



**PALISADES
PUPPY
RAISERS
SOUGHT**

See Page 22

Condos Well Underway



On a hillside above Sunset, developer G.H. Palmer's Sea View Condos, at 17235 Tramonto Dr., will have 29 units. Higher up the hill, at 17331 Tramonto, co-developers Etco Homes and Taylor Morrison are building 53 units (now called One Coast, formerly Tramonto Landmark). A traffic study was done in 2002 and reported the intersection of PCH and Sunset Boulevard was operating at over-capacity during the a.m. peak hour. How will traffic be impacted 16 years later?

Rent Protest Staged in Highlands

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

A rent dispute led to a tenant demonstration near landlord Lisa Ehrlich's home in the Palisades Highlands on April 23.

Close to 70 people participated, according to eyewitnesses. The protestors included tenants who live in one of three buildings, located at 131, 143 and 171 S. Burlington Ave. in Westlake, a majority Latino neighborhood sandwiched between Koreatown and Downtown L.A.

Palisades Patrol officer A. Gonzalez spoke to some of the organizers, who told him their landlord was Lisa Ehrlich and that a
(Continued on Page 5)

Brendan Serapiglia Is Parade Theme Winner

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Palisades Parade—70 Years of Cheer! will be the theme of this year's Fourth of July parade.

Brendan Serapiglia beat 70 other entries to win the opportunity to ride in the parade on a Station 69 fire truck with a group of family and friends.

He and his wife, Lauren Horner, who have lived in the Palisades Highlands since 2009, have entered the contest before.

"We're always excited when the theme contest is announced," said Serapiglia, who noted that in law school, he was taught that you always have to find a fact and he and his wife wanted to highlight that this was the 70th anniversary of the parade. "We wanted to come up with something catchy and wanted to reflect on patriotism and the celebration."

Born in Canada, Serapiglia attended boarding school in London, where he lived

from the age of 13 to 27. He received his doctorate degree in physics from Imperial College, University of London.

He moved to UC Santa Barbara in 2001 to work as a research scientist in physics. His project was to find a more efficient and sensitive astronomical technique for measuring aspects related to the origins of the universe for NASA.

In the process, Serapiglia met his wife in 2002 and they married in 2004. Having grown up in Westchester, she convinced him to move to L.A. Her grandparents, David and Helen Horner, lived in Pacific Palisades.

The couple both attended Loyola Law School. Serapiglia got his law degree in 2008 and is a patent attorney with Gates & Cooper, LLP, while his wife is a criminal defense attorney.

"I'd fallen in love with Southern California," he said. "As soon as we had enough money, we moved to Pacific Palisades."

The Serapiglias have watched the parade

every year since they moved here and generally set up early at their favorite location: Sunset and Via de la Paz, near the DWP power station. Once their children were born (a son, 6, and a daughter, 4), they continued the tradition, bringing the kids along to the parade.

"We love the community; we love the parade," Serapiglia said. "My son has walked in the parade with Gerry Blanck's [Martial Arts] group."

A history buff, Serapiglia said one of the aspects that he likes about Pacific Palisades is, "There are ties to the past and there is respect for tradition, but it sets you going forward." The parade, he feels, serves as a link between the past and the future.

"There are a lot of older people living

here and you can draw from their experiences—and there are lots of new families with young children moving in."

He loves this hometown parade because "There's skydiving, there's bands, there's lots of fancy stuff going on there."

Serapiglia has attended the Rose Bowl parade, but said, "I prefer the Palisades parade. You don't have to travel and you get a lot of 'bang for your buck' here."

He and his wife have told their kids about winning the theme contest and their chance to ride on the fire truck. "The kids were very excited," Serapiglia said.

"We really love the community. Everyone in the Palisades is so lovely. I'm happy we live here."



Brendan Serapiglia's family will ride on the fire truck in the parade. Photo: Bart Bartholomew

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Saving the Planet: Child by Child

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

It was a game of Jeopardy. “We’ll take Energy Saving for \$300,” said the two Palisades Elementary fifth-grade girls.

“What uses less energy? A microwave or an oven?” the Palisades High senior asked.

After some discussion the girls said, “Oven.” Incorrect: a microwave uses 50 percent less energy.

Next, the fifth-grade boys chose “Recycling for \$400.”

“What bin does a coffee cup, like one from Starbucks, go into?”

“Recycling, the blue bin,” the three boys responded instantly. Wrong. Coffee cups have a plastic lining, which means they go in the black bin.

Into which bin do you place an unused paper napkin? If you guessed recycling, you would be wrong. PaliHi students explained that a napkin has fibers too small to be recycled.

Which saves more water, a dishwasher or doing dishes by hand? “The dishwasher,” said senior Liam Mathers. “That’s what I tell my mom every time she wants me to do dishes.”

For the past 14 years, students from Steve Engelmann’s AP Environmental Science class and from Karyn Newbill’s honors marine biology class (the past six years), find ways to teach Palisades Elementary students about reducing, reusing and recycling, protecting endangered species and other ways of saving the planet.

The event, in conjunction with Earth



Junior Jessie Bierschenk wears a kale “hat” to emphasize the importance of healthy foods.

Day, was held on the PaliHi baseball field, with 34 different booths—all planned by high school students.

“It’s so cool this year,” Newbill said. “They came up with a lot of original ideas.”

Engelmann said that he and Newbill oversaw the ideas to keep from having 30 booths on recycling.

“We told them ‘no bummers,’ we wanted uplifting—telling the kids what they could do,” Newbill said.

“One girl wanted to put down a plastic grate and have the children take off their shoes and stand on it like some animals do,” said Engelmann, who noted this booth was a no-go. Instead, the kids were asked to



Palisades High School students explain to Palisades Elementary students what happens when fish swallow plastic, using ping pong balls to demonstrate.

come up with positive ways of teaching. Broken into smaller groups, the young students were led by a high school student to different booths and tables.

Senior Edwin Guzman had his six charges practice being penguins. He explained how each penguin has its own sound and calls out to find its mate or its parents. The kids were each given a card with a sound, then they had to find their “family” by calling the right sound back.

At the pearl table, students were asked where the gem comes from. The most common response was “mermaids.”

The kids were excited to learn that “spit” was involved. Senior Ava Jorgensen explained, “A piece of sand or some irritant will get in the oyster and will cover it with a special coating, kind of like spit.”

At the Jaws table, kids learned about shark myths. For example, how many people do sharks attack? Very few. How many sharks are killed by man? More than 100 million every year.

Elementary students got to see the difference in soils by pouring water into dirt, clay, sand and gravel, and watching the water run out. Yet another table was about what to compost: newspapers, fruits and veggies, coffee grounds and egg shells.

At the baby turtle table, kids were told how many obstacles sea turtles face after hatching and trying to return to the ocean. To make the point, kids pretended to be baby turtles, carrying an egg on a spoon and dodging cones—the obstacles making it much harder than it initially seemed.

At the “deadliest catch” table, kids were given a fishing pole, and when they threw their line into the ocean (a blue tablecloth), a student under the table attached one of nine tags telling them what endangered sea creature they had caught, which ranged from a hammerhead shark to white abalone and

a dugong. A high school student would then suggest ways to help save ocean inhabitants.

One particularly interactive table about saving the coral reefs had small balls flying everywhere. Plastic cups, representing the coral, were lined up on the table. Kids threw balls, trying to knock the coral off the table.

Older students then explained how youth could help save the reefs, and the elementary students were again asked to throw balls at the “reef.” But this time the high school students batted them away.

Eisenstock to Discuss Elgin Baylor Memoir

Long-time Palisadian Alan Eisenstock will discuss the memoir he co-authored for pro basketball legend Elgin Baylor, *Hang Time: My Life in Basketball*, on Thursday, May 17, at 6:30 p.m. in the Palisades Library community room.

The public is invited to this Friends of the Palisades Library event.

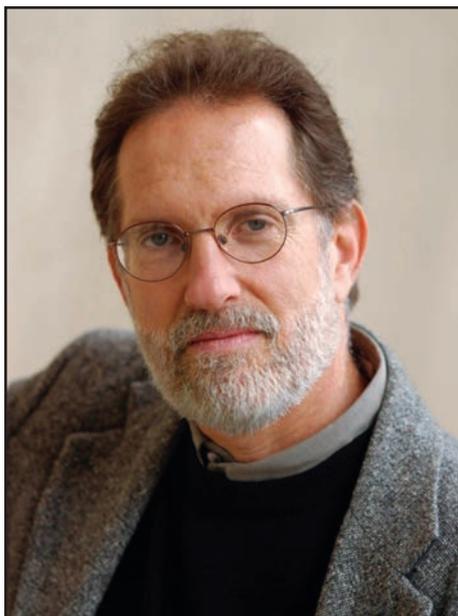
“This book culminates a 4-year labor of love, and I’m very proud of it,” says Eisenstock, who has published nine other non-fiction books.

Booklist gave *Hang Time* a starred review, calling it “. . . a compulsively readable autobiography,” and stating, “For anyone with an interest in basketball history, this is absolutely essential reading.”

The book details Baylor’s early life and development, his personal challenges as a pioneering black athlete in the 1950s, his many failed attempts to bring the Lakers an NBA championship, and his years as general manager of the L.A. Clippers.

Eisenstock told the *Palisades News* that

before writing the book, “I knew about Elgin’s physical strength as a player, but I wasn’t aware how strong he was as a person.”



Alan Eisenstock



LAFD Fire Service Day

Fire Station 69 (Sunset at Carey) will be open to the public for LAFD Fire Service Day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 12.

There will be tours of the station and kids will be able to sit in the seat of a fire truck. It’s a great chance to meet the men and women who respond to local emergencies and fires. There will be a barbecue and you will be able to buy LAFD gear and t-shirts. In past years there have been a Jaws of Life demonstration. The community is invited.

News Honored in Journalism Contest

The *Palisades News* was the only Pacific Palisades newspaper to receive recognition in the 2017 California Journalism Awards contest, conducted by the California Newspaper Publishers Association.

News entries earned recognition in seven categories: cartoon, columns, education, writing, editorial comment, special publication and special cover.

The *News* received third place in the special publication category for its annual Fourth of July program, titled “Palisades on Parade.” A judge wrote: “I enjoyed the many angles the editor took on the annual event. Lots of good information.”

The *News* also received third for a Special Section cover, “Holiday Gift Guide,” featuring a photo by Shelby Pascoe and graphics by Manfred Hofer.

Bob Vickrey was a finalist in the columns category. Per contest rules, he submitted two columns: “Dining Early-Bird Style” and “My Stressful Test at the DMV..”

In praising Vickrey, one judge wrote: “A thoroughly entertaining, honest, illuminating account letting readers of all ages into a slice of life a particular segment of the population has to figure out [the Early-Bird column]. I chuckled aloud picturing Vickrey and his tablemates yelling back at the young waitress as though she were hard of hearing. A wonderful contribution to a local newspaper. The

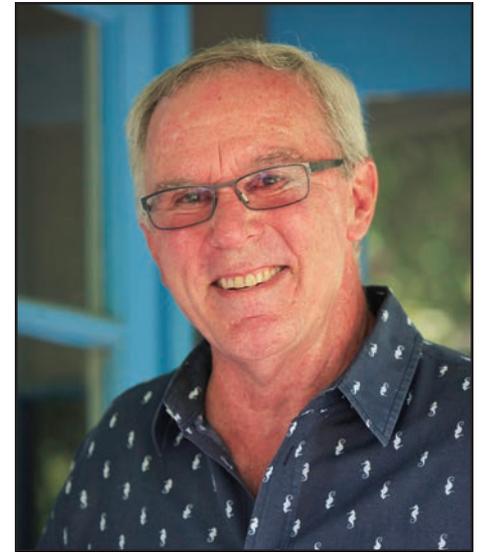
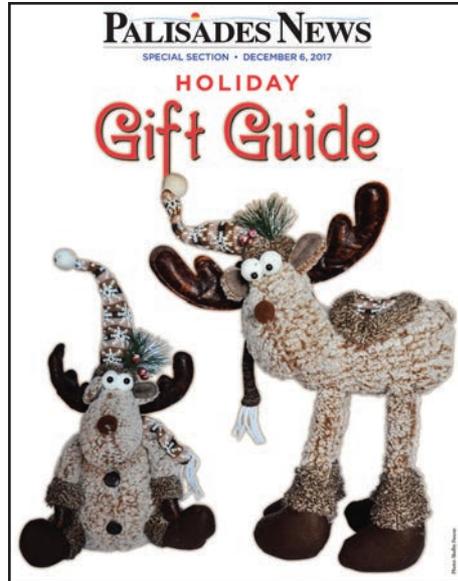


Laurel Busby

second column was maybe more fun than the first—I think I’d like to be friends with this man, I’ve so enjoyed his two columns that blend snark and sweetness so originally.”

