



Caden Lacy, who attended St. Matthew's and now attends Windward, said his sister Piper was screaming it was a UFO. They climbed out onto their home's second-floor roof and Caden, 16, snapped this photo.

Many residents in Pacific Palisades felt their houses shake at 5:27 p.m. on December 22. Some thought it was an earthquake; a few wondered if North Korea had successfully launched a missile that made it to the United States mainland.

Instead, it was the successful launching of SpaceX's Falcon 9 from Vandenberg Air Force Base. This was the fourth set of 10 satellites in a series of 75 total that SpaceX will launch for Iridium's next-generation global satellite grouping.

Iridium NEXT is upgrading its current commercial satellite network of low Earth-orbit satellites. The new satellites are scheduled to be deployed by mid-2018. The existing satellites are expected to remain operational until Iridium NEXT is fully operational, with many expected to remain in service until the 2020s.

The new satellites will deliver faster speeds and higher throughputs for aviation, maritime, Internet of Things, terrestrial and government organizations.

Elon Musk, founder of SpaceX, tweeted after the launch: "If you liked tonight's launch, you will really like Falcon Heavy next month: 3 rocket cores & 3X thrust. Two cores return to base doing synchronized aerobatics. Third lands on droneship."

Vittorio's Brings Joy to Homeless Children

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Photos by Bart Bartholomew

For 62 homeless children who live in shelters in Long Beach, Torrance, Sylmar, Los Angeles, Canoga Park and Venice, December 18 was one of their happiest days in 2017.

After the kids were bused to Vittorio's Ristorante on Marquez Avenue and served a lunch of pizza and garlic rolls, Santa came with wrapped gifts for each child. In addition to the toys, each youngster left with a large decorated cookie.

Marie Steckmest, who organizes an annual Holiday Spirit Toy Drive through Palisades Cares, sees that half of the toys collected go to these children. "This is one of my favorite events of the year," said the former Citizen of the Year.

Hank Elder, a member of the Sons of the

American Legion (SAL), said that his organization paid for the buses.

"For the first time, SAL members decorated Vittorio's with Christmas decorations in anticipation of the Homeless Children's Christmas party," Elder said. "I saw a miracle. I cannot think of anything in Pacific Palisades as special as this event this time of year."

Elder said that each age-appropriate gift is chosen for a child and then wrapped. The goal was for each child to receive four gifts. "These were most likely the only ones the children would receive for Christmas," Elder said.

Steckmest and Elder pointed out the two people truly responsible for this event: Vittorio's owner Mercedes Pellegrini and her daughter Vanessa, who have sponsored it the past seven years.

"We are so blessed and grateful to everyone who comes out to help wrap gifts, give gifts and volunteer that day," Vanessa said.

This celebration came out of pain, after

Vanessa was diagnosed with CNS (central nervous system) lupus in December 2010 and hospitalized for two weeks.

"We weren't sure I was going to pull through, since the disease was attacking the blood vessels in my brain," Vanessa said. "My mother, being a devout Catholic, prayed to Nossa Senhora de Aparecida in Brazil. She performs miracles, according to local legend, and so my mother prayed."

(Her mother was born in São Paulo, Brazil, and met her husband Ron while he

was traveling to Rio de Janeiro for Carnivale. The couple married and Mercedes came to the United States, where she started Mercedes' Continental Delights, a bakery in the San Fernando Valley. In 1984, she opened Vittorio's Ristorante with a partner, but when Giovanni Mazzola left to open a new restaurant in Malibu, Mercedes kept Vittorio's.)

Mercedes' prayers were answered and after a few weeks of intensive care in the hospital, Vanessa was sent home, well on

(Continued on Page 15)



Palisades High seniors (left to right) Emma O'Neil, Madeline Goore and Ashley Miller and Vittorio's Vanessa Pellegrini helped Santa distribute Christmas toys to children.

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Council Honors Six Citizen Activists

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Photos by Lesly Hall Photography

Community leaders spent an evening celebrating activism on December 14, as residents Bruce Schwartz, Tom Creed, Matthew Rodman, Marie Steckmest, Debbie Warfel and Nancy Klopper were honored at Gladstone's restaurant.

The Pacific Palisades Community Council hosted the event, marking the 70th anniversary of the Citizen of the Year award, presented this year to Bruce Schwartz. (The list of past Citizens can be viewed at pcc.org.)

Residents Howard Robinson and Peter Culhane spoke about Schwartz's accomplishments and noted that he was a 2012 Golden Sparkplug recipient for his "Safety on Sunset" program, and last year was responsible for securing the signs that prohibit camping in high-fire-severity zones in the Palisades.

As a member of PRIDE, Schwartz also planted flowers (and flags) and cleared street medians on Sunset in an effort to beautify the community. In addition, he was on the committee that pushed the City to clear standing water along Palisades Drive.

When he received his award, the usually talkative Schwartz seemed overcome with



Bruce Schwartz



Nancy Klopper

emotion and simply said, "Thank you."

The four Golden Sparkplugs—Warfel, Creed, Rodman and Steckmest—were honored next. This award recognizes citizens who ignite original ideas and projects into action that benefits the community.

When Debbie Warfel noticed an increase in airplane noise over Santa Monica Canyon, she contacted the FAA, LAX Noise Roundtable and elected officials. She was able to raise money to hire a lawyer to advocate for residents.

"I'm honored to have this award," Warfel said. "It's a long battle and we're still in it."

"I share this award with Wes Hough and John [her husband], and with my mother (Charlene Hartman), who taught me and my brothers that if something bothers you, take action."

Introducing Creed, Council Representative Lou Kamer said, "About eight months ago, he wanted to find a way to clean up the abandoned homeless encampments, so he mapped them out—and then he had a few of us pulling trash out of the bluffs."

"He has organized more and more clean-ups," said Kamer, who credited Creed with helping to restore the land to its native state.

"A sparkplug on its own is useless," said Creed, noting that 50 local campsites have



Tom Creed



Matthew Rodman



Marie Steckmest

been cleaned (filling 19 dump trucks with debris) and about 20 sites remain. "I couldn't have done it without the support of the people here tonight."

"If someone asks, 'What can I do to help?'" Creed said, "Give them something to do and that's how we can all make a difference."

Rodman was introduced by Andrew Wolfberg, who lives close to Paul Revere Middle School.

"We asked LAUSD for more buses to alleviate traffic problems at Revere," Wolfberg said. "Instead, they took them away."

But once Rodman joined the Revere traffic committee, parents took action and eventually added seven buses, taking 300 vehicles off the road daily. "Many people think Matt is the principal because he shows up at 7 a.m. and directs traffic around Revere," Wolfberg said. "If I didn't like Matt so much, I'd beg Tom Ianucci [Revere's principal] to fail his children year after year."

"This is about keeping our children safe," said Rodman, who has two boys at Revere. "I just sat down with the principal and asked, 'What can I do to help?'"

He thanked the school's parents and Revere's Lori Vogel and Ianucci for their assistance. He added that since his younger son is a sixth grader this year, he's willing to continue helping for a few more years.

Emcee Sam Lagana noted, "When I went

to Revere, there were 25 buses that came over to the Palisades and picked us all up."

When Marquez Elementary parent Jenny Hogue presented the Sparkplug award to Steckmest, she thanked the garden teacher for fostering her fifth grader's interest in growing vegetables and using them in the kitchen. "It was amazing to see my son make salsa, and he loves kale smoothies. Who knew?"

Said Steckmest, a Sparkplug winner in 2006 and Citizen of the Year in 2008: "It's a pleasure to be here. I work with some of your kids and some of your grandkids."

This year she was saluted for her gardening program at Marquez, which started with second grade and now includes kindergarten through fifth grade.

Her message to the more than 120 people assembled: "Eat your vegetables and garden with your kids/grandkids."

LAPD Officer John "Rusty" Redican introduced Klopper, who received the Pride of the Palisades award for her efforts to help the "Pretty Blonde," a homeless woman in the Palisades.

"She [the woman] was getting worse and worse," Redican said. "Klopper created and executed a plan to get her off the streets. I firmly believe this saved her life."

Klopper thanked members of the PPTFH, the enforcement team and the neighbors who helped the homeless woman.



Presenting certificates of appreciation to Debbie Warfel (second from the left) were Kimberly Morosi (City Attorney Mike Feuer's office), Maryam Zar (Community Council President), Stephanie Cohen (L.A. County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl's office), Janet Turner (Representative Ted Lieu's office) and Lila Kalaf (Senator Ben Allen's office).



Two cats with differing IQs: Jagger, left, was rescued from a tree by a specialized animal rescue team and Gunnar, right, taught himself to use the toilet. Photos: Wendy Price Anderson

Two Rescued Cats Have Different Stories

Jeaneen and Mika Fabbro, who live in Tahitian Terrace overlooking the ocean, have two cats of far differing IQ's. Five-year-old Jagger ran up a tree after being chased by a coyote, but then refused to come down. The Fabbros, who own Beach House by Mikaila (mikaila.com), tried different methods of coaxing him to leave his perch, but nothing worked. As the days went by, the two owners became increasingly concerned. They called the Los Angeles Fire Department, who told them they no longer take pets out of trees because they don't have the proper equip-

ment and are worried the pets will jump and get hurt. After five days, and still no movement from Jagger, Jeaneen Googled how to get a cat down from a tree and found SMART (Specialized Mobile Animal Rescue Team). This specialized division of the L.A. Department of Animal Services is free to residents. According to neighbor Wendy Anderson, Jeaneen called and SMART responded, although it took several hours to coordinate Jagger's rescue. "A cherry-picker truck was borrowed from the DWP and a professional climber

was called in from the Valley," Anderson said. "They did an amazing job and Jagger was rescued in less than an hour." Anderson, a Palisades News contributor who photographed the dramatic rescue, reported that "Jagger was very hungry and thirsty and is now watching the outside world comfortably from his sofa inside." Meanwhile, the Fabbros' other cat, Gunnar, 3, the smarter "sibling," no longer requires a kitty-litter box. "Jagger needs the City to rescue him from a tree," Jeaneen said. "Gunnar has taught himself to use the toilet." She explained that

both were rescue cats. Jagger was found living in a tree. "He was so small he could be held in the palm of your hand and was badly injured from what looked like talon tears. I guess he has an affinity for trees." Gunnar was found living under an apartment building in the Valley. Jeaneen noted he eats spider webs. "I often wonder if eating small bugs and spider webs kept him alive until he was rescued," she said. "If he's not racing around our 'catio,' or peeing in the toilet, he's eating spider webs!" (For animal rescue: contact SMART at (888) 4LA-PET1 or (999) 452-7381 or visit: LAAAnimalServices.com).



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PACIFIC PALISADES | \$3,159,000
5 BEDS | 6 BATH
5,589 SQ. FT. | 29,146 SQ. FT. LOT

Fatalities Updated at PCH Meeting

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

At the quarterly Pacific Coast Highway Task Force meeting held December 21 at the Palisades Library, law enforcement officials addressed traffic collisions and fatalities on PCH.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff, which serves Malibu, reported five fatalities year to date, as opposed to two in 2016.

On March 4, a motorcyclist was struck by a car and killed as he attempted to make a U-turn at Leo Carrillo beach. Two days later, a solo driver hit a sign and died.

Later in March, Germaine Lathouwers, 55, was struck by a vehicle as she tried to cross PCH near Zuma Beach.

In May, Kokab Sheikholialaavasani, 83, was struck and killed as she attempted to cross PCH in the early morning hours.

The fifth fatality occurred on November 29, when a car that was being pursued by Los Angeles County sheriffs slammed into parked cars, caught fire and killed gardener Antonio Castillo, 28, who was taking out the trash.

