

## What Is Killing Our Bees?

By Katharine Russ

Honeybees, or *Apis mellifera*, were brought to North America by 17th century settlers. Honeybees represent a highly organized society with various bees having specific duties. There are currently 26 recognized subspecies of the honeybee and all are in danger of extinction.

Most people don't think twice about bees and are often mindless when spraying pesticides to kill weeds or bugs on their lawns or near their homes. Not many consider the impact that bees have on our food supply.

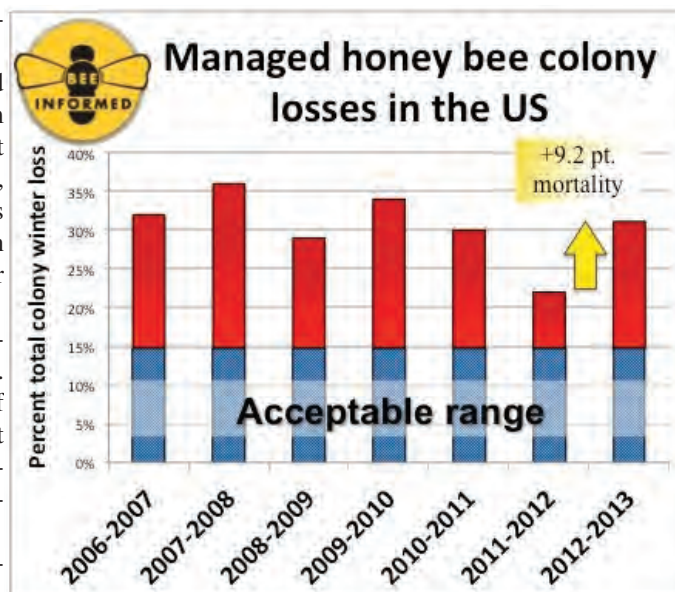
Over one third of our foods rely on honeybees. Did you know that one of every three bites of food comes from plants pollinated by honeybees and other pollinators? That includes apples, nuts, strawberries, blueberries, carrots, broccoli, cherries, onions and a host of other foods. Bees contribute more than \$30 billion to U.S. crop production and without them; the costs of those foods would soar or cease to be sold.

Around 2006, bee's suddenly started dying and disappearing in alarming numbers and without explanation. Scientists and experts still do not know the actual cause of what has been named Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) but a "first of its kind" study published July 24, 2013 in the journal, PLOS ONE, provides some insight into "beemagedon" that is more complex than once thought.

Parasites and pathogens are considered as principal actors, in particular the ectoparasitic mite, *Varroa destructor*, associated viruses and the microsporidian, *Nosema ceranae*. But the study, by Dennis vanEngelsdorp et.al, identified a number of pesticides and fungicides that contaminate pollen collected by bees to feed the hive.

Bee expert, vanEngelsdorp is the Pennsylvania state apiarist and one of the nation's most prominent advocates and researchers of bees. In September 2013, vanEngelsdorp told Planet Green's Rachel Cermansky, "We know that the bees are dying from the equivalent of the flu, and so they're getting bad virus infections. But it's not the same flu--there are different strains and different types of viruses bees can get.

CCD bees have a lot more pathogens than healthy bees do. The question is, why are these bees suddenly so susceptible to these different pathogens, and we don't have an answer to that yet. We have to look at the various factors. It's like heart disease in people--you don't get heart disease from one factor, it's a combination of factors that contribute to heart disease. So that's what we're trying to do now is figure out what factors combined contribute to CCD."



"Bee Informed" is a Partnership is funded by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture- USDA and is an extension project aimed at decreasing the number of honeybee colonies that die in a winter season. Their most recent preliminary report, published in May 2013, said, "On average, U.S. beekeepers lost 45.1% of the colonies in their operation during the winter of 2012/2013. This is a 19.8 point or 78.2% increase in the average operational loss compared to the previous winter (2011/2012), which was estimated at 25.3%.

The Agriculture Research Service (ARS), USDA's internal research agency, is leading several efforts aimed at bee health and are studying bee diseases and parasites. In conjunction with several Federal and State departments of agriculture, universities, and private companies, studies are being conducted to find causes of disease and treatments to keep the bees healthy.

The USDA reported, "The total number of managed honey bee colonies has decreased from over 5 million in the 1940s to only 2 million today. At the same time, the call for hives to provide pollination services has continued to increase."

Because of the shortage of bees, farmers are forced to transport hives over longer distances, driving those who rent the hives to pay more than 20% above normal costs.

In addition, chemicals used for agricultural spraying of other insects and pests are toxic to honeybees. Because the bee's forage up to several miles from the hive, they can fly into areas actively being sprayed by farmers or they can collect pollen from contaminated flowers. Foraging bees have to fly an estimated 55,000 miles to produce a pound of honey--that's roughly 2 million flowers a honeybee must visit.

In March 2012, the Center For Food Safety (CFS) along with Beekeepers and several Public Interest Groups sued the Environmental Protective Agency (EPA) over the use of "bee toxic" pesticides that they contend are rushed to market with little public oversight.

"America's beekeepers cannot survive for long with the toxic environment EPA has supported. Bee-toxic pesticides in dozens of widely used products, on top of many other stresses our industry faces, are killing our bees and threatening our livelihoods," said plaintiff Steve Ellis, a Minnesota and California beekeeper. "Our country depends on bees for crop pollination and honey production. It's time for EPA to recognize the value of bees to our food system and agricultural economy."

The lawsuit seeks to address bee CCD and demands that the EPA protect livelihoods, rural economies and environment.

(cont. on page 3)

## "Rally in the Valley"

By Nina Royal

A coalition of nine Region One Los Angeles City Neighborhood Councils, pooled their resources and put together what they called the "Rally in the Valley", whose purpose was to encourage community members to run for their local Board election or at least become involved with their councils. They pulled their money for advertising as well.

Guest Speakers included Grayce Liu, General Manager, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment {DONE}, Commissioner Kevin James, President, Dept. of Public Works Commission, Monica Radcliff, District 6 Representative, LAUSD, and Commissioner Lydia Grant, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners and Stephen Box, Director of Outreach and Communication for DONE.

Each Council had a table with a banner and was staffed with Board Members who did outreach and offered refreshments.

Neighborhood Councils in Region One in the North East San Fernando Valley include: Arleta, Foothill Trails Distinct, Mission Hills, North Hills East, Pacoima, Panorama City, Sunland-Tujunga, Sun Valley and Sylmar. Their elections will be held on Saturday, March 8.

Neighborhood Councils in Region Two in the North West San Fernando Valley include: Chatsworth, Granada North, Granada Hills South, North Hills West, Northridge East, Northridge South, Northridge West and Porter Ranch. Their elections will be held on Saturday, March 1.

