

*Walking along the path in Palisades Park is always time for inspiration.*

*Photo by Julie Dobkin Gilberg*

## Tips for Planning Winter Getaways

**Family Features** -Winter occasions and celebrations equate to increased travel opportunities for many families to see destinations around the globe. Whether you're planning a trip far from home or taking advantage of nearby attractions during a staycation, you can get more out of your adventures when you plan ahead.

• **Planning** - Overall, Americans spend an average of 14 hours planning their getaway, the majority of which happens online or with the help of apps that provide booking information, directions, localized tips, and more. In addition to deciding where to go and what to do once you get there, you may find planning ahead and checking restaurant reviews is especially helpful for those first hours after you arrive. Upon arrival, the first order of business for



*Introducing your children to museums, aquariums, and zoos can be part of a special family trip.*

*Photo: Getty Images*

travelers is often refueling with a good meal, typically based on reviews they read. Also research attractions and create a plan of things you'd like to do each day, even if you don't follow it to the letter.

Remember, while many attractions and entertainment options provide flexibility, some should be booked in advance. Check individual websites for events, attractions and more to find details about booking and tickets, if required.

*(Continued on Page 7)*

## 38th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Keynote Speaker to be Dr. Benjamin Chavis, Jr.

With a thought-provoking theme: *When you stand up for justice, you can never fail*, the program for the 38th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration will be an inspiring way to start our new year.

The national celebration in Santa Monica will begin on Monday, January 16, at 9 a.m. at the John Adams Middle School Performing Arts Center, 2425 16th St., at Pearl.

Come join the festivities which will include inspirational remarks, a performance by the Santa Monica Playhouse students, dance by the Lindiwe Rose Dancers, and a special song by William Bryant accompanied by Gil Leib. Education awards will be presented to local students going on to college. The annual Community Light Award will be given to the Pepperdine University's Foster Grandparent Program for their effective inter-generational project involving older adult volunteers who serve youth with special needs. Masks are required. Street parking is available on Pearl, 16th, and 17th Streets.

Check the website for a possible live stream link closer to the event date.

The sponsoring organization is delighted that Dr. Ben Chavis, Jr. will be their keynote speaker. He is currently President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, which supports and advocates for publishers of the nation's more than 230 Black-owned community newspapers. He is an author, journalist, environmentalist, chemist, a United Church of Christ ordained



*Dr. Ben Chavis, Jr., will be the keynote speaker at this year's annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration on January 16.*

minister, and global entrepreneur.

As a young man, Dr. Chavis was a youth coordinator and Southern Christian Leadership Conference assistant to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1995, he was the National Director of the Million Man March. In 2001, he became CEO and Co-Chairman of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network which he co-founded with Russell Simmons.

Dr. Chavis was at the forefront of the environmental justice movement and coined the term "environmental racism."

After the celebration, you are encouraged to continue your civic engagement by visiting the Community Involvement Fair for information and conversation with representatives from a variety of community organizations.

At 10:30 a.m. following the opening event, the Community Involvement Fair will be set up in the quad area at John Adams Middle School. For information, email [involvementfair@gmail.com](mailto:involvementfair@gmail.com).

On Saturday, January 14, at 3 p.m., the popular Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Concert with Gary Pratt, guest conductor, will be held at the John Adams Middle School Performing Arts Center. Preregistration is required. Check the website for updated mask policy. For information visit: [www.smsymphony.org](http://www.smsymphony.org).

On Friday, January 13, at 8 a.m., the MLK Freedom Celebration via Zoom will be sponsored by the Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council. For information, email [minister@ciop4justice.org](mailto:minister@ciop4justice.org).

Planned for Thursday, January 12, at 6 p.m., an Unfinished Work Virtual Film Festival: *Advancing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Legacy of Equity, Justice and Human*

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# Discover What's Happening on the Westside

**By Pamela Lawrence**  
• **Sunday, January 1 – Happy New Year! It's 2023!**  
• **Monday, January 2 – The 134th Rose Parade** - The first Rose Parade in 1890 was staged to show off California's sun-kissed climate, and it's still the best way to boast to your friends and family who are typically snowed in this time of year. The parade, and its floral floats, marching bands, and equestrian outfits, step off around 8 a.m. near the Norton Simon Museum, 411 W. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. For details, call 626-449-4100.  
• **Ongoing until Mar 12 - Fabric of a Nation: American Quilt Stories** - See how American quilters have knitted together stories since the 1600s. Over 40 artists will have work on display, as well as a large-scale collection of keepsakes that respond to the pandemic. Both run at the same time as the outdoor sculpture exhibition, *Chloë Bass: Wayfinding*. Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd. Tuesdays through Sun-

days. Visit: [www.skirball.org](http://www.skirball.org) or call 310-440-4500 for details.  
• **Wednesday, January 4 - West LA's LGBTQ+ Book Club** - West L.A. Library is starting an online virtual monthly LGTBQ+ book club. It will be the first Wednesday of each month from 6 p.m. - 7 p.m., starting in January. West Los Angeles Regional Library. Jan. 4: *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, by Taylor Jenkins Reid. Please contact [westla@lapl.org](mailto:westla@lapl.org) for details, or to obtain the Zoom link. For adults.  
• **Thursday, January 5 - Wonders Of Wildlife** - An animal program ideal for preschool through elementary age audiences, as well as for family groups. See how animals stay fit and healthy to endure the world they live in and survive, while learning about the strategies they use. In person, 4:15 p.m. - 5 p.m. West Los Angeles Regional Library. For babies, toddlers, and kids.  
• **Thursday, January 5 - Money 101** - What is one of life's biggest ideas, and how does that idea im-

pact our financial choices? Explore this topic during a basic introduction to investing. Online for teens. 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Please email: [teens@lapl.org](mailto:teens@lapl.org) from your school email address at least one hour before the program to request the link.  
• **Saturday, January 7 - Introduction to VR** - This exciting introduction will allow you to experiment with VR cameras to find unique ways you can tell your stories and share your reality. You will learn how to create virtual reality experiences with a 360 camera, and you will be instructed on the resources you can use to do simple edits and share your work on social media platforms. 1 p.m., Palisades Branch Library, 861 Alma Real Dr. In person for teens.  
• **Saturday, January 7 - In Person Shabbat Service** - Come pray, sing, and schmooze together in person at Beth Shir Shalom in the sanctuary. They will offer a small Kiddush after the service. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Temple Beth Shir Shalom, 1827 California Ave.

