

Senior Snapshots

Steve and Gail Litvack Began Community Service in Their Teens



Steve and Gail Litvack will celebrate 55 years of marriage in August of this year. They met at a synagogue youth group while in high school.

AlphaGraphics shop owners Gail and Steve Litvack are well known in Santa Monica for their community service as well as for their impressive printing skills, fine quality work, and caring personalities.

Their partnership began many years ago when Gail, a Cleveland native, and Steve, a Los Angeles native who grew up in Mar Vista, met at a local synagogue youth group for teenagers.

Being involved in the community was a group activity they both shared. Gail recalls that members helped out at the Foundation for the Junior Blind.

Another fond memory Gail has of high school years is when they went on group dates. Steve was very popular because he was the only one with a car. She also loved his mom's cooking, and having a lot of fun with his large family

since she was an only child.

Steve had taken printing as an elective in high school. The printing teacher at that time was set to retire in a year. So Steve went to Santa Monica College to learn about offset printing. He originally wanted to be an optometrist. But, since he was the oldest when his dad died, he needed to get a job to help his family. At 19, he ended up working at Revell Hobby Kits in the Marina. He helped to build the shop up from one person to six people working on two shifts.

After five years, Steve went on to work in a silk screening plant. He then worked for his uncle who owned a printing company. A short while later, Steve opened a business called Copy Cat Printing in Ocean Park.

Eventually, Steve and Gail started One Stop Print Shop in 1977. In 1992, they joined Eric Brandin at Copy Spot on Wilshire Boulevard. They blended their two companies, and they flourished. Printing machines were on the first floor, and offices on the sixth floor. Unfortunately, the 1994 earthquake hit, and changes had to be made.

Getting the printing equipment out of the building was a real challenge, as the building had been

(Continued on Page 2)



Palisades Park is one of the most inspirational locations in Santa Monica. Be sure to visit, especially in the winter months to see spectacular sunsets

Photo by Julie Dobkin-Gilberg

Black History Month 2022 to Focus on Black Health and Wellness in Santa Monica

By Delana Gbenekama

Black History Month in February is a time to celebrate and learn about the history and accomplishments of the Black community. Equally important is bringing awareness to issues that affect the Black community by engaging in dialogue, sparking thought through avenues such as art, and inspiring action to make positive changes.

This year's programming will also include a therapeutic paint and sip class, stress-relieving somatic soul integration workshops, a TikTok dance class, and more. Also honored will be Black community members who live and work in Santa Monica for their outstanding leadership and service. Here are some upcoming events.

• **Tuesday, February 1 – Wednesday, February 16: Black History Month Exhibits at Santa Monica City Hall.** The City is partnering with the Quinn Research Center to display exhibits at Santa Monica City Hall featuring Black historical figures in Santa Monica who worked in health and wellness. Additionally, the City is working with the library, City staff, local schools and the Building Bridges Art Exchange to collect student art to display. The public is welcome to browse the exhibits during the City's regular business hours.

• **Thursday, February 3 at 10:30 a.m.: Black Health and Wellness (Virtual).** Join in for the Black History Month opening ceremony featuring local health professionals, including Phillip Brown, MD, Assistant Clinical Professor at UCLA Family Medicine, and Nakeya T. Fields, mental health entrepreneur, author, and speaker, who will dis-

cuss the importance of mental and physical health. The event will also feature tap performances by the Syncopated Ladies, the singing of the Black National Anthem by Castella, a hula hoop competition, and a healthy cooking demonstration.

• **Tuesday, February 15 at 12 p.m.: TikTok Dance Class with Choreographer and Dancer Jamal Josef (Virtual).**

• **Thursday, February 24 at 6:30 p.m.: Celebrating Black Excellence Community Awards (Virtual).** The City will hold a virtual awards ceremony honoring Black professionals in Santa Monica for outstanding leadership and service. The event will also showcase South African dance performances featuring celebrity choreographers and dancers Lindiwe Rose and Jamal Josef.

• **Saturday, February 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Black History.** Join Virginia Avenue Park, the Parent Connection Group, and the library in a celebration of Black History Month with the annual Greens Festival at Virginia Avenue Park. This year's theme is Celebrating Black California History.

To RSVP, or for details on all of these events, go to <https://santamonica.gov/blog/black-history-month-2022>.

At the main branch of the Santa Monica Library in the central courtyard on Wednesday, February 16, children from ages two and up can sing songs and listen to stories written by Black authors and illustrators. Space is limited. Register for the event here: <https://bit.ly/YouthProgramSignUps>.

Do You Recognize This Neighborhood Celebrity?

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Take A Look Inside

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Steve and Gail Litvack (Continued from Page 1)

red-tagged. Realtor Vince Muselli helped Steve find the location where he is still at today. They re-opened One Stop Print Shop where he and Gail started to rebuild their business. In 2016, they became part of AlphaGraphics. Steve notes, "The benefits are the advantages of having the latest technology, and that it is nice to have support with this technology."

Meanwhile, Gail went to Santa Monica College after high school to get a degree in accounting. While in college, she worked in the steno pool at the General Telephone Company (GTE). She soon blossomed in her job and was promoted to work in the corporate office of the public relations department at GTE. Her dream was always to become a court stenographer.

But, as they opened the printing businesses, Gail began working with Steve. Eventually, their son Mike was born in 1972, and three years later, their son Josh was born. As the boys grew up, Gail and Steve became active in their schools and sports programs.

In 1991, Carol Ann Emmitt invited Gail to become a member of the Santa Monica Lions Club, where she is still active. Gail is also a member of the Santa Monica College Associates.

Steve got involved with Indian Guides and Camp Big Bear at the Santa Monica Family YMCA. The boys loved going to the camp (as did their whole family), and they eventually became counselors, and then directors. Gail was a director

at the Camp for nine years.

Steve is on the Boards of the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Monica, and since 1986 has been a member of the Rotary Club of Santa Monica.

Gail and Steve are both also members of the Y's Men's and Women's Service Club.

Son Mike married Cathryn Dhanatya, and they have twins, Jackson and Rosalyn, who will be nine years old this month. Gail and Steve look forward to being with all of them and Cathryn's family, too, at special holiday events. Cathryn is an amazing cook, and the kids are learning to prepare the most delicious foods from her.

Mike loves sports statistics and received his dream job when he became Director of Accounting for the Dodger organization. He enjoys playing his guitar when he wants to relax.

Son Josh and his two dogs live in North Carolina. There, he has a home where he can garden and be creative with his mechanical and wood working skills, which he developed as a teenager.

In the future, Steve looks forward to doing some train traveling. Gail would like to visit the East coast to see the leaves turn colors in Autumn. But, for the time being, they will remain on the track that leads to community service. —D.M.