Cartoonist Ann Cleaves was a finalist for “Let’s Take a Family Staycation,” which lampooned the difficulty of trying to leave the Palisades because of traffic on PCH and Sunset.

Laurel Busby, who took first place in the writing category last year, was a finalist in two categories this year: coverage of youth and education and the writing category.



Bob Vickrey

Her story, “Alpharoah Tells His DACA Story at PaliHi,” was recognized, as was her story “Saving a Life While Videotaping Riots.” The latter was the story of *News* photographer Bart Bartholomew, who was rescued by a Palisades High graduate when the 1992 Los Angeles riots first broke out.

“Hiding Out on the Internet” was a finalist in the editorial category. Writer Sue Pascoe concluded, “If you think you have the right to make a harsh comment on Nextdoor or any social media site, we urge you to ask yourself, ‘Would I say that to the person’s

face?’ If the answer is ‘yes,’ then do it in person. Don’t hide behind your computer. If the answer is ‘no,’ you couldn’t look someone in the face and say it, then don’t press ‘send.’”

Two other local papers, the *Santa Monica Daily Press* and the *Malibu Times*, also received recognition in the CNPA contest. The *Daily Press* won a first in land-use reporting and was also a finalist in the same category and received a third for its special section. The weekly *Times* earned second-place awards for breaking news and profile stories and was a finalist in features.



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DWP Steel Poles to Stay

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Electrical utility boxes (transformers) and three steel power poles have been installed along Albright Street to service Caruso's Palisades Village.

At the March 22 Pacific Palisades Community Council meeting, a resident living adjacent to Caruso's project asked why the contractor's original plans showed electrical utility boxes placed off the alley entrance at Bashford, but that these boxes have actu-

ally been placed on Albright, at the intersection with Monument.

Michael Gazzanno, the Palisades Village project manager, who had earlier shown a video at the meeting, declined to answer questions, instead sending residents to the Caruso website for answers to various questions that had been raised from within the community.

On the website (palisadesvillageca.com), the electrical question was answered: "Plans that are prepared for entitlements are conceptual-level designs. Engineered drawings are not developed until after the City approves the project and the applicant meets with various agencies to confirm how the literally hundreds of building, electrical, mechanical or other codes will be applied to the project."

"The location of the transformers was informed by DWP. All electrical power is provided by an existing conduit in Albright which necessitated the location of the transformers. DWP would not allow the transformer to be located underground."

The *News* contacted DWP spokesperson Carol Tucker, who responded: "The location of the equipment is chosen by the customer. They can install it wherever they choose as long as it meets certain LADWP requirements for safety, construction and maintenance access, and electrical equipment clearances. Some building owners have chosen to place this equipment above ground

(as in this case), below ground in a basement or vault, or in a room."

Tucker continued, "Whether to locate the equipment above or below ground is not determined by LADWP. It is a decision made by the customer in coordination with City Building & Safety and potentially City Planning."

Meanwhile, three steel poles have been placed in the middle of the sidewalk on Albright, just west of Monument. There is no sidewalk on the north side of the street, so anyone walking on Albright must avoid the poles.

Tucker was asked if the poles were permanent. "Yes, they replaced wood poles that were on private property, close to their new locations."

The *News* asked why the poles, which were formerly on the Caruso property didn't stay there. Tucker explained that because the wood poles no longer brought electricity to the Caruso project they were no longer needed.

"The original poles were removed and replaced with the new steel poles whose only function is to provide structural support for the poles on the north side of the street," Tucker said. "As a general policy, we design the electrical infrastructure, including power lines and poles, in the most structurally sound, safest and cost-effective manner possible."

"The new poles [called guy stubs] are necessary to provide support to the poles/lines



Steel poles ("guy stubs") provide structure support for other electrical poles on Albright.

across the street, mainly because there is a slight curve in the road that creates a strain on the lines heading north."

Tucker said there were two other, more costly alternatives: 1.) replacing the existing poles (north side of the street) with engineered steel poles that would not require guy stubs, but that solution might require an easement since the footprint of the engineered steel poles are larger, and 2.) converting all the infrastructure on the north side to underground, also more costly, because converting electrical equipment from overhead to underground can cost more than \$1,000/foot, and the stretch along Albright is more than 800 feet.

Luncheon for Town's 90-Year-Olds Will Be June 2

The Pacific Palisades Woman's Club will host its annual luncheon honoring Palisadians 90 years and older on Saturday, June 2, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the clubhouse, 901 Haverford.

This free celebration will include lunch and entertainment. Bill Bruns, an adviser with the *Palisades News* and former longtime editor of the *Palisadian-Post*, will be guest speaker.

To RSVP and receive an invitation (spouses, family members and caregivers are invited), please call Fay Vahdani at (310) 699-5885.

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Heard About Town

A Shocking Sight

I was walking down the sidewalk and saw a teen walking towards me on the sidewalk reading a book. I did a double take: walking and reading a book? All you ever see is kids texting on their phones.

Thanks to Lisa Cahill

Thank you to Councilman Mike Bonin's field deputy Lisa Cahill for her efforts and hard work. We have been bothering her for months about how awful Palisades Drive has become and how the roadway needs to be replaced. The City crews arrived on April 25 to begin the process of removing the old asphalt and creating a "new" Palisades Drive.

New Sidewalk on Albright

I live close to the Caruso project and I just received a letter announcing that Albright Street will be partially closed for about two months, starting May 7, while they install "new sidewalks, curbs and gutters." Two months seems excessive. What's going on?

(Editor's note: Back on March 29, the News asked the DWP why it was once again digging up Via de la Paz next to the electrical substation. A worker explained that the electricity for Palisades Village must come from the vault at Sunset and Via and will be routed along Albright to the corner of Monument. Check with the Caruso people; this two-month project probably has more to do with the DWP than the new sidewalk.)

Highlands Eldercare Query

I feel that some members of the Pacific Palisades Community Council were a little devious at the West Los Angeles Planning Commission hearing for the eldercare facility in the Highlands. They announced they were from the PPCC, but were speaking as private individuals. Why would they even say PPCC, unless they were trying to make themselves more credible?

Who Speaks for Me?

The Community Council says it speaks for the residents of Pacific Palisades, but they certainly don't speak for me. What should I do?

(Editor's note: If you believe that your area representative or at-large member is not speaking for you, please consider running for a seat on the board. Elections will be held this year. Visit: pacpalicc.org.)

Monument Shout Out

After numerous long-time vacancies, it's nice to see new businesses in the 970 Monument building (corner of Sunset): Mi-Lina & Co. (jewelry) and Bellacures (nail salon). BOCA (women's clothing), a long-time Swarthmore favorite, is opening in May and Kim Kedeshian will open her restaurant Armav (breakfast, lunch and dinner) in the fall.

ANN CLEAVES



DO EARLY BIRDS CATCH THE WORMS??

VIEWPOINT

Dealing with Theft in Madrid

By DAVID GRINSFELDER
Special to the Palisades News

It was a Wednesday night and my flatmates, Carlos and Matthew, and I had just finished studying and were going to a club, Teatro Barceló. After a 45-minute wait to get in, we were surrounded by thousands of students from all over the world.

I do not normally frequent clubs, either at home or in Madrid. My preference is discovering a hole-in-the-wall bar and sharing a few beers with friends.

However, as I made my way into the "pit" (the dance floor), there was something about the electrifying brightness and pulsating music of a Spanish *discoteca* that could appeal to even the most unwilling partygoer. Despite being packed onto the dance floor, I was actually having a good time.

That is, until I reached into my pocket and felt nothing where my phone had been. I immediately borrowed Matthew's phone and dropped to a squat between the sea of legs in a panicked effort to find it.

I realized then that someone had slipped their hand into my pocket during the constant bumping and jostling that occurs on a nightclub dance floor, and had taken it.

I had been robbed at gunpoint in Berkeley after a football game, and I was not about to lose my second phone in less than six months.

I found David, one of Barceló's innumerable security guards, and alerted him to the situation. Apparently, I was not the only person with a stolen phone, as six other victims were also standing helplessly in the lobby.

Using Find My iPhone, I was able to see that the phone was on the move, but within the

vicinity of the club. That meant our iPhone thief was still there.

With nearly 1,500 people packed into Barceló, I decided that the best strategy would be to wait by the entrance to the club, the only way in or out, to catch the culprit.

I realized the chances of apprehending this thief were less likely than someone actually reading iTunes Terms & Conditions agreement.

As I monitored Find My iPhone, I noticed that my phone had stopped moving. It still appeared to be on the Barceló property, but was stationary. The culprit had probably realized that the club's security team was looking for them and dumped the phone.

Following the directions on my friend's Find My iPhone app, I went outside to a deserted street behind the club.

With the rain pelting down and Hans Zimmer's *The Dark Knight* movie score pulsating in my head, I hit the "Play Sound" button. Somewhere nearby, barely perceptible, I could hear the faint "ping" of an iPhone.

As I inched closer to its location, I was incredulous that the thief had actually ditched it outside the club.

I came upon an industrial-sized teflon garbage bag, full of cinder blocks, bricks and roofing tiles. Digging, I found my iPhone, along with several others.

My credit card had disappeared, but I had my phone: a feat which, according to David the security guard, "never happens." It was a moment of victory, and for a brief moment I cherished the fact that I wouldn't have to explain to my parents that I had lost *another* iPhone.

(David Grinsfelder, a 2015 Palisades High graduate, is a junior at UC Berkeley.)

Thought to Ponder

"Success is never final,
failure is never fatal.
It's courage that counts."

— John Wooden

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VIEWPOINT

Tenure Protects Good Teachers—And Bad

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

In California, teachers must be notified if they will receive tenure after 16 months on the job, which means essentially that after little scrutiny, they receive a life-time tenure.

Teaching is a complicated art: how can you decide if someone will be a great artist in under two years? I don't think you can.

There are several math teachers at Palisades High School who have made students' lives hell. A student whose parents have money can possibly get around that nightmare by taking the class online or working with a tutor. But too many families don't have the money, and their teenager ends up with a D or F and has to take the class again—often with the same teacher. The student ends up hating math, which is actually a delightful subject if taught well.

PaliHi administrators are fully aware of the school's weak teachers, those who should have never received tenure in the first place. But now that they have it, those teachers are impossible to fire.

My daughter, now 26, had an ineffective science teacher when she was a freshman at Pali. The woman had personality issues and parents wrote letters in an effort to get her out of the school. To no avail; she is still there, although

she has since been shuffled to several different classrooms.

There has to be a mechanism to boot problem teachers out of a school. I understand that if a teacher has a personality issue with a principal, tenure prevents the teacher being fired: but bad teachers should not be allowed stay in the classroom.

Offer mentoring, videotape the teachers and the classroom, have student assessments about the subject—what did they know going in and how well are they grasping the concepts? But push tenure back for elementary, middle and high school teachers to a minimum of three years.

Keep the good, work with the average and help the bad find a different occupation.

Teacher Appreciation Week begins May 7, and since politicians care more about political contributions than doing the right thing for students by getting bad teachers out of the classroom, take time to remember or thank the good teachers.

PaliHi physics teacher Dave Schalek is amazing; if your child is lucky enough to have him, the world will be opened up in a different way. The same goes for chemistry teacher Carole Smith.

Last Friday, while covering the annual walkathon at Palisades Elementary, I ran into two excellent teachers, Judy Gold and Susan Williams. Gold, who retired and is now subbing, taught fifth grade at that school for

years and had all three of my children. (She should have received a special medal just for dealing with our family.) She had the knack for knowing what each student in her classroom needed and how to give it to them.

Williams, who will retire this year, is also delightful. My second child came out of her classroom scoring the tops in all of the standardized testing and on John Hopkins. I also remember Marcia Beard, who taught kindergarten forever and whose students came out with a love of the great artists.

Listing good teachers, I can't forget Margo Mandell—a brilliant elementary art teacher, who will be retiring from Village School this year.

