

It's Time to Salute Our Fathers



Frank Lavac with his daughter, Kira, in Arizona where she is receiving her Master's degree in counseling. Congratulations!



Stephen Freedman and Olivia, his daughter.



Father Alex Padilla, third from left, was the officiant at the May wedding of his son, Alex Jr. and Alyssa last month held in Temecula. From left, Karla, Miguel, Alex, Stella, Alex Jr., Alyssa, and Priscilla Padilla with her son, Leo, and Rafael Nuñez, to her right.

How Did Father's Day Become a Holiday?

By Gigi Appelbaum-Schwartz

Father's Day was celebrated for the very first time on June 19, 1910, thanks to the efforts of Sonora Smart Dodd, a woman from Washington who had been raised by a single father. She wanted to establish a holiday to celebrate all of his, and other fathers' hard work. But, it wasn't until 1972 – 52 years after Mother's Day became official – that Father's Day became a legitimate holiday celebrated throughout the United States.

Historically, Father's Day was met with some backlash from men who protested what they perceived as an effort to "domesticate manliness," and who disapproved of the use of the holiday to sell commercial products.

cial products.

In the 1920s and 1930s, a movement promoting the establishment of an overarching Parent's Day instead of separate Mothers and Fathers days gained traction, with protestors demonstrating yearly in Central Park in New York. But, the movement lost its footing following the Great Depression, in which efforts to sell commercial goods were intensified, as well as following World War II, when the holiday was framed as a way to honor troops and support the war effort.

Ultimately, despite historical controversy, the holiday's legacy continues to be one of overwhelming love and compassion. It shines

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Sean Inoue with daughter, Parker Dare, at her preschool.



Hodge Patterson with sons, Mack, and Hodge.



Three-year-old Aurora with her grandfather Richard Lombardi.



Max Margolin, left, is with his dad, Don, and brother Michael, seated, at a birthday celebration held at an airplane-themed restaurant in Van Nuys. Standing is Alexa, then six, Don's first grandchild.

Assistance League Recognizes Long Time Member June Peralta for 23 Years of Service



The Assistance League of Santa Monica's Thrift shop is a beloved staple in the community offering affordable treasures. One of the shop's most cherished volunteers is June Peralta, center, who at 99 years old has dedicated 23 years of her life to helping at the store. She shows up every week ready to lend a hand. Her dedication and positive attitude have made her a favorite among customers. June's presence is a reminder of the power of giving back and the impact that one person can have on a community. The thrift shop is located at 1453 15th Street. On the left is Sandra Willard, and far right, Lora Anthony.

Photo by Bernadette Lucier



Dick Lawrence with his grandson Zachary Perez.

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Better Sleep Leads to Better Brain Health



By Omid B Mehdizadeh, MD

Have you ever awakened feeling groggy and tired? That's because sleep directly impacts our brain

function. Getting seven hours of good sleep each night is a key factor in preserving brain health, especially as we age.

Sleep disruption can lead to fatigue, irritability, lack of focus, depression, and overall quality of life issues. According to the Centers for Disease Control, three in four adults in the U.S. have a sleep disorder. Among the most common is Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), where the upper

airway becomes blocked during sleep, leading to breathing interference. Recognizable symptoms of OSA include loud snoring, gasping/choking for air during sleep, excessive daytime sleepiness, and headaches, among others.

Untreated, OSA can have severe health consequences such as Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart failure, stroke, and more. Traditionally, OSA is diagnosed through a sleep study and treated with continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines, which use pressurized air to keep airways open during sleep. However, CPAP machines may not suit everyone's lifestyle.

For those with moderate to severe OSA, it's important to make

sure that oxygen gets to your brain while you sleep. If you are unable to tolerate CPAP for one reason or another, there's an implantable alternative that provides relief from OSA. The device, called Inspire, works by delivering gentle pulses to airway muscles, keeping them open for regular breathing and sound sleep.

Patient outcomes with this device implant have been promising. About 90% of bed partners report no snoring or soft snoring, and there is a 79% reduction in sleep apnea events. Remarkably, 94% of patients report that they prefer the implant over CPAP and would recommend it to others.

If you or a loved one are struggling with OSA, it's worth explor-

ing this second-line therapy for better sleep and improved overall health.

Omid B. Mehdizadeh, MD, is an otolaryngology-head & neck (ENT) surgeon with particular expertise in voice, swallowing and airway conditions at Pacific Neuroscience Institute (PNI). A Los Angeles native, his career has spanned treating world-class opera and Broadway singers to surgical mission trips serving underprivileged and indigenous populations of Central America. Outside PNI, he has focused his time on educating medical and undergraduate students and providing medical care to disenfranchised populations through community clinics. PacificHeadAndNeck.com. Or, call 213-320-4277.

Entertaining With Ease

A Potpourri of Spring and Summer Parties



By Maureen Molé

Summer is almost here and there are so many types of parties to host – indoors or outside.

• **Special Occasion Lunches.**

Lunch is generally a lighter meal, perhaps one appetizer, main course, salad, and dessert. I always write the menu on a piece of attractive stationery and try to name the dishes according to the theme. For special occasions, such as a baby shower, I don't just serve a cake for dessert, I serve a Lullaby Cake. For a bridal shower, I serve Honey-moon Mimosas. To celebrate a friend's promotion to Senior Vice

President, I hosted a celebration lunch for her and wrote the following on the menu card: Vice President's Quiche, Supervisor's Spinach Salad, and Executive Fruit Compote.

• **Entertain Al Fresco.** There's something special about sitting under a shady tree sipping a cool drink in the daytime or dancing under a starlit sky on a warm summer evening. Many hosts like the advantages of outdoor entertaining. Simple and easy dishes are the norm. There's usually more room in the backyard than indoors. The house stays tidier, and the clean-up is easier. Plastic plates, cups, and glasses provide convenience and a casual atmosphere.



Michael takes a break from the barbecue while Max oversees the food to be served to their guests.

For evening parties, enchant the atmosphere with candlelight: Cluster candles of varied sizes as a centerpiece or a votive candle at each person's place setting for a sit-down dinner.

