



# NEWS

West Pasadena Residents' Association

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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## San Rafael Elementary and WPRA Launch Neighborhood Volunteer Programs

*By Michael Udell*

This Fall, San Rafael Elementary School (San Rafael) and WPRA will launch a series of community-based volunteer programs geared towards enriching the academic experience of San Rafael students, and providing a lecture series for parents that address many of the issues facing parents of preschool and elementary school children. A sampling of the programs include the Student Enrichment Program, the High School Mentors and Readers Program, and the Parent Lecture Series.

### Student Enrichment Program

Throughout the 2008 school year, the WPRA's quarterly and weekly newsletters invited residents to volunteer at San Rafael. The response was positive, including several residents who signed up to read with students for one day, and ended up coming back several times a week throughout the year. Resident Nino Sutcliffe initially volunteered to assist with the Upper Grade Book Club, and then agreed to teach a 7-class art history course to 4th-6th grade GATE students, which culminated in a field trip to the Norton Simon Museum.

Inspired by Ms. Sutcliffe's efforts, the WPRA Education Committee and San Rafael Principal, Alyson Beecher, created the Student Enrichment Program. The goal of this program is to provide a mind-expanding, educationally enriching, experience for San

Rafael students by tapping into our many knowledgeable neighbors. The WPRA is searching for volunteers from a variety of fields, including science, medicine, architecture, ornamental horticulture or gardening, the arts (dance, music, drama, culinary), government/civics/politics, law, finance and business, to teach San Rafael students about their respective professions.

There are no defined parameters for classes taught by community volunteers – they can be a single one-hour class or a series of classes throughout the school year. Volunteers are encouraged to work with Principal Beecher to create a class that fits their expertise and availability. To date, the response has been excellent. Confirmed programs and volunteers include: a moot court program chaired by Judge Larry Crispo (Ret.); a mediation/conflict resolution program chaired by former California



*San Rafael Elementary School*

Attorney General, John Van de Kamp; landscaping classes taught by Kicker and Betty McKenney, Constant Gardeners of Arlington Garden; an art class in water colors taught by local artist, Joseph Stoddard, whose work is displayed on the WPRA website; and a dramatic writing workshop by "Snoopy" producer, Michael Grace.

### High School Mentors and Readers

Many of the local high schools urge or require their students to

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# President's Message

By Audrey O'Kelley

## *Frequently Asked Questions from Neighbors:*

*Why are all these buildings being built? Where's all this traffic coming from?*

**B**uildings and the resultant traffic are a result of city and regional planning. You've undoubtedly been hearing a lot about the General Plan update taking place right now in Pasadena. This is where citizens can exert some control over the destiny of their city.

The unprecedented building boom we have experienced in Pasadena recently is a result of the groundwork laid in the early 1990's, when the city updated its general plan. Planners and city leaders decided to accept more growth in Pasadena and to steer this future growth and development toward Pasadena's commercial center, which stretches, roughly, from Lake Avenue on the east to Old Pasadena on the west. This, in order to preserve the character of the city's single-family neighborhoods.

This development has had a profound impact on Pasadena's residents, despite city officials' efforts to shield them. There has been traffic overflow into neighborhoods. Residents venturing out of their neighborhoods are finding it difficult to move about comfortably in the city. Neighborhoods contiguous to development taking place in the commercial districts have been living with constant construction and building designs that clash with their neighborhood. Some residents will experience a drop in real estate value due to multiple resident housing built next to their property.

### **Jobs, Population Projections and Increased Density**

Currently there is 4.2 million square feet of unallocated "non-residential" or commercial square footage (office buildings are an example) in the Central District. If the City does not reduce this allotment, look for

more housing developments. That is because the state ties jobs to housing – the more jobs in the city, the more housing Sacramento will require Pasadena to build. This increase in density will produce more traffic with spillover into the neighborhoods.

In addition to jobs, a group of planners from six California counties, known as SCAG is mandated by the federal government to research and draw up plans for transportation and growth management. SCAG projects future housing needs and comes up with the RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Assessment) numbers. These numbers dictate how many "housing units" local governments *must allow to be built* in order to meet those regional goals.

### **Smart Growth**

Pasadena is a built-out, 22 square mile city. Development anywhere in our city, along with continuing regional development, is going to be felt by everyone in every neighborhood. "Plans" to get people out of their cars and reduced parking options are problematical. Despite the lure of euphemistic terms like "smart growth," there is no way to shield people from the consequences of density. One just lives with it. Often uncomfortably.

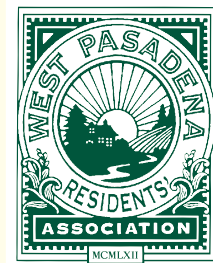
### **Speak Up Now or Forever Hold Your Peace**

More complexes like the Sares Regis's Westgate Complex at Del Mar/ De Lacy and Pasadena Avenue are undoubtedly being planned for Pasadena. No matter where these are built in Pasadena, they will affect your quality of life. If you don't like the traffic produced by these big developments, and all of the many

smaller ones popping up, then you best participate in the General Plan update process to avert more of the same.

Attend a General Plan workshop and speak up now to have an impact on density and traffic. Go on to the City's website and click on the General Plan under "Hot Topics."

There you can find meeting schedules, blog and find out what is being planned for Pasadena. ■



## Have Your Say

The WPRA invites West Pasadena residents to submit Letters to the Editor. Make your voice heard by sending a letter to [editor@wptra.net](mailto:editor@wptra.net). Letters will be selected to reflect a variety of viewpoints, and may be edited for space considerations. Have your say . . . submit a letter today!

—Vince Farhat



# Pasadena General Plan: Speak Up!

By Mic Hansen

**O**ur home, our neighborhood, our city . . . how do these factor into how enjoyable and comfortable our lives are? Do you sometimes wish you had a say in what your neighborhood looks like? Are you pleased with the way Pasadena has grown over the last decade?

From now until the end of Calendar 2009, we have the opportunity to make our voices heard. A major update of the General Plan's Land Use, Mobility, and Open Space elements is in process, and the more we participate in this update, the more productive and responsive the plan becomes. Because—once the plan is put into place—we will all have to live with the consequences.

