

## LADWP Plans Pole-Top Substations

Pole-top distribution stations are now being considered for the Marquez area to help mitigate overloaded circuits because LADWP has been unable to find a new location on which to build a permanent new substation (DS 104).

In 2013, the utility company sent an open letter to Pacific Palisades customers saying, "The proposed DS 104 is needed to improve power reliability. Currently, the power load is now being distributed by only one existing distributing station in Pacific Palisades (DS-29).

"The heaviest power load is also being distributed on circuits that are farthest away from DS-29, which impacts reliability for the entire area. There is no space at the station to build more capacity."

The DWP owns land next to the Marquez Elementary School playground, but some residents rejected the site as being unsafe. The current power station, built in 1935, is located at Via de la Paz and Sunset Boulevard, closest to two condominium buildings.

A DWP spokesperson said the department will continue to evaluate locations in order to reliably supply power to this area, but it is now in an engineering phase to implement pole-top distribution stations.

The spokesperson did not know how many poles it would take or where they would be located in the Marquez area, but DWP will present a plan at a January Community Council meeting.

An earlier email from the *News* to LADWP inquiring about future power needs for the Landmark (53 townhouses) off Tramonto Drive and the Seaview (29 units) at Castellammare received the following reply: "LADWP does not have any information about the specific projects so we are unable to comment on their potential impact on energy supply to the area."

—SUE PASCOE

## Celebrating the New Year



Pacific Palisades resident and stroke survivor Dana Rivera walked in the Rose Parade on New Year's Day as part of the Union of Hearts float, a collaboration between the American Heart Association and Union Bank to draw attention to heart disease and stroke—the nation's leading health threats.

Photo: courtesy of Union Bank

## Park Picnic Tables: \$3,500 Each

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

Sometime in 2007, 53 picnic tables and eight pergolas were taken out of the Temescal Canyon Park that stretches from Pacific Coast Highway up to Palisades High School.

They were replaced by six picnic tables and one pergola in the 36-acre park that borders Temescal Canyon Road. At an L.A. City park improvements meeting in Brentwood on December 14, residents were asked to vote on adding picnic tables.

But newspaper records show that the original tables, which were installed in the 1960s and then taken out by the City, were all supposed to be replaced in 2007 with Prop. K money.

According to a February 2007 *Palisadian-Post* article, "Temescal Renovations Approved (and Needed)" by reporter Max Taves, the park was allocated \$250,000 in Prop. K funding (2006) to upgrade its wooden pergolas, park benches and picnic tables.

In that story, Debby Rolland, superintendent of the Department of Recreation and Parks operations in West L.A., said: "The condition of the pergolas is very poor, and the picnic tables are falling apart. But they are going to be replaced with Prop. K funding."

The article stated that "Lower Temescal was one of the few parks that was allocated Prop. K money last year, but visitors may not benefit from the new funding until July 2008, according to Neil Drucker, who oversees Prop. K Funding for the Bureau of Engineering."

After a preliminary design was finished,

a group of community members (called Local Volunteer Neighborhood Oversight Committee) was selected by former Councilman Bill Rosendahl. The group, including Stuart Muller, Susan Oakley, Harry Sondheim, Ted Mackie, Diane Goldberg and Bernard Kinsey, held three meetings.

Notes from the May 2007 meeting stated that there was \$250,000 in Prop. K money, but after design, permits and other miscellaneous fees, only \$185,000 of that money could be used for picnic tables and trellises. In those notes the cost of each picnic table with a concrete pad was given as \$3,500.

The existing conditions were also listed: 1.) trellises are constructed of wood and need repair; 2.) picnic tables are in a state of disrepair and need to be replaced; 3.) there are eight areas with either a trellis or a trellis and table arrangement: picnic areas

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## Name the New Development

During a meeting on December 17, the *News* asked developer Rick Caruso what his new development on Swarthmore and Sunset will be called. The working title is Palisades Villages, but Caruso said he is open to other suggestions.

"I've always just thought of it as The Palisades," said Caruso, who lives in Brentwood and whose signature development is The Grove.

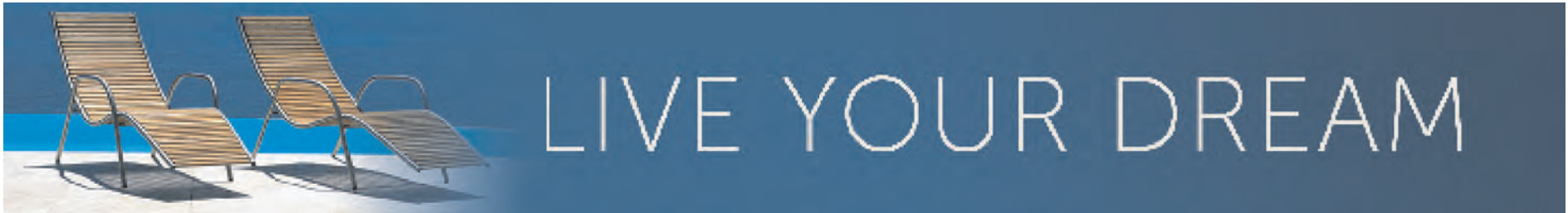
Should Palisades Village have another name? What would be your suggestion? Send ideas to [spascoe@palisadesnews.com](mailto:spascoe@palisadesnews.com) and we'll share them with Caruso.

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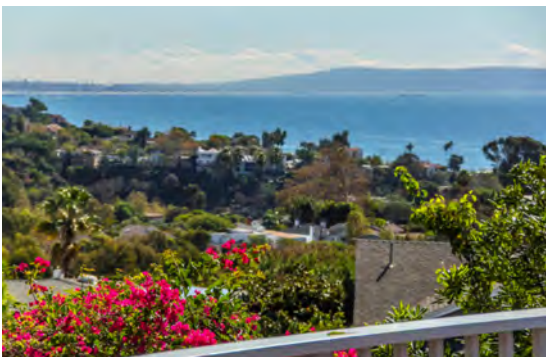
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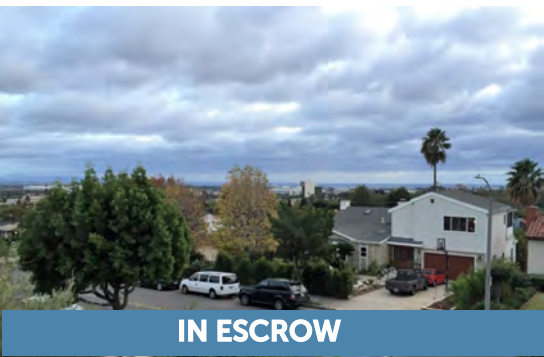
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# Addiction: Coming Out of the Shadows

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

Two Palisadians who came out of the shadow of addiction have now dedicated their lives to helping others. For their efforts and the development of a new outpatient program, Andy Besser and Robert Landes will be honored at the 24th Annual Beit T'Shuvah gala on January 24 at the Century Plaza.

The mission of Beit T'Shuvah, which is located across from Helms Bakery in Culver City, is helping "souls recover from addiction and learning how to properly heal. The faith-based model integrates spirituality, psychotherapy, Jewish teachings, the 12 Steps and creative arts."

About 120 people are receiving treatment at the Beit T'Shuvah facility, and are allowed to remain as long as they need help: an average stay is six months to a year.

"The idea is not to 'graduate' people," said Besser, who worked 25 years as a civil litigation attorney before coming to Beit T'Shuvah. "This is about building community."

"More than 10,000 people have been helped," said Landes, a businessman, who noted that about 40 percent of those receiving treatment are not Jewish.

"No one is turned away because of financial need, 70 percent of our clients are on scholarship," Landes said. The cost of the outpatient program is \$3,500 a month, which is cheap by treatment standards. "You can pay \$140,000 a month for a world-class

recovery, but you also get a world-class debt."

When a person enters the facility, he or she is assigned an addiction counselor, a spiritual counselor and a therapist—and an individualized program is developed.

"A person is challenged to recover their passion and discover their purpose," Besser said. "They learn they don't need to fill up 'space' with drugs."

In addition to therapy rooms, a vocational and career center and a recording studio, there is also a community room and dining room.

Landes and Besser said the center has a good relationship with the courts, so that many people with an addiction problem come there for treatment instead of jail.

Besser noted that *60 Minutes* (on December 13) featured Michael Botticelli, director of the National Drug Control Policy, who said we need to look at addiction differently: that it is a brain disease rather than a moral failing, that addiction doesn't have anything to do with will power, but rather should be viewed as a disease.

"We need to come out of the shadows and look at the disease model," Landes said.

"One in three families will be touched by addiction," Besser said. "One hundred twenty people are dying every day from overdoses, which is more than gunshots and car accidents."

Besser talked about how he had a substance abuse problem earlier in his life. After retiring from the legal field, he was



Palisadians Robert Landes (left) and Andy Besser have implemented a new addiction outpatient program at Beit T'Shuvah in Culver City.

Photo: Bart Bartholomew

seeking a new direction. "It was mind-boggling the number of kids with substance abuse issues and I decided I wanted to get involved as a counselor."

He attended UCLA in 2011 and received an addiction counselor certification, which required 300 hours of experience and passing a state certification examination. "I did my hours here and fell in love with this place," Besser said.

In like fashion, Landes, an executive vice president at L.A. Gear, was featured in an April 1995 *L.A. Times* business story. The following month he was in rehab in Minnesota.

He credits his late wife, Wendy Landes, with breaking the chain of addiction in his family. She said, "I'm not willing to hide any more."

"You treat it when you bring it out of the shadows," Besser said.

When they share their story with others, people afterwards seek them out and "They whisper, 'Can you help?'"

"Why do they whisper?" Landes asks.

The men point to an increasing problem with heroin in youth. According to Botticelli (director of National Drug Control Policy), "We know one of the drivers of heroin has been the misuse of pain medication. Many pain drugs are opioids like heroin and the number of opioid prescriptions has risen from 76 million in 1991 to 207 million today."

"Most of the young people coming in today are addicted to heroin," Besser said. Heroin is as cheap as \$5 or \$10—less than prescription pain killers.

He also warns about medical marijuana. "A group of kids are addicted to it. This marijuana was developed for those with cancer and it [the strength] has no relation to what many of today's adults may have used."

The two men are clear that those with substance-abuse problems should be treated with a medical model, rather than as a will-power issue.

"We are not here to legislate or judge, we're here to provide a solution that includes the family," Besser said.

"We're bringing it out of the shadows so that people are able to ask for help," said Landes, who started working 300 hours towards his counseling certification in 2014.

