

Mountain Views News

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

Duarte

Monrovia

Pasadena

Altadena

South Pasadena

San Marino

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 2026

VOLUME 20 NO. 4

St. Rita School

NORTH
ON
BALDWIN



Sierra Madre's Catholic School



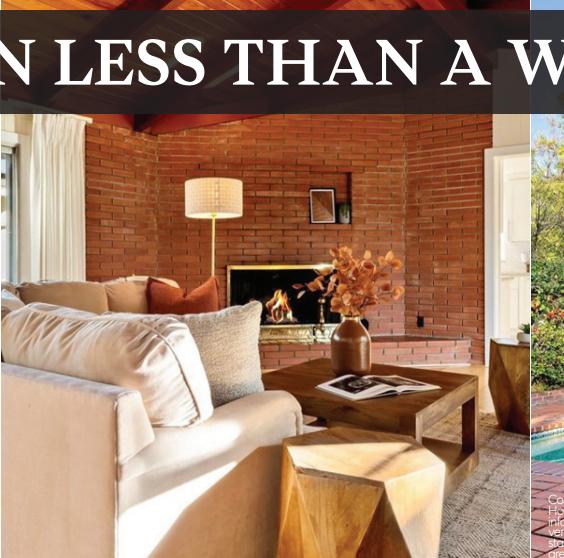
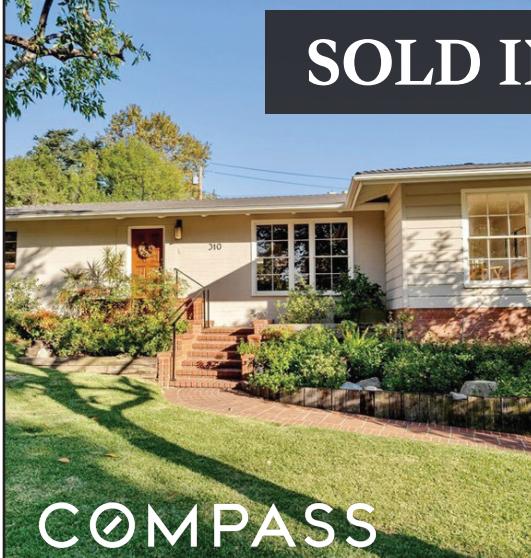
- Catholic Fidelity
- 103 Years of Tradition
- Grades TK-8th
- CYO Team Sports
- Advanced Technology
- After-School Programs
- Low Classroom Ratio
- Average Teacher Experience: 14 years



**SCHEDULE A
TOUR TODAY!**

322 N. Baldwin Ave.
Sierra Madre
626-355-6114
www.st-ritaschool.org

SOLD IN LESS THAN A WEEK!



310 Toyon Road
Sierra Madre

Listed for \$1,895,000

3 BD | 3 BA | 2,504 SF | 11,455 SF LOT

Judy Webb-Martin
626.688.2273
DRE #00541631



Merry Plumbing

626-796-7383
Commercial / Residential

Google **99% FIVE-STAR REVIEWS**

**\$50.00 off Total Bill
For New Customers!**



Murder on the Wistaria Express

A 1930's MURDER MYSTERY DINNER EXPERIENCE



Welcome Aboard our 2nd Murder Mystery Dinner

Step into a glamourous 1930's journey on the luxurious #13 Wistaria Express where mystery, intrigue and suspense await!

Saturday, February 28 – 4:00 pm Sharp
Don't be late! The train won't wait! Limited Seating.

Sierra Madre Woman's Club
550 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre
 Wistaria Express #13 Return: 7 pm
(If you're still with us.)

TICKETS
SELL OUT FAST

TICKETS
\$75 ea thru Jan 31
\$85 ea Feb 1 - 14
ZELLE SMWC SMWC1907

Includes fine dining, wine/beer, dessert and a night of twists, turns and intrigue.

RSVP by February 14: SMWCevents550@gmail.com
Thank you for supporting our philanthropies & scholarships

Colonial Kitchen
RESTAURANT

NEW HOURS
TUESDAY to SUNDAY
8AM - 9PM
MONDAY 8AM-2PM
(626) 289-2449
AMANDA (owner)



HAPPY HOUR

WEDNESDAY – SUNDAY
3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

**BUY ONE, GET ONE
FREE**

Selected drinks included

**APPETIZER SPECIAL
— \$7.99**

All selected appetizers
at one special price



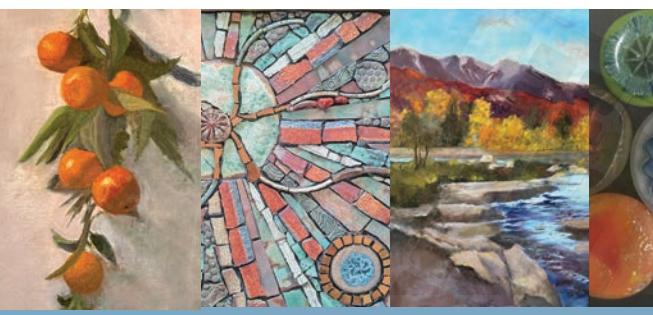
**DRINK + APPETIZER
COMBO - \$21.99**

Perfect pairing for a
relaxing afternoon

COLONIAL KITCHEN

1110 HUNTINGTON DR, SAN MARINO, CA 91108
(626) 289-2449

OPEN DAILY - MONDAY & TUESDAY AFTERNOON CLOSED



CREATIVE ARTS GROUP

FACULTY ART SHOW

On view January 30-February 30

Opening Reception
Friday, February 6, 7:30pm

CREATIVEARTSGROUP.ORG

DESIGN THE 2027 FLOAT CONTEST



DUE BY FEB 4TH

ALL ENTRIES ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY 4—SUBMIT AS
MANY IDEAS AS YOU'D LIKE, BE SURE ALL FORMS ARE
COMPLETED, AND NOTE THAT VOTING IS OPEN ONLY
TO CURRENT SMRFA MEMBERS.

SMRFA.ORG



Holy Angels OPEN HOUSE

Call to
schedule a
tour today!

Holy Angels School is
committed to educating
children in a faith-filled
environment that is
academically strong and
infused with Catholic
values.



Sunday
25 January 2026



Time
10:00am - 12:00 pm

360 Campus Dr. Arcadia, CA

PK (3 YEARS OLD)-8TH GRADE



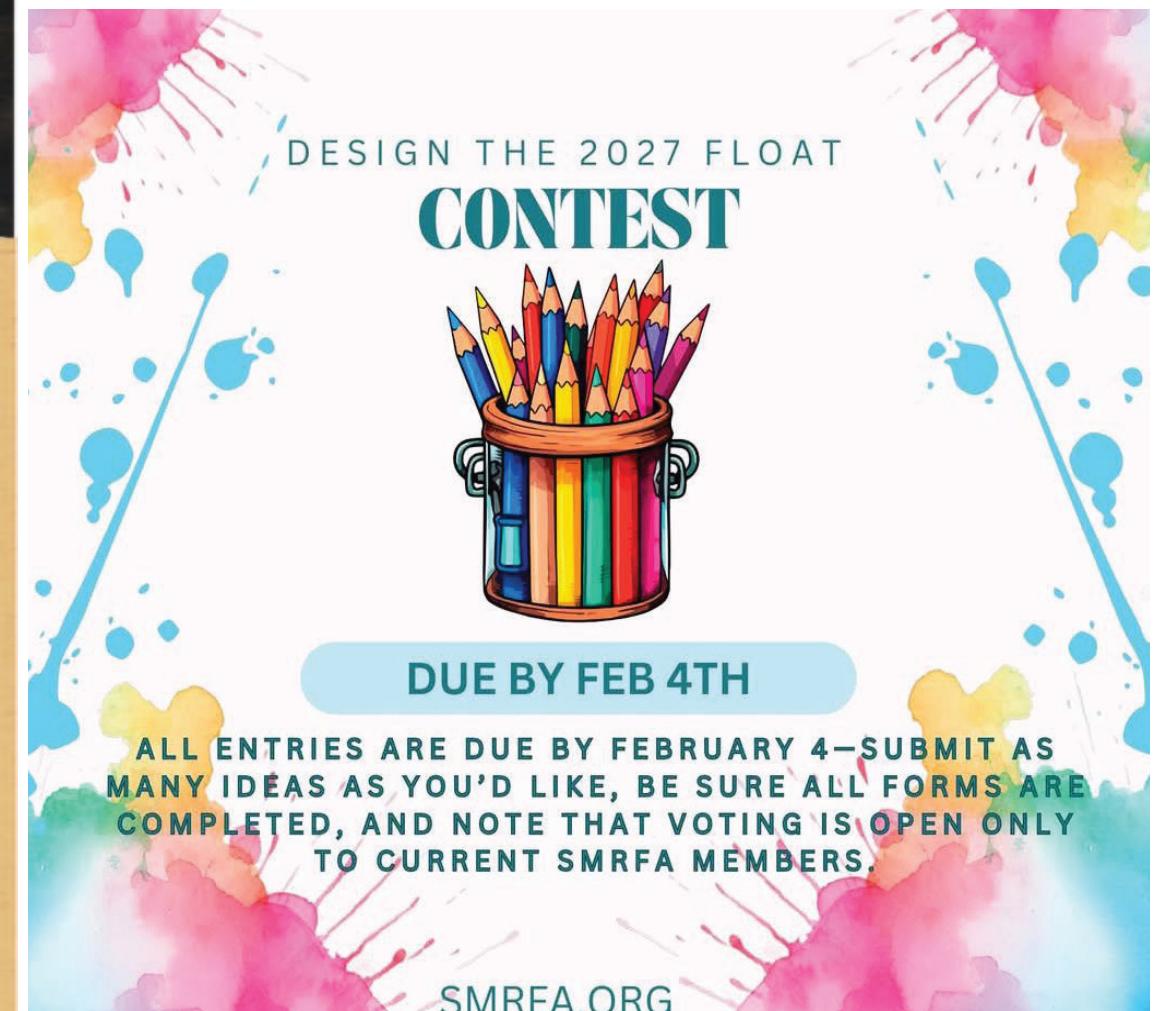
www.holyangelsarcadia.net



626-447-6312



@holyangelsschoolarcadia



SIERRA MADRE

SIERRA MADRE

ARCADIA

PASADENA

ALTADENA

MONROVIA

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 27, 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