• **BBQs, Picnics and Cookouts.** Remember to spray insect repellent before the guests arrive, use electric gadgets or leave some repellent cream for guests to use. Menus can be easy and fun by serving cold salads, fresh fruit, vegetables in season, and grilled meats. If you don't like to stand by the barbeque alone, simply set up the bar near the grill and you will have plenty of company. Propose a rain-date for an outdoor party or, at least, have an alternate plan if the weather doesn't cooperate. Damp weather doesn't have to

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How Did Father's Day

(Continued from Page 1)

a much-needed light on the hardworking fathers of the world who deserve to be appreciated for all that they do for their children.

Today, Father's Day is celebrated on the third Sunday of June each year. It serves as a welcome reminder of all that our fathers do for us, and creates a space of love and gratitude for meaningful connection to be shared. Fathers, who are often overlooked in terms of parental effort, deserve recognition as much as anyone, and so this day calls attention to all of their many efforts.

Be sure to thank any father figures in your life this June 16, and let them know how much you appreciate their contributions to your life. No matter how you choose to celebrate, it's important that we ensure that the fathers of the world feel supported and showered with love.



- Joe Analco



Happy June Birthdays to:

David Trachtenberg, Michael Margolin, Frances McDormand, Wendy Navin, Sharon Gavin, David Rosenfeld, Rick Mateus, Thelma Daar, Rose Mann, Chris Baca, Brandon Murray, John Dravillas, Pat Johnston, Eric Jorgensborg, Steve Rosell, Bernadette Lucier, Clara Wright, Rufus Baker, Julia Abbott, Jeff Jarow, Charles Haskell, Elise Martin, Matt Lehman, Skip Rimer, Ruth Sperber, Toby Fulp, Maurice Jordan, Johanna Jenkins, Jane Franz, Kevin Erhart, and Andy Gavin.

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Distribution: Paper Pushers LA

Special thanks to Rufus Baker and Bernadette Lucier

Gardening For Wellness

By Michaela Grant
Climate Action Corps Fellow,
City of Santa Monica

In today's fast-paced world, stress and anxiety can be high, so finding peace of mind becomes increasingly important. One easy and local way to achieve mental well-being is right in our backyards – gardening. Beyond just a hobby or a means of sustenance, gardening offers countless therapeutic benefits that can positively impact our mental health.

The connection between gardening and mental health stems from the beneficial connection that exists between humans and nature. Spending time in green spaces has been shown to reduce stress levels and promote relaxation. The process of tending to plants or watering them promotes concentration as well as a sense of peace as one becomes more in sync with nature's patterns.

In addition, gardening is a form of physical activity that not only keeps our bodies moving but also produces endorphins, the body's natural mood boosters. The combination of physical activity and exposure to sunlight can help reduce feelings of depression, stress, and anxiety.

Aside from the individual benefits, gardening provides opportunities for social connection and community engagement. Community gardens, in particular, provide spaces for people to come together, share experiences, and support one another. These situations

produce a sense of belonging and connection, which can help reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.

The mental health benefits of gardening are numerous and undeniable. Whether you have a backyard garden or just a few pots on the balcony, nurturing plants can bring immense joy and fulfillment. If you don't have the space, the Santa Monica Community Garden Program, Will Rogers Regenerative Farm, and Growing Hope Gardens offer volunteer opportunities. If you want to learn more about the program, email gardens@santamonica.gov. So, the next time you feel overwhelmed or need a mental rest, consider stepping outside and getting your hands dirty in the garden. Your mind and body will thank you for it.



Strawberries and green onions flourish in the garden bed at Ishihara Park Learning Garden, with trays of kale and other vegetable seedlings ready for planting.

Byte by Byte

Looking Back Over the Past Year of Adapting in the UAE



By Dr. Miceala Shocklee
Heading into June, I will officially have lived in the United Arab Emirates for a year. One year in, I very much feel as though I'm still

figuring this place out. I am still learning how to navigate the seasons of life here – and there are definitely seasons.

Missouri and Scotland (my former homes) brought distinct Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter seasons. While California followed a dip into cooler and even cold temps in the winter before following a rise back to sweltering, the UAE follows an offset pattern of inversion. Summer is the season I dread on the cusp of this second year – heat and humidity too unforgiving to allow for running, hiking, or even much neighborhood walking; burnt hands on steering wheels if I don't put up the sun shield; curtains closed during the day to save my AC bill.

Winter, on the other hand, is the season we all wait for here. The wind whips up and cloud seeding makes the fate of late winter a haze of stormy unpredictability, but for the most part, late October to early February offers blue bird skies and an almost feverish drive to go out and traipse across the dunes and mountains. Unfortunately, most of those mountains are over a two hour drive from where I live, but my goal for this next hiking season (far away as it may be) is to get much better acquainted with the local (and virtual) landscape of Waze and Wikiloc, a drive navigation and trail navigation app, respectively.

Hopefully, more on those tech tools – and their role in my adventures – to come.

Dr. Miceala Shocklee is a part-time freelance writer and editor and a full-time staff veterinarian with SeaWorld Abu Dhabi Yas Island in the United Arab Emirates.



June Events at Our Santa Monica Public Libraries

Santa Monica Reads All Summer Kickoff Party will be on Saturday, June 15 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Main Library, North Courtyard. Fun activities include a magic show and more!

Pride on the Promenade Pop Up Library will be held on Saturday, June 22 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on

the Third Street Promenade. The staff is packing up the books and bringing the library to the Pride on the Promenade Festival for an LGBTQIA+ themed pop-up! There will be free books for readers of all ages, Rainbow Family Storytime, Pride Crafts, and more.