The two men have created a 90-day outpatient program, dubbed IOP (intensive outpatient program), that allows people who may have an addictive-type disease to gain support, while continuing to work. It is specifically for those people whose personal and professional obligations don't allow inpatient treatment. The program

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## Celebration of Lights



Pacific Palisades was awash in lights during December, exemplified by this home on Albright Street. Now, as the New Year starts, the house lights are replaced with the light in the hearts of residents.

Photo: Bart Bartholomew



# Homeless Meeting: A Confrontation

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

A recap of the December 17 Pacific Palisades Task Force on Homelessness (PPTFH) meeting that was sent via email to many households did not detail the frustration felt by more than 70 residents who attended.

"Our paid City officials have abdicated their responsibility," one resident said at the 3 p.m. meeting at the Palisades Library community room.

Another asked, "Why are the bluffs still full of campers?"

One person chimed in, "It's not a crime to be homeless, but it is a crime to camp and trespass in a posted high-fire-hazard zone. It's time to distinguish between homeless and criminals trespassing."

A group of Via de las Olas residents staged a cleanup on December 2 in park grounds below their properties, clearing out hypodermic needles, vodka bottles, lighters, propane canisters, car batteries, stoves, fuel cans and marijuana pipes.

"Why should Pacific Palisades residents be required to take on the homeless and take care of sanitation concerns?" one of the cleanup organizers asked. "Do we need to hire our own security?"

Two homeless camping fires that got out



Residents saw smoke on the parkland below Via de las Olas on December 28 and called firefighters. Two days later, firefighters were called again.

of control in thick brush below Via de las Olas on November 8 and 9 and threatened multi-million-dollar homes, led to increasing scrutiny over government responsibility for the safety of taxpaying residents and their property.

The City of Los Angeles, which has been hit with several lawsuits filed by the homeless and homeless advocates, and allows

those individuals to live on City streets, feel its hands are tied. A second lawsuit does not allow the City to throw away homeless property (which to many might appear to be trash or junk), but instead must store it.

"The community approach is a great place to start, because of the injunctions against the government," LAFD Assistant Chief Patrick Butler said at the meeting.

"But, I should caution you could become civilly liable for taking property that is on City property."

He also warned that there are rattlesnake holes and to be careful at encampments. A resident wanted to know if the homeless should also be warned about the rattlesnake danger.

Another resident stated, "We all pay taxes. You are here to help us," as he addressed the 12 officials on the dais. "We were told there will be twice-daily sweeps. Are there?"

Sergeant Rodney Carter [LAPD Transient Unit] said, "We're responsible for 64 square miles. I only have four people working for me. We arrest people and they come right back."

"They flat-out told me, 'Why would I want to leave here?'" Carter said.

One resident asked, "Will the City allow a private service to come in, if we would hire them?"

He was told, "This is dedicated parkland and the City does not have a mechanism at this time to contract with other security services."

Assemblyman Richard Bloom's senior field deputy and PPTFH vice-chair Stephanie Cohen said, "It's extremely unfair to say nothing is happening. I know [Palisades LAPD Senior Lead] Officer Moore and (Continued on Page 5)

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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 Berkshire Hathaway sales professionals.



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# Homeless

(Continued from Page 4)

Carter have been out here several times and six people have been arrested. Caltrans has been here. It is grossly inaccurate and unfair to say nothing is happening."

The increasing number of homeless in Pacific Palisades led to the creation of the PPTFH in late 2014. One member, Bruce Schwartz, spearheaded new signage that forbids camping in high-fire-hazard zones. Neighborhood prosecutor Veronica De La Cruz Robles has been able to use the signs in court.

"Slowly and steadily we're getting traction on prosecutions," De La Cruz Robles said, noting that illegal camping and trespassing do not get the same attention from a judge as a high-profile felony case. "I'm asking the judge to order people to stay away from a larger area."

De La Cruz Robles said that judges want an explanation and she said she conveys residents' concerns to them.

Another speaker was Caltrans representative Gustavo Nunez, who was attending his first PPTFH meeting. "We do enforcement on the Caltrans right of way and we give 72 hours' notice of a cleanup, in order that it will hold up in court," he said. The Caltrans area extends from the center of the road (PCH) to 80 feet to the side.

State Parks Superintendent Stephen Bylin said the state does not own the land adja-

cent to Palisades Drive, and that Topanga State Park skirts around the top of the Highlands—there is about a half-mile City property buffer zone.

"If you see any encampments on state property, let us know immediately," said Bylin, who also explained that although the state owns Will Rogers Beach, there is an agreement with the county, which does enforcement on the beach. But the county enforces minimally and LAPD is the chief enforcer for the beaches. "We don't have the resources like the City does to clean up encampments," Bylin said.

A Huntington resident described how a homeless man came through a gate on her fenced property and was sitting on her doorstep. Unsure what to do, she opened the door and escorted the person off the property.

SLO Moore told her, "Next time call 911. It is trespassing."

St. Matthew's Associate Pastor Lester McKenzie presented a check for \$25,000 to Dr. Chris Miller of Ocean Park Community Center (OPCC). To date, more than \$160,000 has been raised locally to support two social workers who will come into Pacific Palisades starting January 4 and who are supposed to help get the homeless into housing.

One resident commented, "If I lived on ocean-front real estate without having to pay utilities, insurance, mortgage or rent and didn't have a landlord, not a lot of people are going to take your help."

Miller has said the outreach will be in the early morning hours (starting at 4:30 a.m.) and the workers will be accompanied by police. If you see a homeless person whom you feel OPCC should reach out to, you may call a special phone number (that has yet to be set up).

"We want to get in touch with the homeless and get them into services," Miller said.

"The vast majority have serious mental illness: schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and trauma, which makes it hard to connect with them.

"People may be in danger to themselves or someone else and sometimes just the presence of police can make a difference," Miller said, noting "The mental health system is broken."

## DRB to Discuss Caruso Plans

The Pacific Palisades Design Review Board (DRB) will hold a regularly scheduled meeting at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, January 13, in Mercer Hall on the Palisades High campus.

Caruso Affiliated Inc. is requesting a preliminary design review evaluation and consultation by the DRB. The group will review and offer recommendations on the proposed design.

The project includes the redevelopment of various properties along Swarthmore Avenue, Monument Avenue and Sunset Boulevard and includes nine new buildings with a total of 116,215 square feet on 3.11 acres.

The buildings will range from one- to two-stories with a maximum building height of 36 feet. The project proposes a mix of uses including retail, restaurants, offices, eight residential units, a specialty grocery, a movie theater, a community room, a fitness space, storage spaces, pedestrian paseos and a village green.

A total of 470 off-street vehicle parking spaces will be provided in two levels of subterranean parking. Additionally, the project will include 98 bicycle parking spaces and add eight on-street parking spaces for a total of 29 diagonal parking spaces along Swarthmore Avenue, if Caruso Affiliated is allowed to convert Swarthmore into a one-way street.

This public meeting will focus on design, based on the Palisades Specific Plan. Every person wishing to address the board during the meeting must complete a speaker's card and submit it to the City Planning Staff in attendance.

DRB chairperson Barbara Kohn has the discretion to modify the time and the number of speakers per subject.

Plans for the project will also be available for review at the Department of City Planning (City Hall Room 621, 200 N. Spring St. or visit: [cityplanning.lacity.org](http://cityplanning.lacity.org)) or the Council District Office (1645 Corinth Ave. Call: [310] 575-8461.)

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## Heard About Town

### Christmas Tree Recycling

How can we recycle our Christmas tree?

(Editor's note: We visited [lacitysan.org/tree-recycle.htm](http://lacitysan.org/tree-recycle.htm) and learned that first you must remove all tinsel, decorations and the stand. Cut the tree in half and place in the green container. If it does not fit, set it next to the container curbside. Flocked trees cannot be recycled. They must be cut and placed in the black container. Call (800) 773-2489 Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.)

### Nice Sanitation Worker

I watched as the sanitation trucks came through our neighborhood. One of the blue bins had been knocked over (I'm not sure how) and the sanitation worker got out of his truck, righted it and then continued picking up the green bins. He didn't have to do it, but he should be appreciated for helping out.

### Nasty Beggar at Gelson's

There was a woman begging in front of Gelson's and when another Palisadian started to give her money, I suggested she give the money to the Task Force or OPCC in order to try and help people overcome homelessness. The homeless woman started screaming at me and told me God was going to get me.

(Editor's note: We urge all Palisadians who are compassionate to support the local effort to help these homeless people, rather than enable them by giving handouts. Donations can be made to the OPCC, put PPTFH on memo and send it to P.O. Box 331, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.)

### Sprinkler Reminder

After the rain shower the week of Christmas, one of my neighbors still had his sprinklers on. Just a reminder: let's send our sprinklers into hibernation for a few months.

### DWP Refunds

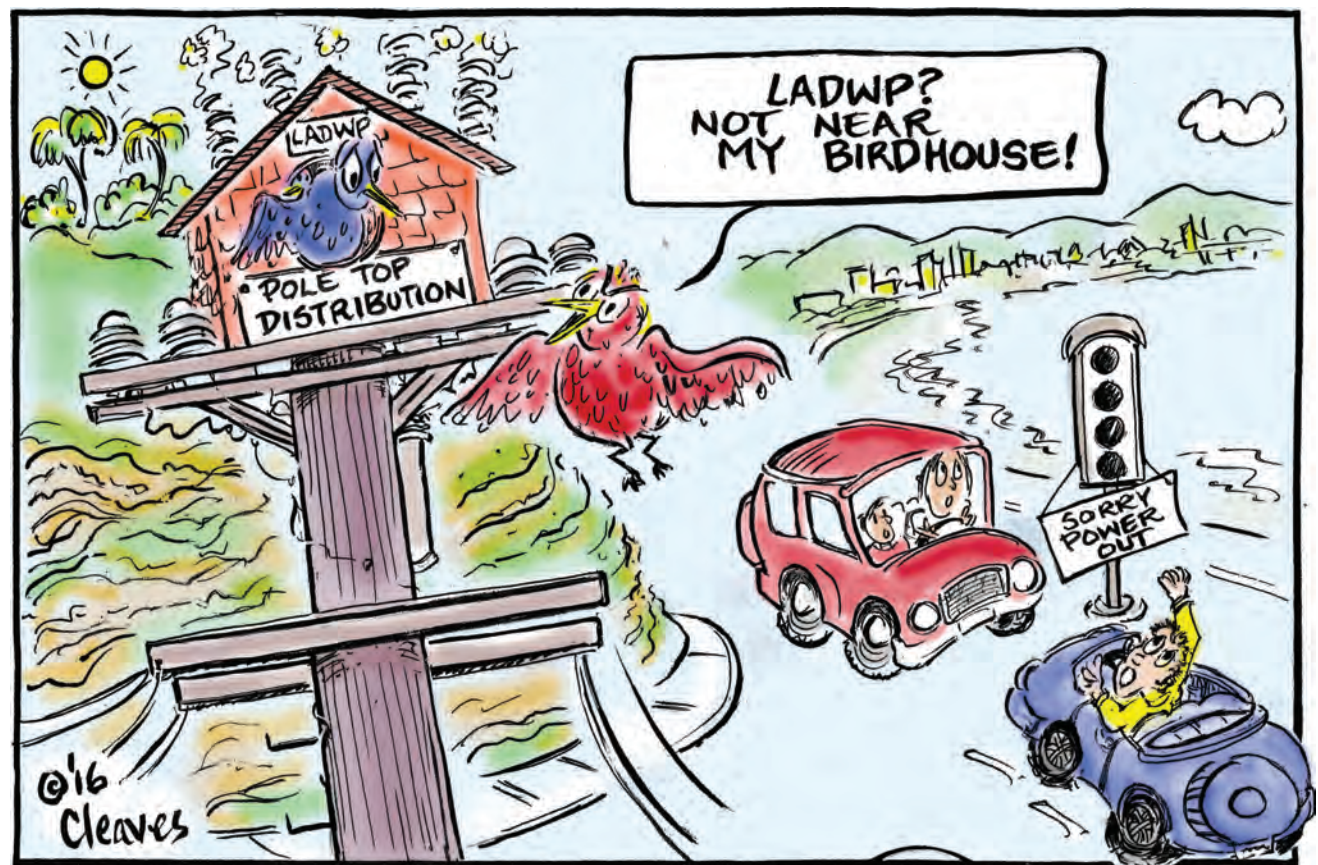
With all the talk of the DWP overcharging, how do you know if you are entitled to a refund? It all seems very confusing to me.