For more information regarding the elections, visit www.empowerla.org/elections or call: 818-293-vote (8683)





# COMMUNITY NEWS

## You Should Know...

By Nina Royal

The **CERT and First Aid/CPR classes** scheduled to be held at Pacoima Charter School beginning the week of **January 7th** have been cancelled due to lack of minimum registration requirements for groups. The Los Angeles Police Department's Foothill Division will reschedule the classes to be held on an undetermined date in June. They are going be held at the station, which will be a more central location with better parking. Email Sergeant Herrold Egger at [22198@lapd.lacity.org](mailto:22198@lapd.lacity.org), before June to register for either of the classes.

The **20th anniversary of the 1994 Northridge Earthquake** is being commemorated at a ceremony hosted by Councilmember Englander to recognize local community heroes. It will take place **Friday, January 17**, at 6:00–8:30 am at the Northridge Recreation Center, 10058 Reseda Blvd, Northridge.

**Free Special Preparedness Workshops**, also in remembrance of the Northridge Earthquake for individuals, families and businesses, are being offered by The Valley Economic Alliance at California State University, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge from 8:30 to 1:30 pm on **Friday, January 17**.

**United Chambers of Commerce** will hold their annual **Legislative Aide Recognition Luncheon on Wednesday, January 22**, 11:30 a.m. at the Porter Ranch Country Club, 19216 Singing Hills Drive, Northridge.

**Congressman Adam Schiff** is holding a Town Hall Meeting to discuss the “Rim of the Valley” on **Wednesday, January 22**, 6:00 pm, at the Crescenta-Canada YMCA Auditorium, 1930 Foothill Blvd in La Canada-Flintridge. The National Park Service has already provided a recommendation to Congress to create a San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. Congress passed Schiff’s bill directing the Park Service to conduct a special resource study to determine the possibility of providing federal protection to the “Rim of the Valley”—an area that stretches from the existing Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, through the Simi, Santa Susanna and Verdugo Hills and on to the San Gabriel Mountains.

**LAPD Assistant Chief Michel R. Moore**, Office of Special Operations, will be the featured guest speaker at the Police Activity League Supporters (PALS) on **Thursday, January 23** at No. Hollywood Police Station, Community Room, 11640 Burbank Blvd., in No. Hollywood beginning at 6:00 pm.

**Get a free inspection of your Child’s Car Seat** by the CHP, **Thursday, January 23**, beginning at 6:00 pm. The event is sponsored by Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, District 46 Representative, at the Help Group Parking Lot at 13130 Burbank Blvd., Sherman Oaks. RSVP to [Kimberleo@icloud.com](mailto:Kimberleo@icloud.com) or 818-906-9976 for an appointment.

**Museum “Free-for-All”** which includes free admission to 20 So. California Museums is being held on **Saturday, January 25**, for the ninth year. The museums, presenting art, cultural heritage, natural history and science, will be open free of charge for general museum admission only and may not apply to special ticket exhibitions. For more information visit [SoCalMuseums.org](http://SoCalMuseums.org).

**State of the Valley Public Safety Town Hall** featuring, Valley Top Cop, Deputy Chief Jorge A. Villegas, Operations Valley Bureau, will be held on **Wednesday, January 29**, from 6:00–8:00 pm., at Van Nuys City Hall, 14410 Sylvan St., Van Nuys.

**Los Angeles City Fire Department’s CERT Unit**, also known as the Disaster Preparedness Headquarters was moved at the beginning of the year from Sherman Oaks to Frank Hotchkin Memorial training Center, 1700 Stadium Way, Los Angeles.

## LADWP Releases Final 2013 Power Integrated Resource Plan



The Final 2013 Power Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) was presented to the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition (LANNC) on Saturday, January 4 at the DWP Facility in Los Angeles. *By Aram Benyamini*

According to the LADWP, the Final 2013 IRP is a map to guide this power transformation over the next 20 years and is supposed to balance the following key objectives: superior reliability and supply of electric service, competitive electric rates consistent with sound business principles and responsible environmental stewardship exceeding all regulatory obligations

However, the DWP say they face a number of challenges and critical issues that are driving the power supply transformation. Many of them are mandates with fixed deadline dates that converge over the next decade. Other critical issues and challenges, such as rebuilding infrastructure are necessary to ensure future reliability of electric service to customers. These challenges include but are not limited to:

- Hiring and training a skilled work force to implement the programs described 2013 IRP while dealing with the following issues an concerns:
  - Exodus of retiring workers 1,200 to 1,700 by 2023
  - Knowledge transfer of 37,400 years of experience

- Workforce gaps – 416 current unfilled positions
- Filling some positions can take 6 years or longer
- Future workforce requiring new skills, capabilities and expertise to implement the
- Mandated and reliability programs of the IRP
- Addressing the critical need to replace and/or upgrade again infrastructure, including the distribution, transmission, substations, and generation infrastructure. Also reducing the number and duration of outages. They also need to integrate new variable renewable energy resources such as wind and solar power. Efforts are underway to expand on the existing Power Reliability Program. They are developing a new Power System Reliability Program to incorporate distribution, generation transmission and substation with a new prioritization model to improve system reliability.
- They have made significant investments in newly created and redesigned energy efficiency program offerings to achieve a goal of 10% less customer usage by 2020, with a target of up to 15% pending the results a new potential study to be completed this March.
- They have a strict timeline for modernizing their coastal generating units to replace over-aged equipment. Also to reconfigure the units to be more fuel efficient, better integrate intermittent renewable energy and satisfy OC

regulatory requirements under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Clean Water Act Section 316(b).

- SB 2(1X) requires 33 percent renewable resources by 2020 with interim target of 25 percent by 2016 and ramp up 2 percent each year to reach 33 percent by 2020. They met the first RPS goal of 20 percent in 2010, The 2013 IRP lays out the strategy, and timing and cost for meeting the upcoming RPS targets and includes several local distributed solar options for consideration.
- Under SB 1368, the California Greenhouse Gas Emissions Performance Standard Act, the LADWP will stop importing power from two coal-fired power plants when current operational and energy purchase contracts expire-Navajo Generating Station in Arizona by 2019 and Intermountain Power Project (IPP) in Utah by 2027. The DWP’s strategy is to pursue early replacement of its coal-fired generation and several alternative scenarios are analyzed in the 3012 IRP.

IHRP includes the formation of a Workforce Development Task Force utilizing cooperative joint labor-management committee process. The updated 2013 Report, which is an up date of the 2012, does not appear to be on line yet. However you can see the 2012 Report on line at [www.ladwp.com](http://www.ladwp.com) and you can click on Energy Report. A hard copy of the 2013 report should be available at your local library.

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# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Rim of the Valley Town Hall Meeting to be Held



Congressman Adam Schiff  
28th Congressional District

On Wednesday, January 22nd at 6 pm, I will be hosting a town hall meeting at the Crescenta-Cañada YMCA to discuss the future of the Rim of the Valley. The National Park Service has already provided a recommendation to Congress to create a San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. While this is only a recommendation, Congresswoman Chu, who has spearheaded the San Gabriel initiative, will likely introduce legislation in the near future to act upon it.

