out by another company?

What happens if you move? Can the plan be transferred to another funeral home in a different state?

If there's money left over after your funeral, will your heirs get it, or does the home keep it?

If you decide to prepay, be sure to get all the details of the agreement in writing and give copies to your family so they know what's expected. If they aren't aware that you've made plans, your wishes may not be carried out. And if they don't know that you've prepaid the funeral costs, they could end up paying for the same arrangements.

Other Payment Options

While prepaying your funeral may seem like a convenient way to go, from a financial point of view, there are better options available.

For example, if you have a life insurance policy, many policies will pay a lump sum when you die to your beneficiaries to be used for your funeral expenses. The payment is made soon after you die and doesn't have to go through probate.

Or you could set up a payable-on-death (or POD) account at your bank or credit union, naming the person you want to handle your arrangements as the beneficiary. POD accounts also are called Totten Trusts. With this type of account, you maintain control of your money, so you can tap the funds in an emergency, collect the interest and change the beneficiary. When you die, your beneficiary collects the balance without the delay of probate.

Send your questions or comments to questions@savvysenior.org, or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.



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SENIOR HAPPENINGS

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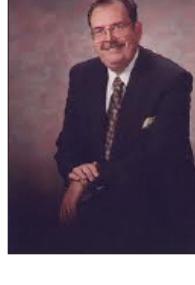
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11:30am (Participants are encouraged to arrive by 11:15am)

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OUT TO PASTOR

A Weekly Religion Column by Rev. James Snyder

AN OLD GEEZER LOOKING FOR NEW TRICKS

Although the year is new, I'm still an old geezer. I think I know what geezer means, but I'm not sure what the definition of "old" is. One person's old is another person's youth. Believe me, I don't know the difference. I do know that I am a geezer because occasionally, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will look at me and say, "Are you acting like an old geezer?" I stare at her for a moment and respond, "Oh, no my dear. I'm not acting." She gives me one of her looks, then walks away. Of course, I may know that I am a geezer, but I'm really not quite sure what old really is. According to her, I am the poster child of an old geezer.

That may be true, and I will not question it in any degree. I just want to make sure I get everything out of being an old geezer. I do not want to miss anything. With the New Year underway, I'm reflecting on my responsibilities as an old geezer.

This year, I'm looking for some new tricks. None of my tricks up to this point has worked as planned. I need something new this year that's going to help me perfect my old geezerhood.

I reflected on some of the tricks I used this past year. Tricks like, "I just don't remember that." Or, "I was doing something else at the time."

There were others, but none of them seemed to work with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She can see what I'm doing a week before I actually do it. I'm really not sure how she does that. It would be helpful to know how that works, but at this point, I don't know.

I need to learn some new tricks to address the situation at hand. I need an excuse for not doing what she wants me to do. Up to this point, she is not falling for "I can't remember."

One trick might work. "I was thinking about that, my dear, but I wanted to wait and get your advice on it." That might work. Because she loves giving me advice the most. So, I'm going to find ways in which I can insert this "new trick" into our conversation.

I need to come up with another trick. I thought of one. When she looks at me and asks me what I'm thinking, I could say, "I was just thinking about how lucky I am to have you in my life. What a blessing you are."

That should work in many regards. I think it might throw her off her game, putting me a little ahead of schedule. That's certainly worth trying out for this New Year.

Another new trick came to mind. Occasionally, we go out to a diner for lunch or supper. Whenever she asks if I want to go out for lunch, I could say, "I was just thinking about that. Where do you want to go?"

That would shift the responsibility over to her. Wherever she wants to go is all right with me. The last thing I want to do is tell her where I want to go for lunch or dinner. I don't have the palate for cuisine that she has.

The purpose of these "new tricks" is to divert attention away from me and put it back on her. I'm going to spend a lot of time this year studying and learning as many new tricks as I can.

There is another trick I need to focus on: when she asks me what I want for supper. She usually asks me right after lunchtime, when I'm not really hungry. I'm trying to think of what to say to take the pressure off me.

Maybe I could say, "Oh, my dear, anything you make would be pleasing to me. You're the best chef I know."

There was that one time when she slipped broccoli in, much to my disdain.

Not only is she good in the kitchen, but she is also good with clothing.

Sometimes, not often, she will come from the bedroom, stand before me, and ask, "I just bought this dress, what do you think of it?"

This is where I have a problem. I am at a loss when it comes to clothing. They all look the same to me. I can't even tell the difference between colors. One color matches mine.

I look back at her and give it some thought. The only thing that comes to mind is, "Oh, my dear, anything you wear looks amazing." And, I will smile my best smile. I don't know how many times I can get away with it, but I'll take it as far as I can go.

I couldn't help but think of a verse from the Bible that is relevant to this subject. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3).

Sometimes we need to agree to disagree. We have differing opinions and tastes. But the secret of a good relationship is to find that area where we agree. That becomes the foundation of our relationship and can bring blessings in.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamesnyderministries.com.

