

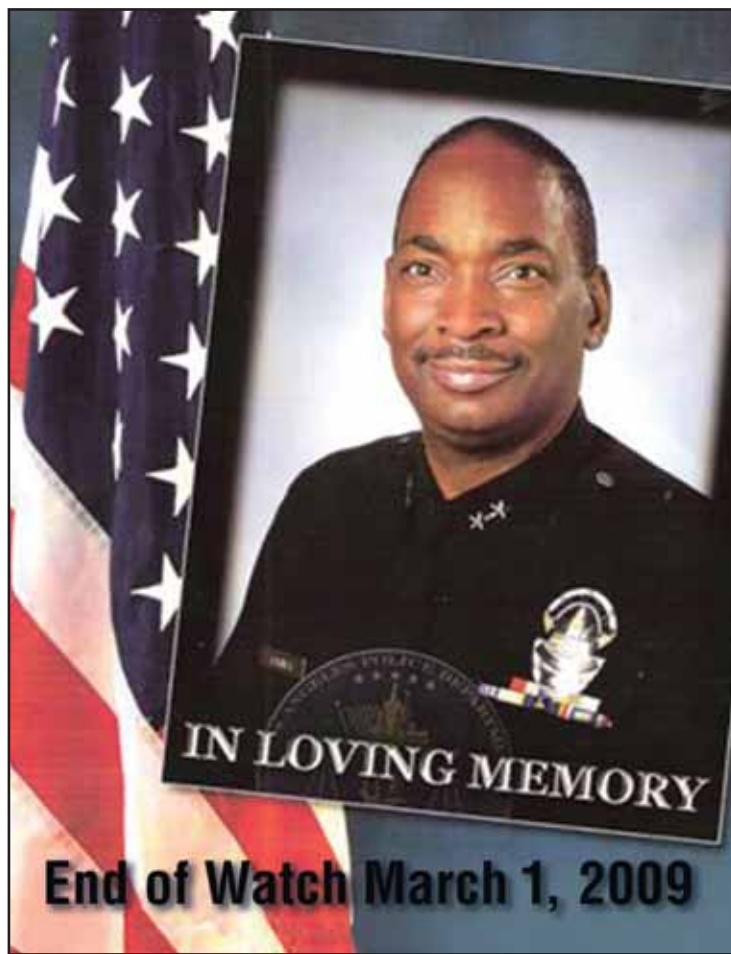
# Deputy Chief Kenneth O. Garner, LAPD

## Called to Serve a higher power, March 1, 2009

By Nina Royal

"We lost our beloved Kenny" were solemn words that were spoken by Vicki Burch, Co-Chair, who was expressing the sentiments of the LAPD's Foothill Area Community Police Advisory Board (CPAB) members before requesting a moment of silence in his memory, at their meeting on March 11.

Kenny, as he liked to be called, suffered heart failure, which caused the "end of his watch" while he was at home on the morning of Sunday, March 1st. He is a special loss, because he not only earned the love and respect of all the communities served by the Foothill Station but also all of the personnel who served under his command at Foothill where he served twice during his career. One as Patrol Captain and then he came back as the Commanding Officer. They knew that he could be counted on to lead in a fair, just manner. He took pride in mentoring and encouraging his officers to excel and be the best they could be. He continued with his own form of community based policing and keeping citizens engaged through the years even while Senior Lead Officers were no longer advocates for communities because the Senior Lead program was discontinued by the LAPD. He was presented with the "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty" Award by the Sunland-Tujunga com-



munity, for playing a major part in the reduction of crime in their community. No one was surprised and or more thrilled that he rose through the ranks so quickly.

Captain Curreri, the Commanding Officer of the Foothill Division, arranged to have a Van available to take members of Foothill, and Mission Area station CPAB (because they were under his command before the new station was commissioned), to carpool to his memorial service held on Monday, March 9, at the Crenshaw Christian Center FaithDome in Los Angeles. Thousands of people and many dignitaries were in attendance including Mayor Villaraigosa, Police Commissioner John Mack, Chief Wm. Bratton and Assistant Chief Earl Paysinger. It was specifically mentioned during his eulogy that the Foothill communities had a special place in his heart because of the love and respect they felt for him and he had always hoped to go back to the Valley one day.

Deputy Chief Garner leaves his 18 year old daughter, his pride and joy who is a college freshman, his parents and a brother and sister behind. Their strong faith will help them through along with the knowledge that Kenny Garner is loved and made a difference in many lives. He is sorely missed and will never be forgotten.

# Burying our Veterans Before they Die



Peggy Burgess of NHWNC

By Katharine Russ

In September 2007, the Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, gave testimony on Capitol Hill citing the Veteran's Administration (VA) shortcomings, "Delayed decisions, confusing policies, and the perception that DOD and VA disability ratings result in inequitable outcomes have eroded the credibility of the system, thus, it is imperative that DOD and VA take prompt steps to address fundamental system weaknesses." In 2009, deficiencies still exist and Veterans still receive shoddy treatment, experience long delays in services and see their benefits denied and eroding.

Marshall Jackson, a Vietnam Veteran, said, "I am a veteran of almost 16 years in the army - two tours in Vietnam, and I know a little about the VA system. I finally got my claim approved and it only took 28+ years. What really burns me up is that it was approved using the same information that I presented at the

very beginning, and to every Adjudicator and Administrative Law Judge in the appeals process."

Transcripts from a Dr. Phil show in December of 2008, gave commentary from Congressman Bob Filner, Chairman House Committee on Veterans Affairs, who approved the leases for the Sepulveda facility. He said its hard to get accurate information from the VA, because the administrators lie to his committee. "In the last two years, we have increased their budget, especially in mental health, almost 40 percent, which is unprecedented. So we give them the resources. The question is, how do they use them? If they want to cover up, they can cover up. We've had shredding of documents reported for claims. We've had backdating of things. We've had covering up suicide statistics, and we say, 'Fire those people,' but we don't have the authority to fire them, only the executive branch does."

The Department of Veterans Affairs FY 2008 Asset Management Plan (AMP) states, "This lease (Buildings 4 and 5) will result in the availability of safe, affordable supportive housing for veterans, on a priority basis. In addition, VA will receive as a consideration for this lease, the following; cash in the form of 10% of gross revenues received from filmmaking activities on the Property, in-kind services in the form of professional counseling, case management and crisis management services to veteran tenants, professional/technical training services for VA employees, and temporary use of the property by VA employees for VA activities. Overall this lease will result in significant cost avoidance to the Department by reduc-

ing reliance on inpatient and domiciliary resources, and will permit more resources to be directed toward direct veteran care." But in 2005, a letter from Theresa Castillo, Public Affairs Specialist Asset Management-Filming and Land Use, to Ralph Tillman, Director GLA Asset Management, indicated this was not the case. "It has come to my attention that Buildings #4 and #5 on the Sepulveda campus may soon become unavailable for filming due to a contract with New Directions. Losing Buildings #4 and #5 would be severely detrimental to Asset Management's five-year strategic plan and would dramatically decrease our department's ability to generate revenue," Castillo wrote. According to Castillo's projections, the VA would lose millions of dollars from this revenue between 2005 and 2010 since 90% of the revenues would no longer go to the VA if the zoning variance is approved.

Aside from issues and problems that plague the Veterans Administration, at hand is the granting of the variance so that the Sepulveda VA Hospital Buildings 4 and 5 can be turned into apartments that may (or may not) house Veterans. The provisions of the lease only give "preference" to veterans and make provision for changes to the lease that could redefine the tenants.

Case No. ZA-2008-2304(ZV)(SPR), request for a zoning variance that would change the zoning for 7.05 acres of the 160 acre site, was heard on February 20 and attended by over two hundred people, nearly all in opposition of the approval of that variance.

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# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Tammy Flores Prepares to Meet Disaster Head On



Tammy Flores

By Nina Royal

On 11/24/08, after the Sayre Fires, the Red Cross, FEMA and the Emergency Network Los Angeles, hosted a meeting at St. Didicus Roman Catholic Church, Sylmar, to discuss the formation of Long Term Recovery Groups, (LTRG) such as are now in place in the South following the Katrina disaster.

