

THE SANTA MONICA STAR

*Also covering
The Greater
Westside*

Volume XX Number 3

Connecting You With Your Community

March 2021

Congratulations to the 2021 Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Monica Youth of the Year



Youth of the Year Jorge Ontiveros



Runner-up Ledia Soliman

This year the Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Monica held their first Virtual Youth of the Year event on Zoom at the end of January. There were a total of 99 audience members who watched the event.

They had six stellar candidates and a panel of five judges. Each one of the youth shared their compelling story and vision for their future. Each candidate was also asked a question that allowed them to share additional perspectives and provide deeper insights into their motivations.

This year's runner-up was last year's winner, Ledia Soliman. The 2021 Youth of the Year is the dynamic Jorge Ontiveros, who exudes

enthusiasm and passion for helping others. Jorge is involved in numerous activities to help those less fortunate and embodies the compassion and leadership qualities we all love to see in a young person. Each of the candidates received scholarships to help with higher education. We're most grateful to the Cathcart, Kohl, and Larmore families for their deep generosity.

And, last but not at all least, the club sends heartfelt thanks to the Kiwanis Club of Santa Monica for their long-standing commitment to youth leadership and direct support of the Youth of the Year. They are grateful for their partnership on this project.

Sign Up for the Santa Monica YMCA Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program



Participants in the program will receive a blood pressure monitor, access to Y live stream exercise classes and a four-month Y membership voucher.

Make an investment in your health and commit to reducing your risk for heart attack or stroke by joining the YMCA's Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program.

This four-month evidence-based program helps adults with hypertension achieve the goal of lowering and managing their blood pressure with self-monitoring, awareness of triggers that elevate high blood pressure, and developing healthier eating habits.

This is a free program in partner-

ship with the L.A. County Dept. of Public Health. Space is limited. For more information, contact Lidia Magarian, Chronic Disease Prevention Director 310-393-2721, ext. 129, or by email at: lidiam@ymcasm.org. Lidia will be providing a short **free** virtual presentation on Friday, March 19 at 3 p.m.

The program is sponsored by the Santa Monica Family YMCA, 1332 Sixth Street, in Santa Monica. For more information, go to www.ymcasm.org.



Mary O'Halloran mixes her Irish Soda Bread Scones in her New York shop on the Lower East side.



She bakes and then ships them to you with some Irish butter and her fresh homemade blackberry jam.

Bring a Bit of Ireland to Your Home This March

Mary O' Halloran discovered New York city on a summer trip after college in Ireland in 1991. She eventually returned to New York and opened her shop, Mary O's, in 2009. Her husband is a longshoreman who is away for months at a time. She and their six children, ages 8 to 17, miss him while keeping busy with their school work and helping Mary in the shop.

Mary has had a traditional Irish music session for several years. Because of the pandemic, it is now online. Due to the encouragement of the musicians and customers, Mary began selling her scones online, too. She had always wanted to make her mom's recipe for scones from County Mayo in Ireland for her customers. She feels people appreciate simple things more now.

She says the comments from her customers inspire her. One woman wrote, "Your scones were so good. I think I gained ten pounds. My husband went to the freezer to get



Warm them up at home for a delicious treat. Spread on some butter and a dollop of jam. Serve with a cup of tea. It's a taste of heaven.

some and they were gone!"

To order Mary's Irish Soda Bread Scones, go to info@maryosnyc.com, store.maryosnyc.com, or call 212-505-5610 for more details. The scones are shipped all over the United States. Mary suggests requesting second day delivery.

St. Monica Catholic Community to Host Online Seder Dinner March 27

St. Monica Catholic Community invites you to their online Seder dinner experience this year on March 27, the first day of Passover. The event will be hosted by Msgr. Lloyd Torgerson. Join this annual tradition at St. Monica which is a community affair with an interfaith welcome to it.

The Seder dinner is the meal of the Passover that was eaten by the

people of Israel on the night before their escape from the bondage of the Egyptians and the leader of Egypt, the Pharaoh. It traditionally includes the blessing of the four cups of wine, the breaking and eating of Matzah (unleavened bread) because they left Egypt in a hurry

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The Seder meal with the matzah and wine at St. Monica last year.

How You May Benefit from Another Government Stimulus Plan



By Carolyn Hemann, CFP

For the second time in 10 months, Congress has approved a fiscal stimulus plan that is designed to provide a financial boost to a wide range of Americans in response to hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes individuals, businesses, and other organizations. The legislation was part of a comprehensive package that passed both the House and Senate on December 21, 2020 and was signed into law on December 27.

While the \$900 billion+ package is structured somewhat similarly to a stimulus program put forward in March 2020, the level of benefits are generally reduced from that time. Nevertheless, it does offer some help for those struggling due to the economic fallout from the continuation of the pandemic.

Here are five key areas of

support included in the plan:

#1 – Direct payments of up to \$600 per person - Economic impact payments of \$600 will be made for individuals earning up to \$75,000 per year based on adjusted gross income (AGI) in 2019. Married couples with AGI of up to \$150,000 will receive \$1,200. In addition, a \$600 payment is provided for each dependent child. Payments phase out for those with higher incomes. Single taxpayers with a 2019 AGI of \$87,000+, or married couples with a 2019 AGI of \$174,000+ are not eligible for any payments under this plan. If the IRS has direct deposit information for one of your bank accounts, you will receive the money that way. Others will receive a physical check in the mail.

