Show Us the Money
Final DWP Union Deal Turns Ratepayers Off

The Los Angeles City Council approved a deal that paves the way for city officials to investigate how a pair of Department of Water and Power employee training and safety trusts spent tens of millions of dollars in ratepayer money over the past five years.

The city agreed to release an annual $4 million payment to the Joint Training Institute and the Joint Safety Institute, in exchange for half a decade of financial records, under the pact with DWP employee union chief Brian D’Arcy.

The 21-page letter of agreement was approved without discussion by the City Council.

D’Arcy who heads the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 18, had refused to allow financial documents from the trusts — formed more than a decade ago to address DWP worker safety and training issues — to be audited by City Controller Ron Galperin.

D’Arcy contended the controller did not have the right to subpoena records from the organizations, which he said were independent from the city. Galperin, in turn, refused to release the DWP’s annual $4 million payment to the trusts. The payments are part of a collective bargaining agreement with the DWP employee union, and the union has received at least $40 million in the dozen years.

* * *

The agreement includes most of the 13 conditions proposed by City Council members, and settles most of the legal disagreements between the union and the city, with the exception that the two sides will not be settling a dispute over the controller’s right to audit the two trusts.

In the ongoing litigation, D’Arcy challenged Galperin’s subpoenas for financial records. A judge decided in favor of Galperin, and union officials are appealing the ruling.

Under the agreement approved, D’Arcy has consented to present five years of records, and the $4 million payment to the trusts will be on hold for 120 days while Galperin conducts his audit and interviews trusts officials. If the controller spots any illegal activity in the records or if D’Arcy refuses to produce the documents, the $4 million payment could be withheld.

Any improper activity discovered during the audit would be sent to District Attorney Jackie Lacey, who is also investigating the two trusts, City Administrative Officer Miguel Santana said.

The boards have not met in almost nine months, with the union objecting to a pair of management trustees appointed by Mayor Eric Garcetti, though a judge recently ordered the union to recognize them as legitimate board members.

City officials who pushed for the deal were also concerned that by not releasing the $4 million payment, the city would be accused of violating terms of a recently reached labor agreement with the union.

That labor agreement, signed last summer, defers cost-of-living increases for three years and institutes a new pension tier.

Galperin said he has been demanding for the past year that the trusts

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Santa Susana Mountains

Porter Ranch Residents Balk at New Oil Drilling

Residents of Porter Ranch have demanded a full environmental assessment of a Long Beach company’s proposal to expand oil drilling operations in the Santa Susana Mountains from 18 to 30 wells.

Community activists raised concerns ranging from groundwater contamination and health risks to increased earthquake hazards in objecting to The Termo Co.’s request to add the wells to its North Aliso Canyon Field, north of the Santa Susana ridge.

The oil field has been in continuous production since 1938 according to Termo spokesperson Ralph Combs.

“The community has grown up around the field,” he said, telling City News Service that “no significant concerns” had been raised by residents over the years.

Locals told the Board of Supervisors that they were worried about hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking.”

Combs told CNS that “hydraulic fracturing is not proposed for this project,” but residents countered that the permit to expand the operation, if approved, would give the company leeway to use hydraulic fracturing in the future.

A representative of the Department of Regional Planning said it has not yet begun work on an initial study to determine whether a full EIR is required because it is still waiting for additional information from Termo.

In the interim, the Los Angeles City Council, spurred by Councilman Mitch Englander, has already called for a full EIR, as has the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council.

Hydraulic fracturing is the process of injecting water, sand and chemicals at high pressure to produce fractures in underlying rock formation to stimulate the flow of oil. It has been used since the 1940s, but has experienced a boom as gas prices have gone high enough to make the technology profitable.

The methodology has become a hot button for environmentalists concerned about the impact on groundwater and seismic faults.

Industry proponents argue that hydraulic fracturing, properly executed, is a safe way to move toward energy independence.

Termo has roughly 125 wells nationwide, and hydraulic fracturing has been used to stimulate production in about nine of those wells, according to Combs. In 2007 and 2011, the company used fracturing on two wells in the North Aliso Canyon Field.

Tuition Hikes

The University of California Board of Regents approved tuition hikes that will increase students’ costs by as much as 5 percent a year over the next five years at UCLA and other campuses across the state.