L.A. County officials said that arrests for DUI were down in 2017 and they attribute that to Uber and other ride-sharing companies.

The L.A. Police Department, which cov-



PCH is under several law enforcement jurisdictions.

Photo: Lesly Hall Photography

ers PCH from Entrada to Coastline Drive, reported that in the third quarter (ending September 30), there were six traffic collisions, three of which were attributed to unsafe turns, but no fatalities.

Santa Monica Police Department reported that from September through December 20 there were 15 collisions on PCH between Entrada and the McClure Tunnel. Five resulted in injuries, with two fatalities.

A pedestrian was killed crossing PCH near the California Incline around 5:20 a.m. on November 21. Two vehicles traveling northbound hit the man, with both drivers remaining on scene.

The roadway closed for hours. At the Task Force meeting, the Santa Monica official was asked if this was a transient. "He hadn't been home for seven months," the official said, noting that it appeared there were mental issues. Santa Monica police had received reports about a man on PCH, but were not able to respond in time to prevent the accident.

In October around 7 p.m., Kazumasa Nozaki, 23, was riding PCH on his bicycle while pulling a small trailer. A transient from Hawaii, he was wearing all black and there were no lights or reflectors on the bike or trailer when a car struck him from behind. The driver originally fled the scene but was

chased down by bystanders. PCH was closed for several hours during the investigation.

Many Palisades residents may also remember the August 23 death of a pedestrian at 5:10 a.m. in the 1100 block of PCH, which snarled traffic for hours. The pedestrian was on the highway (near the Incline) for unknown reasons, and was struck by a northbound vehicle. The driver stayed on scene and cooperated with officials.

At the end of the meeting, representatives of State Senators Henry Stern and Ben Allen and Assemblymember Richard Bloom announced that a \$150,000 safety corridor grant had been secured from the California Office of Traffic Safety to address traffic, pedestrian and bike problems along PCH.

Pat Hines, founder and director of Safe Moves, was introduced and will work with implementing the grant. Her nonprofit was named Safety Program of the Year by the United States Department of Transportation and Hines was featured on *The Today Show*, *Good Morning, America*, *20/20*, *Oprah* and *Dateline*. Visit: safemoves.org.

The PCH Task Force was created more than a decade ago in an attempt to bring the different roadway jurisdictions together on a regular basis. The highway runs through Santa Monica, Los Angeles, Malibu and unincorporated areas that are governed by the State/Caltrans.

ELLEN McCORMICK

Goals for 2018

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Heard About Town

The Holiday Spirit

On Christmas Eve, in the late afternoon, I was making my third trip to Gelson's. The first two trips, every cash register was open and there were lines of people. But this time, a man pushing a shopping cart filled with small bouquets stopped at each register and gave the worker a small bouquet of flowers. It was such a nice thing to do and the workers all smiled and seemed pleased. I asked the clerk and she said the man was a regular shopper.

Underground Wires

People in our town have been talking about how to go about putting electrical and cable wires underground. Especially when the Santa Ana winds are blowing, putting electrical wires underground seems like a good idea. I've tried contacting DWP for information, but so far that has been fruitless. We need to come together and get answers.

Thanks to Schwartz

After hearing that the homeless were responsible for starting the Skirball fire that destroyed homes in Bel-Air, I am particularly thankful that Bruce Schwartz, a member of the Pacific Palisades Task Force on Homelessness who persisted in getting the "no camping, high fire severity zone" signs posted. I'm also thankful for Rusty's [LAPD Officer John Redican] enforcement efforts.

Christmas Tree Lights

I love that the Village Green committee puts up lights in that tall, tall tree every Christmas. I was told that Fire Station 69 helps hang the lights. Thank you guys, you're just the best!

Giant Houses

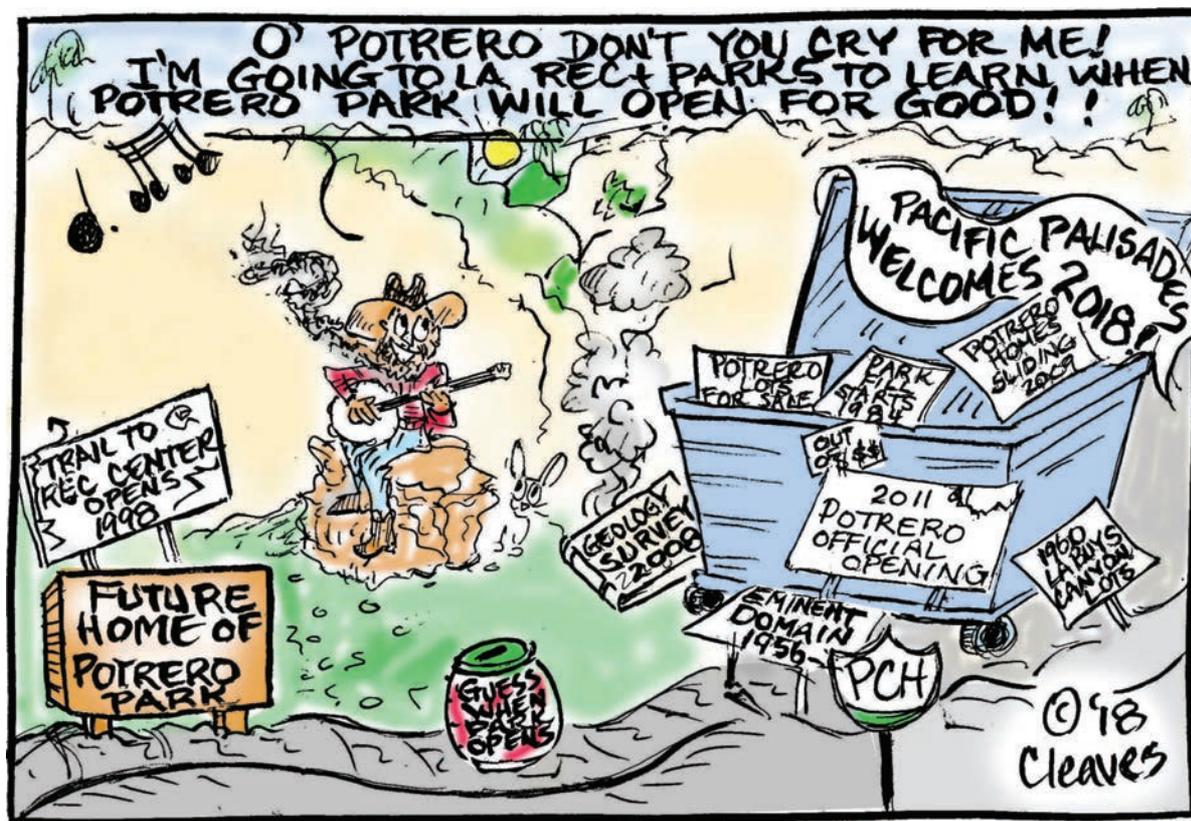
Can anyone explain why two, three or four people need such huge houses in places like Pacific Palisades? If we truly wanted to help save the planet, we wouldn't use so many resources to build giant structures that are mostly not used. It seems they are just for show. Even if these houses are energy efficient, they still use considerable electricity, and building them means trees are chopped down and plants eliminated—the very things that help cool the planet.

New Year's Resolve

My resolution this year is to spend less time on Nextdoor Palisades and looking at my Facebook page, and instead try to interact with real people.

If you'd like to share something you've "heard about town," please email it to spascoe@palisadesnews.com

ANN CLEAVES



VIEWPOINT

The Preven Report

By ERIC and JOSHUA PREVEN
Special to the Palisades News

Our story, "Herb Wesson, L.A. Mayor for Almost a Year Now," was printed in *CityWatch* in October.

The L.A. City Charter requires that when the Mayor of Los Angeles departs the state of California, he or she stops being Mayor . . . with the role passing to the City Council President.

It's a serious rule. Since he was inaugurated on June 30, 2013, whenever Mayor Garcetti has left the state, he has sent a formal letter to City Council President Herb Wesson announcing the precise date and time of departure and return—down to the minute.

A public records request we made recently produced a stack of every notice of absence sent by Eric Garcetti to Herb Wesson to date. Add up the days on which Herb Wesson took over the role as Mayor of Los Angeles and you get 336—just a few weeks shy of a full year (and that's not including any travel the Mayor may have done during the past few months).

When Garcetti's out of town, Wesson has—and uses from time to time—the power to approve ordinances and legal settlements. It was Wesson, for example, who signed the recent controversial \$6.5 million dollar payout to an injured cyclist named Peter Godefroy. There was plenty of time for the Mayor to sign that settlement himself after getting back in town, so it's not clear why he had Wesson do the signing, but that's not the issue at hand.

The real question is, should Herb Wesson get paid for his 336 days of service as Mayor of Los Angeles? Mr. Garcetti's annual salary with benefits is \$241,000, which comes out to \$660 dollars per

day. That translates into Garcetti owing Wesson about \$221,852 dollars. Tip not included.

On December 14, another Preven piece titled "RFPs . . . We Don't Need No Stinking RFPs" was printed in *CityWatch*.

We pointed out that "In California, public agencies are required to put major contracts out to bid," and ask, "So why did the Mayor and City Council of Los Angeles just award a seven-year, \$64-million contract to Motorola Solutions, Inc. with no Request for Proposal (RFP)?"

We wrote:

"The Council Resolution which authored the deal offers no explanation, asserts no exemption to the competitive bidding requirement, cites no precedent.

"Sixty-four million dollars.

"The annual lease payment of \$9.2 million will begin in Fiscal Year 2018-19 and continue until Fiscal Year 2024-25.

"The purpose of requiring governmental entities to open the contracts process to public bidding, according to an important CA appellate case *Konica Business Machines U.S.A., Inc. v. Regents of University of California*, is to: *eliminate favoritism, fraud and corruption; avoid misuse of public funds; and stimulate advantageous market place competition . . . The importance of maintaining integrity in government and the ease with which policy goals underlying the requirement for open competitive bidding may be surreptitiously undercut, mandate strict compliance with bidding requirements.*

"Strict compliance with bidding requirements is not handing out a seven-year, \$64-million contract with no RFP."

(Eric and Joshua Preven are public advocates for better transparency in local government. The *CityWatch* articles are reprinted with permission.)

Thought to Ponder

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."

— C.S. Lewis

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EDITORIAL

Money Is There: Fix the Streets

In November 2016, taxpayers approved Measure M, which promised \$22.5 billion of that money would be used for street repairs. Additionally, that same year \$19 million targeted for street repair was returned to the City's general fund.

Tell that to the driver whose car had blown a tire on Radcliffe Avenue between Haverford and Bowdoin Street. "I'm going to sue the City," he told the *News*. "That street has a giant hole in it."

The middle of the street has a 12-inch by 12-inch hole (about three inches deep). Around it, the pavement is so uneven that it serves as an impromptu speed hump.

The street is well traveled because it's a route for kids going to Palisades High School. Those who drive it stay to the far right and go exceptionally slow, so they don't suffer a similar fate of losing a tire.

It will come as no surprise to residents that in a May 2013 *L.A. Times* story "Grading Los Angeles Streets", this portion of Radcliffe received an F rating (last resurfaced August 19, 1992, and last inspected on November 9, 2011). Visit: graphics.latimes.com/la-streets-map/#13/34.0717/-118.5354.

According to that report, 23 percent of Pacific Palisades streets (175 of 769) received a grade of F. (Overall the average for the streets here was a C-.)

