

AROUND ALHAMBRA



NOVEMBER 2023 | GATEWAY TO SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

www.alhambrachamber.org



Kennedy has extensive background, knowledge, and experience in law enforcement and has served the Alhambra community for over 20 years.

Alhambra's Newest Police Chief is Committed to Keeping Alhambra Safe & Livable for All

Alhambra's newest Police Chief, Garrett Kennedy, has taken the reins of the police department with a vision of safety, community engagement, and modernization. With a career marked by dedication, leadership, and a commitment to community policing, Chief Garrett Kennedy is set to make a lasting impact on Alhambra's law enforcement landscape.

Chief Kennedy's appointment was on May 11, 2023, when he officially succeeded Retiring Chief Kelley Fraser. Before taking on the role of Police Chief in Alhambra, Garrett Kennedy spent over two decades rising the ranks in the

Alhambra Police Department. Now, as Chief, Kennedy is uniquely qualified to protect a city like Alhambra.

"Chief Kennedy has been with our police department for a long time and knows our city well," said Maria Gao, President of the Alhambra Police Foundation. "We have great hopes that his history and experience with the city will allow him to flourish as a chief to serve our community in the future. We look forward to his leadership for the years to come."

>> **Newest Police Chief Is Committed to Keeping Alhambra Safe on page 3**



This photo collage shows just a few of the more than 50 representatives on hand at AUSD's 16th Annual College Fair to share information and options for students as they make decisions about their post-graduate plans.

More Than 1000 Attend AUSD College Fair

AUSD's 16th Annual College Fair was a resounding success and featured representatives from over 50 colleges, universities, trade schools, and the military. The October 4th event at San Gabriel High School's campus was open to students and families from the entire district.

The College Fair is an essential resource for students preparing to make important choices about their future. College and university representatives offered invaluable information about their academic programs, scholarships, and campus life. Prospective students could receive one-on-one guidance and get their questions answered. The armed forces were well-represented, with recruiters from various branches providing students with information about career opportunities, educational benefits, and the unique experiences that come from serving in the military.

Dr. Leann Huang, Coordinator of College and Career Preparation, oversaw the team that organized and facilitated the event. "Our goal is to empower our stu-

dents with knowledge and options for their future," Dr. Huang said. "Our annual college fair is a vital opportunity for students to explore the many educational and career pathways open to them. I'm thrilled we had such a tremendous turnout this year."

In addition to the wealth of information and resources distributed, students could attend workshops, such as "College 101," "How to Succeed as a First-Generation Student," and "Financial Aid Overview." Students and their parents gained insight into ways to make college more affordable, use resources to overcome barriers, and find success beyond their high school years.

The Annual College Fair leaves a profound impact on the community, equipping students with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions about their future. Each year the event grows in scale and significance, and has become a cornerstone in AUSD's commitment to preparing graduates to be career- and life-ready.

How to Get Involved in Local Community Organizations to Improve Alhambra

Are you wondering how to give back this season? If you're passionate about making a positive impact in your local community, there are numerous opportunities for you to get involved in Alhambra's nonprofit organizations and events. Whether through volunteer work, donations, or actively participating in local initiatives, your efforts — no matter how big or small — can contribute to the betterment of Alhambra.

Around Alhambra has put together a directory of local nonprofit organizations throughout our community (and the greater SGV) that go above and beyond

to improve people's lives year-round! Read on to discover what may be your next volunteer opportunity or helpful resource in our 2023 Nonprofits of Alhambra guide.

Additionally, exciting opportunities to give back are coming this very month! Giving Tuesday, which encourages charitable donations, is on **November 28**. Small business Saturday is before that, on **November 25**, so why not do some holiday giving and shopping on those days?

See how you can make a difference by visiting the 2023 Nonprofit Directory on p 7



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We welcome comments, press releases, and community interest stories and will make every effort to include all appropriate information.

Articles submitted and printed in *Around Alhambra* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce or its Board of Directors.

Please e-mail submissions to AA@alhambrachamber.org

For advertising rates and other information, contact:

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Mayor's Corner



Mayor Ross J. Maza

By Mayor Ross J. Maza

As we enter the 2023 holiday season, we are again reminded how quickly time passes. It's time again to wish you and your family a happy and peaceful Thanksgiving. With all of the unfortunate events happening around the world, I am ever grateful to live in such a beautiful community within our wonderful nation.

A lot is happening around Alhambra and City Hall, where things never slow down. This past month, the city council reviewed the **Housing Element**, which provides Alhambra with goals, objectives, and policies to direct and improve future housing development. The direction of housing is a topic most cities in Southern California struggle with, mainly because of the strong push in recent years by the State of California to increase density

within our cities. As with most issues of this nature, finding the right balance is key. Our Alhambra Housing Element must be certified with the State in order to be deemed complete and, therefore, must include many of the requests from the State.

As mentioned in a recent Mayor's Corner, Alhambra was the recipient of a rare grant in the amount of \$25 Million, which was made possible by the offices of State Senator Susan Rubio and Assembly Member Mike Fong. No other city has received a grant this large. The specific purpose of the grant is to build a new **Alhambra Community Center**, which will be located at the site of what many of us know as the Shorb Clinic, at the corner of Shorb Street and 6th Street.

The planning for this project is now well underway, with a couple of beautiful design concepts completed. I encourage you to provide your thoughts and feedback on this project, as it is something that members of our community will enjoy for many decades.

As we enjoy the many outings and dinners that are a part of the holiday season, I ask you to consider dining locally and supporting our local businesses. The local options are endless. An extensive list of options is available at alhambraeats.com.

As always, I thank you all for the privilege of serving Alhambra as Mayor, and I want to remind you that I am always available to you. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!



2024 Rose Queen & Court Luncheon

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11:30 AM-1:30 PM
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TICKET PRICES:
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To register, scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/2024AlhambraRose

Newest Police Chief is Committed to Keeping Alhambra Safe

from page 1



A day in the life of a police chief starts just like any other—Chief Kennedy wakes up in the morning and goes to work. Yet, much of his day is now composed of meetings, events, and administrative duties as opposed to the fieldwork he used to do.

When *Around Alhambra* asked whether he preferred the ability to make a difference from behind a desk or the wheel of a police car, he found it hard to say, as they are “completely different.” Life for a sergeant and below is extremely hands-on because it involves daily interactions with the community. “You feel involved, like you’re protecting someone,” he said. Now that his work consists of setting policies, training officers to help people, and other newfound duties, he finds his work feels less hands-on. However, he happily adds, “Both ways you help people.”

One improvement of note is that he is “now meeting people in happier times” as

opposed to on patrol — people tend to call the police on the worst day of their lives. However, he regularly goes on ride-alongs with police officers on patrol so he doesn’t “lose touch.”

Chief Kennedy’s philosophy revolves around community policing, an approach that places Alhambra’s people — especially younger folks — at the heart of his law enforcement efforts. He understands that policing is not just about enforcing the law but also about building relationships and trust within the community. He tries to get police to be in local schools as much as possible, “Not as warriors but as guardians.” Creating connections with youth and ensuring they understand that “protecting them no matter what is our job” is essential, according to the Chief. “No problem is too small, and we’ll be there to help no matter what hour of the day.”

Chief Kennedy has initiated a range of community engagement programs to strengthen community-police relations further. These initiatives include joining local neighborhood watch meetings, youth outreach, and open house events. By actively involving the community in decision-making, he aims to bridge the gap between the police force and the residents they serve.

Chief Kennedy has emphasized transparency and accountability as cornerstones of his leadership. He believes that an open dialogue with the community fosters trust and cooperation. By sharing information and engaging with the residents of Alhambra, the Police Department aims to build strong, positive relationships and address community concerns effectively.



He didn’t always see himself becoming Chief of Police, let alone a police officer.

Kennedy initially attended college as a biology major — he wanted to become a doctor to help others. That was always the goal: helping others. While in school, he worked as a park ranger for the city of Anaheim, helping with things like first aid and generally keeping the park safe for visitors. He enjoyed being outside and helping people so much that he decided to become a police officer instead. He switched his major to criminal justice, and the rest is history.

This journey led him to Alhambra, where he has spent almost 23 years in the police department. “I love this community. It’s extremely supportive of the police department,” Kennedy said of his “second home.” He added, “Working in Alhambra is well worth the drive.” He thinks of the members of the police department as his immediate family; the Alhambra community is his extended family. In fact, he believes everyone should treat each other like family.

In the short time since he took the helm, Chief Garrett Kennedy has already impacted law enforcement in Alhambra. With his vision of community-centric policing and commitment to transparency, Chief Kennedy is steering the Alhambra Police Department toward a safer, more united, and forward-thinking future. His leadership is poised to leave a lasting, positive mark on the city and its residents, ensuring that Alhambra remains a safe and welcoming place for all.

Get updates by following @alhambra_police on Instagram.

YOUTH AT THE YMCA



An abundance of developmental youth opportunities offered for Foster Youth 13 years and above at the YMCA of West San Gabriel Valley

- The YMCA of West San Gabriel Valley is partnering with the Department of Children and Family Services in introducing a new and exciting program for foster youth 13 years and above. Access to extracurricular activities offers an engaging and confidence boosting environment – underlining the importance of positive influences.
- The integration of positive influences over physical and mental fitness is a key contributing factor towards youth success.

Opportunities

- Membership at the YMCA of West San Gabriel Valley geared towards mental and physical fitness – full access to our gym, swimming pool, locker rooms, shower facilities and fitness classes.
- Taekwondo, Zumba, yoga, and more.
- Physical fitness necessities such as: towels, toiletries, swimsuits/caps/goggles, duffle bag
- Life building skillsets such as:
 - CPR Training
 - First Aid Training
 - AED Training
 - Lifeguard Training
 - Academic Resources
 - Job training
- Preschool program for teen parents
- Afterschool program for youth up to the age of 13



YMCA of West San Gabriel Valley
401 E. Corto Street, Alhambra, CA 91801

Email: angelmurillo.ymca@gmail.com
val.ymca@gmail.com

626-576-0226

Call the YMCA and ask for Angel for more information.

www.wsgvymca.org

NEWS & NOTES



> Councilmember Andrade-Stadler Honored at Noche de las Luminarias

Set against the beautiful backdrop of the L.A. County Arboretum, this year's Noche de las Luminarias was a symphony of delicious vegan cuisine, community spirit, and upbeat music. The annual award ceremony honored former Alhambra mayor and Councilmember Adele Andrade-Stadler as the Outstanding Elected Official - City of Alhambra. Congratulations to her and the other award winners!