The board approved the hikes as protesting students loudly chanted, “Hey, ho, tuition hikes have got to go!” When the vote was completed, the crowded repeatedly chanted “Shame on you.” The board chairman eventually called for a recess and asked security to clear the room at UC San Francisco so the meeting could continue.

The increase will raise annual tuition by up to 5 percent over the next five years, making the tuition more than $15,000 by 2019. UC officials have said that the hike is necessary to help offset higher pension and salary costs, as well as to help recruit more in-state students.

They have also said that the tuition hike could be less than 5 percent depending on state funding of the university system.

UC President Janet Napolitano noted that tuition rates have been frozen for three years. A 5 percent increase will increase tuition for the 2015-16 school year by $612 to $12,804. Out-of-state students would pay the same increased rate, plus the non-resident fee of $22,878, which would also increase by the same percentage, according to UC.

The 5 percent increase assumes the state will provide the university system with a promised 4 percent increase in funding. But UC officials say that increase still falls short and doesn’t even cover the cost of inflation.

Napolitano has said she hopes the plan will offer some stability to students and gradual, predictable increases instead of possible large spikes in tuition — eliminating “volatility” in the tuition-setting process. She also expressed hopes that it will spur the state to boost its funding of UC.
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Healthy Eating During the Holidays
By Bhavana Arora, M.D.

T is the season shorter days, family gatherings, and all the excitement that comes with the holiday season. All that excitement can make it feel challenging to keep healthy, but it is possible and it isn’t hard! Here are my best tips for living and eating healthy during this holiday season.

1. Exercise regularly during the holidays and especially before major dinners such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. Be realistic! You won’t lose weight during the holidays but you can maintain it.

2. Don’t go to the party hungry or skip meals! Eat something small and healthy prior to the event so you do not overindulge when you get there.

3. Bring a healthy dish that you can eat in case there are not many healthy options at the party.

4. Focus on small portion sizes. Use a smaller plate so you put less on the plate. Avoid seconds. Moderation

5. Eat slowly and savor the flavors. It takes time to get to that sensation of fullness. You are more likely to overeat if you eat fast. You want to be satisfied but not full!

6. When you get to a party, choose 3 to 4 healthier foods to focus on and stick to them!

7. Fill up on the healthy foods such as turkey and vegetables first and eat less of the unhealthy foods such as desserts and other entrees with cream and butter.

8. If you eat one heavy meal, go light on the other meals.

9. Spend more time socializing and less time eating! Enjoy the company and take the focus off food!

10. Minimize sugary drinks and alcohol. Drink water in between to fill you up.

11. Chew gum or eat mints in between food and drinks to avoid overeating. This is my favorite trick! I always carry sugar free mints in my purse.

Here are a few tips to reduce fat and calories without compromising flavor by swapping out a few ingredients in your favorite recipes.

1. Using two egg whites in place of one egg can reduce the cholesterol and produce the same tasty result.

2. Use low-sodium, fat-free chicken broth in your mashed potatoes to add flavor and cut back on added but- ter or margarine.

3. Substitute applesauce or low fat Greek yogurt for oil, margarine or butter in muffins and quick breads like banana bread. Try substituting a small amount at first, as the more you substitute the more the texture of the finished product changes.

4. For dips, sauces, use fat free or low fat Greek yogurt which is high in protein and has less fat

5. Sliced almonds and walnuts make great crunchy toppings to salads.

6. Choose reduced-fat or low-fat cheeses for salads and casseroles.

7. See these tips and more at www.facey.com/healthykids
Nor could George W. Bush be described as a Union with it. Not bad for an amiable dunce. He was smart enough to end the Cold War - and the Soviet empire. Not bad for a man who, like Democratic operatives like Clark Clifford, but he made mistakes that gave Carter a mandate. "Mistakes were made," as he would say. Decades later, the country would get a president with a real gift for gab - Ronald Reagan - and he, too, would sometimes be stumped. But there's something to be said for a president who doesn't let the land go six blue years bother them. They don't need validation; they know who they are, where they stand, and they just keep on going. They have an identity, they've earned it over the years, and they're not about to bargain it away for a brief boost in the always evanescent polls.

