

On Mother's Day, Celebrate Family and All Who Create Special Memories With You



On a trip to Mexico, Enjoli Margolin with Jake and Alexa.



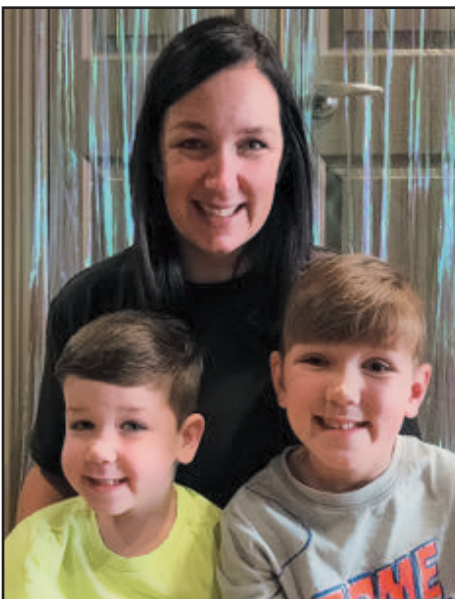
Charmaine Pasimio with newborn daughter Caia and son Joni



Camille, left, with sister Catherine and mom Catalina Chowdhury



Jenna Gilliland, center, with Cash, far left, Luca Joe, and Kinsley



Kelly Patterson with sons Mack, left, and Hodge.



Our popular columnist, Cheryl Thode, and her two sons.

When you think about one of your most valuable gifts to give, it is your time. Be sure to share it generously on Mother's Day with



Pamela Lawrence poses with her mother, Char.

those who are important to you, and with all the other special people who are a part of your life.



Author and columnist for The Santa Monica Star Qin Sun Stubis with her two children, Halley and Keaton, during the national launch of her award-winning book, "Once Our Lives."



Go to Page 3 to learn about the history of the Merry-Go-Round on the Santa Monica Pier in Jim Harris' monthly column. Photo by Julie Dobkin Gilberg

Do You Recognize These Neighborhood Celebrities?

(Answer on Page 11)



Take A Look Inside

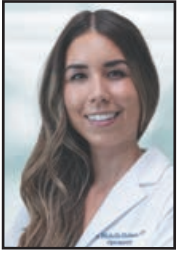
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Westwood Library's 20th Anniversary

Celebrate the Westwood Library's 20th anniversary with a full day of activities and performances. Enjoy an educational show featuring arthropods, amphibians, and reptiles. Attend a zine-making workshop, meet firefighters from

(Continued on Page 8)

Why Eye Health Matters for Aging Well



By Michelle Holmes, OD

As we celebrate having more birthdays, maintaining clear vision becomes just as important as keeping our bodies and minds strong. Our eyes do more than just help us see – they play an essential role in nearly every aspect of daily life.

From fulfilling basic self-care needs to engaging in meaningful working and learning, and participating in activities that bring us joy, like socializing and enjoying entertainment, our vision impacts it all.

Poor vision can increase our risk of falls and accidents, while

untreated eye diseases like glaucoma or macular degeneration can lead to permanent vision loss. The research is clear that healthy eyes support cognitive function, physical ability, and overall quality of life. Yet, many people neglect their eye health.

The good news? There are simple steps you can take to protect both your eyesight and brain health for years to come!

Join a free workshop on Understanding Your Eyes and Protecting Your Vision for a Brighter Future. We invite you to attend our FREE Two-Part Vision Wellness Brain Health Booster, a virtual educational workshop designed to help you understand the connection between eye health and brain

function. As an experienced neuro-optometrist, I will lead this two-part series and share practical strategies to maintain clear vision and support lifelong cognitive health.

You'll Learn:

- The link between eye health and cognitive function
- Updates on current research involving vision and dementia
- The basics of glasses and vision correction
- Common vision conditions in aging eyes – what's normal and what's not
- Lifestyle and nutritional tips for lifelong vision wellness
- A guide to eye exams and eye care providers

Let's keep our vision and minds

sharp together!

Join this exciting two-part vision workshop series on Wednesday, May 14 and May 21 at 12 p.m. Register now at bit.ly/vision-wellness, or call 213-344-2037 for more details.

Michelle Holmes, OD, is a neuro-optometrist at the Pacific Neuroscience Institute®, focused on the connection between vision and brain health. Dr. Holmes provides specialized eyecare to patients with central nervous system disorders such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, dementia, stroke, multiple sclerosis, and brain tumors.



Time to Branch Out This Spring

By Elizabeth Armstead California Climate Action Corps Fellow

As Spring blooms across Southern California, it's the perfect time to think about planting native plants that not only enhance your garden but thrive in the region's heat, dryness, and poor soil conditions.

Whether you're looking to attract local wildlife or add vibrant color to your space, these native plants offer the ideal solution.

For a burst of color, consider California wildflowers. The California poppy's striking orange, the pristine white of common yarrow, and the soft blue of baby blue eyes will light up any garden. If you're after

a more rustic, earthy vibe, the Chalk Liveforever and California sagebrush are perfect choices. Both are excellent soil stabilizers and thrive on slopes, making them a smart addition to challenging landscapes.

For something a bit larger, the White Lanterns Manzanita offers stunning red bark and evergreen foliage, while Cleveland sage provides eye-catching whorled purple flowers. Both shrubs are aromatic and sure to catch the eye, adding texture and scent to your garden.