From the Santa Monica Pier Guy

Discover More About the Santa Monica Pier

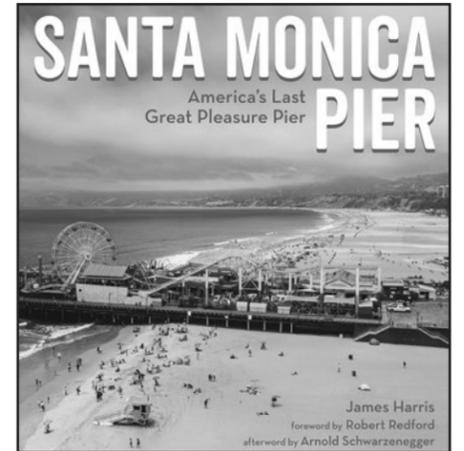


By Jim Harris
There's a new Santa Monica Pier history book in town. And, take it from me, it belongs in everyone's personal collection.

Of course, I'm admittedly biased. I am, after all, the author of the new book, *Santa Monica Pier: America's Last Great Pleasure Pier* (Angel City Press, 2024), and have been a part of the Pier's proverbial woodwork for the past 35 years. Over 20 of which I've been with Santa Monica Pier Corporation – that scrappy little non-profit that produces all of the free public events and special programs at the pier.

I'm joining you all today, not just to promote the new book, but to introduce myself as a new columnist for *The Santa Monica Star*. And, it's great to be aboard! I'm looking forward to sharing my inside knowledge about our Santa Monica Pier, highlighting its great event schedule as well as some of its intriguing, multifaceted history.

For instance, our illustrious Santa Monica Pier originally opened as a public utility, built specifically to carry and dump treated sewage into the ocean. Not exactly an inspiration, right? However, thousands of people showed up on September 9, 1909 – the official opening day – to celebrate the new pier. Why? It



The cover of Jim's newest book. A good gift idea for dad.

was the first pier on the West Coast, and second in the world, made entirely of concrete. Yes, Santa Monica prided itself as being at the forefront of technology, even back in the early 20th century!

Want to learn more? Make some room on your coffee table and pick up a copy of *Santa Monica Pier: America's Last Great Pleasure Pier* now. It's available in bookstores and gift shops as of May 21, or you can order online at www.santamonicipier.org.

Jim Harris is the Executive Director of the Santa Monica Pier Corporation, a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the pier visitor experience, as well as an accomplished author and playwright.

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Reflections From The East

Ode to The Santa Monica Star – My Journalistic Cradle



By Qin Sun Stubis

I started to pen my column here at *The Santa Monica Star* in May 2007. For the last 17 years, "Reflections From The East"

has been not only a writing platform for me, but also a classroom where I learned to sharpen my craft. My teachers and critics are none other than my readers. For that, I'm forever grateful to all of you.

It was during this period that my writing career took off: My columns inspired me to branch out and write poems, essays, tall tales, and short stories. And, my historical memoir, *Once Our Lives*,

finally took shape and was published last June by Guernica World Editions, a traditional Canadian publisher.

Now, Santa Monica is very much part of my identity even though I have never been a formal resident. Every time I talk about my writing, I cannot help but talk about this paper's great impact on me, how my monthly column has been my most consistent writing project, and how it has honed my journalistic and literary skills.

Looking back, my love for Santa Monica all started with Diane Margolin, the publisher and editor of *The Santa Monica Star*. My Chinese historical memoir project intrigued her and she invited me to contribute to the paper using an

Eastern perspective, being from both the East Coast and the Far East. I loved the idea of being a window to other worlds for Santa Monica residents. Though I was shy, I was willing to try.

At the time, I didn't know how long I could work for Diane, fearing that I'd run out of topics quickly. I could never have envisioned now turning out my 200th column, and I want to celebrate with you!

Since then, I have visited Santa Monica on multiple occasions, attending a Santa Monica Rotary Club meeting and an annual gala for the Santa Monica History Museum, and visiting and talking to many of my readers. I have tasted Neli's delicious muffins and

enjoyed lunch at Spumoni restaurant. I even have a picture of me smiling under the gigantic Moreton Bay Fig Tree in front of the Fairmount Miramar Hotel. Santa Monica now feels like home.

As I celebrate the first birthday of *Once Our Lives* this month, I am overwhelmed with gratitude to Diane Margolin, our paper, and our readers for being there with me every step of the way during my long writing journey. Thank you. (See more on Page 12.)

You can always reach me at qstubis@gmail.com, or please visit me at www.QinSunStubis.com. You can find a copy of my book, *Once Our Lives*, online at www.Amazon.com.

To All Our Dads – Thank You So Much



By Cheryl Thode

To all the striving, thriving, trying, loving and stepping up dads out there, thank you! Thank you for showing up for

your families, being present, contributing, and just being you!

While your official day of celebration for this year is Sunday, June 16, 2024, know that your community, family, and your children love you and appreciate you being a part of their lives. There is no question that each and every one of you serves a very important role!

For this article, I reflected on the many fathers I have known, and have come to know over my 40 years of life. From my own father to the fathers of my peers, to my father-in-law, to my husband, to the fathers of my parents, cousins, nieces, nephews, and the fathers of my own children's friends, there is not one mold or model of a father. They come in many different shapes and sizes, and they each use their gifts to best fit the demands of their own individual role. Looking at all of these men

and their critical and necessary part in their family and children's lives, I am in awe of how each father has assumed their role to care for, support, protect, and provide for their children. To those who love them, they are more than just a father, they are dad, daddy, poppy, papa, pops, dada, etc.

Dads are the ones who help us mamas, fill in the gaps, teach their sons how to act in society, and model for their daughters what a good man acts and looks like.

In my own life, my husband's involvement in our children's lives is not only beneficial to them, but a needed respite for me. From the day we brought our children home from the hospital, he has been an ever present support to me and an active, loving father to our sons.

As every parent knows, it is hard to raise a child. You need a village, right? Well, a very important part of that village is a father. A father to help, guide, protect, provide and most importantly, love. Show me a father with a newborn baby in his arms, and I will show you a man filled with unconditional love and a desire to be all and everything that child needs.

While life may throw bumps and

curve balls at that relationship, deep down that father will always love that child. Remember that!

Oftentimes, I feel our society for whatever reason downplays the role of our dads in our lives. For some it has gotten to the point that even the father doesn't know his own worth in his children's lives. That is not okay. We all, especially dads, play a vital role. I challenge you to think about your own dad (the man who stepped up for you) and list three ways your connection with him bettered your life. Then, if he is still with us, call him up or send him a card listing how he impacted your life for the better. If he is no longer here, go outside, look at the clouds and send up some love to him.

