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7-11 Committee to PUSD:

'Work harder to keep San Rafael Elementary School open'

BY CATHERINE STRINGER
AND KENYON HARBISON

The Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) in December of 2013 appointed a Surplus Property Advisory Committee to consider the future of San Rafael Elementary. By law, the PUSD Board of Education cannot declare a District property surplus until such a committee has made its recommendation.

Selected by the District from a pool of candidates comprising community leaders, property owners, business and legal professionals and school staff, Committee members were tasked with making a recommendation to the Board regarding the future use or disposition of the San Rafael School site after evidence of potentially active seismic faults was discovered in the Spring of 2012. The District has already approved a plan to move San Rafael's academic programs to Allendale Elementary on or after the start of the 2017-18 school year.

The "7-11 Committee" – so called because it is required by law to have between seven and 11

members – met eight times between January and May, including two public hearings to solicit community input. The Committee submitted its final report to the District in late May, and it was presented to the Board at its June 26 meeting.

In the report, the Committee recommended that the PUSD Board not declare the property surplus. It argued that the District has not determined with 100% certainty that the detected seismic faults are active, nor, given active status of the faults, has it explored sufficient options for continued use of the site as a public school. The options could include moving existing buildings or reorienting and/or constructing buildings outside of fault zones. The Committee felt that the District must do further due diligence before making a surplus declaration.

The Advisory Committee and, based on considerable input across all demographics, the community strongly favor a public school remaining on the property and/or in the west Pasadena area. Serious further investigation and/or creative alternatives should be actively

Continued on page 5

Save the date

INVITATION TO FOLLOW

What:

**Summer Social
for West Pasadena Residents'
Association members**
*An opportunity to communicate,
collaborate and celebrate*

**Generously hosted by
John and Andrea Van de Kamp**
Wine, beer, hors d'oeuvres and,
for purchase, burgers from the
Pie & Burger truck

When:

Sunday, August 17, 2014
4 – 6 p.m.

Who's invited:

WPRA dues-paying members



WPRA recognizes exemplary community service. (Left photo) During the WPRA annual meeting, WPRA Board member Catherine Stringer presents Darryl Dunn, CEO and General Manager of the Rose Bowl Stadium, with a Community Service Award for his stewardship of the Rose Bowl renovations and for work with residents to mitigate the impact of stadium events on the surrounding neighborhoods; (above photo) Stringer also presented a Community Service Award to the San Rafael Library Associates for their much appreciated and vital work in upgrading the San Rafael Library. (See pages 8-9 for more on the annual meeting.)

Focus on 3C's: communication, collaboration and celebration

BY GEOFFREY BAUM
PRESIDENT, WPRA

Six months ago our family adopted a little black dog from the Pasadena Humane Society. My 9-year-old named her Ruby; life has not been the same since.

Lisa and I added gates to the backyard, replaced our living room carpeting with hardwood and now spend more time than we care to admit at the Petco® on Arroyo Parkway. But Ruby always welcomes us home with a wagging tail and a lick to the face, eager for a walk through the neighborhood.

It took no time at all for Ruby to fall in love with west Pasadena. On walks through the Arroyo and the tree-lined streets of our San Rafael neighborhood, seeing our world through Ruby's eyes reminds us what a truly special place we call home.

We have magnificent, historic architecture that celebrates both the traditional and the innovative. We have awe-inspiring natural beauty that has drawn visitors and new residents for more than a century. Most

important, we are a community of warm and caring neighbors who contribute countless hours and precious financial resources to preserving the unique character of our neighborhood and improving the quality of life for residents in west Pasadena and throughout the city.

Some of this work is done through formal institutions like city government or neighborhood organizations like the WPRA. But so much more is being done by individuals who show they care by finding ways to stay in touch and keep us connected.

On my block, Kathy Goodwin, Barbara Fraser, Christine Doerfler, Raquel Donchey and others have found ways to reach out. It could be just a hello in the driveway, a neighborhood potluck or an email bulletin to warn us of a crime incident and remind us to look out for one another.

With an active, committed (and all-volunteer) board, the WPRA continues to be a powerful voice for our neighborhoods in the face of some very serious threats, including the proposed 710 Freeway extension, which

MTA and Caltrans dangerously continue to pursue.

We are also actively engaged in other vital issues, including:

- **Saving** San Rafael Elementary School
- **Reducing** local crime and enhancing public safety
- **Transforming** the former Desiderio Army Base into a new residential community and park
- **Monitoring** the retrofitting and renovation of the La Loma Bridge, which, as a result, will be closed for up to two years
- **Other** commercial and resident development that have the potential to threaten historic structures, negatively impact carefully negotiated plans or increase already crippling traffic volumes on our streets.



Geoffrey Baum

Continued on page 10

About us

Mission

Founded in 1962, the West Pasadena Residents' Association is dedicated to maintaining the character of our community and enhancing the quality of life in west Pasadena.

Area

The WPRA service area is bounded on the north by Colorado Boulevard, on the east by Fair Oaks Avenue and on the south and west by the city limits.

Funding

All WPRA activities are funded through membership dues and contributions. The WPRA receives no public funding and has no paid employees. Since the WPRA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation, contributions and donations are fully deductible to the extent permitted by law.

2014 – 2015 officers

- President: Geoffrey Baum (baum@wpra.net)
- Vice President: Sarah Gavit (gavit@wpra.net)
- Treasurer: Blaine Cavena (cavena@wpra.net)
- Secretary: Robert Holmes (holmes@wpra.net)

2014 – 2015 board of directors

- Ken Grobecker
- Kenyon Harbison
- Joan Hearst
- Chuck Hudson (hudson@wpra.net)
Communications Director
- Jim Keatley
- Audrey O'Kelley, past president
- Marilyn Randolph (randolph@wpra.net)
Education chair
- Catherine Stringer
- Michael Udell, past president
- Bill Urban, past president
- John Van de Kamp
- Fred Zepeda, past president
- Linda Zinn (zinn@wpra.net)
Membership, Open Space &



The News is mailed each quarter to nearly 7,000 homes in the 91105 and 91103 ZIP codes.

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Visit our website at wpra.net

The West Pasadena Residents' Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation.

The WPRA is grateful to Castle Press for design and printing services.