### Seeking a Vice Mayor

I read in the *L.A. Journal* that Jake Steinfeld's three-year term as honorary mayor of Pacific Palisades ended on December 31. Is there a vice mayor who can fill Jake's leadership role until a successor is found? How about Tom Hanks or Steven Spielberg or J.J. Abrams?

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

### Kids Still Say the Darndest Things

By BARBARA GOULD  
Special to the Palisades News

There are those of us who remember Art Linkletter's book and TV show *Kids Say the Darndest Things*. Now that I've raised three children and am enjoying my grandkids, I realize the accuracy of the show and the book. They still say the darndest things.

My oldest son was the kind of quiet boy that all teachers loved. Ron, my middle, was a different—he could out-logic me even when he was 3 years old. When his oldest daughter was the same age, he called me one day to tell me about their conversation. He didn't know how to reply. Barely holding in my laughter, I told him he should certainly know what to say as he had pulled that same stuff on me at that age.

David, my youngest had the same fourth grade teacher as his older brothers. The teacher asked, "Any relation to Ron and Russell?"

"Yes," he answered.

"Any more at home like you?" she asked.

"Oh yes, only six more," replied my son, scaring the teacher—until it was finally cleared up.

When Ron's daughter Alyce was 7 years old, I called the home at Saturday about 10 a.m. figuring everyone was up. Alyce answered the phone, and after a chat with her I asked to speak to her dad. She replied, "He can't come to the phone right now. He and Mom are in the bedroom making me a baby sister or brother."

A few months later, they came up from San Diego for a visit and Alyce walks in and excitedly tells us to sit down as she has something to tell us.

Grandpa and I expected news about school, girl scouts, piano lessons or karate. Instead she says, "Mom and Dad are having a baby sister for me to play with." That was a guess, because they didn't know the sex of the baby, yet.

Fortunately, it turned out she was right. Talia, now 8, idolizes her big sister, and Alyce, 16, has lots of patience with her younger sister.

Talia recently saw the animated movie *The Good Dinosaur*. It takes place 65,000 years after a huge asteroid was supposed to hit earth and eliminate the dinosaurs. However, the asteroid missed its target and the dinosaurs are safe.

The story revolves around a young boy and a dinosaur who become unlikely friends in order to survive. Talia asked her dad who the mother is of the oldest people on the planet, adding she'd ask the woman directly, only it was so long ago, that she is dead and couldn't answer. Her parents opted to tell her there was a huge debate about whether it was the big bang theory or evolution. That seemed, at least temporarily, to suffice.

Several years ago Talia was admiring my rings, and asked if she could try on "the great big one." She put in on her middle finger—the ring was way too big for her tiny finger. "Look, it fits," she said, excitedly. A girl after my own heart; I love jewelry, too.

(Gould lived in Pacific Palisades from 1957-60. She and her husband returned to town in 2000 when her parents passed away. She has worked as a sales representative for a candy distributor for 21 years and is active in the Marquez Knolls Property Owners Association.)

### Thought to Ponder

"Ring out the false,  
ring in the true."

— Alfred, Lord Tennyson

## PALISADES NEWS

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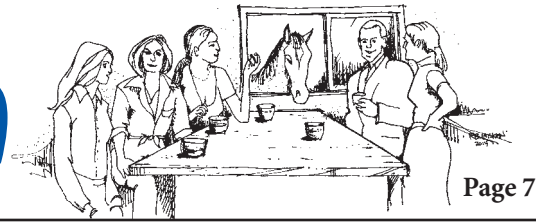
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## VIEWPOINT

# Calendars 2016: A Love Story of 365 Days

By DEBBIE ALEXANDER  
Palisades News Contributor

The ball's dropped, the confetti's tossed, and the champagne's sipped, so 2016 is upon us—a new year, which for me represents an indulgence in my love of calendars.

Julius Caesar created the Julian calendar because an astronomer realized Earth's time continuum was off. His repair—adding 90 days to 46 B.C. and deciding a New Year begins on January 1. He also declared a leap year every four years to account for earth's six extra rotation hours.

Caesar's version worked well for centuries until Pope Gregory VIII realized in 1582 there was an error of 11 minutes and 14 seconds. Hence, he added an extra day to October. His Gregorian calendar slowly became the standard used today.

I am tied to that archaic paper way of keeping track of where and what I am supposed to do. However, no rational human being, including my husband Scott, would ever understand my complicated system of five separate calendars.

My former therapist ordered me down to just one calendar. I obviously ignored her, and she'd be horrified at my increased number. Yet, each one serves an invaluable purpose.

As 2015 waned, I bought my first 2016 weekly calendar in mid-November. It's a "The Therapeutic diary," an

amalgamation of inspiring art. This one lives in my bedroom. Here, I keep track of future plans and valuables like concert tickets.

My second weekly calendar is "At-A-Glance" 2016, an official engagement type. I selected a blue 8½" by 11" edition with times from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. I like scribbling plans down because I struggle with punctuality and double booking. Located in my kitchen, this one I consider my bible.

Our Alexander monthly calendar tradition probably started a decade ago when my younger son Jeremy made us one at school as a holiday gift. Now, the chosen calendar prominently hangs in the kitchen for everyone to see; however, my three children could care less.

According to my husband Scott, this is the ONLY family calendar! So, after much deliberation, I selected "Awkward Family Photos 2016." Last year, my daughter Lily insisted on Shih Tzus because of our dog, Milo. I didn't want our older dog Sonny's feelings hurt, so we also had "Black Labs."

I really miss 2014's Peeps Calendar filled with elaborate art pieces for each month incorporating those sugary chicks and bunnies.

I adopted the "Wisdom of the East" page-a-day calendar in 2009. Daily, I get a dose of Eastern philosophy with a message like that found on April 1: "To lose the patience is to lose the battle," a quote from Mahatma Gandhi.

I keep the sayings that resonate with me for guidance

and tack them up.

On April 10, my eldest son Casey's birthday, the Korean proverb appeared: "Put off for one day and ten days will pass." Oh so true! A few years ago, I resorted to finding a Wisdom of the East calendar on eBay out of desperation—and had to pay three times the list price of \$9.99. Silly, but I've grown attached to those sayings.

A newer addition to my repertoire is now another page-a-day—"Cartoons from *The New Yorker*." Two years ago, I used the weekly version and appreciated the humorous doodles. I now look forward to my essential daily laugh. I find myself keeping them, because the cartoons are so darn pertinent and funny.

I used to gift page-a-day calendars to various relatives. Unfortunately, I've stopped because I often found them unused in my kids' rooms, and the ultimate rejection came from my dad. After he passed away, I discovered his Corvette page-a-day calendar barely touched. Instead of tossing it, I kept it as a daily reminder of him.

For more than 25 years, I hoarded my old weekly calendars in our attic. One spring-cleaning moment, I tossed the bulk of them into the blue recycling bin. I turned over a new leaf. I no longer save them.

However, certain years I have kept for obvious sentimental reasons: 1992 (our wedding), 1994 (Casey was born), 1996 (Jeremy was born) and 2000 (Lily was born). I'm not sure what 2016 will bring, but I certainly hope my calendar will be worth saving!

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### We Need Our Sidewalk Back

I wish we could have our SIDEWALK back! Just the half block on Monument between Albright and Swarthmore Streets: the half that was taken away for the temporary wall for the excavation work. That job was finished many months ago, but the rebuilding is still too far in the future to put up with the situation.

In the meantime, Alphabet Street residents and the many people parking around there, especially on Sundays, have to struggle to get to the farmers market and into town.

The partially blocked sidewalk on the north side of Swarthmore is bad enough, but we have learned to "weave" around the obstructions or walk in the street.

Unfortunately, the stretch along Monument between Albright and Swarthmore is a real challenge. One has to squeeze between parking meters and other posts and the wall. There is definitely not enough space if people bring their little shopping carts, strollers, walkers, wheelchairs.

Walking in the street is dangerous and the opposite sidewalk is in bad shape and requires crossing Monument Street in the middle of the block.

The sidewalk belongs to residents. Since this is a fairly short block, one would think that moving the temporary wall should be a minor expense in relation to the cost of the whole project. Mr. Caruso would make a lot of friends if he would fix this problem.

When I mentioned my concern to the young man at

the Caruso table at the farmers market, he assured me there would be wider sidewalks. The future wider sidewalks, however, do not interest me. I would like the current ones to be intact.

Sigrid Hofer

(Palisades resident and a walker on Swarthmore for 55 years)

### Toy Drive Unites Residents/Students

Thirteen years ago, Palisades Cares started an annual holiday toy drive in the Palisades with drop-off locations around town. We donate the toys to organizations that help homeless and low-income families.

This year, we again had a toy drive with drop offs at Benton's, CVS, Berkshire Hathaway, Regal Cleaners and the YMCA. We also received generous donations from the Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce holiday event. This year the toys went to One Voice and School on Wheels. Here's where the story gets even better . . .

Students from the Palisades High School on Wheels club, started by Ashley Miller, picked up many of the toys and took them to Vittorio's on Markez. Vanessa Pelligrini of Vittorio's and her friends wrapped the toys.

