

SIERRA MADRE CANDLELIGHT WALK

Sunday, December 23rd 7:00 PM



More than forty years ago two wise visionaries, Pastor Bob VanderZaag and Pastor Richard Anderson “Dick,” felt their community deserved a momentous celebration. Maybe they both saw the beauty in the small towns that had gathered their people together in those many snow filled landscapes, huddling meekly in simple rooms, where a lone fireplace lent its heat. It was not lost on these two Pastors that it was not the splendor of the place that mattered but the people gathering together that created the collective depth to inspire the Spirit of Christmas.

In the Big City, the granting of ones personal space and privacy is considered a social politeness. That is predictable and understandable. It has remained our great fortune that two Pastors understood the Social Contract but also understood the human heart with a perceptive intuition, and so they did not accept the predictable and understandable.

In an age of power grids and lavish displays of electricity, we have not stolen away the charm of candlelight. It remains eternal in its ability to inspire reverence, ever vigil in touching our heart in its simple and artistic beauty. So it is fitting that the light of a star that once guided Three Magi to a baby. Has been commemorated in a candlelight that guides a community to Christmas. The Sierra Madre event has commenced in the

same manner for forty plus years, at the steps of Saint Rita Catholic Church. The silence of the night is broken in the glorious notes of Christmas song. As the gathering people amass at Saint Rita’s Church, they begin to light the candles within their hand. For those that wait below at the bottom of the street, the sea of lights begins its slow, picturesque descent down Baldwin Avenue until they arrive at Kersting Court. As scripture passages are read and the notes of Christmas hymns swirl around the nativity scene.

It is exactly as Linus, instructed Charlie Brown on the true meaning of Christmas. For each year two local children become Joseph and Mary and carry the statue of the baby Jesus and place the statue of Jesus in the crèche.

If you desire to touch the true spirit of Christmas, there is no finer place to discover its heartwarming tones of the season than The Sierra Madre Candlelight Walk.

This year’s event: Sunday, Dec. 23, 7:00pm. Walk begins at St. Rita’s Church on N. Baldwin, Sierra Madre.

Original story submitted by Craig Hakola; Photo Mountain Views News Archives

SHARED MOBILITY DEVICES: THE GROWING MENACE

It’s the latest thing, but to Sierra Madre residents, along with much of the San Gabriel Valley and beyond, it’s not the greatest thing. Shared mobility devices, such as scooters and bikes, are scattered across the valley, discarded on sidewalks, parks and parking lots like stolen shopping carts—they are under-regulated and growing by numbers.

During the City Council meeting on December 11, the city took the first step in getting ahead of this proliferation by prohibiting the abandonment of these mobility devices in the public right-of-way, on public property and barring the trendy transportation form offered for use in Sierra Madre. In other words, if someone logs on to their app for a Bird scooter (pictured below) or Lime bike and picks up their transport in Pasadena, they can’t dump it in Sierra Madre. And, if they do happen to escape the law, and discard their device in the city, a new customer is prohibited from recovering the wheeled vehicle and riding off.

Out of concern, preventing such actions is the targeted intention of Urgency Ordinance No. 1407-U. How to enforce this may be as tricky as catching one of these speedsters gliding down Baldwin Ave.

on a motorized scooter. That’s why City Council wants to study the relevant arguments on both sides of this issue. On one hand, using a bike or a scooter can help reduce motor vehicle congestion on the roads, yet on the other hand, cities are bombarded with safety concerns, the pile up of mobility devices on sidewalks causing clutter and welfare concerns, and the growing amount of companies putting out such devices with few regulations and no concern for the discarding of scooters/bikes or public safety. Some of these companies lack the proper contracts, permits and business licenses as well.

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) does set some regulations for motorized scooters. They are not supposed to be operated on streets with a speed limit over 25 MPH. Operators should wear safety helmets. Minors without driver’s license and instruction permit are prohibited. And, they should not be driven on sidewalks. Just to name a few.

For 45 days, these vehicles can be operated in Sierra Madre, but not abandoned or offered for use. City staff will revisit this item in the future and decide if a permanent ban in in order.

Kevin McGuire/MVNews



CITY PREPARES FOR BAN LIFT ON SIDEWALK VENDORS

City Council adopted an Urgency Ordinance amending sections of a Municipal Code Tax Amendment focusing on “unlawful parking by peddlers and vendors” and “outdoor dining” in the city, during a public hearing on the subject on December 11.

The recommended changes come as a result of Senate Bill 946 (SB 946), signed by Governor Brown on September 17, 2018, which essentially decriminalizes sidewalk vending and limits local regulations, while creating a new outline for regulating “sidewalk vendors” on public property.

Sierra Madre’s Municipal Code does not currently regulate sidewalk vendors, at least as it’s defined in the Bill, but it does control “peddlers” which falls into the same category. Vincent Gonzalez, the Planning and Community Preservation Director, gave a presentation and suggested direction to the Council recommending adjusting two sections of the Code and adding a new section prior to Governor Brown’s Bill going into effect on January 1, 2019.

Section 10.24.100 of the Municipal Code which covers “Unlawful parking by peddlers and vendors” would need amending to remove the prohibition of sidewalk vending from the code section. In addition, Section 12.12.050 dealing with “Outdoor dining” would be changed to “Outdoor dining attached to a fixed place of business,” and a new section, “Sidewalk vendors and peddlers,” would be added and listed as Section 12.12.055.

A “sidewalk vendor” is defined as someone who sells food, beverages, or merchandise from non-motorized conveyances or from his or her person from the public sidewalk or other pedestrian path. This can include pushcarts, stands, wagons and racks and be in a fixed location, or roaming.

As of January 1, 2019, local governments in California cannot ban sidewalk vending outright. This means Sierra Madre can no longer:

- Require vendors to operate within specific parts of the public sidewalk or pedestrian path
- Prohibit the selling of food or merchandise in parks.

- Require a sidewalk vendor obtain consent or approval from a nongovernmental entity before selling food or merchandise.

- Restrict vendors to designated neighborhoods or other areas, and

- Restrict the overall number of sidewalk vendors permitted to operate in the area.

What the city can do is impose regulations as they relate to health, safety, welfare concerns, time, place and manner in which sidewalk vending takes place. This can include restricting hours to 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., requiring maintenance or sanitary conditions such as hairnets and gloves, complying with disability access standards, and require permits/licenses. The city can also enforce background checks on vendors, prohibit stationary vendors in residential neighborhoods, set a 500-foot distance requirement in relation to farmer’s markets, swap meets and festivals, and limit noise coming from vendors carts, racks etc.

Generally, sidewalk vendors are not seen within Sierra Madre, but there is concern that the city would not be able stop a vendor from selling coffee in front of Bean Town, or tacos in front of Tacos Ensenada. In other words, longtime established businesses have little protection from vendors selling competing food or beverage items. Yet, temporary use permit events, such as swap meets, would have more protections from vendors who would need to set up at least 500 feet from their events. Moreover, area sidewalks are barely narrow enough for pedestrians without carts in place, which is another concern expressed by Mayor Denise Delmar.

No residents spoke for or against the vendors and the general feeling among Council Members is that requirements and regulations would make it too much of a hassle for most vendors to bear. The Ordinance required four-fifths of City Council votes, which it received, with one small revision required to number 5 of the General Regulations; the removal of the word “No” from the beginning of the sentence.

K. McGuire/MVNews



SIERRA MADRE HOLIDAY PARKING SCHEDULE Christmas/New Year’s Holidays

Please be advised that beginning at 2:00AM on Saturday, December 15th, 2018 there will be a City wide exemption for parking related to Permit Parking and Overnight Parking. This Exemption will extend until 2:00AM on Wednesday, January 2nd, 2019, in observance of the Holiday Season. Please note that safety violations related to parking will be enforced 24/7.

There will be Officers staffing the SMPD, 24/7 to handle enforceable parking issues and safety violations during these times.

\*\*\*SAFETY VIOLATIONS\*\*\* (e.g. Red Zones, White Zones, Blue Zones, parking violations obstruction egress/ingress to the roadway or sidewalk).

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## 6-Day Forecast Sierra Madre, Ca.



<b>Sun</b>	Ptly Cldy	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
<b>Mon:</b>	Chance Rain	Hi	60s	Lows 50s
<b>Tues:</b>	Ptly Cldy	Hi	60s	Lows 50s
<b>Wed:</b>	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
<b>Thur:</b>	Sunny	Hi	70s	Lows 50s
<b>Fri:</b>	Ptly Cldy	Hi	70s	Lows 50s

Forecasts courtesy of the National Weather Service

## SIERRA MADRE CITY MEETINGS

## CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings listed below are held at City Hall 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre, Ca. 626-355-7135

City Council  
December 11th, 2018 at 6:30 pm  
December 25, 2018 at 6:30 pm - CANCELLED

Planning Commission  
December 20th, 2018 at 7:00 pm  
January 3rd, 2019 at 7:00 pm  
January 17th, 2019 at 7:00 pm

Community Service Commission  
December 17th, 2018 at 6:30 pm  
January 21st, 2019 at 6:30 pm

Senior Community Commission  
January 3rd, 2019 at 3:00 pm CANCELLED  
Special Meeting January 10th, 2019 at 3:00 pm

Library Board of Trustees  
December 26th, 2018 at 7:00 pm - CANCELLED  
January 23rd, 2019 at 7:00 pm

Energy, Environment, and Natural Resource Commission  
December 19, 2018 at 7:00 pm  
January 16th, 2019 at 7:00 pm

Can't make it to the meeting, but still want to share your thoughts? You can mail or drop off a written statement to City Hall or email city@cityofsierramadre.com before 30 the night of the meeting and your statement will be delivered to all the Council Members. Sierra Madre City Hall 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre, CA 91024 (626) 355-7135

## 1630 AM EMERGENCY RADIO &amp; Free on-air publicity for local events

Sierra Madre's EMERGENCY radio station is now accepting scripts for Public Service Announcements (PSAs) about community events. PSAs will be broadcast on the air at no charge. The station operates 24/7 and can be heard at 1630 on the AM dial.

Any local non-profit or non-commercial organization can have their event information broadcast to the public on Sierra Madre Community Information Radio. The station covers the city of Sierra Madre, plus surrounding areas of Pasadena, Arcadia, and Monrovia.

Your event must:

- Benefit a non-commercial or non-profit entity
- Be open to the public
- Be of general interest to local citizens

Just write a Public Service Announcement that describes your event and e-mail it to [radio@cityofsierramadre.com](mailto:radio@cityofsierramadre.com).



## This week at the Sierra Madre Public Library

December 17-22

Monday at 9:00 am

Baby Rhyme Time

Monday at 10:00 am

Preschool Storytime

Tuesday from 2:00 - 5:00 pm

LEGO Play Day

Wednesday at 4:00 pm

Teen Activity Day-Kooky Karaoke

Thursday at 11:00 am

Third Thursday Book Club

Thursday at 1:00 pm

Billy Bonkers Magic Show

Saturday from Noon - 5:00 pm

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Wistaria Thrift Shop Open: M, Th, F 10a-3p 355-7739

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SIERRA MADRE LITTLE  
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now open. <http://www.sml.org>



SIERRA MADRE GIRLS  
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is now open for the San  
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12th to secure your  
player's spot.

<https://www.smsgsa.org/>

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Member: General Federation of Women's Clubs cfwc.org & gfwc.org



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GFWCSierraMadreWomansClub.org

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## FALSE ALARM REDUCTION AND REGISTRATION PROGRAM

Nearly 98% of all fire and security alarm  
calls are false alarms.

In an effort to reduce the number of false alarms and conserve valuable  
City resources, the City of Sierra Madre is partnering with PM AM  
Corporation to implement and administer an Alarm Permit Program  
for residents and business within the City of Sierra Madre.

\*The annual registration fee will not apply to Fire and Life Safety systems  
or Med-Alert systems.

For more information, FAQ and registration link visit  
[www.CityofSierraMadre.com/FALSEAlarmProgram](http://www.CityofSierraMadre.com/FALSEAlarmProgram)

## SMPD TOY DRIVE



The Sierra Madre Police Department is once again pleased to participate in toy campaigns for the United States Marine Corps, "Toys for Tots" and Pasadena Foothill Air Support Team (FAST). Please bring unwrapped toys

to drop in the appropriate bin in the SMPD lobby  
from now until Dec. 24th!

Catch breaking news at:  
[mtnviewsnews.com](http://mtnviewsnews.com)



# SIERRA MADRE

Sierra Madre

Arcadia

Pasadena

Altadena

Monrovia



## KATIE Tse.....This and That OFFICE PARTY

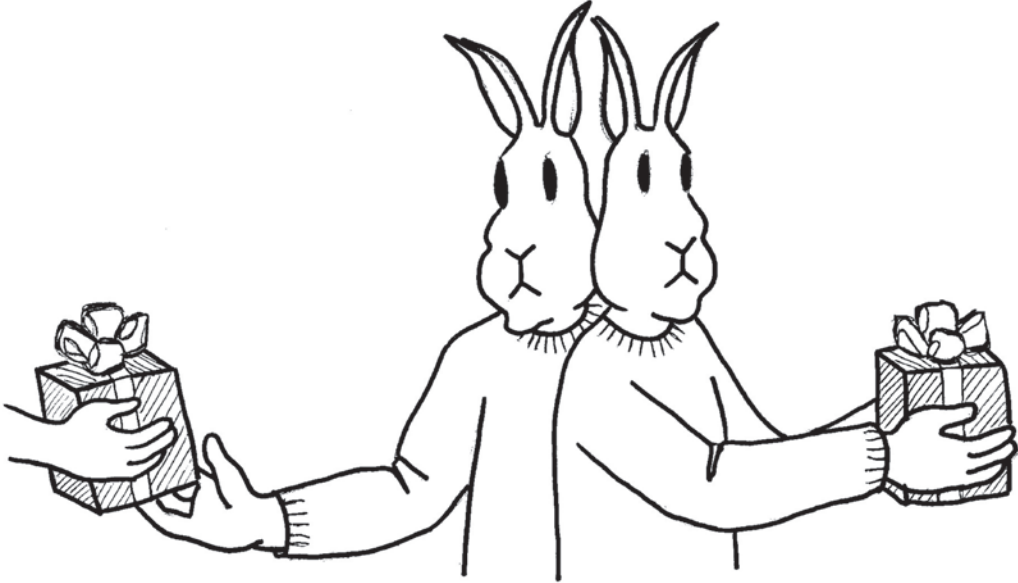
Hello again. You don't know how tempted I was to recycle an old article. It's been one of those weeks. But, as you can see, by sheer force of will, I churned out another fresh piece for you. Enjoy!