According to the Bureau of Street Services, streets are rated using the Pavement Condition Index (PCI), a scale that rates the physical condition of the street by considering the pavement's structural and surface operational condition, and is based on a 0 to 100 scale. An F means the street

condition is very poor with the following characteristics:

Type of Maintenance Required: resurfacing and/or reconstruction (6 to 12 inches of asphalt concrete).

Physical Condition: major or unsafe cracking.

PCI Range: 0 to 40.

Other major Palisades thoroughfare grades included: an F for Palisades Drive (inspected November 2011 and last repaved August 1991); a D for Chautauqua Boulevard (inspected November 2011 and last repaved August 18, 2001); and a D for Temescal Canyon Road, between Bowdoin and Sunset (inspected November 2011 and last resurfaced August 28, 1990)—the rest of Temescal earned a C.

Why aren't the roads being repaved? Ask Councilman Mike Bonin or Mayor Eric Garcetti.

A KCET November 16 episode, "Cycle of Disrepair: The Dangers of Biking in L.A.", discussed the amount of money the City is paying to injured bike riders—and the families of deceased riders—because of accidents on unrepaired streets. (visit: kcet.org/shows/socal-connected/cycle-of-disrepair)

That episode also featured a snippet of the April 2017 L.A. City Budget Hearings in which Nazario Saucedo, director of the Department of Public Works of the Bureau of Street Services, was questioned by Councilman Mitchell Englander. (The entire budget meeting can be viewed at lacity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=18&clip_id=16882, click on Street Services.)

"How much money are you giving back this year [to the general fund]? Englander asked.

Saucedo replied "A total of 19 million dollars."

"The bulk of that was pavement preservation?" Englander asked.

"That is correct," Saucedo said. "Yes, \$17.1 million."

"Why do you have money left over? Why wasn't it spent?" Englander asked. "We give the department money and we don't expect a dime back because there's so much more to be done."

Saucedo told the Councilman that was a question that he should ask the Mayor. "As a team working together with the Mayor's office, we understand there is a need to balance the budget," Saucedo said.

The City controller did an audit of Street Services, and in a July 31, 2014 report noted that \$21 million was returned between 2010-13, which had been earmarked for street repairs.

After the KCET episode aired, the Mayor announced Saucedo would be retiring.

The *News* emailed the Mayor's office November 27 (and cc'd Councilman Bonin's office) with two questions:

1.) "Did the Mayor ask Saucedo to help with the budget?
2.) Did the Mayor realize how much money was coming back to the City and if so, why didn't he direct Saucedo to use it towards pavement preservation?"

George Kivork, Federal Manager/Associate Counsel for Garcetti, replied the same day, "I am copying our press secretary Alex to help address your inquiry."

Alex never replied, and the *News* sent a follow-up email to Kivork on November 29 that went unanswered. We urge readers to ask Bonin and Garcetti to ensure our D and F roads are getting repaired. It appears the money is there.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Take Down the Signs

(Editor's note: The following letter was sent to the Palisadian-Post and also shared with the News.)

I have stopped my subscription to the *Palisadian-Post*. You have violated the Palisades Specific Plan by installing two large signs on the 881 Alma Real building.

Please remove these illegal signs immediately.

Chuck McGlothlin

(The author is a past Citizen of the Year in Pacific Palisades and a former member of Palisades PRIDE.)

Alliance for Seniors Seeks Donations

Palisades Alliance for Seniors grew out of a small group that started meeting in 2014 to discuss ways to provide support and enhance community for older people here in Pacific Palisades. The 2010 census identified 1,414 Palisadians—six percent of the population—aged 80 or greater. Notably, a full 20 percent of the population was 65 or over, suggesting that the present concern will soon become a wider one as baby boomers join the ranks of the elderly.

Most seniors hope to stay on in their own homes as they age, but as we grow older, we begin to recognize the challenges involved for those who are frailer, who may have stopped driving, and who have lost dear friends or loved ones.

A social life seems to come organically when you are a young family. Through work, community involvement and children's play dates and activities, we meet other

parents and peers, and form lifelong friendships. But when the kids are out of the house, and as we age, it's harder to find parallel opportunities.

The same things that make the Palisades so attractive to active young families—big lots, privacy, remoteness—work against us when we find it harder to get around. Public transportation is limited and inadequate. There is no senior center.

Palisades Alliance for Seniors is an advocate and a source of connection for older people in the community. Will you help us with a small donation in early 2018?

Since we formalized our structure in the spring of 2016, we have completed the following activities:

- Started a twice-monthly speaker series at the library, with 37 speaker programs completed so far. Attendance has grown steadily, to the point that it is now nudging up against the room's 75-person capacity.
- Conducted a forum on transportation options for seniors who don't drive.
- Initiated a partnership with Palisades High School to connect seniors and high school students for one-on-one technology tutoring.

You can help by giving to our support campaign. Donate by visiting: palisadesalliance.org, or mail checks to: Palisades Alliance for Seniors, P.O. Box 1082, Pacific Palisades 90272. We will acknowledge all donations with a letter for your tax records, as our organization is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt charity.

Thank you for your support of Palisades Alliance for

Seniors in making the Palisades a welcoming place in which to age.

Karen Stigler,
Chair, Palisades Alliance for Seniors

Thanks for Helping the 'Pretty Blonde'

(Editor's note: Nancy Klopper, who was honored with the *Pride of the Palisades* award for her part in helping the "Pretty Blonde," received the following letter from the woman's Scandinavian father. She read it when she received her award.)

"When you receive the honor, please bring to everyone who is listening a message from the mother, brother and father, that this honor is given to a person who brought a non-stopping work, seeking out details and small signs for bringing daylight on a greater picture.

"This person has saved a life, and brought back sun over a large family on the other side of the earth. It's not possible to thank this person enough. A great thanks also to LAPD, to Veslemøy Zwart and to the lady (who I for the moment do not remember her name), who borrowed us her apartment, and to the whole team of angels who helped us through two months tough life in L.A."

"Pretty Blonde's Father"

Palisades News welcomes all letters, which may be emailed to letters@palisadesnews.com. Please include a name, address and telephone number so we may reach you. Letters do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the Palisades News.

Orchid Collector to Talk About Classic Cattleyas

Heirloom orchid collector David Toyoshima will be the featured speaker for the Malibu Orchid Society meeting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 16, in the Woman's Club, 901 Haverford Ave.

Toyoshima has been growing orchids,



Cattleya Bow Bells

specifically cattleyas, since he was seven years old, when he received his first seedling.

"I remember that plant. It was a lavender hybrid, Blc. Doctor Von Braun. I grew it in my parents' windowsill and a few years later I flowered it."

By age 12, Toyoshima had built his first greenhouse, a 6' x 8' fiberglass and redwood structure. He joined the American Orchid Society (AOS) in middle school.

While in college, Toyoshima was an AOS clerk and student judge. He is currently serving his second term on the AOS board of trustees.

When it comes to orchids, his biggest passion is collecting and preserving heirloom cattleyas. "One of the first cattleyas I bought from Ernest [Hetherington] was Cattleya Bow Bells. Back in the mid-1970s, many of these old clones were largely forgotten (and relatively inexpensive to buy). Today, there's a resurgence in collecting these old plants."

Allied Artists To Host a Paint-Out

A plein-air paint-out will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 13, at Juan Bautista de Anza Park, 3701 Lost Hills Rd., Agoura Hills. There will be a painting demonstration at 9 a.m. by pastelist Bruce Trentham. There are facilities and free parking.

A paint-out is a great way to meet other artists and discover new sites for inspiration. All levels of artists are welcome, and no membership is required. Bring your own art supplies, water, lunch, sunscreen and hat.

This area has grasslands, oaks and views of the Malibu Canyon hills (without the traffic and noise of Las Virgenes Road) from a popular trail in the park. Access is easy and there is some shade as you walk



Russell Hunziker, a member of Allied Artists, paints on the bluffs. Photo: Matthew Stockman

along this path. Meet in the parking lot. Rain cancels.

Visit: allied-artists.com or contact Trentham (818) 397-1576 or bmtrentham@charter.net or Russ Hunziker, (310) 500-6584 or hunz1234@mac.com.



Palisades High School alumna Rosie Galanis has won awards for her art.

Galanis' Exhibition Opens

Palisades resident Rosie Galanis will have an art exhibition from January 6 to 27 at the Palisades Library, 861 Alma Real. The opening reception will be 2 to 5 p.m. on Saturday, January 6. The community is welcomed.

Galanis' work consists primarily of mixed media works, exploring the temporality of the human condition and the implications of the tropes of modern existence. Her work focuses on the relationship between internal and external worlds. Her work consists primarily of organic materials.

On view will be the series *Torn*, an explo-

ration of the relationship between societal obligation and its widespread effect. Galanis was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Pacific Palisades, attending Palisades Elementary, Paul Revere Middle School and Palisades Charter High School.

A member of the Pacific Palisades Art Association, she has received numerous awards for her works in past juried exhibitions. She is currently earning a bachelor's degree of fine art in painting, with a minor in arts education, from Otis College of Art and Design.

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J. Paul Bowinkel, 75; Renaissance Man

J. Paul Bowinkel, 75, of Corona del Mar, passed peacefully in his sleep at home on December 8.

Paul was known in Pacific Palisades for owning “the Bowinkel building” on north Swarthmore (the two-story professional/retail building adjacent to the alley) and the former Denton Jewelers space on Sunset, which abuts the Caruso construction project. He elected not to sell the buildings when Caruso was acquiring property for Palisades Village.

Paul was born on February 27, 1942 to Paula and Attilio Bowinkel in Santa Monica. He was a devoted and loving husband to his wife Vicki, with whom he had just celebrated his 38th wedding anniversary on December 1. Paul was the best and most loving father imaginable to his two children, Jacqueline and Jeremy.

Paul grew up in Santa Monica and Pacific Palisades. His parents ran Bowinkel’s Galleries, including a location on Rodeo Drive, which sold fine art to Hollywood’s elite. Paul and his sister Antonella attended St. Paul the Apostle school in Westwood. The family spent half the year traveling, always by train and then steamer, to Italy, where they visited family and friends and traded fine art. Paul often reminisced about his magical Italian summers in Sorrento and Bocca di Magra and recreated the experience for his own wife and children for many, many years.

After graduating from University High

School in 1960, Paul earned a degree in political science at UCLA. He was a tutor to the UCLA athletics department in 1965 and 1966 with Coach Wooden. In 1966, Paul received a Fulbright fellowship to teach in Italy, one of his proudest achievements. He continued to teach in Italy until 1969, then returned to UCLA, where he received his MBA from the Anderson School of Business.

Paul worked as a financial advisor for 30 years and was known as “the professor” around the office. He met his wife Vicki while working at Kidder-Peabody in 1978, and they

were married in 1979. They later bought a home in Corona del Mar, where they raised Jacqueline Andrea, born in 1987, and Jeremy Paul, born in 1993. Paul also helped to raise Vicki’s daughter, Jennifer, and his niece Amelia.

After retiring from UBSTK in 2009, Paul remained an active member in every corner of the community for the rest of his days. He was a founding member of the Orange County Italian Cultural Association, a member of Compadres de Los Libros, and active in UCLA Anderson Forecast and the United Methodist Church.



Paul Bowinkel
Photo: Luis F. Pazos (Cadet3Studios.com)

William W. Graham, 69; Philanthropist

Palisades Riviera resident William Welsh Graham, a lawyer, philanthropist and investor, was born May 2, 1948, in Washington. He committed suicide on December 20. His parents, Philip Graham and Katharine Graham, were the famed publishers of the *Washington Post*.

