



December 17, 2009 – Volume V, Issue I

Calendar of Events

Now thru Sun., Jan. 24, 2010
 Start times vary
 * Tickets at (213) 628-2772 *
 "Palestine, New Mexico"
 Mark Taper Forum
 135 N. Grand Ave.
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Now thru Sun., Feb. 7, 2010
 Start times vary
 * Tickets at (213) 628-2772 *
 "Mary Poppins"
 Ahmanson Theatre
 601 W. Temple St.
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thurs., Dec. 17, 2009
 10 a.m. to Noon
 "Breakfast with Santa and Toy
 Give-Away"
 Mayberry Park
 13201 E. Meyer Rd.
 South Whittier, CA 90605

Thurs., Dec. 17, 2009
 Starts at 6 p.m.
 "Community Meeting"
 Sunshine Park
 515 S. Deepmead Ave.
 La Puente, CA 91744

Thurs., Dec. 17, 2009
 Starts at 5 p.m.
 "5th Annual First District Artist
 Showcase"
 500 W. Temple St.
 8th Floor North Balcony
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thurs., Dec. 17, 2009
 Starts at 8 p.m.

'CASA CULTURAL' KIDS HELP CREATE HOLIDAY CARD



Charity - Creativity - Possibility...

For four years, we've provided a local artist the opportunity to display their work on our First District Holiday Card. We're continuing the tradition -- but this year, six student artists from Casa Cultural will showcase their talent. The card features six paintings (clockwise from top left): "La Piñata" by Stephanie Hernandez, 14; "Navidad en la Ceiba" by Brianda Rios, 10; "Loteria Navideña" by Beatrice Bojorquez, art director at Casa Cultural; "Jesus, Maria y Jose" by Melissa Lopez, 13, "La Posada" by Vanessa Bañuelos, 11; and "Noche Buena" by Isis Serrano, 15. Founded in 2004 by Guadalupe Bojorquez, the Casa Cultural program brings art and culture to the children of Saybrook Park in East L.A. Bojorquez develops an individualized program for each child based on their age and experience. Children learn layout, design, sketching, drawing painting in watercolor, and painting in acrylic. Casa Cultural also teaches them about different cultures through arts, crafts, and music. Throughout the year, Bojorquez invites artists to talk about their work and teach children their techniques. Kids also visit art museums, galleries, as well as festivals -- and they participate in art contests. We love Casa Cultural, and we encourage donations to them this holiday season! (Make checks payable to Plaza Community Services and mail them to 4018 City Terrace Dr., L.A., CA 90063. Please note "Casa Cultural" on your donation. ¡Muchísimas gracias!)

GOLD LINE EASTSIDE EXTENSION IS UP AND RUNNING!

Starts at 5 p.m.
 * Tickets at (323) 850-2000 *
 "A Chanticleer Christmas"
 Los Angeles Philharmonic
 Walt Disney Concert Hall
 111 S. Grand Ave.
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Fri., Dec. 18, 2009
 Starts at 5 p.m.
 "Christmas at the Park"
 Saybrook Park
 6250 E. Northside Dr.
 East Los Angeles, CA 90022

Fri., Dec. 18, 2009
 Starts at 5 p.m.
 "Christmas Toy Give-Away for
 Soccer Participants"
 Roosevelt Park
 7600 Graham Ave.
 Florence-Firestone, CA 90001

Fri., Dec. 18, 2009
 Starts at 5 p.m.
 "Christmas Toy Give-Away for
 Soccer Participants"
 Walnut Nature Park
 2642 Olive St.
 Walnut Park, CA 90255

Fri., Dec. 18, 2009
 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
 "Community Christmas Arts
 and Crafts"
 Dalton Park
 18867 E. Armstead St.
 Azusa, CA 91702

Fri., Dec. 18, 2009
 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
 "Annual Holiday Dinner"
 City Terrace Park
 1126 N. Hazard Ave.
 East Los Angeles, CA 90063

Fri., Dec. 18, 2009
 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
 "Holiday Sing-Along"
 Music Center
 135 N. Grand Ave.
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009
 9 a.m. to Noon
 "Pancake Breakfast"
 Sorensen Park
 11419 Rosehedge Dr.
 West Whittier, CA 90606



The holidays came early this year with the opening of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension! This \$898.8 million, six-mile light rail line extends from Union Station in downtown L.A. to East L.A. with one above-ground stop in Little Tokyo, another at the Pico-Aliso Station in Boyle Heights, and two more stops at Mariachi Plaza and Soto St. both underground. The train then resurfaces at Lorena St. and makes three above-ground stops in East L.A. along Third St. -- including at the East L.A. Civic Center -- before ending at Atlantic Station.

