

If you aren't sure whom to go to when you have a problem with the care at a convalescent home, check out the WISE & Healthy Aging Advocacy website.

WISE & Healthy Aging Launches New Advocacy Website

Several years ago, a friend of mine had been hit while crossing the street at a corner while she and her caregiver were out taking a walk. She ended up in a local convalescent home to wait for her leg to heal enough to have surgery. At about 5 a.m. one morning, she called me, pleading with me to call the police to get her out of where she was staying. I asked her to wait until 8 a.m. so I could figure out what to do. Others have told us about the poor care that their loved ones or friends have experienced in convalescent homes. But, when you want to make a complaint, you are not really sure who to go to. Check out the new advocacy website that WISE & Healthy Aging has set up. —D.M.

WISE & Healthy Aging, a community-based, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the dignity and quality of life of older adults, recently announced the launch of its new advocacy website: WISEOmbudsman.org. The new site provides information,

tools, and resources for anyone who wants to get better care in a skilled nursing or residential care facility.

"Whether you're a professional, a family member, or a facility resident who wants to understand their rights or know how to report a complaint about their care, our new site can help you find the resources you need," said Molly Davies, LCSW, President and CEO of WISE & Healthy Aging.

"Our advocacy to address poor-quality care in long-term care facilities has given us good insight about the information that people need when they suspect abuse or identify a resident's rights issue," Molly added.

The new site features everything from helping facility residents know their rights; tools on how to make a complaint; resources and guides for professionals; the latest news; and info on how individuals can get involved in the fight against elder abuse.

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The Santa Monica Bead & Design Show Returns to the Fairmont Miramar Hotel

The Santa Monica Bead & Design Show will take place from April 14-16 at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel. Over 175 artisan exhibits will be presented. You will enjoy meeting and talking with skilled artisans, many of whom have spent decades perfecting their skills.

Explore traditional materials and designs which integrate textures, shapes, and colors to make beads, jewelry, glass art, findings, gemstones, lapidary, collectibles, ethnographic art, hand tooled leather, jewelry supplies, art

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You won't know where to look first with all the colorful displays awaiting your discovery.

Garden Growing Basics for Beginners



The joy of tasting produce you have grown yourself is one of life's many delights.

Photo courtesy of Unsplash

Family Features - Growing your own produce is an all-around smart practice, from the money you'll save at the grocery store to the contributions you can make toward a cleaner planet.

Consider these tips to start growing your at-home garden:
1. Select a perfect spot. You'll want to place your garden in an area where you see it often so you're reminded to weed and care for it regularly.

2. Choose between ground and containers. There are pros and cons to gardening in containers vs. the ground, and there's no universal right choice. Rather, the best garden depends on your goals and preferences. A ground garden usually offers more space and may provide a better growth environment for roots. However, a container garden is often easier to maintain and may be all you need

if you wish to grow just a few plants.

3. Understand the importance of quality soil. You may think any dirt will do, but keep in mind the soil you plant in will be the primary source of nutrients for your produce. Not only that, but quality

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Do You Recognize This Neighborhood Celebrity?

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Discover What's Happening on the Westside

By Pamela Lawrence

• **Mondays in April (3, 10, 17, 24) - Parent & Me Ukulele** - This enrichment program is comprised of Artists in Residence hired to teach enrichment classes to youth. The class is taught by Santa Monica Youth Orchestra (SMYO) members and requires registration with SMYO and Virginia Ave. Park. 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave. For more information, call 310-458-8688.

• **Sunday, April 2 - Palm Sunday**

• **Wednesday, April 5 - Passover begins**

• **Friday, April 7 - Good Friday**

• **Friday, April 7 - Spring Egg Hunt** - Inflatables, crafts, games, refreshments, music, coloring contest, face painting, custom air-brush T-shirts. Egg Hunt will begin at 11:30 a.m. in two separate fields: five years and under and six years and up. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Palisades Rec Center, 851 Alma Real Drive, Pacific Palisades. For details, call 310-454-1412.

• **Friday, April 7 - Springtopia Spring Fling and Egg Hunt** - Games, crafts, contests, and jumpers! 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cheviot Hills Rec Center, 2551 Motor Ave., L.A. Call 310-837-5186 for more information. For kids up to age 12.

• **Saturday, April 8 - Spring Egg Hunt** - Arts and crafts, cookie decorating, egg hunts, games, and a Spring bunny. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Mar Vista Rec Center, 11430 Woodbine St., L.A. Egg hunts from 1 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. Bring your own basket. For more information, call 310-398-5982. For kids ages two-13.

• **Sunday, April 9 - Easter Sunday**

• **Monday, April 10 - Baby Music and Play** - Play and learn at the library. Babies will be using movement, song, and play to help grow and to promote bonding between caregivers and babies. 3 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. In person, Donald Bruce Kaufman Brentwood Branch Li-

brary. For babies younger than 24 months old and their caregivers.

• **Sunday, April 16 - Santa Monica Breakfast Club's 7th Annual Mad Hatter Tea Party** fundraiser - Honoring Paul Leoni and the memory of his wife, Marilyn. Come enjoy an elegant tea service, a delicious brunch, silent and live auction items, and a basket raffle to benefit this club that provides urgent dental care for local children whose families cannot afford it. 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Santa Monica Elks Lodge, 1040 Pico Blvd. For tickets, call 310-493-8004, or email santamonicaclubbreakfastclub@gmail.com.

• **Tuesday, April 18 - Book Club** - *The Woman in the Library* by Sulari Gentill, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. **Zoom**. A murder takes place in the Reading Room at the Boston Public Library. Four strangers sitting in the room are not allowed to leave. Could one of them be the murderer? Contact library@santamonica.gov for Zoom link.

• **Thursday, April 20 - Sunset Vibes Silent Disco** - Eat, drink, and dance under the stars, perched above the beautiful Pacific Ocean on the Santa Monica Pier. Entertainment includes youth activities, a car show, local DJs and bands, art exhibits, and the newly announced Sunset Vibes Silent Disco. 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

• **Saturday, April 22 - KidSave - Earth Day Event** - Celebrate Earth Day with older children in foster care and orphanages. Kid-Save helps these wonderful teens find their forever home, a host family, or a mentor through building meaningful relationships with adults and families. There will be games, crafts, and activities to help both the teens and families get to know each other. 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. SERVICON, 3965 Landmark St., Culver City. Call 844-445-2852 for details.

• **Saturday, April 22 - UC Master Gardeners at Pico Farmers Market** - The booth is filled with free advice on how to care for plants, how to troubleshoot a gardening problem, and much more. Free seeds and seedlings are available on a limited basis. 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Virginia Avenue Park.

• **Friday, April 28 - Arbor Day**

• **Saturday, April 29 - LA Made: Beginning Watercolor** - Watercolor attributes and techniques are discussed. The instructor gives a live demonstration, and then there are three sessions of hands-on painting of still-life objects by the participants, concluding with a "throw-down" session to show everyone's work and discuss what has been learned and where to go next in your practice. Pencils, pens, paints, brushes, and paper are supplied. 1 p.m. In person, West Los Angeles Regional Library. For teens and adults.

• **Saturday, April 29 - Annual Authors Forum** - Featuring four authors from Sisters in Crime/Los Angeles: Anne Louise Bannon, Diana Gould, Melinda Loomis, and Lynda Palmer. 2 p.m. Donald Bruce Kaufman Brentwood Branch Library, 11820 San Vicente Blvd. Call 310-575-8273 for more details.

• **Saturday, April 29 - Arts & Literacy Festival** - Ready, set, build. A construction-themed day of live performances, a literacy zone, and family-friendly activities hosted by community organizations. Virginia Avenue Park, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Santa Monica Bead & Design Show (Continued from Page 1)



A large variety of colorful beads will be on display.

clothing, and accessories.

Showtimes are Friday, 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fairmont Miramar, 101 Wilshire Blvd. Call 888-747-1123 for more information. For tickets, visit beadanddesign.com/santamonica.