Graham graduated from St. Albans School in Washington and then in 1970 from Stanford University, where he majored in history. He graduated from UCLA law school in 1973 and then worked at Williams & Connolly for three years.

According to the *Washington Post*, Graham settled in L.A. and taught trial law at UCLA. He founded an investment firm,

Graham Partners, which he owned and operated for about 20 years before dissolving the business in 2001.

The *Washington Post* noted that Graham then concentrated on philanthropic activities, including those in education, medical research and support for veterans. He was an early supporter of the PUENTE Learning Center, a Los Angeles educational and youth services organization.

He was a summer resident of Martha’s Vineyard, where he served on the board of the local hospital.

In a CNN story, his brother Donald Graham said that William spent years suffering from a heart ailment that was “painful and

debilitating.”

Newsweek reported that William’s father, Philip, killed himself at his family home in 1963 after spending six weeks in a psychiatric hospital.

Graham’s marriages to Jorie Graham, Caroline Cushing and Jean Parker ended in divorce.

Survivors include his wife of seven years, Sally Lasker Graham; two children from his second marriage, Alice Graham of Portland, Oregon, and Edward Graham of Pupukeya, Hawaii; a sister, Lally Weymouth of New York; and two brothers, Donald E. Graham of Washington and Stephen M. Graham of New York.

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Paul Walquist, 90; Dentist, Navy Veteran

Paul Davis Walquist, born September 20, 1927 in Los Angeles, quietly passed at his Pacific Palisades home December 19 surrounded with love.

Vi, his devoted wife of 65 years whom he cherished, was by his side together with children Christine Reich and John Walquist.

Paul, a loving husband, father and grandfather, is also survived by son-in-law Paul Reich, daughter-in-law Eva Walquist and nine adoring grandchildren.

Paul served in the U.S Navy from 1950 to 1954 during the Korean War. He went through flight training in Pensacola, Florida, and Corpus Christi, Texas. Upon receiving his wings in 1952, Paul and Vi married. He was assigned to a jet fighter squadron and after training for six months left for the Korean Peninsula, where he flew over 100 combat missions while aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Philippine Sea*. Paul received numerous military awards and decorations during his time of service.

After discharge from the Navy, Paul applied to the University of Southern California Dental School. He graduated in 1959.

He opened a dental office in Pacific Palisades and spent the next 37 years in private practice performing all phases of general dentistry. Paul was elected president of the Western Dental Society, a group of about 800 dentists, and served five years as chairman of the Peer Review Committee.

Paul was also a dental consultant for Con-

necticut General Insurance Company, advising dentists from all over the United States.

At a young age, Paul was asked to become a Fellow of the American College of Dentists. Less than three percent of dentists are selected as Fellows for their significant contributions in dentistry.

In his retirement, Paul became active in the local American Legion Post 283. He was proud to contribute to the Legionnaires' mission to serve veterans, active military, their families and community. Paul rose

through the ranks and was elected Commander in 2011.

Paul enjoyed playing tennis at the Riviera Tennis Club. He also mastered the most beautiful calligraphy which he shared for the benefit of his family.

Paul and Vi traveled the world, but always appreciated coming home to the Palisades where they raised their family.

A memorial service will be held in early January. We will miss his loving heart and warm smile.



Dr. Paul D. Walquist

Michael Gyepes, 84; Long-time Resident

Dr. Michael T. Gyepes was born on October 16, 1933, in Hungary, and died in his Pacific Palisades home on December 18, 2017. He had been a resident here for close to 50 years.

Michael was the husband of the late Edna Gyepes, a well-known figure in Pacific Palisades real estate. Dr. Gyepes is survived by three children (David, Steven and Nancy), their spouses and seven grandchildren. They all live in the area but not in the Palisades. His only sister, Judit, lives in Hungary.

His friend Marianna Birnbaum writes: "I first met Mike on September 3, 1941, on the first day as we entered the first grade of the Jewish elementary school in Budapest. I liked him right away, although differently than Vera Sonnenfeld, who planted a kiss on his face, embarrassing Mike in front of

his classmates for some years to come.

"I would have liked to become his sister, mostly, because I was an only child and could have profited from a brother, protecting me from the other boys in class, and keeping me company in the afternoons. But, alas, Mike already had a sister and he had no need for another one.

"The situation did change, however, when the two of us met again in Los Angeles, whereas Judit, Mike's sister, remained in Hungary. As fate would have it, we were both active at UCLA (he in medicine, I in literature), and even lived close to each other, both in Pacific Palisades.

"Thus, after 1956, we entered into a quasi-sibling relationship that, fortunately, was benevolently viewed by each other's spouses and families.



Dr. Michael T. Gyepes

"I have known Mike for 76 years, and suddenly, he is gone. I am numbed by grief. I, the eternal understudy for the role of Mike's sister, have lost my brother, and no matter how long I shall still live, I will never see him again. May I usurp Judit's place for the last time and say, "Thank you Mike for having been my brother for so many years."

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New Tenants Added to Palisades Village

Caruso announced December 19 that it has added four more businesses for Palisades Village, which is set to open in late summer 2018.

“At General Porpoise, edo little bites and SunLife Organics, guests will enjoy an incredible caliber of atmosphere, community, cuisine and service that redefines the ‘neighborhood’ dining experience,” said Kloe Colacaro, Caruso executive vice president of leasing.

Max-bone, the fourth store announced, features the highest quality materials used in pet beds, play toys, leashes, dog jumpers, cat hoodies, harnesses and collars. Co-founder and owner Parisa Fowles Pazafro has stores in the Robertson Boulevard shopping district and in the SoHo district, New York. Visit: max-bone.com.

General Porpoise, which is Seattle-based, will feature custom coffee and doughnuts. James Beard award-winning chef Renee Erickson has created doughnuts made with fresh local eggs and seasonal jams, jellies, custards and creams.

With 400 reviews on Yelp, most praise her Seattle café, which also features quality coffees from multiple rotating roasters and includes espresso, pour-over, drip and draft cold brew.

About the doughnuts, one reviewer wrote: “They have seasonal flavors that I like to try out, but oh man the vanilla custard is a must have every time for me.” A second



Palisades Village is slated to open in summer 2018.

Photo: Bart Bartholomew

wrote, “Such tasty donuts!! I have always been pretty skeptical of donuts with fillings, but General Porpoise definitely is one of the best donuts I have ever had.”

Palisades Village will be General Porpoise’s first location outside Seattle and the second in the U.S. Visit: gpdoughnuts.com.

SunLife Organics is a health-food store that originated in Malibu and whose motto is “Love, Heal and Inspire.” Found at several locations, including Malibu, Calabasas, Thousand Oaks, Manhattan Beach and USC Village, this will be the company’s

first store on the Westside.

SunLife founder Khalil Rafati was addicted to heroin and cocaine when living on Skid Row, but in 2003 he decided to turn his life around. He became sober, but was still smoking heavily and eating junk food when a friend introduced him to juicing and superfoods.

After a quest to find out the truth about healing, Rafati visited India, Indonesia and Central America, and studied Western medicine. “In the end, I found that the truth was not much different than what

most people’s grandmothers advised: ‘Eat your fruits and veggies.’”

In addition to smoothies and health foods, SunLife Organics will offer juices, wellness shots, protein shakes, coffee, tea and bowl. Residents will be able to pre-order all menu items for pickup. Visit: sunlife-organics.myshopify.com.

The eatery **edo little bites** will specialize not only in breakfast (including fresh pastries, tarts and croissants), but also salads, sandwiches and toasts.

The menu has been developed by Chef Edoardo “Edo” Baldi, who owns e. baldi Ristorante and edo Italian baretto in Beverly Hills, and will allow takeout so that families can enjoy a picnic sitting on the lawn directly in front of the eatery. Visit: ebaldi.com.

In keeping with a request from many Palisades residents that no chain stores be in the Village, Caruso has signed several new businesses that will have their first “brick and mortar” location.

In addition to the four latest stores, prior businesses announced include Bay Theatre by Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas, Sweet Laurel Bakery, McConnell’s Fine Ice Creams, FdeiM by Madeo, Vintage Grocers, Jennifer Meyer, Botanica Bazaar, Carbon38, The Little Market, Marysia, Miller’s Oath, Zimmermann, TOWNE by elysewalker and Bentons Sports Shop.

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Realtor Halfon Believes in Palisades Values

By LAUREL BUSBY
Staff Writer

Creativity and problem solving are two of Marty Halfon's favorite aspects of being a realtor.

From the beginning, when he dove into the profession after his freshman year at St. Mary's College in 1978, he found both real estate's design possibilities and varied challenges appealing. For example, he helped remodel the first two homes he sold in his hometown of Beverly Hills, and in the 40 years since he has also enjoyed renovating and redesigning multiple properties ranging from apartment houses to industrial spaces.

"I look at things a little different; I look at the simplicity of fixing things more than the complexity of it," Halfon said. "I'm a problem solver. In real estate you have to be because you're always solving problems. . . . Some people look at construction issues as roadblocks. I look at them as hurdles that we can get around—not a big deal."

As a teenage realtor, he also encountered his own hurdles to get around. In his first year selling homes, he encountered some unscrupulous people and discovered he was a bit naïve about how the real estate world worked.

"I was raised that you do what you say you do," Halfon said. But "people were ripping me off, lying. I said to my father, 'I don't want to change who I am to survive in this business.' I had a baby face. I was too naïve. People were thieves. It was a rude awakening. It was real life."

So Halfon stepped away from real estate for a few years and pursued another interest—music. He worked for Motown, listening to music submitted to the A&R department. This interest strangely enough led him back into real estate. The night club Studio 54 was popular in New York City at the time, and after a visit there, he was inspired to start something similar in Los Angeles.

A 10,000-sq.-ft. roller-skating rink called Flipper's had gone out of business, and Halfon arranged a deal to create a nightclub there and also ventured into creating concerts in various struggling L.A. clubs. By 1985, he was back in real estate to stay. He first trained in commercial



Marty Halfon, a realtor with Rodeo Realty.

real estate at Marcus & Millichap, and then worked both on his own and with the Homestead Group in apartment building acquisitions. He finds commercial real estate to be more strategic, while residential transactions are more emotional.

"It's like fixing someone up on a date," Halfon said. "You can't sell residential real estate. You listen to what they like, what they don't like" and try to find the right match. With commercial ventures, "it's not a matter of emotion. It's a matter of fact. I understand both aspects. I can analyze an apartment building in 10 seconds if you give me the numbers, but selling a house is like being a tour guide."

Halfon has also purchased properties himself, including 10 homes and various apartment buildings, which he has often renovated. He worked on a deal to convert a Sylmar industrial space to Lone Star Studio, which was

home to a couple of the *Matrix* movies and the *Ripley's Believe It Or Not* television series. In 1992, when the real estate market crashed, he switched gears and opened a restaurant, The Hollywood Hot Dog, which he operated for four years as a quick, less expensive business lunch spot that appealed to people ranging from President Ronald Reagan to Steven Spielberg.

Throughout his various ventures, he has worked to be forthright about issues with properties, such as pointing out shoddy construction or cheap features that he feels makes a purchase not worth the expense.

"I won't sell you something just to make a sale," he said. "I wouldn't let you buy it just to make a commission. I don't believe in that. . . . My reputation is more important than making a sale."

He has also continued to cherish community. Until last year, Halfon had centered his life in Beverly Hills, where his family had moved when he was five years old. He has worked at Rodeo Realty for the past six years and at various other realty firms, such as Fred Sands and June Scott and Associates, previously.

