

# SHPOA

Shadow Hills Property Owners Association

Dedicated to Preserving Rural Community

Volume 34, Issue 6

*A Neighborhood Where Families Grow*



November-December 2011

## **Shadow Hills Residents: Slow Down on Sunland Boulevard!**

*By Tracy Coleman*

Hello neighbors. I live in Shadow Hills on Sunland Blvd. near Wornom with my family. We all love our neighborhood, and enjoy the rural atmosphere and way of life.

Excessive speeding on Sunland Blvd. has become a real hazard in our neighborhood, especially late at night and the early morning hours. If you don't live on the boulevard you may not even be aware of this problem. Many drivers and motorcyclists seem to think it is OK to use the boulevard as their personal racetrack.

For the past few years the number of late night collisions went down dramatically, this year however, has been particularly bad. We thought the stop light at Shadow Island Drive was making a difference, but speeding and accidents have picked up again to prior undesirable levels.

People are getting hurt. Just recently we watched as our neighbors tried to comfort a young man whose leg was completely severed above the knee. It really was an awful scene.

I've had to call 911 several times with my cell phone because the accidents often knock the power out. In fact, we are aware of four power poles that have been replaced on the boulevard this year alone as well as a fire hydrant and stretches of trail fencing, all because of reckless, speeding drivers. Another dangerous location is near the intersection of La Canada Way and Sunland Boulevard – there is still debris from the most recent accidents strewn on the road and sidewalks at that intersection!

Our son takes the bus to school and has to cross the street to get to the bus stop. It makes us very nervous knowing he is crossing a street that many people think is a freeway.

Recently we had a chance to meet with Officer Joel Flores who is in charge of traffic control in the area. It was surprising to hear that nearly 75% of the tickets he writes for speeding on Sunland Boulevard go to people who live in the area. All along we had thought the speeders were non-residents jumping from one freeway to the other. This is why we feel the need to write this article. If we can get our neighbors to honor the posted speed limit of 45mph on Sunland

Boulevard maybe then people who are just passing through will slow down as well.

The boulevard is our front yard. As you are passing through, please drive with the same respect that you would expect from someone driving down your street.



*Editor's Note: We were fortunate to have Officer Joel Flores as our guest speaker at October's SHPOA general meeting. He enlightened us about the large percentage of local drivers and Shadow Hills residents who speed and declared the speeding/traffic safety situation to be "out of control." He also told us Sunland Boulevard has not been "surveyed" for some time and that it is past due to be surveyed to see if the posted speed is safe/appropriate. He let us know that funding issues are causing delays in such surveying, as well as deployment of added traffic safety officers and equipment. As always, the more of us who speak up the better. SHPOA is taking several actions on this issue and we need your help.*

1. We will invite the Department of Transportation to meet with us about safety issues in the near future.
2. We have created a "Speed Enforcement" section on our website ([http://www.shpoa.us/Speed\\_Enforcement.html](http://www.shpoa.us/Speed_Enforcement.html)). Any concern or request you make goes directly to Mary Benson of Councilman Kregorian's office. Her email is [mary.benson@lacity.org](mailto:mary.benson@lacity.org).
3. When you contact Mary Benson via our website or via email, please specifically request:
  - a. Speed limit be reduced to 35 mph on Sunland Boulevard through Shadow Hills
  - b. Survey be conducted of speed/safety on Sunland Boulevard
  - c. Truck traffic be limited to 6-ton vehicles as is the case on La Tuna Canyon, and that such heavy trucks be re-routed to industrial freeway exits such as Osborne
  - d. Request traffic control officers be deployed to Sunland Boulevard, as well as equipment be installed such as additional traffic/warning lights, speed trailers, synchronized lights, warning signs, etc.
4. Continue to report speeders and accidents to Officer Flores at 818-644-8142 or call 911 in an emergency.

**2011 SHPOA Board Members**

**Executive Officers**

President: Elektra Kruger 352-6220  
kalkrulers@earthlink.net

Vice President: Dave De Pinto 352-7618  
7daviddepinto@ca.rr.com

Executive Secretary: Muriel Sullivan 352-5052  
carlington@ca.rr.com

Recording Secretary: Katherine Dayen  
Dayenight1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Gerhard Kruger 352-6220  
kalkrulers@earthlink.net

Membership: Kellie Kozonis  
kozonis@ca.rr.com

**Appointed Officers**

Land Use: Bill Eick (W) 248-0050  
(H) 353-6191  
weeick@pacbell.net

Trails: James & Andrea Gutman  
353-5974 - jgutman1@ca.rr.com

Special Projects: Karen Burdett 970-1995  
kburdett89@gmail.com

Neighborhood Watch: Sue Mansis 554-8113  
suemansis@shpoa.us

Outreach and Lost/Found Pets: Vacant  
shpoa@shpoa.us

Webmaster: Carlos George  
webmaster@shpoa.us

Newsletter:

Editor and Article Collection: Dave De Pinto 352-7618  
7daviddepinto@ca.rr.com

Ad Collection: Colleen Keppler 209-4972  
cccaamano@yahoo.com

Layout: Colleen Keppler 209-4972  
cccaamano@yahoo.com

Mike McCoy 273-4195  
mccoyart@yahoo.com

Historian: Vacant

Hospitality: Martha Hankins 951-1669  
mhankins@ca.rr.com

**SHPOA's Mailing Address: P.O. Box 345, Sunland, CA 91041**

**SHPOA's E-mail Address: shpoa@shpoa.us**

**Website: www.shpoa.us**

Printer: Wright Color Graphics  
Linda Fullerton, 246-8877  
linda@wrightcolor.com

**Senior Lead Police Officers:**

*Sunland:* Larry Martinez 634-0705  
31179@lapd.lacity.org

*Sun Valley:* Michelle Rodriguez 634-0755  
31020@lapd.lacity.org

**Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council (FTDNC):  
www.ftdnc.org**

*West Shadow Hills/  
Stonehurst:* Terry Kaiser  
hdconcerns@ca.rr.com  
Mary Ann Geyer  
maryanngeyer@aol.com

*East Shadow Hills/East LVT:* Dale Gibson 968-8670  
Mike Carpenter 470-5235  
lamikec@yahoo.com

**2011 "Spirit" Recipients Chosen by NHOER Board**

The 2011 "Spirit of Johnny Carpenter" Awards recipients have been chosen by the NHOER Board which includes Nancy Woodruff, President of Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council, Sue Bartlett, Director of Sun Valley Graffiti Busters and Robert Stevens, stuntman and member of the Reel Cowboys. The "New Heaven on Earth" Ranch is an independent 501 c(3) public charity.

The "Spirit" awards will be presented at a venue to be decided in mid-November and the community will be notified. The award was created to honor the legacy of the late Johnny Carpenter - stuntman, actor and cowboy whose original Heaven on Earth Ranch stood on current church property for almost 25 years. Johnny built an authentic western town and taught physically and mentally challenged children and young adults how to ride horses. Every Thanksgiving, Johnny treated the kids to a Turkey dinner and Wild West show.

In 2010, the awards were presented at the 8th Annual "Thanksgiving" Dinner and over 500 attended from the community and church, the most ever. NHOER is in the midst of its general appeal fundraising drive will announce shortly the official "groundbreaking" of the "Johnny Carpenter" Arena.

To get more information and to learn how you can support NHOER please call 818-470-5235 or email: lamikec@yahoo.com.



**Park Volunteer Program**

*by Elektra Kruger*

The City and Department of Recreation and Parks continue to battle significant staffing shortages due to budget cuts. The National Park Service has a "Volunteer in Parks" program whose participants work alongside the National Park Service staff to perform a wide variety of functions including:

- Designing visitor brochures
- Photography
- Museum artifact preservation
- Campground hosting
- Guiding nature walks
- Organizing and monitoring clean-up efforts

Councilmember Tom LaBonge felt that the City could benefit from a similar program and in mid-August 2011 presented a Motion to City Council suggesting that they ask the Department of Recreation and Parks to prepare and submit a report with recommendations relative to establishing a "Volunteer in Parks" program in the City of Los Angeles.

The City Council's Parks Committee held a special meeting in early September 2011 at which time a representative from the Department of Recreation and Parks stated that the Department had over 25,000 registered volunteers - the most of any City Department - performing a wide variety of services such as coaching, assisting at day camps and senior centers, assisting with clean-up of park grounds, assisting with tree plantings, etc. The Committee ultimately approved the recommendation contained in the initial Motion. The Committee also requested the Department of Recreation and Parks prepare and



**Letters to the Editor:**

**Dear Editor:**

Thank you for the article from Ms. Kruger regarding porno at the library. I have started visiting the Lake View Terrace library of late. I recently witnessed two minor males who sit at the library most of the day playing video games. But, they interlace that with watching pornography on the computer. I approached the librarian on several occasions to discuss it with her and was told that the city attorney informed them there was nothing they could do. Their parents drop them off and that is that. Last Saturday I watched the older male (maybe 16) sneak swigs out of a beer bottle hidden in his book bag.