Seven Guiding Principles were introduced in the 1994 revision of the General Plan which all work together to guide policy in the city. They are:

- 🌱 Growth will be targeted to serve community needs and enhance the quality of life.
- 🌱 Change will be harmonized to preserve Pasadena's historic character and environment.
- 🌱 Economic vitality will be promoted to provide jobs, services, revenues and opportunities.
- 🌱 Pasadena will be promoted as a healthy family community.
- 🌱 Pasadena will be a city where people can circulate without cars.
- 🌱 Pasadena will be promoted as a cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment and educational center for the region.
- 🌱 Community participation will be a permanent part of achieving a greater city.

Do you agree with the above guiding principles? Do you think others should be added? What is right about Pasadena? What would you like to change? What are qualities that make

Pasadena special to you? What challenges do you think Pasadena faces going forward? **Now is the time to stand up and be heard.**

The City's Planning Staff and the City Council-appointed General Plan Update Advisory Committee (GPUAC) are in the process of informing and engaging as many community members as possible. The City Council directed the Committee (composed of citizens) to play two significant roles during the Land Use and Mobility Element update process:

- 🌱 Guide the public outreach program to ensure widely diverse public participation
- 🌱 Work with City staff and other relevant experts in the development of General Plan documents.

A comprehensive outreach program is in place asking for citizen participation. The objective of this outreach is to both educate our community about the General Plan update process as well as to insure that a large and diverse portion of the community participates.

To date, there have been more than 100 interviews of various community members/stakeholders to gauge what issues are foremost in their minds. Additionally, staff-led community

workshops are in process for neighborhood and interest groups to give feedback about our city. Recently, a workshop was held for interested community members to learn how they may conduct self-facilitated workshops for their neighborhood or community groups.

An exciting learning and feedback component is the "Move-Abouts." These are self-guided tours—walking, driving, riding—to really experience and critique various areas of Pasadena with which you may not necessarily be familiar. These tours intend to illustrate some challenging issues we may be facing, such as density, bike lanes, architectural design, street trees, and ease of transit. To start on these tours, community members need to pick up **Move-Abouts Passports**. These are available at the City Hall information booth, at the Permit Center (175 North Garfield Ave.), or any Pasadena public library, community center, or public counter. You may also download a copy from the city's General Plan website.

A number of other activities and community meetings are also on the schedule. Speaker series, featuring a diverse range of experts and open to

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## **You, too, can provide feedback and have an active voice.**

The City's newly redesigned website makes it easy for every community member to stay informed about and participate in the General Plan. When you go to the main City of Pasadena web page ([www.cityofpasadena.net](http://www.cityofpasadena.net)) The **General Plan link is in the center of the page** under **FYI PASADENA**. Clicking on the link takes you directly to the General Plan main page, and once there, the green left-hand column lists all the activities and links within the General Plan. **Please read, inquire, find out dates, attend meeting, do the "move-abouts," send on-line feedback, write a letter...PARTICIPATE!**

The recent special issue of *Pasadena in Focus* is completely dedicated to the General Plan. If you did not get your copy or keep it, it's available on line—again as a direct link from the main web page ([www.cityofpasadena.net](http://www.cityofpasadena.net)), under the same heading of **FYI PASADENA**.





# City Hall Update

By Vince Farhat

## City Council Adopts New Budget

The Pasadena City Council recently adopted the budget for Fiscal Year 2010, which began July 1 and will end June 30, 2010.

The City of Pasadena is experiencing a large structural deficit in the City's general fund. Expenditures have exceeded revenues as a result of increasing operating costs exacerbated by revenue shortfalls from the national recession. The new budget reflects the first year of a four-year plan to resolve the structural deficit in the general fund, which would have grown to \$28 million in Fiscal Year 2014 if it had gone unchecked.

The total budget is \$680.9 million, including general fund, special funds and capital improvement projects. This reflects a reduction in general fund spending of \$5 million from the prior fiscal year.

The new budget taps City reserves to cover an approximately \$6 million deficit. With tough economic times expected ahead, City officials anticipate having three more budgets before

the City is able to stop spending out of its reserves.

The City has imposed a hiring freeze that will carry over into next year. Pasadena has not filled nearly 70 jobs. Moreover, seven of the 10 City employee unions agreed to forego or delay salary and/or cost-of-living increases.

In August, City staff gave a budget status report to the City Council. The recently approved State budget will have significant fiscal impacts on the City. In addition, local revenues have continued to erode to a point that additional budget reductions will be necessary in order to balance the General Fund operating budget by 2014. According to staff reports, the budget gap could be as high as \$12.1 million, or \$2.55 million more than previously projected. Staff will return to the Council on October 5 with more information and additional budget recommendations.

For more information, please visit [www.cityofpasadena.net/budget](http://www.cityofpasadena.net/budget) or call (626) 744-4336.

## City Council Raises Water Rates

The City Council has approved a plan to raise monthly water bills by

about \$10 for an average customer. The increase will be phased-in over three years, and will allow big water users to get credits that will decrease their bill if they can demonstrate they are using water efficiently.

Phasing-in the rate hike over three years rather than two will bring in \$2.6 million less over the next two years. According to news reports, Pasadena residents could see increases in their monthly bills even if they drastically cut their water use. In some cases, users might have to cut usage by nearly 30 percent to avoid higher bills.

As a result of state water shortages, Pasadena is facing a ten percent reduction in water supplies and higher penalty rates from its main supplier if it does not meet that target. The City wants to reduce citywide water use by ten percent through the rate increases and new rules limiting the amount of landscape watering for residents. In the long term, the Department of Water and Power is studying a budget-based rate system that would take into account that larger lots tend to use more water.

## Pasadena General Plan: Speak Up!

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community members, will present new ideas, perspectives and provide the audience with question-answer opportunities. **Council District Workshops** will be held in each district that will list some emerging themes from earlier community feedback and further clarify and refine the issues. On **November 14, a Community Open House** will serve as the wrap-up for the initial community outreach effort. This is where everyone who's interested will make sure that they've been heard, and heard right!