However, last summer, he moved to Pacific Palisades with his daughter, Caitlyn, 16, and son, Sam, 14, and began working at the Palisades Rodeo Realty office in addition to the Beverly Hills location.

He has since relished being a part of the Palisades by joining the Chamber of Commerce, donating a piano to Palisades High, where his daughter is a junior, and also raising money to eventually refurbish the school's tennis courts in part through an upcoming event at Café Vida. (Twenty percent of gross sales between 6-9 p.m. on January 16 at the 15317 Antioch restaurant will support this effort.)

He was drawn to the Palisades because of the small-town feel, similar to the Beverly Hills of his youth—a safe, quiet community where everyone knew and helped each other.

"I was raised in a very close-knit family where my dad coached Little League and my parents were involved in the community," Halfon said. "My value system comes from family and community involvement and giving back and being a part of. That's why, since I moved to the Palisades, I've been very involved."

Inherited a House? Know the Options

By MICHAEL EDLEN
Special to the Palisades News

Eventually, many people need to decide what to do with a home they have inherited. Generally, this will be the case when a family member has passed, and there are several alternatives that are well worth exploring and evaluating before making important decisions. Some people may become trustees who are responsible to family members and perhaps others who have a financial interest in the property.

There are various options to consider, including selling the house, leasing it, moving into it, or perhaps developing and then sell-

ing it. I advise people to meet with a financial advisor to compare some of the options for the use of asset funds and to also compare with alternative investment opportunities.

An experienced local real estate agent can help in the decision-making process as well. He or she can do a professional analysis of the potential market value as a sale or a lease.

The agent can also recommend which home improvement actions would have a good return on investment in order to maximize the highest value of the property.

Some agents may also provide added services such as coordination of clearing out the house and preparations before the beginning of marketing. This might include

painting, carpet cleaning or replacement, landscape upgrading and professional house and window cleaning. Which of these items to address would depend on whether you decide to sell or lease.

In some cases, the decision may be to make every effort to retain the property for present or perhaps future family use. If one heir will be occupying it, various alternatives will need to be discussed so arrangements are made to fairly compensate other heirs who may be disadvantaged for the time being.

If the decision to sell the property is postponed, and none of the heirs will be living in it, then leasing it for a year or two may be the most favorable decision. This will pro-

vide cash flow to the heirs quickly, and also give time to decide which long-term plans to make.

Most family or trust heirs decide to simply sell the property. Others develop it with a substantial investment to expand and/or upgrade it before selling.

However, a serious consultation with a local real estate agent is highly advisable before an heir decides to consider that latter course of action, as there are many aspects that could make this a risky decision.

Michael Edlen is ranked in the top one percent of all agents across the country. Visit: MichaelEdlen.com or call: (310) 230-7373 or email: michael@michaeledlen.com.

Palisadian Gains Marijuana Notoriety

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Stephanie Smith, a Pacific Palisades resident, was busted on December 13 for operating an allegedly illegal marijuana-growing operation in San Bernardino.

According to KTLA, police issued a search warrant for Smith at her home near the Asilomar Bluffs and she was detained there.

The case received national media attention, with headline writers calling the attractive 43-year-old a “queenpin.” CBS News reporters said police reported that “The huge operation is normally associated with a drug lord” and “Smith was making millions of dollars per month running the operation.”

The operation was centered in San Bernardino and involved more than 24,000 plants (18,000 pounds of marijuana) and eight people working in an otherwise empty building.

Officials received a tip about the operation several months ago when the supposedly empty building had an electric bill of \$67,000 per month. According to CBS, “The investigation revealed a major operation with employees, guards, gates and no building permit.” Another news source said there was a 12-foot metal rolling fence, fortified doors, a large concrete wall around the parking lot and surveillance cameras. Inside there were heat lamps and an advanced irrigation system.

If misdemeanor charges are filed, Smith could face jail time and a fine.

Smith told the DailyMailTV reporter, “Yes of course [I’m going to get a license]. No one has a license in San Bernardino. There’s no licensing scheme available at this time.”

Smith continued, “January 1, that’s when the laws change for the state and that’s when they begin accepting licenses. I already do it as a proper business. I already have a lot of other licenses in other jurisdictions.”

Asked if she was concerned about possible misdemeanor charges and potential jail time, she said “No, what for?”

KTLA reported that Smith had paid cash for two warehouses and a home for the operation.



Stephanie Smith, née Darcy

This was not Stephanie Smith’s first brush with the law. Her boyfriend, the former doctor, Craig Allan Bittner, first came under scrutiny in 2003.

An *L.A. Times* story reported that the California Medical Board and San Francisco district attorney filed a joint civil suit against his Arizona firm for allegedly using false advertising about the effectiveness of a breast-cancer scan.

The *Times* article said, “The suit seeks to stop Dr. Craig Bittner, 36, the founder and medical director of Ameri-Scan, from continuing to boast in radio ads and on the Internet that the firm’s ‘BreastScreen’—using a technology called magnetic resonance imaging—is nearly ‘100 percent effective’ in finding tumors and is more capable than a traditional mammogram.”

Then the radiologist changed course and started a “liposculpting” company under the name Dr. Lipo 90210, with offices in Beverly Hills.

In 2009, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Bittner fueled his car with human fat, obtained from those procedures.

Its story said there were allegations that he had allowed his unlicensed office staff, including Stephanie Darcy, aka Stephanie Smith, to perform cosmetic surgery.

In February 2008, Darcy was named in a trio of personal injury suits filed in Santa

Monica in which she was accused of performing liposuction without a license.

Along with her boyfriend Bittner, she was sued for breach of contract, fraud, negligence, battery, willful misconduct and intentional infliction of emotional distress by plaintiffs Barbara Lundy, Sheila Choi and Dorie Leo.

The California Medical Board executed a criminal search warrant, signed by a state superior court judge in Bittner’s offices in Beverly Hills and Irvine, as well as the couple’s Santa Monica home in November 2008. The warrant sought information about at least 15 of Dr. Bittner’s patients and “evidence tending to show the unlicensed practice of medicine.”

Bittner pled guilty to a felony in April 2011, lost his license for five years and was required to pay restitution to his victims. Darcy also pled guilty to a felony for the unauthorized practice of medicine.

Stephanie Rachel Darcy, the mother of three (two through surrogates), legally changed her name to Stephanie Smith in Santa Monica on August 24, 2012.

The sentencing was deferred until April 22, 2013, when Smith was sentenced to 36 months’ probation after being found guilty of violating the California Business and Professions Code.

One victim wrote on an Internet site:

“Refund of the original surgery fees is insulting. I have already paid almost TWICE the original fee for corrections and have at least another \$10K more to go. That comes out to THREE TIMES the original cost.”

The victim continued: “The folks at Beverly Hills Liposculpture have recorded three new LLC’s (limited liability companies). Officer’s/member’s personal assets are protected from litigation. They take a salary out of the profits and are able adjust it so that the company itself has minimum assets. This can leave the company with little resources to pay damages for negligence or other compensable offenses.”

According to a December 18 *Daily Mail* story, Smith has registered a series of companies in California since 2015. “Among them are 10 Palmdale LLC, Carnation Enterprises LLC, 322 Clearbright LLC and Central Ave LLC—all of which are registered to a postal facility in downtown Pacific Palisades.

“No details on what the companies do are available, but Smith is also connected to a series of medical-based businesses in Arizona, including one named Advanced Liposuction Specialists LLC which was last listed as active in July 2016.” Visit: daily-mail.co.uk/news/article-5191377/California-queenpin-seen-shopping-drug-bust.html.

(Continued on Page 15)



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Police issued a search warrant for Smith at her home near the Asilomar Bluffs and she was detained there.

Marijuana

(Continued from Page 14)

In a 2013 Consumer Watchdog story (“Top Ten Dangerous Doctors Are Poster Children for Patient Safety Reform”) the author wrote: “These ten dangerous doctors are some of the most egregious over-prescribers, repeat offenders, and drug and alcohol users in California. Their stories show the urgent need for action by California lawmakers to replace a Medical Board that has allowed bad doctors to continue to practice, and to raise the outdated cap on patients’ ability to hold negligent doctors accountable in court.”

Craig Bittner was one of the ten “poster children” and the story described him as “a

Beverly Hills radiologist who performed liposuction. He allowed his assistant, who was also his girlfriend, to perform liposuction although she was not a doctor and had no formal training in the procedure. Patients began complaining as early as 2008, and at least nine women were left disfigured and in pain. Bittner did not surrender his license until 2011. In criminal prosecution, Bittner was allowed to plead guilty to just one misdemeanor count. His five-year sentence was reduced to two. He has reportedly changed his name and is now attending law school.”

Allegedly, in addition to owning two Teslas, Bittner and Smith also have homes in Pacific Palisades and Scottsdale, Arizona. They purchased the Palisades two-bedroom home in 2013 for \$720,000.



Santa brings joy to homeless children at Vittorio’s.

Vittorio’s

(Continued from Page 1)

the way to recovery. “As an offering, we both promised to give back to the less fortunate children, who are innocent and often times are the victims of circumstance,” Vanessa said. “I had worked with School on Wheels since 1999 and I was intimately involved with kids who were living in abused homes, homeless shelters and transitory houses. These were the children that were forgotten, and so, the Holiday Luncheon was born.”

School on Wheels provides academic tutoring to children living in shelters, motels,

cars, group foster homes and on the streets with the hope of having them achieve educational success, so they can break the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

Vanessa, who attended a parochial school in the Valley and then graduated from Pepperdine, told the *News* in a December 26 email, “I’m still fighting the battle [with lupus].” She works with her mom in the restaurant and at the Palisades office of Pacific Union Realty (formerly Gibson International). She has two sisters, Sabrina and Pia.

“The luncheon is an amazing day for us, for the kids and for the community!” Vanessa said. “We have no plans to stop this wonderful tradition.”



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Left: Paul Revere's Town Crier staff with faculty advisor Eric Wechsler.

Above: Town Crier staff member Mason Wein, an eighth grader, works on his page on deadline.

Photos: Lesly Hall Photography

Revere's Town Crier Wins National Award

By LAURA ABRUSCATO
Contributing Writer

Five times a year, Paul Revere Middle School's 2,100 students look forward to receiving a colorful 32-page newspaper produced by their fellow students and focused on campus life.

This paper, *The Town Crier*, has once again received national attention as well, by winning its second Pacemaker Award from the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA), which honors excellence in student journalism every November.

The *Crier* was one of 275 high school and middle school newspapers submitted to the contest from around the country.

Revere faculty advisor Eric Wechsler told the *News* in an email, "Four middle schools were among the 49 schools that made it into the final round. When the winners were announced at the NSPA's fall convention in Dallas, only one middle school—Paul Revere—was among the 26 schools that took home the top award."

Media professionals choose the winning student newspapers based on their excellence in coverage, writing, editing, design

and photography.

The busy Revere student-journalists, however, didn't have much time to celebrate. It was time to get back to work on the December issue, but with school closed December 7 and 8 because of wildfires, the paper's deadline was pushed back and students were scrambling to make it to press in time to distribute the paper in early January.

"The fire gave us an opportunity to go outside our borders," said Wechsler, who heads up the newspaper and yearbook and is an eighth-grade English teacher. He likes to show his students daily newspapers such as the *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times* as examples of journalism to strive for.

The students generally write about subjects related to the campus, or young people's lives. They use printed questionnaires which they send to faculty members or others they are interviewing in order to make sure they are accurate in quoting them.

In addition to their daily journalism class, there are some after-school and lunch-period time commitments required of each student, in order to cover campus events.

Although many of the students say they signed up for the newspaper elective be-

cause they love writing, they have learned there is much more to putting together a newspaper. They also take photographs, gather information and create layouts using Adobe InDesign.