#2 – Added unemployment benefits - With millions of Americans still unemployed, Congress has approved a modest expansion of benefits by

up to \$300 per week. This added benefit is scheduled to run until mid-March 2021. Provisions also extend the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program that offers benefits to those in non-traditional employment such as gig workers and the self-employed.

#3 – Rental assistance - The legislation addresses what has been touted as a potential avalanche of evictions of renters. It extends until Jan. 31, 2021 a moratorium on evictions that was slated to expire at the end of 2020. It is possible that the federal government will extend the deadline beyond that date. Included in the bill is \$25 billion in emergency assistance to renters to help cover their rental costs. These funds can be used to pay past due and future rent payments as well as utility bills. It is not clear exactly how that money will be distributed.

#4 – Childcare assistance - Additional funding is provided

to give states the flexibility to provide childcare assistance to families. The bill also includes funding (managed by each state) for direct financial support to childcare providers to help cover their operating expenses.

#5 – More financial backing for business owners - The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which provides forgivable loans to eligible businesses, is included in this package. \$284 billion of funding is earmarked for first and second PPP loans. While small businesses are a primary target, the funds are also available to non-profit organizations, churches, and faith-based organizations. An additional \$15 billion was set aside to support live performance venues, independent movie theaters and cultural institutions.

Also included under the business-related provisions is a clarification on tax treatment of expenses

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Planning Ahead

Creating Post Death Checklists



By Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.

A friend or loved one has died and you are the Executor. Long ago you agreed to serve, but what did you get yourself into? What exactly does an Executor do?

Luckily, there are lots of lists of Executor's duties available online – just Google "checklist when someone dies in California." You will find checklists published by such reliable sources as AARP, *Consumer Reports* and the *L.A. Times*. But there are topics not covered by the lists.

As you work your way through the tasks of notifying the banks, you may be asked to provide a copy of your "Letters" or "Letters Testamentary." This is a Court document issued in a Probate. But there may not be a Probate, in which case, you will likely need to provide a "Small Estate Affidavit." In California, a decedent's estate can be administered without a Probate if the value of the assets is not more than \$166,250. This threshold amount does not include assets held in a Trust or assets that are payable to a named beneficiary (such as life insurance, retirement accounts or bank or brokerage accounts payable to a beneficiary.)

Before paying last bills, be sure to understand how much money is available and the total amount of debts owed. Will assets have to be liquidated or sold to pay bills? Is there enough money to pay all the bills? If not, you should get legal advice before you pay any of the bills. And, nothing should be distributed to the beneficiaries until all the decedent's debts are satisfied. That includes setting aside a reserve to pay final income taxes due in April of the next year. Contact an accountant to help you with the taxes.

Lists can be helpful, but it is guaranteed there will still questions and complications. And, even with a list to guide you, the job can seem overwhelming. A good trusts and estates attorney can demystify the process and advise you. If the assets are over the Probate threshold, you will need an attorney to help you file for the Probate.

Contact Lisa C. Alexander, Esq. at 310-395-6555 or 310-656-4310.

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Brain Matters

What is Bell’s Palsy?



By Dr. Amoit Kochhar
Bell’s palsy is a paralysis or weakness of the muscles on one side of the face. The facial nerves control muscle activity so when damaged it can cause the face to droop.
Fortunately, for the majority of patients, normal to near-normal facial nerve function can be restored within one to two months with medications alone, especially in those who can still partly move their facial muscles.
Bell’s palsy-related facial paralysis is sudden, often occurring overnight. The most common cause is a reactivation of the herpes virus within the facial nerve, however it can also be associated with immunosuppression, stress, Lyme’s disease, and other viral illnesses such as varicella zoster (shingles).
The diagnosis of Bell’s palsy is typically made after a thorough evaluation of the entire body that may include a laboratory work up and possibly neuroimaging (MRI). As Bell’s palsy is a diagnosis of exclusion, other causes of facial weakness such as stroke, brain tumor, trauma, etc., should be ruled out.
Symptoms include the inability to blink or close the eye, smile, or hold liquids properly in your mouth

on the paralyzed side. Patients may have hearing-related issues such as ringing (tinnitus), sensitivity to sound on the affected side (hyperacusis), and reduced sense or metallic taste on the affected side of the tongue. Patients may experience dry mouth from decreased saliva production, and excessive tearing on the paralyzed side.
Any sudden facial weakness occurring on one side should be checked by a doctor right away. When treated within 72 hours of onset, symptoms usually improve within a few weeks. The current recommendation involves high dose Prednisone for 10 days, antiviral therapy within 72 hours, eye protection with artificial tears, lubrication, and a moisture chamber to prevent accidental trauma to the eye.
With prompt medical treatment, most patients enjoy restored facial nerve function.

Dr. Amit Kochhar is Director of the Facial Nerve Disorders Program at Pacific Neuroscience Institute. He is one of a few select surgeons who perform complex (microvascular) head and neck reconstruction following cancer removal and facial trauma, as well as for the rehabilitation of facial paralysis, an area in which he has specific clinical expertise and research interest. Pacificneuro.org/FacialNerve, 310-356-0292.

She Said What?