Holiday Memories From 2021



The community brought food and clothing to fill large gift boxes around the Moreton Bay Fig Tree in the entryway of the Fairmont Miramar Hotel last year.

Celebrating its centennial year, the Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows closed out 2021 with its eagerly awaited annual holiday event – Meet Me Under The Fig Tree.

With the pandemic and safety at the top of everyone's minds, this year's event was a little different. Instead of the usual celebration with Santa, faux snow, and family-friendly activities, the Miramar continued its annual holiday give-back tradition with a month-long charitable food and clothing drive in partnership with Santa MoniCARES. The event benefited the Westside Food Bank, which provides nutritious food for local families in need, and Chrysalis, an organization dedicated to providing employment opportunities, business clothing, and supportive services for those who face barriers

when entering the workforce. The property's 140-year-old 80-ft. Moreton Bay Fig Tree, adorned with festive holiday lights, featured oversized gift boxes available for locals and travelers from afar to donate canned or non-perishable food items and clothing, which generated over 3,750 pounds of non-perishable food items, and hundreds of pieces of clothing for those in need.

"We are so proud of our Santa Monica community for rallying together to give back to those in need this year. Following a year with many peaks and valleys, we are honored to have had the opportunity to continue to serve those who are less fortunate while ensuring the safety of local Santa Monica residents and visitors alike," said Ellis O'Connor of MSD Partners.

A Mindful Valentine's Day Celebration

By Dr. Sheila Forman

As February 14 rolls around the corner, the smell of chocolate wafts through the air. Heart-shaped vessels of sweet morsels line the shelves wherever we look.

For many, these delicious treats signal love is in the air. For others, they are a not-so-gentle reminder of our struggles with weight and mindless eating. Are you a mindless eater? Not sure?

Here's quick test: Do you get to the bottom of the chip bag but don't remember tasting the chips? Or, do you multi-task while eating lunch and not notice when your sandwich is done? If you are – join the club! We are all mindless eaters from time to time.

Mindless eating can sabotage your most earnest dieting efforts and spoil the romance around Valentine's Day chocolate. If you need help with your diet and enjoying your Valentine's treats, try mindful eating. Mindful eating means eating with awareness and intention, so you can really taste the food you are eating, enjoy it more, and be satisfied with less.

To eat your chocolate valentines mindfully, try this: 1. Take a moment and get centered. Breathe. Focus your attention on the food you are about to eat. 2. Check in with how hungry or full you are. 3. Observe the food in front of you. Notice its appearance, scent, and texture. 4. Think about how the food got to you. (The farmers, manufacturers, transportation vehicles, stock clerks, cashiers, etc.) Silently thank them for their participation.

5. Eat your food slowly, paying attention to how it tastes and feels in your mouth. Notice when/if the taste changes. 6. Check in periodically with your hunger and fullness signals. 7. Stop when you notice that you have had enough and feel satisfied.

Practice these skills whenever you can, and in time you will find that you are eating less and enjoying more.

Dr. Sheila Forman is a psychologist and mindful eating instructor. Her new book TAME Your Appetite: The Art of Mindful Eating will be in stores in Spring 2022. For more information, go to www.TAMEYourAppetite.com.



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Special thanks to Rufus Baker, Zachary Perez, and Becky Mejia.

Valentine's Day is a Time to Share Caring Thoughts

By Julia Abbott

While we all adore the gifts from friends, family, and lovers, very few people know about the actual history of Valentine's Day.

The holiday comes from the Roman festival of Lupercalia, once held in mid-February. The festival, which celebrated the coming of spring, was basically a giant matchmaking party.

At the end of the 5th century, it was not Christian enough for Pope Gelasius I, who replaced Lupercalia with St. Valentine's Day. It came to be celebrated as a day of love around the 14th century.

However, as there are several Christian martyrs named Valentine, the day may have taken its name from any number of them. This includes a priest who was martyred about 270 C.E. by the emperor Claudius II Gothicus. This priest signed a letter "from your Valentine" to his jailer's daughter, whom he befriended after healing her from blindness.

Another possible option is St. Valentine of Terni, a bishop, although the two Valentines may be one and the same. See the confusion? Another theory is that St. Valentine defied the Emperor's edicts and secretly married couples to save husbands who would be sent to war, and it is for this reason this day is associated with love.

The forefront of the holiday we know and love, messages and

valentines, appeared in the 1500s, with sweet homemade cards. With commercialization in the late 1700s, commercially printed cards began circulating. The U.S. caught on a little late, as the first commercial valentines here were printed in the mid-1800s.

And, Valentine's Day today? The ever-present heart emphasizes love. Birds have become a common symbol, as the avian mating season occurs in February. Gifts include candy and flowers, particularly red roses, a symbol of beauty and love. Valentine's Day is celebrated in the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, Argentina, Spain, Scandinavia, France, Singapore, Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Romania, Philippines, Lebanon, Mexico, and South Korea. In Israel, the Jewish tradition of Tu B'Av is the equivalent of Valentine's Day. In Taiwan, Qixi Festival and White Day are celebrated. In Japan, the holiday is celebrated by women giving men presents, and men responding with presents two or three times in value. The Philippines takes the cake, with February 14 being the most common wedding anniversary, and mass weddings of hundreds of couples are not uncommon on that date. Maybe you might not want to speed up a romance to get hitched by then, but consider buying a card, rose, or candy for the people you love!



Darlene and Lillie take a break from making Valentines at a past Santa Monica Bay Woman's annual Valentine's Day crafts event.

Byte by Byte

Won't You Be My Virtual Valentine



By Dr. Miceala Shocklee

As has become the theme with holidays, this Valentine's Day, technology affords a chance for connection. Whether you're navigating a long-distance relationship or sharing a rented space, these tech treats are available to help sweeten your day.

The Technological Touch: Missing another's touch can be one of the hardest needs to meet with supplements. But, an increasing number of companies are trying their hand at it! Borrowing the same technology behind the heart rate monitoring in smart watches, companies like Little Riot and Bond Touch have created tools to track and transmit partners' heart beats to each other in meaningful ways.

Little Riot's "pillow talk" uses a wristband to pick up a partner's

pulse and transmit it to a paired speaker that can be placed under a pillow. Bond Touch's wristbands, however, pick up the input touch of partner and transmit it as a vibration alert to the corresponding wristband as a kind of haptic "I'm thinking of you."

Lovebox: Touch isn't everyone's love language. For those who prefer words, the "lovebox" gives a kind of instant mailbox that allows partners to send a brief message to each other. The "lovebox" sports an icon at the front that tilts back and forth to alert a partner when they have a message waiting. Lovebox's design for romantic partners has since expanded into options for friends, grandparents, and more.