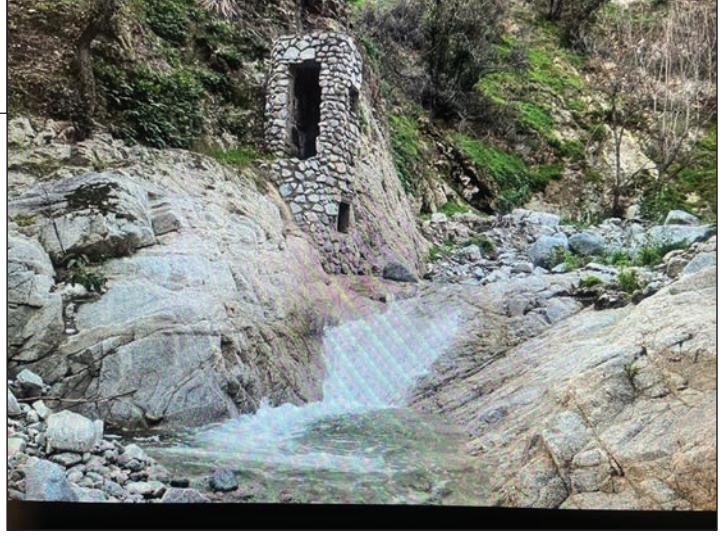
WALKING SIERRA MADRE: The Social Side

by Deanne Davis

"Kindness is like snow. It beautifies everything it covers." Kahlil Gibran

"January sees past mistakes with kinder eyes. Offering new paths from lessons learned." Eleanor Roosevelt

I'm writing this on Tuesday, January 20th and Walking Sierra Madre is full of good news today. The Mt. Wilson Trail is open! Joyful Trail walkers have been posting incredible pictures and videos on Facebook and the picture today was taken by Carlo Bronsozian. Look for pictures by Randy McDevitt and Della Gonzalez. There is so much water in the stream. My favorite Trail hiker, my husband, John, who is now hiking in heaven, would have been so thrilled with how First Water looks now. He would frequently hike up there, sit for a few minutes, listen to the quiet, and thank God for the beauty of this place. The picture on the front page of last week's Mountain Views News of the volunteers working on the Trail was awesome. I'm sending a check to the Fletcher Trail Maintenance Fund. And you can, too, to pay for the supplies and equipment these people need to keep our Trail in shape. P.O. Box 715, Sierra Madre CA 91025. All donors will receive a written tax-deductible acknowledgement letter. There now, that's the best news of the week.



I discovered that today, January 20th has quite a history.

In 1945 on this day, President Franklin Roosevelt was inaugurated for an unprecedented fourth – and final – term in office!

In 1961, John Kennedy was inaugurated as the 35th president. Kennedy was the youngest person elected to be president at age 43. Probably the quote he will be remembered most for was: "My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."

In 1981, 52 U.S. captives who were held at the U.S. embassy in Tehran, Iran, were released minutes after Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as the 40th president. Their release ended the 444-day Iran Hostage Crisis, which began November 4, 1979. The pastor of our church PazNaz, right down the road on Sierra Madre Blvd., at that time was Earl Lee. His son, Gary, was one of those hostages and let me tell you, friends and neighbors, when that plane landed with the hostages on board, Pastor Lee stepped over that rope where the parents and families were to wait and walked right out on the tarmac to embrace his son. The service that was held at the church filled that huge building to overflowing and the song I will never forget was, "My Son Is Home!" When I think of unforgettable moments, that's high on my list!

In case you didn't know, today, January 24th, is National Compliment Day. This is an unofficial holiday, the purpose of which is to give you an opportunity to say something nice to your friends, family, co-workers and anybody else who crosses your path. Compliments are so important that every March 1st, is World Compliment Day. This also happens to be our daughter, Patti's, and granddaughter, Nicole's, birthday. I don't know if you've noticed, but people never get tired of hearing compliments. I know I certainly don't! Compliments reassure people, strengthen relationships and build self-esteem and trust. Look at all the nice things you can accomplish by just telling the girl who hands you your Caramel Brulee Frappuccino that her hair looks nice.

Or maybe telling the WalMart stock person who is kind enough to reach you down something from a high shelf that you really appreciate his help. It just takes a few seconds and makes a real difference.

Mark Twain once said, "I could live for two months on one good compliment." Similarly, President Abraham Lincoln said, "A drop of honey catches more flies than a gallon of gall."

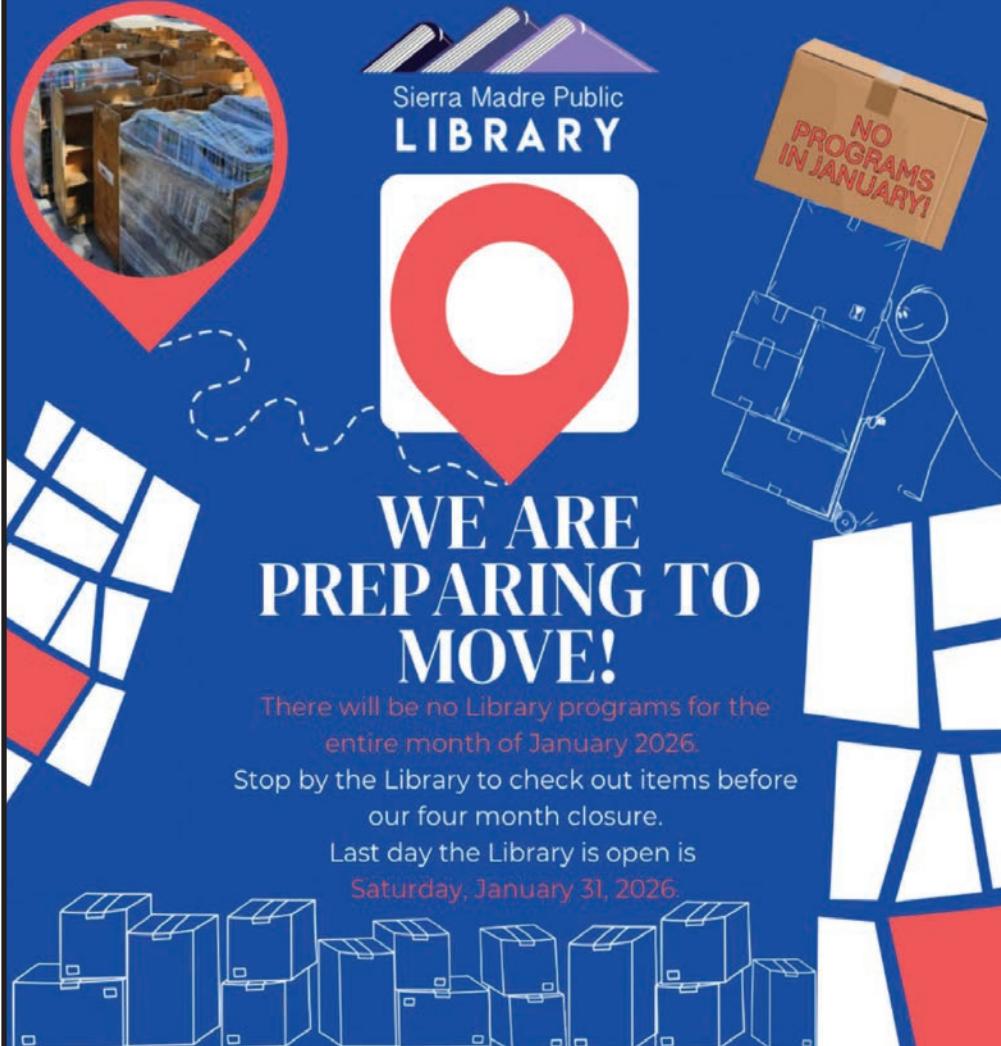
I'm not exactly sure what gall is, but I'm clear on the concept of honey.

This week, go take a look at our beautifully restored Mt. Wilson Trail, give someone a compliment and enjoy seeing signs of Spring emerging. And, rejoice, the Library will be moving into their fabulous new building very soon.

"Kindness is free. Sprinkle that stuff everywhere!"

My book page: Amazon.com:
Deanne Davis
There are wonders to be found
there.
Take a look!

Catch breaking
news at:
mtnviewsnews.com



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

Pasadena Library Every Story Counts

A week in the life of your public library

Pasadena Public Library is participating in Every Story Counts, a statewide initiative aiming to capture data, stories and photos about how and why Californians use their local public libraries. During the week of January 25 – 31, library patrons are encouraged to share their library stories through an online survey, available at: cityofpasadena.net/library.

Public libraries across California serve all residents as vital community hubs for learning, connection, essential services and trusted information for all California communities. "The Pasadena Public Library staff work hard to provide our community with a wide range of programs and services," said Library Director Tim McDonald. "We want to know more about not only how and why our community uses the library, but to hear from the community directly about their own library experiences."

"We all know the value of public libraries and the strong return on investment they provide" said California State Librarian Greg Lucas. "Every Story Counts will help us create a more complete picture of the extraordinary range of activities that happen in libraries across the state."

During the week of January 25 – 31, 2026 the Pasadena Public Library will encourage patrons to share their stories about visiting the library. Whether you're bringing your child to storytime, using the library computers, checking out items from books to sewing machines, asking a question, or many of the other things you can do at the library, we want to hear about it!

Along with libraries everywhere, Pasadena Public Library continues to seek your valuable insight on our programs and services that we provide to our community.