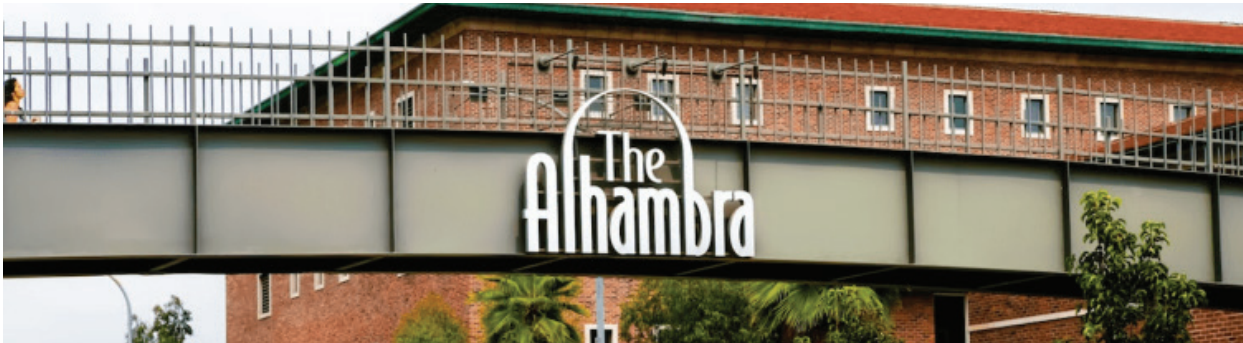
> E-Waste Collection at The Alhambra

The recent E-Waste collection event at The Alhambra was a major success! California Recycles collected 2,390 pounds of old electronics from The Alhambra tenants, including computers, keyboards, displays, printers, toners, light bulbs, fluorescent lights, and more. This event is a great way to help the environment and keep waste from ending up in landfills. Follow The Alhambra for updates on future events by visiting thealhambra.net.



> Chili Mee Grand Opening a Success

The ribbon-cutting ceremony for Chili Mee, Alhambra's newest noodle shop, successfully took place on October 13, 2023. Community members gathered in the parking lot of Valley Square for speeches by Alhambra Mayor Ross Maza, representatives of Judy Chu and Mike Fong, and a pastor from a local church, who all welcomed the new business to Alhambra.



> ELARC Expands Office Space at The Alhambra

The Ratkovich Company has signed Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC) to a 10-year deal for 23,345 square feet, adding to the community nonprofit's existing lease at The Alhambra. ELARC will now occupy just under 147,000 square feet, becoming the second-largest tenant at the 40-acre campus. The Alhambra is now more than 90% occupied, significantly higher than the average office building in L.A.!

ELARC is a private, nonprofit organization that coordinates and provides community-based services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The space serves as the administrative office for coordinating program services. ELARC has occupied office space at The Alhambra since 1996, when it first took about 32,000 square feet, according to ELARC Executive Director Gloria Wong.



> Bon Appetea Cafe Now Serving Truffle Fries

One of Alhambra's newest boba tea spots recently added a new menu item — truffle fries! This tasty snack features thin-cut fries seasoned with delicious truffle. Grab a bite with your drink at any of the three Bon Appetea locations in the SGV.



NEW MEMBER SHOUT OUT

Meet the newest members* of the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce. Support your local businesses by paying them a visit, and join us in welcoming them to the community!

*As of October 2023

El Niño Conditions are Strengthening — What Does That Mean for the San Gabriel Valley?

By Mark Paulson, Board of Directors,
Division I — Alhambra
San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District

We've all heard the saying, "When it rains, it pours." That was certainly the case last winter when storms dropped about 40 inches of rain in the San Gabriel Valley, more than double the yearly average. California is nearly drought-free now — most state and local reservoirs are near capacity, local groundwater levels have risen, and imported water deliveries, used to replenish local groundwater supplies, are at 100% for the first time since 2006.

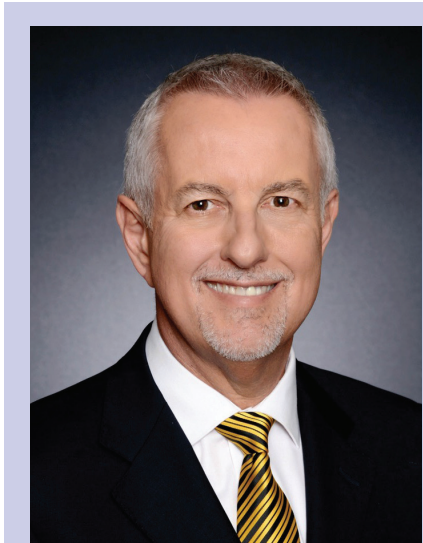
The heavy precipitation we received earlier this year came at the tail end of a La Niña condition usually associated with droughts. Sudden storms like Hurricane Hilary led to Southern California recording one of the wettest summers on record. **Some weather scientists, citing recent record high global ocean and surface temperatures, are forecasting a strong El Niño condition this winter, which may lead to heavy rain in some coastal areas of southern California.**

This may be good news for our local water supply conditions, but there is still much we should do to save water. Drought will recur, and in the long run, we use more water than Mother Nature provides, so let's take these actions related to our precious water resources as winter nears.

First, reset your irrigation controllers and systems to water less frequently and in smaller amounts as the weather is cooler and rainier, and sunshine is not as intense. When it rains, turn off your watering system for a few days.

Second, purchase a rain barrel that can capture stormwater for reuse around your home. If you are buying a rain barrel, the District will provide you a rebate of up to \$35 (check the website: sgvmwd.com/water-conservation/#rebates).

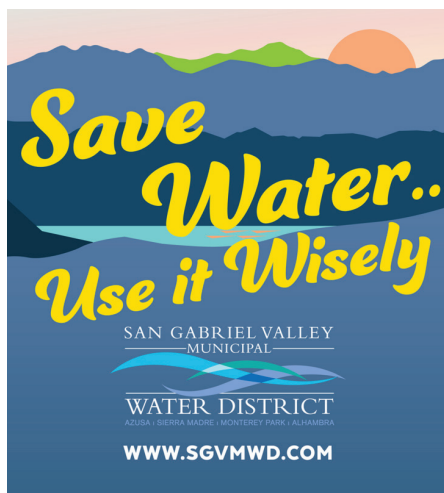
Third, now is the time to plant California Native Plants and other drought-resistant vegetation to give your plants and



Mark Paulson
San Gabriel Valley
Municipal Water District
info@sgvmwd.com

their roots a head start before next year's warmer spring and summer months (check our website for plant recommendations customized for Alhambra: sgvmwd.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/CalScape_Alhambra_web.pdf).

For more information, please visit the San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District website at sgvmwd.com or call the District at 626-969-7911.



All Around the Town



A White House inauguration picture of President Kennedy via the JFK Library.

President Kennedy Remembered 60 Years On

By Glenn Barnett

For anyone who did not live through the terrible day of John F. Kennedy's death 60 years ago, it is difficult to appreciate the shock and confusion that affected everyone, including those of us in Alhambra. The generation before mine had experienced so much death in World War II and Korea, as well as that of President Roosevelt, but we "baby boomers" had not yet encountered national tragedy.

I was a senior at Mark Keppel High School on Friday, November 22, 1963. My mother had allowed me to drive her 56 Chevy Bel Air to school so I could feel cool. Everything started as usual. Once a month, there would be an assembly on Fridays, and we were dismissed from class to attend some performance or lecture. On this day, however, Principal Bruce Lawson and Vice Principal James Kemp were alone on the stage. This was odd, as this was their first time participating in an assembly.

As the auditorium was filling up, Principal Lawson spoke softly but firmly into the microphone. "Please take your seats and be quiet," he said. Such was his authority that we complied immediately. When we sat down and grew silent, he said, "We have just received word that the President has been shot."

There was an audible gasp from the entire room — an intake of breath and exhale of disbelief. Girls started crying, and boys tried to be brave while barely comprehending the announcement's implications. Principal Lawson told us that the assembly was canceled and that we were to go back to class. We filed out of the auditorium as if in mourning because we were.



Glenn Barnett

Instead of going back to class, I went to the parking lot. I sat in my mom's car, listening to the radio news about the assassination. Vice Principal Kemp came out to the parking lot and saw me. He came over and stood by the car as we listened to the news. After a few minutes of us taking the news in, he told me to return to class.

By the time school was out, the country and Alhambra began closing down. Businesses closed for the rest of the day. High school football games were canceled. Movie theaters were closed. There was nothing on TV but the awful news. There was nothing to do.

At Keppel, however, there was a student play scheduled that night. It was decided that the show — and life — must go on. It's a good thing, too — there was standing room only for that play, such was the desire for normality. Principal Lawson led a prayer for the President before the curtain went up, and we all made the best of it.

President Kennedy was killed 60 years ago this month. Yet, his memory lives on. If you remember that day, what were you doing when you heard the news?



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Alhambra Tree Lighting Ceremony — Santa Claus is Coming to (Down)Town!

Time to get into the ho-ho-holiday spirit!

The Downtown Alhambra Business Association is excited to partner up with the City of Alhambra to once again bring you and your loved ones one of the most delightful holiday events of the year — the Alhambra Tree Lighting Ceremony! This annual event is a holiday celebration to jump-start the winter festivities for the whole family.

The ceremony will be filled with vendors from the community, games, and a variety of live performances courtesy of the magical talents of Alhambra. Santa Claus will arrive on a local Alhambra Fire Department Fire Truck on Main St. to take free professional photos with guests at a photo booth. This will surely

be a memorable event for you and your whole family!

The Alhambra Tree Lighting Ceremony is on **Friday, December 1, 2023**, in the heart of Downtown Alhambra. The event begins at 5:00 p.m. and ends at 9:00 p.m. Get your free photo with Santa starting at 6:00 p.m.

This exciting holiday event will take place on the corner of Main St. and Garfield Ave., right in front of Regal Cinemas and Applebee's, where the massive Christmas tree will be towering. You can't miss it!

For more information about DABA events, visit downtownalhambra.com or follow [@downtownalhambra](https://www.instagram.com/downtownalhambra) on Instagram.

DOWNTOWN ALHAMBRA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION BRING YOU

Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony

FREE PHOTOS WITH SANTA!

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NOVEMBER 2023



ALHAMBRA Restaurant of the Week

PRESENTED BY THE ALHAMBRA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Enjoy delicious, local cuisine!

The Alhambra Restaurant of the Week (ROTW) highlights the unique flavors of our community. Every week, we showcase a diverse culinary offering that represents the best of local dining in the City of Alhambra!