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

As the Page Turns

Self-Perception Highlighted in These Two Books

By Dane Swanson

I was handed two books to review for this edition. Let me start by saying these two books dovetail each other, which is amazing since there are so many books out there, and what is the chance that this would happen? Both have to do with self-perception.

The first one I will look at is by Adrienne Youdim, MD. It is titled *Hungry for More - Story and Science to Inspire Weight Loss From the Inside Out*.

Dr. Youdim is a physician with an emphasis on nutrition. You

would expect her to write on the subject of nutrition with recommendations for better nutrition. Yet, she goes at it from a different direction. She presents the suggestion that weight gain is a way to seek out a hunger for something deeper in one's life. She presents stories of 35 patients who have consulted her as a specialist. In each chapter, she uses hunger as a teachable moment. An example would be overeating as a hunger for control, or as a reaction to grief.

(Continued on Page 11)

Mar Vista: Neighbor to Neighbor

By Tesi Treuenfels

Hello from Mar Vista! It's the Santa Monica-adjacent neighborhood with a small-town feel. Mar Vista is easy walking distance to everywhere, so park your car and forget about it.

I'll start with our Rasselbock Kitchen and Beer Garden. Stop in for dinner or lunch with a fresh take on authentic German cuisine. The menu includes a variety of schnitzel, sausages, Bavarian pret-

zels, and the famous apple strudel.

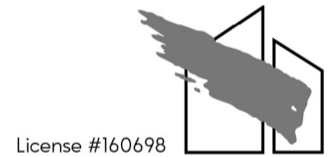
All of this is accompanied by a choice of 35 German and Belgian beers. Enjoy the full menu and drink out on the back open-air patio. This spot has won us over as a local favorite.

After visiting Rasselbock, head across Venice Blvd and walk up the north side of Venice, three blocks east to The Art Bar, and catch a show. On Wednesdays, they have

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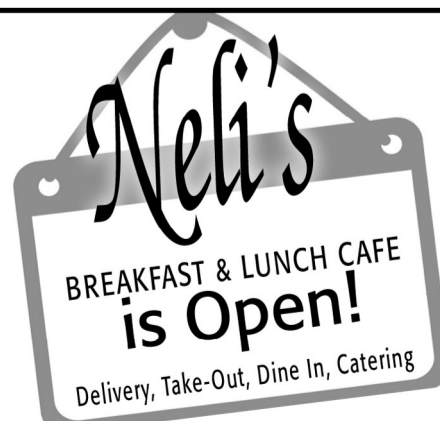
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Reflections From The East

The Year of the Tiger: Showing Your True Stripes



By Qian Stubis
Many say intelligence can be seen in the eyes. If you have ever looked into a tiger's eyes, I'm sure that you were impressed by their intense golden glow, as if the purest amber were on fire. William Blake, an English poet, captured this perfectly:

*Tyger Tyger, burning bright
In the forest of the night.*

Tigers are among the most magnificent predatory creatures in our world. Due to their fierce, wild, and solitary nature, few of us have seen them outside a zoo visit, a safari adventure or a National Geographic documentary.

Normally, they roam in their own

habitat, far away from human civilization, although starting on the first day of this month, we get to enjoy their presence in our lives. Welcome to the Chinese Year of the Tiger!

To celebrate its arrival, Asian families decorate their windows and doors with red paper cutouts of tigers, welcoming the spirit of the jungle into their lives. Those who fervently believe in the ancient Chinese zodiac will also modify their behavior in accordance with the latest "tiger" forecasts in dating, finance, and health.

Of the 12 birth animals in the Chinese lunar calendar, the tiger is third in line. Those born in its year are supposed to inherit its personality traits for life. A fortune teller often relies on such knowledge to

predict someone's personality and fortune.

In nature, tigers are playful and athletic, capable of running 30-40 miles per hour. They are smart and skilled hunters, good at launching surprise attacks on their prey. Though viciously territorial, tigers are known to be kind and caring toward their own partners and cubs.

Like tigers, those born in its year are said to be strong, courageous and smart. They know how to put up a fight or get the job done, even under mounting pressure or time constraints. Being loyal and trustworthy, they also make great friends to protect those they love and care about.

"Tigers" are good-looking people and know how to use their charm.

I'm sure that they themselves won't dispute this. But fear not that all the greatness of such a noble beast exempts them from having flaws, for they will inherit a big cat's impulsive behavior and must take precautions against their own unpredictability and overconfidence in life.

No matter what birth animal we belong to in the Chinese zodiac, we can all benefit from the luscious gold color of the tiger, the very symbol of prosperity. So, put on your tiger stripes and enjoy the year. May this mighty cat bring us all health, wealth, and happiness!

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

Fellow Moms, Send Yourself a Valentine!



By Cheryl Thode
Hey, momma! Yes, you with the children in tow, the one with the newborn, the one with the empty nest, the one with the

teenager, the one with the toddler, and the one doing the best she can for her children. Happy Valentine's Day to You! Momma, you are doing great and you deserve a big "pat on the back."

February is notably the month of love. It's a time when we as a country celebrate those we love. Whether it's recognizing our affection for our significant others, family, friends, or neighbors, it's a splendid time to acknowledge our fondness for others. However, it is also a perfect time to celebrate and grow the love for our own selves as moms.

Fellow mothers, as you know, it is so easy to put ourselves and our needs aside, to manage all the other tasks and chores calling on us to fix them. We forget to check in on ourselves, and due to time and energy constraints, we often put our needs at the end of the list.

By putting ourselves last, we are hurting not only ourselves, but also our families and those around us.

So, how can we moms celebrate ourselves? Valentines! Write yourself a Valentine. While I know this may seem a cliché, I want you to trust me.

Just take five minutes to write your own love note to yourself on a piece of paper or card, place it in a self-addressed envelope, and then mail it to yourself.

You are the most important critic of yourself, and what you say matters. We so easily criticize ourselves throughout the day, but when do we celebrate (in writing) our successes and love for who we are as mothers?

You are the only wonderful you, and the only one who knows what you need in a love note. Taking the time to write out loving words to yourself will immediately make you feel good and honor the work you do as a mother. Seeing loving words about yourself in your own hand is uplifting and so rewarding.

Furthermore, when you mail your Valentine to yourself, you are guaranteeing that you will get to revisit that good feeling caused by

your self-affirmations sometime in the future, when you receive it back in the mail.

Fellow momma, I strongly encourage you to do this activity. As I wrote last month, 2022 is the year of new possibilities. We are all ready to feel goodness and love. Be proactive! Set yourself up for success by being your best advocate and supporter. Share with your inner self what you love about you. Send yourself a Valentine!