Even when they have their privacy screens on I could easily see without trying hard that they were watching pornography. Why is it I cannot enjoy an environment free from explicit sexual videos when I go to the public library? We are allowing our children to watch porno legally and my rights don't matter? The big question is what is wrong with those two sets of parents, so hands off, that they just drop their kids off for hours on end and have no clue what they are doing, or maybe they do know. What a sad situation and commentary on our society.

Madeleine Jen Kin  
*Shadow Hills Resident*

---

**Dear Editor:**

I need to disagree with the article by Ms. Drucker regarding her desire to be able to go to public places and let her dogs run free. Almost every "dog bite" situation involves an off-leash dog. One attack or bite is all one needs to be injured or worse, a small dog gets killed. Society as a whole has rules and regulations that may hinder our every tiny freedom, but in some way protects the greater good.

If Ms. Drucker wants her dogs to run free, there is a dog park or her own back yard. But, when going out in public it is responsible and respectful to each other to carry bags (yes pick up the poop on the trail when possible) and have your dog on a leash at all times.

We do not know what is going on for certain inside the head of an animal. Leashes can save another dog as well as save our own dog's life. I walked my three dogs there one time, on-leash and an off-leash dog chased us. He was after my tiny dog and my larger dog was ready to fight to protect us, but it made for a terrifying experience.

Luckily, a Good Samaritan came to my rescue. I rode my horse there as well, but I either had a long line on my dog, or I just did not bring him with me. Tujung Wash should enjoy no real "special condition" status that removes the on-leash rule - a public place is just that...public! I am glad tickets are being given out.

Madeleine Jen Kin  
*Shadow Hills Resident*

---

**Be a California Native with  
Theodore Payne Foundation!**

*By Dave De Pinto*

The guest speaker at SHPOA's September general meeting was Lisa Novick of Theodore Payne Foundation. Lisa is in charge of school and community outreach for the Foundation which is dedicated to the preservation and strengthening of "native" California vegetation and wild flowers which



are very beneficial to our environment. Theodore Payne Foundation is located on 10459 Tuxford Street, in the hills bordering La Tuna Canyon and Sun Valley.

Lisa's presentation showed attendees the interconnections between our climate, geology and topography, the interdependence between bird, insect and butterfly life, as well as the resulting implications for human quality of life. In a nutshell, the Southern California landscape has been overridden by non-native species of plants and vegetation that have a negative impact on many indigenous species here in Southern California.

By making a commitment to planting "California Native" vegetation, all of us can help restore a balance to our ecosystem. Another important benefit is water conservation. Given that California Native plants utilize 1/7th the water of non-native vegetation, there are major water, cost and energy savings to be realized by going "native."

To learn more about California Native plants, please visit the Theodore Payne Foundation website ([www.theodorepayne.org](http://www.theodorepayne.org)), call them at 818-768-1802 or visit local their educational facility at 10459 Tuxford Street (where you can also purchase California Native plants).

---

**Vote-By-Mail**

*Continued from page 3*

voting at a traditional polling place if they so choose - but only in the event of a special election to fill a vacancy created in a single Council District. This Ordinance would NOT apply to any other type of special election or any regular election. The Ordinance would not eliminate traditional polling places nor reduce the number of polling places as had been proposed when the measure was first introduced.

Whether such a special election is even held in the first place, or a Council seat is allowed to remain vacant, is determined by vote of the Council when there is a vacancy. If the election is to be run as a VBM to all qualified registered voters it must be approved by the Council at that time.

Various reviews and consideration of the Draft Ordinance have occurred. The City Clerk submitted their report to the City Council in early July 2011. As the idea bounced off the walls of many committee hearings and Council review, its proposed design changed significantly to a Draft Ordinance calling for all registered voters within a single Council District to be issued a VBM ballot automatically as well as maintaining all traditional neighborhood polling places. Thus, the voter could choose his/her preferred method of voting although all registered voters would receive a ballot by mail automatically.

The City Clerk expressed concern about actual increases in election costs of this approach as well as voter and poll worker confusion related to the voting process and did not recommend elections to be run as a two-option procedure. How typical - a very good idea gone greatly awry as it makes its way through the "system." SHPOA will keep you informed about this issue in future newsletter editions.



DRE# 01328172



## How to Rescue Rover When He's Choking

By Denise Fleck ([www.sunnydogink.com](http://www.sunnydogink.com))

It was a picture-perfect Thanksgiving. A patchwork of red, orange and gold leaves blanketed the ground while a smattering of green still clung to the branches above. The house was filled with the sound of football while all anxiously awaited the holiday meal. Suddenly Brutus, a 90 pound Rottweiler, entered the room with an unsteady gait. Unable to breathe and making a ghastly assortment of noises, the dog was in grave distress while the humans nearby froze in a panic.