Officially named after the late Rep. Edward R. Roybal - who championed the project during the entire course of this 13-year career on the L.A. City Council and his 30-year career in the U.S. Congress -- the Eastside Extension truly has been a labor of love for everyone involved. Groundbreaking may have taken place five years ago but the Eastside community has advocated for this project for decades. We officially commemorated our hard-fought victory with several community celebrations at various stops along the Eastside Extension route. We were joined by grassroots transit advocates, elected officials, transit planners, and local residents.



But we particularly want to express our thanks to members of the Eastside Extension Review Advisory Committee (RAC). They were with us from the start -- and they helped us mitigate an impacts to the community that Eastside Extension construction inevitability created. Most importantly, they helped us determine which light rail route would best serve the Eastside. Thanks to everybody's hard work and dedication, East L.A. and Boyle Heights are now connected to the rest of L.A. County's mass transit network!

ROOSEVELT HIGH MARCHING BAND PLACES 1ST AT PARADE



Congratulations to the Roosevelt High School Marching Band for placing first in the Northeast Holiday Parade! This 70-member musical ensemble almost missed out on the chance to compete when funds for a bus to and from the parade came up short. Instead of giving up, though, the marching band members and their director hopped on the Eastside Extension at the Soto Station. Once they reached Union Station in downtown L.A., they transferred to the Gold Line heading north, exited at the historic Highland Park Station, and made it just in time to march in the parade where they won first place. Band Director Suzanne Gindin originally paid for the train trip out-of-pocket -- but to express our congratulations, we reimbursed her for the cost of the train trip. Right on, Rough Riders!

FOSTER CHILDREN ENJOY SPECIAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009
 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
**"Belvedere Park Fishing Club
 Holiday Toy Give-Away"**
 Belvedere Park Lake
 4801 E. Third St.
 East Los Angeles, CA 90022

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009
 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
**"Adult Art Workshop-Create
 your Own Silkscreened Gift"**
 Self Help Graphics & Art
 3802 E. César Chávez Ave.
 East Los Angeles, CA 90063

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009
 Starts at 10 a.m.
"Christmas in the Park"
 Ringrove Park
 747 N. Ringrove Dr.
 Valinda, CA 91744

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009
 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
**"Christmas in the Park Toy
 Give-Away, Food and
 Entertainment"**
 Sunshine Park
 515 S. Deepmead Ave.
 East Valinda, CA 91744

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009
 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
**"Santa Claus Toy Give-Away
 and Entertainment"**
 Salazar park
 3864 Whittier Blvd.
 East Los Angeles, CA 90023

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009
 * Registration at 10:30 a.m. *
 * Festivities from 11 a.m. 3
 p.m.
**"A Better LA Toy Drive and
 Family Christmas Party"**
 Helen Keller Park
 1045 W. 126th St.
 Los Angeles, CA 90044

Sat. Dec. 19, 2009
 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
"Winter Wonderland"
 Walnut Nature Park
 2642 Olive St..
 Walnut Park, CA 90255

Sat. Dec. 19, 2009
 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
**"Christmas Luncheon for
 Salazar Park Seniors"**
 Salazar Park
 3864 Whittier Blvd.
 East Los Angeles, CA 90023

Sat. Dec. 19, 2009
 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
"Jungle Jam"

For East County's foster children, the holidays can be an especially difficult time of year. We helped make it a little brighter by hosting a special holiday celebration exclusively for them at the Gene Autry Museum of Western Heritage near Elysian Park. Staff from the county's Dept. of Children & Family Services organized the party. The kids enjoyed a tasty dinner as well as lots of cake, candy, and Christmas cookies. There were plenty of presents underneath the Christmas tree for all foster children in attendance -- and the Autry Museum's distinct grandeur gave the soirée a special ambience. We want to express our appreciation to everyone who worked with DCFS to make this party possible. Antonia Hernandez of the California Community Foundation and Judge Michael Stern covered the catering costs.



