

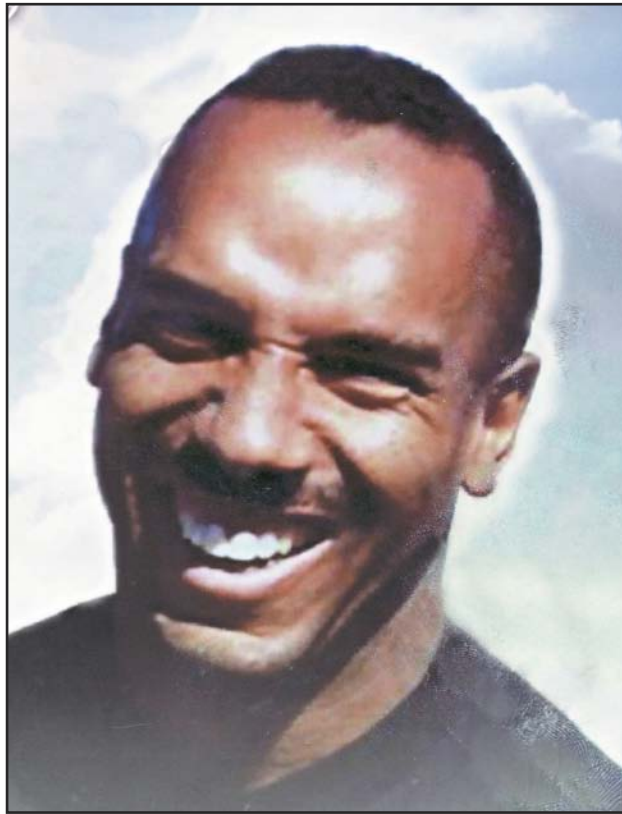
He Gave Us His Best...He Gave Us His Life

LAPD Officer Randal D. Simmons End of Watch: February 7, 2008

By Nina Royal

Officer Randal D. (Randy) Simmons, a senior LAPD SWAT Team member was killed in the line of duty when his team rolled out to the small community of Winnetka in the San Fernando Valley on Thursday, February 7, to mitigate a possible hostage situation. His killer had called the police saying that he had already killed three of his family members and to come and get him. The Team was lead to believe that people were still alive in the house. Upon entering the home, the killer, while hiding behind a mattress, gunned down Simmons and severely wounded his partner. Officers of the SWAT team, which originated in, and is on call for the entire city of Los Angeles, were in a state of shock because Simmons was the first of its officers to be killed in the line of duty in its 40 year existence.

Randy, as he was affectionately called by his family, friends and co-workers, was not only an officer doing his duty "to protect and serve" the citizens of Los Angeles, he was also a Minister and a mentor to hundreds of children who were known as "the Glory Kids" through a church he founded in Carson. He was responsible for turning many "at risk" children's lives around. They knew he was a police officer, but they knew and loved him as simply "Randy." He participated in their lives, took them on field trips and insisted they take their edu-



cation and faith seriously. Those who knew him said he led by example.

Randy was born July 22, 1956. After graduating from Fairfax High School he attended Washington

State University where he excelled playing football. His teammates lovingly called him the Deacon because he was always ministering to anyone who needed his help. He continued to practice his faith and preach the love of God after joining the LAPD, which he considered an extension of his ministry. The department came to rely on him as their "negotiator".

It is evident how much Randy was loved when over 10,000 people from all over the country and outside the United States came to join his lovely wife, their two teenage children and family, along with his LAPD family, in the celebration of his life and his interment at Holy Cross Cemetery in Culver City. Some of the many Dignitaries attending included Governor Arnold Swartznagger, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, LAPD Chief Wm. Bratton, and Former LAPD Chief Daryl Gates.

According to the many speakers, Officer Randy Simmons is a shining star who represents the best of us, as a husband, a father, a friend and a member of the LAPD. He lives on through the lives he has touched, who will now go on to mentor others in return.

Donations may be made to LAPFCU Blue Ribbon Trust Fund/Randal Simmons, Acct. 203007-product code S4.12, 15150 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, Ca 91410., or visit www.lapfcu.org and click red square "LAPFCU Community Corner."

Antonovich Calls for Las Lomas Investigation

By Katharine Russ

Councilman Greig Smith's "Motion to Kill The Massive Las Lomas" project that Dan Palmer had been touting for years, came just days before Supervisor Michael Antonovich's Motion calling for an investigation by the Chief Executive Officer, Assessor, County Counsel, and Regional Planning to determine the legal owner of the Las Lomas Property. Tony Bell, Assistant Chief Deputy LA County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, said the motion passed on February 12, 2008.

Paul Novak, Planning Deputy for Supervisor Antonovich, said, "Supervisor Antonovich is concerned about the integrity of the planning process. On the application the developer (Palmer) signed as the record owner; at the time (and until now) it

appears that Palmer-controlled companies own 8 of the lots and Fred McHaddad owns 6 of the lots.

The Supervisor's motion asks several County departments (Regional Planning, County Counsel, and Assessor) to investigate and resolve, and report back to the Board within 30 days."

Two days later, a Press Release from State Assemblyman Cameron Smyth and Los Angeles City Councilman Greig Smith "called for an investigation into whether Las Lomas developer Dan S. Palmer committed perjury when he submitted official City and County documents stating he was the sole owner of the property to be developed into Las Lomas. Because of the size, scope and multi-jurisdictional issues involving this controversial development, Assemblyman Smyth and Councilman Smith are asking the California State Attorney General's Office, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and the California Department of Real Estate to immediately launch an investigation to determine what laws may have been broken, including perjury and/or real estate fraud."

In an emotional plea to LA County Regional Planning Van Nuys resident Fred McHaddad, 77, who actually owns nearly half of the 555 acre site wrote on January 14, 2008, "I became scared and I still am." McHaddad referenced a notice for a hearing from LA County Regional Planning concerning Dan Palmer's application to merge all parcels of land into one. "Mr. Cordova told me that what I was afraid of is what is being applied

for, and that the application is for the elimination of all the parcels on Palmers property and mine, as well as the elimination of the boundary line between my property and his, thus converting the entire 555 acres into one parcel and Palmer listed himself as the owner of the entire 555 acres." McHaddad feared that Palmer was illegally taking his property from him. Yet, when asked for an interview, McHaddad said he could not comment and referred all requests for such to Palmers spokesperson, Matt Klink.

Matt Klink, spokesperson for Las Lomas, said, "A total of 14 parcels comprise the Las Lomas property. Las Lomas Land Company owns eight (8) of those parcels and Mr. McHaddad owns six (6). The other names mentioned no longer own property in the Las Lomas project area." Klink, further stated, "Las Lomas Land Company has an option to purchase all six of Mr. McHaddad's properties. Additionally, Las Lomas Land Company has a written agreement with Mr. McHaddad whereby the Las Lomas Land Company is the only authorized party legally authorized to negotiate with government entities about the properties. To file a tentative parcel map with the County of Los Angeles, the property in question can have multiple owners. To record a final parcel map, that act must have one entity. Las Lomas is in this process with the County of Los Angeles."

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Animals Endangered by Lack of Funds

Waystation in Critical Need of Help

By Katharine Russ

Los Angeles County -The Wildlife Waystation has been an icon in Big Tujunga Canyon for 32 years and has taken care of over 75,000 animals during that long period. Martine Colette purchased the 160 acres in 1975 and opened the Waystation in 1976.

The Waystation offered outreach programs that delivered educational and ecological messages concerning animal welfare to adults and children in the Los Angeles area.

Because of a series of legislative situations from both local and state agencies the Waystation has had to close its doors to animals in need and restrict its fundraising and educational programs.

Until the Waystation can complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), it cannot operate as it had in the past. "The completion of an EIR costs money that the Waystation does not have, and major repairs cannot be done without a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), which we cannot get without first completing the EIR", says Director and Founder Martine Colette. Collette says that, "first and foremost, the animals must be cared for and our non-volunteer staff and bills must be paid. Beyond that, there is no money left to complete an EIR and do required repairs and replacements costing over one million dollars.

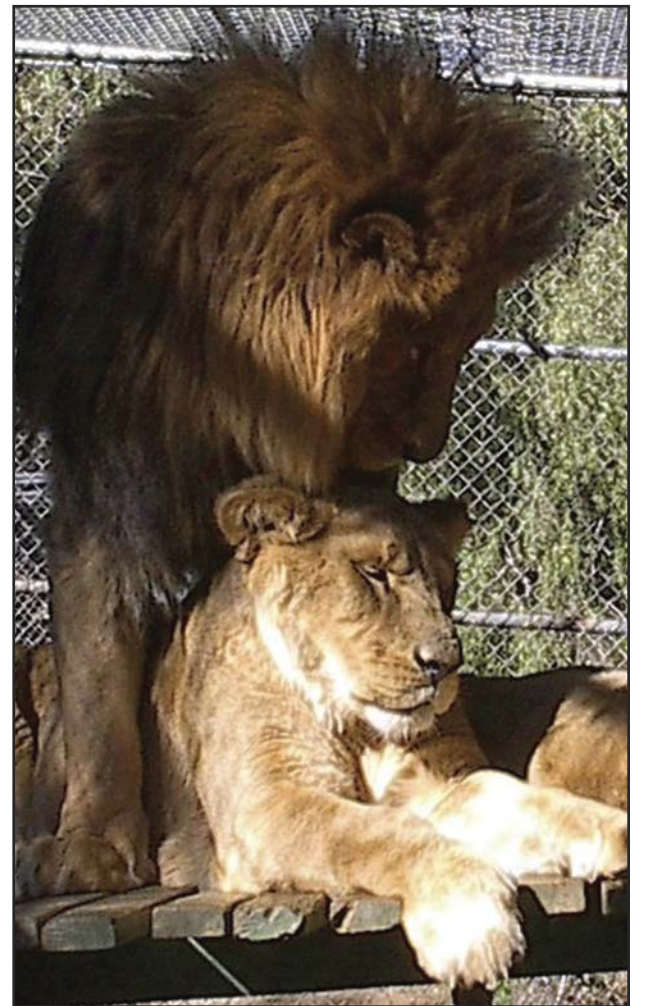
The Waystation staff has been reduced by 40% and all have taken on more duties in an effort to save money to insure the animals are still well cared for by the facility staff, which includes two full-time veterinarians.