Non Profit organizations such as The Salvation Army, Christian Charities and many others, totaling approximately 30 organizations, came out to partner with the Long Term Recovery Groups.

After listening to FEMA's presentation and seeing the need to develop an LTRG in our community, Tammy Flores, Vice President of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council (SNC) knew she wanted to be part of the recovery and have the Sylmar Neighborhood Council take a lead role in forming a committee. Flores, a long time community activist, stepped up to the plate and volunteered to head the Recovery Groups, along with Ron Lopez with Christian Charities. She said, "I had no idea what I was getting into." Flores was also

one of the first responders, as a Crises Response Team member, who served unselfishly at the Chatsworth Train Disaster site last year.

The LTRG became the San Fernando Valley LTRG (SFV-LTRG). Together, she and Lopez completed policy and procedures and are currently developing by-laws. They are presently on their way to becoming a 501C3 Non Profit Corporation. The SFV-LTRG has partnered with the L.A Emergency Preparedness Foundation to be their fiscal sponsor in order to receive donations and grants until all the new group's requirements are in place. Flores says, "We are very excited about this! We will be their first client."

Monies received will be used to help families in need who have already exhausted all other available resources. Flores states, "Our Goal is to help families regain some of the normalcy they had in their lives prior to the disaster. We currently have a web site, [www.RebuildSylmar.org](http://www.RebuildSylmar.org), where families can register to receive assistance. We also have case managers ready to help them." SFV-LTRG plans to engage elected officials to work with them to service needy families.

Flores affirms that her personal goal is to have a LTRG in place in every district. "When a disaster happens, the switch will turn on and families can begin hav-

ing their needs addressed and start receiving guidance and assistance." Her vision is that all communities have an LTRG-501C3 organization order to begin receiving donations immediately, which will stay within their own communities. The SFV-LTRG, as well as the SNC, Fire Dept, Police Dept, and Emergency Management Department, are currently working together on emergency plans and Emergency Preparation Town Hall Meetings. The SFV-LTRG is currently planning trauma assistance workshops for families in need and will release a schedule shortly. Many victims of the recent wildfires have suffered not only material loss, but were disconnected from their friends and families as well, which, in a number of cases, lead to depression and despair. When disaster happens, victims and their families need to come together and share a quiet place in order to work through the experience and devastation together. A recent example is the Oakridge Mobil Home Park, where residents considered themselves to be one family. They became disjointed and remained separated for long periods of time. The reason? There was no conduit in place to help them keep in touch with each other during the recent, most disastrous fire in LA city's history, in terms of the number of homes lost due to a single blaze. Visit the SFV-LTRG website at: [www.RebuildSylmar.org](http://www.RebuildSylmar.org)

## YOU SHOULD KNOW...

By Nina Royal

**Fun(d) Raisers for Bolton Hall Museum** by the Little Landers Historical Society is being held at Dominick's Italian Restaurant on Tuesday, March 31, between 2 pm-9pm at 2948 Foothill Blvd, La Crescenta. Mention Little Landers or Bolton Hall and they will make a donation to the Museum.

Also 1,000 plants including ground covers, trees, flowers, succulents, vines, shrubs, and much more will be on sale to benefit the Museum on Saturday April 25. From 9 am to 1 pm. It will be held in the ally behind Rio's Dress Shop at 9929-31 Commerce Ave. in Tujunga. Plan on attending early because they sell out fast.

**The Wildlife Station**, unfortunately, is not yet open to the public as mistakenly reported. However, they will still be holding Volunteer Orientations and tours on April 11 May 9, June 13 and July 11, from 9:00am to 3:00 pm. A small donation

of \$25 is appreciated to help give medical care as well as provide food and shelter for the animals. For further information visit: [www.wildlifewaystation.org](http://www.wildlifewaystation.org).

**Annual horseback "Poker Ride"** is happening on Sunday, April 19

In Lake View Terrace starting at 9 am. The Rangers' Sidekicks, an equestrian-based organization that supports non-profit charities through monetary contributions and volunteer work, is the host. Participants can sign up for poker hands, at \$5 per hand, and refreshments at San Fernando Ranger Park, located at 11301 Clybourn Ave. in Lake View Terrace, or at any poker stop on the trails. For more information visit [www.oldmillsoap.com/PokerRide2009.pdf](http://www.oldmillsoap.com/PokerRide2009.pdf) or call Kristi at 818-352-8242.

**Earthday Activities** - are taking place in the valley. On April 25 volunteers will be joining together at Stetson Park Ranch, 13877 Glenoak Blvd in Sylmar with Million Trees LA, Hollywood/Los Angeles Beautification Team, Koreatown Youth and Community Center, Los Angeles Conservation Corps, and North East Trees to plant 150 trees that were destroyed during the Oakridge Fire. An appearance by Mayor Villaraigosa and Assemblymember Felipe Fuentes is expected. Starting time is 9 am until noon. For registration, contact [lsotelo@treepeople.org](mailto:lsotelo@treepeople.org) or (818) 623-4879

**LADWP Water Shortage rates** will be effective June 1. They seek to achieve 15% water savings citywide and in all customer sectors -- single-family, multi-family, commercial, industrial and governmental. Under shortage year rates, the current Tier 1 water allocation, which is the standard allocation every customer gets per billing cycle, will be reduced by 15%. A customer's allocation is based on number of family members, heat zone and lot size. Customers whose water use remains within their reduced allocation will actually see their bills go down. Customers who usually stay within their regular allocation and do not reduce their water use by 15% will pay a premium rate for each gallon they use beyond their new reduced water allocation. Customers who today exceed their regular allocation and pay Tier 2 rates routinely, and do not significantly cut their water use under shortage year rates, will see their water bills increase substantially. For more information [www.ladwp.com/waterrates](http://www.ladwp.com/waterrates) and [www.ladwp.com](http://www.ladwp.com)

**Passport requirements will change** on June 1. According to the WHTI Program, all U.S. citizens ages 19 and older must provide a valid passport book, passport card, or other travel document that denotes identity and citizenship to enter the U.S. upon returning from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean or Bermuda. U.S. citizens will no longer be able to prove identity and citizenship by relying on an oral declaration alone. For details regarding the WHTI program can be found on the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website: <http://www.getyouhome.gov/>

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# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Alarcon's Truck School Facing Opposition

By Katharine Russ

Controversy is mounting against the Teamster's Union-backed Truck Driver Training Program, which will be moved from Long Beach to the Lopez Canyon Landfill. Supervisor Antonovich's Office, four Neighborhood Councils and the Sierra Club are calling for a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to mitigate negative impacts, which were deemed to have little or no impact on the surrounding area.

An August 18, 2008 letter from David Thompson, Environmental Supervisor-Local Enforcement Agency City of Los Angeles, gave the green light for the project. "The Los Angeles Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) reviewed the proposed project to determine if it met the conditions of 27 CCR 21990 and would not negatively effect the final cover or the underlying landfill. After determining that the proposed project complied with 27 CCR 21990, the LEA signed off on the portion of the project under our jurisdiction."

Antonovich's office disputed the Bureau of Sanitations conclusions in the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (DMND) in a March 13, 2009 letter. The Department (Dept.) of Regional Planning, Dept. of Public Works, The Dept of Parks and Recreation, the Los Angeles County Sheriff, and the Consolidated Fire Protection District expressed their concerns over noise, traffic, the integrity of the Landfill and the construction of 12-foot sound barriers that were not apparent to inspections.

In their October 26, 2008 Resolution the Sierra Club asked that the City "Comply with its original agreement that the Lopez Canyon Landfill site remain closed for the additional 18 years as promised in the original agreement when the site was closed in 1996." The resolution asked for a full EIR and for full public involvement in the project.

The Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council said, "The Hanson Dam Environmental Center Awareness Fund funds are specifically designated for envi-

ronmental awareness programming at Hanson Dam Recreational Area. The Truck Drivers Training program at Lopez Canyon Landfill does not fit the fund's criteria per LA City Administrative Code Section 5.332.3." The Sierra Club agreed and called for a restoration of all funds incorrectly used and to restrict the money for those projects that have a clear "environmental benefit."