By Dr. Sheila Forman
She Said What? We all have them. Well-meaning friends and family members who offer unsolicited advice or insinuate themselves into situations that are really none of their concern. You know who I mean.
The aunt who emails you the latest diet because she thinks you need to lose weight. The neighbor who can’t wait to “share” the newest gossip on the block. Or, the friend who takes center-stage at every wedding, or even funeral.
My clients give me examples of this kind of behavior often, and each example is followed by the questions, “why do they do that?” and “what can I do about it?”
I understand that these “intruders” are irritating and that your first inclination could be to yell at them and kick them out of your life, but if you understand where they might be coming from and what you can do about them, you could keep your cool as well as the relationships.
There are several reasons why people do this. First, they are genuinely trying to be helpful. Their definition of helping may be different than yours, but nonetheless, they are coming from a good place.
Next, they may need to feel valuable or important. Many of these folks actually have poor self-esteem and need to build themselves up by drawing attention to themselves, or being a part of something that they deem as significant. Third, whether they acknowledge it or not, they feel jealous and their jealousy makes them want to feel as if “they have it too.”
And, finally, they may have poor boundaries, not recognizing that they are stepping on toes. The best way to “protect” yourself from these busybodies is to assertively set up and maintain healthy boundaries. To be assertive means to come from a place of being self-assured and confident, not aggressive. To be aggressive means to be confrontational and attacking.
Healthy boundaries are a way to protect and take care of yourself. They create “space” between you and another person and they announce the limits that you find acceptable. Using the illustrations above, here’s what you could do:
To your aunt who thinks you need to lose weight you could email, “Auntie, I appreciate how much you care about me, but please stop sending me diets. I am not interested in dieting. I am happy as I am.” For the neighbor who loves to be the first to spread the word you could say, “I prefer if you don’t share the neighborhood gossip with me. If someone wants me to know about something, I will wait and let them tell me themselves. Thanks anyway.” And finally, for the friend who needs to

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Teen Scene

What Are the Social Effects of Online Learning?



By Julia Abbott
No one really knows how online school has affected students. In L.A. county, currently deep in the COVID-19 crisis, sending students back to school is still not a viable option.
Students and parents are getting mixed messages, ranging from possible hybrid models (some days at school, some days at home) or even school over the summer to make up for lost time. No one really knows what’s happening.
However, while the focus has been on the missed learning, it’s also crucial to look at the social effects of online school. While the effects of missed socialization have been well-documented on younger students, older students are also suffering. Because so much of the socialization focus is placed on younger students, many high

schoolers aren’t getting the support they need.
For many juniors at the start of the pandemic, the last day of high school was a random day in March, 2020. Thousands of students in Los Angeles County will never get a semblance of a normal senior year, usually regarded as the best year of high school. A time to look back on all of the hard work put in, the highs and lows of the college application process, and hanging out with friends in a year with less work. Instead, they are sitting at home.
As a current junior, I’ve got my fingers crossed I’ll still be able to go to prom and graduate. But, there are many students who feel cheated out of some of the most important milestones in high school. Not only are they dealing with isolation, but they are grappling with the fact they’ve lost some of the last years of their

(Continued on Page 4)

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Reflections From The East

The Life I Knew Before Plastic



By Qin Sun Stubis

It seems to have been so long ago. Even my memory of it is now laced with the dust of time, and so much of it recounts my growing up in China in a bygone era. I remember heading to the morning market with my diligent mother, each of us carrying a bamboo-woven basket to haul home our daily groceries.

We went from stall to stall in search of the freshest, most affordable vegetables, meat or seafood for the day, all of it laid out on wooden counters. The vendors would take our orders and weigh them on hand-held scales before placing them in our baskets. The transactions were done in cash, of course, the only way people knew for the last five thousand years.

In my high school days, I often went to the market on my own, tucking a few enamelware boxes and jars into my basket the way my mother had taught me, in anticipation of buying things that needed containers. After so many decades, I can still retrieve images from my memory of those heavy, filled baskets like a collection of colorful still-life paintings.

The most common packaging materials at the time were differ-

ent-sized brown paper bags, balls of twine mostly made of cotton, straw or hemp, and boxes. The last were reserved exclusively for high-end fashion stores and bakeries, and came embossed with fancy words and drawings.

When we went to a store to get our school supplies or a cut of fabric, our purchases were often wrapped up with string, a thin, pink carbon copy receipt riding on top. If we ran out of soy sauce, cooking wine or vinegar, we would bring our empty bottles to a store to be refilled. Only when a family member accidentally smashed a bottle would we replace it with a new one.

Before we headed to a grain store, we always took a cloth bag or two with us. When the store clerk pulled a lever, rice poured from a pipe attached to the ceiling into a weighing vessel. When he got the right quantity, he unplugged its bottom, sending the rice through a chute toward us. We would be waiting at the other end, holding our bag tightly around the mouth of the chute. The only packaging material we needed was our bags and some string to tie them closed.

Growing up, my favorite shop was a local convenience store across the street. When we saved enough pocket change, my sisters and I would go there to get little

treats. We carefully counted out our pennies to buy ice pops wrapped in wax paper, or dried sour plums and sesame candies in small brown bags. Everything tasted especially good when we could never have enough of them.

