



# The Mount Washington Association

Serving the Mount Washington community since 1955.

September 2008

[www.mtwashington.org](http://www.mtwashington.org)

## General Membership Meeting

Monday, September 15, 2008, 6:30 PM  
Self-Realization Fellowship  
3380 San Rafael Avenue

## *Special Mount Washington History Meeting*

Please join us for a special presentation on the history of our community, including a tour of the SRF headquarters building, constructed one hundred years ago as the Mount Washington Hotel. See the articles on page 3 for details.

PLEASE NOTE THE SPECIAL TIME AND LOCATION FOR THIS MEETING. (We've moved it an hour early to allow ourselves some daylight for our tour).

As always, refreshments will be served and all are welcome.

*"Whether you own or rent or sleep out in a tent, you have a voice in the Mount Washington Association."*

## Helping Out at Avenue 50 Studio

At the July "Summer Fun" meeting, the Mount Washington Association presented the Avenue 50 Studio with a \$1000 donation to help replace equipment lost during a recent burglary.



The Avenue 50, operated by Kathy Gallegos, is a non-profit art gallery formed to support the cultural vitality of the community. The Avenue 50 Studio's objective is to enhance public recognition and appreciation of the area's multicultural art community and engender support for visual artists, writers and poets.

## President's Message

*Eliot Sekuler*

### Let a million lawn signs bloom

Hard to believe that it's already autumn, my favorite season in Los Angeles, when the heat of the summer is exchanged for the heat of the election season.

The Mount Washington Association is a non-partisan group, and this is a non-partisan message. But whatever political stripes you may wear, I can't imagine

not feeling the sense of urgency, even electricity, that's crackling in the air as November approaches.

Most of us are transfixed by the historic crossroads at which the presidential contest has arrived. Of course there's quite a bit more at stake this year, including propositions that will have major impacts upon our lives. Seldom has there been an electoral season that touches upon so many economic and social issues, so many aspects of our future.

We've already begun to be inundated with conflicting and often confusing arguments.

We've heard compelling arguments for the Measure J bond proposal for community college classroom repair (and opinions from the other side). Our online bulletin boards are already buzzing with the pros and cons of Measure R, the sales tax increase that would fund public transportation projects and help build out L.A.'s subway and light rail system. Statewide, passions are running high on both sides of Proposition 8, which would eliminate the right of our gay neighbors to marry. Conflicting arguments are airing in TV ads on the alternative energy-related Proposition 7. And we can soon expect a blizzard of ads pertaining to Arnold Schwarzenegger's Proposition 11, which would change the legislative re-districting process more to the Governor's liking.

Our state assemblymen, Anthony Portantino and Kevin DeLeon – both of whom have been frequent visitors to Mount Washington Association events – are both on the ballot for re-election.

I can't recall an election in which so many issues require such careful attention. And many of these issues will be hotly debated and may require, not just our votes, but also our active participation in the discourse.

For my part, I always go scurrying on line to find a good, impartial summary of all the propositions. And I've found that a good place to start (which also includes a listing of

all other election choices) is at the League of Women Voters "Smart Voter" site:

<http://www.smartvoter.org/ca/la/>.

And since we live in the highly opinionated, politically active Mount Washington, I fully expect to see many of

you at meetings, fundraisers and rallies or knocking on doors in support of issues and candidates. I, for one, will be lacing on my walking shoes and preparing to walk our hillside precincts. I hope to see you out there.

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Web site: Connie Rohman (225-3321)

Bulletin Board: Nancy Lilly (225-7597)

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Newsletter edited by Scott Burleigh (319-3534)

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clude the proposed purchase and ten-year maintenance, by the developers, of additional buses to improve service from Universal City to the 405 freeway. New freeway ramps are planned to relieve expected traffic congestion.

Designed to consolidate and concentrate NBC studio activities, many of which will be relocated from Burbank, the mammoth project will include studio, office, commercial, and residential space.