John L. Gray, executive director of the Autry Museum, secured the venue at no cost. Federico and Ellen Jimenez took care of logistics. Our "Santa's Helpers" for the evening came from Girl Scout Troop 7221, who volunteered on all sorts of tasks -- from face painting and cookie making to Christmas frame assembling and picture taking. And 12-year-old mariachi singer Alex de la Torre provided the evening's free entertainment!

NATIVITY PROCESSION MARKS CHRISTMAS SEASON



Walnut Park came alive with holiday cheer during the Second Annual Community Tree Lighting and Nativity Procession at La Alameda Shopping Center! Located at the corner of Alameda St. and Florence Ave., this 18.3-acre shopping center -- which opened in the Summer of 2008 -- represents a \$59 million investment into this Southeast L.A. neighborhood. Now it is the perfect place to celebrate the season. The festivities began with a nativity procession starting from Jamba Juice to Chuck E. Cheese that ended back at the shopping center's outdoor plaza. There organizers had set up a 30-foot Christmas tree which we gladly lit before watching a nativity reenactment and singing lots of Christmas carols. Many thanks to everyone from the Walnut Park and Florence-Firestone neighborhoods for being part of this new holiday tradition -- and als

14830 S. Giordan St.
West Valinda, CA 91744

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009

1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

* Tickets at (213) 972-8001 *

"The Barber of Seville"

LA Opera

Dorothy Chandler Pavillon

135 N. Grand Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sat., Dec. 19, 2009

Starts at 5:30 p.m.

"Christmas Dinner"

Bassett Park

510 N. Vineland Ave.

West Valinda, CA 91746

Sun., Dec. 20, 2009

Starts at 7 p.m.

* Tickets at (213) 972-7282 *

"29th Annual Messiah Sing-
Along"

Los Angeles Master Chorale

111 S. Grand Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Mon., Dec. 21, 2009

9 a.m. to Noon

"Toy Give-Away"

Bassett Park

510 N. Vineland Ave.

West Valinda, CA 91746

Tues., Dec. 22, 2009

10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

"Senior End-of-the-Month
Party"

Roosevelt Park

7600 Graham Ave.

Florence-Firestone, CA 90001

Tues., Dec. 22, 2009

10a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

"Senior End-of-the-Month
Party"

Walnut Nature Park

2642 Olive St.

Walnut Park, CA 90255

Tues., Dec. 22, 2009

Starts at 8 p.m.

* Tickets at (323) 850-2000 *

"Holidays with Sweet Honey

JOY TO HUNTINGTON PARK AT CHRISTMAS PARADE

I proudly participated as Grand Marshal in one of the oldest holiday traditions in L.A. County, the 59th Annual Huntington Park Christmas Parade! Approximately 250,000 people joined me along the parade route which stretched along Pacific Blvd. from Randolph St. to Florence Ave. before heading west on Rugby Ave. Mariachis, charros, Aztec dance troupes, colorful floats, the Bob Baker marionettes, and the Wells Fargo stage coach also were a part of the parade procession as were ten high school marching bands. Myriad celebrities participated, too, including Ninette Rios, El Mandril, Lianna Grethel, Humberto Luna, Jose Alonso, "El Plebe," Francisco Quiroz, Grupo Bravada, Los Kitos characters, Olympic boxing gold medal winner Paul Gonzales, and actor Miguel Angel Rodriguez. Congratulations to the Huntington Park Chamber of Commerce for continuing to host this beloved tradition!