Now I have plenty of everything, especially food, most of it coming vacuum-packed, plastic-wrapped, canned or bottled. No more getting up at the crack of dawn. No more bamboo baskets. No more of the past. For the last three decades here in America, I've shopped in supermarkets where endless plastic bags wait for me at the check-out counter. Still, I have re-learned to bring along my own bags. It hurts my heart to know that so many birds and animals are choking on the abundance of plastic. It scares me that scientists say we soon will have more plastic than fish in our oceans, in spite of our efforts to recycle. Our prosperity and convenience shouldn't come at the expense of the health of our planet. Perhaps the life I knew before plastic holds lessons on how to best protect our future.

You can always reach me at qstubis@gmail.com

How You May Benefit (Continued from Page 2)

covered by PPP loans. Businesses that received loans and had them forgiven are still allowed to deduct the costs covered by those loans on their federal tax returns. An additional provision in the measure reinstates a full tax deduction for corporate meal expenses. This had been limited to a 50 percent deduction under previous laws.

This is a time when you want to be sure to balance decisions that address your short-term financial obstacles with your long-term financial plan.

Carolyn Hemann, CFP, is a Private Wealth Advisor with Hemann, Preator & Associates. She can be reached at 310-477-2500.

What are the Social Effects (Continued from Page 3)

childhood. No one wants to spend their senior year on a computer in their bedroom.

Sending students back to in person learning is full of risk, and I am not here to push one side or the other. But, if you know a current Senior, be nice to them; in an unprecedented time, they've lost one of the last events of childhood.

Julia Abbott is a local high school student who has been writing for us since she was in elementary school. She has won awards in debating, speaking, writing, piano, and dance.



She Said What? (Continued from Page 3)

be the center of attention, you could suggest, "Hey, you know what? I can tell that you are moved to speak at this event, but since it's their wedding, let's let them shine."

If you find it hard to be assertive or set boundaries, you are not alone. These are two of the most difficult life skills. If you would like to master these skills, let me know. I'm here to help. Meanwhile, try to remember that most of the time these folks mean well. Keeping that in mind might help you not lose your cool – or your friend.

Dr. Sheila Forman is a clinical psychologist based in Santa Monica who provides teletherapy services. For more information, call 310-828-8004 or go to www.DrSheilaForman.com.

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Saint Monica Catholic Community (Continued from Page 1)

and there was not time to make the traditional raised bread. The account of the Passover meal is in Exodus 12.

The dinner can be purchased online at www.stmonica.net/seder and picked up at the parish center the morning of the event for you to reheate at home. It includes a Seder plate and wine. The price is \$40 for adults, and \$25 for children, without wine.

Guests should check in between 6:15 and 6:30 p.m. The event will begin at 6:30 p.m.

For more information, contact



Msgr. Torgerson leading a past seder at the church.

dale@stmonica.net or call 310-566-1500. Meal orders must be in by March 19. Everyone is welcome.

Mini Message Bulletin Board

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Clergy Corner

Waiting Helps Us Develop Greater Patience



By Rev. Janet Cromwell

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused a lot of waiting. We are waiting for the vaccines to be distributed and the pandemic to be over, for schools and businesses to fully reopen, and for the chance to travel and hug our family members in-person. We are waiting for things to return to (a new) normal.

In our fast-paced lives and desire for rapid results, waiting can be annoying. We become impatient and sometimes even rude when we have to wait.

The process of waiting has captured my attention, particularly during this Lenten Season, the 40-day period prior to Easter when Christians enter a time of self-reflection. I wonder, could waiting be a part of a spiritual practice?

To answer this question, I turned to Holly Whitcomb’s book *Seven Spiritual Gifts of Waiting*. She writes, “Waiting teaches us to dwell fully where we are. When we can’t control our circumstances and we can’t predict the future, we have the opportunity to live in the present.” Consciously pausing in the midst of waiting can draw us into appreciating the present moment.

We notice our breath, acknowledge the blessing of life, and see the details of creation that surround us.

As a spiritual practice, waiting can help us develop greater patience with ourselves and others. With increased patience, we expand our empathy for those who struggle with the ins-and-outs of daily living. Learning to graciously wait makes us kinder and more compassionate people.

By pausing to reflect on our approach to waiting, we may find that we can let go of always wanting to be in control so that we can trust God and others more. With intention and practice, we can discover that waiting can be both peace-filled and spiritually grounding.

Rev Janet Cromwell
Associate Pastor
West Los Angeles United Methodist Church
310-479-1379 ext. 102
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Editor’s Note: Each month we are asking a clergy member of our local churches or temples to do a column on dealing with COVID-19.



Selecting a Caregiving Agency

Years ago when my mom first needed home-health care, we used the agency recommended by the hospital. There wasn’t time to do any research. Since then I’ve learned what qualities to look for when choosing an agency for healthcare.

Last year a close friend lost her husband. She knew she wanted caregivers at that time, as she had some health issues and had stopped driving. She had the luxury of taking time to interview representatives from three agencies. The difference between their attitudes and prices was amazing.

After much thought, she selected the Right at Home healthcare agency. The owner Tim Petlin had impressed her with his answers to her questions. When he sends caregivers to meet a patient, he goes with the caregiver. He continues to check up to be sure the client and caregiver are a good fit. That hadn’t happened with other agencies we had used.