Neighbors showed up in force to question parking and driving convenience, the efficacy and reality of "transit-oriented development", and the increased visual blight for nearby hill-dwellers. Shuttle bus service for local residents was requested, inasmuch as parking needs for using public transit have never been met. If granted, this would set a pattern for our vicinity. (Remember MTA talking about "mountain jitneys" for the Gold Line?)

The developers will return to Hillside Federation for the October meeting.

## Public Safety

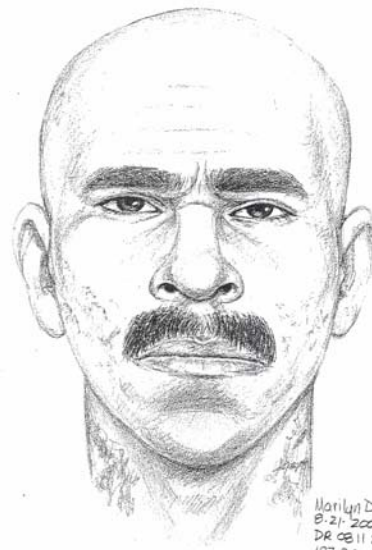
Cheri Uno

### SLO Preciado – the new SLO for Mt. Washington area

Senior Lead Officer Nina Preciado is the replacement for SLO Chris Cooper. She has been on the job for about a month and is learning the area. She reported that she is working to remove the parked RVs on Marmion Way because of requests from the neighborhood.

She also has a drawing of a suspect in the 60th & Hayes Homicide (see picture; go to website for a larger picture).

M Hispanic 25-30 Yrs  
5'5" broad shoulders  
Slender build



Harilyn Diaz  
8-21-2008  
DR 0811 20417  
187 P.C.

If you know this person, please contact the Northeast Station – (213) 485-2563. SLO Preciado's number is (213) 793-0761 and her email is [32128@lapd.lacity.org](mailto:32128@lapd.lacity.org).

CERT News – from a recent CERT Bulletin

CERT REFRESHER

Sunday, November 16, 2008

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM (Registration starts at 7:00 AM)

LAFD Fire Station 88

5101 North Sepulveda Blvd.

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Hosted by the Los Angeles Fire Department.

SIGN UP NOW at <http://www.cert-la.com/refresher.htm>

The drill is open to all graduates of CERT training programs.

Come practice and refresh the skills you learned during the Basic CERT Program Course.

[from Linda Underwood for [www.cert-la.com](http://www.cert-la.com)]

Civilian Police Academy – FUN, FUN, FUN – excellent instructors

You missed the last one but another one is starting up. They occur about 4 times a year. If you can't commit to the whole class series you could make up classes on the next go around. Once you start, you won't want to miss a class. Contact the NE CRO – 213-485-2548 for information. This is really a FUN learning experience.

## Special Mount Washington History Meeting

The September General Membership meeting of the Mount Washington Association will feature special presentations on the history of our community, including a tour of the Self-Realization Fellowship headquarters building, constructed one hundred years ago as the Mount Washington Hotel.

- The historic SRF/Mount Washington Hotel building will be discussed by preservation architect Stephanie Kingsnorth, a board member of the Los Angeles Conservancy and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Stephanie, an Associate and Director of Preservation Projects for Pfeiffer Partners Architects, has supervised preservation projects for Cal Tech and Stanford. She'll be overseeing the upcoming preservation process for the building.
- Local historian Charles Fisher will talk about Mount Washington and Northeast Los Angeles history. Charles, author of "Highland Park (Images of America: California)" is a professional historian specializing in local history. A native of Los Angeles, he grew up on Mount Washington and has lived in Highland Park for over 25 years. He has researched, written, and advocated for more than 100 successful monument applications in Los Angeles and is a past president and current board member of the Highland Park Heritage Trust.

Once again, PLEASE NOTE THE SPECIAL TIME AND LOCATION FOR THIS MEETING: 6:30 PM at the Self-Realization Fellowship, 3880 San Rafael Avenue.