Revere has had some exceptional teachers—Craig Honda and his farm; the P.E. teachers, Paul Foxson and Marty Lafolette, who managed to make running “cool;” Robert Aochi, Melvin Agcaoli, Steven Anderson, Daryl Stolper, Carlos Hernandez, Ms. Palmer and Eric Wechsler, all of whom raised kids to new levels in their classrooms.

Look back to your own schooling and just for the heck of it, see if you can connect with a teacher who had an impact on your life or your child's and tell them thank you this week.

Then email your state assemblyman and state senator and tell them it's time to change tenure, because all kids deserve better—not just those whose parents can afford to go around the system.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

C.E.R.T. Training Available

I am part of a team of four people who are C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team) and ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Services) ham radio volunteers. In coordination with the team, we have been presenting/organizing introductory classes in earthquake preparedness over the last year in the Palisades Highlands.

Palisades Drive is particularly vulnerable to rockslides and liquefaction. We believe Highlands residents need this training as it may be several weeks before certain services are restored. Thus far over 120 residents have attended.

Now, we are reaching out to all residents of Pacific Palisades.

According to LAFD, after a major earthquake, Fire Stations 69 and 23 and LAPD will be deployed to more densely populated areas of Los Angeles, leaving the residents of Pacific Palisades to take care of themselves and each other.

The LAFD has a program to teach local C.E.R.T. training classes to volunteers who will become backup responders to our residents of Pacific Palisades. Visit: cert-la.com.

Many people want to attend C.E.R.T. training classes, but most classes are held few and far between (two sessions annually) in Santa Monica, West L.A., and Culver City fire stations.

I contacted Mitch McKnight, head of LAFD C.E.R.T. training, for guidance. Last week, Calvary Christian Church on Palisades Drive graciously agreed to let us use their recreation room (can handle 50+ students) on Tuesday evenings from July 10 to August 21. The classes meet once a week for seven weeks from 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Our goal is 300 C.E.R.T. graduates. It's an ambitious goal. I believe we need three venues to accomplish this if

the LAFD teaching staff can accommodate the demand.

C.E.R.T. graduates can then go into their neighborhoods to hold meetings to encourage their neighbors to plan survival strategies (shelter-in-place). Our team will be available to assist in outreach meetings.

K.C. Soll

(310) 245-6161, cert.palisades@gmail.com

The 3 a.m. Bathroom Run

I have a suggestion for the Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Board of Commissioners, which has approved keeping open the multi-stall bathrooms at the Venice Beach Recreation Center 24 hours a day, 365 days each year.

The next time nature calls them in the middle of the night (say 3 a.m.), they should test the wisdom of their vote, especially the impact on the people of Venice, by answering that call, leaving home and hastening down to those all-night Venice toilets. Maybe they should make a night of it by bringing down the whole family.

Al Ramrus

May Day Delight in Marquez

May Day around my neighborhood always produces a surprise: big, beautiful, tissue paper flowers attached to our doorknobs. Every year, I forget that May Day is upon us, but the first graders of Marquez Charter School don't. The children stroll down Marquez to shady Bollinger Drive and leave their colorful creations. Apparently, this May Day Walk is their Community Service Project. What a super idea!

One year, I was gardening when the whole troop appeared to offer me one of their May Day flowers. I like to send a thank you note and last year, to my delight,

teacher Mrs. Lew (Room 26) sent me one in return.

The kids, she wrote, had been excited to get my note, had shouted, “She loves animals like we do!”

In this darkening world, these children with their bright flowers are such a sweet lift. They—and their teacher—deserve a bit of attention for the kindnesses they bring.

Edie Ditmars

Council Supports Eldercare Facility

(The following letter was sent to the West Los Angeles Planning Commission by the Pacific Palisades Community Council prior to the Commission's April 18 hearing regarding the proposed Elder Care facility in the Palisades Highlands.)

On October 26, 2017, the Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) Land Use Committee considered the Eldercare Project and produced an advisory opinion to the PPCC Board that the Eldercare Project was an appropriate use for the Property. The full board of the PPCC then discussed the matter and passed the motion below, after hearing presentation from both sides and listening to testimony from residents.

PPCC finds that the proposed eldercare facility is an appropriate use. We note community concerns about height, safety, access, noise, disruption and proximity to zoned open space. The developer assures us that the Palisades Dr. driveway will be modified to exit only. Further, the developer assures us that he will be responsive

(Continued on Page 8)

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.

Letters

(Continued from Page 7)

to complaints about outdoor light.

Since that time, questions have been raised as to the breadth of the PPCC's finding and the extent of the affirmation the finding conveyed with respect to the Eldercare Project. In the interest of full and complete communication, I now offer the following additional comments, which are intended to clarify and contextualize the PPCC Board's action.

1.) With its motion, the Board intended to say only that we thought an eldercare facility was an appropriate land use at the Property. The finding was limited to the appropriateness of the use. The motion was not intended either to imply support for the design of the proposed building or to address the question of whether the Eldercare Project was in conformity with the California Coastal Act or applicable City of Los Angeles regulations including the required findings for approval of a Coastal Development Permit or Site Plan Review.

2.) The Board declined to consider, or make any determination, about the Project's compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and whether or not the City acted properly in June, 2017 when determining the project was categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. The Board made clear that we lacked the requisite knowledge and expertise to engage in a well-informed debate on this aspect of the project.

3.) The Board and its Land Use Committee, in aggregate, spent approximately three hours on October 26, 2017 hearing from local residents and deliberating the Board's position on the Eldercare Project. In its adopted motion, the Board noted "community concerns about height, safety, access, noise, disruption and proximity to zoned open space." A large number of residents attended these meetings to express their support or opposition,

indicating an extreme level of community engagement in this issue. Our intent in noting the areas of concern in our motion was to communicate the types of concerns expressed by many residents, to City decision makers.

4.) In our letter to the ZA, we noted that the developer acknowledged community concerns with respect to the height and scale of the building at the October 26, 2017 meeting, and made a verbal commitment to be mindful of those concerns. Our intent in making these statements was to bring the primary scope of community feedback to the attention of the City decision-makers, in case they had relevance in the ZA crafting of conditions or requirements for the Eldercare Project, should it be approved.

5.) The PPCC Guiding Principles state in part, that "the PPCC maintains that planning and zoning regulations, building codes, rules, restrictions, and ordinances have been established for the good of the community. They should be applied, upheld and enforced by the Zoning Administrator, Building and Safety, and other governing bodies with jurisdiction over the approval, execution, and enforcement processes."

It is my hope that this letter helps clarify the limited scope of the finding adopted by PPCC.

Maryam Zar, President, PPCC

Upset with Post's Coverage

(Editor's note: The recently dismissed Palisades High wrestling coach Aldo Juliano sent the following letter to the Palisadian-Post and then shared it with the Palisades News.)

Your paper has been covering the story of my firing from Pali High as its wrestling coach. I gave the Post reporter all the e-mails I got from [parent] Dan Hansen and the school and spent a lot of time on the phone with him telling him my side of the story.

Yet, every headline and story seems to make me look like the one in the wrong, the one with the problem.

I am very disappointed the way your paper is making me look! You have told the story of Dan Hansen from his side, making him sound like the victim of what I said in the heat of the moment. But this came after being badgered for over six months and having him spread nasty lies, rumors and out-and-out false stories about me all over town and the wrestling community.

The whole time the school knew and did nothing to defend or protect me or stop his aggressive behavior.

And he had a hand in a teacher being fired and two other coaches, including Steve Cifonelli, last year's wrestling coach.

Your paper talked to one parent, Dan Hansen, but you did not talk to the other parents who support me.

You never talked to Gretchen Topputo, who Dan Hansen told to threaten a teacher with suing to help her daughter's grades. He also said it was his goal to have me fired this year.

Carlos Velada, George Carpenter and Delilah and Cory Chapman, and all the freshman parents complained their voices were not heard! Only one parent was heard—that's all the school spoke to and all you covered.

Not once did your paper talk to the other kids on the team! Not once did you mention that Dan Hansen's son threatened to take a swing at me and called me names in front of my other wrestlers.

Why is the school coddling this wrestler? Because his father threatened to sue the school.

I have been coaching the wrestling team for seven years and your story didn't mention I raised the money for the new mats for the wrestling room and I put up pull-up bars, ropes and a peg board and painting. I dumped a lot of my own money to building a beautiful room for the kids that they would be proud of. The school didn't spend a dime on it.

I feel your paper did not tell the whole story.

Aldo Juliano



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THANK YOU!

Scott Wagenseller, Owner and Publisher

Protest

(Continued from Page 1)

civil court hearing was to be held on April 25. Tenants told him they had received rent hikes ranging from 25 to 50 percent.

On April 26, the *News* spoke to Ehrlich, who said that the last rent increase on the units was in 2008 and it was generally less than \$100.

She blamed the higher rents on DWP rate increases and the new garbage collection fees. "Fees have tripled," Ehrlich said, noting that landlords have also been hit with various new garbage surcharges, such as a fee for pressing a button to open a gate.

Ehrlich said that one-bedroom apartments in the complex, which are not under rent control, have stayed steady at \$1,050 for the past 10 years. By comparison, market rates for studio apartments in the area rent for \$1,200 and a one bedroom is \$1,500.

She recently raised rent to \$1,300. "We're trying to keep it affordable," she said.

According to an April 12 story on Knockla.com, "The Biggest Rent Strike in L.A. History: Burlington Tenants vs. Slumlord Attorney Lisa Ehrlich" by Jacob Woocher, people in 85 of the 192 units are currently withholding rent.

The tenants have organized and are being assisted by the VyBe chapter of the Los Angeles Tenants Union.

Some tenants have been served eviction notices, and according to Woocher, they are being represented by Elena Popp of the

Eviction Defense network.

Ehrlich was asked about complaints that tenants didn't have hot water, that there were cracks in the walls, and rodents.

She disputed the allegations. "Every time L.A. Housing has come out to check on complaints, they haven't found any basis for the claims."

Juanita Robles, the owner of Grey Pacific Housekeeping, has worked for Ehrlich since 2008.

Once someone leaves, "the unit is repainted, tile changed and new carpet put in," Robles told the *News*, and then her company does a final deep cleaning before the new tenant moves in.

Robles talked about how some tenants leave their apartments in bad condition. For example, some of the stoves have never been cleaned in the years people have lived in the apartments. "The grease buildup from the years is so bad, I have to use a blade to get it off. It's so dirty it's nasty."

Often, the bathroom tubs have to be resurfaced and new tiles installed. Then, "I do a germicidal cleaning," Robles said.

She disputed the lack-of-hot-water claim. "All the years I've worked in those apartments, there has been hot water," Robles said. "How could you just turn water off in the apartments of a few people? It would have to be off in the entire unit."

She said she tells her kids, "If you make a mess, you clean it up." She feels like asking for the same courtesy from tenants. "I gave it to you new, clean and fresh, keep it that way."



Protestors brought their rent increase dispute to the Highlands. Photo courtesy of Palisades Patrol

Why would tenants accuse Ehrlich of substandard conditions?

"Habitability claims," Ehrlich said. "The tenants are being coached by the L.A. Tenants Union to use the press to create awareness of the state repeal of the Costa Hawkins legislation."

Costa Hawkins, which went into effect in 1995, prohibits cities from capping rent increases for properties built after February of that year.

In Los Angeles, the bill also froze in place the terms of the city's Rent Stabilization Ordinance, meaning that only buildings constructed prior to October 1978 are subject to rent control.

The Burlington Ave. apartments were built in 1989-90 and are not under rent control.

Costa Hawkins also allows single-family residences that are rent control to be re-listed at market rate prices after tenants move out.

In addition to Palisades Patrol, other security companies responded to residents' calls starting around 7 p.m. on April 23 about the loud demonstration.

LAPD officers said that because the protesters were on a public sidewalk and no one was attempting entry into the gated community, there was no crime. The protesters dispersed around 9:30 p.m.

The following night about 7 p.m., about 50 people, mostly families, once again came to the Highlands to protest, according to Palisades Patrol officer Gonzalez. LAPD was called, but had not responded before the crowd dispersed around 9:15 p.m.



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Eldercare Project Appeal Rejected

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

An appeal hearing at the West L.A. Area Planning Commission on April 18 lasted almost 3½ hours as each side argued about the proposed 64,646-sq.-ft. eldercare project at 1525 Palisades Dr. in the Highlands.

The four-floor, 82-unit facility would be built on a long-vacant 43,097 sq. ft. lot at the corner of Palisades Drive and Vereda de la Montura, just above a small business complex to the south, across the street from condominiums on the east and north, and adjacent to open space parkland on the west.