BRIEFS

Metro delays SR-710 tunnel DEIR

Metro and Caltrans in May announced a delay until February 2015 in the release of the SR-710 Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The primary reason given was the need to update the regional travel demand model; but the delay is also likely due to design challenges for this very complex tunnel project that is expected to cost anywhere from \$5 billion to \$15 billion. The I-710 South DEIR report was more than 10,000 pages in length, and we can expect the SR-710 DEIR to be no shorter. Moreover, Metro continues to add options to those already identified – one or two tunnels, trucks or no trucks, tolls or no tolls – that will make it difficult to assess impacts.

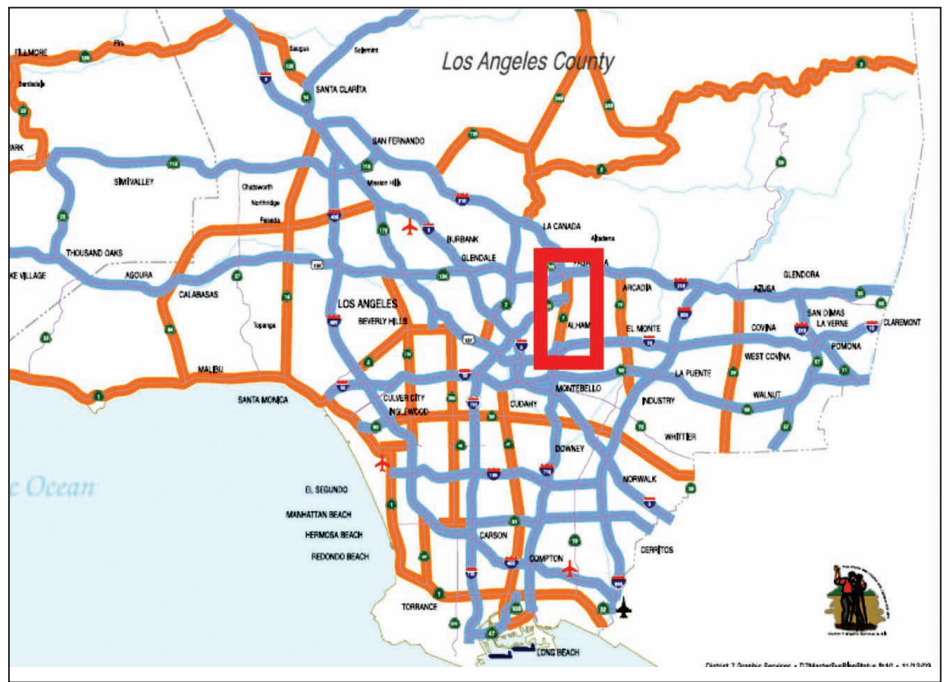
Council considers SR-710 alternatives

At the June 2 Pasadena City Council meeting, District 7 Councilmember Terry Tornek suggested that the City create a special task force to look into the various suggested SR-710 alternatives. As a model, he cited the group that had so effectively developed a more suitable alternative plan to remove sediment from Devil's Gate Dam. (See article on page 11) District 5 Councilmember Victor Gordo agreed, but suggested that the City also continue to work with the already established five-city coalition created to fight alternatives that might be detrimental to our City. Council agreed to discuss the matter in a future meeting.

Pasadena should be "for" something

Councilmember Tornek, in a recent position paper, wrote "It has been clear for some time that the (Metro EIR) report is rigged in a way that will identify the \$6+ billion freeway tunnel alternative as the only solution that will meet Metro's skewed scoring system." He believes that Pasadena should stop allowing "itself to be manipulated by Metro/Caltrans," and instead of being "against" something, we should start being "for" something.

– Sarah Gavit, Vice President, WPRA
(gavit@wpra.net)



This Master System Plan Map for the Los Angeles County Highway System shows highways "built" (in blue-grey) and "not built" (in orange). Most of the not-built projects have been cancelled as a result of opposition to the plans by activist communities and residents who recognized that simply more freeways is not the answer to traffic congestion. The SR-710 Freeway extension remains among the few active unbuilt idea.

The lawsuit, the NFL and Rose Bowl events/music festival

Opinion

BY NINA CHOMSKY
PRESIDENT,
LINDA VISTA~ANNANDALE ASSOCIATION

The lawsuit

The Coalition for the Preservation of the Arroyo that is challenging the City's Environmental Impact Report for potential National Football League use of the Rose Bowl has appealed the decision, finding for the City, that was issued in January by a Los Angeles Superior Court.

The NFL

The NFL has yet to announce that an NFL team will come to L.A. in 2014, and the City of Los Angeles seems to be giving up on AEG and its permanent downtown stadium proposal. Rather, the City is going ahead with improvements to the L.A. Convention Center.

Hollywood Park, in Inglewood, together with the adjacent property recently purchased by St. Louis Rams owner Stan Kroenke,

still appears to be a likely location for a permanent NFL stadium. The St. Louis Rams' lease allows it to leave St. Louis in 2015.

Rose Bowl Stadium "displacement" (major) events

Meanwhile, Pasadena has started to prepare a new Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for an "entertainment" alternative to the temporary NFL project.

The Arroyo Seco Public Lands Ordinance currently permits up to 12 displacement (major) events plus, for up to five years, 13 NFL games at the Rose Bowl, for a total of 25 displacement events, all without additional City Council review.

City Council early this year voted to increase 2014 Rose Bowl displacement events not requiring additional Council review from 12 to no more than 18, including seven large concerts. Also, Council committed that in 2014 it would not use the Rose Bowl for the NFL, which isn't likely to happen anyway, and indicated that 18 major events in 2014 would

Continued on page 10

BRIEFS

City's proposal to host music festival at the Rose Bowl Stadium

The West Pasadena Residents' Association Board understands that it's important to host events at the Rose Bowl. These events will help ensure the stadium is able to pay for its continued improvement, maintenance and operation. The WPRA Board, however, also believes the major impact of each "displacement" (major) event on surrounding neighbors and those along the traffic corridors serving the Rose Bowl must be fully considered. For this reason, the Board urges City Council to seriously consider residents' views and recommendations when preparing the Environmental Impact Report for the proposed music festival *For more information, we encourage you to visit the WPRA's and the Linda-Vista~Annandale Association's websites, wp.ra.net and lvaa.net, respectively.*

New law repeals 1981 amendment; gives cities along SR-710 more control

A bill sponsored by Assemblyman Gil Cedilo, D-Los Angeles, and recently signed into law, repeals a 1981 provision of a 1939 law that permitted Caltrans to "build a freeway without first securing a street closure agreement with the affected local jurisdictions. The repeal is said to return to municipalities along the proposed SR-710 corridor some control over Metro's freeway plans.