These native plants aren't just beautiful – they support essential local wildlife like bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Plus, they're



Baby blue eyes will bring a wonderful Spring color to your garden.

designed to withstand the region's tough conditions, making them easy to grow with minimal upkeep.

As Spring unfolds, take the time to enjoy the beauty of Southern California's native flora. From vibrant wildflowers to hardy shrubs, these plants are an investment in both your garden and the local ecosystem. So, roll up your sleeves and get planting – nature is waiting to thrive with you!

Celebrate Spring at Marine Park on May 24 with our exciting Flower Power event! Enjoy a variety of hands-on activities, including flower pressing, creating seed balls, and painting vibrant flower

(Continued on Page 9)



Happy May Birthdays to:
Ed Rich, Barbara Bishop, Michael Cates, Donn Umber, Jack Gregory, Dick Lawrence, Gia Mickey, Jake Margolin, Savi Labensart, Steve Litvack, Jim Menzies, Bill Randle, Thomas Woods, Jane Wall, Felix Crown, Ross Furukawa, Todd Lawrence, Sean Inoue, Stacy McClendon, Paul Gaulke, Robert Powers III, and Cathryn Litvack Dhanatya.



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From the Santa Monica Pier Guy

A Pair of Merry-Go-Round Icons



By Jim Harris
Just a few weeks ago I finally “checked a box” that had been long overdue. And, if you have ever known someone with the last name of Loeff or Newcomb, you will understand why doing so was important to me. Those two surnames have provided a literal carousel of fun and memories to the Santa Monica Pier for many generations.

In June, 1916, Charles I.D. Loeff, a famed carousel carver turned amusement park entrepreneur, literally brought the fun to the pi

er when he flung open the doors of the Loeff Hippodrome and turned on the Wurlitzer band organ inside the building, thereby announcing to all within earshot that the pier’s first amusement park attraction – the carousel – was open for business. Earlier that year, he had begun construction on what would become the pier’s original amusement park, building a wooden pier immediately adjacent to and connected to the all-concrete Santa Monica Municipal Pier that had been in place since 1909.

The Loeff Hippodrome, which we know today as the Merry-Go-Round building, still provides

thrills to riders of all ages with its beautiful array of painted ponies circling inside. The building, which is a combination of Moorish, Byzantine, and California-style architecture, is on the National Registry of Historic Places – the highest distinction that a building can have.

A few decades later, long after Loeff had passed and his part of the pier had changed ownership a couple of times, a Venice banker named Walter Newcomb took over operations of it in 1943. At that time, Newcomb also operated a few amusements on the old Abbot Kinney-built Venice Pier. As that pier’s days came to an end in 1947, Newcomb moved his prized 1922 Philadelphia Toboggan Company carousel from Venice into our pier’s Loeff Hippodrome.

Newcomb’s carousel is the very same carousel that brings smiles to the faces of people of all ages who come to enjoy it today, over 77 years later.

So next time you come down to ride on that wonderful antique carousel, wander over to the south wall. There you will find two framed posters honoring Loeff and Newcomb, a pair of the Pier’s most important dignitaries.

Jim Harris is the Executive Director of the Santa Monica Pier Corporation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit

Honoring the Power of Mothers: American Red Cross Acknowledges All That Mothers Accomplish

By Angel Saucedo

Mother’s Day is a heartfelt occasion dedicated to celebrating the incredible women who have nurtured, loved, and supported us throughout our lives. It’s a day to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation for all the sacrifices they make and the boundless love they give.

Mothers come in all forms – biological, adoptive, stepmothers, grandmothers, and even those who have taken on a motherly role in our lives. Each one brings a unique blend of warmth, wisdom, and care that shapes us into who we are.

In the face of adversity, true heroes emerge, and the story of Vesta and Nathalie Sung is a testament to the power of compassion and resilience. While vacationing on Maui, the mother-

daughter duo found themselves thrust into action as the island’s deadliest wildfire in a century erupted.

Amidst heartbreaking burns and stories of loss and uncertainty, Vesta and Nathalie remained resilient, providing comfort and support to hundreds of people affected by the tragic event. Their dedication and hard work did not go unnoticed. Before returning home to California, they were honored by local officials for their compassion and service, leaving behind a legacy of community and care.

As Mother’s Day approaches, we celebrate the extraordinary bond between Vesta and Nathalie Sung.

Their story reminds us of the incredible strength and love that mothers and daughters share,

(Continued on Page 6)

Santa Monica Fire Department Has a New Team Member

The Santa Monica Fire Department (SMFD) recently launched a new K-9 Peer Support Program, an initiative designed to support the mental health and wellbeing of firefighters and other Santa Monica city employees and community members.

The program’s first K-9 team member, an English Labrador named Roger, is a certified support K-9 trained in providing comfort and companionship. Working alongside a designated peer support team handler, Roger will visit fire stations, attend debriefings

after critical incidents, attend community events to interact with the public and be available to firefighters and city employees in need of emotional support.

Through Roger’s efforts, the program aims to provide comfort, reduce stress, and promote emotional resilience for Santa Monica Fire Department, or SMFD, personnel as well as the broader community.