Happy April Birthdays to:

Marlene Dobkin, Klaus Brandt, Paul Gaulke, Mervyn Hecht, Carol Jackson, Xavier Banister, Sarah Young Shepard, Rena McKinzie, Sharon Koskery, Alan Rich, Cameron Khoury, Jennifer George, Matt Williams, Jessica Heffernan, Frank Vespe, Kathleen Fish, Isabelle Viguier, Jason Nadler, Jamie Menzies, Jenna Analco Gilliland, Raul Gomez Salazar, Carolyn Jemmott, Beth Field, Lenn Hilario Chowdhury, and Linda Greenberg

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The Santa Monica History Museum will embark on a new partnership with the Quinn Research Center (QRC), collaborator on the museum's exhibition - *Broadway to Freeway: Life and Times of Vibrant Community*. Opening in June 2023, the Quinn Gallery will advance the museum's commitment to inclusivity as they continue their mission to share the rich, diverse history of Santa Monica. From left, Rob Schwenker, SMHM Executive Director; Kathleen Rawson, SMHM Board Chair; Bill Edwards, QRC co-founder; Carlyne Edwards, QRC co-founder; and Susan Gabriel Potter, SMHM President. Dr. Alfred T. Quinn's portrait is on back wall.

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Real Estate Number Ones and Alphabet Soup



By Richard Lombardi

This is the time of year when many real estate agents start strutting proudly like peacocks as they tout their last

year's successes. The number of agents claiming to be number one, in whatever flattering statistic they can find, is absolutely staggering. The intent of flouting their self-described superlative sales numbers is to garner credibility.

There is no denying that experience in any career field is an indication of capability, but longevity alone does not equate to being exceptionally skilled.

The threshold to receive and maintain a real estate license is not substantial. Educational requirements to receive a California real estate sales license are just three college-level real estate courses, passing the state licensing exam, plus only 45 hours of training required to renew a license every four years.

Most real estate buyers and sellers do not realize that a real estate salesperson is in essence an apprentice that MUST work under the direct supervision of a real estate broker. There is no requirement for a salesperson to ever earn a real estate broker license and become solely legally responsible for their own actions.

Most active real estate licensees join the National Association of Realtors® (NAR) trade organization. The organization has created additional courses and credentials to increase their members' skills, proficiency, and knowledge to better serve their consumers. There are, however, no requirements for members to participate in these programs.

Here are a few of the Designations and Certifications awarded by the National Association of Realtors® and affiliate organizations:

- Certified Residential Specialist/CRS: The CRS designation is the highest credential awarded to resi-

dential sales agents, managers, and brokers. To earn the CRS designation, members participate in advanced classes as well as provide documentation of sales experience. Annual training is required to maintain the designation.

- Graduate, REALTOR® Institute/GRI REALTORS® with the GRI designation have in-depth training in legal and regulatory issues, technology, professional standards, and the sales process.
- Seniors Real Estate Specialist®/SRES® The SRES® Designation program educates REALTORS® on how to ethically serve the real estate needs of the fastest growing market in real estate, clients age 50+.

Other professional credentials include:

- Residential Real Estate Divorce Specialist
- Luxury Homes Certification/LHC
- Certified International Property Specialist/CIPS
- Real Estate Investing/REI
- Short Sales & Foreclosure Resource/SFR®
- Negotiations Certification

While it is easy to be distracted by self-promotion, when interviewing agents, I encourage consumers to dig a little deeper. Seek agents who have training and experience most closely matching the transaction needs. Ask how agents have consistently built their knowledge and honed skills to help ensure a smooth transaction even when difficult situations arise.

Richard Lombardi has been in real estate sales since 1989, and a California real estate broker since 2005. He has earned almost every combination of letters in the real estate alphabet soup. To learn more about Richard, visit lombardi realestatewealthadvisors.com/about, or email Richard@TheLombardiGroup.com. You can also call 310-903-6509 for even more information.



From the Santa Monica History Museum



A woman and a child are resting in Palisades Park. Ocean Avenue and the Windermere Hotel are in the background. The Hotel Windermere By-The-Sea was built in 1909 and demolished in the early 1960s. It was located at 1431 Ocean Avenue. Image number 2018.FIC.4.12a is from the Adelbert Bartlett Collection at the Santa Monica History Museum.

Byte by Byte

The Sound of Science



By Dr. Miceala Shocklee

With April hopefully bringing warmer, drier weather than the wet and windy Spring so far,

Southern Californians will likely start heading outdoors and out of town for pre-summer adventures.

Rather than shuffling through your top two Spotify playlists for the hundredth time, consider filling the silence with the sound of science instead by checking out one of these three playlists:

- **Huberman Lab** - Hosted by the eponymous Dr. Andrew Huberman, Stanford School of Medicine tenured Professor of Neurobiology and Ophthalmology, the Huberman Lab podcast covers primarily neurobiology-based topics. The podcast doesn't require a medical degree – or even a biology one, for that matter – to understand, though. The Huberman Lab breaks down the science behind subjects like meditation methods, headaches, and the link behind gastrointestinal and brain health in ways that don't shy away from the use of technical terms, but rather employs them in well-explained, accessible vernacular.

The Huberman Lab podcast emphasizes delivering information

backed by evidence and peer-reviewed studies, even going so far as to provide updates and edits on earlier topics as new information or a clearer way of explaining is available. The only subjective critique of an otherwise very objective podcast is that in addition to delivering a hefty dose of science, the podcast does promote sponsors and brands rigorously as well.

Aside from the intermittent verbal advertisements, the podcast is otherwise a wealth of information on some of the most brain-tickling topics out there. To find out more about the Huberman Lab and its podcast, visit: hubermanlab.com.

- **Aquadocs** - Hosted by the soon-to-be Doctor Michelle Greenfield, Aquadocs is an auditory treasure trove of information for coastal residents. The podcast features episodes ranging from "Sustainable Aquaculture to End World Hunger" to "Brain Scans for Sea Lions." Aquadocs guests have included aquatic animal veterinarians and other zoological health professionals at the top of their fields from all over the world.

A bonus for listeners who may be novices to the field is Michelle's ability to bring the dual background of teacher and learner to the topics from their unique stage

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Reflections From The East

The Most Precious Things in the World Are Often Free



By Qin Sun Stubis
I consider my children to be the luckiest people on Earth because they grew up with libraries. When they were only a few months old, I started to wheel them in their strollers to “Mommy and Me” storytimes. Surrounded by books, we read with a group of mothers and babies, and we then returned home with a pile of our own colorful storybooks to enjoy.

After more than 30 years in America, libraries have become my forever friends whom I can rely on for knowledge, help, and enter-

tainment. No matter where I move, I always make sure that a library is close by.

Unlike my children, however, I didn’t have a library as a child. In fact, I didn’t even know about libraries until I was in my high school years during the Cultural Revolution in Shanghai, China. Few students read books aside from political tracts then, and teachers were not respected.

During those turbulent times, I had little to do besides constantly worry about my politically-imprisoned father and poverty-stricken family. When I heard about the need for a student helper at a place filled with books,

I applied. Since there were few volunteers for the position, I got the job easily.

Formerly a missionary school in the old French Quarter, our library occupied the ground floor of the original schoolhouse nicknamed “The Red Building.” It was an expansive, dark wood paneled room filled with shelves of books that were covered under a layer of dust.

I got to spend two afternoons a week after school, often all alone, in the library. There, I was free to roam around the aisles and read whatever I wanted, quietly, by myself. Some of the books I read were banned and couldn’t be

taken home. I often had to hide them in a secret place so I could continue my reading the next time I went back.

Soon enough, I started to long for the hours when I surrounded myself with walls of books. It was exciting because I never knew what new treasures I could discover and what interesting knowledge I would learn. Being a librarian became the best part of my high school years.