Paul Novak, Planning Deputy for Supervisor Michael Antonovich, said, "Deputies to Supervisor



Antonovich and several County departments met recently with the Director and Board Members of the Wildlife Waystation. The County has indicated to Waystation representatives that the property is not in compliance with several County codes (Zoning Ordinance as well as building, electrical, and plumbing codes), and also indicated a willingness to work with the Waystation to bring the property into compliance." Jerry Brown, the Waystation's Publicist, said, "At

present, the Wildlife Waystation is home and sanctuary to around 400 animals, birds and reptiles, all taken care of by Colette's volunteer staff and by donations from the public and the corporate world. The Wildlife Waystation has never received local or federal funding for the care of its animal population. In its 32 year history, the 160 acre Wildlife Waystation has earned an international reputation and many awards for the way it provides a home for wild and exotic animals."



But caring for the animals and keeping them fed costs upwards of \$5000 per day and funds are still needed to insure the Waystation can maintain that care. Ongoing discussions with Palm Springs Mayor Ron Oden about a possible move are at a standstill, and no one is sure if there will even be a move. Dozens of residents interviewed believe the Wildlife Waystation is an asset for Los Angeles County and many would like to see more assistance from the County to keep the Waystation in its current location. If you are interested and would like to help, visit the Waystation website at www.wildlifewaystation.org katharine.russ@charter.net

COMMUNITY NEWS

Criminal Charges Filed Against Mobile Home Park

Katharine Russ

In what may be an unprecedented move in the State of California, Los Angeles City Attorney, Rocky Delgado, announced the filing of criminal charges against two Corporations and their executives for failure to maintain "safe and habitable" conditions at a Van Nuys trailer park.

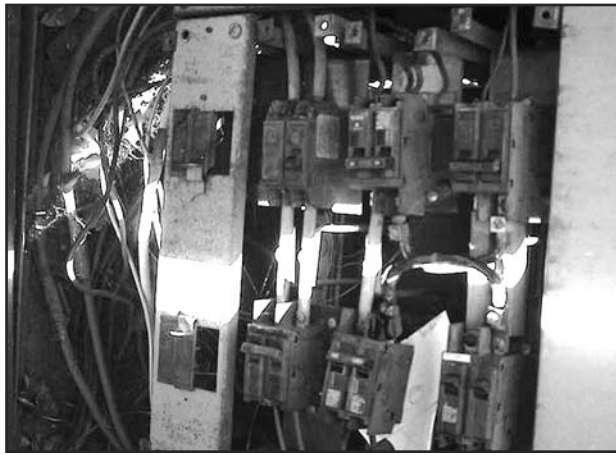
According to his Press Release on Friday, February 1, "Hedamar Development, Inc, President Hedy Magna and Vice President Mark Magna, as well as Valley MHP, LLC, were each charged with six criminal counts. The charges included: unsafe electrical equipment and wiring; unsafe plumbing in the laundry facility; failure to provide each lot with a drinking water outlet; permitting contamination of drinking water; and failing to connect units to outlet with approved gas connectors. Each count carries a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail and/or a \$400 fine.

The owner of the property could face suspension or revocation of its permit to operate a trailer park facility and may face additional civil penalties from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)."

The first round of complaints against the owner of the park came in November 2007 when residents complained of raw sewage seeping from pipes, excessive trash and debris, and unsafe electrical conditions. All, but two residents, were forced to use garden hoses for drinking water which posed serious health risks. One of the buildings sustained excessive damage from fire in October 2007 and was never boarded up.

Ron Javor, Assistant Deputy Director for the Division of Codes and Standards at the Dept. of Housing and Community Development (HCD), had earlier remarked that the violations, in their seriousness, are the worst he had seen in a number of years."

Glenn Bell, President of Neighborhood Friends, first became aware of the conditions at Woodley Trailer Park in November and reported the Park to Councilman Tony Cardenas office but it was Bell's complaint to the HCD and the diligence of one inspector that finally got results. Samii Taylor, Leg-



This is the master meter. It is wide open with exposed wiring with a minimum of 200 amperes. It is approximately 18in. off the ground. There were a half a dozen children playing within 5ft.

islative Advocate of the Windsor Group said, "We have worked, tirelessly, on this case since November contacting city agencies and legislators to investigate and prosecute this park owner. For criminal charges to be filed is a great victory for the residents of this community who have been forced to get drinking water from a garden hose and endure raw sewage spills within the community." Taylor, further, commented, "Assembly Member Fuentes' staff has given a verbal commitment to accept two legislative proposals, specifically proposals for expanded enforcement of legislation affecting manufactured home owners. Other legislative representatives acknowledged the need for such enhanced consumer protections.

Neighborhood Friends and Windsor Group are pleased that legislators support the need for greater enforcement to protect homeowners following recent HCD investigations involving gross deterioration of infrastructures in parks, which endangered homeowners and potentially threatened the surrounding communities."

Frank Mateljan Press Deputy for City Attorney Rocky Delgado, "We do not believe that a potential



Trees not maintained, exterior fence in disrepair.

incarceration of the park owners will have any effect on the daily operation of the park. The criminal charges are designed to, both, force compliance to current regulations and hold to account those responsible for any deterioration or neglect to the park. Any residents that are removed would be entitled to compensation as well as relocation costs from the owner."

Originally, the Loftin Law Firm, based in Carlsbad, had agreed to pursue a civil lawsuit on behalf of the residents of the park, but stepped aside when the City agreed to take action. California Civil Code, Section 798.87(c) states, "A civil action pursuant to this section may be brought by a park resident, the park management, or in the name of the people of the State of California, by any of the following:(1) The district attorney or the county counsel of the jurisdiction in which the park, or the greater portion of the park, is located.(2) The city attorney or city prosecutor if the park is located within the jurisdiction of the city.(3) The Attorney General.(Amended by AB 2382, (Corbett), Ch. 141, (2002), eff. 1/1/03) Arraignment is scheduled for March 3 in Department 101 of the Van Nuys Superior Court.

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Las Lomas – from cover

But Paul Novak said, " Since the application, Palmer filed is an application to merge several legal lots into one new parcel. It is not possible to do so if there is more than one owner (a legal lot can only be owned by one entity, whether that is a person, a corporation, LLC, etc.)."

McHaddad does not want his property to get lost in the annexation process. In his letter, he wanted his property to have "distinct and different parcels- each of which has its own pin or assessors identifying number"

"Swindling an elderly couple out of their property would be a despicable act," Councilman Smith said. "This situation is highly disturbing and I hope that Mr. Palmer and the Las Lomas Land Co. will cooperate with any investigations."

City and County Officials will investigate Palmers alleged ownership of other parcels shown to be owned by Newhall Calgrove Estates Limited Partnership, Carole Bergin and Samuel R. Biggs, and the Trustee of Ralph Thomas Flora Trust.

The fabled mini-city has been blanketed in controversy for five years. Experts have weighed in on the high probability that the city would be too costly to build. Experts cited traffic congestion, the land slopes, seismic activity in the area, sewers, water supply, and the fact that no annexation into LA has ever been granted. Now, many concerns have been raised as to who actually owns the land, an important detail that until now, has been overlooked.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

City of Los Angeles Voted to Support SB1818

By Katharine Russ

Despite protests over the long anticipated CA. State Senate Bill SB1818, the L.A. City Council voted to pass the law on February 20, 2008. The new city law would permit density bonuses of 35%, providing developers add 10% affordable housing units in their projects.

According to Dale Thrush, Director of Planning and Economic Development for Councilmember Wendy Greuel, "The SB 1818 density bonus applies to all properties zoned for multi-family residential development (including commercial zones), so the applicant would get his extra units by-right. The issue that you raise relates to whether the applicant can also get FAR (floor area ratio) and height incentives by-right. Since the property is not within 1,500 feet of a transit stop, the applicant would have to ask for the FAR (floor area ratio) and height incentives in a public hearing format. He could not get them just for asking.

The basic approach to the City's ordinance is to define the by-right aspects of SB 1818 and leave them out of the public hearing process. The argument is that there is no reason for a public hearing if the public cannot really influence the process. For example, we don't hold public hearings in order to issue building permits. The small lot subdivision ordinance, unlike SB 1818, creates no new density. It simply allows condominium projects to convey actual ownership of land and structures to individual owners. Owners in normal condominium projects get undivided interests in the whole project. Realistically, the two approaches could yield projects that look identical but have profound differences in litigation risks and construction costs."

In his letter to Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa last September, County Supervisor Yaroslavsky called SB1818 a poorly thought-out effort that forced local jurisdictions to waive, or modify, existing zoning or development standards. In its current form, SB1818 allows more State and Federal grant money for these projects. Some fear that new developments that utilize the density bonus will subject the city to overcrowding and causing crime to skyrocket over the years. Critics fear the bill will place heavy burdens on city utilities and do little to protect the integrity of single-family neighborhoods.

Elaine Brown, an activist in Sunland-Tujunga, expressed grave concerns over the implementation of SB1818. "The bill allows developers to ignore long term planning at both the city and community levels without any input from the communities that will be decimated by this implementation. In hillside areas, the problems of increased traffic and destroyed views are ignored. Effects of accumulated impacts is a state CEQA issue and are also ignored by the implementation of SB1818."