5 ILLEGAL CLINICS SHUT DOWN IN POMONA



Since 1998, our Sheriff's and Health Depts. have joined forces with the LAPD and the California Dept. of Health Care Services to crack down on illegal clinics. We call this unit the Health Authority Law Enforcement Task Force -- better known as the "HALT Team." Our goal is to stop unscrupulous individuals from selling dangerous drugs and providing a space for unlicensed doctors and dentists to practice. In the Fall of 2005, the HALT Team added Medicare fraud to its list of illicit activity to look out for -- and a part-time federal agent joined us specifically to assist with Medicare fraud inquiries. So we're pleased to announce that the HALT Team raided five illegal clinics and pharmacies over a two-day period this month in Pomona and, in effect, shut them down. County authorities confiscated over 300 lbs. of illicit drugs -- all imported illegally from Mexico -- worth approximately \$400,000. The HALT Team also arrested five people on various charges, from unlawfully dispensing pharmaceuticals to practicing medicine and dentistry without a license.

Los Angeles Philharmonic
Walt Disney Concert Hall
111 S. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Wed., Dec. 23, 2009
Starts at 8 p.m.
* Tickets at (323) 850-2000 *
"Preservation Hall Jazz
Band -- A Creole Christmas"
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Walt Disney Concert Hall
111 S. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thurs., Dec. 24, 2009
Christmas Eve

Thurs., Dec. 24, 2009
* Festivities at Noon *
* Doors Open at 2 p.m. *
* Show from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. *
"50th Annual L.A. County
Holiday Celebration"
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
Music Center Plaza
135 S. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Fri., Dec. 25, 2009
Christmas Day
* County buildings closed *

Thurs., Dec. 31, 2009
New Year's Eve

Thurs., Dec. 31, 2009
Starts at 7 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.
* Tickets at (323) 850-2000 *
"New Year's Eve with
Big Bad Voodoo Daddy"
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Walt Disney Concert Hall
111 S. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Fri., Jan. 1, 2010
New Year's Day
* County buildings closed *

Expect the HINET Team to bust more unlicensed clinics in the New Year! If you or someone you know needs medical or dental care, we strongly recommend avoiding these illicit establishments. They are more dangerous than they appear -- and there are always safer medical options available. To connect with a reputable public medical clinic in your neighborhood, call 2-1-1 and operators will assist you.



GLORIA MOLINA BECOMES CHAIR OF THE BOARD



This year, as Chair of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors, I think the biggest challenge we'll face is the fiscal storm that is upon us. I've received lots of comments from people here and in Sacramento as to why L.A. County has fared so well -- so far -- in comparison to other municipalities since, this past year, we did not experience layoffs or furloughs. But given the huge budget deficit Sacramento lawmakers are facing, most likely they'll pass on more responsibilities to us that the state formerly handled -- and they probably will not pass on to us the dollars necessary to carry out these new duties. So our major challenge this year will be handling this transfer of responsibilities without taking an axe to our budget. It won't be easy since the nationwide economic recession has caused our taxes and property taxes to decrease. The most difficult financial decisions are before us, not behind us. But as Chair, I intend to help bring the Board of Supervisors to consensus on these issues -- so I'm confident we'll weather the storm ahead. Also this year, we'll continue concentrating on risk management issues because every dollar we pay in lawsuits is a dollar we don't spend on vital public services. The majority of our county employees are caring, effective, and hard-working. But the misdeeds of a few have cost taxpayers dearly. Especially in light of our struggling economy, we intend to work hard this year on keeping liability costs to a minimum -- and preventing future lawsuits.

- Image of First District Holiday Card courtesy of Erica Banegas, Office of Sup. Gloria Molina
- Photos of Eastside Extension courtesy of Ralph Cangialosi and Gary Leonard, Metro Media Relations
- Photo of Roosevelt High School Marching Band courtesy of Suzanne Gindin, band director
- Photos of holiday party for foster youth courtesy of Richard Cervantes, Dept. of Children & Family Services
- Photo of Second Annual Community Tree Lighting and Nativity Procession courtesy of Rafael L. Mijangos, Primestor Development, Inc.
- Photo of 59th Annual Huntington Park Christmas Parade courtesy of Dante D'Eramo, parade producer and CEO/executive director, Huntington Park Chamber of Commerce
- Photos of confiscated illegal pharmaceuticals from HALT Team raid courtesy of the Dept. of Health Services
- Photo of Sup. Gloria Molina as Chair of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors courtesy of Martin Zamora, L.A. County Chief Executive Office - Photo Division