Through the technology of the Internet, libraries have become more and more accessible to us now. We can sit at home and be at the library at the same time. With the touch of a button, we

(Continued on Page 5)

Spring-Cleaning the Artwork Bin



By Cheryl Thode
Okay, all you moms and dads, we made it to April. For many of us, that brings about past memories of cleaning out the cobwebs, right? While time-consuming, the ritual of “spring-cleaning” I find to be liberating. However, this year, with a four-year-old and a newborn, any time for cleaning has been very elusive. That said, I have been craving decluttering one area of my house, my pre-schooler’s artwork bins. (Yes, I said bins. He is only four and has amassed more papers than in my four years of college.)

If you are like I am, you probably have a couple boxes of “artwork,” too. These precious pieces are of lines and squiggles, first attempts with a paintbrush, zillions of copies of your kid’s attempts at writing their name, the various class “cut and glue” holiday proj-

ects, and so on.

When you are presented with these “masterpieces” by your kids, you savor them and keep them. Maybe you plan to display them later or save each and every page your child touches because they are amazing and memorable. Heck, maybe you have no clue what to do with them, and you stash them somewhere because you want your kid to feel special. Whatever the reason, we all have these boxes. What to do with them? I only have a preschooler. Left untouched, I may need to invest in a storage pod. Nope! I need to Spring-clean.

So, what to do? Well, like any item that needs organizing, we need to sort the items into groups of Keep, Pass on, and Get rid of.

The first pass is an assessment of what you need to slyly get rid of. Depending on your child’s age, you will probably do this alone. It may seem harsh, but you can only appreciate the true gems if the

clutter is decreased. Take this time to get rid of the items that are just scraps of paper, repetitive in nature, hold no meaning, or items that you can’t even recall the who, what, when, or where of it.

Your next pass through the bin can be done with your child and be a fun activity for you. Make two piles: one for the artwork to keep, and the other, for artwork to share or give to family members to have. You will be surprised at how easy it is to let go of some of the pages when you know you will not be throwing them out. Also, grandparents love their grandkids’ artwork, and they may even create a revolving display for your kids to see when they come visit.

As for the last pass, now that you know what you are keeping, how should you store it? Well, the quickest and easiest option is to use the box we just emptied and either put the “keepers” back into the box as is, or in a more

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Do You Recognize This Neighborhood Celebrity?

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Christopher Edwards will help you check out your books at the Montana Avenue Branch Library. He has worked there for four years.

Mini Message Bulletin Board

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Clergy Corner

The Blessings of Ramazan

By Rev. Jeremiah Lal Shahbaz Kalendae

All year, I eagerly await the arrival of the holiest of months in the Islamic tradition—Ramazan (or Ramadan) – to arrive with its blessings. Muslims all around the globe fast from food and water during the daylight hours, study the Quran, increase their daily prayer offerings, give to charity, and build community throughout this sacred lunar month. It arrived with the sighting of the crescent moon last month, and it will conclude later this month with the completion of the moon’s cycle. It is a time for spiritual renewal that brings with it many blessings.

The celebration of the Queen of Months is a foundational pillar of Islamic spiritual life. It is an annual period to spiritually reflect upon life, draw nearer to our souls, and be more aware of our Beloved Allah. I welcome this month as a joyful gift – an opportunity to restore and refresh my being. Fasting from food and water during the daylight hours is no easy task, but there is a hidden sweetness found in slowing down,

emptying oneself, and becoming more aware of one’s hunger and thirst. The fast encourages more sustainable routines, it brings a clarity to mind and heart, and helps to cultivate compassion for all those who do not have enough food to eat or safe water to drink. It reminds us of our responsibility to care for our neighbors, locally and globally.

We are all in need of some deep rejuvenation after the hardships and traumas of the past few years. I hope regardless of whether you celebrate Ramazan, Pesach, Easter, or no holiday at all, you’ll make some time to slow down, practice self-care, cultivate wellbeing, and contribute to the flourishing of the greater community.

Ramazan Mubarak and Happy Holidays!

Rev. Jeremiah Lal Shahbaz Kalendae
Minister, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Monica

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

Enjoy Gardening This Spring

On Saturday, April 8, the City of Santa Monica Community Gardens Program will be presenting *Seeing and Relating to Life in the Soil* at the Main Street Community Garden from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

With all the rains, the superbloom above ground is in full Spring. Is the same true for the myriad of organisms below our very feet? Is there an eruption of fungi and soil microbes? Come and discover. Join James Oliver, mycologist and soil researcher, for this presentation. Garden gates open and refreshments served at 9 a.m. Presentation and demonstration begins at 10 a.m.

Celebrate Earth Month on Saturday, April 15 from 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. at Ishihara Park Learning Garden, 2909 Exposition Blvd., in Santa Monica. You can start some of your own seeds, dissect an owl pellet, talk hot composting, make your own smudge stick, investigate the worm bin, and help decorate the sidewalk all around the garden to celebrate Mother Earth. Bring your own reusable cups/plates/utensils for pancakes and coffee, and be entered to win your own worm bin. They will even toss

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- Joe Analco

The Most Precious Things
(Continued from Page 4)

are able to study a foreign language or learn the timeless lyrics of Chaucer.

And, like mushrooms, “Little Free Libraries” are sprouting up in neighborhoods all over the country, offering free books to anyone who is interested in taking them home. As we take our daily walks, we stop, look, leaf through a few, and take some home. With a cup of coffee and a new book in hand, we are off for another adventure.

These days, as our world tempts us with an evergrowing wealth of gleaming treasures, don’t forget that the most precious ones may be waiting for us to find and pick up at our local libraries. And, they are absolutely free.

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

Passing Through the Pico Neighborhood

Poetry Liberates Hearts and Minds



By Stacy McClendon

The United States celebrates National Poetry month throughout the month of April. This celebration

was created by the Academy of American Poets in April, 1996.

Over the years, this has become the largest literary celebration in the world, with over ten million readers, students, teachers, librarians, book stores, publishers, families, and more participating. It also showcases and honors the expansive role that poetry has and will continue to play in our culture.

Poetry is an expressive art form that tantalizes the senses and delights the soul. It frees words and thoughts and allows them to be shaped and shared in a myriad of ways, depending on the voice and stance of the poet. This is where ingenuity, playfulness, and uniqueness come alive.

The Academy of American Poets has plenty of activities and resources available for participants. It gives viewers a choice to locate thoughts that resonate with them and/or the community they’re a part of.

To learn more about this celebration and see the list of activities and events, please visit poets.org/national-poetry-month.

Please also visit www.smpl.org to see what our Santa Monica libraries are offering during the month. Also, to see what the Los Angeles Public Library has in store, go to www.lapl.org to view events held at libraries in neighboring cities of Santa Monica.

I plan to participate in a few events, as I’m a poet who loves to



Thoughts of Springtime inspire creative poets.

create and enjoy the freedom that poetry gives me. It’s also extremely enjoyable to just sit back and take in another poet’s body of work.

I hope your love of poetry expands to a new dimension this month!

Here’s a couple of poems that I came up with for the word Poetry:

Pushing Mentals Farther
Operating Strengths Towers
Enticing Without Trying
Taking, Not Buying
Rights, Wrongs Contemplated
You Better Keep Chasing ... That Right Thing

Pansies Push Through
Over, Under, New
Encouraged to Choose
Timing is Everything
Race Not Important
Yellow, Bright, Open

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

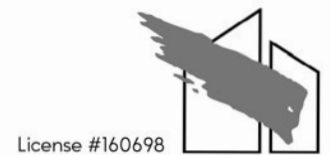
Oops...

Last month we meant to print that Janice Anderson had lived in Santa Monica for 34 years, not four years.



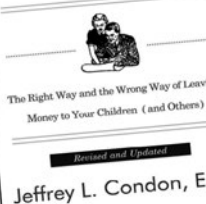
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Locally-Sourced Parenting



By Erin Surace

Confession: I have never been good at accepting unsolicited parenting advice. I am what some call an older parent. So, it's hard for me. There. I said it.

Currently, I live in a different country than most people offering the advice I just mentioned. And, because of this, I realized one day after a phone call from my daughter's school that I only seek local advice on how to look into the issues that concern my child and the environment she lives in to handle any situation.