Fortunately for Brutus, dog lover Terri was on the scene and could sense the true emergency at hand. She quickly hugged the large dog around his abdomen and gave a quick thrust. Nothing happened, so Terri tried again, and this time a chunk of dog food literally flew out of Brutus' mouth and across the floor. The grateful Rottie, whose breathing returned to normal, began licking Terri's face if to say a great big canine "thank you," while Terri herself breathed an enormous sigh of relief.

### **IF YOUR DOG IS CHOKING**

Initially, give him a few moments to perform a cough which may expel the object, but if it does not...a *careful* sweep of the mouth with your fingers to dislodge the object is recommended. Always look at what you're doing though—don't blindly reach into your pet's mouth or you could push the object further down, tear throat tissue or even get bitten. If your attempt is not successful, try one of these techniques:

**1. *Doggie Heimlich*** -- Stand behind your dog and place your arms around his waist keeping his head lower than his stomach. Close your hands together to make a fist and place your fist just behind the last rib in the soft part of the tummy. Compress the abdomen by pulling



up in a quick and rapid manner similar to the technique commonly performed on humans. This method does have the potential of bruising internal organs, and since canine ribs are more flexible than human ones, it doesn't always create enough pressure to expel the object, so you may then try...

**2. *Chest Thrusts*** -- Place your hands flat on each side of your pet's chest and squeeze inward, pushing with your shoulders and elbows to squeeze the lungs. After two thrusts, give the animal a moment to cough and/or look in his mouth to see if the object is now reachable. If not, repeat.

Techniques like these are best learned in a Pet First-Aid and CPR Class where you can gain the confidence and skill to perform them properly.

## Trapping Wildlife? There is no Relocation!

by Elektra Kruger

**Fact:** Many wild animals that are trapped are euthanized.

The City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Services does not provide traps or issue trapping permits to the public to remove nuisance wildlife themselves. Trapping or relocation of wildlife by the public is prohibited. California State law prohibits the relocation of predatory mammals (CCR Title 14 sec. 465.5).

The Los Angeles Department of Animal Services recommends altering a property's attractive influences (pet food bowls outdoors, human food in uncovered compost piles, fallen fruit) or the use of wildlife deterrents such as motion lights. Los Angeles residents may contract with licensed Nuisance or Pest Control companies to remove certain types of mammals, however be well aware that these animals will most likely be euthanized - not relocated.

Why is there no relocation? Often wild animals on our urban properties are the result of multiple generations that have learned to survive on food sources, water sources and protective shelters around our homes. These "urban mammals" may not have the foraging or survival skills needed to live successfully in our forests, hills or mountains. They usually have been found to die of starvation within a short period of time following relocation to a land totally foreign to them. An urban wild animal may have come in contact with our domestic animals and become exposed to diseases for which they may now be carriers that could infest wildlife populations if relocated. The best solution to rid unwanted wildlife from your property: do not attract them in the first place or deter them with features unpleasant to them.



## Transfer of CD2 Funds to Neighborhood Councils?

by Elektra Kruger

The City's Neighborhood Councils, like all City Departments, received budget cuts in the latest budget proposal in an effort to balance the City's bleeding red fiscal status. The value of the Neighborhood Council concept is something close to Councilmember Paul Krekorian's heart and to support the Neighborhood Councils in CD2 he presented a Motion in May 2011 to City Council asking that they approve a transfer of \$22,000 of unallocated and unencumbered CD2 discretionary funds into a new fund to be entitled "Council District 2 Neighborhood Council Grant Program" for the purpose of providing grants to Neighborhood Councils.

Per the Motion, all expenditures from this new fund must be authorized by the Councilmember in office such that the monies will not be foolishly wasted. This Motion went straight to City Council for their vote rather than being first referred to any City Council Committee for review and recommendation. It was approved at the May 20, 2011 City Council session and approved by the Mayor on May 27, 2011.

### Shadow Hills Pre-School

Are you looking for top quality preschool for your young child? Do you have a 3 or 4 year old that is ready to grow and develop in a hands-on, fun-filled, nurturing environment? At Shadow Hills Preschool we are looking for a few new students to enjoy our program. We emphasize development of social, emotional and cognitive skills. We are a developmental, play-based school and we believe learning should be fun!

We are located at the corner of Sunland Blvd and Johanna and our hours are currently Monday-Wednesday-Friday 9:00 a.m. until noon. We are planning to implement extended hours until 2:00 p.m. later in the year. Stop by and see us, or give us a call at 818-353-7554.