The country doesn't need a president who's popular, just one who's right. Even if it may take the long perspective of history to prove it.

Cases in point: Harry Truman, the man from Independence. Now that he's been promoted to one of the greats or near-greats in those ever fickle presidential ratings by historians, which are even less reliable than the daily polls, it may be forgotten how unpopular he was when he left office in early 1953 - though unpopular would be a vast underestimate.

Or consider the presidency of his successor, one Dwight David Eisenhower. By the time his two terms were over, the sophisticated had dismissed him long before as a harmless old duffer who was just holding up progress. The more fashionable could hardly wait till the Kennedys and their court took over and gave the place some class, you know, made it more ... French. Out. Would go stodgy old ideas like balanced budgets and paying off the national debt. In would come Camelot!

Decades later, the country would get a president with a real gift for gab - Ronald Reagan - and he, too, would suffer reverses. "Mistakes were made," as he would say. He, too, would be dismissed as "an amiable dunce" by the likes of Democratic operatives like Clark Clifford, but he was smart enough to win the Cold War - and the Soviet Union with it. Not bad for an amiable dunce.

Nor could George W. Bush be described as popular when he left the White House. Bush 43 wasn't just despised in some quarters but actually hated. His response: None. He just kept on doing what he thought was right at the time - and the success of the Surge in Iraq proved that on occasion he was.

Whatever their differences, all those presidents had one thing in common: They never lost their interest for Americans. We the People never stopped taking noticing of them, if only to hurl at their foibles. Whether you were applauding or just being appalled, you paid attention when they spoke. No one was neutral about them.

This president is different. When he speaks these days, it's as if he were reporting the doings of an administration that only coincidentally happens to be his own. He's our bystander-in-chief, and as his tenure begins to fade, he's gone from being Mister Cool to Mister Irrelevant. Have you noticed? The sound of his voice no longer attracts, or even repels. It's just there. Like fading wallpaper, it has become just another part of the unnoted background as it goes on and on about.

... I can't remember offhand. His press conference, the one the day after that dramatic defeat of his party in the midterms, there was nothing dramatic about what he said. I thought I listened to every word. I just can't remember a single one of them. He just went on and on about ... nothing in particular. The bully pulpit of the presidency might as well be unoccupied. Maybe it is.

What does he say when he has nothing to say? He analyzes, he theorizes, he extemporizes, rhapsodizes and temporizes, but he still has nothing to say. At length.

Paul Greenberg is the Pulitzer-winning editorial page editor of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.
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As a pastor and an avid basketball fan, I have been fascinated by Jeremy Lin’s story of faith and perseverance. Now that he is playing for my favorite team, the Lakers, I like the guy even more. But it’s easy to look at a person like Jeremy Lin—who always seems to have a smile on his face, a positive attitude, and has the privilege of playing ball for one of the greatest franchises in the NBA—and think that the road to success has always been a smooth one.

Lin endured a series of disappointments and setbacks prior to becoming the most talked about basketball star during the 2011-2012 season. Upon graduating high school, Lin hadn’t received a single athletic scholarship offer and was rejected by his first-choice school, Stanford University. After six months of prayer, he decided to enroll at Harvard, but he was not selected in 2010 NBA draft after graduation.

It was then that Donnie Nelson, the president of basketball operations for the Dallas Mavericks, called him and said, “This could be just...another barrier that you have to overcome, but God is sovereign.” After Lin played in the Summer League at Nelson’s invitation, he received offers to play on multiple teams including the Mavericks, Los Angeles Lakers, and Golden State Warriors.

He chose to sign with the Warriors, which was his favorite team growing up and located in his hometown of Palo Alto. But Lin was released after a year. He went on to the Houston Rockets who waived him less than a month later. The New York Knicks claimed him off waivers in December 2011. When the team wasn’t doing well early the next year, Knicks’ coach Mike D’Antoni finally gave Lin a chance to play. During a game against the New Jersey Nets on February 4, 2012, Lin reached careers highs. He then helped the team secure seven consecutive wins. That’s when “Linsanity” swept the nation.