We have a unique parenting style within our community. Our little city tries to operate daily within a meshed community of 83 nationalities, but nestled into one nationality – like America.

Over the years, without labeling it or being aware of it, I have adapted to “locally-sourced parenting” to tailor our own family's path. I focus on who I am – where I am – and what is going on around me right now.

The most helpful reminder is to stop, take a deep breath, and look at it from any and every angle I

can. Patience. Wisdom. Insight. Empathy. There are a lot of different “shoes” here to walk in.

And, of course, we are observing the current situations surrounding us. We talk a lot about topics like this in our MOMs group because we are all parenting a lot differently than what our parents went through with us. So, this is not unique at all if you really think about it.

I've said so many times that my parenting style is different from anyone else I know. It has to be. Every person is different. And, we should be.

I find it so helpful when I look at things from the perspective of my own environment, then act accordingly for the wellbeing and growth of my own child.

Another confession: I miss the Santa Monica Farmers Market on Wednesdays so much! I think locally-sourced parenting advice is my new Farmers Market. Peace be with you all.

Please join us at Mothers of Monica when we meet every Tuesday via zoom. Register here at: <https://stmonica.net/ministries/fellowship-groups/moms>.

Keeping Up on New Laws That Have Passed



Harmon Sieff is a local lawyer who makes a point of keeping his clients apprised of new laws and court decisions which may be important to them. Here are a

few for your consideration:

1. Pink Tax

In California, substantially similar products from the same company shall not be priced differently based on the gender of the intended customer. (Think pink razors.)

2. Housing

a. Homeowners may add up to two bedrooms within an existing dwelling unit despite local zoning rules to the contrary.

b. Certain development along strip malls will be fast-tracked to skip lengthy and costly local review processes.

c. Governments shall not implement minimum parking requirements for projects within a half-mile of public transit.

3. Bicycles

Drivers must change lanes when passing a cyclist if feasible; governments shall not impose license laws; e-bike access is expanded;

and bikes may cross streets on pedestrian walk signals.

4. Jaywalking

Pedestrians may now lawfully cross a street in midblock if done safely.

5. Fur Law

California now bans the sale and manufacturing of new fur clothing and accessories, but not used fur products, leather, cowhide, faux fur, or shearing.

Harmon's practice serves as a “lawyer of first resort,” or “primary care attorney,” advocating for small businesses and individuals with disputes and transactions, including accident victims by referral only. His firm specializes in personalized client service. If he can be of any assistance with your legal issues, consider contacting him as soon as a question is identified. Remember: Preventative lawyering is the most effective kind. Harmon can be reached by calling 818-986-4563.

Spring-Cleaning the Artwork Bin (Continued from Page 4)

organized fashion. However, we want to avoid numerous boxes, right? You could buy an art portfolio. However, that has a similar problem.

If you want to continue to condense on the clutter, a great option that will also free up space is to make a book of your child's artwork: take the originals and place them in a three-ring binder or turn to the digital realm and take pictures/scan the artwork to make a book of your child's creations. Depending on the time you want to spend, you could make your own book with Shutterfly or a similar app, or use services such as Artsonia, Artkive, or Keepy to help you store, digitize, and print a keepsake photobook with mini-



Love his concentration!

mal involvement. Once you digitize the artwork, you can freely “let-go” of the original.

Like all “Spring-cleaning,” processing your child's artwork will take some time and energy, and may be a little emotional. However, in the end, you will have culled through a pile of random papers, picked out the true treasures, and saved them for your child to have in years to come.

As an added bonus, you will also have created a one-of-a-kind, art-filled coffee table book. Enjoy the decluttering and God Bless!



The Sound of Science (Continued from Page 3)

in the veterinary process. To learn more about the Aquadocs community, go to: www.aquadocs.com.

• **Queer As Fact** - While not strictly a science-related podcast, this Melbourne-based group of queer academics with backgrounds in history and media brings a refreshingly data-based, analytical approach to historical queer figures and societies. Their interrogation of queer individuals and cultures throughout time and across the world pairs sensitivity with curiosity and critical thinking

– as well as with humor and a charismatic cast. The podcast covers people like the mother of science fiction, Mary Shelley; the semi-scandalous researcher, Samuel Steward; and the famous military surgeon, Dr. James Barry. To delve into the world of Queer As Fact, check out: www.queerasfact.com.

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

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Rotary Club of Santa Monica Hosts Spring Wine and Food Festival



Rotarians Ann Greenspun and Paul Leoni visit at the event.



A bidder raises his paddle.



A view of the dinner from upstairs.



Incoming President Ken Waltzer, left, with current President Joe Metoyer, watch the auction.

Fall Prevention: Myths, Facts, and Useful Information

Falls are serious business. Every year, over three million Americans are treated in the emergency room as a result of falling. Falling can result in lifelong disability, and even death. Falls are also expensive: it is estimated that the U.S. spends over \$50 billion each year in medical costs related to falls. (CDC Facts About Falls 2023).

But, did you know that most falls are preventable? Check out these “myths and facts” about falls and falling.

Myth: Falls are an inevitable part of growing old.

Fact: In California in 2020, (the last year for which statistics are available), only 28% of people over 65 reported a fall. That means that nearly ¾ of older adults don’t fall.

Myth: Falls “just happen.”

Fact: Most falls are caused. Risk factors include hazards in the home and in the community environment, side effects of certain medications, vision and hearing impairments, a sedentary lifestyle, social isolation, and even fear of falling.

Myth: There’s nothing we can do about falls.

Fact: Most falls can be prevented! Simple precautions such as wearing appropriate shoes, exercising regularly, having your hearing and vision checked annually, and reviewing your medications with a doctor or pharmacist can reduce your risk of falling.

Myth: Staying home and staying

seated are the best way to avoid falling.


Fact: Social isolation and inactivity are significant risk factors for falling.

Want to know more? Contact Miriam Caiden, MSG, PhD, at WISE & Healthy Aging, 310-394-9871, or mcaiden@wiseandhealthyaging.org to learn about their next evidence-based eight-week workshop, *A Matter of Balance (AMOB)*, which has been shown to reduce emergency room visits from falls by 50%.

The AMOB program begins on Friday, May 5, from 10 a.m. to Noon. Space is limited. You can, and should, enjoy all the benefits of an active life – without having to worry about falling.



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Mama Bun Bun and her baby.



Sister and Brother bunny siblings.

Unexpectedly My Pet Family Expands

By Pamela Lawrence

Last month, I wrote an article about my experience rescuing an abandoned pet rabbit in the mountains. "Bun Bun" has been settling into her new, safe, loving home with my son and me wonderfully. I purchased an extra large enclosure, and scheduled her to be spayed and vaccinated.

Twenty-two days after her rescue on the morning of her spay surgery, I discovered four tiny babies had been born overnight. This was a complete shock, unexpected, and not a happy moment for me! I had been sweetly telling "Bun Bun" the previous few days that we were going to help her avoid reproductive organ cancers through the upcoming spay surgery, and I think she understood me and rushed to birth her kits before that fateful day. I had committed to care for one rabbit, but the overnight appearance of four more bunnies was a bit overwhelming for me in so many ways.

I am so grateful for supplies, food, bedding, more bowls, and guidance from Michelle Kelly of the L.A. Rabbit Foundation. Baby bunnies eat different hay and pellets than adult rabbits, and I have really learned much more about rabbit and baby kit care than I ever thought I needed to know.

All five have recently received their first RHDV2 vaccinations, and "Bun Bun" will be spayed in two weeks. The babies are 33 days old upon this writing today, and have really grown on me – literally. They are so adorable and playful. I plan to keep one as a pal for "Bun Bun," and need to find homes for the other three, two males and one female.

Anyone interested in adopting one of the bunnies, or fostering/adopting any other rabbit can visit: larabbits.org. The little ones will be posted to the website as soon as they are ready for adoption.

Thoughts From a Second-Time Father

Developing a Sense of Pride



By Michael Margolin

I work for a home health and hospice company, and we primarily work with seniors. One focus my partners and I have is interacting with seniors in assisted living facilities.