The Christmas season is upon us. As I wrote a few weeks ago, I'm not even ready for Thanksgiving, and it's already passed. So you can imagine how unprepared I am for Christmas! My husband is impossible to shop for. But one group of people

to come through for them at Christmas and on their birthdays in order to obtain their desired possessions. But for us adults, I say, "Why don't you keep your \$20 and I'll keep mine?"

Aside from the gift giving part of Christmas parties, I must say I could do without the games. If you've lived long enough, you've attended countless Christmas parties, bridal and baby showers, and you know all the cheesy games that typically take place at these events.

I witnessed one that I hadn't seen before at another Christmas party I recently attended.



I never stress over as far as gifts are concerned is my coworkers.

So when I go to their Christmas party tomorrow (which, for you, is yesterday) my plan is just to socialize but not participate in the gift exchange. I already explained this idea to one of the ladies on the social committee, and she assured me that she isn't even fully participating in all the planned events, herself. It's going to be a combo ugly-sweater-contest-gift-exchange-game affair at a local restaurant, and she doesn't want to brave the ugly sweater part.

I'm not one for Christmas parties, or any kind of party, but I do enjoy hanging out with my coworkers, so that's why I decided to make an appearance this year.

It's not that I don't like Christmas. I do. It's just that I could really pass on the whole gift exchange aspect of it all. I mean, I understand the vitality of Christmas for children. They don't have incomes or any way of buying things for themselves, not being able to drive and all. So they rely on us

For this one, everyone brought an inexpensive wrapped gift, deposited them on a table, picked out one for themselves, and then stood in a big circle, each one holding the gift they picked out. The leader read a story and inserted the words "left" and "right" periodically, which was our cue to pass the gifts in the given direction. I predicted that no matter how far our original present traveled, it would eventually return to us. And I still think that was what the intended plan was.

Humorously however, we managed to botch this, and not once, but twice, the circle ended up with some people holding two bags and other people empty handed. And we weren't even drinking! Don't know how we happened to mess that up.

Well, I've never been to a Christmas party with my current coworkers before, since I'm at a different campus now. But I'm sure it will be a riot. Hopefully no one will mind my being a wall flower during the game. And if anything particularly funny happens, at least I'll have some material for my next article!

## WALKING SIERRA MADRE.. The Social Side By Deanne Davis



"That First Noel's come 'round again,  
Just like it does each year,  
To tell us it's Christmas, finally it's Christmas,  
Joyfully it's Christmas,  
The best time of the year, the best time of the year..."

This particular song goes on to tell us that the tree is in the window, the wreath is on the door, and about a million ornaments are scattered on the floor! Most probably you're way past that stage, the tree is up and gorgeous. You finally untangled the lights and put the angel up on top. But here's the question you'll be facing in a few days when the presents are all unwrapped and everything you got everybody fit and was exactly what they wanted! Why is it that putting up Christmas decorations, is so much more fun than taking them down. Also, why is it that the Christmas decorations that seem so few and so light as you take them out of the basement and up the stairs have doubled (like wire hangers) in size and tripled in weight and you can't remember when on earth you carried all those up.

Playing Christmas music and rediscovering each cute little Christmas item is such fun and then deciding where to put each one is a pleasure. I'm especially partial to all my little lighted houses. My mother started collecting them many years ago and gave her collection to me. I have added to it over the years and now think I have about twenty of them. They look fantastic on the piano, behind the couch and on the maple hutch in the dining room. Last year they all stayed in their boxes as my best buddy and Christmas decoration admirer was spending his first Christmas in heaven. This year, I've gotten most of them out and they look wonderful.

After much discussion among our adult children, I did get out Santa's Band, which was John's favorite Christmas decoration. Many years ago he went to Costco and came home with his eyes alight and excitement spilling out of his every word as he described this wonderful band of little men attached to bells and electrically driven so every time you turned it on, it played a Christmas carol. They had quite a repertoire and the band was led, of course, by Santa. John went to Costco several times and came home each time with more stories of the glories of Santa's Band. I finally took his hand, looked deep into his eyes and said, "You know, honey, you can buy Santa's Band yourself, with your own money!" He had never thought of that. Back he went and Santa's Band decorated the top of one of our bookcases every year from then on. Yes, it got up there after I spent an hour untangling all the wires, bells and little people,

but he loved it. Apparently, all the children loved it, too, and there was lively discussion over who should have Santa's Band. Our daughter, Patti, ended up with it and I was happy to hand it over and let her untangle all those wires and bells.

We all have special nostalgic goodies that fill our hearts with memories and happy thoughts. Pictures of our children taken in Sunday School, our grandchildren's little hands and feet on ceramic tiles, tiny felt Christmas stockings with everyone's name on them in glued on glitter. I also have little glass ornaments which were my Aunt Helen's, dating from the '30s.

When we were first married, we rented a lovely house with a high beamed ceiling up on Canon Drive, right behind where Christian author, Fay Angus lived, and when our first Christmas together arrived, I was about hysterical with excitement. We went down to the railroad yards where trains were coming in from wherever they loaded on those trees, I have a feeling it was the Pacific Northwest. Railroad workers pitched them off the cars and anyone who was standing there could pick out whatever tied-up tree they wanted. I don't remember it costing very much. We selected an enormous Noble fir and tied it to the top of our little blue Ford Falcon. Got it home and it had to have been ten feet tall or taller and was the most gorgeous thing we'd ever seen. We had just a few things to put on it, but it was our tree and our home and our children opened presents under it and I will remember always what a wonderful time that was.

The song up at the beginning goes on to say:

"But that's not the reason we celebrate the season...  
Oh, it's that baby in the manger,  
Christ child in the manger,  
Mary kneeling by his side,  
Joseph beaming down with pride.  
Peace on earth, good will to men,  
We celebrate that night again."

I'm hoping all your Christmas memories are merry and bright! To quote Tiny Tim from Dickens' A Christmas Carol, "God Bless us every one!"

My book page: Amazon.com: Deanne Davis "Star of Wonder – A Christmas Story" Is available there. This is a wonderful Christmas Love Story...trust me! Star of Wonder the CD is now on TuneCore! Featuring this song! Take a look! Blog: [www.authordeanne.com](http://www.authordeanne.com)

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19<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Holiday Fundraiser

Thursday, December 6 13  
5:30-7:30

Gift Card Giveaway  
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# Pasadena Altadena

News From Your Community For Your Community

## Pharmacy Owner Convicted of Fraud



A federal jury in Los Angeles found a Pasadena pharmacy owner guilty Friday for her role in a Medicare fraud scheme involving more than \$1.3 million in fraudulent claims for prescription drugs.

After a two-day trial, Tamar Tatarian, 39, of Pasadena, was convicted of one count of health care fraud and two counts of wire fraud. Sentencing has been scheduled for Feb. 25, before U.S. District Judge John F. Walter of the Central District of California, who presided over the trial. Tatarian was the owner of Akhtamar Pharmacy in Pasadena.

According to evidence presented at trial, from approximately October 2015 through approximately October 2017, Tatarian engaged in a scheme involving the submission of fraudulent claims to Medicare Part D plan sponsors for prescription drugs that Akhtamar Pharmacy never ordered from wholesalers, and thus never dispensed to Medicare beneficiaries. Tatarian attempted to conceal the fraud through the creation of fake invoices, reflecting wholesale drug purchases by Akhtamar Pharmacy which had, in fact, never taken place. As a result of this scheme, Tatarian through Akhtamar Pharmacy submitted claims to Medicare for more than \$1.3 million in prescription drugs that she never purchased or dispensed to patients, the evidence showed. This case was investigated by the FBI and HHS-OIG. Trial Attorney Alexis Gregorian and Assistant Chief A. Brendan Stewart of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section are prosecuting the case.

## Pet of the Week



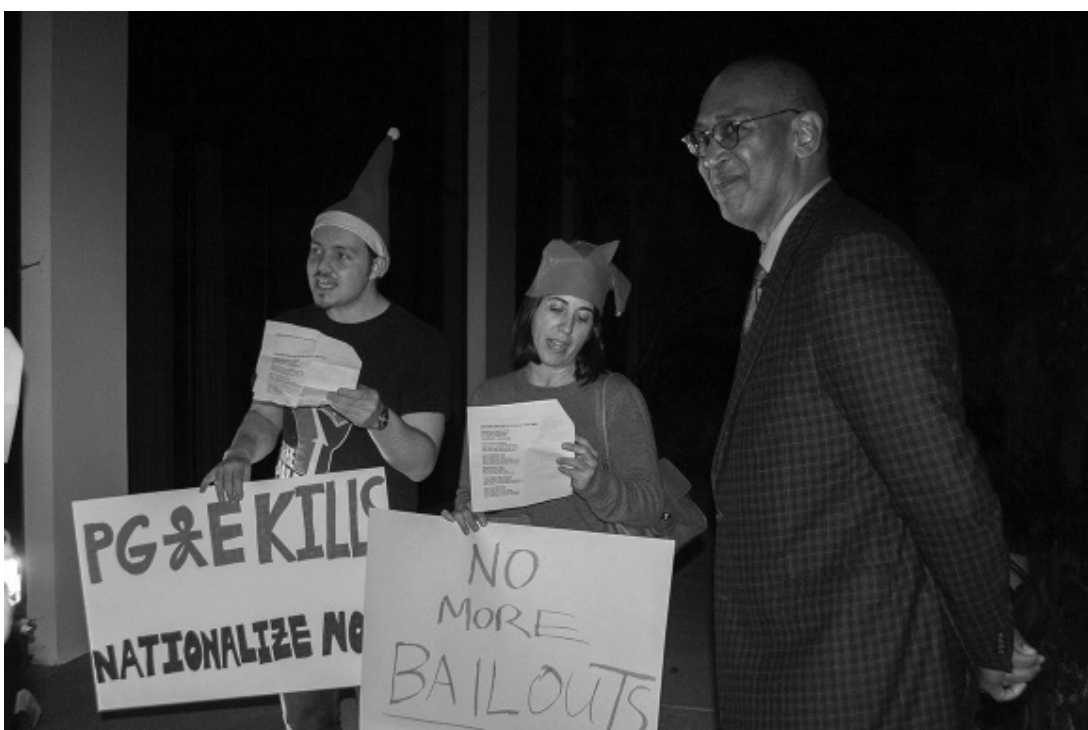
Goober (A462838) is a 4-year-old Chinese Shar-Pei looking for a home for the holidays. Goober has been at the Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA since July! We think he's been getting overlooked in the kennels. This past weekend he went home with a foster family to get some comfy couch time. He was a very well-behaved boy who liked to follow his Foster around the house and sit right by her side. He gave tons of kisses and slept peacefully at the foot of the bed at night. Goober is now back at PHS looking for a new friend who would like to give him a furrever home.

The adoption fee for dogs is \$130. All dogs are spayed or neutered, microchipped, and vaccinated before going to their new home.

New adopters will receive a complimentary health-and-wellness exam from VCA Animal Hospitals, as well as a goody bag filled with information about how to care for your pet.

View photos of adoptable pets at [pasadenahumane.org](http://pasadenahumane.org). Adoption hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday; and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Pets may not be available for adoption and cannot be held for potential adopters by phone calls or email.



## Holden Holiday Open House and Shoe Drive

By Dean Lee

Staying in the spirit of the holidays, a number of protesters showed up to Assemblymember Chris Holden's Holiday Open and Shoe Drive Thursday night singing Christmas Carols spoofs such as "Santa Holden."

Holden smiled as they sung, to the tune of Santa Baby: 'Santa Holden' 'Don't be a shill for PG&E, you see' 'Use your office for good' 'Santa Holden' 'So listen to the people right now'

In response, Holden said he was open to hearing ideas.

"Here's what we plan to do, we're going to have a town hall [meeting] and have an opportunity to bring in everyone because this is such a complicated set of circumstances," Holden said. "Look at different options, ideas. But I think one of the things that we are going to have to explore is, the whole range of ideas"

Before they sang, local activist Lauren Steiner read, in part, what they alleged was at issue.

"He [holden] wants to put forward an absolutely unconscionable bill that would bail out PG&E,

SCE, SoCal Gas and their stockholders from their liabilities for wildfires and pass all the costs on to the customers instead. Not only would this completely eliminate any incentive for those corporations to ensure fire safety, it would also give them strong incentives to overbuild still more of those fire-dangerous power lines when we should instead be building much cleaner and safer local renewable energy sources."

Other protesters and activists, including, Ian Burke Jameson said they want "public ownership of public utilities now."

Jameson said Holden did agree to sit down and talk with the groups, "so that's something, we will believe that when we see it."

Steiner said they wanted to be respectful of the event, we're at an event where they collecting shoes for low income children. The invitation said we could talk about legislative issues, so we decided to sing about it"

Holden said about the event, "It's our way of just saying thank you to the community, to bring every one together. Its not always about the legislation, its about how you can connect

people with services, making sure that they're aware, solve problems, so being able to partner with 'Shoes that Fit' and having so many people participate at such a high level."

Shoes That Fit is a nonprofit that tackles one of the most visible signs of poverty in America by giving kids in need new athletic shoes to attend school with dignity and joy, prepared to learn, play and thrive.

Holden said that all the shoes they collected will be given to children in time for Christmas.

## Give A Club Kid A Gift this Holiday

During this season of giving, Boys & Girls Club of Pasadena needs your help to insure that no Club Kid is without a present.

The goal is to provide each kid and teen of the Boys & Girls Club of Pasadena with a toy, sports ball, art supplies, gift card, non-electronic game, or other gift item during our annual Holiday parties on December 20th at each branch. We have collected about a third of the needed items for the 600 Club kids we support.

You, or a group you belong to, can make a BIG difference this holiday season by bringing new gift items to either the Del Mar or Fair Oaks branch OR making a donation to allow us to do the shopping for you!

Your support will bring joy not only to a Club Kid but to their family, too. For more information or to donate visit: [bgcpasadena.org](http://bgcpasadena.org).

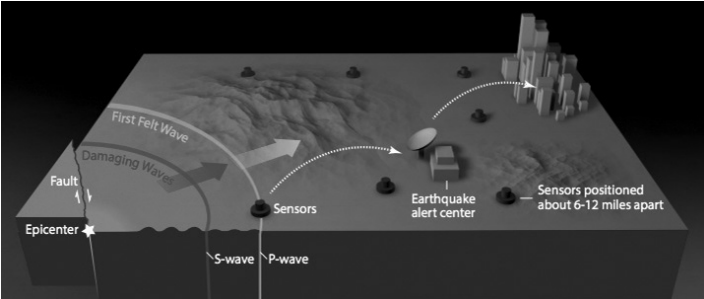
## Police on the Lookout for DUI Drivers

Pasadena police officials announced that they will be on the lookout for impaired drivers during the upcoming holiday season. Whether you are out celebrating with friends at your favorite restaurant or enjoying a holiday party at a residence, please find a safe way home. Remember that averting a holiday tragedy starts with all of us. DO NOT drink and drive. Authorities said "make the smart choice - go safely and arrive at your destination safe and sound."

