

THE SANTA MONICA STAR

Also Covering
The Greater
Westside

Volume XXV Number 8

Connecting You With Your Community

August 2026

The Kardashian Family Recognized For More Community Work



The Paulette Kardashian family of Southern California Disposal and Recycling, Inc. received a special "Fly Your Flag" certificate and commendation from the Santa Monica Elks Lodge. Pictured from left, are Samuel Matosian, Sammy Matosian, Paulette, and Tamara Kardashian Matosian with Santa Monica Elks Exalted Ruler, Ilene Knebel.

The World Came to the Westside

By Richard Lombardi

I am not a soccer fan. At least, I wasn't when the FIFA World Cup arrived in Southern California. Like millions of Americans, I knew it was the world's biggest sporting event, but I couldn't explain the offside rule or name more than a handful of international players. Yet, over the course of a few weeks, I found myself eagerly looking for places to watch matches – not because I had suddenly become a soccer expert, but because I wanted to experience what the tournament was doing to our community.

My first World Cup experience came during my church's men's night out at Santa Monica Brew Works. Mexico was playing South Korea, and the brewery was overflowing with energy.

One thing immediately stood out. There wasn't a single South Korean jersey in sight. The crowd was overwhelmingly cheering for Mexico, reflecting Southern California's deep ties to our Mexican neighbors and the passion their fans bring to the sport. Every scoring opportunity produced cheers, groans, and high-fives among people who had never met one another.

It wasn't really about soccer. It was about community. For two hours, strangers became teammates.

My next World Cup experience came at the Bel-Air Bay Club during Argentina's match against Cabo Verde. I expected people to support the tournament favorite. Instead, the large crowd gathered around the beach bar was almost unanimously pulling for Cabo

Verde, the tiny island nation hoping to shock the defending champions.

Every Cabo Verde attack was met with cheers. Every close call drew gasps. The possibility of an upset united people who may not have known one another but quickly found themselves sharing the same hopes.

Standing there overlooking the Pacific Ocean, I realized something remarkable was happening. None of us needed to be from Cabo Verde to appreciate their story. We simply wanted to see the underdog succeed.

Argentina ultimately prevailed, but the lasting memory wasn't the score. It was watching the entire crowd ride the emotional roller coaster together.

Meanwhile, America's own tournament run gave casual fans like

(Continued on Page 10)

**Do You Recognize This
Neighborhood Celebrity
Celebrating His
Special Birthday?
(Answer on Page 11)**



Boy Scout Troop 2, from left: Zach Matise, Mario Scaduto, Julian Grosky, Oscar Park, Nathan Hall, Scoutmaster Mr. John Matise, Jacob Browning, James Faries, Jefferson Tinus, and Matthew Oleynikov. Photo by Ken Sleeper

Santa Monica Troop 2 Awards Eagle Scout Rank to Nine Local Youth

This year's Troop 2 Eagle Scouts completed a wide range of public service projects which are goals for the scout troop. They were: **Julian Alexander Grosky** - Palisades Charter High School, Class of 2026. "We contributed two outdoor features to the Covenant Preschool in Westchester, Los Angeles: a large planter box and a chalkboard. The concept was to encourage positive experiences for the preschool kids in their outdoor areas."

Zach Matise - Loyola High School Class of 2027. "We planted 22 eucalyptus trees and five cypress trees, and cleared an overgrown tennis court, restoring areas of Will Rogers State Historic Park that were devastated by the Palisades Fire."

Oscar Park - North Hollywood High School Class of 2027. "At Kuvungna Sacred Springs in West Los Angeles we cleared and restored a large overgrown section of land. This included the removal of invasive weeds and vines, and the application of sheet mulching, which helps control weeds."

Mario Scaduto - Santa Monica High School Class of 2027. "At Kuvungna Sacred Springs we restored native species along the edges of the natural springs pond, and constructed a flagstone ramp to improve accessibility. The new ramp provides easier passage for visitors and wheelchair users."

Jacob Browning - Santa Monica High School Class of 2026. "At the Will Rogers Elementary School Regenerative Farm we built ten garden mesh protective "crates" to be placed over vegetation, and five bee "hotels" filled with bamboo

and sticks to create inviting homes for bees and bugs to nest."

Nathan Hall - Palisades Charter High School Class of 2026. "My project involved planting 21 trees along the road at the entrance to Will Rogers State Historic Park, helping to restore areas devastated by the Palisades Fire. Troop 2 Scouts worked together in teams to dig deep holes, and then carefully placed and filled soil around the 8-foot trees."

Jefferson Tinus - Santa Monica High School Class of 2027. "My project was the construction of a low fence around a parking lot in Will Rogers State Historic Park. We dug 26 holes for posts, then placed and plumbed the fence posts, and anchored the post bases. The fence structure was built by attaching the face and supporting boards to the posts with screws."

James Faries - Santa Monica High School Class of 2026. "My project benefitted the Santa Monica Animal Shelter. We built much needed seating and shade for dog owners, and created adjustable-height dog hurdles and hoop jumps for the doggies to enjoy while they waited for the day a family adopted them."

Matthew Oleynikov - Santa Monica High School Class of 2027. "My project was the improvement of the cat section of the Santa Monica Animal Shelter. I designed five durable elevated beds, two bed complexes (one consisting of four beds and the other consisting of five beds), and three scratch towers. We also sanded and restained the bench for guests."

(Continued on Page 6)

Take a Look Inside

What's Happening on the
Westside?3
Reflections From the East ...4
Senior Care5
Entertaining With Ease5

Community Service9
Paws and Claws10
Historic Broadway Spotlight.10
Planning Ahead11
Love Links12

Wonderful Memories of the 250th Celebration of Our Country's July 4 Birthday Parade



Jeff Jarro, founder of the annual 4th of July Santa Monica parade with Evelyn Lauchenauer, NOMA member.



Talented members of the Santa Monica Ballet Folklorico Dancers at the parade.



Part of the Sullivan-Dituri Real Estate team working on their parade entries.



The U.S. Army Reserve's 300th Army Band with Mr. Leavy, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Svrtson preparing to play in the parade.

Enter the Community Garden Annual Tomato Competition

By Sarah Caso, California Climate Action Corps Fellow
Calling all gardeners and tomato enthusiasts! Join the Community Garden Program at Ishihara Park's monthly community breakfast for its annual tomato competition! To pique your interest in tomatoes or just get you excited for the competition, here are some interesting facts relating to tomatoes.
Tomatoes are a member of the Solanaceae, or nightshade family. Other members of this family include potatoes, peppers, tobacco, and tomatillo. Although tomatillos may look like green tomatoes, they are actually completely different plants. Tomatillos grow in a papery husk and have a tarter and more acidic flavor profile.