If you have any questions, please email them at [editor@leveisha.org](mailto:editor@leveisha.org).  
• **Ongoing through January 15 - Astra Lumina** - Stroll through a garden illuminated by celestial-inspired lights during this year-end event at South Coast Botanic Garden. Astra Lumina will set up about an hour-long nighttime trail through the Palos Verdes garden, with eight starry installations along the way. Tickets available from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Estates. Visit: [feverup.com](http://feverup.com) for more info and to buy tickets.  
• **Sunday, January 22 - Happy Chinese New Year! It's the Year of the Rabbit! See Qin's column on Page 4.**  
• **Thursday, January 26 - Bubblemania** - Bubblemania creates mesmerizing soap bubbles in an educational and interactive presentation that will entertain the whole family. 4 p.m. In person, Palms - Rancho Park Branch Library. For kids.  
• **Saturday, January 28 - Transform Your Life Through Social Dance** - Hear Ilona Glinarsky's immigration story from Kyiv, Ukraine. Learn how she used dance to turn a life of losses and challenges into a life of inspiration and personal fulfillment. Followed by a sample tango lesson. In person, 1 p.m., Venice - Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library. For adults.

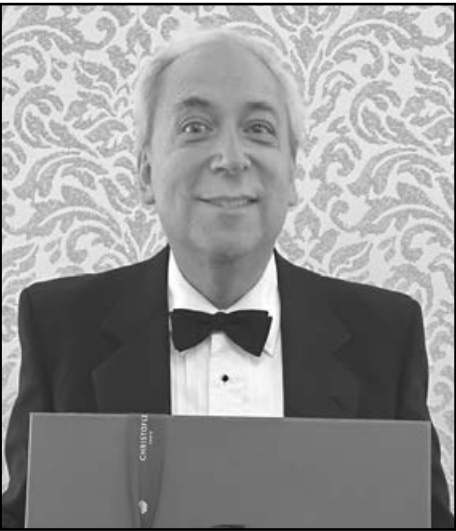
**38th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**  
*(Continued from Page 1)*

*Rights* hosted by New Roads School, will be held at The Herb Alpert Educational Village, 3131 Olympic Blvd, Santa Monica. For details: [www.newroads.org/MLK](http://www.newroads.org/MLK).  
For further information, go to [www.mlkjrwestside.org](http://www.mlkjrwestside.org); Facebook: [mlkwestside.org](https://www.facebook.com/mlkwestside.org); Instagram: [MLKWestside](https://www.instagram.com/MLKWestside); Twitter: [@Westsidemlk](https://twitter.com/Westsidemlk); Email: [mlkjrwestsidecoalition@gmail.com](mailto:mlkjrwestsidecoalition@gmail.com); or phone 818-207-3934.

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## National Humanitarian Medal Awarded to Nonprofit Champion and Longtime Friend of the Santa Monica Star

American Humane, the country's first national humane organization, awarded its most prestigious honor, the National Humanitarian Medal, to lifelong champion of nonprofit causes, Mark Stubis. If that name sounds familiar, it may be because he not only is a longtime friend and former contributor to *The Santa Monica Star*, but the husband of popular *Santa Monica Star* columnist, Qin Sun Stubis.  
Previous recipients of the National Humanitarian Medal, which has been bestowed only a handful of times in the charitable organization's 145-year history, include such notables as actor and animal lover Betty White and renowned humane advocate Temple Grandin.  
The announcement was made during American Humane's recent annual, nationally televised



Honoree Mark Stubis

Hero Dog Awards.  
Mark, who has devoted his life to supporting nonprofit missions, is a nationally recognized communications professional who has helped bring critically important attention and resources to a wide range of major charities over the course of his 40-year career. He has used his skills to generate hundreds of thousands of breaking news reports and profiles on the vital work being done by those on the front lines of the compassion movement and distributed protection and prevention tips reaching billions of people.  
Mark served as chief communications officer and managing editor for American Humane, and during his 11-year tenure the organization saw its national profile grow dramatically as its charitable reach increased twentyfold.  
"I have always believed that kindness and compassion are the  
*(Continued on Page 10)*



**Happy January Birthdays to:**  
**Eric London, Bill Rayman, Molly Smulian, John McIntire, Tom Larmore, Bill Dawson, Judy Neveau, John Lehne, Larry Maher, Julia Miele, Klaus Mennekes, Mitchell Kraus, Connie Maguire, Vickie Laham, Joe Rainsford, Jack Rainsford, Linda Levee, Alan Paar, Mike Stark, and Joan Sitnick.**

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The Real Estate Advisor

# Race to Sell Before Hefty Transfer Taxes Activate



By Richard Lombardi

Voters in the cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica approved measures to add hefty real estate transfer taxes to high

value properties, including both residential and commercial use properties. If you are thinking about selling soon, the clock is ticking to close your sale before the taxes kick in.

Santa Monica property owners selling property over \$8 million will see their transfer tax raise to 5.71% from the current rate of .71%, starting March 1, 2023. As an example, a sale with a gross value of \$8 million without lien encumbrances, will pay an additional \$400,000 in transfer taxes.

Beginning April 1, 2023, Los Angeles will tack on a 4% tax on the sale of properties when the consideration of value exceeds \$5 million, but less than \$10 million. Over \$10 million, the additional transfer tax is 5.5%. Santa Monica neighboring communities that will be affected by the city of Los Angeles transfer tax hike include Brentwood, Bel Air, Century City, Pacific Palisades, Venice, Westwood and West L.A.

There are some limitations and exemptions expected on both cities' transfer taxes, including governmental and tax exempt organizations. Clarifications will certainly be made prior to imple-

mentation, but the path to exemptions will be very tight.

Both cities added the additional transfer taxes to raise funds for affordable housing projects and homeless prevention measures.

Beyond the transfer tax implementations, there are additional reasons why now might be a good time to sell your home. The upward trend of interest rates has been putting brakes on home shoppers. And, even more interest rate increases are expected.

Santa Monica single family home sales in November plummeted 64%, compared to November of 2021. The unusual tick seen across the area is that the average dollar per square foot is 12% up during that same time period due to limited inventory.

In November, inventory was up nearly 8% just about ensuring that this anomaly of fewer home sales with increasing dollar per square footage will not continue. As in other market shifts, it is expected that inventory will continue to grow, as will days that it takes to sell a home and prices will slip.