Stephanie De Wolfe, Pasadena's Deputy Director of Planning, is leading the General Plan update effort along with members of the city's Planning and Transportation staffs. The General Plan Update Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public and scheduled the second and fourth Thursday evenings of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the basement conference room of City Hall. These are public meetings, with agendas posted on-line.

With so many opportunities for

input, WPRA urges residents to please get involved: attend meetings, workshops, and feedback sessions and speak up; pick up a Move-Abouts Passport and go on the tours; hear the experts speak; write a letter (or two!); speak with your GPUAC Committee member, your councilmember, and the Mayor—but above all please participate and **make your views heard**. Now is the time to put forth your ideas, concerns, and dreams, because once in place, we must all live with the consequences of our decisions! ■

## City Approves Office Building for Monty's Restaurant Site

The City's Hearing Officer recently approved the environmental impact report (EIR) for the 16 East California project at the southeast corner of Fair Oaks Avenue and California Boulevard (formerly Monty's Steakhouse). The proposed project includes demolition of the existing on-site structures and surface parking areas in order to develop a four-story, 113,200 square foot office building with 255 parking spaces within a two-level subterranean parking garage.

The draft EIR was reviewed by the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and Historic Preservation Commission. The WPRA also reviewed and commented on the draft EIR. Some TAC and Planning Commissioners questioned the adequacy of the traffic study for the project, and requested that it be revised to more accurately reflect the anticipated traffic impacts. City staff responded to these comments in the final EIR, and submitted it to the Hearing Officer for review and approval. The Hearing Officer conducted a public hearing on July 30, and issued his findings approving the EIR and two minor conditional use permits on July 31.

At the regular Planning Commission meeting on August 12, a motion to call up the project for further review failed by a vote of seven to two. On August 17, the City Council discussed whether to call up the project for further review. At the request of the developer, the matter was deferred to the next City Council meeting.

The project is now in the design review phase. The Design Commission will review the Concept and Final design of the proposed building. The design review phase is expected to last anywhere from three to six months.

## New Pasadena Listings on National Register

Congratulations to the City of Pasadena on its successful nomination of several West Pasadena buildings and a historic district to the National

Register of Historic Places. Individual properties recently accepted for listing on the National Register include five homes designed by the firm of Buff, Straub & Hensman between 1955 and 1964. They are 820 Burleigh Drive, 512 Glen Court, 1385 El Mirador, 541 Fremont Drive, and 919 La Loma Road. A new historic district is the Poppy Peak neighborhood. This is a grouping of significant Modern homes designed by influential architects including Richard Neutra, Harwell Hamilton Harris, and James Pulliam. A second historic district of mid-century homes on Pegfair Estates Drive and Carnarvon Drive is still pending at the State Historical Resources Commission where all nominations from California are reviewed.

## Urban Forestry Committee Supports New Trees on Colorado

The City's Urban Forestry Advisory Committee recently recommended phasing-out Mexican palm trees on Colorado Boulevard. King palms would be planted between Catalina and Sierra Madre Boulevard, and date palms would be planted from Sierra Madre to the eastern boundary of the City. Mexican palms typically offer less shade than date palms, which can be found along Arroyo Parkway. The City Council will have the final word regarding the committee's recommendation.

The matter of Colorado street trees has been highly controversial. Because of the public outcry of the need for shade along Colorado Boulevard, and against palm trees, especially the Mexican fan palm, the committee plans to report to the City Council that the need for shade should be a higher order consideration in the selection of trees for replacement. The committee voted to send a letter to the Council asking for permission to consider altering plans to add more shade canopy along Colorado. This is a point of contention; some in the business community support keeping palm trees on Colorado.

The committee has asked staff for a wider selection of trees to choose from for the perimeter of City Hall on Garfield and Euclid. The committee hopes to find a tree that will harmonize with the magnolias now planted during the transition period as the magnolias die and are replaced. The ideal small tree would need little water, be showy but not overwhelm City Hall. It was repeatedly emphasized that no trees will be removed until they cannot be saved. ■

*Editor's Note: WPRA board member Gerry Silver contributed to this article. Please send an e-mail to [update@wpra.net](mailto:update@wpra.net) if you want to receive weekly updates regarding Pasadena city government and civic affairs.*



*Developed in the 1920s, the Hotel Vista del Arroyo offered guests panoramic views on the Arroyo bank overlooking the Colorado Street Bridge. The main hotel building is now the home of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Image courtesy of Claire Bogaard.*



# Pasadena Fire Department Offers Free Training

By Lisa Derderian

The Pasadena Fire Department offers free Emergency Response Team (PERT) Training to assist your neighborhood in planning for major regional disasters, responding in the event of such a disaster, and facilitating communications with local fire departments, police, hospitals, and aid workers to ensure that the community can respond effectively and support those who will be in need. In the event of a major disaster, we may be on our own for several hours, days or possibly weeks. The Southern California Earthquake Center and the State of California recommend that citizens be prepared to live without municipal power, water, and gas for anywhere from three days to a week. An earthquake such as the one simulated during the recent *Great ShakeOut Drill* is likely to completely disrupt electrical and water service. Urban fires which are sparked during

and immediately after such an earthquake will cause widespread property damage and injury and further stress the police and fire departments of southern California.

## Information and Training for You

If you are interested in taking the 12-hour PERT course, please contact Lisa Derderian, Emergency Management Coordinator, at (626) 744-7276. Our goal, to ensure everyone's safety in the event of a catastrophe, is to get our neighborhoods trained, neighbor-helping-neighbor philosophy, to be responsible for planning and executing preparedness drives, organizing neighborhood disaster kits, and raising community awareness. Banding together as a community will help the neighborhood weather an incident. Next to having basic earthquake kits, the most useful way to prepare for such an event

is to share knowledge. Are you a doctor or are you trained in first aid? Do you have a monkey wrench, and can you turn off a water main? Do you have particular medical needs, or allergies to medicines? Do you have current photos of your pets, and have they been micro-chipped? Are you a licensed radio operator? So many things we don't think about until it's too late. ■



STATION 38, located at 1150 Linda Vista, was established in 1931 with the appearance of a picturesque Spanish residence rather than the conventional fire station. The character was that of a residence. In 1958, the Linda Vista station was torn down because of the inability to house the manpower and equipment needed for the area. Construction began on the same site and the one story building contained an office, apparatus room, dormitory, kitchen, classroom, locker/shower rooms and a workshop. The exterior copied the residential dwellings surround the station. Today, Station 38 protects the hills and homes of the Linda Vista area and periodically assists Glendale and Los Angeles County.