## **Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags**

*by Elektra Kruger*

An estimated 2.3 billion single-use plastic carryout bags and 400 million single-use paper bags are used annually in the City of Los Angeles. These bags become a major source of litter on City streets and waterways. Only about 5% of plastic bags (btw: plastic grocery bags can now be placed in our blue recycle bins) and 21% of single-use paper bags are recycled.

In 2008, the City Council adopted a Bureau of Sanitation report recommending that the City adopt a citywide ban on use of carryout plastic bags at all supermarkets and retail stores beginning January 2010 (that date was recommended in a report - no Ordinance relative to a single-use plastic bag ban has yet been adopted).

To address overuse of plastic bags in retail and grocery stores, since 2005 the Bureau of Sanitation has passed out over 250,000 reusable bags at various citywide events. Since 2007, the City has also worked with supermarkets to provide bins for customers to recycle their plastic bags. The State needs more comprehensive legislation, but so far State law still prohibits local jurisdictions from placing a point of sale fee on single-use plastic bags.

Given this, the LA Bureau of Sanitation recommends requiring reusable bags to be used in supermarkets and retail stores. In early September 2011, Councilmember Paul Koretz presented a Motion to City Council asking that a citywide policy be adopted to ban single-use carryout bags at supermarkets and retailers, that the Council instruct the Bureau of Sanitation to develop an implementation plan and the City Attorney to draft an Ordinance banning use of all single-use carryout bags from City retailers.

The Motion was referred to the City Council's Energy and Environment Committee for their review and recommendation. SHPOA will keep you abreast of the progress of this Motion.



## **Retain Four Photo Red Cameras**

*by Elektra Kruger*

In late July 2011, the Los Angeles City Council voted to terminate the Photo Red Light Program in exchange for lengthening signal timing. At the time this decision was made, there had been discussion of retaining cameras at certain intersections in order to make an objective evaluation as to whether lengthening signal timing actually would improve traffic safety.

In early September 2011, Councilmember Bernard Parks presented a Motion to City Council asking that the Chief Legislative Analyst, LAPD, and Department of Transportation negotiate retention of photo red light cameras at four specified intersections, determine its cost and report back to the City Council for further consideration of using this technology to conduct an objective evaluation of the effect of lengthening signal timing on improving traffic safety.

The Motion was received and filed by Council in mid-September 2011. Let's see what happens from here.





## LightRadio vs. Cell Tower

by Elektra Kruger

Mobile data usage is expected to grow to 26 TIMES its current level between 2010 and 2015. As use of SmartPhones, Tablets and other forms of mobile data traffic surges, wireless companies are struggling to keep up with demand which currently requires further deployment of cell tower facilities to house the antennas. This is costly to them and to customers, not to mention the towers being grossly unsightly.

A new technology known as LightRadio has emerged that is anticipated to help wireless carriers expand their networks. LightRadio is a technology developed by Alcatel-Lucent that miniaturizes the size of broadband data base radios and antennas into a 2-inch cube that compresses all the components of a cell tower which can be controlled at centralized stations through cloud technology allowing for less-intrusive mounting of the equipment on utility poles, billboards and building structures.

It is estimated that LightRadio units are up to 30% more efficient than current cell towers and could contain multigenerational antennas (i.e. 2G, 3G, 4G) from the same cube. Power efficiency of LightRadio cubes should greatly reduce operating costs for wireless providers which would presumably be passed on to the consumer.

One thing that does still need to be taken into account is that the physics of radio propagation remain the same and that in order to provide adequate coverage the Radio Frequency power emitted by the LightRadio will be similar to that emitted by current cell towers/facilities. Thus, there is still the potential to cause radio interference and desensitization of other radio receiver systems such as those utilized by Departments associated with Public Safety such as Police and Fire.

Wireless carriers will begin trials in September 2011 with full production anticipated for 2012. The City is expressing an interest in this technology as a potential for revenue as these unobtrusive "cubes" could be attached to City-owned utility poles.



## Fighting Graffiti with "Point of Purchase" ID

by Elektra Kruger

In an effort to control access to items associated with graffiti activities such as spray paint, spray paint nozzles or paint pens, the City of Portland, Oregon, in addition to storing these items in locked cabinets and/or locating the items behind check-out counters (as is done in California), called for a "point-of-sale" record for each transaction of these materials requiring proof of identification of persons purchasing these items and requires stores making the sales to retain a copy of these records for two years.