If you are considering selling, moving quickly could save you many thousands of dollars in equity.

**Richard Lombardi is a 30+ year real estate veteran, author, coach, speaker, and broker in California and Florida. He can be reached at 310.903.6509, or [www.LombardiRealEstateWealthAdvisors.com](http://www.LombardiRealEstateWealthAdvisors.com).**

## Fond Memories From the Past



Here are three Santa Monica community leaders greeting each other at the Santa Monica History Museum Gala Dinner in 2014. If you recognize the staircase, you'll know the event was held at Casa del Mar. From left, Ellis O'Connor, Richard Lawrence, and Jeff Jarow.

Photos by Diane



Maria and Scott Ferguson, our former fire chief, always dressed for the theme. It was the 90th anniversary of the First Around the World Flights that began at the Santa Monica Airport.



Newsboys, Michael, left and Aaron, right, get ready to pass out newspapers. Ann Greenspun is in the middle of the two boys. Now each boy is in college.

## Byte by Byte

### System Update: Tech Resolutions for 2023



By Dr. Miceala Shocklee

With each new year comes a slew of new resolutions. People vow to clean up their routine, their diet, their house -

but what about their technology?

While looking forward to the next calendar year and all its potential, it may be worthwhile to pause and look back at past tech-related behavior, too. For example, consider these tune-ups to tech engagement:

#### • Log Out and Disconnect -

While there's value in completely unplugging from screens from time to time, that's not what this task is about. Over years - even decades - of technology use, espe-

cially within the realm of social media, accounts may have been formed or connected in ways that are no longer really current with who the user is. Think of it as the Marie Kondo approach to technology - if there are any old social media sites, chat rooms, forums, or other online conglomerates that were once frequented but have long since been buried in the server history, consider de-activating that account. Twitter has seen a recent nose-dive in userbase, but it may be worth considering whether an old DeviantArt account really still needs to stay live, or if all those sites that asked for one-time email sign-ups for an initial discount on clothes, makeup, cookware, or whatever really still

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Reflections From The East

Out of This New Year's Celebration Hat Comes . . . a Rabbit



By Qin Sun Stubis

This January is special because it is blessed with the start of both new solar and lunar years. The former starts . . . well, you know when, and the latter occurs on the 22nd, making the entire month worth celebrating. With the arrival of this new lunar year, we welcome a long-eared, cotton-tailed creature from the Chinese zodiac, commonly known as the rabbit, or, more specifically in 2023, the Water Rabbit, since the rotation of the zodiac's 12 animals is combined with the cycle of the five fundamental elements of our world:

Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. This furry, adorable creature hops into our lives with its exciting New Year proclamations and predictions to please our ears and give us hope. Chosen as part of the Chinese fairy god's kingdom and known as an ancient being of wisdom, it will also caution us about the potential obstacles ahead (for those who want to hear), and provide possible remedies to overcome them. In the Western world, rabbits are more associated with childhood love and fun. Boys and girls cuddle with their stuffed bunnies as they listen to the exciting adventures of Peter Rabbit. Children wake up early one morning each

spring in hopes of finding hidden goodies left by the Easter Bunny. And, perhaps the most magical moment of seeing a real one, face-to-face, is the time it is pulled out of a tall black hat during a magic show. The surprised look on that rabbit is met with equally stunned expressions from the young audience. In China, the Rabbit represents tenderness and wit, elegance and beauty. Those born in a Rabbit year are said to be quick on their feet and gentle in character. They are good-tempered, nonconfrontational, and trustworthy – all wonderful traits to have in friends and family. Similar to the West's view of a rabbit's foot as a symbol of luck,

the Chinese zodiac's Rabbit is also a sign of good fortune. Add to that the fact that water is a symbol of wealth in China, and a Water Rabbit promises us an extraordinarily lucky and prosperous year. We cannot wait to welcome this year's good fortune. We are eager to adorn our doors and windows with red and gold Chinese lucky words and strings of large, decorative silk firecrackers to start our lunar year celebration. May the Water Rabbit bring us all health, wealth, and happiness!

You can always reach me at qstubis@gmail.com and or please visit me at www.qinsunstubis.com.

Let's Get Our 2023 Vision in Focus



By Cheryl Thode

Happy New Year and Hello 2023! The start of a new year always makes me feel fresh, new, and energized.

Once January 1 comes around, there is a new electricity in the air. The new year brings with it the promise of new purpose, new goals, new hope, and new intentions.

There are many ways we try to capture and seize on this invigorating and positive energy: from making resolutions and writing down goals, to decluttering our homes to even making major life changes. Without a doubt, this month is a wonderful time to take stock of our current situations. We then dream, design, and plan ways to make things even better.

Reflecting on our lives, dreaming about the future, creating plans to

achieve our aspirations, and then actually acting on our plans, are important tools that we each need to succeed in our lives. They are taught to us throughout all of life in different ways. However, a very useful way I have found for myself is with a vision board. So, what is a vision board? It usually is a collage of images, phrases, and quotes that represent your dreams, goals, and wishes. It typically will have cut-out pictures and words from magazines that you find inspire you to manifest your dreams and where you want to go. In today's age, it can even be made in a digital format by copying and pasting images and words we like into a digital document. Regardless of the medium, a vision board's main purpose is to help us imagine what a positive future could look like for us. This January, I encourage you to take some time to reflect on

what you want for 2023. There is no topic off-limits. Ponder and consider what goals you want for some area or multiple areas in your life (i.e., goals for career, family, love, health, travel, social life, spiritual life, etc.). You can do this as an individual exercise or together as a family. To get started, first, do a status check and review of 2022. Next, think about your goals for 2023. Third, find images and words in magazines and other print media that embody your goals, or just speak to you, and paste them onto a poster board backing. If you cannot find a particular image or word that matches your goal, hop onto the computer, and do an image search and print it out. Finally, when you complete your board, put it in a place you will see it every day. It has been scientifically proven that when we visualize what we want, the

(Continued on Page 5)

Answer to Neighborhood Celebrity

(Continued from Page 1)



Javier Bello has been a tailor for 28 years. He has owned his Santa Monica Tailor by Bello shop for 10 years. He invites you to come by to meet him.