Tomatoes also originated in South America, while the tomatillo is native to Central America. And, while tomatoes are botanically a fruit, developing from flowers of the tomato plant, they are legally considered a vegetable by the U.S. Government (ruled in 1893 for taxation purposes)!
As fruits, tomatoes require pollination to set develop. Due to the shape of the flower, the managed honey bee is unable to pollinate tomato flowers. This makes sense once you consider the fact that honey bees are not native to the Americas, where the tomato originated. Instead, tomatoes need buzz pollination, in which the pollen is shaken out of the anthers. Bumble bees, which are much larger than honey bees and



Here is a bumble bee pollinating a tomato flower.

much larger than honey bees and native to the Americas, can rapidly vibrate their flight muscles, causing the pollen to fall out and onto the bees' bodies. Next time you enjoy a tomato, remember to thank the bees that helped produce it. The tomato competition will take place on Saturday, August 15 at 10 a.m. at Ishihara Park Learning Garden, 2909 Exposition Blvd., Santa Monica. Whether you're growing yellow, purple, green, or the classic red tomato, heirloom or cherry, all are welcome to enter their tomatoes.
Not growing any tomatoes this year, but still a big fan? Come and be a judge! Arrive at 9 a.m. to enjoy breakfast, enter your tomato (or register to be a judge) by 9:30 a.m., and wait for the festivities to begin at 10 a.m! Tomato-ly fun time guaranteed.



Happy August Birthdays
Tammy Ito, James Casalor, Susan DeRemer, Suzan Allbritton, Roger Davis, Charley Follette, LaVonne Lawson, Tod Lipka, Myles Pritchard, Freya Rainsford, Jim Rushton, Rebekah Gould, Ruth Schick, Eddie Guerboian, Jay Smith, Mariko Nakagiri, Eric Dobkin, Tish Tisherman, Pat Potter, Kathryn Boole, and Robert Trimborn.



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Email: smstarnewspaper@gmail.com
Editor and Publisher:
Diane Margolin
Editorial Assistant:
Pamela Lawrence
Advertising Sales: Diane Margolin
Ad Graphics: Libby Knapp
Artwork: Joe Analco
Contributing Writers:
Dr. Frank Lavac, Qin Stubis, Michael Margolin, Michelle Li, Cheryl Thode, Pat Webber, Jim Harris, Stacy McClendon, Lisa Alexander, Maureen Molé, Tim Petlin, Kingsley Fife, Araceli Alejandre, Ilene Knebel, Richard Lombardi, Mitchell Kraus, Scott Andrews, and Frances Barry



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What's Happening on the Westside

Choose From a Variety of Activities to do This August

By Pamela Lawrence

• **Sunday, August 2 - Stuffed Teddy Bear Project** - Come enjoy a meaningful afternoon of service assembling stuffed teddy bears for children of deployed service members. These bears will be sent as a comforting reminder that their families are supported, remembered, and appreciated while their loved ones are away serving our country. Come be part of this hands-on service project and help us show gratitude to military families in a simple but heartfelt way. 2 p.m.-4 p.m. American Legion - Ronald Reagan Palisades Post 283, 15247 La Cruz Drive, Pacific Palisades. The American Legion Auxiliary is partnering with Operation Gratitude on this special project. Volunteers of all ages are welcome to participate.

• **Tuesday, August 4 - Kids Reading to Dogs** - Come enjoy an afternoon of reading with some furry friends! Children are invited to read to a therapy dog from the BARK volunteer program. Trained to be good listeners, therapy dogs can help boost children's self-confidence and reading skills. Dogs will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis. 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Fairview Branch Library, Community Room, 2101 Ocean Park Blvd, Santa Monica. For ages 5-11.

• **Friday, August 7 - SMPL at the Beach** - Southern California's only beachside pop-up library is heading back to the Beach House for a day of bookish fun in the sun! Sign out books from their beach reads collection (no library card required), make nautical crafts, play games, or kick back, relax, and read in the Surfside Lounge. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 Pacific

Coast Highway, Santa Monica. Seaside Storytime is at 10:15 a.m., followed by Nautical Crafts, and at 11:30 a.m., an interactive musical performance from Sweet Potato Music. For all ages.

• **Sunday, August 9 - Pali Veg Fest** - Join Resilient Palisades for an afternoon of community healing, featuring a vibrant lineup of vegan food vendors, a native plant sale, fun giveaways, music, kids activities, and opportunities to learn from local organizations working to support a healthier and more resilient community. Expect a day filled with good food, meaningful conversations, and a chance to reconnect with neighbors in one of the places that has always brought the Palisades together. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. The Palisades Village Green, 15280 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades. Free event.

• **Friday, August 14 to Sunday, August 30 (weekends)** - Theatre Palisades is thrilled to present a limited engagement of David Lindsay-Abaire's dark comedy, *Kimberly Akimbo*. This heartwarming and hilarious play explores what it truly means to grow up, grow old, and cherish every single moment we are given.

This summer production is produced by Martha Hunter, Sherman Wayne, and Phil Bartolf of Theatre Palisades, and is directed by the talented Cate Caplin.

"I am absolutely thrilled to bring this extraordinary story to life with such an incredible cast and creative team," says Director Cate Caplin. "At its heart, *Kimberly Akimbo* is a masterful balance of dark comedy and profound human truth. It's about family, grief and about celebrating friendship. It challenges us to look at life's fragility and uncertainty and to find

joy, love, and connection in the most unexpected places. We are so excited to share this beautiful and moving story with the audience."

Reflecting on the role, the lead actress Dey Young playing Kimberly shares a powerful perspective on embodying this resilient spirit: "Being Kimberly means stepping into the shoes of someone who doesn't have the luxury of waiting for 'someday'. Because of her condition, her clock ticks a little faster, but instead of letting that break her, it fuels her. She looks at a chaotic world, a deeply complicated family, and a body that's aging too fast, and she chooses to say, 'I'm here right now, so let's make it count!'"

Tickets can be purchased online at theatrepalisades.com and www.odysseytheatre.com. The production will be hosted at the Odyssey Theatre, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles. Call the box office for details and to purchase tickets: 310-454-1970.