Recently my friend had a high fever and had to go to the emergency room at her local hospital. Her caregiver stayed with her throughout most of the evening. My friend finally got a room in the main hospital. The agency sent staff to be sure she was settled in comfortably. They also went back to her house to bring things to her that she needed. While she was in the hospital, the agency staff was in touch with her. They were ready to send someone to be with her in the evenings, even though that wasn’t her usual routine.

When my friend needed a fan during one of our incredibly hot bouts of weather, Tim brought one over. We were so impressed. That was above and beyond the service an agency usually offers, but that’s why it is such a blessing to work with Tim and his staff.

Over the past several months

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Do Something of Service for Another During This Springtime Season



By Cheryl Robertson Thode

This month marks a year from the first statewide stay-at-home order.

While the actual pandemic started sooner, I did not feel the true effects of COVID until my world literally shuttered.

It feels like so much has been taken away. While done to protect us, our loved ones, our neighbors and the global world; the closures and lockdown felt more like a punishment than a protection.

So much of our culture is centered around communal activities: family gatherings, public events, holidays, vacations, grocery store outings, dining together, walking in nature, seeing co-workers by the water cooler, smiling and touching one another. We are a social group and need to be around people to thrive. Thankfully, we were not thrust into complete isolation, the technology that we have all grown accustomed to was at the ready to help us stay connected with our loved ones, churches, work, and even news.

However, our cultural norms, greetings, and manners of interaction, have all but vanished because of this pandemic. I no longer know whether to say “hi,” wave or smile under my mask when saying “hello” to a friend or stranger. I feel disconnected.

In my faith, mid-March begins the season of Lent, a time of reflection and preparation for the season of Easter. It is a time of self-reflection and examination. Typically, it is a time to give up something. I have never really adhered to the practice. In fact, a couple years ago, I stopped the practice in place of “taking up something.” Rather than giving up something, I opted to do something in the service of God.

Whether or not you celebrate Lent, I believe “taking up” would be a beneficial act for your family, self, and world. We have given up a lot this past year and it is becoming ever clearer that we will not be returning to our pre-COVID ways of life. We will learn a new normal.

As we prepare for a time after COVID, we can use this time of social separation to better the world and ourselves. Do not increase your pain, guilt and disharmony by setting more and more boundaries. Rather, look at what you can “take up.”

What is one daily action you can do to help transform the world around you? Write a letter to a friend, pay for someone behind you in the drive-thru, email an old classmate, donate a book, call your grandma, volunteer...read an extra book to your child at bedtime. Whatever “it” is, do it for you, do it for the next generation, and do it for God. Please do not lose sight of

(Continued on Page 8)

Selling Online - Part Six



By Mark Presky

This column will cover a few miscellaneous items not touched on in my previous discussions of online selling.

Never deliver: Someone may be waiting in a dark stairwell or behind a wall to rob you or worse. In addition, once you have taken the trouble to deliver the item, they will almost always take advantage of your now being in their territory and your showing that you are anxious to sell the item, to negotiate a lower price. Legitimate buyers will find a way to meet with you at your place, the corner of your street, a

shopping center, or better, a police station, to complete the sale. If concerned about meeting with a stranger, ask a friend or neighbor to be with you when the buyer arrives. During our Covid-19 crisis, buyers, wearing masks, have been willing to stand on the sidewalk in front of my house to examine items and pay me over the fence. (I then take the cash inside and disinfect it with 10% bleach.)

Buyer discourtesy: People often don’t show up after making an appointment with you. Provide a meeting address or place only when they are ready to pick up the item. And, don’t wait around much past the meeting time if you have an

(Continued on Page 8)

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Passing Through the Pico Neighborhood

Try Making These Meat Pies in March

Our neighborhood Chef Jahrid Longworthy said his inspiration to make meat pies is because of his favorite YouTube channel, Popular MMOs with Patrick, known as Pat, who reminds Jahrid of Saint Patrick's Day!

- March Meat Pies
- Ingredients:
- 1 lb. ground steak
 - 3 Tbsps. flour
 - 1 tsp. salt
 - 1 tsp. black pepper
 - 1 tsp. thyme
 - 1/2 of a yellow onion, diced
 - 1/2 of a green pepper, diced
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 2 Tbsps. olive oil
 - 2 cups beef broth
 - 1 package refrigerated pie crust (room temperature)
 - 1 egg

- Directions:
- In a mixing bowl, combine ground steak, flour, salt, black pepper, and thyme.
 - Put mix in a medium pot on a high flame, and add oil. When oil is lightly smoking, reduce heat to medium and add onion, garlic, and bell pepper. Stir constantly until onions are transparent, about 4-5 minutes.
 - Add ground steak mixture to pot, then cook on high until steak is brown in color.
 - Add beef broth and reduce heat. Let simmer for about 15 minutes.
 - Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease cupcake baking pan.
 - Roll out pie crust and cut into 8" circles for base and 6" circles for the top of the meat pie.
 - Place one each of the 8" circles



Chef Jahrid created meat pies for his dairy-free menu this month.

into the bottom of each opening in the cupcake pan. Add 1/4 cup of the steak mixture. Then cover the top with one of the 6" pie crust cut-outs, pressing the sides to hold the meat pie crusts together.

- Bake for 40 minutes. Then cool, and use a knife to loosen edges to remove the meat pies from the pan.

