



## Movies in the Park Kicks Off Season



Above: The Palisades Recreation Center staff will serve up free hot dogs (courtesy of Mike Skinner) every Saturday night in August at Movies in the Park. Top right: John and Justine Aylward brought their nine-day-old baby Jack to his first movie. Photos: Tom Hofer

A free movie, free hot dogs and neighborly company can be enjoyed by residents every Saturday night in August on the Field of Dreams at the Palisades Recreation Center, 851 Alma Real.

“People wait all summer, it’s such a nice event,” said Dana Michaels, a 20-year Pacific Palisades resident who now lives in Venice. She was at Movies in the Park last Saturday with her husband and three children.

*Armageddon*, sponsored by local dentist Dr. Emma Kim, was this year’s first movie. This Saturday, the 1961 animated feature *101 Dalmatians*, sponsored by the Marquez Knolls Property Owners Association, will start at dusk.

Please, no alcohol, no smoking, no stick chairs and no pets.

The free hot dogs, served by Recreation Center employees, are paid for by Mike Skinner, the town’s new honorary sheriff.

Palisades High student Cole Frangipane is helping fund his Eagle Scout project by selling candy, water and soda. His brother Evan, also an Eagle Scout and majoring in physics at Cal Berkeley, serves as his assistant.



Urban Sitter, described as the “Uber of Babysitters,” is sponsoring a table that includes arts and crafts for children.

This was nine-day-old Jack Aylward’s first outing. His parents, John and Justine, came to *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* two years ago, the day they moved to the Palisades.

“When I was a baby, my first adventure was also to a movie in the park,” Justine said. Ironically, that 1982 movie shown in Westchester was *E.T.*

## Palisadian Swimmer Qualifies for Olympics

By LOGAN TAYLOR  
Sports Writer

Open water swimmer Jordan Wilimovsky, a member of the Palisades YMCA swim team as a boy, has earned a position on the U.S. Olympic Team that will compete in the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Wilimovsky, 21, who lives with his family in Sunset Mesa, won the men’s 10K open water race at the FINA World Championships on July 27 in Kazan, Russia, to secure his Olympic berth. He swam 1:49:48.2, closely followed by the Netherlands’ Ferry Weertman, who finished in 1:50:00.3. Sean Ryan, 22, also made the U.S. team by placing fourth in 1:50:03.3.

The top 10 finishers, who swam a course in the Kazanka River, all qualified for the Olympics.

After upsetting 2012 Olympian Alex

Meyer by over 12 seconds in the Open Water National Championships in April, Wilimovsky was the U.S. athlete to beat in Kazan. Meyer competed in the 5K open water race and placed 11th. Wilimovsky is



Jordan Wilimovsky will be representing the United States at the 2016 Olympic Games.

only the second American to ever win the 10K world title.

“I’m stoked with this win,” Wilimovsky told City News Service. “I guess I surprised myself, but I know I have been putting in a lot of work with my coach. I was just trying to get into the top 10 and qualify for Rio, so I’m pretty excited.”

Wilimovsky, a Malibu High School graduate, swam at Northwestern for three years, but has taken a year off in order to train to make the U.S. Olympic team. Now that he has completed that goal, his next is to prepare for the 10K open water race in Rio.

Visit: PalisadesNews.com (“Wilimovsky Strives for Olympics” July 8, p. 19).

## The Mystery of Jeffrey Lash

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

After the discovery of the decomposing body of Jeffrey Lash in the Highlands on July 17, there are statements Jeffrey Lash’s neighbors agree on: he called himself Bob; he claimed to be an operative with the U.S. Government, most possibly the CIA; he could be physically threatening; and he seemed just a little “off.”

A July 23 KFI radio interview with investigative reporter Eric Leonard spoke to the neighbors’ observations. “He was paranoid when I met him and clearly that got worse over the years,” said Leonard, who first met Lash 15 years ago.

He described Lash as secretive, so secretive that he didn’t even want people to know his name. Leonard also called him incredibly wealthy, citing at that time he met Lash that the recluse was making pos-

sibly \$30,000 to \$40,000 a week from a family trust. Supposedly his father, biochemist Joseph Jerry Lash had patents on several heavily used pharmaceuticals.

Lash’s father died in 2010. His mother was a pianist who died in 1984. Lash was the couple’s only child. His father’s significant other, Shirley Anderson, said she had not heard from Lash since 2010.

According to Leonard, who works with law enforcement officials and says “part of my job is to know unusual people,” it was highly unlikely that Lash was connected to any enforcement agency. “He never worked a day as far as I know.”

The reporter described Lash as paranoid and that condition clearly became worse. “He was worried he would become target of outside evil sources and that they would try to take his things, steal his money or take his gun collection, of which he was really proud.”

(Continued on Page 21)

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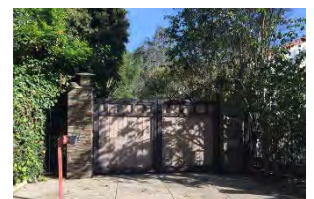
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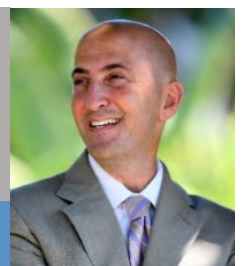
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Second place went to Corpus Christi seventh grader Liliana Rudolph.



Carlthorp sixth grader Catherine Hou won the bike decorating contest.



Marquez Elementary kindergartner Ben Strike took third.

## Kids on Bikes Winners Announced

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

After an afternoon of difficult deliberations, Yogurt Shoppe owners Kevin and Jennifer Sabin announced the winners of their annual bike decorating contest on July 3.

First place and \$75 cash went to Carlthorp sixth grader Catherine Hou; second place and \$50 cash went to Corpus Christi seventh grader Liliana Rudolph; and third place and \$25 cash went to Marquez Elementary kindergartner Ben Strike.

The runners-up, who each received a \$25 Yogurt Shoppe gift card, were Asa Mele, 6,

and brother Tom, 4, who are entering first grade and kindergarten at Marquez; Oliver Rahn, 6, a first grader at St. Matthew's; and Mabel Lowe, 6, a first grader at Palisades Elementary.

"There were so many entries and it was extremely difficult to choose," said Kevin, who handed out the prizes on the Fourth before the parade got under way. This was the fifth year of sponsorship by the Shoppe, at 873 Swarthmore.

In prior years, many kids showed up at the parade after the judging was already complete. To make it fairer, the format changed last year and those wanting to compete in the decorating contest was

judged the day before, which also allowed them to sign a waiver allowing them to ride in the parade.

Since opening their business in February 2011, the Sabins have donated more than \$35,000 to community organizations and nonprofits through a Happy Hour fundraiser program. Between 5 and 7 p.m. weekdays, the owners give 15 percent of net sales back to various groups and nonprofits.

The most recent recipients were BBYO Jewish Youth Group (\$140); Village Green (\$157); PaliHi Envirothon team (\$160); and Palisades Americanism Parade Association (\$506.42).

"We are seeking participants for future

'Happy Hour' slots that want to collaborate with us to raise money for their organization," said Sabin, who received the 2014 Chamber of Commerce Mort Faberow Award, given annually to a business person who supports the Chamber, community and children.

Additionally, the Yogurt Shoppe has sponsored the "Go Blue or Go Home" event for three years, with all proceeds going to Autism Speaks.

The Sabins live in the Palisades and have three children: Frankie, Oliver and Sadie. Jennifer is also the executive director and founder of Working with Autism.

Visit: [a.placetomix.com](http://a.placetomix.com) or call (310) 459-0088.

## Caruso Affiliated Received Building Exception

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

At the Pacific Palisades Design Review Board meeting on July 8, the agenda contained three "old business" items: the design of the Shell Gas Station/Store, 881 Alma Real Signage and the Caruso Project.

- DRB members, who are appointed by the City, gave suggestions to Shell Station owner Saeed Kohanoff and architect Richard Finkel about the proposed design for the Shell Station/Store at the corner of Sunset and Via de la Paz.

- In May, the DRB denied approval of two proposed illuminated *Palisadian-Post* signs on the parapet of the 881 Alma Real building, stating that the signs did not adhere to the Palisades Specific Plan. At July's meeting, members learned that *Post* lawyer David Ruben, of Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton, had appealed the DRB ruling to City Planning.

- DRB Chair Barbara Kohn announced that there was no news about the Caruso development. But then, to everyone's surprise, audience member and local resident Ted

Weitz said that Caruso Affiliated had received an exemption from City Planning and Weitz wanted the Design Review Board to appeal it.

Michael Gazzano, who is the head of the Village project for Caruso, filed with City Planning last October 31, shortly before the company closed escrow for the properties on Swarthmore and Sunset.

Gazzano wrote that soil remediation was needed because a dry-cleaner's chemicals had leaked for decades into the soil below the buildings on the north side of Swarthmore, and shops would have to be destroyed.

Replacing them would be an issue because "The structures were built prior to adoption of the Specific Plan, do not conform to the Specific Plan setback, and do not meet the parking provisions."

Caruso Affiliated received an exception based on provisions in the Specific Plan. One listed is Section 5.B. Exceptions, subparagraph 1.b.: "In order to rebuild as a result of destruction by fire, earthquake or other natural disaster, provided that the construction is not prohibited by a provision of the Los Angeles Municipal Code and the rebuilding does not increase the height

for floor area of the destroyed building."

The City Planning Department clarified that the code allows for rebuilding a similar structure following unplanned and/or unforeseen destruction of a structure, such as the remediation issue faced by Caruso Affiliated.

Contacted on Friday, Gazzano told the *Palisades News*: "About a year ago prior to taking ownership of the property, chemicals were discovered in the soil, and we realized we'd have to tear the buildings down in order to perform cleanup. We wanted to have those grandfathered rights. Those buildings today would not be in compliance because of setbacks, parking and the commercial corner.

"We want to be able to build back the same square footage that existed a year ago, on the same footprint," said Gazzano, noting that Caruso Affiliated is only exempt on those issues. He said the overall larger project would have to go under the Specific Plan, that the project plan is still subject to City review and that they are voluntarily going in front of the Design Review Board.

Although Weitz asked the DRB board to appeal the exemption, the group learned that they cannot appeal a City Planning de-

cision. The deadline for the general public to file an appeal was July 28.

Weitz, an attorney, said the interpretation should be appealed to City Councilman Mike Bonin because it allows the City Planning Director to rewrite the Brentwood-Palisades Specific Plan.

"It sets an ill-conceived interpretation as precedent, and leaves the community exposed to developers who wish to build new buildings to 1950s zoning and regulatory standards."

Weitz felt the more responsible action on the City's part would have been to look at the entire development as new construction, requiring it to comply with the existing zoning and Specific Plan requirements.

In an e-mail to Chris Robertson, deputy director of land use and planning for Council District 11, Weitz wrote: "For all we know the same exemption could be used to rebuild the rest of the planned development because it lies above the plume of chemicals that occurred on the prior owner's watch, and which was known to the current owner who bought the properties with full knowledge of the 'man-made' problem."

# The Storm Drain That Didn't Work

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

What is a storm drain supposed to do? This is not a trick question, but it seemed to Pacific Palisades resident Martin Kappeyne that the City would not answer.

Nine years ago, he noticed that water was running over a storm drain on the east side of Temescal Canyon Road, just above the playground near PCH. He sent emails and letters to different City agencies and to Councilman Bill Rosendahl and submitted requests via 311—all with the same subject title: "Request to fix the drain."

When Prop O storm-drain construc-

tion got underway in 2013, Kappeyne had hoped there would finally be accountability and a solution. He sent an email and photos in June that year to Project Manager Christian Gagne.

"I have lived in the Palisades since 1985," Kappeyne said. "Images 935 and 935a show the storm drain has been plugged for years."

Nothing was done. Last month he tried again.