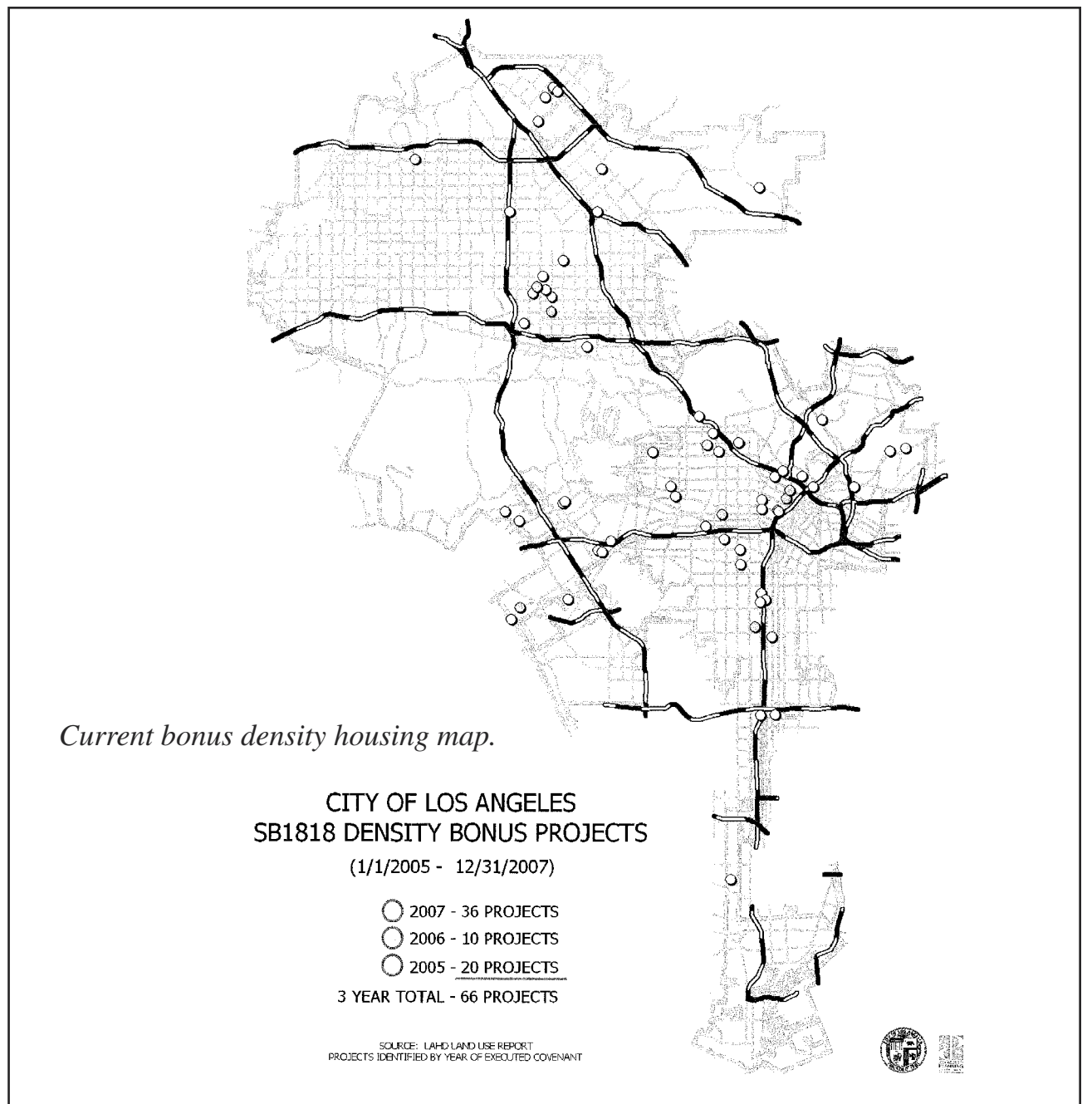
Several Neighborhood Councils attended the hearings and wrote letters in opposition to the Bill. They cited that the ordinance goes well beyond the requirements of SB1818 and does not address the fact

that far more affordable housing units will be torn down to make way for luxury units that will only provide 10% of affordable units.

David Rand, Land Use lawyer and President of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council, disagreed. "There is widespread belief in communities that SB 1818 will encourage developers to raze rent stabilized buildings ("RSO units"), and build predominately market rate units (with a very small SB 1818 affordable component) in place of the demolished RSO units. While we have seen a lot of this throughout the City in the past few years, it has little to do with SB 1818. The root causes are market forces and the State Ellis Act, which grants the owner of an apartment building (rent stabilized or otherwise) an absolute legal right to exit the rental housing business and build for-sale condominium units on a given property."

Rand further remarked, "What SB 1818 ensures, however, is that if a RSO building is slated for demolition under the Ellis Act, the new building will have an affordable housing component. There are also im-

portant differences to recognize between RSO units and SB 1818 affordable restricted units. SB 1818 units can only be sold or rented to households that meet very strict income eligibility requirements - as opposed to RSO units that may be rented to any prospective tenant, regardless of their annual income. SB 1818 units also must be kept affordable for a 30-year period through the recordation of a covenant with the City. Thus, SB 1818 units are truly restricted for LA's neediest residents on a long-term basis. While many low-income residents need the protection of rent stabilization, there is no guarantee that the occupant of an RSO unit will actually qualify as a low-income tenant. Communities oppose SB 1818 because they fear additional height and density. However, if you believe in the need for more affordable housing, the state law, as well as the city's implementing ordinance, could be valuable tools to ensure that more housing units for LA's low-income residents are brought on-line in the future." The future of SB1818 remains to be seen. katharine.russ@charter.net



Burglar Nabs Computer Containing Employee Information

8300 DWP Workers, Including Retirees, Fear I.D. Theft

By Katharine Russ

Fourteen thousand Dept. of Water and Power (DWP) employees received letters advising them of a computer theft that occurred February 11, at the Fullerton office of the data-processing company, Systematic Automation, Inc. The computer contained names, social security numbers, dates of birth, employee identification numbers, salaries, insurance plan coverage, health care benefits and retirement savings information of DWP workers/retirees. The computer was taken from the outside vendor that Union Officials feel should not have had this information, despite its alleged encryptions.

A spokesperson for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 18, which represents DWP employees said workers, were "shocked and upset" over the theft of personal data. DWP General Manager, H. David Nahri, promised workers that "extraordinary steps were being taken" to protect employees and promised Equifax credit monitoring for a year to insure their identities were not misused.

An employee's spouse, who requested anonymity said, "that is not even a Band-Aid and does not mitigate the possible problem we may have because of this theft. It should never have happened in the first place and we need to insure that this never happens again. I suffered through I.D. theft several years ago and it took over four years to

mend my credit. I am outraged and terrified that this may happen to my family again!"

Published accounts elsewhere, show that in addition to information taken from the data processing company relative to DWP workers/retirees, burglars nabbed sensitive information involving 15 other organizations, including a Modesto School District where 3500 workers could also fall victim to identity theft. Representatives of Systematic Automation could not be reached for comment.

Opponents of recent controversies regarding required financial disclosures from the LAPD and Neighborhood Councils can now cite one more example of the dangers of sensitive information falling into the wrong hands.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Every Penny Counts



Councilmember Wendy Greuel

With a budget crisis facing the City of Los Angeles, I am urging my Council colleagues to adopt new measures that will immediately generate revenue and save the City millions of dol-

lars. These common-sense proposals are a critical first step in beginning to balance the City's books.

The City of Los Angeles is facing a projected budget deficit of \$300 million this year, due in large part to a loss in sales tax, property tax and documentary transfer tax since the collapse of the housing market last August. These dire financial times demand cuts in our current spending. I have proposed a number of plans to eliminate pork barrel spending and generate revenue for the City. For example, I am asking my colleagues to consider consolidating City Departments that serve overlapping functions. Further, I am proposing a streamlined permitting process in Los Angeles, and

I introduced a measure to reopen City contracts based on current economic conditions.

Please email me with any ideas that you have to help reduce our spending – every penny counts. In order to keep doing the job of fighting crime and fixing potholes, I am leaving no stone un-turned in the quest to save funds.

Los Angeles loves its schools! I am encouraging all residents to consider contributing to one of the many teacher-proposed projects designed to improve the education of our Valley children. In an effort to raise over \$5,000 for Los Angeles public schools, I have joined with the national organization Donors Choose to launch a website allowing Valley residents to donate in small and large amounts to local classroom projects. At our website, you can choose a project to which you want to contribute and the exact dollar amount you are able to give. In Sunland-Tujunga, for example, an Apperson Street Elementary School teacher is requesting funds to buy a DVD burner to help special education children improve their public speaking skills. You can peruse the 12 projects totaling \$5,279 in elementary, middle and high school classrooms from Sunland-Tujunga to Sherman Oaks. Once again, every penny counts. Visit : <http://www.donorschoose.org/donors/viewChallenge.html?id=18204> for more information.

Girl Scouts Went Global on World Thinking Day, 2008



Chatsworth: On Friday, Feb. 22, 2008, Girl Scouts across the San Fernando Valley celebrated World Thinking Day by participating in various activities, games, and projects with global themes. The annual event gives girls a chance to learn about other countries and honor their sister Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 144 countries throughout the world.

"Think globally, act locally", is the mantra for Girl Scouts and their troop leaders as they designed activities to increase cultural awareness and emphasize the positive similarities between Girl Scouts in the U.S. and their sisters throughout the world. Girls often spend weeks researching the culture, music, food, and history of different countries in order to prepare for World Thinking Day festivities. "It's a fun, educational way to learn about other countries, foster international friendships, and remind girls that Girl Scouts USA is part of a global community", said Gerry L. Keshka, Chief Executive Officer of Girl Scouts of the San Fernando Valley. This year, World Thinking Day activities focused on five specific countries: Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Italy, and Madagascar, which represent the five regions of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

Brownie Troop 29 in Studio City had a full schedule of activities for World Thinking Day. It started with group discussions about how girls can be responsible and respectful global citizens. The girls created a special banner in preparation for the event, using photos of themselves, their drawings and signatures. They are also sending the banner to the Buenos Aires Girl Guides. Additionally, Girls will be paired up with Girl Guide pen pals in Argentina after having written World Thinking Day greetings to their new South American friends.