In early September 2011, Councilmember Dennis Zine presented a Motion to City Council suggesting that Los Angeles should consider a similar program in an effort to deal with potential graffiti vandals. The Motion calls for joint effort by the City's Chief Legislative Analyst, the City Attorney and the Los Angeles Police Department to review the Portland "point of purchase" program and to prepare a report on its merits for the City Council's Public Safety Committee. SHPOA will keep you abreast of any progress related to this Motion.

## Mountain Lion - or Whatever

by Elektra Kruger

The Mountain Lion - or Puma, or Catamount, or Panther, or Cougar, or whatever you want to call it, really is not a lion at all, but is more closely related to the jaguar. Their coloring is generally in varying shades of tan with black-tipped ears and tails. They can get quite large with males sometimes reaching 8 feet in length and up to 180 pounds. If you see one in this area they are not likely to be nearly that large. Their tails are very long in relation to their bodies which serve to maintain balance while chasing prey. While the mainstay of their diet is larger prey such as deer, they do make use of such things as rabbits, squirrels, coyotes and raccoons.

With increasing urban development into one-time Mountain Lion territory and increasing recreational sports in our mountains and open space such as biking, hiking, climbing, off-road riding - Mountain Lion encounters have risen. In Spring we may be far more likely to run into a juvenile Mountain Lion in Shadow Hills or any of our local hills because Mom has just kicked him out to make room for the next batch. Uncertain as a newbie on his own to define or understand what native habitat to a Mountain Lion may be and not as capable to fight for his own territory in a truly native habitat, he is forced to take on marginal - and often transitionally urban - territories. It is likely that it is these that we see in our Shadow Hills open grasslands - small as those parcels may be.

These juveniles may attack our pets. We might have to deal with an increased population of Mountain Lions of all ages if tragedy strikes their native habitat, such as the Station Fire and their primary diet base—the deer—have all but disappeared. Mountain Lion attacks on people are rare, but in the event you encounter a Mountain Lion:

- Stand your ground and face the animal maintaining eye contact - do NOT turn your back and do NOT run. That makes you fair game.
- Do not bend or crouch down - you will appear as a frightened prey animal. That makes you fair game.

Even if you do not see a Mountain Lion itself, you may encounter evidence of their presence. They have large paw prints; up to 3-4" across without claw marks. The pads have a very distinctive "M" shape. They tend to bury their prey under loose brush and feed on it for several days. To avoid being encountered by a Mountain Lion, if you come across such a carcass, leave the area, fully aware of your surroundings and make your presence known such that you will not surprise a Mountain Lion near his prize.



## Ohh-Possum

by Elektra Kruger

Our backyards and city streets can become a banquet brunch for opossums. They are basically a nocturnal creature that will eat insects, snails, fallen fruit, carrion, eggs, garbage, pet food and items tossed into open compost piles. They are not fast movers and amble along seeking shelter in locations such as abandoned nests or burrows of other animals, tree hollows, under rocks, in wood or brush piles, in trash piles, sheds, under decks,

*Continued on pg. 11*



inside unused vehicles and even in storage boxes in your attic or basement or..... gosh.....where else?

In an attempt to get at something to eat, opossums are often caught in trash cans and are unable to get out. Once I found an opossum in the bottom of a trash can in my backyard, but by then there wasn't a whole lot of him left - and that was even an empty trash can. If you should ever find one in a trash can and he is in better shape than the one I found, just turn the can on its side and let the little guy escape. Make sure trash can lids are tightly secured to avoid this from happening again. Opossums have opposable thumbs and a prehensile tail, both of which are used for gripping and climbing.

I wouldn't try petting one. If he doesn't like it, he may snarl at you with his 50 teeth - more teeth than any other North American mammal has. If cornered they may initially snarl with that mouth full of teeth and growl, but they often end up laying down still with their mouth agape. It is believed that this is actually an involuntary response triggered by "fright chemicals" released into their bloodstream resulting in temporary paralysis.

Opossums are often blamed for damage done around urban properties that is actually caused by other animals. They generally do not fish koi out of backyard ponds, dig up lawns or gardens or attack our pet cats. Do not feel compelled to trap and remove opossums based on their looks - granted they really are not particularly "cute" - besides which especially in our transitional semi-urban area they will always be around. You will never really "get rid of them". The best thing you can do to keep them away from your property is to remove any easy access to food sources thus making your property less inviting to them - let them check out the neighbor.



**LA in Compliance with the Clean Water Act? - Part 1**

*by Elektra Kruger*

In 1972, the Federal Clean Water Act provided codes for the management of wastewater discharge into our waterways. Following the passage of the Clean Water Act, Los Angeles created the Sewer Construction and Maintenance Fund in 1972 to do such things as upgrade the Hyperion Treatment Plant to full secondary treatment of wastewater by 1998, cease ocean disposal of sludge (biosolids) by 1987 and the construction of some of the largest tunnel interceptor/outfall sewers to deal with capacity issues that were causing sewage spills onto our streets and into waterways such as the LA River and Pacific Ocean.