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



Answer to Neighborhood Celebrity

(Continued from Page 1)



Mini Message Bulletin Board

Happy Valentine's Day
to my sweet Poodie Kins!
You will always be my rock!
I love you! -Mom

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Happy Valentine's Day
to Joanne, the love
of my life.
- KINGSLEY

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Clergy Corner

Let Love Power Prevail



By Reverend Carolyn Baskin-Bell
There is power in love. As we continue to endure this COVID-19 virus pandemic and the pandemics of racism, and economic and mental health crises, there is a call for "Love Power" to prevail.

national acknowledgement days, and reminders from individuals in leadership to practice the golden rule.

On this next Valentine's Day, some of us plan to express love in a tangible manner. After the box of chocolates are gone, the dinner date comes to an end, or the exotic event concludes, let the spirit of love reside in the heart and mind of humankind by daily expressions of thoughtfulness, tolerance of an individual's differences, and the reinforcement of tangible acts. Let Love Power Prevail!

Reverend Carolyn Baskin-Bell, Senior Pastor First African Methodist Episcopal Church, Santa Monica

The AME Church is the oldest Black denomination in the U.S. Celebrating Bishop Richard Allen, our founder, and Reverend Jarena Lee, First Woman Preacher in the AME Church.

Many of us agree with the songwriter, Burt Bacharach, as he penned the words, "What the World Needs Now is Love Sweet Love!" Love power is expressed through thoughtfulness and kindness.

Love power is to practice tolerance. The respect, acknowledgement, celebration, and acceptance of culture, religion, belief, lifestyle, or background demonstrate the effort to love, regardless of an individual's profile and personal data. Our faith teaches us that love is kind.

Every Valentine's Day, random acts of kindness are promoted through corporate advertisements,

Chef Jahrid Prepares a Hot Dish For a Cool Winter Day

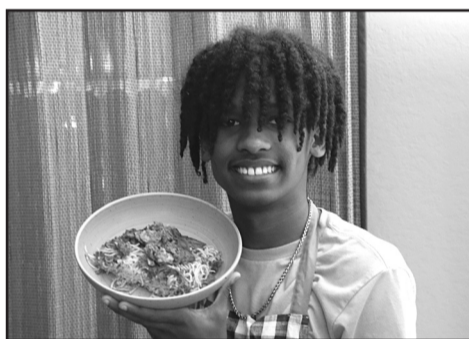
Chef Jahrid Longworth has been bringing our readers his favorite dairy-free recipes for over a year. This high school student discovered that he couldn't have dairy in his diet after going to doctors for years with stomach problems.

Each of the recipes he shares includes dairy-free products. This month, Jahrid selected an entrée with Italian sausage and pasta. He thought it would be perfect for dinner on a cool winter day.

Italian Sausage and Pasta

Ingredients:

- Italian sausage
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 3 cloves garlic - diced
- 2 cans diced tomatoes
- 1/2 small can tomato paste



Jahrid is ready to eat his hot pasta dish.

- 1 small can tomato sauce
- 1 Tbsp. basil flakes
- 1 Tbsp. parsley flakes
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- Salt and pepper to taste

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Passing Through the Pico Neighborhood

SMYO Turns 10!



By Stacy McClendon
The Santa Monica Youth Orchestra (SMYO) turned 10 last month and is extremely excited to still be sharing the love of music with youth in the Pico Neighborhood.

SMYO founding member Shabnam Fasa shared her intriguing story of how her love of musicianship blossomed and brought her and her organization to where they are today.

Shabnam's love of the violin and the symphony was fostered during her youth in Denmark. In Denmark, it was free to play an instrument, and the symphony was utilized as a way to build connection and community.

Shabnam sees the orchestra as a humbling harmonious experience as anywhere from 50-150 people come together to create and share magnificent music that affects people differently at the core level, and could never be created by one person.

In her late teens, she attended the Herb Albert World Music Program at UCLA. Soon, she began to work for the City of Santa Monica's CREST afterschool program. While working in the CREST program, she championed a gardening program, and assisted children who were struggling with playing their instruments to improve.

Shabnam also taught violin for the Youth Orchestra in Los Angeles. It was through this opportunity that she developed her dreams of starting an orchestra for Santa Monica's young people.

Not long afterwards, she connected with some champions in the Santa Monica community and shared her desire to create a SMYO giving the love of music to youth in the community.

Since its inception ten years ago, the orchestra has received over 20+ grants and countless donations. One was from the Herb Albert Foundation, which is near and dear to Shabnam as it came from the founder of the college program she attended.

Shabnam remembers having three participants on her very first orchestra day. Now, she counts her grit and determination to succeed as one of the main reasons that SMYO is still growing to reach the heights it has.

This orchestra is a known member of the Santa Monica's Pico Neighborhood community. It gathers weekly at Virginia Park, holds an annual Opus Summer Camp, and shares a host of events and performances throughout the community.

Up next for SMYO is the start of their very first Infant Orchestra, which began on their 10th anniversary. For more info visit www.santamonicyouthorchestra.com.



Broadway Community Exhibit Postponed

Last month, we promoted an exciting exhibit coordinated by Bill and Carolyne Edwards about the Broadway Community and the Quinn Research Center. It was to be held on February 5 at the Santa Monica History Museum.

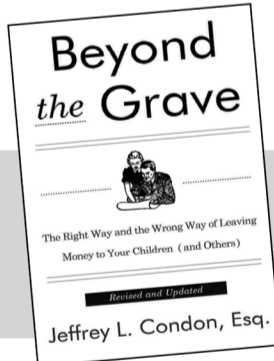
Executive Director John Kearns sent us a message that "Due to the increasing cases of the Omicron variant, and for the safety and concern of our staff, volunteers, and visitors, the museum will now re-open on Friday, April 1."

For more information, please visit their website at www.santamonicahistory.org.



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Designers are creating inviting and serene spaces through the use of clean lines in design, materials, and furnishings.

On-Trend Home Designs for 2022

Family Features - A home design that blends multiple elements seamlessly can be both inviting and visually interesting. If you're planning to upgrade your living space in 2022, consider incorporating materials like stone and brick, which bring color, texture and functionality while complementing some of this year's leading design trends.

• Warm Colors

Look for a shift toward warmer colors like beige, tan, caramel, cocoa, and even black.

• Textures and Patterns

Textures and patterns are popping up in many on-trend designs.

• Outdoor Inspiration

Nature is inspiring an array of design elements this year. You may see this trend emerging through increased use of glass for light and views of nature, as well as contin-

ued focus on the versatile and transitional indoor-outdoor spaces that gained momentum during the height of the pandemic.

Approaches may vary depending on the homeowner's style and climate, but examples include larger patios in brick and stone, as well as more functional private patios and porches. Another aspect of this trend is the tendency for homeowners to integrate indoor conveniences such as kitchens, fireplaces, furniture and electronics into their outdoor spaces.