World Thinking Day is held every year on February 22, a date selected because it was both the birthday of Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of Boy Scouts, and his wife Lady Baden-Powell, one of the first World Chief Guides.

To learn more about the Girl Scouts, visit www.GirlScoutsSFV.org or contact: Kimberlie Nitti at 818-886-1801, ext. 23, knitti@sfgsc.org.



Deficits Reign Even as Revenue Rises



By Senator George Runner

Through skillful gimmicks and incompetent mismanagement of state finances, California finds itself facing a staggering budget deficit of \$14 billion, despite continuous revenue gains.

In fact, even as the economy appears to be slowing, revenue has actually increased, albeit not at the same high rate as previous boom years. The truth is California does not face a lack of revenue; it suffers from a lack of fiscal restraint.

The budget deficit came about during a period of revenue growth that brought in \$27 billion in new revenue over the past five years. However, legislature failed to spend these revenues responsibly. With that kind of financial windfall, the budget should be balanced by now.

We cannot allow spending to outpace revenue. While the population of California grew by 4.8% over the past five years, spending increased 35% during the same period. It seems the state's voracious appetite for your tax dollars knows no limit.

In fact, even in this time of financial difficulties, this fiscal year's budget actually exceeds last year's budget. The government's upside-down management of your money is evident when spending cuts translate into a \$1.1 billion increase in spending this year from last year's budget. This

means that most state agencies actually see an increase in spending.

This behavior is comparable to a person who consistently receives a raise each year, yet still finds himself in debt because he maintains a wasteful lifestyle he cannot afford. Instead of driving a Mercedes-Benz, he may want to buy a Honda instead. Likewise, the state needs to cut its extravagances.

While it may be tempting to consider higher taxes in light of the budget problems, that idea fails to really address the underlying issue of overspending. The budget deficit faced today is not the result of declining revenue – instead it is the fruit of exploding spending.

When I was first elected to the Assembly 10 years ago, the budgets was under \$50 billion – compare that with the \$100 billion budget we have today. Certainly the population growth of California has not kept pace with its spending. This means California spends twice the amount of money it did 10 years ago. But looking at our education system and roads, they certainly did not improve twice as much.

I agree with the Governor's contention that we do not have a revenue problem, and that we cannot tax our way out of this situation. Last year I along with my Republican colleagues got slammed by the critics for holding up the budget vote. We insisted it be balanced and have been warning that California will eventually have to pay the piper. Had our advice been heeded, the current budget crisis would not be as bad. It appears that day has arrived.

Sen. Runner is the chairman of the Senate Republican Caucus and represents portions of our San Fernando Valley and Santa Clarita Valley's. Visit: <http://republican.sen.ca.gov/web/17>

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Thoughts from Foothill



*Captain Joe Curreri
Commanding Officer,
Foothill Area
Los Angeles
Police Department*

Foothill Area is off to a good start this year with an 11.5 percent decrease in crime when compared to the same time last year. All personnel assigned to the Foothill Community Police Station and our community partners will be working diligently to maintain a crime decrease throughout the year. I ask each and every one of you to join in this partnership by simply taking a few precautions to avoid becoming a crime victim. As I've said many times before, lock your residence doors and windows

when you are gone. Invest in timers, which turn lights and radios on intermittently to give the illusion you are home when you are away. When traveling on foot, walk with a companion whenever possible. **Lock your vehicle and please do not leave anything of value visible in the passenger compartment when you leave your vehicle.** Stolen vehicles and burglaries from vehicles are, by far, the most prevalent crimes in the Foothill Area. Please assist us in reversing this trend by taking a few common sense precautions to safeguard your property.

In closing, I ask all the readers of this article to reflect about the awesome responsibility and risk a person takes on when they join the ranks of law enforcement. As you know, the Los Angeles Police Department recently buried another of our family, a 27-year veteran who lost his life while protecting those who live, work and play in our city. I realize that no one forces anyone to become a police officer, but

think about how our society would be if no one chose law enforcement as a career. Take a moment to think about that responsibility and risk the next time you are stopped for committing a traffic infraction or whenever you encounter a police officer for any reason. Police officers routinely are forced to deal with and to observe the aftermath of cruelty and evil within our society; things that most folks don't even want to think about. Randy Simmons was not only a police officer; he was a husband, a father, a minister, and much more. In short, he was an outstanding individual. He was typical of what most people in law enforcement are and aspire to be. So please, the next time you encounter a police officer, think about that officer's responsibility and risk. You might even consider thanking that officer for what he or she does so you can live in peace.

LAPD Teams with LoJack

by Elektra Kruger

While there are several private companies that provide stolen vehicle recovery services to residents of Los Angeles. However, LoJack Corporation tworks directly with LAPD and has partnered with the Department since 1989. The Police Department is the Stolen Vehicle Recovery Network (SVRN) Program Manager for the State of California. LoJack installs radio frequency units in customers' vehicles, which can later be tracked by Police if necessary. All vehicles reported stolen in California are checked through a computer database to determine whether they are equipped with LoJack. Those so equipped are then signaled to activate their transponders to broadcast their location to a police receiver.

LoJack vehicle recovery claims a 90% success rate. Of the 10,581 LoJack equipped vehicles stolen in Los Angeles since 1989, 10,315 have been recovered. Over 295 "Chop Shops" have been discovered in So. California and shut down as a result of signal tracking by a LoJack equipped vehicle resulting in more arrests. Additionally, LoJack has recently introduced a GPS cellular system called "In-Transit" in which a small battery-operated device can be mounted on a vehicle or in a cargo container or on an undercover officer. This system monitors the movement and location of the unit over the Internet. A great tool for law enforcement. Since LoJack utilizes LAPD personnel to do the actual searching for a vehicle once it

is reported stolen, they have so far provided receivers, software and computers to operate the system on 202 police vehicles free of charge.

LoJack provides support for their equipment at no charge to the City. Councilmember Dennis Zine suggested that the City should equip a much greater number of Police Vehicles with LoJack Tracking units to assure a high level of service to Los Angeles residents who purchase the LoJack system. City Council has recently approved the Public Safety Committee recommendation that the Chief of Police be authorized to execute a formal contract with the LoJack Corporation for a period of five years for SVRN services

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818-352-5755 **Shadow Hills**



DUVCW Installation a San Fernando Valley First



Mission Hills - Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War 1861-1865 (DUVCW) held their initiation and installation ceremony for its "Tent" in the San Fernando Valley on February 2. The Cornelia Hancock Tent #91 DUVCW group is the first to serve the San Fernando Valley in the organization's 123-year history and is named in honor of a nurse and humanitarian who was one of the Civil War's first female volunteers. DUVCW is an organization of "daughters" (direct lineal descendants of Union veterans of the Civil War) who honor and perpetuate the memory of their ancestors through service projects that benefit the public at the local, state and national level.

Charter members of the new Tent, along with friends and local dignitaries including members of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society, met at the historic Andres Pico Adobe in Mission Hills. Janet Uribe, President of the California Nevada Department of the DUVCW, officiated at the installation and initiation. The CA/NV Department of DUVCW will celebrate its 100-year anniversary in 2009.

Carole Morton was installed as President of Tent #91 and narrated a slide presentation that included a history of the Civil War told through archival photographs, drawings, and maps. Ancestors of the Tent charter members were highlighted, and brief histories of the DUVCW and its parent and associated organizations were also presented. For additional information visit www.corneliahancockduvcw.org (under construction) or contact Carole Morton, Tent President.

Abby Diamond to be Honored by BPW



The Sunland-Tujunga Chapter of the Business and Professional Women (BPW) has selected Abby Diamond to receive their yearly Woman of Achievement award.

Abby Diamond, a resident of the San Fernando Valley for most of her life, became active in civic affairs in the Sunland-Tujunga community in 2003 when she became a homeowner. She as one of founders and serves on the Board of Directors of the recently formed non-profit group, Sunland-Tujunga Alliance. The 501c4 group was originally formed to spearhead the "No Home Depot Campaign in Sunland-Tujunga" and were successful in getting the City of Los Angeles to require the Home Depot Corporation comply with local land-use regulations. They have now joined other community organizations to help the "Save the Verdugo Hills Golf Course" campaign. While a leader and spokesperson for that organization, she acquired a detailed understanding of land use and environ-

mental law, and became their internal specialist on these issues. She is consulted frequently by other communities facing similar challenges. Ms. Diamond was recently contracted to write an amendment to the Land Use section of the General Plan for the City of Ventura.

Ms Diamond has been in private practice as a massage therapist, specializing in therapeutic bodywork for over 16 years. She is a Certified member of the Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals, a national organization. She is also a member of the California Chapter of the Emergency Response Massage International Team, a volunteer organization that assists Emergency Responders in Critical Incident Stress Management through massage. Having completed the National Incident Management System independent study course, she has also been certified by the Department of Homeland Security/FEMA.

In her spare time, she is an avid gardener who has created a water-wise native plant garden in her front yard, and vegetable garden in her backyard. She designs and creates custom mosaic art using broken plates and ceramics.

The BPW will be honoring her at a dinner in her honor on March 25, at Elks Lodge #2098 located at 10137 Commerce Ave. in Tujunga. Call 818-352-8935 for reservations.

Barbara Hughes

September 28, 1933 -
February 15, 2008



photo credit: Lloyd

The picture was taken at the S/T Coordinating Council Christmas party 2007.