STATION 39, housed at 50 Avenue 64, was built in 1948 because of the increased population where the city recognized that a post war improvement plan for the fire department was a priority. This station housed a new triple combination engine with a 750 gallon per minute pump. This station prides itself on protecting the neighborhoods of San Rafael, Glen Oaks and those shared by Engine 5 on South Pasadena Avenue.

# No Parking on Red Flag Days

By James Weckerle

**Y**ou should be aware of an important public safety proposal potentially affecting you. In order to mitigate the increased brush fire hazards associated with narrow, winding roads in the hillside areas, the Pasadena Fire Department (PFD) is proposing that the City restrict parking on those narrow, winding roads on days of extreme fire hazard, also known as "Red Flag" days.

Recognizing the potential inconvenience this temporary parking restriction might cause the residents in these areas, the Fire Department has been attempting to establish a community dialogue. It has been challenging to get sufficient time and attendance at

public information meetings and so to reach as many residents as possible, we have converted the presentation for viewing on the web. To download or view the presentation, please go to <http://www.cityofpasadena.net/fire/redflag.asp>. Viewing the presentation will require the free Adobe Reader. To download the Reader if you don't already have it, you may go to: <http://www.adobe.com>.

The Fire Department continues to believe that the most effective way to discuss this complex issue and to craft the best solution for Pasadena is to have a face-to-face discussion with the citizens we serve. If you are interested in hosting a

meeting for your neighbors, please contact us. Alternatively, we hope that the web-based presentation is useful and look forward to receiving your comments at [redflagparking@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:redflagparking@cityofpasadena.net).

Thank you for your assistance with spreading the word to your neighbors! And thank you for your help in maintaining our beautiful Pasadena hillsides in a safe manner for all to enjoy. ■

*Editor's Note: James Weckerle is the Hazardous Materials Specialist for the Pasadena Fire Department. He can be reached via email: [jweckerle@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:jweckerle@cityofpasadena.net).*

## San Rafael Volunteer Programs

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devote a certain amount of time to community service. San Rafael hopes to provide another alternative for area high school students (both public and private) to fulfill their obligations by providing the following volunteer opportunities:

🐼 **6th Grade Mentors:** Applications are currently being accepted for 35 student mentor positions. Volunteers will mentor 6th graders on success in junior high and beyond. All mentors will participate in a one-day training program put on by Principal Beecher. Expected time commitment is 2 hours per month during the school year.

🐼 **Readers:** This program will serve all San Rafael students in need of a extra reading practice. Volunteers will be paired with one or more students, and will be asked to read with the students

during 15-30 minute sessions. Expected time commitment is 2 hours per week during the school year.

### 🐼 **Math Field Day Coaches:**

Every spring PUSD holds its Math Field Day competition for 4th, 5th and 6th graders in the District. Hoping to improve upon past performances, San Rafael is looking for 12 high-achieving high school math students to serve as coaches. Practices will take place weekly beginning in October.

### **Parent Lecture Series**

Beginning in October, the Parent Lecture Series program will provide monthly lectures from area professionals speaking on topics aimed at parents of preschool and elementary school children. The lectures will take place in the San Rafael auditorium, and will

be open to San Rafael parents and residents of the WPRA service area. Potential topics include: disciplining children; obesity and nutrition; current issues in pediatrics; the internet and social networking sites; preparing children for junior high and high school; getting to know your local library; and, things parents can do to facilitate pre-reading and reading. Confirmed lecturers include pediatrician Anne Marie Fanselau, MD., psychologists Andre van Rooyen, Ph.D and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D, and Christine Reeder of the San Rafael Library. Childcare will be provided by San Rafael.

If you are interested in volunteering at San Rafael, or if you would like more information, please contact Marilyn Randolph ([marilyn97@earthlink.net](mailto:marilyn97@earthlink.net)), Michael Udell ([mudell@mckennalong.com](mailto:mudell@mckennalong.com)) or Alyson Beecher ([abeecher@pusd.us](mailto:abeecher@pusd.us)). ■



# Pasadena Adopts New Water Conservation Measures

By Vince Farhat

The City Council has revised Pasadena's water conservation procedures in response to ongoing concerns about the city's depleting water supply and an expected water shortage. According to the Office of Public Affairs, Pasadena receives 65 percent of its water supply from the Metropolitan Water District. In July, Metropolitan cut its allocation to Pasadena by ten percent and imposed surcharges on all member cities, including Pasadena, if they do not meet water conservation targets.

The following prohibitions on water waste, among others, are now in effect:

- No watering outdoors between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., except with a hand-held container or hose with a shut-off nozzle, or for very short periods when adjusting a sprinkler system.
- No watering during periods of rain.
- No excessive water flow or runoff onto pavement, gutters or ditches from watering or irrigating landscapes or vegetation of any kind.
- No washing down paved surfaces unless for safety or sanitation, in which case a bucket, hose with a shut-off nozzle, cleaning machine that recycles water or low-volume/high-pressure water broom must be used.
- All property owners must fix leaks, breaks or malfunctions when they find them or within seven days of receiving a notice from Pasadena Water & Power.
- Fountains and water features must have re-circulating water systems.
- Vehicles must be washed with hand-held buckets and/or hoses equipped with water shut-off nozzles (does not apply to commercial car washes).



Glenarm Power Plant Fountain

This Summer, the City Council declared a Level 1 water shortage. Level 1 rules: Outdoor water permitted only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays in summer, and only on Saturdays in winter. Sprinkler or plumbing system leaks, breaks and malfunctions must be repaired within 72 hours.

For more information, including water conservation tips, tools and workshops, please visit [www.cityofpasadena.net/savewater](http://www.cityofpasadena.net/savewater) or call the city's Water Shortage Hotline at (626) 744-8888. ■

## Neighborhood Safety Corner

By Bob Holmes

### Crime Statistics

The Pasadena Police Dept has released the statistics on crime in CSA1 (which includes the WPRA area) for the second quarter.