November 6 to November 12



85 Degrees is back in Alhambra with a newly remodeled store! The bakery and cafe serves coffee, tapioca tea, cakes, rolls, pies, and more. Fresh bread is baked every hour, and over 60 different varieties of bread inspired by European and Asian baked goods are available. Sweet or savory, day or night, you can satisfy your cravings. 85°C Alhambra is open every day from 7 AM - 9 PM.

Visit them at 299 W Main St #101, Alhambra



November 13 to November 19



Garden Cafe is the place to enjoy Hong Kong-style comfort fare when in the mood for casual dining and impeccable service. The cafe's expansive menu includes seafood-laden chef specials, hot noodle soups, afternoon tea drinks and snacks, breakfast plates, and more. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are served daily; customers can dine inside or outside or take their meals to go.

Visit them at 228 W Valley Blvd, Alhambra



November 20 to November 26



U2 Cafe & BBQ will satisfy your Asian fusion cravings. Want shabu shabu? How about filet mignon? An egg waffle with coffee? That and more are waiting to be experienced at this bustling, Hong Kong-inspired restaurant. U2 also serves annual Thanksgiving turkeys, so order now! The whole family is welcome, even pets. Happy Hour specials are available daily from 3 - 5:30 PM.

Visit them at 1200 E Valley Blvd, Alhambra



November 27 to December 3



Fosselman's Ice Cream is a staple of the Alhambra community. Established in 1919, Fosselman's has been serving up cold, delicious scoops of ice cream, as well as pints, quarts, cakes, pies, malts, shakes, and a host of other sweet treats for over 100 years. With 48 flavors to choose from, including classics like vanilla and seasonal flavors, there is something for everyone. Open daily!

Visit them at 1824 W Main St, Alhambra





Local Artists Shine at L.A. City Hall in the Disability Art Exhibition

The City of Alhambra, California, has reason to celebrate — a selection of its talented local artists has been recognized at the prestigious Los Angeles City Hall Bridge Gallery! Christian Tresieras, Ricardo Tresieras, William Lee, LIFT Students, and James Takar are among the accomplished artists whose works are on display, thanks to the unwavering support of The Academy of Special Dreams Foundation and sponsorship by The City of Los Angeles Department on Disability.

After a hiatus of three years, the Disability Art Exhibition has triumphantly returned in person, showcasing the creative brilliance of 42 artists with disabilities. The exhibition is set to run from **October 13 to November 12, 2023**, aligning with the

celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

This remarkable achievement results from collaborative efforts between the Academy of Special Dreams, Braille Institute of America, Exceptional Children's Foundation, L.A. GOAL, and Tierra del Sol Foundation. These organizations have committed to promoting access and equity for individuals with disabilities, enabling them to thrive as cherished and essential members of the Los Angeles community.

The exhibition is open to all, and admission is free. Visitors can explore these inspiring artworks from Monday to Friday, **between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., until November 12, 2023.**



First Row: Tiffany White, Marian Hallin, Betty Morin
Top Row: Elena Velarde, Barbara Shannon, Jane Krause, Jackie Fisher

Audience Applauds Brave Resilient Artists at Second "Readers Theater" Event

by Jackie Fisher & Betty Morin

The Brave Resilient Women Committee of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Alhambra-San Gabriel Branch presented "Brave Resilient American Women of the Arts" at San Gabriel Methodist Church on Saturday, October 28. Artists in the fields of Dance, Literature, Music, Theater/Drama, and Visual Arts were highlighted.

Betty Morin, the committee's founder, organized and directed the program, which focused on artists who challenged the status quo and whose determination and persistence, paired with hard work and talent, brought them to the highest levels of success. Audiovisuals, photos, and quotes capturing the essence of the featured artists were embedded in the presentations. AAUW members, friends, Tech Trek Campers, and their families

enjoyed this free, entertaining, and instructional presentation, during which light snacks from Home Girl Café were provided.

Director Morin first brought a small committee together in 2021 to share her dream of creating a "Readers Theater" to spotlight eleven cutting-edge scientists and courageous change-makers as culturally diverse American women contributing to the "fabric of America." In March of 2022, the dream came true and was enthusiastically applauded by over one hundred AAUW members and friends. On October 28, 2023, the second program became another success.

For more information about Brave Resilient Women and AAUW, go to alhsangab-ca.aauw.net.

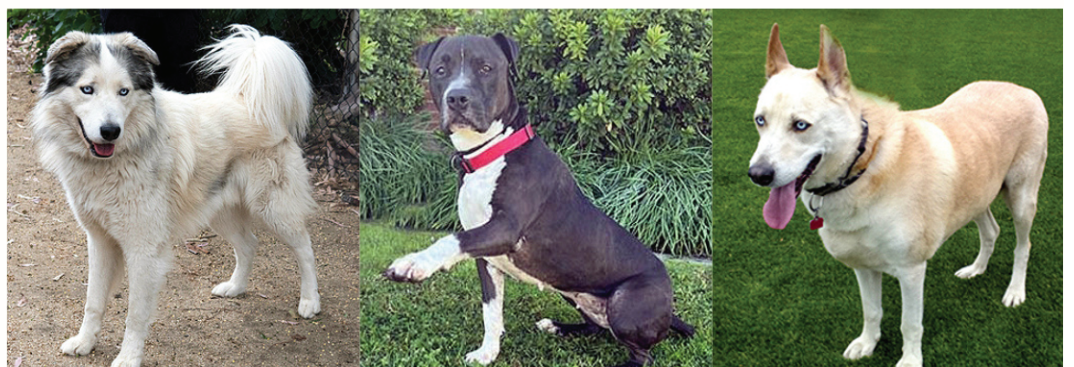


To inquire about these adoptable animals, contact the San Gabriel Valley Humane Society at 626-286-1159, or visit at 851 E. Grand Ave., San Gabriel. Adoption hours are 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. The shelter is closed on Mondays. Directions and photos of many more dogs and cats can be found online at www.sgvhumane.org.

The adoption fee for cats is \$99, which includes spay/neuter, vaccinations, de-worming, FIV/FELV/heartworm testing, and microchip. A \$130 - \$145 dog adoption fee includes microchip, vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, and de-worming, as well as a free health check-up at a participating vet (some breeds slightly higher).

Save money with the Buddy Program. Adopt two pets at the same time for a reduced fee. The Senior for Senior Program offers pets for \$39 each.

The San Gabriel Valley Humane Society is the local, affordable choice for spay and neuter, vaccinations, and TNR (trap, neuter, and release) for feral cats. Check out the website for information on the adoptable pets and adoption programs: www.sgvhumane.org.



The San Gabriel Humane Society would like to introduce the November 2023 Pets of the Month!

Bartok: Siberian Husky and Alaskan Malamute Mix | Adult | Male | Large

Donatella: Pit Bull Mix | Adult | Female | Large

Lucky: Shepherd Mix | Adult | Male | Large

Bartok is a 3-year-old male Siberian Husky and Alaskan Malamute mix. He has a handsome white and gray coat. Bartok is a talkative boy who loves treats and playing with stuffed toys. Bartok's distinctive vocal bark makes him a natural protector. He will require training to be the best dog he can be.

Donatella is a beautiful black and white 4-year-old Pit Bull mix girl. She likes to be energetic sometimes and would benefit from a large yard. Donatella walks nicely on the leash and loves rolling around on the grass at parks. She would make a great companion for someone who will love her unconditionally and treat her like a queen. A home with no other pets would be ideal.

Lucky is a buff white 5-year-old shepherd mix. He enjoys relaxing in the shade and receiving lots of cuddles. Lucky is a calm and sweet dog who will sit for treats. If that doesn't melt your heart, you'll fall in love with his pointy ears and bright eyes. Lucky can't wait for you to take him home!

To schedule a "Meet and Greet" appointment call the San Gabriel Valley Humane Society at 626-286-1159. Or inquire online through our website at <https://www.sgvhumane.org/adopt>

Tax Tips

Tax Tips: Retirement Planning

By Michael Aston EA



Michael Aston, E.A.
Alhambra Tax Center
michael@alhambrataxcenter.com

It is never too early to begin planning for retirement. Individual retirement accounts provide tax incentives to make investments that can provide financial security after retirement. These accounts can be with a bank or other financial institution, life insurance company, mutual fund, or stockbroker. A traditional IRA is the most common type of individual retirement account.

What to Consider Before Investing in a Traditional IRA

A traditional IRA is a tax-advantaged personal savings plan where contributions may be tax deductible. Generally, the money in a traditional IRA isn't taxed until it's withdrawn. There are annual limits to contributions depending on the person's age and the type of IRA.

When planning when to withdraw money from an IRA, taxpayers should know a few things. First, they may face a 10% penalty and a tax bill if they withdraw money before age 59 1/2 unless they qualify for an exception. Usually, one must start taking withdrawals from their IRA when they reach age 73. For tax years 2019 and earlier, that age was 70 1/2. Additionally, special distribution rules apply

to IRA beneficiaries.
Differences Between a Roth and a Traditional IRA

A Roth IRA is another tax-advantaged personal savings plan with many of the same rules as a traditional IRA, but exceptions exist. For example, a taxpayer can't deduct contributions to a Roth IRA. Qualified distributions are tax-free, and Roth IRAs don't require withdrawals until the owner's death.

Which Account is Right For You?

An experienced tax professional can help you and your loved ones determine whether a Roth IRA or a Traditional IRA is suitable for your circumstances. Remember, it's never too early to plan ahead!

This column is provided to Around Alhambra by Michael Aston, E.A., who is solely responsible for the content. Around Alhambra does not endorse the advice from this author or any other provider.

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After Auto Accidents: Mobile Help and Quick Tips

By Regina Talbot
State Farm Insurance Agent,
Insurance License # 0G05807

Although no two auto accidents are alike, there are preparations and post-accident steps that every driver should take.

Before An Auto Accident

Download the State Farm (or your insurance provider's) mobile app and register your account. This grants an accessible digital copy of your insurance information. Additionally, stash a hard copy of your insurance card and registration in your vehicle.

Keep a camera handy to document any post-accident damage. If you don't have a phone that can be used for this purpose, consider spending a few dollars on a disposable camera to keep in your vehicle.

After An Auto Accident

First, ask yourself: Is anyone hurt? If so, immediately contact emergency services.

Always call the police, no matter the severity of the accident. Ask for and keep a copy of the police report.