“We are thrilled to introduce this program as a proactive step in supporting the mental wellness of

(Continued on Page 8)

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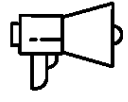
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Reflections From The East

Meeting My Own Past on a Special Day of Remembrance



By Qin Stubis

Every Memorial Day, we as a nation take time to pay tribute to our brave military men and women and remember those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom.

Two years ago, this special day of reflection and remembrance brought me the chance for a special commemoration – and an unlikely meeting with my own past. My husband, Mark, and I were driving back from Toronto, Canada, where we had just attended the international launch of my Chinese historical memoir, *Once Our Lives*. After some 20 years of writing and editing, you can imagine how excited I was to meet my publisher and present my book for

the first time to an audience of readers, critics, and authors.

I tried to savor every minute of it, in spite of the long road trips back and forth from our home in Bethesda, Maryland. On our way back, a delay at the border crossing added two hours to our trip, making it impossible to get home by dinnertime and prompting us to stop for a late lunch along the way.

We soon found ourselves passing through a remote town in upstate New York called Ellicottville and were pleasantly surprised by its stunning beauty. Sitting in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains, it was quite an attractive, 19th Century resort town with a grand view of luscious green mountains and ski slopes, a row of quaint shops, upscale bars, and restaurants.

Fearing that it would soon end its lunch service, we quickly walked into a café, found a table in the back, and ordered some burgers and barbecue in the spirit of Memorial Day. As we waited for our food, I surveyed the dimly lit room and its small handful of patrons. My attention was soon lured toward a display of desserts at the front entrance. I went to check it out.

"The cookies are very good." I heard a calm and kind voice and turned toward it. There he was, an elderly gentleman, sitting alone in the corner and sipping coffee with his back against the wall. He was wearing a worn orange t-shirt and a crisp grey cap embroidered with the word "Navy." Despite being indoors, he had a pair of sunglasses on. He smiled at me and quietly nodded his head.

"Thank you. Perhaps I will consider them after I have my lunch." I smiled back at him before walking back to my table.

Toward the end of the meal, our waiter surprised us with a plate of cookies. "The gentleman over there bought them for you," he explained.

The stranger's generosity touched us. We went over to thank him. I told him about the launch of my book and how we were heading back home. Since he wore a Navy hat, I also told him about my one and only experience with the American military.

Thirty-five years ago, I had been a tour guide for American tourists visiting Shanghai. As part of my duties, I was assigned to be the interpreter when three U.S. Navy ships made a historic visit to
(Continued on Page 5)

A Mother's Day Meditation



By Cheryl Thode

We made it to May and we are almost to Summer! For those of you with children, you are probably in the midst of (if not already done with)

signing up your kids for all their summer activities, events, and camps. Between budgeting, scheduling, and planning, it can be a full-time and overwhelming job. Regardless of where you are right now in your own personal journey, let's take a minute to reflect.

We all come from various walks of life. Irrespective of our differences, there is one common truth for all of us. We all have a mother; we are all someone's child. Now, what that relationship looks like for each of us differs greatly. However, it remains that we all have mothers. In observance of this important fact, the United States has designated May 11 as a holiday for all mothers, called Mother's Day.

Now, my understanding of what

makes a "mother" has changed over the years and through my experiences, especially since becoming a mother myself. In past May columns, I have shared ideas on how to celebrate the holiday with your families and how to self-celebrate for us moms. This year, however, I wanted to provide a way for everyone to participate, celebrate and enjoy Mother's Day regardless of your state in life.

So, in the vein that we all have a mother, know a mother, and may even be a mother, please join me for the next couple minutes in a Mother's Day Meditation. Feel free to take part in this by yourself, with friends, with your own mother, your siblings, or your children and spouse. Let's do it!

First, close your eyes and take a deep breath in. Use a five-count breath, where you breath in for five seconds, hold your breath for five seconds, and then release your breath over five seconds. As you exhale, imagine any stress or discomfort you are experiencing leaving your body. Repeat this

breathing process three times, letting go of more and more of the stressors bogging you down.

Next, center your attention on your heart and feelings. Think of someone in your life who has filled the role of mother for you. Think of your actual mother or someone who took on a nurturing and guiding role for you, who helped you become the person you are today. With this person in mind, feel and wrap yourself up in the love this individual has given to you. Allow this love to travel throughout your entire body, starting at your heart and flowing out through your arms, torso, legs, hands, fingers, feet, toes, and head. Feel the love exponentially overflowing from you.

While you are experiencing this love, send this wonderful mother in your life (whether still with us or gone) your thanks and gratitude. Thank her for sharing herself and her love with you. Imagine her feeling the love you are sending and her overflowing with feelings of joy and happiness. Take a

moment to witness the circle of love created by both you and your mother.

Now, take a deep breath for the count of five, hold it for five and as you release it for five seconds, will that this love be extended to all the mothers and children of the world. Repeat this three times.

Take a few additional deep breaths and slowly open your eyes.

You are someone's child, you are loved, you are special. This Mother's Day and month of May, practice this meditation a couple times. Use it to calm yourself, express your gratitude, and just help to place some more love into our world. God Bless!



-Joe Analco

Mini Message Bulletin Board

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Architecturally Speaking

How to Build a Fire-Resistant House



**By Elisa Garcia
Garcia Architects**

This is a continuation of Elisa's suggestions on building a fire-resistant home. She discusses home styles this month.