Residential burglaries remain the most prevalent type of crime. April, 2009 saw a big (133%) increase over last year, however, the numbers for May and June, 2009 are below last year and in line with the first quarter.



You can see all of the statistics on the WPRA web site ([www.wpra.net](http://www.wpra.net)). Click on Issues, then click on Neighborhood Safety, then click on Local Area Crime Statistics.

### Residential Burglary Alert

The Pasadena Police Department has issued an alert about residential burglaries. You can see the alert, and a listing of reports from your neighbors on the Recently Reported Incidents page of the Neighbor Safety section of the WPRA web site.

### Emergency Response Training

The Pasadena Fire Department is offering free Pasadena Emergency

Response Team (PERT) training classes. The goal of the Pasadena Fire Department is to respond to emergencies within 5 minutes. During a disaster, you may need to be self sufficient for up to 72 hours. PERT teaches you: Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Medical, Fire Suppression, and Light Search & Rescue. To schedule, please contact Lisa Derderian at the Pasadena Fire Department. Her phone number is (626)744-7276 and email: [lderderian@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:lderderian@cityofpasadena.net). ■

*Editor's Note: Bob Holmes is Chair of the WPRA Neighborhood Safety Committee. You may contact Bob at [Holmes@wpra.net](mailto:Holmes@wpra.net).*



# Pasadena Leaders Speak at Annual Meeting

By Vince Farhat

Pasadena's new City Manager, Michael Beck, was the featured speaker at the WPRA's Annual Meeting on May 13 at the Maranatha High School Student Center, located on the historic Ambassador West campus. Over 150 West Pasadena residents turned out to listen to Mr. Beck, who was joined by many of his senior department heads, including the directors of planning, transportation, and public works.

In a panel discussion moderated by WPRA board member Blaine Cavena, Mr. Beck and his senior staff answered residents' questions about

traffic, crime, development, and the City budget. Some residents also submitted questions in advance on the WPRA website. Mr. Beck was introduced by City Councilman Steve Madison, who also participated in the question and answer session.

The evening also featured remarks by Mayor Bill Bogaard. Mayor Bogaard recalled his time as president of WPRA, and offered his thoughts regarding the value of volunteerism. After the Mayor's remarks, the WPRA presented Emina Darakjy with its annual Community Service Award, recognizing her as a protector

and supporter of Pasadena's trees and green spaces, and her long service to Pasadena as president of the Pasadena Beautiful Foundation.

The business portion of the meeting included the election of a new slate of directors and officers. Exhibitors at the reception included the Arlington Garden, artist Joseph Stoddard, San Rafael School, and the Rose Bowl Operating Company. ■

*Editor's Note: Photographs courtesy of WPRA member Chuck Hudson.*



*Color Guard opens the Annual Meeting*



*Vince Farhat presents Emina Darakjy with the WPRA Community Service Award*



*Blaine Cavena moderates panel discussion with City leaders*

# The Long Road – Hahamongna Annex Plan Process

By Mary Barrie

The Plan for the Hahamongna Annex is now wending its way through the Commission review process. In early July both the Planning Commission and the Design Commission declined to approve the Annex Plan, requesting instead a site visit which has been scheduled for September 9. Julianna Delgado, Chair of both the Design and Transportation Advisory Commissions, requested that the Transportation Advisory Commission be invited on the site visit as well.

The most discussed aspect of the Plan was the staff recommended alternative for a 30-ft wide bike/trail corridor. This route, north of the

proposed public Equestrian Center, would require tree removals, considerable grading, and infrastructure relocation. The 30-ft wide “recreational greenway” has caused considerable controversy because it is in the same location as the road to the JPL West Arroyo parking lot which was taken out of the Hahamongna Master Plan in 2003. At the time, the road was proposed as an access for park visitors to a 1200-space JPL parking garage.

The Friends of Hahamongna, a group of long-time Arroyo activists, suggested a bike path alternative to be located on the existing park Perimeter Trail/road. The latter would impact only one tree, require only minimal

grading on what is already a flat road, and would not require any infrastructure relocation. It would consist of a permeable paved bikeway on the existing Perimeter Trail/road with an adjacent dirt trail for hikers and equestrians.

The Commissions requested that the alternatives for the trail/bike corridor be flagged and marked before the site visit, which will be an officially noticed meeting open to the public. ■

*Editor's Note: Mary Barrie is a member of the Friends of Hahamongna and an active advocate for trails and open space in our region. She can be reached at meb787@aol.com.*

## Editor's Corner

September is here, and with it another issue of the WPRA News. This issue brings you updates on happenings at City Hall and PUSD, and information concerning projects and issues affecting West Pasadena.

More than anything else, Pasadena is defined by the quality of life in our neighborhoods. As residents of West Pasadena, we are truly fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful and unique areas of Southern California. The WPRA is committed to maintaining the quality of life that makes West Pasadena a special place.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. The WPRA welcomes your feedback and comments. Please e-mail me at farhat@wpra.net.

—Vince Farhat

## WPRA Wants You!



The WPRA is looking for volunteers to serve on committees and to get involved in neighborhood issues. Whatever your interests, we have many opportunities for involvement and are looking for dedicated West Pasadena residents committed to preserving our neighborhood quality of life.

The WPRA wants you and needs your help! For more information, please contact Vince Farhat at farhat@wpra.net. ■



# Community Input Needed for Pasadena City College “Vision 2020” Master Plan Development

By Geoffrey L. Baum

**V**ision 2020 is the Educational Master Plan project which will guide the growth and development of the Pasadena Area Community College District into the next decade and beyond.

The process begins by seeking community feedback about the programs and services offered by Pasadena City College. It also includes a thorough review of enrollment trends, area demographics, along with statewide and local economic data to guide educational master planning, facilities and technology planning, and implementation. It is an intense, comprehensive, and dynamic effort that will help PCC improve its service to the community and support student success.

The planning process begins in Fall 2009 and continues through Spring 2010. During this time, PCC will conduct extensive interviews and discussions with area employers,

residents, students, faculty and others through a series of public meetings throughout the district.