Catch breaking news at:
mtnviewsnews.com

**CHRISTOPHER Nyerges**

[Nyerges is an educator and author. His many books can be seen at www.SchoolofSelf-Reliance.com.]

THE EVENT: At Dawn's Early Light**A novel by Christopher Nyerges**

Nearly 20 years ago I had a series of memorable dreams that seemed so real that I wrote down all the details when I woke up. This was a time in my life when I was worrying about everything, and I would often go to sleep hoping for a vision, or an answer.

Pictures came in my dreams, and little by little, I pieced the pictures together. I dutifully wrote down the details every morning, and eventually, I thought to myself, Hey, this might make a good story! I slowly wrote a fictitious novel based on these dreams which I now call The Event.

Though most of the dreams had to do with my personal life, the larger picture that I began to write about took on a life of its own.

THE EVENT

In the novel, The Event, "something" happens one day. No one ever finds out what it was. Was it a comet that hit the earth? Was it plasma ejected from the sun? No one knows, but it killed off nearly everyone, unless they happened to be underground and stayed there for about three days.

The story that emerges is of a dark world, through the eyes of the main character who I call Rick. Rick survived because he stayed with his co-worker Tim, in Tim's family cellar. Finally, Rick emerges and explores the world that now exists.

The story takes place in Southern California, from the Pasadena area, into Eagle Rock, and into Highland Park. Rick sees abandoned vehicles and dead bodies everywhere, and he cautiously seeks out the survivors.

In the Pasadena/ Altadena area, he finds that his wife survived. They had not been living together and Rick finds her in a hidden shelter that she created deep in her backyard. She knows the few neighbors who survived, and tells Rick that trucks came through the area in the days after the event, telling survivors that they had to get into the trucks and evacuate the area. Dolores just hid, and made her shelter and cooked soup, which she served to any friendly visitors.

Rick makes his way on foot through the Rose Bowl area, and through the Annandale Golf Course where he finds some drunken survivors who think Rick is coming to help them. Rick had been a famous physicist from Caltech, though now youthfully retired, and his picture was on the wall of the golf course office along with other famous physicists. The drunken survivors thus believed that Rick was there to provide some answers, though Rick was just passing through.

On his way to his old home and urban farm in Highland Park, which is northeast Los Angeles, he encounters homeless camps still surviving, he gets shot at, and he meets Jane, who was a former member of the National Guard. Together, they make their way into Rick's destination, the old Fuller Farm, which had been a place to garden and farm in the city and learn about permaculture and self-reliant living.

Most of the folks at the Fuller Farm survived, though barely.

The story tracks a few other groups of individuals as well, most of whom end up at the Fuller Farm, and who find ways to work together now that there is no functioning larger society. The Event meant that suddenly there were no banks, no electricity, no functioning grocery or hardware stores. Indeed, there was nothing to spend money on, even if you had any. Though water is not an immediate problem, everyone knows that most of the water to Los Angeles came from over 300 miles away, and that they needed to plan for water.

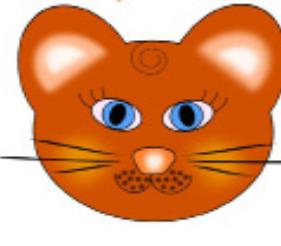
The surviving society is also full of opportunists who want to control areas, and who are ready to fight and kill to take what they need. The story describes the gun fights and assaults that were the inevitable result of the battles started by those who wanted to forcefully acquire something they wanted or needed. It's not a pretty picture, but the survivors of the developing communities learn to set up perimeter barriers, and alarms, though they continue to have random and unexpected gunfights.

Of course, The Event is a work of fiction, and I do not possess a crystal ball as to what the future portends. This is the exploration of one scenario, and the mechanics for how a small group of people in L.A. County might survive under such adverse conditions.

Six months after the event, it is apparent that whatever happened was very widespread and that things would not be going back to "normal" anytime soon. The two groups which this novel tracks, begin to assert their political identity and they take charge of their little emerging and growing communities. There are lots of twists and turns and setback, while there is still hope. Along the way, I was able to insert little hints about the things that people might need, such as a silcock key for accessing water, or the "vinegar of four thieves" for washing wounds.

I enjoyed the process of creating this as a movie in my mind and then writing what I was "seeing." I hope that you enjoy it too, and find it both entertaining and educational.

The Event is available from Amazon.com as an e-book or hard copy book. It is 283 pages long.

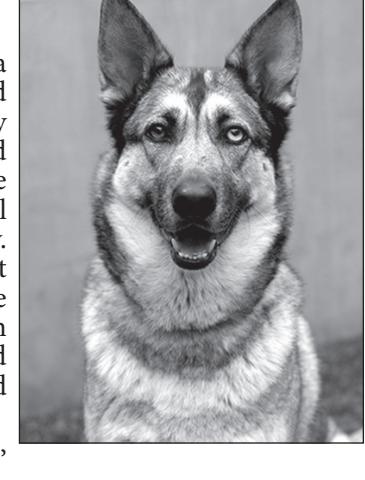
Katnip News!**A Special Name: "VISION"**

Named after a famous and kind Marvel Comics robot, Vision is an affectionate, gentle tuxedo boy who lights up when people or other cats walk by. Vision is clearly ready to love and be loved.