In a letter written on July 21 to Councilman Mike Bonin, Kappeyne wrote, "As one of your constituents I am approaching you to get some city services that should not require this level of effort. The storm drain has been clogged since at least 2005 (I have an email string that goes

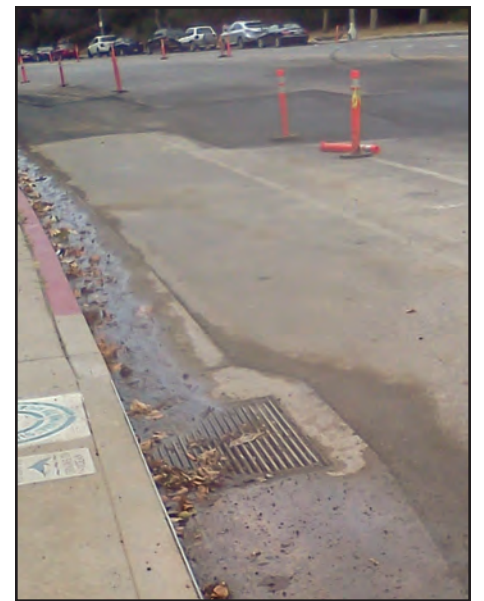
back to March 2006) . . . None of these efforts have been addressed by the responsible City department.

"It is easily visible as water running down the gutter fails to be captured by the intake," Kappeyne said. "I have on one occasion witnessed a sanitation vacuum truck make a halfhearted attempt to clean the drain and then drive away without completing the job. Attached are the written records of my previous attempts to get this remedied."

Much to Kappeyne's surprise, he received a response on July 29 and he emailed the Palisades News. "This morning the sanitation supervisor called me and said that a vac truck was heading out to Temescal. I agreed to meet Allen Gordon in Temescal and show them the plugged drain."

Kappeyne later reported the sanitation workers spent nearly 90 minutes vacuuming and jetting the storm drain. They found 10 sand-filled bags plugging the drain. When they finished, the drain still was not working well.

"Allen called in the real water jet truck to try making sure that there wasn't additional bags and debris in the drain that the vac truck could not reach," Kappeyne said. "He indicated that much of the problem was due to the lack of street sweeping which caused debris to run into the drains. He said it might be prudent to sweep Temescal early one morning."



Water flows over the clogged storm drain on Temescal Canyon Road.

Gordon may be right that Temescal Canyon Road needs to be swept because on weekends the upper road way is packed with hikers' cars, the lower road with beachgoers and during the year the middle portion with Palisades High parked cars. (Right now there is no street-sweeping schedule for the road.)

Councilman Bonin's field deputy for Pacific Palisades Sharon Shapiro said she would try to arrange a one-time courtesy sweep, but the "Bureau of Street Services currently does not have enough staff to even maintain their regularly posted sweeping schedule often."

(Continued on Page 5)

## Allied Artists Host Plein-Air Paint-Out

A plein-air paint-out will be held from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, August 8, at the Will Rogers State Historic Park hosted by the Allied Artists of the Santa Monica Mountains and seashore.

A paint-out is a great way to meet other artists and discover new sites for inspiration. All levels of artists are welcome. The park provides stately eucalyptus-lined paths, riding stables and views of Santa Monica Mountains and the ocean.

A painting demonstration will be held by Alfonso Colochoat at 9 a.m. There will be a group critique at noon.

Bring your own art supplies, water, lunch, sunscreen and repellent, hat and walking shoes. Meet in the parking lot. Rain cancels the paint-out.

Visit: [allied-artists.com](http://allied-artists.com) or contact Bruce Trentham (818) 397-1576 or [bmtrentham@charter.net](mailto:bmtrentham@charter.net).

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Dan was recently congratulated by John Closson, Vice President and Regional Manager of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, for being the "TOP PRODUCING" AGENT IN THE PACIFIC PALISADES OFFICE FOR 2014, as well as one of the "TOP TEN" AGENTS NATIONWIDE OUT OF MORE THAN 35,000 SALE PROFESSIONALS.



Sand bags were discovered plugging the storm drain, which remains partially blocked despite vacuuming efforts by City sanitation workers.

(Continued from Page 4)

That afternoon Kappayne wrote: "I drove by the storm drain just after 4 p.m. and noticed that it was not draining. Apparently the outfall/drain to the main storm drain under the street is still blocked and needs jetting or routing by the Sanitation Bureau."

Shapiro replied, "The City's Sanitation Bureau conducted an investigation and found that this drain was built and is maintained by Los Angeles County." She told Kappayne the drain had been referred to the County.

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# Possible Murder Weapon Found Near Gladstone's

A possible murder weapon was found on July 6 on Will Rogers Beach. Palisades Patrol officers watched Los Angeles Police Department remove a shotgun found between the rocks on the ocean side of the Gladstone's parking lot, furthest from the restaurant. An extra shotgun round was found next to it.

Due to the ongoing investigation of the murder of Carrie Jean Melvin, who was murdered in Hollywood on July 5, and the gun's suspected tie, the security company was told to not reveal the development until LAPD made it public knowledge.

The murder had been allegedly committed by Ezeoma Obioha, who claims to have at one time worked for a security company in the Palisades (but not Palisades Patrol). The gun is now being investigated as a possible match to the one used in the murder.

According to an *L.A. Times* article July 26, the suspect and the female victim met when Obioha contracted with Melvin's newly launched social media company to market his company Hood Inc. and Hoodfellas. (Visit: [youtube.com/watch?v=hr9lihm8F9Y](http://youtube.com/watch?v=hr9lihm8F9Y) to see Obioha.)

A dispute reportedly arose when Obioha wrote Melvin a check that bounced and she threatened to take him to court.

According to sources, Obioha, 31, did not have a state license for his security company (Neighborhood Watch Network), his state-issued security guard license expired in May and his firearm permit was cancelled last November.

Obioha was charged with capital murder on July 28. He pleaded "not guilty" and was ordered held without bail. He also faces special circumstances allegations of lying in wait and murder for financial gain, according to the L.A. County District Attorney's Office, which makes him eligible for the death penalty. His next court date is set for August 31.

## Rain in July!

A rare rainfall July 18 and 19 brought 0.49 inches of rain to Pacific Palisades as measured in the official Los Angeles County rain gauge, located at Carol Leacock's home on Bienvenida Avenue.

Deputy assistant rainmeister Ted Mackie reports the normal year-to-date is 0.02 inches. "We are now almost 25 times normal," Mackie said, "and El Nino is thought to be on the way. A weird year indeed."



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## Heard About Town

### Skunk Alert

There's a skunk that seems to live in the 800 block of Radcliffe. I was walking down the street on a Tuesday morning and it was just fluffing along. A man didn't see him initially and almost walked up on him—but at the last minute stopped and the skunk, which had turned to spray, turned around and continued to fluff its way down the sidewalk.

### Free Samples

It's nice to see Gelson's doesn't discriminate. There was a homeless man who asked for free samples (he didn't have a number at the deli, but they let him go in front everyone who had numbers) and after trying a bunch of free samples from the deli, he finally said he wanted a dollar's worth of chili.

### Bring a Dog Bag

There is a gentleman who walks his dogs along the Asilomar bluff on Tuesday mornings. He fails to pick up his dog droppings. LAMC Sec. 53.49 states: "Animal defecation on public property or upon private property other than the owner's property is prohibited." Not only is it a law, it's really the right thing to do.

### Pump Station Thanks

Kudos to David Card and his fellow Rotary Club members who landscaped the area around the pump station at Temescal Canyon Road and PCH. This was formerly an eyesore at the entrance and exit to our community. Rotary members also keep the site maintained.

### Something to Ponder

People in town are being personally attacked and I think we should all remember the quote: "First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me."

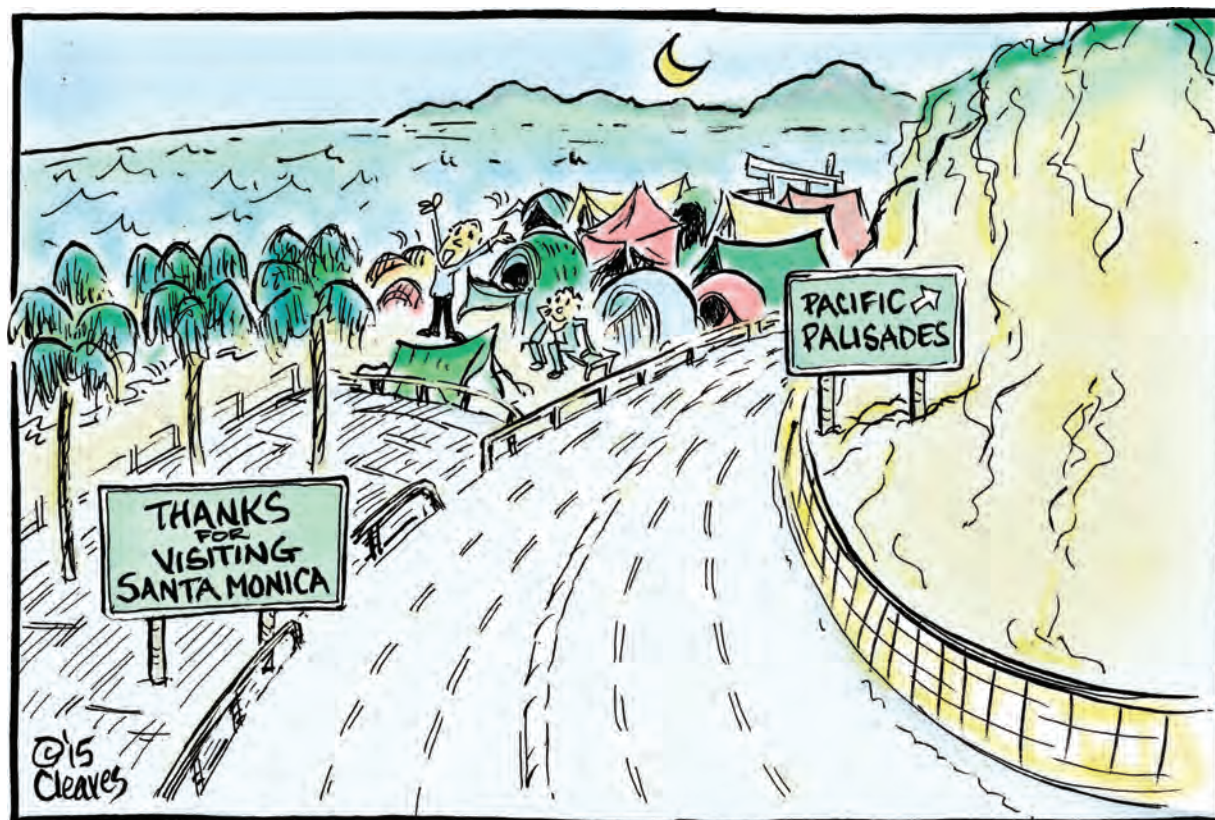
(Editor's note: The quote is attributed to Protestant pastor Martin Niemoller, who lived from 1892-1984.)

### Marlon Brando Connection

There is a new documentary, *Listen to Me Marlon*, about the famous actor. That reminded me that Marlon Brando's daughter once owned a little bookshop, Brando's Book Bin, on the corner of Via and Antioch, in the two-story building that was replaced by Regal Cleaners.

If you'd like to share something you've "heard about town," please email it to [spascoe@palisadesnews.com](mailto:spascoe@palisadesnews.com)

## ANN CLEAVES



## VIEWPOINT

# Trust Public Drinking Water

By EVELYN WENDELL  
Special to the Palisades News

I founded the nonprofit WeTap about five years ago when my two children were in elementary and middle school. I saw the repeated overuse of single-use plastic water bottles and the lack of trust in public water and drinking fountains in schools and parks around Los Angeles. Why were there so many broken fountains and who was responsible for fixing them?

When I discovered the overwhelmingly depressing statistics about how plastic pollution is hurting our oceans, I became an advocate for change.