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Clergy Corner

Reflect on the Parade of People Who Have Crossed Your Path



**By Monsignor Liam Kidney**  
On Monday, January 2, 2023 many of us celebrated the New Year by watching the Rose Parade, which always

takes place in Pasadena. I've been to the parade once, and I've seen it on television many times. I enjoy watching the floats and the energy and excitement of the people at the parade. In some way, their enthusiasm touches me, and I feel uplifted by the experience. Let us take a moment to reflect on the parade of people that have crossed our paths in 2022. Who were they? Will we ever see them again? Did we pay any attention to them?

I believe that the people who cross our paths every day can be important to us. They might include our family members, relatives, and friends. Some we know well and some we know only by sight.

This coming year as the parade of people who will cross our path in 2023 begins, maybe we can make a resolution to at least notice them and discover what a valuable gift they can be. This can include the people more in the background who may touch our lives with an idea, or maybe model for us how to live more courageous lives. Let us also think about how people perceive us in the parade of life as we cross their lives. There is an old saying: "I pass this way but once, so Lord help me to make my passing worthwhile." My prayer for you as we begin the journey through 2023 is that you will be positively touched by those you meet and that, in some way, they will be positively affected because they met you. Siempre Adelante!

**Monsignor Liam Kidney, Pastor Corpus Christi Catholic Church**

*Each month, we ask a member of the clergy to write a column for our readers.*

Mar Vista: Neighbor to Neighbor

Evaluating Last Year's Resolutions



**By Michael Byrne**  
Another year has come and gone! And, you know what that means. It's time to evaluate 2022's New Year's resolutions. Remember? Those lofty goals we set a year prior when we were certain that next year will be different. Well, right off the bat I can say that this year for me is different. I actually wrote my 2022 resolutions down. So, let's review:

I never did get around to running that half-marathon. Really I didn't make it much more than three miles. Do I get an A for effort? **0/1.** I did get back into mountain biking – though (I rode once) – it counts! **1/2.** Recording one episode per month of that podcast I created with my friend back in COVID-19? We didn't record one. **1/3.** Finish the three books that I had started in 2022? Not a single one, but I did read 2.5 others, so another A for effort! **1/4.** Did I fix my shoulder – that nagging pain that has been bugging me for a few years? Well, not exactly, but I think I'm on the

right track now. Let's count that! **2/5.** Meditate once per week. **2/6.** Take my fiancée camping? Well, that hasn't happened yet. Maybe for New Year's Eve. **2/7.** Move in with my fiancée? I did that! **3/7.** OK, I am below 50%, but this list doesn't account for all the things I've actually done this year! Listen to 38,000 minutes of music on Spotify? Yep! **4/7.** Change jobs? You know it. **5/7.** Learn to navigate my local grocery store? I can shop with my eyes closed now. **6/7.** Descalc my coffee machine according to the manual? **7/7.** Put up Christmas lights? **8/7.** I voted! **9/7.** Whew! I feel a lot better now. See, it's not what you planned to do. It's what you did! Celebrate the small wins, big wins, and everything in-between. On to 2023! Happy New Year everyone!

**Michael Byrne is a fairly new Mar Vista resident. Please let us know if you know a Mar Vista resident he could interview.**



Passing Through the Pico Neighborhood

Attaining Our Goals



**By Stacy McClendon**  
By the time you read this, we all will know who won the FIFA World Cup in Qatar 2022. To some, that may not mean much, but in my household it's quite the opposite.

I have one son who is a dedicated soccer player whose goal is to become the best. My other son who watches the games cheers on with great intensity. While watching the game with my sons, I was struck with the fact that the players/teams who were in the World Cup trained extensively for four years for this chance. There were also other teams that did the same, but they weren't chosen to play at all this round, and have to wait four more years to try out again for this chance of a lifetime. Then it hit me, as I thought to myself what goals have I been working on that haven't manifested yet? I began to ask my sons to ponder the same question, as they are also working on their own

goals. We realized that some goals have already been achieved, while there are others we were sure would have been accomplished by now, and some that still seem so far out of reach. However, we have learned to continue to make strides forward, even in uncertainty, as most times we are much closer to either our end goal or something even better than we originally planned or expected. The goal could take one year, eight years, three months, 20 years, or it may even happen tomorrow. It's about the journey and strides taken while on the road to your destination that's important. The community stands to enjoy and celebrate what is born from new goals being accomplished for the greater good. No goal is too small, as it serves a much larger purpose. I know 2023 will have some sure-fire success stories waiting to be shared by community members with their neighbors.

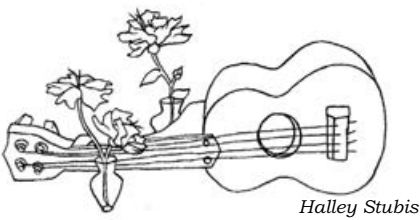
**Stacy McClendon is a longtime Pico Neighborhood resident and Santa Monica City staff member.**

Let's Get Our 2023 Vision in Focus

(Continued from Page 4)

likelihood of achieving that vision exponentially increases. It is my hope this year that the constant reminder of your desires and goals especially in pictorial form will help guide you through 2023 and take you closer to the vision you want for yourself! Now's the time, readers! Let's all focus on 2023 and get crafty with our visions! God bless.

*If you or someone you know is a mother in need of a group of mothers to share with and grow her own village, please visit our website at the link below and register to be a Mother of Monica. Go to <https://stmonica.net/ministries/fellowshipgroups/moms>.*



Halley Stubis

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### Planning Ahead

## 119 Distant Relatives Inherit



**By Lisa Alexander, Esq.**

A recent personal interest story has been in the news. Joseph Stancak was a quiet, not obviously wealthy man living in Chicago, who died with an estate worth \$11,000,000. Neighbors had no idea he had such wealth. He had no Will and no immediate family.

If you die without a Will you are said to have died "intestate." Without a Will naming your beneficiaries, the default under the law is your estate will be distributed to your "heirs" according to the laws of "intestate succession." Your heirs are determined by going up and down your family tree.

Most of us don't give any thought to who might be our heirs if we don't have a Will. We think our heirs are the relatives we see at Thanksgiving or Christmas, but there may be people distantly related to us who would be our heirs if we died.

In this case, Mr. Stancak had 119 relatives who each will receive

a portion of his estate. But, they weren't easy to locate. Mr. Stancak had no children. He had six siblings who all died before he did, and none of them had any children. It took years to create Mr. Stancak's family tree and to locate his relatives. Investigators had to go back five generations. The attorney representing the estate described a scroll 15 feet long that stretched across an entire room.