## Annual Kwanzaa Celebration

Join The Pasadena Library for Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community & Culture. Enjoy music, stories and tasty dishes prepared by members of the Pasadena Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Thursday, Dec. 27 • 11 a.m.-1 p.m. • La Pintoresca Branch located 1355 N Raymond Ave, Pasadena.

## Schiff Urges Funding Earthquake Early Warning System



Representatives Adam Schiff, Derek Kilmer (D-WA), and Peter DeFazio (D-OR), along with 31 Members of Congress, last week, wrote a letter to the Office of Management and Budget Director, Mick Mulvaney, strongly urging the Trump Administration to include funding in the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget for the continued development and operation of the West Coast Earthquake Early Warning System (EEW).

"To follow through on the funding made by the federal government, as well as growing commitment from states and the private sector, it is critical that this program be properly funded so the West Coast will be prepared for the next catastrophic earthquake," the Members wrote in their letter. "This technology will save lives and reduce the economic impact of an earthquake; it simply needs to be properly funded."

EEW technology, also known as ShakeAlert, is already fully operational in countries like Japan and Mexico, and is credited for saving lives during Mexico City's earthquake in September. Such an early warning system could provide residents and first responders with advanced notice that could help save lives, avoid injuries, and avert major infrastructural damage by slowing trains to prevent derailment, stopping elevators, pausing surgeries and taking other actions in the event of a major earthquake.

Schiff, who helped secure consistent and increased federal funding since Fiscal Year 2015 for a West Coast Earthquake Early Warning System said, "Congress has made plain its sustained and bipartisan support for ShakeAlert, and its implementation is crucial to saving lives, infrastructure and property. We will continue to urge the Trump Administration to recognize the immense value of this system and fully support its funding so that it can be deployed widely before the 'big one' hits."

"In the Pacific Northwest, it is not a matter of if, but when, the next big earthquake will strike.

By investing in the Earthquake Early Warning system, Congress can buy valuable seconds for Americans to seek cover or get to higher ground. Anything short of fully funding this valuable technology puts people and our communities at risk," Rep. Derek Kilmer said.

"Life-saving earthquake early warning technology exists, but is not yet fully implemented in the United States because of a lack of will—that has to change. We're living on borrowed time," said Rep. DeFazio, Ranking Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. "In an earthquake, every second counts. We could save lives and protect critical infrastructure if we installed a robust early warning system, like ShakeAlert. It's only a matter of time before we see a major quake off the Oregon Coast and we must be prepared for that day."

The White House eliminated funding for the West Coast Earthquake Early Warning system in both its Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 budget requests. Congress has recognized the critical need for implementation of an Earthquake Early Warning System and has provided funding for its development and implementation in recent Fiscal Years. Because of sustained support on the federal level, as well as significant financial contributions from the State of California, ShakeAlert is now available to the public on a limited basis. Businesses, schools and local governments can partner with ShakeAlert to distribute the alerts for members of their organizations. With continued support from all levels of government – at both the state and federal level – individuals all along the West Coast will soon be able to receive alerts through their phones.

ShakeAlert is being developed by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in conjunction with California Institute of Technology; the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Washington; the University of Oregon; the University of Nevada, Reno; and Central Washington University.

## Free Monthly Events at Pasadena Senior Center

There is something for everyone in December at the Pasadena Senior Center, 85 E. Holly St.

You do not have to be a member to attend. Some events require advance reservations as noted.

**Stay Connected with Social Media – Tuesdays and Thursdays to Dec. 27, from 9 to 11 a.m.** Learn how to keep in touch with family and friends via email, Skype, Facebook and other forms of social media during a 30-minute, one-on-one session with instructor Edison Samuel. You'll choose which applications you want to learn. Bring a laptop or use one of the onsite computers. If you have an email address, bring it and your password. Sign up at the Welcome Desk or by calling 626-795-4331.

**Screening Mims Film Discussion Club – Tuesday, Dec. 18, at 1:30 p.m.** Diehard fans are invited to watch a movie the first and third Tuesday of every month, preceded by a presentation about the film's hidden history and followed by lively discussion. Dec. 18: The Red Violin (1998, R) starring Carlo Cecchi and Samuel L. Jackson. A perfect red-colored violin inspires passion, making its way through three centuries, several owners and many countries, and eventually ending up at an auction where it may find a new owner.

**Friday Movie Matinees – Fridays, Dec. 21 and 28, at 1 p.m.** Everyone enjoys watching movies and the pleasures they bring. Dec. 21: The Night They Saved Christmas (1984, NR) Starring

Jaclyn Smith and Art Carney. A woman and her three children help Santa save his toy factory at the North Pole from being destroyed due to nearby oil drilling. Dec. 28: Crazy Rich Asians (2018, PG-13) starring Constance Wu and Henry Golding. An Asian American New Yorker is apprehensive about meeting her longtime boyfriend's family when she accompanies him to his best friend's wedding in Singapore.

**Holiday Concert – Tuesday, Dec. 18, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.** When "cello" is combined with "celestial," the result is Celestial, an ensemble comprised of cello students and music teachers that will perform classical, popular and Christmas music guaranteed to get you into the holiday spirit.

**Spirituality and Aging – Thursday, Dec. 20, at 10 a.m.** Spirituality is the measure of how willing we are to allow grace, some power greater than ourselves, to enter our lives and guide us along the way. Each person has a different interpretation of spirituality. Local spiritual leader Doug Edwards, who brings faith into aging and is director of outreach for be.group, will lead a discussion about this important topic.

Founded in 1960, the Pasadena Senior Center is an independent, donor-supported nonprofit organization that offers recreational, educational, wellness and social services to people ages 50 and older in a welcoming environment. Services are also provided for frail, low-income and homebound seniors.



# ARCADIA

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## CITIZEN'S FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE RELEASES FINAL REPORT RESIDENTIAL PANEL PROPOSES ADDITIONAL LOCALLY CONTROLLED REVENUE

December 14, 2018 – The City of Arcadia's Citizen's Financial Advisory Committee—an independent, ad-hoc advisory body of civic volunteers empaneled by the City Council to review the City's General Fund long-range financial forecast and provide recommendations to the City Council for cost containment and/or revenue enhancements—released its final report today. The 40-page report includes 15 recommendations for the Arcadia City Council to address the City's \$8,000,000 structural budget deficit.

The Arcadia City Council will review the report at its January 15, 2019, meeting. To view the report, visit [ArcadiaCA.gov/CFAC](http://ArcadiaCA.gov/CFAC).

After careful review, the Committee is recommending additional funding options that maximize local control over taxpayer dollars. A key recommendation is for the City to consider increasing the City's local sales tax rate by ¼ of one cent in order to maintain services at current levels. A growing number of California cities with large malls and retail centers—including other cities in Los Angeles County—have enacted similar measures as significant percentages of sales tax revenues are paid by out-of-town shoppers.

The Committee reviewed all possible scenarios, including a 12.5% reduction in City services to close the budget gap. Services that are important to the Arcadia community, particularly police and fire, which comprise over 60% of the General Fund budget, would be adversely impacted, the Committee concluded. As many as two dozen police officers and firefighters could potentially be cut, and the City's northern fire station could potentially be closed.

"The Committee was primarily concerned about quality of life in Arcadia," said former Arcadia Mayor and Committee Chair Mickey Segal. "Eliminating 13 police officers, 10 firefighters, and closing a fire station would reduce neighborhood patrols and life-saving response times. There are alternatives to these community-changing service cuts."

"We looked at the books and realized that service cuts alone could not address this issue without sacrificing Arcadia's quality of life and safety," said Vice Chair Howard Ursettie. "The revenue options were either to raise property taxes on Arcadia residents or recommend a voter-approved, locally-controlled sales tax increase on visitors who shop at our mall. Also, the prospect of the County grabbing the remaining sales tax increment for another one of their initiatives that doesn't benefit Arcadia residents is a real concern."

"Cities are struggling with the rising costs of services, especially increasing pension costs due to policy changes

at the state level," said City Manager Dominic Lazzaretto. "Arcadia was one of the first cities in the state to implement pension reforms in 2011 and the City has taken a fiscally conservative, responsible approach over the years to control costs while maintaining the quality services our residents expect. Despite our early leadership on pension reform, the unfunded liability, payments to PERS are overwhelming our General Fund."

The Citizen's Financial Advisory Committee is comprised of five well-known residents, all with strong backgrounds in finance and accounting:

- Mickey Segal, a 34-year resident of Arcadia, a former Mayor, and Chair of the City's previous Citizen's Financial Advisory Committee, Mr. Segal has an extensive background as a CPA and financial advisor, with a particularly strong background in municipal pension financing.

- Howard Ursettie, a 45-year resident of Arcadia and Certified Public Accountant, Mr. Ursettie is a long-time financial advisor, providing financial services to individuals and large and small businesses. A well-known figure in the community, Mr. Ursettie brings a deep understanding of neighborhood needs to the Committee. Jessica Louie, a 28-year resident of Arcadia worked for an external auditing firm that audited the City's finances. Mrs. Louie has a deeper understanding of Arcadia's finances having been a part of that independent audit team. Mrs. Louie has also been involved in the Santa Anita Oaks Homeowners Association.

- Robert Miller, a 38-year resident of Arcadia and current member of the Arcadia Beautiful Commission, Mr. Miller has extensive experience with financial consulting through his award-winning financial consulting firm and sterling reputation in the financial services industry.

- Tommy Thai, a 12-year resident of Arcadia and former member of Arcadia's Zoning Review Committee, Mr. Thai brings a comprehensive understanding of the City's real estate environment, focusing on preserving the high property values and excellent services that make Arcadia a desirable place to live.

"I am proud of the work of this Committee," said Committee Member Tommy Thai. "All Arcadians deserve a safe, clean, and prosperous community. Arcadia really is a City that works. We want to keep it that way."

For more information about the Citizen's Financial Advisory Committee meetings, please visit [ArcadiaCA.gov/CFAC](http://ArcadiaCA.gov/CFAC). To join the Conversation regarding the future of Arcadia City services, please visit [ArcadiaCA.gov/CityWorks](http://ArcadiaCA.gov/CityWorks).

## ARCADIA POLICE BLOTTER

*For the period of Sunday, December 2nd, through Saturday, December 8th, the Police Department responded to 892 calls for service, of which 136 required formal investigations. The following is a summary report of the major incidents handled by the Department during this period.*

### Sunday, December 2:

Shortly before 6:32 p.m., officers responded to a residence in the 1600 block of Loganrita Avenue regarding a suspicious person. The officers located the subject lying down on a resident's lawn and discovered he was in possession of a meth pipe. The 37-year-old male from Monrovia was cited and released in the field.

At approximately 7:36 p.m., an officer responded to the Arcadia Police Department front counter regarding a fraud report. The victim stated an unknown suspect made fraudulent purchases on his credit card totaling \$2,000.00. The victim doesn't know the identity of the suspect or how the suspect obtained his personal information.

### Monday, December 3:

Just after 12:41 a.m., officers conducted an enforcement stop on a vehicle in the area of Huntington Drive and Baldwin Avenue for driving without headlights. Upon contacting the driver, the officer noticed signs consistent with alcohol consumption. During a series of tests, the officers concluded the 28-year-old male from Monrovia was driving with a blood alcohol content of .214%. He was arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

At approximately 8:23 a.m., an officer responded to the 400 block of West Le Roy Avenue regarding a vehicle burglary report. The officer discovered an unknown suspect smashed the front passenger window and stole the victim's purse between 8:10 a.m. and 8:18 a.m. on December 3rd while the victim dropped her kids off at school. No suspects were seen and no witnesses were located.

### Tuesday, December 4:

Around 2:57 a.m., officers responded to Envision Optometric Eyecare, 655 West Duarte Road, regarding an audible alarm activation. Surveillance footage revealed an unknown suspect smashed the front glass door with a sledge hammer and stole numerous pairs of glasses. The investigation is ongoing.

Just before 7:10 a.m., an officer responded to the 800 block of Arcadia Avenue regarding a stolen vehicle report. The victim discovered her 1999 Honda Civic had been stolen sometime during the previous evening. No suspects were seen and no witnesses were located.

### Wednesday, December 5:

At about 1:02 p.m., an officer responded to a residence in the 1600 block of Alta Oaks Drive regarding a fraud report. The victim determined an unknown suspect attempted to open a Target credit card in their name without their permission. The victim does not know how the suspect obtained their personal information or the identity of the suspect.

Shortly after 3:39 p.m., an officer responded to

Fairview Park, 542 Fairview Avenue, regarding a grand theft report. The victim was approached by three female suspects who told her a family member was in danger and to save them, she should participate in a "spiritual ceremony". They instructed her to go home, find all of the money and jewelry she could find, and then return to the park and give them the items. The victim complied and gave the suspects more than \$15,000 worth of property and money. The suspects fled on foot.

The suspects are described as three Asian females, 5'1" to 5'4" tall, 100 to 150 pounds. The investigation is ongoing.

### Thursday, December 6:

Before 4:04 p.m., an officer responded to Arcadia Medical & Cosmetic Center, 1317 South Baldwin Avenue, regarding a forgery report. Staff members located a counterfeit \$100 bill in the register. It is unknown who passed the fraudulent currency.

Around 5:44 p.m., an officer responded to a residence in the 1400 block of Melanie Way regarding a residential burglary report. The officer determined unknown suspect(s) pried open the pet door screen, ransacked the home, and fled with an unknown amount of property. The investigation is ongoing.

### Friday, December 7:

At about 8:54 a.m., an officer responded to a residence in the 100 block of Genoa Street regarding a battery report. An investigation revealed an altercation occurred between a husband and a wife resulting in the husband choking the wife until she lost consciousness. The 32-year-old male from Arcadia is outstanding at the time of this report.

Just before 5:43 p.m., officers responded to Nordstrom, 400 South Baldwin Avenue, regarding a burglary report. An investigation revealed six juvenile suspects stole six backpacks valued at \$1,800.00 before exiting and fleeing in a red Ford Econoline van. The investigation is ongoing.