On December 22, Mercedes and Vanessa Pelligrini hosted their annual holiday party for 60 children from homeless shelters that are tutored by School on Wheels. Ashley, Sophie and Amy Miller and some Pali High students served as elves and Vanessa's friend John was Santa. The kids loved the garlic balls, unlimited drinks and pizza and were really excited to get the presents with their names on them. (Thanks also to Gordon from Knoll's Pharmacy for the candy canes and batteries).

One person doing something to help others is good

but it's so much better when multiple people help—or even a Village! Thanks to everyone who donated toys or money, who let their business be a drop-off location, who picked up toys, wrapped toys or hosted a party. There are lots of generous people in the Palisades who made the holiday better for kids that they didn't know.

Marie Steckmest  
Palisades Cares

### Addressing 405/Sunset Traffic

(The following letter was sent to Brentwood residents and the Palisades News.)

As we all know, traffic congestion on Sunset Boulevard in Brentwood is maddening and infuriating. During rush hour, motorists can spend nearly an hour driving a single mile near the I-405.

The problem has been getting incrementally worse for decades—but I refuse to believe we can't make it better. That's why I am launching a Sunset Traffic Initiative and taking three big steps to address the problem.

1. Formation of Sunset Transportation Collaborative.

There are many causes of traffic on Sunset Boulevard. One big cause is the number of people going to and leaving from schools, houses of worship, hotels and museums and cultural centers.

To truly make an impact on traffic, these institutions need to work together, share best practices, pool resources and develop goals for actually reducing the number of Sunset Boulevard trips. That is why I am convening a Sunset Transportation Collaborative, and inviting all the Sunset-area institutions to participate. We will hold

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Letters

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the first meeting in early 2016.  
2. Getting expert analysis and advice.  
In order to solve this problem, I have asked renowned transportation expert Allyn Rifkin in collaboration with former City of Santa Monica Traffic Engineer Sam Morrissey (now with the transportation systems firm Iteris), to prepare a strategic analysis of the Sunset corridor design and signal timing.  
3. Community Charrette.  
Once the expert analysis is complete, we will share it with the public at a Sunset Traffic Solutions Charrette, to be held February 6. This will be your opportunity to evaluate proposed solutions, and suggest your own.  
Sunset Boulevard is not going to miraculously return to the traffic-free street that it might have been a half century or more ago. But it can get better—if we work together.  
Councilman Mike Bonin

Unfair Will Rogers Story

Editor Sue Pascoe’s front-page story [December 16] about the bidding process under way for Will Rogers Park’s new [equestrian] concessionaire begins by stating “California State Parks has not been fair in its bidding process, according to two equestrian companies: Westside Riding School and Ride On.” In the next paragraph, she states the reason for the outrage is that Westside and Ride On contend that a third company, Jigsaw Farms, which won the contract, “was not well vetted and lacks requisite experience.”  
Upon reading this, I nearly choked on my morning coffee and felt compelled to respond to this unbalanced, inaccurate piece of journalism. Let me first provide a personal reference defending the character and profes-

sionalism of Charmain Jago Levinson, owner of Jigsaw Farms, which operates in Sullivan Canyon.  
“Cha Cha,” as families associated with Jigsaw Farms call her, has a long history of providing professional, safe, reliable and fun equestrian instruction to myriad riders in the Los Angeles community. Two of my daughters, now ages 18 and 15, began equestrian instruction with Cha Cha at 5 years of age. My family never once doubted the quality of her expertise and dedication toward helping my children advance their equestrian skills. Most important, Cha Cha and the rest of the staff at Jigsaw Farms have always put safety first in a sport that has obvious risks. I have observed the same level of care with every rider who has ever taken a lesson at the facility.  
The article implies that Jigsaw Farms is an inexperienced company, established in 2015 with a mere 36 “likes” on its Facebook page. I do not know the details of Jigsaw Farms’ Small Business Certification, but my daughters have been riding under the name of Jigsaw Farms for several years now. My eldest competed in the Interscholastic Equestrian League (IEL) for the Harvard-Westlake School for six years with Jigsaw Farms as her legitimate training facility, as have many other young riders from other high schools across Los Angeles. Does the status of a Facebook page or a “shared address” that Cha Cha uses for the business dictate the quality of the company’s success? Perhaps Sue Pascoe could have done more research to uncover how Jigsaw’s riders have progressed in their sport.  
My daughter won awards for her school by earning top points for her IEL competitions. She is not alone. Jigsaw Farms has produced some of the most accomplished athletes around. My daughter has since graduated and currently rides for the equestrian team at Washington University in St. Louis. Other riders who grew up with her at Jigsaw Farms have gone on to continue their equestrian careers at top universities. Two currently compete at Stanford University, which has one of the

most competitive teams in the country. Jigsaw Farms has always presented itself as a community of equestrians that demonstrate maturity beyond their years, all due to the leadership provided by Ms. Jago Levinson.  
I am also troubled by the implications in Ms. Pascoe’s article that because Jigsaw Farms was provided a \$300,000 loan commitment letter from Caruso Affiliated Holding, LLC that there are questionable motives behind Ms. Jago Levinson’s bid to run the equestrian program at Will Rogers. Perhaps, instead, Caruso’s company sees and understands what an excellent leader Cha Cha is—not only with her instructional skills, but also her ability to properly oversee the business model of an equestrian center. Did Ms. Pascoe reach out to Ms. Jago Levinson to learn about her extensive history in Sullivan Canyon—long before the facility was officially named Jigsaw Farms?  
Does Ms. Pascoe remember the tremendous work that Ms. Jago Levinson and her colleagues put in to save Sullivan Canyon from being demolished and parceled out for a housing development over a decade ago? Instead, Ms. Pascoe ends her article with the audacious implication that Jigsaw Farms was awarded the Will Rogers contract because its proposal was “slicker, replete with photographs, logos and fancy headers, presented in a ‘magazine’ format with columns and interesting typeface.” Since when does professionalism in presentation constitute inadequacy in leadership and performance?  
If *Palisades News* “need[s] a professional and trustworthy news source to keep us informed about important events and community developments,” as is stated in its mission statement, then perhaps its journalists should strive to obtain balanced information about ALL parties involved in its stories. Disgruntled Westside Riding School and Ride On certainly voiced their grievances. Where did Jigsaw Farms have the opportunity to defend its excellent equestrian program?  
Susan McAdams

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# Picnic Tables

(Continued from Page 1)

are numbered by Recreation and Parks, but the numbering did not match the Bureau of Engineering exhibit; and 4.) there are currently 53 picnic tables in six locations and park amenities included barbecue pits, picnic tables, a playground area and public restrooms.

On July 2007, members of the LVNOC voted on replacing picnic tables at the three areas closest to Pacific Coast Highway and repairing and replacing the pergolas at two of those areas.

Was all of the allotted \$185,000 used for only six picnic tables and one pergola? If not, what happened to the rest of the money? The *Palisades News* contacted Recreation and Parks for an explanation.

Principal Rec Supervisor II Michael Harrison responded on December 28, "I forwarded your question to Ramon Barajas, superintendent of Construction and Maintenance, and Cathie Santo Domingo, head of Planning and Development. I will send you an email when I get more information."

Cathie Santo Domingo, who was managing the project for the BOE in 2007, was quoted ("Small Budget, High Costs Limit Park Plans," July 2007) saying the project was "surprisingly one of the simplest that the Bureau has. The construction, which would be done by workers at the General Services Department, could be completed



Only six picnic tables have replaced the 53 that were removed in Temescal Canyon.

by December."

(Editor's note: Proposition K was a ballot initiative passed by voters of the City of Los Angeles in November 1996 that created a Citywide assessment district to generate \$25

million each year for the acquisition, improvement, construction and maintenance of City parks, recreation facilities and other projects through an annual real property tax assessment on City residents over a 30-year period.)

## Free Movie to Screen at Library

The Palisades Branch Library will host its monthly movie at 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 9, in the community room, 861 Alma Real. The movie is free to residents. It is rated R and has a running time of 101 minutes.

Sadistic young thugs senselessly attack John Wick (Keanu Reeves). They have no

idea they have attacked a brilliantly lethal ex-assassin, who then embarks on a merciless rampage, hunting down his adversaries with skill and ruthlessness that made him an underworld legend.

Call the library (310) 459-2754 for the movie title.

# Addiction

(Continued from Page 3)

operates 9 to 11 a.m. Monday through Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon and includes grief work, Steps study, meditation and a support community.

Almost from the moment the men came up with the model, funding fell into place through the Leonard Lipman Charitable Fund and the Alan B. Slifka Foundation, which will support the program for three years.

"The irony for me is that Slifka is one of the partners of the Wendy Walk," Landes said, noting the Walk was established by his three children, Ali, Matt, and Jacie, to support his late wife with her battle against liposarcoma (a rare cancer of the connective tissues).

The two men emphasize that the disease of addiction is also a disease of ego and pride and that people are too embarrassed to ask for help: but that it is an equal-opportunity destroyer.

Both are satisfied with their new path. "It's about an obligation to give back," Landes said.

Besser added he thinks of Winston Churchill's statement: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

To attend the Gala and/or contribute to Beit T'Shuvah, please visit: [beittshuvah.org/gala/](http://beittshuvah.org/gala/). For information on the Outpatient Program, visit [iopbts.org/](http://iopbts.org/) or call (310) 280-3693.

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# Temescal Canyon Sees Increasing Tents

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

After the homeless-related brush fire in the parkland below Via de las Olas in early November, signs were posted that warn "Restricted Entry, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, Trespassing and Loitering Forbidden by Law, LAMC 57.4908.81. Fines up to \$1,000 + Penalty Assessments."

Six people were arrested by December 17, but this enforcement has caused increased transient camping along Temescal Canyon Road in the 33-acre parkland on either side of the road between Pacific Coast Highway and Bowdoin. On December 26, four tents were easily seen in the park.

Since the tents are now in closer proximity to housing along the rim of the canyon, residents are asking two questions: 1.) can those tents be moved and 2.) fearing another fire, why hasn't the City done brush clearance on its own property?

Susan Oakley, who lives on the canyon rim, and whose home is directly above where two fires took place (in 1985 and again in 2006), showed the *News* how brush

clearance had been done on some of the hill, but not on the bottom third.

The *News* contacted Fire Department officials about brush clearance and LAFD Assistant Chief Patrick Butler responded on December 28: "The Fire Code requires minimum 200 ft. clearance from structures. Once that is accomplished there is no specific requirement to perform the clearance any further."

Since fire travels faster up hills, Butler was asked if a hillside requires more clearance. "The only requirement is distance," he said. "As a general rule the fire flame length is determined by the height of the brush multiplied by 3. Example: A 30-ft. tree under the right conditions (humidity, fuel moisture, weather and terrain) could potentially have a 90-ft. flame length.