The 119 heirs to receive distributions include cousins once or twice removed and living in many countries. Even after locating all the heirs, it will still take a year or more to make the distributions. The average check each relative can expect to receive is \$60,000.

Wouldn't it be fun to inherit from an unknown distant relative? But, the moral of the story is to make a Will and name the people or charities you know and love instead of leaving your estate by default to total strangers!

**Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.**  
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### Where Is This Samohi Graduate Now?



Dyllen Andrews, Samohi class of 2021, played the role of Snow White in the Cottey College production of Disney Descendants, The Musical, last November. Dyllen is a sophomore at Cottey College in Nevada, Missouri, majoring in psychology with a double minor in writing and theater. She has had roles in all the productions at Cottey College since her freshman year, and is the head of the costume department.



This light two-ingredient dessert can also be a good side dish to serve at a big dinner.

### Betty's Easy Jello Dessert

Betty Roe was the wonderful office manager at a school I taught at in Las Vegas. I hadn't made this mold for many years and all of a sudden, I decided to try it again.

You will need a **small box of regular or sugar-free gelatin**, and a **24 oz. jar of applesauce**, unsweetened, if you prefer. I like raspberry or strawberry flavors.

Pour the applesauce into a small saucepan. Add the gelatin powder. Stir over a **low** flame, and keep blending the powder into the applesauce. Do this for 5 minutes or so.

Set aside a jello mold. Add the applesauce and let it get firm in the refrigerator. When it is hard, unmold it, and serve with sour cream, or whipped cream. Yum!





## 4 Steps to Live in the Present Every Day

**Family Features** - Living in the present means celebrating each moment as it happens without worries about the past, or anxiety for what the future holds and enjoying life to the fullest. Many people find themselves thinking about what happened yesterday or what might happen tomorrow, making living in the now a challenge. You can overcome those hurdles and live each day more fully by adopting habits that promote physical and mental well-being.

• **Regular Exercise**

You'll find exercise on virtually every list of self-care advice, and for good reason. Exercise stimulates your body in numerous beneficial ways, not the least of which is getting your heart pumping and oxygen flowing throughout your body, including your brain.

• **Quality Sleep**

Getting quality sleep is linked to improved concentration and productivity, consciously managing your sleep habits can help you be more present each day. Creating a bedtime routine and establishing a comfortable, quiet sleeping environment are important steps.



Take time to have fun with your family.

Healthy sleep begins with seven to nine hours of sleep a night, but there's more you need to know to achieve the sleep you deserve. By getting the recommended amount of sleep and hitting all your sleep stages, you can wake up feeling more refreshed and ready to own the day.

• **Deep Breathing**

Focusing on the here and now can be easier said than done. However, it's possible to train your body and mind to concentrate on specific thoughts and tasks. Deep breathing exercises are an example of physically focusing yourself.

(Continued on Page 11)

## Tips for Planning Winter Getaways

(Continued from Page 1)

• **Destination** - If you're like many Americans, you may favor traveling to a place where the temperatures soar and you can soak up some sunshine. However, taking advantage of some of those typically warmer destinations outside of peak season, can actually provide a way to avoid lines and enjoy a break from the heat.

• **Packing** - Smart packing is an often-overlooked secret to successful travel. Not only do you need enough attire for each day, you may also need extras to accommodate special activities or adjust to changing temperatures throughout the day and evening hours. The majority of Americans (63%) pack the night before a big trip, but starting sooner can help ensure you don't forget anything important.

• **Excursions** - Taking advantage of the unique activities and excursions is a smart way to more fully experience the cities you visit. On average, Americans participate in five activities and excursions during a single trip; most of the time, those outings are planned from home as much as four weeks

ahead of time, rather than upon arriving in the destination city. If you're planning to schedule excursions on your trip, explore resources like Go City, which can help you save up to 60% over gate admission prices. Passes can unlock the best a city has to offer, from bucket list attractions and top tours in the United States, such as Universal Studios, Sea World, the Long Beach Aquarium and the Statue of Liberty, or abroad like the Vatican, the Eiffel Tower and more. There are also plenty of hidden gems and exclusive experiences such as a tour of Fenway Park, Texas Ranger Museum, Museum of Us, Coral Crater Adventure Park and even wine and cheese-making classes. Start planning your winter travel adventure at [gocity.com](http://gocity.com).

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L	H	B	2	1	M	A	W	S	N	A	M	A	I	N	P	I	C	O	X	X	P	X
A	O	I	3	4	I	S	I	T	E	I	X	C	X	X	E	A	K	6	X	H	I	H
M	L	C	R	T	C	H	L	E	I	R	V	A	L	T	A	R	I	T	G	I	N	I
E	L	K	D	H	H	L	S	W	L	P	I	R	E	X	R	I	N	H	E	L	E	G
S	I	N	B	C	I	A	H	A	S	O	R	L	U	B	L	I	N	C	O	L	N	H
A	S	E	A	O	G	N	I	R	O	R	G	Y	C	R	G	Z	E	D	R	A	P	L
C	T	L	R	L	A	D	R	T	N	T	I	L	L	O	L	O	Y	E	G	I	R	A
E	E	L	N	O	N	C	E	N	T	I	N	E	I	A	E	N	X	L	I	R	I	N
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A	P	C	R	A	A	O	X	M	P	A	A	X	X	W	N	X	O	W	A	O	C	B
R	A	E	D	D	Y	V	U	O	A	H	X	G	R	A	N	T	C	A	P	R	E	E
K	L	A	R	O	C	E	A	N	R	O	N	A	V	Y	A	L	E	R	C	T	T	V
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S	A	R	M	R	R	I	X	N	B	E	R	K	L	E	Y	C	P	E	A	R	L	L
A	D	O	O	I	A	E	W	A	S	H	I	N	G	T	O	N	A	9	L	1	1	Y
S	E	N	N	N	N	L	S	A	N	V	I	C	E	N	T	E	R	T	T	1	7	M
X	S	T	D	E	D	D	C	A	L	I	F	O	R	N	I	A	K	H	A	T	T	X
C	E	N	T	I	N	E	L	A	S	U	N	S	E	T	I	D	A	H	O	H	H	O

In January, we can look forward to celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday, the opening of Ellis Island in 1892, the introduction of the Euro in 1999, National Hot Tea Month, National Skating Month, or Oatmeal Month. It's also time to remember the birthdays of Issac Asimov, Taye Diggs, Eli Manning, Issac Newton, Bradley Cooper, Diane Keaton, Kahlil Gibran, Katie Couric, Stephen Hawking, Rod Stewart, Stanley Tucci, Shonda Rhimes, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Debbie Allen, Alan Alda, and Michelle Obama.