For Valentine's Day, we took Valentine's Day-related coloring sheets to local schools and had kids color them with Valentine's Day messages. We then delivered them to seniors in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

The school that Alexa and Jake go to is right across the street from one of those buildings. And, on Valentine's Day, I was able to help chaperone ten or so fifth graders, along with fourth grader Alexa, and first grader Jake, to hand out Valentine's Day art and messages to seniors in both the assisted living unit and the memory care unit of the building.

The whole event produced plenty of smiles and what I think will be lasting memories for the kids as well. When I spoke to the kids before they went back to school, I was impressed by how positive they had been and how eager they were to do it. The questions they had were great, and I was encouraged by their attitudes. I reminded them that what they had just done made the day of a lot of people,

and it did not cost them a cent.

I was proud of all of them, and certainly proud of Alexa and Jake. That leads me to something else I noticed recently.

My wife Enjoli, the kids and I went to dinner with my mom for her birthday last month. The restaurant we went to is a bit nicer than one we would usually go to with the kids.

I have noticed various behavior changes as my children are getting older. Alexa, in particular, in the way she sat and handled herself as she politely conversed with the waiter. Enjoli took a picture of me with Alexa, and then I became aware of something else.

I realized that I felt I had the same type of smile on my face that my dad would sometimes have in pictures with us as we got older. A look that said, this is my child, and I am quite proud to be his father.

I'm not sure if I had really seen that look on my face in a picture before. So, I suppose the feelings of pride that I felt while observing my nine-year-old being so sure of herself, were written all over my face. And, at the rate Alexa and Jake are going, there are sure to be many more similar photos.

Mike Margolin has been writing for us since Alexa was born ten years ago. He is an avid sports fan. Mike is also a coach for both of his children's soccer teams.

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She Said "Yes!" in the Pumpkin Patch



Brittany Jolivette and Jacob Pierce made a major decision in the pumpkin patch after Brittany said "Yes!" to Jacob's proposal.

By Grandmother Clara Wright
Wedding bells will ring for Santa Monica native Brittany Jolivette and Jacob Pierce of Poulsbo, Washington the beginning of April. In a private wedding ceremony, 200 invited guests will join the lovely couple as they exchange their wedding vows.

Watching Brittany grow through the years as she attended Santa Monica schools – McKinley Elementary, John Adams Middle School, and Santa Monica High School has brought me many moments of joy and happiness. She received a BA from the University of Florida and a Masters Degree in Nursing from UCLA, where she continued to excel in her studies. These accomplishments all make me a very proud grandmother.

How did the two meet when they were living in different cities? Brittany explained, "Jake and I met on Bumble, an online dating site where those who identify as women initiate the conversation. We had our first date back in January of 2019 in Long Beach, and it's been amazing ever since."

"Jake's the most kindhearted

human I've met, and I'm very happy he popped the question. While forever with him doesn't seem long enough, I will continue to cherish every moment!"

Brittany's parents Gloria and Craig Jolivette of Santa Monica recently announced Brittany's choice to wed Jacob Pierce with open arms.

The couple will reside in Tacoma, Washington where Brittany is doing nursing, and Jacob is a longshoreman working in his family's business.

Much happiness to them both on this new adventure.



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Connect to Nature in April

By Julie Rensink Hanson

Happy Earth Day! Similar to last year, the theme for 2023, "Invest in Our Planet," challenges governments, corporations, and private citizens to move toward more sustainable practices by buying from greener companies and taking an active role in the Earth's wellbeing.

Think about something you can do locally or globally, such as planting trees, buying certified bird-friendly coffee, reducing plastic use, or forming an action group. You can find a list of events to join on Earth Day, or create and register your own event at www.earthday.org.

We don't usually see many American Robins in coastal Southern California, but this year has been an exception. The orange-chested Robins have been showing up in large flocks in backyards and parks since December, and it's been a joy to see them. Often found with groups of Cedar Waxwings looking for berries such as Toyon, they also love worms, and a good water fountain is sure to entertain. We aren't exactly sure why we have seen such a large influx this year; it could be that colder weather is bringing them into our area, or perhaps there's more food available here than normal. We just know they have brought us many smiles, and we are grateful for however long they choose to stay.

It's the time of year again when Hooded Orioles return to our area looking for palm trees to weave their hanging nests. They will be



American Red Robin

here through August and the best way to attract them to your yard is to provide nectar-producing flowers or a nectar feeder designed specifically for orioles.

If you are looking for a great new place to walk and experience a restored riparian canyon, check out the George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon in Pacific Palisades. This new 46-acre park opened in December and includes trails and informational signs to learn about the canyon's history and unique habitat. Park at the Palisades Recreation Center and begin your walk from the entrance next to the tennis courts. You will also enjoy the expansive view of the lovely Pacific while you walk the trail. Thank you to all who advocated for this amazing new park! For more information, go to: <https://wolfbergpark.potrero.la/>.

Call the Wild Bird Unlimited Nature Shop at 424-272-9000, or go online to www.wbu.com/santamonica for more information.

An Update From ERBA Markets

What Happens to the Products Before They Get to the Store?



By Stephen Freedman

As a large dispensary with many locations, one question that is frequently asked is where do you get all of your products from? It's a question that has garnered a variety of guesses, from deals on the street to growing and packaging in the back of our stores. The truth is, the supply chain is heavily regulated and tracked by the state, for both safety and compliance. This track and trace technology, called Metrc, enables tracking from seed to sale.

After the plants are cultivated, dried, cured, and trimmed, they are sent for manufacturing. This includes extraction, which is the process of creating natural by-products of the cannabis plant. This is how cannabinoids and terpenes from the plant that add flavor and effect to the final product are collected. This phase also includes infusion, which is how we get our edibles.

The next stage is testing. Lab testing is an essential part of the legal cannabis industry. This ensures that all products being sold to the consumer are safe. Products are tested once before selling the

harvest, and a second time if the products have been altered from the original flower state. All cannabis products can only be sold once they have gone through testing. The testing label is where you will see displayed the THC%, cannabinoids, terpenes, etc. of the product.

The next stage is distribution, which has the most compliance hurdles. Distributors move products between wholesalers and retailers, collect payments, and sometimes store products. They make sure all products are packaged correctly and labels are compliant, before storing and transporting the products to their final destination, the dispensaries.

With cannabis still being federally illegal, this entire process is complicated and time-consuming. Hopefully, one day the speed bumps will be removed, with the general public having more access to a variety of products in an expedited, less cumbersome manner.

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

Mar Vista: Neighbor to Neighbor

A Community for Westside Seniors



By Michael Byrne

What does it mean to have a community? Before answering, let me share a definition of "community" (from the Oxford English Dictionary): "a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals."

With the advent of the Internet, it's easy to find and participate in any community anywhere on the planet. However, for many (me included), a "digital" community does not serve as a replacement for the in-person variety. That's why as someone relatively new to the Westside of L.A., I'm still working to generate my own local community. I know that having it will help me feel like I've actually found home.

These thoughts all came to me when I met Byron Stalcup, President of the Mar Vista Senior Club, during one of the club's Friday meetings. Byron, who has served as president for the past 10 years, shared the club "tries to make everyone feel like they belong to something."

The Mar Vista Senior Club belongs to the Los Angeles Federation of Senior Citizen Clubs, which is under the L.A. County Parks & Recreation department. Mar Vista is one of 28 clubs in the Federation, each of which costs the city close to nothing except a little electricity from the facilities they



President Byron Stalcup

use to meet.

Unfortunately, many of the clubs have yet to restart since being forced to stop during COVID. However, the Mar Vista Club is as strong as ever. They see 40-60 members show up at their weekly meetings. Members range from lifelong residents of Mar Vista to folks who were born outside of the United States.

Byron shared that at one point, the membership represented 42 separate countries of origin. Once a month, the club has an entertainment/speaker series. This year they've had representatives from the California Highway Patrol and Red Cross speak. Every quarter, they take a field trip. The last one was to Palm Springs to see a Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga "look-alike" show.