Nancy Woodruff, Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council's Land Use Chairman, said, "The City is pushing through a precedent setting land use for closed landfills, that not only reverses the promises to the community for peace and quiet after years of enduring trash dumping, but opens up the possibility for any number of business uses that have not been allowed on closed landfills which, by law, can never be built upon."

Councilmember Richard Alarcon could not be reached for comment before press time.

Katharine.russ@charter.net

## Historical Surveys to Begin in Los Angeles Communities

SurveyLA's citywide rollout is scheduled to begin this summer. Sunland-Tujunga, a community in the San Fernando Valley, is one of 11 community plans in the city that will be surveyed and scheduled for this summer. However, everyone is invited to "MYHistoricLA," a special citywide kickoff celebration of SurveyLA, Los Angeles' first-ever comprehensive survey of its historic resources which takes place Saturday, April 4, 2009, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, at the historic Los Angeles Central Library.

Larry Mantle, KPCC-FM's host of Air Talk, will lead a lively panel of City officials, preservationists, community organizers and developers discussing the

key issues surrounding Los Angeles' citywide survey. According to Ken Bernstein, Manager of the Office of Historic Resources, says Los Angeles has a rich and diverse cultural heritage and a remarkable architectural legacy; however, 85% of the city has never been surveyed to identify significant historic places. Historic preservation professionals conducting the survey cannot know all of the potential historic resources throughout the city. Therefore, input from community members is needed to provide information regarding special buildings and locations in each neighborhood.

Participants will learn how: survey teams will identify historic sites and how they will use the information provided. They will also learn how to bring "MYHistoricLA" to their own neighborhood and sign up to become a SurveyLA volunteer. Panel seating is limited and reservations are recommended

Visit <http://preservation.lacity.org/survey> for further information, or contact: Office of Historic Resources, Department of City Planning 200 N. Spring Street Room 620 Los Angeles, CA 90012, or call 213-978-1200, or Fax 213-978-0017



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# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Sunland - Tujunga

By Cindy Cleghorn

**Mission College** is coming to Sunland-Tujunga. Judith Valles, President of Mission College, is keeping her word and is committed to bringing a satellite college to town. Both President Valles and Larry Eisenberg, Executive Director of Financing, Facilities Planning and Development for the College District, will be guest speakers at the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) General Meeting on Wednesday, April 8, at 7 pm, at North Valley City Hall, 7747 Foothill Blvd, in Tujunga. The College Board is presently reviewing the former Kmart site and promises total involvement with the community regarding its development. Whatever site is selected will include a total Environmental Impact Review. If it is the Kmart site, they will partner with a developer who will bring in a Target or similar type business along with a "retail village" according to Executive Director Eisenberg. Refreshments will be served at 6:30 and neighboring community members are invited and encouraged to attend this very important meeting.



Linda Casteel

**Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council** - Two new members were appointed to the STNC Board during their last General Meeting. Linda Casteel, a former board member who recently retired from the S-T Library, and Luther Bedoyan owner of Classy Jewelers in Sunland are now Representatives for Region One and will be in-

stalled during the next board meeting on April 8, at the North Valley City Hall. The STNC Land Use Committee (LUC) recently confirmed four main architectural styles that are dominant in the community, in order to assist the City Planning Department, property owners and developers who plan to make future improvements to properties that are within the Foothill Blvd. Corridor Specific Plan area. The styles are Craftsman, Spanish, Art Deco and Local Rustic Style (River Rock). These basic styles offer a broad visual character



Luther Bedoyan

that represent the history of the Sunland-Tujunga community. Elaine Brown, President of the Commerce Ave. Owners and Business Restoration Assoc. (COBRA) and Nina Royal, Vice President-Outreach, were recently appointed to the LUC to fill vacancies.

On Tuesday, March 31, 7 pm, STNC is sponsoring a get together with all organizations in town including churches and schools, at the Elks Lodge in Tujunga, who offered to the host this unique event. They will be working in unison to plan dates and locations regarding their major events for at least a year. This will prevent overlapping, and provide each with the opportunity to share resources, logistics, outreach and volunteers. They hope to make it an annual event. The S-T Coordinating Council will continue to keep an ongoing Calendar that will be constantly updated with meetings and events as they are added in the future. The calendar is linked to both the STNC web site at [stnc.org](http://stnc.org) and the S-T Chamber web site at [stchamber.com](http://stchamber.com)

**The Foothill Town Center** at Commerce and Foothill Blvd appears to be progressing quickly. The Department of Transportation is anticipating increased traffic at that intersection and is currently working on plans to make it safer.

**S-T Chamber of Commerce** Easter Carnival is being held in Sunland Park April 10 through April 12. Friday 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday 12 noon to 10 p.m. For further information call: (818) 352-4433 or visit: <http://www.stchamber.com/sunland-tujunga-chamber/events.htm>

Nikki's Corner Café, owned by Yervand "Jack" Iskoyan, and the S-T Chamber of Commerce, held a ribbon cutting ceremony for his new business on March



Mark Seigel, Dr. Lloyd Hitt and Nina Royal

25th. This quaint coffee, sandwich and other "goodies" Café, located at 9925 Commerce Ave. in Tujunga, is a very welcome addition to the "Historic Olde Towne" neighborhood on Commerce Ave.

**S-T Business & Professional Women (BPW)** honored Nina Royal, Publisher/Editor of the North Valley Reporter and Vice President-Outreach for the STNC, with the "Community Woman of Achievement Award" and Mark Seigel with C&M Printing and Treasurer of the STNC, with the "Golden Nike Award" for his support of women, for the year 2008-2009. They were both recognized by many dignitaries for their numerous contributions to the community when the awards were presented in February during the BPW's Banquet held in their honor, at the S-T Elks Lodge in Tujunga.

*Editors' Note: Ms. Cleghorn is the former President and current Secretary of the STNC and owner of C & M Printing*



Sonia Tatulian Vice President of the Bank of America in Sunland received an Award from the Chamber during their Mixer.

## Granada Hills



Yardena Barzilay

**A new school is opening in Granada Hills.** Yardena's Hebrew School (YHS) Director, Yardena Barzilay, says she is excited about serving communities in the Granada Hills area and is accepting applications. Her mission is to help students study Jewish values and encourage them to lead a lifestyle based on religious sensitivity and personal observance of Mitzvot, holidays and The Ten Commandments. She believes that a Jewish education is the key element in ensuring a positive Jewish identity and the continuity of Jewish people. An Open House is scheduled for May 14, starting at 3:45 pm to 6:00 pm and everyone is invited.

Yardena, as she prefers to be addressed, says she wants to target families who are unaffiliated and would like to provide their children with basic Jewish knowledge and the continuity of Jewish tradition. She plans to work with these families rather than turn them away.

YHS has a well balanced and multi-faceted curriculum of Jewish education that will strive to achieve the following goals with love and understanding and will be a positive experience for the entire family in order to give students the opportunity to explore their identity as a Jew: to guide students in developing the skills required to practice and to participate in acts of kindness; to teach Jewish values and Tikkun Oam (to make the world a better place); to teach Hebrew reading skills in order to enhance the student's appreciation and participation in the Jewish community leading to his or her Bar or Bat Mitzvah, with the confidence to become a leader; to motivate students to accept responsibility and create a bond with Jews around the world and love for the Land of Israel.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Curriculum Highlights include: Hebrew reading, Torah Portion Haftarah, Blessings and Prayers, Jewish Values/Ethics/Tikkun Olam, Holidays/Heroes /Israel, Family Education as holidays occurs

Yardena believes that open flow of communication between teachers, students and parents is essential. Parent consultations can be in person, via phone and/or email. They are always welcome and invited to sit in the classroom.

The school, located at 1665 Rinaldi St., Granada Hills, will begin with a weekly class on Thursdays, from 3:45 pm to 6:00 pm. For more information call Yardena at 310-980-1836 or email: [yardb10@yahoo.com](mailto:yardb10@yahoo.com)

**A Traffic Signal** on Balboa at Knollwood Shopping in a North Granada Hills Neighborhood Shopping Center is in limbo. The project is listed as number 56 \$130,000 Balboa Blvd Traffic Signal at Knollwood Shopping Center Driveway Los Angeles CA 1 \$130,000 Streets/Roads 56 on the website. [http://www.stimuluswatch.org/project/by\\_program/Streets\\_Road](http://www.stimuluswatch.org/project/by_program/Streets_Road). According to that Webster, many community members voted 76% of 106 voted it to be a critical project. And they are hoping others will vote yes on the site in order to jump start the project.