"Steepness, type of brush, topography do not play a factor into the code enforcement," Butler said. "The code has to be applied and enforced uniformly on both City-owned parcels and private lands."

He said that an inspector would be sent to the Temescal location to determine if any further action needs to be taken per the fire code.

"There is a delicate balance between maintaining proper defensible space around homes and preserving the natural foliage and ground cover," he said. "One is designed to protect the homes and one ensures that



After the Via de las Olas transient fire, there has been increased transient camping along Temescal Canyon Road.

the natural habitat and soils erosion is protected. This is especially important with the anticipated El Nino."

Park Rangers Captain Albert Torres re-

sponded about the new campsites on December 29: "Okay. I'll scout that area and start the process for removal. We cite and arrest if necessary."

## JUMBLE SOLUTION

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By Sam Potter

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Patient Elizabeth C. from Santa Monica says, "My back pain was unbearable but the worst thing was the searing burning pain I felt in my buttock and leg.

I couldn't work or do anything useful and the drugs my GP prescribed hardly did anything.

My husband insisted I respond to one of these ads, I thought it would be a total waste of time, but I'm so glad he kept on at me.

Thank god I called your number, I'm 95% better in just a couple of weeks."

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**Sciatica Relief Expert Luke S. Cohen, D.C., says, "In 16 years of practice, I've never seen a treatment as effective as Non-Surgical Re-Constructive Spinal Care for patients with sciatica or lower back pain."**



# Kelly to Speak at 'Food for Thought'

Palisades Presbyterian Church will continue its "Food for Thought" speaker series on Thursday, January 21 at 11:30 a.m. in Janes Hall, off El Medio at Sunset.

Dr. Henry Ansgar (Andy) Kelly will speak on "How Did Satan Change from God's Attorney General to God's Chief Enemy?"

Kelly, the former Director of UCLA's Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, is a Distinguished Research Professor of English at UCLA. He has been on the faculty since 1967.

Kelly completed his doctoral studies in

1965 at Harvard, where he was a Junior Fellow in the Society of Fellows. A former Jesuit seminarian and cleric in minor orders (including exorcist), his research interests include medieval and Renaissance literature and history, Biblical studies, and ecclesiastical history and theology.

He has written on such subjects as the prosecutions of Joan of Arc and Galileo, including a recent article, "Judicial Torture in Canon Law and Church Tribunals: From Gratian to Galileo."

Among Kelly's many books are *The Matrimonial Trials of Henry VIII* and *Thomas*

*More's Trial by Jury*. Three of his books are on the figure of the Devil as he appears in the Bible and Christian tradition, including *Satan: A Biography* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Kelly and his wife, Marea, have lived in Pacific Palisades since 1970, and have two grown children, Sarah (a filmmaker) and Dominic (a composer and musician).

Atria Senior Living will once again serve a complimentary lunch (donations welcome). The event is free, but please RSVP to (310) 454-0366 to ensure there will be enough food.



At right, Dr. Henry Ansgar (Andy) Kelly with his granddaughter, Josie.

## PALISADES NEWS

**NEXT ISSUE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20**

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## Park Advisory Board Seeks New Members

The Pacific Palisades Park Advisory Board (PAB) is accepting applications for new members who will serve a one-year term beginning January 20, at the year's first regularly scheduled meeting. Meetings are quarterly and operate under the Brown Act. Those interested should contact Park Director Erich Haas at (310) 454-1412 or

email erich.haas@lacity.org.

The PAB's mission is to support and guide Haas in maintenance of the Palisades Recreation Center facilities, programs and activities and to identify the recreational needs of the residents. PAB, solely an advisory board, may also develop fundraising and implementation strategies.

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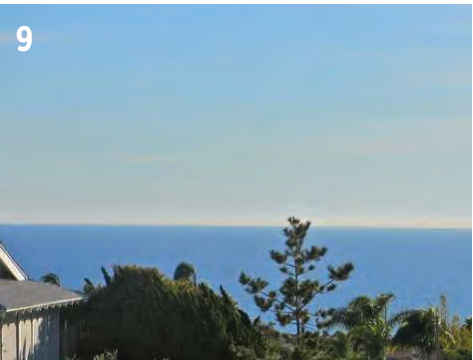
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## Dalia's Dress Shop Opens

By SUE PASCOE  
Editor

**D**alia's, a store that specializes in women's elegant evening and cocktail wear, opened at the end of November at 15415 Sunset Blvd. (between Ritrovo restaurant and the Atria).

Co-owner Dalia Gabriel offers dresses that can be worn for mother-of-the-bride or groom, bar or bat mitzvahs and even red carpet affairs. The dresses are designed by Nicolo Bakti, Jovani, John Paul and Alberto Makali, and come from New York, Europe and Israel.

"We have sizes 0 to 22," Gabriel said. "Each dress comes in different colors and with each, we can modify with a sleeve or no sleeve." Some of the dresses have revealing backs, but Gabriel has an expert tailor who can adjust the dress to fit a customer's wish.

"The dress has to be a perfect on a woman," Gabriel said. "I have something for everybody's shape."

When a woman comes into the store, Gabriel can give her suggestions as to which dress will be the best fit, and which style might be the best look for her.

After coming to the United States from Israel 22 years ago, Gabriel soon started working for her cousin, who owned four stores in Hollywood. "I convinced him to



Cutting the ribbon to celebrate Dalia's opening were Chamber members (left to right) Nicole Howard, Dr. Sean Malek, Richard Blumenberg, store owners Kevin and Dahlia Gabriel, Adam Glazer, Mike Ball, Fay Vahdani and Simon Santana.

do one-evening dress store," she said, and they began importing dresses from France, Italy and Israel, which is how she discovered her passion for glamorous fashions.

Gabriel also owns another shop in Thousand Oaks. Her enthusiasm about the gowns, some of which have elaborate beading, is infectious.

"We can do a short or long version of any

of the dresses," Gabriel said, "People get a lot of compliments."

The store also carries accessories such as one-of-a-kind clutches, belts and jewelry.

Gabriel and husband Kevin live in the Reseda area and have two children: a boy in college and a girl who attends Taft High School. Gabriel said she's excited to be in Pacific Palisades. "I love the peace here, I



Dalia's store specializes in elegant dresses.

love the people."

She describes the store as a cozy boutique, but is already looking towards prom time. "We'll have lots of extra dresses," she said, noting her goal for her customers is "We want to make each one look beautiful, sexy and unique."

The store is open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and closed on Sunday.

Visit: facebook.com/daliaspalisades or instagram: dalias\_boutique or call (424) 744-8132.

## History Behind Palisades Street Names

By MICHAEL EDLEN  
Special to the Palisades News

**I**n 1990, Randy and Betty Lou Young published a limited edition book titled *Street Names of Pacific Palisades & Other Tales*. It originated with the suggestion to create a list of local street names and their origins for the Pacific Palisades Historical Society, and took two years to research and organize. This short series of summaries of these names is based on that book.

Until 1921, most of the land in the Palisades was divided into a few large plots within two large Mexican land grants. There were only a few dirt roads used by ranchers and farmers. Most of the canyons had names reflecting Indian and Spanish origins, such as Temescal, Potrero, Las Pul-

gas, Santa Ynez and Las Lomas.

In 1922, when Founders Tract I, which was located north of Beverly Boulevard (later changed to Sunset Boulevard) began, streets were given numeric and alphabetic names. Three years later, the Pacific Palisades Association held a contest for permanent name suggestions. Dr. Oren Waite, the new Methodist Minister, proposed using names from the history of Christian Church leaders in alphabetical order for that Tract, and they were agreed to.

This basis for naming the first tract streets was also logical because Tract I was laid out with small lots and mostly narrow streets between Chautauqua and Monument, to appeal to retired clergymen, widows and Christians of modest means.

**Albright:** Named for Bishop Jacob Al-

bright (born 1759), affiliated with the Methodist Church.

**Bashford:** James Bashford was a Methodist bishop who was active in China until 1910.

**Bestor:** Dr. Arthur Bestor was the second president of the Chautauqua Institute (from 1915-44). Until 1923, Chautauqua Boulevard had curved and ran where Bestor is today.

**Carey:** William Carey (born in England, 1761) became a Baptist minister after being a shoemaker by trade.

**Chautauqua:** Named in recognition of the Chautauqua Institute, which was founded in 1874 in Upper New York as an educational program for Sunday School teachers. Pacific Palisades was actually founded as an independent Chautauqua community, and annual summer assemblies were held in Temescal Canyon.

**Drummond:** Henry Drummond was a 19th-century Scottish evangelist and scientist who worked toward reconciling science and religion.

**Embury:** Philip Embury was an Irishman who became an early American Methodist leader in the 1750s.

**Fiske:** Wilbur Fisk (with no "e" at the

end) was born in 1729 and was a Methodist minister and scholar.

**Galloway:** Bishop Charles Galloway (born 1847) led the formation of a strong Methodist Church in the southern states.

**Hartzell:** Methodist bishop Joseph Hartzell (born 1842).

**Iliff:** Thomas Iliff was a missionary in Utah during the 1850s and was in conflict with Mormon authorities about their practice of polygamy.

There is no "J" street name because all of the six names suggested were rejected.

**Kagawa:** Reverend Toyohiko Kagawa (born 1888) was revered as Japan's greatest Christian leader. He visited Pacific Palisades in 1931. Ironically, because deed restrictions at that time limited land ownership to Caucasians, he would not have been permitted to own a home even on the street named after him!

Michael Edlen has been ranked in the top one percent of all agents in the country with nearly \$2 billion in sales and more than 1,300 transactions. If you would like to discuss your home's possible value in today's market, call (310) 230-7373 or michael@michaeledlen.com

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# 2010 Housing Prediction Was Accurate

By ANTHONY MARGULEAS  
*Special to the Palisades News*

I published an article, “Time to Buy an Investment House in the Palisades?” in a local paper in March 2010. At that time, I predicted we were close to the bottom of the market and that it might be a good time to buy an investment property in Pacific Palisades.

I conservatively predicted we would have a 15 to 20 percent total appreciation over the next five years. Many may not remember, but the Palisades along with the rest of the state was experiencing a major fallout from the financial crisis.

At the end of 2009, the average price of a home in the Palisades dropped a whopping 15 percent. This was the largest decline in property values the Palisades had ever seen. At the end of 2010 property values dropped another five percent.

People were worried and no one knew when prices were going to recover. But the Palisades real estate market bottomed in 2011, and we have seen an approximately 60 percent appreciation since then. (See chart.)

How much would you have made if you bought a home in 2010?