### Saturday, December 8:

Shortly after 1:24 a.m., an officer conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle in the area of Sixth Avenue and Live Oak Avenue for driving without headlights. A records check revealed the vehicle's registration was suspended. During a consensual search of the driver, the officers located drug paraphernalia, a controlled substance, false identification cards, and discovered the 33-year-old female from Temple City was driving without a license. A records check of the 18-year-old male passenger from Temple City revealed he had an outstanding felony warrant. Both were arrested and transported to the Arcadia City Jail for booking.

At approximately 7:11 p.m., officers responded to a residence in the 1100 block of Fallen Leaf Road regarding a residential burglary report. An investigation revealed unknown suspect(s) smashed a second story window, entered the home, and fled through the front door. The loss is unknown at this time. No suspects were seen and no witnesses were located.

# MONROVIA - DUARTE

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## SANTA TOURS THROUGHOUT MONROVIA SET FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 17!

The ever-popular Santa Tours are set to take place once again this year during the week of December 17, when Santa Claus will be driving down every street in Monrovia! Santa Claus will be touring each neighborhood on top of a decorated fire engine passing out candy canes, escorted by a police car and a decorated public works sleigh! Everyone is encouraged to come out and wave to Santa and enjoy the Christmas carols playing over the police car's P.A. system!

A big thank you to all of the City employees from the Police Department, Monrovia Fire & Rescue, and Public Works who volunteer their time to help make this program a success!

Please note... those wishing to participate by riding in the sleigh with Santa should assemble by 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall parking lot (415 S. Ivy Ave) each night the Santa Tour occurs. Remember that space is limited and participation is on a first come, first served basis. Parents are reminded that children must be accompanied by an adult.

The tours will last from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and follow the schedule below:  
Monday, December 17

City streets east of Myrtle Avenue, north of Foothill Boulevard.

Tuesday, December 18

City streets west of Myrtle Avenue and north of Foothill Boulevard.

Wednesday, December 19

City streets east of Myrtle Avenue, south of Foothill Boulevard, north of Duarte Road, west to east city boundaries.

Thursday, December 20

City streets west of Myrtle Avenue, south of Foothill Boulevard to Huntington Avenue between Myrtle Avenue and Fifth Avenue.

Friday, December 21

City streets south of Huntington Avenue, west of Myrtle Avenue to Fifth Avenue, north of southern city boundaries. Also include Valley Circle.

For more information, please contact the Monrovia Police Department at (626) 256-8000!

## CITY ROUND UP

**CITY COUNCIL OATH OF OFFICE** - The Duarte community is invited to participate in the December 11th historic oath of office and transition meeting for the new seven district City Council. The meeting starts at 7:00 pm in the Duarte Community Center at 1600 Huntington Drive and the Oath of Office will be delivered by County Supervisor Hilda Solis. Immediately following the ceremony there will be a reception featuring live music from California School of Arts of the San Gabriel Valley.

**DUARTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FUND RAISER** - This Saturday, December 8th starting at 9:00 am the annual Winter Solstice craft faire featuring handcrafted items, food and vintage wares will be for sale at the Andres Duarte Statue Plaza directly across from City Hall. All day there will be entertainment featuring: the Choir from the Duarte Senior Center at 11 a.m., the Sounds of Harmony, a Sweet Adeline's Chorus, will perform at 1 p.m. and Monrovia Jim Constantian will play music by Glenn Miller on his vintage phonograph throughout the day.

**DUARTE'S HOLIDAY GIVING** - Duarte's Promise and the Duarte Neighborhood Watch Program, along with several local churches, businesses, schools and non-profits have teamed up to ensure a joyous 2018 Holiday season for hundreds of Duarte area families. This year's Holiday of Promise program runs till December 13th and the Neighborhood Watch Toy Drive ends December 8th. For more information about the Holiday of Promise and a list of participating sites, contact Duarte's Promise at City Hall, (626) 357-7931 ext. 260 or email [valeriola@accessduarte.com](mailto:valeriola@accessduarte.com). For more information on how to organize your own Neighborhood Watch Party, please contact Aida Torres at (626) 359-5671.

**PARKING ENFORCEMENT HOLIDAY SCHEDULE** - The Public Safety Department will not be issuing parking citations for street sweeping or 3am - 6am parking restrictions from December 21, 2018, to January 4, 2019, in recognition of the Christmas and New Year holidays. We will still issue citations for safety violations and violations of the Municipal Code.

## LIBRARY'S VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

Once again, the Library's Veterans Resource Center is partnering with the local American Legion Women's Auxiliary to support the USO & local military personnel who are hospitalized. Below is a list of critical items needed:

- White socks for men and women
- Coloring books for adults

- Coloring pencils, markers and pens
- Board games and card games for adults

There is a large yellow box in the Library Lobby near the Circulation Desk for donations. Please drop all donated items in the marked box. For more information, contact Librarian Mabel Cross at (626) 256-8294. Thank you for your support!



Monrovia Public Library & Monrovia American Legion Women's Auxiliary

## Support Drive for Veterans

Donate **NEW** items for hospitalized veterans & military service members

- WHITE socks for men and women
- coloring books for adults
- coloring pencils, markers, pens
- board games and card games for adults



**Drop off donations at:**  
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Monrovia, CA 91016  
626-256-8274



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FAREWELL TO  
PATCHES

As far back as ten or twelve days ago, I had a specific topic in mind for this week's column. I had even mulled it over numerous times as I walked my dogs around town, making mental notes of how I might write it in a way that I hoped would be inviting and interesting to my readers.

Funny how life has a way of making last-minute modifications to the plans we put in place, isn't it? You know what I'm talking about; those 'out-of-nowhere', unexpected occurrences that completely alter your course, potentially putting you into a tail spin if you're not flexible and willing enough to bend. I've learned that it's best to just go ahead and bend because if you don't, Heaven forbid, you might break.

I suppose this may be what happened to me last week. One minute I was thinking about typing up a story having to do with big cats and their habitats, and the next minute I was in a state of sadness and shock, somewhat perplexed and groping to find the words to properly memorialize the life of a dearly beloved four-legged friend.

Fact is, I find it challenging to write about anything that is not within my heart to be written at the moment, and likewise difficult to avoid writing that which is. So, long story short, I did not break (thankfully), rather I bent and began working on a story quite different from the one I'd originally planned to write.

They are only here on earth for a short time, our canine companions. Far too short a time, if you ask me. I once heard a show host on talk radio say the reason dogs live such short lives compared to humans is because God takes each of us home when He is sure we've learned how to love unconditionally, and it just so happens that dogs get it a lot quicker than we humans do.

I actually don't know if that's true, but I'd challenge anyone to prove that it isn't. Anyway, I do digress...So, the story I decided to write this week is in honor of my dear friend, Patches, who was loved and will be missed by many of both the two- and four-legged persuasion. Our dear Patches fell gravely ill over the weekend and at the ripe age of 12 years, on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 he crossed that Proverbial Rainbow Bridge. May he rest in peace.

Patches was an absolutely gorgeous Red Merle Australian Shepherd with lots of light brown spots (thus the name Patches) and brilliant blue and brown marbled eyes. Even more endearing to me, was his personality. Patches had the sweetest disposition you could ever hope to find in a dog. He had this uncanny cuteness that really drew you in.

Patches had the most adorable little quirks. For

## Happy Tails

by Chris Leclerc



example, upon my arrival for our walks each day, he'd immediately flip over on his back, knowing I couldn't resist rubbing his soft, pink belly. Then, after our walks when we'd get back into the house, I would laugh every time he'd lay down and cross his front legs like a human, as if he knew I'd get a kick out of it!

I honestly don't think Patches knew what it meant to bite someone, though he had a mouth full of healthy teeth to do it with. No, Patches wasn't a fighter or a biter, he was a lover. He enjoyed using those pearly whites to greet people on the street with a huge smile. It always warmed my heart when he'd stare at fellow pedestrians during our walks, hoping they would stop and give him a friendly pat or a kind word. And I must say, all who did take the time to meet Patches were instantly enamored by his beauty, inside and out.

Patches lived a fabulous life with his loving human family. But I mustn't forget to mention the family member who was closest to Patches. That would be the apple of Patches' eye; Puck. Now, Puck and Patches were brother-pups and by that I don't mean they were biological brothers. I just mean as pups, they were brought home on the same day, grew up together and spent nearly every waking hour together.

Of course, both being canines, Patches and Puck had much in common. But they did have their differences. Puck is a darling blonde Cocker Spaniel who is somewhat shorter than his brother, Patches was. And much like human siblings, the two boys had occasional spats over such things as balls and bully sticks, but 99.9% of the time they were snuggling buddies who had each other's backs. I imagine they probably even kept a few secrets from their humans on each others' behalf!

No words are sufficient to describe the bond I have been blessed to have with my precious canine companions, not the least of which was the one I have had with Patches. And while I cannot claim to feel the intensity of loss that Patches' family is feeling right now, I can at least empathize, having been through similar scenarios with my own pets. Now it is their turn and I do not envy their position.

All my love goes out to Terry, Patches' human 'mom' and the entire Sterling family, during their difficult time of loss. You have been the most awesome owners for your pups, and I know Patches was forever grateful for your tender-loving-care. Happy Trails to you, sweet Patches... til we meet again.



## BEST FRIEND

## CATERINE

Beyond the captivating beauty of Caterine is a calm lady who craves the peaceful continuity of life in her own home. She likes people to approach her slowly and will then relax into the hand massaging her head and ears and stroking down her soft white and gray coat. The attention is rewarded by her purring of contentment while she "makes biscuits" on the bed or lap she is on. Caterine is more than just a pretty face, which has the cutest smudge mustache. She enjoys playing with her visitors. A simple shoe string can be the beginning of a tug of war game that ends when she wins. Sometimes the laser dot game of chase will set off Caterine's huntress instincts. Other times she seems to not want to bother with something she wisely knows can't really catch. Caterine's beauty and sweetness will add décor and bring calmness to your home, while also adding some fun. Please come meet Caterine in Meow Manor. Take advantage of our special adoption fee price of \$25 for the month of December! The adoption price includes spay surgery, a microchip, first vaccinations and a free

wellness check-up at a participating veterinarian. Feel free to call us at (626) 286-1159 for more information. She is located at the San Gabriel Valley Humane Society, 851 E. Grand Ave. Adoption hours are 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Tuesday - Sundays, closed Mondays. Website: [www.sgvhumane.org](http://www.sgvhumane.org).



## Katnip News!

NORMA JEAN/  
MARILYN MONROE

NORMA JEAN, age about 3, is waiting for Santa to find her a home where she is treasured. She is very happy, super loving, playful and sweet and will love you to bits. She is FIV+ but we all know by now that it's easily managed, and no meds are needed. NORMA JEAN may look just ordinary on the outside, but inside she's as beautiful as Marilyn Monroe! Call Lifeline for Pets to meet her: 626-676-9505. See more pictures and her cute video at <http://www.lifelineforpets.org/seniors--sp-needs.html>

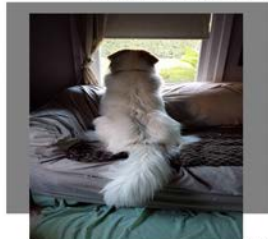


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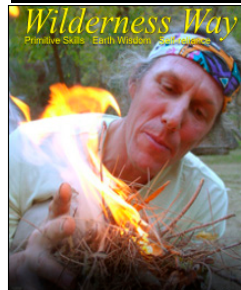
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## THE WORLD AROUND US

CHRISTOPHER Nyerges  
WHO IS SANTA CLAUS?

A few years ago, I recall a Christian woman complaining that Santa Claus has gained a more prominent role during the Christmas season than the Jesus child. She argued that this was a sign that "we" have allowed secularism – and may-

be even paganism – to creep into the Christmas tradition. Really!?

So, who is Santa Claus? Isn't he just a fictitious jolly man to make us feel happy during the dark of December? Not really. There actually was an historical figure, upon which "Santa Claus" is based.

Nikolas of Myra was an historical 4th century Bishop in the Catholic church of Asia Minor (modern-day Demre, Turkey). He was born on March 15, 270, in Pataya, Lycia, in Asia Minor, what is now modern Turkey. At that time, however, the area was culturally Greek, and was politically a part of the Roman diocese of Asia. He was the only child of wealthy Greek parents, who both died in an epidemic when Nicholas was young. Nicholas inherited much from his parents, and was then raised by his uncle (also named Nicholas), who was a Bishop of Patara, and who trained young Nicholas into priesthood.

Nicholas was said to be religious from an early age, and he always fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Because of his outspoken beliefs, he was persecuted by the Romans and was imprisoned during the persecution of Diocletian.

In case you never heard of the "persecution of Diocletian" (I hadn't), it was the most severe of the persecutions against Christians, simply because they were Christians, in the Roman Empire. It was also known as the "Great Persecution." In 303, four emperors issued a series of dictatorial laws which essentially did away with any legal rights of Christians. The edicts demanded that the Christians comply with traditional Roman "religious" practices, meaning, giving sacrifices to the various so-called Roman gods. This persecution was severe, and was weakest in the British colonies where the Empire had the least sway. It was the most severe in the Eastern provinces, where Nicholas lived.

Since Nicholas refused to worship the Roman gods, he was imprisoned, and suffered hardship, hunger, and cold for about 5 years. With the rise of Constantine, the persecutions came to an end in 313. With Constantine in power, Nicholas was released. Constantine is known for "Christianizing" the Roman Empire, and re-naming all the Mythraic and so-called "pagan" holidays so they could all now be regarded as Christian holidays.

Shortly after his return to his homeland in 317 A.D., Nicholas became the Bishop of Myra.

He was later invited to attend the First Council of Nicaea in 325, the famous council where much of the modern dogma of the Catholic church was determined. Nicholas of Myra was one of many bishops to participate in the Council at Constantine's request. He is listed as the 151st attendee at the Council. There, Nicholas was a staunch anti-Arian. Arius, from Alexandria, held that the Son of God did not always exist, but was created by the Father. Nicholas disagreed with Arius, and defended the developing orthodox Christian viewpoint. According to stories told, Nicholas got so angry at Arius that he punched him in the face! Really? Proto-Santa Claus

punches a fellow man of the cloth? Really?

Back in his homeland, Nicholas became known as a very generous bishop. Remember, he inherited wealth from his parents, and he would sometimes give gold and other valuables to those that he heard was in need. In one case, it is said that Nicholas tossed a bag of gold coins into a needy family's yard, anonymously. He was apparently humble, and didn't want to be seen giving money to people, so he did it secretly. He was so famous for wanting to give such gifts in private when he traveled the countryside, children were told to go to sleep quickly or Nicholas would not come with gifts. This, apparently, is the origin of telling children to go to sleep or that Santa will not come.