To implement all elements of the Clean Water Act, which would upgrade our means of dealing with wastewater, a serious financial commitment from the "stewards" of Los Angeles would be needed. Unfortunately, these "stewards" have chosen to litigate their way out of doing such work for years. Spending all that money on lawyers rather than upgrading the sewage system has left us with a dinosaur-aged sewage treatment program and that much less money available to finally "get with the program".

Even today, infrastructure investments in the City's Clean

## Clean Water Act

*Continued from pg. 9*

Water Program are far from being completed. Most of the sewer collection system, which consists of approximately 6,700 miles of sewer pipes and 49 pump stations, need replacement and/or upgrading. The City's four water reclamation plants are in serious need of upgrading to meet effluent quality standards.

It is the Bureau of Sanitation (BOS) that is being held responsible for ensuring that Los Angeles at least meets, if not surpasses, the minimum requirements to remain in compliance with the Clean Water Act and all associated state and regional laws and permit requirements. The BOS is also responsible for ensuring that LA continues to invest in infrastructure maintenance and upgrades.

Given an awareness of the City's obligation to meet the legislative requirements of the Clean Water Act, in mid-December 2010, Councilmember Bernard Parks presented a Motion to City Council asking that they request the Bureau of Sanitation to prepare and present a report on the status of Los Angeles' Clean Water (i.e. Wastewater) Program inclusive of a financial plan dealing with the Program. To be continued in future issues of the SHPOA newsletter.



## Our White Elephant Museum (Summary as of late-October 2010)

*by Elektra Kruger*

Following the April 2009 filing for Chapter 7 bankruptcy of the Children's Museum of LA (CMLA) which resulted in the sale of its exhibits and the City taking possession of the structural facilities, on October 26 2010, the City Council voted on a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed with the Discovery Science Center for the design, fabrication and installation of exhibits and the operation and maintenance of the Children's Museum.

As part of the bankruptcy proceedings, the Bankruptcy Trustee had attempted to find a replacement operator for the museum, but was unable to do so. In November 2009, the Bankruptcy Trustee rejected the CMLA lease and all agreements with the City which discharged all CLMA obligations as part of the bankruptcy proceedings. The City thereupon took possession of the structural premises.

However, in accordance with various funding and grant agreements for the construction of the Museum, it was now the City that became obligated to operate and maintain the Museum for 30 years. But the City did not have the personnel with appropriate expertise to develop exhibits and to operate and maintain the Museum and budgetary constraints made it impossible to hire personnel with this expertise.

The Discovery Science Center, with staff having the necessary expertise and experience, was operating a 59,000 square foot science center facility with interests similar to those sought for the Children's Museum and wished to create exhibits for and to operate the Children's Museum. The City's Department of Recreation and Parks applied for a grant through the State's Prop 84 Nature Education Facilities Grant Program to fund the design,



fabrication, and installation of exhibits at the Museum under the title of Hansen Dam Nature Education Center (HDNEC).

By virtue of the Memorandum, the Discovery Science Center agreed to help the City fabricate and install Museum exhibits including the HDNEC exhibits IF the City were awarded the Prop 84 grant funds. If the City failed to get the Prop 84 grant, the City and Discovery Science Center would, for a time, seek other funding sources but the Memorandum would be void if funding were not found. According to the Memorandum, conceptual Plans for the exhibits would be financed solely by the Discovery Science Center at no cost to the City and would be subject to the approval of the HDNEC grant application and the Department of Recreation and Park Commissioners.



## **Bribes & Criminal Misconduct in B/S - Part 1**

*by Elektra Kruger*

Two Building and Safety field inspectors recently plead guilty to charges of soliciting bribes in exchange for building approvals. These employees were terminated and subsequently arrested by the FBI. In addition, the Department received an anonymous letter charging criminal misconduct by two other inspectors.

The Mayor then ordered further interdepartmental investigations. Over 50 Projects were checked for possible permit approvals granted without actual physical inspections or improper/inadequate construction. As of late June 2011, three additional employees were terminated and two more ended up on administrative leave.