Thoughts From a Second-Time Father

Thinking About Sibling Relationships



By Michael Margolin  
Alexa and Jake are now nine and six years old respectively, and something I have thought is that the older they get, the more fun they become.  
The early days and weeks were mind-blowing, and watching mental and physical developments were certainly priceless. But, now our outings are more involved and do not require strollers or diaper bags. Like any parent, I see my kids growing up too quickly and will constantly reminisce about what they were like as infants and toddlers and first steps.  
Perhaps those memories will always be the clearest and bring a smile and a shake of the head more rapidly than others, because they still seem more life-changing for a parent than some other memories. But, what do I know? I have not even been a parent for a decade yet. That happens later this year.  
Even thinking of that gives me pause. I brought up our outings because recently, my wife Enjoli and I took the kids to an escape room. An escape room is a game room or series of rooms in which there are certain clues that need to be deciphered, and puzzles that need to be solved, in order to accomplish a task and escape the room. It was a lot of fun and Jake looked forward more to it than the rest of us. He was more excited to talk about it once we were done. It was fun to work as a team and see the wheels turning in Alexa's and Jake's heads about how to find clues to find the arms and legs of a robot we needed to rebuild in order to succeed.  
The robot had all of its limbs back with plenty of time to spare. Ahh, the sense of seeing accomplishment in your child's eyes. It is quite rewarding.  
I have written before about siding with Jake on particular issues when it comes to dealing with his older sister. Most clear are my memories from the mid to late '80s of wanting to watch football games on Sunday mornings and having to wait until teen heartthrob Scott Baio's show *Charles In Charge* was over before I could.  
However, I also remember being fairly successful at being a nuisance and simply doing my part to annoy my sister. As is my job as a father to take large bites from my kids' sandwiches, it was also my position to frustrate my sister. I was reminded the other day of some of the dynamics between my sister and me when listening to Jake and Alexa.  
Jake had done something to bother Alexa, and as Alexa was trying not to, he made her laugh. A lot. She then proceeded to tell me how annoying he can be, but that he's also so cute. For all I know, I look like a troll but I know my sister thought I was cute.  
I also know, as Jake has learned

(Continued on Page 9)

Find These Santa Monica Streets in Our Special Word Search

ADELAIDE  
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ALTA  
ARIZONA  
ASHLAND  
BARNARD  
BAY  
BERKELEY  
BEVERLY  
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9TH  
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SUNSET  
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VIRGINIA  
WASHINGTON  
WILSHIRE  
YALE





# Community Service on the Westside

## Discover the Santa Monica Family YMCA



**By Eduardo Lowe**  
**Member Engagement Director**

As the new year begins, it's a great time to connect with others and explore new communities.

The Santa Monica Family YMCA offers a welcoming and inclusive space for people of all ages with a wide range of programs and activities to take part in. As our hours and programs continue to expand, the Y is excited to offer a special promotion for January – no joining fees! You can save up to \$75 on your joining fee and begin enjoying our fantastic community to start off the new year.

Additionally, the Y will be hosting an Open House on January 4, 5, and 6, inviting the public to

come and see what the Y is all about. During the Open House, you will have the opportunity to tour our facility, meet our staff, learn about our programs and receive a complimentary *Guest Pass*. Don't miss this chance to visit the Y, discover a new community, and focus on your well-being.

Visit our website at [www.YMCASM.org](http://www.YMCASM.org) for more information and to check out the Y's program offerings in all our departments.

Again, be sure to stop by the Y's Open House on January 4 - 6 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. for a complimentary tour and *Guest Pass*.

The Santa Monica Family YMCA is at 1332 6th St., between Arizona and Santa Monica Blvd. Free parking is underneath the building. Our phone number is 310-393-2721.

## Looking Forward to the New Year



**By Susan Barry**

December was a wonderful month at the Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club. (SMBWC) The SMBWC Board hosted an evening holiday

party on the 6th to celebrate members and their guests, focusing on our many new members. Also, attending were 2022 donation recipients and those expressing interest in joining SMBWC. The following Monday, the annual holiday luncheon sponsored by the scholarship committee, was held in the ballroom for our weekly Bridge, Canasta, and Maj Jong players.

Our ballroom and stage host many events throughout the year, perhaps none as magical and superb as the Candlelight Concert Series that has performed several times this year. The stage and floor in front were covered with

3,000 pillar candles while the brilliant Orchid Quartet played selections from composer Joe Hisaishi arranged for strings. Orchid Quartet will return on Valentine's Day for an evening concert, not to be missed.

Our annual Valentine Making and Music Day will finally return on Saturday, February 4, from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. It's an all-community event and everyone is invited to make as many Valentines as they wish from the abundant supplies of paper and all things Valentines and art! Tickets are \$10 with all proceeds benefiting SMMSD art and music programs and School on Wheels.

Ongoing activities include Bridge and Canasta on Mondays, Duplicate Bridge on Thursdays, monthly Book Group on the 4th Tuesday, and weekly Crafts and Conversation. Our historic building may be rented for events, and we encourage nonprofit

(Continued on Page 10)

## Santa Monica - Pacific Palisades Lions Club to Hold Annual Student Speakers Contest



**By Linda Levee**

Calling all high school students interested in honing their public speaking skills while earning

money, and perhaps a college scholarship. The Santa Monica-Pacific Palisades Lions Club is looking for candidates to participate in their Annual Student Speakers Contest to be held on Wednesday evening, February 8 at the Santa Monica Elks Lodge at 6 p.m. Any high school student in the Westside area can qualify.

This is a statewide contest conducted by the Lions Clubs of California. Competition begins at

the club level and advances up through four levels. The students earn money at every level. The final winner gets a college scholarship to a school of their choice.

The speech should be between five and ten minutes, the topic this year is, "Social Media – Connects or Isolates us?"

If you are interested, please contact our contest coordinator, Lion Carole Mullaney, at [carolemullaney6@gmail.com](mailto:carolemullaney6@gmail.com), or call 310-399-7604.