Dads have a major and important place in our children's lives. For those of us blessed enough to have a dad who shows up and leans into the daily activities of our kids, celebrate it! Celebrate that man!

To all the fathers out there, keep up the great work and have a Happy Father's Day! God Bless!!



Troy Fromin Focuses On Fulfilling His Dreams



Troy takes a break from behind the Fromin's deli counter where he often works.

By Cree Buckner

Character actor Troy Fromin, self-described "no-filtered jokester, working man, and loyal husband," sat down with me to talk about the inner workings of the entertainment industry, and the chronology of his extensive career, while sharing a bit of noteworthy advice.

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Mini Message Bulletin Board

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Clergy Corner

What is the Most Satisfying Thing in Life?



By Reverend Matthew Hardin
A wise teacher once asked his students to identify the most satisfying thing in life. Some replied, "good health." Others said, "a happy marriage" or "riches." After everyone responded, the teacher announced that no one gave correct answer.

"The most satisfying thing in life," the teacher said, "is to see your child confidently walk down the road, on their own, after you have shown them the way to go." This tale reminds me of a tradition my dad and I had when I was a kid. Every Sunday morning, we would walk to the corner store to get the Sunday newspaper. We'd bring it home and together we would eat breakfast while he read the Sports section and I looked at the cartoons. One Sunday when I was about six years old, my dad sent me to the store to buy the paper all by myself (without telling my mom!) I still remember making the three-minute walk there, grabbing the paper, putting the bills on the

counter, getting change from the clerk, and then walking back home. All on my own. No problem. As you might expect, when my mom learned what my Dad had done, she freaked out. And yet, to this day, my dad considers that one of the proudest moments of his life. He'll tell anyone that story and just smile. "The most satisfying thing in life it is to see your child confidently walk down the road, on their own, after you have shown them the way to go." On this Father's Day, I like to think of our Heavenly Father feeling proud of us. Not just because of our big accomplishments, but because of the little things as well. God has shown us the way to go in life – how to love, how to forgive, how to be compassionate – and I'm sure it brings a smile to God's face anytime we confidently live the way he has shown us to live.

Rev. Matthew Hardin is the Pastor of Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church (www.palipres.org) where services are held each Sunday morning at 10 a.m. (both in-person and online).

Passing Through the Pico Neighborhood

Juneteenth Celebrations Coming!

The City of Santa Monica will host the 32nd Annual Juneteenth Celebration on Saturday, June 15, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Virginia Avenue Park. This year's theme is *Rising Above Racism: A Legacy of Empowerment & Pride*. The free family-friendly event will feature an afternoon of music, unique food and craft vendors, a kid's activity area, a community stage, and local resources.

The festival will also include the Community Stage featuring panel discussions and spoken word artists. Participants can also enjoy a children's craft area and community resource booths. A cultural arts marketplace will feature over a dozen vendors selling a wide variety of cultural arts, jewelry, clothing, and more. Food will be available for purchase from Jon Que's Smokeout barbeque, Wing Lord and the Patty Wagon food trucks, and desserts from C&L Catering.

Known as America's second Independence Day, Juneteenth has been celebrated in Santa Monica since 1992 thanks to LaVerne Ross. She had approached the city council to ask them to commemorate the holiday that her family has been celebrating in Texas.

Juneteenth is an annual celebration commemorating the end of slavery after the Civil War. The first Juneteenth in Santa Monica was held in 1992 as a small observance. Over the years, thanks to LaVerne's dedication and leadership, the event has grown into an important annual tribute.

Juneteenth is produced in part-



La Verne Ross received a city proclamation from former Mayor Gleam Davis at a previous Juneteenth celebration.

nership with the Santa Monica Juneteenth Celebration Committee, Inc. For complete event details, visit santamonica.gov/places/parks/virginia-avenue-park.

You can also celebrate on Sunday, June 16 on the grounds of the oldest African American Baptist church in Santa Monica which will be transformed into a celebration of heritage, achievement, equity, culture, and fun! The event will take place from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Calvary Baptist Church, 1502 20th Street. For more details, visit calvarysantamonica.org.



- Joe Analco

Discover What's Happening on the Westside

By Gigi Appelbaum-Schwartz
 • **June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - Wellness and Waves** - Visit the Santa Monica Pier to participate in free yoga lessons and mindfulness exercises. Event will take place from 9 a.m -10 a.m. at 200 Santa Monica Pier. For more information, visit santamonicapier.org.
 • **Friday, June 7 - Pico Roots Grand Opening**. Community Corp., a nonprofit affordable housing provider, is opening a marketplace offering affordable rents for small business owners. 1819 Pico Blvd. 10 a.m. Come welcome the new business owners. More details, 310-394-8487, ext.133.
 • **Saturday, June 8 - College Readiness Event** - Learn about the process of researching and committing to colleges, with guidance from a professional college counselor. Event will take place from 12 p.m -1 p.m. at the West Los Angeles Regional Branch Library, 11360 Santa Monica Blvd. Details, visit lapl.org.
 • **Saturday, June 8 - Open House: Main Street Community Garden** - Taking place the second Saturday of each month, this open house offers a time for anyone to come enjoy the community garden! Event will take place from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. at 2318 Main Street, Santa Monica.
 • **Saturday, Sunday, June 8-9 - American Indian Arts Festival** - Celebrate traditional and contemporary Native art at the Autry's 33rd American Indian Arts Festival! Enjoy live music, pow-wow dancing, art, and theatrical performances as part of the Native Voices Young Playwrights Festival. Event will take place from 8 a.m.-10 a.m. at the Autry Museum of the American West, Griffith Park, 4700 Western Heritage Way. For more information, visit