• **Saturday, August 15: The Mother Road at 100 Years Old: Voices of Route 66** - Join Route 66 Podcast host Anthony Arno as he shares highlights from past shows, featuring a multimedia presentation showcasing a historical look at America's Main Street as told by past guests. All attendees are invited to participate in a Route 66 trivia game following the presentation, complete with prizes. 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Main Library, Multipurpose Room, 601 Santa Monica.

• **Saturday, August 15 - Teen Back to School Mixer** - Come participate in mourning the end of Summer and make some new friends before school starts. There will be games, information about our teen volunteer program, and tasty food. 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., Youth Activity Room. For ages 13-18.

• **Saturday, August 22 - Introduction to Mahjong with Mahjong Mistress** - A new monthly Mahjong series is starting at Santa Monica Library with an afternoon of guided Mahjong play, community gathering, and cultural learning. To open the series, Mahjong Mistress will present a special introduction exploring the history of Mahjong, its journey through America, and its enduring role as a tool for connection across generations and communities. 2:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Main Library, Multipurpose Room, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. All experience levels are welcome!

• **Saturdays from August 22 through September 26** - Marina Movie Nights - Presented by The Department of Beaches and Harbors. Pack your picnic baskets and bring the family to Burton Chace Park on Saturday nights to enjoy the free outdoor movie screenings - by the water and under the stars! Seating is festival-style, available on a first-come, first-served basis. All movies start at 8 p.m. Be sure to bundle up. For details, call 424-526-7900. Free.

Thoughts From a Second-Time Father

Watching My Kids Become Teenagers



By Michael Margolin

I very much enjoyed helping to teach my kids how to walk. It was a time in both of their lives I was looking forward to and it did not disappoint. Jake also had a really funky, awkward-looking crawl so it was nice to see him grow out of that. Nonetheless, it was rewarding to watch the focused looks on little faces turn into proud expressions.

Not long ago, Enjoli and I were watching a show in which a very loving but slightly overprotective father, was having a conversation with his adult daughter, a character who portrayed an accomplished young lady. But, after she learned that her dad pulled some strings to make some things easier for her, she very clearly expressed to him that she did not need his help and that he needed to let her make her own mistakes. *Let her make her own mistakes* - that moment of their conversation stuck with me. And, I thought about the analogy when a child is learning to

walk. They are going to fall. It is inevitable. We all fell. And as a parent, unless it was going to be headfirst into a sharp corner or into a fireplace, you let them fall on what was generally, a fairly well-padded caboose. Generally there was not a ton of whining, if any at all, and they would get back up and try again.

As my kids get older, I want them to fall on their own and get back up. But, I want to keep them from falling onto the proverbial jagged edges of poorly-made decisions. I see it as a bit of a balancing act as a parent. They need to learn how to fall, get back up, and dust themselves off. I will not always be there to catch them or even guide the fall. Teaching them how to handle that, and trying not to be overprotective at the same time, is part of my job as well.

Mike Margolin has been writing for us since his daughter Alexa was born 13 years ago and son, Jake, 10 years ago. He also coaches each child's soccer team.



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Cherishing Summer's Final Moments



By Cheryl Thode

Every year, August seems to arrive in the blink of an eye. It feels like we were just celebrating the last day of school, dreaming about lazy mornings, family vacations, and all the possibilities that Summer would bring. Then suddenly, backpacks are filling store shelves, school supply lists are making their way home, and parents everywhere are wondering where the Summer went. If the weather forecasts are right, Southern California is in for some especially hot days this month. While the heat can make us want to stay inside with the air conditioning running full blast, it also brings us some of the best family moments that don't require elaborate plans or expensive outings. In fact, I've found that children usually remember the little things far more than the big ones. Years from now, our kids probably won't remember how much

money we spent on a particular activity, but they'll remember chasing each other through the sprinklers, eating popsicles on the front porch, staying up just a little later to watch the sunset, or laughing together over a board game while the ceiling fan hummed overhead. Those ordinary moments often become the stories families tell for years to come. As Summer begins to wind down, many of us parents feel the pressure to squeeze in one more adventure before school starts. While there is certainly nothing wrong with that, we shouldn't overlook the value of simply being together. A trip to your local library, an evening walk after the temperature drops, a homemade pizza night, or even reading a book together can create memories just as meaningful as a costly vacation. While August is the perfect time to gently transition back into school routines, Summer fun does not have to end overnight. Reading together for 20 minutes before

bed, encouraging children to write about their favorite Summer memories, or letting the kiddos help measure ingredients while making dinner all help to keep young minds active without feeling like homework. Children learn so much through everyday experiences when we take the time to include them. I also think August offers parents a quiet reminder that preparation isn't only about buying notebooks and new shoes. It's about preparing our children emotionally for a new beginning. New teachers, new classmates, and new routines can bring excitement, but they can also bring anxiety. A little extra encouragement, a few conversations about what they're looking forward to, and reassurance that it's okay to have butterflies can go a long way toward helping them start the school year with confidence. As parents, we sometimes put tremendous pressure on ourselves to create the "perfect" Summer. But, our children aren't grading

us on how exciting their Summer was. More often than not, they're simply looking for our attention, our laughter, and our presence. Those gifts don't cost anything, yet they're often the most valuable things we can give. So this month, I'd like to offer a simple challenge. Before the first day of school arrives, set aside one afternoon or evening to unplug from your devices and simply enjoy being together. Read a story, play a game, take a walk, make homemade ice cream, watch the sunset, or sit outside and talk. No agenda. No rush. Just family. When the school year begins and life becomes busy once again, I know those simple moments will be the ones that everyone in your family remembers most. Here's wishing you a month filled with cool breezes, grateful hearts, and memories that last long after Summer has ended. Stay safe, stay cool, and enjoy these final days before another exciting school year begins. God bless!

Reflections From The East

Making Life's Endless Decisions



By Qin Sun Stubis

No matter who we are or how confident we feel, we're all familiar with the experience of arriving at a crossroads in search of answers to life's too many questions. Whatever we choose is a result of our decision-making, be it ever so trivial or earth-shakingly important. Sometimes by opting not to make a choice or take a side, we still have made a decision. What should I have for breakfast? What should I wear today? Should I accept this new job offer? Who should I hang out with this weekend? The minute we wake up, we are faced with questions. We ponder over the possibilities before we even get out of bed, and before we know it, many of our decisions have already been made.

The reality is that our lives move so quickly that we don't get to spend much time dwelling on most decisions we make. Often, we don't even realize that we're making them, especially when they pertain to the little details of our everyday life. We just pick out one choice and move on, as we do when we're surveying grocery aisles and throwing a bunch of things into our shopping cart, or opening a kitchen cabinet to grab a box of cereal in the morning. Remember the feeling of being a child when your mother asked you to pick out a book or a candy bar in a store and how you took your time lingering from one choice to another, and often did not know what to do? It is only natural that children find it challenging to make simple choices as they have just embarked on the journey of life.