Gordo to Give State of the City

Pasadena Mayor Victor Gordo and his colleagues announced they are inviting the community to join him on Wednesday for this year's State of the City. This year's theme is "Rising Together".

The event will take place at the Robinson Park Recreation Center, 1081 N Fair Oaks Ave. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and the program will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Limited parking is available at the Robinson Park Rec. Center and Jackie Robinson Comm. Center parking lot. Street parking is also available. The State of the City will also be live-streamed at: PasadenaMedia.org/Kpas. For more information visit: cityofpasadena.net.



City Conducts 2026 Homeless Count

Pasadena city officials announced Friday that the city conducted a Point-in-Time Homeless Count on Wednesday night with approximately 200 volunteers, both new and returning, participating from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The operation continued Thursday with a Youth Count from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

"The community response has been incredibly encouraging. We surpassed our volunteer recruitment goals ahead of schedule, demonstrating that Pasadena residents view homelessness as a critical problem that is deserving of time and attention," said Homeless Count Coordinator Christina Kasali. "This year, 48 percent of volunteers participated in the Pasadena Homeless Count for the first time. We're grateful to everyone who participated and

made the count a success."

According to officials, teams of four to six people were deployed to 28 geographic zones covering the city's entire geography and used a mobile, GIS-enabled app to conduct a survey which was developed by the City's Department of Information Technology they said.

Volunteer teams also counted in all ten of the city's branch libraries and at locations where people receive services.

Volunteers distributed cold weather kits with warm clothing items, snacks, and resource flyers. The Pasadena Police Department provided critical support, surveying in the city's parks, freeway embankments, and other hard-to-access locations. The Pasadena Public Health Department, in partnership with Huntington Health, administered flu, COVID, and hepatitis A vaccines

and distributed Narcan overdose reversal kits throughout the count.

The Homeless Count provides a "snapshot" of what the homeless population looks like on any given night. Count data is most useful as a tool to study the demographics of the unhoused population and to track trends over time. Pasadena was the first city in the State of California, and one of the first three cities in the nation, to conduct a dedicated Homeless Count in 1992.

Homeless Count data is used year-round to inform the planning and funding of homeless services in the City and is used by federal, state, and county funders in the allocation of homeless services grants. The results of the Homeless Count will be available by June.

City Rental Housing Board Seeks Applicants to Fill At-Large Member Vacancy

The Pasadena City Council announced Tuesday that they are accepting applications to fill an unscheduled vacancy in one At-Large Member seat on the Pasadena Rental Housing Board (PRHB) following the resignation of Arnold Siegel.

The PRHB was established under Section 1811 of the Pasadena City Charter and is responsible for enforcing Article XVIII, the Pasadena Fair and Equitable Housing Charter Amendment. The PRHB includes eleven members: seven Tenant Members, four At-Large Members, and two alternates, one Tenant Alternate and one At-Large Alternate.

The selected applicant will serve the remainder of the term, which ends on May 24, 2027.

At-Large Member Eligibility
Pursuant to City Charter Section 1811(a), At-Large Members are appointed by the City Council and:

May reside in any Pasadena Council District

May or may not be tenants

May or may not have a material interest in rental property

While the City Charter allows At-Large Members to own rental property, California conflict-of-interest regulations for public officials establish separate standards. As a result, individuals with a prescribed financial interest in 4 or more rental units within the City of Pasadena may be restricted from fully participating in all matters that come before the PRHB. Applicants who may be affected by these regulations are encouraged to consult with their legal counsel prior to applying.

Board Responsibilities

The duties of PRHB include:
Adopting rules and regulations

to implement Article XVIII of the City Charter
Establishing allowable rent increases and determining the Annual General Adjustment
Appointing hearing officers and conducting hearings on rent adjustment petitions

Establishing the Board's budget
Pursuing civil remedies for violations of Article XVIII

Holding public hearings
Establishing penalties for violations

Establishing and maintaining Pasadena's rental housing registry

Pasadena residents interested in serving on the PRHB are encouraged to apply. To be considered, applicants must:

Submit a completed application to the Office of the City Clerk.

Circulate a nomination petition and collect at least 25 qualified signatures from residents in the same Pasadena Council District.

Submit a declaration of financial interests for themselves and their extended family members, which will become a public record.

The application period is now open and closes on Thursday, March 5 at 5:00 p.m. Application forms are available at the City of Pasadena, Office of the City Clerk, located at 100 North Garfield Avenue, Room S228, Pasadena, CA 91101. You can also call (626) 744-4124 or email CityClerk@CityOfPasadena.net for more information. Forms can be obtained during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

This is a paid position with compensation for up to 20 hours per week at an hourly rate of 2.5 times Pasadena's minimum wage. Attendance at board meetings is mandatory to qualify for payment.

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AROUND SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

NEWS BRIEFS

ARCADIA AUDIT CONFIRMS STRONG FISCAL POSITION

ARCADIA, CA – Independent auditors have completed their annual review of Arcadia's Fiscal Year 2024-25 financial results, reporting a positive ending result of \$4.6 million, significantly outperforming initial projections.

By September 2024, the approval of five labor association agreements resulted in a projected deficit of \$2.2 million. However, by June 2025, updated forecasts indicated that a balanced budget was the most likely outcome. Consistent with prior years, actual results proved significantly more favorable than initial projections, which were supported by stronger revenues, disciplined spending, and routine timing and supply chain delays for certain capital projects.

Arcadia's positive financial results were driven by favorable performance on both the revenue and expenditure sides of the budget. On the revenue side, tax collections exceeded projections by \$1.6 million, led by higher collections on sales, utilities, property, and hotel stays. The fiscal year also reflects increased investment income, which contributed an additional \$1.3 million to the budget. Further revenue growth came from fees, fines, and charges for services, including approximately \$150,000 for code enforcement activity, \$150,000 for engineering services, \$300,000 in grant funds, and \$400,000 in reimbursements related to Fire Department Strike Team deployments.

Budget savings were largely the result of normal capital project scheduling and supply chain delays, lower-than-anticipated personnel costs, and the deferral of a voluntary contribution to help stabilize employee pension costs. Capital and equipment spending totaled about \$2.5 million less than projected, with most of those costs being carried forward into the current fiscal year. Following the favorable results of the audit, the City will proceed with transferring the \$1.0 million previously set aside to help smooth pension costs.

Although the labor contracts initially signaled a challenging budget year, higher revenue growth and disciplined spending helped Arcadia turn a multimillion-dollar deficit into a \$4.6 million surplus. "Our employees are the foundation of Arcadia's success, and the City Council ensured that our labor agreements reflect their vital contributions to the community," said City Manager Dominic Lazzaretto. "Their foresight to invest in our workforce contributes to Arcadia's long-term vitality, helping our community remain a place where people want to live, work, and play."

Arcadia's FY2024-25 financial audit will be posted to the City's website at ArcadiaCA.gov in the coming weeks. Any questions about the audit can be directed to the Administrative Services Department at (626) 574-5424.

#

About Arcadia

Nestled along the rolling foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains and Angeles National Forest, Arcadia is a charming, family-oriented community with a population of just over 57,000. Located only 13 miles east from downtown Los Angeles, regional transportation networks like the Metro A Line connect Arcadia as a premier residential, shopping and entertainment destination in the San Gabriel Valley. Arcadia is known for its top-rated schools, iconic landmarks, and serene neighborhoods. With the conveniences and amenities of a full-service, mid-size city, Arcadia's "Community of Homes" provides a quality of life that will go Above & Beyond your expectations.

For more information, visit ArcadiaCA.gov, like us on Facebook or follow us on Instagram or X.

Sierra Madre Woman's Club

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2 We have something for everyone!
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3 Every Week Since 2007
We have been publishing your community news consistently every week since 2007...come wind, rain, mud, fire and/or lovely weather. FACT: The Mountain Views News is the longest running newspaper in Sierra Madre history!

4 Published by an Award Winning Journalist and a dedicated team of contributors
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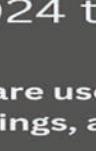


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For Information about the Student Commissioner Program and each Commission go to <https://www.sierramadreca.gov/cityhall/commissions>

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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
3880 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.
(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 Esseln
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

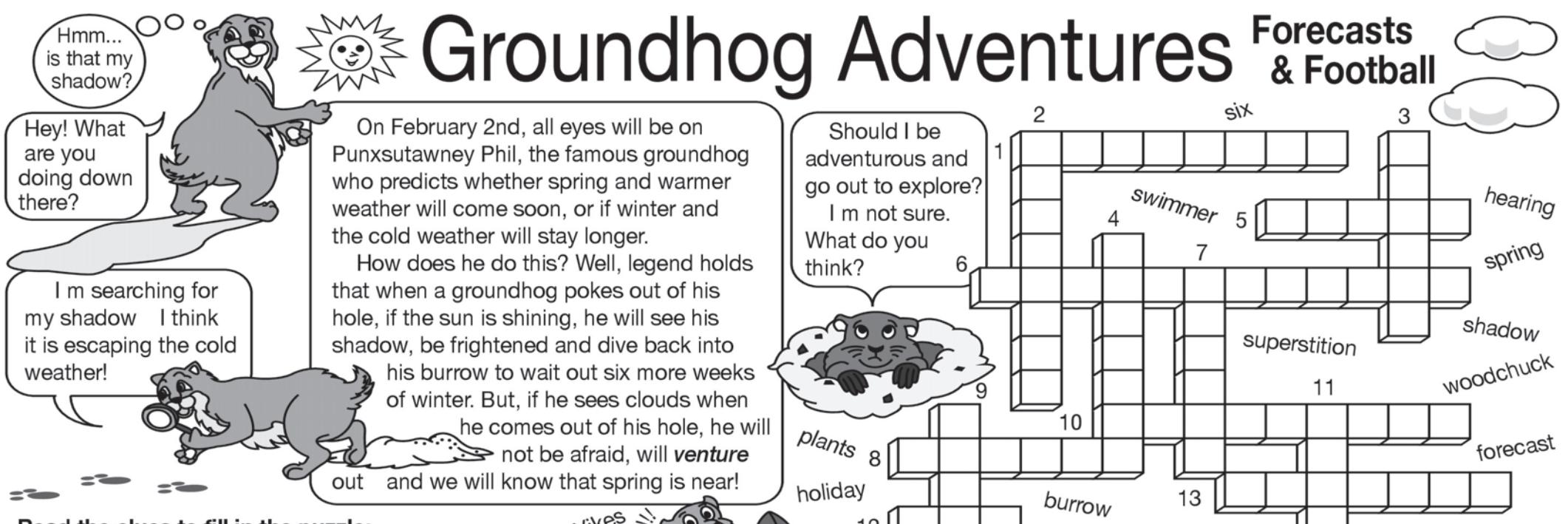
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Duarte Unified School District
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(626) 599-5000 Website: www.duarte.k12.ca.us