## Arleta



Officer DeLuz and Proud Parents at Graduation

By Al Piantanida

Lee Perry, LAPD Senior Lead Officer and Robbery Detectives from Mission Division are working closely with Arleta's Community Watch Dogs, Neighborhood Watch, Business

Watch, Looky-Loos, Neighborhood Council and Councilmember Cardenas to mitigate the increase in street and business robberies in the Arleta community.

Those groups are making every combat the problem through community outreach, awareness and education regarding prevention measures. They suggest everyone be aware of their surroundings, notice persons who are loitering and paying undue attention businesses and homes in their neighborhood. They are asking everyone to report unusual to activity that may relate to a crime in progress and call 911 and report anonymously if they desire. For more information on joining in the effort, call Al Piantanida 818-897-9122.

**Arleta native, Luis Deluz**, is now Rookie Patrolman Officer Deluz who reported for duty in January at LAPD's Devonsire Division. Officer Deluz was raised in Arleta and graduated from San Fernando High School. He joined the U.S. Marine Corp and served two combat tours In Iraq. After being honorably discharged, he took over his family's business because his father becomes seriously ill. Upon his father's recovery, he was able to pursue his dream of attending the Police Academy and becoming one of L.A.'s finest.

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Pacoima

By Leroy Geter

**Volunteers are needed.** The Pacoima Community Youth Culture Center (PCYCC) is seeking volunteer community-based organizations, businesses, churches, and concerns residents of Pacoima to participate in the upcoming rally regarding the plans for restructuring the Pacoima Community Youth and Family Center located at 11243 Glenoaks Boulevard.

Leaders of the Youth Center and other programs housed in the community complex, learned of a proposal to change the facility into a one-stop family development center during a recent meeting with representatives from the City Community Development Department. A model is presently being considered by the Mayor and City Council. Some of the program managers currently operating at the center are not in agreement with the proposed changes.

A community rally and grassroots campaign is being planned to protest any action to change the mission and purpose of the complex without input from community leaders and stakeholders. Letters and fliers announcing the rally will be posted in various locations, including community churches, businesses, and other venues to get the community involved in this protest. For additional information contact: (818) 896-8878 (message).

**A Community Empowerment Forum is scheduled.** The Leader-to-Leader African American Community Empowerment Think Tank group (LLAACETT), a program of the Pacoima Community Youth Culture Center (PCYCC), is hosting a community empowerment forum entitled the "Stimulus Plan

and You!" on Thursday, March 26, 2009, starting at 6 pm at the Pacoima Community Youth and Family Center, located at 11243 Glenoaks Boulevard, Pacoima.

General Colin Powell once said, "Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand." It is with this thought in mind that this emerging body of critical thinkers has planned an evening for residents to come and learn about the many facets of the Stimulus Plan, which was signed into law by President Barack Obama under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Act is a nationwide effort to create jobs, jumpstart the economy, and place our nation in position to compete globally in the 21st century.

The forum is led by Mr. Edward Johnson, Associate and facilitator for the group's economic development and community empowerment module. Leroy Geter, Senior Associate for the LLAACETT Group will also provide important community updates as it relates to the job recruitment opportunities available during the construction phase and build-out of the new Plaza Pacoima complex, located at Paxton Street and Bradley Avenue in Pacoima. The public is invited to attend this event. For information, contact call 818- 896-8878.

The goal of the LLAACETT Group is to provide a forum through which residents of the community, African Americans in particular can learn about national, regional, and local laws that impact upon their educational, economical, physical (health), and political cultures and awareness and participation. The LLAACETT Group exists to advance public awareness and understanding of these broad fields; its strategy is to serve as a catalyst to mobile people, data, ideas, and resources to help improve the communities where African American and people of African descent work, live, and play. LLAACETT seeks to provide thinking points and offer techniques to its constituency groups that lead to greater independence and self-sufficiency as productive citizenry.

*Editors' Note: Leroy Geter is a Senior Associate of, LLAACETT Group, Vice President, Pacoima Neighborhood Council and former President/CEO Pacoima Community Youth Culture Center, Inc.*

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**Arl** - Arleta, **G.H.** - Granada Hills, **K.C.** - Kagel Canyon, **LA** - Los Angeles, **LVT** - Lake View Terrace, **LTC** - La Tuna Canyon, **M.H.** - Mission Hills, **NR** - Northridge, **NVCH** - North Valley City Hall, **Pac** - Pacoima, **S-T** - Sunland-Tujunga, **S.V.** - Sun Valley, **Syl** - Sylmar, **V.N.** - Van Nuys, **PC** - Panorama City

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**Tuesday, Mar. 31**  
**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Horsin' Around"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**All Organizations**  
Community Meeting  
S-T Elks Lodge  
11037 Commerce, S-T  
7 pm 951-7411

**Sunday, Apr 5**  
**Palm Sunday**  
**Officers Installation**  
S-T Elks Lodge  
10137 Commerce, S-T  
2-4 pm 352-2098

**Monday, Apr 6**  
**SNC Public Serv. Commit.**  
Sylmar Park  
13109 Borden, Syl  
6:30 pm

**PCNC-Commerce Com**  
Wells Fargo Bank  
8548 Van Nuys, PC  
2: pm

**Sylmar Woman's Club**  
Odyssey Restaurant  
15600 Odyssey GH  
11:30 am

**FTDNC Equest. Meet.**  
9747 Wheatland, SH  
7 pm

**Wednesday, April 1**  
**April Fools Day**

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

**NHWNC Gen Meet.**  
Holy Martyrs Aremen. Sch.  
1667 Parthenia, NH  
7 pm

**STNC LUC Committee**  
**North Valley City Hall**  
7747 Foothill S-T  
7 pm 951-7411

**Tuesday, Apr. 7**  
**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Horsin' Around"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**Bingo Night**  
S-T Elks Lodge  
10137 Commerce, S-T  
5 pm 352-2098  
Thursday, Apr. 9  
First Day of Passover

**FTDNC Exec./Gen Meet.**  
9747 Wheatland, SH  
7:30 pm

**N. Hills West NC Gen. Meet.**  
Sepulveda VA  
16111 Plummer Bg22 N.Hills  
7 pm 893-8613

**Thursday, Apr. 2**  
**PCNC Land Use**  
Mission Community Hospital  
14860 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
6:30 pm 894-7841

**Stonehurst Elementary**  
Open House  
9901 Dronefield, SV  
6:30 pm 767-8014

**MHNC Safety Comm**  
16161 Sepulveda, MH  
7 pm 892-2414

**Relay for Life Meet.**  
Sylmar Park  
13109 Borden, Syl  
7 pm

**Wednesday, Apr. 8**  
**Rotary Club**  
Coco's Restaurant  
10521 Sunland, S-T  
7 pm 951-5299  
Coco's Restaurant  
10521 Sunland, S-T  
7 pm 951-5299

**Granada Hills North NC**  
1st Baptist Church of GH  
11011 Hayvenhurst, GH

**Wednesday, Apr. 10**  
**Good Friday**

**Wednesday-Sunday, Apr. 10-12**  
**Easter Carnival**  
Sunland Park 352-4433

**Saturday Apr. 4**  
**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Horsin' Around"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**Friends of GH**  
Library  
10640 Petit, GH  
10:30 am 368-5689

**MHNC Youth Outreach**  
10161 Sepulveda Blvd.  
4 pm 892-2412

**MYhistoricLA**  
**L.A. Central Library**  
630 W. 5th Street  
L.A.Rm 620  
11 am - 4 pm  
213- 978-1200

**LANCC/SLAP**  
10am-3pm  
Hollywood City Hall  
6501 Fountain  
Info: lanccoalition.org/

**Wednesday, Apr. 10**  
**Good Friday**

**Wednesday-Sunday, Apr. 10-12**  
**Easter Carnival**  
Sunland Park 352-4433

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**Sunday, Mar. 29**  
**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Horsin' Around"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**Chavez Day March**  
Guest Speaker Hilda Solis  
15174 San Fernando Mission, MH  
11 am