Permanent access to Fish Canyon Falls provided for first time in 30 years

For the first time in 30 years, hikers now have access to one of the most breathtaking waterfalls in the San Gabriel Mountains. Fish Canyon Falls comprises a new 0.7-mile pathway through a working rock quarry that leads to the canyon trail. The new trailhead begins off Encanto Parkway and includes a 70-space gravel parking lot. It will be open seven days a week, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the summer, roughly from dawn to dusk." Source: *Pasadena Star-News*

Bridge party, lost-and-found art, Orange Grove Circle, and La Loma Bridge news

BY SUE MOSSMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PASADENA HERITAGE

**Pasadena's best summer party – Saturday, July 12**

Pasadena Heritage's Colorado Street Bridge Party has been a tradition since 1979. First conceived to call attention to the bridge's need for repair and maintenance, the party has since grown into a celebration of the bridge's seismic strengthening and restoration. Keeping this historic structure standing is a preservation success story symbolic of Pasadena Heritage's mission and 37 years of preservation efforts.

We are very grateful to have the WPRA as a supporting sponsor of the Bridge Party again this year! The event includes lots of children's activities (under age 7 can attend for free), live music on three stages featuring jazz and classic rock, festive foods and beverages along the bridge, and a display of vintage Mustangs. Advance tickets are on sale now at pasadenaheritage.org or by calling (626) 441-6333. Tickets will also be available at the door on Saturday, July 12, at party entrances at Orange Grove and Colorado or at the west end of the bridge.

Historic art again on display

Several years ago, Pasadena Heritage urged the Langham Huntington Hotel management to conserve the paintings that adorned the historic Picture Bridge on the hotel grounds. Those discussions resulted in a thorough conservation report and plan for the paintings, which were suffering from decades of exposure to the elements. We know the original paintings were removed, crated and are being stored awaiting future restoration (we hope). We've recently learned that replicas of the scenes are being created now and will be installed on the Picture Bridge this summer. We look forward to the day!

A much more recent work of art by world renowned local artist Kenton Nelson is a mural in the historic Bear Building at the southeast corner of Fair Oaks and Colorado Boulevard. The mural (see photo on page 5) was commissioned by Roger Kislingbury, a local entrepreneur and owner of the building during the early days of Old Pasadena's revitalization. Uncovered after years hidden

behind the walls of the now-closed Louise's Trattoria, the mural is being restored by the artist and reveals many humorous references to Pasadena, including one of Albert Einstein with a fishing pole and another of bags of money being trundled into and out of City Hall. Visit the new pizza parlor going in there to see the restored art.

Orange Grove Circle – not over yet

Although the developer who proposed to replace 16 unique 1950s apartment buildings with bigger, taller new condo buildings on this sensitive site has withdrawn its proposal in light of community opposition, Orange Grove Circle is still high on our Watch List. The owner of 14 of the buildings could join forces with another developer and proceed. To establish the historic character and value of the complex, Pasadena Heritage is drafting a Pasadena Landmark application. Orange Grove Circle is one of the first and largest multi-family projects to have been built along South Orange Grove Boulevard, marking its transition from a millionaires' row of mansions to a new reality and change of zoning after World War II. Residents of Orange Grove Circle who love their one-of-a-kind residences surrounded by lush and varied landscaping have been very concerned and very helpful. If you would like to support this effort, a donation to the Pasadena Heritage Advocacy Fund will help pay for expert help to complete the research on the buildings and prepare the nomination.

La Loma Bridge update

The latest information we have from the City of Pasadena indicates that the La Loma Bridge will close beginning in the spring of 2015 for about two years of construction. Seismic upgrades will strengthen the bridge, with seismic strengthening on the east and west ends of the span that would keep the bridge standing, even if the fault that runs under the center of the bridge were to rupture. We especially look forward to the rebuilding of the bridge deck with replicated original design features including the handsome balustrade and light standards that once favored this "little sister of the Colorado Street Bridge."

■ For more information, send an email to smossman@pasadenaheritage.org



Lost and found art. A mural by world renowned local artist Kenton Nelson (on right) has been uncovered after years hidden behind the walls of the now-closed Louise's Trattoria. The artist is participating in the restoration of the mural, which reveals many humorous references to Pasadena, including one of Albert Einstein with a fishing pole and another of bags of money being trundled into and out of City Hall. Visit the new pizza parlor going in there to see the restored art.

7-11 Committee to PUSD *Continued from page 1*

considered to definitively determine that a public school cannot remain on the property – both from a seismic and, separately, from a fiscal perspective.

Committee members, well aware that the Board may vote to declare the property surplus despite the recommendation not to, also considered the next best use of the site if it is not maintained as a public school.

After much debate, the members voted by a slim majority to recommend sale of the property, but only if proceeds from the sale were used to renovate the Linda Vista Elementary campus or construction of a new school west of the Arroyo Seco. Barring that, the committee argued, the site should be leased, with the preference for a charter or private school tenant.

Members of the 7-11 Committee were: Don Watson, chair; Kenyon Harbison, vice chair; Karla Cordova; Darrell Cozen; Rudy Ramirez; Carla Riggs; Dorena Rodriguez; Asma Saraj; Catherine Stringer; Michael Trujillo; and John Van de Kamp.

San Rafael Elementary will remain open for at least the next two years, during which it will likely continue its marked upward trajectories in enrollment (including west Pasadena families), test scores and overall academic achievement. It is our hope that in that time, the PUSD Board finds the resolve to join and validate the investment we have made in our school, an investment that has already paid dividends exceeding even the most optimistic expectations.

Former WPRA Board President Bill Urban recently argued in these pages that west Pasadena needs a public school. A free education for a community's children is a cornerstone of public services, one that taxpayers hold sacred, because schools are the very centers of our communities: the places where children learn and grow, where school families and neighborhood residents come together to meet challenges and celebrate success, and where everyone looks to gain a glimpse of the next generation's future in the making. If the PUSD Board votes to shutter San Rafael without investing in another site

in west Pasadena, it will in effect break this public trust and concede to a future in which we, in west Pasadena, pay for public schools, but have none to call our own.