Groundhog Adventures

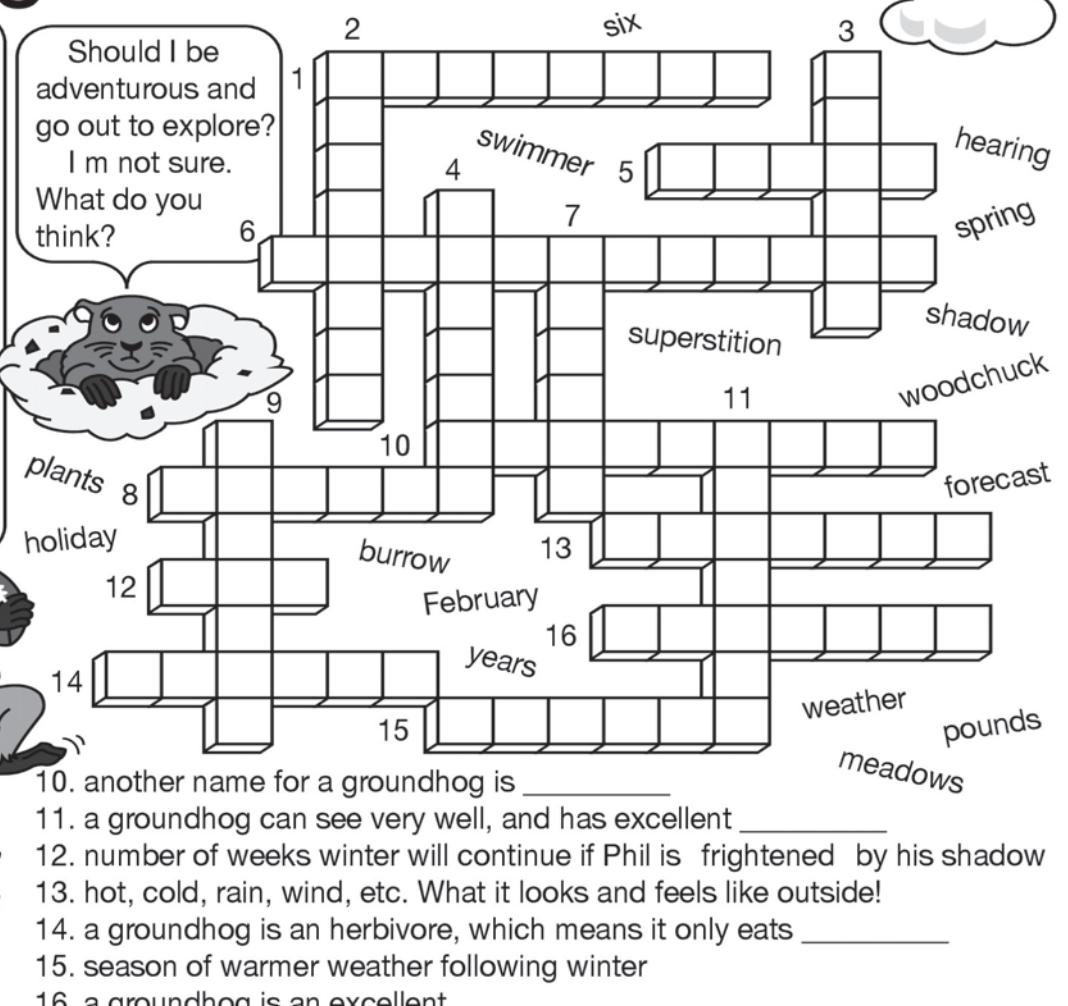
Forecasts & Football



Read the clues to fill in the puzzle:

- On February 2nd, Phil, the famous groundhog (and other groundhogs in other places) will be watched for his weather prediction about what kind of weather to expect
- the second month of the year
- a tunnel dug underground
- groundhogs can be found in the woods, fields and
- a groundhog usually lives to be 6 to 8 old
- belief in magic, luck and chance
- the dark area formed when light is blocked
- a groundhog usually weighs about 12
- the groundhog is the only animal with its own national

Have super Super Bowl fun!



FOOD, DRINK AND FUN!

Mountain Views News Saturday, January 24, 2026



CHEESEBURGER, CHEESEBURGER, CHEESEBURGER. ACT #2

No, that's not me chanting into the void—it's a pop-culture wink from a very popular TV show. Check my Facebook page for the answer; consider it your appetizer before the main course.

Now, to matters of real importance. The cheeseburger was invented in Pasadena, and if that doesn't earn us a full week of indulgence, I don't know what does. So welcome to Cheeseburger Week, where I say calories don't count, opinions are strong, and napkins are mandatory.

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

Let's begin with the obvious truth: everyone has a favorite burger, and everyone else is wrong. But that won't stop me from trying.

The Neighborhood Heroes

In nearby Sierra Madre, 355 Burger remains a logical—and delicious—starting point. I wrote about them a few months back, and the appeal hasn't changed: focused menu, freshly ground beef, no gimmicks. A burger that knows exactly what it is. Confidence is attractive, even in food.

Then there's Tom's Famous Family Restaurant—and honestly, the name alone deserves an award. No trophies on the wall, no celebrity endorsements, just a proper neighborhood joint serving a real-deal value burger. Is it an award winner? No. Is it family-friendly, satisfying, and honest? Absolutely. Sometimes that's better.

When the Chef Gets Involved

At The Arbour on Lake, an award-winning chef turns the humble cheeseburger into something a bit more... polished. Their Happy Hour burger (\$11) is top-shelf in both execution and price point—a reminder that even comfort food can dress up and still feel comfortable. Just around the corner sits the heavyweight champ, Pie 'n Burger. Anyone with a phone, a Yelp account, and an opinion swears by it—and for good reason. It is the best of the best. But let's address the elephant in the diner: when a burger hovers around \$20, one is allowed to raise an eyebrow. Even Oscar Wilde would have something clever (and slightly cutting) to say about that.

Crossing Bridges (Literally and Figuratively)

I mentioned The Hook last week, so we move on. Just outside our immediate area—just over the bridge—you'll find Colombo's Italian Steakhouse. Their idea of a smash burger makes the Dills cut, which is not handed out lightly. Italian steakhouse, smash burger? Odd couple, yes. Successful marriage? Also yes.

Under-the-Radar Finds

If you like your burgers without fanfare and with a side of nostalgia, Super Burger has you covered. Think In-N-Out energy, but with a larger tomato slice. Hey folks, I'm just the writer here—I report the facts as I find them.

There are many more burgers worth mentioning. Many more. But even Cheeseburger Week has its limits, and this is all I could eat in one week without requiring medical supervision. So get out there. Support the classics, discover the under-the-radar gems, argue with your friends, and remember: life is far too important to be taken seriously—especially when there's a cheeseburger in front of you.

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THE TASTING ROOM A GREAT TASTING CAB UNDER \$20

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

If you are looking for a great tasting Cabernet Sauvignon that is well-made, small production, and it's organic – look no further! The Bottle Shop has the 2024 Ultraviolet Cabernet Sauvignon from Sonoma County.

This wine is produced by Samantha Sheehan, a rising star in the wine world. She has been making wine since 2009 with her POE label, and since 2010 with the Ultraviolet label. She checks all the boxes for me in what I am looking for in a wine. It's small production, she uses locally sourced organic grapes, she uses minimal sulfites, and her wines are bright and balanced.

The 2024 Cabernet Sauvignon is sourced from two vineyards – Norgard Farms in Mendocino and her estate vineyard in Coombsville. It's 97% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Cabernet Franc. The grapes were hand-picked and destemmed into a stainless-steel tank. She used native yeast in the fermentation process. The wine was aged for 12 months in neutral French oak.

The wine is delicious. Dark black fruit, bing cherry, cacao, and Christmas spice. The tannins are almost non-existent. This is a soft and easy drinking wine with a long mellow finish. We have been carrying this wine at The Bottle Shop for at least seven years now ever since I met Samantha at a wine trade tasting. She takes care in the making of this wine and she takes her time with it. It shows in the glass. An exceptional value for Cabernet Sauvignon.

Get it at The Bottle Shop for \$17.99. Say you saw it in the Mountain Views News and get the special price of \$16.20. Special pricing good through January 30.

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. Use the QR-Code to sign up for our newsletter.

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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Beer Tasting – Wednesday 5pm
Wine Tasting – Thursday 6:30pm & Friday 6pm & 7:30pm



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KNOWING WHEN TO CONSIDER ASSISTED LIVING IN THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

As the population of the San Gabriel Valley continues to age, many families are facing an important and often emotional decision: when is the right time to consider assisted living for an elderly loved one? While there is no single answer, recognizing the signs early can help seniors remain safe, supported, and connected to their community.

One of the first indicators is difficulty with daily activities. Seniors may struggle with cooking, bathing, managing medications, or keeping up with household chores. In the San Gabriel Valley, where many older adults live alone in long-time family homes, these challenges can go unnoticed until a fall, illness, or emergency occurs.