Get out of the way if you can. If the vehicles are drivable, move them to a spot out of the way of traffic. Turn on your hazard lights and set up emergency cones if available. Then, get out of the vehicle unless it is unsafe to do so. Once in a secure spot, use your mobile app to contact Roadside Assistance for towing help.

Record all the details. Use the mobile app to alert State Farm you've been in an accident. Open the app to share information, such as contact and insurance details, with anyone involved in the accident.

Ask other drivers to share their details, too. That information will be needed once fault and financial responsibility are established.



Regina Talbot
Talbot Insurance Agency
regina@reginatalbot.com

What You Should Never Do

Don't try to assign blame.

Don't sign or agree to anything from anyone other than the police — especially the other driver's insurance company.

Don't leave the scene of the accident until all the necessary information has been exchanged with the proper parties and everyone's safety has been ensured.

What Happens Next

The mobile app will alert State Farm that you've been in an accident and begin the claims process. Coverage levels and determination of fault will help outline who is financially responsible for repairs and other costs, including medical bills. You can use the app to track the status of your claim with the claims center.

For more information, contact Regina at 626-357-3401.

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In Their Own Words: Ken Lee

Around Alhambra asked Ken Lee, Vice President of Pacific Plaza Premier Development Group and dedicated local leader, "Why do you feel compelled to give back to your community?" Here's what he had to say:

As a "community builder," I love playing a small part in helping strengthen the fabric of the communities I feel led to give back to. I enjoy the process of fostering partnerships and linking arms with civic, business, and nonprofit community collaborators to work toward shared goals that improve lives, enrich neighborhoods, and build more resilient economies.

Personally, I choose to invest my time, talent, and treasure in organizations that are making a mark in their communities, including the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce, the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, two faith-based nonprofits that are committed to helping end homelessness in California, and my home church.

Pacific Plaza Premier, our development company, has invested in four housing projects in Alhambra over the last ten years because we love helping build communities and not just projects.

As a company, we also give our time, talent, and treasure to leading organizations in the San Gabriel Valley (SGV), like Asian Youth Center (AYC), whose mission is "to empower low-income, immigrant, and at-risk youth" in our communities and invest in the future leaders of the region.

In 2020, at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic and with a sudden spike in unemployment, Pacific Plaza Premier rallied its closest business partners and friends to raise more than \$35,000 for AYC's Emergency Food Program to address the rapidly growing food insecurity issues in the SGV region. AYC honored us later that year with a Corporate Partnership Award, and, in response, we helped raise another \$26,650 for AYC through sponsorships and donations for AYC's 32nd Anniversary Celebration & Awards Ceremony. During my acceptance speech for the award, I announced that we would match another \$10,000 in donations, dollar for dollar, through the end of 2020. We quickly met that match goal. We continue to regularly support AYC and other community-based organizations to build a stronger and more resilient SGV.



Ken Lee speaking at the Asian Youth Center

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Republic Services: Making a Difference in the Communities it Serves

In the busy world of recycling and waste collection, Republic Services stands out as a company that's not only dedicated to sustainability but also deeply committed to giving back to the communities in which it operates. Community engagement helps build strong relationships between its staff and customers in Alhambra.

Active participation in local events and celebrations is at the core of Republic Services' commitment. A standout example is its support for the Lunar New Year, where it donates event collection boxes and dumpsters to ensure that everyone can participate in this cultural celebration without worrying about litter, recycling, or waste.

Republic Services' dedication to recycling and composting goes beyond the everyday. It co-sponsors events like Alhambra Recycles and Compost Giveaways in the spring and fall. Not only do these events encourage the responsible disposal of electronics and confidential personal documents, but they also promote the benefits of recycling and composting.

Education is another area where Republic Services invests its efforts. Each year, Republic Services awards five \$1,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors in Alhambra, opening doors to

higher education and personal growth. Additionally, Republic Services provides a paid summer internship program, allowing students to gain valuable experience in the field. It also donates to the Alhambra Educational Foundation.

Through residential organics workshops, Republic Services empowers households to reduce waste and adopt more sustainable practices. Its commercial organics workshops extend this support to businesses, helping them make eco-friendly choices.

But Republic Services doesn't stop there. It also engages in community-building activities. Events like Trunk or Treat and the Pumpkin Run create safe and enjoyable family experiences, nurturing a sense of togetherness and community spirit. Residents can also find Republic Services in a booth at fun community events, like the Bunny Hop, National Night Out, and the Farmers Market.

Community engagement isn't just something Republic Services says it cares about — it is something it does, who it is, and how it serves. Republic Services strives to be good partners, neighbors, and friends and to inspire positive change here in Alhambra.



Main Street Attraction, Uniting Commerce and Charity for Over 40 Years

In Alhambra, community involvement and charitable organizations play a significant role in shaping the city's character. Among the many organizations dedicated to making a difference in the lives of residents is Main Street Attraction on W Main St, a volunteer-run thrift and consignment store established in 1982.

Owned and operated by the San Marino Area Chapter of the National Charity League, this upscale, nonprofit secondhand store is fully staffed by volunteers. So where do the profits go? Proceeds all go to charity, mainly funding college scholarships for local girls.

According to the owners: "Our mission is to sell high-quality, pre-owned merchandise, operating with an all-volunteer staff, enabling us to award the proceeds to our chapter-affiliated philanthropies and provide scholarships for deserving college-bound high school

women." This charitable model has sustained the business for over 40 years!

Inside, Main Street Attraction is a treasure trove of pre-loved items. Shoppers can find an array of goods, including clothing (for adults and children of all sizes), accessories, household items, furniture, books, and more. Prices are reasonable, and the quality is top-notch.

For over four decades, Main Street Attraction has remained a haven for both bargain hunters and those with a heart for charity, demonstrating that shopping with purpose can attract and maintain customers. With their unwavering commitment to community service, this volunteer charity has become a cherished fixture at the heart of W Main St.

Main Street Attraction is open Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday at 218 W Main St, Alhambra, CA 91801. Follow them on Instagram at @main_street_attraction.

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Alhambra Holiday 2023 Gift Guide

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Put Together Your Thanksgiving Meal Without Leaving Alhambra

Thanksgiving is fast approaching. Why not give thanks to your city by putting together as much of your holiday dinner as possible without leaving Alhambra? Here's a guide to finding your Turkey Day dinner essentials locally at U2 Cafe, Burnt Belly, Perfectly Sweet, Sage Bistro, and The Chicken Koop.



Image courtesy of facebook.com/U2Cafefans

Turkey at U2 Cafe & BBQ 庸記燒臘小廚

Every year, U2 Cafe & BBQ makes and sells approximately 300 turkeys for the Alhambra and SGV communities. This long-standing annual tradition means you can trust them with handling the centerpiece of your meal. They also sell a range of baked goods and savory dishes that your guests will enjoy. U2

Cafe is your go-to spot for diverse, international flavors that will add a unique twist to your Thanksgiving dinner.



Image courtesy of instagram.com/burntbelly

Mac' N Cheese at Burnt Belly

For a fusion of flavors that will spice up your Thanksgiving feast, Burnt Belly in Alhambra offers a delightful assortment of barbeque and Asian-inspired dishes. Their mac and cheese is overflowing with cheesy goodness that everyone at your table will surely appreciate.

Mashed Potatoes at Sage Bistro & The Chicken Koop

Local favorites Sage Bistro and The Chicken Koop serve delicious mashed potatoes that would be at home in any Thanksgiving Day spread. Can't decide which restaurant to support? Two mashed potato dishes at a feast are certainly better

than one, so why not pay both a visit?



Image courtesy of facebook.com/SageBistro626



Image courtesy of facebook.com/thechickenkoop

Pumpkin Pie at Perfectly Sweet

Perfectly Sweet is a local Alhambra bakery renowned for its mouthwatering desserts guaranteed to satisfy your sweet tooth. Choose from an array of cupcakes,

pies, cookies, and other delightful treats to round off your Thanksgiving meal on a sweet note. The seasonal pumpkin pie is highly recommended.



Image courtesy of yelp.com/biz/perfectly-sweet-alhambra

All of these establishments typically offer takeout and/or delivery options — be sure to check their websites or contact them directly for the most up-to-date information on their Thanksgiving offerings and ordering procedures. Due to the popularity of Thanksgiving dinner packages, placing your order well in advance is advisable to ensure availability.

Thanksgiving is a time for gratitude, celebration, and — of course — a delectable feast that brings friends and family together. Thankfully, a diverse and vibrant culinary scene right here in Alhambra offers an array of options to make your Thanksgiving dinner an unforgettable experience!

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General George S. Patton, Jr. grew up in the San Gabriel Valley and was the grandson of Alhambra's founder, Benjamin Wilson.

Alhambra Historical Society To Present "Alhambra's Local Hero - General George S. Patton, Jr." on November 9

Join Alhambra Historical Society at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 9, 2023, at the Alhambra Masonic Center at 9 West Woodward Avenue for a presentation entitled "Alhambra's Local Hero - General George S. Patton, Jr." To reserve your spot, please visit generalgeorgepatton.eventbrite.com.

The presentation will detail the life of General Patton. It will focus on his early days growing up in the San Gabriel Valley, his subsequent rise through the military ranks, and his ultimate achievement of becoming one of the greatest heroes of World War II. General Patton is widely known as one of the most extraordinary personalities the United States has ever seen — a person whose legacy remains strong throughout

Southern California and the US.

The evening's presenter will be Joe Castillo, Alhambra Historical Society Board Trustee and Treasurer, author of five historical books, and historical columnist for the San Gabriel Valley Examiner. General Patton has been the subject of many of Mr. Castillo's written pieces.

Light refreshments will be served, and parking will be available at the Alhambra Masonic Center and on surrounding city streets. The event is free to the general public, and all are welcome.

To learn more about the Alhambra Historical Society, visit alhambrahistorical-society.org. For questions about the event, email the Alhambra Historical Society at alhambrahistsoc@att.net.

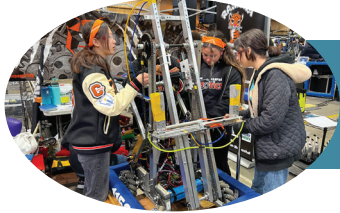


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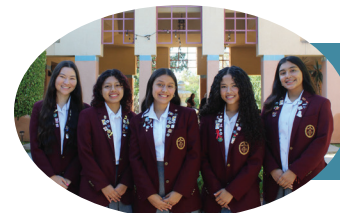
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Ramona Convent Campus Ministry Team Hosts Annual Service Fair

Through service and social justice activities, Ramona Convent students contribute to the lives of others throughout the community and discover they have the power to change the world around them while developing compassion and character.