In one story, he apparently snuck into the home of a family where the three daughters of a poor man were about to get married. Nicholas put some gold into the stockings which the girls left by the fire to dry. This, apparently, is the origin of hanging up stockings on Christmas eve.

He was also well known for the gifts that he gave to newly married couples during the already established Christmas season.

And so it goes. Nicholas was a complex man, part of the new Catholic tradition which celebrated the birth of Jesus on the already-observed winter solstice. (Early Judeo-Christians did not celebrate the birth of Jesus, a date that has been lost to history, but was definitely not December 25).

He died on December 6, 343, which is to this day known as "Saint Nicholas Day." Upon his death, he was buried in the cathedral of Myra. He is revered as a saint in most versions of Christianity and is especially honored in Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

By the year 450, churches in Greece and Asia Minor were being named in honor of Nicholas. He was officially honored as a saint by the Eastern Catholic Church in 800. December 6 began to be celebrated as Bishop Nicholas Day in France by the 1200s.

As time went on, when ever someone received a mysterious gift, it would be attributed to Saint Nicholas!

The Dutch called Saint Nicholas "Sinterklass," which is the most likely manner in which the name Saint Nicholas gradually evolved into "Santa Claus." Along the way, Saint Nicholas was given some of the attributes of Odin, the Norse God, who could travel through the sky and who had a secret home somewhere around the north pole. Come to think of it, even the Superman story also borrowed from Odin. Remember how Superman sometimes goes to a secret cavern in the Northern coldlands and converses with his ancestors via ice crystals?

The image continued to morph over the years, with the Coco Cola company giving the world a somewhat sanitized and plumper Saint Nicholas-Santa Claus with their early 20th century ads. There we began to see the fatter bearded man in the red suit.

Today, the man you see in the mall is the modern condensation of fact and myth, embodying the generosity of one Catholic Bishop, the good will of all who gave gifts in his stead, and bits of the mythology of Odin.



## OUT TO PASTOR

A Weekly Religion Column by Rev. James Snyder

MY LITTLE DEAR, IT'S NOT WARM  
OUTSIDE!

Once again, it is the Christmas season, which means I have to put up with people offended by everything, particularly that pertains to Christmas.

When I was young, we had a little saying, "Sticks and stones may break your bones but words will never hurt you." And as far as I understand, we stood by that saying.

Most people today have never heard that saying and maybe somebody ought to educate them on some of the realities of life. If words are hurting you, something is wrong with "you."

Everybody is offended by something. I am offended by people who are offended by things I say, which makes no sense whatsoever to me.

Where people got this offend-it-is disease is beyond me. I wonder if there is any cure for this kind of disease?

I was in the restaurant the other day and behind me, a person sneezed. Instinctively, I turned around and said, "God bless you."

Of course, I was not ready for the reply when the man said to me, "I'm an atheist don't you dare use that word 'God' around me."

I am a gentleman otherwise I might have been tempted to say something like, "Well, then, God curse you." Thankfully, I did not say anything like that. I wonder if unspoken thoughts really matter along this line?

What puzzles me is why somebody who does not believe in God is offended by the word "GOD." The fact that he was offended by that word tells me that somewhere deep inside of him he believes there is a God. Otherwise, it would never have offended him.

If I was an atheist and someone said to me "God bless you," I would laugh it off because I do not believe in God. To be offended by something you do not believe has to be the epitome of stupidity.

Another offensive phrase is, "Merry Christmas." I happened to mention this to a person I was passing in the store and they looked at me kind of Scrooge-like and said, "Don't you dare wish me a Merry Christmas."

I would like to know why two words like "Merry Christmas" are offensive to anyone?

Being an amateur wordsmith, I like to research words and try to find out their original meaning. There is no way I have found that the two words "Merry" and "Christmas" have anything whatsoever offensive to them. Those offended by those two words have a chimney that is not smoking.

If you are offended by those two words, maybe you should consider the fact that I may be offended by you being offended by those words. What offends one person does not make any sense to someone else. This is America so keep your offending attitude to yourself.

Just the other day I was going into a store and there was a lady behind me, so as a gentleman, I opened

the door for her and said, "Ladies first." I would have a hard time understanding the offensiveness of those two words.

The lady looked at me and said, "That is the most sexist thing I have heard all day."

I have been trying to find out what is sexist about those two words.

I am either homophobic (whatever that means), racist or sexist. I do not know if I am all of these things at different times or what. I never know if I am one of these until somebody tells me I am one.

There are Christmas songs that we cannot play on the radio anymore, movies that we cannot watch at Christmas time, decorations that we cannot put outside our home anymore.

I heard recently that the song, "Baby, It's Cold Outside," is offensive to some people. I have listened to that for years and cannot figure out the offensive side of that song.

What's crazy to me are those offended by that song are completely okay with some female singer getting on stage barely clothed, singing a depravity soaked song with lustful lyrics you can't use in public.

Why is that okay and not sexist, but when I open a door for a lady and say, "Ladies First," that is sexist?

Some people refer to this as the war on Christmas. If that is true, I believe those people are losing that war. No matter what anybody says or thinks I still will celebrate Christmas, wish people "Merry Christmas" and say, "God bless you" when somebody sneezes and open a door for the ladies.

If those things offend people, I am happy and most delighted to keep doing them.

For years now, there has been a war on Christmas, but it seems that Christmas comes every year at the same time. Isn't that simply amazing? No matter what people say or how offended they are by it, Christmas still comes.

I could think of quite a few things that would offend me. However, I have a thick skin and a tender heart. My life is not depended upon somebody being offended.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is in the book of Proverbs.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

I refuse to let people who are offended by everything direct my path. My trust is not in man, but rather "in the Lord."

Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship. He lives with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage in Ocala. Call him at 1-866-552-2543 or e-mail [jamesnsnyder2@att.net](mailto:jamesnsnyder2@att.net). His web site is [www.james-snyderministries.com](http://www.james-snyderministries.com).



## TABLE FOR TWO by Peter Dills thechefknows@yahoo.com

### TOP RAMEN

Moon Cat Ramen

Think of it as having lunch at a friends house.

How about a short road trip to Monrovia? Don't mind if I do. First off, there are certain dishes that well, should be left to the pros. Of course, I am a home chef versed in such delights as BBQ and Grilln', and more BBQ and Grilln', with the bachelor favorite of spaghetti thrown in once a week. I have become a creature of habit lately. The chef salad at Tops and the chicken from Uni Pollo have been my go-to the last few weeks. My pal, Phil Marte of Sapporo Beer fame, invited me to the Moon Cat Sushi Bistro in Monrovia. It turns out the sushi section is closed during lunch, so we went opted for the ramen. This is where the part of "let the experts handle the cooking" comes in.

I get the headlines all across Los Angeles; ramen is very popular right now. What I love about ramen is that there are few variations so it's pretty much standard wherever you go - the restaurant(s) are typically very small and intimate. Service was right on, probably because there is no place for the server to hide. As far as atmosphere, there's not much to speak of - just a few tables inside, and if the weather is nice, a table or two outside. The restaurant is small so you'll be able to hear your neighbors' conversation. Even though the sushi part of the restaurant is closed for lunch they do give you the option of sushi and ramen. We both ordered the Tonkotsu Ramen, which comes with red ginger, spinach and a soft-boiled egg, and the pork shoulder. Besides the ramen I had in college this was my first experience in a while. I loved it! I was able to use chopsticks and a soup spoon so my meal was extremely easy to eat. The idea was to have sushi and ramen, but with the Chicken Karaage and the Sapporo Beer, I will have to return for the sushi, and my eye is on the fried baby lobster. Short review? Yes: I'll be back at dinner time!!

I recommend that if you are in 10 miles of this restaurant to give it a try. I've read a few reports of slow service, but we were served right away - made me think I was at a friend's house for dinner.

On a scale of 1 to 10, and ten being best I give it 7.5!! Editors Note, no one has received 10/10

Moon Cat Ramen 110 E Lime Ave Monrovia Lunch 11:30 to 2:30 Dinner at 5:30. For complete photos go to my Instagram peterdills, next week my promised article comparing prices at Vons and Stater Bros.



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Looking Up  
with Bob Eklund



## A PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT: FIRST STAR I SEE TONIGHT

By Bob Eklund

This book invites the scientist and poet to set aside their differences for a night—to come outside, stand very still as the sun sets, feel the earth turning eastward, be dazzled by a moonrise, catch a falling star, walk with constellations, ride a rocket to Jupiter space, and finally look back at the Home Planet with new eyes. In poetry, prose, and picture, author/poet Robert Eklund and illustrator Virginia Hoge have created a unique mix of astronomy and art that asks you to join them in the billion-year mission of “descrambling the wonder, outside and inside.”

FIRST STAR

The evening burns,  
The dark earth turns,  
The mountains loom against the sky;  
One star looks down  
To bless the town,  
While sunset clouds sail grandly by.  
And if the light  
Of noon's delight  
Moves on, and leaves us where we are,  
The darkest night  
But aids our sight—  
The better to reveal the star.

Excerpt: Introduction

One starry night many years ago, while driving alone up the wild and rocky Big Sur coast of California, I pulled over and stopped mycar for a break. Stepping out into the starlight, I walked a few feet to the edge of the cliff and looked down. From somewhere farbelow came a growl of surf. As my eyes grew accustomed to the dark, I looked with awe at the brilliant Milky Way stretching overhead and down the sky to the southwest, out over the sea. Then I did a double-take—and thought I was going to fall off the cliff.

What I thought I was seeing was the Milky Way continuing down, down, below what must have been the horizon and deep into the sea itself. The dizzying impression was that I was standing on a flat earth and seeing stars beyond and below its edge. What I was really seeing was the Milky Way reflected on the ocean hundreds of feet below me—but I was not immediately aware of that, and so startling was the impression on my senses that I panicked. Feeling lost, disoriented and frightened under that vast sky, I turned and ran for my car! I only felt safe again when I had the engine running, lights on, and the car in motion.

As other recollections of that trip faded, that single moment of bedazzled stellar awe and panic remained with me as one of my most cherished memories. Later, when I began to read Japanese

haiku poetry, I realized that my Big Sur night was exactly the kind of experience that the best haiku poems are able to record and transmit to others. The great haiku-master Matsuo Basho perhaps summed it up best. His own experience on the cold, lonely coast of northern Japan, on a dark night in the 1600s, must have been much like mine. He wrote:

How wild the sea!  
And, stretching over Sado's isle,  
The Galaxy!

The poignant sense of space, of loneliness, felt in Basho's encounter with the night sky becomes all the more intense when you know that, in his time, Sado's isle was a penal colony.

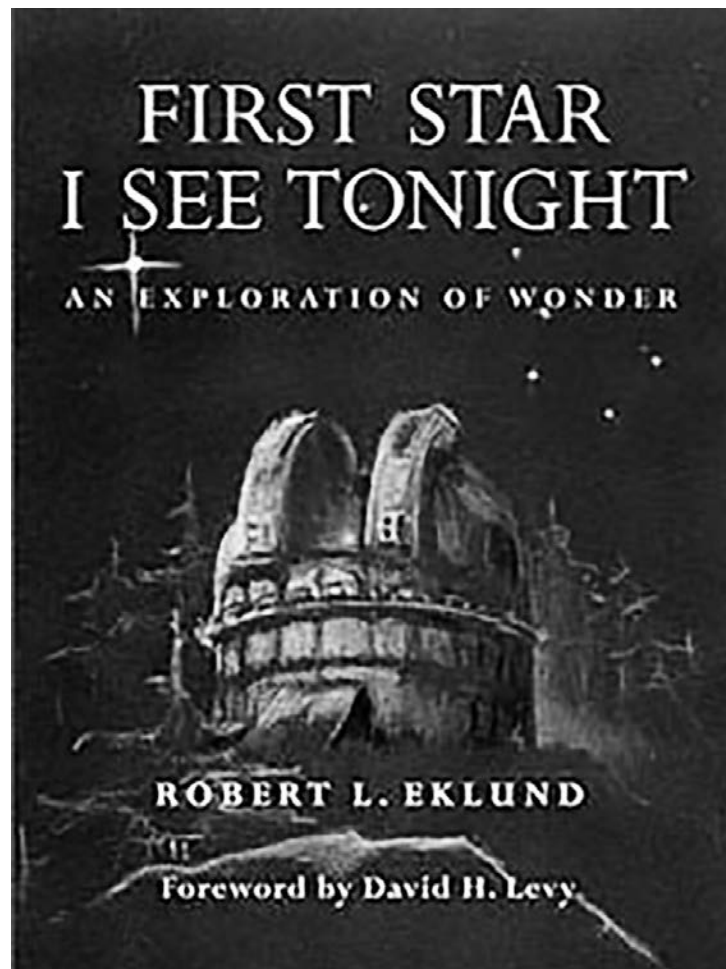
A poem can intensify, compress, and store our experiences and emotions, just as a painting intensifies and preserves an artist's vision—or as a capacitor stores and holds an electric charge. This is a book of experiences under the sky, most often the sky of night. In recording such moments, I frequently have used the compact, 17-syllable haiku form of poetry, borrowed from the Japanese. This form seems especially suited to encapsulate and preserve meaningful encounters with nature, to “call forth in 17 syllables the limitless nuances of earth and sky,” as the classic haiku poet Masaoka Shiki put it.

When I was a child, it was my good fortune to grow up on the grounds of Yerkes Observatory, a major astronomical observatory in southern Wisconsin, where my grandfather was employed for many years as a photographer and lecturer. No doubt the seeds for these poems were sown in those early years when, as a six-year-old, I would sometimes be roused out of sleep by my mother at midnight to go outside and watch a display of the aurora borealis or a shower of meteors. Over the years, while pursuing other careers, I have learned a few things about astronomy, but always as an amateur—in the original meaning of that word: a lover. The naturalist John Burroughs said it so well: “To know is not all, it is only half. To love is the other half.”

A word about the organization of this book may be useful. I have endeavored to so blend science and art that readers may gain unexpected insights in the twin realms of the mind and the heart. The book is structured as an encounter with a starry night—from nightfall through moonlight and starlight and on to bedtime—with excursions, along the way, into both outer and inner space.

You may find it helpful to refer to the “Endnotes” section (starting on page 205) while reading this book. The comments there, keyed to the book's page numbers, add perspective to the main text and provide resources for further learning.

Basho wrote: “Before the light that things give off dies in the heart,



it must be expressed.” My hope is that this book may inspire readers to go out, observe the “limitless nuances of earth and sky,” and then express, in their own words, “the light that things give off.”