This charming boy has so much to offer. He's meant to be someone's beloved, fun companion. He will follow you around, yet he can be both playful chill, or will happily nap by your side. He's a very young age 9, passed up repeatedly because he is on a special diet, which he may not need any more. This is no reason to deny him from having a loving home. He is otherwise healthy and doing very well. In the Marvel Comics Universe, Vision was loved by and loved the Marvel character named Wanda. However, their life together was denied. Are you the one who will give Vision his real life happy ending? Apply to meet him at <https://www.lifelineforpets.org/vision.html>, or use the qr code.

**Pet of the Week**

Cinco is a stunning 3-year-old husky at Pasadena Humane with both beauty and heart. This foster field trip veteran loves getting out and about. She especially loves going for long walks, taking in the world around her, exploring, and showing off her calm confidence with new people and environments. Cinco also rides well in the car, settles quickly, and takes treats very gently. While out and about several people couldn't help but comment on how beautiful she is - and we couldn't agree more! She is also very affectionate and enjoys leaning in for pets and attention whenever she can. Cinco would love an adopter who can help her gain confidence, and in turn, she will be a wonderfully devoted companion. If you're looking for a sweet, active, and loving dog, Cinco may be your perfect match.



The adoption fee for dogs is \$150. All dog adoptions include spay or neuter, microchip, and age-appropriate vaccines.

Walk-in adoptions are available every day from 10:00 – 5:00. View photos of adoptable pets at pasadenahumane.org.

New adopters will receive a complimentary health-and-wellness exam from VCA Animal Hospitals, as well as a goody bag filled with information about how to care for your pet.

Pets may not be available for adoption and cannot be held for potential adopters by phone calls or email.

THE FUTURE OF PET HEALTHCARE

The benefits of pet ownership are well documented. Pets provide unconditional love and companionship, improve emotional well-being, and help reduce stress and anxiety. For dog owners, daily walks encourage physical activity and social interaction. So, it's no surprise that nearly 70% of all U.S. households own at least one pet.

b. Veterinary Clinic
In 2021, we opened a 400-square-foot veterinary clinic in Arcadia, California. Due to its size, the clinic was limited to basic spay & neuter services and operated only one day per week. Despite these constraints, we have spayed or neutered more than 4,700 cats and dogs, vaccinated 850 pets, repaired 60 hernias and removed 55 masses.

The Need
Over the past decade, the cost of veterinary care has increased by 63% -- nearly twice the rate of inflation. These costs are projected to outpace inflation over the next 5 years, placing essential veterinary care further out of reach for many families.

As the clinic's owner, we control operational costs, allowing us to provide excellent veterinary care for the lowest possible price. The clinic is self-sustaining.

Today, an estimated 27% of Los Angeles County pet owners are unable to afford a critical veterinary expense, costing \$1,000 or more. The impact is staggering: In 2026 alone, as many as 800,000 local cats and dogs may not receive critical and often lifesaving medical care. Despite the scope of this crisis, few accessible resources exist to support pets whose owners lack the financial means to help them.

Yearning To Do More
Our next step is to transition from our small spay-and-neuter clinic to a full-service veterinary clinic capable of providing a more diverse range of surgical services. This expansion will allow us to provide more pets with broader medical services in a more timely and cost-effective manner. We anticipate the full-service clinic will be self-sustaining in its second year of operation.

Our Solution
Free Animal Doctor is a non-profit animal welfare organization headquartered in Sierra Madre, California. Our mission – really our passion – is to ensure pets receive essential veterinary care when their owners cannot afford it.

In February 2025, we purchased a 2,000-square-foot modular building intended to be remodeled into a full-service surgical clinic. We had secured an agreement to place the building on a property in Arcadia; however, the property owner's position changed, and that option is no longer available. As a result, we have a building—but no location on which to place it.

There are only two ways to help pets in these circumstances: fund their treatment or provide that treatment directly.

a. Fundraising
We initially focused on fundraising through our crowdfunding platform to cover the cost of critical veterinary care. Over the past 10 years, this effort has raised more than \$2.7 million, enabling treatment for 1,400 pets. While this model has been impactful, it carries a significant limitation: Fundraising takes time. For pets requiring urgent or immediate care, delays in treatment can be devastating. Waiting for funds to be raised prolongs the pet's pain and suffering, increases its risk of secondary complications or worse, funding comes too late or not at all.