You may be wondering if you have to have a contemporary style home to have a fire-resistant home. It is true that a fire-resistant home lends itself best to a contemporary style. However, you can create a modified version of other styles. Below are some examples of a traditional style home with fire-resistant materials.

A Good Investment

Although building a home with fire-resistant materials does cost more, the additional costs can be offset by more affordable materials for other parts of the home. In 2024, a traditionally-built, ground-up custom home ranged between \$800 to \$1,400 per square foot in Los Angeles and



Above, an example of a home built with fire-retardant materials.

Santa Barbara.

A fire-resistant home can range from \$1,000 to \$2,200 per square foot, depending on the level of fire resistance and preferred style.

Keep in mind that fire-resistant materials are typically more long-lasting and sustainable, and require less maintenance and replacement throughout the years. Plus, the added peace of mind is priceless.

Elisa Garcia has been an architect for several years. Her firm, Garcia Architects, has offices in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara.

Passing Through the Pico Neighborhood

Let's Celebrate Mothers



**By Stacy
McClendon**

It's time to celebrate and honor the Mother in your life and all she brings, whether it be a birth mother, stepmother, or mother figure for Mother's Day.

This holiday can bring on a range of emotions, some good and not so good. Some may have lost their mother, not have a good relationship with their mother, or wish they had a mother figure in their life.

However, if you do have a mother or mother figure in your life, look no further as the possibilities to celebrate are endless.

Some ideas include:

- Take a trip to the spa
- Go to the park or beach
- Go catch a movie or event
- Give flowers and a card
- Cook a nice meal and enjoy it at

- home with family/friends
- Call and have a lovely conversation
- Play your favorite family games (board, athletic, etc)
- Go out to a restaurant
- Take a walk in one of your favorite neighborhoods/cities and try a new restaurant, bakery, etc.
- Take a day trip or go away for the weekend

Also, if you don't currently have a mother figure in your life, I'd suggest you visit close friends and their Mother, or a good friend, as I'm sure that they'd enjoy your company. It beats the alternative of staying home alone and not enjoying the day.

I hope everyone makes a beautiful new memory with the special women in their life.

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

Send in Photos With Dads for June Issue



Next month we will be running photos of our dads with their children. Above, you may recognize the popular Guerboian family. They are very active in our community. From left, grandson Edward, Grandfather Eddie, grandson Lucas, and Avo, owner of the Edward Avedis jewelry boutique in the Fairmont Miramar Hotel lobby.

Meeting My Own Past

(Continued from Page 4)

China in 1989.

"I was there," he said in a quiet, pleased voice. Behind their dark lenses, I detected a pair of transfixed eyes staring into the distance. He told me that he was a Navy cook and continued in the culinary profession until his retirement.

"Remember the acrobat show you watched? I was the English announcer that night." I was excited to share my part of the story, how I conducted the Shanghai tour for a busload of sailors, and how, at the end of the day, as they hopped off the bus, each placed his hat on my lap. I was at a loss about what to do with the hats. We talked like two old friends having a reunion.

Soon, we said goodbye to our new/old Navy friend so we could continue on our way home. For the rest of the drive, though, I couldn't stop thinking about this sailor, a man of seemingly limited means, behaving so generously to us - two strangers. Was he sitting in the café waiting for us to arrive? Did he sense that we once shared a historic moment when a U.S.



Qin meets a friend from her past.

battleship arrived in a distant Eastern port?

Now, on every last Monday in May, I give thanks not only to those who gave us freedom, but to a single sailor who gave me a cookie and a most memorable Memorial Day.

You can always reach me at qstubis@gmail.com, or please visit me at QinSunStubis.com. You can find a copy of my book, *Once Our Lives*, online at Amazon.com.



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Clergy Corner

Courage and Hope Will Guide Us



By Pastor Christie Webb

I've been thinking about the hope and courage we need in the midst of a story to see our way through. You are in the midst of your day. Maybe it has been great, perhaps it has been challenging. Courage and hope are required in either situation to keep going and not go back to bed.

We are all in the midst of our life stories. There have been good and challenging times. Each day, we wake up and keep going. That act requires hope that good things are ahead, and courage to face whatever may come.

We are in the middle of the story in the life of our country as well. Regardless of whether we are liberal or conservative, Democrat or Republican, we do not know where today's events will take us in the future. It feels precarious. We need hope and courage, which are difficult to find in these times.

As I write this to you, the Christian church is in the midst of Holy Week. We have celebrated Jesus'

triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We will mark the day Jesus commanded us to, "Love one another as I have loved you," with foot washing and Holy Communion. We will gather to witness Jesus crucified. Then we will celebrate the joy of the empty tomb, resurrection, and the Mystery of Easter. When you read this, we will be weeks into the 50-day celebration of Easter, a mystery so great it cannot be contained to just one day.

From the story of Easter, I gain courage and hope. The cross seemed like the end of the story, but God would not let it be so. God did a new amazing thing. Life came out of death. I trust that God is able to do this again – to pull life out of certain death. It has happened in my life and the lives of those around me. In the midst of the stories we find ourselves in today, I gain courage and hope to keep going because of this trust that God can and will continue to call life even from death.

Pastor Christie Webb serves Mt. Olive Lutheran Church on the corner of Ocean Park and 14th Street.