Because some of the San Gabriel area overlaps with land included in the Rim of the Valley study area, I want to hear from you and other stakeholders, including members of organizations, businesses and other institutions, to ensure that

any legislation will create the most useful and environmentally sound national recreation area. I am particularly interested to hear whether residents would like the Rim of the Valley Park to become part of the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area, the San Gabriel Park, or a new Rim of the Valley Park.

In 2008, Congress passed my bill directing the Park Service to conduct a special resource study to determine the possibility of providing federal protection to the Rim of the Valley – an area that stretches from the existing Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, through the Simi Hills and Santa Susannas, Verdugos, and on to the San Gabriel Mountains. The study explored whether any portion of the Rim of the Valley study area was eligible to become a unit of a national park system or added to an existing one, and how the resources could be protected and best utilized by the public.

In the fall of 2012, the National Park Service released its preliminary findings, and offered four initial alternatives – Alternatives A through D – and opened up the conversation for public comment. Thousands of residents and members of government agencies, organizations and other institutions submitted their comments to both the NPS and Congressman Schiff’s office. Over 4750 individuals wrote in supporting a combination of the boundary adjustment for alternatives C and D, which would adjust the boundary of the recreation area to connect many people in urban areas to the park, as well as provide key habitat protections.

The Park Service is now in the process of developing a recommendation to present to Congress that will take into account the public comments, and expects to publish a draft of their recommendation to Congress for the Rim of the Valley this summer.

## Jim McDonnell Announces Campaign for L.A. County Sheriff



Jim McDonnell

(Long Beach, California) Chief Jim McDonnell, who has been heading the Long Beach Police Department since 2010, after serving as the second in command of the Los Angeles Police Department before retiring, announced that he is running for Los Angeles County Sheriff in the June 3, 2014 election.

McDonnell served with the Los Angeles Police Department for 29 years, holding every rank in the department up to Chief of Staff and he is the immediate past president of the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs’ Association.

He also served on the Citizens’ Commission on Jail Violence, an independent blue ribbon panel that investigated and issued a report with recommendations to bring about lasting and meaningful changes within the Los Angeles County jails and has been an active leader in state and national law enforcement and criminal justice bodies.

McDonnell announced that he begins his candidacy with broad, bi-partisan support, including many top local leaders in law enforcement.

McDonnell’s initial endorsements include (all titles are for identification purposes only; organizational support is not implied):

- Jackie Lacey, Los Angeles County District Attorney
- Don Knabe, Los Angeles County Supervisor
- Steve Cooley, former Los Angeles County District Attorney
- Charlie Beck, Chief of Police, City of Los Angeles
- Mike Feuer, Los Angeles City Attorney
- Bob Foster, Long Beach Mayor
- Bob Hertzberg, former Assembly Speaker
- Rick Caruso, former President, L.A. Police Commission
- John Van de Kamp, former California Attorney General & Los Angeles District Attorney
- Tony Cardenas, Congress member
- State Senator Ted Lieu

- Felipe Fuentes, Los Angeles City Council member
- Nury Martinez, Los Angeles City Council member
- Walter Allen III, Mayor of Covina
- Fred Gaines, Mayor of Calabasas
- Terry Hara, Deputy Chief, Los Angeles Police Department
- Alan Skobin, former Vice President, Los Angeles Police Commission
- Lloyd Greif, former Chair, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
- Bert & Jane Boeckmann, former President, L.A. Police Commission & owners, Galpin Ford
- Naomi Rainey-Pierson, Philanthropist/civil rights leader
- Nina Royal, Publisher/Editor, North Valley Reporter, Treasurer, STNC
- Monica Harmon, Speak Out Against Bullying, Inc.
- McDonnell has hired SG&A Campaigns (Parke Skelton, Steve Barkan, Mike Shimpock) to handle his campaign

### What Is Killing Our Bees? (cont. from page 1)

According to the CFS Press Release, “The suit comes on the heels of a challenging season for California’s almond farmers, who produce 80% of the world’s almonds. Almond growers rely on beekeepers to bring literally billions of bees from across the country to pollinate their orchards. However, many beekeepers are reporting losses of over 50% this year and the shortages have left many California almond growers without enough bees to effectively pollinate their trees.”

National Geographic’s Jennifer S. Holland’s article titled The Plight Of The Honeybee, (May 10, 2013) noted, “Last year a French study indicated that this same class of chemi-

cals can fog honeybee brains and alter behavior. And a British study on bumblebees, a natural pollinator in decline in many places, reported neonicotinoids keep bees from supplying their hives with enough food for queen production.”

We, as a society, can do our part by planting plants that are good sources of nectar and pollen. There are several websites with lists of dozens of flowers and plants that will not only complement any garden, but will help sustain honeybees for generations to come.

Avoiding the use of pesticides during the mid day is strongly recommended because honeybees are most likely to be foraging on flowering plants.

For more information visit: [www.beeinformed.org](http://www.beeinformed.org)  
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/news/docs.htm?docid=15572>  
<http://www.thedailygreen.com/going-green/tips/bee-friendly-plants>

Crop Pollination Exposes Honey Bees to Pesticides Which Alters Their Susceptibility to the Gut Pathogen *Nosema ceranae* (Published: July 24, 2013 DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0070182)

*Editor’s Note: Katharine Russ is an Investigative Reporter and writes for the NVR as well as City Watch. Katharine.russ@charter.net What Is Killing Our Bees?*

## LANCC Installs Officers

The Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition (LANCC) is an alliance for all 95 neighborhood councils across the City. This is the grass-roots organization that neighborhood council leaders can go to with issues and accomplishments once a month. Many issues come through the LANCC such as land use, public safety, council files, signage and more. The LANCC held their elections on January 4 and Cindy Cleghorn from the Sunland-Tujunga NC and Mike O’Gara from the Sun Valley Area NC were on the committee to elect these officers. The LANCC meets on the first Saturday of each month. Info.: [lanccc.org](http://lanccc.org)



L-R: Frank Wada, Glenn Bailey (Treasurer), Connie Acosta (Secretary), Fred Mariscal (Vice President), Terrence Gomes (President), Mike O’Gara, Cindy Cleghorn, Grayce Liu (DONE GM)