• Clean Lines

This season, designers are creating inviting, comfortable, and serene spaces with modern vibes through the use of clean lines in design, materials and furnishings.

For more on-trend design ideas for your home, visit glengery.com.

Prepare Quick, Cozy Breakfasts for Cold, Busy Mornings

Family Features - It's often a challenge on cold, overcast days to pull yourself out from under the warm covers. Even though you know the importance of a satisfying breakfast, before heading off to work or dropping the kids off at school, that cool chill may keep you hitting the snooze button.

On those cold and busy mornings, turn to a solution like Minute Ready to Serve microwavable cups for a quick, cozy breakfast. Ready in 90 seconds or less, the cups offer a fast and easy meal that helps you spend less time cooking.

When a weekday calls for an on-the-go breakfast, make quick work of your morning meal with this Breakfast Scramble for a filling option without the unnecessary additives. Made with just four ingredients - eggs, sausage, cheese, and white rice - it's perfect for a busy lifestyle. Plus, it can be customized any way you like with toppings like avocado, tomatoes, fresh herbs and more.

Visit MinuteRice.com to find more quick breakfast ideas perfect for chilly mornings.

Breakfast Scramble

Prep time: 2 minutes
Cook time: 2 minutes
Servings: 1



Breakfast Scramble is easy to prepare in the morning.

- 1 cup Minute Ready to Serve White Rice
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup shredded cheese
- 1/4 cup crumbled cooked sausage
- Salt, to taste (optional)
- Black pepper, to taste (optional)
- Heat rice according to package directions.
- In a small, microwave-safe bowl, combine egg, cheese and sausage. Microwave on high 60 seconds, or until egg is set.
- Transfer rice to small bowl and top with egg and sausage mixture. Season with salt and pepper, to taste, if desired.

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Connect to Nature in February

By Julie Rensink Hanson

Love is in the air and not just because of the human Valentine's Day. Birds, too, begin to think about courting and nesting in February. Our local California Scrub Jays are sizing up candidates for their long-term, some say lifetime, partners. By the end of the month, they will begin nesting. Jays live in families. The young from the year before stay near their parents and often help with rearing the next year's clutch of eggs. They establish their own territory only when they start to breed.

Beautiful Western Bluebirds also are finding mates and looking for homes. Unfortunately, they tend to nest in hollow dead trees, something in short supply in urban areas. You can help them by hanging up a bluebird box close to their favorite hangouts, any place with lawns and big trees, such as golf courses, parks and cemeteries. Wrens are also in need of more nesting habitats and a wren box can easily be hung in a tree or on a post or building in your yard.

If you enjoy watching nature cams, tune in to watch our local Big Bear Bald Eagle couple, Jackie and Shadow, as they nest and raise their young this winter: www.friendsofbigbearvalley.org/eagles. Or, delight in watching Bella, a local Allen's hummingbird, as she raises several broods of chicks throughout the year. (<https://explore.org/livecams/hummingbirds/bella-hummingbird-nest>).



A Male Western Bluebird

February is National Bird Feeding Month. This is the time of year when birds need extra calories to molt, fatten up for migration, defend territory, and build nests. Your feeder, filled with the best quality seed, suet, nectar, or worms, can play an important role when natural food sources are lacking or absent.

It's just four days, but February 12-15, 2022, is one of the year's most important bird counts – The Great Backyard Bird Count. A joint project of Cornell Lab of Ornithology, The Audubon Society, and Birds Canada, the count is open to anyone, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It's easy to do from your backyard, or anywhere in the world. If you are a teacher, consider having your students do a count at school or home for science and math education. Find out more at: www.birdcount.org.

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

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Happy February Birthdays to Christie Brinkley, Ina Garten, Nathan Lane, Tom Brokaw, Garth Brooks, Ashton Kutcher, Chris Rock, Laura Dern, Robert Wagner, and Michael Bloomberg.



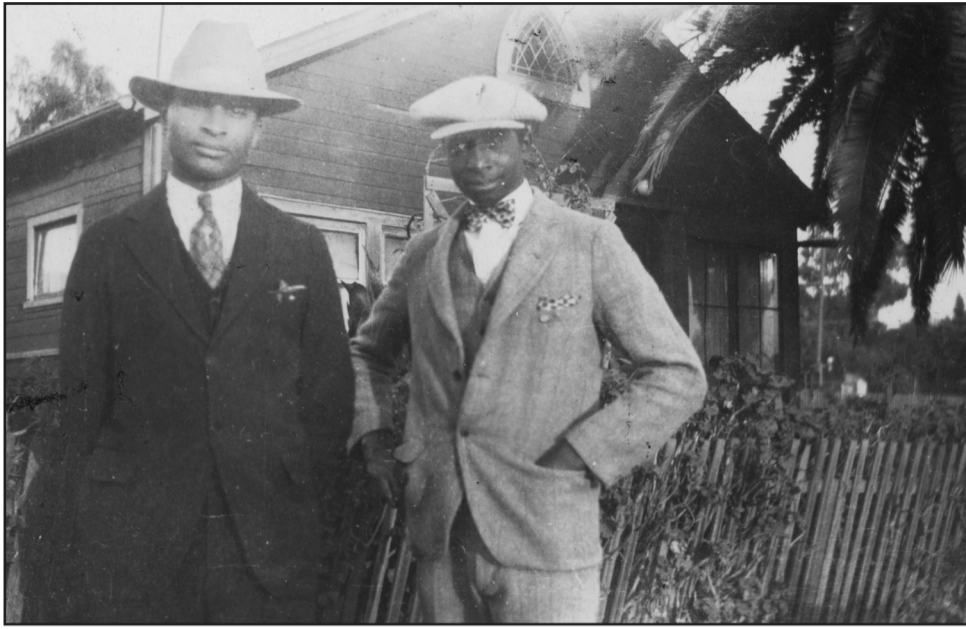
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From the Santa Monica History Museum



The Brunson Brothers - Brothers Donald, left, and Vernon, right, are standing in front of their mother Selena's home at 1745 5th Street in Santa Monica. The Brunson Family was one of earliest African American families in Santa Monica. Donald's and Vernon's parents moved to Santa Monica around 1905 and had their children a few years later. For more information on this photo, (Santa Monica History Museum Collection 36.2.2294), or the many others in the museum's collection, go to santamonicahistory.org, or call 310-395-2290.

Thoughts From a Second-Time Father

What Qualities Do Good Friends Have?



By Michael Margolin

Recently my wife, Enjoli, and I took the kids to a friend's house and ended up spending just about the whole day there.

It is a family of four we visited, which includes a girl who is eight, just like Alexa. Jake is five, and the son at the house is a bit older and has mostly outgrown playing with little kids.