City Zoning Administrator Henry Chu wrote the original 32-page Letter of Determination, which approved plans for the facility.

That approval was appealed to the Planning Commission by Jonathon Klar and Robert Glushon of Luna & Glushon (for Robert and Sandra Flick), on the basis that the project did not meet the requirement for Class 32 of the City's CEQA Guidelines, which provided the environmental clearance for the project.

Two commissioners were absent, but the other three commissioners, president Esther Margulies, vice president Michael Newhouse and Lisa Waltz Morocco, rejected the appeal, 3-0.



Site of proposed development in the Highlands.

Photo: Bart Bartholomew

Ben Resnick, attorney for applicant Rony Schram, said, "The standard of review is that in order to have a reversal, there has to be an error: an error in a misapplied law or a mistake in a calculation."

In his final statement Commissioner Newhouse asked, "Do we have any substantial evidence that what the City did was an error?" He added, "We need actual evidence [to find for the appellants]."

He pointed out that the building, which would be built in a high-fire-severity area, had raised numerous questions about evacuating the elderly, but that the City had testimony from LAFD assistant fire chief Pat-

rick Butler, who had not viewed the facility as an unusual situation.

Newhouse acknowledged that one of the environmental concerns was traffic, but appellants had not presented any evidence to contradict the City's report that the project did not meet the threshold for a traffic impact study.

Finally, he addressed noise concerns: the City had presented a Meridan analysis paid for by the applicant, which discounted noise concerns.

Newhouse, who lives in Venice, knows the area: he hikes frequently in Los Leones Canyon and also played flag football on the

Calvary Church property (just below the Highlands) for about 10 years.

"We're talking about a lot that has been vacant," he said, noting that if the project was located farther into the park, that might make a difference. He added that his background is nonprofit environmental law.

Newhouse stated that something will eventually be built on the lot and that an eldercare facility seemed noble compared to other possible uses.

Commissioner Waltz Morocco said, "I agree with Newhouse." She noted that as she read all of the paperwork and reviewed the exhibits regarding the facility, she was looking for a project that cut into the canyon or something that degraded the view, but instead sided with the City. "I believe it's an 'urban infill.'"

In making its determination, rather than relying on an environmental study through CEQA and a mitigated negative declaration, the City used Class 32. (The Class 32 "infill" Categorical Exemption—CEQA Guideline Section 15332—exempts infill development within urbanized areas if it meets certain criteria).

The criteria defined by law includes: a.) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable
(Continued on Page 11)

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Appeal

(Continued from Page 10)

zoning designation and regulations; b.) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses; c.) The project site has no value as habitat for

Panel to Discuss Media, 'Fake News'

The Pacific Palisades Democratic Club will host a discussion about "Our Free Press and 'Fake News'" from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8, at the Palisades Library community room, 881 Alma Real Dr.

The panel discussion will include Terry McCarthy, a former foreign correspondent and now CEO of the Los Angeles World Affairs Council; Palisades resident and lifelong journalist Bill Bruns, former editor of the *Palisadian-Post* and now the editorial adviser of the *Palisades News*; and John Harlow, editor-in-chief of the *Post* and former *Guardian* reporter.

The moderator will be Maryam Zar, who was a Middle East correspondent based in Iran in the 1990s and is now president of the Palisades Community Council.

The community is invited to this free event, and middle school and high school students are invited to attend and learn more about how journalism plays a vital role in democracy.

endangered, rare or threatened species; d.) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; e.) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

"What struck me was the sheer passion and intelligence of this community," Waltz Morocco said, but "the zoning administrator did not err."

Margulies, whose mother once lived in the Atria assisted living facility on Sunset, summarized: "There is support for senior housing and I also feel that there has not been an adequate study for the open space and the site."

"But we have a standard of review," she said. "Experts, on the City level, have come out one way and I don't have anything telling me otherwise."

After the vote, Flick told the *News*: "I was very disappointed at the APC's denial of my appeal. Many important factors were ignored by the Commissioners in reaching their decision. I have avenues of appeal available relative to CEQA and the Coastal Act, and I intend to pursue them."

Pacific Palisades Residents Association President Sarah Connor, who spoke in favor of the appeal based on environmental issues, said "We will continue to work hard to preserve the integrity of our coastal laws. Our next step will be to support the appeal at the Coastal Commission."

To listen to the recording, visit: <http://planning.lacity.org/StaffRpt/Audios/West/2018/04-18-2018/5%20ZA-2017-2170.mp3>.

Palisades Symphony Will Perform May 6

The Palisades Symphony, joined by the Brentwood Palisades Chorale, will present Antonin Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* on Sunday, May 6, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community United Methodist Church, 801 Via de la Paz. Admission is free.

Dvorak's oratorio, written at the time of great anguish in his life (he buried all of his three young children within the space of two years), is regarded as his greatest contribution to the sphere of church music.

The symphony orchestra will be led by its founder and music director, Joel B. Lish.

The chorale is directed by Susan S. Rosenstein, who has served for more than 40 years as the music director of the University Synagogue in Brentwood.

The soloists on Sunday will be Christina Borgioli, soprano, a member of the Los Angeles Opera Chorus; Nandani Maria Sinha, mezzo, an internationally acclaimed singer; Scott Noonan, tenor, a soloist and section leader for Westwood Presbyterian Church; and Eric Castro, bass/baritone, who has sung principal operatic roles with numerous orchestras.

Chamber Music Palisades To Present World Premiere

Chamber Music Palisades will perform its last concert of the season at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8, at St. Matthew's Parish, 1031 Bienvenida Ave.

Violinist Sarah Thornblade, cellist David Speltz, CMP Co-Artistic Directors flutist Susan Greenberg and pianist Delores Stevens will be joined by guest composer Nora Kroll-Rosenbaum and regular commentator Alan Chapman.

The concert will feature the world premiere of a commissioned work by Grammy Award-winning composer Kroll-Rosenbaum, "An Exposition of Sleep Come Upon Me (Nine Bedtime Epigrams)" for flute, violin, cello and piano.

The program will also include trios by Haydn and Arensky and a duo by Schumann. Tickets (\$30) will be available at the door. Students with ID are admitted free.

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Party Lauds Caruso Tenants

More than 20 female-led businesses have signed leases at Caruso's Palisades Village, which will open on September 22 along Sunset, Swarthmore and Monument.

The newest announced tenant is fashion designer Andrea Lieberman, whose store will feature her A.L.C. ready-to-wear collection.

Born and raised in New York, Lieberman trained at Parsons School of Design. She started her career as a stylist in the music industry, working with hip-hop figures such as Sean Combs. In 2000 she styled Jennifer Lopez in a green silk chiffon Versace dress for the Grammy Awards (a dress deemed one of the top Grammy dresses ever).

Lieberman moved to Los Angeles in 2009 and debuted her A.L.C. collection. She recently opened a New York store and will establish her West Coast flagship shop at Palisades Village.

"I live on the westside of Los Angeles," Lieberman told *Women's Wear Daily*, "so the new store feels like a really

direct way to speak to my customer."

Developer Rick Caruso, founder and chief executive officer of Caruso (whose properties include The Grove), hosted Lieberman, other tenants and guests for a dinner at his Brentwood estate on April 17.

The four-course meal was prepared by James Beard Award-winning chef Renee Erickson, who will open General Porpoise, a coffee and doughnut shop in Palisades Village.

Another Caruso tenant, Sweet Laurel Bakery's Laurel Gallucci, provided dessert.

Two other signed tenants who helped host the dinner were jeweler Jennifer Meyer and long-time Palisades shopkeeper Elyse Walker.

Walker plans to open towne by elysewalker (a block or so from her store on Antioch), which will feature coed casual wear and also carry Tina & Gigi Caruso's swimwear line, GiGi C. Gigi is Caruso's daughter and Tina is his wife.

Other incoming shop owners at the event included Hannah Skvarla (The Little Market), Lisa Graynak (Carbon38) and Leilani Bishop and Bethany Mayer (Botanica Bazaar).

Regarding the impressive number of female entrepreneurs joining what his company is calling a "lifestyle destination," Caruso told the *L.A. Times*, "That's going to breathe life into this project."

At his gathering, he told his guests, "We could build something cool that looks great, but it needs a soul. And all of you are going to give us that soul."

Other announced Caruso tenants include Bay Theatre by Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas, McConnell's Fine Ice Creams, Al Forte by Madeo, Vintage Grocers, Zimmermann, max-bone, SunLife Organics, edo little bites and an



(Left to right) Jennifer Meyer, Andrea Lieberman and Elyse Walker will all have stores in the Palisades Village.

Photo courtesy Caruso

S.M. Canyon Annual Meeting

The 72nd Annual Meeting of the Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8, at the Rustic Canyon Recreation Center, 601 Latimer Rd.

Refreshments and the opportunity to meet the board will start at 7 p.m., followed by the program at 7:30 p.m., with board elections for a term ending 2020, as well as speakers Councilman Mike Bonin and Senior Lead Officer Michael Moore.

Visit: neighborhoodlink.com/Santa_Monica_Canyon

Amazon bookstore.

Sephora was announced last week and in the store's release, they called Palisades Village the home of a curated store of its makeup and skincare products. With an optimized store design and intimate format, Sephora plans to foster personalized connections between clients and the store's top-ranking beauty advisors.

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New Owners for Palisades Pit Stop

Maybe you have returned home from a road trip and your car is not only dusty, but is littered with food wrappers, empty bottles and other debris. Or, maybe the food that lodges under kids' car seats has turned the back seat of your car into a petri dish of odor.

Not to worry. Marilyn and Gary Mons of Palisades Pit Stop, located at 15233½ La Cruz Dr., not only have valet service (they will pick up your car and deliver it back to you), but can do a complete detail of your sedan or SUV in four hours or less.

A useful service the Pit Stop offers for this family-friendly town is special child's car-seat cleaning—everything from sanitizing and disinfecting to stain removal and a vomit/potty-accident treatment.

The Mons bought the professional auto detailing and car washing business from Alex and Seth Zorensky in October 2016. Although the new owners were retired, "we were looking for something to fill our time," Marilyn said.

"Retired is the worst word," Gary said. "This is a time when you can reinvent yourself, a chance to re-create yourself."

The two met through friends when they were 20 in Redondo Beach, where they had grown up. But they didn't get back together



Gary and Marilyn Mons are the owners of Palisades Pit Stop.

Photo: Bart Bartholomew

until about 16 years ago.

Marilyn had attended Harbor College and then El Camino, with plans to work with animals, but along the way married into a family that had auto body shops. She would work for the next 25 years in a shop

in Torrance.

Gary, who was born in Manchester, New Hampshire, moved here as a child. After high school, he spent the next portion of his life in the aerospace industry. "I'm a self-taught engineer," he said, noting that he

even sat in a mock-up of Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose before it was built.

He started at Garrett Air Research as a machinist before moving to Rockwell, where he worked on the B-1 bomber. From there he moved to Culver City and worked on the Apache attack helicopter.

"I went to Hughes next," Gary said, "and built reflectors for DirecTV." Hughes was purchased by Boeing, and Gary continued to work as a senior scientist until 2015, retiring after 40 years. "Every company I worked for was bought out by Boeing," he noted.

After Gary and Marilyn had separated from their respective spouses, they were reintroduced in 2008. "We hit it off," Marilyn said.

The couple moved to Ventura, bought a house and spent time fixing it up. They traveled through Europe. But after returning home, they they found they had time on their hands.

"I want to keep busy," Gary said, and after looking for businesses, they found Palisades Pit Stop (located behind the Palisades Garden Cafe and the Chase Bank building).

"We fell in love with this community," Marilyn said, and after eight months of commuting, they decided to move to the Palisades.

"We put an offer on a place in the High-
(Continued on Page 14)

Pocket Listings: Who Benefits?

By MICHAEL EDLEN
Special to the Palisades News

It has been a very challenging period for buyer's real estate agents since 2013 when the market recovery began. Demand has consistently been stronger than housing supply and prices are far higher than the previous market highs reached in 2007.

However, the current Westside real estate market is showing signs of beginning to cool off, even though technically it is still a "seller's market." In fact, with steady increases in inventory at the higher price ranges, it is gradually becoming more of a "buyer's market."

For a variety of reasons, most agents are having a difficult time in the effort to find people who are interested or willing to sell their homes, especially in the more affordable lower-to-middle price ranges.