Throughout the year, students join many school-sponsored service opportunities such as the beach cleanup, the human trafficking walk, and volunteering at local food banks. They also serve in nursing homes, food banks, libraries, and more.

The annual service fair is a yearly highlight of this culture of service. The event starts with an assembly where students who've completed 100 to 200 hours of service are honored with a certificate and pin displayed on the lapel of their dress uniform blazer. This year, Mrs. Amanda Argueta, a Theology Teacher, invited junior Dalina Ruedaflores to address her peers with a speech about her personal relation-

ship to service.

All students were dismissed to the special events tent on campus, where representatives from various service organizations set up tables and met with students to discuss volunteer opportunities. These organizations also included campus clubs seeking student volunteers, such as Campus Ministry, Peace and Justice, Mental Health Awareness Club, Music and Charity, Heal the Bay, and more. Student Council leaders also created posters and artwork focusing on social justice issues to raise awareness.

Ramona Convent Secondary School is a welcoming Catholic college-prep high school for young women celebrating a legacy of 134 years of distinction. Graduates are empowered, resilient, socially conscious leaders well-prepared to meet life's challenges. To learn more, visit 1701 W. Ramona Rd. in Alhambra, call (626) 282-4151, go to or ramonaconvent.org.



Local Sports News from AUSD High Schools

Submitted by Mike Koski, President Alhambra High School Sports Hall of Fame Committee

2023 Varsity Football

Going into the last three games of this season, only San Gabriel had a chance to finish with a winning record from the three AUSD high schools. They were 4-4 — Alhambra was 1-7, and Keppel was 0-8. The last two games have significant ramifications and can determine who advances to the playoffs and who goes home early. The games are getting bigger, so it's time to gear up as the monetary portion of football season has arrived.

Last year, San Gabriel made the playoffs as an at-large team and went all the way to the State Championship Game, where they lost to Atascadero. In 2021, Alhambra finished third in the league and made it to the CIF Semi-Finals before losing to Loara, who went on to win the Division 14 Championship.

2023 Varsity Basketball

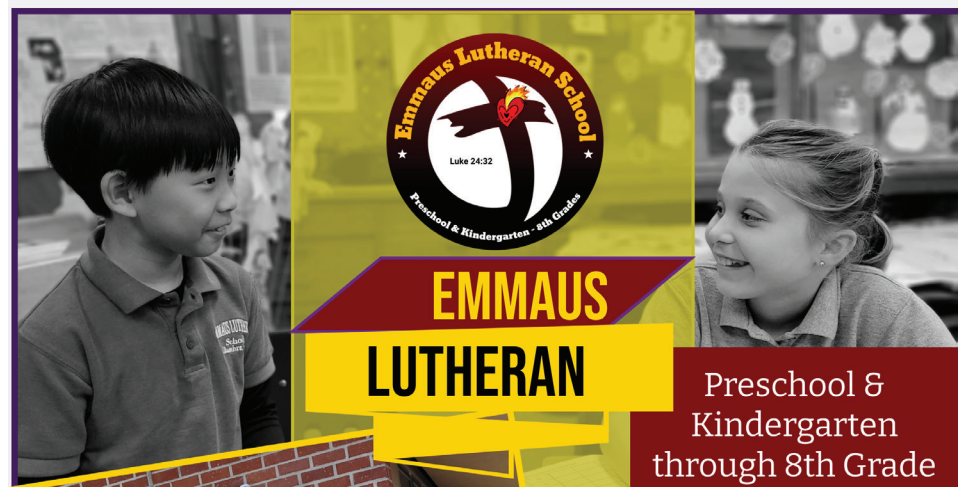
The 2023-24 Basketball season is just around the corner, with games beginning November 13. All three long-time Head Coaches return: Hung Duong (Keppel), Bryan Gonzalez (Alhambra), and Jason

Meador (San Gabriel). Last year, Keppel finished with a record of 20-9, Alhambra finished 18-9, and San Gabriel finished 14-12. Let the games begin!

2023 Varsity Baseball

You might think it's too early to think about baseball, but many teams are playing Fall games in preparation for the 2024 season. The Alhambra Moors have 12 games lined up from October 28 through February 3, hoping to replicate last year's 20-win season. Head Coach Jovan Ramirez returns for his third season with five players who made the All-League last year: Carlos Hernandez, Jackson Akers, Ethan Ayala, Marc Hernandez, and Nero Navarro. Keppel has a new Head Coach, Eric Felix, who played and coached at Alhambra under former Head Coach Steve Gewecke. San Gabriel made strides last year under first-year Head Coach Anthony Nichols, and his return, along with a full coaching staff, is good news for the Matadors. The 2024 season for all three teams begins February 10, 2024.

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Los Angeles Dodgers players, their significant others, the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation, Playworks, and Repetto Junior Coaches worked together to make a memorable Dodgers Play Day for the entire Repetto School community.

Dodgers Play Day Energy Inspires Repetto Students to Embrace the Joy of Play and Physical Activity

Laughter and excitement were in the air as four Los Angeles Dodgers players made a memorable visit to Alhambra Unified School District. This is the second Dodgers Play Day for AUSD. Last year, they visited Northrup School in Alhambra, and this year, Repetto in Monterey Park was the lucky school.

On September 21st, catcher Will Smith, super-utility player Chris Taylor, and pitchers Shelby Miller and Alex Vesia (along with their wives/fiancée Cara Smith, Mary Taylor, Erika Miller, and Kayla Howard), and legendary team photographer Jon Soo Hoo arrived at the Repetto campus to show students the power of play at an all-school assembly and 4th/5th grade recess. A sea of blue greeted the players as the school declared it Dodgers Day. Students and staff members donned blue shirts from the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation or wore their own Dodgers gear. After welcome speeches and ceremonial presentations, it was "Time for Dodger Recess!"

The day was possible thanks to the strong partnership between AUSD and Playworks, whose mission is to improve the health and well-being of all children

by increasing opportunities for physical activity and safe, meaningful play, and through the generous support of the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation (LADF) and Catching Hope (The Will and Cara Smith Foundation).

"We are proud to partner with Will and Cara to support Playworks so that every student has a welcoming and safe place to play during the school day," said Nichol Whiteman, CEO for LADF. "The Catching Hope Foundation is an incredible partner in mobilizing fans and community members to support an organization committed to providing equitable physical activities to underserved youth."

The Dodgers provided more than just star-struck excitement. As living examples of the benefits of an active, playful lifestyle, the players delivered a compelling message about the importance of physical activity and play in the lives of students.

All-Star Will Smith reminded everyone, "Playing outside is essential for a fit and well-rounded childhood. Every student deserves the chance to engage with their friends in a healthy environment."



Mark Keppel Football Team Holds Educators Appreciation Night to Honor Favorite Teachers in Their Lives

At the September 15th Mark Keppel High School varsity football game, the student-athletes invited some of their favorite current and former teachers and staff members to attend the game, wear their jerseys, and be recognized before the game and again during halftime. The educators were both touched and honored to be remembered by students who wanted to recognize those who made meaningful impacts on their lives. This was a beautiful tribute that many hope will become an annual Aztec tradition.



Alhambra Police Bring Coffee with a Cop to Baldwin School

On National Coffee with a Cop Day, the Alhambra Police Department spent the morning at Martha Baldwin School where they greeted families as they arrived, distributed information and giveaways, and chatted with parents to get to know them and hear their community concerns.

"Alhambra USD and the Baldwin family appreciate the strong partnership with our local law enforcement agencies," Principal Chris Takeshita said. "We are grateful for all they do to keep our students, staff members, and families safe."

AUSD Continues to Recognize School Site Leadership Excellence

In October, Park School principal Carin Gasca (left) was honored as the most recent recipient of the AUSD's "Excellence in Leadership" award. This is a rotating recognition for a principal who has gone above and beyond in his/her role. She was selected by last month's recipient Alhambra High School principal Diana Diaz-Ferguson (right). Ms. Gasca will display the award in her office at Park until the next principals meeting, when she will present the award to the next AUSD principal honoree.



SEPTEMBER 2023

GAME CHANGERS



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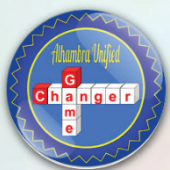
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AUSD Game Changer Recognition Program Continues Honoring Outstanding Employees in 2023-24

The AUSD tradition of recognizing outstanding employees with the monthly Game Changer employee recognition program started off the 2023-24 school year with two amazing honorees, who were honored at the September 19th Board of Education meeting.

The September classified Game Changer literally saved a life. Sergio Escobedo, custodian at Marguerita School, was nominated by an anonymous colleague who shined a spotlight on Mr. Escobedo for stepping in when a co-worker had a seizure at work. Mr. Escobedo called 911 and stayed with him to provide care and comfort until medical help arrived. As the nominator pointed out, "If Mr. Escobedo had not stepped in, who knows what would have happened to his co-worker? AUSD needs employees to always act in the way that Mr. Escobedo responded."

Equally deserving of Game Changer recognition was the September certificated honoree. Nathan Sapalicio is a STEM

(Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) teacher at Baldwin and Ramona Schools. He was nominated by fellow teacher Jennifer Lankford, who pointed out Mr. Sapalicio's leadership among his colleagues. She also emphasized his passion for creating new dynamics as a team to ensure a smooth, efficient, and engaging experience for students. Ms. Langford says, "Nathan is a born leader and we're lucky to have him on our team to instill a sense of order and balance as we collectively create a dynamic new enrichment program for AUSD students across the district."

Do you know of other deserving AUSD employees who should be recognized as Game Changers? Visit www.ausd.us/badges, click on "Recognition," select one of the two available badges ("Above and Beyond the Call of Duty" or "Spotlight"), and fill out the short, fast form to submit a nomination.



At the October AUSD Board of Education meeting honoring Martha Baldwin as one of 33 California public schools to win the prestigious 2023 National Blue Ribbon Award, the thrilled Baldwin community turned out in force to celebrate.

AUSD's Martha Baldwin School Wins Coveted 2023 National Blue Ribbon Award as an Exemplary High Performing School

In September, the U. S. Department of Education unveiled the 2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools, "We are happy to announce MARTHA BALDWIN SCHOOL in Alhambra Unified School District has been designated an Exemplary High Performing National Blue Ribbon School for 2023 by U. S. Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona. Your school is one of 353 schools in the nation and one of 33 public schools from California to be recognized in 2023."