See Chef Jahrid at Work

The Santa Monica Family YMCA is celebrating Nutrition month in March with Chef Jahrid. The Y invites you to join Chef Jahrid for his live streaming cooking class on Wednesday, March 31 from 4:15 p.m. - 5 p.m. Please contact Lidia Magarian, Chronic Disease Prevention Director to register and receive the meeting Zoom link at 310/393-2721, ext. 129, or email: lidiam@ymcasm.org.

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Marty Katon Strives to Teach More Than Art

By Stacy McClendon

I had the pleasure of sitting down with artist Marty Katon at his studio on a drizzly Friday afternoon.

Marty's art is extremely vivid and eye catching. A great deal of his paintings feature animals, as he has a deep love and reference for them. (He rescues animals on his day off).

When a youngster, Marty learned that he had ADD. Marty always had a ton of energy and it was hard for him to sit still. He used to finish his work fast. One of his fifth grade teachers noticed this and had him tutor other students. This became a running theme for Marty as he also helped students in college and began teaching as an adult.

Marty began painting in high school in Southern Michigan. He lived near fishing camps with African Americans, Indians, and Asians. Marty took all that he learned from these cultures, environment, and experiences and fused it into his art.

Currently, Marty teaches kids art over Zoom at the City of Santa

Marty Katon invites you to sign your children up for his art classes.

Monica's Virginia Avenue Park on Thursday afternoons. He has been doing this for 15 years and thoroughly enjoys it. What Marty loves most about teaching at Virginia Park is that the City staff support him in welcoming kids of various abilities to sign up for the classes.

Marty has learned that ALL children have something that they do great. He has seen children who were non-verbal become verbal, children paint with both hands, and kids that were having trouble in school design company logos

(Continued on Page 8)

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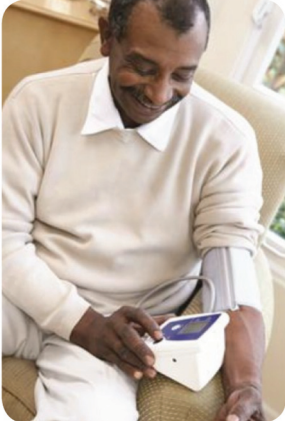
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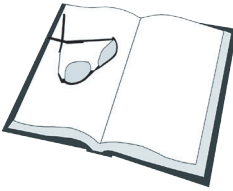




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From the Santa Monica History Museum



Family at Ocean Park Pier, March 1957—
A family walks along the closed Midway a year before it reopened as Pacific Ocean Park. Courtesy: Santa Monica History Museum, Outlook Collection [For historical reprints, please contact SMHM and specify image #1998.1.1315.]

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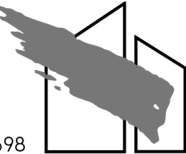
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Thoughts From a Second-Time Father

Enjoying the Daily Moments of Growth



By Michael Margolin

One thing I look forward to everyday is coming home and seeing my family. No matter what my day is like, I get to see their loving faces at the end of the work day. After a particularly long day, the first thing I heard when I got home was Jake belting out, "Hakuna-matata," the Swahili phrase meaning "no worries" which was made popular in *The Lion King*. Jake has been around for almost five years and he has been singing for much of it. Enjoli has always said that a singing child is a happy one. Alexa will be eight this summer, and along with her brother, she has learned to whistle. I would not necessarily classify this combination as particularly melodious to the non-Margolin ear, but at least the kids are happy. Being around the kids when they experience new things is always entertaining. A couple of weeks ago when it rained here, we got some hail as well. It is not too often that we get to have hail-ball fights in

our yard. In fact, the kids had never seen hail, let alone gather it up into balls to assault each other, or their parents. I was ready to go inside long before the kids were, but when something that is so rare is happening and it is so much fun for them, it is hard to call it quits. A week later we were fortunate enough to take a drive up into the mountains where there was real snow. It really made Alexa’s and Jake’s day. Such simple things do make such great memories. And, of course our household full of Chiefs fans was disappointed at the outcome of the Super Bowl. Before the game Alexa told me that it would not be the end of the world if they lost. Which is good because judging by how they lost, the end of the world would be even worse than I could have imagined. But she told me as if to remind me not to be snobbish or patronizing. It was just a simple reminder of all we have to be thankful for. And, "Hakuna-matata!"

Michael Margolin is an avid sports fan and was a soccer coach on Alexa’s team when they played.

Do Something of Service (Continued from Page 5)

our need for connection and how to reach out to one another. We are all in this together. Mothers of Monica is a mothers’ community ministry designed to foster fellowship, charity, and spiritual growth for ourselves, our children and for the St. Monica Catholic Community. It is at its core a community of moms working together to facilitate discernment of critical decisions and situations we mothers face. To find out more about Mothers of Monica, please go to <http://stmonica.net/ministries/fellowship-groups/moms>.

Selling Online - Part Six (Continued from Page 5)

errand to run. Meet when it is convenient for you. Let them know that you won’t wait long. If concerned about your safety, meet at the corner of your block, or at a local police station. If living in an apartment, meet in the building lobby, or in front of the building. Have them call or text you when they arrive. Don’t hand them the item while they sit in their car. And, if the item is an electrical appliance, is there a safe, convenient place to plug it in to demonstrate its functioning if they desire to see it working? I am not a lawyer, and offer no legal advice, but I have been told that unless one provides a verbal or written warranty, sales of used items are usually understood to be sold “as is” – with an exception for eBay. With eBay, if I believe there is a chance that a buyer may not be happy with a sales item once seen, I list it for “local pickup only,” so that he/she can handle the item before closing the sale (and leave positive feedback, which confirms delivery **before** taking the item). On eBay people have been occasionally known to damage an item, claim that it was damaged upon receipt, and then force the seller to pay for return shipping and a refund. Good luck! I hope that I’ve covered the basics, and that you feel more confident with trying your hand at online selling. As you’ve read, it may take some time and effort, but it can definitely be fun.