The public drinking fountain is key to connecting us to not only water when thirsty when we hike, play and learn in schools, but also to the fact that municipal water is a treasure worth protecting and conserving—always.

I recently went on an LADWP-hosted tour of the California Aqueduct and learned that there are 80 flow wells that are the source of the water we drink here in Los Angeles. For example, well #132 releases 220 gallons per minute and was drilled down 600 feet in 1932.

We depend on these wells to provide us with our water for drinking, cooking, showering, landscaping and the rest of our domestic water use. Most importantly, I saw firsthand how clean and refreshing our tap water really is.

As conservation efforts are in full swing around Los Angeles and water rate increases are inevitable, the discussion is alive about the value of municipal water. With Mayor Garcetti's goal of lowering imported water purchase by

50 percent by 2024, for now 85 percent of the water we use in Los Angeles is imported.

On May 7, Mayor Garcetti, LADWP, the State Water Board and the L.A. County Department of Public Health came together and celebrated the first Tap Water Day.

As an advocate for municipal water appreciation and greater access in parks and schools, I hope the conversations about conservation doesn't end when/if the rains comes but instead this crisis instigates a stronger water ethic in our communities.

In addition to being an advocate, I am also a parent who deeply understands we have to leave our world better for our kids. More drinking fountains in communities is a win-win worth winning!

I hope others realize that picking one issue and focusing with determination and commitment can lead to progress. I remain very optimistic, based on my experience now, that positive change is possible. There are so many brilliant and kind-hearted people working in government and for our public services. We are lucky and we need to pay attention in order to maintain our dignity as a society. Our public water is worth protecting and speaking up for.

(Editor's note: Wendell has waged a one-woman crusade to repair and install drinking fountains and hydration stations in schools, parks and across California and to educate the public about the safety of tap water and the environmental and economic cost of the plastic-based alternative. She has been publicly recognized by municipal and school officials for her efforts. Visit: [wetap.org](http://wetap.org).)

## Thought to Ponder

"Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence."

— Desiderata, Max Ehrmann

## PALISADES NEWS

Founded November 5, 2014

15332 Antioch Street #169  
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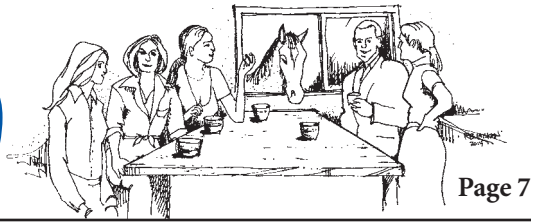
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## EDITORIAL

# The Unintended Consequence of Compassion

A July 8 headline in the *Los Angeles Times* screamed “After 12-year decline, crime in L.A. Surges,” and the *Daily News* July 9 headline was equally sober: “Rise in Crime ‘Unacceptable.’”

There was a 13-percent increase in overall crime during the first six months of the year—the first time in more than a decade that there was an uptick, city officials said. Every LAPD bureau saw an increase.

The statistics are grim: total violent crimes in Los Angeles are up about 21 percent over last year, with aggravated assaults up 26 percent, rapes increasing by eight percent and robbery up 17 percent, according to midyear data released on July 8.

Jay Handal, chairman of the West Los Angeles Neighborhood Council, said he hears daily reports from neighbors about home burglaries, car break-ins and automobile thefts. In West L.A., property crime increased more than 21 percent.

“It’s a major problem,” Handal told the *Times*. “The city really needs to refocus its energy on this. These property crimes are all quality-of-life crimes that affect us every day.”

In that same article, Mayor Eric Garcetti stated the obvious: “This is bad news.”

In Pacific Palisades the first six months of 2015,

there were seven aggravated assaults, 85 burglary thefts from vehicles, 52 burglaries, seven grand theft auto, one robbery and 40 thefts.

Last week’s crime report for the Palisades included two robberies, a grand theft auto from Charm Acres, two burglaries/theft from motor vehicles (Marquez Terrace and McKendree), an assault with a deadly weapon at PCH and Entrada, two burglaries (Lachman Lane and Las Pulgas), a theft (Palisades Circle), and two reports of vandalism.

At Temescal Canyon Road and PCH, a suspect brandished a handgun and in the 16800 block of PCH, a suspect threatened to kill a victim.

Those who have lived in our community for a while can remember when an LAPD helicopter circling a neighborhood was a rare occurrence and warranted a call to the local paper to see if anyone knew why it was up there.

Nowadays, helicopters are so commonplace that one just glances in their direction and wonders if the police are on the way—and what the issue is this time.

Nobody is exactly sure why this is the first crime spike in Los Angeles in 12 years, but two possible reasons are mentioned.

Police Chief Charlie Beck told the *Times* the city’s rising

homeless population contributed to the crime increase.

A second factor cited was the passage of Prop. 47, which reduced the classification of most non-serious and non-violent property and drug crimes from a felony to a misdemeanor and resulted in the release of 3,700 from prison.

We agree that jails are not the answer for many of those who have committed misdemeanors and other property crimes, but there needs to be viable alternatives to help these people make a change in their lifestyle.

Everyone needs to make a living, but few employers are going to hire workers with a past drug arrest or known drug addiction. Unless these people have gone through a program and found a way to support themselves, releasing them on the street with no income or prospect of work is a major societal challenge.

Some of the homeless have mental issues and are in jail for misdemeanors. Releasing them may also not be the best solution for them or the community. Instead, L.A. County District Attorney Jackie Lacey has proposed expanded mental health help, maybe at stabilization centers, which is a good idea.

Our compassion needs to reach out and make sure education, job training and mental health services are available to those leaving the criminal system.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(The two letters below were sent to Gustavo Nunez at Caltrans on July 17 and 18.)

### Clearer Traffic Signs Needed At Chautauqua and PCH

We have very confusing signage at the intersection of PCH and Entrada. The signage states “crosswalk” and there is not any crosswalk at this intersection. We need signage directing pedestrians to the tunnels on both the beach side of PCH and near the intersection of Entrada and PCH.

People are crossing PCH in the middle of the highway and it is only a matter of time before someone will be killed doing this. We have asked for signage in the past and were promised that Caltrans would correct the problem.

It is summer and more tourists are confused and crossing the highway. The owner of Canyon Liquors tells me that he sees folks crossing the highway several times a day, not knowing that pedestrian tunnels are available to access the beach.

I have attached photos for you to understand the dangers we are facing here in Santa Monica Canyon.

Sharon Kilbride

SMCCA and Boca neighborhood associations

### Chautauqua and PCH Has Highest Pedestrian Deaths

You may be aware that the *L.A. Times* prepared an analysis of the vehicle and pedestrian accidents in L.A. County from 2002 to 2013. Accidents at the intersection of PCH and Chautauqua killed four pedestrians during this period. According to the *L.A. Times* analysis, this is

the most pedestrian deaths at any intersection on PCH.

Also, this intersection ranks the highest in L.A. County in terms of pedestrian deaths. The lack of clear signage that Sharon pointed out is part of the problem. New clear signs would improve safety for pedestrians and vehicles dramatically.

Hopefully this new analysis can help you convince the decision makers at Caltrans to take action on this dangerous situation.

Wes Hough

(Editor’s note: Nunez responded on July 18: “Thank you for reporting your concerns. Your concern regarding the signage has been forwarded to our traffic personnel. We are aware of the attenuator damage at Entrada, and we are working on getting it resolved. Flooded pedestrian tunnel will be worked on today.”)

### Unnecessary Signs Need To Be Removed from PCH

I’ve been in contact with Caltrans about removing the hazardous and unnecessary signs on PCH in Pacific Palisades. There are two near Sunset and PCH and one near Temescal and Sunset.

The signs are within two feet of the traffic lanes and are a hazard to cars, bicyclists and pedestrians. They display safety messages such as “Don’t Text and Drive” and, ironically, “Share the Road.”

Caltrans told me that the California Highway Patrol (CHP) is responsible for these signs. Caltrans agrees that the signs should be moved and have asked the CHP to do so.

I want to notify news media about these hazards and

the bureaucratic obstacles to either removing them entirely or moving them to a safer location.

Warren Farmer

### Your Headline Was Misleading

Your headline in the July 22 paper, “Will Rogers Beach Cleared on Friday,” was misleading.

Wes Hough

(Editor’s note: The article dealt with the stepped-up enforcement because of the signs at the beach: “Beach Closed Dusk to Dawn. No camping or sleeping allowed. 15.20.070 LA Co C.C. 17.12.250.”)

Resident Audrey Foster reported early Friday morning that police vehicles were on the sand and a lot of officers who were going from tent to tent, speaking to residents and asking them to pack up.

“I think because Jose [Jose Bedolla from L.A. County Beaches and Harbors] posted signs, officers can now cite the campers and with continued enforcement transients will leave permanently,” said Foster who thanked Bedolla, West L.A. Captain Tina Nieto and the Pacific Palisades Homeless Task Force for their efforts.

Tents are still not cleared from the beach, and police activity continues. We agree with Hough the headline was misleading. He also told the News that “what happened on Friday was still a positive step by LAPD and earlier in the week by L.A. Beaches and Harbors to at least get some signage up.”)

Palisades News welcomes all letters, which may be mailed to [spascoe@palisadesnews.com](mailto:spascoe@palisadesnews.com). Please include a name, address and telephone number so we may reach you. Letters do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the Palisades News.

## LETTERS

Mazboudi Responds  
To July 23 Post Article

The July 23 article in the *Palisadian-Post* ("Lawsuits, Judgments Stack Up Against Prominent Local Biz Denton Jewelers") was biased on behalf of people who have an issue with Denton Jewelers and chose to attack us publicly. I feel it is important to speak up about the article and its contents.

The article by Hayley Fox (a "hired gun" who was not even on staff) was written without having all of the facts, and much of what is attributed to me was taken out of context; these quotes were applied wherever Ms. Fox and Frances Sharpe (the editor) saw fit. The *Post* included some accurate factual information, but many other facts were twisted and misrepresented in order to produce a more dramatic story.

The personal information in this article regarding me and my family was clearly not necessary; moreover, it was inaccurate, slanderous, reckless and some was told "off the record" to the writer, yet it was printed anyway. My private life has nothing to do with any of this, and as a result MY family was hurt needlessly.

The *Palisadian-Post* article contained many defaming quotes and character attacks on me, my family and Denton Jewelers. Other small-business owners will tell you: For every 100 happy customers there is an unhappy one who takes to Yelp or

social media or the local newspaper to be heard. Maybe it makes them feel better, but it also creates a lasting impression on the business even if the things said are untrue and unfounded. Most of the legal action brought by these people and companies have much higher price tags than the original infractions. Many are seeking monetary values well above the original issue.

Charlie Matthau, the driving force behind this article, continued his attacks (not the first time publicly attacking me and my company) while knowing that his claims were completely unfounded.

We worked together on the ring, the diamond was presented to him, and he agreed to move forward. He gave me his approval to put the ring together.

Upon picking up the ring, Mr. Matthau made partial payments on multiple credit cards, and asked for Denton Jewelers to carry the balance. He returned to the store two days later and wanted to return the ring, claiming "according to his Beverly Hills jeweler," I misrepresented the weight and quality of the diamond. The diamond was then removed from the ring immediately and weighed in the presence of Mr. Matthau. The weight was exactly as it was told to him. Then I suggested we send the diamond to a third-party laboratory/appraiser. We did and it came back from the laboratory with the exact grades and weight that were presented to Mr. Matthau.

I contacted him several times to inform him of the good news. My calls were ignored and never returned, and one day

without notice he contacted his credit-card companies and put in a claim to reverse the charges and refund his cards.

The charge-back was denied—his own credit-card companies declined to refund his money, and stood behind the sale with Denton Jewelers because we proved to them without a shadow of a doubt that our sale was legitimate.

Nevertheless, Mr. Matthau made several threats publicly, using name calling and threatened to use what he considered his immense resources to discredit and bring down my company.