Articles in the works for the coming issue include Davina Yashar's on the community service club activities, and Johnny Harvey's round-up of how different students celebrate winter holidays. Annabelle Grandy was editing her piece about the school's lost tortoise, and how he was found. Bianca Cherry was writing a page on "overpriced clothing brands such as Supreme." Ginger Simpson was finishing up a page about four faculty members who attended college in other countries.

The winning Pacemaker issues were edited by eighth graders Alexandra Schoettler, Joey Chae, Maddie Glenn and Cole Herron.

"We thought it was just journalism, we thought it was just writing," said Glenn, who added that they have enjoyed learning about adding pictures, charts, graphs, maps and collages to each issue.

"It teaches us leadership skills," said Chae, who notes that each editor has to lead 8 to 10 people.

"It's great to be on a team doing quality work," added Herron.

Schoettler praised Mr. Wechsler, who has been overseeing the paper for 13 years. "He helps us write articles really well."

Revere previously won a Pacemaker Award in 2015.

Garden Club To Hear Iris Expert Bonino

The Pacific Palisades Garden Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. Monday, January 8, at the Palisades Woman's Club, 901 Haverford Ave.

Speaker Jill Bonino will discuss the different varieties of irises and how to care for them. She is a member of the San Fernando Valley Iris Society and has participated in maintaining the iris garden at Descanso Gardens since 1997. Her home garden has evolved into a collection of both bearded and beardless iris.

Bonino has been a judge for the American Iris Society since 2007. She is an avid photographer and will present a slide program.



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Synchro Swimmers Practice at PaliHi

By LAUREL BUSBY
Staff Writer
Photos by Shelby Pascoe

Like upside-down Rockettes, the team strives to kick their legs in unison, while the rest of their bodies hover almost invisibly underneath them.

After an array of kicks, they pop to the surface, continuing to dance together with flips, floats and other synchronized swimming maneuvers. Sometimes they dance to music, which is audible even underwater, and other times, a coach sits at the edge of the Palisades High pool tapping a stick against the side, so the girls can properly time their movements to its beats.

Even when they aren't performing a routine, the Westside Aquatics team members are moving, treading water while they listen to a coach's instructions or chatting among themselves. They look happy and comfortable, yet also focused when they begin their choreography.

Mia Sim, 12, a Paul Revere seventh grader and a member of the club's Junior Olympic squad, has been part of the team for two years and said she treasures the sport "because of how satisfactory it is. For example, when you finally perform for the judges and hit a hard move just right, or even looking back at your routine and seeing everyone synchronized at one point makes all the pain, soreness, effort and hard work worth it."

Other synchro swimmers, who can begin participating in the Westside Aquatics introductory splash program as young as five years old, revel in the joy of learning tricks in the water.

For example, pre-team member Mia Mozenter, 10, said, "It's really fun because we get to dance underwater and do all these fun moves."

Her mother, Tammy, said they happened onto the sport when Mia was taking swimming lessons and synchro coach Valerie



Synchronized swimmers practice at the Maggie Gilbert Aquatic Center at PaliHi.

Williams suggested that Mia give it a try. The Pacific Palisades family knew nothing about synchronized swimming, so they checked it out online and thought it looked intriguing.

"And she loves it, loves it," Tammy said. "She's really motivated. She loves coming. . . . She's never liked anything as much as she likes this."

Head coach Williams, who also is an assistant coach for the U.S. national team, found the sport as a child through a city recreational program. She later moved onto a club team and transitioned to coaching after a car accident.

"The combination of artistry with athleticism" appealed to her, Williams said. "I really like combining music and movement—in the water is such a completely different experience than on land as a dance. . . . The underwater world is very cool."

In practices, the team, which trains together three times each week, works both on land and in the pool to develop strength, endurance, flexibility and artistry. The 30

minutes of land training might include jumping jacks, resistance bands, pushups, ballet kicks, yoga and acrobatic skills, such as bridges and handstands.

Pool work could feature both regular laps and synchronized swimming exercises like swimming underwater and holding your breath or doing laps using the eggbeater, which is a specialized way to tread water. Sculling, which is a way to use your arms to support yourself, would also be practiced.

Work on routines is also a central part of practice time. For both the novice/intermediate and the Junior Olympic groups, competition routines include choreography moving across a large swath of the pool. In addition, the swimmers might train separately for solos or duets. At the competitions, scoring is a bit complicated.

"The swimmers perform four figures individually and those scores are added to their routine score," Williams said. "With a system similar to other artistic sports, there is a panel of judges giving scores on a 10.0 scale for ex-

ecution, difficulty and artistic impression."

The judges' scores are combined for a total between 1-100. The top team in the world, which is currently the Russian team, might score as high as 98, while other elite teams will have scores ranging from the 80s to 90s, Williams said. Young teams' scores will typically range from the 40s to the 60s, depending on their level.

As the Westside Aquatics team has grown from three swimmers in 2014 to 16 competitors today, more coaching has been added, including French Olympian Cinthia Bouhier; Jane Kok, who swam for Ohio State's team; and Chloe Larouche, who swam for the Canadian national team. Some of the coaches also still perform as professionals for the company Aquabatix.

First called water ballet, the sport was initially a male-only event, but in the 20th century, it flipped into a mostly female sport with men in the U.S. either banned from joining women in many competitions or as of 1941 required to compete separately by the Amateur Athletic Union, which caused male participation to dwindle. In the U.S., men were again allowed to compete with women on the amateur level in 1978. However, men have yet be allowed to compete in the Olympics, which first offered the sport in 1984.

The local Westside Aquatics team is all girls at the moment, with 16 swimmers divided among the pre-team, novice/intermediate team and Junior Olympic squad, while another 12 girls have experimented with the introductory splash program over the past year.

Coach Larouche, who from 7 to 18 years old trained up to 40 hours a week as a synchronized swimmer, said that the sport tends to appeal to those who give it a try.

"It's the best sport in the world," she said. "We're made of 80 percent water, so you know if you put music on and your body is in the water, there's nothing better."





Caroline Ross



Alex Miller



Halsey Hulse



Noe Winter

PaliHi Sweeps City Doubles

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Photos by Bruce Hulse

It was a one-two-three sweep for Palisades High School in the City Section girls doubles tournament on December 15 at the Balboa Tennis Center in Encino.

Pali's Alex Miller and Caroline Ross won the championship by beating the Dolphins'

freshman team of Halsey Hulse and Noe Winter 7-5, 6-3 in the finals.

In order to reach the championship round, the second-seeded Miller and Ross barely worked up a sweat in their first four matches, losing only five games out of 30. Their biggest challenge came in the semifinals, when they went three sets against teammates Maddy Goore and Kalea Martin, who were seeded third.

By contrast, the top-seeded Hulse/Winter duo never played more than two sets. The closest anyone came to challenging them was the Cleveland team of Irene Kim and Katie Song (6-1, 6-3).

Dolphins head coach Bud Kling was asked how he coaches when both of his teams are fighting for the championship.

"I don't root for anybody. I just want them all to play well and have fun," he said, and then noted that, "I was coaching the third team which was playing Cleveland."

Goore/Martin beat Cleveland 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 for third place.

When there were breaks, Kling said, he gave individual playing tips to his players in the championship, "such as 'keep your elbow down,' but I didn't give them any strategy. They've played against each other all year, they knew what to do."

Kling said that Hulse/Winter had beaten Miller/Ross six out of seven times the week before the championship finals. "Caroline [Ross], who had won doubles last year with Gigi [Feingold], maybe had more experience under pressure," he speculated, which might have made a difference.

All six Pali girls automatically made the CIF First team.

The season stretched almost an additional two weeks. The initial doubles tournament started November 16 and was to conclude on December 5, but was pushed back because of the fires (and unhealthy air). Then when it was deemed safe to play, it was finals week at City schools, so the championship was postponed.

Pali's team depth is so great, Kling said, that he would have had four teams in the top

four. But a few years back at the doubles tournament, of the eight teams in the quarterfinals five were from Pali and in the semifinals, all were Palisades teams, so the CIF instituted a ruling that a school can enter only three doubles teams and four individual players.

On the individual side, Ireland Amato (seeded fifth) and sister Sophia (seeded sixth), made it to the quarterfinals before losing to two Venice players, the fourth-seeded Christine Inah Canete and the third-seeded Fmar Canete.

In November, Pali's four single players (the Amatos, Winter and Sophia Arvin) and double players (Miller/Ross, Goore/Hulse and Feingold/Kalea) won the City team title against Cleveland.

The Dolphins then advanced to the CIF/USTA Southern California Regionals at Claremont Club, where they fell 7-0 to San Diego sectional winner Torrey Pines. Torrey Pines, the defending champion, lost to Arcadia 6-1 in the semifinals and Arcadia lost to Corona Del Mar 4-3 in the final.

Going into the tournament season, the Dolphins were 22-2, losing only to West Ranch and Palos Verdes. They finished 12-0 in league play.

"This has been one of the nicest groups of girls that I have coached. They all worked really hard," said Kling, who added that "This is also one of the best parent groups." He cited the parents' willingness to help out whenever it was needed.

The veteran coach has only three seniors graduating this year, Alex Hart, Goore and Taylor Barfield. "We're set for next year," he said. "We should be really deep. Our freshman class this year was exceptionally talented."

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AYSO Region 69 Team Wins

The AYSO Region 69 U11 Girls EXTRA team, coached by Jonathon Eastman and Matt Humiston, won the Sportsmanship Trophy at the 21st Annual Beverly Hills Sportsmanship Cup tournament held December 16-17.

Almost 70 teams from U10, U12 and U14 age groups competed in the tournament, which emphasizes good sportsmanship.

The tournament is timed to take place before the competitive playoff season begins and offers teams four almost full-length practice games that are played for fun and to experiment with line-ups.

Every team has the chance to win regardless of goals scored or allowed. Teams, coaches and parents are judged by officials to see which team best epitomizes sportsmanship.

The tournament website states: "We know everyone will play hard, but we have done this since 1997 and the players love playing (and the referees love refereeing) without the pressure."

In order to win its award, the Palisades team exhibited exemplary sportsmanship, beating 13 other teams in their age group.

In order to participate in the tournament, all players must have registered and played in the 2017 fall AYSO primary season. Palisades players included Declan Eastman, Maya Eisner, Becca Reuben, Molly Held,



At the awards ceremony for the Beverly Hills Sportsmanship Cup were (back row left to right) Coach Jonathon Eastman and referees Dick Held, Brian Held and Tim Reuben; (middle row) Declan Eastman, Maya Eisner, Becca Reuben, Molly Held, Ophelia Soule and Harlowe Hranek; (front) Ingrid Knapp. Not pictured: Coach Matt Humiston, Francesca Moreno, Rachel Humiston, Jordan Roth, Hailey Sugarman, Amanda Wexler and Siena Wolfson.

Ophelia Soule, Harlowe Hranek, Ingrid Knapp, Francesca Moreno, Rachel Humiston, Jordan Roth, Hailey Sugarman, Amanda Wexler and Siena Wolfson.

Volunteers Sought For Genesis Open

Volunteers are needed to work two or more days during the Genesis Open at the Riviera County Club on February 12-18. Those who register before January 11 (and pay for their uniform) will be entered to win a round of golf at The Riviera on Monday, January 29. Winners' names will be drawn on January 12, and the raffle is good for them and a guest to play a round.