Memory changes are another common concern. Missed appointments, confusion while driving familiar streets, or forgetting to turn off appliances may signal that additional support is needed. Social isolation is also a growing issue locally, especially for seniors whose families live out of the area or who no longer drive. Loneliness can negatively impact both physical and emotional health.

Family members often step in to help, but caregiver stress should not be overlooked. Balancing work, family, and caregiving responsibilities can quickly become overwhelming. This is where guidance can make a difference. Organizations such as Safe Path for Seniors, a local senior placement service, help families understand care options and navigate assisted living communities throughout Pasadena, Arcadia, Glendora, and the surrounding areas.

Assisted living does not mean giving up independence. Many local communities offer private apartments, daily meals, housekeeping, transportation, and 24-hour support, along with social activities that promote wellness and connection.

Starting the conversation early allows seniors to be part of the decision-making process. With the right information and local support, families can make confident choices that help their loved ones continue to thrive close to home. For more information, Safe Path for Seniors can be reached at (626) 999-6913.

TOOLS TO HELP YOU FIND A PLACE TO RETIRE

Dear Savvy Senior,

What resources can you recommend for researching good places to retire in the U.S.? My husband and I are interested in relocating to a warmer climate when we retire next year.

Looking to Relocate

Dear Looking,

It's exciting to think about relocating in retirement! Whether you're considering seasonal escapes or a permanent change, there are a wide variety of digital resources that can help you find and research new locations. Here are some tips and tools to help you get started.

Where to Retire?

Deciding where to relocate when you retire is a big decision. There are many factors to think about to ensure the move supports your lifestyle, financial goals, and overall well-being. To help you identify some good retirement locations you need to consider things like cost of living, climate, taxes, health care, housing, crime, access to social and recreational activities, access to transportation and proximity to family and friends.

If you're at the beginning of your search, a good starting point is BestPlaces.net. This site compiles demographic data from numerous reliable sources, updates it regularly and lets you easily compare cities using different criteria, such as housing cost, climate, crime, religious practice, voting patterns and education level. They even offer a 10-question "Where is the best place for me to live?" quiz, which may suggest some locations you may never have thought of.

There are also news and financial publications like U.S. News & World Report, Forbes, WalletHub, Bankrate and The Motley Fool that publish "best places to retire" ranking lists on their websites each year. These can give you an idea of popular retirement locations based on different sets of criteria.

Once you identify a few good spots, here are some additional resources that can help you dig a little deeper.

Cost of living: Affordability is often the No. 1 factor when deciding where to relocate. To research and compare the cost of living from your current location to where you would like to move, use the previously mentioned BestPlaces.net, the Economic Policy Institute Family Budget Calculator at EPI.org/resources/budget and/or Bankrate's cost of living calculator at Bankrate.com/real-estate/cost-of-living-calculator. And, because housing is a big expense, you can take a deeper dive into these costs at Zillow.com and Realtor.com.

Taxes: Some states are more tax friendly than others. To investigate how states treat retirees when it comes to income, sales, property and other taxes, see Kiplinger tax guide at Kiplinger.com – search "Taxes on Retirees: A State-by-State Guide."

Crime rate: To evaluate how safe a community or area is, the FBI Crime Data Explorer (cde.ucr.cjis.gov) allows you to explore crime statistics at the national, state, and local levels.

Climate: You can find U.S. climate/weather information at National Centers for Environmental Information at NCEI.noaa.gov. And to research climate change factors and the risks of extreme temperatures, wildfires, floods, hurricanes, severe storms, earthquakes and drought in different locations, use ClimateCheck.com and FEMA (Hazards.fema.gov/nri/map).

Health care: If you're enrolled or planning to enroll in original Medicare, check the coverage and availability of providers in your new location. Search by ZIP code for health care providers and facilities at Medicare.gov/care-compare, and check star ratings for quality of care. If you're enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan and you move out of the coverage area, you'll need to find a new plan in your new area.

Transportation: If you plan to travel much, or expect frequent visits from your kids or grandkids, convenient access to an airport or train station is a big advantage.

Once you have narrowed down your choices, spend a couple weeks in each location at different times of the year so you can get a feel for the seasonal weather changes, and so you can carefully weigh the pros and cons of living there. You may find that you like the area more as a vacation spot than as a year-round residence. It's also a good idea to rent for a year before buying a home or making a commitment to a retirement community.

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




Safe Path for Seniors
Assisting Families with Their Senior Care Journey

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• Steve@SafePathForSeniors.com
• SafePathForSeniors.com

SENIOR HAPPENINGS

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OUT TO PASTOR

A Weekly Religion Column by Rev. James Snyder

IT'S NOT A MESS, IT'S MY CREATIVE DECOR!

The greatest joy I have every morning is not only getting up but also stepping in my office. I step inside, pause for a moment, and look around at all the books on my shelves. I have almost 10,000 books. And yes, I read every one of them. Well, except for commentaries and dictionaries. I love looking through all my books, and most of them, I know where I got them. Every once in a while, I'll take one down and spend some time reading it. What would I do without my books?

If you saw my desk, you would not be able to find it. My desk is such a mess of papers and folders, my laptop, and other things. But I love every bit of it. When I retired, I had to have a room built at the back of our house for my office. I think it was one of the best things I've ever done. Walking into that office is a wonderful experience for me. Some days, I look at all of the books that I have written and remember working on that manuscript. I have over 30 books at the present time.

Every once in a while, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will come into my office while I'm working. She will step in, pause, look all around my office and then say, "What a mess you have." I will look up to her with a big smile on my face and reply, "Where do you see any mess?"

With sort of a grunt in her voice, she says, "Just look all around this office. It's a mess everywhere. I don't know how you can work in this environment." "It's not a mess," I respond to her, "it is my creative décor." I'm sure she's never heard that phrase before, especially coming out of my mouth.

Several times, I walked into her Craft Room and noticed how pristine it is. When I walk in, I get a bit dizzy, and I'm not sure how to get out. Such organization is not my cup of tea.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is known for her organizing skills. If you want something organized, call her. I caught her once in my office trying to organize some things. I had to gently calm her down and walk her out of my office and set her in her chair.

My philosophy is, if you can't find something, you don't need it. And if you need something, you'll find it. I can tell how many times I couldn't find what I wanted at that time. I have learned to stop looking for it and get back to work. When I do that, all of a sudden, I find what I need. I'm not sure how that works, but in my office, it works.

Unlike The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, I do not have to have everything organized. And the word "messy" is not part of my vocabulary. Often, I will ask The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, "What do you mean by messy?"

Oh, she will go on a long tirade explaining to me what she considers messy. I listen, but I do not comprehend what she's saying. Messy is a part of me. Not too long ago, while she was in her Craft Room, I peeked in and said, "Would you like me to organize your Craft Room?"

She stared at me for a moment and then said, "I think I'm quite all right here. There is nothing here that you can do to organize this room. Just go to your messy office and get back to work." I chuckled all the way down the hall towards my office. What would her room look like if I organized it? I'm pretty sure she would not be able to find anything she needed for any of her crafts. Whereas in my "messy office," I can find anything I want. If I can't find it, I don't need it. And if I don't need it, I'm not going to worry about it. Life can bring you a lot of lemons, but I would rather have ice tea. Sometimes, as I walk around in my office looking at my library, I see a book I haven't seen for a long time. With great delight, I go to my chair and begin reading it.

All the books in my office have created a beautiful display that I enjoy every day. Since my retirement, I can go in and out of my office as I please. Recently, both The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I had the flu. All week I wore my pajamas when I went into my office. I could go in and out as I pleased, dressed as I pleased.

As I was sitting in my office, thinking about this, I was reminded of a verse of scripture that addressed it. The Apostle Paul said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

According to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, my office may be a mess. That's not the important issue. The thing that must be organized is my service to the Lord. That is the only thing that is crucial in my everyday life.

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.

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CHRISTOPHER Nyerges

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

FEELING MALLOW

Learning to Recognize the Common Mallow Plant
(*Malva neglecta* and *M. parviflora*)

(The author has been teaching ethnobotany since 1974. He is the author of "Guide to Wild Foods and Useful Plants," "Foraging Wild Edible Plants of North America," and other books on the uses of wild plants. He can be reached at www.SchoolofSelf-Reliance.com)

Because of our heavy rains of November and December, wild areas and backyard and alleys are full of tall green floral growth, most of which are widely regarded as weeds and are cut down as fast as the weed-whackers can work.

But some (though not all) of these wild weeds are great food, as long as we take the time to learn to accurately recognize them.

One of the conspicuous large weeds currently filling every vacant space is the mallow plant, also known as cheeseweed.

USES:

Mallow leaves are edible eaten raw, and are commonly used in salads. The leaves are a bit tough though chefs have found many ways to bring mallow to the table. In salads, they are chopped fine (think "taboule"), and they impart a slightly mucilaginous texture. The leaves, with the tough stems removed, are regularly cooked and eaten like spinach. They can also be added to soup.

Experimental chefs have found that the large leaves of the mallow can be used as a replacement for grape leaves in the popular Middle Eastern dolma ("grape leaf"), which is rice and meat rolled into a grape leaf.

During Covid, when many people were at home experimenting with foods, it was discovered that you can successfully sauté the individual leaf, making "mallow chips."

As the plant matures, little flat round fruits develop along the stalk. These fruits can be eaten as-is while still green, having a nutty flavor. The green fruits are also popularly pickled, created a sort of wild caper.

The mature fruits can also be gathered, dried, and then the seeds separated from the chaff and other debris by winnowing the plant through a soft breeze. The seeds can then be simmered in water. They swell up slightly, and they can be seasoned and eaten like rice.