The *Post* chose to feature the story on Page 1 and then jumped it to TWO FULL PAGES inside, using graphics and photographs to provide a more dramatic look. The *Post's* statement that the lawsuits are continuing to grow and the list of judgments continues to grow is unsubstantiated.

A recent lawsuit and police report was filed by Jonathan Girard, a Palisades Highlands resident. His wife (one of the sweetest people I've met) brought many items to Denton Jewelers for an appraisal. We returned all but one item, which was returned to her a few months later after it was found misfiled accidentally.

The Girards have received ALL their jewelry and watches, all in the condition they were brought in. Nothing was damaged, nothing was stolen. Yet a frivolous and vindictive lawsuit continues because the Girards weren't happy about the time frame in which their one item was not returned. I am very sorry they felt the need to do so.

As to the police report filed against us, it was dismissed for lack of grounds.

Denton Jewelers did in fact file for Chapter 11 in 2012, and this became the source of most of the lawsuits filed against my company. The information is public and the *Post* reporter(s) contacted each and every one of the creditors for quotes, comments and photographs to be included in this biased article.

Being in Chapter 11 ties the corporate hands. The bank accounts and the checkbooks are controlled by the courts. In my case, the court determined who got paid, when and even how much, forcing us to close several bank accounts which caused us to temporarily stop payments on checks that were issued. The control of the company was taken during the time in question, and at the end the company was deemed viable by the government agencies that rule such decisions. This is also public record.

I apologize to every person who was legitimately affected by our Chapter 11 filing. As to any other accusation, I will fight vigorously every unfounded or personally vindictive claim brought against me, my family or Denton Jewelers. I have spent 31 years serving this community and this company. I will continue to provide sales and services to this community and strive for excellence with each and every one of you. I appreciate the outpouring of goodwill and support from our loyal customers, neighbors and friends. Thank you all.

Sincerely,  
Saad Mazboudi  
Owner, Denton Jewelers

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## 'To Live and Dine' Series at Library

The "To Live and Dine Series" is free to residents and will be held in August in the Palisades Library community room, 861 Alma Real.

"How to Make Sauerkraut" will be the topic addressed by Ernest Miller at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 11.

Josh Kun, author of *To Live and Dine in L.A.: Menus and the Making of the Modern City* (Angel City Press), will be the featured speaker for Culinary Historians at 2 p.m. on Saturday, August 15.

Referencing the Los Angeles Public Library's vast archive, USC professor Kun uses the Library's menu collection to explore the shaping of Los Angeles, from the city's first restaurants in the 1850s up through the most recent food revolutions.

"Menus are social text. They're urban text. They're pieces of fiction. And they are written," said Kun, who is an author, journalist and critic and a professor at USC.

Eat Healthy/Bibimbap Tasting will be the topic at 2 p.m. on Friday, August 21. Bibimbap is a signature Korean dish served as a bowl of warm rice, topped with sautéed and seasoned vegetables. A raw or fried egg or sliced beef are common additions.

The series is sponsored by the Library Foundation of Los Angeles and the Friends of the Palisades Library.

# Marguleas Donates to SPCA

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

Anthony Marguleas, owner of Amalfi Estates, sold a house in the Riviera neighborhood in June and donated 10 percent of his commission (\$11,295) to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA).

"The seller, who is a retired veterinarian, chose that charity for my donation," said Marguleas, who offers to give 10 percent of his net proceeds from each home sale to a charity of his client's choice.

Madeline Bernstein, spcaLA president, said: "There is no national SPCA; all SPCAs and humane societies are independent en-

tities, who fundraise separately. There is no umbrella organization that distributes funds, which is why it is so important to donate locally.

"We are so thankful to Mr. Marguleas for his generous donation," Bernstein continued. "The spcaLA cannot investigate animal cruelty, run life-changing humane education programs, and find homes for more than 3,000 animals a year without the support of our community."

Marguleas was named Pacific Palisades' top Realtor and one of America's top 100 real estate professionals by *The Wall Street Journal* and *REAL Trends* on June 26.

For the past three years, he has also donated to the nonprofit Village Green committee.

"It's such a blessing," said board member Bob Gold about Marguleas' \$5,000 donation in an earlier *News* story. "We still have to raise money, but it takes the pressure off."

The realtor, who has lived in Pacific Palisades since 1992, is not comfortable being singled out.

"It is not just the act of giving money, but



Anthony Marguleas

also of good deeds. Ever since my four kids were younger, in the morning I remind them 'to make a difference in the world' today and help someone," Marguleas said. "I am so fortunate to live in the best town, have a great wife and family, and a job I truly love that I am glad to be able to give back and help others."

For spcaLA, call (323) 730-5300 or email mdavenport@spcala.com. Call Marguleas at (310) 293-9280 or visit: AmalfiEstates.com or email Anthony@amalfiestates.com.

## Chamber Mixer Set Thursday, August 13

The Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce will host a mixer from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 13 at the Aldersgate Retreat Center, 925 Haverford Ave. The event will be sponsored by Ramis Sadrieh, owner of Technology for You!

There will be raffles of gifts from local merchants. Chamber members are free and non-members are \$25. Call the Chamber (310) 459-7963.

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# Nieto Heads LAPD West Division

By LAUREL BUSBY  
Staff Writer

Captain Tina Nieto is responsible for policing 65 square miles and about 250,000 residents in the LAPD's largest division, which includes Pacific Palisades, Brentwood, Beverlywood, Bel-Air, Century City and Westwood as well as the neighboring mountains to the San Fernando Valley.

Crime is low in these areas compared with other police divisions, said Nieto, the new area commanding officer for West L.A., so the number of personnel she oversees is one of the smaller Los Angeles Police Department allotments. She has about 230 officers plus civilian support personnel, including staff who track records and do crime analysis.

"Some people say, 'We need more officers,' but we're not having to deal with murders constantly," said Nieto, 52. "The chief puts resources wherever he wants to put them. Here's what you get; make it work."

For the Palisades, resources need to be sufficient to address both local crime and some quality-of-life issues, said Nieto, who has seen LAPD change in many ways during her 26-year career. One patrol car with two officers is assigned to the area at all times to have someone on the scene when needed.

In order to make certain that the car is not stuck in traffic driving to division headquarters, the automobile rarely leaves the Palisades; instead, officers come to the car when their shifts start.

In addition, a helicopter is available to help with flyovers when property crimes occur, especially in foothill and canyon areas where it can take time to get a police car to the scene. When burglar alarms go off, Nieto said the helicopter is sent to see if a car can be spotted speeding away.

Each morning, she meets with a leadership team to be briefed on crimes, including what happened overnight. "The one thing we're really struggling with this year is burglaries," said Nieto, who grew up in the San Gabriel Valley. "The hard thing about the patterns on these burglaries is that there is one here, and one there. They are very spread out."

Nieto, who earned a bachelor's degree from Cal State Fullerton and a master's degree in leadership and management from the University of La Verne, noted that thefts in general tend to be crimes of opportunity—meaning that the thief happens to spot an open window, find an unlocked door or see a laptop or cell phone visible in a car. She encouraged people to take basic precautions even during a quick errand or walk around the block.



Captain Tina Nieto heads LAPD West Division.

Photo: Bart Bartholomev

"About 40 to 50 percent of these crimes are a result of the victim's behavior," Nieto said. A victim might say, "Why me?" but you were the one who left your stuff out. The guy in the next car put it away. You can do things to make it so you're not an easy victim."

In order to help prevent crime, she suggested that neighbors join together through Neighborhood Watch and by installing the cell phone app Nextdoor, which is an online

way to connect with neighbors.

The police department is also always looking for volunteers, Nieto said, or people can help with police fundraising, which pays for projects that are not supplied by the city, such as youth programs, special training for officers or specialized equipment, such as Mules—oversized golf carts—which Nieto would like to use on the division's beaches.

Aside from crimes, the police also deal with quality-of-life issues, which can range from loud neighbors to a gang presence in an area, said Nieto, who lives in Orange County.

In Pacific Palisades, these complaints concern the homeless, but Nieto wants to impress on people that homelessness is not illegal. Asking the police to remove homeless people from an area is the same as asking the police to remove a minority individual from an area.

"We can't make them leave," she said. "We can't violate people's rights."

Crimes can be addressed, but arrests occur for misdemeanors only if they occurred in the officer's presence, Nieto said. Aggressive panhandling and trespassing, if a trespassing letter is on file, can be cited, but otherwise, in her view, homelessness should not be addressed by the police.

"Fifty percent of the issues come from mental illness, but we're not social workers.

(Continued on Page 11)

## ELLEN McCORMICK

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# Nieto

(Continued from Page 10)

We're not trained to do that," said Nieto, who was the area commanding officer in Koreatown for eight years before transferring to West L.A. "This is an issue with City Council people, social services. It totally should not be in the hands of law enforcement. Mental illness and homelessness should not be a police issue."

Watering restrictions are another local concern that citizens often refer to police, but Nieto said that police are not the enforcement agency for these restrictions.

Still, connecting with people about their issues is part of what Nieto enjoys about the job. "I like people, so I like getting to know people," said Nieto, who hopes to head the West L.A. division until her anticipated retirement in four years.

Nieto noted that connection between the police and people in the community has improved throughout the city during her career. After the 1992 riots, changes involved linking the police with civic leaders, clergy and community activists.

"We've been partnering with them to at least talk," she said. "We agree to disagree on certain issues, but at least the conversation is there."

Another change has been the ever-present video cameras. "For the most part, officers are good people trying to do the best for their communities. To have a camera on



Captain Tina Nieto replaced Captain Evangelyn Nathan, who retired at the end of April.

you all the time—everything is scrutinized. That's an uncomfortable position to be in."

In thinking of her own earlier life as an officer in a patrol car, she said, "I probably made a lot of mistakes. I didn't violate people's rights, but police work is not pretty.

"Fights are not pretty. In a big fight, officers need to account for every single nanosecond. That's really tough."

One thing that has improved in her view is the LAPD's diversity. There were only two female command staff when she joined the police force. Now there are 22. "Law enforcement should be more reflective of the community. There is strength in diversity. It's really diversity of thought," Nieto said. "I'm short, Rubenesque and Hispanic. I was

not a poster child. Twenty-six years ago I wouldn't have been a captain."

And yet command was her goal since she first became an officer. "I like being in charge," said Nieto, who has also maintained her interest in the varied aspects of police work. She initially enjoyed the independence of jumping into her patrol car and solving problems—"being an independent thinker." She also relished exploring the why of things, whether it's why an individual citizen or police officer behaved in a certain way or why the department handles an issue in a particular way so that she can help come up with a solution. Police work "is dynamic ... constantly changing. It's a moving target—the only constant is the change."

## Marquez Charter Popsicle Social for Youngest Students

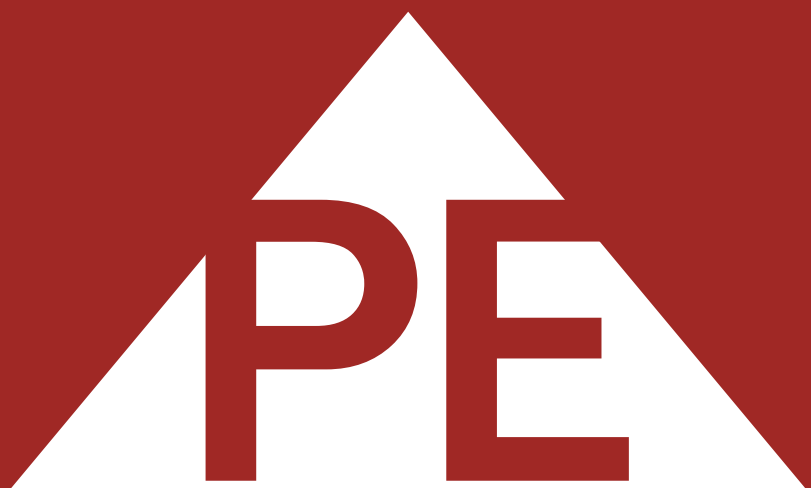
Marquez Charter Elementary will welcome new families by hosting a transitional kindergarten (TK) and kindergarten playdate from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 11, at the Temescal Gateway Park (Sunset Boulevard and Temescal Canyon Road).