Catherine Stringer, a communications consultant, is a member of the WPRA Board of Directors. She served on the 7-11 Committee as a community leader and parent representative. Her daughter and son attend San Rafael Elementary in the Dual-Language Immersion Program.

Kenyon Harbison, an attorney with Allen Matkins, is a member of the WPRA Board of Directors. He served on the 7-11 Committee as vice chair. His daughter attends San Rafael Elementary in the Dual-Language Immersion Program.

LOOKING BACK, 1905:

1905: "First Queen appeared in Rose Parade. Hallie Wood was chosen informally by Altadena school girls." — *Pasadena Community Book*, 1943

Is Pasadena losing its 'sense of place'?

Opinion

BY MIC HANSEN
MEMBER, PLANNING COMMISSION

A respected and knowledgeable colleague recently posed this question: “Do you think Pasadena is losing its “sense of place”?

How do you define sense of place? Is it a modifier for your surroundings? Is it an ineffable uniqueness that distinguishes a given place or setting from all others? Edward T. McMahon, a senior fellow at the Urban Land Institute, defines sense of place as “a unique collection of qualities and characteristics — visual, cultural, social and environmental — that provide meaning to a location.”

From its founding, Pasadena has had a strong, welcoming and aesthetically advanced identity. Pasadena’s special setting, its quality architecture, historic fabric, iconic public as well as private buildings, and educational and cultural institutions combine to make it the rare, desirable place that it is. You may share the perspective that Pasadena is not interchangeable with other cities.

When we walk down Arroyo Blvd., framed by the beautiful live oaks and hundred-year-old

Arts and Crafts homes, we know it’s like none other. When we are in Old Pasadena, its streets overflowing with shoppers, diners and visitors who’ve come — some from long distances — because of its distinctive appeal, it’s like none other. When we stroll along the streets of Bungalow Heaven, the Civic Center, Oak Knoll or the Playhouse District, yes, we know it’s like none other...

Over time, we have all heard such questions posed:

- “Have we slowly eroded the very essence of Pasadena by allowing many undistinguished, commonplace and unsightly glass, metal, and stucco infill boxes amidst beauty and distinction?”
- “Are we slowly diluting the essence that is Pasadena in favor of economy, homogeneity and lack of imagination?”
- “Are the new structures cutting-edge and deserving of being inserted into our coherent context to shake things up or to modernize?”
- “Is the new residential structure seen on South Los Robles Avenue (see photo at the bottom of this page) an example of gross misfit?”

- “How long before this inimitable and special place loses its identity and becomes just another collection of buildings and stores on the way to somewhere else?”

Are these valid questions? Do they merit response or critical thought? You, as a community member, must evaluate these questions.

It’s unfair to say that all that has been constructed in the last 50 years is inferior. Some remarkable and high-quality structures have been erected during this time, from the traditional to the very modern, bringing value with their diversity and attributes. But do you believe that these have been the exception rather than the rule, as some contend?

It is incumbent upon you — a resident of this community — to remain involved and express your point of view. The community has multiple means of participation, and it’s from such active participation that we all benefit.

Pasadena’s beauty, architectural importance, and yes, its unique sense of place, are the reasons why many of us have chosen to make our home here. It’s only fitting that each of you engages and remains active and attentive in defining the character and feel of your home.



Beauty or beast? This photo captures a new single-family home that’s currently under construction on S. Los Robles Avenue. This four-bedroom/six-bath home is listed for \$2.75 million. Many believe it is a perfect example of erosion of Pasadena’s very essence, an unsightly glass, metal and stucco infill box set amidst beauty and distinction. Others, on the other hand, may find it aesthetically advanced, intended to shake things up or to modernize. What do you think? (Photo by Mic Hansen)

Desiderio project to transform base into community

BY VINCE FARHAT
MEMBER, PLANNING COMMISSION
PAST PRESIDENT, WPRA

The City of Pasadena is preparing a final environmental impact report (EIR) for the proposed re-use of the 5.1-acre Desiderio Army Reserve Center site, 655 Westminster Dr., at the northeast corner of Arroyo Boulevard and Westminster Drive.

Four abandoned and vacant buildings, comprising more than 28,000 square feet, are currently on the project site, as is a hazardous-materials shed. In addition, the site includes parking areas paved for military equipment and privately owned vehicles. Approximately 80% of the site is covered by paved surfaces; the remaining ground surface is lawn. All existing buildings and pavement will be removed from the site.

The proposed project includes two primary components:

- Nine single-family detached bungalow homes in a courtyard formation
- A 3.87 acre public neighborhood park

The southeast portion of the site would be developed into 9 one- and two-story bungalow homes by Habitat for Humanity. The bungalows would be sold at affordable prices to families earning up to 80% of the area's median income. All would be three-bedroom 1,244 to 1,248 square foot units with detached two-car garages. Lots will range from 5,610 to 9,717 square feet.

The neighborhood park would include the minimum standard set of amenities, as proposed by the City's Green Space, Recreation and Parks Master Plan. These include an open turf area, trees, security lighting, walkways, picnic tables, benches, play equipment, drinking fountains, and waste and recycling receptacles. Access to the park would be from Arroyo Boulevard at the northeast portion of the site with a driveway from Arroyo Boulevard that would lead to a paved area with parking for approximately 10 cars.

Earlier this year, the Planning Commission held public hearings to discuss the scope of the Desiderio environmental impact report (EIR) and to comment on the draft EIR itself.



Desiderio time line

- **1903:** Part of the 1903 Vista del Arroyo Hotel complex
- **1943:** Acquired by the U.S. Army
- **1956:** U.S. Army builds Desiderio Army Reserve Center, named after Reginald Benjamin Desiderio (9/12/1918 – 11/27/1950), a soldier in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and posthumous recipient of the Medal of Honor
- **2005:** U.S. Army recommends the Desiderio facility for closure
- **2006:** City conducts process to determine best use of the site; 11 re-use proposals received, presented to four committees and commissions; finalists selected over three additional commission meetings
- **2007:** City Council approves neighborhood park/affordable housing concept
- **2011:** Formal proposal submitted to the Federal Government
- **2013:** City accepts property, finalizes transfer

The WPRA and numerous west Pasadena residents participated in the comment process.

The project has been planned for some time, and public comments have reflected consistent support for the proposed park. However, most residents and WPRA opposed making Desiderio a regional park by adding bathrooms and additional parking.

The City is now responding to public comments and will circulate a final EIR later this year.