**Cultural Arts Festival**  
Richie Valens Park  
10731 Laurel Canyo, Pac  
12:30 PM

**Monday, March 30**  
**GNCC General Meet.**  
NVCH, 7pm 951-7411

**STNC Education Meeting**  
Van Gogh Elem. School  
17160 Van Gogh, GH  
6:30 pm

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# Mark YOUR Calendar

**Saturday, Apr. 11**

**Work of the Hands Exhibit**  
Little Landers Historical Soc.  
Bolton Hall's 96th Anniversary  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
1 pm 951-11041

**Sunday, Apr. 12**

**Easter Sunday**  
Kiwans Easter Sunrise  
Little Landers Historical Soc.

**Monday, Apr. 13**

**PCNC Outreach**  
PCNC Office (4th Floor)  
14500 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
6:30 pm 714-2133

**SNC Land Use Com**

Sylmar Park  
13109 Borden, Syl  
6:30 pm

**MHNC Zoning & Land Use**

10161 Sepulveda., MH.  
6:30 pm

**Tuesday, Apr. 14**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Work of the Hands"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**PCNC Commerce**

Wells Fargo Bank  
8548 Van Nuys Blvd., PC  
2:30 pm 714-2133

**SVANC Gen Meet**

10631 Vinedale, SV  
6:30

**SNC Outreach Com.**

Sylmar Park  
13109 Borden, Syl  
6:30 pm

**MHNC Board/Land Use**

LAPD Mission Station  
1121 Sepulveda, MH  
6 pm

**Wednesday, Apr. 15**

**Tax Day**

**Community Police Advisory**

Board (CPAB)  
11121 Sepulveda, MH  
8:30 pm

**Rotary Club**

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

**Pacoima NC Gen. Meet.**

Pacoima Comm. Center  
11243 Glenoaks, Pac  
6:30 pm

**No .Hills West NC**

Sepulveda Va  
16111 Plummer, N. Hills  
7 pm 893-8613

**Bingo Night**

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

**Thursday, Apr. 16**

**PCNC Safety Com.**

Plaza del Valle  
8614 Van Nuys #BPC  
5:30 pm  
STNC Safety Comm.  
NV City Hall  
7747 Foothill S-T  
6 pm 951-7411

**S-T SERVS**

NV City Hall  
7747 Foothill S-T  
6:45 pm 563-1962

**STNC Outreach Comm.**

NV City Hall  
7747 Foothill, S-T  
7:30 pm 951-7411

**Mixer**

SVA Chamber of Commer.  
Dimion's Restaurant  
8274 Sunland, SV  
5:30 - 7:30 pm

**Tip-A-Cop**

Claim Jumper Restaurant  
Northridge Fashion Center  
9429 Tampa, Nrth  
5-9 pm

**April 18 and 19**

**Relay for Life**  
Olive Vista Middle School  
14600 Tyler Street, Syl  
Information: 818.915.0406

**Saturday, Apr. 18**

**Book Sale**  
Friends of the Library  
Osborne & Foothill, LVT  
10am-2 pm 897-7644

**Sunday, Apr. 19**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Work of the Hands"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**Elks Famous Omelete Bar**

S-T Elks Lodge #2098  
10137 Commerce, S-T  
7\$ 9 am-12 pm 352-2098

**Monday, Apr. 20**

**STNC/LUC Comm**  
North Valley City Hall  
7747 Foothills, S-T  
7 pm 951-7411

**Tuesday, Apr. 21**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Work of the Hands"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**PCNC Rules & Finance**

PCNC Office (4th Floor)  
14500 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
5:30 & 6:45 pm 714-2133

**Neighborhood Watch**

NV City Hall  
7747 Foothill, S-t  
7 pm 756-7766

**MHNC Beauti. & Cult. Com**

10161 Sepulveda., MH.  
6:30

**Wednesday, Apr. 22**

**Earth Day**

**Rotary Club**

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

**Bingo Night**

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

**Thursday, Apr. 23**

**Panorama City NC**  
Mission Community Hospital  
14860 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
6:30 pm 785-9355

**Sylmar NC Gen. Meet**

Sylmar Elementary  
13291 Phillippi, Syl  
6:30 pm

**Saturday, Apr. 25**

**MHNC Outreach-Gen-Youth**  
Volunteers Needed  
2 pm call 892-2414

**Plant Sale -Little Landers**

Historical Society  
Back alley 9929 Commerce, S-T  
9 am- 1 pm

**Fire Recovery Planting**

Stetson Ranch Park  
13877 Glenoaks, Syl  
9 am-12 pm 818 623-4879

**Used Book Sale**

Granada Hills Library  
10640 Petit, GH  
9 am-1 pm 368-5687

**Sunday, Apr. 26**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Work of the Hands"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**Monday, Apr. 27**

**GHNNC Board Meet.**  
Van Gogh Elem. School;  
17160 Van Gogh St. GH  
6:30 pm

**PCNC Public Safety**

PCNC Office (4th Floor)  
14500 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
6:30 pm 984-2133

**SNC Gen. Meet.**

Hubbard St. Elementary  
13325 Hubbard, Syl  
6:30 - 9:30pm  
GHNNC Board Meet.

**Tuesday, Apr. 28**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Work of the Hands"  
10110 Commerce, S-T  
Docent Tours  
1-4 pm 352-3420

**Emergency Preparedness &**

Crime Prevention Expo  
CSUN  
18111 Nordhoff.Nrth  
10 am-2pm 677-5973

**Wednesday, Apr. 29**

**Rotary Club**

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

**Bingo Night**

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

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# PUBLIC SAFETY

## The Race is on-Join our Team



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

The weekend of March 14-15 was a very special time in the desert, which connects California to Nevada. During that weekend the largest law enforcement sponsored sporting event took place: the 25th annual Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay Race. The relay race consists of 20 runners per team, spanning a distance of 120 miles. Two hundred sixty five teams of law enforcement officials from throughout the United States and Europe participated in this grueling race, running in the heat of desert during the day and through the cold of the desert at night.

This event is significant in several ways. Not only does it provide additional rationale for officers to stay in good physical shape throughout the year, but it also helps build positive relationships among the participating agencies and a strong sense of pride and comradery in the individual teams.

Foothill Area's running team finished second in its category this year, the best finish in the many years Foothill has fielded a team! Just as importantly, all team members returned uninjured and ready to continue our other significant race, the race to run crime out of the Foothill Area.

I am very happy to tell you that, thus far this year, Foothill Area is experiencing the largest percentage decrease in crime throughout the City of Los Angeles with a reduction of 16.2 percent decrease in crime when compared to the same time last year. With your help, I am convinced that we can continue to improve upon our crime reduction. Join our team in running crime out of the Foothill Area. Avoid becoming a crime statistic by properly securing your valuables, being mindful of your surroundings and advising us of suspicious or criminal activity in your neighborhood. Join your Neighborhood Watch to become more educated about crime in the area and how to avoid victimization of crime. Call our Community Relations office for more information at (818) 756-8866.

## Council District Six Sponsors Self-Defense Class

Men, Woman and Children of all ages learned how to protect themselves during the self-defense class held on Saturday March 21, at the Fernangeles Recreation Center in Sun Valley. The class was taught by Instructor Tim Saito, who volunteers his time and service, is a Deputy City Attorney who works in the Neighborhood Prosecutor Program and is assigned to LAPD's North Hollywood Division. This class is highly recommended for Senior Citizens, who learned quickly how to use a cane to pull their attacker off his feet



## Alarcon Introduces Motion to Help Wildfire Victims

Los Angeles- – Today, L.A. City Councilmember Richard Alarcón introduced a motion instructing the City of Los Angeles to immediately accept state funding that will be used to create temporary jobs for workers who have been displaced by the 2008 wildfires. The jobs will be overseen by the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, and the jobs created will be to assist in the cleanup and repair of areas damaged by the Sayre Fire. Additional jobs will also be available for other dislocated workers or those who are “long term unemployed,” meaning they have been unemployed for five of the last twenty-six weeks. Approximately 50 temporary jobs (6 month length) are expected to be created from this funding.