NUTRITION

The tasty mallow plant is also good for you. According to the USDA, 100 grams (½ cup) of the mallow leaf contains 249 milligrams of calcium, 69 milligrams of phosphorus, 2,190 international units of vitamin A, and 35 milligrams of vitamin C. An analysis of the same volume of mallow leaf by Duke and Atchley showed 90 milligrams of calcium, 42 milligrams of phosphorus, 410 milligrams of potassium, and 24 milligrams of vitamin C. This second analysis also revealed 3,315 micrograms of beta carotene.

MEDICINE/NUTRITION:

Herbalist Michael Moore regards mallow as a good demulcent and emollient. An infusion of its leaves is used for coughs and to soothe the throat. In Mexico, the raw leaves are chewed to alleviate minor sore throats. According to Daniel Moerman ("Native American Ethnobotany"), the leaves were used externally by Native Americans as a poultice on sores and swellings.

IDENTIFYING MALLOW

Mallow leaves are roundish in outline, palmately divided into 7 to 11 shallow lobes, with a margin of small teeth. Where the long leaf stem meets the base of the leaf blade, you will notice a red spot on the upper surface of the leaf. The leaves are alternate and almost hairless.

The flowers are arranged in close axillary clusters along the branches. The floral parts are five sepals, five rose-colored petals about 1/8 inch long, numerous stamens, and one pistil. Circular flat fruits develop from the flowers. These ¼-inch green fruits split when ripe into up to a dozen nutlets, resembling packaged cheese, thus its common name: cheeseweed.

WHERE FOUND:

Mallow has naturalized here from Europe and Asia. It is almost always found around the disturbed soils of urban areas, and tends to be mostly absent from wilderness areas. Look for this plant in vacant lots and waste areas. Mallow is one of the most common urban wild plants. This spreading and highly branched annual reaches to about three feet tall and is seen as mounds of green in the lots.

HISTORY

This plant is related to the marsh mallow (*Althea officinalis*), the root of which was boiled to yield a slimy juice. This was whipped into a froth and made into an ages-old medicine for sore throats, bronchial troubles, and coughs. Today, marshmallows have no marshmallow root extract, but are made of eggs, sugar, and other ingredients and sold as candy.

Experiments done by author Euell Gibbons ("Stalking the Healthful Herbs"), common mallow root (*Malva parviflora*) will not yield as thick and slimy a juice when boiled, but the green fruits (and the roots) can be boiled and the water beaten for an inferior but still useful substitute.

RECIPES:

MALLOW -POTATO DISH

5 C. mallow leaves, torn or cut into bite-size pieces

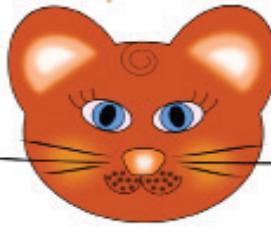
2 large boiled potatoes

½ pint sour cream

Dill weed

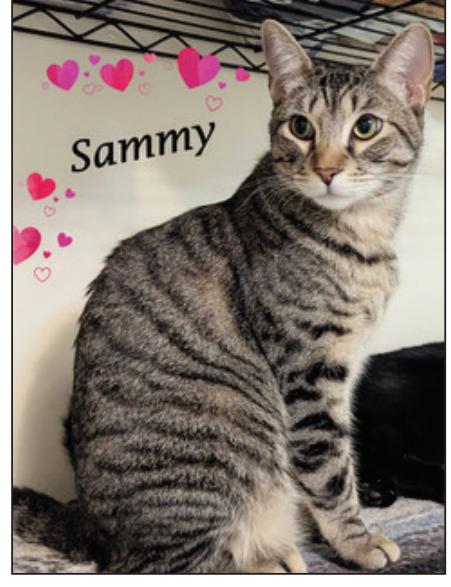
Boil the potatoes until tender. Steam the mallow until tender. It's easier to cook them separately because the potatoes will take longer to cook. Dice the potatoes and blend them in a serving dish with the mallow greens. Mix in the sour cream, and top with the dill before serving. Best if served warm. Serves two or three.

Katnip News!



SAMMY. A. SWEETHEART!

Thinking about Valentine's Day? From now till Valentine's Day you will meet some wonderful furry cats who are sweet, friendly, and cuddly.



Last week you met Ollie. Now meet his brother, SAMMY, aka Sammy Sweetheart! Sammy is a sweet friend. Wherever you are, Sammy will be close by. He will quietly say hello frequently, and will silently join you wherever you are, and give you a loving look. He shares well, and would like to be adopted with one of his siblings:

Ollie, Rocky, or Dot-tie.

He especially loves to play with the broom. He will lie down where you're sweeping and play gently while you "sweep" him up. He purrs quietly when petted and will gaze into your eyes lovingly. He loves being petted and brushed, and will easily roll onto his back for a tummy brush.

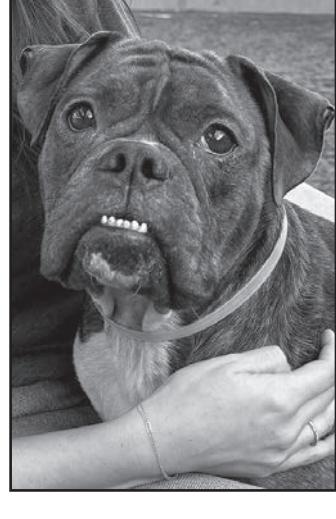
Apply at <https://www.lifelineforpets.org/mindys-kittens.html>, or use the qr code.

Pet of the Week

Dutchie is a 2-year-old brindle bulldog at Pasadena Humane with a whole lot of love to give!

Playful but not over-the-top, Dutchie is always ready to enjoy a nice game of fetch followed by plenty of lounging and cuddles. She's very affectionate, thrives on praise, and loves being close to you. Not to mention, Dutchie is potty trained, well-mannered indoors, and walks nicely on a leash.

An easygoing companion, Dutchie has shown herself to be calm around kids and people in her foster home. She's quiet, rarely barks, and can be left alone without issues.



While she may need a brief moment to warm up in new situations, she quickly blossoms into a trusting, sweet, and devoted friend. Available for a 10-day adoption trial, Dutchie would thrive in a loving home — especially with a family looking for a well-behaved, cuddly, and incredibly kindhearted dog.

And there's no better time to adopt — adoption fees for dogs 6 months and older are waived at Pasadena Humane as part of the Dog Days of Winter adoption promotion, now through January 25.

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 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. 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.

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PELVIC FLOOR BUZZ

For years, the message about the pelvic floor was simple: if you leak urine, do Kegels. That advice helped some but left many confused or in pain. Today, doctors and physical therapists are talking about something fitness professionals have understood for decades. A muscle can be weak. A muscle can be tight. Sometimes, it can be both. The pelvic floor is no exception.

This issue affects far more people than most realize. It is not limited to women or older adults. Athletes, weekend exercisers, and people who have never stepped into a gym can all experience pelvic floor problems. Many notice leaking when they cough, laugh, run, or lift. Others feel pressure, urgency, pain, or difficulty emptying the bladder or bowels. Symptoms often appear in active people who brace their bodies during workouts and in older adults who hold tension from fear of falling or leaking.

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles at the bottom of the pelvis, forming a supportive sling for the bladder and bowel, and in women, the uterus. These muscles play a key role in bladder and bowel control, posture, balance, breathing, and core stability. Like all muscles, the pelvic floor must tighten when needed and relax when safe. It must also have endurance and move with breathing. Problems start when this balance is lost.

Pelvic floor issues usually develop slowly over time due to chronic stress, poor breathing, surgery, injury, childbirth, or years of holding tension. Many people tighten their pelvic floor without realizing it, especially during exercise or lifting. Over time, this constant holding changes how the muscles work.

A tight muscle can feel weak. When a muscle stays tense all day, it becomes shortened and tired. It loses its ability to contract strongly and relax fully. This is why some people faithfully do Kegels, strengthen their abs and glutes, and still leak, hurt, or feel worse. They are strengthening a muscle that never learned to let go.

Doing the wrong thing for the wrong problem can make symptoms worse. Strengthening exercises help a pelvic floor that is weak but able to relax. Strengthening an already tight pelvic floor often increases pain, urgency, and dysfunction. This is why pelvic health experts now say that if a pelvic floor muscle cannot relax, it should not be strengthened yet.

Pelvic health physical therapists do not guess. They look at symptoms, breathing patterns, posture, and how the hips and core work together. They assess how the pelvic floor feels at rest, whether it can relax, and how well it contracts and releases. They determine: can the muscle fully relax? If the answer is no, the issue is not just weakness.

Athletes often experience pelvic floor problems because of over-bracing. Heavy lifting, high-impact sports, and intense core training can train the body to stay tight. This can lead to leaking during exercise, pelvic pain, hip and back problems, and reduced performance. Learning how to relax the pelvic floor before strengthening it often improves control and power.

Older adults face a different challenge. With age, many breathe more shallowly, sit more, and move with extra tension. Fear of falling or leaking can cause constant guarding. In these cases, the goal is not just strength, but control, coordination, and confidence in movement.

People who worry they may have a tight pelvic floor often notice patterns in their body. They may hold their breath during movement, clench their stomach or glutes without meaning to, or feel tension in the hips, tailbone, or low back. Bathroom habits can offer clues, such as difficulty starting urine, feeling unable to fully empty, or straining despite soft stools. When clinicians identify excess pelvic tension, treatment usually focuses on relaxation rather than strengthening. This includes breathing retraining, letting the pelvic muscles drop instead of lift, improving posture and movement habits, gentle hands-on therapy, and reducing unnecessary bracing linked to stress.

If pelvic floor muscles never learn to relax, they can't work properly. Strength becomes limited, pain and tension persist, and bladder or bowel problems may continue. Even athletes may notice reduced core stability and performance, while everyday activities can feel uncomfortable. Without relaxation, the pelvic floor is always "on" and never fully functional, making long-term strength, comfort, and control much harder to achieve.

Luckily, most people can regain balance with awareness and consistent practice. Learning to breathe, release tension, and move naturally allows the pelvic floor to support strength rather than resist it. For anyone dealing with leaks, pressure, or pelvic discomfort, the first step is learning to let go. Notice your tension, breathe fully, and allow your muscles to relax, the foundation for true strength and comfort.