"We are thrilled to be able to kick off the school year with a Popsicle Social," said Joyce Wong Kup, Chair of the Friends of Marquez (FOM) Board. "The start of TK/kindergarten is a big step in a child's life and making them feel comfortable in the Marquez community is a lot easier when we have great events like this."

School representatives, STAR staff members, FOM members and new family welcome chairpersons will welcome families and provide information about Marquez.

FOM Vice President Amanda Keston said, "It is a great opportunity to welcome all of the new families." For more details email Keston at Askeston@gmail.com.

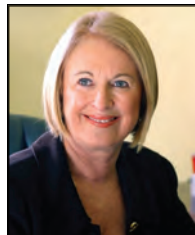
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## Sweet Rose Creamery to Open Soon

By SARAH STOCKMAN  
Palisades News Contributor

When Baskin-Robbins closed its doors in December 2013, after 55 years in business, Pacific Palisades was left without an ice-cream store.

Although Toppings and the Yogurt Shoppe have certainly helped fill the void, a town-hall meeting with developer Rick Caruso last November proved that Palisadians still hunger for a true ice-cream shop.

Their wish will come true this month with the opening of Sweet Rose Creamery next to Palisades Hi-Tech on Monument Street (at Sunset).

Sweet Rose Creamery, which specializes in fresh, organic local flavors, first opened at the Brentwood Country Mart in 2010. Since then its popularity has led to two more shops opening in Santa Monica and Mid-City, with another two on the way, including the Palisades shop.

Sweet Rose co-owner Josh Loeb didn't originally plan a Sweet Rose in the Palisades because it was so close to the Brentwood Mart, but since the closing of Baskin-Robbins he's changed his mind.

"Every neighborhood should have its own ice-cream shop," said Loeb, who has always had a soft spot for the Palisades.



Photo: Cida Fukushima

He grew up in Rustic Canyon and fondly remembers walking 20 minutes into town to hang out with his friends. Surprisingly, his wife Zoe Nathan grew up just two miles from him, but their paths didn't cross until years later.

While Nathan, a Windward grad, attended college in Vermont, Loeb graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in English and then moved to New York City to work as a fact checker at *Vibe* magazine.

Realizing that he wasn't happy with what he was doing, Loeb moved back to Pacific Palisades. In 2006, he decided to pursue his dream of owning a restaurant by opening



Sweet Rose Creamery owners Josh Loeb and Zoe Nathan.

Photo: Emily Hart Roth

the Rustic Canyon Wine Bar and Seasonal Kitchen in Santa Monica.

Nathan, a trained pastry chef who had also moved back to the Westside after living in New York City and San Francisco, went to work for Loeb at Rustic Canyon. It wasn't long before they were dating and then married.

Since then, Loeb and Nathan have become owners and co-owners of Huckleberry, Milo & Olive and, most recently, Esters Wine Bar & Shop.

The couple have a four-year-old, a one-year old and another child due soon. They like the idea of families being able to walk to an ice-cream store after going out to dinner or eating at home. Given that notion, they downplay demographics and competition when opening a new store.

It's also why Loeb is not concerned about

Caruso Affiliated's proposed ice-cream store on Swarthmore. After all, he points out, the Caruso development is more than two years from completion, and Loeb believes Palisadians deserve an ice-cream shop sooner than that.

Sweet Rose specializes in organic, hand-crafted ice cream that's made daily at the Sweet Rose located in Santa Monica. Executive Chef Shiho Yoshikawa spends time buying produce at local farmers' markets and makes flavors based on the seasons.

Each store has 14 to 16 flavors, including the five most popular flavors: old-fashioned vanilla, Caffè Luxxe, fresh mint chip, chocolate and salted caramel.

Loeb says his Palisades store will have a soft opening in early- to mid-August, and there will be a neighborhood day where the ice cream is \$1. Visit: [sweetrosecreamery.com](http://sweetrosecreamery.com).

## The Palisades Highlands

By MICHAEL EDLEN  
Special to the Palisades News

The Highlands is one of newest communities in Pacific Palisades. Proposed as a large-scale development, it was the focus of major environmental battles for nearly 20 years before construction finally began in 1972.

Originally planned as a 7,200-unit project to be served by three four-lane roads, the Highlands was eventually scaled down to 1,600-1,700 housing units with one primary access road. There is also an emergency "back door" out of the area at the end of Piedra Morada over to Lachman Lane, used only when Palisades Drive is closed.

The Highlands is the only Palisades area with a large number of condominiums and townhouses, and also includes two guard-gated developments: The Country Estates and The Enclave.

Nearly every property belongs to a homeowners association, most of which offer a variety of recreational facilities.

"The Summit" HOA, which serves more than 300 homes, includes both tennis and basketball courts, playgrounds, a huge pool, a gym and a recreation room.

Although only about a 10-minute drive

from the Village, the Highlands feels like a sub-community of its own to many people.

It tends to have a warmer climate, and almost never gets fog. Surrounded by parkland and mountains with several hiking trails, it has many characteristics of small resort living, and most homes have ocean and/or mountain views.

Perhaps one of the best benefits is that buyers get more house for their money in the Highlands, with a current average price per square foot of \$595 versus \$1,013 per square foot for the rest of the Palisades.

In the 12-month period from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, there were 37 homes sold, ranging from \$1,345,500 for a three-bedroom, three-bath house on Avenida De Cortez to \$4.4 million for a five-bedroom, six-bath home on Via La Costa.

The median sales price for this period was \$1.9 million. There were also 30 condo sales, with a median sales price of \$902,500. As of late July, nine Highlands homes, and five Highlands condos were available.

*Michael Edlen has been ranked in the top 1 percent of all agents in the country. He has tracked Pacific Palisades sales since 1987. Michael can be reached at (310) 230-7373 or [michael@michaeledlen.com](mailto:michael@michaeledlen.com).*

## Palisades Cares Holds Back-to-School Drive

Palisades Cares' annual back-to-school gathering of supplies for School on Wheels will be held from August 7 through 22. School on Wheels is a Los Angeles nonprofit that provides one-on-one weekly tutoring for homeless children and school supplies.

Items needed (new, please): backpacks, spiral ring notebooks, school uniforms or uniform certificates, crayons, markers, colored pencils, pens, pencil sharpeners, school binders (2-inch or smaller), erasers, homework folders, flash cards (multiplication and division), USB flash drives, laptops (2008 and newer), mini staplers, mechanical pen-

cils, scientific calculators (preferably solar), graphing calculators, three-ring paper (college or wide-ruled), arts and crafts materials, gift certificates and vouchers for supplies.

Items may be dropped off at Benton's, Regal Cleaners, CVS and the Palisades-Malibu YMCA. We encourage you to shop locally for your supplies and to have your children participate in the purchase decisions.

School on Wheels also has many tutoring opportunities for ages 12 and older. Visit: [schoolonwheels.org](http://schoolonwheels.org).

Email Marie Steckmest [info@palisadescare.org](mailto:info@palisadescare.org).



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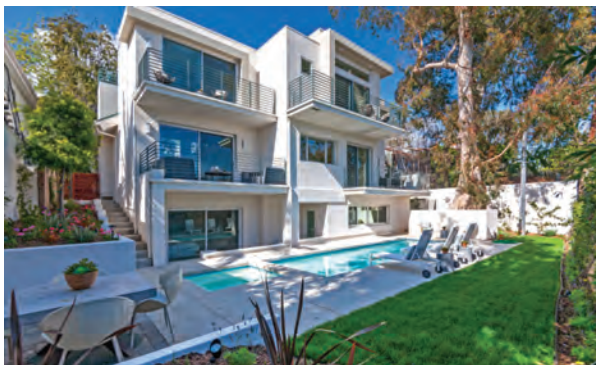
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### Atria Offers Programs For Palisades Seniors

Atria Senior Living, at 15441 Sunset Blvd. (across from Gelson's) offers its programs free to Palisades residents. Seniors do not have to live at the facility to take advantage of the programs, but please RSVP to (310) 573-9545.

World class concert pianist Alexander Borghese will play Saturday, August 8 at 10:30 a.m. French singer Natalie performs Tuesday, August 11, at 3:30 p.m. R&B singer Marion Calhoun will take the stage Thursday, August 13, at 3:30 p.m.

# Safety First: Sign Goes Down

The Palisades High School electronic message board at the corner of Temescal Canyon Road and Bowdoin was removed Saturday around 8 a.m. for safety reasons, especially because of its potential to distract drivers. The prominent sign, donated many years ago by the school's late English teacher, Rose Gilbert, will be repurposed, perhaps in the Stadium by the Sea.

Principal and CEO Dr. Pam Magee said: "The intersection presents a number of safety problems, particularly on school mornings. Excessive vehicular speeds, ille-

gal U-turns, unsafe lane changes and high pedestrian counts have resulted in many reported accidents and observed near-accidents. The sidewalks are insufficiently wide to accommodate the large numbers of students and other pedestrians (estimated at 1,000) who enter the school each day on foot from the intersection, resulting in many pedestrians walking near the curb next to moving vehicles, or even in the roadway itself."

Magee said the school is developing safety plans with the City of Los Angeles

and LAUSD.

"In the short term, the school has removed overgrown shrubs at the northeast corner to create a larger pedestrian waiting area," Magee said. "It will temporarily be treated with decomposed granite to create a wider walkway. The school, with the support of the Booster Club, hopes to enhance the visual appearance of the corner with new landscaping as part of the Pali Gateway project." This plan will also include improving the bus-stop waiting area at that corner, which is heavily used by students.

### Rustic Canyon Bridge Winners Announced

The Rustic Canyon duplicate bridge club plays from 6:15 to 9 p.m. every Wednesday at Rustic Canyon Park. No master points are awarded; instead the game is friendly and residents are invited to join. Call Russ Sherman at (310) 454-2989 or email russ-metal@aol.com.

Last week's east-west first place winners were Carol and David Field. Zenon Neumark and Ralph Gidwitz took second. The north-south winners were Ann and Lou Dachs. Second place went to Ed and Joan Dasteel.

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# PaliHi Board Answers Brown Act Complaint

By LAUREL BUSBY  
Staff Writer

A District Attorney's office inquiry, raises for non-union employees, and the principal's goals for the coming school year were all discussed at the Palisades Charter High School's board meeting on July 21.

The DA's inquiry stemmed from a complaint the city had received alleging that on May 26, 2015, the board had violated the Brown Act when it met in closed session to consider Principal Pamela Magee's evaluation. The Brown Act defines the open-meeting requirements and exceptions of local legislative bodies.

The complaint stated that the "real purpose for the closed session was to decide how to deal with students and faculty who signed a petition complaining about the principal," according to an email from Deputy District Attorney Bjorn Dodd.

Prior to the July 21 meeting, the school's attorney, Mark Bresee, addressed the allegation in a 12-page letter asserting that the closed meeting concerned the principal's evaluation, which included considering how much weight to give a student petition complaining about Magee. Due to the private nature of employee evaluations, the meeting was closed.

"Indeed, we believe that had the Board acted in any other manner, it would not have been fulfilling its fiduciary duty to its stakeholders while at the same time observing the legal protections afforded to employees when personnel matters are discussed," Bresee wrote. "Allegations that the 'real purpose' of the closed session was to 'deal with students and faculty who signed a petition complaining about the principal' are untrue and contrary to the governance philosophy at PCHS."

Bresee described PaliHi's efforts to follow the Brown Act, including a recent five-hour training to ensure that board members and administrative staff understand the law. He

also invited Dodd to meet with the board to help further their understanding of the act.