We are seeking a small unimproved lot, or portion of a larger property located in the San Gabriel Valley, where we can place our modular clinic for a nominal fee. Our building sits on a wheeled platform, requires no foundation, and can be easily installed or removed. With permission, a tasteful acknowledgment of the supporter(s) will be displayed on the clinic's exterior.

The most effective way to eliminate these delays is by opening a veterinary clinic. Providing care, when that care is needed, to yield the best possible medical outcome.

We ask for the chance to meet and discuss this unique opportunity. Our integrated fundraising and healthcare delivery model is one-of-a-kind and will enable us to provide broader, timely, and affordable veterinary care to more pets in need.

For more information contact Sam, Sam@freeanimaldoctor.org or call my cell, 626-487-7129.

Pets in need
Some pet parents cannot afford the cost of vet care right now. You can help those pets! Visit us: www.FreeAnimalDoctor.org

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Mountain View News Saturday, January 10, 2026

SPORTS, FITNESS & HEALTHY LIVING

FITNESS FOR LIFE



Michele Silence, M.A. is a 37-year certified fitness professional who offers semi-private/virtual fitness classes. Contact Michele at michele@kid-fit.com. Visit her Facebook page at: [michelesfitness](https://www.facebook.com/michelesfitness).

NEVER SAY NEVER

Have you ever told yourself, "I'm just not a runner," or "I'll never be strong enough for that"? Maybe you've heard it from a friend, a coach, or even your own voice in the mirror. The truth is... you're probably lying to yourself—but your brain doesn't know that. Repeated messages, even false ones, have a sneaky way of convincing our minds that they're true. This is called the Illusory Truth Effect, and it's one of the biggest obstacles in fitness—because it doesn't just spread myths about workouts and diets; it can make you believe you can't do something.

Here's how it works. Our brains are wired to treat familiar things as true. If we hear the same idea over and over, we start to believe it, even if it's false. Advertisers know this—they repeat slogans until they feel true: "Just do it," "Eat more fiber," "This miracle pill burns fat fast." Political slogans, memes, even social media posts all take advantage of the same trick. Repetition creates trust—or at least the illusion of truth.

This is exactly how propaganda works. Governments, political parties, or media campaigns repeat certain messages over and over to shape what people believe. Sometimes the messages are half-truths or outright lies, but by the time you've seen them on posters, TV, online, and heard friends repeat them, your brain starts to treat them as fact. Think about history: repeated slogans like "Work hard, obey authority," or modern misinformation online. Even smart, educated people can fall for it. The Illusory Truth Effect is powerful because repetition feels like proof.

Fitness is full of similar examples. Think of all the myths we've heard: "Carbs make you fat," "Crunches eliminate belly fat," "Women will get bulky if they lift weights." These messages show up in magazines, Instagram posts, and even well-meaning trainers. You hear them enough, and suddenly your brain says, "Well, that must be true." But the Illusory Truth Effect doesn't stop there. It creeps into the most dangerous place: your mind.

This is where it becomes personal. Repetition can convince you that you can't do something. Maybe someone once said, "I could never run a 5K," and you heard it so often it became a rule in your head. Or maybe your neighbor said, "I'm just not flexible," and suddenly your brain says, "Yeah... I'll never touch my toes either." These repeated "truths" become self-limiting beliefs. They're like invisible walls that block progress before you even try.

You might even hear it in subtle ways at the gym: "Some people are just born fit," or "You're too old to start." You repeat these words in your own head, and soon your brain believes them. The Illusory Truth Effect is powerful because it works quietly. It doesn't scream at you; it whispers, "You can't," and over time, you start to believe it.

But here's the good news: just like it can trick you, you can also trick your brain back. You can break free from the "I can't" habit. Here's how:

Challenge the negative repetition. Write down the "I can't" thoughts that pop into your head. Then ask yourself: Is this actually true? Have I tried it before? Often, you'll realize you've just accepted a repeated idea without evidence.

Replace it with positive repetition. Surround yourself with examples of success. Read stories of people who started where you are and achieved their goals. Follow trainers who emphasize growth over perfection. Even small doses of positive messages repeated over time can start to rewire your brain.

Start small and track wins. Want to run a mile without stopping? Start with a quarter mile. Want to lift heavier weights? Add just a few pounds weekly. Every success, no matter how tiny, is proof that your brain's "I can't" messages are wrong.

Remind yourself: repetition ≠ reality. Just because you've heard something a hundred times doesn't make it true. Your limits are not fixed—they're flexible, like muscles. You can grow stronger, faster, and more capable than your brain thinks.

Fitness is not just about strength or speed. It's about mindset. Every time you catch yourself thinking, "I can't," remember that your brain is being tricked by repetition. You can start that new routine. You can try that exercise. You can achieve more than you've ever imagined—if you refuse to let repeated lies define you.

So, next time you hear someone—or your own inner voice—say, "You'll never..." stop. Because that "never" is a lie, repeated enough times to sound true. And your job is simple: don't believe it. Take one small step, one repetition, one day at a time.