The community of Sunland-Tujunga has lost a wonderful friend and supporter this past Friday when Barbara quietly slipped away. Barbara was a third generation Tujungian and a graduate of Verdugo Hills High School and she and her husband Harry still live on her grandparents homesteaded property in Tujunga.

At the same time she wrote and edited for seven newspapers including the Record Ledger, Foothill Leader, and The Foothill Paper. Barbara and Harry had their own newspaper in Anza, California

Her dedication and that of her husband Harry to the Sunland-Tujunga Coordinating Council held the organization together through some very tough years and yet the Council perfected an outstanding annual Historic Garden and Home Tour working with The Little Landers Historical Society and Verdugo Hills High School.

Barbara leaves her husband Harry, her daughter Michele and Michele's three children; her son Mark and wife, Rose, and their two children; and son Michael. We will all miss Barbara's smile and words of encouragement at those critical times in our community. The Memorial will be for family only.



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Wednesday, Feb 27

Foothill Optimist

Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

Rotary Club

Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

Panorama City NC

Knob Hill Bank. Center
8229 Van Nuys, VN
5:30 pm 785-9355

San Fernando Pioneer

Memorial Cemetery
Foothill & Bledsoe, Syl
9 am - 12 pm 365-5860

L.A.'s Bicycle Master

Plan Update - Room 1B
Braude Consituent Center
6262 Van Nuys, VN
6:30-8:30 pm 213-978-1379

Thursday, Feb. 28

S-T Lions

Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6:30 pm

Public Safety thru

Neighborhood Empowerment
All Nations Church
10000 Foothill, LVT
6:30-8:30 pm 352-3287

Panorama City NC

Gen. Meeting
Mission Community Hospital
14860 Rosco Blvd, PC
6:30 pm 785-9355

Sylmar NC Genral Meet.

Hubbard Street School
13325 Hubbard St., Syl
6:30pm

Friday, February 29

Stonehurst HPOZ Hearing

Panning Commission
Marvin Braude Center
6262 Van Nuys Blvd, VN

Sunday, March 2

Bolton Hall Museum

Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Learn About Loans by

Jane Fanganello Century 21
8307 Foothill, S-T
7-9 pm 248-9100

Tuesday, March 4

Bolton Hall Museum

Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Wednesday, March 5

Foothill Optimist

Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

Rotary Club

Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

Thursday, March 6

Elks Lodge #2098

11037 Commerce, S-T
6:30 pm 352-2098

Sylmar Women's Club

Odyssey Restaurant
15600 Odyssey Dr. M.H.
11:30 am 833-8033

Panorama Ciy NC

Land Use Comm
Mission Community Hospital
14860 Roscoe, PC
6:30 pm 785-9355

Kagel Canyon Civic Assoc

Dexter Park
7 pm

Saturday, March 8

Community Blood Drive

S-T Elks Lodge 2098
10137 Commerce, S-T
352-2098

Panorama City NC

Board Election
Panorama Presbyterian Ch.
1421 Roscoe, PC
10 am - 7 pm 785-9365

Sunday, March 9

Day Light Savings Time

Turn Clocks Ahead

Bolton Hall Museum

Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Monday, March 10

STNC-DAC (Land Use)

NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 951-7411

Zoning & Land

Use
MHNC
10161 Sepulveda,
MH
6:30 pm 892-2414

Tuesday, March 11

Candidate Forum

Mission Hills NC
San Jose Elem. School
14928 Clymer, MH
6:30 pm

Mission Hills NC

Presentation on Pocket Parks
San Jose Elem. School
14928 Clymer, MH
6:30 pm

Bolton Hall Museum

Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Northridge West N/C

Beckford Elementary
7 pm

Sun Valley Area NC

Villa Scalabrini Center
10631 Vinedale,SV
6:30 pm 767-6766

"Looky Loos"

Neighborhood Watch
Beachy Elementry
9757 Beachy, Arl
6:30 pm 756-8866

Wednesday, March 12

Foothill Optimist

Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

Sunland-Tujunga NC General Mtg

Mt. Gleason Middle Sch
10965 Mt. Gleason - Sunland
Meet the Candidates
7 p.m. Info: 951-7411
www.stnc.org

Rotary Club

Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

Learn how "Guide Dogs

of America" are trained
Sylmar Library
14561 Polk, Syl
5 pm 367-6102

Thursday, March 13

Foothill Div. Community Police
Advisory Board (CPAB)
Villa Scallabrini, SV
6 pm 756-8866

S-T Lions

Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6:30 pm

Friday, March 14

"Alzheimers Disease"

Bilingual Presentation
S-T Library
7771 Foothill, S-T
4-5 pm Tel: 352-4481

Saturday, March 15

STNC-Outreach Comm.

Joselitos West
7308 Foothill, S-T
1 pm 951-7411

"Jewels of the Foothills"

Art Show/Exhibit
March 15-31
McGroarty Arts Center
7570 McGoarty Terrace, S-T
5-9 pm 249-7270

Spring Egg Hunt

O'Melveny Park
17300 Sesnon, GH
10 am-12 pm 363-3556

St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance

S-T Elks Lodge
10137 Foothill S-T
6 pm 352-2098

Sunday, March 16

Bolton Hall Museum

Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Omlet Bar

S-T Elks Lodge
10137 Commerce, S-t
\$6.50 9 am-12 pm 352-2098

Monday, March 17

HAPPY ST. PATRICKS DAY

Mission Hills NC

Beautification &
Cultural Affairs Comm.
10161 Sepulveda, MH
6:30

Sun Valley Area NC

General Meeting
Villa Scalabrini Ret. Home
10631 Vinedale, SV
6:30 pm 767-2024

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GranadaHillsHistory.com

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4H Meeting
Shadow Hills Pres. Church
Sunland, SH
7 pm 352-0864

San Fernando Pioneer
Memorial Cemetery
Foothill & Bledsoe, Syl
9 am - 12 pm 365-5860

Arlita NC
Beachy Elementary School
9757 Beachy, Arl
6:30 pm 897-9122

Tuesday, March 18

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Wednesday, March 19

Foothill Optimist
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

Rotary Club
Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

Granada Hills South N/C
Granada Hills Rec Center
16730 Chatsworth St. GH
7-8:30 pm

Thursday, March 20

First Day of Spring
STNC Safety Commit.
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
6 pm 951-7411

S-T SERVS
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 563-1962

Foothill Trails District NC
General Meeting
Village Christian Church
8930 Village Ave., LTC
7 pm

Beauti & Cultural Affairs
Mission Hills NC
10161 Sepulveda, MH
6:30 pm 892-2414

Friday, March 21

GOOD FRIDAY

Easter Carnival
S-T Chamber
Sunland Park S-T
4-10 pm 352-4433

Saturday, March 22

Mission Hills NC
Outreach/Youth Outreach
10161 Sepulveda, MH
2 pm

SNC Land Use
Sylmar NC Office
13515 _ Hubbard, Syl
3:30 pm

"Be There, Be Fair"
Presentation on Youth Sports
S-T Library
771 Foothill, S-T
4-5 pm

Easter Carnival
S-T Chamber
Sunland Park S-T
10 am-10 pm 352-4433

Sunday, March 23

HAPPY EASTER

Easter Carnival
S-T Chamber
Sunland Park S-T
12 am -10 pm 352-4433

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Monday, March 24

STNC/DAC (Land Use)
North Valley City Hall
7747 Foothill - Tuj
7 p.m. Meeting
8 p.m. Candidate Forum
Info: 951-7411 www.stnc.org

Tuesday, March 25

"Woman of Achievement"
presented by S-T BPW
to Abby Diamond
Elks Lodge #2098
10137 Commerce, S-T
6:30 pm RSVP 352-8935

"Crime Free Housing"
LAPD Siminar
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
6-9 pm 756-8866

Monday, March 24

STNC-DAC (Land Use)
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 951-7411

Tuesday, March 25
CERT - LAFD QTR
Division Training
Fire Station 89
Community Training Center
7063 Laurel Cyn, No. Ho
www.cert-la.com/quarterly-training.htm

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Wednesday, March 26

Foothill Optimist
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

April 5, 12, 19
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Emergency
Preparedness Training
Sunland Recreation
Center
8701 Foothill Bl.
Info: 951-7411

Rotary Club
Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

Panorama City NC
Knob Hill Bank. Center
8229 Van Nuys, VN
5:30 pm 785-9355

San Fernando Pioneer
Memorial Cemetery
Foothill & Bledsoe, Syl
9 am - 12 pm 365-5860

STNC Executive
Committee NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7pm 951-7411

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Beware the Ides of March!

By Marlene Hitt

Beware? Why?, one would ask. Because of some weather cycle? The lunar cycle?

Shakespeare himself made the statement in the play, Julius Caesar. He also wrote the words "The die is cast", and, "The Ides of March have come". Was there a great hurricane on March 15 of 44 BC? Some other disaster?

In investigating the term, Ides of March, we find information telling us that farmers have often gardened in tune with the lunar cycle. It is thought that the moon's gravitational effect on the flow of moisture in soil and plants, and the effect of moonlight on seed germination, controls the time of planting.

Add to that knowledge the statement from E.B. White, "The first day of spring was once the time for taking young virgins into the fields, there in dalliance to set an example in fertility for nature to follow. Now we just set the clocks an hour ahead and change the oil in the crankcase."

The celebration of springtime has always been important to people. But the Ides of March assumed a whole new identity after the events of 44 BC when that date came to represent a day of abrupt change that set off repercussions throughout Roman society and beyond.

By the time of Caesar, Rome had a long-established republican government in which two consuls had joint powers of leadership with a body of citizens, called the senate, all who ruled The Pueblo, I mean, the City of Rome.

Caesar, a great orator and writer, was one of the greatest statesmen and generals in history. In time, he and his military had conquered France, Belgium, Italy, and even part of England. As the empire became larger, the Mayor, oops, I mean Caesar, and the senate saw that the form of government for a small city was not working well, so the senate appointed Caesar dictator for life.