Selecting a Caregiving Agency

(Continued from Page 5)

Marty Katon

(Continued from Page 6)

whenever a challenge would arise, she could call Tim for help. He, or his wonderful staff, has always found a solution. The Right at Home staff really do treat their clients like family. They can be reached by calling 310-313-0600. Tell them Diane suggested you contact them. — D.M.

Stacy McClendon is a longtime Pico Neighborhood resident and Santa Monica City staff member who loves to find and introduce the wonderful people of her neighborhood. If you know someone we should interview, please contact us at 424-581-6005.

Community Service in Santa Monica

Santa Monica Rotary Likes to “Get Stuff Done”

By John Bartlett

With so much divisiveness and animosity in the news currently, it's refreshing to belong to a group that pulls together not to complain, nor make excuses, but to actually Get Stuff Done!

“Get Stuff Done” – those words from a very successful business-woman with whom I had the pleasure of working, have stuck with us all here at the Santa Monica Rotary Club. The first page of our website says it well, “Together We Are



Many lunches were packed to take to The People's Concern members.

People of Action, Serving Santa Monica and the global community since 1922. More broadly, Rotary International is a global network of 1.2 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

One example of our club at work is the recent assistance we provided The People's Concern, one of the largest and most respected social service agencies in L.A. County. They provide hundreds of

bag lunches daily to the homeless in Santa Monica. Our past President Sharon Gavin reached out to them, and with help from our current President Lisa Alexander, we asked our members to help assemble a portion of the lunches.

Our goal was to provide about 150 brown bags of snacks and beverages, with The People's Concern providing the sandwiches from their approved commercial kitchen. However, once word got around, 15 of our members stuffed over 500 bags – three car loads of lunches that were driven to the center on February 8. That should have been enough for two days' worth of lunches for the homeless. We Got Stuff Done!

It is a pleasure being a member of a club where the answer to a question is always: “Yes, how can we help? Let's do it!”

For more information about our club, events, and virtual meetings, email Savi at rotaryclubofsantamonica@verizon.net, or call our office at 310-917-3313.



More lunches were delivered by other Rotarians who had packed them.

Continuing to Meet Our Community's Needs



By Linda Levee

Welcome everyone to this month's update on the Santa Monica Lions Club. I am reminded by our International President Dr. Jung-Yul Choi, that, “this past year has been marked by the struggle to serve those in need; the struggle to maintain some sense of who we are in the face of such unprecedented circumstances.”

We have had to rethink how to best serve our widely diverse and now expanded group of people, many who have not had to use resources before like food banks, free medical services, or help with equipment for children to attend virtual classes, etc. The need is greater than we have ever had to face before.

However, our small Lions Club has remained steadfast and focused on the best way to provide services to the most needy and the diversity in our community. Our recent effort to join with the Pacific Palisades club is still in progress. Hopefully, it will come to fruition in the next couple of months.

We are actively looking for new members to join us. Please contact Santa Monica Lions Club at levelheadedlinda@yahoo.com. This ap-

peal for members in Santa Monica and Pacific Palisades is important to our survival as an international institution which collects and provides eye glasses and eye treatments in the community that we serve and in the third world countries where resources are less than ours. Our Motto is “We Serve.” We need help in fulfilling our continual promise.

Please keep wearing your masks, washing hands, keeping six feet away from others, and giving thanks for all we have.



Looking for Seniors Who Need Help With Daily Errands

George Heller, a wonderful former neighbor of mine, is looking for people who may not be able to grocery shop, pick up medications, or do any daily errands on their own.

He writes, “I have a large group of motivated, responsible, and compassionate able-bodied volunteers who are eager to help others with such tasks. There is no charge for this service. If you need help picking up goods outside your home, please email me at g.heller@bep-la.com, or call 310-770-9666. -D.M.

Meet the Person Behind the Voice



By Pat Webber

When you phone the Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club (SMBWC) during the week between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., you will likely hear a distinctly New York City-accented voice. That would belong to our diligent and dedicated facilities manager, Peter Abbay.

During this past pandemic year, he has continued to manage our office while finding new chores to keep busy. And, his two feline workmates, Sonic and Monkey, make sure he doesn't slack off!

Since coming to California from Long Island, New York, he first continued working as a bartender in several local venues, including The Belmont Hotel. Peter was hired by our Club's Board of Directors in the winter of 2015. Today, beside his office duties, he coordinates with contractors and renters, gives tours

to potential renters and curious visitors, and supervises set-ups for Club activities and rental events. He is immensely proud of the Club and especially enjoys helping people.

While not working at the Club, Peter is an actor who recently portrayed former Oakland Raiders owner Al Davis in an ESPN documentary which aired February 4 of this year. Although viewed only in shadow, he was the Banker on “Deal or No Deal” for several years up to 2009.