Jake likes everybody in the household, although he offered some protest in going there. He was curious as to when we would go to a house of his friend's and stay there and hang out all day. It reminded me of a time before I had kids, when a friend of mine said he was going to surprise his young son with a trip to the zoo the next day. The boy was five or six years old, and I thought, what if he already had plans?

Of course, a child that young generally does not make his own plans. And, I am sure they had a great time at the zoo. Jake is still in a spot where when we make plans, he must go along with them, whether he likes them or not. In this case, we were going to my friend's house and Alexa's friend's house. Jake saw it more as going to his sister's friend's house.

In a sense, it was a lot like when we first brought Jake home. When we first brought Alexa home, we were very anxious. Every single thing she did was something we had never seen her do before. We were first time parents. We did not

plan anything because we had no idea what was going to happen next. When we first brought Jake home, it was more like, "Well, here we are. Go ahead and make yourself at home. We are still making plans for your sister. If we go anywhere, we'll put you back in this carrier, and you can come too."

Jake ended up having a nice day, as we all did. Thankfully, our kids are flexible and easy going, and that certainly helps. Having a day like we did reminds me of something I believe to be very important in teaching them.

I want them to do their best to surround themselves with good people. I think that awareness is a very underrated trait, and that surrounding yourself with good people is one of the best things you can do. Since they are beginning to collect more and more of their own friends, being aware of the good people is only going to help. To Alexa, a good friend is somebody who is always there for you. Somebody who always stands up for you and is always super happy to see you. When he was asked, Jake tried to copy what Alexa said.

As a parent, you want your kids to feel included when they are guests and there are other kids playing with their friend.

To me, good people are those who more often look for the positives in life. They are easy to be around. They are genuinely concerned with the well-being and contentment of others.

Michael Margolin is the father of two young children. He is an avid sports fan and a soccer coach on Alexa's and Jake's teams.

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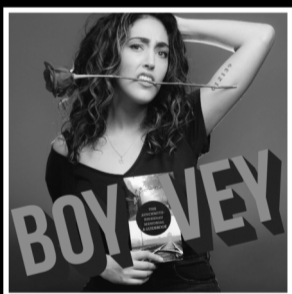
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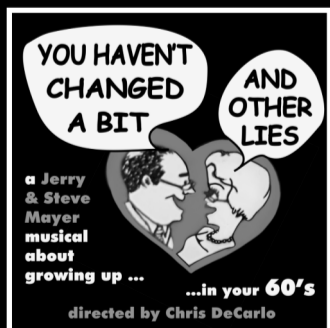
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Community Service on the Westside

The Rotary Club of Santa Monica Celebrates 100 Years!

By Nora Bohn

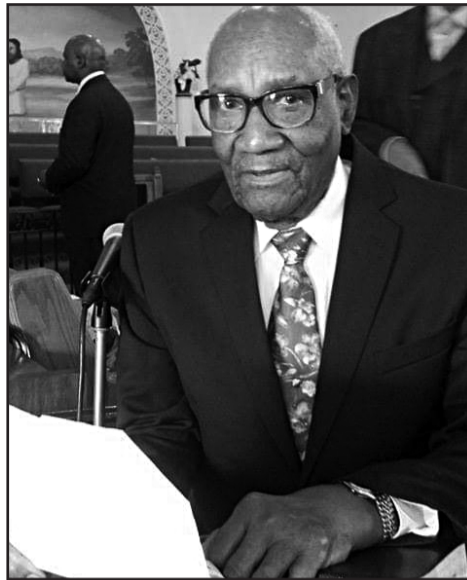
What do the Roaring '20s, Prohibition, the Jazz Age and the Rotary Club of Santa Monica all have in common? They were all born at the same time. It's an impressive achievement that the Rotary Club of Santa Monica has been here for 100 years, and is as energized as ever, as we begin our 101st year.

Our clubs' charter was presented at "an enthusiastic banquet and impressive ceremonies" at the Miramar Hotel on March 8, 1922. The members were a dynamic and visionary group of Santa Monica business owners who wanted to make contributions to their growing community.

Here are just a few of the things our club has been doing for the past 100 years: We traveled the world together to support humanitarian missions such as raising funds to provide wheelchairs for children in Mazatlan, establishing a relationship with the Boy Scouts, raising money to redo the pool and clubhouse at Camp Josepho, sponsoring a school in Sri Lanka, taking part in providing electricity to a village in Columbia that had never had it before, and completing a water project in the Bahamas, as well as another in El Salvador.

We also launched international youth exchange programs as well as sponsored student tours, and closer to home, began a program called Rotary Reads where Rotarians volunteer to read to local school children.

The celebration of our centennial is slated to take place on February 26, 2022 at the Marriott in Marina



Lloyd Allen will be honored at the Rotary Club of Santa Monica 100th Anniversary celebration.

Del Rey. The event's theme is "Rolling Through The Ages." We will be paying tribute to the club's decades of service through music and presentations punctuated with surprise guest appearances.

Our honoree will be Lloyd Allen, who is also celebrating his 100th year. He became the first Black member of the Rotary Club of Santa Monica, and in 1971 was nominated by then-Governor Reagan and appointed by President Richard Nixon to the Selective Service Board in Santa Monica.

If you are interested in joining us as we continue to make a difference in our community and in the world, check out our website at rotaryclubofsantamonica.org, or contact us at admin@rotaryclubofsantamonica.org.

Looking Forward to New Lion Club Members in the New Year



By Linda Levee

The holidays came and went very fast. This new year of 2022 brings lots of hope and improvements in our communications. We were so proud of the Rose Parade float from Lions International in which we all participated. The float was beautiful, and it gave the world a view of what Lions do. There was a representative showing all of the projects in which we participate, and the International President was here on our home turf.

We had to change our plans from a monthly face-to-face meeting until this new variant has diminished.

Please make sure all of your friends and neighbors get vaccinated and boosted so that we can all again begin to live a more nor-

mal life. I am amazed at all of the different ways people are finding to help one another. One of the ways is to contact charities and organizations like Lions who are in our community. We will respond to your calls if you wish to participate in any of our programs.

We need your ideas and a few hours a month to help people who may have children who are food deprived in our area. Yes, we have those who have lost jobs or had to quit working for lack of child care. These have been difficult times, and that is why we have community-based organizations. All funds raised in our community are used in our community.

If you are interested in participating in our Santa Monica-Pacific Palisades Lions Club, please call President Lion Kingsley Fife with your questions or for information at 310-454-2960.

Share Valentine's Day Nearby With Your Loved One

Have you been to see the Fairmont Miramar hotel lately? Think about booking their Romance Package on that special day. It includes a bottle of champagne, a box of Miramar chocolates and a \$100 hotel credit.