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**Thursday Jan 16**

**FTDNC Gen. Meeting**  
www.ftdnc.org for location  
7:00 pm

**Neighborhood Watch**  
Block Captain's Mtng.  
Sylmar High School  
13050 Borden Ave., Syl  
6:30 pm

**Northridge East NC**  
Northridge Academy  
9601 Zelzah Ave., Nrdge

**NHNE NC Board Meet**  
L.A. Fire Station 89  
7063 Laurel Cyn., No Ho

**Sylmar NC Equestion Com.**  
Sylmar Rec Ctr  
13109 Bordon Ave. Syl  
7:30 pm

**Sunday, Jan 19**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**Monday, Jan 20**

**Martin L. King Day**  
Breakfast w/Mayor Garcetti  
Boys & Girls Club SFV  
11251 Glenoaks blvd, Pac  
8:00 am

**Valley Vote**  
Galpin Ford  
15555 Roscoe Blvd., MH  
6:30 pm

**STNC LUC – Cancelled**  
North Valley City Hall  
7747 Foothill Blvd., S-T  
7:00 pm

**GHNNC LUC-cancelled**  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
7:00 pm

**Tuesday, Jan 21**

**Arleta NC Gen. Meeting**  
Beachy Elem. School  
9757 Beachy Ave., Arl  
6:30 pm

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**CERT, Free course**  
Community Emergency  
ResponseTeam  
LAPD/CPAB sponsored  
11016 Norris Ave., Pac  
Sgt Herrold Egger  
818-756-8866  
Nina Royal  
818-563-1962  
6:30 pm

**GHNNC Gen. Meet**  
Exec Comm Mtg  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
6:00 pm

**LAPD Neighbrhd Watch**  
7747 Foothill Blvd., Tuj  
6:30 pm-7:30 pm

**Sylmar Block Captains**  
& Neighborhood Watch  
LAPD Mission Station  
11121 Sepulveda Blvd., MH  
6:30 pm-7:45 pm

**Thursday Jan 23**

**PCNC**  
Brd of Dir Mtg.  
Mission Comm, Hosp.  
14860 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
2nd Fl, Rm. 208  
818-714-2133  
6:30 pm

**SNC Board Mtg**  
13109 Borden Ave., Syl  
6:30 pm

**Saturday Jan 25**

**PNC Ed and Com**  
Engagemnt Fair  
10115 Haddon Ave., Pac  
11:00 am-2:00 pm

**LAPD Cadets Youth Pro-gram**  
New Session - FREE  
Ages 13-20  
213-486-1931

**Sunday, Jan 26**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**Monday, Jan 27**

**Arleta NC**  
Comm Imprvmnt Com  
13306 Branford St., Arl  
6:30 pm

**FTDNC**  
Rules & Elec Comm  
9747 Wheatland Ave., SH  
7:00 pm

**GHNNC Gen. Meeting**  
12227 Balboa Blvd., GH  
6:30 pmSVANC LUC  
9040 Sunland Bl., SV  
6:30 pm-8:30 pm

**Tuesday, Jan 28**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**CERT, Free course**  
Community Emergency  
Respns Team  
CPAB sponsored  
11016 Norris Ave., Pac  
Sgt Herrold Egger  
818-756-8866  
Nina Royal  
818-563-1962  
6:30 pm

**Wednesday, Jan 29**

**STNC Exc Com mtg**  
N.V. City Hall  
7747 Foothill Blvd., S-T  
6:00 pm-8:00 pm

**Saturday, Feb 1**

**Friends of Granada Hills Library**  
10640 Petit Ave., GH  
10:30 am

**LADWP MOU Comm.**  
Hollywd Com. Center  
6501 Fountain Ave .Holly,  
8:45 am Info: LANCC.org

**LANCC Meeting**  
Hollywd Com. Center  
6501 Fountain Ave., Holly,  
8:45 am Info: LANCC.org

**PCNC LUC**  
Mission Comm. Hospital  
14860 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
818-894-7841  
6:30 pm

**Sunday, Feb 2**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**Monday, Feb 3**

**Mission Com Clinic**  
Ground Breaking  
8527 Sepulveda Blvd., No. Hills  
10:00 am -12:00 pm

**Northridge South NC**  
Northridge Middle School  
17960 Chase St. Nrth  
Exec. Com.: 5:00 pm  
Transport. & Public Works: 5:30  
Budget and Finance: 5:45  
Planning & Land Use: 6:15

**STNC LUC**  
7727 Foothill Blvd., S-T  
7:00 pm

**Mission Hills NC**  
Gen. Meeting  
Mission Police Station  
11121 Sepulveda Blvd., MH  
6:45 pm

**North Hills West NC**  
Sam's Café  
15725 Parthenia St., No.Hills.  
6:30 pm.

**FTDNC**  
Bldg & Outrch Meet.  
9747 Wheatland Ave SH  
6 :00 pm  
Exec Brd Mtg follows

**Tuesday, Feb 4**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**FTDNC LUC**  
9747 Wheatland Ave., SH  
7:00 pm

**SVANC**  
Ex Board Mtg  
9040 "B", Sunland Blvd., SV  
6:30 pm-8:30 pm

**Wednesday, Feb 5**

**FTDNC Equest Comm.**  
9747 Wheatland Ave. SH  
7:00 pm

**PCNC LUC**  
8700 Van Nuys Blvd.  
6:30 pm 818-894-7841

**Rotary Club**  
Coco's Restaurant  
10521 Sunland Blvd., S-T  
7:00 pm 818-951-5299

**MHNC Safety Com**  
Mission Police Station  
11121 Sepulveda Blvd., MH  
6:30 pm

**Thursday, Feb 6**

**Kiwanis Club Of Nrdge**  
CSUN Orange Grove Bistro  
Zalzah & Nordhoff St., Nrdge.  
12:00 pm

**4th Annual Race for Youth**  
Mission Comm. Police Council  
MB2 Raceway, Kart Racing  
13943 Balboa Blvd., Syl.  
12:00-10:00 pm.

**Saturday, Feb 8**

**PlanCheckNC**  
Plan For A Healthy LA  
10:00-12:00 pm  
www.plancheckncla.com

**Sunday, Feb 9**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**GHNNC**  
Emerg Prepared.  
Sub-Comm Mtg  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
7: 00 pm

**GHSNC Gen. Meet.**  
Rawley Hall  
10535 Zelzah Ave., GH  
6:30pm

**GH Womens Club Meet**  
10666 White Oak Ave., GH  
10:00 am

**Kagel Cyn Civic Assoc.**  
Dexter Park,  
11053 No. Trail Rd., KC  
7:00 pm

**NHENC BD Meeting**  
15435 Rayen St., NH  
6:30 pm

**North Hills East NC**  
15305 Rayen St., No Hills  
6:30 pm

**PNC Outreach Com.**  
Pacoima Library  
13505 Van Nuys Blvd., Pac.  
5:00 pm-6:00 pm

**FTDNC Budget Comm**  
9797 Wheatland Ave., SH  
7:00 pm

**SNC LUC**  
Sylmar Park  
13109 Bordon Ave., Syl  
6:30 pm

**PCNC Committee Meetings**  
US. Bank  
PCNC Office (4th Floor)  
14500 Roscoe Blvd., PC  
Commerce: 9:00 am  
Outreach: 5:00 pm  
City Life: 5:30 pm  
Rule: 6:00 pm  
Education: 6:40 pm

**SVANC Gen Meet**  
10631 Vinedale Ave., SV  
6:30 pm

**SNC Outreach Com.**  
Sylmar Park  
13109 Bordon Ave., Syl  
6:30 pm

**Northridge West NC**  
Beckford Elem. School  
19130 Tulsa St., Nrdge  
7:00 pm

**MHNC Budget & Finance**  
LAPD Mission Station  
16161 Sepulveda Blvd., MH  
818-892-2414  
7:00 pm

**GHNNC Safety Comm**  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
2:00 pm

**Sun Valley Chamber Meet**  
Villa Scalabrini Ret Home  
10631 Vindale Ave., SV  
12:00 pm

**Monday, Feb 10**

**PCNC**  
9:00 am: Comrce Com Mtg  
5:00 pm: Outrch Com Mtg  
5:30 pm: City Life  
and Edu Com Mtg's  
6:00 pm: PCNC Rules Com  
mtg.