Honoring the Power of Mothers

(Continued from Page 3)



Red Cross volunteers Vesta Sung, left, and her daughter Nathalie Sung on vacation in Maui, leapt into action during the island's deadliest wildfire in a century. They were recognized as Hometown Heroes in 2024 for their bravery.

Photo by Stephanie Grande/American Red Cross.

and the profound impact they can have when they come together to serve others.

This Mother's Day, let us honor all the mothers who inspire us with their unwavering dedication and selflessness.

Vesta and Nathalie were honored as Hometown Heroes in 2024 for their selflessness. Hometown Heroes 2025 celebrates those who,

like Vesta and Nathalie, go above and beyond in the face of adversity to help their community.

Remember Memorial Day
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What's Happening on the Westside?

By Gigi Appelbaum-Schwartz

• **Saturday, May 3 - YALLWEST Young Adult & Middle Grade Book Festival** - This book festival for young adults will host nearly 80 authors for panel talks and book signings! 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Santa Monica High School, 601 Pico Blvd.

• **Sunday, May 4 - Beach Walk and Sketch** - Observe and sketch the beautiful nature of Santa Monica's coastline. Binoculars, drawing boards, pencils, and newsprint provided. 9 a.m.-11 a.m. at the Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Highway.

• **Saturday, May 10 - The Manzanar Baseball Project** - Artist Dan Kwong will present video, performance art, and a panel discussion on the history of Japanese American baseball alongside authors Kerry Yo Nakagawa and Prof. Susan Kamei. 1 p.m.-3 p.m. at the Santa Monica Main Library MLK Jr. Auditorium, 601 Santa Monica Blvd.

• **Sunday, May 11 - Mother's Day Concert and Brunch** - Celebrate Mother's Day with piano, flute, cello, and voice accompanied by a buffet. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club, 1210 4th St. smbwc.org.

• **Tuesday, May 13 - Superbloom Sound Bath: Relax & Restore** - Calm your nervous system and restore balance with this immersive sound bath, utilizing crystal singing bowls and other healing instruments. 3 p.m.-3:45 p.m. at the Pico Branch library, 2201 Pico Blvd.

• **Tuesday, May 13 - Carol Leifer and Rick Mitchell in conversation with Frank DeCaro** - Carol Leifer (writer on HBO's Hacks) and co-author Rick Mitchell discuss their new writer's guide alongside entertainment journalist and author Frank DeCaro. Book sale and signing to follow. 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. at the Santa Monica Main Library MLK Jr. Auditorium, 601 Santa Monica Blvd.

• **Thursday, May 15 - 5th Annual Rick Crocker 5K Challenge** - Honor late SMPD officer Rick Crocker with this fundraiser and 5k run/walk challenge, free for youth and active military. 4 p.m.-7 p.m. at the Santa Monica Pier Carousel, 200 Santa Monica Pier.

• **Friday, May 16 - Saturday, May 17 - Pen Paper Palooza** - Celebrate a love for stationary at this festival featuring 100+ stationery brands, local artists, workshops, and more! 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club, 1210 4th St. For tickets, visit penpaperpalooza.com.

• **Saturday, May 17 - Jewish American Heritage Month Concert: Klezmer Juice** - Enjoy a live performance by Klezmer Juice, an L.A.-based Jewish soul band! 2 p.m.-3 p.m. at the Santa Monica Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd.

• **Saturday, May 17 - Adaeze Nwanonyiri and Lenny Rosenberg, new owners of the New York Bagel Deli and Bakery at 2216 Wilshire Blvd., will be doing a book signing** of their new cookbook, *It's a Sweet World*. Meet them at Barnes & Noble on the Third Street Promenade from 4 p.m.-6 p.m.

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(Continued on Page 8)

Thoughts From a Second-Time Father

Rejoicing in the Memorable Sports Accomplishments of My Children



By Michael Margolin

Several years ago I remember writing about having my kids learn to ride their bikes.

I recall how sometimes we need to encourage our kids to do things we know they can accomplish, but can make them a bit uneasy, such as riding a bike without training wheels for the first time.

Jake is almost nine and has

tried a couple of new things in the last month. We took him out of his Ninja class which is akin to an obstacle course type of class that helps with agility, balance, and some good cardio work. Instead of that, he is now several lessons into his jiu-jitsu lessons. He was onboard with trying jiu-jitsu, but misses his Ninja class. After some encouragement, he agreed to just do jiu-jitsu. Jiu-jitsu is a martial art that, among other things, is based around taking opponents to the ground and using a number of

different techniques to get them to submit. He has done well so far.

Jake is also on a flag football team. There were not enough kids to make more than two teams, so there are only two teams and they consist of kids from eight to 12 years old. This does not make for a continuously level playing field.

While he is out there, Jake plays as hard as he can, listens, and does what I ask him to. It should be no surprise to anybody who reads this column regularly, that I help coach this team as well. I am

definitely proud of the effort that he makes. Especially considering that it is not always easy for him to get open for passes or elude defenders who are two to three years older, and have developed their own skills quite nicely. There was a play where Jake was able to make the most of his opportunity with the ball.