Vision 2020 is comprised of three phases: (1) Needs and Assessment and Plan Framework, (2.) Program Assessment, Plan Development and Implementation Strategy, and (3.) Documentation Review and Adoption. Through this process, an informed Educational Master Plan is created. The plan then becomes the centerpiece for college planning and resource allocation.

Guided by the needs of the community, Pasadena City College will continue to fulfill its mission to provide access to outstanding instruction for students seeking transfer to four-year universities or cutting-edge career and technical training for new jobs in our rapidly changing economy. To find out more, visit [www.pasadena.edu](http://www.pasadena.edu) or write [gbaum@pasadena.edu](mailto:gbaum@pasadena.edu). ■



*PCC Trustee Geoffrey Baum*

*Editor's Note: WPRA board member Geoff Baum represents West Pasadena and Linda Vista on the PCC Board of Trustees.*

**Save the Date:**

## **Picnic in Linda Vista Park**

**Saturday, October 3, 2009 • 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

The Linda Vista / Annandale Association invites you and your family to join them for a “Picnic in the Park.”

The day's festivities include a fire engine demonstration by *Fire Station #38*, the *All Saints Children's Center Open House*, and a musical performer and story reader from *Linda Vista Library*.

Other groups participating are *Art Center for Kids*, *Pasadena Humane Society*, *Rose Bowl Operating*

*Company*, *Pasadena Water & Power*, *Arroyo Seco Foundation*, *Green City*, *Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy*, with music by the *Marshall Fundamental Secondary School (Pasadena USD) Jazz Band* . . . and much, much more!

Lunch available for purchase from In-N-Out Burger or bring your own.

Grab your neighbors and a blanket, and plan to join the neighborhood for a fun-filled afternoon!



**LINDA VISTA-ANNANDALE ASSOCIATION**



# Ambassador College Update

By Mic Hansen



*View of Westgate Project from across the bridge*

Construction continues apace on the first phase of the Westgate project, on the former Ambassador East Campus. The full project is projected to be built over three blocks and comprised of 820 housing units.

Currently, 420 apartments are under construction in Block 3 of the project, bounded by Del Mar

Boulevard on the South, De Lacey Street on the East, Valley Street on the North, and Pasadena Avenue on the West, for roughly accounting for half of the units. Blocks two and one have been cleared, though construction has not begun as of yet. For more information, please visit [www.westgatepasadena.com](http://www.westgatepasadena.com).

It appears that Ambassador West,

the western portion of the former Ambassador College Campus, is being offered for sale. WPRA has no new report on the project. ■

*Editor's Note: Please send an e-mail to [update@wpra.net](mailto:update@wpra.net) if you want to receive weekly neighborhood updates regarding Pasadena city government and civic affairs.*



*View of Westgate Project from Del Mar*



*Westgate Project from De Lacey Avenue*



*Ambassador West Campus along Grove Walk.*



*Ambassador West is on the market*



# New Pasadena Building Design Guidelines

By Mic Hansen

From the Greene and Greene's ultimate bungalows, to Bakewell and Brown's City Hall, to Thom Maine's recent Astrophysics building at Cal Tech, Pasadena has a remarkably rich architectural legacy and is home to an extraordinarily large number of exceptional structures, many built by renowned architects. As development has accelerated over the past decade, sustaining such quality and creativity has engendered discussion.

To address design issues, the City has been developing design guidelines to tackle design consistency, quality,

and context in multi-family residential and neighborhood commercial areas outside the seven specific plan areas, which already have design standards. The new guidelines were cooperatively developed with the local firm of Moule and Polyzoides, architects and urbanists. The photographs accompanying this article show examples of the types of buildings to which these guidelines would apply.

Pasadena currently requires design review for all multi-family housing starts having three or more units, and for all commercial construction projects of over 5,000 square feet.

Existing commercial buildings over 5,000 square feet that require major renovation or remodel are also subject to design review.

Prior to the preparation of the initial draft design guidelines, staff and consultants conducted a series of interviews of representatives of community stakeholder groups such as neighborhood associations and businesses. To date, there have been three public workshops where the community and interested groups have given feedback.

The resulting document is intended to supplement the citywide design guidelines and offer further direction for projects in the above areas. It is intended to "illustrate options, solutions, and techniques to achieve the goal of excellence in new design."

Final draft design guidelines are scheduled to be presented to the Design Commission at its August 24th meeting starting at 6:00 pm at the Pasadena Senior Center, 85 E. Holly Street. The finished guidelines are expected to be presented to the City Council for adoption in late September. For further information, please contact Kevin Johnson, Planner, at [kevinjohnson@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:kevinjohnson@cityofpasadena.net). ■



*Mixed-use building at southeast corner of Los Robles and East Orange Grove*



*Fair Oaks Court multi-family affordable housing project*



*TRIO Apartments, along Union Street*

# Open Space Committee Update

By Gerry Silver

The City of Pasadena Open Space and Conservation Committee has participated in the General Plan Outreach Community Workshop and “Pasadena Stories,” which are short video interviews soliciting present and future quality of life goals for Pasadena. The “Move Abouts” are self-guided tours of various areas of Pasadena. Information about the tours is available on the City’s web site. With these events, the City hopes to determine the needs and hopes of the public and

incorporate these ideas as the General Plan Update is finalized.

The Open Space and Conservation Element Committee is preparing its Vision Statement, Principles and Purpose. The Committee hopes that this statement will keep conservation of natural resources and open space opportunities at the center of all city decision-making.

City staff has prepared an Open Space Parcel Summary as of July 6, 2009, and has updated its aerial imagery for the geographic information

system (GIS) network. The staff has prepared a list of community foundations, committees and groups that includes a brief description and web address. Also included are definitions of terms related to open space and conservation.

The address that Will Rogers, CEO-President of Trust for Public Lands delivered at the Open Space and Conservation Element Community Fair is also available on line. ■

## Save Beautiful Rubio Canyon

By Linda Zinn

Rubio Canyon is one of the most beautiful and historically significant areas on the south face of the San Gabriel Mountains. Now, thanks to the vision and tireless efforts of the Altadena Foothills Conservancy, 22 critical acres at the mouth of the canyon will be preserved in perpetuity. This land includes prime riparian habitat, oak woodland, sage scrub, and chaparral plant communities which support a large variety of native wildlife.