Nearly 1,000 volunteers assist with all aspects of the PGA tournament. Parking will be free for volunteers and will be located in Santa Monica. Volunteers will receive four Good-Any-One-Day grounds tickets in the volunteer packet (\$160 value). These tickets are for volunteer guests to attend the Open. Youth 15 and under get in free with a ticketed adult.

In addition to hole marshals, who provide crowd control when popular players are at specific locations on the course, there are needs for walking scorers, transportation (taking golfers to and from airports and hotels), player services (assists with professional player registration), social media (volunteers must have a camera and interact with fans and take photographs for use on tournament social media) and spectator services.

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Campbell Geddes was named Kicker of the Year.

Top PaliHi Players Make All-City Team

Photos by Drew Vaupen

Palisades High football players gathered post-season honors after the team went 8-4 under Coach Tim Hyde.

Since coming to Pali five years ago, Hyde has turned the program around and winning has become the new normal. This year's team reached the quarterfinals in the City Section Division 1, but lost to Dorsey, 42-28.

When All-Western League awards were handed out, senior Ari Sallus, who has committed to UC Davis, was named Offensive Linesman of the Year, and senior Campbell Geddes was named Kicker of the Year.

Pali's other first-team selections included senior tackle Syr Riley, senior running back Dakota Hamilton, sophomore running back Max Palees, and senior wide receivers Cameron Bailey and Alex Vaupen. Junior safety Will Janney was named to the defensive team.

The Southern California Prep Insider's All-City football team included linemen Riley, Sallus and Baraka Beckett, plus kicker Geddes.

On December 19, Dick Dornan, the L.A. City sports information director, released the 2017 Football All-City teams. In Divi-

sion I, junior Trevor Gill of San Fernando was named Player of the Year and Ari Sallus was named Offensive Lineman of the Year.

Running back Hamilton made the first team with 237 carries for 1,455 yards and 12 touchdowns. Geddes was also selected for making 47 out of 50 PATs and 9 out of 12 field goal attempts (the longest being 46 yards).

Making the All-City second team were safety Janney (25 solo and 43 assisted tackles) and linebacker Palees, a two-way player. He was credited with 21 solo and 27 assisted tackles, while also scoring 14 touchdowns.



Ari Sallus was Linesman of the Year.

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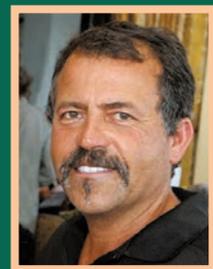
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Panoramic view of the land of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

Shaping Education on the Reservation

By LIBBY MOTIKA

Palisades News Contributor

Photos courtesy Pine Ridge Girls' School

A few days before Christmas in 2015, Santana Janis, a 12-year-old Lakota Indian, decided that she did not want to live anymore.

The incident sparked a series of *New York Times* articles that revealed a shocking spate of suicides among Lakota youth, mostly girls between the ages of 12 and 24.

Pine Ridge Reservation, home of the Oglala Sioux tribe, drew national attention that year after nine young people killed themselves during a four-month period, and another 103 attempted suicide during the same period.

Statistics deliver cold facts and alert us to a disturbing malaise that expresses the despair and hopelessness experienced by some Native American youth, Robert McSwain, acting director of the Indian Health Service, told Congress in 2015.

Behind the data are precious children, sa-

cred to the Lakota, who live with the legacy of oppression, lack of economic opportunity, and high levels of drug and alcohol use around them.

For Victoria Shorr, reading about the Pine Ridge suicides exploded in her mind and sparked a startling insight at a time when she was already reassessing her own goals in life.

"I was taking a walk by myself in Temescal Canyon and I was thinking I'll never get my book published and then I saw a California king snake. It jolted me. Even though I thought I would never start a girls' school again, when I got to thinking about Pine Ridge, I couldn't just forget about it.

The Pacific Palisades resident, who had cofounded the Archer School for Girls in 1995, began to envision a college-prep school for girls on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

Shorr certainly had her challenges in founding Archer back when the trend in private education was for girls' schools to join forces with boys' schools. It was her single-

minded belief in the benefit of single-sex education for girls that propelled her optimism.

But Shorr soon realized that duplicating the Archer model would not work at Pine Ridge.

The Pine Ridge Reservation is a vast windswept land of stunning grasslands and dusty plateaus the size of Delaware and Rhode Island combined.

Officially, there are 20,000 reservation inhabitants, but officials believe there are twice that many. The tribe has suffered centuries of injustices, including the confiscation of the Black Hills by the U.S. military in 1876, which broke up the Great Sioux Reservation, and then in 1890, the Wounded Knee Massacre that resulted in the death of some 300 Lakota at the hands of the U.S. Army.

The reservation is the third-poorest place in America, with an average income of \$3,500. There is no grocery store on the reservation; the nearest is 90 minutes away in Rapid City.

The state of education at Pine Ridge is severely lacking in multiple areas. The school dropout rate is over 70 percent, and the teacher turnover rate is eight times that of the national average.

"What we needed wasn't just any old girls' school," Shorr explains. "Before we teach these girls geometry we have to deal with the trauma that every single girl has undergone, either experienced or witnessed.

"We had to empower these girls before we could educate them, which turns Archer's mantra on its head: Education through empowerment instead of empowerment through education."

Says Lakota native Cindy Giago, head of Pine Ridge Girls' School: "The problem with reservation schools is that I don't think we challenge the students enough. There is a stigma around Native Americans related to drugs and alcohol. We are lowering our expectations of them."

Before the school opened its doors in August 2016, much preparation had taken place.

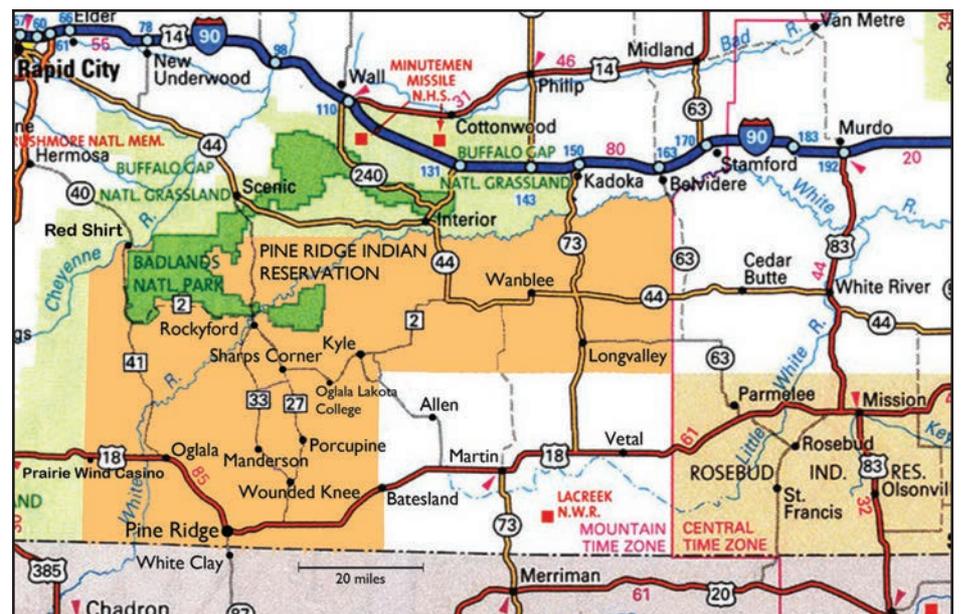
"Our strategy began with planning with the community," Giago told the *News*. "What did you want to see in a school? The elders advised us not to teach about the culture, but rather to let the culture teach us. Lakota first!"

The founders hired a skeletal staff and started with seven sixth- and seventh-grade

(Continued on Page 23)



Pine Ridge Girls' School has 15 students enrolled this year.



Map of the Pine Ridge Reservation

Reservation

(Continued from Page 22)

ers. They advertised in the local newspaper for interested students.

“The application essays were intended mostly for the purpose of getting to know the girls,” Giago says. “The personal interviews with the girls and their families gave us an idea of what our students are dealing with.”

The curriculum is 50/50 Common Core standards and Lakota history and culture. Lakota cultural lifeways are woven in all ways into the life at the school.

“There is a coming-of-age ceremony, when each girl is given a Lakota Spirit name,” Shorr says. “We respect and eat the buffalo and offer the hide for people to sit on when they’re upset. We do a ‘wiping of the tear’ ceremony when somebody loses a family member.”

The history curriculum includes world history and U.S. history, taught through a Lakota lens. James Loewen’s *Lies My Teachers Taught Me*, the American Book Award-winner and national bestseller that revitalizes the truth of America’s history, explores how myths continue to be perpetrated. The textbook dispels the idea that American history pits evil white people against saintly natives. Rather, Loewen insists that the history show that natives and whites influenced each other’s cultures in profound ways.

To make history relevant to the students locally, the teacher talks about the tribe’s



Pacific Palisades resident Victoria Shorr (back row, left) joins the girls and teachers of Pine Ridge Girls’ School.

lost land, what happened at Pine Ridge, or the heroism of the men who fought in World War II.

“After the Standing Rock [pipeline] stand-off last year, the girls went up there and they wrote a letter to the governor of North Dakota explaining why the science of the pipeline was faulty,” Shorr says. “That inspired me to ask the Di Caprio Foundation for a grant to pioneer a curriculum called the science and pol-

itics of water that we can share through Indian Country. We got the grant and we’re doing it.”

The school now enrolls 15 girls, four in 6th grade and 11 in 7th.

Their week begins Monday morning with a purification circle, an adila, where the girls burn sage to eliminate any negative energy that may have upset them over the weekend.

At 10 a.m., they enter the Inipi, or sweat lodge. Within the enclosure, constructed of willow branches covered with canvas, they build a fire, which when burned to embers is doused with water. Much like a sauna, the sweat-lodge experience grounds the girls for the school tasks ahead.

While these ceremonies are valuable and meaningful, the girls also need someone from the outside they can talk to, says Giago. A counselor comes to the school every week to talk to the girls, understanding that this is a very delicate age.

The school also offers art, music—and sports, in which they compete well, despite the fact they lack a gym. They placed fifth in the Big Foot Conference in volleyball and basketball, Giago says. Their team name is Kahtella, warrior women.

President Shorr presides over a 14-member board, comprising eight white members and six natives. While on campus, she meets

with the girls but doesn’t impose. She is careful to respect their ideas and recalls a mistake early on.

“They wear uniforms for all the reasons they wear uniforms at Archer and Marlborough,” Shorr explains. “We got them polo shirts and skirts. But they like to wear leggings or long skirts, as do the older Lakota women. They showed their resistance by demonstrating that they did not want to look like white girls.

“My idea was that they’d look like Archer girls, but they said ‘No.’ That’s okay, I don’t impose.”

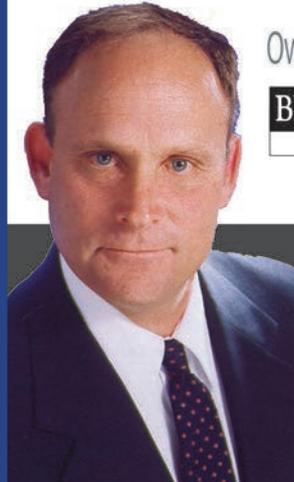
Funded by private donations and foundations, Pine Ridge Girls’ School has ambitious plans that include establishing greenhouses and gardens, health and wellness screening, and ongoing counseling to the students and their families, while building an eventual endowment.

“Our wish is that the girls are proud and secure wherever they are,” Giago says. “A lot of times we hear ‘I have to be a different person to fit into the broader culture.’ My granddaughter, who is a Stanford senior, told me ‘I do not walk in both worlds. I am Lakota wherever I go.’”