## The Mount Washington Hotel

At the southern crest of Mount Washington, overlooking downtown Los Angeles, stands an impressive three-story Mission Revival structure which now serves as the International Headquarters of Self-Realization Fellowship.

Originally constructed in 1910 as the Mount Washington Hotel, it was intended as the centerpiece for an exclusive residential subdivision promoted by real estate developer, Robert Marsh.



The hotel was served by a cable railway and featured a tennis court and terraces with panoramic views. For a time it was a highly popular spot, frequented by local sportsmen and silent film stars, such as Charlie Chaplin.

But its popularity proved short, as the film studios moved out of Sycamore Grove Park on their way to Hollywood. By the time Paramahansa Yogananda happened upon the site in 1925, the building stood vacant.

Hailed as the "father of yoga in the West," and widely regarded as a seminal religious figure of the twentieth century, Yogananda was on a cross-country speaking tour at the time, but it is said that when he saw the building, he immediately recognized it from a vision he had had years before in Kashmir. He decided to buy it as his residence and headquarters.

Over the decades, Yogananda taught hundreds of thousands – including Mahatma Gandhi. Among his students in America were horticulturalist Luther Burbank, conductor Leopold Stokowski, poet Edwin Markham, and industrialist George Eastman (inventor of the Kodak camera). Many celebrities visited Mount Washington during Yogananda's lifetime and many continued to visit after his passing, perhaps most notably Elvis Presley and George Harrison.

As the years passed, Yogananda acquired additional land adjacent to the original hotel. Today the property consists of about 12½ acres, including beautiful landscaped grounds that are open to the public. Since Yogananda's passing in 1952, the property has served

as the international headquarters of Self-Realization Fellowship, the nonprofit religious society he founded to carry on his spiritual and humanitarian work. It was officially designated a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument in 2006.

## What Happened to the Bees?

*Dennis Campbell*

Nothing perks up a sultry summer day like a tall cool one, accompanied by fresh guacamole, chips, and salsa.

Although avocados grow throughout the western hemisphere, some of the finest are found right here in Southern California. My backyard tree produces hundreds of the tasty green fruit each year, with a bearing season lasting from late December to early July.

The last few weeks of the cycle were especially hectic this year, with early summer hot weather and a long stay-cation severely taxing my avocado supply. Finally I went out one day and, try as I might, I couldn't find an avocado to pick.

"Well, there'll be more in a few months," I told myself. But I examined the tree and couldn't find a single avocado bud! Where were my avocados?

I began to look around my usually prolific yard and discovered that there were also no apricots. I was dumbfounded.

Then I remembered the bees.

I had heard it reported a few weeks earlier that vast numbers of bees have been dying all over the world. Now it was affecting my yard. No bees, no avos.

Damn! I looked around that day, and for the month and a half since, and I've seen two bees. Two!

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I searched the internet for information and found the following:

- US honey yields have been decimated by honeybee losses of 36%, supposedly due to colony collapse disorder (CCD), a mysterious disappearance linked to the blood-sucking varroa mite, lethal viruses, malnutrition, pesticides, and a lack of genetic diversity. CCD has spread to Canada, France, Germany and Italy.
- Scientists increasingly believe that Gaucho (a pesticide) and other members of a family of highly toxic chemicals — neonicotinoids — may be responsible for the deaths of billions of honeybees worldwide.
- The French refer to the effect as "mad bee disease" and in 1999 were the first to ban the use of neonicotinoid-based pesticides, which are currently marketed only by Bayer (the aspirin people) under the trade names Gaucho and Poncho. In Germany, the agricultural research institute concluded that the poisoning of the bees was caused by the rub-off of the pesticide clothianidin (that's Pancho) from corn seeds.
- Here at home, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency granted an "emergency" exemption allowing increased use of Gaucho — typically invoked during a major infestation — when only a few beetles were found in blueberries. (Are we a little slow on the uptake or what?)