As we get older, we attend to our daily affairs more and more on autopilot, often making decisions based on our experiences, habits, or previous knowledge about the things that we have gone through over and over. We only seriously put on our "thinking caps" when we are faced with something that disrupts our normalcy, like falling in love, a painful breakup, or the sudden loss of a job. Let's face it, our daily lives are made of hundreds of question-and-answer sessions. How to efficiently and effectively deal with them can have a long-term impact on our health, wealth, and happiness. "Autopiloting" often makes bad habits hard to break while overthinking trivial matters can create a lot of unnecessary stress, making life painful and difficult. It is never too late to reflect on our old habits and form healthy

new ones to promote our self-understanding and confidence. It is also never too early to train our children on how to make decisions by encouraging them to independently manage the little details of their own lives so one day they will grow into healthy, happy adults. For as long as we are here on Earth, our never-ending questions and answers will remain vital parts of our lives. Sometimes we just have to slow our rhythm down and give ourselves the time and space to fine-tune our habits and routines. Remember, our "thinking caps" are always there when we need them.
You can always reach me at qstubis@gmail.com and please visit me at www.QinSunStubis.com. You can also find a copy of my book, *Once Our Lives*, online at www.Amazon.com.

Mini Message Bulletin Board



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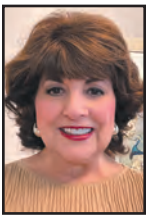
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Entertaining With Ease

Welcoming Guests to Your Home



By Maureen Molé

Often, Summer-time is when friends and family who live at a distance visit overnight and we also host friends and family at our own homes. Overnight hosting means anticipating your guest's needs for meals, daily activities, and sleeping arrangements. It's much trickier than hosting a meal or party, but hopefully the following suggestions will help you.

Hosting Overnight Guests

- When extending the invitation, be sure to determine the day and time they will arrive and also the departure date and time.
- Additionally, give the guests an idea of the activities you plan, such as swimming in the lake, playing golf, or visiting a fancy restaurant, so they know the appropriate clothes to bring.
- Let guests know any others who are invited for the same time. Tell your guests if family members will be present, if your spouse is leaving that weekend or if your grandkids are visiting. Most people don't like surprises.
- Prepare your guest room with fresh linens, of course, but also add a few niceties such as a bottle of water, a current magazine or bestselling book, or a small vase of fresh flowers.
- Guests should always have a table next to their bed, ideally with a lamp, so they can keep any necessary items close by as they sleep.
- Plugging in a night light in the bathroom might be helpful to prevent guests from walking completely in the dark.
- Hosts should plan on serving at least three basic meals a day, whether they're prepared in advance and frozen, cooked at home, ordered via take-out or going to a restaurant. It's also a good idea to ask the guests if they are allergic to any food or require a special diet. If your guest's food habits differ from yours, make sure you accommodate theirs. Don't deprive your guests just because you skip breakfast.
- Be honest with your guests if you'd like them to assist you in the kitchen, set or clear the table, make the salad, or bring a cooked dish. If you don't want any of that, be honest about that too.

Guests Visiting Overnight

- It's always gracious to bring the host a gift. It could be some candy, dessert, special cheese,

or olive oil that you know the host would appreciate. Most importantly, tell the host that the gift is for them alone and they need not serve it during your visit.

- When the invitation is extended, offer to bring some food or cook part of a meal. The host should be honest with you. They may greatly appreciate your contributing a dish or they may honestly say that they will take care of all the meals. Believe your host.
- When you are there, be sure to offer to help in the kitchen with meal preparation, or clearing the table when dinner is over. But do listen to your host, if they don't want your help, they should say so.
- Don't leave your belongings all over the house such as keys on the counter, jacket on the chair, handbag or shoes in another place. Keep your belongings in the guest room or area that you've been designated.
- Make your bed and clean up after you use the bathroom.
- Don't stay on your phone for long periods of time. Live in the moment and enjoy it.
- Don't take photos and post them on social media without the express permission of the host.
- Participate enthusiastically in all the activities that the host has planned. If you truly cannot participate, politely tell the host why you can't. If you need downtime or a nap in the afternoon, then tell your host so they can plan accordingly.
- At the end of your stay, offer to bring your linens to the laundry room.
- Always send a written thank you note. These days an email is acceptable, but a handwritten note is extraordinary.

Hosting family and friends in your home can be taxing when you're trying to anticipate your guests' needs. But with some planning, you'll be sure to make wonderful memories. Most of all, hosts and guests – have fun!

Maureen Molé is the author of *The Book of Entertaining at Home*, product spokesperson, and lecturer. Follow her on Instagram #Entertain_at_Home_with_Maureen, or email her: MaureenMole@gmail.com.



Senior Care

We Need to Talk About Ageism



By Tim Petlin

Did you know there's a form of discrimination that almost everyone will experience? It's called ageism – the stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination people face because of their age. Unfortunately, it often goes unnoticed.

Ageism appears in jokes, greeting cards, television, movies, workplaces, and even healthcare. Over time, these attitudes can influence how society treats older adults – and how older adults see themselves.

Ageism Is More Common Than You Think

Research shows children begin forming ideas about aging as early as age 3. Those beliefs often persist into adulthood, shaping how we interact with older people.

One common example is "elder-speak" – speaking to older adults in a slower, louder, or childlike voice. While usually well-intentioned, it can come across as disrespectful and suggest that older adults are less capable than they really are.

Ageism also affects employment. A 2025 AARP survey found that nearly two-thirds of workers over 50 have witnessed or experienced age discrimination, and 22% felt they were being pushed out of their jobs because of their age.

The effects go beyond the workplace. A University of Michigan study found that people who regularly experience ageism report poorer physical and mental health. In healthcare, symptoms such as pain, fatigue, or depression may sometimes be dismissed as "just part of getting older," delaying proper treatment.

Media can reinforce these stereotypes by portraying older adults as frail, lonely, or confused, rather than active, engaged, and living meaningful lives.

What Can We Do?

Reducing ageism starts with simple changes.

Speak to older adults as you would anyone else unless they ask for accommodations. Avoid jokes about "senior moments" or comments that portray aging as something to fear or ridicule.

In the workplace, employers should continue to value older employees by providing equal opportunities for hiring, training, and advancement. Diverse, multigenerational teams benefit everyone.