The funding for this program is from a \$766,075 grant National emergency Grant Workforce Investment Act funds from the State of California's Employment Development Department. The city has previously received funding for post-disaster job creation. In November of 2007, the City Council approved the receipt of an initial allocation of \$770,460 from the same funding source, which enabled the City to partner with the County of Los Angeles Workforce Investment area for cleanup and restoration of areas affected by the 2007 wildfires.

The grant that Councilmember Alarcón is calling on the city to accept is a new, separate grant of funds and is not part of the “phase one” funding.

Councilmember Alarcón has been a strong advocate for the residents who were affected by both the Marek and Sayre Fires. He previously created a \$100,000 Relief Fund for families who lost their homes. Monies from this fund are currently being distributed to the affected families.

He also hosted a holiday event for over 500 people and received donations from over \$60,000 worth of toys, food, clothing and other items and worked with the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) action to allocate \$500,000 for Sayre Fire victim assistance. He also help persuade the City Los Angeles take over the debris removal process from the Oakridge Park area and has worked to expedite the clean-up and ensure Federal funding for the process.

## An Important Message



*Stacy Gerlich, Captain/Paramedic  
CERT Unit Commander  
Los Angeles Fire Department*

To all CERT member in Los Angeles. Due to a recent earthquake swarm near Bombay Beach in the Salton Sea area, we are asking that all CERT members make sure that your ready bags are deployable should the need arise. Please understand that this is

NOT an ALERT! Should something change, you will be notified through the automated system or via email. Thank you for your cooperation.



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This information was printed in the letters section of Western Horseman Magazine April 2008



# COMMENTARY

## Villaraigosa for Governor?



By Ron Kaye

Newly-elected to a second term by a slim majority, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is gearing up to run for governor on a platform that he can do for the State of California what he's done for the City of Los Angeles.

Unfortunately for his prospects, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Legislature already beat Villaraigosa to the most important task of bankrupting the state. That, after all, is what Villaraigosa has done for the city.

Despite raising fees, taxes and rates astronomically, Villaraigosa has run up a \$430 million deficit for the coming year, or, is it the \$700 million City Hall sources are whispering about, or, the \$1 billion it's likely to be by June.

But what's a few hundred million dollars among the taxpayers, ratepayers and feepayers of Los Angeles? It's a lot actually, when you think about it. Villaraigosa tripled trash fees to hire 1,000 extra cops and he's actually achieved nearly 800 of them. But, it's come with an additional price. There aren't any more officers on the street, mostly because 600 civilian LAPD jobs have been left open and most of the tens of millions of dollars in extra trash fee money

were spent wherever it served the mayor's political interests, if not the public interests.

So, what is the mayor going to do about the massive budget hole that his sweetheart deals to labor unions, developers and contractors have wrought? He's given every indication that he will cut public services even more and raise fees everywhere he can, no matter what the cost to the quality of life of the residents, no matter what the cost to business opportunities and job creation.

Police and fire unions, looking greedily at the six percent raises being given to Department of Water and Power workers, are aggressively demanding big wage increases. Healthy increases are already in contracts for other city workers. And their pension plans that pay up to 90 percent of final salaries with lifetime family health benefits have to be made good for the huge losses they have suffered because of the Wall Street meltdown.

The sad truth is that for years L.A. city government has been a jobs program, not a public services program. City government simply costs too much and delivers too little. Even as poverty in the city has soared and major corporations with good-paying jobs fled, city salaries have kept going up and up.

There is nothing left to squeeze out of the residents and businesses of the city and borrowing and selling

off city assets, as the mayor intends to do, is unthinkable. It's a bill that we will have to pay in the future, a debt that will prevent us from fixing our neighborhoods for a generation no matter how fast the economy revives. The truth that will not be spoken at City Hall is that public employees are in the same position as autoworkers who are agreeing to decreases in salaries and benefit cuts to keep their jobs and keep public services going.

There are huge sums of money owed the city that must be collected and unproductive programs that must be eliminated. Public pay and benefits must also be brought in line with the private sector which is usually lower for the like positions.

Don't count on the mayor to ever suggest such a thing unless the same kind of grassroots effort that went into fighting Measure B to a stalemate, is brought to bear on the city budget.

Without that pressure from the community, business and labor and people of all political beliefs, you are going to be hearing a lot of campaign slogans that sound like this: "Nobody knows how to squeeze more money out of the public than I do. Elect me governor and I'll balance the budget on the backs of working people just like you." Editors' Note: Ron Kaye is a former Editor of the Daily News and Chairman of Saving L.A. Project, website: ronkayela.com

## State of the Housing Market: The Silver Lining

By Craig Price

There is a great deal of negativity in the news surrounding real estate these days. However, there are also a lot of positive things going on unnoticed.

According to the Southland Regional Association of Realtors' website, single-family home sales in the San Fernando Valley increased 13% in 2008 and 21% in January 2009. Single-family home sales in the Santa Clarita Valley increased 10.1% in 2008 and 48.5% in January 2009! Eventually prices will rise again.

With lower resale prices and recent declines in the mortgage interest rate, the real estate market becomes dramatically more inviting for entry-level buyers. The SRAR reports that affordability of homes in California more than doubled last year. A recent study found that approximately 53% of California households can afford to buy an entry-level home, up from 24% for the same period a year ago.

Many people are unaware of incentives now available to buyers. The SRAR is currently offering a \$4,000 grant with no repayment requirements to low- and moderate-income households who purchase a home in the

San Fernando or Santa Clarita Valley. President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act into law on February 17th, 2009. This stimulus package includes a Federal Housing Tax Credit of up to \$8,000 for first-time homebuyers who purchase a primary residence between January 1, 2009 and December 1, 2009.

This is an increase from the \$7,500 that was already in effect. The new tax credit is also different. It does not have to be paid back if the homeowner stays in the home at least three years.

While lenders are still reluctant to write loans, there are several options available to people who want to buy. FHA-insured loans have become popular again and have many benefits. Almost anyone is eligible for an FHA-insured home loan – not just first-time buyers. There are also no limits on the household income or price of the home being purchased. Even more appealing, the down payment required is as low as 3.5%, as of January 1st, and there are no prepayment penalties. Finally, the loan limit on FHA-insured loans was raised from \$625,000 to \$725,000 by the recent stimulus package.

For consumers having difficulty securing a loan, the Department of Veterans Affairs and credit unions may provide a solution. The VA doesn't make loans, but they guarantee payment of loans if the buyer defaults. Many lenders will accept this guarantee as a substitute for a down payment. If a consumer is men or women who served in our armed forces, the VA may be able to help secure a home loan. For those who belong to a credit union, there are also advantages to home loans made by those institutions. Credit unions often offer add-on fees that are much lower than most other financial institutions. They are also service-oriented institutions, who make their loans very consumer-friendly.

Today, the real estate market is much more complicated than the doom and gloom that the media may lead the public to believe. Today's market is a buyer's market, unlike any we have seen in recent years, and opportunities still exist. I invite you to contact me for a market analysis on the real estate market in your neighborhood, at no charge. I am happy to discuss your options with you and guide you in venturing into the real estate market. I can be reached at CraigPrice@kw.com

## Freedom



By Robert J. Barbera

The very hope of most people is to be free. However, do we take the steps to be free? Over the years Americans have become less self-reliant. This is acted out in many ways.

We have become more and more accustomed to government entitlements. If you don't earn enough the government provides tax refunds (an oxymoron) even if you haven't paid taxes. The list of entitlements continues on to food with food stamps, rent through Section 8, free legal and medical service etc. etc. The programs are idealistic, which could be a good thing, however, the abuse is rampant.

Restrictions and regulations have mounted over the years. Environmental controls on land use and build-

ing development have preempted one's own decisions and development plans. Health and safety regulations have stymied production.

The complicated mix of sales taxes, property taxes, income taxes and state taxes are confusing and confiscatory. Our progressive tax system penalizes success. We have become a nation of litigants. Many of us face consequences when trying to perform our services.

Special business interests groups from farming to manufacturing receive subsidies. Lately, big business comes in with the expectation of being bailed out for their mismanagement.