ALL THINGS

by Jeff Brown

WINTER: THE STORY OF A SEASON BY VAL McDERMID

In Winter, McDermid takes us on an adventure through the season, from the frosty streets of Edinburgh to the wind-blown Scottish coast, from Bonfire Night and Christmas to Burns Night and Up Helly Aa.

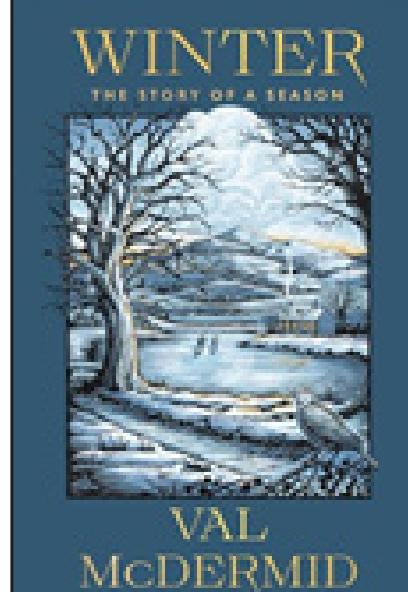
Recalling in parallel memories from her own childhood—of skating over frozen lakes and carving a "neep" (rutabaga) for Halloween to being taken to see her first real Christmas tree in the town square—McDermid offers a wise and enchanting meditation on winter and its ever-changing, sometimes ephemeral, traditions.

Winter is also a reflective, wide-ranging exploration of winter as both a physical reality and a powerful idea that has shaped human lives, fears, and imaginations. Rather than approaching winter as a single scientific or historical subject, McDermid weaves together personal memory, social history, crime writing, folklore, and cultural observation to show how deeply the coldest season influences the way we think and behave.

The book moves fluidly between the intimate and the expansive. McDermid begins with her own experiences of winter in Scotland, recalling childhood landscapes of ice, darkness, and endurance. These memories ground the book emotionally, reminding the reader that winter is not an abstract concept but something felt in the body—through cold fingers, short days, and long nights. From there, she broadens her scope, examining how winter has historically meant danger and deprivation, especially before modern heating, medicine, and food supply systems. Starvation, illness, and isolation loom large in earlier centuries, giving winter a reputation as a season to be feared and survived.

As a renowned crime writer, McDermid brings a sharp eye to winter's association with violence and death. She explores why winter settings are so common in crime fiction, where snow can hide evidence, darkness can conceal motives, and bad weather intensifies human desperation. At the same time, she contrasts this with winter's quieter symbolism: rest, stillness, and the suspension of normal life. The season becomes a pause in the year, a time when growth retreats but reflection deepens.

McDermid also considers how modern life has reshaped winter. Central heating, electric light, and global travel have softened its dangers, but not erased its psychological weight. Seasonal depression, loneliness, and social inequality still surface more starkly during winter months, reminding readers that the season continues to test resilience.



VAL
McDERMID

UNLOCK YOUR LIFE



Lori A. Harris

THE QUESTION THAT MAKES YOUR BRAIN LIGHT UP DIFFERENTLY

I found myself staring at another coffee mug: "What would you do if you knew you wouldn't fail?"

Ugh! My shoulders tensed. My jaw clenched. I started mentally listing reasons why my ideas wouldn't work. Here's what I've learned after 30 years as a trial lawyer and now as a coach: That question is designed to inspire you. But it's actually activating your brain's threat detection system.

Why Inspiration Backfires

When you ask "what if I fail?", your amygdala, your brain's alarm system, floods your body with stress hormones. Neuroscientist Dr. Andrew Huberman's research shows this literally narrows your field of vision and shuts down creative problem-solving. You're biologically primed to scan for danger, not possibility. No wonder that Pinterest quote leaves you stuck.

The Question That Actually Works

A client once told me she'd been asking herself the failure question for months while her business idea stayed trapped in her notebook. One morning, she asked something different: "What would I create if I remembered I'm built for this?" She launched her website that afternoon.

The difference isn't just semantic, it's physiological. Research from Stanford's Carol Dweck shows that identity-based questions ("I'm someone who creates" vs. "I want to be creative") increase follow-through by 30% and significantly reduce action-anxiety. You're not fighting against fear. You're changing which part of your nervous system you're activating.

Try This - This Week

Notice when you catch yourself asking, "What if I fail?" Don't fight it. Just notice where you feel it in your body. Chest? Throat? Stomach? Then ask: "What would I do if I trusted I'm equipped for this next step?" Not the whole journey. Just the next step. A baby step. Write down whatever shows up. Not the perfect plan, just the honest answer. Maybe it's "I'd send that email." Maybe it's "I'd make the phone call." Maybe it's "I'd block out an hour to work on it." That's your starting place.