If you'd like to learn what Lionism is all about by being our guest at a dinner meeting, please contact Lion Kingsley Fife at [jkfife88@yahoo.com](mailto:jkfife88@yahoo.com), or call 310-454-2960.

## More About Cannabis



**By Stephen Freedman**

Entering a cannabis dispensary can be an overwhelming experience. There are various devices and terminology

being used that can make it seem like you're in another world. To help, the following is a glossary of cannabis terms that may help you on your visit:

- **Cannabinoids:** A combination of natural chemical compounds made by the cannabis plant that gives cannabis its range of effects.
- **CBD:** Cannabidiol. Unlike THC, CBD leaves the user clear-headed, which is advantageous to those who want the medicinal benefits of cannabis without the psychoactive effects.

- **BG:** Cannabigerol. Helps with inflammation, glaucoma, pain, and nausea.
- **CBN:** Cannabinol. Helps to facilitate a restful sleep.
- **Concentrate:** Cannabis extracts made by concentrating the resinous oil in the plant. Gives the enjoyable aspects of cannabis, like taste and feel, without the plant's vegetation.
- **Extract:** Cannabis oil products that have been concentrated using solvents to produce a rich amber oil.
- **Indica:** Strain associated with relaxing and calming effects.
- **Infused:** When concentrates are added or infused into a cannabis product.
- **Sativa:** Strain associated with stimulation and cerebral effects.
- **Terpene:** Diverse group of

(Continued on Page 10)

### Thinking About Sibling Relationships

(Continued from Page 8)


it does not always get you out a jam with your older sister. But, it does not hurt.

And, when you get out of that pickle with your sister, maybe the look is a tad different, but the


sense of accomplishment is still there.

**Mike Margolin has been writing for us since Alexa was born nine years ago. He is an avid sports fan.**

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# Remembering Rex Minter



Rex Minter  
Photo by Brendan Minto

In 2020, we received a letter from Christie Thobe, daughter of Rex and Doris Minter. She wanted to let us know that her parents would be celebrating their 75th anniversary. We had also done a story on them in March, 2019. Rex and Doris met in high school and were devoted to each other for 77 years. Recently, we were sad to read about Rex passing away after being in a plane crash on December 22 on the Santa Monica shore.

Rex was a big part of the Santa Monica community for many years. Upon finishing his time with the Marines in 1949, he and Doris returned to Santa Monica where he went to college and law school. By 1955, Rex was a member of the City Council, and he became Mayor from 1963-1967. He was also a longtime member of the Rotary Club of Santa Monica. Rex served as a Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner from 1968-1967, at which time he was selected by Governor Ronald Reagan to serve as a judge in the Municipal Court. He served as a Superior Court judge when the Municipal and Superior courts were consolidated. After his retirement in 2000, he served as an assigned judge throughout California until his complete retirement in 2012. Both Rex and Doris were avid aviators since 1948. They had three children, Christie, Laurie and Thomas who gave them eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Christie closed her letter by saying that her parents were still crazy about each other and they lived life to the fullest each day.

—D.M.

## National Humanitarian Medal (Continued from Page 2)

greatest gifts . . . gifts that American Humane gives to the most vulnerable among us millions of times around the world each day,” described Mark. “The only honor greater than receiving this remarkable award is the honor of having worked side by side with so many wonderful people over the years who have committed their lives to the cause of compassion.” Of course, nothing worthwhile comes easily, even getting a prestigious national award. Mark, Qin, and their children Keaton and Halley flew to Florida to attend the event and landed right in

the middle of Hurricane Nicole. As the wind whipped around their hotel and restaurants throughout the city closed, they managed to find one local pizza joint open where they ordered the last (aptly named) “Hurricane Pizza.” “My whole life has been a whirlwind of exciting events and helping others weather the storms in their lives,” Mark describes. “So, having to go through a hurricane to get a wonderful award like this seems completely appropriate.”



## Paws and Claws

### Could My Lab Have a Food Allergy?



**By Dr. Frank Lavac, MS, DVM**  
**Q: My labrador retriever scratches his trunk and licks his feet. He has hair loss around his mouth. Could he have a food allergy?**

**A:** Allergies in dogs are fairly common. The most common allergies seen are inhaled allergies and flea allergies. Food allergies are less common, but also can be difficult to diagnose. There is no skin test or blood test that accurately diagnoses food allergies. Most often your veterinarian will first rule out flea allergy and inhaled allergies prior to embarking on food allergies as a possible diagnosis. Some hints of food allergies include a lack of seasonality, scratching since they were very

young, no response to external parasite treatment, and lack of response to corticosteroids. In some dogs, recurrent ear infections or anal area itching can be suggestive of food allergies. When they are food allergic, it is typically allergic to the protein component of the food. In order to diagnose the problem, you would need to feed them a strict diet of a single, novel protein for two months. Alternatively, you can feed your dog a special diet where the protein is made very small to prevent an immunologic reaction (called Hydrolyzed protein) for two months. You may need to get the help of a veterinary dermatologist to unravel the cause of itching as well. For further information, go to [www.VeterinaryPartner.com](http://www.VeterinaryPartner.com).

**Dr. Frank Lavac can be reached by calling 310-828-4587.**

## More About Cannabis (Continued from Page 9)



The knowledgeable staff at ERBA Market will help you with your choice of products.

organic compounds made by plants. They give cannabis its variety of aromas and flavors as well as working with THC and CBD to give the "entourage effect."

- **Tincture:** Liquid cannabis elixirs that can be taken orally, added to food or drinks, or directly to the skin.
- **THC:** Tetrahydrocannabinol. Gives the psychoactive "high" commonly associated with cannabis.
- **Topical:** Products like creams and lotions that are infused with cannabis that are applied to the skin. Used for soreness, inflammation, and pain.
- **Vape:** Pre-filled oil cartridges that when paired with a battery are easily and discreetly consumed.

Hopefully knowing these terms will help you better navigate the dispensary to the product you're after. If not, our staff at ERBA Markets can aid in getting you there.

**Stephen Freedman is the General Manager at ERBA Markets. Locations include the Woods, Los Angeles, Venice, Lompoc, South Bay, and WeHo.**

## Adopt a Pet



Colby is an eight-month-old dog. He previously fractured his leg which was repaired. He's back to normal now. He is super friendly and loves everyone. Contact [lange.foundation.org](http://lange.foundation.org) for more details.