**Sylmar NC**  
Land Use Mtg.  
13109 Borden Ave., Syl  
6:30 pm

**Tuesday, Feb 11**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents : "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
818-352-3420

**GHNNC**  
Public Safety Comm Mtg  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
2:00 pm

**SVANC**  
Board Mtg  
10631 Vinedale Ave, SV  
6:30PM

**Devonshire CPAB Mtg**  
17037 Plummer St.,Nrdge  
7:00 pm

**GHNNC**  
Citywide Issues Mtg  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
6:30 pm

**LAPD-CPAB**  
Mission Division  
11121 Sepulveda Blvd., MH  
6:15 pm

**Rotary Club**  
Coco's Restaurant  
10521 Sunland Blvd., Slnd  
7:00 pm 818-951-5299

**Devonshire CPAB Mtg**  
17037 Plummer St., Nrdge  
7:00 pm

**GHNNC**  
Citywide Issues Mtg  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
6:30 pm

**LAPD-CPAB**  
Mission Division  
11121 Sepulveda Blvd., MH  
6:15 pm

**Rotary Club**  
Coco's Restaurant  
10521 Sunland Blvd., Slnd  
818-951-5299  
7:00 pm

**Wednesday, Feb 12**

**STNC Gen Meet.**  
NV City Hall  
7747 Foothill Blvd., S-T  
818-951-7411  
7:00 pm

**FTDNC Exec. Board**  
9747 Wheatland Ave., SH  
7:00 pm

**Sun Valley Beautiful**  
9081 Tujunga Ave., SV  
11:30 am

**Thursday, Feb 13**

**LAPD Foothill Div. CPAB**  
Japanese Amer. Comm. Ctr  
12953 Branford, Pac  
818-756-8866  
6:00 PM

**Little Landers Presentation**  
Bolton Hall  
10110 Commerce Ave, Tuj  
818-352-3420  
1:00 pm-3:00 pm

**VANC Meeting**  
Sherman Oaks Hospital  
4929 Van Nuys Blvd., SO  
6:30 pm

**Friday, Feb 14**  
**VALENTINE'S DAY**

**Kagel Cnyn Civic Assoc.**  
Dexter Park  
11053 No. Trail Rd., KC  
7:00 pm

GHNNC, Rules &  
Policy Comm.  
11139Woodley Ave., GH  
4:00 pm

Little Landers Hist. Society  
Presents:  
Bolton Hall Museum  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
1:00 pm –3:00 pm  
818-352-3420

**Sunday, Feb 16**

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**Monday, Feb 17**

**PCNC**  
Public Safety Com  
Mtg .6:00 pm  
Finance Com  
Mtg.7:00 pm  
Social Media  
Com Mtg. 8:00 pm

**Valley Vote**  
Galpin Ford  
15555 Roscoe Blvd.,  
6:30 pm

**GHNNC LUC**  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
7:00 pm

**STNC Land Use Comm**  
NV City Hall  
7747 Foothill Blvd., S-T  
7:00 pm

**Tuesday, Feb 18**

**Arleta NC Gen. Meeting**  
Beachy Elem. School  
9757 Beachy Ave., Arl  
6:30 pm

**Bolton Hall Museum**  
Presents "Time Exposure"  
Docent Tours  
10110 Commerce Ave., Tuj  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**GHNNC Gen. Meet**  
Exec Comm Mtg  
11139 Woodley Ave., GH  
6:00 pm

**LAPD Neighbrhd Watch**  
7747 Foothill Blvd., Tuj  
6:30 pm-7:30 pm

**S-T Neighborhood Watch**  
7747 Foothill Blvd., S-T  
6:30 pm

**Sylmar Block Captains**  
& Neighborhood Watch  
LAPD Mission Station  
11121 Sepulveda Blvd., MH  
6:30 pm-7:45 pm

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# COMMENTARY

## Garcetti and Galperin vs Union Leader D'Arcy

By David Barron



Why would DWP General Manager Ron Nichols and union leader Brian D'Arcy have a need to pump \$40 million dollars over the years into two secret non-profits called Joint Training Institute and Joint Safety Institute? In this day in age all Human Resource Departments have a warehouse full of labor laws that protect employees. Hopefully, Controller Ron Galperin, who announced that he will be issuing subpoenas, will also follow up with public hearings for the benefit of ratepayers who are entitled to know the details.

And,...why are City officials asking ratepayers to conserve more energy, when a California Energy Commission report stated that since the adoption of the Energy Code

in 1978 to about 2011, Californians have saved \$56 billion in energy cost. Also, the Commission's report further said that because energy conservation was successful and that between 2011 and the end of 2013 Californians would save an estimated additional \$23 billion in electricity and natural gas cost, thus, preventing having to spend billions of rate payer dollars on building 15 additional power plants. Then why are DWP utility rate hikes predicted to increase to equal a house mortgage payment?

These are the solutions to this madness. Non-profit organizations must be willing to reveal their financials in order to solicit for a government grant. We must vote out incumbents.

Fix the broken Civil Service System and prevent elected officials from hiring family or friends, who do not have prior municipal experience to fill important positions. The Mayor

must appoint qualified Civil Service Commissioners with actual hands on Human Resource Management experience. City officials must allow the H.R. Director to do their job freely, such as enhancing employee's job strengths as well as addressing all city departments' personnel complaint issues. They must be able to do so without interference from supervisor's, or city council members such as what council member Herb Wesson is apparently trying to do in the sexual harassment complaint against his colleague, councilmember Jose Huizar.

Most importantly, repeal the City's business tax which has driven employers out of town and they would most likely return and put our people back in the workforce when it is repealed..

*Editor's note: Mr. Barron is a Civil Servant, local community activist and a Commentator for the NVR.*

## Are All Gun Owners Mentally Ill?

By Michael Connelly



On June 25, 2013 I posted an article "Psychiatry as a Weapon of Tyranny" at <http://michaelconnelly.jigsy.com/entries/general/psychiatry-as-a-weapon-of-tyranny>. I pointed out the history behind using an ever-broadening definition of mental illness as a way to disarm and ultimately imprison the potential enemies of dictators throughout history. I also pointed out that this technique was being used against American military veterans, and with the IRS now having access to the medical records of all Americans, this type of action would be broadened to include many more U.S. citizens.