There are trail heads leading to the historic Rubio Pavilion and Great Cable Incline sites, and the acreage includes the Pacific Electric Railway right-of-way that leads to Rubio Canyon’s dramatic waterfalls. Rubio Creek is a year round, “blue-line” stream and is an important source of drinking water for 10,000 Altadena residents.

This area also has a fascinating history. In 1867, Jesus Rubio began farming at the entrance of what later came to be named Rubio Canyon.

The ranch he established was later sold to Altadena pioneers, John and Fred Woodbury, in 1880. When Professor Thaddeus S. C. Lowe began building the Mount Lowe Railway, he purchased his right-of-way and the ranch from the Woodburys. Professor Lowe used the land to grow produce for the resort hotels at Rubio Pavilion, Echo Mountain, and Crystal Springs. When financial problems caused the railway to go into receivership in 1902, Henry Huntington acquired the property as a part of his company, Pacific Electric. The improved portion of the property was used as a Boy Scout Camp for a number of years and later subdivided in the early 1960’s.

The Altadena Foothills Conservancy, AFC, needs your help in completing the purchase of this important property and your contribution will ensure that this land and future critical areas will be protected for all to enjoy. For more information about AFC, please go to <http://www.altadenafoothills.org>



[www.altadenafoothills.org](http://www.altadenafoothills.org) or <http://www.arroyosandfoothills.org>. Your contribution can be sent to Altadena Foothills Conservancy, P.O. Box 3, Altadena, CA. 91003. The AFC is a 501(c) 3 California non-profit organization, and all contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. ■

*Editor’s Note: Linda Zinn is Chair of the WPRA Open Space Committee. She can be reached via e-mail and [Zinn@wpra.net](mailto:Zinn@wpra.net).*



# San Rafael Elementary School: Back to School News

By Alyson Beecher

Every August, I arrive back to work to prep for the new school year. The custodians are usually busy finishing up summer cleaning and teachers are beginning to stop by and set up their rooms for the first day of school. Each summer, I wonder how we will get everything ready, and yet somehow it always is ready. This year there are some pleasant new challenges in getting the school prepared for the first day.

When I returned from vacation in August, the workers were finishing up the installation of new ceiling tiles. New windows had been installed in several of the classrooms. Painters were finishing up with the outside of the school. In addition to these projects, a new shade structure was installed near the cafeteria, and the main hallways were painted. I would like to thank everyone who voted in favor of Measure TT which has allowed us to begin these and other renovation projects.

Despite State budget cuts in the area of education, San Rafael has a lot to celebrate. Renovations at the school aren't our only exciting news. The preliminary results reveal that the school has made significant academic gains in both English Language Arts and Math on the 2009 STAR tests. The official announcements about the school's test scores, including our API score (annual performance index or that 3 digit number assigned to schools) and the Annual Yearly Progress results will be made shortly.

In addition to celebrating our academic achievements, we are excited about several new programs that will be debuting at San Rafael this fall. When school begins on September 10, San Rafael will welcome our first three classes of students who will be participating in the District's exciting new *Dual Language Immersion Program in Spanish*. Families from



*San Rafael Elementary School*



*San Rafael Principal  
Alyson Beecher*



*San Rafael students participate in Summer introduction class  
for new Dual Language Program*

all throughout the District and from other surrounding districts applied to participate in this new program whose goal is to ensure that every child is bilingual and bi-literate in both English and Spanish by the 5th grade. Currently, the program has a waiting list. Tours of the new program will begin at the end of October 2009 and continue through the Open Enrollment period. New applicants for the 2010-2011 school year will begin in January 2010.

Additionally, San Rafael is one of three elementary schools that is scheduled to receive a *full-time Physical Education Teacher* who will be providing P.E. to every class three times per week. This will be a model program which will show how supporting students' physical health will

also increase academic performance.

We are also looking forward to a continued partnership with the *Armory Center for the Arts*, and collaborating with several community partners to provide enrichment programs for our students. For more information on the enrichment programs and community partnership, please see the article by WPRA's Michael Udell.

On behalf of all the staff, parents and students at San Rafael School, I would like to thank the WPRA and the San Rafael community for their continued support. We look forward to another exciting year of working together. ■

*Editor's Note: Alyson Beecher is principal of San Rafael School. She can be reached at [abeecher@pusd.us](mailto:abeecher@pusd.us).*

*The Rose Bowl is a grand venue that has showcased beautiful Pasadena to the country, indeed, the whole world since 1922. The stadium has served this role admirably to this day and hopes to continue that role in the future which is why the Rose Bowl Operating Company has placed the project into the capable and careful hands of Janet Marie Smith.*

## Special Care for A Special Place

*By Janet Marie Smith*



*Janet Marie Smith*

Pasadena is one of the loveliest and most vibrant cities in America. Much of the energy and beauty of the setting comes from the devotion that the city has had to the preservation of its history and the foresight to protect both the traditions and the architectural quality of the city. Pasadena has maximized its southern California climate and created a most walkable community that celebrates the parklike quality of its public spaces and city streets and parks.

Nowhere is this commitment to heritage, architecture and landscape beauty more apparent than at the Rose Bowl. The City has done a magnificent job of keeping this historic stadium alive by making it home to not only the fabulous Tournament of Roses game each New Year, but by making the venue home to UCLA

and truly celebrating the grand tradition of college football in America.

But like all aging facilities, the Rose Bowl is in need of an update. The RBOC is exploring the possibility of importing some of the techniques applied to multi-year set of improvements to Boston's Fenway Park, built in 1912 as home of the Boston Red Sox, but like the Rose Bowl, aging in a way that it needed updating in order to comply with current building standards and fan expectations.

We are hopeful that with the input of the community groups, the preservation community, UCLA, the Tournament of Roses and other user groups from soccer to concerts to park goers, we can propose a modest set of improvements that the City can implement to insure the longevity of this oldest operating city-owned college bowl stadium.