For more information, contact pine-ridgegirlsschool.com



The Pine Ridge Girls’ School is located in the western part of South Dakota.



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Giving Back to the Palisades!





The 2017 debutantes presented at the Coronet Debutante Ball were (left to right) Chelsea Anne Worrell, Ashley Nicole Griess, Caleigh Scott Canales, Sloan Callaway Hooper, Elizabeth Nicolle Glover, Alice Wilson Gould (Coronet Ball Director), Catherine Margaret Rozelle, Josephine Marie Deranja, Arabella Angelina Stadvec, Blair Marie Sullivan, Haley Lynn Worrell and Brigitte Gibson Corbell. Not pictured is Julia Barger.

Photo: Lee Salem Photography, Inc.

Coronet Ball Honors 12 Debutantes

The 68th annual National Charity League's Coronet Debutante Ball was held on November 25 at the Beverly Hilton.

Eleven young ladies made their debut at the traditional black-tie ball wearing customary 14-karat gold lavaliers for the first time. One by one, they were presented on the arm of their fathers and sponsors as they made their debut.

The debutantes, from the greater Los Angeles and Atlanta area, include the following remarkable young ladies: Julia Barger, Caleigh Canales, Brigitte Corbell, Josephine Deranja, Elizabeth Glover, Ashley Griess, Sloan Hooper, Catherine Rozelle, Arabella Stadvec, Blair Sullivan, and Chelsea and Haley Worrell.

Rozelle, a Pacific Palisades resident, attends Marymount High School and is the daughter of Marcia and Kacy Rozelle. Hooper lives in Atlanta, but her grandmother, Kathleen Purcelli, is a Palisades resident.

The women were invited to debut based on their extensive community service, each having volunteered a minimum of six years. This year's class volunteered their time to benefit a number of charities, including the

Samburu Project, Relay for Life, the Pediatric Arthritis and Lupus Foundation, Upward Bound House, Walk & Roll and United Built Homes.

In addition to their philanthropic contributions, the young ladies also serve as leaders in a number of extracurricular activities, such as founders of clubs and organizations on campus, members of the honors council, active members of the Mayor's Youth Council, and award-winning student ambassadors for the White House.

"We are pleased to have such an inspiring group of girls debut this year," said Alice Wilson Gould, Coronet Debutante Ball Director, "and are extremely confident that each of these young women will continue to dedicate their time to acts of service in the Los Angeles community and beyond for years to come." Suzanne Boone is the National Charity League President. Both are Pacific Palisades residents.

A portion of the proceeds from the Ball go to National Charity League, Los Angeles to benefit its various philanthropies. The first Coronet Ball was held in 1949 and more than 1,500 women have been presented over the years.

Wellness, Eating, Cooking Class At Woman's Club

A wellness talk and healthy cooking class will be conducted by Chef CC Consalvo from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 18, at the Palisades Woman's Club, 901 Haverford Ave.

Consalvo, who has more than 15 years' experience as a personal holistic chef and wellness coach, focuses on anti-inflammatory cuisine. She has worked with various doctors, registered dietitians and practitioners in support of her clients.

Her talk will include tips on shopping, cooking, eating and eating out more efficiently. Consalvo will also speak on nutrition management, weight gain versus inflammation, and food intolerance. She will also address motivation and spiritual wellness around a work-life-mom-life-balance. Her overall goal is to incorporate simple, healthy lifestyle choices that are doable and that support busy lives.

The event will include a taste of the meal featured in the class. The class is \$45 for PPWC members and \$55 for nonmembers. Please RSVP by January 12 to (310) 454-9012.

Free Movie to Play at Library

A 2017 summer war film written, directed and co-produced by Christopher Nolan that depicts the World War II evacuation of Dunkirk will play at 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 13 at the Palisades Library community room, 861 Alma Real Dr. The film is rated PG, the running time is 106 minutes and admission is free.

Chinese Sealing Practices Jan. 5

Ancient Chinese sealing practices will be explored at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, January 5 at the Palisades Library community room, 861 Alma Real Dr.

Elliot Barden will teach some simple techniques that a person can do anywhere in a minute or two that will help one achieve remarkable feelings of energy, strength and calm. This is suitable for ages from 18 to 108 and for people of every level of fitness from infirm to Olympian. (310) 459-2754.

Experts to Discuss Elder Abuse, Scams At Seniors Meeting

The Palisades Alliance for Seniors will present "Elder Abuse and Scams: How to Recognize Them and What to Do" from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Monday, January 8 at the Palisades Library community room, 861 Alma Real. Attendees are invited to stay afterward and socialize.

The speakers will be LAPD Officer Kristin Cho, who covers financial crimes and elder abuse for the West L.A. Detective Division, and L.A. City Attorney Susan Strick, who is responsible for elder-abuse prosecution and policy.

Palisades Alliance, in conjunction with the Palisades Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library, offers programs of particular interest to seniors, usually on the second and fourth Monday morning of every month. The programs are open to all, and free of charge.

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The Day I Became My Father

By BOB VICKREY
Special to the Palisades News

After paying the tab at a local café and noticing that my burger and fries came to an astonishing \$17.50, I found myself mumbling to no one in particular, “I remember when hamburgers cost fifty cents.”

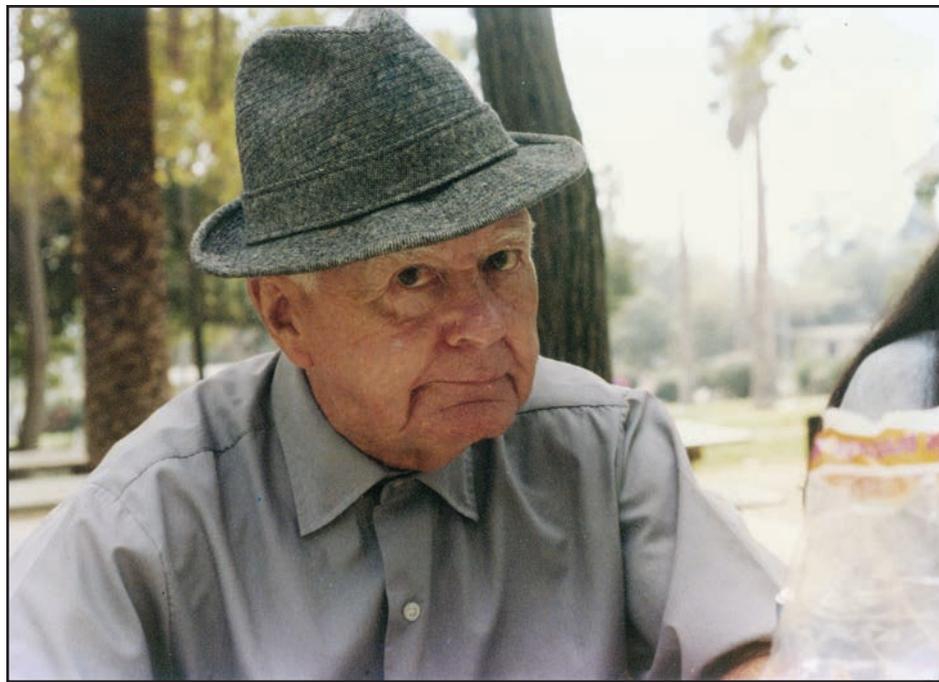
It was meant as a seemingly innocent comment about today’s rising cost of living, but instead, I heard echoes of my dad’s voice uttering a similar nostalgic theme many decades earlier.

After tossing a couple of bucks into the tip jar for my carry-out lunch, I walked out with my *twenty-dollar* hamburger, realizing that it had come from a modest counter-service café—not a Michelin four-star restaurant.

Comedian Dennis Miller once joked: “When did a cup of coffee suddenly become \$8? How long have I been asleep? Wasn’t it like ten cents a few weeks ago?”

I’m with you, Dennis. My head is on a swivel these days when I fill up my gas tank and am forced to consider a second mortgage on the house. While I’m at the bank, I might as well consider financing a trip to the movie theater. Who knows? I might decide to order popcorn and a soft drink, and I simply don’t carry that kind of cash.

If my late, great dad, who lived through



Irian “Vick” Vickrey, 1980

the Depression, knew what I pay monthly to simply watch television, he would be speechless. I’m convinced that my cable bill is now a major contributing factor toward our national debt. All this, so I can watch a little college football and a few *Seinfeld* reruns on the half-dozen channels I ever use—not the 900 I pay for.

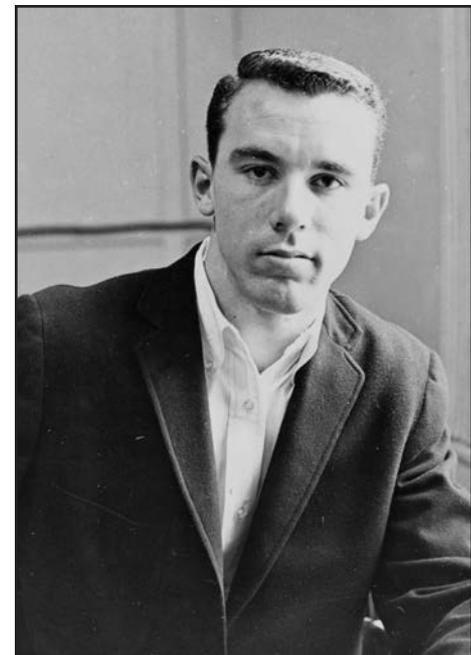
Though 36 years spent in book publish-

ing won’t make you rich unless you’re running Random House, I managed to save a few *shekels* along the way toward my retirement, and at least so far, have not found it necessary to sell bags of oranges on weekends at the Bellflower Boulevard off-ramp of the San Gabriel Freeway.

During those years in publishing, I would often stop off in Texas to visit my folks on the way back home from business meetings in Boston. My company always put us up in some of the finest hotels in the city, and I remember saving one particular breakfast tab for room service from the Ritz Carlton that I thought my dad might appreciate.

I don’t remember the exact amount of the Ritz bill for my continental breakfast that day, but I do remember the small-sized glass of orange juice was \$16. Dad’s face reflected pure bewilderment when he saw the tab, and responded quickly in his East Texas drawl, “For goodness sakes! Don’t that just beat all?”

But “sticker shock” is certainly not a new



Bob Vickrey as a young sports editor.

phenomenon. Back in the 1960s, legendary college basketball coach Abe Lemons traveled with his team to a tournament in New York City, where they stayed in one of the city’s many pricy hotels. At breakfast he noticed two eggs à la carte were \$6.95—nothing with them. He called the waiter over to the table and asked to see the chicken. “What for?” the waiter asked. “I just wanted to see the chicken that lays \$6.95 eggs.”

So, all these years later, I find myself wondering about the basic price of goods and services necessary in simply maintaining a modest lifestyle. I’ve noticed occasionally that after the grocery checker at my local market rings up the scant few items (which barely cover the bottom of my shopping bag,) she will quickly glance at the receipt in seeming disbelief. She shrugs her shoulders and says, “How did that happen?”

If I was living in the fast lane like a few of my Palisades neighbors, I might better understand the economics of it all, but lately, my slow-paced lifestyle more closely resembles a guy driving on the shoulder with the hazard lights blinking.

Next time I order takeout at the cafe, I may follow Coach Lemons’ lead and ask the waiter if I could see a picture of the prize-winning animal that produced my *twenty-dollar* burger. I’d just like to take a moment to admire his royal lineage, because based on the price this apparently must have been one Grand Champion Angus steer.

Bob Vickrey is a longtime Palisadian who is a regular contributor to the News. He also writes for the Houston Chronicle and the Waco Tribune-Herald.

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