Dodd did not mention the name of the person instigating the complaint, but newly elected board member and parent Dara Williams told the board that she wrote the complaint before joining the board. Williams won a run-off election held from May 26 to June 1, and the July meeting was her first full meeting as a board member.

"I was a member of the public, and I had concerns," Williams told the board. She said that the principal's evaluation and the discussion of the petition could have been conducted in separate meetings, so that the petition aspect could be addressed openly. She also noted that she has different responsibilities now that she is a board member, but she had felt that it was her responsibility to report a possible violation. "If I think there's a violation, I'm going to bring it to the investigatory agency."

Fellow attorney Mark Epstein, a previous board member who attended the closed session, spoke from the audience about the evaluation meeting. He noted that when conducting a personnel evaluation, meetings are closed, and that part of this evaluation involved considering how the petition, which was signed by more than 1,200 students, impacted the evaluation, including whether students read the petition before signing it or felt pressured to sign it. There were "too many [student signatures] to discount."

The board had received complaints that some students had felt pressured into signing the document.

"Looking back at how we handled that petition, I would do the same thing," Epstein said. "I too take the Brown Act very seriously. I don't think a mistake was made at all."

An investigator was hired to help the board determine how to process the petition as part of Magee's evaluation.

Student representative Evan Hammond said that from a student point of view, he

*(Continued on Page 17)*



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# Support Maasai Girls

Pacific Palisades resident Correne Gichuru grew up in Kenya. For the past several years she has worked with Maasai girls, who are in danger of female genital mutilation and early marriage.

"We have helped raise money for girls to help them stay in school," Gichuru said. "With the aid of a few Palisadians we have raised and sent money to buy shoes for these children, which may have seemed like a small gesture but is one with long-lasting positive effects. For some of these children, it was their first pair of shoes and to others their first new pair."

Gichuru recently started a company called Exotic Mara, a name inspired by Maasai Mara in Kenya, where the Maasai tribe calls home. From an early age, Maasai tribal girls are predestined to be married early or must raise siblings, which means they are not allowed to attend school.

At Exotic Mara, Gichuru will sell uniquely handcrafted products made by the Maasai, and women from other regional tribes.

"We want to fairly compensate them with the intention of eliminating a parent's decision to keep a child home from school because they can't afford it," said Gichuru, whose son attends Palisades Elementary and daughter goes to Paul Revere Middle School.

Zulily, an online shopping site that offers a variety of products from shoes to clothing to bedding at sale prices for a short time, will feature Exotic Mara from August 14 to 17. Visit: Zulily.com.

"We will be introducing products crafted by these entrepreneurs," Gichuru said. "We urge people to log onto Zulily and purchase something."

Currently you can view Exotic Mara



Correne Gichuru displays some of the Exotic Mara wares.

products at Vivian's Boutique, 875 Via de la Paz, and at the Ultimate Health and Wellness Store, 827 Via. The company's website (Exoticmara.com) will launch August 14.

# PaliHi

(Continued from Page 16)

didn't think the petition reflected serious concerns on the part of many of those who signed it. Instead, "it was, 'Sure, I'll sign this.'" He also voiced support for how the board handled the situation.

At the meeting, Williams expressed a worry that students might be disciplined for signing the petition, but Magee indicated that the administration was not considering this. In addition, Allison Holdoroff Polhill, the outgoing board chair, said that the board is not responsible for student discipline.

The board also considered electioneering allegations against teacher Alex Shuhgalter, who won the student-elected teacher position on the board. However, the board chose to forego an investigation into whether Shuhgalter had campaigned to students in his classroom in part because the school's election policy is not clearly defined.

Instead, a committee was created to delineate these rules and address how to disseminate them to faculty and students before the next election. Board member Leslie Woolley said that these types of complaints had come up in several previous elections of student-elected teacher representatives.

\*\*\*

In an earlier portion of the meeting, raises for non-union employees, such as college advisors, were discussed, including a presentation by Amy Nguyen, human resources director. She said that these employees had received no changes in their pay since 2011, while other employees had received a 12 percent pay increase over the same time period. The board voted to increase the salaries of these unrepresented employees to bring them in line with the union employees' percentage increase.

Principal and CEO Magee also presented a list of goals for the coming school year. The goals were: 1.) increase math support for students and teachers—a goal which she said would be discussed further at the August 18 board meeting; 2.) expand intervention support, such as tutoring, emotional support and differentiated classes; 3.) establish a positive culture and customer service focus throughout the school; 4.) increase 21st century career awareness and opportunities; and 5.) refine school data analysis, including metrics and measurements to increase academic achievement.

\*\*\*

In other news, the board unanimously elected special education teacher Emilie Larew to take over as the new board chair. Allison Holdoroff Polhill also was elected unanimously as vice-chair, while community representative Leslie Woolley continued as secretary.

# PALISADES ANNUAL BLOOD DRIVE

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# Klapardas Achieve Elite Golf Status

By BILL BRUNS  
Palisades News Advisor

Norman Klaparda and his wife, Samm, share one of the most unusual accomplishments in sports: At one point, they had each played every course in *Golf Magazine's* bi-annual Top 100 Courses in the World ranking.

Their joint quest, certainly more inviting than trying to scale the world's 10 highest peaks, took them mostly to beautiful, challenging courses across the U.S. and the British Isles, but also meant lugging their clubs to Canada, Columbia, nine Western European countries, Morocco, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Korea, Japan and China.

"It was a lot of fun, something really special, especially being able to travel and play golf with my wife and friends," said Norman, 77, who completed his goal in 1991 when he played Durban Country Club in South Africa. Samm was the first woman to reach 100 when she finally wrangled an invitation to play that male bastion, Augusta National, in 1998.

Norman, an active member of the Riviera Country Club since 1980, has been fighting pancreatic cancer for 20 months, but it didn't keep him from flying to Korea in May to be honored by his *Golf Magazine* compatriots during the World Club Championships.

This inspired his friends and fellow Top 100 panelists to gather on June 26 to celebrate Norman at the Riviera, where he once sported a three-handicap and had a best score of 71 before his illness.

At dinner that night, one of his longtime Saturday playing partners at Riviera, Dick Zmuda, said: "Norman didn't hit the ball 300 yards, but he's one of the greatest chippers and putters around. He took us apart



Palisadian Norman Klaparda tees off on the par-3 15th hole at Cypress Point on the Monterey Peninsula. His three favorite courses in *Golf Magazine's* Top 100 rankings are Cypress Point, Pine Valley in New Jersey and Shinnecock Hills in New York. Photo: Samm Klaparda

around the greens. He has been an important part of the club for many years and we want him back on the course. I know there's no doubt in his mind."

Norman, sitting at the dais, nodded and said, "I'll be back."

Born and raised in Israel, Norman Klaparda was 16 when his family moved to West Hollywood in 1954. "I couldn't speak a word of English," he told the *Palisades News*, "so I went to high school just to learn English, and then I got a job at a men's clothing manufacturer in downtown L.A., where I swept floors and worked my way

up to become sales manager. When the owner retired, my brother and I started our own business, Mr. Jan, making men's sports shirts and slacks."

Klaparda took up golf when he was about 21 and married to his first wife, with whom he had two children. As his fledgling business grew, he bought a house in Van Nuys and joined Braemar Country Club in Burbank.

"Golf has always been a part of our lives," said his daughter, Karen, at the Riviera dinner. "I remember how dad used to practice on the front lawn, and how my allowance would go up and down, depending on how well he played."

After his divorce, Klaparda met Samm while on a business trip to Miami (she was a model and a marketing/PR executive who had moved to Florida from Ohio after her own divorce). They married in 1979 and later bought a condominium in Pacific Palisades, where they still live.

In 1984, eager to escape the anticipated traffic chaos during the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, the Klapardas traveled to England, Scotland and Ireland to play some of the sport's most renowned golf courses.

"After we played the Turnberry course, I noticed a plaque that displayed *Golf Magazine's* 1983 list of the Top 50 golf courses in the world," Norman said. "I counted up the ones I had already played, and the ones I was going to play on our trip, and it came to 28. So I thought, 'Why not play the rest?'"

Klaparda's business was thriving, and he had also invested in commercial and resi-

dential real estate over the years, so he had the cash flow necessary to pursue his goal—even after that task almost doubled when *Golf* expanded its rankings to 100 courses in 1985.

In order to gain access to various exclusive private clubs on the list, Norman had to draw on his membership at Riviera (the course is currently ranked #33 in the world), his gregarious salesmanship skills, the networking support of fellow *Golf* panelists (he was invited to join this select group in 1986)—and Samm's resolute preparations. In those days before e-mail, she had to write letters and make cold calls to club officials to secure a tee time or to find a member who would invite them to play. "I don't give up easily," she noted.

Pursuing this obsession also meant sharing a passion for golf. In 1988, for example, the Klapardas and three other couples flew to Europe and played 21 rounds of golf in 17 days in seven countries. In 1996, Samm traveled to New Zealand, Australia and Japan to order to play eight courses on the Top 100 list.

"I was in my 40s when Norman set his goal," Samm said. "I knew how to play, but I knew that if I was going to travel with him and play the game respectfully, I had to approach golf as a full-time job. I started taking lessons twice a week, I practiced every day and I played three to five times a week." She eventually had a six-handicap and won the women's club championship at Riviera.

(Continued on Page 19)



Norman and Samm Klaparda have been members of the Riviera Country Club since 1980, and have lived in the Palisades since 1987. Photo: Joann Dost



Samm Klaparda practices at the Riviera.

Photo: T.Y.

# Klapardas

(Continued from Page 18)

When Norman became only the third man to play *Golf's* Top 100 courses, Samm's own count was close to 40 and he encouraged her to shoot for 100.

This was no easy task for a woman trying to play at various male-dominated country clubs. She had to assure one board of directors in New York that their course would "not be mentioned in any aspect, pro or con, if there should be any publicity connected with my goal."

Norman's contacts helped her overcome other roadblocks, Samm said, and she is grateful for the many people "who were willing to share their love of the game and their facilities with a totally unknown but kindred spirit."

Ultimately, it took a chance encounter for Samm to complete her quest.

"One day a young man moved into our building and we got to talking," she recalled. "He was a good golfer and I told him I was trying to play the top 100 courses and the only one left was Augusta. He said, 'I can get you into Augusta,' and I thought, 'Sure.' But then he called and said, 'Well, we have a tee time—9 a.m. on December 14.' Turned out his brother was a major business executive and had a friend who was a member at Augusta who agreed to play with me."

These days, Norman's golf game has been sidelined by his illness, but he and Samm are still voting panelists for *Golf's* Top 100 (the 2015-17 rankings will be published in September), and she recently played #30-ranked L.A. Country Club North, which will host the 2023 U.S. Open.

When he looks back on his life, Norman said, sitting next to Samm in their condo, "The best part was meeting this lady. We both shared our love of golf and travel, and along the way we met so many beautiful people all over the world. We're still in touch with many of them. So it's been a hell of a ride, no matter what happens, but I'm a positive thinker and I think everything will work out for the best. There's a lot of time yet."



Cooperstown players (left to right) are Ryan Kennedy, Griffin Milner, Alec Morrison, Jack Grode, Jack Hassett, Cooper Morrow, Charlie Collins, Matt Closson, Cooper Robinson, Lane Johnson, Will Lawrence and Jake Moore. Coaches (back, left to right) are Russ Moore, Bill Lawrence and Joe Collins.

# Palisades Team Plays Cooperstown Tourney

By LOGAN TAYLOR  
Sports Writer

Cooperstown, here we come! This is the 18th year that the Pacific Palisades Baseball Association (PPBA) has sent a team of 12-year-olds to a summer baseball tournament just outside of historic Cooperstown, New York.