For more information, contact City of Pasadena Case Manager Laura Dahl at ldahl@cityofpasadena.net, or visit the City's website: cityofpasadena.net/Planning/Desiderio_Army_Reserve_Center/.

Members gather for the WPRA's 52nd annual meeting



Photo #1: The Save Orange Grove Circle contingent was out in force; Photo #2: PUSD Superintendent Jon Gundry (who resigned from his position shortly after the WPRA meeting) gave the assembly little hope that San Rafael Elementary could be saved; Photo #3: District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison identified the SR-710 Freeway plan and the Devil's Gate Dam sediment removal plan as very real threats to west Pasadena; Photo #4: John Shaffer delivered a sobering

SR-710 Freeway tunnel assessment; Photo # 5: Evening emcee and WPRA Treasurer Blaine Cavena, right, congratulated outgoing WPRA President Bill Urban for his leadership and service over the past two years; Photo #6: Pasadena Community Gardens' President Ron Garretson and Financial Recorder Jody Hudson take a moment to chat with WPRA Board members Audrey O'Kelley and John Van de Kamp.

ARTICLE BY JUSTIN CHAPMAN

PHOTOS BY CHUCK HUDSON

About 200 local dignitaries and residents gathered on April 30 for the 52nd annual West Pasadena Residents' Association meeting. It was held this year, appropriately enough, in the San Rafael Elementary School auditorium.

Two pressing issues discussed – the future of San Rafael Elementary and the SR-710 freeway extension – weighed heavy on the minds of WPRA members as they enjoyed refreshments and visited exhibiting community organizations before the meeting.

Aptly, the theme of the annual meeting was "Save Our Neighborhoods!"

Following a brief performance by San Rafael Elementary students from their spring play, WPRA members unanimously voted in a slate of new officers and board members for 2014-2015. Geoffrey Baum was unanimously elected WPRA president, succeeding Bill Urban, who served in that capacity for the past two years. Baum is also the vice president of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and past president of the Pasadena

Area Community College District Board of Trustees. Along with Baum, the slate included Vice President Sarah Gavit, Treasurer Blaine Cavena and Secretary Robert Holmes.

Baum used his opening remarks to recognize the leadership of outgoing President Bill Urban and to address the challenges that west Pasadena faces in the coming year.

"The WPRA will continue to be a powerful voice and support the neighborhood in the face of some very serious threats, including the 710 freeway extension, which MTA and

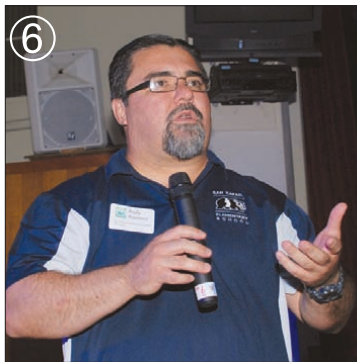


Photo #1: San Rafael Elementary students presented a scene from the school's spring plan; Photo #2: WPRA Boardmembers Laura Kaufman and Priscilla Taylor take a momentary break from their duties as hosts at the WPRA table; Photo #3: newly elected WPRA Boardmember Ken Groebeck and his spouse, Kathy, chat with long-time WPRA member Dean Price during the reception; Photo #4: the Blair High School Junior ROTC Color Guard helped get

the annual meeting off to a classy start; Photo #5: John Chan shared conceptual drawings and ideas about "Connecting Pasadena: Re-envisioning the 710 Stub," a positive alternative to Metro's SR-710 Freeway tunnel proposal; Photo #6: San Rafael Elementary School Principal Rudy Ramirez proudly announced the school's designation as a 2014 California Distinguished School.

Caltrans dangerously continue to pursue," he said. "We will also be actively engaged in other vital issues. As your president, I will focus on three Cs: Communication, Collaboration and Celebration." (See related article on page 2.)

Pride was in the air at the meeting, as it had just been announced that San Rafael Elementary was designated a 2014 California Distinguished School, an honor that recognizes the state's most exemplary and inspiring schools. That pride, however, was coupled with sadness as it seemed unlikely that Pasadena Unified School District would find a way to keep open San Rafael Elementary School, the last remaining

public school in west Pasadena. (See related articles on pages 1 and 12.)

Outgoing WPRA Vice President and current Board member, Catherine Stringer, presented the WPRA's annual Community Service Awards to:

- The San Rafael Library Associates, for its work in upgrading the San Rafael Branch Library
- Darryl Dunn, the CEO and General Manager of the Rose Bowl Stadium, for his stewardship of the Rose Bowl during the recent renovations and for collaborating with residents to mitigate

the negative impact of stadium events on the surrounding neighborhoods.

During his remarks, District 6 City Councilmember Steve Madison talked about the two biggest threats facing west Pasadena: the County's plan to remove sediment from the Hahamonga basin, and Metro and Caltrans' plan for the SR-710 Freeway tunnel.

"This tunnel will completely wreak havoc on West Pasadena," said Madison. "If you're not actively opposing the tunnel, you're permitting it to happen. There are so many positive modern public transportation

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Focus on 3C's... *Continued from page 2*

The 3C's

As Board president, I will be focusing on three C's: communication, collaboration and celebration, and will be elaborating on these themes throughout the year.

■ **Communication:** Knowledge is power, and WPRA will redouble its efforts to keep you informed and engaged using traditional forms of communication, including our website, this quarterly printed newsletter; our weekly email, Neighborhood Update and postcards. We're also proud to introduce a new form: a WPRA Facebook page. If you are a Facebook fan, please be sure to stay in touch and offer feedback through facebook.com/westpasadena.

■ **Collaboration:** Of course, the most effective way we will handle the serious threats we face is through collaboration with a broad spectrum of partners. Working with other neighborhood associations, like Linda Vista~Annandale, San Rafael and Downtown Pasadena, our efforts and advocacy will be stronger. Working with our City partners – both staff and elected leaders – will help ensure that no decision will be made without strong community input. The same goes for our State and Federal elected officials, especially when it comes to developing an alternative plan for the 710 Freeway. Also, we must collaborate with our outstanding businesses, schools and other vital

community organizations. They are our neighbors, too, and outstanding partners as we address important neighborhood, community and city issues such as traffic and public safety.

■ **Celebration:** Lastly, we will celebrate the remarkable record of service that the WPRA and residents has built over more than 50 years, but also highlight other milestones and achievements.

Please stay involved. Please stay in touch. And please stop and say hi to Ruby when you see her trotting down the street.