At the October Board of Education meeting honoring the school for their prestigious award, an excited and emotional Baldwin Principal Chris Takeshita said, "Martha Baldwin School extends its heartfelt gratitude to all staff members for their tireless dedication and unwavering support. Their passion for education and commitment to student growth have made a lasting impact on the lives of countless students."

He added, "To the families of Martha

Baldwin School, we thank you for working with us and being a partner in preparing our students for school every day! What a great time to be a Baldwin Cougar."

Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo congratulated Martha Baldwin School, saying, "This remarkable achievement is a well-deserved recognition for Baldwin teachers, staff, parents, and students."

In his letter to parents, Mr. Takeshita wrote, "The National Blue Ribbon Award is a testament to the collective efforts of our dedicated staff members who have gone above and beyond to ensure that every student receives a high-quality education. Their consistent commitment to student success in partnership with our Cougar families have made this achievement possible."

In November, Martha Baldwin School will be honored at special ceremony in Washington D. C. hosted by the U. S. Secretary of Education Cardona.



AHS Senior Gives Opening Address at LACOE Teachers of the Year Celebration

AUSD educators were honored to join Alhambra High School senior Nicolas Kiet Quach for his opening address at the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Teachers of the Year Luncheon in September.

Nicolas, who serves on the LACOE Superintendent's Student Advisory Council, praised his own teachers who helped him in his journey from his family's humble beginnings to finding his passion for public service. He thanked them for serving as role models and guiding students as they navigate the changing world around them.

Quoting beloved educator Rita F. Pierson in her acclaimed TED Talks on teaching, Nicolas shared her mantra, "Every child deserves a champion, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be." In closing, Nicolas congratulated LACOE's Teachers of the Year, thanking them for being the champion for their students.

Top: Alhambra High School senior Nicolas Kiet Quach welcomed by LACOE Superintendent Dr. Debra Duardo for his opening address at the LACOE 2023 Teachers of the Year Luncheon.

Bottom: Joining Nicolas, left to right standing, were Janet Lees, AUSD Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Diana Diaz Ferguson, Alhambra High School Principal, Kaysa Moreno, AUSD Board President, Ana Estrada, friend, colleague. Seated, Justin Wang, AUSD Student Board Member and Nicolas Quach.





For their September Community Check-In, the AUSD Student Support Services team invited 900 second graders to a specially created tri-city Get-Your-First-Library-Card Day Saturday event at Alhambra Civic Library, Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Library, and Rosemead Library. By celebrating and connecting with kids and families outside of school through fun activities in their own neighborhoods, the SSS team created a memorable day designed to foster a love of books, reading, and libraries — and a sense of belonging, trust, and empowerment. Crowds of happy seven-year-olds and their families turn out and stayed on to explore the treasure trove of books to check out with their new library cards.

AUSD Student Support Services Community Check-In Fosters Connection, Shares Magic of Libraries

On a September Saturday morning, Alhambra Unified School District's Student Support Services (SSS) superheroes fanned out across three cities to welcome students and families to the Alhambra Civic Library, Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Library, and Rosemead's L. A. County Library. The SSS team invented their own celebration of Library Card Day as part of their series of Community Check-Ins for their Year of Fostering Connectedness and Belonging.

"Meaningful connection is a layering process," says Assistant Superintendent SSS Lindsey Ma. "We know that strengthening and expanding relationships with our students, families, and the community are the bedrock for building trust and the true path to making a real difference for our students on many fronts."

The SSS team invited nearly a thousand AUSD second graders to get their first library card. AUSD's LIFT special education students made adorable puppy bookmarks to give thrilled seven-year-olds. By celebrating and connecting with kids and families outside of school through fun activities in their own neighborhoods, the SSS team created a memorable day designed to foster a

love of books, reading, and libraries — and a sense of belonging, trust, and empowerment.

"Our September Library Card Day was such a labor of love. In July, our SSS teams started reaching out to the three libraries in our feeder cities of Alhambra, Monterey Park, and Rosemead," said Ni'Kysha Johnson, AUSD Student Support Services mental health counselor and intern coordinator. "We wanted to create a fun, interactive tri-city community event for AUSD's second graders to get their first library card and we wanted to be there to make it fun and connect with the students and their families."

AUSD second grade teachers started working in August right after school began to shepherd a total of 902 second grade students to complete a library card application so their first library card could be waiting for them. SSS director Jim Schofield said, "Hats off to teachers! Our Library Card Day event focusing on 2nd graders would not have been possible without the 40 fabulous second grade teachers at AUSD's nine elementary schools in Alhambra and four in Monterey Park."

Alhambra Civic Library's Adriana Saucedo, a senior librarian said, "By



AUSD's Student Advisory Council members spent a Saturday in October focusing on governance training, communication strategies, advocacy, and equity, diversity, and inclusion in our schools. California School Boards Association's Angelena Pride led the workshop and members of the AUSD Board of Education joined the students for lunch. For a Shark Tank activity, students created and delivered mock board presentations to receive feedback from board members, superintendent Jaramillo, and assistant superintendents Janet Lees and Lindsey Ma.

AUSD Student Advisory Council Members Take Their Work Seriously

AUSD's 12-member Student Advisory Council (SAC) is elected by their classmates to represent each grade level at the three district high schools. The council meets at 7:30 a.m. each month (and sometimes more often) in their role as a two-way communications bridge between students and the Board of Education about issues that matter to their constituents.

"We're so impressed by the hard work and dedication of our Student Advisory Council — they take their leadership responsibilities very seriously," superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo said. "On a recent October Saturday, they spent SIX hours in governance training with Angelena Pride from the California School Board Association (CSBA)."

In addition to governance, the day focused on effective communication strategies, advocacy, and equity/diversity/inclusion in our schools. Near the end of the day, the students participated in a "Shark Tank" activity, where they made

mock board presentations to effect change in policies and protocols.

Board of Education members, who held a special board meeting/study session earlier in that day, joined the students for lunch. SAC members got to know the board members and discovered "little-known-facts" about each one. The board members, superintendent Dr. Jaramillo, and assistant superintendents Janet Lees and Lindsey Ma acted as judges during the Shark Tank activity and gave the students suggestions and ideas to strengthen their presentations.

Kaysa Moreno, Board president, said, "We are very proud of the Student Advisory Council members — their willingness to commit the time and energy needed to bond with each other, connect with their classmates, and to fully understand all points of view required to find solutions is remarkable. They are embracing all the challenges of leadership thoughtfully and with enthusiasm."

distributing the new library cards at the Alhambra Library, families discovered first-hand their community library space and all it has to offer to inspire a life-long love of reading and learning."

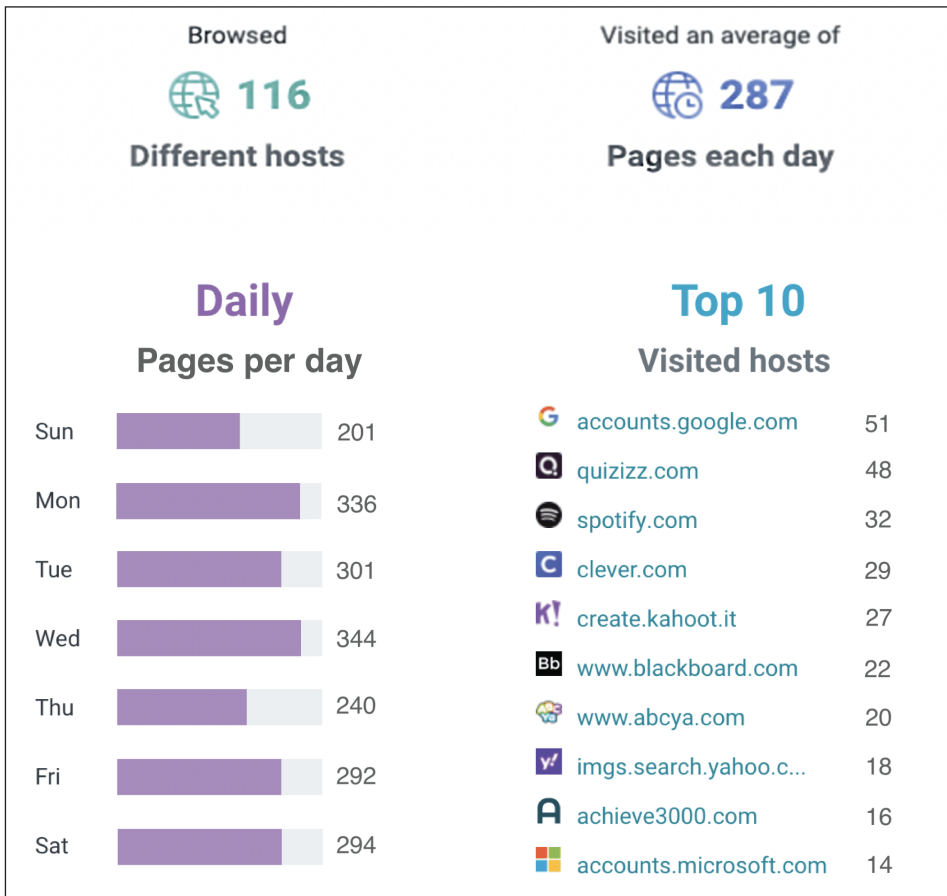
The SSS team made an amazing discovery as they were planning Library Card Day with Rosemead Library. "Rosemead Library, it turns out, has the largest collection of Mandarin-language children's books in L. A. County — an example of the happy surprises that our Community Check-Ins events are uncovering," said Lilia Leung, SSS school community coordinator, who also acts as a Mandarin and Cantonese translator for families.

Sue Yamamoto, Rosemead Library manager said, "We can't wait to welcome the Mandarin Language Dual Immersion students at Northrup Elementary to our

enormous collection of children's books in Mandarin."

Kristen Olivarez, Interim City Librarian at Monterey Park's Bruggemeyer Library, added, "I think I speak for all librarians when I say we want to expand our partnership with Alhambra USD. For example, we would love to share our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program with AUSD parents to show them how to read to babies and toddlers — and why reading aloud early and often is a life changing gift to give your children."

As testament to the magic of the day, event's success, long after the Saturday Library Card Day event ended, many second graders and their families stayed on at the libraries, happily exploring the treasure trove of books to check out with their new library cards.



The district encourages all AUSD parents to sign up for the weekly Lightspeed reports to help create a safe online experience for their children. For directions and links to register, parents can view the October 6th issue of the district's digital newsletter, AUSD Connection under Technology Updates:

Parent Digital Newsletter – Parents – AUSD
ausd.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=4251985&type=d&pREC_ID=2372183

AUSD Launches Lightspeed Parent Portal to Help Parents Monitor their Child's Web Activities, Actively Promote Digital Education and Safety

Students spend a significant portion of their lives online, whether for educational purposes or leisure activities. The internet offers a wealth of information and opportunities, and it comes with potential risks that parents need be aware of and monitor.