He was popular with soldiers and the Roman people, but the Mayor's power and arrogance-- oops again--the Emperor's popularity was not shared by all. The President's, I mean Caesar's, power, though he refused to be crowned king, came to an end when his friends, the people he trusted, surrounded Caesar and stabbed him to death.

Even good looks and good principles, great moments and fine policies can't change the fact that when a governing body gets too large, and too much power is in-



photo credit: Lloyd

vested in one person, or one powerful group, the people just don't like it. Strange how the process repeats and repeats.

For ourselves, we can choose the Ides of March as the day when the Spring Equinox signals a new beginning, as nature tells us, and the time when night and day are in perfect balance.

Or, we can remember Rome and beware! The Ides can be used as a metaphor for impending doom. Veni, vidi, vici.

Editors Note: Marlene is a former Poet Laureate for Sunland-Tujunga and is a contributing writer to the North Valley Reporter.

Calling for Class of 1958

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What Happened to Real City Planning? How Does Las Lomas Fit?

By Mary Benson

Gail Goldberg's 13 points of "Do Real Planning" have breathed hope into owners and residents who want to preserve their neighborhoods in the City of Los Angeles. But it's not much more than "thank you for your comment" once it hits the City Council's "Planning and Land Use Management" (PLUM) committee. Her statement that developers are not entitled to huge profits and that property development is a speculative undertaking doesn't seem to worry big developers.

It seems like PLUM works under just one rule, "whatever the developer wants." The Council should just rename the City of Los Angeles' Department of City Planning to the "Department of Developer Facilitation" and be done with it. Then Neighborhood Councils and stakeholders would know they have no basis to object to 75-ft. high condos with 300 units and three parking spaces. We could have just one plan, "a hundred square miles of mixed-use -anything goes -whatever you want". Sometimes it seems the "General Framework" is being used just that way. Developer Facilitation can be an automated "serve yourself" counter with all the approvals issued from a vending machine like stamps at the post office.

The City General Plan and Community Plans are supposed to be about certainty.

Think of all the time spent getting around the rules, and getting the City to change their rules to facilitate developers. Think you've got an environmentally protected open space next door? There's no such thing in the City of LA. It might be the only place on the planet for an endangered species, but it's URBAN INFILL if it's within the City Limits. Just ask the developers.

After mountaintops are ripped off in the Newhall Pass to accommodate Las Lomas, who foots the bill for maintenance in the city that will defy every zoning law ever written? The Money Fairy?

Councilmember Alarcon's motion looks at the recovery cost of facilitating the developer through his "entitlement" process for a mini city on which Santa Clarita has already nixed and the County of Los Angeles has already placed a 10% construction limit on the total project. LA City seems to interpret rules and laws differently than others. E.g., there's no need to work with the State Agencies like the California Environmental Affairs, Transportation Department, Water Quality Board, Toxic Substance Control or In-

tegrated Waste Management, because the City Attorney says the developer could sue the City for already beginning the process of entitlements for a project outside of the city. Only the City of Los Angeles can be counted on to do what it's always done, say "YES" in exchange for an up-front fee.

Why else would a smart cookie like Dave Palmer jump through all the hoops and be willing to pay those extra fees for permits? Because, once annexed, Las Lomas can demand all those services from the City of LA: sewers, streetlights, water, Police, Fire, trash pick up, schools, and public transportation. Undoubtedly, it will be the current residents and taxpayers of the North Valley who will have to "share" their infrastructure and pick up the costs for all the utilities and services to accommodate Dan Palmer's shining new city on the hill. That is, if the City of Los Angeles can figure out who owns the property! *Editors note: Ms Benson is a Columnist for the North Valley Reporter and Vice President of the Sun Valley Neighborhood Council, and recently announced her a candidacy for Election to Council District Two, in 2009.*

What Do You Call a Rose in a Cesspool?

By M. Pichon

In the last twenty years the City of Los Angeles has been planting Roses in a cesspool. The site is the Community of Pacoima.

Under construction is a dynamic building known as the Children's Museum. On the drawing boards are construction plans for the Price Pfister site at Paxton and Bradley. Plans are in the works for an East Valley City Hall on Van Nuys Blvd. The community is pleased with the new construction and the proposed construction sites. We acknowledge the improvements, but we beg our Councilman to get the Los Angeles City Departments to enforce the laws as stated in the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). For those who don't understand: The Los Angeles Municipal Code is a set of laws which sets the standards by which the residents will conform in what could be called a 'civilize society'. This set of rules, directives and laws establish standards which call out quality of life issues which affect every resident of the city. Within the community of Pacoima, the LAMC rules, directives and laws have not been enforced in years.

Many of us who reside in the Northeast Valley are aware that Pacoima resembles a 'third world ghetto'.

Single family residences are being converted to multi-family units. Garages are being converted into living quarters. Single family houses being occupied by three to four families with 8 to 10 adults is placing a major burden on parking in every block in the community. In the last year we have had two individuals killed over a parking spaces within Council District 7 (CD7). Inoperative, unlicensed cars and trucks are allowed to linger in driveways and on the streets for months. It is a sad situation when there is no place to put your trash cans because your neighbor has more cars than he can park on his own property or in front of his own home. Hundreds of houses in Pacoima utilize the entire front yard as parking lots. Many have six to eight vehicles from one side of the property to the other.

The community is overloaded with shade tree mechanics. Nearly every block there is a single family residence converted into an auto repair shop or a residential 'junk yard'. Some blocks have as many as 3 or 4. Nearly every block have a tow truck parked in,

with wrecked, damaged inoperative autos stored in the driveway or on the street. Motor homes litter the streets for months at a time, anchored to the asphalt by spider webs, casting a shadow over trash and debris, which gathers under it. Vehicles of such size and height endanger neighbors exiting their driveways. If there is not a law against parking motor homes on the street, there should be one.

Only a few of the many LAMC violations were mentioned here, there are many more. The code violations as stated above would be a good place to start to improve the community. I ask that our councilman get the highest paid city employee in the country to leave the comfort of the office and perform the job they are being paid to do.

Before Pacoima takes on another new development, this community needs to conform to the laws and standards as stated in the Los Angeles Municipal Code. It is more important that we clean up what we have before we bring in the new development.

When you place a 'rose' in a cesspool, you don't sweeten the cesspool; you get a stinking rose.

SOUND OFF

Save Verdugo Hills Golf Course

I have been a resident of the La Crescenta area (Montrose) area for many years. Although I am not an avid golfer, I have used the Verdugo Hills Golf Course many times. I am opposed to the idea of a residential development to replace the Golf Course. Although a patron must pay for the use of the facilities (a good price I might add), the visual enhancement to the area is very nice and pleasant for those passing by on the freeway. Removing it for development would be detrimental to the community.

Todda Neubrand
Montrose

No Las Lomas

I quote a statement made by Councilmember Richard Alarcon from a prior issue of the North Valley Reporter: "We cannot cede control over a project of this size (Las Lomas) and rely on another jurisdiction to make a choice that is in the best interest of our City and our communities".

The COUNTY of Los Angeles approved 250 residential units. Las Lomas wants almost 6,000. Why do you think they turned to the CITY of Los Angeles? We have a reputation for approving a large portion of what developers ask for, regardless of existing land-use designations and regardless of the overall consequences to issues of quality of life for existing residents and consequences to biological resources.

Elektra Kruger
Shadow Hills

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Sunland – Tujunga Neighborhood Council



*Cindy Cleghorn,
STC Chairwoman*

The candidate filing deadline for the STNC elections is approaching fast. If you have any thoughts about running for a neighborhood council board, please visit the STNC website for information and a candidate application. Deadline is Thursday, March 6th at 5 p.m.

To date we have a good group of candidates. You will have a chance to meet them at our

March 12 STNC meeting to be held at Mt. Gleason Middle School. Join us for refreshments starting at 6 p.m., presentations and "meet the candidates".

Our first Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council Newsletter has been distributed throughout the community. It has a lot of great news and updates. If you would like a copy, please contact Ed Rock at the STNC office and he will see that one is sent to you. Or, attend the next meeting -- we have copies.



Mt. Gleason Teachers - Robert Thurman, Shannon McCord, Gary Ireland

Upcoming Election Events

- Extra Candidate Information Session - March 5th at 6:30 p.m.
- Last Day to File to be a Candidate - March 6th at 5:00 p.m.
- First Candidate Forum - March 24 at 7 p.m.
- Townhall Candidate Mixer - March 29 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Second Candidate Forum - April 3 at 7 p.m.
- Election Day - April 5th - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

All events at
North Valley Neighborhood City Hall,
7747 Foothill Blvd., Tujunga

Visit our web site at
www.stnc.org or call the
STNC office at 818-951-7411

Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council

*By Jim Summers
President*

Our next Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council (GHSNC) meeting will be Thursday, March 13, 2008, at 7:00 pm at Tulsa Street Elementary Street School, 10900 Havenhurst Ave. The Agenda will consist of committee reports from Planning and Land Use, Ethics and Outreach, plus, we will discuss website management and renewal. Our meetings are always open to the public and we encourage your participation. Come and have a voice of your community.

Our major planning concern is the revision of the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan. The L.A. Planning Department will be conducting a Scoping Meeting on March 5, 2008 at 6:30 pm in Rawley Hall at Granada Hills Charter High School, 10353 Zelzah Ave., in Granada Hills. We encourage the public to attend and have your voices heard regarding the future of our community. Contact Anna Vidal at 818-374-5043. For more information, visit: www.ghsnc.org, or call 818-321-6259.

During our January meeting, our GHSNC voted to confirm that elections for membership would be held in September 2008, under the supervision of the city of Los Angeles Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. Changes in the City Charter would have allowed the GHSNC to extend the currently elected board's terms to 2010. However, the panel voted strongly for the board to maintain the current two-year terms.