Some agents have approached that challenge by suggesting to owners that they could "quietly" let the agent do some unofficial marketing. This strategy, traditionally known as a "pocket listing," enables the agent to discuss the property with people he or she knows and try to get some buying interest through fellow agents in their office.

Of course, the "listing" does not receive

any advertising in print or online exposure and misses the vast majority of agents whose sole way of learning of listings is through the MLS (Multiple Listing Service).

There are, of course, occasions when a homeowner may prefer a low-key style of marketing. It may be more suitable if one of the owners is quite ill, or highly sensitive to having people come through their home. Others may not want anyone to know they might be selling their home.

Some sellers may be convinced it is a good idea because the agent proposes a lower commission if they can sell it quietly, having no marketing or advertising costs or time invested.

This is the question to consider: "Who benefits from a pocket listing sale?"

There are usually four parties involved in a home sale: the seller, the buyer, the seller's agent and the buyer's agent.

Does a seller benefit from having little or almost no exposure to the market? Is it likely that such an approach to selling will get the seller top dollar, when the buyer has no competition? Might the seller receive more money, and possibly better contract terms and conditions, if there were two or more buyers waiting for a home just like that seller's property?

The buyer might benefit quite a bit from being able to buy a "pocket listing." Without needing to compete with other potential buyers, there is much less pressure on them to pay more, or to have more stringent contingency periods or conditions.

A study done over a period of one year in the last strong market showed that buyers in a local area very similar in demographics to the Palisades were able to purchase homes for 3-7% lower prices than had been paid for relatively comparable homes being marketed in the conventional way using the MLS.

If there is only the one agent involved, even if the commission is reduced by 2%, the agent does very well, especially considering there is little investment of time and no investment of money to do marketing of any sort. If there are two agents involved, they will still be well compensated relative to the efforts expended.

Some people think "pocket listings" are unethical. The more recent standard California sales contract form includes a section that the owner is supposed to read and initial that indicates they have been made aware by the agent that a listing like that might not be in their best interest.

There are exceptions in which an owner may receive even a higher price than might

be expected.

Generally, sellers will succeed in obtaining the best contracts for their homes by hiring an agent who has many sales in the area and provides a vigorous custom marketing plan for that seller. Such an approach will assure maximum exposure to the greatest number of qualified prospective buyers before negotiating with one prospect.

Many listings have received multiple offers in recent years, often resulting in the home selling for more than its list price. Our team has been able to achieve multiple offers 25-30% of the time, using a very high-energy marketing system.

When the system works as designed, the results achieved in quality as well as dollars have consistently proven beneficial for the sellers.

As the market begins to normalize, and buyers feel less pressure, full market exposure will become even more essential for sellers to attain the best results possible. Then, "pocket sales" can potentially be significantly more costly to sellers.

Michael Edlen and his team have developed a highly effective system for marketing and selling with the best likelihood of multiple offers. Call: (310) 230-7373 or visit: Michael@EdlenTeam.com.

Pit Stop

(Continued from Page 13)

lands,” Marilyn said, “and they accepted our offer that same night.” Once that happened, they listed their home in Ventura and 15 minutes into the first showing, someone made an offer.

“It was a good move for us,” Gary said, noting that they’ve met all sorts of people here from all different walks of life.

“Our business and crew and our customers make us so happy,” Marilyn said. “Our long-time, trained staff go over every part of each car to clean it and make it beautiful.”

“We take pride in our work,” said Gary, who pitches in and helps his crew. “We’re all about the quality and taking time to do it right.”

On February 14, Gary and Marilyn married. “We had planned to get married in Buerge Chapel at Aldersgate,” Marilyn said.

But “When we went down to City Hall to get our license,” Gary said, “I had totally forgotten it was Valentine’s Day.”

The place was packed with people getting married, so the two decided to tie the knot there. They had a reception back at their home for friends, family and the couple’s six adult children.

Then it was back to the shop, with a romantic honeymoon getaway planned for the future.

Call (310) 573-9274 or visit: palisades-pitstop.com.

Newman Conducts School Orchestra

A citywide student orchestra of more than 120 of the area’s brightest students from two dozen schools will perform at the 20th annual All Schools Elementary Honor Orchestra Concert in UCLA’s Schoenberg Hall on May 5.

The orchestra will perform the concert twice to accommodate ticket demand, with shows at 10 and 11:30 a.m.

Conducted by Pacific Palisades resident Larry Newman, the orchestra’s annual broadcast performances from Schoenberg Hall have earned four Los Angeles Area Emmy Awards in the Children/Youth Programming category. The orchestra was recently honored by the City Council at L.A. City Hall.

Each participating child is selected by his/her school music teacher. Student ages range from 7 to 12; 10 is the average age.

“These students are exceptionally talented, and together make music that inspires not only their parents, but also anyone in Los Angeles who is interested in music, the arts and education,” Newman said. “The honors orchestra is a diverse group of children that come together to play beautiful music in a professional concert setting. It is a shining example of the importance of music in our local schools.”

Palisades Elementary students include: Claire Sibson, Isabelle Kocher, Millie Slow, Max von der Ohe, Shane Masterson, Maia



These Palisades elementary school musicians were selected to perform with the All Schools Elementary Honor Orchestra.

Baserga-Rudd, Sky Shannon, Zachary Shapiro, Oliver O’Donnell, Connor Branch, Teddy Grandy, Rhys Grandy, Maren Ghafari, Darby Rastegar and Kai Simi-Ottinger; Calvary Christian students are: Jamey Tsugawa, Hanna Shin, Hannah Campbell, Andrew Grinsfelder, Connor Telehowski, Logan Scott, Collin Kim, Lucas Hocking and Eve Matteson; Marquez Elementary musicians are: Parker Keston, Ella Nielson, Alex Halpin,

Brett Rosenblatt, Luke Jacobs, Isabel Hurd, Annalisa Hurd and Charlotte Sng; and UCLA Lab student is Anniela Kahala.

Children’s Music Workshop, founded by Newman almost 30 years ago, provides instrumental music instruction to schools throughout Los Angeles, including Topanga, Canyon, Marquez, Kenter and Palisades.

Tickets must be reserved in advance. Please email: schoolmusic@mac.com.



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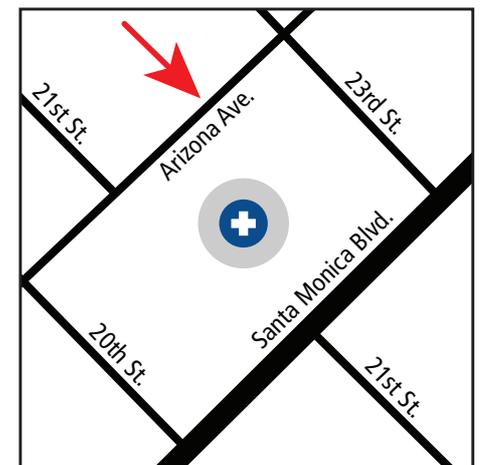
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Hobnobbing at The Grill on the Alley

By BOB VICKREY
Special to the Palisades News

When it was suggested that our monthly lunch club try The Grill on the Alley in Beverly Hills, I had to admit that I had never heard of it.

But after learning that The Grill is a favorite haunt for show-business executives, I understood why I had completely missed this industry hideaway that some refer to as “The Commissary.” Having called L.A. my home for almost 40 years now, I have been living with the shame and humiliation of never having produced a major movie or successful television series. And what’s worse, I never even tried.

In times past, Los Angeles was recognized for having such celebrated restaurants as The Brown Derby, Chasen’s and Morton’s. And these days, many fans of The Grill compare it favorably to those classic bistros of bygone years. A few old-timers have even compared it to the venerable Musso & Frank’s Grill in Hollywood (which turns 100 next year).

The Grill can’t yet boast the long history of those illustrious institutions, but after 30-plus years, it has established a sterling reputation for its extraordinary service and its flexibility in catering to special off-menu requests.

Steve Oliver, a longtime server there, once said “For any request, the answer is ‘yes’—



Craig Natvig and The Grill waitress Patricia.

Photo: Barry Stein

now, what’s the question?” One regular customer described the restaurant’s professional service: “At The Grill, the actors are in the seats—not serving you.”

Our special guest this trip was my longtime friend, Craig Natvig, a third-generation Palisadian who has specialized in residential real estate for almost two decades and is a top-producing agent with Coldwell Banker.

He attended Palisades High and received a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Colorado.

Prior to his real estate career, Craig founded and managed the Pacific Athletic Clubs in the Palisades and Palos Verdes for 15 years. The local club is where I first met him as a member of PAC (now the Bay Club), located at Sunset Boulevard and PCH. His athletic background and passion for adventure sports had led him into the world of fitness training and the creation of the PAC workout facility.

Craig was a world-class skier and internationally certified instructor, and even made an appearance in Warren Miller’s renowned ski film *Steep and Deep*. He was also an A-rated beach volleyball player and competed in more than 150 triathlons throughout the world—including the Hawaii Ironman World Championships.

After arriving at The Grill and remembering Craig’s impressive athletic achievements, I considered shortening the ordering process and simply informing our waiter, “I’ll have whatever he’s having.”

But instead, I spotted the liver-and-onions on the menu and decided to go “rogue-prim-

itive” by ordering this rather politically incorrect dish that seldom ranks high on anybody’s list of favorite foods. In fact, I asked my fellow tablemates if they would need to find seating elsewhere if I ordered the liver. By most healthful standards, I was also likely abandoning those long-held dreams of winning my own Ironman competition.

Craig ordered the Kobe burger with French fries and coleslaw, so I felt better knowing “Mr. Ironman” occasionally lets his hair down and doesn’t always have kale salad for lunch.

Arnie ordered the Caesar salad with blackened salmon and Barry chose one of the Grill’s most famous dishes—the chicken pot pie, which was roughly the size of an intimidating banana cream pie from Marie Callender’s. He said little about his mammoth, blimp-like dish, but when he scarfed it down in such short order, we assumed it signaled a big thumbs-up.

We topped off our memorable luncheon with a big slice of Key lime pie and four sharp-edged forks—which are always handy in the inevitable duel that ensues when any dessert hits our table.

After the mid-day rush, we chatted with our server Patricia, who has been working at The Grill for 22 years, and we briefed her about our monthly outings at famous restaurants throughout Southern California. She told us that Clint Eastwood is probably her favorite celebrity customer because of his friendliness toward fellow diners who often stop by the table to greet him.

We informed her that we had also been available to chat with fellow diners during our extended lunch there, but not one person took advantage of our friendliness and availability.

At first, I assumed it was simply because Mr. Eastwood had been given a better table, but when I caught Patricia glancing down at my plate of rather unappealing liver-and-onions leftovers, I think I figured out our problem.