■ *For more information or to help the WPRA address important community issues, send an email to president@wpra.net*

The lawsuit, the NFL and Rose Bowl... *Continued from page 3*

not be regarded as a future "baseline" In fact, the 18-21 is now proposed as the new baseline.

The new project would permanently increase the 12 displacement events from 12 to 21 (with an attendance cap of 75,000) without additional Council review, in any year in which NFL games do not occur, including expanding the allowed use of the Brookside Golf Club to facilitate a three-day music festival in the Rose Bowl and on stages on the Club's courses.

As is true for the NFL EIR, one wonders how the music festival EIR can identify and study significant impacts and provide and adopt performance-based, enforceable impact mitigations ... when the City has not provided sufficient details.

City staff and Councilmembers have indicated that the music festival will not be like some notable festivals, such as Coachella. If so, why doesn't the project description:

- Identify and limit the type of music and performers involved?
- Indicate the days of the week and times of day/night involved?
- Limit the number of stages to be placed on the Brookside courses?
- Indicate whether or not any recreational activities will be permitted in the Central Arroyo during any music festival (including the Aquatic Center and Kidspac)?

■ Limit times and types of permitted alcohol use and sales?

■ Ban such activities by patrons as overnight camping and parking in the Central Arroyo?

Also, why can't the music festival be considered for a limited-time trial, such as a three-year test run? What about drug use and sale at music festivals, particularly Molly and Ecstasy, and the potential that drug dealers may end up in the neighborhoods surrounding the Central Arroyo?

The current historic 12 permitted "baseline" displacement events were the product of a carefully negotiated understanding between the community and the City, and is rooted in the Arroyo Seco Public Lands Ordinance that provides major public policy support for a Central Arroyo, which remains open and available for public use and recreation.

The new proposal is to PERMANENTLY increase to 21 displacement events, including the possibility that the City can make findings and increase displacement events beyond 21 any time in the future. Such a proposal permanently changes the character of the Central Arroyo, including the Brookside golf courses, intensifies use and commercialization, including neighborhood impacts, and moves the City away from the values stressed and protected in the Ordinance, including recreation.

To quote the general purposes of the ordinance: "The purpose ... is to establish regulations for preservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the Arroyo Seco as a unique environmental, recreational and cultural resource of the city surrounded by residential neighborhoods. Such resource and the neighborhoods must be preserved, protected and properly maintained."

The full ordinance can be found in Pasadena Municipal Code Chapter 3.32. Up to date information on the status of the new EIR is available at [cityofpasadena.net/Rose Bowl MusicFestival/](http://cityofpasadena.net/RoseBowlMusicFestival/).

Stay "tuned" – pun intended!

■ *For more information or to engage in this issue, send an email to nrchomsky@aol.com*

LOOKING BACK, 1895:

Hurlbut Street: : "Named after E.F. Hurlbut. It stops at the stone wall which encloses the east side of his fine home place. It was first called 'Terrace Avenue,' and is so named on some old maps; but the name had no sense or fitness in that locality, and was changed to Hurlbut."— *History of Pasadena*, by Hiram Reid in 1895



Here today, gone tomorrow – In late April, Los Angeles County in one day and without warning or discussion with the City – peremptorily drained a pond, which had formed behind the dam. The result can be seen in the above photo. The result was catastrophic to the nesting birds (see inset photo) and other creatures that depended on the pond for survival. The Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan requires protection of habitat, active nesting sites and native animals. It's crucial that in the future the County and City establish and adhere to a protocol that will prevent such thoughtless destruction of habitat. *(Photos by Marnie Gaede)*

Citizen's group develops responsible plan for sediment removal

BY LINDA ZINN
OPEN SPACE CHAIR, WPRA

The Pasadena City Council appointed a working group of knowledgeable individuals to study the L.A. County sediment removal plan, which was proposed in the 2013 Draft Environmental Impact Report. This working group was composed of Don Bremner, Tim Brick, Gretchen Brickson, Nina Chomsky, Henreen Nunley and Dr. Seema Shah-Fairbank. Advisors to the group were Dr. Norman H. Brooks; James Irvine, professor of Environmental and Civil Engineering Emeritus at Caltech; and Michael (Mickey) Long, former Natural Areas Administrator of LA County's 19 Natural Areas and Nature Centers and supervisor at Eaton Canyon Natural Park and Nature Center.

The group was asked to develop a plan to address the detrimental impacts of the County's plan and to present a recommendation to ensure flood protection and minimize

the negative impacts on Hahamongna and the surrounding neighborhoods.

In the proposal recommended by the group, the City of Pasadena and L.A. County Flood Control District would achieve and maintain a capacity in the Hahamongna basin for 2.5 million cubic yards of sediment. No more than 220,000 cubic yards would be removed per year, except after unusually large storm events, when the County could remove an additional 100,000 cubic yards per year. The current capacity is about 1.4 million cubic yards. To reach the sediment target level of 2.5 million cubic yards, sediment would be removed at a rate of 220,000 cubic yards per year until the target goal is achieved.

The historical record of sediment within Hahamongna indicates that a target of 2.5 million cubic yards of sediment storage capacity is quite adequate. After the initial five year period, it was recommended that the 2.5 million cubic yards of storage capacity should be maintained with a sediment removal schedule acceptable to the City.

The group recommended that:

- The sediment project footprint should be adjusted to minimize damage to the environment and wildlife
- The majority of the excavation should take place just north of the dam and along the eastside of the Arroyo, as far north as Johnson Field
- No excavation should be done on the west side stream channel beyond where the two channels merge, to preserve valuable riparian habitat for wildlife
- Wildlife corridors, ideally at least 100 feet wide, need to be preserved for animals to move back and forth.
- Unavoidable habitat destruction needs to be mitigated: riparian and alluvial habitat must be replaced at a rate of 5 to 1 and should take place within the Arroyo Seco Watershed or otherwise within the City of Pasadena

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A letter from San Rafael Elementary

Editor's note: The WPRA has "adopted" San Rafael Elementary School, 1090 Nithsdale Rd., which is the last public elementary school in west Pasadena, through the WPRA-sponsored Student Enrichment Program.