Most importantly, spend time talking with older adults. Their experiences, knowledge, and perspectives are invaluable, and many will tell you they don't feel nearly as old as others assume. Older adults also benefit from maintaining a positive outlook on aging. Yale gerontologist Becca Levy, PhD, found that people with positive attitudes about growing older lived an average of 7.5 years longer than those with negative views.

We Are All Aging

Ageism is unique because, if we're fortunate enough to live long lives, we will all experience it.

Treating older adults with dignity and respect isn't just about today's seniors – it's about creating the kind of world we all hope to grow old in.

About Right at Home

Tim Petlin is the owner of Right at Home West Los Angeles. For more information, contact Right at Home at www.rahwestla.com, at 310-313-0600, or email Tim: timp@rahwestla.com.

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Santa Monica Boy Scout Troup 2

(Continued from Page 1)

Achieving the Eagle rank is the pinnacle of the scouting experience for these accomplished young men. The 2026 Eagles were asked to describe some favorite memories from their years in the troop.

• **Matthew Oleynikov:** “Camp Emerald Bay was my first Summer camp, and one of the most enjoyable camping experiences. I still vividly remember rising at sunrise to stand-up paddle on the calm ocean. I also shot my first rifle there. I swam my first mile, competed in the camp-wide relay, and explored the Catalina Island marine life. What tied it all together was the campfire on the final night. All the troops gathered around the fire, and as I sat among the friends I had spent the week with, I reflected on how that first full week in nature had changed me.”

• **James Faries:** “Backpacking in the Grand Tetons is my favorite memory from my years in Troop 2. There were so many breathtaking views! From witnessing the peaks of the Tetons from Hurricane Pass, to looking down into Death Canyon from Death Canyon Shelf. The Grand Tetons showed me what natural beauty can truly be, and it is something I will never forget for the rest of my life.”

• **Jefferson Tinus:** “Easily my favorite outdoor experience with Troop 2 was my very first high adventure trip to the Boundary Waters in Minnesota. My group of fairly new Scouts was able to tackle a challenging canoe journey. We were so fortunate to be able to experience such a vast amount of beautifully preserved nature. This adventure really opened my eyes to the world of Scouting, and paved the way for so many more adventures. I think that’s why this first trip held so much significance for me. Additionally, with my family being from Minnesota, it felt like a sort of homecoming.”

• **Nathan Hall:** “Deep in the Amazon Rainforest we worked long days with indigenous Maijuna People, painting their community house, planting trees, and constructing a dock that would serve them for years to come. One evening the entire troop ventured onto a small island at the heart of the river and gathered around a bonfire. As the fire gradually dwindled and the scouts, thoroughly exhausted, began to doze off, a voice commanded, “Turn off your lights!” Then an unforgettable moment unfolded. As the last light was extinguished and we sat nestled amidst the serene silence of the jungle, we all turned our gaze to the sky, where the stars painted a mesmerizing tapestry across the night.”

• **Jacob Browning:** “Backpacking through Yellowstone National Park remains the most memorable adventure of my years in Troop 2. It was a grueling and exhilarating conquest. I can still feel the weight of my pack as we fought up vertical ridges, singing for miles to combat our fatigued legs, relentless rain, unstable scree, and waist-deep river currents. The wilderness was unreal, from the lingering mist clinging to massive

hills and skyscraper trees that touched the sky, the roaring waterfalls, to the warmth of the hidden hot springs where we soaked our aching muddy feet. Every mile sometimes felt like a lifetime, and every campsite we took turned the journey from a challenge into an accomplishment.”

• **Mario Scaduto:** “One trip that stands out above the rest for me was the Boundary Waters of Minnesota. Canoeing through miles of connected lakes and crossing the dozens of portage trails was surreal, and spending all that time in unspoiled wilderness far from any roads or cell towers was honestly intense. The weight of a canoe on your shoulders while you hauled it over land, the ache in your arms after a full day of paddling, and setting up camp as the sun went down, were brutal. But every morning, once we were out on the glassy open water surrounded by pure nature, none of that mattered.”

• **Oscar Park:** “My most memorable trip in Scouting was our expedition to the Peruvian Amazon where we had the amazing opportunity to spend time with the indigenous Maijuna people. We planted coconut trees in their village, played soccer together, and even performed a short skit for them in Spanish. We took freezing cold showers surrounded by bugs, and kayaked down rivers while dodging Catclaw along the banks. My most vivid memories were walking 100 feet above the rainforest on a suspended canopy walkway, and toasting marshmallows on a sandbar in the middle of the Rio Napo. This trip holds a special place in my heart because the people were incredibly welcoming, and the food was amazing.”

• **Zach Matise:** “My most memorable experience in Troop 2 was the 2025 Peru High Adventure. We ventured deep into the Amazon rainforest and spent time at the Sucusari village alongside the Maijuna tribe. During one torrential downpour, I spotted Maijuna children playing soccer on their muddy field and joined in with a few other scouts. We slid across the field and tumbled into puddles, the rain washing it all away as quickly as it came. That spontaneous game was the most fun I have ever had playing soccer. It showed me that despite being thousands of miles from home, I could still feel like part of their community.”

• **Julian Alexander Grosky:** “Troop 2’s 2024 trip to Zion Canyon National Park was my favorite experience. My crew had the opportunity to rappel and hike some of the most coveted trails and canyoneering routes in the United States, including the Top Down Narrows route and the Top Down Subway Route. Looking up from the bottom of 20-foot-wide canyons at sandstone walls rising up more than fifteen hundred feet was awe inspiring. Seeing sand dunes transformed into rock formations, and how water had carved beautiful, narrow paths, gave me a truly sublime feeling. The experience also gave me a

(Continued on Page 7)

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Parenting Talk

Turn Manic Mornings into Marshmallow Mornings



By Frances Barry

It's only 8 a.m. as you drive away from the school drop-off and you are already exhausted. Yes, you just pulled off the "got to school on time" battle – but it was a victory earned through a dozen small standoffs.

Mornings serve as a launch pad for the whole day. Calmer mornings can bolster a child's ability to focus, engage with peers, and shake off small stressors. Taking concrete steps to convert manic mornings into marshmallow mornings can benefit everyone in the family.

Here's where the ORCA framework – Observe, Reflect, Connect, Act – can help you get started.

O – OBSERVE: Write down every task completed between waking up and school drop-off, for every family member, no matter how small (brush hair, eat breakfast, walk the dog, etc.)