Since working at the Club, he has fond memories of many events. These include memorial services, theme events including weddings and receptions, and of course the Lennon Family concerts featuring the band, Venice.

When not at the Club he enjoys visiting with his two grandsons, which, due to the pandemic, is on hold for the time being. But he

(Continued on Page 10)

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Paws and Claws

Is it Safe to Anesthetize My Dog?



By Dr. Frank Lavac MS, DVM
Q: How safe is it to anesthetize my 10-year-old Lab for a dental procedure?

A: This a very good and common question. It is normal and appropriate to be anxious about anesthetizing your pet. I don't look at the age of the dog per se. I initially perform a physical exam and make sure the pet is in good physical condition. In particular, I make sure the lungs and heart are

normal. I do anesthetize pets with heart problems, as well. However, I make sure that pets with heart murmurs or arrhythmias have seen a veterinary cardiologist first. I then take direction from the cardiologist with the safest anesthetic regimen. Additionally, I take a blood sample to make sure that their internal health is normal. I focus primarily on the liver and kidney function, since these organs metabolize the anesthetics. I also look closely at the pet's history to make sure there are no significant pre-existing medical problems that would affect the safety of the anesthesia.

Prior to anesthesia, the pet is sedated and an intravenous catheter is placed. This allows for fluid administration to support circulation as well as easy access for further sedation or anesthetic administration. After the initial part of anesthesia, the pet is intubated (a sterile tube is placed into the trachea). This allows for direct administration of oxygen and the anesthetic gas. Once the pet is anesthetized, we monitor closely with oxygen and carbon dioxide monitors, EKG, blood pressure and temperature. We also use warming blankets.

After anesthesia, the endotracheal tube is removed and the pet is kept warm and comfortable until it is able to walk on its own.

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

Adopt a Pet



Forever Young! Although she will turn 11 at the end of the year, Chrissy still looks and acts like a teenage kitty. Chrissy is a very mellow and pleasant cat. Chrissy is simply looking for a mellow place to be. Contact info@Langefoundation.org.

Photo by Ellen Serpaa.

Mar Vista: Neighbor to Neighbor

Follow Your Neighborhood Council



By Tesi Truenfels
Hello Neighbors! There are so many changes happening in Mar Vista these days. It's an exciting and challenging time. There's an easy way to keep up-to-date with all that's going on and give your input. Accessible and easy to use is the Mar Vista Community Council

website, marvista.org The website has a connection to a Twitter account as well as a Facebook page for quick updates and information. When you first log in, the home page gives a bright information page to the most important current community council action. Our local community council elections are coming up. To vote, you need to register with the

(Continued on Page 11)

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The Conversation Nobody Wants to Have

By Barry A. Snell

Closing out a loved one's estate can be one of the most emotional and difficult responsibilities a person could be asked to do. This is whether the decedent has a will and trust, or nothing written at all. Having a checklist will help in the process.

1. Obtain copies of death certificates and date obituary notices.
- 2 Meet with the decedent's attorney.
3. Obtain affidavit or Letters Testamentary for Executor (issued by Court).
4. Check the contents of any safe deposit boxes.
5. Compile a list of heirs, next of kin, and beneficiaries.
6. Make copies of marriage certificate and birth certificates.
7. Review will to determine whatever probate is needed.
8. Proceed to probate filing, if no trust was created.
9. Locate deeds, mortgages, and leases of real estate property.
10. Locate inventory, and secure personal and financial assets.
11. File and collect insurance claims as applicable - life, medical, etc.
12. Notify those organizations providing retirement benefits.
13. Locate recent income tax returns.
14. File for employer and union and association benefits.
15. Open an estate bank account to hold money that is owed to the deceased.
16. Notify the Social Security Administration and Medicare of the death.
17. Notify banks and brokerage companies of the death and change information for any jointly held accounts.
18. Notify creditors of the death and close/cancel credit cards.
19. Examine and approve/reject claims of creditors.
20. Sell or change title for the deceased's automobile and terminate

- leases and outstanding contracts.
21. Pass real estate and other assets owned in joint tenancy to beneficiary.
 22. Transfer bank accounts and securities. Register in "payable on death" for beneficiaries.
 23. Transfer property of the surviving spouse, or transfer assets held in trust to named beneficiaries.
 24. If the decedent had his/her own business, arrange for management of the business.
 25. Establish management of rental properties, both in and out of state.
 26. Pay continuing expenses, such as mortgage payments, utility bills etc. until property is sold or re-titled.
 27. Notify accountant to prepare final personal tax return and pay any taxes due.
 28. Prepare and file an estate tax return for estate taxes or any state inheritance.
 29. Determine whether the estate qualifies for "special use valuation" under the tax laws.
 30. Keep detailed reports of all receipts and disbursements and a record of time spent and activities conducted on behalf of the estate.
 31. When debts and taxes have been paid and the property distributed to beneficiaries, the estate or trust can be closed.

Barry A. Snell is a Certified Public Accountant in Santa Monica. Often he is hired by attorneys to research the above information when a client is deceased. Barry can be reached at info@snellcpa.com, or by calling 310-410-0119.

Meet the Person (Continued from Page 9)

especially misses seeing our members who play bridge and canasta every Monday (on hold since March 2020). And, we miss seeing him, too. Hopefully, we will soon. For more information about our club, please call 310-395-1308.

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