The Building and Safety's General Manager proposed a number of changes to improve accountability, oversight, transparency and communication among co-workers so the department can commit to the public that these allegations will not occur again (good luck):

- Create an internal investigations unit to receive and review complaints to be overseen by the City's Personnel Department
- Set up background investigation standards for hiring
- Increase supervision
- Set up GPS tracking of field inspectors

The Personnel Department is in the process of creating four Groups to run performance audits of the Department of Building and Safety:

- Group 1: Inspection Bureau to audit Residential Inspectors of houses and duplexes
- Group 2: Inspection Bureau to audit Commercial Inspectors of commercial buildings and apartments
- Group 3: Code Enforcement Bureau to audit Code Enforcement Inspectors
- Group 4: Engineering Bureau to audit Engineers.

Computer programs are being created to automatically search computer records associated with inspection work done over the past 12 - 24 months. SHPOA will update you on the progress of this program.

## **Farmer's Markets in Residential Zones?**

*by Elektra Kruger*

Farmer's Markets have not been permitted in residential zones in the City of Los Angeles. Councilmember Herb Wesson felt that in the interest of providing communities easy access to fresh foods, fruits and vegetables that the City should consider streamlining the permitting process for Farmer's Markets and should allow non-profit organizations to set up Farmer's Markets in residential areas by-right.

In mid-November 2010, he presented a Motion to City Council asking that they request the Planning Department and City Attorney to review the feasibility of allowing non-profits to obtain a permit by-right for Farmer's Markets in residential zones without requiring a Zoning Administrators Hearing or other discretionary action. The Motion was referred to the City Council's Planning and Land-Use Management Committee (PLUM) which considered the matter at its April 12, 2011 meeting. Among the issues in the debate about Farmer's Markets are the tough economy, competition, the proper location for such markets, impacts on residential neighborhoods, and fairness to businesses which work hard to comply with strict City business permitting regulations, pay City taxes, meet City/County licensing regulations and meet County health requirements.

The Committee made no decision at this meeting continuing further consideration of the matter to its April 26, 2011 session where residents spoke to both the pros and the cons of Farmer's Markets. To be continued in future issues of the SHPOA newsletter.



## **Ban on Mill-Bred Animals?**

*by Elektra Kruger*

Pet shops selling live animals are traditionally a sales-outlet for mill-bred animals. Mill breeders may produce from hundreds to thousands of animals under conditions lending themselves to cruelty, in-breeding, health and personality issues. It is a very lucrative trade for both mills and pet shops. Animals not placed in shops and/or sold to consumers generally end up being dumped into our overburdened shelters - or worse.

Growing national sentiment against animal mills has led many states and individual communities to adopt legislation that regulates the mills and the retail outlets. Thousands of dogs, cats and rabbits are euthanized annually in City shelters. There is a growing public sentiment to find ways to break the link between the mills and pet shops. Efforts thus far on the City's part have included such things as establishing an Animal Cruelty Task Force, strengthening animal abuse laws, limiting forms of street sales of animals, establishing stronger regulations monitoring performing animals and establishing more rigorous requirements for kenneling and for pet shop permits.

In 2010, there were approximately 100 retail shops selling live animals in the City of LA, most of which had been obtained from puppy and kitten mills. Recognizing the abuses associated with animal mills and their contribution to the overpopulation of animals in our community, in

early May 2011, Councilmember Paul Koretz presented a Motion to City Council requesting that the Los Angeles Department of Animal Services, the City's Chief Legislative Analyst, the City Attorney and the Los Angeles Police Department perform a study and make recommendations to the Board of Animal Services and the City Council regarding:

- Establishment of a ban on the sale of mill-bred dogs, cats, chickens and rabbits within the City limits
- Making shelter animals available to licensed pet stores for adoption
- Establishment of a rating system much like that of our restaurants that identifies stores excelling in meeting rigorous requirements and conditions
- Banning puppy, kitten, chicken and rabbit mills in the City limits
- Proposal of Ordinances and Programs to accomplish these proposals



In late May 2011, the California Federation of Dog Clubs submitted a letter to the LA City Council OPPOSING any ban on pet sales. They argued that such bans would create a shortage (?) of desirable pets, create a black market for dogs and cats, would create a rise in animal imports from other countries and could create health/disease issues for animals and humans. This may well be true and should also be banned.

As the Ordinance is drafted and reviewed by appropriate committees, it should also include a section requiring Rescue Groups permitted to provide animals for sale through the pet-store trade to verify to the City by means of the licensing or permitting process that no animals in their care are knowingly originating from other countries and are knowingly originating from any mill-bred setting domestic or international. SHPOA will keep you updated on this issue in future newsletters.



Do you have a "White Elephant" looking for a home? Wrap it up "pretty" & bring it to our November meeting and laugh until you hurt watching your friends & neighbors try to dump their white elephants & gifts on you.