R – REFLECT: Review your list. Can any tasks be eliminated entirely or only done on weekends (make the bed)? Which ones can move to the night before (gym bag by the door)? Can the tasks that cause the greatest friction be simplified?

C – CONNECT: Bring your kids into the conversation. Talk with them about having mornings that

feel soft like marshmallows. Explain how the morning and evening routines are intertwined. Engage them in a way that helps them feel part of the solution. Remember, you are aiming for calmer mornings for you too, not just for the kids.

A – ACT: Experiment with the new routines for at least a week. If one piece isn't working, resist abandoning the endeavor – try a small tweak instead. Maybe the school bag needs to be packed earlier in the evening. Does your child need a visual checklist for the morning and evening? A sticker for each finished task turns "getting ready" into something they're doing for themselves, not something you're managing for them.

No matter how much you plan, some mornings will still feel chaotic. But the goal is to have more mornings where you wake up excited to start the day. With a little preparation, smoother mornings are possible. And when the kids get to school on time, it's a win for everyone – another marshmallow start to the day.

Frances is a therapist who helps elementary school children and their families navigate times of overwhelming anger, anxiety, and grief – helping everyone to find their footing again. Learn more at www.FrancesBarry.net.

Traveling on a Budget



By Scott Andrews

Traveling doesn't have to be expensive. With a little planning and flexibility, travelers can explore new places and create memorable experiences without spending a fortune. Budget travel is all about making smart choices when it comes to transportation, accommodations, food, and activities.

One of the best ways to save money is by planning ahead. Booking flights, trains, or buses early often leads to lower prices, and being flexible with your travel dates – like flying midweek or during the off-season – can reduce costs even further. Using fare comparison websites and setting price alerts helps you find the best deals. Booking with an airline credit card can also offer benefits such as earning miles and saving on baggage fees.

Accommodations are another area where costs can be cut. Instead of expensive hotels, consider hostels, vacation rentals, or budget motels. Guesthouses and homestays are often affordable and offer a more local experience. Many hotel chains also offer free rewards programs or branded credit cards that allow travelers to earn points toward free stays and

added perks.

Food expenses can also add up quickly, but there are simple ways to manage them. Visiting local markets, grocery stores, or street food vendors is often much cheaper than dining at tourist-focused restaurants. Asking locals for recommendations can lead to affordable meals and authentic experiences. If accommodations have a kitchen, preparing some meals can help stretch your budget.

Budget travelers can also take advantage of free or low-cost activities. Many cities offer free museum days, public parks, walking tours, and cultural events. Exploring neighborhoods, beaches, or hiking trails can be just as rewarding as paid attractions.

Traveling on a budget isn't about missing out – it's about spending wisely and prioritizing experiences over luxury. With thoughtful planning and a little creativity, you can see the world without breaking the bank.

Scott Andrews, an experienced world traveler, is the co-host of The Cruise Dudes Podcast. You can listen to The Cruise Dudes Podcast on major platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and YouTube.



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August Holidays to Celebrate

- August 2 - National Ice Cream Sandwich Day
- August 10 - National S'mores Day
- August 21 -National Spumoni Day
- August 26 - National Dog Day

Community Service on the Westside

Upcoming Events for August



By Ilene Knebel

Come see all the wonderful projects we're involved in throughout our community. We'd love to welcome you for a

visit! Did you know we:

- Support our veterans at the West L.A. Campus
- Collect food for NourishLA Food Bank
- Support local Scout troops
- Award thousands of dollars in scholarships each year to local students
- Award our neighbors for their patriotism and flying the American Flag
- **Music at the Lodge**

Elks and their guests are invited to enjoy live music from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Sundays.

- Sunday, August 9 – Dan Rad Jazz Collective Big Band
- Sunday, August 23 – Welcoming for the first time, Slide FX Jazz Trombone Ensemble. General admission: \$5/ Elks free.

• **Westside Winds Mahjong**

Join us on Wednesdays, August 12 and 19 for our popular Mahjong games! We offer tables for all

skill levels, including expert-guided play. Open to Elks and their guests. Sign up here: <https://westside-winds-july-dec26.cheddarup.com>.

• **National Night Out**

Visit our booth at National Night Out at Santa Monica City Hall on Tuesday, August 4. Stop by to learn more about the Elks and how we make a difference in our community.

♥ **Serve Your Community**

Looking for a meaningful way to give back? Join the Elks and help support veterans, children, and underserved members of our community.

There are many volunteer opportunities throughout the year. Visit our website to see upcoming events and contact us for membership information. <https://www.santamonicaelkslodge906.org/home>. We look forward to meeting you!

• **Event Space** - Looking for a venue for your next meeting or special event? Our Lodge offers event and meeting space for a variety of occasions. Call our office at 310-452-3557 for more information.

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



By J. Kingsley Fife

We Santa Monica-Pacific Palisades Lions are very excited about meeting for the first time in our beautiful new location. It's the

Hyatt Hotel at 530 Pico and the date for our dinner meeting is Wednesday, September 2, at 6 p.m. Recently we had the installation of our new officers and cabinet for the coming year and consequently, our new president.

Past District Governor, Carol Ann Emmitt, will be conducting the highly-anticipated dinner meeting. Several special things are planned to highlight this event. It's going to be a memorable evening for all of us!

What makes Lionism so stimulating is to be able to participate

regularly in various charitable activities on the Westside. We just had a very productive, enjoyable one recently. We had a table at PAL's (Police Activities League) annual "Back to School" event held in their center on Olympic Blvd. This is something very special that all the school kids look forward to each August. Many groups, clubs, and organizations participate besides we Lions. However, what made our effort unique is we gave out 70 Target \$10 gift cards to eager youths to help them with their shopping. It was a very festive affair with homemade BBQ treats, free haircuts, and free eye, and dental health screenings.

Curious about the Lions Club? Want to add more zest to your life? Be our guest at one of our monthly dinner meetings. For info, contact me at jkfife88@yahoo.com.

A New Rotary Year Begins

By Vicky Curtis

The Rotary Club of Santa Monica kicked off a new Rotary year with our first meeting led by our new President, Carol Powell. It was a wonderful start to the new Rotary year and a reminder that every Friday brings an opportunity to learn something new, connect with community leaders, and make a difference through service.

Our first program celebrated our hometown Dodgers, and the remarkable influence of Japanese baseball stars Shohei Ohtani and Yoshinobu Yamamoto, whose impact reaches far beyond the baseball diamond. Guest speakers Yusuke Fukuda of the Dodgers organization and David Ikegami, Executive Director of Little Tokyo's Business Association, shared fas-

cinating insights into the "Shohei Effect" – from record-breaking viewership in Japan to increased tourism, cultural connections, and the growing excitement surrounding the Dodgers throughout the region.