As my chat with Byron was ending, someone brought in a cake to celebrate everyone who had a birthday in the last two months. Were it not for the club's age

(Continued on Page 11)

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Planning Ahead

Estate Planning Advice From Jimmy Carter



By Lisa Alexander, Esq.
Former President Jimmy Carter has been in the news. I listened to a few interviews with him recorded over

the years by Terry Gross for her *Fresh Air* radio program heard on NPR. In a 1998 interview recorded after the publication of Jimmy Carter's book: *The Virtues of Aging*, the former President talked about his and Rosalyn Carter's approach to estate planning.

Jimmy Carter has not shied away from contemplating his death. He says we all know we are going to pass away someday. His approach was to plan for it in a reasonable way.

First of all, the former President and his wife both have living wills (in California we use Advance Health Care Directives) expressing their desire to pass away without tubes or artificial extension of life that can be very costly. They have planned for what they hope will be a natural death.

Second, the former President and his wife have done some tax and estate planning. Jimmy Carter points to the fact that anyone who has a taxable estate has the U.S. government as a major heir. Without proper estate planning, a percentage of your estate will go to the U.S. government instead of the people we care about, or the charities and projects that we would rather support.

A Community for Westside Seniors
(Continued from Page 10)

requirement (50+), I might have asked to join the ranks right then and there. But, it's comforting to know that when the time is right, this community will be waiting for me.

The Mar Vista Senior Club meets every Friday from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. at the Mar Vista Recreation Center. For more information, call Byron Stalcup at 310-351-9876.

The Carters approached estate planning in a methodical way. They had all their children come home during a holiday weekend. They had frank discussions with their children about everything they owned. And, they asked the question – what did their children want the parents to leave to them.

For example, would a child rather the parents skip them and leave the child's share directly to his/her own children (the grandchildren)?

Finally, balancing their desire to benefit their children and with counsel from their estate planning professionals, the Carters created an estate plan to leave a substantial portion of their estate to the Carter Center, founded by the former President and his wife with a mission to wage peace, fight disease, and build hope.

Jimmy Carter ended the interview segment with good advice to all of us: "No matter who we are, we ought to make some plans about what kind of legacy we want." (NPR: Jimmy Carter: *The Fresh Air Interviews*, March 7, 2023.)

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Free Alzheimer's and Caregiving Educational Conference April 19

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) will host a free Alzheimer's & Caregiving Educational Conference on Wednesday, April 19 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. It will take place at the Hilton Hotel in Orange County, (18800 MacArthur Blvd., Irvine).

Participants will learn about the field of Alzheimer's disease, brain health, and caregiving. To register, go to www.alzfdn.org/tour. Advanced registration is highly recommended. If you cannot attend the conference, you can connect with licensed social workers daily through AFA's national toll-free helpline by calling 866-232-8484.

Paws and Claws

Bats in the Belfry



By Dr. Frank Lavac, MS, DVM
Q: I recently returned from a trip to India where dog rabies is prevalent. Is there a rabies

problem in L.A. County?

A: A robust rabies vaccination program in dogs has allowed the U.S. to be free of dog rabies since 2007. Mandatory dog rabies vaccinations are still required and can be administered after three months of age. Mandatory cat vaccination varies from city to city in L.A. County.

Santa Monica does not require cats to be vaccinated for rabies. In L.A. County, the chief source of

rabies is from bats. There were 68 cases in 2021, and 50 cases in 2022. If you find a sick or injured bat, contact the LA County Veterinary Public Health Department. (<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/>).

The L.A. County Veterinary Public Health unit is also a good resource of information for other disease outbreaks. They were instrumental in appraising owners and veterinarians of an outbreak of Canine Flu and Leptospirosis that occurred the Summer of 2021. Fortunately, rabies is not a health concern among dogs in L.A. County.

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

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Community Service on the Westside

Sign Up for the YMCA Summer Camp



By Eduardo Lowe
Attention all summer camp enthusiasts! With camper spots filling up quickly, now is the perfect time to volunteer or secure a position with our fantastic organizations.

Located on the beautiful shores of Big Bear Lake, Camp Big Bear offers a unique summer camp experience for young people, with two week-long summer camps every year. Campers can enjoy a range of activities, such as swimming, kayaking, hiking, and more. For those passionate about working with youth, volunteering as a counselor at Camp Big Bear offers an opportunity to develop leadership skills and gain valuable experience.

In addition to volunteers, Camp Big Bear is also seeking dedicated individuals to hire in various roles, including cooks, lifeguards, housekeeping staff, kitchen aides, and program specialists. Mean-

while, the Santa Monica Family Y is also hiring for a range of positions, such as Aquatics Director, Early Childhood Education Teacher, and Member Services Representative.

Working at the Santa Monica Family Y or Camp Big Bear is an opportunity to be part of a passionate and dedicated community. As a volunteer or employee, you will make a positive difference in the lives of young people while enjoying the beauty of Big Bear Lake.

Don't wait any longer. Apply now before it's too late! Camper spots are almost full, and we need your help to make this summer unforgettable for our young campers. Whether you're looking for a summer job or volunteer experience, the Santa Monica Family Y and Camp Big Bear have opportunities for everyone. Sign up today at ymcasm.org!

Eduardo Lowe is the Member Engagement Director of the Santa Monica Family YMCA.

Past, Present, and Future



By Susan Barry
It's the time of year when the Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club (SMBWC) Board begins its discussion of our annual donations.

Any decision to donate, whether relatively modest or grand, focuses the giver on the great needs around them. With our mission to support women and our community at the forefront of our planning, we reflect on preserving the past, as with our donations to the Santa Monica History Museum; to the future, with local scholarships for Samohi Seniors and medical students at UCLA researching women's health; and, to the present needs in our community with our support for the outstanding organizations in Santa Monica serving the immediate needs of the unhoused and hungry.

While our specific gifts are announced in June, our thoughtful

consideration is what occupies us now.

On March 17, SMBWC welcomed the General Federation of Womens Clubs' Marina District for our annual photography and writing contests, and a luncheon complete with green tablecloths and shamrocks. Our beautiful ballroom was the setting in March for the largest International Tango Championships in the U.S., and our amazing stage continues to welcome Candlelight Concerts.

Please think of us when you plan your next event, especially for nonprofit groups planning fundraising activities.

Ongoing, our Book Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. Artist League meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m., and Bridge and Canasta players meet every Monday beginning at 11 a.m. at 1210 4th Street. For further information, visit our website, www.smbwc.org, or call 310-395-1308.

Lions Review Past Events



By Linda Levee
We are very happy to announce that the Santa Monica-Pacific Palisades Lions Club and the Venice-Marina-LAX Lions

Club held their 7th annual "Lions Eyes Across California" event on Saturday, March 18 at the Virginia Avenue Park (corner of Pico and Virginia), in Santa Monica. We provided free vision screenings for adults and children, free diabetes screenings, and free reading glasses. We also collected any used eyeglasses and hearing aids that you may have had lying around your house.

We Lions have had a focus on vision efforts as one of our charitable activities going back to 1925 when the famous Helen Keller, at our national convention, challenged us to become "Knights

of the Blind in the crusade against darkness."

At our recent dinner meeting, which we hold the second Wednesday of each month at the Santa Monica Elks Lodge, President Kingsley Fife passed the position of incoming President to Kathy Boole. Lion Kathy, we're happy to say, has just received the coveted award of "The Elks Citizen of the Year." This is an honor she justly deserves, as she's not only an active Lion, but also very involved with numerous other organizations, including The Salvation Army and the Santa Monica Breakfast Club.

If you're interested in learning more about Lionism, meeting new friends, and helping those in need in our community, please contact Yoriko Fisher at yorikofisher@gmail.com, or Dr. Kingsley Fife at 310-454-2960.

WISE & Healthy Aging (Continued from Page 1)

A highlight of the new site is its "Facility Locator Map," which enables a person to select from various criteria to pinpoint just the right type of nursing or assisted living facilities to meet their needs and to download a customized report of those facilities. It includes facilities in both Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties.