If you had bought a home in the Palisades for \$1.5 million, and assuming you added no square footage, it would be worth

about \$2.25 million today. Assuming you put a 30 percent down payment (\$450,000) you should be close to a break even on rent. Even if you were negative \$1,000 a month after taxes, insurance, vacancy and maintenance costs, that negative times 5.5 years comes to \$66,000.

If you were to sell that house today at

\$2.25 million, the \$750,000 in profit, less about six percent in closing costs and commissions (\$135,000), less the \$66,000 in upkeep, vacancy etc., means you would have made about \$549,000.

That comes to about 120 percent return on your investment or about 22 percent over the 5.5 years. Not bad.

One factor that has helped the Palisades is Caruso’s development in the village. Many believe that once his development is complete in 2017-18 that suddenly property values will increase. However, once Caruso got the 3.17-acre parcel in escrow, we started seeing property values spike.

Everything is about location, location, location so it depends where you purchased your \$1.5 million Palisades property. For instance, the Highlands is still 10 percent below the 2008 price peak of the market, while the rest of the Palisades is about 25 percent more than the 2008 price peak.

For the next five years, do not expect to see the same appreciation we have been fortunate to have the past five years. I expect to see continued appreciation for the next year or so and then the market may stay level for a couple years.

Homes in the Palisades (over the past 20 years), experienced price depreciation from 2009 to 2011. I think if there are home price declines in the future, they will be relatively small ones.

Anthony Marguleas founded Amalfi Estates 21 years ago. He has sold close to \$1 billion in properties and was selected by The WSJ as one of the top 100 agents in the country. Call (310) 293-9280 or visit: [amalfiestates.com](http://amalfiestates.com).

Pacific Palisades Home Prices as of Dec. 26, 2015

Year	Median Price	Change	Average Price	Change	Cost per ft.	Change	# Sales	Average DOM
2005	\$1,875,000	11%	\$2,293,634	18%	\$752.02	16%	337	62
2006	\$2,102,500	12%	\$2,535,318	11%	\$801.63	7%	305	66
2007	\$2,157,210	3%	\$2,575,562	2%	\$856.96	7%	269	63
2008*	\$2,315,000	7%	\$2,847,472	11%	\$841.43	-2%	191	101
2009	\$1,950,000	-16%	\$2,427,691	-15%	\$682.65	-19%	189	118
2010	\$1,820,000	-7%	\$2,294,299	-5%	\$684.02	0%	255	109
2011	\$1,696,090	-7%	\$2,139,381	-7%	\$665.85	-3%	262	83
2012	\$1,922,500	13%	\$2,465,738	15%	\$709.14	7%	285	87
2013	\$2,240,000	17%	\$2,772,753	12%	\$818.43	15%	321	70
2014	\$2,500,000	12%	\$3,184,229	15%	\$895.78	9%	303	62
2015	\$2,835,000	13%	\$3,469,821	9%	\$1,014.08	13%	284	61

\* Market peak

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# Students Fear New SAT

By SCOTT GROZA  
Special to the Palisades News

Test prep is always a tricky, nuanced journey. Students must contend with standardized tests when they apply to their dream colleges and universities each year, choosing between the ACT or the SAT.

In an effort to align with Common Core, address the criticisms of its prior test formula and take back some market share from the ACT, the SAT has been totally redesigned this year. The new test will be given for the first time on March 5.

Ironically, in many ways, it feels much more like the ACT (which is unchanged for 2016, except for the essay). However, both the ACT and the new SAT offer distinct advantages to different types of test takers. And colleges take both without partiality.

This begs the question: ACT or new SAT?

The word on the street seems to be avoid the new SAT like the plague—play it safe and stick with the ACT. The two primary reasons given are: 1.) the ACT is better

known; and 2.) there are more resources for practice. Is this the most thoughtful approach to deciding which test to take?

Let's address both concerns.

Is the new SAT knowable? The College Board has released a 210-page blueprint document along with four practice tests. While a standardized test will evolve to some extent, there is already official information available that

gives a clear picture of what the new SAT will look like. We are not left to navigate it in the dark.

Are there enough resources? In addition to the official information, other major test-prep book publishers have already begun printing the usual thick prep books based on these releases. Of course, there are more resources for the

ACT, but that's not really the point here.

The major takeaway is, the new SAT is scaled. Students are competing against their peers, not a raw score.

So, since everyone is working with mostly the same available resources, it really doesn't matter that a test is new. The difference is

what the student does with those resources and how he or she prepares. For the right type of student, there is a real opportunity to do well with the new SAT, while others are shying away.

Bottom line: Keep your options open. Both the ACT and the new SAT should be equal, viable contenders when choosing a test for college admissions.

A knee-jerk dismissal of either test will not serve the student well; rather, it is imperative to consider both tests thoughtfully. Commit to one. And most importantly, have a great preparation plan in place—whether with a tutor, or a class, or self-prep.

The Groza Center will host an open house to discuss "ACT vs. New SAT: Which to Choose?" at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 12, 881 Alma Real #115. Space is limited. RSVP to [office@grozalearningcenter.com](mailto:office@grozalearningcenter.com).

Visit: [GrozaLearningCenter.com](http://GrozaLearningCenter.com) for a free guide, "ACT vs. New SAT: Which to Choose?"

*(Scott Groza is the Director/Co-Founder of Groza Learning Center. With a strong commitment to each student, team building, best practice, innovation, and individualized learning, Groza specializes in tutoring, test preparation, reading programs, and home-school and has also published "Roots Booster: for vocabulary expansion and rocking standardized tests.")*



## Atria Offers Free Programs

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.

Violist Joel Lish, the longtime conductor of the Palisades Symphony, will play at 3 p.m. on Thursday, January 7.

On Saturday, January 9, at 3:30 p.m. variety entertainer Joey Aaron will perform.

Bill Shuttic will teach self-defense to residents (even those using walkers and wheelchairs) on Tuesday, January 12, at 4 p.m.

## Randy Young Will Lead History Walk

The monthly Temescal Canyon Association Sunday morning hikes will resume on January 10, with local historian Randy Young leading a "walk and talk" through the history of Pacific Palisades. The public is invited.

Said hike leader Carol Leacock, "We understand that Randy's route will center on the Castellammare area."

Meet for carpooling at 9 a.m. sharp at the Temescal Gateway Park parking lot

Visit [www.temcanyon.org](http://www.temcanyon.org). Bring water and lunch, but no dogs.



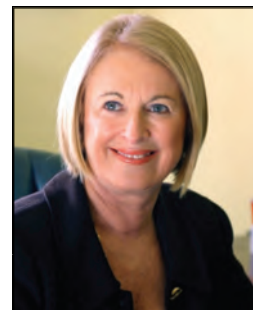
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# Halper Conquers Alcatraz Swim, Twice

By LAUREL BUSBY  
Staff Writer

The second swim from Alcatraz to San Francisco was almost easy for 85-year-old Joe Halper this fall.

Halper, now the oldest person to make this historic swim, had been swimming a mile each week for years in Santa Monica Bay. Thus, the approximately 1.5 miles he swam from Alcatraz to Aquatic Park, just below Ghirardelli Square, wasn't much further. The water also turned out to be warmer than his first effort five years ago.

"The unexpected part was the warmth of the water. It was in the high 60s," Halper said. "Last time we went, it was probably in the high 50s. It was a big difference, which made it much more pleasant."

Two of Halper's sons, Jamie, 56, and Mike, 53, accompanied their father on both swims. On the first crossing in 2010, the trio thought the elder Halper, then 80 years old, would be the oldest to complete the effort, but an 81-year-old swimmer edged him out of the title. "They said, 'You have to come back and be the oldest,' so I came back," said Halper, who turns 86 this month.

Global warming may have given a little boost to Joe Halper's effort as the low snow-pack meant that the water feeding San Francisco Bay wasn't as cold as usual. November was the chosen month for both his swims, "because it's the time when the snow melt is at its lowest normally," he noted.

Halper still wore a 4.2 mm wetsuit to keep warm. He said he saw no sea life on the swim probably because he not only had his sons, who have both previously completed Ironman competitions, but also about 100 other people who were swimming across with a fundraiser for an ophthalmology clinic in San Francisco—"Nothing else out there but people."

A few more folks had been planning to join the swim, but were scared off because a great white shark had killed a seal in their swim path the week before.

"They had about 12 mature great whites in the bay," Halper said. "It gave it a little scare flavor. Some of our people dropped out, but this is where the sharks live, and people don't realize it. We have great whites here all the time. It was something I was not going to get concerned about."

Swimming with marine life is something that Halper has been comfortable with most of his life. As a young man, he worked for 1-1/2 years on a beach in the Dutch Antilles where sharks were an accepted part of the ecosystem. "Nobody out there became concerned. It was a part of life," Halper said. "We're not normally shark prey. We're very fortunate living out here—being this close



Jamie, Joe and Mike Halper swam from Alcatraz to Aquatic Park in November. Joe 85, now holds the record for being the oldest person to make the swim. On paper, a mile and a half might not seem like much, but in San Francisco Bay, one has to factor in a strong current, waves, cold water, shipping traffic and the chilly weather.

to the ocean and having it as a recreational resource."

In the Palisades, he often saw dolphins and once even a great white shark on his regular swims, which for about a decade, he did every Wednesday morning with his friend, Bill Inglis, while another friend, Bill Klein, a retired UCLA law professor emeritus, would boogie board nearby.

Inglis, the former deputy director of the Peace Corps, helped Halper with navigation while swimming. "He would bring me back.



Bill Klein, Joe Halper and the late Bill Inglis met at Will Rogers Beach every Wednesday.

I would be headed to Catalina," Halper said. "He was much better at it than I was. The way I breathe, I don't have much forward vision."

However, last year, Inglis became ill, and the group became a breakfast club until Inglis' death in October.

Swimming and recreation have been lifelong endeavors for Halper. As a young man growing up in the South Bronx, he was a lifeguard at Coney Island for several years. In 1952, Halper earned a bachelor's degree at SUNY Cortland in recreation education, and the following year he garnered a master's degree at Penn State in recreation and park administration.

He worked in New York in recreation for years before moving to Pacific Palisades in 1975 to be the chief deputy and acting director of parks and recreation for Los Angeles County. In 1981, he became the director of recreation for the city of Long Beach. Then in 1986, he and his wife, Arline, moved to Virginia where Halper took a job as director of parks and recreation of Arlington County. Two years later, he worked as a special assistant to the National Parks Service Director in Washington, D.C.

In 1992, Halper retired, and the couple moved back to the Palisades. Arline directed UCLA's learning disabilities program, while Halper remained active in varied ways. He co-authored a textbook, *Strategic Recreation Management*, which was published in 2012.



Joe Halper grew up in the South Bronx and started his recreation career lifeguarding at Coney Island.