## More Nonprofits to Discover

**By Deborah Gray**  
The year 2023 has arrived. It's a chance to make a difference as so many of us may feel the need for a fresh start. The following list of nonprofits are hoping to do just that. Contact information is provided for more details about their advocacy, volunteer, and donation opportunities:

- **Venice Family Clinic** provides primary health care to people in need. 310-392-8636 - [www.venicefamilyclinic.org](http://www.venicefamilyclinic.org).
- **Friends Of The Santa Monica Public Library** is currently

(Continued on Page 11)

## Looking Forward (Continued from Page 9)

organizations to inquire about space availability. The Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club wishes you a New Year filled with good health, joy, and abundance. To learn more about our philanthropy, membership, events, and activities, please visit us at [www.SMBWC.org](http://www.SMBWC.org), or [info@smbwc.org](mailto:info@smbwc.org).



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# Connect to Nature in January

By Julie Rensink Hanson

The excitement of a new year is here, and so too is the beginning of the nesting season for our local Anna and Allen’s hummingbirds. Hummingbird nests are just a little bigger than a quarter, and are often found in your garden hedges and plants. To help the mothers, who raise the babies alone, keep your feeders clean and full, and consider setting out fruit, such as a banana to attract fruit flies that the babies need. This is also a great time to put out nesting materials, such as a natural cotton ball. The mothers will use it, along with spider webs and plant materials to build their nests- a true miracle of nature!

Have you been hearing “hoots” or “screeches” during the night? We are fortunate to have Barn, Great-Horned, and Screech Owls living in our area, and although most are heard and not often seen, they are active and right now looking for places to nest. To help them, consider putting up a nesting box. Barn and Screech Owls need to nest in cavities, such as hollow trees, but those are in short supply in our suburban areas. By adding a nesting box, you are increasing a nesting habi-

tat and the chances for a young couple to find the right spot and raise a healthy brood. Please contact the store to find out more about our local owls and nesting boxes to support them.

If you are seeing flashes of little yellow in your yard on the backside of a tiny bird, then the Yellow-rumped Warbler has come to greet you. Enjoy these little visitors while they overwinter in our area. They will love to find water in your yard or a suet feeder with some good fat to help them through the colder months.

The Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival takes place January 13 – 16. After taking two years off, the event is back and bigger than ever! The list of events is extensive and offers field trips, master classes, and guest speakers, including Keynote speaker, David Allen Sibley. If you are interested in birds and other wildlife of the Central California Coast, this event is for you. For more information, visit: <https://morrobaybirdfestival.org/>.

**Call the Wild Bird Unlimited Nature Shop at 424-272-9000, or go online to [www.wbu.com/santamonica](http://www.wbu.com/santamonica) for more information.**

## More Nonprofits (Continued from Page 10)

under-funded and lacks the staff and support to fully reopen all branches. They need donations, volunteers, and advocacy help. Email: [FriendsoftheSMPLAdvocacy@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsoftheSMPLAdvocacy@gmail.com).  
• **Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services** transforms lives by providing quality mental health and

substance abuse services. 310-390-6612 - [www.didihirsch.org](http://www.didihirsch.org).  
• **St. Joseph Center** provides homeless and working poor individuals with the resources and tools to become stable. 310-396-6468 - [www.stjosephctr.org](http://www.stjosephctr.org).

## 4 Steps to Live in the Present (Continued from Page 7)

Initiating a slow, steady breathing pattern and paying close attention to that rhythm can be an effective way to ward off negativity, whether it’s fear, anxiety, or another undesirable emotion.

• **Time Management**  
For many people, the modern world’s frenetic lifestyle often demands constant multitasking. However, that continual juggling act makes it virtually impossible to give your full attention to any one aspect of your life. While a full stop to your multitasking tenden-

cies may be impractical, you can carve out time to dedicate your mind more intentionally and completely. You may be surprised by how much joy you derive from simply being present.



# From Me to You...



By Diane Margolin

One of my friends from New York was telling me how he and his wife used to get together with their friends every so often and they would talk about their kids and their trips. As they got older, they talked about their health conditions and doctors’ visits. I’ve often wondered who designs some of the doctors’ offices we visit. One was so white everywhere. So sterile. But, you could tell they had spent a great deal on artwork that was made up of various kinds of materials that didn’t have any particular meaning, and was far from helping to create a comforting or supportive environment. Another doctor had a wife who was a wonderful artist and her paintings were all over the office. They made you think of places other than where you were. Some doctors put up landscapes, flowers, or nature scenes.

One of my doctors has a skeleton in his office. It’s helpful when he wants to point out a part of your body and explain why it may be hurting.

Some doctors have abstract art on their walls. How does your doctor have his/her office decorated?

Congratulations to the incoming slate of Santa Monica Rotary Club officers who will begin in July, 2023. They are Ken Waltzer, president-elect and Monika White, president-elect designate for the following year. Vice presidents are Kathy Shepard and Mike Kallhoff. George Pickell is treasurer and Felix Crown is secretary. New directors are Gary Ogden, Richard Lombardi, Kinan Aljamal, Brian Linnekens, Karin Wallerstein, and Bill Rayman. Thanks to Bill Powell for sending this information and all the work he did on the election.

Have a wonderful New Year celebration. Wishing you good health and happiness in 2023.

## System Update (Continued from Page 3)

need your contact or even potentially financial information. Some platforms, like Facebook, may have also been used to log into secondary sites. By going to the account section of the site and selecting “your data settings” under “privacy check up,” users are able to see and modify what apps and websites that Facebook has connected them to.

• **Reset for Safety** - When it comes to security, more often than not, user’s online banking applications, email accounts, and other high-use sites attached to personal information are overdue for a password reset as well. How many passwords are still the name of a child, a pet, or another easily associated detail? For those worried about potentially forgetting more complicated strings of char-

acters, tactics like developing a personal substitution system of numbers and special characters for certain letters in a word may help make totally alphabetic passwords at least slightly more secure. Consider adding articles from sites like Wired or even the Google support page on how to make passwords more secure to 2023’s intended list of reading.

Becoming tech safe and savvy is as ongoing a process as the development of the software itself. With time and attention, however, engagement with technology can become as streamlined as the hardware in our pockets.

**Dr. Miceala Shocklee is a full-time aquatics veterinarian and part-time science writer and freelance editor.**

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