Dear friends of the West Pasadena Residents' Association:

As summer kicks into full swing, it is precisely this time that we can sit back and reflect on the 2013-2014 school year at San Rafael Elementary School. The simple act of looking back brings a smile to my face as we have so much to celebrate. At the end of last year, our students voted on a school motto that we would embrace: "Pandas Rock!" In hindsight, this motto seems more



like a premonition of great things to come. In putting 2013-2014 in perspective, that is exactly what our San Rafael Pandas did: **THEY ROCKED!**

For a school that was on the brink of extinction just a few years back due to low enrollment and underperforming test scores, we are proud to announce that once again, enrollment is at an all-time high. And in regards to test scores and overall academic

achievement, this April San Rafael was named a 2014 California Distinguished School!



As with all success stories, credit must be given where credit is due: At San Rafael, we have an amazing teaching staff that is forward-thinking, compassionate, and creative; a phenomenal parent community that provides us with an unyielding commitment to doing what is best for students; some of the most talented, curious, and hard-working students that anybody could ask for; and, last but not least, we have our friends from the West Pasadena Residents' Association who have taken our school under their collective wing and supported us every step of the way. San Rafael's star is on the rise and we are sure that the best is yet to come!

School may be out of session for the summer, but Pasadena Education Foundation's summer enrichment program is keeping our campus alive with children learning and playing from

mid-June through mid-July. The program, which includes a variety of classes in Spanish and English, takes place Monday through Thursday from 8 am to noon. Our neighbors nearest the school may notice a bit of drop-off and pick-up congestion around these times, as during the regular school year. Please note that school starts back in session Monday, August 18th.

I wish our West Pasadena community the very best of summer fun and relaxation, and look forward to communicating with you this fall as a new school year gets underway.

Rudy Ramirez



Rudy Ramirez

WPRA annual meeting

Continued from page 9

projects that we could do that would have minimal effect on our community and be very helpful as opposed to this ridiculous tunnel."

John Shaffer followed Madison, by delivering a sobering presentation on the SR-710 Freeway tunnel proposal. John Chan then shared conceptual drawings and preliminary ideas members of the community have been developing as an alternative to the tunnel plan. Plans to date suggest that the area adjacent to the freeway stub could be transformed into a "grand boulevard" serving as a transportation hub and commercial/residential center. U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff's field representative, Theresa Lamb-Simpson, expressed Schiff's opposition to the tunnel project.

Finally, PUSD Superintendent Jon Gundry closed out the meeting by sharing the District's challenges when it comes to rebuilding San Rafael Elementary or relocating its programs, faculty and students to alternative sites.

Citizen's group develops responsible plan

Continued from page 11

- Dates for sediment removal would be weekdays (only) between April 15 and October 15 from 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. No operation would take place on four Federal holidays, during major Rose Bowl events or during days with high winds, Red Flags or wildfires in the area
- No more than 120 trucks per day; reduced from the County's proposed 425 truck trips per day.
- All vehicles must adhere to the highest Federal and State standards, including AQMD standards, which was not included in the County's proposal

The citizen group recommended many more detailed requirements for the County to follow during the sediment removal project.

This group provided the City of Pasadena with a comprehensive and reasonable proposal which addressed the real concerns of the public and City Council about the dire impacts the County's plan would have on Pasadena. Their work, as a group of informed citizens with relevant expertise, can be used as a template for future issues facing the City of Pasadena. Our thanks go to them for a job extremely well done.

- *For more information or to engage in this issue, send an email to zinn@wpra.net.*

City marks, celebrates library patio renovation

BY: KATHLEEN ROONEY HAMILTON
SAN RAFAEL LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

The San Rafael Library has a beautiful, newly renovated patio space. In a celebration hosted by Councilmember Steve Madison, District 6, and the San Rafael Library Associates, the patio was officially re-opened in a ribbon cutting ceremony and reception on May 17. Friends, neighbors, supporters and City staff gathered to acknowledge the completion of the project and to thank the community for its generous support.

Designed by noted architect and San Rafael resident, Culver Heaton, the San Rafael Library is a charming example of Mid-Century Modern architecture. It was constructed in 1957; the same year as the Linda Vista Library.

According to historical documents, upon opening, the library's goals included having exhibitions by leading authors, dance performances, and hosting reading groups. Each student at the San Rafael Elementary School was to have their own library card and the location was deemed safe as there are no large streets to cross when walking to the library from the school. The Pasadena branch library system was designed so that a library

is within walking distance (one mile) of every home. The San Rafael Library is a vital component of the library system.

Upon being elected to office, Councilmember Madison asked a group of citizens to establish the San Rafael Library Associates (SRLA) as

a support group for the library. The SRLA identified projects that would benefit the library and raised funds with two major events; one of which encompassed the theme of "If you have a garden and a library you have everything you need." (Cicero).

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Pictured at the ribbon-cutting ceremony and reception on May 17 to mark the official reopening of the renovated patio at San Rafael Branch Library are (left to right) Taka Suzuki, Field Representative for District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison; Jan Sanders, Director of Library Services; Leonard Lane, Head Librarian, San Rafael Branch Library; and Dolores Diaz-Carrey, President of the San Rafael Library Associates. (Photo courtesy of Leslie Rosenthal, San Rafael Library Associates)



The new patio serves as a quiet oasis for all to enjoy and includes new trees with a low canopy to provide shade, drought-resistant flowers and plants, and new furniture.



Museum opens 'Crown City Jubilee' exhibit. (Left to right): Mayor Bill Bogaard joined Pasadena Museum of History Executive Director Jeannette O'Malley and President John Baatz at the VIP opening reception for Crown City Jubilee. The exhibit includes bits and pieces of Pasadena's historic past, including school uniforms and gowns from Pasadena Tournament of Roses® royalty, a Matt Groening cartoon and a nearly life-size poster of a muddled and disheveled football player, a child-size desk chair and a fiercely masculine horn-and-leather chair that could only be suitable furnishing for a "Man Cave." These and other fascinating items present an intimate peek into Pasadena's development through some of the city's oldest and most influential institutions and organizations. Crown City Jubilee is on view through September 14 from Noon to 5 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays at Pasadena Museum of History, 470 W. Walnut St. (Photo by Jim Staub)

Library patio renovation... *Continued from page 13*

In partnership with the City of Pasadena, the SRLA embarked on a series of capital improvement projects made possible by the generous support of private donors.