To aid parents in this crucial responsibility, AUSD introduced the Lightspeed Parent Portal, a tool that provides parents with the ability to monitor their child's recent web browsing activities. This opt-in program requires parents to sign up to receive weekly emailed reports sent every Sunday. Parents can review their child's browsing history for the previous seven days as well as analytics (such as the number of pages they view each day, and their top visited sites).

With the Lightspeed Parent Portal,

parents can actively engage in their child's digital education and safety. It promotes open communication between parents and children, ensuring that families can navigate the online world together while prioritizing safety and responsible internet usage.

"Technology plays a pivotal role in education and entertainment, so it's reassuring to give our parents a tool like the Lightspeed Parent Portal to help them create a secure online environment for their children," explains AUSD Director of Technology Ashton Potter. "As an AUSD parent myself, I appreciate the ability to be actively involved in my children's online life and I depend upon the peace of mind it gives me."



MKHS senior Kaitlyn Cao, AUSD's student board member alternate and vice-chair of the AUSD Student Advisory Council, was recently named to the Los Angeles County Office of Education's (LACOE) Superintendent's Student Advisory Council. She will serve alongside Alhambra High School seniors Nicolas Quach and Adrian Mendoza who are returning to LACOE's Advisory Council.

Mark Keppel's Kaitlyn Cao Expands Her Representative Outreach to County Level

MKHS senior Kaitlyn Cao, AUSD's student board member alternate and vice-chair of the AUSD Student Advisory Council, was recently named to the Los Angeles County Office of Education's (LACOE) Superintendent's Student Advisory Council. Council members from throughout L. A. County will share their experiences, perspectives, and feedback on issues in their schools and communities.

Kaitlyn will serve alongside Alhambra High School seniors Nicolas Quach and Adrian Mendoza who are returning to LACOE's Advisory Council. Kaitlyn will meet with her fellow Council members at least four times this year (in-person and virtually) to focus on elevating student voices to shape conversations about public education and issues impacting youth.

LACOE Superintendent Dr. Debra Duardo in her congratulatory video to the students said, "I'm so excited to be able to meet with you and hear students across the county problem-solve what we can do better and how we can ensure that every single student in Los Angeles County has a high-quality education and the resources and supports they need to thrive."

Grateful to serve in this capacity, Kaitlyn said, "I will continue to represent our school district with pride and dignity at the county level."

AUSD Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo said, "We are excited that Kaitlyn will join Nicolas and Adrian to represent student voices on a larger scale as she works with LACOE Superintendent Dr. Duardo."



Ynez Teacher Honored for Going the "Extra Yard" to Support Her Students

Ynez School 4th/5th grade teacher Tammy Scorgia was recognized by UCLA, the Pac-12 Conference, and the College Football Playoff Foundation for going the extra yard for her students and community. The "Extra Yard for Teachers" program pays tribute to extraordinary teachers who go the extra yard to create a better experience for their schools and community. At UCLA's September 16th game at Rose Bowl Stadium, Mrs. Scorgia, center, was invited onto the field at half-time to be honored for all she does in and out of the classroom. She was also presented with a check for \$3,500, which she will use to provide much-needed support and assistance to the Ynez School community. Mrs. Scorgia is joined by Ynez principal Dr. Janice Phan, left, and assistant principal Harry Wong.



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Ask Dr. Dara, D.D.S.

The Relationship Between Vitamin D and Gum Disease

by Dr. Krasnodara Gashparova, DDS
 (also known as Dr. Dara)

Periodontal disease and its early stage, gum disease, are destructive oral health conditions that affect the gums and supporting bones around the teeth. Periodontal disease is caused by a bacterial infection and can lead to gum and bone recession — even tooth loss if left untreated. While the primary cause of periodontal disease is related to other factors, recent research has also highlighted the role of vitamin D in its development and progression.

Vitamin D is fat-soluble and essential for calcium metabolism and bone health. Vitamin D deficiency puts children at risk of rickets, conditions in which bone does not mature, which causes skeletal deformities and osteoporosis in adults. It is estimated that approximately 1 billion people worldwide have a vitamin D deficiency, including people living in sunny California.



Vitamin D is essential for oral health as well. It is responsible for calcium absorption, which is necessary for strong teeth and optimal bone health. Additionally, vitamin D has been found to possess anti-inflammatory properties.

Several studies have examined the relationship between periodontal disease and vitamin D levels. They found that low levels of vitamin D increase the severity of periodontal disease and create poor treatment responses compared to those with sufficient levels.

Other studies published in the Journal of Clinical Periodontology discovered that vitamin D supplementation reduced gum inflammation and improved periodontal health. By regulating the excessive im-



Dr. Dara, D.D.S.
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mune response, the tissue damage in the gums can be significantly reduced.

Additionally, vitamin D may enhance the body's ability to fight off bacterial infections, including the bacteria responsible for periodontal disease.

Maintaining adequate levels of vitamin D is important for overall health, including oral health. While sunlight exposure is a natural source of vitamin D, it can also be obtained through diet or supplements. Foods rich in vitamin D include fatty fish (such as salmon and mackerel), fortified dairy products, egg yolks, and mushrooms.

If you are concerned about your periodontal health or suspect you may have periodontal disease, it is essential to consult with a dental professional. They can evaluate your oral health, provide appropriate treatment if necessary, and offer guidance on maintaining optimal oral hygiene practices.

In conclusion, while maintaining good oral hygiene practices remains the primary way to prevent and manage periodontal disease, emerging research suggests that vitamin D may play a role in its development and progression. Adequate levels of vitamin D, whether obtained through sunlight exposure, diet, or supplements, help support optimal oral health.

This column is provided to Around Alhambra by Dr. Krasnodara Gashparova, DDS who is responsible for the content. Around Alhambra does not endorse medical advice or any remedies recommended by this author or any other provider.

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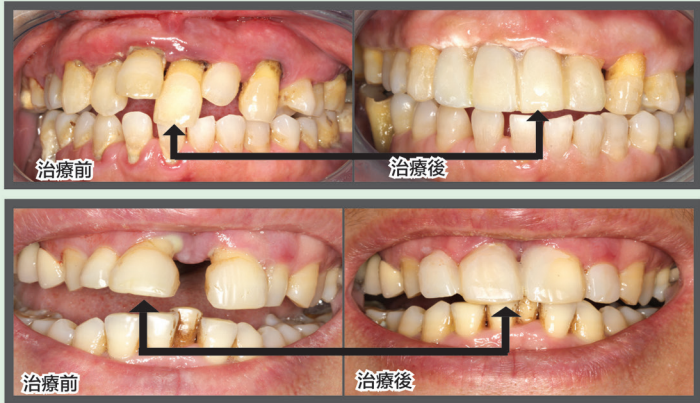


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Your Insurance



4 Questions to Ask When Selecting Your Medicare Plan

By Katherine Yu Simms

Starting October 15, many Americans will be faced with selecting their 2024 Medicare health insurance benefits as part of Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period, also referred to as AEP. Here are four crucial questions to consider when making your Medicare selection.



Katherine Yu Simms
Medicare Insurance Agent
lovemygoldenyears@gmail.com

1. Are my doctors covered by this plan?

Original Medicare (Part A/B) allows you to visit any doctor in the United States who accepts Medicare. If you choose a Medicare Advantage plan, you must select from a specific network of primary care doctors, specialists, and hospitals. However, if the doctor agrees to treat you and accepts Medicare, you can still see an out-of-network doctor for covered services, usually for a higher out-of-pocket cost.

2. Does the prescription drug coverage meet my needs?

Whether you choose a Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage plan, it is essential to look at the list of prescription drugs covered and ensure it includes your current medications. You will also want to make sure your local pharmacies can fill your prescription and whether you can get prescriptions sent to you by mail. If you have other questions about your medications, make a note.

3. What are my out-of-pocket costs?

Out-of-pocket expenses are the costs you are responsible for paying after Medicare has paid its share. This can include your monthly premium, deductibles, coinsurance (the percentage of costs of a covered health care service you pay after meeting your deductible), and copayments.

Reviewing this information before selecting a plan is critical, especially if you are on a fixed income. Please note that Original Medicare does not have an out-of-pocket maximum, while Medicare

Advantage plans generally have an out-of-pocket maximum.

4. What other benefits are included?

Take the time to review the different benefits available in each plan you are considering. You may want a plan that covers vision or dental exams—or perhaps it is vital to have hearing exams or a fitness program as part of the coverage. Whatever it is, make sure to include it in your decision-making process.

Now is an excellent opportunity to review your insurance options. Contact a Medicare Insurance Agent if you have any questions or concerns about your current plan. With Katherine Yu Simms, consultation and services of enrollment are entirely free!

Only some plans are available in your area. Any information provided is limited to plans offered in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all your options.

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1 How well does my current plan meet my needs?

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For more information, contact the Chamber at hello@alhambrachamber.org



From the Desk of Rev. Craig Statton



The Season of ThanksGIVING

One of the uniquely American holidays is Thanksgiving. Like Independence Day on the 4 of July, it centers around our country's founding. Our Thanksgiving tradition comes from the early days of America when the pilgrims gathered in the fall and invited the Indians who had helped them survive their first year to share a feast of Thanksgiving. Their Thanksgiving feast was a way to "give back" to those who had enabled them to survive and thrive in this new world.

But the themes of giving and giving thanks are more critical to our lives than a seasonal holiday. Over the last several years, scientists have begun to study the effects of gratitude and sharing on our lives. Robert A. Emmons, a professor of psychology at UC Davis, is widely regarded as the world's leading scientific expert in the study of gratitude and has noted that thankful, giving people have "stronger immune systems, fewer noticeable aches and pains, lower blood pressure, increased energy, a desire to exercise more, and experience more refreshing sleep." Giving

and saying "thank you" helps us create an attitude that affects our whole life.

Dr. Emmons also noted that giving and gratitude can be cultivated. We can produce new skills and reap wonderful results with a little concentrated effort. For example, plan to give to your favorite charity regularly and look for a way to serve the charity and/or donate financially. Make it a practice to say "thank you" when someone does something for you, even when it is the most mundane task, such as opening a door or pouring a glass of water. As a senior, remembering good times or events can also fill you with gratitude and have a positive effect on your life.