I write for all who love the starry sky, the setting sun, the full moon rising, and even the stormy night full of raindrops and snowflakes. The beauty of these things is never far from us.

— Robert L. Eklund

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## CITRUS COLLEGE CONTINUES TO MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE REGION'S HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY

By Dr. Edward C. Ortell  
Citrus College Governing Board Member

For more than 50 years, Citrus College has played an important role in the San Gabriel Valley's health care industry. From dental assistants to emergency medical technicians, the college's health sciences programs have produced thousands of professionals who use their skill and knowledge to care for local residents. Citrus College's nursing programs have proven especially prolific, with graduates gaining employment at hospitals, rehabilitation facilities and skilled nursing centers throughout the region.

With a nationwide nursing shortage making national headlines for over a decade, the college's commitment to providing students with a sound nursing education is particularly noteworthy. Citrus College currently offers three nursing career pathways: an associate degree in nursing (ADN) program, a licensed vocational nursing (LVN) program, and a certified nursing assistant (CNA) program. Each option includes instruction provided by knowledgeable faculty members, guidance from a full-time nursing counselor and hands-on experiences in a state-of-the-art skills lab and simulation lab.

Another characteristic of Citrus College's nursing programs are the strong partnerships they have with clinical affiliates. Formal relationships have been established with a number of care facilities throughout the area. Soon, a new partner will be in our own backyard – the college is currently working on establishing a clinical agreement with Methodist Hospital in Arcadia.

These partnerships are just one way that Citrus College demonstrates its commitment to the achievement of its nursing students. A variety of resources are available to ensure that every student accomplishes their goals. As a result, the nursing programs have experienced impressive success rates. In fact, the board licensure pass rates for the ADN, LVN and CNA programs are all 90 percent or higher.

Of course, Citrus College is concerned about more than pass rates. In recent years, the college has made a concerted effort to encourage its nursing students to think past their community college education. When a 2010 report from the Institute of Medicine recommended that nurses

achieve additional education and training, higher education institutions throughout the United States accepted the challenge to increase the number of nurses who have earned a bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN).

Citrus College has taken steps to promote a seamless academic progression from an ADN to a BSN. Articulation agreements have been established between the college and several four-year institutions with BSN programs. In addition, the college began hosting the RN to BSN/MSN Fair in 2013. Designed to provide articulation information from local colleges and universities that offer bachelor's degrees and master's degrees in nursing, the RN to BSN/MSN Fair introduces students to a variety of options for pursuing higher education in nursing.

Richard Medina, a Duarte High School graduate who is currently studying to be a registered nurse at Citrus College, attended last year's fair. He believes the event, as well as the other resources provided by the Citrus College's nursing program, have helped him make important decisions about his future. "I knew I wanted a career that would allow me to make a difference in the lives of others, and nursing does this," he said. "My ultimate goal is to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing from California State University, Long Beach."

Medina and other Citrus College students who choose to pursue a BSN are more marketable when entering the workplace. With nearly 3 million jobs nationwide and job growth at 15 percent, the employment outlook for registered nurses is incredibly positive. That said, those holding bachelor of science degrees in nursing will have an even greater advantage when seeking employment.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a shortage of more than one million registered nurses by the year 2022. As the senior board member on the Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees, I am proud of the college's success at producing health care professionals; particularly, registered nurses. I am certain that Citrus College's impact on the health care industry in Duarte, Arcadia, Covina and beyond will be felt for years to come.

Dr. Edward C. Ortell, Citrus College governing board member, poses in one of the college's high-tech simulation and skills labs.

## SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Alverno Heights Academy  
200 N. Michillinda Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-3463 Head of School: Julia V. Fanara  
E-mail address: jfanara@alvernoheights.org

Arcadia High School  
180 Campus Drive Arcadia, CA 91007  
Phone: (626) 821-8370, Principal: Brent Forsee  
bforsee@ausd.net

Arroyo Pacific Academy  
41 W. Santa Clara St. Arcadia, Ca,  
(626) 294-0661 Principal: Phil Clarke  
E-mail address: pclarke@arroyopacific.org

Barnhart School  
240 W. Colorado Blvd Arcadia, Ca. 91007  
(626) 446-5588  
Head of School: Ethan Williamson  
Kindergarten - 8th grade  
website: www.barnhartschool.org

Bethany Christian School  
93 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-3527  
Preschool-TK-8th Grade  
Principal: Dr. William Walner  
website: www.bcsilions.org

Clairbourn School  
8400 Huntington Drive  
San Gabriel, CA 91775  
Phone: 626-286-3108 ext. 172  
FAX: 626-286-1528  
E-mail: jhawes@clairbourn.org

Foothill Oaks Academy  
822 E. Bradbourne Ave., Duarte, CA 91010  
(626) 301-9809  
Principal: Nancy Lopez  
www.foothilloaksacademy.org  
office@foothilloaksacademy.org

Frostig School  
971 N. Altadena Drive Pasadena, CA 91107  
(626) 791-1255  
Head of School: Jenny Janetzke  
Email: jenny@frostig.org

The Gooden School  
192 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 355-2410  
Head of School, Carl Parke  
website: www.goodenschool.org

High Point Academy  
1720 Kinneloa Canyon Road  
Pasadena, Ca. 91107  
Head of School: Gary Stern 626-798-8989  
website: www.highpointacademy.org

La Salle High School  
3880 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.  
(626) 351-8951 website: www.lasallehs.org  
Principal Mrs. Courtney Kassakhian

Monrovia High School  
325 East Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016

(626) 471-2800 Principal Darvin Jackson  
Email: schools@monrovia.k12.ca.us

Odyssey Charter School  
725 W. Altadena Dr. Altadena, Ca. 91001  
(626) 229-0993 Head of School: Lauren O'Neill  
website: www.odysseycharterschool.org

Pasadena High School  
2925 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. Pasadena, Ca.  
(626) 396-5880 Principal: Roberto Hernandez  
website: http://phs.pusd.us

St. Rita Catholic School  
322 N. Baldwin Ave. Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
Principal Joan Harabedian (626) 355-9028  
website: www.st-rita.org

Sierra Madre Elementary School  
141 W. Highland Ave, Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 836-1428 Principal: Lindsay Lewis  
E-mail address: lewis.lindsay@pusd.us

Sierra Madre Middle School  
160 N. Canon Sierra Madre, Ca. 91024  
(626) 836-2947 Principal: Garrett Newsom  
E-mail address: newsom.garrett@pusd.us

Walden School  
74 S San Gabriel Blvd  
Pasadena, CA 91107 (626) 792-6166  
www.waldenschool.net

Weizmann Day School  
1434 N. Altadena Dr. Pasadena, Ca. 91107  
(626) 797-0204  
Lisa Feldman: Head of School

Wilson Middle School  
300 S. Madre St. Pasadena, Ca. 91107  
(626) 449-7390 Principal: Ruth Esseln  
E-mail address: resseln@pusd.us

Pasadena Unified School District  
351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena, Ca. 91109  
(626) 396-3600 Website: www.pusd@pusd.us

Arcadia Unified School District  
234 Campus Dr., Arcadia, Ca. 91007  
(626) 821-8300 Website: www.ausd.net

Monrovia Unified School District  
325 E. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, Ca. 91016  
(626) 471-2000  
Website: www.monroviaschools.net

Duarte Unified School District  
1620 Huntington Dr., Duarte, Ca. 91010  
(626) 599-5000  
Website: www.duarte.k12.ca.us

Arcadia Christian School  
1900 S. Santa Anita Avenue Arcadia, CA 91006  
Preschool - and TK - 8th Grade  
626-574-8229/626-574-0805  
Email: inquiry@acsilions.com  
Principal: Cindy Harmon  
website: www.acsilions.com

## THE GOOD LIFE

### HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY STATEMENT FOR ERRORS?

Dear Savvy Senior,  
I've heard that Social Security sometimes makes mistakes on our earnings record, which can reduce our monthly retirement benefits. How can I make sure this doesn't happen to me?  
Paranoid Paul



Dear Paul,  
Mistakes in the Social Security earnings record are actually fairly common. Your Social Security benefits are based on your highest 35 years of earnings history. So, if your earnings for any particular year are underreported, it will reduce your benefits.

These errors typically occur because your employer either reported your earnings incorrectly or reported your earnings using the wrong name or Social Security number. Or if you got married or divorced and changed your name but did not report the change to Social Security.

#### Check Your Statement

The best way to keep an eye on your benefits and avoid any possible mistakes is to carefully review your Social Security statement every year. To do this, go to SSA.gov/myaccount and then print your statement out on paper.

If you're age 60 or older and not yet receiving benefits and don't have a My Social Security account online, your statement will actually be mailed to you about three months before your birthday.

Your Social Security statement lists your earnings record for each year of employment and estimates the benefits you and your family may receive as a result of those earnings.

Once you get your statement, take some time to verify its accuracy by comparing the earnings listed on your statement with your own tax records or W-2 statements. You have to correct errors within 3 years, 3 months and 15 days following the year of the mistake. If you happen to spot a discrepancy within that time limit, follow these steps.

First, call your nearest Social Security office (see SSA.gov/locator or call 800-772-1213 to get the number) to report the error. Some corrections can be made over the phone, or you may need to schedule an appointment and go in with copies of your W-2 forms or tax returns to prove the mistake, or you can mail it in.

If you suspect a discrepancy but don't have back-up records, the Social Security Administration (SSA) may be able to use your employment information to search its records and correct mistakes. If the SSA can't locate your records, you'll need to contact the employer to obtain a copy of your W-2 for the year in question.

Once your earnings record is corrected, Social Security will send you a confirming letter. If you don't receive the confirmation within three months, contact them again, and double-check the correction by making sure it appears on your Social Security statement.

If corrections aren't made on your statement start an appeals process (see SSA.gov/pubs/EN-05-10041.pdf).

#### Other Mistakes

Social Security earnings miscalculations can also happen if there's a mistake in your current mailing address that the IRS has on file for you. Check your federal tax returns for this possible error, especially if you've moved recently.

To correct your address, contact the IRS at 800-829-3676 and ask them to mail you the "Change of Address" form 8822, or print it off at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8822.pdf, fill it out and mail it back to the address on the form.

Other factors that can cause mistakes are if your name or date of birth in the SSA records isn't the same as it appears in the IRS files. So double-check your Social Security statement for these possible mishaps, and if you find an error call the 800-772-1213 and ask for Form SS-5, "Application for a Social Security Card," and submit it with the correct information. The form can also be downloaded at SSA.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

## SENIOR HAPPENINGS



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY! ....December Birthdays\*

Pat Karamitros, Joan Hufnagel, Mary Alice Cervera, Carol Horejsi, Shirley Anhalt, Mignon Grijalva, Helen Reese, Levon Yapoujian, Toni Buckner, Lottie Bugl, Pat McGuire, Sheila Wohler, Nan Murphy, Eleanor Hensel, Sylvia Curl, Elizabeth Levie, Gayle Licher, Cindy Barran, and Melissa Stute. \* To add your name to this distinguished list, please call the paper at 626.355.2737. YEAR of birth not required but you must be over 60.

### HART PARK HOUSE MONTHLY PROGRAMS:



Unless listed differently, all activities are at the Hart Park House (Senior Center) 222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre  
*Hawaiian & Polynesian Dance Class:* Every Tuesday Morning from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Join the class with Instructor Barbara Dempsey as she leads you in the art of Hula!  
*Bingo Time:* Every Tuesday beginning at 1:00 p.m. Cards are only \$0.25 each! Everyone is

welcome to play! Activity may be canceled if there are less than five people.

*Free Blood Pressure Testing:* 2nd Tuesdays Monthly from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. No appointment is necessary.

*Brain Games:* Thursday, December 13th 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. Join us for Scattergories, a creative thinking game by naming objects within a set of categories; or Jenga, a block-building challenge that keeps you stacking and balancing your tower. Everyone is welcome, and no experience is needed. A great way to strengthen your mind and make new friends... Games are facilitated by Senior Volunteers.

*Free Legal Consultation:* Wednesday, December 19th from 10:30 a.m. - Noon. Attorney Lem Makupson is available for legal consultation. Specializing in Family Law, Wills, Trusts, Estates and Injury. Please call the Hart Park House for an appointment, 626-355-5278 ext. 704.

*Senior Club:* Meets Saturdays Monthly at Hart Park House... Brown Bag Lunch and great company at 11:30 a.m.

*Chair Yoga:* Mondays & Wednesdays 11:00 - 11:45 a.m. with Paul Hagen. Classes include Yoga and balance exercises. All ability levels are encouraged and welcomed! \* Voluntary Donations of \$5.00 per week per participant are suggested but not required.

*Birthday Celebration:* Every 2nd Thursday Monthly at the Hart Park House. Share free birthday cake and ice cream kindly provided by the Senior Community Commission!

*Game Day:* Every Thursday Monthly 12:00 Noon come into the Hart Park House and join a lively poker game with friends!

*Free Strength Training Class:* Fridays 12:45 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. with Lisa Brandley. This energetic class utilizes light weights, low impact resistance training and body conditioning. Class equipment provided.

*Save the Date:* Senior Excursion, Wednesday, Dec. 19th to Rogers Gardens in Corona Del Mar.

### SENIOR MOVIE: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays Monthly 1:00 p.m.

#### December 5th National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation Rated - PG-13 1hr 37 min

Its Christmas time and the Griswolds are preparing for a holiday celebration. Things never run smoothly for Clark, his wife Ellen and their children. His bad luck is worsened by obnoxious family but he stays positive knowing his Christmas bonus is near.



#### December 19th Book Club Rated - PG-13: 1hr 59 min

When deadly ghost pirates led by his old nemesis, the terrifying Captain Salazar escape from the Devil's Triangle, determined to kill every pirate at sea, Captain Jack Sparrow's only hope for survival lies in seeking out the legendary Trident of Poseidon, the powerful artifact bestows upon its possessor total control over the sea.



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he did, we're both thrilled

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 to all the people; for there is born to you this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”  
 ~ Luke 2:10

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2018

## AROUND SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

### HISTORY MAKING AND A LITTLE MAGIC IN DUARTE

By Joan Schmidt



At the December 11 Duarte City Council Meeting, history was made and magic was in the air. The meeting began with the Flag Salute by a precious group of children, Sam Kang's two children, Tzeitel Paras-Carracci's son Jack and some of Margaret Finlay's grandchildren. Outgoing Mayor John Fasana did the Moment of Reflection; he spoke of the many good things in Duarte during the past year.