theautry.org.
 • **Monday, June 10 - Police Activity League (PAL) will host its Annual Golf Tournament** at the Braemar Country Club in Tarzana. Shotgun start: 10 a.m. Call Eula Fritz at 310-458-8988.
 • **Friday, June 14 - Flag Day**
 • **Saturday, June 15 - A Night of Symphonic Film Music** - Enjoy Orchestra Santa Monica's impressive season finale, featuring iconic works from celebrated movies. Event will take place from 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. at The Eli and Edythe Broad Stage, 1310 11th Street. For more information, visit orchestrasantamonica.org.
 • **Saturday, June 29 - "Dogtown and the Legendary Z-Boys - From the Inside Looking Out,"** opening reception from 3 p.m.-6 p.m. California Heritage Museum. Exhibit runs June 30 - October 27. Location: 2612 Main Street. Call 310-392-8537 for more details about special events.
 • **Saturday, June 29 - Tenth Anniversary Celebration of the Pico Branch Library**. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Readings from Santa Monica Poet Laureate Anne Carmack and children's book author Ashley Granillo (*Cruzita and the Mariacheros*), mariachi music from the Santa Monica Youth Orchestra mariachi band, food, arts and crafts, games and giveaways, and much more.
 • **Saturday, Sunday, June 29-30 - Pier 360 Beach Festival** - The Santa Monica Pier's 15th annual Pier 360 Beach Festival promises a vibrant and fun-filled celebration, full of ocean sport competitions, live music, food and drink, interactive games, and more! Event will take place at 200 Santa Monica Pier. Details: visit santamonicapier.org/pier360.

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Adding a Unique Accessory Can Bring a New Dimension to a Bride's Look

By Gigi Appelbaum-Schwartz

When people think about bridal outfits, it's usually the dress that draws the most attention. For a bride, finding the right dress can be a huge part of planning her wedding and feeling beautiful and confident for the big day. But, a wedding dress's beauty can be amplified significantly by the addition of a unique accessory – a veil, hat, bow, or sash that accentuates the uniqueness of a dress and adds an entirely new dimension to a bride's look.

Debra Shirley, a designer working for NWLA, a Santa Monica-based bridal shop, handcrafts these one-of-a-kind bridal accessories. Her work is intricate and curated to seamlessly blend into a bride's outfit. While a simple veil might only take a few hours to make, more elaborate lace pieces can require up to two days of careful work – all of which Debra does on her own, by hand.

Debra studied millinery, or hat-making, at fashion school in Chicago, where she learned the basis of what makes up her craft today. She has been designing for over 20 years, and her expertise shines through in her attention to detail.

In making a custom veil or headpiece, Debra says that she draws inspiration from the bride's dress. "The wedding gown itself inspires me," she shared. "Beautiful lace on a gown, for example, could inspire a veil that has the same matching lace at the bottom, to create a lovely frame around the bride."

Consequently, the very first step in designing a veil or headpiece is meeting with the bride, her family, and her gown to make sure that every aspect of the look is cohesive.

"I never want to take away from the bride or her gown. I want the veil to be something that enhances her [look]," Debra shared. "After our meeting, she can now imagine



Debra designs headpieces for a unique accent to an outfit such as one that Britton is wearing.

Photo by Bernadette Lucier

her wedding day ensemble from head to toe."

Often, she is asked to design pieces that draw from a mother, or grandmother's wedding dress or veil. These are her favorites, as she feels that their sentimental value is unmatched.

"A really special piece evolves, because you've got something from the past that's been updated as a modern veil," she said. "It's very lovely and special, because you're getting a piece that nobody else in the world has."

Her favorite design to date was one such piece: an incredibly unique, multi-generational veil that she custom-made for a bride. "I took lace from the bride's dress and components from both her mother and grandmother's dresses, so [the veil] represented three generations of brides," Debra shared. "It was such a one-of-a-kind piece, and I'll never forget it."

Recently, Debra has noticed a shift in veil trends towards the more extreme. She has enjoyed experimenting with more involved designs and creating veils meant to draw more attention.

"This year, we're noticing that brides are willing to go more dramatic with their veil," she said. "Many want a 'veil moment,' where the dress might be more

(Continued on Page 12)

Thoughts From a Second-Time Father

Teaching the Kids a New Sport



By Michael Margolin

When I was six or seven years old, I learned to snow ski in Maine. My aunt and uncle were experienced skiers and ski

instructors, and from what I remember, I picked it up relatively quickly.

I have enjoyed hitting the slopes ever since, though I do not get to go very often. Luckily enough for us, some family friends have a place in Mammoth and Enjoli and the kids and I were able to join them there for a special weekend.

Alexa is 10 and Jake is seven so I figured it was a perfect time to teach them how to ski. The kids have been in the snow several times, but never in a place when it was actively snowing.

The light snow flurries that occurred when we were heading into Mammoth excited them, and then the steady snow that picked up several hours later really got them going.

The next day, Saturday, we got up early and went to the mountain where we had reserved an hour lesson for the kids. Looking back, I am not quite sure how much, if anything, was accomplished in that 60-minute instructional period. Their coach told us they could not turn, and should not go on any lifts or runs without more lessons. That was not very encouraging, or economical, to hear.

The husband of the family we went with has been quite successful in teaching his four kids, aged nine to 14, how to ski. He told us he would take Alexa and Jake down some runs, and that in a matter of time, they would be skiing just fine on their own.

Before that happened, I took Alexa down one of the easier runs a couple of times. I have written before about times when maybe we need to strongly encourage our kids to do things they do not want to do at the cost of tears and frustration.

I remember teaching Alexa how to ride a bike, and getting through those tears because I knew she would be successful once we got past that, and she was. So, when there were falls and tears, I had to push and encourage and to remind. Remind her that when you try new things that are not easy, you do not start out as an expert.

She would fall and cry and apologize. One thing I have told my kids and the kids I coach on the soccer field is, I do not need or want to hear an apology if you are really trying your hardest to do something.

After a run or two with Jake, both kids told me that skiing probably was not for them. But, that was before about four to five instructional runs apiece from the father of the family we were with.

For most of the day on Sunday, the kids skied the same run countless times with no instruction, and only positive emotions. I heard Jake singing to himself as he skied down the mountain. It did not get much better than that for me, and is one of the main memories I will take away from a fabulous weekend.