Here's Why This Matters

You're not broken for feeling afraid. Your nervous system is doing exactly what it's designed to do: protect you. But you can learn to work with it instead of against it. The life you want isn't waiting for you to become fearless. It's waiting for you to take the next step, even though you're feeling some fear. You've got what it takes. Just ask yourself a different question. This week, ask the right one.

Lori Harris is an Integrative Change Coach, Life Mastery Consultant, and the Host of the Unlock Your Life Podcast with Lori Harris. Learn more at loriaharris.com

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STUART TOLCHIN



PUT THE LIGHTS ON THE HIGH COST OF FREE SPEECH

The basic right of INDIVIDUAL Americans to express themselves is protected by the first Amendment to the United States Constitution. I am sure you know that language well. "Congress shall make no law restricting the establishment of religion, the freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right of the people peaceably to assemble, or the right to petition the government for grievances." Right here at the outset of this article, it is worth reciting that sacred language in full. This language is considered the cornerstone of American liberty by safeguarding expression of belief.

Specifically, as to speech, it must be understood that open and vigorous expression of views must be encouraged and protected. The Federal Government was never intended to be the arbiter of what was correct or incorrect. If an argument was advanced that brought disagreement, it was thought opposing arguments would be presented and eventually TRUTH would emerge even if the Government did not favor that truth. This process would engender trust and security and contribute to the overall wellbeing of our American society.

So, what happened? Now it must be agreed that many of us are living in a time of confusion and distrust. We don't know who, or what to believe. The consequence of this inability is often a kind of despair and even contributes to a willful ignorance wherein individuals decide to just stop paying attention and choose to remain uninformed.

The unfortunate result is that the potential influence of that distasteful class of billionaires has flourished. This cannot be argued since it is agreed that all political aspirants now must rely on huge monetary contributions in order to gain election or even a place on the ballot. The source of these monetary contributions is now allowed to be kept secret as the money comes from Super Pac's, Independent Expenditure-Only Political Committees, that are allowed to raise and spend unlimited amounts of money from not only individuals, but also corporations and unions to advocate for or against candidates.

The significant case which changed the whole ball game is the Supreme Court opinion of *Citizens United v Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 310. (It is hard for me to remember that I practiced law for over fifty years.) This decision held that non-individual entities such as those cited above had the same rights to free speech as private individuals. This group of non-individuals has come to include even foreign governments, all of whom can and do hide the individual contributors. All that becomes important to the aspiring candidates is the presence of the money supporting them independent of the source of that money. As individuals we citizens are prevented from knowing whose money is behind the candidates.

Additionally, the advent of social media challenges traditional free speech principles by making it difficult to distinguish truth from falsehood. What is important is balancing the promise of open expression with the reality of the intentional distribution of lies or what is called misstatements.

We have all heard politicians describe what they call "fake news". Every day we see the representatives of our government; paid by us individual taxpayers make statements that are obviously untrue. Why, you wonder, is such a deceit not punishable? Yes, there is something called perjury when a factual statement made is knowingly untrue; but perjury requires that the statement be made under oath, and political speeches are not made under oath. Certainly, we all want the TRUTH; but now, we don't know where to find it. Perhaps impartial fact checks should be required to visually accompany televised political presentations; but things are not that simple. Protections designed to protect free speech have left us all unprotected and currently that is the TRUTH at a very high cost.

About this there can be no disagreement!

HOWARD HAYS AS I SEE IT

Nicolas Maduro Charged With Felony Oil Possession
- Headline from The Onion

This is the fifth anniversary of the violent, armed attack on our nation's Capital, part of a coordinated effort by Donald Trump to overturn a presidential election for the first time in our history. The president himself marked the occasion by addressing House Republicans at the Kennedy Center (recently renamed for himself), blaming the whole thing on Nancy Pelosi. No, that last part didn't come from The Onion. I wish it did.

In other news: It's become clearer what our attack on Venezuela is all about. It's becoming especially clear what it's not about.

It's not about drugs. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro had been indicted on drug-related charges. Since last September, we've blown up 35 small boats, killing 115. They were no threat to us – likely headed to drop stuff off at another port for shipment to Europe. We don't know for sure, as the administration hasn't offered evidence justifying anything – to Congress or anybody else.

Venezuela isn't a source of drugs, though it's helped facilitate shipments of cocaine from Colombia. Trump has been making a big deal about fentanyl – which is irrelevant. That drug is mainly smuggled in by U.S. citizens through ports of entry at our southern border.

We know it's not about drugs because of Trump's pardon of former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez. Maduro has been indicted. Hernandez had been indicted, tried, found guilty and sentenced to 45 years for helping traffic 400 tons of cocaine into the U.S., taking millions in cartel bribes and stealing from U.S. taxpayers. But Hernandez had deals with billionaire techie Trump supporters – so his pardon was more important for Trump than whatever concern about drugs.