For six years, he was president of the Pacific Palisades Democratic Club and is now the club's president emeritus. He is also currently a delegate to both the L.A. County and state Democratic Party Central Committees. In addition, Halper is a member of the Post 283 American Legion and Post 118 of the Jewish War Veterans.

His oldest son, Jamie, also lives in the Palisades, while son Mike lives in San Francisco and the youngest, Keith, 50, makes his home in New Jersey. Each of his sons has four children, and Halper and Arline enjoy spending time with all of their twelve grandchildren. "That's our occupation now—visiting them," Halper said.



# With a Little Help From Friends

A youth basketball team from Garvey Intermediate Middle School in Rosemead made a community service trip to Will Rogers Beach on December 19.

As they filled 13 bags with trash, the students were concerned about the large number of cigarette butts they found on the beach.

The 20 students are members of a youth basketball club sponsored by the Woodcraft Rangers, an after-school program.

According to Woodcraft Rangers spokesperson David Perez, "They decided they wanted to give back to a beach community and after researching various beach communities and beaches they voted on Will Rogers."

Perez said the kids also wanted to travel to a site they had never been before.

Chris Johnson, the Woodcraft Rangers CEO, said "Field trips are important for our youth. It can spark a new interest for them."

Woodcraft Rangers, a free program, provides enrichment programs after school and during the summer. Designed by and for youth, NVISION programs are tailored to



Students From Garvey Middle School came to Will Rogers Beach to pick up trash. They included (left to right) Hai Vi Diep, Timothy Szeto, Darian Sun, Angel Villegas, Jai Li, Kaitlin Tran, Bryan Ly, Chris Zendejas, Justin Ishii, Chloe Tong, Brian Lam, Enzo Kim, Jade Lam, Bryan La, Priscilla Tang, Erik Lim, Andy Fong, Brian Pham, Leyna Tran, Mathieu Gol, Olivia Thai and Kiran Chan.

the community and offer a variety of clubs at more than 65 schools throughout the Los Angeles area.

Woodcraft's goal is to extend schools' capacities to provide safe and supportive environments beyond the school day and to help youth improve social, behavioral and learning skills that contribute to school achievement.

Kids are encouraged to help their community and to branch out to other communities.

Visit: [woodcraftangers.org](http://woodcraftangers.org) or call (213) 249-9293.

# Rustic Canyon Offers Variety of Classes

There are a dozens of classes to choose from at the Rustic Canyon Recreation Center for the January 11 through March 18 winter session. Choose from tennis, ceramics, tai-chi, jewelry making, piano lessons and mommy and me classes.

Long-time Riveria resident Debbie Alexander said her tennis class at 11 a.m. on Wednesday with teacher Park Liu is looking for more students.

The park is located at 601 Latimer Rd. Registration is currently open to walk-ins and on-line at: [rusticcanyon.rc@lacity.org](mailto:rusticcanyon.rc@lacity.org). Class fees range from \$20 to \$180 for the 12-week session. Contact: (310) 454-5734.

## PPBA Tryouts This Weekend

Pacific Palisades Baseball Association evaluation days will take place on Saturday, January 9, and Sunday, January 10 (specific times for all ages can be found at [ppba.net](http://ppba.net)). Baseball practices start in early February, first practice games are scheduled for February 20, and the annual opening day Pancake Breakfast is set for March 12. The season's closing ceremonies and all-star games are Saturday, June 4.



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# Honey Girl Set in Pacific Palisades

By LAUREL BUSBY  
Staff Writer

Pacific Palisades in the early '70s, Hawaiian culture, and the pain and joys of coming of age all mix together in Lisa Freeman's first young adult novel, *Honey Girl*.

Freeman, who grew up in Pacific Palisades, centers her book on the travails of "Nani" Nuuhiwa, a Hawaiian girl who in 1972 moves a few blocks away from Will Rogers State Beach after her father's sudden death.

So much of the book takes place on the beach that a map of PCH, Entrada Drive and local businesses is placed alongside the table of contents. Freeman, who graduated from PaliHi in 1975, would have been a classmate of her main character if she had really existed, and the book swims in the details of that time period.

The book includes "all of the mythology—surfing, what was going on in the '70s, Vietnam, the draft bill, Watergate, the birth and magic of feminism as it began, a very large gay population and all the things that come with homophobia," Freeman said.

The 15-year-old Nani is trying to find

her way in a strange land without her father and with an estranged mother, while also reaching forward to explore her budding sexuality in a time when being gay was taboo. Nani finds herself a boyfriend and yet an interest in girls is a strong part of who she is. She desperately wants to find her place among the coolest girls on the beach, and plans her entrée with all the cunning of a military offensive.

For Freeman, the book's setting and world is illuminated in some ways by her past, although the characters and story are fictional. "The book is totally fiction," she noted. "It is historical in that everything I wrote about has a realistic context."

The novel brings back details of that era, from Tab cola to Henshey's department store. Hawaiian words such as haole, which means non-Hawaiians like Nani's white mother, are also sprinkled throughout. Freeman spent chunks of her childhood in Hawaii, where her dad sometimes worked.

"I identified deeply with Hawaiian culture," Freeman said. "I have tremendous respect for our 50th state. I really consider it my second home."

Like her main character, Freeman also



Author Lisa Freeman grew up in Pacific Palisades.

Photo: Kate Arnesen

had adventures as a girl, leaving the Palisades at 17 to work as an actress in Hollywood and New York, in movies like *Back to the Future* and *Mr. Mom*. However, writing was also an interest, and in her late 30s as a mom with two small children, she went back to school and earned a B.A. in creative writing and a master's degree in fiction from Antioch University.

*Honey Girl*, published by Sky Pony Press, has sold well, Freeman said, and the publisher has ordered a sequel, which Freeman,

who lives in Santa Monica, is currently writing for publication in spring 2017. Interest in the book has also brought her various speaking engagements, including a meeting with PaliHi's GLOW (Gay, Lesbian or Whatever) group.

"The kids at GLOW are my inspiration," Freeman said. "I like kids who are exploring their reality from many different perspectives and have the courage to be who they are, whether that's gay or straight. I support them."



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# Traffic Accident Leads to Arrests

Palisades Patrol received a call about a car crash on Westridge road (off Mandeville Canyon) early Christmas morning.

Patrol Officer Jason Madsen reported "at about 5:47 a.m. we arrived on scene and found a silver four-door Hyundai sedan located on a private resident's front yard."

There were no occupants in the car. "Upon further search, we noticed in plain view numerous backpack-type bags, golf club bag, tennis racket and other packages were located on the rear seat," Madsen reported. Sergeant Fine and Officer McDonald also assisted in the incident.

The Westridge resident told the officers that two people had fled the car. The Palisades Patrol officers got back in their car to

try and locate the accident victims.

"On Westridge Road we came upon two males matching the description," Madsen said. "They seemed exhausted and we asked them to have a seat for their safety."

A Patrol officer called LAPD. The two men, who gave their names as Randall Smith and Aschikan Amirsokyani, said they had been notified by a friend that he had been involved in an accident and that they were supposed to come pick up the vehicle. The story did not make sense to the Patrol officers.

The police arrived at 6:53 a.m. and the men were arrested.

Brentwood Senior Lead Officer Maria Gray in a later officer crime briefing said, "There are a couple of noteworthy arrests

worth mentioning. The folks of Westridge and Mandeville Canyon received a nice holiday present early on Christmas morning in the form of two arrests of burglary suspects—due to the quick actions of Westridge residents, who called the police and Palisades Patrol, who responded and checked the area for what was described as two males in dark hoodies involved in the crash. Palisades Patrol observed the two suspects. It appeared they were leaving the scene. Palisades Patrol detained them and called for the police.

"When LAPD officers arrived, they conducted an investigation and discovered the suspects had tools consistent with the commission of burglaries and there was considerable property in their crashed rental vehicle that was possibly stolen. Both suspects have extensive criminal histories.

"This was a great cooperative effort by the community, Palisades Patrol and the LAPD

police/detectives, all working together toward the substantial arrest of two suspects with long criminal histories. Great job."

Gray also noted the arrest of a man who was allegedly stealing mail/packages from doors and lobbies in the Brentwood area. The man was on federal probation for mail theft and had a history of committing identity theft and fraud.

"In his possession were 'master type' keys that were able to access multi-unit complexes and their postal boxes," Gray said, noting that mail theft is a Federal crime, but if a person sees a mail theft in progress to call 911.

## Rain Accumulation In Pacific Palisades

With rain predicted last Sunday and through this week, it might mean El Niño has finally arrived in Southern California.

Showers on December 22 brought .3 of an inch of rain to Pacific Palisades as measured in the official Los Angeles County rain gauge, located at Carol Leacock's home on Bienveneda Avenue.

Deputy assistant rainmeister Ted Mackie reports the current year to date as of January 1 was 2.73 inches. The normal year-to-date is 3.48 inches.

The most rain recorded in Pacific Palisades (in the years from 1942 to 2015) was 42.60 inches in 1997-1998. The least recorded rainfall was 4.11 inches in 2006-07.

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# Artist Alden Marin Remains Prolific

Story and photos by LAURIE ROSENTHAL  
Staff Writer

Artist Alden Marin finds inspiration everywhere, from the squirrels that dine al fresco on his porch to the best-known names in 20th-century art.

The Connecticut native, who grew up in Bel-Air and Malibu, has called Pacific Palisades home for more than 20 years.

A talkative and observant fellow, whose brain is constantly taking in, processing or spewing out information, Marin is honest, straightforward and matter-of-fact about his life and family.

He is immersed in local culture and history. His grandfather, Ned Marin, was one of the first people to buy property in Malibu Colony from May Rindge in the 1920s. Marin's dad, John, grew up in the 1930s in the beachside home that his grandfather built there. His mother, Jana Week, grew up in Bell, on a farm.

"We moved back [to the Colony] in the 1960s when my parents' home burned down in the Bel-Air fire, and in '71 we moved to Point Dume, to a home my mom built right on the edge of a cliff."

A poet and musician in addition to being a fine artist, Marin has an eclectic style inspired by some of the greatest artists last century: Picasso, Kandinsky, Pollock, Hockney, Basquiat and, most notably, Paul Klee.

"A lot of those artists addressed the fragmentedness of modern existence. That's what a good artist should show. The Zeitgeist of the time," Marin said.

"I try to paint how I feel rather than how it looks, because anybody can paint something how it looks, but if you can paint it how it feels, you're going to get your own unique emotion in," said Marin, when explaining his style.



Alden Marin often sketches friends' faces on paper cups.

"The best thing you can hope for is to be yourself."