- **2006:** Front Gardens renovated: irrigation system, trees, including cherry trees from our sister city in Japan, drought-resistant flowers, plants, and benches made of recycled materials.
- **2009:** Community Room refurbished: state-of-the-art audio visual equipment, carpet, paint, new furniture, and a beautiful painting by Pasadena artist Joseph Stoddard. The painting was dedicated in loving memory of Dorothy Lindsey, an SRLA Board member and a WPRA past president.
- **2014:** Back Patio demolished and rebuilt: removal of pavement and large trees that had caused the patio to crack. New electrical wiring, outdoor lighting, irrigation system, new concrete base, seating height wall with rounded brick caps to match the existing exterior. Beautiful trees with a low canopy to provide shade, drought resistant flowers, and plants.

New furniture. Free Wi-Fi. Handicapped accessible for all to enjoy.

The SRLA is not just a fundraising organization. It consists of a committed group of citizens who love reading and gardening and who know that libraries are much more than a place to store books. The library is a meeting space in which we build community. The SRLA tapped into the passion of Pasadena citizens to maintain the libraries as relevant, up-to-date places in which we connect with the world and each other, available to all of us, for free. That passion for public libraries motivated hundreds of people to donate to this series of projects, culminating with the completion of the back patio renovation.

On behalf of Councilmember Madison, Taka Suzuki, Field Representative, praised the public-private partnership that made the series of capital improvement projects possible. Jan Sanders, Director of Library Services, thanked the community for its support of the libraries and said she wished there was an Associates group like SRLA for every branch library in Pasadena. Dolores Diaz-Carrey, President of SRLA,

acknowledged the support of the Library Administration staff and the Public Works staff, which helped the project to proceed on time and on budget.

Leonard Lane, Head Librarian of San Rafael Library, stated that library patrons are enjoying the patio immensely and that it has expanded the library's programming by offering a new outdoor room. Kathleen Hamilton, Chair, Pasadena Library Commission and board member of SRLA, summarized the projects spearheaded by the SRLA which culminated in the new patio and invited attendees to come back to the library often.

The SRLA, in partnership with the City of Pasadena and the community, is delighted to have reached its goal of providing the greatest possible access to the library for all library patrons in a beautiful and functional space. In a recent summary of circulation statistics it was reported that usage of the San Rafael Library has increased by 25% over the past year.

The SRLA wishes to warmly thank the WPRA for its sustaining and generous financial support of the renovation projects undertaken at the San Rafael Library.

Gone, but not forgotten

Conger's Hill: A commanding view for our first physician

[Editor's note: The Pasadena Museum of History graciously provides WPRA News readers with historical vignettes that reveal our city's past and inform our future.]

BY KIRK MYERS
ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST
PASADENA MUSEUM OF HISTORY

Orville H. Conger, M.D., and wife Louise arrived here on August 24, 1874 and immediately bought 30 acres of land on the southeast corner of Orange Grove and Colorado Street. On September 28 they moved into their new home – which consisted of “one long room built of matched redwood boards, with a sash door in each end.” Two other homes would later be built on the Conger property.

Dr. Conger was the first and for a number of years the only practicing physician in Pasadena, but like many early residents he came to try his hand at fruit growing. Mrs. Conger would later write: “Our thirty acres were all set to oranges, grapes, and a full variety of deciduous fruits. Our first raisins were cured by hanging the large bunches of grapes on nails driven along the south side of the house and covering them with mosquito netting.”



After the auction of 20 acres of his property, Dr. Conger built a home which was said to be “one of the most elegant yet planned by Mr. Ridgway, of whose taste and skill many Pasadena homes give evidence.”

One history noted that the Conger property was “a beautiful site, commanding one of the most attractive views in California.” It was known as Conger's hill, and in 1886 Dr. Conger decided to sell 20 acres for subdivision. An auction was held on February 23, with 84 lots offered in an L-shaped tract

along Colorado and Vernon (now St. John) to Del Mar. This auction came at the beginning of a land boom in Southern California.

When Dr. Conger died in April, 1892 his friend Jeanne C. Carr gave tribute. “He loved his home and found his happiness therein, and he made it more and more lovely as the years went on. He loved Pasadena, and his ardent enthusiasm became contagious, whether directed towards public or private ends.”

Many years later, his daughter Louise wrote: “Our home stood near where the Elk's Club House now stands only further from Colorado Street ... Tourists from the East were always driven, by Los Angeles drivers, through our grounds and mother and father took pleasure in presenting them with oranges, raisins and flowers of which we had an abundance.”

The Pasadena Museum of History is located at the corner of N. Orange Grove and W. Walnut. Parking is free in the museum's lot. The Research Library & Archives are open to the public free of charge Thursday-Sunday from 1-4 pm. For additional information, please visit the Museum's website, PasadenaHistory.org, or call 626/577-1660, ext. 10.



A view of Colorado Street looking east from Conger Hill in the early 1880s.



**WEST PASADENA
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**
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Emergency..... 9-1-1
Pasadena Crime Stoppers (800) 222-8477
Non-Emergency (626) 744-4241

Services

Bulky trash items (626) 744-4158
Missed trash pickup..... (626) 744-4087
Missed residential recycling pickup (626) 744-4087
New trash container..... (626) 744-4087
New street light (626) 744-4191
Pothole (626) 744-4158
Recycling..... (626) 744-4087
Sewer problem (626) 744-4158
Shopping cart pickup (626) 744-8227
Street light not working (626) 744-4158
Storm drain blockage..... (626) 744-4158
Traffic signal malfunction..... (626) 744-4158
Traffic signal timing problems (626) 744-4191

Frequently called numbers

City information operator (626) 744-4000
Abandoned vehicles (626) 744-7627
Alarm permits (626) 744-4166
Animal control (626) 792-7151
ARTS bus (626) 744-4055
Code enforcement (626) 744-4633
Dog licenses (626) 744-4501
Graffiti (626) 744-7622
Historic preservation (626) 744-4009
Neighborhood Watch (626) 744-4550
Park/picnic reservations (626) 744-7275
Parking permits/exemptions (626) 744-6440
Parking tickets (626) 744-4360
Street tree maintenance (626) 744-4321
Trash pick-up (626) 744-4087
Water/power billing inquiries (626) 744-4005
Yard sale permits (626) 744-4200

**The West Pasadena Residents' Association is a
501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation.**

Make your own motion!

Our representatives need to hear from you. Take a few minutes to make your voice heard, and make your own motion.

Pasadena

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United States

Representative Judy Chu (D-27), (626) 304-0110

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Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA), (202) 224-3553

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