On January 3, 2014, Obama has issued two new illegal and unconstitutional Executive Actions (EA) on gun control that attempt to codify my predictions into law. The new EAs exempt the states from complying with Federal privacy laws and encourage states to disclose confidential medical information to the FBI so that more people can be placed on the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and prohibited from purchasing firearms. (Note: Early last year, President Obama proposed 23 executive actions on gun control as well, pushing healthcare providers to ask their patients whether they own firearms.)

This is despite the fact that in order to legally be placed in the NICS database, an individual must be a convicted felon or legally adjudicated to be mentally ill to the point of being a danger to themselves or others. Obama and the Veterans Administration (VA) are already bypassing the le-

gal adjudication process when it comes to veterans and now with these new EOs will do the same thing to many other Americans.

The Constitutional implications of this are obvious and rampant. First, Obama has violated both Article 1 and Article 2 of the Constitution that establish the balance of powers existing between the Congress and the Executive Branch of government. Under Article 1 the Congress has the exclusive power to pass laws and Article 2 requires the Executive Branch (the President) to enforce those laws. The President is routinely violating these provisions by choosing which laws to enforce, amending existing laws without congressional approval, and making new laws by Executive Order.

Second, federal laws require the states and the medical community protect the privacy of individual medical records. This has now been waived by the Obama Executive Orders that he had no constitutional authority to issue. This also violates the Fourth Amendment prohibition against illegal searches and seizures.

Third, the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution prohibits the government from depriving citizens of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. By placing veterans and other Americans on the NICS list without a legal adjudication of mental illness causing them to be a danger to themselves or others they are being denied liberty and property without due process.

Last, but certainly not least, the U.S. Supreme Court has twice ruled that the right to keep and bear arms is an individual right, yet this right is routinely being denied to veterans and other Americans simply because Obama and

his minions want all of us to be disarmed. A disarmed population is a population that cannot effectively resist tyranny.

Since Congress has repeatedly refused to pass gun control legislation Obama is invoking the mental illness card to accomplish the mission. If you have ever told your doctor you have been depressed, ever suffered from PTSD after being in an accident or losing a family member, or even in the past taken certain types of medications for things such as ADD you may be denied your Second Amendment rights.

The Obama administration has also changed the definition of adjudication of a mental illness from requiring an action by a board, commission, or other lawful authority to allowing anyone in the VA or other government agency to find someone incompetent or mentally defective.

There is no longer any due process required and while military veterans are still the primary targets, the ultimate goal is the disarming of all Americans. This mirrors the actions of the Nazi party in Germany and other dictatorships that have used alleged mental illness to disarm, imprison, and control their populations.

The groundwork is being laid to have the very act of gun ownership be declared a mental illness. If the efforts of the Obama administration are successful at disarming veterans, the rest of the population will also be vulnerable.

*Editors Note: Michael Connelly, Executive Director-United States Justice Foundation and Constitutional Law Alliance (CLA) is a U.S. Army veteran, Constitutional attorney, published author, freelance writer, and teacher. Visit him at: MichaelClonnellyblog or contact him at mrobertc@hotmail.com.*

## The Future of 'Sun Valley' Rests on the History of 'Detroit'

By Jesse Torrero



Cruising around the Internet one night I came across some old time pictures of my hometown Chicago, Illinois. My mom and dad, sister Annette and I, as one and a half year old, move here in late 61' into to live with my grand parents in Burbank Annette and J. Glenn Orr, went on to buy the family home in Sun Valley in 62'. Years later I became a Real Estate and Loan Broker in the area, which has lasted 34 years and have so many fond memories like all of us.

Wow! Sun Valley, what a place to grow up! Swimming in the clear clean waters of Hansen Dam, riding horses and dirt bikes, playing on the streets with no traffic, unsightly structures, or vicious dogs, and we had endless front yards with no fences that seemed to stretch out like a giant golf course of green grass that I swore reached the horizon.

As I looked at the pictures of my family in Chicago, I moved on to some old photos of the 5th largest city in America called Motor City Detroit, Michigan. These pictures, however, have a past and present photo which is side by side for comparison. What happened? Today Detroit looks like Tokyo after the aerial firebombing campaigns of WWII. In my opinion, corrupt politicians, unions, and corporations broke the back of Americas greatest manufacturing city. It is ironic that since 61' every elected politician in Detroit has been a Democrat with a progressive and liberal agenda of socializing and creating thousands of handout programs that people have taken totally advantage of.

These decisions have lead to a generational stagnation of education, health care, manufacturing, and social behaviors. Detroit should just be mowed down, and started all over, but that will never happen.

So, you say 'Jesse' what does this have to do with Sun Valley, and Los Angeles?

Simple, "I say have you really taken the time to look at Sun Valley, and Los Angeles closely?" The fond mem-

ories I have of Sun Valley are all gone. The memories today's kids will have of Sun Valley are gangs, crime, graffiti, pimps, prostitution, adult and juvenile human sex trafficking, schools that look like prisons, destroyed streets, trash everywhere, homeless infested parks, human defecation in the alleys, marijuana stores, vacant houses filled full of low life transients, and have you been to Hansen Dam lately? It is ironic that Sun Valley, and Los Angeles, like California is 90% run by Democrats, unions, and giant corporations. Does this not remind you of what happened to Detroit? (Google Detroit Pictures Past and Present)

We now have new politicians all over the scene, so, lets see if it is business as usually. I can only hope and pray that Detroit is not our future. I think I better hope and pray a lot more than I have, for that not to happen here.

*Editor's Note: Mr. Torrero is a long time community activist and member of Foothill CPAB who is instrumental in cleaning up problemantic San Fernando Road Corridor. Visit" [www.jessetorrero.net](http://www.jessetorrero.net), [facebook.com/JesseTorrero-Broker](https://www.facebook.com/JesseTorrero-Broker), [winwinwininc@yahoo.com](mailto:winwinwininc@yahoo.com)*

## This 'n That: Don't be Left Behind

By Marlene Hitt

The street where I live appears to be a part of rural Somewhere, yet three blocks east the Foothill Freeway leads to Montrose, Glendale, Pasadena Los Angeles, anywhere I need to drive to. Two horses while away their days on the corner, cars, trailers, trucks and an ocean- going vessel line the street. No crime comes to this place and the neighbors are excellent. You may wonder where this unique place might be—why, in Sunland/Shadow Hills of course.

I see from my point of view, Sunland-Tujunga and Shadow Hills are towns with exciting demographics, wonderful scenery, and a personality that, according to new residents, is somewhere between unique and weird. That personality is worth fighting for. Once an agricultural community, we find ourselves now a combination of ranches, single family homes, apartments and condos. Once in a while over the

years our homes have been tents and shacks, even castles dotted here and there. The people hail from everywhere bringing philosophy, expertise and culture with them.