As a coastal getaway that doesn't require you to leave the property, this Valentine's Day, guests can

make their way to FIG Restaurant for an evening filled with cocktails, wine, and farm-to-table dishes.

On February 14, Director of Culinary Experience Jason Prendergast will be offering a special *Romantic Shareables* menu from 5 p.m.-

(Continued on Page 11)

Looking for a Location for Your Event?



By Pat Webber

We made it through 2021 with hopes that 2022 would be a return to increased activity at the Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club (SMBWC). Thanks to the new COVID-19 variants, we are restrained by local health guidelines until at least mid-February.

Our Monday card playing is still going on with bridge and canasta, while mahjong is on hold. Free bridge lessons are held on Tuesdays from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Reservations are required and can be made by calling the Club and asking for Darlene regarding bridge lessons.

Our club, along with our sister clubs in the Marina District (part of the California Federation of Women's Clubs), is participating in our annual Art Contest Show and Luncheon on February 19. Members are invited to submit their work in Fine Arts, Crafts, Photography, Writing, and Floral Arrangements. The Fine Arts, Photography and Writing contests are also open to students. As of this writing, we

hope the event will not have to be postponed again due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Call for an update.

However, we had a busy year despite the pandemic. We welcomed 14 new members, collected 64 boxes of cereal for the Westside Food Bank, amassed 104 pairs of socks for the homeless, and purchased and wrapped 21 gifts for the campers at Happy Trails for Kids Winter Camp.

Finally, we are delighted to announce that our web page, www.smbwc.org, has been revised, making it easier to read for those interested in joining the Club or renting the Club for events.

We have a Google view of our entrance, lobby, lounge, ballroom, and stage. It's fun to scroll around to get an idea of how this can be used for activities in the community. Here's hoping 2022 will get us back to normal.

Our Club is located at 1210 Fourth Street, just south of Wilshire Boulevard, in Santa Monica. Please call 310-395-1308 for more information on our many programs. Our club is also available to rent for meetings or small and large occasions.

An Update from ERBA Markets

Learning More About Cannabis

Here is a new column that will provide us with more information on cannabis. Please send your questions to smstarnews@paper@gmail.com.

By Stephen Freedman

Q: I hear about THC in cannabis, but don't understand what it is and what its effects are if I take cannabis with it in it. What will happen?

A: THC stands for tetrahydrocannabinol, a cannabinoid found in cannabis that can produce psychedelic effects when it enters the body. This happens due to THC "tricking" the brain into thinking it is anandamide, a naturally occurring chemical in the body.

This can have effects on memory, coordination, and mood; the "high" you hear so much about. Cannabis is extremely subjective, so the effects of THC will be different from person to person.

If someone is new to cannabis, we always recommend starting small and moving up in dosage from there. It's always easier to take more than less.

THC shouldn't be confused with other cannabinoids, such as CBD or THCA. Both of these, as well as other cannabinoids, have great medicinal benefits for ailments such as pain and anxiety, without altering the mind in any way.

Q: How does your staff keep up on all of the new products they have to sell to their customers? Do you have staff meetings or do reps come to talk to you?

A: At ERBA, our staff is immensely knowledgeable regarding the different strains, products, as well as the medicinal effects of all merchandise in the store. We pride ourselves on listening to our patients and finding the right products for their individual needs.

This knowledge is refined through a number of channels. Management is always staying on top of emerging research and products that are new to the industry and passing that information to our staff. Our brands also supply us with information regarding their specific products which we then disseminate to our budtenders (staff members).

We also allow the brands to conduct budtender training sessions to better educate our staff on their merchandise and to answer any questions they may have.

In addition, we permit vendors to hold appreciation days in which they will educate our patients directly, as well as offering deals and promos in the process.

For more information on ERBA markets, go to Page 12.

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Paws and Claws

Are Lilies Dangerous for Cats?



By Dr. Frank Lavac MS, DVM

Q: I heard that lilies are dangerous for cats. Is that really true?

A: Yes, lilies are quite toxic to cats.

Easter lilies, tiger lilies, and various other lilies can be fatal if ingested.

Even small amounts of the ingested plants are toxic, including the pollen. We do not know the

exact reason why they are so poisonous, but we do know that they cause sudden kidney failure.

Vomiting is one of the first signs noted as the cat enters kidney failure. Then, their appetite becomes reduced, and their attitude becomes depressed. If you see your cat eating any part of the plant, call the ER and take your cat to the hospital immediately.

Treatment involves aggressive intravenous fluid therapy. Time is of the essence, as the toxins damage the kidneys very quickly. If you own a cat, never have lilies in your home.

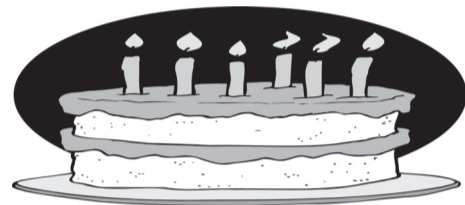
For more information go to <https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/how-spot-which-lilies-are-dangerous-cats-plan-treatment>.

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

Adopt a Pet



"Abigail" is a beautiful and curious cat. She is eight years old. She was in a good home for many years, but, her owner was in an accident and could no longer care for her. If you are interested, please contact the Lange Foundation, info@langefoundation.org.



Happy February Birthdays to:

- Jerry Dobkin, Libby Atwater, Sara Frank, Rick Kennedy, Ken Waltzer, Russ Warner, Timur Berberoglu, Eric Gadai, Frances Bilak, Shirley Wilson, Pam Andrews, Darby Navin, Kylee Navin, Adam Barnard, Katie Parr Morgan, Lauralee Asch, Eula Fritz, and Daniel Bennett.**

Planning Ahead

Increased Estate and Gift Tax Exemptions



By Lisa Alexander

Many of us spent 2021 worried that tax proposals would lower the Estate Tax Exemption.

People were looking for strategies to make use of the higher exemption while they still could. But, as it turned out, nothing happened. The current version of the Build Back Better Tax Act has no provision to lower the estate tax exemption or otherwise affect current transfer tax planning techniques.

Not only did we escape a lowering of the Estate Tax Exemption, but we are also starting 2022 with an even higher exemption due to a cost-of-living adjustment. For anyone who died in 2021, the Estate Tax Exemption was \$11,700,000. This year, in 2022, the Estate Tax Exemption is \$12,060,000. And, we can expect further incremental increases at least for the next few years.