You won't want to miss the Spring Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 15, sponsored by the Granada Hills Recreation Center, to be held at O'Melveny Park, at 17300 Sesnon, Granada Hills. There will be a Moon Bounce, Pace Painting and refreshments available for a small fee.

The Egg hunt is free for children through 12 years old.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council

By Tina Cameron

Crown Disposal is planning an expansion of its facility in Sun Valley and is seeking additional permits in order to process about 60% more material per day. Crown plans to provide additional information to the community at the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council (SVANC) Land Use Committee Meeting at 6:30 pm on Monday, February 25, at our SVANC office, at 9000 Sunland Blvd, #A, in Sun Valley. Our meetings are open to the public and we invite the community to come and participate.

Crown is a multi-purpose facility that processes refuse demolition materials, restaurant waste, and green waste. It recycles up to 80% of all waste that pass through their system. Crown intends to focus even more of its efforts on the recycling efforts so that less is deposited into landfills. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be made public to the community in March 2008. This is an ideal time for Sun Valley stakeholders to bring concerns or suggestions to the attention of those directly involved in the expansion.

Neighboring communities that have used up their landfills are sending their refuse and recycling to the Sun Valley area. We are the place for waste processing in all of LA County. It has always been a staple of Sun Valley, and it appears it will remain so for generations to come. While it is great for other communities and for the environment, Sun Valley is forever impacted as more materials arrive daily, and therefore, it is so important that our Neighborhood Council and our community get involved every time an expansion of a waste management company is planned.

Our community is expressing concerns regarding the following: the increase in the number of trucks causing traffic congestion which could result in accidents, debris flying out of trucks, increased dirt and dust, increased odors, increased birds in the area, and the potential for more pest problems which could create health concerns for our community. The present expansion plans show that only part of the facility is to be roofed, instead of all, which is a particular concern raised during the Council Meeting on February 12.

According to the Pepperidge University website, Crown sells recycled aluminum and plastics to manufacturers; wood chips to energy plants for fuel and is one of the largest compost producers. The need for this company and this industry is essential. Therefore, it is in everyone's best interest to work with these companies and help mitigate the challenges they face as they continue to accommodate our propensity to consume. Funding for the project comes from Crown according to the plans presented to our SVANC; the facility is 107,000 square feet and 40 feet high.

Our SVANC as joined with Foothill Trails District and Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Councils to publicize and hold our elections on the same date, which is April 5. We encourage everyone to become involved. Please consider running for our Board of Directors. For information on how to become a candidate on participate on a committee of your choice, call 818-767-8262, or visit our website at www.svanc.org. Our next General Meeting is Tuesday, March 11, starting at 6:30 pm, at Villa Scalabrini Retirement Center, 10631 Vindale in Sun Valley. Call 818-767-6766 for more information.

Sylmar Neighborhood Council

By Nick Krall

Public Relations Coordinator

The Sylmar Neighborhood Council (SNC) recently held elections for their Board of Directors. The Board for year 2008 is: Quyen Vo-Ramirez – President; Tammy Flores-Vice President of Administration; Rick Donnelly - Vice President of Communications; Randall Kelly – Treasurer; Nicholas J. Krall - Public Relations Coordinator and Land Use Committee Chair; Saul Gonzales - Community Based Organization; Gene GaitMaitan - Home/Condo Owner; Erlin Arellano - Youth Representative; Hector Cabrera - Member at Large; Hiral Bhakta - Retail Representative; Martin Laufer - Home/Condo Owner; and Estaban Tabres - Youth Representative.

Our meetings are noticed and we are encouraging all community members to come and address your concerns with us and get the latest updates on the issues and events in our community. Our Board of Directors Meeting is always on the 4th Thursday of every month, 6:30 pm, at Hubbard Street Elementary School, 13325 Hubbard Street in Sylmar. Our next meeting is Thursday, February 28. Come early and join us for refreshments! We are looking forward to seeing you there. Our Land Use Committee meeting is always held the first Monday of every month, 6:30 pm at our SNC office, 13515 _ Hubbard Street (next to Councilmember Richard Alarcon's field office). This is the place to discuss issues like the proposed Las Lomas project, which we are working on currently. Our next meeting will be Monday, March 1. Visit our website: www.sylmarnc.org. for more information.

Our SNC Board co-sponsored the Holiday in the Park event at El Cariso Park in December with Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's office and the Department of Parks and Recreation. The SNC selected \$300 in gifts for children who would likely not get Christmas gifts. We also sponsored \$200 in hot dogs for the LA Mission Police Station and their sponsored event called the San Fernando Toy Giveaway.

The SNC also outreaches to and also supports and advocates for all organizations in town. Our Sylmar Chamber of Commerce is celebrating its 50-year anniversary. (Its prior existence was under a number name). They held a recent election and the new Board of Directors members are: Cheri Blose, XXX Property Management – President; Barry Sylvan of Barry Sylvan Co. – 1st Vice President; Nick Krall, Primerica Financial Services – 2nd Vice President/Membership Director; Valerie Kieselhorst, Voila Photography, Guillermo Reyes, EcoQuest Health Products, Saul Gonzalez, Blue Graphics & Printing, Charlotte Bedard, Graffiti Busters & RM Accounting; Past President, Vanessa Smart, Hiral Bhakta They will be moving soon to a new location to be announced soon. Their upcoming events are a Networking breakfast at Denny's on Hubbard, at the 210, 7:30 am, Thursday, March 6, 2008, and a Chamber Lunch, location TBA, Wednesday, March 19, 2008 11:30 am. – For more information visit: www.sylmarchamber.com.

Panorama City Neighborhood Council

By Tony Wilkinson

President

One year after our official certification, our Panorama City Neighborhood Council (PCNC) will hold its second Board of Directors election. There are 16 candidates on the ballot vying for nine positions on the 21-member board. Despite the competition, everyone will win. PCNC received city approval for a by laws change that will permit five candidates who do not gain a seat in the election to serve as Alternates. Alternates will sit in place of elected Board members who are not able to attend meetings. In addition, no candidate for the North district renter's seat filed for the ballot. The vacancy will be filled by appointment if there are no write-in candidates.

Polling will be open from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm on Saturday, March 8, at Panorama Presbyterian Church, 14201 Roscoe Boulevard, Panorama City, CA 91402. Parking is off the alley that runs behind the church buildings. Stephen M. Box is the Independent Election Administrator. Jan Brow, 818-785-5624, heads the election committee. Volunteers to help with the election are needed and welcome. This will be the last PCNC election until 2010, when the City Clerk will run all neighborhood council elections.

PCNC is sponsoring a large Health and Safety Fair at Plaza del Valle on Saturday, February 28. The council is partnering with Agora Realty, Council District 7 and Mission Community Hospital in the effort. Kaiser Permanent and other local health organizations and businesses are supporting this event. Many people in the Panorama City area have health issues and are under-served by the health care system. The council hopes to make this an annual event.

The existence of a strong neighborhood council in Panorama City has figured into the realignment of Los Angeles Police Department station boundaries that will take place in November. Panorama City (ZIP code 91402) is now divided north and south along Roscoe Boulevard for police protection. Mission Area Station serves the north and the Van Nuys station serves the south. In the new alignment, Mission station will extend its boundary south to the Union Pacific railroad tracks, uniting the community under a single police command.

Mission Area station will also pick up Arleta from the Foothill division. The area West of the 405 freeway will go back to the Devonshire division. Mission will expand from seven to eight basic cars, which will be aligned largely on neighborhood council boundaries. Sylmar retains its two cars. Mission Hills and Arleta will each continue to have a dedicated car. North Hills east of the 405 freeway (no neighborhood council) will have one car. Panorama City will have three. Captain Jorge Villegas of Mission Area Station has worked closely with the community in establishing these boundaries.

North Valley Reporter

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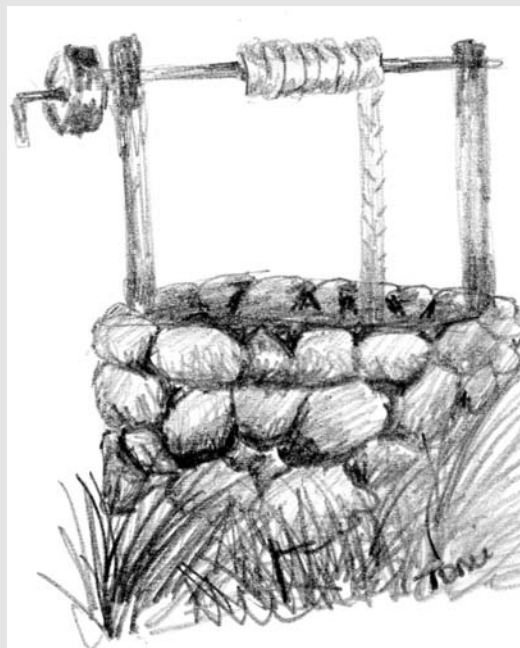
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THIS & THAT

Carrick's Journey -Part Six



By Tomi Lyn Bowling

It was still quite early in the morning. Drake had scarcely had time to rub the sleep out of his eyes when everything had gone completely hay wire. This old man, kneeling next to him, was talking faster than Drake could possibly comprehend. He found himself on the ground, peering over the huge stone along side the smelly old man. It went silent as Whiskers stopped his chatter. It was now completely silent except for the sounds of their own breathing and racing heart beats. As both heads, Drake's and Whiskers', arose slightly trying to get a glimpse shots rang out coming from across the way. Most of the bullets could be heard as they ricocheted off of the trees. There was very little space in between trees. Successfully shooting anything more than a few feet away required skill. As one bullet slightly grazed Drake's head, enough to part his wavy black hair, Whiskers was able to see exactly where the shots had come from. The bullet seemed to travel in slow motion across the top of his head, Whiskers kept his eagle eye on the source, took aim and fired. Whiskers had been successful at hitting his target exactly where he'd intended. The shooter made quite a loud noise as his body fell back leaving the rifle free to fall and land on the nearby stones. Suddenly they both had realized what had just occurred and looked at each other. Drake, uncertain where to go or what to say, began picking up the cooked eggs that lay on the dirt mixed with pine needles. He was stuffing it in his mouth as Whiskers stopped him and said, "we have more important matters to tend to right now son, let's go". Drake had a mouth full of dirt, pine needles and egg and was sloppily chewing what he could. Reluctantly Drake left the remaining eggs on the floor and gathered his wits, and his belongings, and began to follow Whisker's.