Mike Margolin has been writing for us since his daughter Alexa was born 11 years ago. He is an avid sports fan. Mike is also a coach for both of his children's soccer teams.



A Potpourri of Spring and Summer Parties

(Continued from Page 2)

dampen the spirit of the party if the guests can gather in another indoor party room.

• **Cooperative Parties.** Share the expense of a party by hosting a gathering where everyone either splits the cost of the food or brings a dish. Two popular excuses for not hosting a party are the expense and the effort. If these two factors were shared among friends, there would be many more parties to attend.

Another idea is to initiate a Progressive Dinner with neighbors who live close by. Just walk to a different house for each course.

Have cocktails and appetizers at one house, the main course at another, and dessert at a third home. Guests can even vote on the Tastiest Dish or Most Coveted Recipe. While the weather is warmer, take advantage of so many types of parties to host!

Maureen Molé is a lecturer, product spokesperson, and the author of The Book of Entertaining at Home. Email any questions or comments to MaureenMole@gmail.com



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Community Service on the Westside

Lions Members Out in Our Community



By Kingsley Fife

We members of the Santa Monica-Pacific Palisades Lions Club have had a very full month of activity.

To celebrate National Arbor Day, we all met recently at the beautiful Santa Monica Airport Park and planted two trees. It was a very vibrant morning as we enjoyed the company of other service organizations there planting additional trees, including the Rotarians, Kiwanis, Santa Monica Breakfast Club, and the Salvation Army, etc.

Santa Monica Mayor Lion Phil Brock read an official proclamation from the City and the Santa Monica City Forestry Dept handled the initial setup. Everyone had a wonderful time.

We also participated recently in the Santa Monica Annual Arts and Literacy Festival at Virginia Avenue Park. The theme this year was, "The Robots are Here!" At our booth we had colorful stickers the children could apply to their dis-

play paper to create robots. Our booth was busy all day with parents and youngsters eagerly participating in this project.

I must say we all enjoyed seeing some wild imagination at work! The entire park was alive with various activities including talking robots attracting the attention of everyone and rides around the park on a kiddie train.

Soon, at our next dinner meeting, we will be inducting a new Lion into our Club as we continue to grow. She is Michelle Edgar, a recent grad of UCLA. Michelle has already become very active in our community. She is an Adjunct Professor at Northwestern Law School, a Director in the Compton School District, CEO of The XX Project and Executive Director of Music Unites. We will all give Michelle a hearty three roars as our newest Lion!

Are you curious about Lionism? Maybe joining us will fill that void in your life. Learn more by being our guest at one of our dinner meetings. Call Lion Kingsley Fife at 310-454-2960, or email jkfife88@yahoo.com.

There's Something for Everybody at the Santa Monica Family YMCA!



By Araceli Alejandre, COO

Since 1927, the Santa Monica Family YMCA has consistently served the Santa Monica commu-

nity. We're excited to celebrate our 97th birthday in June and to show off all of the wonderful things you can find at your friendly YMCA.

Located in the heart of downtown just three blocks from the Third Street Promenade, the Santa Monica Family YMCA is home to infants, kids, families, adults, and seniors, alike. We've got 87,000 square feet of space and a multitude of offerings. Welcome to the Y!

On the first floor of the Y, you'll find a beautiful and recently renovated basketball gymnasium

with opportunities for open play, pick-up games, Pickleball (three courts) and an organized basketball league for youth!

For working families or families seeking care for their little ones, we offer a full-time, fully-licensed Early Learning Center where we develop infants, toddlers and pre-school-aged children.

For our water-friendly friends, we are home to a training pool, a 25ft. yard pool, and a 15-person jacuzzi. Interested in swim lessons? We've got them, too!

Our recently renovated strength-training rooms complete with state-of-the art equipment, two cardio rooms, group exercise room and cycle studio are sure to get your heart pumping and reaching your fitness goals in no time.

Our third floor is home to our After School Program, where we

(Continued on Page 10)

An Update From the SMBWC



By Patricia Webber

The Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club (SMBWC) is a busy venue once again.

Rentals continue to be booked into early fall. As part of our mission of community service, once a year the Board of Directors allocates a percentage of our annual income from our rentals to organizations in the community that benefit women, children, education, the environment and special needs.

One project that we support annually is a scholarship endowment we established at Santa Monica College to benefit women starting or returning to college. Another area of support is the Santa Monica High School orchestra, and the Samohi Jazz Band which performs at our annual valentine making event.

This year's list of recipients also includes Upward Bound House, Santa Monica History Museum, Step-Up on Second Street, The Teen Project, UCLA Next Generation Doctors (this provides support for students doing research in women's health), Westside Food

Bank, Beauty Bus Foundation, School on Wheels, May Stuff Bags, Happy Trails for Kids, Fisher House Southern California, Heal the Bay, Santa Monica College Veterans Resource, Pennies for Pines, Meals on Wheels West, KidsSave, Santa Monica Animal Shelter, and finally World's Central Kitchen - Ukraine. Wise and Healthy Aging received another donation from our Laura Hubbell Trust Fund.

Our Club was built in 1914 so we take great care in maintaining it. To that end we are going to remodel the bathrooms beginning the last week of June. The process should take four to six weeks. We will be remodeling only one bathroom room at a time (i.e. men's, then the women's). Therefore, three stalls will be available throughout the remodeling process. Both the men's and women's bathrooms will be handicap accessible when the remodeling is done. Impact to Club activities, hopefully, will be negligible.

For information on Club activities, see our website smbwc.org, or if you would like to join our Club, contact our office during weekday mornings at 310-395-1308.

Give Your Children Wonderful Summer Memories at the Santa Monica Family YMCA Big Bear Camp



At the YMCA Big Bear Camp you can make one new friend such as Hodge did with Cindy.



Or, you can make many new friends during all of the activities.

Photos by Hodge Patterson



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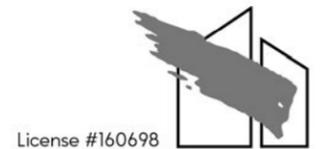


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Planning Ahead

Selling Your Parent's Home



By Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.