The Annual Gift Tax Exclusion Amount has also increased as of January 1, 2022. This year and in future years, a person can gift up to \$16,000 to as many people as they want, without having to file a Gift Tax Return. A married couple can combine their Annual Gift Tax Exclusion Amounts to gift up to \$32,000. (Last year, the Annual

Gift Tax Exclusion was \$15,000.) Generous gifting using the Annual Gift Tax Exclusion can be a simple and powerful tool to reduce your taxable estate and transfer wealth to the next generation. For example, Mom and Dad can gift \$32,000 to each of their children, their children's spouses, and their grandchildren. Assuming their two children, both married, have four grandchildren, Mom and Dad can make gifts to each totaling \$256,000. Over four years, Mom and Dad can give away over \$1,000,000 without any complicated planning. You should talk to your CPA and estate planning attorney to see if this is a good strategy for you.

For the immediate future, we avoided changes in the laws governing Estate and Gift Tax. But, we must remain mindful that under current law, on January 1, 2026, the Estate Tax Exemption will be cut in half and will be reduced to approximately \$6,000,000. Congress would have to act to extend the current Estate Tax Exemption to avert this from happening. However, between now and the end of 2025, we have time for thoughtful Estate and Gift Tax planning, instead of the rushed and panicked reactions that occurred last year.

Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.
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Mar Vista: Neighbor to Neighbor

(Continued from Page 3)

trivia night; Thursday is drink and draw night; Friday is burlesque; and there is a fab drag show on Saturday nights.

For other Mar Vista business news, Eric Oxenberg shares news about the Mar Vista Chamber end-of-the-year 2021 holiday mixer at Casa Sanchez. Please contact Eric at 310-309-0034 for more news on joining in future Mar Vista Chamber events. Their meetings are on Zoom and in person.

According to Eric, the Mar Vista Chamber of Commerce knows how to throw a party, and this gathering was no exception! Members went to Casa Sanchez to see friends, catch up, and enjoy fine Mexican appetizers and drinks.

Casa Sanchez offers a number of

excellent enchiladas, and bowls full of fresh tortilla chips and salsa, plus some pretty strong margaritas and mojitos! The mixer spot was their large covered outdoor patio, which was warm and bright for the occasion. A full mariachi band played just inside the dining room doors.

Founding member Donna Benton of Re/Max Properties won a \$50 gift card from Amazon.com in the Chamber's 2021 membership raffle. Other members, including board members Eric Oxenberg and Allison Beale, received \$10 Starbucks cards. Several members, including Craig Jaffe of Jaffe Insurance and Manuel Jimenez of EZep Financial Services, brought family members to meet the group.

As the Page Turns (Continued from Page 3)

She shares her own struggle so you will find her relatable. I would recommend this book for those who want to consider the reasons for weight gain being psychological, rather than purely physical. There may be a connection they can make for themselves.

Dr. Youdim's book is published by Amazon and can be downloaded on Kindle.

The second book is a bit easier to digest. We are still talking about hunger for acceptance. In *I'm Not Single, I Have a Dog* by Susan Hartzler, we have the story of Susan's seeking for love, sometimes in the wrong places. It is her dog that stabilizes her. But, it is the journey that is important here. Susan is

open with her search. I also recommend this book.

I'm Not Single, I Have a Dog is published by McFarland & Company, Inc., and can be found at a bookstore or ordered online from Amazon.

As I have said, these both center on choice. Dr. Youdim calls it hunger. Susan Hartzler calls it a journey. Both are right.

Until next time, keep turning those pages.

Good books deserve good reviews. Dane Swanson enjoys sharing fine literature with others. He is also an affiliate marketer and his website <https://drs-affiliate.com> offers affiliate products in the area of health and wellness.

Chef Jahrid Prepares a Hot Dish (Continued from Page 5)

1. Start cooking your Italian sausage. Remove the sausage meat from the casings. Make sure to break up the meat into small crumbles. Add the chopped onion and diced garlic to cook until it's softened.

2. Stir in the other ingredients – garlic, tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato paste, basil, parsley, brown sugar, salt, crushed red pepper, and black pepper. Bring the meat sauce to a low boil and simmer on low, stirring occasionally, for at least an hour.

3. When you're ready to eat, and the meat sauce is ready to serve, start cooking the pasta according to package instructions.

4. To serve, spoon meat sauce over drained spaghetti noodles (or other favorite pasta according to package instructions), top with dairy-free cheese and enjoy.

Side note: To melt the dairy-free cheese, sprinkle in on top of the pasta, then put it into the microwave for three to five minutes, or until melted, and enjoy!

Share Valentine's Day (Continued from Page 9)

10 p.m., including "dishes for two" specials, along with their a la carte and "FIG at Five" happy hour menus.

For those looking to spoil their other half, the hotel's on-site Exhale Spa offers customized massages, facials, and nail services.

For you and your Valentine to get primed and ready for date night, book a blow out, haircut, or shave at Lloyd's Barbershop or The Salon.

Call the hotel at 310-576-7777 for more information.

From Me to You...



By Diane Margolin

During this time of new challenges, many resources are available to help us deal with them.

Local resident and television commentator Maria Shriver writes an inspirational weekly newsletter called *Maria Shriver's Sunday Paper*. She talks about what she has been thinking and often, it is what we have also been thinking. She offers several resources that she may turn to, giving us a choice, depending on what we are concerned about.

Her thoughtful words help us to deal with the situations we are facing that we have not dealt with before. She presents various solutions so we can feel that we have a direction to head in that we may not have considered. You can receive the newsletter online by going to mariashriver.com.

With Valentine's Day coming this month, we look for gifts to share with our friends and family. I always recommend the Magic Muffins from Neli's Breakfast and Lunch Cafe in West L.A. The freshly-baked fruit-filled muffins are the best gifts you can send. It continues to amaze me how excited people respond when a box arrives at their front door.

You can send candy or cookies,

but there is something about the oversized muffins that really excites the person receiving them, especially when they open the box before they are ready for their morning coffee and see what they are about to taste. Flavors can include blueberry, chocolate, banana nut, cinnamon pecan, pumpkin, carrot, marbled chocolate and vanilla, and cream cheese, depending on which day you order. Call 310-477-0031 for more details.

I found a recipe years ago to make eggs in a muffin pan. They suggested mixing six eggs with a little milk, cheese, and vegetables. What I ended up doing was mixing three eggs, shredded cheese, cut up steamed vegetables, and a little milk, maybe 1/4 cup. You can use whatever is in your refrigerator. I ended up having enough mixture to fill six cups. Be sure to grease the cups in the pans so the eggs will come right out after they have baked. I used the butter spray in a can. You can bake them around 325 degrees for about 15 minutes. Just keep an eye on them, and when they brown on the top and edges, take them out. You can store them in the refrigerator in a plastic bag. It's a great way to get a quick protein snack.

Remember George Washington and Abraham Lincoln this month. And, Happy Valentine's Day, too!

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