Here, some of the people do volunteer work in the museum, in schools, at festivals and events, running service clubs, at the Cultural Arts Center, on streets, in churches, at the neighborhood council meetings.

So many of us go to work, shop outside the area, come home to get ready for work again and those people over the years have not explored the richness of this small town culture. My message to those who want to know what is going on here, who don't know how to become involved, here is how it is done:

Join the Little Landers Historical Society, the Friends of the Library, McGroarty Art Center, a church, local neighborhood council, or other interest groups. Attend school functions, the Watermelon Festival, the Easter festival, the

Easter Sunrise Service, the Fourth of July parade and fireworks, school productions, Bolton Hall Museum, the Lions, Elks, American Legion, Rotary and neighborhood groups (Shadow Hills, Lake View Terrace). Absolutely read your local newspapers. All these places, and more, offer information through newsletters to inform people of events and opportunities.

One very exciting activity is to walk, bike or drive the streets of these communities to find the many hidden treasures.

Your community is vital to you. Don't be caught saying "I didn't know about it or I would have been there."

*Editors Note: Marlene Hitt is a Director at the Bolton Hall Museum, past Poet Laureate of Sunland-Tujunga and writes for the Reporter.*

PUBLIC SAFETY

Scott is New OVB Commander



Regina A. Scott  
Assistant Commanding Officer  
Los Angeles Police Department  
Operations Valley Bureau

Commander Regina Ann Scott is now assigned to Operations Valley Bureau to replace former Commander Sharon Pappas, who is now Chief Pappas of the Huntington Beach Police Department.

Commander Scott born and raised in Orange, New Jersey joined the United States Army after high school as a combat medic and pharmacy technician. Honorably Discharged at the rank of E-5 and then served an additional two years in the Army Reserves. She still continues to show her support for military veterans by volunteering her time with New Directions, which is an organization to help homeless veterans.

Commander Scott earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Organizational Management/Criminal Justice from Ashford University and she is also a graduate of West Point

Leadership School, and the 216th Session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy, in Quantico, Virginia.

Commander Scott was appointed to the LAPD in July 1987. She has held numerous positions and worked various assignments within the Department as a Police Officer, Field Training Officer, Senior Lead Officer and Sergeant, plus all advance pay grades in the Detective and Lieutenant ranks.

On April 16, 2006, Commander Scott was promoted to Patrol Captain 1 at Southwest Div. where she was responsible for the patrol functions of sworn and civilian personnel in South Los Angeles. That area includes historic venues such as the Los Angeles Coliseum, the Sports Arena, Shrine Auditorium, the University of Southern California, and Baldwin Hills Shopping Areas.

Commander Scott was promoted to Captain II Central Traffic Division in May of 2007, and later and reassigned to Gang and Operations Support Division. In this assignment, she was responsible for oversight and coordination of the Department’s Gangs Units, Los Angeles City/Coun-

ty Community Law Enforcement and Recovery (CLEAR) program, the Department’s Cal Gangs coordinator, Gun Detail, Foreign Prosecution, and Fugitive Warrants.

In March 2009, Commander Scott was promoted to Captain III and assigned to Communications Division, which is the largest division of the Department with 570 sworn and civilian personnel and includes both the Metropolitan and Valley Dispatch Centers.

Scott became the first female African American appointed to the rank of Commander in the Department’s history on October 10, 2010. She was assigned as the Assistant Commanding Officer of Information Technology Bureau. In September 2013, Commander Scott was reassigned as the Assistant Commanding Officer of Operations-Valley Bureau.

Commander Scott is the mother of two adult children and a grandmother of two grandchildren. Her daughter is currently serving in the United States Air Force and her son is a Longshoreman working from the San Pedro Harbor. In her spare time, Commander Scott enjoys playing golf and playing blues on her guitar.

Meet Captain Rodriguez

By Sgt. Harold Egger



Jorge R. Rodriguez was appointed to the Los Angeles Police Department in November 1987, and after successfully completing his Police Academy training, he was assigned to Rampart Area where he worked a variety of assignments which included patrol, gangs, footbeats, special problems unit and eventually as a senior lead officer. Over the years, he has not only worked a variety of patrol divisions such as North

Hollywood, Northeast, and Southeast, but also Metropolitan Division where he remained as an element member until he was awarded his next promotion. In 1996, shortly after ascending to the rank of Sergeant, he was assigned to Southeast Area where he supervised the foot beats and the gang unit. During his supervisory years, he has also completed tours of duty at Inspection and Control, the Rampart Cor-

ruption Task Force, Internal Affairs and DARE Divisions, and eventually back to Metropolitan Division where he was assigned to the administrative platoon and later both crime suppression platoons. While at Metropolitan Division, both as an officer and a supervisor, he had the opportunity to have worked every single patrol division within the City of Los Angeles.

In May 2006, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and returned to Rampart Area where he was assigned as a watch commander and a district lieutenant responsible for repressing crime and serving the communities of Pico-Union and McArthur Park. In late 2007, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant II as the adjutant to the Deputy Chief in charge of the Department’s Special Operations. In October 2010, Captain Rodriguez was promoted to his current rank of Captain, where he has served as a Commanding Officer in 77th Street Area, Newton Area and currently in Foothill Area.

Born in Havana, Cuba, in 1964, Rodriguez immigrated to the United States with his parents at the age of seven and

settled in Hawthorne, California. He was educated in the public school system and after graduating class Salutatorian from Lennox High School in 1982, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. Four years later, after completing his commitment honorably, he decided to apply to the Department and serve the citizens of Los Angeles.

Captain Rodriguez earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix and a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership from Woodbury University. He has also graduated from the Delinquency Control Institute at the University of Southern California and the Sherman Block Leadership Institute.

Captain Rodriguez currently resides in the County of Los Angeles with his wife of twenty years and four children. He enjoys vacationing with family and friends, while boating on the Colorado River. Additionally, he has a goal to eventually play as many golf courses as he can throughout the United States.

Focusing on Foothill



Captain Sean Malanowski  
Commanding Officer  
Los Angeles Police Department  
Foothill Division

Foothill Area’s residents as well as the Officers, who so proudly serve their communities, have reason to celebrate in 2014. Crime within our area decreased once again by 2.1%. This equates to about 80 less victims of crimes as compared to 2012. Violent and gang crimes continued to decrease also. Our goal for the year 2014 is another decrease of 3%. As far as the numbers go, this means that we must work to ensure that we have no more than 70 crimes per week in the Pacoima, Sun Valley, Shadow Hills, Lake View Terrace, Sunland-Tujunga areas. Together, we can make this happen. Neighborhood and business watch is the key. If you see something, say some-

thing. Contact the Foothill Senior Lead Office to become a member of Neighborhood Watch.