History was made as Duarte now has SEVEN voting districts and SEVEN members on their City Council. The first Oaths of Office were administered to Margaret Finlay and Sam Kang by retired Fifth District Supervisor Mike Antonovich, a good friend of Margaret's since she began her twenty-five+ years, on the City Council. The second swearing in of Tzeitel Paras Caracci, Brian Urias and Jocelyn Nunez was administered by First District Supervisor Hilda Solis; Brian and Tzeitel have been good friends of Hilda's for several years. Hilda has a special connection to Duarte. Several ago, when Francisco Martinez Flores died in Iraq, she attended his funeral and sat next to Bob and me.

There was magic in the air because Mrs. Finlay said FOUR GENERATIONS of her family and FOUR GENERATIONS of Mrs. Paras-Caracci's family were in attendance at this swearing-in. For Margaret, it was her parents, Ed and Helen Ferguson, her husband Brad, their two sons, James and Ian with their lovely wives, and 6 (of her 15) grandkids. Margaret LOVES Duarte; her folks still live there as does a couple of her children, and James works at City of Hope. (All are Duarte HS graduates.) For Tzeitel, her grandparents and uncle drove from San Diego, her parents Lino and Russell (Her next door neighbors) her husband, and of course, their son Jack!

So many other wonderful old friends attended: Jim and Kathy Kirchner, Reyna Diaz and newly-elected School Board Member, Ceci Escarega Carroll, Perla

Trumkul and Hector Elizalde from Congresswoman Grace Napolitano's office, Kristy Lopez from Senator Portantino's office, Debby Mendelsohn from Supervisor Barger's office, Mike Eng, Dr. William Wallace, Principal of CA School of the Arts, Alfonso Somilleda, Joanna Gee, Duarte Library, Judy Blake, Tina Heany and more!

The new Mayor is Tzeitel Paras-Carracci, and the new Mayor Pro tem is Sam Kang.

What was so great was the Meeting began a little late-maybe 7:10. So there was time to visit friends prior to the Meeting. The Swearing-in took place and vote for Mayor and Mayor Pro-tem. Then there was a 30 minute recess and reception which included delicious Mexican food and a cake. It truly was a wonderful evening with magic in the air.



### GOLD LINE UPDATE



On Thursday, the Metro board of directors unanimously supported the motion by Supervisors Hilda Solis and Kathryn Barger, LA Mayor Eric Garcetti and Directors John Fasana and Ara Najarian to reaffirm the agency's commitment to funding and completing the Foothill Gold Line from Glendora to Montclair as a first priority project and to identify funding sources and approaches to fill the funding gap identified by the Construction Authority through the currently ongoing procurement.

We thank Supervisor Solis and the other Metro Directors for their continued support of the project, and also thank the many key stakeholders who attended the Metro meeting and/or sent in letters of support. In attendance, for what turned out to be a seven-hour meeting, were Foothill Gold Line Board Chairman Doug Tessitor (photo below); Foothill Gold Line Board Vice Chairman and City of Claremont Council member Sam Pedroza; Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval (photo below) and Council member Victor Preciado; Claremont Council members and Council members-Elect Larry Schroeder, Jennifer Stark, Jed Leano and Ed Reece; Montclair

Mayor Ginger Eaton; as well as representatives from State Senator Anthony Portantino and Assembly member Freddy Rodriguez, the Los Angeles County Fairplex, Cal Poly Pomona, the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, Pomona College and Citrus College.

In case you missed it, below is an article that ran over the weekend in the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin announcing tonight's scoping meeting, which kicks off the environmental review process for the proposed phasing of construction for the Glendora to Montclair project. The Construction Authority is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report to analyze the impacts of all possible phasing options, allowing the agency flexibility to build as far east as possible depending on the amount of funding that can be secured. The SEIR will also review the possible relocation of the Pomona station parking facility from the north side of the station to the south side. For those interested in attending, the meeting takes place from 5:30-7:30 PM tonight at the La Verne Community Center.

The Journey Continues,

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### ART SALE TO AID WOOLSEY FIRE RECOVERY

MONROVIA, CA, December 9, 2018

More than a dozen local artists have donated paintings for an art sale to benefit people affected by the Woolsey fire. The sale will be held on Sunday, December 16 from 1 pm to 5 pm at the Jewish Federation of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys, 114 W. Lime Avenue in Monrovia.

Landscape paintings featuring views of the San Gabriel Valley and great Los Angeles area will be featured along with other subjects. The artists will include Jill Ackles, Amanda Alten, Joseph Campbell, Gina Frierman-Hunt, Hector Gallego, Harold Hart-Nibbrig, Jeri Mitchell, Amy Nettleton, Jeannine Savedra, Karen Seabrook, Robert Sherrill, Lynne Sims, George Sonneborn, Lisa Yuratich and others. Paintings in oil, watercolor and other media will be included.

Proceeds will be donated to the Southern California Disaster Relief Fund created by the United Way of Greater Los Angeles and the United Way of Ventura County. The fund will provide longer-term support to help low-income individuals and families rebuild their lives. A portion of the Fund also supports American Red Cross immediate response efforts. The event is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys.

"As a group of landscape painters, we appreciate both the beauty and the danger of the natural environment in California," said artist and sale organizer Gina Frierman-Hunt. "I can't think of a better purpose to paint than to help the people facing a long recovery from the Woolsey fire." For information, contact Gina Frierman-Hunt ginahunt@gmail.com or 626-233-9320.

Kai

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# Jeff's Book Pics

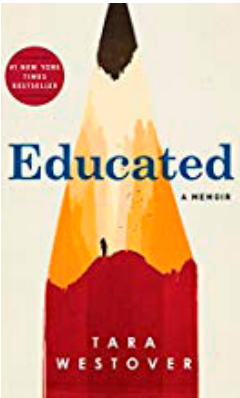
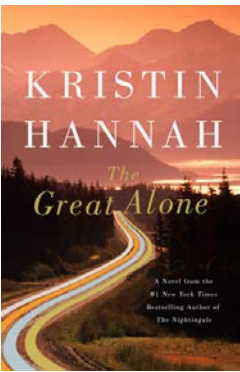
By Jeff Brown

**Educated: A Memoir** by Tara Westover

ONE OF TIME'S TEN BEST NONFICTION BOOKS OF 2018

An unforgettable memoir about a young girl who, kept out of school, leaves her survivalist family and goes on to earn a PhD from Cambridge University. "Beautiful and propulsive . . . Despite the singularity of [Tara Westover's] childhood, the questions her book poses are universal: How much of ourselves should we give to those we love? And how much must we betray them to grow up?"—Vogue

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.



**The Great Alone** by Kristin Hannah

Alaska, 1974. Unpredictable. Unforgiving. Untamed. For a family in crisis, the ultimate test of survival. Ernt Allbright, a former POW, comes home from the Vietnam war a changed and volatile man. When he loses yet another job, he makes an impulsive decision: he will move his family north, to Alaska, where they will live off the grid in America's last true frontier. Thirteen-year-old Leni, a girl coming of age in a tumultuous time, caught in the riptide of her parents' passionate, stormy relationship, dares to hope that a new land will lead to a better future for her family. She is desperate for a place to belong. Her mother, Cora, will do anything and go anywhere for the man she loves, even if means following him into the unknown. At first, Alaska seems to be the answer to their prayers. In a wild, remote corner of the state, they find a fiercely independent community of strong men and even stronger women. The long, sunlit days and the generosity of the locals make up for the Allbrights' lack of preparation and dwindling resources. But as winter approaches and darkness descends on

Alaska, Ernt's fragile mental state deteriorates and the family begins to fracture. Soon the perils outside pale in comparison to threats from within. In their small cabin, covered in snow, blanketed in 18 hours of night, Leni and her mother learn the terrible truth: they are on their own. In the wild, there is no one to save them but themselves. In this unforgettable portrait of human frailty and resilience, the book reveals the indomitable character of the modern American pioneer and the spirit of a vanishing Alaska—a place of incomparable beauty and danger. The Great Alone is a daring, beautiful, stay-up-all-night story about love and loss, the fight for survival, and the wildness that lives in both man and nature.

**A Good Man, a Great Dad and a Loving Husband: Every Man's Guide to a Brilliant Life** by Bradley Brown

"In this book you will find common-sense approaches to help you to be a good man, a great dad and a loving husband. I have invested 55 years into researching this book. Like any good scientist, trial and error have played a major part in my findings. Wisdom is about learning from what we have done or what others before us have experienced and evolving as a result." Brad Brown.' Over the years I've had the privilege of interviewing thousands of business people, leaders, visionaries and entrepreneurs. Bradley has always been someone who has stood out for me as a genuine, caring person who is grounded in reality, and achieving extraordinary results as a consequence. Widely recognized as a pioneer and innovator when it comes to human resource management and leading organizational change, Bradley has achieved results in his professional life that many others only will ever dream about. He has led numerous companies within various industries over the past three decades to have phenomenal increases in revenue, profit and staff numbers, while simultaneously transforming their workplace cultures. I wholeheartedly recommend this book for anyone intent on pursuing their passion both professionally and personally, and learning how to lead a brilliant life, even if it's against all odds.' Lee Woodward CEO, Real Estate Academy. Look for the hardback on Amazon.com/scroll down on Amazon to find it. All reviews are from Amazon.

## All Things

By Jeff Brown

### BOOKS!

"A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies . . . The man who never reads lives only one."  
– George R.R. Martin

"So many books, so little time."– Frank Zappa

"A room without books is like a body without a soul." – Marcus Tullius Cicero

"Good friends, good books, and a sleepy conscience: this is the ideal life." – Mark Twain

"A great book should leave you with many experiences, and slightly exhausted at the end. You

live several lives while reading." – William Styron

"Books are my friends, my companions. They make me laugh and cry and find meaning in life."  
- Christopher Paolini, Eragon

"In a good bookroom you feel in some mysterious way that you are absorbing the wisdom contained in all the books through your skin, without even opening them." - Mark Twain

"I read a book one day and my whole life was changed." – Orhan Pamuk

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLES



### HOLIDAY YOGA

The holidays can be an intense time with extra parties, errands, and visits with people we don't see often. It can be overwhelming. Conversely, a lack of these extra events/merriment can bring its own set of emotions. During this time, it's best to figure out how to dial down the intensity and stay centered. Yoga is the

perfect remedy.

I'm happy to share a few essential holiday yoga poses:

For energy, try Utkatasana, or chair pose. On the inhalation, bring the arms in line with the ears. On the exhalation, bend knees and sit in a chair that's not there. Don't go too deep, and try to keep the chin tucked in but eyes lifted up straight ahead. Stay in the pose for just the inhale and exhale, release, unbend knees, come to stand. Try a few more times dynamically and then hold the pose, breathing steadily.

For grounding and balance, try Prasara Padottanasana. It's a wide-leg forward fold. Step the feet about 3 1/2 - 4 feet apart and have the feet point straight ahead. On the exhalation, soften knees slightly and fold over between your

legs. Take several steady breaths here. Try to draw shoulder blades together on your back to not over-round the back. Release the neck too, then release from the pose entirely after 8 breaths or so.

For centering, try Supta Matsyendrasana, a simple supine twist. Come to lie on your back and draw knees to chest. With knees to chest, roll over completely to one side (fetal position). Then, open up the top arm and look toward the arm that is outstretched. Hold steady for several breaths. Make sure to do both sides. For added centering, add a little abdominal work such as a low boat pose or something similar.

For digestion and to ease tension in the lower back, try Apanasana. Lie on your back and draw knees to chest. Stay for several breaths and feel free to move a little to massage the lower back.

In whatever you do, remember to BREATHE. It's the connection — the gateway— between inside and outside, body and mind, and mind and energy. Breathing with intention and steadiness will bring calm. Please don't hesitate to reach out, [keely@keelytotten.com](mailto:keely@keelytotten.com) or see current events at [www.keelytotten.com](http://www.keelytotten.com).

Namaste,  
Keely Totten, Yoga & Meditation Teacher

## THE MISSING PAGE

Real Life Tips from Life's Instruction Manual

### CREATE MEMORIES

December can be stressful. As parents, good friends, and partners we are tempted to overindulge. Sometimes we overeat, we spend too much money, or we talk too much. Some of you hate the holidays because you feel pressure. What causes you to feel pressured? Are you concerned about having an awkward conversation at a holiday meal?

Do you worry about overextending yourself purchasing extravagant gifts? Are you concerned about putting on another five pounds?

I invite you to return to your mindfulness practice. Rather than getting caught in an endless cycle of spending and consuming, stop. Decide who you want to be this holiday season and how you will interact with your family and friends.

It is an excellent time to remember your power of making an advanced decision. It's time to flip the script. Decide how you want to feel this holiday season and what kind of memories you want to create.

Your lover may not remember the noise canceling headphones that you charged on your credit card, but I suspect they will love if you made a picnic on the living room floor with all of their favorite snacks.

Considering creating a unique activity for your loved ones instead of buying another object to toss in the closet. Make pancakes and let your kids add the berries or chocolate chips. Think of activities that you love and would love to share.

It's fun to fellowship around the table, but it doesn't feel great to overeat. This year try letting everyone else go first in serving themselves. Take time to inquire about your dinner companions and what's new with them. Decide now not to take offense at anyone's comments or conversations, give the gift of giving your dinner mates the benefit of the doubt. Decide now that you won't take anything personally. Deliberately slow down while you eat. Put your fork down between bites and chew your food thoroughly. Make a goal of creating a connection and helping your fellow diners feel seen and heard. This holiday season make it your goal to create a great memory.

Lori A. Harris is an author, speaker, and coach. She loves helping people live extraordinary lives. She offers individual and group coaching programs at [www.loriaharris.com](http://www.loriaharris.com)

# FAMILY MATTERS

By Marc Garlett



## SAVING WHAT MATTERS: 12 MUST-HAVE ITEMS TO PACK IN YOUR GO-BAG

It's the middle of the night.

The authorities just notified you that you have 20 minutes to evacuate your home before a raging wildfire cuts off the exit from your neighborhood, leaving you trapped.

The fire is advancing at the rate of a football field every second, so the actions you take in the next few moments will determine whether you and your family can get to safety or not.

While this may sound like a scene from a blockbuster disaster movie, it's the very scenario faced by many California families recently. And it's a possibility we should all be ready to face.

### Be ready to go

I've always believed the responsibility for protecting my family lies squarely with me. I may not be able to count on, or in the worst of circumstances even hope for, outside help. If I can't shelter in place and protect my family, evacuation is my Plan B. And as the recent wildfires should remind us all, when you have mere minutes to evacuate, you won't have time to think about what you should bring with you to survive the days—or weeks—to come.