We are delighted to welcome two outstanding new members to our club: Kenneth Cleveland, (Salvation Army) and Christina Benavides, (Community Bank of California). Their addition reflects the diverse leadership and professional excellence that continues to strengthen our Rotary family.

If you've ever wondered what Rotary is all about, we'd love to have you join us for a meeting and experience it firsthand. Visit <https://www.rotaryclubofsantamonica.org/>.

An Update From the SMBWC



By Patricia Webber

The Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club (SMBWC) members elected the following members to

serve two-year terms as the Board of Directors: Becky Upchurch, President; Marcia Stein, 1st VP; Josana Joseph, 2nd VP; Denise Simon, Treasurer; Alicia Syres, Program Chair; and, Pat Webber, Archives Chair. We take the responsibility of maintaining our 116-year-old clubhouse, supporting our members in Club activities, and illustrating our commitment to our Santa Monica community very seriously.

The General Federation of Women's Club's (GFWC) reminded us of their continued commitment to recognize and support veterans and asked us to turn our attention to the Military Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery. The goal is to add 200 new names to the Military Women's Memorial Register. "Never leave a man behind" is an unofficial military creed promising that service members will risk their lives to rescue, recover, or bring home fallen, wounded, or captured comrades. It is time for a new creed, "Never forget the women who

served our nation."

GFWC is taking a key role in this effort through its promotion of the Military Women's Memorial Registry. The Square Foot Society is the organization which generates the funds necessary to fund the future of the Memorial.

Once again, the SMBWC members donated boxes of cereal to the Club's annual Westside Food Bank Cereal Drive. We collected 120 boxes of cereal! Our next project will be once again participating in the Santa Monica Travel & Tourism "Socktober" Campaign in October.

Weekly activities at the Club are bridge, contract bridge, canasta, Mahjong, and, Conversation, Arts and Crafts.

For information on participating in any of these fun games, please leave a message at the Club at 310-395-1308. Our book group meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month.

Due to Club member allergies and other conditions, pets are not allowed in the Club except for Certified Service Pets.



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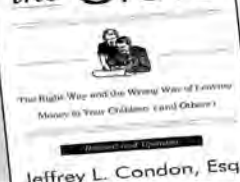
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Historic Broadway Spotlight

FAME Church of Santa Monica Celebrates 105 Years

By Reverend Carolyn Baskin-Bell

The First African Methodist Episcopal Church of Santa Monica (FAME) continues to stand as a representative of faith, hope, and love in this community at large. This AME Church operates as a part of a connectional church founded in 1787 by free slaves led by Bishop Richard Allen with the objective to empower all people. African is merely the heritage of the AME Church but the work, witness, and worship invite all people.

FAME Santa Monica's journey launched in 1921 at the home of Richard and Carrie Dumas. As the membership grew, these faithful worshippers moved to the Masonic Hall at 18th and Broadway. Since the late 1920s, the ministry of FAME has provided ministry to the social, spiritual, and physical

development of all people.

The Reverend Carolyn Baskin-Bell serves as the 18th Pastor of FAME Santa Monica and celebrates the work of those who have paved the way for this ministry to thrive! Join in on Sunday, August 16, at the 11 a.m. worship service with Presiding Elder Allen L. Williams, and at 2 p.m. where the work of Historians: Carolyn Edwards, Patricia Diggs; Media Personnel: Marisa Council, Donald Locke and many contributors will be premiered.

A video of the church life from the words of many present and past members unleashes a fresh view of the rich history that has influenced this community for 105 years. Everyone is invited to share in this awesome celebration!

First AME Church is located at 1823 Michigan Ave. Contact us at choffice19@aol.com.

The World Came to the Westside

(Continued from Page 1)

me another reason to pay attention. Each victory seemed to attract more viewers. Friends who rarely discussed soccer suddenly wanted to know when the next match would be played.

The timing made it even more meaningful. As our nation celebrated its 250th anniversary, the United States was also making an exciting run in the world's biggest sporting event. In a time when our political differences often dominate the conversation, it was refreshing to witness one of those increasingly rare moments when Americans from every walk of life found themselves cheering for the same team.

A brief red-card controversy added another layer of drama before the United States' tournament ultimately ended with a disappointing loss to Belgium. By then, however, I realized I wasn't disappointed simply because America had lost. I was disappointed because I had become invested in the shared experience.

More importantly, I had become invested in watching our community embrace the tournament. For a few weeks, people made time to gather, put their phones away, cheer together, and simply enjoy being part of something larger than themselves. Whether they agreed on politics, religion or anything else simply didn't matter for those ninety minutes. They were neighbors first and fans second. That may be the greatest gift the World Cup gave the Westside.

Visitors came from every corner of the globe, bringing their flags, songs, and traditions with them. They filled our hotels, restaurants, beaches, breweries, and bike paths. Local businesses benefited economically, but residents bene-

fited in another way. We were reminded how fortunate we are to live in a place where the world wants to gather.

For a few extraordinary weeks, Santa Monica, Venice, Pacific Palisades, and the surrounding communities became the world's neighborhood. Different languages filled the air. Rival fans shared tables. Families posed for photographs together. Complete strangers congratulated one another after thrilling matches or consoled each other after heartbreaking losses.

In a time when it often feels like our differences dominate the headlines, the World Cup quietly reminded us of something just as powerful: people still enjoy coming together.

I still don't consider myself a soccer fan. But I have become a fan of what soccer did for the Westside.

It reminded us that while we may cheer for different teams, speak different languages, or come from different countries, we all understand the joy of celebrating together, the heartbreak of coming up short, and the simple pleasure of sharing an unforgettable experience with people we had never met before.

For a few weeks this Summer, the World Cup didn't just come to Los Angeles. The world came to the Westside.

Richard Lombardi is a Pacific Palisades resident, Real Estate Wealth Advisor with Sotheby's International Realty, 1st Vice Commander of American Legion Post 283, Advisory Board Member of the Salvation Army Santa Monica Corps, and Board member of the Santa Monica Family YMCA.

Express your gratitude to those who do good work, for they will be thankful for your words and try to do even better work.

Paws and Claws

Urinary Health Problems with Cats



By Dr. Frank Lavac, MS, DVM

Q: My two-year-old female cat has bloody urine and frequently visits the litter box. What could be the

problem?