When I was writing my book, Walls Fall Down: 7 Steps from the Battle of Jericho to Overcome Any Challenge, I couldn’t help but share Lin’s story about consistency. Lin has said that one of his favorite Bible verses is Romans 5:3-4: “Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character; and character, hope.” I’ve highlighted the word “know” in the above verse about perseverance because to know—or to be fully convinced of something in one’s mind—can motivate a person to accomplish the impossible despite hardship.

God asked Joshua and the Israelites to persevere despite years of hardship and to trust Him as He led them to the land He promised their ancestors. Once they reached Jericho, the gateway city to this Promised Land, the Lord said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men” (Joshua 6:2). He told Joshua, the priests, and the soldiers to march around the walls of Jericho for six days. On the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times, sound the trumpets, and give a loud shout; then the walls of Jericho would come tumbling down. Because of God’s promise, the Israelites knew that the tiring and monotonous work of walking around a heavily fortified city—day after day for seven days—would result in victory. Consider this: All of the people you admire went through some kind of adversity—poverty, abuse, imprisonment for what they believed, doubt in their ability to achieve their goals, setbacks, rejection, or discouragement. With every awe-inspiring biography or autobiography you read, you find out what makes these extraordinary people different from every other person who has endured the same kinds of hardship. It’s an unwavering mindset that they were going to change their situation, pursue their goal, and achieve it.

Jeremy Lin’s journey to the Lakers is a reflection of his steadfast commitment not only to his basketball dreams, but also to honoring God throughout the ups and downs of life. I love what he shared during an interview with Good TV, a Taiwanese evangelical Christian channel: “The Bible talks a lot about how God takes bad situations...and He teaches us, and He uses those times of suffering to draw us closer to Him. And that’s what I try to focus on during those times. For me, when I get knocked down, I really try to get back up and go at it again. I don’t like to give up.”

Adapted from the book, Walls Fall Down, by Dudley Rutherford and published by Thomas Nelson. Copyright 2014. Dudley Rutherford is the author of Walls Fall Down and the senior pastor of the 10,000-member Shepherd Church in Porter Ranch (Los Angeles), California. You can connect with Dudley online at www.WallsFallDownBook.com or on Twitter @pastordudley.
Coming Any Day Now!
Porter Ranch CHEVRON!

Rinaldi and Tampa (same family owners, same location)
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HOPE TO SEE YOU VERY SOON

If you drive by and we're not open, please join Andrea and Ford Cole at their other Chevron location, Rinaldi and Balboa.
Dear Editor:
The horrific news we woke up to recently was a blow that is hard to recover from. The bodies and pools of blood intermingled with Tallit, Tefilin and Siddurim conjured images of the Holocaust that we were sure would never be repeated.

It left me stunned and it left me hurt but it must not leave us paralyzed.

We must respond.

Not to do so is to turn our backs on children and families who awoke this morning to sorrow and unbearable pain. They cry for a husband, a father, a son, a brother (yes that brave Druze policeman, who gave his life in a heroic attempt to save theirs, is now also a brother) – can we just sit here?

They didn’t die because of their political beliefs, or their national dogma. They weren’t butchered because they wanted to pray in a place Muslims consider theirs. They were murdered for one reason and one reason only, because they were Jews.

Being murdered because you’re Jewish has been a regular part of our existence for three thousand years. And despite that, three thousand years later we are still here and we are the only nation in the world that can say that. And we were able to say that without an army of our own or a country of our own.

When a horror such as this occurs our response must be “You may be able to kill a Jew but you will never be able to kill the Jew!”

The only constant in our existence for the past three thousand years has been the Tefillin our brothers were wearing when they died yesterday because they were Jews.

The Tefillin, the Shabbat candles, the Mezuzah, and of course the Torah and all that is in it. That is what ties us all together, that is why we feel their pain as if it was ours and that is why we cry today as one family.

And that is how we MUST respond.

If you are a Jewish male and you haven’t yet put on Tefillin today, stop what you’re doing and put Tefillin on now. All it needs to take is five minutes. You don’t have Tefillin, here is where you can find the nearest Chabad Center, they – or anyone in your own synagogue – will be happy to help you do it today. (And if you are reading this after nightfall DO IT TOMORROW!)

You’re a Jewish woman? Resolve that this Friday afternoon you’ll light Shabbat candles.