--to be continued.

Watch Your Wallet

By Tina Cameron

How Much Life Insurance Do You Really Need?

Life Insurance: The mere utterance is enough to make eyes glaze over. Many folks just don't want to deal with it because it gives them the willies, or it seems too complicated, or even better, "I won't need it, I'll be dead." Fine, a body dump in the desert it is.

Regardless, you should ask yourself, "Self, is there anyone in my life that I care about and might still be here after I'm gone?" If the answer is yes, you need life insurance. That's it, it's that easy. You really don't need to consider your age, but if you are in poor health you don't have time to wait. The older you are the more it costs. The only time someone probably does not need life insurance is if they have no debt, lots of assets, especially cash, and a will and executor with instructions to dispose of the body, using assets from the estate to pay for it. If you are a retiree with no mortgage, modest living expenses but very little cash in the bank, you should at least have a burial policy – more later. Unless you are a single person, with no living children, no living parents, no living siblings, and no living friends and are going to donate your body to science, you should have life insurance.

So, how do you determine how much you need? If you fall into the single category of with little to no debt (less than \$2,000), you need to at least have a \$10,000 policy so someone can give you a proper burial. Take that burden off your loved ones. If you don't, you are going to put someone else in debt to perform this courtesy for you. And that is just plain selfish.

If you have children, you should have a policy that covers your burial expenses (\$10,000 is the standard), enough to pay off all your debts - credit cards, car loans, home mortgage, business loans, and, something left over for college - that's how much you need. If you have a stay-at-home spouse with no marketable skills, you need to consider that into your calculations. But the bare minimum is to pay off your debts and your funeral expenses.

The way to choose an insurance company? 1) A plain vanilla, no-nonsense company; 2) one that has been around a long time; 3) has a good record of payouts. There are companies out there that are known for trying NOT to pay out – MetLife and Travelers have a bad rep. You don't need a California company. It can be anywhere in the U.S. If your employer offers a policy, fine, but also get one on your own. If you change jobs, that policy goes away.

Lastly, repeat after me, "I will buy TERM insurance only." It takes an extensive explanation why, but the short answer is, Term is insurance only, not combined with a savings account. Term is the cheapest there is and the quality is exactly the same. Other types such as "Universal" or "Whole-Life" are derivatives, which cost more so you can't buy as much coverage. Ask around for a reference to an insurance broker who will shop for you. However, if you get a broker that tries to push something other than term on you, go somewhere else. The biggest commissions come from these, so they love them! So, do your first grade math and get it done, TODAY

Ms. Cameron is a Corporate Risk Manager, Small Business Owner, and former Life Insurance Agent

Poetry in the Foothills

By Marlene Hitt

Sunland-Tujunga has had its share of poets and writers, with at least two poetry groups at any one time and a Poet Laureate program. The current Poet Laureate Program began as a tribute to John Steven and Ida McGroarty who used their home as a gathering place for prominent town citizens to enjoy cultural and fund raising events. The McGroartys were probably the town's most famous citizens. John wrote a weekly page in the Los Angeles Times in which he romanticized the Beautiful Vale of Monte Vista and the town of Tujunga, full of wondrous attractions and good folks. A man of many talents, he was known as an orator, congressman, columnist, publisher, historian, playwright, poet and community activist.

McGroarty served as Poet Laureate of California, 1933-1944. Memorization of one of his poems, "Just California", was required by California school students. Because of this legacy, Virginia Haddad, Tujunga poet and teacher at the McGroarty Art Center decided that we should carry on the tradition in order to stress the importance of the artists and writers, past and present, of this community. She began, in 1999, a program to elect a person worthy enough to represent us as Poet Laureate.

Many communities have caught on to this idea. If you can pull up PoetsLaureate.com you can see photos of nearly all of the California small town Poets Laureate. A Poet Laureate must be a writer who honors good craftsmanship and also be the most representative of the community.

For the two year term of the Poet Laureate, he or she will have duties that challenge him or her to adapt well to a variety of occasions: the maker of a toast, the bestower of a prize, the dedication of a park, the composer of an ode to the Little League team and such. As well as a position of high honor, this is a position of community service. The poet Laureate is an ambassador, a cheerleader for our community.

If anyone wishes to join in to be a part of the community of writers and poets, be aware of the Chaparral Poets who meet one Saturday a month at 2:00 for an open reading, and the Camelback readings on the Third Thursdays at 6:45 in the evening. Both meetings are held in the Multi-Purpose room at the Sunland-Tujunga Branch Library.

The Passing of the Laurels ceremony at which the public can meet the new Poet Laureate of Sunland-Tujunga (which includes Shadow Hills) will be at McGroarty Art center on April 13, 2008 at 4:00. This will be a lovely program with poetry, music, and good talk.

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A - Z39.2 Archives in a Nutshell

Jennifer Goldman, staff member of the Huntington Library, will be the guest speaker of the Little Landers Historical Society at Bolton Hall, located at 10110 Commerce, Ave., Tujunga, on Saturday, March 8, at 1 pm. Jennifer has been an Archivist and Associate Curator of Manuscripts at the Huntington since 2006.

This program will be of special interest for historians, hobbyists, genealogists and anyone interested in the who, what, when, how of the past, and think

archivist. Jennifer will talk about the archives profession and how it relates to the boxes we have in our garages. She will also talk about how you can donate your collections and what archivists are looking for and what "A - Z39.2" means to an archivist.

The next exhibit by Little Landers will be Sunday, March 16, titled "Paper Trail" about their archives

All their programs are open to the public at no charge. Call 818-951-1041 for further information.

A Day at the Auction

By Tomi Lyn Bowling

There were three open houses prior to auction day. That was the only chance to do any inspections. Once bought, there's no turning back. The LA Auction was split into two separate auctions, both being done simultaneously, but in different halls. One covered LA, the other Santa Clarita. Even with the added screen to show what was going on in the other hall it was impossible to pay attention to one auction and keep tabs on the other.

No matter how much the final bid is, there is an additional "Buyer's Premium" of 5%.

Buyers were required to show a cashier's check for \$5000 (\$10000 for more than one property) before being allowed inside and additional checks for the remainder of the cash or required down payment. There were approximately one thousand chairs, all spoken for. Several hundred people were still left standing and people were ushered to the back repeatedly. They kept coming, filling in the sides and aisles faster than ushers could clear them. There were countless "saved" chairs to irk those left standing. There were several large, high video screens, but still impossible to see for many.

"Under contract" meant someone had successfully bid on a property. Amazingly many properties would end up being auctioned again. This was a huge irritant for those waiting to bid on the later properties because that stopped the auction while they re-sold them repeatedly!

The lure of home ownership, at those enticingly low prices, was more than most could resist. In the catalog there was a figure that the home was "Previously Valued to". Those figures combined with the low minimum bid were irresistible. The "previously valued to" was completely fictional and created the illusion that these were great deals.

For example a local property at 1333 Idlewood in Glendale had a minimum bid of \$339,000 with the "Previously Valued at" of \$1,250,000. That house ended up selling for \$780,000, adding the 5% premium; the sale amount was \$819,000. That home needed work. A similar house four blocks away at 1530 Kenneth sold for \$705,000 in October and was a much nicer house. Many left out of frustration after seeing what kind of "deals" there were.

For some people it was a chance to buy their first home and maybe save a few bucks. For those people it might have been worth it. That is a huge maybe. Mostly, there were a lot of investors and speculators. In the final analysis, some may have gotten a fair deal, but did not come away with the great deal they'd expected. The most important ingredient is having done your homework and knowing what is a good deal. If you do that you will find a good deal with or without an auction no matter what you are buying. Editor's note: Ms. Bowling is a licensed Real Estate Broker and also a columnist for the North Valley Reporter

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THIS & THAT

L.A. City Fire Department to the Rescue

By Hugh Yuho

On February 14, Los Angeles City Fire Department Station No. 74 with Captain Waters in command arrived with a ladder truck to the American Legion Post 520 in Sun Valley after generously offering to repair a broken flagpole halyard. Old Glory is once again flying from our main flagpole thanks to the cooperation and expertise of the fire fighters from Station 74. Sun Valley American Legion Post 520 again salutes all of the uniformed fire fighters, law enforcement officers and armed forces personnel who daily put themselves in harm's way to preserve our safety.



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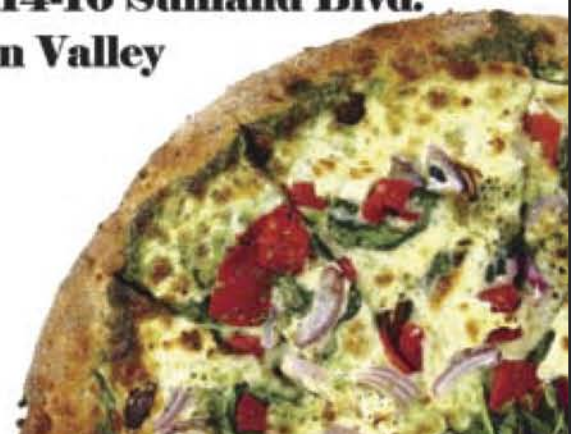
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