Your parents passed away leaving you their home and you are ready to sell. You may be surprised and happy to

know that you have inherited the home with a "stepped-up" basis equal to the value of the home at the date your parent died.

An exception would be if the home were held in an irrevocable trust created after the earlier death of your other parent. This is an important question to review with the estate attorney. A stepped-up basis could avoid any capital gains tax if the house is sold soon after your parent's death.

You will need to know how title to the home is held. If there is a trust, are you named as successor trustee? If there isn't a trust, you may need to be appointed by the court as executor of your parent's estate in a probate proceeding. Or, if your parent was not the sole owner, title will have to be sorted out before you can sell.

If there is a reverse mortgage on the home, the terms of the loan may give you as little as six months to sell before the lender will foreclose.

The death of your parent almost certainly triggered property tax

reassessment. Changes in property tax laws all but eliminated the exclusion from reassessment for transfers between a parent and child. This should be anticipated and reviewed with the estate attorney. In any event, a notice of your parent's death must be filed with the County Assessor.

If the home needs to be cleaned out, there are professionals who can assist, even if there is a hoarding situation. And if the home is dated or in disrepair, your real estate professional can advise on what repairs or improvements should be made, or not, for a realistic return on the money that would be spent.

After escrow closes, be sure to hold back enough money to cover the property tax bill that will come later. Reassessment dates back to the date of your parent's death, but the amount of increased tax due to reassessment is unlikely to be available at the time of sale and therefore will not be paid through escrow. When the tax bill comes, you don't want to be surprised.

Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.
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There's Something for Everybody

(Continued from Page 9)

care and engage with youth from our local elementary and middle schools. Our third floor and rooftop also serve as our Summer Camp quarters for kids and families needing care or engaging activities over the long summer break.

For families and youth seeking a bigger camp experience, may we interest you in our lakefront property in Big Bear? Family Camps, Holiday Camps and Summer Camp at Camp Big Bear will make sure you connect with the outdoors and disconnect from technology!

The Santa Monica YMCA is at

1332 Sixth Street, in Santa Monica. There is parking available underground.



- Joe Analco

Santa Monica Interfaith Council Held May Event to Affirm Their Commitment to Peace, Understanding, and Unity

In early May, the Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council according to Council President Kathleen Benjamin, "held an 'Interfaith Affirmation of Our Common Humanity' at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Monica. She expressed that this was not a celebration, but a powerful gathering to affirm their commitment to peace, understanding, and unity. It's a time to support each other in a cause that transcends our individual beliefs and backgrounds.

They were to "remember the past and defend the future," as the cover of their invitation read. The evening program involved music, sacred readings, reflections, poems, prayer, and inspirational work that reflects what is on the minds of our local clergy, and (many of us).

In attendance, were Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae, Rabbi Shira Freidlin, Rev. Janet Gollery McKeithen, Rabbi Neil Comess-Daniels, Rev. Leon Campbell, Rev. Christie Webb, Pastor Carolyn Baskin-Bell, and more.

Kathleen explained that it "took courage to have the event at this time. Giving everyone the opportunity to offer a prayer through our commemoration gave us hope."

Meetings of the Santa Monica



At the recent event, were, from left, Angela Scott, President of the League of Women Voters; Kathleen Benjamin, President of Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council and the General Advisory Board SMC; and right, Ericka Leslie, Chair of the Santa Monica Rent Control Board, and Chair of the Black Agenda.

Area Interfaith Council are open to the community. Most meetings are held on Zoom. The next one will be on June 13. If you would like further details on this and another upcoming event, or if you would like to join the group, please email smaainfo@gmail.com.

Troy Fromin Focuses On His Dreams

(Continued from Page 4)

Originating from modest beginnings in the San Fernando Valley, Troy grew up working in the heart of Santa Monica at his dad's deli, a very popular neighborhood staple, Fromin's.

Each day, he never fails to authenticate himself as a man who follows his dreams and aspirations. "My love for horror, sci-fi, and fantasy contributed to my initial interest in acting. I couldn't get enough of it as a kid."

Like many actors, he began acting where he could, "I started by submitting myself for jobs in Drama-Logue, student films, extra work, and so on," he states.

Eventually, he started becoming familiar in certain circles of the industry, which meant he booked more roles. This would eventually land him within his favorite genre, horror, starring in such roles as Podowski in *Shrunken Heads* or Tony in *Brush with Death*.

His agents and managers came next through networking connections, which allowed him to con-

tinue performing more roles. You may remember him from '90s shows like *Saved by the Bell*, *Doctor, Doctor*, and *The Wonder Years*. We can expect to see Troy in an upcoming sequel, *Joker: Folie a Deux*, later this Fall. He leaves us with these parting words, advice if you will, for young actors eager to get their feet wet. "Don't give anyone money unless you're making money." Troy states.

"At the end of the day, the actors who get less credit end up doing more. They are around us every day, blending in, thus they're successful in their craft. It's a combination of luck and skill," says Troy, "that lead to acting jobs and success in the entertainment industry. Jobs don't necessarily lead to recognition."

We, as audience members, should start to pay closer attention to everything and everyone in a film or show, not just our favorite celebrity in the lead role, and to understand the general significance of smaller, independent projects, as well as larger ones.

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Paws and Claws

My Dog is Keeping Me Awake



By Dr. Frank Lavac, MS, DVM
Q: My dog is constantly licking his feet and rubbing his face. Is he anxious? He is keeping me

awake at night chewing on his feet.

A: This is a very common problem. It is very unlikely that it has anything to do with anxiety.

The most common reason for this symptom is Inhaled Allergies, referred to as Atopy. When dogs

inhale pollens to which they are allergic, the most common signs are foot licking because their feet are very itchy. It seems a bit counterintuitive that inhaled allergies would cause that as you might expect more respiratory issues, but that is not the case in dogs.

The most common allergies that we see in dogs are inhaled allergies, flea allergies, food allergies and contact allergies.

There are several effective and safe treatments for Atopy, including Cytopoint which is a monoclonal antibody.