In the past, it was expected for one to be independent, responsible, and self-reliant. Now problems are solved at someone else's expense. The government becomes the enabler, and we give up our freedom. In short steps we come to expect a lifting hand but over

time we expect the help received as a right. The lawmakers, acting as our superiors, take resources and productivity from one group and give entitlements to another. For their interventions, they wish to be re-elected. Or worse yet, the politician loves the power of being benevolent. The great example of this was to encourage home ownership. The whole system of housing went "Hellter Skellter" to provide housing. As a result our economy broke down.

Our representatives are supposed to be servants of the people. The people are now the servants of the representatives. The price we have paid is the loss of freedom. Let us recapture our freedoms of the past by being independent and self-reliant.

Editor's Note: Mr. Barbera is Chairman of the Americanism Educational League. To contact him, visit: <http://www.americanism.org>

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# SOUNDOFF

## Huge Victory for Mission Hills Surrounding Communities

With approval from the court, on March 6, 2009, the Los Angeles City Council voted to resume construction of the expansion of Providence Holy Cross Medical Center in Mission Hills. Due to a technicality, a judge issued a "Stop" notice last year, which resulted in construction coming to a grinding halt.

When completed, the new trauma center will provide, among other services, 101 new inpatient beds, ten semi-private overnight rooms for ER patients, a 12 bed Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, additional ICU beds and new labor and delivery beds. All at no cost to the City. In addition to bringing desperately needed

access to expanded health care to communities in the Valley, the expansion will provide jobs for 300 workers at a time when unemployment is at a 25 year high.

Even with this good news, it's not over yet. However, as we await the final outcome, I would like to take this opportunity to offer a sincere thank you and acknowledgement to all past and present Mission Hills Neighborhood Council (MHNC) Board members as well as our Zoning and Land Use Committee for your insight, vision, dedication and perseverance. From the very start, by taking the swift and determined action necessary to support the expansion of

Holy Cross Hospital, the MHNC provided a true representation of the expressed wishes of the majority of our stakeholders.

The MHNC extends a special thank you to Maria Townsend and Holy Cross staff for their relentless efforts in lobbying for this worthy and honorable cause. The San Fernando Valley is now a little closer to having a safer, more secure place in which to live and raise our families because of this victory.

*David Guzman*

*President, Board of Directors*

*Mission Hills Neighborhood Council*

## Leaving a Golf Course and Community in the Lurch

If L.A. City Councilmember Wendy Greuel had spent as much energy on saving the Verdugo Hills Golf Course as she did on her campaign for L.A. City Controller, the golf course would be in safe hands by now. If Councilmember Greuel had taken the initiative shown by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, local community leaders, and even the eager-to-sell property owner, she could have cinched a deal in the form of a multi-jurisdictional purchase of the golf course, preserving a valuable recreation and open space resource shared by numerous communities. Instead, Ms. Greuel has only talked the talk during the past three years, letting fortuitous circumstances dwindle, and now the owner/developer of the golf course is proceeding with plans for an Environmental Impact Report for a proposed development of 229 homes on the golf course. Ms. Greuel will be moving on to the L.A. City Controller's office on July 1 with no apparent plan for a golf course procurement in place, leaving the residents of Sunland-Tujunga, La Crescenta, Montrose and Glendale to gear up for what may be a protracted, exhausting battle with the developer.

And make no mistake--this is not just an unfortunate turn of events. During the past three years, the Verdugo Hills Golf Course Committee has made monumental efforts toward working with Councilmember Greuel's office to save the Verdugo Hills Golf Course, and she responded with a pledge to secure a purchase deal prior to her departure from Council District 2. She agreed to explore all possible funding sources through city, state and federal designations. Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy representatives have offered various scenarios for possible funding, and the Verdugo Hills Golf Course Committee presented a visionary plan for a golf course/regional park that could trigger funding for recreation, watershed and wildlife habitat. Experts and government officials from surrounding communities have suggested additional funding avenues as well. Councilmember Greuel heard all of it and pledged to research the funding options, but she has not delivered. When pressed for answers at community meetings, Ms. Greuel's staff continues to make excuses and hazy speculations, with nary a clear direction to save the golf course.

The current poor economy is no excuse for lack of a deal. Since 2006, the Verdugo Hills Golf Course Committee has advocated creative, cooperative funding, and it remains a viable avenue for Councilmember Greuel today. Ms. Greuel's constituents and surrounding communities expect her to step up and fulfill her promise to structure a deal to save the Verdugo Hills Golf Course. She needs to finish her job before heading out of town.

*Sharon Hales*

*La Crescenta*

*Editor's Note: Sharon Hales is a member of the Verdugo Hills Golf Course Committee*

## Thank You all - for Your Big Hearts

First, I want to thank City Councilmember Richard Alarcon for stepping up to the plate regarding the wildfires. He is making sure that the cleanup is getting done in an efficient manner, and he has also helped many families, who are victims, in their time of need.

I am blessed to be a part of the revitalization effort and look forward to the day when all families affected by the fire are able to go back to their homes, and we can celebrate their good fortunes together.

I also want to thank every single volunteer for their many hours of dedicated work, without pay, for helping the SFV- LTRG, and who continue to give all the love in their hearts to see that every family gets the assistance they need.

*Tammy Flores*

*Co-Chairperson, SFV-Long Term Recovery Group*

*Vice President, Sylmar Neighborhood Council*

## Bill Robertson for Council District Two

Several local activists have been seriously looking for a possible grass roots candidate to run for Council District 2. We all agree that it should be someone who has real experience in dealing with the city departments, the City Council, and the Mayor's Office. I think that possible candidate could be Bill Robertson, the head of the Bureau of Street Services.

Bill, who lives in Tujunga, is part of the equestrian community. As Director of Street Services, he understands the unique needs of each part of this district. He is also passionate about working with NCs throughout the city.

I have dealt with him on several street projects over the years and he gets things done! He is no politician, but he has worked in the city for 25 years, working his way from truck driver to the head of the Bureau and is well-liked and respected by everyone from the secretaries in his department to the politicians he has to work with. I have talked to him, he believes in the autonomy of communities. I believe that if we could convince him to run, he would truly serve the best interests of all our communities in District Two.

*Terry Hake-Church*

*Tugging*

### Continued from cover — Veterans

Under questioning by AZA Linn Wyatt, Consultant Lee Ambers stated that in a private meeting with Michael LoGrande, Chief Zoning Administrator, and Gail Goldberg, Director of City Planning, LoGrande and Goldberg had decided that Gallo could sign the application. The Application was signed by Lessee, Dora Leong Gallo, CEO of A Community of Friends, (ACOF) on 6/4/08 without Power of Attorney to act on behalf of the VA. According to the Applicant's affidavit: "Under penalty of perjury the following declarations are made:

The undersigned is the owner, or lessee if entire site is leased, or authorized agent of the owner with power of attorney or officers of a corporation."

A Zone Variance is, in effect, a zone change although it applies only to a portion of the property. ACOF is not the property owner and, as Gordon Murley, author of PF Zoning and Member of South Valley Area Planning Commission, pointed that ACOF is not the owner, therefore the application should not even have been accepted. Murley also told Wyatt that she

could not make at least three of the five mandatory findings necessary for approval.

"The Master Plan for the Sepulveda facility does not exist. Before a project like the New Directions Sepulveda I and II is approved, a plan for the site that boldly looks to serving the veterans and their families in the future should be considered. The San Fernando Valley communities have a large stake in this rare and valuable VA property. It should not be redeveloped nor committed to permanent uses without careful overall planning," said Lewis Brown, President North Hills West Neighborhood Council (NHWNC).

Councilmember Greig Smith said, "We cannot comment as this is an ongoing and open land use application with facts still coming in."

Peggy Burgess, Stakeholder-member of NHWNC Land Use Committee said, "The controversy is more than a 'land use' issue. It represents a blatant disregard by the VA for veterans to which the City has become a part of. Granting the variance would severely debilitate and incapacitate the more than 150,000 veterans who rely on the Sepulveda facility for medical care and

who are now forced to travel to West Los Angeles for acute care. Add to that equation the thousands of Afghanistan and Iraq soldiers who have been deployed multiple times, unlike any other war, and the end result will be a critical shortage of acute care. The buildings must be restored to a full service medical facility. The Enhanced 75 year leases will pave the way for further building on the 160-acre site as well."