Sometime in the Fall of 2018 when I was coaching the first soccer team Alexa was on when she was five, I was serving as the

(Continued on Page 11)



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Entertaining With Ease

Check Out My New Account on Instagram



By Maureen Molé

Here are some questions and responses from my new Instagram account, [Entertain_at_Home_with_Maureen](#).

• **What makes a successful party? Is it expensive wine and gourmet food?**

A: Of course not. Even millionaires who can afford expensive wine and gourmet food can have boring parties. A successful party is when the guests feel special and comfortable, and the host is at ease and not in the kitchen for the whole party.

• **What's the most important part of menu planning for a party?**

A: The most important part of planning for a party is advance

preparation, especially of your menu. Never try to cook all the dishes on the day of the party. You'll be exhausted. Select recipes that can be made a day or two in advance. Also, never select recipes that need to be made at the last minute. You'll be spending all your time in the kitchen and not enjoying the party with your guests.

• **Are there any key facts that hosts should tell the guests before the party?**

A: Yes, there are two facts that guests may be wondering about before your party. First, they'd like to know if this is a large or small party, and you should give them some idea of who's invited. You might mention a few friends or say, "it's the neighbors, or office friends." Second, guests would like to know a little information about the food you'll be serving.



There's always food involved at any party whether it is a get-together for wine and cheese, a dessert party or if you'll be serving dinner. You needn't offer the whole menu but do provide some idea of the food at the party.

• **If I'm a guest going to a party, should I bring a gift for the host?**

A: While traditions may vary geographically regarding hosts' gifts, it's truly gracious to bring a gift for the host. Someone once told me she was going to a party and not bringing a gift because "the host doesn't need anything." It's not at all about need; it's all about thoughtfulness.

If the host is a gourmet cook, you might bring a special bottle of olive oil, an imported cheese, or something you know the host would enjoy. It's fine to bring a bottle of wine or a box of chocolate. As an especially nice gesture, say to the host, "Please keep this for yourself. You don't have to share it with the guests."

Maureen Molé is a lecturer, product spokesperson, and the author of The Book of Entertaining at Home. Email her at MaureenMole@gmail.com.

Santa Monica Fire Department Has a New Team Member (Continued from Page 3)

our firefighters and city employees," Fire Chief Matthew Hallock said. "The presence of a therapy dog has been proven to lower stress levels, improve morale and encourage open conversations about mental health. We believe this initiative will make a meaningful impact on our team."

Firefighters face high levels of stress due to the intense and often traumatic nature of their work. Recognizing the need for enhanced mental health support,



Roger, seated right, is a welcome member to the SMFD team.

SMFD has integrated the K-9 Peer Support Program as part of its commitment and dedication to prioritizing a healthy and supportive work environment.

SMFD joins a growing number of agencies across the nation in bringing on a K-9 support program to prioritize mental health for first responders.

Celebrate Mother's Day With Music

**By Elizabeth Armstead
California Climate
Action Fellow**

On this coming Mother's Day, join the California Climate Action Corps Fellows for a very special event. Grammy-nominated Main Street gardeners, Andrew & Polly, will lead you in a morning of music, dance, and garden activities. Discover the wonders of the garden through a scavenger hunt, grab some refreshments, and wander through the gardens.

Enjoy a family-friendly concert for all ages. Sing and dance your hearts together! Polly & Andrew are the hosts of Ear Snacks – the kids' podcast "packed with ear-worms and made with heart."

The event starts runs from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. but the concert begins at 10:10 a.m. There's limited seating, so bring your own chairs, blankets, or throws.

For more information about this event and other events in Santa Monica, go to Santamonica.gov/events. The Main Street Community Garden is located at 2318 Main St.

Westwood Library

(Continued from Page 1)

LAFD Fire Station 71, and enjoy a piano concert by the Yoder Brothers. Complimentary pizza and drinks will be provided. Saturday, May 10, 2025 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

What's Happening

(Continued from Page 7)

• **Sunday, May 25 - Mainopoly: A Taste of Main Street** - A unique foodie board game experience, enjoy this interactive, monopoly-themed culinary walking tour of Main Street's many eateries. 1 p.m.-5 p.m. on Main Street. mainopolysm.com.

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Community Service on the Westside

Make This a Summer to Remember at the Santa Monica Family YMCA's Summer Day Camp



By Araceli Alejandre, COO
Summer is just around the corner, and there's still time to sign up for the Santa Monica

Family YMCA's Summer Day Camp! Running from June 16 through August 15, our nine-week camp promises a season full of adventure, creativity, and connection for kids in grades TK through 11th Grade.

Each week features a different theme – from Animal Encounters to Sports Themes – designed to spark imagination and keep campers engaged. Campers will enjoy field trips, beach days, and hands-on STEM activities that make learning exciting even when school's out.

And, of course, there's plenty of time for good old-fashioned fun – games, crafts, songs, and making new friends that will last long after summer ends.

YMCA Summer Day Camp is more than just childcare. It's a

place where kids build confidence, learn independence, and create memories that last a lifetime. Our dedicated staff prioritize safety, inclusion, and fun in everything we do. Whether your children are first-time campers or returning favorites, we're ready to welcome them with open arms and smiling faces.

Camp runs Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Flexible registration options mean you can sign up for one week, several, or the whole summer – whatever works best for your schedule.

Spots are filling up fast, but there's still room to join the fun. Don't miss out on the ultimate summer experience! Visit ymcasm.org/camps, or stop by the Santa Monica Family YMCA today to learn more and register. Let's make this a summer to remember – the Y way!