- Chabad of Chatsworth

Kamal Levine, one of the four rabbis murdered in a meat cleaver and gun attack in the Kehillat Bnei Torah synagogue in Jerusalem, and had attended CSUN also, had strong ties to the Los Angeles Jewish community. He was born Cary Levine in Kansas City but found his orthodox faith after moving to Los Angeles. His childhood best friend, Shimon Kraft, lives in Los Angeles and owns The Mitzvah Store. From the Jewish Journal:

After Levine graduated Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy in the late ’70s and returned to the United States after six months on a kibbutz, he moved to Los Angeles to enroll at a pre-dental program at the University of Southern California (USC). Although Levine grew up Conservative in Kansas City, Kraft said Levine’s time in Israel led to a religious transformation, and Levine became Sabbath and kosher observant.

While Levine was at USC, Kraft said he visited in him in summer 1977. Levine, after he came to Los Angeles, became very close with Rabbi Zvi Block, who taught at Aish HaTorah in North Hollywood, and Levine’s inspiration from learning Torah with Block helped solidify his religious transformation that began in Israel.

Levine and Kraft decided to travel to Israel together and they attended two years of yeshiva before they returned to Los Angeles to attend a post-high school study program at Yeshiva University Los Angeles (YULA).

Kraft said that Levine decided to return to Israel again in the early 1980s—this time he never left. Over the years in Jerusalem, Levine built a family and continued pursuing the passion of his life—Torah. Kraft said Levine even organized a group of men who would get together for the sole purpose of self-improvement and strengthening character traits.

“He was truly great,” Kraft said. “He was so unusual, so special.”- LA Observed
More Street Paving Rolling Out

Mayor Eric Garcetti announced a series of cost-saving initiatives that would enable the Bureau of Street services to get 200 more miles of streets resurfaced next year. Garcetti said his “Street Smart” initiatives would “squeeze more miles out of every dollar we spend” and better coordinate city departments involved in paving the city’s 8,200 miles of streets. The mayor’s budget for fiscal 2014-15 includes funding for 200 more miles more than in the previous year - about 2,400 miles of streets were repaved in FY 2013-14 - and his cost-savings package would result in 400 extra miles of streets paved, city officials said.

The ideas, introduced earlier this year by City Councilman Joe Buscaino, include recovering the cost of damage done to streets - by Metro buses for example - and prosecuting parking lot owners who do not pay city business taxes. Capital improvements at the city’s asphalt plant would save up to $5 million in material costs, city officials said. City staffers from various city departments involved in paving also would meet regularly to discuss and prioritize projects.

The city also would impose a ban on cutting into streets that were resurfaced within three years.

Porter Ranch Residents Balk at New Oil Drilling

(Continued from page 1)
The North Aliso Canyon Field is not in a groundwater basin, though opponents point out that the wells would be situated above Browns Creek, a headwater for the Los Angeles River. The river functions largely as a concrete flood control channel through much of the county.

Termo is just one of several oil operators in that area - and prosecuting parking lot owners who do not pay city business taxes. Capital improvements at the city’s asphalt plant would save up to $5 million in material costs, city officials said. City staffers from various city departments involved in paving also would meet regularly to discuss and prioritize projects.

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CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PRODUCTION

The Shepherd of the Hills Church Kids of the Kingdom and Sunbeam Singers are proud to present their 2014 Christmas Musical Production on Dec. 4 and 5 at 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Get the best seats in the house by purchasing your tickets at the Ticket Office on campus at 19700 Rinaldi Street in Porter Ranch or by calling 818.831.7880. For more information, visit www.theshepherd.org.