A: The likely possibilities include a bladder infection, crystals causing irritation to the bladder, bladder stones, and "idiopathic cystitis" caused by stress. The last differential diagnosis is the most likely.

It would be very uncommon for a cat this young to have a bladder infection. It needs to go to the hospital and have a urine sample tested. If the urine sample doesn't show a bladder infection or large amounts of crystals, it's most likely stress related.

The term "Idiopathic cystitis" technically means unknown cause of bladder inflammation. When cats are stressed it often manifests by signs related to their bladder. Attempting to identify stressors in your cat's life is important. A website called the "Indoor Pet Initiative" can help you create a relaxing environment for your cat – www.indoorpet.osu.edu/cats.

You can always contact Dr. Lavac at 310-828-4587 with questions

Adopt a Pet



"Gomez" is a fun and friendly 5.5-month-old kitten who was born and raised in a loving foster home. He is very curious and sweet and would be happiest in a home with another cat or kitten so he has a friend to play with. Please contact the Lange Foundation at info@langefoundation.org.

The 17th Annual MixMatch Dance Festival

It's that time of year again. The annual MixMatch Dance Festival will be bringing dance works from dancers across Southern California and the U.S. to Santa Monica!

Plan to enjoy Contemporary, Mexican Folklórico, Modern, Ballet, Indian, Jazz, Kathak, Belly, Flamenco Arabe, Heels, and more!

Times are August 14 at 7:30 p.m., August 15 at 2 p.m. (matinee) and 7:30 p.m. Tickets: <http://www.hartpulsedance.com>.

Location is The Miles Memorial Playhouse, 1130 Lincoln Blvd., right below Wilshire Blvd.

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Planning Ahead

The Importance of Beneficiary Designations



By Lisa Alexander, Esq.
Careful planning for life insurance and retirement accounts (IRAs, 401Ks) can be undone by beneficiary designations gone wrong.

As a real-world example, father purchased life insurance on his own life, with his son as the beneficiary. When the son died unexpectedly, father attempted to change the beneficiary to his grandson. Forms were submitted to the insurance company but one of the forms was not accepted. The insurance company sent a letter to the father that further action was needed. Unfortunately, the father did not respond and died shortly later. As a result, the life insurance intended for the grandson instead had to be probated. The grandson ended up with only a small share of the insurance money.

In another example, a grandfather wanted to divide a large retirement account among several grandchildren. When the grandfather fell ill, a family member acting under a power of attorney looked up the policy online and could see that a beneficiary designation was "on file." Wisely, they called to confirm and found out the beneficiaries had not been updated. A new change of beneficiary form was submitted but did not include a spousal waiver required in California as a community property state. The retirement account ended up in a probate of the grandfather's estate. The grand-

children ultimately received their shares, but the money could not be rolled over into inherited IRA accounts to defer the income taxes.

Other ways a beneficiary designation can go wrong include failure to update the beneficiary after divorce. Under California law, in most cases, when there has been a divorce, the former spouse won't receive the distribution. But if there is no back-up beneficiary named, the money could end up in a probate. And the law does not help in case of a pending divorce. Until there is a Court order finalizing the divorce, the ex-spouse remains entitled to receive the money. Nor is there any recourse in the case of non-married couples if a partner is named as a beneficiary and no change of beneficiary is submitted after the relationship ends.

The lesson is to make sure a beneficiary designation is on file with the insurance company or the administrator of the retirement account, and be sure the beneficiary designation is up to date.

Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.
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—Joe Analco

Come to a Fire Safety Workshop at the Santa Monica Family YMCA

By Matthew Takahashi
Active Older Adult Program Coordinator
I hope you're doing well! I'd like to invite you and your friends to a Fire Safety Workshop at the Santa Monica Family YMCA on Tuesday, August 4, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The workshop will be presented by the Santa Monica Fire Department. While this program is designed with older adults in mind, the information will be valuable for the broader community as well. We encourage you to share this opportunity with your members, staff, and others in your network who may benefit.

Looking forward to meeting you. Call 310-393-2721 for details.



(Answer to Neighborhood Celebrity from Page 1)

Eddie Guerboian
Famous Santa Monica Jeweler and Community Member



Happy Birthday to Eddie Guerboian on August 6. Wishing you many more wonderful happy and healthy adventurous years!

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- Toddler Tunes!
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Love Links

A Special Family Wedding
in London, England

Signing the license at The Old Marlybone Town Hall at 4 p.m.

Jake Perkins and Sophie Heffernan leaving the church.

Sophie on the far right, in a short white dress next to her sister, Kim, in a black dress with her family at the reception.

The double-decker bus taking the guests to the reception.

Mom Jessica Heffernan Shares Feelings on
Daughter's June 19, 2026 Wedding Day

"Sophie, today I will watch you marry the love of your life, and my heart could not be fuller. I am so incredibly proud of the beautiful, kind, strong, and caring woman you have become. From the day you were born, you brought so much love and joy into our lives, and it has been a privilege to watch you grow into the amazing person you are today.

"Having the honour of walking you down the aisle will be one of the most emotional and special moments of my life. It means so much to me to be able to take the place of your beloved dad, who sadly left us when you were only nine years old. He loved you beyond words and would have been so proud of the beautiful woman standing before us today. I know in my heart that he will be with us, sharing in every moment of your special day.

"Jake, from the moment you came into Sophie's life, it was clear how much you loved her. Thank you for making her so happy, for supporting her, caring for her, and loving her so completely. Over the years, you have become so much more than Sophie's husband; you have become a much-loved member of our family, and I want you to know how much I love you too.

"Watching the two of you together has always been a joy. You bring out the very best in each

other, and it is obvious to everyone who knows you that you are soul-mates. The love, laughter, friendship, and respect you share are truly special, and I could not be happier that you have found one another.

"Sophie, I know your dad would have loved Jake and would have been so happy to see the life you have built together. I am certain he will be watching over you both with immense pride and love on your wedding day.

"My wish for you both is a lifetime filled with love, happiness, laughter, good health, and wonderful memories. May you always face life's adventures hand in hand, support each other through every challenge, and never forget how lucky you are to have found such a perfect partner in one another.

"I love you both more than words can say, and I am so grateful to be a part of this beautiful day."

Jessica is my cousin who moved to England many years ago after growing up in the San Fernando Valley. Sophie and Jake met in 2017 at a pub called the Plume of Feathers. They were both from Essex. Jake proposed on a clifftop in Ibiza, Spain. The two enjoy traveling the Route 66 when they come to the U.S.

—Diane Margolin

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