For more details, contact the Santa Monica Family YMCA at 310-393-2721, or visit our website at ymcasm.org.

The Santa Monica - Pacific Palisades Lions Are Always on the Go



By J. Kingsley Fife

We Santa Monica-Pacific Palisades Lions have been enjoying a very busy schedule of activities this past month. First we

joined other Lions in our District to participate in the giant Free Item Distribution Faire put on by Lions Club International at the Image Church.

We distributed food, hygiene kits, blankets, school supplies, and more to those in need. It was a wonderful, fulfilling experience.

Then, came the Annual National Arbor Day Celebration. A tree-planting event, conducted by the Santa Monica Urban Forest, Public Landscape Division, occurred on the Olympic Blvd. median at 17th St. Our Lions Club, plus all the other service clubs in Santa Monica, including the Salvation Army, were there to plant several beautiful trees to add to the city's

urban forest mantle.

We then had the Annual Santa Monica Arts and Literacy Festival at Virginia Avenue Park. The theme this year was "Dinosaurs." Our Club had our usual booth there. The children were given colorful puzzles which they used to create dinosaurs. It was an exciting moment for us watching these kids develop their artistic minds.

We are continuing our campaign to help those trying to recover from the devastating fires. Those wishing to donate can make checks payable to Calif. Lions Foundation and designate on the check: "for the SM-PP Lions Club Fire Relief Fund." Mail to Calif. Lions Foundation, Attn: David Heberbrand; 20231 Valley Blvd. #E; Tehachapi, CA 93561.

Are you interested in learning more about Lionism? Be our guest at one of our dinner meetings. Contact me at jkfife88@yahoo.com.

An Update From the SMBWC



By Patricia Webber

Much of the Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club's (SMBWC) mission of community service naturally focuses

on women. So, it was natural that we welcome the Pacific Palisades Woman's Club to use our clubhouse for their monthly club meetings. Although their clubhouse was not destroyed in the fire, it did sustain damage making it unusable for the foreseeable future. At their first meeting at our clubhouse, they were gracious to invite our members to join them for a catered buffet dinner. Most of our Board of Directors attended, along with many of our club members.

The SMBWC is looking into projects for the annual "Day of Service" in September. Currently our club does two member-involved projects: collecting boxes of cereal

in the Spring and collecting socks for the fall "Sock-tober" event. We will be soliciting ideas from our members at our next Pass-the-Dish potluck dinners.

This month, the Club's Elmira T. Stephens Scholarship Committee will be meeting to select this year's awardees from Santa Monica High School. SMBWC has been offering these scholarships to Samohi female students for many, many years. I will be reporting on the recipients in a later column.

The Artist, Crafts, & Conversation group is one of the Club's enduring activities. They meet on Tuesday from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Anyone interested should contact joanie.tee@gmail.com for more information. Ongoing activities include card playing (bridge and canasta) and Mahjong on Monday, and book club on the 4th Tuesday of the month.

For more information, or other questions regarding rentals and membership, go to SMBWC.org, or call 310-395-1308.

Monthly Celebrations in May
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Time to Branch Out (Continued From Page 2)

beds. It's the perfect way to get creative while celebrating the beauty of nature. Don't miss out on this fun-filled day for all ages!

-Joe Analco

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Paws and Claws

My Dog Has “White Coat Syndrome”



By Dr. Frank Lavac, MS, DVM
Q: My German Shepherd is very anxious and becomes increasingly upset at the animal hospital. He has even tried to bite the doctor. I feel bad for my dog and the veterinary staff. What can I do to help him?

A: I’m so sorry to hear that. You’ve already taken a big first step by acknowledging his issues. Many clients with potentially aggressive dogs are in denial that their dog would ever bite which makes addressing the problem exponentially more difficult.

The first step is to discuss this issue with your veterinarian. This is not an uncommon problem. There are drugs that can be given ahead of time to make your dog’s experience less stressful. We often recommend a combination of Trazodone and Gabapentin. There are more options as well, and most veterinarians are familiar with what is called the “Chill Protocol.”

Additionally, try to book the first appt. of the morning or afternoon. This will allow him to be seen more quickly without extensive waiting.

Call the hospital when you arrive so they can take the appropriate precautions before actually entering the hospital.

Determine if your dog behaves better with you or without you. Some dogs are protective of the owner and may behave significantly better away from the owner. Some dogs respond well to treats. If he has favorite treats, let the vet know. You also want to choose a veterinarian/staff that philosophically has the attitude that “less is more” e.g. mild-mannered restraint. Aggressive restraint is not the perspective that most veterinarians use.

Also, be prepared to reschedule the appointment if the process isn’t going well. Thank you for asking this important question.

If you have any questions, you can always contact Dr. Lavac at 310-828-4587.

Adopt a Pet



“Alfie” is a friendly and energetic, one-year-old cat that we rescued. He loves other cats and is very playful and curious. If you are interested, contact the Lange Foundation at info@langefoundation.org.