He can create a painting in 20 to 30 minutes, while a song, which Marin composes on his guitar, may take weeks. His desk overflows with his tools, mainly the Decocolor and Sharpie markers he uses to create his drawings.

Anything can become his canvas; he chooses to draw on whatever is handy, including coffee cups, placemats, tablecloths, rocks and paper. He draws every day, and has binders full of thousands of sketches.

"I just try to keep everything and make use of it. I pick up litter, cans, rocks at the beach."

Picking a favorite subject to paint is impossible for Marin. He likes faces, profiles and part-human, part-animal combinations.

As a poet, he has published more than two dozen poetry chapbooks, with titles ranging from "Jaywalking with the Baby" to "Paddling to Misto." Marin's late mother was a poet, and he began writing poetry as a teenager in Malibu.

The 1978 Stanford graduate has a day job: selling wine. He entered the business in 1980 and, in 1996, he began Marin Marketing, which sells wine throughout Southern California.

"Even though I'm sober, I sell wine," Marin said. He has been sober since 1997, when he realized his partying ways were destroying him. Today, he is "addicted" to creating art.

He studied wine during his junior year abroad in Europe, and is "almost obsessively maniacally knowledgeable about wine," he said. "I'm good at it. People turn to me for good wine. I sell to Whole Foods, Bristol Farms and eight to ten other accounts.

"The best wines show the winemaker's personality. And, the best art shows the person's actual inner soul and personality in theory, at least in my opinion."

Recently, his original artwork adorned boxes and bottles of the Wine of the Month Club's holiday selection. Riven Rock wines, available locally at Whole Foods, also feature one of Marin's original images on the labels.

In the Palisades, his art permanently adorns the walls of Ogden's Cleaners. Daniel Rolnik Gallery in Santa Monica and Blooming Art Gallery in Little Tokyo handle his work.

These days, Marin derives great pleasure from the squirrels that visit his apartment balcony (some of whom he pets and feeds), as well as his coffee group that has met since 2009 at Coffee Bean in the Village. There are 49 active members, and about a dozen people show up on any given day. Marin often sketches them on Coffee Bean cups, and frequently gives them to his subjects.

Marin thrives on his peaceful, quiet existence. He's up by 5 a.m. most days, painting, and remains an avid surfer (something he began doing as a kid in Malibu),



Artist Alden Marin in his art-filled home.

Photo: Bart Bartholomew

as well as a frequent hiker in the local mountains. He bemoans a lack of quiet in the world—and in his head—but finds peace and solitude when surfing.

He compares surfing to art, and says that the sport inspires him. "Surfing is very influential because of the movement and conformity of nature's lines.

(Continued on Page 21)



Marin's original artwork adorned boxes and bottles of the Wine of the Month Club's holiday selection. Riven Rock wines also feature Marin's images.





Some samples from Alden Marin's prolific body of work.

## Alden Marin

(Continued from Page 20)

"Art imitates nature," he continues. "That's why I have leaves sitting around. Line is everything in art. Line defines everything in life. It conveys to people what your feelings are."

Marin's favorite colors are green and blue. "Green is a good color: jade, mountains, waves and mountain water holes I like to swim in. It's a spiritual color. Part of my surfboard is green. But I like all colors. I celebrate color."

He appreciates his good fortune in life, yet feels a sense of urgency about remaining engaged in the world. He paints, writes and/or works on new songs every day. "If not, I start to contemplate meaninglessness and worthlessness. I'm constantly troubled by something."

"The world is out of our control," he says, but in the end, "You've got to hope for the best."

## Coward's *Hay Fever* Opens Jan. 15

Theatre Palisades will present the Noël Coward comedy *Hay Fever* from Friday, January 15 through Sunday, February 21. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and on Sunday at 2 p.m. at Pierson Playhouse, 941 Temescal Canyon Rd.

The play was written in 1924 and can best be described as a cross between high farce and a comedy of manners. The play is set in an English country house in 1924, where the four members of the Bliss family each invite a guest to spend the weekend. The hosts are so egocentric their guests soon find themselves lost in the midst of craziness.

Directed by Michael Worden and produced by Martha Hunter and Sherman Wayne, the cast features Philip Bartolf, Anna Carlise, Mark Davidson, Tyler Frost, Martha Hunter, Cassandra Orrantia, Yvonne Robertson, Holly Sidell and Przemek Jaremkowski.

This play is cleverly constructed, wittily written, slightly cynical and undeniably entertaining. The work contains all the elements that helped establish Coward's



Tyler Frost, Yvonne Robertson, Philip Bartolf and Cassandra Orrantia portray the Bliss family in Theatre Palisades' production of *Hay Fever*. Photo: Shari Barrett

reputation as an award-winning playwright.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$18 for seniors and students. Call (310) 454-1970 or visit [theatrepalisades.org](http://theatrepalisades.org). Free onsite parking is available at the theatre.

## Allied Artists Host Plein-Air Paint-Out

A plein-air paint-out will be held from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, January 9, at Chesebro Canyon, 5792 Chesebro Rd. in Agoura. A painting demonstration begins at 9 a.m.

A paint-out is a great way to meet other artists and discover new sites for inspiration. All levels of artists are welcome. Bring your own art supplies, water, lunch and walking shoes. Rain cancels the paint-out.

Take the Ventura Freeway (101) to Chesebro Road exit. Turn north on Palo Comado Canyon Road, then right on Chesebro. Go north one mile to park entrance. Turn right and follow road to parking lot. There are facilities.

Contact Bruce Trentham at (818) 397-1576 or [bmtrentham@charter.net](mailto:bmtrentham@charter.net) or Russ Hunziker, (310) 500-6584 or visit [allied-artists.com](http://allied-artists.com).

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V's was just as I had remembered it: busy with diners of all ages—from families with children, to singles celebrating birthdays, to locals who obviously enjoy not only the food but also the atmosphere. Owner Vassil Pertchinkov greets all diners warmly, making all customers feel special.

Pass by the small bar when you enter and check out the wall of wine before you are seated in a comfy booth, or at a table, from both of which you can see the rear outdoor patio window enchantingly lovely with trees and lights. Surveying the menu takes a few minutes, so order a cocktail or wine to let you relax while you decide what suits your mood.

The "For the Table" menu features an octet of dishes to share with table mates, such as sauteed shishito peppers (\$8), or the flatbread with fig and pork belly, goat cheese and caramelized onion with shaved parmesan. This warm \$14 dish was so scrumptious it was hard to say, "Please give the rest to us for another day so that we can eat our dinner." The sautéed peppers with sea salt and an herb aioli were totally addictive, especially to my dinner companion, who consumed every single one.

Starters began with the soup of the day, zesty tortilla soup, which was excellent (\$10). The roasted beets and feta cheese salad with nuts was filled with flavor and



good to the last bite (\$16). Other salads included a classic Caesar, kale and red onion, baby lettuce, and even a wild baby arugula. There was also an ahi tuna tartare, slow-braised pork belly, and sautéed P.E.I. mussels, among others.

If pizza is what you yearn for, then there are a quintet to select from including my favorite, the margherita (\$17), or my friend's favorite, the organic spinach (\$18).

Entrees vary from the special blackened salmon cavatelli (short narrow ripple-edged pasta shells) with a terrific whole-grain mustard sauce and artichokes and asparagus (\$26), to the skirt steak with marvelous flavorful chimichurri mashed potatoes (\$34).

Other entrees vary from chicken sausage rigatoni (\$24) and spaghetti bolognese (\$24) to pan-seared diver scallops (\$34) and saffron seafood risotto (\$26). Executive Chef Shawn Davis has a magical way of flavoring each dish to make it quite spectacular. It is no wonder that V's Restaurant entices so many locals to dine.

Of course, dessert is inevitable when the food is so very tasty. Who could resist an apple berry crumble, or vanilla bean crème brulee with freshly baked cookies? Spiced apple pie with vanilla gelato and a spiced caramel

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(Answers on Page 10)

drizzle was also tempting, but my friend and I settled on our waiter's recommendation: the Dutch chocolate peanut butter pie with mascarpone whipped cream and candied walnuts. It was outstanding. Thankfully, my friend enjoyed it to the last bite, allowing me to just taste and enjoy. Desserts are \$10.

Located eight miles north of Temescal Canyon Road, V's is open for lunch weekdays from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. At night the restaurant stays open during the week until 9:30, and on weekends until 10 or 10:30 p.m. On Saturdays and Sundays brunch is available. For exceptionally tasty food at moderate prices, V's is a place for any meal—just a simple lunch or a party occasion.

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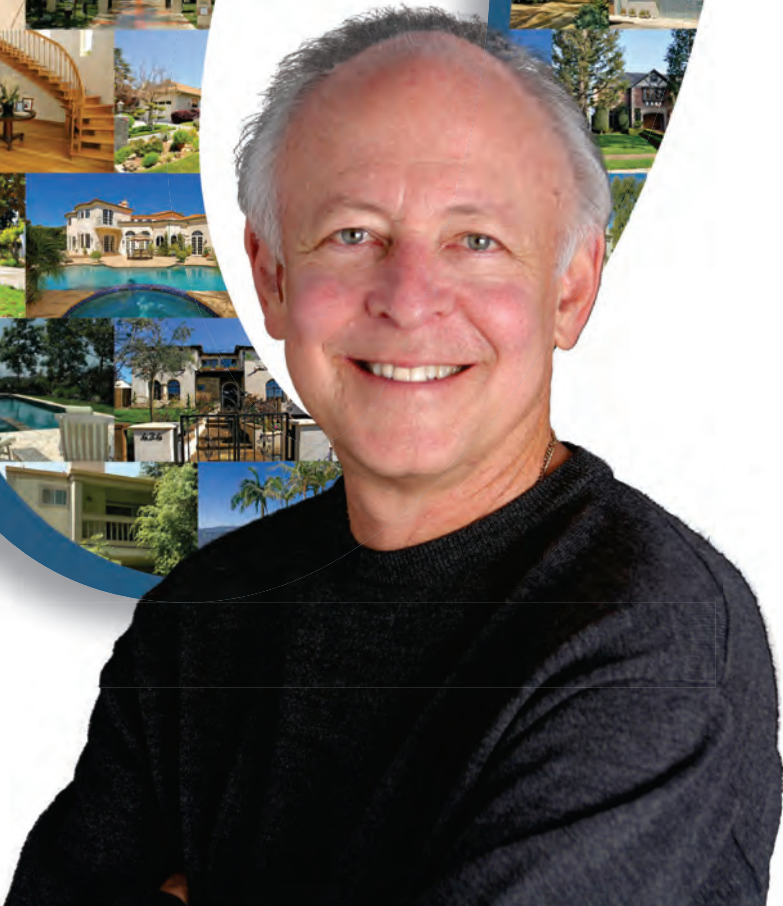
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