The fastest growing crimes in all of Los Angeles is Identity Theft. With people’s personal information being stolen by thieves and hackers, all of us are vulnerable.

Identity theft involves acquiring key pieces of someone’s identifying information. This information enables the identity thief to commit numerous forms of fraud which include taking over the victim’s financial accounts, opening new bank accounts, purchasing automobiles applying for loans, credit cards, Social Security benefits, renting apartments and establishing services with utility/phone companies.

If you become a victim of identity theft:

- Contact all credit companies by phone and writing in order to inform them of the problem.
- Contact all creditors by phone and in writing. Equifax (800) 685-1111, Experian (888) 397- 3742, and Trans Union (800) 916-8800.

- Set up a folder to keep a detailed history of this crime.
- Keep a log of all your contacts and make copies of all documents.
- Notify the Unites States Postal Inspector if your mail has been stolen or tampered with. (Postal Inspector 626-405-1200)
- Notify the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The FTC is the federal clearinghouse for identity theft complaints. (www.consumer.gov/idtheft)
- Lastly, help yourselves by: opting out of pre-approved credit lists (888) 567-8688;
- Remove your name from Direct Mail Lists www.the-dma.org; and Remove your name from telephone lists at www.the dma-org.

Your community police station members wish you a happy and SAFE New Year!

Sound Off: Not in Pacoima!

By Edwin Rameriz

On August 1st, 2013, the Area Planning Commission voted not to allow the construction of a Best Western Hotel on Van Nuys Blvd in Pacoima.

I had not attended one of those meetings in years and was looking forward to speaking in favor of the development, as I was sure that it would be a good thing for a Van Nuys Blvd that could use a new look and also with the hope that this development would encourage other business’ and/or the City to improve the way the Boulevard looks.

While I respect all comments made by fellow Pacoima residents, I wonder if these comments were driven by politics, prejudice or misinformation; as for the speakers from Sylmar, Sun Valley and Lakeview Terrace, well, it was nice to hear their speeches but I failed to comprehend, how a Hotel in Pacoima will affect their communities.

Some of the speakers feared that the hotel would generate prostitution and/or other questionable activities, but, currently Van Nuys Blvd does not allow overnight parking (no parking after 10pm) and the City has installed many surveillance cameras. Granted LAPD may not be monitoring all the time; there is still a record of activities that can be reviewed, when needed.

The truth is that prostitution is a problem associated with the “Motels” on San Fernando Road; they rent rooms by the hour and also provide housing for ex-convicts (some are sex offenders). I wonder if anyone is doing something about this problem?

The one comment that stuck to my head was, “it is a nice building proposed by the developer; but it does not fit in with the culture of Pacoima.” I have been a Pacoima resident for many years and have seen many changes and improvements. That comment made me want to drive up and down Van Nuys Blvd. hopping to see what I was missing in terms of culture of Pacoima (business culture if you will).

I saw that most of the business (if not all) on Van Nuys Blvd. has “safety bars” some on the inside and most on the outside. Some of them even conduct business with the bars closed; a large number of business have tables on the sidewalks where they display their products, others hang theirs on their windows, awnings or custom stands. Also, there are those that constantly play loud music to attract traffic and that business that have security guards during their business hours. It will be interesting to know how many of them are in violation of City Ordinances, Municipal Codes and/or Building and safety codes.

Then we have the “Neighborhood City Hall” that other than the City Council’s Office, it has no City Departments or services. Viewed from Van Nuys Blvd it looks like a big empty building, however, it does provide a public service in the form of shelter for transients, vagrants and homeless. I know the new Council Member will eventually improve this, but that is what we have today.

One of the problems in Pacoima is that many residents think that if they put their furniture on the sidewalk someone else will be able to use it. They should also call sanitation and ask them to pick it up; the furniture will stay there longer than expected either way.

It is fair to say that Pacoima is a much better place today then it was when I first moved here thanks to the many community members committed to improve the community. Their work deserves to be acknowledged and they should know that it has not been in vain.

I am submitting a picture to illustrate the business culture on Van Nuys Blvd.

Editor’s Note: Mr. Rameriz is a long time community activist and education advocate for Pacoima.

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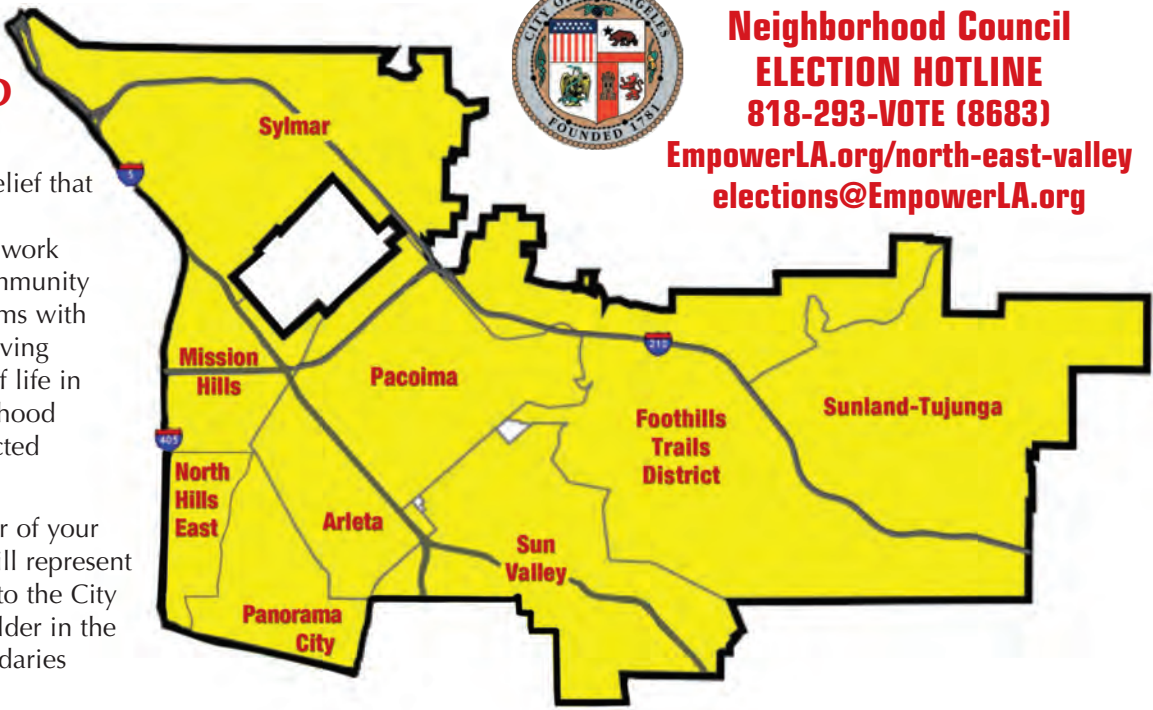
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