"There are many types of facilities for a person to consider, but they often don't know where to start looking," said Rachel Tate, Vice President, Ombudsman Services at WISE & Healthy Aging. "So, whether a person needs 'round the clock medical care,

was recently discharged from the hospital, tends to wander because of their dementia, is low-income or is disabled, the Facilitator Locator Tool helps them to know their options quickly."



-Joe Analco

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A Tribute to Our Friend Sharon Johnson

It is always hard to deal with the loss of a dear friend or family member. When one lives far away from you and you communicate only by telephone, you may not have thought to ask, who should I call if you don't answer the telephone? So, when one day you get a call to tell you why you couldn't reach your friend by telephone, many thoughts may go through your mind. Three of Santa Monica resident Sharon Johnson's friends welcomed the opportunity to share how much she meant to them during the many years they all knew each other.

By Andrea LeClair

I met Sharon in elementary school, and we were best buddies through junior high and into high school. We enjoyed singing together, and I recall us doing some sweet harmonizing on "You Are My Sunshine." I guess Sharon and I marched to a different drummer. We were both boy-shy. In junior high, there was a weekly dancing class in the gym. Before the dancing started, we would duck into the girls' locker room and hang out there until it ended. I lived across the street from Lincoln Jr. High, so Sharon's parents dropped her off at my place, and we both attended our junior high graduation dinner. There was to be a dance afterwards, so we left after the dinner and walked the few blocks to a local theater. After the double feature ended, as we walked back towards my place, Sharon's parents, who were on their way to pick her up, spotted us. They were not pleased.

When other teenagers were swooning over Elvis, we were mad about Yul Brynner. We often slept over at each other's houses, and for her sixteenth birthday, Sharon's parents took us to Palm Springs for the weekend. By some glorious coincidence, there was a Yul Brynner movie playing there.

After high school, we had very little contact. The last time I saw Sharon was in the early 1960s. Around the mid or late 1990s, while living in Southern Illinois,



Sharon loved to play with pets.

I started thinking about her. I located a Santa Monica phone book. Sharon wasn't listed, but I found her parents. They gave me her number, and so we reconnected and found we still had much in common. After my husband and I retired to northern Wisconsin, Sharon and I talked frequently. We would often remind each other of some favorite old song and sing a few bars of it together.

How could I groan about "another birthday" when annually on that date the phone would ring and there would be Sharon serenading me with the "Happy Birthday" song? We shared many interests, such as our love for music, astronomy (Sharon was a member of The Planetary Society co-founded by Carl Sagan) and good science fiction. Together, we would ponder such questions as: Why does one small fragment in one piece of music elicit such an emotional response and often goosebumps? Try to imagine infinity. What might life be like on other planets? Through some of our conversations we traveled to the stars together ... I miss her.

By Virginia Akers

I met Sharon in about 1958, and we were friends for more than 50 years. We met when we were both students at Santa Monica City College, and we were introduced by my friend Cynthia Bennett. We soon discovered that we were all fans of folk music and wanted to learn to play the guitar. Sharon, who already had a background in music, actually learned at the

class we all took together, but I never went much beyond playing chords while I sang.

Still, we had great fun singing and playing at gatherings in the evenings. Along with friends Marilyn and Sheila, my sister Nancy and Cynthia's sister Trisha, we formed a fun-loving group we called "The Girl Gang." We traveled to far-off concerts together and were regulars at the Monday night "amateur night" at the Troubadour music venue in West Hollywood.

Eventually, I left to attend Berkeley, and the "Girl Gang" was further reduced by marriage and other adventures. The occasional guitar playing gatherings still happened, but soon life intervened and we all moved on.

Some of us went to a folk dancing place called the Café Dansa, and I believe it was there that Sharon met the people in a semi-professional group called the Aman Folk Ensemble. Sharon was fascinated by Balkan singing, and they treasured her for her beautiful soprano voice.

Another friend of mine, Juli, was also interested in the group. I introduced her to Sharon, and the two formed a tight friendship while in Aman that lasted many years until Juli's untimely death.

They had discovered a mutual interest in Mariachi singing, and together, they visited many Mexican places which featured Mariachi musicians. The musicians admired their lovely voices and asked them to join in. After Juli moved to New York City, I saw little of Sharon, although we never lost touch.

My sister had formed a "Ladies who Lunch" group in Santa Monica. An accidental meeting with Sharon led to her joining the group, and when I also joined, I saw her every month at the luncheon.

But by 2019, the "Ladies who Lunch" were down to three surviving members - Trisha, Sharon, and me. Still, we faithfully gathered each month for our lunch,

which always ended with a small hot fudge sundae. One scoop. Then came the COVID pandemic.

Trisha moved to Texas to live with Cynthia. I moved into a seniors' residence in Hollywood. We have not seen each other in person since. Sharon, who was not in robust health, stayed in her family home. But, the "Ladies who Lunch" did not lose touch. Sharon and I talked on the phone at great length, often about Egypt, which we both had visited and loved, or just about this and that. And, then suddenly, she was gone, and I miss her very much.



Sharon enjoying a one scoop hot fudge sundae after lunch.

By Cynthia Baker and Trisha Bennett

Sharon Johnson was our friend. She was positive, interesting, and kind and she always had a smile on her face.

When she was young, Sharon visited Egypt and sailed up the Nile with her parents to see the monuments of ancient Egypt. It made a great impact on her, and she was always interested in learning about archeological discoveries and new information.

Sharon was also a talented musician excelling in piano, guitar and voice. In those years, folk music was very popular (and important - because it was often used to hold messages about war and peace, racial inequality, and civil rights.)

We met while attending Santa Monica City College, and we all became fascinated with folk music and singers. Singers such as Joan Baez and Pete Seeger

(Continued on Page 14)


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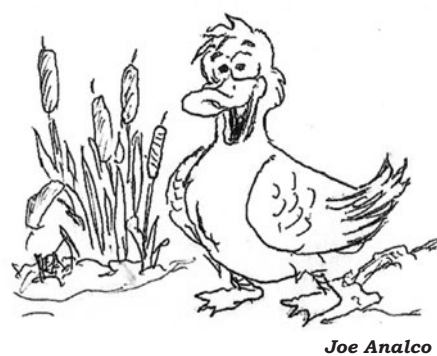
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From Me to You...



By Diane Margolin

It was a beautiful sunny day. After all the rain we've had, it was easy to appreciate the clusters of white clouds throughout the blue skies. It took me a while to get ready to go out to do a few errands, I had the usual paperwork to get ready to mail.

There wasn't a lot of traffic in the early afternoon. For whatever reason, I was in a nostalgic mood as I drove through the Santa Monica landscape. As I approached the Santa Monica History Museum on 7th Street, I remembered what I would usually be carrying to a monthly meeting of our Remembering Santa Monica senior gathering. For almost three years, we met with people who grew up in Santa Monica to talk about their memories. When I arrived at the museum, I would bring in refreshments and materials to share. We had speakers who spoke about their businesses, experiences, and backgrounds. One of our biggest turnouts was when staff from the Santa Monica Bank came to discuss the development of the bank and their adventures.

At one time, I coordinated monthly Saturday morning craft classes for elementary school ages children for almost a year. We had a school librarian introduce the day's topic by reading a related book and I would follow up with an art project.

The museum has had a variety of programs including entertainment, speakers, and celebrations. My favorite was recognizing Shirley Temple's birthday. Many collectors of her dolls were there. Volunteers had made the most delicious sandwiches and desserts for a high tea.

My next stop was Santa Monica Brake to have these odd noises in my car checked out. It is always such a comfort to see George, Sr., the father, and George, Jr., his son who has been helping his dad in the shop for several years. They just need to hear the offending sound and they can tell you immediately what the problem is. I have been going to them for several years and have always felt they are the best and most trustworthy mechanics. We made arrangements for me to bring the car back the next week.