Dr. Emmons notes, "For seniors and those transitioning to a stage in life where they might be less independent than they once were, cultivating an attitude of giving and gratitude can make a notable difference in their quality of life." As Americans, we have a heritage of thanks and giving that we can extend to future generations. GIVE thanks!

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The Senior Resource Guide is a one-stop resource for Alhambra locals to discover experiences catering to the elderly community. The guide is designed to serve as a lifeline for the elderly, offering opportunities, savings, and resources that cater specifically to their unique needs and interests. It also provides a sense of belonging and support, ensuring that the elderly residents of Alhambra are active participants in the community.

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How Seniors Can Give Back to Their Community

In an ever-changing world, one constant has the power to radically transform lives and communities: the act of giving. Seniors possess a wealth of experience and wisdom and can make a significant impact by giving back through donations and volunteering.

to give back. Many seniors have built up financial stability over time, and donations can help fund critical programs, support vulnerable populations, and make a meaningful impact on the lives of those in need. Donating can provide tax benefits for seniors, too.



Seniors can choose to volunteer for social causes they are passionate about. Whether helping at a local animal shelter, participating in food drives, or supporting healthcare initiatives,

One way to do this is through sharing wisdom and experience. Don't be afraid to share your life lessons with those close to you. Volunteering in schools, community centers, or mentorship programs is another way to pass wisdom on to the younger generation. Whether it's offering career advice, teaching a craft, or simply being a patient listener, these interactions can be invaluable for both parties.

there are countless opportunities to get involved. Volunteering is not just a way to support important causes but can also provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Through donating, volunteering, and other ways of giving back, older adults can create a lasting legacy of love, care, and support, helping to build stronger and more connected communities for present and future generations. Age is no barrier to making a difference.

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Real Estate



Why Do Housing Prices Keep Increasing?

By Gary Frueholz

During the past year, the Federal Reserve has taken dramatic actions to increase interest rates in our economy. The Fed's goal has been to "cool" the economy and reduce inflation. To a degree, this appears to be occurring.

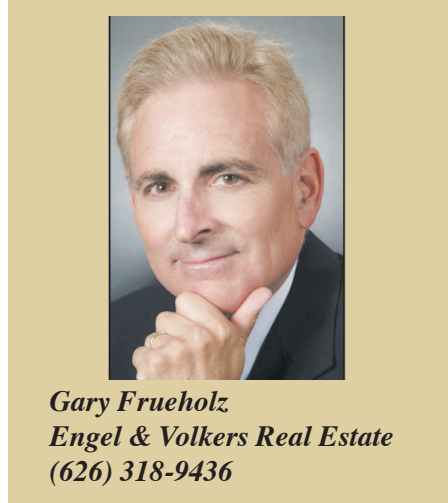
From the summer of 2022 to the summer of 2023, mortgage interest rates more than doubled. As mortgage interest rates increase, the housing price that buyers can afford with their current payment decreases. For the last half of 2022, this actually occurred. But as 2023 has unfolded, prices are again increasing even with the higher interest rates.

According to the S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller 20-City Composite Home Price Index, home values fell for seven consecutive months beginning in July 2022, the first decline in over a decade. However, by this summer in July, national home prices fully recovered to peak levels of 2022.

The factor overwhelming the increase in mortgage interest rates is the decrease in the inventory of homes for sale. And this shortage of homes for sale increases housing prices beyond the "cooling" effect of higher mortgage rates.

Various key factors have propelled this lowering of inventory. Sellers are reluctant to sell and repurchase a new home at the higher mortgage interest rates. California's underproduction of new homes during recent years further lowers inventories. California's high cost of living complicates the redirecting of family budgets to spend more on mortgages.

California lawmakers considered SB 827 in 2018, which would have legalized taller, denser buildings near transit stops. The bill failed to become law



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amid complaints from NIMBY ("Not In My BackYard") groups, environmental activists, and even union organizations.

California's largest metro areas average inventories this August were 32 percent below the previous August, according to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). This is more a reflection of the seller's reluctance to sell versus diminishing buyer demand. New listings to hit the market in California so far in 2023 are 32 to 36 percent below the prior year. This reduction in listings translates into a reduced volume of sales.

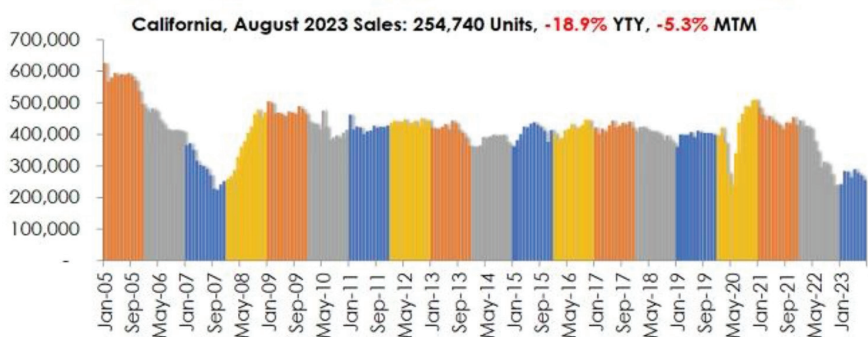
However, inventories of homes for sale in California are expected to increase in 2024. The California Association of Realtors (CAR) has forecast a significant increase in home sales next year in 2024. CAR anticipates sales to grow next year by 23 percent to 327,100 units. Mortgage interest rates will start to fall in 2024.

As borrowing costs decrease in 2024, the inventory of homes for sale will increase. This more favorable environment will motivate buyers and sellers to reenter the housing market next year and support first-time buyers. So, the near future for real estate commerce in California is cautiously optimistic.

Gary Frueholz is a realtor with Engel & Volkers Real Estate, a past member of the Alhambra Planning Commission, a Certified Senior Real Estate Specialist, and a Certified International Property Specialist. He can be reached at 626-318-9436. See his stories at garysstories.com.

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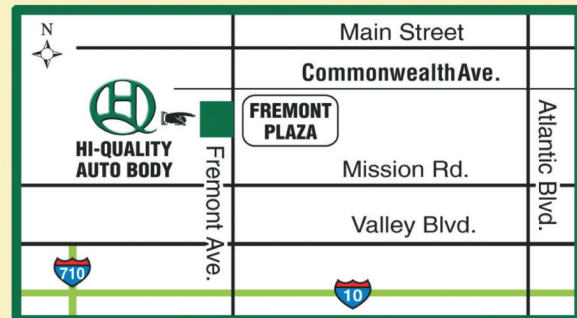
Sales dipped again as mortgage rates continued ascending



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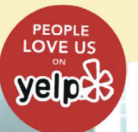
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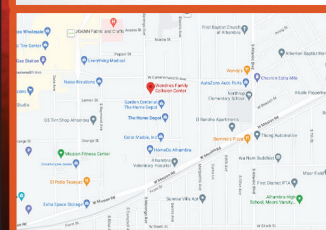
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SoCal Group | eXpRealty celebrating their grand opening in July.

SoCal Group brokered by eXpRealty Brings a Modern Spin on Real Estate to Alhambra

In the world of real estate, technology has rapidly transformed how buyers and sellers navigate the market. Traditional practices are giving way to modern, digital solutions, and one standout player at the forefront of this movement is SoCal Group brokered by eXpRealty, a locally based online cloud brokerage.

the global eXpRealty company, utilizes a cloud-based model to do business. Real estate agents associated with eXpRealty can work remotely with access to various digital tools and resources for buying, leasing, and selling. This approach allows for increased flexibility, reduced overhead costs, and client savings.

of camaraderie and collaboration. The workspace is designed to be fun and engaging, avoiding the rigid hierarchies often seen in traditional real estate agencies. The atmosphere is reminiscent of coworking spaces like WeWork, with music playing, communal meals, and a focus on making real estate a dynamic and enjoyable career. What truly sets them apart is their commitment to their agents—they create a space where agents can collaborate, strategize, and improve their production.

fun while helping the community with real estate goals in order to leave a lasting positive impression.

In today's digital age, a solid online presence is essential in the real estate industry. Clarence Yeung and Jimmy Tram understand this well and have mastered the art of digital marketing. Check out their active Instagram accounts, which feature strategies that include virtual tours and company updates.

When it comes to the competitive world of real estate, success often hinges on a combination of market knowledge, client dedication, and innovative approaches. Clarence Yeung and Jimmy Tram are leading the way by leveraging their partnership and affiliation with eXpRealty. Check out their active Instagram accounts, which feature posts that include virtual tours and company updates.

Connect with Clarence Yeung and Jimmy Tram

Find Clarence Yeung at [clarenceyeung.com](https://www.clarenceyeung.com) and on Instagram as [@yeungmoneys](https://www.instagram.com/yeungmoneys).

Find Jimmy Tram at [jimmytram.com](https://www.jimmytram.com) and on Instagram as [@jimmy_tram](https://www.instagram.com/jimmy_tram).

Stay Updated

For the latest updates and information, follow SoCal Group brokered by eXpRealty on Instagram at [@socalgroup](https://www.instagram.com/socalgroup).



Started by Clarence Yeung and Jimmy Tram and officially launched in July of this year, the company is unique because it is run and owned entirely by real estate agents. SoCal Group|eXpRealty is an agent-centric brokerage focusing on residential and commercial sales, rentals, and property management. The way SoCal Group|eXpRealty views it, they are Netflix and typical brick-and-mortars are Blockbuster — the modern way of doing real estate is by harnessing the latest technology.

Now, eXpRealty is bringing this modern and technology-driven approach to the Alhambra and greater SGV real estate market via Yeung, Tram, and their business partners, with whom they share most profits. In fact, the general work culture at the SoCal Group|eXpRealty office is unique in many ways.

Creating a vibrant and friendly work environment is at the core of Yeung and Tram's vision. "Every agent in that office is connected through our revenue share program," said Yeung, which fosters a sense

Clarence Yeung's career in real estate began in 2014. Over the years, he worked with various real estate brokerages before helping to found SoCal Group|eXpRealty. With nearly a decade of real estate experience, Clarence is dedicated to sharing his knowledge and resources with fellow agents embarking on their real estate careers.

Jimmy Tram's journey into real estate began two years ago. As a close friend of Clarence for over 25 years (they played high school basketball together), Jimmy transitioned from a business in wholesale distribution, logistics, sales operations, and finance to real estate when he realized his priorities in life shifted after having a family (and a home of his own). His motivation to be his own boss and control his time led him to eXpRealty.

Now, Tram and Yeung work on a mindset of abundance. They regularly discuss leveraging that to help each other get more business. They also make sure to focus on



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