ALL THINGS

by Jeff Brown

Fire Survivors Face a Second Disaster-Their Insurance Companies By Richard Rieber, Opinion Piece in CalMatters Jan 12, 2026

I am an Altadena resident & an aerospace engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, but for the past year my second full-time job has been fighting my insurance company. I am one of thousands of Eaton Fire survivors caught in a second disaster — not in the canyons, but in the fine print.

After the Eaton and Palisades fires, survivors turned to insurers to help us rebuild. We had paid premiums faithfully for decades, exactly for this moment. Instead, we encountered obstruction, delay and bureaucracy. Navigating this system has compounded the trauma of losing our homes, possessions and communities.

California's Unfair Insurance Practices Act, enacted in 1959, was designed to prevent precisely this kind of misconduct. Yet nearly every fire survivor I know has experienced violations: rotating adjusters, ignored emails and phone calls, and missed legal deadlines. Despite widespread complaints, there has not been a single public enforcement action related to these fires. California's insurance protections have become a regulatory mirage — visible on paper but absent in practice.

One of the most harmful practices is what many survivors call "toxic gaslighting." Thousands of residents downwind of the fires are dealing with smoke and soot contamination, yet insurers routinely deny these claims, arguing that smoke does not qualify as fire damage. The soot that blanketed our communities contains carcinogens, including lead, asbestos and heavy metals. Still, insurers often refuse to pay for the industrial hygienist testing needed to identify these hazards. Instead, homeowners are told that a simple vacuuming or wipe-down is sufficient — a response that leaves toxic particulates behind and puts families at risk. Some survivors have paid thousands of dollars out of pocket for testing, only to have the results ignored.

The Department of Insurance complaint process offers little relief. For most homeowners, filing a complaint leads to silence. Only when an overwhelming number of complaints accumulate against a single insurer will the department consider a "market conduct examination," a process that can take years and typically concludes long after rebuilding is complete. It provides no timely remedy for individual families.

For survivors, time itself becomes a weapon. Additional living expense coverage is meant to pay rent while homes are repaired, but in a post-disaster housing market where rents have soared, those funds are quickly depleted. Every ignored call and delayed inspection drains that coverage. As the money runs out, families face an impossible choice: homelessness or accepting an unsafe and unfair settlement. Delay has become a profitable business strategy.

This imbalance is structural. A 1988 California Supreme Court decision stripped consumers of the right to sue for violations of the Unfair Insurance Practices Act, leaving enforcement solely to the Insurance Commissioner and removing immediate consequences for insurer misconduct. California must change course. The state should create a streamlined administrative process allowing the Department of Insurance to validate complaints and refer them to administrative law judges who can adjudicate claims in real time, determine fair payouts, and impose significant fines paid directly to the insured. Insurer-caused delays should trigger a "delay tax" in the form of additional living-expense payments beyond policy limits. Insurance companies deserve due process. But fire survivors deserve the good faith we earned by paying decades of premiums. Until noncompliance costs insurers more than delay and denial, Californians will continue to be victimized twice — first by disaster, then by their insurers.



UNLOCK YOUR LIFE



Lori A. Harris

EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE FOR MOM, DAD AND OUR LITTLES:

Introduction to Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) (Originally published January 2025)

Chin: Center of the chin, just below the lower lip.

Collarbone: Just above the collarbone.

Wrist: Grab the wrist of the tapping hand with the opposite hand and gently release the wrist.

Repeat the process, reassessing the intensity of the emotion after each round. Many people notice a significant reduction in emotional intensity within just a few minutes.

Benefits of EFT Reduce Stress and Anxiety: EFT promotes relaxation and helps release pent-up tension.

Enhance Mood and Well-being: Addressing emotional blockages fosters a sense of calm and happiness.

Build Self-Confidence: EFT challenges negative self-beliefs, empowering you to embrace your strengths.

Strengthen Relationships: Managing emotional reactivity improves communication and connection with loved ones.

Sharing EFT With Your Children

Children, like adults, experience emotional ups and downs. By teaching them EFT, you provide them with a lifelong tool for managing stress and building resilience. Engage them in the process by explaining it as "magic tapping" that helps emotions feel better. Keep the language simple and the tone lighthearted, making it a fun and comforting activity.

Moving Forward Together As we move forward from our collective challenges, remember that healing is a journey. EFT is one of many tools to help us and our little ones find peace, strength, and balance. In the weeks ahead, I will share additional techniques and insights to support your family's emotional well-being. Together, we can create a foundation of resilience and hope for the future.

Today, try EFT and involve your children. You might be surprised how a few taps can make a real difference.

About the Author: Lori A. Harris is an award-winning coach and former lawyer who helps people live intentionally and authentically. Learn more from her on her podcast, *Unlock Your Life with Lori Harris*, available at loriaharris.com and all streaming platforms.

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The traditions of community newspapers and the concerns of our readers are this newspaper's top priorities. We support a prosperous community of well-informed citizens. We hold in high regard the values of the exceptional quality of life in our community, including the magnificence of our natural resources. Integrity will be our guide.

STUART TOLCHIN PUT THE LIGHTS ON PERSERVERANCE: A LESSON WE MUST ALL LEARN



First, let me emphasize as strongly as possible that I am not a fan of the current American President. In fact, I shall do my best to avoid mentioning his dreaded name within this article that I am trying to create. Now that this avoidance is understood, let us begin. The first lesson involves the results that can be bought about by simple perseverance as demonstrated by the President.

Perseverance. If you want something, keep pushing, keep trying until you get what you want. Once you get it, you might realize that you really didn't want it. It makes no difference now that you have achieved what you set out to do; you can now take a minute or an hour or a lifetime to congratulate yourself on your achievement. It is not even important that you understand why that achievement was ever so important in the first place. Now that you have done it, what do you want to do with it?

Perhaps we all understand this better than the President himself. There is much agreement that the President really doesn't care about being President. There is nothing he wants other than attention, victory, and acceptance. He believes that these are goals which can be reached by his imagining the attitudes of other people.

The second lesson we learn from the President is that his goals cannot be reached from without, they must be reached from within. He has been elected to the American Presidency twice. Many better educated, more intelligent, even richer people have undoubtedly wanted the same thing, but he's the one who did it; shouldn't that be enough?

Why do we need attention, admiration, and validation from other people? Aren't those things we should be able to attain for ourselves? One would think that achieving money, status, power, and even being admired by other people would be enough. Perhaps the great drive that allows certain individuals to persevere arises from a certain inner void. Maybe it has to do with genetics, or upbringing, or experiencing a painful tragedy at a young age, or feeling rejected by a loved one or just the realization that one is unloved.

The reasons for the feeling of continual dissatisfaction are multiple and unanswerable. Another lesson is that we, the unpersevering masses, benefit greatly from the efforts of those strivers. They work hard and make discoveries, create jobs, and entertain us. In a certain way it should be understood that they live their lives that have consequences that benefit the rest of us whether it is their intention or not.

The problem is that as a result of their persevering efforts these individuals often end up in powerful positions that affect the rest of us. Clearly, the present President has little interest in our welfare, he is a slave to his unquenchable needs which can never be fulfilled. Poor guy—but it is difficult to have much sympathy for him. What can we do to help ourselves? The lesson that is clear is that society at large must take action that influences the rich and powerful. There are such people, officials, or appointees that can bring about change. I would suggest universal boycotts, perhaps everyone could stock up on food and then stop buying stuff, stop going out to eat, even stop driving and buying gas. Universal strikes and boycotts could do the trick. We all must be ready to do what must be done even if it hurts for a while. That is how we can persevere ignoring our current desires and focusing on the long run.

I did go to college and learned a little about the effect of boycotts and strikes. During the brief time I worked with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Mississippi I witnessed how joint action which affect the pocketbooks of the upper classes will inevitably bring about change. We can do it and I hope we do. Otherwise, there will be more painful lessons for the rest of us to learn. There is a huge potential for unimaginable discomfort.

The lesson is that temporary willing sacrifice can do the trick. I know that economics is important not only to those of us who buy things but also to those who sell things. It is a wonderful demonstration of ultimate equality that can ultimately benefit everyone. That is something worth persevering for!

HOWARD HAYS AS I SEE IT



"Get it all on record now – get the films – get the witnesses – because somewhere down the road of history some bastard will get up and say that this never happened." – Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, on viewing evidence of Nazi atrocities following the German surrender

President Trump, for whom the Donald J. Trump Institute of Peace was named (until last month known as the United States Institute of Peace) and owner of a Nobel Peace Prize (received from its actual recipient in exchange for a White House swag bag) is setting up a Board of Peace. \$1 billion buys a permanent seat; money controlled by the Chairman, membership and board decisions upon approval of the Chairman – named as Donald J. Trump, who'd hold the position indefinitely and name his successor.

Trump sees it as replacing the United Nations. A stated mission to "secure enduring peace", run by a guy eager to deploy 1,500 federal troops against Minnesota (Stephen Colbert assures, "That'll calm everybody down"), and whose top aide Stephen Miller insists we're entitled to Greenland simply because our military can defeat Denmark's.

But whatever Trump's commitment to peace, it's now up in the air. He told Norway's prime minister that since he wasn't awarded that Nobel Prize, he's not that into it anymore. He now demands Greenland for "security". (Jimmy Kimmel notes the irony of war threats over a peace prize.) For our allies, it's like restaurant management dealing with a toddler throwing food on the floor while not wanting to lose that family's business. For China and Russia, it's delight over the sinking of NATO – unable to do it themselves and now Trump's doing it for them.

Ninety years ago in Europe, "security" was the stated justification for crossing borders to seize territory – echoed today by Trump. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) and others blame events in Minneapolis on Democrats' calling federal agents "Nazis" and "Gestapo". In response, there's the pro-tip that if you don't want to be compared with Nazis and the Gestapo, then don't act like them.