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



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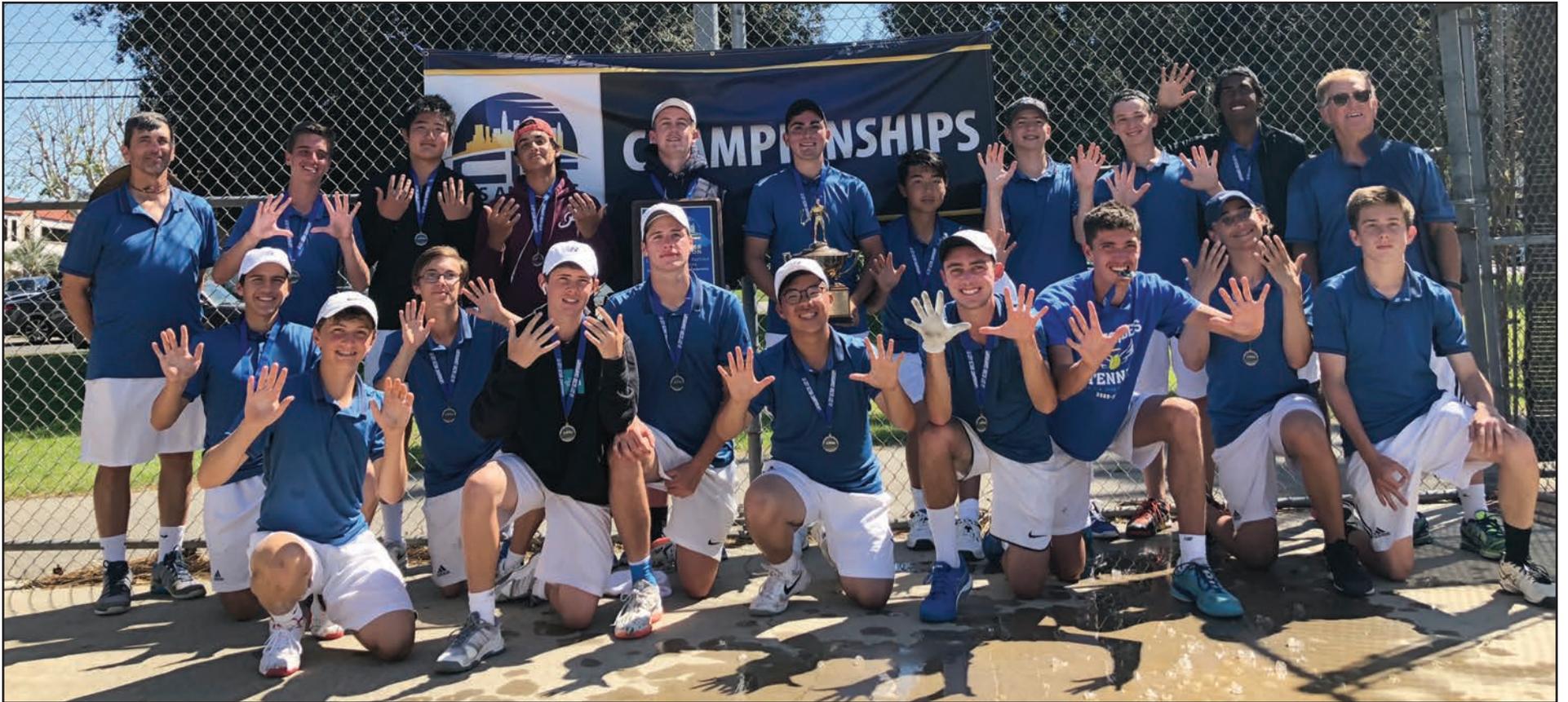
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Members of the Palisades High boys tennis team celebrate their 10th straight City Section championship. At far right is head coach Bud Kling.

PaliHi Boys Tennis: 10 Straight Titles

Capturing the L.A. City Section championship, the Palisades High boys tennis team made it 10 straight with a tense 17-12.5 victory over Granada Hills on April 20 at the Balboa Sports Complex.

After winning the City's Division 1 title for nine years in a row, PaliHi won the inaugural Open Division title this year.

"The team had seven new starters in the lineup this year and were able to continue the legacy of success," said Head Coach Bud Kling, whose teams have won 27 boys titles since 1962, which is more than any school in any one sport in the history of the L.A. City Section.

In the team championship match, the four top singles players on each team play each other in one-set matches. The winner of each match gets one point, meaning a total of 16 points can be earned.

Similarly, the three top doubles teams on each team play one other. The winner of each match earns 1.5 points, meaning a total of 13.5 points can be earned.

The championship is won by the first team to reach 15 points.

Kling earned his latest title by having a team with incredibly talented depth. Early in the season, his No. 1 singles player was suspended from the team. Another player was last year's team captain, who is ranked nationally, elected not to play this year in order to pursue various tournaments. A third top player from last year also decided not to return.

Kling put his faith in players who wanted

to be there and who wanted to work hard, and it paid off, but it wasn't easy.

Granada Hill's No. 1 singles player, Gary Vardanyan, also a ranked junior, beat Pali's No. 1, Lincoln Bellamy, No. 2 Danilo Milic, No. 3 Atticus Parker and No. 4 Nick Arvin.

Granada Hill's No. 2 player, Daniel Lin, also won all four of his matches.

Nevertheless, the Dolphins managed to win the remaining eight singles matches to even the team score at 8-8.

Since a doubles win is worth 1.5 points, Granada Hills coach Troy Aiken moved two of his best singles players into doubles, hoping to win the first title ever for Granada Hills.



But Pali's top doubles team of Jack Harrington and Tomas Huttepain won all three of their matches, 6-3, 6-2 and 6-3.

Pali's second doubles team of Adam Glickman and Souma Hayakama fell behind the Highlanders' No. 2 team, but rallied to win the match, 7-5. They won a second match 6-0 and lost the third 2-6.

Pali's third team of Lucas Trepagnier and Matt Webber lost two matches, 6-2 and 6-2, but won their third, 6-4.

"Those matches (second and third dou-

bles) made the difference," said Kling, who also saluted team captain Ethan Subel and player Ishaan Lal for their work.

This season, the Dolphins were 16-0 in league and 22-2 overall, losing only to Monta Vista and Corona del Mar at the National All-American Tournament.

Kling has now won 44 City crowns—26 with the boys and 18 with the girls (a program he took over in 1979).

Next up are the individual and double competitions with the finals on May 10.



Jack Harrington and Tomas Huttepain were PaliHi's No. 1 doubles team.

Boys Lacrosse Wins City Title

By the end of the second quarter in the City Section championship game last Saturday, the Palisades High boys lacrosse team led Hamilton, 14-3, and never looked back.

The final score was 21-3 at Birmingham High as the Dolphins captured their third straight City title.

“We started a little slow,” said Pali head coach Kevin Donovan. “Before the game I said, ‘share the ball.’ I’m proud of the guys, they didn’t relax, and they could have.”

“It feels fantastic,” said senior co-captain Martin Avila. “Winning a championship is always great to get under your belt. Now we move on” [to the regional playoffs.]

Another senior co-captain, Macchio Risone, who has been one of Pali’s top scorers since he made the varsity team as a freshman, said, “This is one of the most emotional championships.”

The Dolphins are a young team and Risone felt that “I wanted to help develop the freshmen—give them a role model.

“I felt like I had to make the people around me better,” he said. “It’s a team sport.” And by developing other players to score, Risone wasn’t constantly double teamed.

“We have a pretty good team this year,” Donovan said. “Of the three teams I’ve taken to the City championships, this is the strongest.”



The Palisades High boys lacrosse team won the City championship on Saturday.

Even though he had a lot of young players, he had his team play a tough schedule from the beginning. “We could go 16-3 and win City,” he said, “but I’d rather go 9-9 and get the team prepared for the regionals.”

Indeed, the Dolphins finished 10-8 overall and 5-1 in league. At the start of the sea-

son, they were ranked 14th in Southern California (Loyola was ranked No. 1). One of Donovan’s goals was to have a top-10 ranking, which he achieved last week with Palisades coming in at No. 10. Loyola was No. 1 and Palos Verdes No. 2.

“We haven’t been ranked in the top 10

since 2012,” Donovan noted.

The games against higher ranked teams have been close, such as a 12-10 loss to Oak Park on April 21, and a 12-11 overtime loss to Sierra Canyon on April 24.

Donovan and his assistant coaches, Will Manning and Mike Kutzer, all played Division I lacrosse in college and Donovan admits, “My playbook is a little more sophisticated.”

One of his challenges this year has been injuries. “We haven’t had a full team healthy, or at a game,” the coach said. “We’ve had three or four starters out.”

Donovan gave a shout out to his goalie, senior Abner Santiago, for his numerous saves all season.

On Sunday, coaches held a seeding meeting to determine the top 16 teams that will enter the Southern California invitational tournament. Eight lower ranked teams will have their own bracket.

Donovan expected Pali to be ranked around 12. “Our goal is to get past the first round,” he said. “Each year we’ve had a better ranking than the year before.”

Whoever is ranked 15 or 16 will face Loyola or Palos Verdes, and “you don’t want to be that team,” Donovan said, smiling.

He expects that the Dolphins will play Westlake (ranked 6) or Agoura (ranked 7), but whoever they face, “This team still has something to prove,” he said.



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Girls Lose in Lacrosse City Finals

After losing to Birmingham in the City Section finals in 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Palisades High girls team fell once again to the Patriots in Saturday's championship game, 10-6.

The Dolphins had split two games with Birmingham during the regular season, winning 13-9 and losing 9-7. The teams were

evenly matched going into Saturday's title game, but "we came out flat," said coach Betsy Economou, who had three players affected by head colds: midfielders Sammy Stahl and Isabel McKinlay and goalie Jessie Taft.

At halftime, Pali trailed 9-2. "We did not get possession at the draw," Economou said. "I'm proud of how we held Birmingham to

one goal in the second half," outscoring the Patriots 4-1.

In the first half, Economou said, "We switched to a zone defense, and we got a lot of three-second calls that resulted in scores for Birmingham."

If a player is inside the critical scoring area for more than three seconds and not within a stick's length of a player, the referee calls that infraction. The determination of where the ball should be placed depends on when the whistle blew. In this case it often resulted in a free shot from the 8-meter circle and goals for Birmingham.

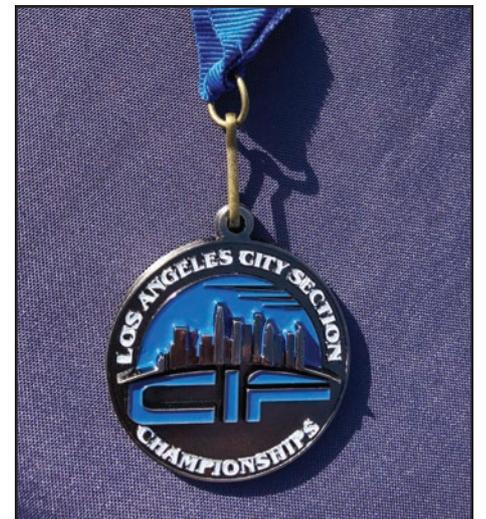
Birmingham Coach Scott Silva said, "It's a great feeling to reach this accomplishment at the end of the season."

He noted that since the girls rules changed last year and only three players are in the midfield until there is possession, this means "With three strong middies, you can gain possession. We were winning every draw."

Silva has six seniors and two of them are middies. "Our middle will be a big question mark next year."

"I'm really pleased with our regular season," said Economou, who has only one senior: attacker Lily Wolman. "We've had a great showing."

The Dolphins are now 14-5 overall, having lost non-league games to Chaminade (12-10), Royal (9-6) and Mira Costa (14-10). Mira Costa beat top-ranked Redondo



PaliHi Girls earned second place and the silver medal.

Union last week.

The seeding meeting for the CIF tournament was held April 29. The top 16 teams will face off, with the lower eight going into an invitational-type tournament.

Redondo, ranked No. 1, is followed by Palos Verdes, Westlake and Cate.

Sunday morning, Economou learned her team was ranked 14th, and its first game was against the Westlake on May 1.

Economou is hopeful that with a healthy team, PaliHi will then go onto face the winner of the Birmingham (seeded 11)/West Ranch (seeded 6) game.



For 23 years, students at Palisades Elementary have participated in an annual walk-a-thon and fitness day. This year's organizers included (left to right) John Gibbons, Erin Armbrust, Jamie Ridgley and Gwendolen Twist.

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Oops!

In our April 18 article "PaliHi Beach Volleyball Begins Play" about the girls' team, three of the five gold medalists who graduated from Palisades High School were named: Kent Steffes, Chris Marlowe and Ricci Luyties. Dave Saunders (1984 and 1988) and Steve Salmons (1984) were omitted and should have been listed. Five volleyball gold medalists have graduated from PaliHi! Thanks to Rocky Bowman for the information.

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YMCA/Optimist Track Meet Registration Open

The 46th Annual Optimist/YMCA Track Meet is now open for registration. The meet will run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 3, at Palisades High School, check-in starts at 10:30 a.m.

Children and teens, ages 3-15, will have the opportunity to compete in sprints, runs, long jump and shot put. Individuals may participate in as many events as they would like in their age division.

The cost is \$20 per participant if registered by June 2. One may register at the YMCA, at 821 Via de la Paz or online at apm.activecommunities.com/ymcala/Activity_Search/139717. Registration the day of the meet is \$40. Call (310) 454-5591.



Matt McGeagh leads Penn in RBI's.

Matt McGeagh Named 'Player of the Week'

The Philadelphia Baseball Review named Pacific Palisades native Matt McGeagh Player of the Week for the week ending April 23.

McGeagh, a junior third baseman at the University of Pennsylvania, finished the week with a .316 batting average, nine RBIs, four runs scored, a pair of doubles, a triple and a homerun. He leads Penn for the season in RBIs (36) and slugging percentage (.511).

As a sophomore, McGeagh was also selected a Philadelphia Big 5 Player of the Week for his performance during a three-game series against Marist College. The Big

5 league includes La Salle, Penn, Villanova, Temple and Saint Joseph.