Some bees are managing to survive, and Mount Washington is a great habitat, so repopulation is possible. First though, I'd like to try and determine the extent of the problem by asking each of you the following

questions:

- Have any your fruit trees gone barren this year?
- Have you seen any honey bees or yellow jackets around your yard? Count 'em if you can.

Email your answers to me at: [dennizen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dennizen@sbcglobal.net).

I'll publish the results in the next issue and if we determine there is a local honey bee die-off, we can begin to plan how to deal with it.

## Green On Green

*Lynnette Kampe*

### Owning your Own Community

What makes Mount Washington so special? I usually describe the natural beauty first, but then right away I get to the people.

The most beautiful walk through the woods can be diminished by a few pieces of trash. In a highly populated area like this there are so many opportunities for trash to accumulate!

But there's a certain satisfaction in getting rid of a piece of trash you pass every day. Clean-ups say a lot about the community. They say that people care, not just about themselves but also about their neighbors. They say that the people feel that they own their own community and have discovered that working together to improve the community is a good way to spend a Saturday morning.

Our larger Los Angeles community has been improving in recent years, and Mount Washington in particular has benefited. Just a few examples:

- open space and habitat preserved in Moon Canyon;

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- the Gold Line with our own beautiful station at the Southwest Museum;
- and the Southwest Museum under repair at last!

We need to thank Council member Ed Reyes (Council District 1) for the beautiful street lights and improved sidewalk and paving along Marmion Way, accomplished through a transportation linkages project.

It's no accident that Mount Washington has been beneficiary of these and many other improvements. Although we are privileged to be positioned within a rare setting of natural beauty, we also have a community full of activists who enjoy getting together to work, and sometimes fight, to preserve and enhance the natural beauty and cultural resources of this place we call home.



**The Wall on Marmion Way**

This is the mission of the Mount Washington Association. Mount Washington didn't become such a special place to live just by random chance. Our members have demonstrated over and over again that they are committed to making our part of the world a bit better, and those persons in charge of allocating resources know it.

What better way to take ownership of your community than by caring for it? A great example is our Beautification efforts on the first Saturday of every month along Marmion Way. The smiling faces of people working and talking with neighbors as they pick up trash may confuse some passers-by. But the line-up of trash bags on the sidewalk clearly advertises to the larger community that people in Mount Washington care, and that having trash or beauty is a choice.



**This Much Trash Removed**

<4 ad spaces>

Please join an upcoming Beautification event and/or contact me at [lynette@pacbell.net](mailto:lynette@pacbell.net) or by phone if you would like to suggest one.

## ASNC Elections

*Pat Griffith*

Elections to the Board of the Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council will be held on Monday, November 24, 2008. We Mount Washington residents, property owners, and parents of Mount Washington Elementary School children will be electing 9 Board members.

We are currently represented by:

### Mount Washington representatives

- Zara Scoville ('07-'08), Mount Washington
- Paula Sirola ('07-'08), Mount Washington
- Hank Shaeffer ('08-'10), Mount Washington
- Ann Walnum ('08-'10), Mount Washington

### At-large representatives

- Ernest E. Sanchez, Community Non-Profits
- Clifford Moseley, Education & Youth
- Marybelle C. Ang, Environment
- AJ Mora, Faith-Based Organizations
- Amado Machorro, Healthcare & Seniors
- J. Michael Walter, Recreation, Culture & the Arts
- Efrén Chepi, Retail, Wholesale, & Service

While Hank Shaeffer and Ann Walnum remain on the Board through 2010, the ASNC will be calling for

candidates to run for the two seats currently held by Zara and Paula (who may run for re-election to those seats). In addition, all seven At-large seats will be up for election.

Candidates for all seats will need to file by October 17, 2008. Two orientation workshops for candidates and prospective candidates will be held, one on September 24, 2008 at 7:00 PM at Ramona Hall and another on October 5, 2008 at 6:30 PM at 5800 Monterey Road., LA 90042.