The last stop was to get lunch at Fromin's. While I was waiting for my order, I talked to Bruce Stein, one of the managers about what was happening at Fromin's. I looked around the spacious restaurant and again, remembered many of the times our family had eaten there, when we would meet our friends for lunch, or when we might run into Msgr. Torgerson, Councilman Bob Holbrook, or one of our police staff having breakfast. It was, and is definitely a neighborhood favorite.

One of my favorite memories was when members of the Rotary Club decided to surprise their secretary Esther Johnson on her birthday. She usually met a few friends there for coffee in the morning. One by one, throughout the next few hours, Rotary members kept dropping in to celebrate with her. Esther was so surprised. The staff kept adding tables to where she was sitting until the tables were almost across the entire width of the restaurant.

Being able to go to various businesses and visit with the owners who know your name is what makes our community as special as it is. I am aware of how things change, and hopefully I will be able to get to know owners of many of the new businesses now in town.

Garden Growing Basics (Continued from Page 1)

soil provides stability so plants can root firmly and grow healthy and sturdy to support their bounty.

4. Keep water close. Lugging water can quickly eliminate the pleasure of tending your garden, so be sure you're situated near a hose. You'll know it's time to water when the soil is dry about an inch below the surface.

5. Plan for plenty of sun. A bright, sunny spot is a must, since most vegetables, herbs, and fruits depend on six or more hours of sun every day. Remember the sun's path changes throughout the year, and as trees and foliage grow, they may produce more

shade with each growing season.

6. Consider what you'll grow. Starting with veggies you know you like is a smart starting point since you'll be pouring sweat equity into making them grow.

7. Plant according to a calendar. Knowing how long it takes different foods to mature will help you create a planting calendar. You don't want to harvest everything at once, and if you stagger planting and replant what you can, you'll have a garden that produces food for your family for a longer period of time.

Find more helpful tips for managing your home and garden at eLivingtoday.com.

A Tribute to Our Friend (Continued from Page 13)



Sharon at a lunch with her friends.

performed locally. What we most enjoyed was going to the Troubadour where we saw folk singers such as Bud and Travis, The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem, Ian and Sylvia, and Buffy Saint Marie.

During this period, Sharon and friends Cynthia and Virginia decided to take guitar lessons with Bess Hawes, and Sharon became quite proficient. On Sunday nights, Sharon, Cynthia, Nancy, Pat, and Marilyn would gather at Sharon's home in Santa Monica. We would first watch *Bonanza* on her new color TV, and then spend the rest of the evening singing and

playing our guitars.

Sharon's interest in folk music was lifelong and led her to become a singer/performer with a Balkan folk dance troop called the Aman Folk Ensemble, and they performed in many places, including in Europe.

She and friend Juli also learned to sing Mariachi songs, and because they were so good, they were invited to sing in various area restaurants.

Sharon was a caring person. She moved out of her apartment and into the family home to personally take care of her parents and her aunt in their final years as they grew older and became ill.

For many years, Sharon and her friends ("The Lunch Bunch" – Sharon, Nancy, Dorothy, Jackie, Trisha, and later Virginia) met in Santa Monica every month at local restaurants to catch up, complain, inform, and enjoy each others' company. We miss Sharon.



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¹"Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2021. ²"How might my oral and dental health change as I age?," www.usnews.com, 11/30/2018. ³American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2018 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2018, American Dental Association.

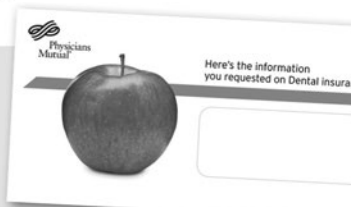
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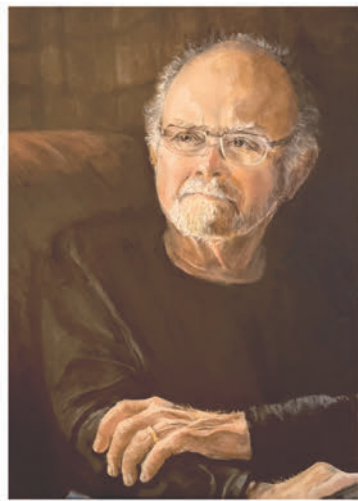
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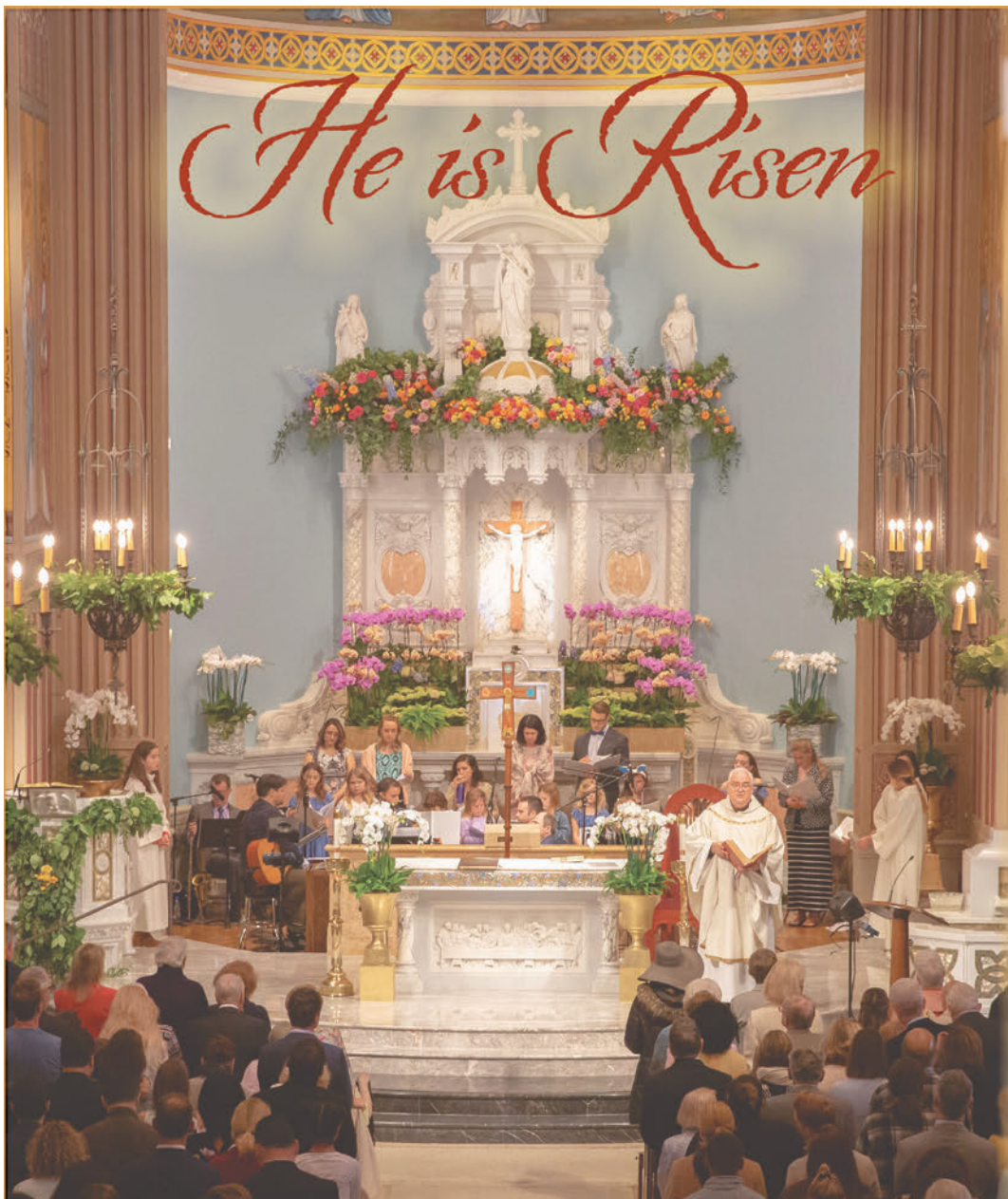
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