McGeagh, a former Pacific Palisades Baseball Association player, is a Loyola High School alum. His father, Rick, was a longtime coach in the PPBA and served on the board.

Rick and wife Tracy flew to the East Coast in April to watch their son play in a three-game series against Cornell. In the first game, which Penn lost 10-9, McGeagh had a single, a homer and 5 RBI's. In the second game, a 9-5 Penn win, McGeagh had one hit and one RBI, and in the final game (a 7-6 loss), he had one hit.

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AYSO Region 69 Fall Registration Begins

AYSO Region 69 soccer registration is now open for youth with birth dates between 2000 and 2015.

Those who register prior to May 31 will receive an early registration discount; guaranteed team placement and one free day at any of the Region 69 summer soccer camps (several weeks to choose from, with either day or afternoon options open).

The AYSO program's philosophy in-

cludes: open registration, everyone plays, balanced teams, positive coaching, good sportsmanship and player development.

There is a VIP program for children with special needs and there will be information nights held during the summer for newly registered families in the U5 through the U8 divisions.

Visit: ayso69.org and go to the registration tab.

Dunk MS to be Held on May 5

Former UCLA basketball player Blake Arnet is organizing the first Dunk MS event on Saturday, May 5, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Palisades High School, 15777 Bowdoin St.

The fundraiser will feature a professional dunk contest with some of the world's best players to benefit Multiple Sclerosis research. Participants may register at dunkms.com. High School and college students will have free entry with student ID cards. Before the contest begins at 11:30 a.m., there will be a basketball clinic for kids ages 8 to 12, a silent auction and raffle.

JUMBLE SOLUTION

Jumbles: HONEY YIELD GRUMPY WEASEL
Answer: The boy who questioned every request from his parents was a — "WHYS" GUY



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Teens Clear Homeless Encampments

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

I want to live here with these beautiful views of the ocean," an observer said, looking out at the Pacific Ocean. "I can understand why the homeless want to live here."

The view from L.A. City-owned property below Via las Olas down to Pacific Coast Highway is indeed spectacular. But that's not why about 40 people assembled on the hillside on April 17-18; they were there to clean out abandoned homeless encampments.

The area below the Las Olas bluffs once served as an illegal campground for numerous homeless people. But after two brush fires broke out at encampments (one below Via las Olas, the other below Corona del Mar) and raced up the hillside toward Pacific Palisades homes, warning signs were posted in 2015: "Restricted Entry, Very High Fire Severity Zone."

Those signs made it possible for L.A. Police Department officers to tell the homeless they could not stay.



Members of the L.A. Conservation Corps helped clean an abandoned homeless camp below the Via las Olas bluffs.

"With the signs, I could ask them to move on," Officer John Redican told the *News*. "I would then ask them if they had help or if they wanted it." He could connect the person with the two social workers hired by the Pa-

cific Palisades Task Force on Homelessness.

As people were cleared from the area, about 30 abandoned campsites remained—with tons of accumulated garbage.

At cleanups last fall, local residents cleared about 14 camps, but 16 remained hidden in steep terrain.

Money had been raised to clear these remaining sites, but L.A. Recreation and Parks officials said the group needed to use a City-approved contractor to finish the task. After PPTFH members met with one contractor, he came back to the group and said he couldn't find a crew.

PPTFH members contacted Councilman Mike Bonin's office for suggestions, and his field deputy, Lisa Cahill, said to try the L.A. Conservation Corps.

The Task Force's Sharon Kilbride spoke

to LACC Program Manager Lorena Umana, who agreed to bring 25 youth, between the ages of 16-19, to the Palisades.

Prior to their arrival, Kilbride had identified two large encampments for the youth to clean the first day.

Upon arriving at 9 a.m., they were given instructions: "Look for needles and glass. If you come across human feces and urine, put it aside, we don't deal with that."

The teenagers then split into two groups, armed with rakes, shovels and gloves, and started bagging the garbage that was fouling the environment.

The *News* asked one youth if he had cleaned up encampments before. "My first one was in Watts, this is my second one," he said, noting that this was different because it had more trash in a smaller space.

NBC Channel 4 News came to document the process and the segment was shown on the 11 a.m. and 4, 5 and 6 p.m. news programs the same day.

Within an hour, the Corps had completed cleaning both abandoned campsites, much to the amazement of Kilbride, who thought it might take two days to do both sites.

She then had Redican show the youth additional campsites.

In about six hours over two days, the youth cleared all 16 targeted encampments. By contrast, local volunteers, many of whom were in their 50s and 60s, took an entire morning to clean one site.

"Us old folks are slower than these youths," Kilbride wrote in an April 18 email to the *News*. "The good news is that Lorena [program coordinator] will be happy to have the Corps clean up the remaining camps along Palisades Drive and the Castellammare slide area."



Bags of trash were removed from the parkland and hauled away.



A propane tank for a barbeque was removed from one campsite.

L.A. Conservation Corps

The L.A. Conservation Corps Clean and Green program was created in 1988 for off-track middle and high school students as a workforce development program. They are paid \$12 an hour.

"We provide job training, such as showing up to work on time, in work clothes, with a lunch packed," said Lorena Umana, program coordinator for the L.A. Conservation Corps.

In order to apply for the Clean and Green program, funded by the City of L.A. and the Bureau of Sanitation, kids have to be enrolled in school (many are in alternate schools) and show they are from low-income families.

"Our goal is not to have them here long-time," Umana said. "We want them to complete their education and reach for something higher." She noted that many continue with their education into college, and others will open their own business.

The Corps also has a Young Adult program that provides low-income disconnected youth (18-24) to train for and gain work experience in fields such as land man-

agement (habitat restoration and urban forestry), zero waste (recycling), construction, energy (audits and solar panel installation) and manufacturing.

Conservation Corps youth are also employed at SEA lab, located in Redondo Beach. Students give public tours, oversee fish feeding and help at the summer marine camps.

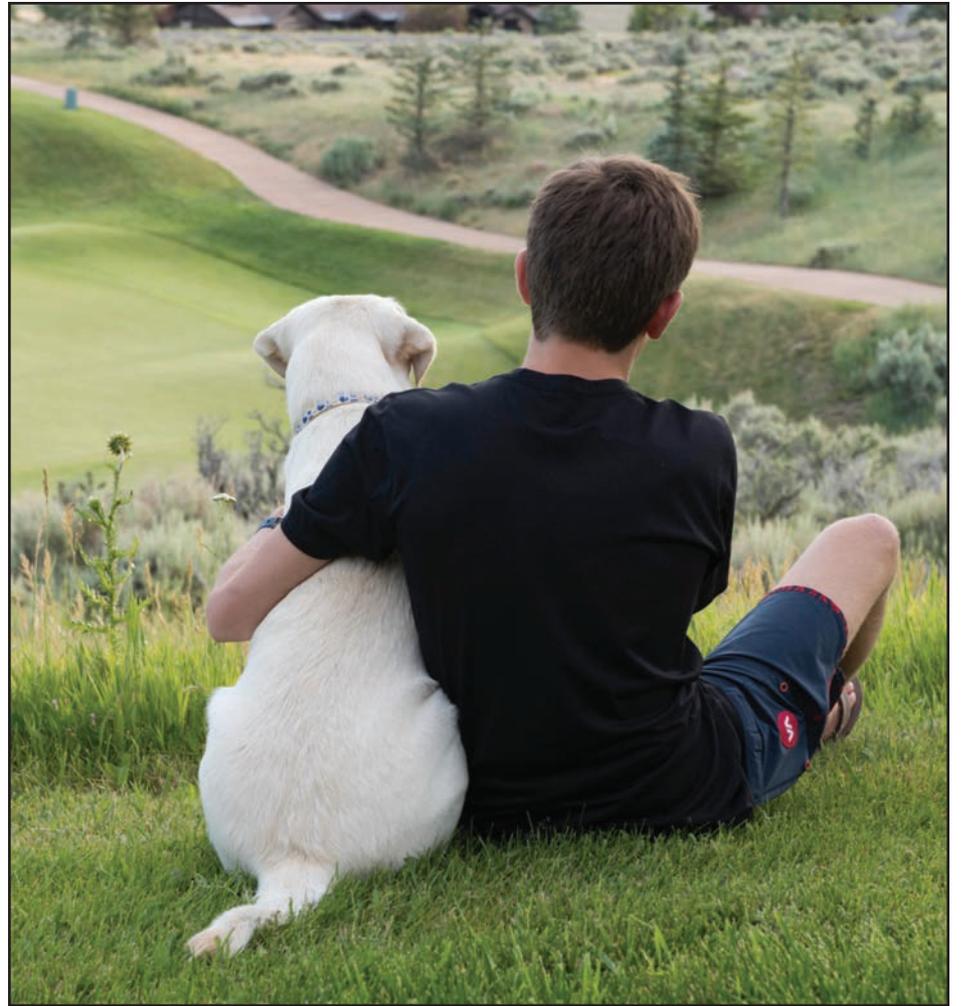
The L.A. Corps can be contacted to employ youth, if an organization needs any of the following: landscape construction, habitat restoration, irrigation installation, tree planting and urban forestry services, storm water capture and retention, graffiti removal, energy audits, community garden development and construction, native plant propagation, fire fuel reduction, invasive species removal, trail building and maintenance, urban park construction, community outreach and canvassing, environmental education and interpretation, large or small scale recycling, erosion/flood control and disaster relief.

Call: (323) 224-2550 or visit: lacorps.org.



Above: Glen Gregos not only has a service dog provided by CCI, he and his wife are now raising a CCI puppy. Right: Garrett Van Konynenburg with Halifax, the puppy raised by his family for CCI.

Photo right courtesy Claire Van Konynenburg



Pacific Palisades Puppy Raisers Sought

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

WANTED: PUPPY RAISERS. If your kids are begging for a dog or you're living in an empty-nest situation and you love dogs, the Canine Companions for Independence (CCI), founded in 1975, may provide a solution.

Pacific Palisades resident Claire Van Konynenburg said she learned about the program because one of her two house dogs had been a CCI dog. The canine refused to go through a door unless it was opened all the way, which meant it couldn't be used for the disabled. About 50 percent of dogs don't make it through training.

Those dogs are then reclassified as a COC (change of career) dog. Instead of being assigned to the disabled, they might become a guide dog, a customs dog, trained for bomb detection or a house pet, such as the one acquired by the Van Konynenburgs.

When the family's third child, Katilyn, wanted another dog (they already had two), Van Konynenburg stopped to contemplate.

An extended family member, who was 17, had been recently paralyzed in a traffic accident and "I felt devastated," Van Konynenburg said. "As a mom, I wanted to help."

What could make a difference? A dog who is trained to help the disabled.

And so, the Van Konynenburgs got their first CCI puppy, and began the training process.

How hard is it to raise a puppy for 14-16 months, knowing you have to give it up?

"I made it clear at the beginning how long the puppy would be with us," said Claire, who noted that when the family gave the dog back to CCI, her kids realized that "When you give back, you get more in return."

"I tell people, I love the dog, but I don't need the dog," said Claire, who is now co-raising a third puppy with her sister. She and husband Mike have four children: Alli-

son, 25, a high school teacher in Nashville; Jenny, a graduate student at Northwestern; Kaitlyn, 20, a sophomore at USC and Garrett, 16, who attends Loyola.

The second question Claire is often asked: "I travel so much, how can I raise a dog for CCI?"

"I travel a lot," Van Konynenburg said, noting that a puppy can go "visit" with another person who is raising a dog for CCI. "It's wonderful and good for the dog to go to different homes."

There is a screening process before CCI gives someone an eight-week-old puppy.

This includes an interview in the prospective puppy raiser's home, so the yard and environment can be deemed safe.

A booklet with instructions comes with the dog, and a Canine Companion instructor is available to answer questions. A puppy raiser is asked to go to occasional puppy classes, where the dog is further socialized and where the "owner" can learn more puppy-raising techniques.

After about 14 months, the puppy goes to a professional trainer for another six- to nine-month training where it learns about

(Continued on Page 23)



A group of puppies in a CCI class held at a Pacific Palisades home.

Photo courtesy Claire Van Konynenburg

Puppy Raisers

(Continued from Page 22)

40 commands.

If the dog passes, then it's graduation day, and the puppy raiser hands the leash to the new owner.

"When you go to the graduation, you see the joy when the dog is partnered with a recipient," said Van Konynenburg, one of the only people in the Palisades currently raising a CCI puppy.