Planning Ahead

It Can Be Bad if You Don’t Have a Will, Trust, or Durable Power of Attorney



By Lisa Alexander, Esq.
Don’t have a Will? Maybe not terrible, if you have minimal assets defined as personal residence or other assets with a total value under \$184,500, a so-called “small estate,” and your intended beneficiaries match the default laws for intestate succession. If you are married, all community property will r spouse, nothing to children. In case of separate property, without children the spouse will get only a portion, and the rest will go to parents or siblings. If minor children inherit, there will likely be a Guardianship with the expense of ongoing Court involvement until a child reaches age 18. If what you want is different from the default plan, not having a Will is very bad.

For an estate with an \$800,000 condominium, the total combined fees for the Executor and the legal fees would be \$38,000.

Don’t have a Trust, but not all your assets are owned in the name of the Trust? It depends. A small bank account can be transferred to the Trust after death using the “Small Estate Affidavit.” But if the value of assets not in the Trust exceeds the small estate threshold, those assets may need to be probated. The effort and expense of setting up a Trust to avoid probate may be all for naught.

Don’t have a Durable Power of Attorney? Very bad if you were ever to experience incapacity. We think of estate planning in terms of ordering our affairs in case of death. But we forget the very real possibility of incapacity that can happen at any age. If a person becomes incapacitated without a durable power of attorney, there may be no way to access the person’s bank accounts, no ability to arrange for and pay for care. It is the last resort, but without a durable power of attorney, a Conservatorship through the Court may be required. Very bad.

Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.
JAKLE, ALEXANDER & PATTON, LLP - Direct Line: 310-656-4310

Rejoicing (Continued from Page 7)

referee for the game. If you have ever seen five year olds play soccer, you would realize the ref is mainly there to keep time and make sure the number of booboo's does not get out of hand. Anyway, I was able to be on the field when Alexa, at five, scored her first goal. I remember it like it was yesterday. Her black and green uniform and her big smile.

A couple of games into Jake's flag football season, I was on the field calling plays for our offense. Jake got open to our quarterback's right and was thrown the ball. The ball seemed to be in the air for about half an hour. Jake made the catch and turned up field and ran as fast his legs could carry him. It was a fairly long run, too. To be on the field for his first touchdown and see the look of accomplishment on his face was a priceless moment for me. More moments provided to me by my children that I will never forget.

I would like to wish a Happy Mother's Day to all of the world's wonderful mothers. I am lucky to

have my always loving mother, Priscilla. My children have no idea how lucky they are to have Enjoli as their mother. She is the shining diamond of our family. I will love her forever, and always be grateful for her, and what she so graciously does for our family.

In April, we lost my stepmother, Joyce, to a long, hard-fought battle against multiple health issues. Joyce was caring, understanding, positive, and full of love. She loved my dad, was dedicated to him, and was half of the wonderful model of a successful marriage of almost 40 years. I could not have asked for a better stepmom than Joyce. She gave me a little brother whom she also loved more than words would ever be able to describe. I will always be thankful for her. Thank you, Joyce. We will miss you.

Mike Margolin has been writing for us since his daughter Alexa was born 12 years ago and son, Jake, nine years ago. He also coaches each child's soccer team. Mike is a great sports fan.

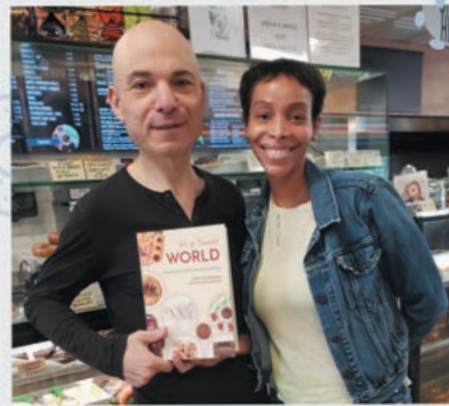
Answer to Neighborhood Celebrities

(Continued from Page 7)



New owner of the New York Bagel Deli and Bakery in Santa Monica, Lenny Rosenberg, center, shows you freshly baked cookies. He is with some of his staff, Gilbert, left, and George, right, who are ready to serve you.

Perfect for a Mother's Day Gift



Go to www.nybdbakery.com to see all items available in store.

The new owners of New York Bagel Deli & Bakery Present
It's a Sweet World
by Lenny Rosenberg & Adaeze Nwanonyiri

To get your copy of **It's a Sweet World**, order on Amazon.com

A Springtime Twist on Classic Chicken Soup

(Family Features) Chasing away those final cool days in the Spring can be done in a cinch. Just try this Lemon Chicken Orzo Soup that calls to mind those classic brothy soups from when you were a kid. Find more soup inspiration at Culinary.net.

Lemon Chicken Orzo Soup

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"
Servings: 4-6

- 2 carrots
- 2 celery stalks
- 3 Tbsps. butter
- 2 cups cooked, chopped chicken
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 2 tsps. lemon pepper
- 6 cups broth
- 1 cup orzo
- 1 Tbsps. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. onion powder
- 1 Tbsp. thyme
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Salt, to taste
- Pepper, to taste



Try this Spring soup to warm up on a cool evening.

- Chop carrots and celery. In pot, sauté with butter.
- In bowl, mix chicken with lemon juice and lemon pepper then set aside.
- After carrots and celery are tender, add broth and orzo to pot. Then add garlic powder, onion powder, thyme, and sugar.
- Simmer 10 minutes, add chicken and cream; simmer about 5 minutes.
- Add salt and pepper to taste, and serve.

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