We know it's not about democracy or liberating Venezuela from a brutal dictatorship. They had their last presidential election in 2024. Maria Corina Machado got overwhelming support in the primaries, so the government barred her from running. Edmundo Gonzalez then took on Maduro. Poll watchers saw a Gonzalez landslide, but the government declared Maduro the winner. No tallies supported that result, but they declared him the winner, anyway.

There's apparently been no attempt to coordinate with Gonzalez, who'd been regarded as the natural, already-elected successor to Maduro. Nobel Peace Prize-winning Machado embarrassed herself in protesting that Trump deserved that prize more than she. But whatever it was she hoped to accomplish, it didn't work. Trump now says of Machado, "She's a very nice woman, but she doesn't have the respect." Machado endured years of Maduro thugs attacking her rallies, arrest warrants and death threats in earning 90% of opposition support. But the guy currently freaked about his name showing up in the Epstein pedo-files says she doesn't have Venezuelans' "respect".

(A White House source quoted by the Washington Post said that had Machado simply refused to accept that Nobel Prize, saying it rightfully belonged to Donald Trump, "she'd be the president of Venezuela today".)

If this had anything to do with restoring democracy to Venezuela, we'd be coordinating with Machado and Gonzalez – or at least calling for elections to choose new leaders. But this has nothing to do with drugs, stemming the flow of immigrants, or ending a repressive dictatorship. It's all about the oil. And Trump brags about it.

Twenty-three years ago, while President George W. Bush was warning of Saddam Hussein's "weapons of mass destruction", V.P. Dick Cheney was secretly going over maps with oil execs divvying up Iraqi oilfields. Trump warns about Maduro's involvement with drug trafficking, but then openly tells reporters on Air Force One, "We should run the country where we can take advantage of the economics of what they have, which is valuable oil and valuable other things". Politico reports that Trump briefed oil execs on the upcoming strike on Venezuela while leaving Congress in the dark.

Nobel-winner Machado described Delcy Rodriguez, vice president under Maduro, as "one of the main architects of torture, persecution, corruption, narco trafficking . . . the main ally of Russia, China, Iran." It's Rodriguez that Trump chose to head the Venezuelan government moving forward. The police state structure of the Maduro dictatorship will remain in place, while Trump says he'll "run" it – and Rodriguez knows what would happen to her if she didn't play along. Energy Secretary Chris Wright says we'll be in control of Venezuela's oil "indefinitely".

A problem, though, comes with estimates that revitalizing Venezuela's oil industry might involve billions of dollars in investments over nearly a decade. Major oil companies have indicated that's an investment they'd be unwilling to make without prospects of a stable, sovereign, democratic government – which is not what Trump has in mind for Venezuela.

Five weeks after launching our invasion of Iraq in 2003, President Bush declared, "Mission Accomplished". Eight years later, 4,492 American servicemembers and 200,000 Iraqi civilians had been killed.

Chinese human rights and democracy activist Yaqui Wang posted, "America's credibility on a rules-based international order is now completely in the toilet. I urge my colleagues to seriously explore alternative approaches to advocating for human rights and democracy in China that do not rely on U.S. power or U.S. funding." Also from last week: "Resolution to block Trump from invading Greenland introduced by Sen. Gallego (D-AZ)". No, that didn't come from The Onion. I wish it did.

OPINION

RICH JOHNSON



THIS, THAT, AND OH YEAH, THE OTHER THING... RESOLUTIONS

As many of you know, music is a big part of my life. I blame my fixation on John, Paul, George and Ringo. You may have heard of them. They called themselves the Beatles. I was just a wee lad in my early teens when the Beatles exploded on the scene and into my consciousness.

I start this column with music because her vocal quality is mesmerizing. You should pronounce her name "Lay-Vee" even though it's spelled Laufey. Laufey Lin Bing Jonsdottir is a native of Iceland. Her Icelandic father introduced her to jazz and her Chinese mother played classical violin. Laufey's voice has the qualities of the torch singers of the 1940s and 1950s. All I can tell you is if you like music, punch her name up on YouTube and enjoy what I consider to be unbelievably good. Many compare her to Ella Fitzgerald which is fair. She also has a distinctive voice. I compare Laufey to Linda Ronstadt and Carly Simon in that all it takes is 3 notes and you know who it is. Check her music out.

Back to reality lol, how are those New Year's resolutions sizing up? What's your past life experience when dealing with resolutions? The top resolutions? Improve fitness, improve finances, and improve mental health.

Experts tell us most of us will abandon resolutions by "Quitter's Day" which is the second Friday in January. Do you live with that frustration? (I'm fairly certain most of us do).

How about some achievable resolutions? Here's one I practice: Start giving someone a compliment a day. About them, their children or even their pet. Whatever comes to mind.

Pay for the person behind you in a Star-Bucks store. Pay someone behind you in line at a compliment.

Now, how about ending with dubious yet telling quotes? I'll start with the most profound quote I found:

You are the artist of your own life. Don't hand the paintbrush to anyone else. Anonymous

You have to be odd to be number one. Dr. Seuss Anthropologist Margaret Mead once said, Always remember that you are absolutely unique...just like everyone else.

Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid Albert Einstein

Creativity is contagious, pass it on Albert Einstein

Lottery: A tax on people who are bad at math. Anonymous

If you are not yourself, who are you? Blaise Pascal

It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation. Herman Melville

Be yourself; everyone else is already taken Oscar Wilde

You can't blend in when you were born to stand out. R.J. Palacio

You're only given a little spark of madness. You mustn't lose it. Robin Williams

Don't be afraid to be different, be afraid to be the same as everyone else

Anonymous

Find out who you are and do it on purpose Dolly Parton

Individuality is the salt of life Khalil Gibran

Don't be afraid of being different, be afraid of being the same as everyone else

Unknown

Have a wonderful week. If you live in Sierra Madre, frequent to local merchants.

They are convenient and it would be nice if they thrived and stayed

Have a good week!

OP ED: Your Misdirected Tax Dollars

I keep hearing from city hall and from our elected council members that claim they don't have enough money to keep our sidewalks and streets safe or properly maintained. I'm hoping that We The People, the residents and taxpayers of Sierra Madre, can create a renewed awareness that reminds both city hall and our elected councilmembers that their primary responsibility is to keep us safe, not entertained.

Anyone with at least 20/80 vision can see that the condition of our sidewalks and streets in Sierra Madre are a dangerous mess. If your eyesight is worse than 20/80, I suggest not walking on the sidewalks or streets, especially at night. It almost seems as if the word "maintenance" has been removed from the City's vocabulary.

I keep asking myself, "Why are the streets and sidewalks being neglected and allowed to deteriorate year after year?" Or, "Knowing how many trip-and-fall accidents occur that are breaking bones and injuring our residents, why does the city council and city staff continue to neglect these public safety hazards?"

The answer, I suppose, is quite simple. It's because, year after year, city staff has failed to present to council a budget that provides sufficient funding to their Public Works budget in order to maintain our failing infrastructure that, incidentally, is failing at a rate significantly faster than it is being maintained. Not only with streets and sidewalks but also with our water and sewer infrastructures. And, both the current and previous councils over the last decade, have not taken the unpleasant but necessary actions to direct staff to provide sufficient funds to Public Works to maintain these infrastructures, mainly because it would require providing reduced services for budget items with way lower priorities. This, to me, is problematic and concerning any time government reduces and sacrifices public safety budgets but willfully uses those funds for entertainment.

In my opinion, it's reckless, dangerous, and irresponsible.

Instead, the best solution we get out of city hall is that they need to increase taxes. And how many times have we voted on the UUT (where Sierra Madre has one of the highest rates in the entire state) or consider the more recently failed Measure PS? And BTW, don't be too surprised if you see signature-gatherers in a few months trying to put another tax-increase on the ballot for this coming November. (I'll detail more on that more in another post.)

Currently, the City is operating annually under a deficit. Recent predictions by a financial consultant that the City hired to examine the City's finances are reporting that the City will probably continue to face an additional 5 years of deficit spending. Municipal financing is a very complex system. Very rarely is it thoroughly understood by elected council members, city staff, or the public at large. Without getting into too much detail regarding municipal financing, I'd like to take a look at two multi-million-dollar projects that redirected your tax dollars that could have easily been put into the Public Works budget; the library renovation/expansion and the purchase of the Bank of America building. I'm only mentioning these two because they are easily recognizable by the average citizen and, frankly, they are low hanging fruit.

Regarding the library, and in my opinion, the city council fell victim and succumbed to the seductive nature of free money. The City received \$10 million in grant funds to be used specifically on the library structure and does not include furniture or other related but necessary items. In order to receive and spend the entire \$10 million, the City needed to not only renovate the existing structure, but they needed to add an additional 5,000 plus square feet. In 2022, City documents informed the public that the total cost would be around \$9,500,000, an amount that would be covered by the grant funds. That wasn't the case and was

submitted by Glenn Lambdin, Former Sierra Madre Mayor

I've heard the argument that the BofA building purchase was a good investment and could be sold at a profit or leased out.

Perhaps that is true but I don't believe that the residents were involved in the decision making process to become real estate investors or landlords. Additionally, from what I'm hearing, is that murmurings at city hall are throwing around the possibility of selling the building.

Perhaps it's time for the residents to demand that infrastructure safety and maintenance, both of which are public safety concerns, be given the same priority as police and fire. I suggest that every resident that sees a pothole to flood city hall with complaints and fill our council members' email accounts with the complaints.

And don't stop there. Do the same with sidewalk hazards. Flood social media with the same. Write letters to the editor of the Mountain Views. Let your voice be heard.

We all work hard for our money and we need to demand that our tax dollars are being spent on a priority basis where public safety is at the top of the list. Sierra Madre deserves much better than what has been the status quo.

Submitted by Glenn Lambdin, Former Sierra Madre Mayor

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