SIERRA CANYON ATHLETIC FIELD COMPLEX

Sierra Canyon School is pleased to announce the grand opening of their new twelve acre Athletic Complex on 11057 Dr. Soto Avenue in Chatsworth on Thursday, December 4 at 5 pm. The Athletic complex includes fields for baseball, football, soccer, and lacrosse and is part of Sierra Canyon’s on-going plan to develop the school’s 35-acre campus for academic, artistic, and athletic programs. The Fields represent four years of planning and construction to provide the best resources for student athletes in the Los Angeles area. Prior to Sierra Canyon’s purchase of the land, the area was run down and an eyesore for local residents, notorious for drug deals and gang-related activity. Now, indigenous and drought resistant trees and plants surround state of the art athletic facilities. The event is open to the general public and media who will have an opportunity to see firsthand the improvements made by Sierra Canyon School, to attend a Girls varsity (3:30 pm) and a Boys’ varsity (6 pm) soccer game, and attend the Grand Opening ribbon cutting ceremony. For more information, visit www.sierracanyonschool.org

THE NUTCRACKER

San Fernando Valley California Dance Academy proudly presents the enchanting and cherished holiday ballet, The Nutcracker, at the historic Madrid Theater in Canoga Park on Saturday, December 6 through Sunday, December 14. Purchase tickets from the box office at (818) 347-9938 or online at Nutcracker.org. Call today to schedule a visit www.BigOakTheatre.com.

CHANUKAH GIFT

“Freedom Song” a transformative musical which will educate and inspire those who need help, will be on Sunday, December 7, 7:00pm at Temple Ramat Zion, 7665 Devonshire Blvd (parking off White Oak). This gift is free to the community. Limited seating. Make your reservations by December 3rd. For more information, and to RSVP call (818) 360-2121.

VOLUNTEERS IN AGENCIES

Join DOTA SVF, enjoy light refreshments, engage with others and network with the valuable professional organization to those within the field of volunteer management on Friday, December 5, 9:30 am – 11:00 am at San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health, Inc. located at 16630 Reseda Blvd., 2nd Floor, in Van Nuys. Please RSVP your attendance to dota@svf.org by Wednesday, December 3.

GRENADA HILLS PARADE

The 2014 Grenada Hills Holiday Parade will be on Sunday, December 7 at 1:30 pm. This year’s Grand Marshall will be Actor Kevin Kervechvalsa “ Cliff Barnes” of the new reprised “Dallas” Television show. Over 140 entries are expected for this wonderful holiday tradition. Everyone is urged to arrive at the parade by 1:00 pm to get front row viewing. Awards will be presented following the parade at Grenada Hills Charter High School in Highlander Hall. Parade will begin at Petit Ave and continue on Chatsworth Ave. and end at Zelzah St. and Kingbridge.

HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

Make the holiday season a little brighter for the children of our Youth Delinquency Prevention Programs by donating a new unwrapped toy to the Toy Drive on Thursday, December 11th at Topanga Police Station, 21501 Schoenborn St. in Canoga Park.

CARLITA MEETING

Retired educators, living in the San Fernando Valley, join members of the California Retired Teachers Association (CalRTA) for a luncheon meeting every month. Retirees will be presented, along with a holiday program starting off with Jingle Bells and then highlighting world famous carolers. For more information, call (818) 704-7884 Tuesday and Thursdays, 4:00 pm at 7227 Owensmouth Ave.

WINTER CONCERT

Come and enjoy your Valley’s young musicians in a winter concert for the whole family, led by distinguished Conductor, Dr. Henry Shin on Saturday, December 13th, 7:30 PM at In-Christ Community Church (former World Vision Church), 19554 Rinaldi St. in Northridge. Program includes F. Spegatto, E. Grieg, Henry Mancini & P. Tchaikovsky. For advance discount tickets contact Jackie at 213-458-4618 or jackie818@juno.com, http://valleypilot.org/timetoholiday.html.

ANNUAL TOY GIVE AWAY

Greg Smith LAPD Devonshire Youth Center will open its doors to the children of our community and distribute 1400 of holiday toys in the spirit of the season on Saturday, December 13, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Toy donations are accepted until December 12th. Toy collection boxes are available throughout the community including the LAPD Devonshire Community Police Station, The Devonshire Youth Center, 9721 Wilbur Ave. in Northridge and the CD 12 community Center, 9287 Oakdale St. in Chatsworth. For more information, contact (818) 885-6432.