If you have any questions, you can contact Dr. Lavac at 310-828-4587.

An Update From ERBA Markets

More Cannabis and Regulations



By Stephen Freedman

With cannabis moving more and more into our main stream culture, many of our everyday inter-

actions have been forced to adjust. This is especially true in bridging the gap between state and federal regulation. A few recent alterations to California employment law regarding cannabis aim to alleviate the stigma associated with the product, and remove some ambiguity in the space on the state level.

In 2022, Governor Newsom signed AB 2188, prohibiting employers from using the results of hair or urine tests for marijuana in their decisions to hire, fire, or discipline workers. While hair and urine can detect trace amounts of marijuana for days or even weeks, it does not signify impairment, a fact that even the federal government has acknowledged. In fact, there have been numerous studies that indicate that these tests for past marijuana consumption do nothing to protect job safety.

At the beginning of 2024, an additional law, SB 700, went into

effect that amended the Fair Employment and Housing Act to bar employers from asking applicants about prior cannabis use.

However, there are a few caveats to these new regulations.

- Employers still retain the right to ask about an applicant's criminal history, but may not discriminate against this applicant if past cannabis activity is discovered in relation to criminal activity, unless permitted by law. They also do not bar employers from using other means to detect impairment, such as blood tests.

- Additionally, these regulations do not apply to those working in building or construction, as safety in this arena is paramount. They also do not apply to applicants for federal jobs with background checks.

As regulations continue to wane, and legality continues to spread across the states, expect more of these common sense laws to be passed, and hopefully, lead to a full re-evaluation of cannabis legality on the federal level.

Stephen Freedman is the Regional Manager of the ERBA Markets, the WOODS, West LA, Venice, Culver City, and WeHo.

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From Me to You...



By Diane Margolin

There is such a wonderful sense of community in Santa Monica that isn't always found elsewhere. One place where

everyone is always welcome is at St. Monica Church. Years ago they held exciting Oktoberfests where there was a diaper dash for babies, wonderful concerts, a chili cookoff, and vendors selling food.

It was so much fun to see so many of our neighbors at these events. But, progress took place on their site and there is no space for those type of activities anymore.

Last month, thanks to the creative Merrick Siebenaler, Director of Worship and Parish Life, local

residents had the opportunity to enjoy an amazing concert put on by pianist Michael Sobie and his orchestra. The talented musicians came from all over the country to perform at the Rocket Man concert. Michael has spent years dreaming of creating of a show featuring the songs of Elton John. He also updated the classic songs with his own unique arrangements.

Before Michael began sharing his thoughts and impressive piano playing and singing for over two hours, Msgr. Lloyd Torgerson welcomed the guests in the packed sanctuary. Msgr. shared how he was happy to use the church to share the arts with our community. I hope Merrick and Msgr. will welcome more fabulous entertainers to Saint Monica Church in the future.



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Adding a Unique Accessory (Continued from Page 8)



Debra explained that she cut the lace flowers from a bridal fabric and applied them to the veil.

understated, but the veil is more of a presence. That's been really fun to play with."

Ultimately, Debra's job is to help make brides' dreams come true – tying their outfits together and perfecting their wedding looks.

"My favorite element of it is being able to work with the bride and help her envision her perfect look as a whole," she said. "A lot of the time, the bride gets focused on the gown, but really the gown is just one element."

To reach Debra, please call 312-420-1041, or call Nadia at NWLA at 424-238-5202.



Congratulations to Qin Stubis For Her 200th Column

As you can read on Page 4, Qin has written 200 columns for us. Her book, *Once Our Lives*, made its debut last summer. She has received several literary awards.

A recent one was the Gold Winner in the international **Nonfiction Book Awards** and the number one winner of the **Pen-Craft Book Awards** for literary excellence. Qin has met many readers and made new friends at book club meetings in various cities. Her work has now appeared in more than 200 publications.



Ashley chose a fascinator created by Debra to accent her wedding dress from NWLA Bridal shop.



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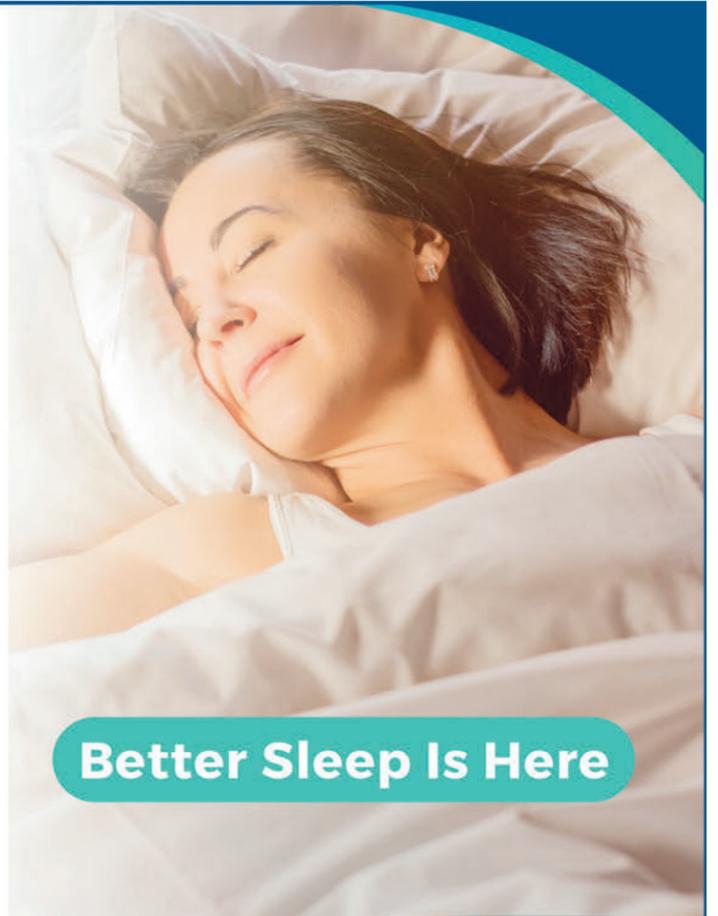


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