There are more than 230,000 stakeholders, Neighborhood Councils, Veterans, and Civic Organizations etc., who have voiced strong opposition to the Sepulveda Veterans Hospital Project.

Robert Rosebrock, Co-Director - We the Veterans and Director - The Veterans Revolution, lamented, "Once this 'community' group gets into the Sepulveda VA, it will become as corrupt as the West LA VA that has leased 20 acres for a wealthy private community school, leased two Veterans theaters to an entertainment group for a 'community cultural center' and 16 acres for a 'public community park,' while Veterans healthcare services go neglected."

*katharine.russ@charter.net*

# HERE'S MY CARD



## Carrick's Journey —Part Sixteen

By Tomi Lyn Bowling


A little charm would do no good at all. Whiskers was a short, dirty, bearded, scruff of a man with teeth missing and a smell that preceded him everywhere. It would take a great deal more than just a little charm to make these women want anything other than getting as far away as possible, as quickly as possible, from the man. As Whiskers smiled and batted his eyelashes, the women, who were still focused on the huge clump of spittle he'd just left on the floor, simply ignored him.

Drake had been very anxious to meet the village elders so he finished embracing his old friend Whiskers and walked proudly to the table to introduce himself. Fanella jumped ahead and quickly began the introductions. "This is Drake, our newest visitor to the camp, and his mother, Madeline".

There at the table, seated as though they were a high counsel, were five elderly men. The one in the middle was clearly the man in charge and this was very visible even to a newcomer. Each of the men stood up to shake hands with the visitors, while introducing themselves. "Lovely to meet you Madeline, and Mr. Drake, my pleasure. My name is Thomas," the first man said as he shook their hands in turn. Drake did not speak up but allowed his name to be referred to as Mr. Drake, out of sheer politeness. The next man stood up and nodded to Drake first and then to Maddie, "My name is Benjamin". The man in the middle was skipped as the fourth man stood up and also nodded, "My name is Thistle," and the fifth man, "And my name is Sarge. That's my nickname but it's the name everyone knows me by."

That left the man appeared to be the leader. He stood up tall with his broad shoulders, short graying hair, clothing that was neatly pressed and appeared somewhat stately looking. He just looked like an important person. He reached his hand out to Maddie first, nodded, took her tiny hand cupping it into both of his own, and said with a warm smile, "I am Sebastian, and I can't tell you how wonderful it is to finally meet you..." and he turned his dark brown eyed gaze to Drake. "Young man, I have heard all about you and I must say that it is an honor to meet you. Please sit down and tell me your tale. How did you come to be here today?"

....to be continued.



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# LA E&E

## Public Comment Needed

Arcadia - Angeles National Forest officials is submitting a cooperative grant application to the State of California Off-highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division for 2009/2010 "Green Sticker" grants, and is seeking public comment on the application. Comments must be received between March 3, 2009, and April 6, 2009. GreenSticker grants provide funding to help protect, maintain, and enhance the Forest's designated off-highway vehicle (OHV) system. Grant money would be used for trails and facilities maintenance, signage, wildlife and cultural resource protection, restoration projects, and law enforcement support at OHV areas. The draft grant application is available on the California State parks website, at <http://www.ohv.parks.ca.gov>. To receive a copy of the application by mail, please call the Santa Clara/Mojave Rivers Ranger District Office at (661) 296-9710.

Comments that are submitted online are required to be sent to the Forest Service, at [rkidd@fs.fed.us](mailto:rkidd@fs.fed.us), and to the California State OHV program, at <http://www.ohv.parks.ca.gov>. Comments also can be submitted by mail to: Ray Kidd, USDA Forest Service, 28245 Avenue Crocker #220, and Santa Clarita CA 91355.

Further information on grant regulations is available at <http://www.ohv.parks.ca.gov>. For more information on the application and on the Angeles National Forest's OHV program, please contact Ray Kidd at (661) 296-9710, ext. 229

## The Rainmaker

By Marlene Hitt

Many years ago there lived a man named Mr. Hatfield, a man who was said to be a commander of nature. He was called the greatest rainmaker of all times after his 30 years of filling lakes, saving crops and breaking droughts from the Yukon to Guatemala.

In 1915, Hatfield made an offer to his City Council at a time when the great reservoir at Morena Dam near San Diego was drying up. A period of severe drought had lowered the water level to near the bottom.

Hatfield proposed that if he could fill the reservoir he would be paid \$10,000. The agreement was that if he accomplished that task he would be paid, if not, he would receive no money. The council members accepted the offer with amusement and pleasure.

The task seemed impossible since the reservoir would hold 15 billion gallons and had never been any more than a third full. But Hatfield went to work by erecting a 20 foot wooden tower, on top of which were trays containing his special moisture attracting mixture.

By the elapse of seven days there was water in the reservoir. Five days later, heavy, almost continuous rain fell all over the county, followed by ten more days of deluge. By that time the whole area was flooded. The rain stopped when the water in the Morena was just five inches from the top of the dam, almost at its breaking point.

A lower dam disintegrated, washing away everything in its 12 mile path. Fifty lives were lost, 200 bridges were washed away, and miles of railroad track were destroyed. In some places the landscape was altered permanently.

When Hatfield's went to claim his money, and there was no doubt that he had filled the reservoir, the city council refused to pay, calling the flooding an "Act of God". Since Charles Hatfield had no written agreement, and since he had no way to prove that he had been the cause of the rain, he had no case, even though he tried to sue the city.

The city of San Diego remembered Hatfield, though, and when, in 1948 they hired a cloud seeder they took out substantial damage insurance.

*Editor's Note: Marlene Hitt is Past Poet Laureate of Sunland-Tujunga*

## Property in Tujunga Wash Close to Dedication

By Tomi Lyn Bowling

Thousand Oaks - Requirements for the final Conditional Use Permits of Angeles National Golf Course (ANGC) always included plans for 280 acres of Big Tujunga Wash be dedicated as a Nature Preserve.

The property dedication includes approximately 240 acres of flat land and 40 acres of hillside. The impending dedication has been floundering for many months without a management body willing to accept the dedication, until last week, when active community members were alerted to an upcoming meeting of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC). SMMC is a conservation group that accepts, as well as manages, open space and land dedications for preservation. It is the group that is specified as the preferred body for this task in the original plans.

On March 17 concerned community members traveled to Thousand Oaks to attend the meeting and presented photographs, power points, maps and impassioned pleas to the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority (rangers who work specifically with the Conservancy). They agreed to revisit the Tujunga Wash in order to make an "estimate of cost." The Chief Ranger did visit a few days later and spent several hours



looking it over. A proposal has now been formulated in order to move forward with accepting the dedication. The boundaries for the dedication will include the Tujunga Wash, from Oro Vista to the East, Foothill Blvd. at ANGC, to the west, and two ranges of hills to the North and South, and about half way up the North hillside.

If the proposal is accepted by the ANGC, the dedicated portion of the wash will be cleaned, signs posted, trash receptacles installed, trails marked and maintained, and it will be patrolled by park rangers. Plans already in existence mandate that the land be preserved and dedicated and include the terms by which that must be implemented. A sample of the rules that will be placed over this area of the wash include: No smoking, no overnight camping, no fires of any kind, no motorized vehicles, no BMX trails for bicycles, no littering or dumping, no off leash dogs. Dogs must be on a leash and park hours are from sunrise to sunset. The trails are for hikers, bicyclists, horses, runners, and walkers. Gates will be appropriately placed at entry points.

The chief ranger remarked about the beauty of the Tujunga Wash. Once it is completely cleaned up, the community will have a grand opening ceremony. The participation of the many community activists and groups played very important roles in making the region's dream a reality. The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC), STNC Land Use Committee, Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council (FTDNC), FTDNC Watershed Council, Riverwood Ranch, Council District 2 staff, Shadow Hills Property Association, and many more, are urging the ANGC to accept this proposal and allow the Tujunga Wash to undergo a long overdue preservation process. Contact them via their website, [www.angesnational.com](http://www.angesnational.com), or fax 818-951-8791, or contact the STNC at: [www.STNC.org](http://www.STNC.org) for more information.

*Editor's Note: Ms. Bowling is the STNC Land Use Chair and Business Representative*



Photos by Tony Bowling

## Save The Date

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