Or dress like them. When CBP chief Greg Bovino showed up in that long trenchcoat with black scarf in Minneapolis for his photo op, one wondered if, when watching "Hogan's Heroes" as a kid, he didn't yearn to grow up and be on the other side. The Mirror collected posts from X: "Chief Greg Bovino walking around Minneapolis in his custom Nazi cosplay coat... harassing American patriots exercising their First Amendment rights". There was, "Why does he look like Hitler to me?" and "Absolute Gestapo."

At the Department of Labor, there was Trump's face on what Gov. Newsom's office called a "Thank You, Glorious Leader" banner hung over the side of their building. They captioned one of their social media posts, "America for Americans", which many connected with the ubiquitous "Deutschland den Deutschen!" from early last century.

At DHS, Secretary Kristi Noem had the phrase "One of Ours. All of Yours" on her podium the day after Renee Good was killed. It's connected with the 1942 massacre in the Czech village of Lidice, wiped out when villagers were accused of killing an SS officer. Nazis used the slogan now embraced by Noem to warn that if their soldiers were attacked, an entire population would be killed or sent to concentration camps. Trump blasts out a Wagnerian, "THE DAY OF RECKONING & RETRIBUTION IS COMING!". (This all began with allegations of fraud at daycare centers.)

Another Labor Department post was headed, "One Homeland. One People. One Heritage." Joking about the obvious "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer" connection, government affairs attorney Robert Kelner posted, "That sounds very familiar. Can't quite place it. Maybe something in a different language? As for me, I remember who I am. I am the grandchild of immigrants. In a nation that welcomed all four of my grandparents when they were dirt poor, with no formal education, fleeing tyranny, pogroms and war."

The University of Pennsylvania is now in federal court, resisting the Trump Administration's demand they provide a comprehensive list - names, phone numbers, home and email addresses - of all Jewish students, faculty, staff - and those affiliated with campus Jewish organizations. UPenn Religious Studies Professor Steven Weitzman reminds, "The Nazi campaign against Jews depended on institutions like universities handing over information about their Jewish members to the authorities." A group of faculty members warns of what this means "not only for the Jewish community but for all of us: unfettered government power to stifle opposition, impose ideological uniformity and undermine civil society."

Making the connection directly was U.S. Marine vet "Skye", who told how as she was following ICE in Minneapolis, they suddenly braked and jerked into reverse, tried ramming her car, broke her window, "yanked" her out by the neck, shoved her face in the ground, stomped on her and warned, "Have you not learned? This is why we killed that lesbian b*tch". Referring to her own service, she said, "I took an oath. And it's the oath they're spitting on and stomping on. And this isn't Germany. They're Nazis. They're Gestapo. They think that they're above the law. They don't care."

We need to get those records, films and witnesses in order, as Gen. Eisenhower advised. Not just for "down the road of history" - but as we approach the midterms, for those who still might not have been paying attention.

RICH JOHNSON



PRESIDENTS, PARROTS, AND PECULIARITIES

Presidential legacies are best viewed in a rearview mirror. Never reserve your final opinion of our chief executives until they are out of office for a considerable length of time. While they are in office upwards of 50% of the commentarians extol our chief executive's glowing successes while the other half decry the pending destruction of modern civilization. In Trump's case 93% of the major purveyors of news decry his villainous reign and our impending doom. Let's look at some other presidential peculiarities: Andrew Jackson, our 7th caretaker of the White House, had a pet parrot named Poll. Poll was an extension of President Jackson particularly in Jackson's fiery use of the language. During Andrew Jackson's funeral the parrot had to be removed due to his "inappropriate language". I wonder if Poll did press conferences?

If you want to document a presidential act that added substantially to not only the quality of life here in the good ole' US of A, but also the waistline. Thomas Jefferson, number 3 in the White House, invented what possibly was the first hand-cranked ice cream machine. Now there is a president who deserves our eternal thanks. And by the way, don't play "Trivial Pursuit" with President Jefferson. He will win!

President #26, aka Theodore Roosevelt, campaigning in 1912 in Milwaukee was shot in the chest. "Teddy" was not about to let a little bullet in the chest slow him down. The consummate politician continued his hour long speech before seeking medical care. And don't let him take you out for dinner. "Teddy" was described as an adventurous eater. Loved the exotic cuisine.

Most people don't know this about president #16, aka Abraham Lincoln. Abe was a accomplished wrestler. He was always known for his physical strength, but he limited his wrestling career to his youth. Except when it came to wrestling rhetoric.

The first president to throw out the first pitch in a baseball game was president #27, William Howard Taft. Taft, by the way, was 5'11" tall, weighed 322 pounds, wore 54-inch waist pants. His shoe size was 14. The first pitch was thrown in 1910 at a Washington Senators baseball game. Presidents have been doing it every since.

#37, President Nixon not only had a dog named Checkers, Tricky Dick had a passion for playing the game of checkers.

We have all heard #1 president, George Washington, had false teeth. The claim his teeth were wooden is a bit in error. To be truthful his "dentures" were made out of wood, ivory, gold and human teeth. How and where did he get the human teeth?

John Quincy Adams, #5. Please don't let Mr. Adams swim in your pool. He was known for swimming in the all together. The "all-together" means no clothes.

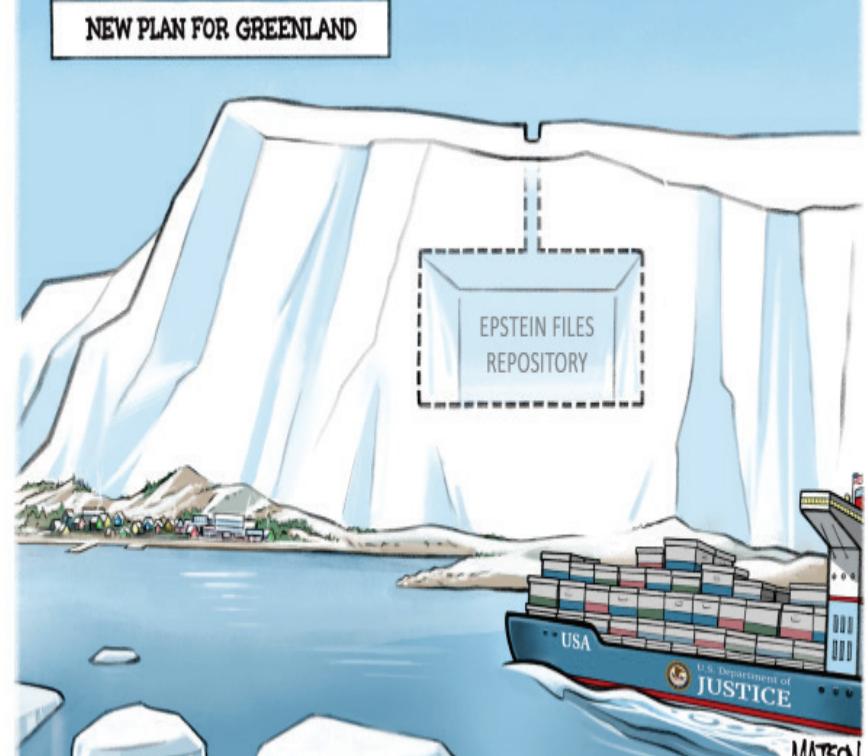
John Kennedy could read 1,200 words per minute. The average reader reads at 238 words per minute when reading silently. Out loud reading drops to 183 words per minute.

Ronald Reagan had a big old jar of jelly beans on his presidential desk. Many think it was there to remind him and others to give up smoking and replace that vice with jelly beans.

I sometimes wonder why people run for office. Chutzpah, a Yiddish word, can be interpreted for good or for bad. Some call chutzpah "courage bordering on arrogance". Whether good or bad, people who run for president put themselves smack dab in the bull's eye. They should be given credit, and they should also be publicly held to a high standard, particularly if elected.

In conclusion, let me quote my doppelganger, Winston Churchill: "Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time; but there is the broad feeling in our country that the people should rule, continuously rule, and that public opinion, expressed by all constitutional means, should shape, guide, and control the actions of Ministers who are their servants and not their masters." And on we go.

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The traditions of community newspapers and the concerns of our readers are this newspaper's top priorities. We support a prosperous community of well-informed citizens. We hold in high regard the values of the exceptional quality of life in our community, including the magnificence of our natural resources. Integrity will be our guide.

14 SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Mountain View News Saturday, January 24, 2026

Issue No. 48

Community & Education | Arcadia Historical Society | Spring 2026

PAST AND PRESENT - WALK WITH ME ARCADIA HERITAGE WEEK

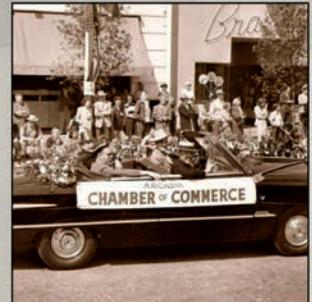
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THIS OPTIONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO PRESERVE AND RECOGNIZE ARCADIA'S HERITAGE, BUILD A SHARED CIVIC IDENTITY, AND SEE THEMSELVES AS FUTURE LEADERS AND CONTRIBUTOR.

Hallmarks of Arcadia Heritage Week

- Preserving Arcadia's local history and traditions
- Encouraging civic pride and community connection
- Engaging students through education and enrichment
- Connecting past generations with future leaders



The Philosophy Behind the Celebration

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What's In It for Your Business

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Contact Information

Ethel Laczko
Coordinator, Arcadia Heritage Week 2026
ethel@edu@yahoo.com | 626.429.3138



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PAST AND PRESENT — WALK WITH ME

Page 1

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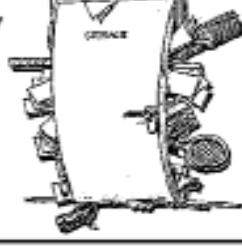
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