Coached by Joe Collins, Russ Moore and Bill Lawrence, the PPBA team has joined 103 other teams in the week-long tournament. Teams checked in last Saturday and were immediately assigned barrack-style accommodations with no air conditioning. Adjusting to the heat and humidity is always a factor for kids who have grown up in the sea breezes of Pacific Palisades.

Starting on Sunday (with games beginning as early as 8:30 a.m. and as late as 7 p.m.), each team plays a minimum of seven games over four days—barring unexpected afternoon thunderstorms.

Single-elimination, six-inning games

start today, August 5. By Thursday morning only 16 teams will remain in contention for the championship game. That evening, after the procession of teams into the stadium and fireworks, the final two teams play for championship.

The PPBA sent invitations to eligible Palisades players based on their ability, as well as parental time donated by coaches and certain other parents to the league.

This 12-member team, the Palisades Pony, consists primarily of the PPBA Bronco All-Star team with a few additions.

"This tournament is about as good as it gets if you are a 12-year-old who loves baseball," Coach Collins said. "It is fun for kids to see and play teams from the rest of the country."

Each team develops its own pin and part of the fun during the week is trying to acquire all 104 pins—and the umpire pins.

The camp is located about eight miles from the Baseball Hall of Fame. Visit: [cooperstowndreampark.com](http://cooperstowndreampark.com).

# PPBA All-Stars Finish Post-Season Play

The PPBA U8 Pintos had a tough draw in the District tournament, facing Los Alamitos on June 25 in Los Amigos Park in Santa Monica. After a 12-8 loss, they needed a win to stay alive in the double-elimination tournament, but lost 8-2 to Cheviot two days later.

The 10U Mustang All-Star team competed in the PONY Sectional Tournament at the Palisades Recreation Center. They opened with a 7-3 win against Lynwood on July 16, behind strong pitching by Caden Abraham. After a 12-2 loss to Torrance American, the Mustangs, coached by Jim Ford, faced a perennial rival, East Long Beach. They had beaten this team twice during the season, and needed a win to earn a berth in the Super Regional. Unfortunately,

the Mustangs lost, 9-4, on July 21.

The U11 Bronco All-Stars, coached by Bruce Wallin, competed in the PONY Super Regional in Whittier. They qualified by winning the District Title, defeating East Long Beach, 15-6. In Whittier, the Broncos lost their first game, 12-8, to Simi Valley, and then fell to Newport Harbor, 7-3.

The PPBA's 12U Bronco team also competed in the PONY Sectional Tournament at the Field of Dreams. Coached by Joe Collins, the Broncos opened with a 16-6 victory over Norwalk on July 15. They then lost to eventual tournament winner East Long Beach, 9-7, followed by an 11-6 loss to Cheviot Hills. The Broncos finished the season with a 17-4-1 record.

—LOGAN TAYLOR



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Hacienda Mojica in Santa Monica Canyon will be the site of a fundraiser. Photo: Ed Lowe

## La Señora Institute Will Hold Fundraiser

The La Señora Research Institute, now celebrating its 10th anniversary, will hold its fourth annual Summer Wine Tasting and Auction fundraiser on Sunday, August 23, from 3:30 to 6 p.m. at the historic Hacienda Mojica in Santa Monica Canyon.

Attendees can enjoy an afternoon in the shaded botanical gardens of the former Hacienda and bid on member-donated auction items, such as a week at a French chateau or a Sunset cocktail sail on a 71' yacht based in Marina del Rey.

Four Brix Winery, a craft winery located in the heart of Ventura, will feature its finest wines at the wine auction and for prior tasting. And Jesse from The Magic Castle will perform his amazing tricks.

Tickets are \$75 and advance reservations are required. Go to: [www.lasenorawine-](http://www.lasenorawine-)

tasting.eventbrite.com. La Senora is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit, tax-deductible organization, located at 565 Dryad Rd., off West Channel Road.

The La Señora Research Institute focuses on research and education related to the Rancho Era of Early California under Spain, Mexico and the United States, especially in regards to the 1839 Mexican Land Grant Rancho Boca de Santa Monica, where the Hacienda and the Pascual Marquez Family Cemetery are located.

Tish Nettleship, the owner of Hacienda Mojica since 1976, co-founded the Institute with historian and author Ernest Marquez, the great-grandson of the original land grantees. The hacienda was built in 1929 by Jose Mojica, a Mexican tenor who enjoyed fame in both opera and in movies.

## Friendship Circle To Host Family Conference

The Friendship Circle by the Sea will host its first conference, "Balance" for special needs families, on Sunday and Monday, August 16-17, at the Palisades Chabad, 17315 Sunset Blvd.

There is a dad and siblings workshop on Sunday from 1 to 6:30 p.m. A moms' workshop will be held on Monday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"At the Friendship Circle by the Sea we celebrate your child and support the entire family," said Ashley Dwyer, youth programs coordinator.

The Friendship Circle volunteer program pairs teens with children with special needs because nothing makes children feel better about themselves than spending time with friends who care about them.

For parents, navigating the world of special needs can be confusing and overwhelming. Friendship Circle offers workshops and support groups.

To register, call (310) 454-7783 ext. 117 or email: Navah Paskowitz at [navah@chabadpalisades.com](mailto:navah@chabadpalisades.com) or visit: [FCbytheSea.org](http://FCbytheSea.org).

## Diamond's Novel Named Finalist for Booksellers Award

Laura Nicole Diamond's debut novel, *Shelter Us*, is a finalist for one of this year's Southern California Independent Booksellers Awards. The winners will be announced at a luncheon ceremony on October 24 at the Garland Hotel in West Hollywood.

Diamond, a lifelong Palisadian who abandoned her law career to become a writer, is competing in the fiction category against *The Book of Life* by Deborah Harkness and *Life #6* by Diana Wagman.

She has received rave reviews, including, "Gorgeously written, deeply felt... A narrative about motherhood, loss and the meaning of life becomes a true page-turner," and "I couldn't put this lovely book down."

The Friends of the Palisades Library will host a free talk by Diamond at 6:30 p.m. on October 15 in the library's community room.

Visit: [LauraNicoleDiamond.com](http://LauraNicoleDiamond.com).

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(Left to right) NYLT Instructor Daniel Allen worked with seven Troop 23 members, including J.T. Junco, Greg Gold, Emmett Kallmeyer, Theo Trask, Declan Askew, Kenneth Gee and Luke Ferrene. Assistant Scoutmaster Jack Allen is far right.

## Palisades Troop 23 Graduates Seven from Leadership Course

Seven Scouts from Pacific Palisades Troop 23 graduated on June 16 from the week-long National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) course held at Camp Josepho in upper Rustic Canyon.

Declan Askew, Luke Ferrene, Kenneth Gee, Greg Gold, J.T. Junco, Emmett Kallmeyer and Theo Trask were chosen to attend the course because they had demonstrated leadership qualities and had previ-

ously completed the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops training.

NYLT is an action-packed program designed to provide Scouts with leadership skills and experience they can use in their home troops and in real-life situations.

The course centers on the concepts of what a leader must be, what he must know, and what he must do. The key elements are then taught with a clear focus on how to.

## Lash

(Continued from Page 1)

Several news sources listed the number of custom-built guns at more than 1,500 and cash at \$230,000. That amount does not include money that could be found in possible back accounts or the estimated 14 cars that Lash had at different storage locations, which might also contain cash and guns.

LAPD Detective Barry Telis told the *News* on July 29 that the final amount of guns, cash and ammunition found would not be released until the investigation was completed.

Leonard said that Lash didn't want anyone to know where he lived, so he would rent a room, but never move in. Once he had a new address he would go to the Department of Motor Vehicles and change the address on the more than 14 cars he owned. According to Leonard, Lash had several cars filled with cash and guns, ready to leave town in case of an emergency.

He said that part of the mystery police are dealing with is trying to find where the cars are stored in order to prevent a criminal from acquiring them. It is suspected that Lash may have paid for the storage rental for at least 10 years in advance.

Leonard said that the last time he saw Lash was two years ago, and Lash had told several people then that he had ALS and would suffer a horrible death.

Still undecided is what will become of the custom-build guns (the worth is esti-

mated at more than \$1 million), the money found and the vehicles.

Tarzana Attorney Robert Rentzer, who worked with Lash for nearly 20 years in connection with his client's firearms, said the mystery man had been to his house several times. He said Lash was a friend, but "not a close one." Rentzer said that Lash had never requested him to draw up a will.

Catherine Nebron Gorin's lawyer, Harland Braun, said they were looking for a will, but "Lash was one of these guys who never thought he would die."

Gorin had been working with Lash for 17 years; the business was out of her townhouse. Braun was asked, "Where did she think the money coming from?"

"She thought he was doing secret work for the government," Braun said, and by helping Lash, "she was helping the country, doing patriotic work."

Lash is survived by six first cousins, who are represented by the Law Offices of Daniel Brookman, a long-time Santa Monica attorney. Brookman was a long-time acquaintance of Lash's father, Joseph Jerry, who passed away in 2010.

Leonard summed up Lash: "In my experience as a reporter, the wealthier you are, the harder it is for people to tell you they think you are nuts. More people are willing to play into it because there might be something for them. He may be one of them."

Visit: [kfiam640.com/listen](http://kfiam640.com/listen) for the July 23 Eric Leonard interview on the John and Ken Show.

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## Skinner Named Town's Honorary Sheriff

By LAURIE ROSENTHAL  
Staff Writer

When Mike Skinner moved to Pacific Palisades in 1977, he certainly never envisioned that one day he would become the honorary town sheriff.

"I'm honored someone chose me," says Skinner, a Westside businessman. "I have a strong appreciation and respect for law enforcement and everything they do."

Skinner has been involved in improving the community for decades.

Most prominently, he was awarded the Pacific Palisades Citizen of the Year award in 2004 for his tireless work in completing the Field of Dreams at the recreation center.

While raising three sons (Kevin, Ryan and Brendan, who now range in age from 27 to 44) with wife Carey, Skinner spent a lot of time at the park while his boys played soccer, baseball and football.

He has stayed involved. As chairman of the Palisades Community Center Committee (PCCC), Skinner helps raise money for projects that the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks will not pay for, such as the "new" gym and the Field of Dreams.

"About 400 individuals and companies contributed to the original project," Skinner said, noting that more than \$1 million was raised for construction of the Field of Dreams.

Now, about \$80,000 is spent each year to maintain the playing fields at the park, from money collected by PCCC. "Almost 90 percent of the funds raised annually come from PPBA," Skinner said. AYSO also contributes.



Honorary Town Sheriff Mike Skinner rode in the recent Fourth of July parade. Photo: Tom Hofer

A member of the Park Advisory Board since it was created 15 years ago, and currently its chairman for the third time, Skinner works closely with Senior Recreation Director Erich Haas.

"Some of the current issues under discussion are off-leash dogs, non-park users parking their cars illegally in the lot, homeless sleeping in the park, ongoing vandal-

ism, a potential bocce court, a Master Plan that would replace the old gym and Tennis Center usage," Skinner said. "We also work with Erich to help with events like the Easter egg hunt and the Halloween 'Spooktacular.'"

Palisades Patrol selects the honorary sheriff after conferring with a handful of community leaders. According to CEO Scott Wagenseller, the position "was originally created to chair a public safety committee for the Chamber of Commerce, but has evolved into recognizing an active community leader, and allowing that person to choose whatever issues he or she wants to address." IndyCar driver Townsend Bell was the previous sheriff.

In 2003, architect Rich Wilken became the town's first honorary town sheriff, which, he said, "can only happen in a place with a hometown feel, like television's *Mayberry R.F.D.* or Pacific Palisades.

"To be thought of as someone who usually has the best interest of my hometown in mind was a gratifying recognition," Wilken said. "Not to mention that being presented with a shiny gold badge kind of reminded me of long-gone days as a kid growing up on Albright Street, and playing Cowboys and Indians with all my neighborhood friends."

His advice for Skinner: "Think of a program or two that you can bring to the com-



The official Honorary Town Sheriff's badge.