CHANUTOWH HOLIDAY PARADE

Join the Kiwanis Club of Chatsworth as they celebrate the holiday season with music, performances, pictures with Santa, shopping and so much more. Grab a seat and watch the parade and enjoy the magical holiday festival on Sunday, December 14. Festival and Car Show is from 11:00 am – 5:00 pm. Parade begins at 1:00 pm and travels east on Devonshire St. from Topanga Canyon Blvd to Laurel Ave. www.chatsworthholidayparade.org.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Join Shepherd of the Hills Church for Christmas Eve Services on Dec. 23, 5pm and Dec 24 at 5pm, 7pm and 11 pm. The church is located at 19700 Rinaldi Street in Porter Ranch. For more information, visit www.theshepherd.org or call (818) 831-9333.

MID-VALLEY LIBRARY BOOKSTORE

Looking for Holiday Gifts? Try Friends of the Library Bookstore at the Mid-valley Regional Branch Library, 16244 Nordhoff Street, North Hills. Choose from many books, cookbooks, children’s books, audio books, mysteries and more. The bookstore is generally open the same hours as the Library; Mon-Thurs: 10-8, Fri-Sat: 9:30-8:30, Sun: 1-5.

R.I.T.H. YOUTHBUILD

Open to ages 16 to 24, R.I.T.H. YouthBuild provides opportunities with people to gain life skills, earn degrees, and obtain job training. Join them for their orientation on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00 pm at 7227 Owensmouth Ave. in Canoga Park. For more information, call (818) 704-7884 or visit www.rithyouthbuild.org

C.S.N.S. SAGE SOCIETY

Looking for a place to come and learn and share now that you are retired? semi-retired? SAGE Society of C.S.N.S might be the right fit for you. Learn more by visiting us at our website www.sagesocietycsn.org, or on facebook. We will gladly speak with you, have you visit classes and try us out. Call (818) 831-5064 or email us at sadders@csun.edu

NEW SAFE CENTER

You can drop off electronic devices, paint and garden chemicals, motor oil, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs and other Hazardous Waste at the new SAFE Center located on Balboa Blvd. 1/2 block south of Devonshire St. in Granada Hills. The Safe Center is open Saturdays & Sundays from dawn to dusk in and open your trunk and the staff at the SAFE Center will remove your Household Hazardous Waste for you.

DEADLINE FOR NON-PROFITS

Please submit your application and materials to the Valley Voice by Thursday, Dec. 11th, at 4:00 pm. Applications will be accepted until the 20th, for the following month.

Call to today to schedule a CAMPUS TOUR

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December, 2014
Flu Prevention

Influenza can cause days of fever, chills, cough, sore throat, sneezing, head and even muscle aches. The CDC recommends that the best time to receive the flu vaccination is between October and December. Flu activity usually peaks in February and vaccination should take place well in advance of this period.

- The following are frequently asked questions about flu shots:

  Q: How can I avoid getting the flu?
  A: The best protection is to get vaccinated. You can also reduce your chances of getting the flu by frequent hand washing and avoiding contaminated objects and surfaces.

  Q: Can a flu shot give me the flu?
  A: No. Flu vaccines are made from influenza viruses that have been destroyed. The flu shot cannot give you the flu.

  Q: Even if I get a flu shot, can I still get the flu?
  A: No. The flu vaccine is 90% effective after two weeks. The effectiveness may be lower in older people or people with conditions that weaken the immune system.

  Q: Should I get a flu shot if it's not 100% effective?
  A: Yes, a small percentage of people may get the flu even after receiving a vaccination. However, even if you do get the flu, you are likely to be far less sick than if you had not had a flu shot.

  Q: Even if I've had side effects worse than the flu?
  A: No. The worst side effect is likely to be a sore arm. Your risk of injury or death from a rare allergic reaction is far less risky than complications brought on by influenza.

  Q: Are there some who shouldn't get the flu shot?
  A: Yes, if you are allergic to eggs (used in making the vaccine) or you have experienced an allergic reaction to the vaccine in the past, you might not be able to get this protection.

  Q: Is it too soon to get a flu shot?
  A: No. The flu shot can be given at any time during the flu season. If you are at high risk, get vaccinated early in the season. It is best not to delay; but if you do, it's still better to get it late than not at all.