Glen Gregos, a local CCI board member and recipient of a service dog, said "When you see how a dog changes lives, it's magical."

Gregos suffered a spinal-cord injury when he was 15 and is confined to a wheelchair. He finished high school and then college with a degree in business administration. In 2005, he went to the Internet and typed in "dog and wheelchair" and a year later received his first service dog from CCI.

"After so many years of working my wheelchair, my shoulder was starting to go out," he said, but his service dog could help pull the chair, and could also help with shopping by holding a small bag while pulling Gregos.

His service dog can turn a light switch on and off, open and close the door, and if Gregos drops something, the dog picks it up



CCI breeder volunteers will take a bred dog into their home and help raise the puppies until they are eight weeks old. The dogs then go to new homes for the start of their training.

Photo courtesy Claire Van Konynenburg

and gives it to him.

For people who lack manual dexterity, the dog is trained to give a credit card to a clerk. "But he [the dog] doesn't have to pay for it," Gregos joked.

"The dog is sort of an icebreaker," he said. Before he had the dog, it seemed that people were afraid to speak to him, but now people are more willing to come up and talk to him.

"I've seen the difference a dog makes with

children who have cognitive disabilities," he said, adding that CCI dogs are vitally important to many veterans.

The person raising the puppy assumes the veterinarian bills, and the cost of the food, because dogs are given free to those who are disabled and in need.

One of Van Konynenburg's "puppies," Petunia, went on to become a dog that was bred for puppies.

Labradors and golden retrievers, or a combination of both, are generally bred because of their temperament and their willingness to fetch.

The dogs are trained to assist adults with physical disabilities, those with hearing issues, children who may have physical, cognitive and developmental disabilities, and those who work in a visitation, education or health-care setting.

The CCI dog is essentially raised by three people before going to its final owner: 1.) the homeowner where the puppies live with the mother for 8 weeks; 2.) the puppy raiser and 3.) the professional trainer.

In addition to raising puppies, there is an added bonus: "I love all the people I've met through CCI," Van Konynenburg said.

To request a puppy-raiser application, visit cci.org/puppyraiser or call (800) 572-BARK.

Calling Pets 'Service Dogs' Is a Disservice

A reader wrote the *News* that she saw a shopper's dog defecate in CVS and was horrified that people bring their pets into stores and try to pass them off as service animals.

Glen Gregos, who is in a wheelchair because of a spinal injury that he suffered as a 15-year-old, said: "It [calling pets service dogs] absolutely does a disservice to those who need a service animal." His service animal can help pull his wheelchair, carry a light shopping bag, turn lights off and on, and retrieve items he drops.

California Health and Safety Code, Section 114259.5 prohibits live animals in a food facility, which includes restaurants, grocery stores and other places that sell

food—except for "service animals."

Is a dog that provides emotional support a service animal? No, according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which defines a service animal as "[A] dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability."

Gregos said that the abuse of the system has made it more difficult for those who are truly disabled. "We're trying to educate. Service dogs are considered 'medical equipment.'"

Claire Van Konynenburg said that when her family gets a new CCI puppy, they will take it to the service manager at Gelson's and introduce the dog and its purpose. She also hands out pamphlets about CCI. "We're trying to create awareness," she said.



Glen Gregos' dog is trained to put his paws on his owner's feet in order to hand him something.

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First- and second-place winners in the annual Palisades Optimist Club's Oratorical contest were Julia Abbott and Matty Gottesman.

Abbott Wins Optimist Oratorical Contest

Optimism is the hope that things can get better, and they will. Optimism is constantly maintaining a cheerful outlook on life, even when life may not seem that cheerful," said Julia Abbott, who won the Optimist Club's oratorical contest on March 20 at the Palisades Lutheran Church.

This year's topic was "Where Are My Roots of Optimism," and speeches had to be four to five minutes long. The emcee was Palisades High School senior Daniel Gottesman, who won the local contest two years ago, then went on to win the Zone and District contests before competing at the international event in St. Louis.

The annual contest is open to any contestant under the age of 18 who attends public and private school or is home-schooled. The first-prize winner received \$200 and second place earned \$100.

Pacific Palisades resident Susie DeWeese was the oratorical chair, aided by four judges: Meria Larson, a retired attorney who specialized in scientific litigation; Angela Vassallo, a nationally recognized expert in infection prevention and epidemiology; Paula LaBrot, the director of drama and film at Chaminate College Prep High School; and Marcel Low, CEO of Providence Saint John's Health Center and John Wayne Cancer Center.

Speeches were made by eight contestants who attend either Paul Revere Middle School or Palisades High School. They included Anirudh Chatterjee, Maya DeGanyar, Keren Dror, Matty Gottesman, Mia Kulinsky, Arya Naeim, Adelaide Saab, Sarah Slavkin and David Tofer.

"It was wonderful," said DeWeese, who noted that the contest was close between Abbott and runner-up Gottesman, with only a point separating first and second

place. Both students attend Revere.

In her speech, Abbott spoke about her mother who was involved in a near-fatal traffic accident.

"I was standing still, not a tear in my eye as I held my sobbing three-year-old sister, looking at our mother's still, almost lifeless body, fighting for every breath," Abbot said. "It was at that moment that I thought about all the things I had never gotten to do with my mom.

"I grew more and more frantic, as I realized that I could stand to lose so many things in an instant. I realized how everything, every day, every moment was a gift. And that is when I swore to treat every gift with the deference it deserved."

Abbot explained that her mother survived, but that the trauma changed the family. "It showed me you had to be happy and grateful," she said, and concluded that "At the end of your life, you will miss the little things, so go appreciate them."

Second-place winner Matty Gottesman explained that music has the ability to change the listener's mood and as an optimist and musician "there is no greater gift than giving music."

After hearing about a charity that brings virtual reality to kids in the hospital, he wrote, recorded and produced a song for those in the hospital. "It is incredible seeing the kids' radiant smiles and wondrous faces when they put on headsets," he said. "The truly amazing part is that kids who wear the headsets have less pain and anxiety in the days following.

"I know that when we work together, we can help improve the lives of others," Gottesman said.

Abbott took first in the Area competition and will advance to the District contest in Bakersfield.

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The *New Girl* cast includes (left to right) Max Greenfield, Hannah Simone, Zooey Deschanel, Jake Johnson and Lamorne Morris. Photo: Brian Bowen Smith/FOX



Community United Methodist Church was transformed into a school for a *New Girl* episode. Photo: Bernice Fox

New Girl Filmed at Methodist Church

By BERNICE FOX
Special to the Palisades News

New *Girl* is coming up to its final episode, and that means no more scenes will be filmed at Community United Methodist Church of Pacific Palisades.

Actually, only one episode of the Fox series was filmed there. And as the comedy winds down, it has the church's pastor think-

ing back to filming and the series star, Zooey Deschanel, who grew up in the Palisades.

She was "very receptive and friendly and thanked me," remembers Pastor Wayne Walters.

Back in September 2016, trucks from 20th-Century Fox pulled up to the church on Via de la Paz to unload cameras, cables, lights and props for *New Girl*.

That episode turned the church into the Academy of Banyon Canyon where De-

schanel's character, Jess, was working. The episode aired two months later as part of the sixth season.

Now *New Girl* is in its seventh and final season, something the show's creator Elizabeth Meriwether says is "lucky compared to a lot of shows" that never make it that far. Meriwether says she fought for, and got, this final season, which is set three years later, to show that the friends in *New Girl* "are a little more grown up."

Filming of that previous sixth season episode at Community United Methodist required some compromise.

Pastor Walters says though they were inside the building, the film crew "did complain that they could hear the children running around screaming and having fun" outside on the pre-school playground. He says they asked, "Can you stop them?"

"That did become a problem, because it's not like they're only going to film for five minutes. They film over and over again."

So, the pastor says "there was a little complication with that. And we did what we could to try to keep the kids a little bit in

different areas and that kind of thing." Ultimately the crew "accommodated that there might be a little background noise."

Walters says the issue is that school was in session; things are quiet during the summer when the kids are on vacation.

Filming at the church has been lucrative—\$10,000 to \$15,000 per shoot—even though only two shows have filmed on site since Walters arrived as pastor in mid-2015. *Jane the Virgin*, which airs on the CW network, shot in August 2016, about six weeks before *New Girl's* cameras set up.

The pastor says "it's nice money that's not budgeted. It can cover shortfalls somewhere else. From one filming, *Jane the Virgin*, half we gave to the pre-school and they were able to use that for the outdoor play area."

Walters, who's now 63, admits he was clueless about both *Jane the Virgin* and *New Girl* when they came calling.

"Both of those, I didn't know anything about. Could be my age. I'll say that. I had to look them up."

New Girl ends its long run with an hour-long episode May 15.

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PACIFIC PALISADES

Music Auditions for July Fourth Concert

This year's Pacific Palisades Rocks the Fourth festival at Palisades High School will have 300 minutes of live music, starting at the Upper Stage (4 to 6 p.m.) and continuing on the Main Stage from 6 to 9 p.m.

All musicians, performers and groups of all music styles and types are encouraged to submit a request to perform at the July 4th concert. General requirements are:

- Family-friendly set.
- Performers must have a connection to

Pacific Palisades (live, school, work, family, etc.).

- 20- to 30-minute set.
- At least 50-percent covers.
- Include some patriotic songs (possible examples: "Born in the USA;" "We're an American Band;" "R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A.;" "America" and "Rockin' in the U.S.A.").

Please forward all music, photos and electronic press kits to Keith Turner atkjt@turnerlawapc.com.



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Taj Palace has been treating Palisadians to tasty Indian food for 17 years. Proprietor Sunny Sukhwinder Singh not only takes care of the restaurant but also oversees “to-go” orders, which many locals take advantage of, both by delivery and self-pickup. We observed both deliverers and patrons coming and going.

My friend Barbara and I selected glasses of wine while we relaxed and surveyed our Indian setting.

The restaurant is delightful, with its variety of Indian paintings and sculptures that create a relaxing setting for your meal. Then, there is the multi-page menu featuring appetizers, soups, salads, tandoori specialties, seafood curries, lamb curries, chicken curries and vegetarian delights, as well as an assortment of rice dishes and Indian breads.

We started with a shared appetizer of crispy mushrooms sautéed with bell peppers, onions and tomatoes and a delightful variety of Indian spices (\$8.95). Appetizers vary in price from deep-fried sliced potatoes (\$4.95) to keema samosas (turnovers filled with ground lamb and green peas, \$6.95) and fish Pakora (\$9.95).

The chicken Tandoori platter arrived with an assortment of shrimp, chicken and lamb marinated in



light spices and herbs along with grilled vegetables. Each item was tasty and, happily, not too spicy. A well-balanced dish for \$26.95 with a terrific variety of shrimp along with the chicken and lamb.

Tandoori means that the meat and seafood are cooked in an Indian clay oven fired with mesquite charcoal and it produces delicious products!

Next was the Taj mixed grill assortment of Tandoori chicken, chicken tikka (Hindi for chunks of meat cooked on skewers), seekh kabab, and jumbo prawns served with onions and green bell pepper (\$24.95). This platter was served with a side dish of

Indian condiments or spices; one red not too spicy, one green and very spicy, and one not spicy but a great accent to the various meats and prawns. This mixed grill also came with a bowl of delicious fluffy rice. And, of course, there was an accompanying excellent naan bread.

Each crisp white-clad table is topped with an enticing brightly colored selection of desserts (\$6.95). These ten selections vary from Gulab Jamun of spongy milk balls soaked in rose-scented syrup and Rosewater Pistachio, (traditional Persian rosewater saffron gelato) to a Coffee Parfait which is a cone-shaped creamy coffee gelato. The mango sorbet was perfect after our large and delicious

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

LEDYI
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

PURYMG
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

EESAWL
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: “○○○○” ○○○○

(Answers on Page 19)

dinner.

The Taj Palace is open every day throughout the year with the exception of Thanksgiving. In fact, Sunny said he is one of the few restaurants open on Christmas Day.

Lunch hours are daily from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dinner is from 5 to 10 p.m. seven days a week. And if you spot a beautiful server, it is Neetu, Sunny’s wife, who can now work with him because grandma is available to watch their child.

The restaurant is located in the Chase Bank building on the floor above the street, so diners can get their exercise climbing the stairs before and after their meal. Free validated parking.

— GRACE HINEY

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