Photo: Scott Wagenseller

munity that will keep improving the safety and prestige of our hometown," Wilken says. "And remember to buy a cool-looking Western-style vest."

Wagenseller, who is also the owner/publisher of *Palisades News*, notes that even though it's only a one-year term, every sheriff has stayed on an extra year. "They are issued a real custom-made badge that says Honorary Town Sheriff Pacific Palisades and are given a hat," he said.

"I was hoping for a horse and rifle," Skinner said, laughing. "I don't think that's in the cards."

What is in the cards is Skinner's ability to appoint up to five honorary deputies, and he has already appointed Bob Benton as his lead deputy (he credits Benton and Brian Sullivan as playing key roles in the Field of Dreams campaign). He hopes "to take every opportunity to honor and support the dedication that we see from the real law enforcement officials."

Skinner's issues will be geared towards improving the park experience for everyone, and trying to rid the town of "all things that negatively impact the quality of life for all the members of the community who use the park."

In addition to being president of his insurance business, MG Skinner & Associates in West Los Angeles, he owns Skinner Vineyards & Winery in El Dorado County in the Sierra foothills, an area that is home to between 60 and 70 wineries.

The vineyard began after Skinner discovered an overlooked part of the family history in 2006.

His great-great-great-grandfather, James Skinner, emigrated in 1852 from Scotland to Massachusetts, eventually making his way to California for the Gold Rush. After success as a gold miner, he purchased more than 500 acres in 1861, which became "one of the first commercial vineyards in the U.S.," Skinner said.

Though that vineyard closed long ago, before Prohibition, "The original wine cellar is still there," he said. "We own that, and

(Continued on Page 23)



Mike Skinner's great-great-great-grandfather owned a winery in Northern California, beginning in the 1860s.

Photo courtesy El Dorado Historical Society



Mike and Carey Skinner enjoy a glass of wine.

Courtesy: Mike Skinner

# Skinner

(Continued from Page 22)

it's a national historic landmark.”

Today, Skinner Vineyards is a thriving business, though when Skinner and Carey began, it was just for fun. Carey resigned from Sotheby's Realty two and one-half years ago and is now devoted to the winery. The couple spend about 10 days a month there.

The vineyard comprises 97 acres, and includes a tasting room and 33 acres of planted vines, located only 1.5 miles from where Grandpa James began his winery.

“It has become a passion,” Skinner says about the winery. “We love it. It's been a really neat ride, and not something that we planned.”

Despite the state's historic drought, the winery is going strong, as it uses well water, not city water.

“We make high-end wine, with lots of intense flavors. We don't over-water. We use drip lines. We want the vines to struggle,” Skinner said.

This year, the winery will produce around 4,000 to 4,500 cases of wine, which is only sold in quality restaurants such as Spago, Chinois on Main, Tavern and Rustic Canyon. Skinner Vineyards has received good ratings from *Wine Spectator*.

When asked about his main role at the winery, Skinner jokes: “I finance it. I write the checks.”



Courtesy: Mike Skinner

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# Go, Chucky, Go! You Can Do It!

By PEPPER EDMISTON  
Special to the Palisades News

On impulse, my youngest son Charlie and I decided to buy a baby dachshund. Charlie called him "Chuckles," after his own nickname, and for several months he was enthralled with his pet. Until he hit age thirteen when he noticed girls, skateboards and MTV and left his puppy behind.

Luckily, my oldest son needed a four-legged friend, so Chucky found a home with David, who was disabled. He was a handsome fellow with sparkly brown eyes and a constant smile. While his age was 27, David's mind was that of a preschooler, except when he tried to kiss a pretty girl.

David shared a big room with a human companion named Greg and a cat named Kitty. Chucky fit right in as nobody but Greg was toilet trained.

David and Chucky became best buddies. Wherever David was, there was Chucky. The little dog went everywhere: to the park, to the Pier and to Grauman's Chinese Theatre, where he and David met Wonder Woman, whom David kissed. Chucky even cheered David on at the Special Olympics.

David and Chucky had eight wonderful years together. While the doxy grew fatter, David got thinner. He had uncontrolled epilepsy and often rested in bed or sat in a wheelchair, always with Chucky by his side.

One Sunday before dawn in 2009, David suffered a fatal seizure. There are no words for the grief we experienced. The sadness is profound and permanent but as the years go by, the pain becomes submerged beneath life and the living.

Chucky became lost in our mourning. We could barely console one another, let alone a plump little dog who quietly waited for his friend to return. Soon Greg moved out because he had nobody to care for and Kitty transferred his affections to my husband Joe. Chucky wandered aimlessly.

Meantime, Charlie grew up. He graduated high school and college and re-embraced Chucky, who sleeps on Charlie's bed



What, me hurry? At the start of the Weiner Dog Races at Santa Anita, Pacific Palisades dachshund Chucky (blue jersey number 3) lay down after all the other dogs bolted off, to the cheers of enthusiastic onlookers.

every night. At age fourteen, our little doxy still is not toilet trained. Plus, he nibbles from Kitty's litter box. But, no matter what, Chucky's tail wags. He has been able to find happiness again, just as we have.

Recently we brought Chucky to the annual 'Weiner Dog Races' at Santa Anita Park. Joe, sons Ben, Charlie and Will, five year-old grandson Gabriel and I all went. During the car ride, Chucky sat by Gabriel's feet, looking anxious. The weather was overcast with a chance of showers, but our spirits were sunny.

On the infield of Santa Anita we spotted oodles of beautiful dachshunds being led around by their proud owners. The dogs were sleek, blond and fit, reminding me of the women in Pacific Palisades. Chucky did a meet-and-greet with many of his peeps. He was more effervescent than he had been

in years.

After several hours it was time for Chucky's race. It began raining, but the cool drops only heightened our enthusiasm. Chucky wore a blue racing jacket with a number "3" on it. Ben and Charlie wore similar vests.

The dog track was 40' long and 10' wide. People were lined up three deep along the sides. Ben brought Chucky to the starting line while Charlie waited at the finish. Joe, Will, Gabriel and I had front row positions. We were as excited as if Chucky was competing in the Kentucky Derby.

It was hard to miss Chucky among the seven hounds. He weighed at least double that of his closest competitor and had a grey snout.

The race official began his countdown: "On your mark, get set, GO!" All the dogs

ran like crazy, except for Chucky, who turned around and faced the fence, his head hanging low. Joe, Will and I began to laugh in horror while Gabriel was totally confused.

(Continued on Page 25)

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Left to right: Will Edmiston, Ben Abrams, Charlie Edmiston and (in front) Will's son Gabriel celebrate Chucky, after the dachshund received acclaim after racing against dogs half his size and age.

## Chucky

(Continued from Page 24)

The race ended and a winner was declared. People cheered but nobody left. They noticed that Chucky had begun to move. Ben held a dog biscuit in front of Chucky's nose. The old doxy slowly advanced. Our family began shouting: "Come on, Chucky, You can do it!" "Go! Go! Go! Chucky!" "This way, Chucky!"

Soon, the entire crowd was yelling and clapping! "Come on, Chucky! Come on!" As Chucky trotted down the track, he felt the love and support surrounding him. Probably no pup in the history of dog racing ever received so much applause for so little movement, but the energy carried Chucky forward.

People were screeching and pounding on each other's backs. They were whistling and laughing. They were waving their hats and umbrellas. Everybody was invested in Chucky's success. On he went until he

crossed the finish line! The throng went wild! Folks were smiling and taking photos of the little doxy who could. Chucky was the hero of the day!

Gabriel thought Chucky won the race so he grabbed the golden dog trophy. An official followed him, snatched the statue back from his hand and snarled, "This trophy is reserved for the champion." We explained to Gabriel that every dog, including Chucky, was a winner.

The contest reminded me of David competing in the Special Olympics. No matter how slight the challenge, the effort was celebrated with great fanfare. When David threw a ball, we screamed until we were hoarse. When he joined in a race, my heart sang. And when he received a blue ribbon, I nearly fainted with joy.

Watching Chucky run in the 'Weiner Dog Races' was one of our family's greatest experiences. And, even if we couldn't see or hear him, David was right there with us, part of the gang, shouting, "Go, Chucky, Go!"



Chucky on the race course totally confused about which direction to run—or if he even should continuing running—at the Weiner Dog Races.

# DINING WITH GRACE

## CASA NOSTRA

1515 Palisades Dr., Pacific Palisades • (310) 454-8889

For almost a decade, Casa Nostra has been giving Highlands locals a place to dine without driving to the coast or into town. The restaurant has a pleasing ambiance inside and also on the outdoor patio with its enchanting canyon view of the local mountains. Fortunately, my college-bound grandson, Ciaran, was able to join me for dinner on an evening where the fog did not descend until dark (although we could watch it coming over the hill).



and arugula fragrant with olive oil made an excellent main or secondi dish.

Here, not only is each dish compelling, but there is a great variety of offerings from eight antipasti to a dozen salads, to an octet of secondi dishes, to some 15 or more pasta and risotto meals, to pizzas, and even a kid's menu.

At lunchtime they also offer Panini sandwiches (\$11.90) in their homemade focaccia bread and served with either French fries or a baby mixed green salad.

Antipasti very in price from \$6.90 for a bruschetta to \$16.90 for the Prosciutto

Happily for me, this growing young man loves food. Thus we began with Prosciutto e Burrata, a large platter of delicious imported Parma Prosciutto with a mound of creamy mozzarella in the center. Delicious.

Several salads are served in full- or half-sized portions, enabling us to each have a half-size to taste two different salads. Fresh peppery wild arugula with shaved parmesan cheese had a fine oil and balsamic vinegar dressing. The other salad of baby mixed greens with a layer of beets on the bottom along with gorgonzola cheese and walnuts was also excellent.

My risotto Mari nostri was exceptional, filled with shrimp, calamari, clams and mussels in a delicious creamy light and spicy tomato sauce.

Ciaran decided on the Milanese de Vittello. Topped with chopped tomatoes, the excellent veal with lemon wedges

e Burrata. Salads are generally \$11.90 or \$12.90 for the whole salad and \$7.90 or \$8.90 for half portions.

Most of the pastas are in the \$15.90 to \$16.90 price range except for the seafood versions, such as my risotto at \$20.90.

Entrees vary from \$18.90 for Il pollo (roasted chicken) served with rosemary potatoes and sautéed spinach to \$28.90 Milanese style veal. A roasted duck breast is \$23.90, while grilled salmon and Mediterranean Sea bass are \$25.95 each.

Pizzas vary from \$12 to \$16 for the regular size and \$16 to \$20 for a large. All items on the kid's menu are under \$8.

Naturally, Ciaran and I had to sample desserts such as the vulcano di cioccolato, an amazingly rich chocolate lava

**JUMBLE** THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME  
by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OTARI  
 O \_ \_ \_ O \_ \_  
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BYRED  
 \_ \_ O \_ \_ \_ \_

DOYHDS  
 O \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

HANVEE  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ O \_

Check out the new, free JUST JUMBLE app

How am I supposed to protect him on that? Bully! Look at him fly!

8/5  
 WHEN THE U.S. PRESIDENT JUMPED THE STALLION OVER THE FENCE, HE RODE ON \_\_\_\_\_

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

O \_ \_ \_ " O \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ " O \_ \_ \_  
 (Answers on page 9)

cake topped with vanilla ice cream, whipped cream and a fresh strawberry. Scrumptious and delicious with the hot chocolate pouring out with each bite. This was so rich that a cup of decaf coffee was necessary to calm down my taste buds.

The coffee-flavored tiramisu served on a painted plate was another winner. Light and beautifully made it was a fine end to a delightful meal. Furthermore, desserts here are a modest \$7.

Casa Nostra is open seven days a week from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. The restaurant also offer catering and take-out. Parking is free.

If you happen to be downtown, try Casa Nostra at 825 W. 9th St., located next to the famous Pantry Café.

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