Along with your vaccination, the following tips will help keep you healthy during the flu season:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water. Washing your hands often will help protect you from flu germs.
- Control your stress level. Prolonged stress levels can affect your immune system. To manage your stress, find a balance between work, exercise, and personal time.
- Get lots of rest. Make sure you are well rested. Sleep deprivation may slow your ability to stay alert and make you more vulnerable to the flu and other viruses.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Use a tissue to help prevent passing the germs to those around you.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. You can infect yourself by unknowingly touching something with flu germs and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Avoid direct contact with people who are sick. You’ll also want to keep your distance from others if you are sick.

By Jeffrey Nordella, MD

Sierra Canyon Students Thankful For Special Guests

Early Kindergarten through Sixth Grade students at Sierra Canyon School, welcomed over 350 grandparents and grand friends to join them in class. The special occasion is an annual event and part of Sierra Canyon’s family-oriented approach to learning.

“I was touched to see four year olds making family trees with their grandparents in Early Kindergarten, and Third Graders creating working volcanos with their guests as part our Eco-Literacy program,” said Jim Skrumbis, Sierra Canyon’s Head of School. The day began with a welcome breakfast for guests who travelled from Northridge, Porter Ranch, Sherman Oaks, Woodland Hills, and Chatsworth. During the meal, Skrumbis shared information about Sierra Canyon’s long-standing commitment to educational excellence. Guests also heard from Sierra Canyon founders, Mick Horwitz and Howard Wang, who as fellow grandparents shared their joy at seeing the school’s family atmosphere become inter-generational.

“Grandparents Visiting Day is one of my favorite days at Sierra Canyon, because it provides that connection between generations which children need,” said Wang. “To observe the interaction and bond between ‘the Grands’ and the students is so heartwarming.”

After breakfast, the special guests set out to explore classrooms with the nearly five hundred Lower School students in Early Kindergarten through Sixth Grade who introduced them to their friends, teachers, and school world. “It’s wonderful to see all of the kids and teachers so happy,” said Anna Arechem of Pasadena, who with her husband Norman, was visiting their granddaughter in Fifth Grade.

Since its founding in 1978 by Horwitz and Wang, Sierra Canyon School has placed a great emphasis on family and community. Small classroom settings allow students to learn at their own pace, and interact with classmates and students in other grades on a regular basis, developing social skills. The flexibilitymeshes well with special events like the visit of Grandparents and Grand friends.

Arthur Ripp of Sherman Oaks, who joined his grandson Oliver in Kindergarten, said, “It love it here. I wish everyone could experience what I saw today, and the vision from its founding, to today, and for the future – Sierra Canyon is a prize!”

Like other independent private schools, Sierra Canyon’s curriculum is not based on Common Core Curriculum standards. Yet Sierra Canyon’s program is set apart by faculty who adapt and enhance the traditional liberal arts education model with technology, hands-on activities, and special events like Grandparents Visiting Day.

Final DWP Union Deal Turns Ratepayers Off

“open their books.”

With this agreement, the trusts are fully agreeing to comply,” he said. “Most important, this agreement stipulates that no city funds will be paid to the trusts unless the trusts cooperate fully with the audit. This is a clear and important step toward greater transparency and ratepayer accountability at the DWP.”

Mayor Eric Garcetti said the deal will give the city the ability “open the books and follow the money, which is what DWP customers deserve.”

Some members of the public questioned if the audit would go far enough. The investigation would only look at about half of the years the trusts received the funds.

How can anybody feel good about ‘only’ $20 million going back to the public,” he asked. “The number is much too low.”

Under the agreement, union officials are “still being allowed to hide the money from the first five years of this agreement,” he charged.

Galperin said he is continuing to pursue the dispute over the Controller’s Office’s right to audit the trusts, so that if the city wins, he would have clear authority to look even further back into the past of the two trusts financial records.

By Jeffrey Nordella, MD is Medical Director at Porter Ranch Care Center in Northridge.

Final DWP Union Deal Turns Ratepayers Off

(Continued from page 1)

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But Galperin also said he believes “we’re going to learn pretty much everything that we need to know from what has happened over the last five years.”

Sierra Canyon co-founders, Mick Horwitz (left) and Howard Wang (right) share their reflections on the importance of family and community during Grandparents Visiting Day at Sierra Canyon School, Chatsworth on Tuesday, November 25. Photo courtesy Sierra Canyon School.

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(Continued from page 1)

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