Against the backdrop of the Cotton Bowl leaving its venerable Dallas venue for the new NFL Cowboys Stadium, and the Orange Bowl leaving, and tearing down, the former Miami stadium to play at the NFL Dolphins Landshark Stadium, the City of Pasadena and the Rose Bowl Operating Company have a unique challenge to insure the longevity of Myron Hunt's much loved creation in the Arroyo Seco, not just for posterity or sentimental reasons, but as an active contributor to the social and economic life for Pasadena.

The proposed improvements are simple in nature, and designed to be constructed in consecutive off seasons to insure that the Tournament of

Roses and UCLA can continue to play in the Rose Bowl between construction sequences. The projects that are getting the most focus are the obvious: adding circulation space and making it easier to enter and exit both the concourse gates and the seating bowl, adding restrooms and concessions, improving the scoreboards, including a proposal to restore the original scoreboard. It will also be important to increase and improve the press box and media and press facilities and to add premium seating in the form of suites and club and loge seats. Another goal is to restore the historic elliptical form of the playing field and in doing so, eliminate the lowest seats that do not have desirable views of the game and instead use the area behind newly restored hedges on the playing field to permit field access for the lowest rows of seats between the 20 yard lines.

In sum, the goal is to propose a minimal set of improvements that can be done over time and without interruption to the games and that will generate more revenue in order to make a significant contribution to restoring a major public asset and insuring its longevity. ■

*Editor's Note: Janet Marie Smith is an architect and city planner who has specialized in the creation and rehabilitation of urban sports stadia and works as a Sr. Advisor to SBER Services, a Baltimore based program management firm that specialized in historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse projects.*



# WPRA Web Site

The WPRA web site, [wpra.net](http://wpra.net), supplements the weekly e-mail Update and quarterly Newsletter with background information and details.

Copies of the latest e-mail Update and Newsletters since 2002

Background on Issues WPRA is watching, and future events.

Links to City and other local web sites of interest

The screenshot shows the WPRA website interface. At the top left is the WPRA logo. The header features the text "WEST PASADENA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION" and a navigation menu with links: Home, Update & Newsletter, Issues, Events, About Us, Helpful Links, and Reference. On the right side of the header are three small images. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there is a sidebar with links: "Join", "EZ donate", "Volunteer", "Contact Us", and "Admin Only". Below these links is a "Welcome to the WPRA's web site!" message. The main content area starts with a "What is the WPRA?" section, followed by a "The Latest" section. The "The Latest" section contains several news items, including a meeting with city planning staff, a water shortage declaration, and a news release about identity theft. Arrows from the text blocks point to specific parts of the website: one points to the "Update & Newsletter" link in the header, another points to the "Issues" link, a third points to the "Helpful Links" link, a fourth points to the "Join" link in the sidebar, a fifth points to the "Welcome to the WPRA's web site!" message, a sixth points to the "The Latest" section, and a seventh points to the "Contact Us" link in the sidebar.

Join  
EZ donate  
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Contact Us  
Admin Only

Welcome to the WPRA's web site!  
We hope you find it useful, and we hope you will let us know how we can improve it. Please send your comments and suggestions to [webmaster@wpra.net](mailto:webmaster@wpra.net).

Did you find what you were looking for?  
Click [here](#) to let us know.

**What is the WPRA?**  
The West Pasadena Residents' Association is an all-volunteer organization of the residents of southwest Pasadena dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the character of southwest Pasadena and the quality of life in Pasadena.  
Your membership, contributions and volunteer support are key to the WPRA's success. All activities of the WPRA are funded through membership dues and contributions. The WPRA receives no public funding or other monies and has no paid employees.  
Become involved! See the links on the left for information on joining, donating, or volunteering with the WPRA.  
We are pleased to display some of the work of local artist Joseph Stoddard on our web site. To learn more about the artist click [here](#).

**The Latest**  
**Come to WPRA-sponsored meeting with city planning staff July 21.**  
WPRA is sponsoring a meeting with Pasadena City Planning staff for West Pasadena residents,  
Tuesday, July 21  
6:00 pm  
Maranatha High School Student Center, 169 South Saint John Avenue, Pasadena  
City staff will lead an interactive workshop that promises to be a high-energy, insightful discussion, part of their community outreach in updating the City's General Plan. The General Plan is the guiding document for future development and quality of life in Pasadena.  
Come to the meeting. Learn what is being updated. Tell city staff what you want for the future of Pasadena. How much new development do you want? What do you want new buildings to look like? What do you think about traffic? For more information, click [here](#).  
**Water shortage declared in Pasadena**  
The Pasadena City Council declared a Level 1 water shortage, adding new restrictions on water use in Pasadena and other areas that receive water from the Pasadena Water and Power Department.  
Effective July 16, outdoor watering is restricted to Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays during the summer period (April 1 to Oct. 31) and to Saturdays only during the winter period (Nov. 1 to March 31). In addition, malfunctions and leaks in sprinkler and plumbing systems must be repaired within 72 hours of notice.  
For more information, see the City's news release, [here](#).  
**Learn about identity theft from LA County investigator on July 22.**  
Alex Zepeda, an investigator with the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer Affairs, will speak about identity theft,  
Wednesday, July 22  
6:30 pm  
Hastings Branch Library, 3325 E. Orange Grove  
Mr. Zepeda will address identity theft and its impact on victims, identity theft trends and emerging issues as well as the role of the Department of Consumer Affairs in assisting identity theft victims. For more information about this program, call (626) 744-7262.

Latest news and events, coordinated with the weekly e-mail Update

How to contact WPRA, to join, donate, or tell us what you think.

Tell us what you wanted from the web site, and whether you found it.



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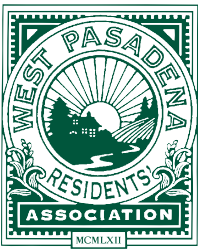
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Communications Co-Director	Bill Urban	626-375-6619
Director of Membership	Fred Zepeda	626-578-7505
Treasurer	Blaine Cavena	626-799-3358
Secretary	Dorothy Lindsey	323-256-4972

*For more information about our committees, please contact:*

Newsletter & Advertising	Vince Farhat	626-375-6619
Membership	Fred Zepeda	626-578-7505
Land Use & Planning	Mic Hansen	626-799-2992
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