To be optimally prepared, have a "go-bag" on-hand packed with the essential items needed to survive for AT LEAST three days following a disaster. While numerous online retailers sell fully equipped go-bags for such emergencies, and both FEMA and the American Red Cross provide checklists to help you pack your own, I'm providing a basic summary of the most-recommended supplies here.

- 1) ID and other essential documents: Bring copies of your passport, driver's license, and/or state ID card and store them in a sealed Ziplock bag. Other documents to consider packing include the deed to your home, vehicle titles/registration, printed maps, and a recent family photo with faces clearly visible for easy identification.
- 2) Cash: Carry at least \$250 in relatively small bills and keep it with your ID in a waterproof bag.
- 3) Shelter: A lightweight tent, along with mylar emergency blankets can help keep you warm and dry no matter where you must spend the night.
- 4) Water and filter: One gallon of water per person per day is a good estimate of needs. Bring as much bottled water as possible, but also include a water purification straw and/or purification tablets, along with a steel container to boil water in.

- 5) A multi-tool: These modern-day cousins to the Swiss Army knife come with a wide array of essential tools, from a knife and screwdriver to tweezers and a can opener.
- 6) First-aid kit and prescription medications: Whether you buy one ready-made or pack your own, the likelihood of injury skyrockets in the wake disasters, so not having a first-aid kit can make a bad situation worse. And don't forget to include prescription medications and other life-sustaining medical supplies if needed.
- 7) Light: Flashlights with extra batteries are great, but headlamps are even better because they're ultra-compact and leave your hands free.
- 8) Fire: Fire can keep you warm, purify water, and cook food. I keep a plasma lighter, waterproof matches, a small portable stove, fuel and tinder in my personal go-bag.
- 9) Solar-powered emergency radio and cellphone charger: Without power, you'll need a way to stay in touch with the outside world. Today you can find devices that include a combination radio, cell-phone charger, and flashlight all in one, with the extra option of hand-cranked power to keep things charged even in the dark.
- 10) Sanitary items: Pack toilet paper, baby wipes, hand sanitizer, soap, as well as tampons and/or pads if needed.
- 11) Clothes: You only need enough clothes to keep you warm and comfortable for a few days, so don't try to bring your entire wardrobe. Stick to essentials like underwear, socks, extra shoes, a jacket, a poncho, a hat, and gloves.
- 12) Food: Focus on high-protein, high-caloric foods that will give you the energy you need to live and get from point A to point B. The most recommended options include, energy bars, MREs (Meals-Ready-to-Eat), freeze-dried survival food, and meal-replacement shakes.

### Stay totally safe and secure

While go-bags are a critical part of helping your family survive the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster or other emergency, they're just a start. For instance, this list doesn't address any of your precious sentimental items, such as photos, old love letters, and treasured cards from the past. Nor does it mention estate planning documents or insurance policies.

Copies of your insurance policies and estate planning documents should be uploaded to the cloud and stored online. You should also store sentimentals, like family histories and photos online, so you don't have to worry about packing any of that in the event of a natural disaster. Indeed, safely storing your sentimentals online is so important, we are constantly innovating ways to help our clients do more of this.

Of course, to keep your family totally safe and secure, you'll need to make sure you have the right insurance coverage and necessary legal documents in place to cover possible emergency contingencies. Contact us if you have questions about what you need or how we can support you.

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MARC

A local attorney and father, Marc Garlett is on a mission to help parents protect what they love most. His office is located at 55 Auburn Avenue, Sierra Madre, CA 91024. Schedule an appointment to sit down and talk about ensuring a legacy of love and financial security for your family by calling 626.355.4000 or visit [www.GarlettLaw.com](http://www.GarlettLaw.com) for more information.

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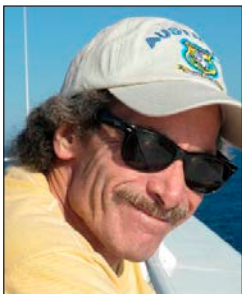
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The traditions of community newspapers and the concerns of our readers are this newspaper's top priorities. We support a prosperous community of well-informed citizens. We hold in high regard the values of the exceptional quality of life in our community, including the magnificence of our natural resources. Integrity will be our guide.

**HAIL HAMILTON**



**BE PATIENT—MUCH MORE IS YET TO COME!**

What really irks me are all these OpEd writers and TV talking heads speculating that the Mueller investigation is nearing its conclusion. I remember the same thing the same OpEd writers and TV talking heads predicting the same thing right after Thanksgiving, 2017. Do these “journalists” realize that, besides Mueller Trump-Russia “collusion” investigation, there are additional eight parallel or proposed investigations going on or being seriously considered.

Be patient—Much more is yet to come!? Let these investigations continue unimpeded to accomplish what they have been asked to do—namely, uncover the truth and expose the wrong-doers. Look at the list. It’s enormous, and it keeps growing in new directions, like a giant spider web.

- Investigation of the obstruction of justice, not the “collusion” investigation, by Republican US Special Counsel Robert Mueller, rather than the one into the dark, corrupting Neverland of Paul Manafort and Roger Stone.
- Investigation and ongoing probing of Michael Cohen, he having pled guilty and sentenced to 36 months in jail, continuing as a cooperating witness, by Republican US Attorney for the SDNY Republican Geoffrey Berman for tax evasion, fraud, and campaign finance violations, who Cohen insists is directed by the President.
- Investigation of the Trump Foundation, the Trump Campaign and Cohen for campaign finance violations, and fraud by Republican Attorney General Barbara Underwood.
- Investigation of taxation and finance fraud by Cohen also begun by Republican NYAG Underwood and NY Department of Taxation and Finance.
- Suit of Trump for Emoluments Clause Violations by Maryland Democratic AG Brian Frosh and Democratic District of Columbia AG Karl Racine;
- Potential Investigation into Trump organization for fraud by Manhattan Democratic DA Cyrus Vance;
- The investigation of Trump over NY Times allegations he and his father Fred committed decades of tax fraud by NY Department of Taxation after being alerted by an article published in the NY Times.
- Investigation of Russian spy Maria Butina, now that she has joined the growing stable of Mueller’s “cooperating witnesses,” expanding his the scope of his inquiry into the shadow world of espionage and illegal foreign election influence, specifically with former and current leaders of the NRA and Christian conservative right.
- Proposed further Investigations of Trump by new Democratic NY Attorney General-elect Leticia James when she takes office in January 2019.

This list doesn’t mention the numerous other investigations by journalists exploring the larger question of why Republicans in Congress and state houses have been so reluctant to break ranks with the President? Is it out of just a matter of party Or is it something much more sinister—like protecting themselves from being discovered being involved in a treasonous conspiracy with the NRA, the Evangelical Christian Right, and with Russia to undermine the US government and its relationships with its allies worldwide. One thing is certain, however, missing in all these investigations, is the total lack of any persuasive motive!

Wouldn’t you wouldn’t know more? Wouldn’t you like to pierce the enigmatic facade of Trump deceits, disinformation, and outright falsehoods? I would like to to know the real, factual truth about what’s been really happening these last 22 months? I sure would.

I would especially like to finally know with certainty whether my suspicions are correct about Vladimir Putin role has been as the puppet master pulling Donald Trump’s strings, like Buffalo Bob used to pull Howdy Doody’s strings on the popular kids TV show. I would also like the names of all Trump’s abettors—foreign and domestic—who aided him in his attempt to undermine the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights that so many of our ancestors fought and died to protect.

My belief, contrary to many of my colleagues speculations that the Mueller investigation is nearing its conclusion, are that they are premature. Too much is still unknown, and much more investigation needs to be done to understand the underlying narrative of what’s happened so it will never be repeated again. I remind paid Trump mouthpiece Rudy Giuliani who keeps demanding that Mueller conclude his investigation—prematurely or not. This is no easy task when dealing with Russian gangsters.

Remember Winston Churchill’s words in 1939: “Russia is a riddle wrapped in a a mystery inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest.” Today, Putin and Russia’s national interest are synonymous. So, I say again, to you especially, Mr. Giuliani: Be patient—Much more is yet to come!



**LEFT TURN/RIGHT TURN**

**TOM PURCELL**



**I'M DREAMING OF A DEBT-FREE CHRISTMAS**

Merry debt-fueled Christmas, America!

According to a recent NerdWallet study, nearly 40 million Americans are still struggling to pay off credit-card debts from last Christmas.

Here’s what’s worse: NerdWallet finds that this Christmas, “American consumers plan to spend more, charge more to credit, and take a longer time to pay it all off!” Good grief!

The grand irony is that the gifts we go in hock to give our kids and each other are often forgotten before the debt is paid off.

I was a kid in the ‘70s. But aside from a Huffy “Spyder” bike I got when I was 10, I can’t remember a single gift I received - though I vividly remember the extraordinary blessings my parents bestowed on me.

I remember going from lot to lot with my father in search of the perfect Christmas tree. We’d bring it home and set it on a sturdy plywood platform he built. We’d decorate the tree as a family, and my mother would explain the history of antique ornaments handed down by family members no longer with us.

I remember that our next-door neighbors, the Kriegers, would always visit on Christmas Eve. Tremendous festivity would fill the air. Donny Krieger, the big brother I never had, would make me laugh out loud (and would be taken from this Earth far too early).

I remember that sleeping on Christmas Eve would be nearly impossible. My father would stack the old stereo console in the dining room with every Christmas record we had - Mitch Miller, the Munchkins, Snoopy and the Red Baron, and Bing Crosby’s “White Christmas.” The scratchy old records would finally lull me to sleep.

I remember it suddenly would be morning. I’d jump out of bed and run around, waking my sisters. Opening our gifts, torn wrapping paper would fill the living room. We’d laugh out loud as Jingles, our beloved mutt, rolled around in it.

But I don’t remember the gifts.

I remember my five sisters, my parents and I were together and happy and healthy. All family conflicts and disputes were set aside on Christmas morning. My father would make a massive breakfast and we’d sit around, laughing and talking for an hour or more. Then, despite his repeated warnings that we’d better arrive at church early, we’d stand in the aisle because some once-a-year churchgoing family would be sitting in our regular seats.

Aside from the spiritual element, memories are what Christmas is most about. My Christmas memories are about togetherness, joy and gratitude for my family’s many blessings - things that cannot be acquired through credit-card debt.

Which makes our growing debts all the more ridiculous.

By the end of 2018, American debt will exceed \$4 trillion for the first time - \$1 trillion in credit-card debt, \$1.5 trillion for auto loans and other debts that do NOT include mortgage debt, and \$1.5 trillion in student-loan debt that is wreaking havoc on the average millennial’s cash flow.

We should spend less on Christmas, not more. We should give more of our time and love, and be charitable, with some of the limited funds we have, to those in greater need.

We certainly should not borrow money we don’t have to purchase things that will soon be forgotten.

All I want for Christmas this year, and every year, is the health and happiness of my loved ones - and more memories, of course.

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**TOM L. MICEK**



**PELOSI GIVES TRUMP AN IMPORTANT CIVICS LESSON**

Somewhere, Dorothy Parker is smiling.

In one withering remark on Tuesday, once (and now increasingly likely future) House Speaker Nancy Pelosi gave Donald Trump the most important civics lesson of his presidency.

“Mr. President, please don’t characterize the strength that I bring to this meeting as the leader of the House Democrats, who just won a big victory,” Pelosi said, deftly shutting down some mansplaining from Trump, who, seconds earlier, patronizingly suggested that the California Democrat was “in a situation where it’s not easy for her to talk right now.”

In just a few words, Pelosi tartly reminded Trump that, in a divided Washington, government by bullying and Twitter fiat straight up won’t work.

First up, let’s not kid ourselves: The Oval Office cage match between Pelosi, Trump, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and what we can only reasonably assume was some sort of PenceBot, was not an exercise in serious policy-making. That went out the window the moment it was opened to cameras.

When that happened, it was all about optics. And Schumer and Pelosi chewed the scenery, while Trump blustered, and the PenceBot, who sat stock still and silent, likely blinked his eyes with some Morse code message pleading for deliverance.

For Democrats, the meeting was an unalloyed win, delivering the message they won’t be cowed into submission like the extraordinarily compliant and supine Republican Congress Trump has had on his side.

Not to be left out, Schumer cast shade of his own, zinging Trump as the president tried to brag about GOP gains in the Senate during the November midterms.

“When the president brags he won North Dakota and Indiana, he’s in real trouble,” Schumer said, as the PenceBot silently raged.

For Trump, the extraordinary 17-minute back and forth between the two Democratic leaders was designed to signal to his base that he’s still serious about delivering on his 2016 campaign promise to build an unbreachable wall along America’s southern border that we now know U.S. taxpayers alone are going to pay for.

Trump made the further Bizarro-World claim that he’d be “proud” to shut down the government if Congress doesn’t deliver every cent of the \$5 billion he wants allocated, as he bravely battles through history’s most epic case of Edifice Complex.

Democrats aren’t moving off the \$1.3 billion they proposed, apparently cementing the grinchy likelihood of a partial, pre-Christmas shutdown of the federal government.

Trump went on to bluster that he’d be “proud to shut down the government for border security. I will take the mantle. I will be the one to shut it down.”

It wasn’t long before official Washington echoed with the sound of Republican members of Congress slapping their foreheads in disbelief. Shutdowns over policy issues, as they well know, never end well for those who provoke one.

“Everybody wants to blame it on the other party, always. That’s what you typically do. That’s out the window now,” said Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., who must be counting the days until his retirement.

Back on Capitol Hill, Pelosi reportedly told Democratic colleagues that the session with Trump was like being in “a tinkle contest with a skunk.” And in a jibe that must have sent Trump into paroxysms of rage, Pelosi took a shot at his manhood, The Washington Post reported, citing a Democratic aide in the room.

Referring to the wall, Pelosi reportedly said that “It’s like a manhood thing for him. As if manhood could ever be associated with him.”

Yes, Trump needs Democratic support in the Senate to get the 60 votes to get the wall funded. But he needs the support of Republicans as well, some of whom have been pressing for more comprehensive immigration reforms.

Tuesday’s White House meeting was a reminder that if Trump couldn’t get what he wanted on immigration when he had control of both sides of Capitol Hill, trying to get things done with a Democratic majority in the House; the Mueller probe careening to its apparent end, and 2020 beckoning, will be an order of magnitude more difficult.

For a president used to getting his way, Civics Class will be in session in 2019.

Copyright 2018 John L. Micek, distributed by Cagle Cartoons newspaper syndicate. An award-winning political journalist, Micek is the Opinion Editor and Political Columnist for PennLive/The Patriot-News in Harrisburg, Pa. Readers may follow him on Twitter @ByJohnLMicek and email him at jmicek@pennlive.com.





















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