To find further information about the elections and the Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council, and to register to vote (if you have not already registered), please look for an informational packet in your mailbox around the 3rd week of September, or check the ASNC website at: [www.asnc.us](http://www.asnc.us).

## Out and About in Northeast Los Angeles

*Pat Griffith*

It is sad to wind down a great summer of free concerts and events at the Southwest Museum, Audubon Center, Heritage Square, Eagle Rock Rec. Center, Pasadena's Levitt Pavilion and Grand Performances at the California Plaza downtown, but we in Northeast LA still have many events coming up.

One significant benefit of living in Mount Washington is that we have one of the most vibrant and thriving artists' communities in Los Angeles. Each month, we have the chance to see a vast array of works by local artists (and their mentors) through the NELA Art Gallery tours, on the 2nd Saturday evening of every month. Up to 22 galleries may be participating with openings and much socializing. The next Gallery Night is September 13, from 7 to 10 PM; visit <http://www.nelaart.com/> for details.

In addition, Avenue 50 Gallery hosts many poetry readings, dialogues, yoga and figure drawing classes. Upcoming events, besides the NELAart gallery tour, are:

- "From Daylight to Midnight" A Benefit Poetry Marathon: September 27, 2008 from 10 AM to 12 midnight.
- "The Black/Brown Dialogues" A monthly healthy and ethical cultural dialogue between the African and Latino communities.

The gallery is at 131 N. Avenue 50 in Highland Park, and at <http://www.avenue50studio.com>.

Also this coming Saturday is the 14th Annual Monterey Hills Jazz Festival. It will take place on Saturday, September 13, 2008, from 11:30 AM to 6:00 PM, at Budd Wiener Park, located at the intersection of Via Marisol and Via Arbolada. Performers will include Lori Andrews, Luis Conte, and the Pasadena Jazz Institute.

This festive event will feature free admission, free shuttle service, a prize drawing for the first 50 adults, and a jumper for children. Refreshments and merchandise will

be available for purchase. Please note that neither alcohol nor dogs will be permitted in the park.

As always, the Southwest Museum is maintaining an active set of programs each weekend while they continue the renovations on our historic museum:

- Open House at the Southwest Museum of the American Indian on Saturday, September 13, 2008, from noon to 4 PM. Here's your chance to find out what's going on behind all the scaffolding around the tower at the Southwest Museum! The Museum's annual Open House features guided tours of the buildings and gardens, live performances, and family activities.
- NELAart Second Saturday Gallery Night: – a group show by the Mount Washington Plein Air Painters. Exhibiting are Kevin Spitze, Richard Willson, Ann Dudrow, Jose de Juan, Olivia Rodriguez, Rod Smith, Diane Behrens, Chris Zambon, John Byram, and Donna Wolff. Pan dulce and Mexican chocolate will be served. Saturday, September 13, 2008, 7–10 PM.
- Let's Make History at the Southwest! Baskets played an important role in the daily life of California Indians. Come make a simple basket that you can display at home. Sunday, September 14, 2008, 1–2 PM.

And remember, our own Neighborhood Council meets every 4th Monday. The Arroyo Seco NC is our direct access to City government, representing the communities Mount Washington, Sycamore Grove, Montecito Heights, Monterey Hills, and Hermon. Check the website for the agendas of upcoming meetings: [www.asnc.us](http://www.asnc.us).

For nightly email postings of events and meetings (not a blog), please send an email to

[ASNCAlert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ASNCAlert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

or sign on to ASNCAlert at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ASNCAlert/>

## Restaurant Review: Auntie Em's Kitchen

*Eliot Sekuler*

There's nothing fancy about Auntie Em's Kitchen. Consisting of two storefronts smooshed together on a stretch of Eagle Rock Boulevard most notable for its hodgepodge of repair shops, churches and (only recently) a brave sprinkling of galleries and boutiques gasping for survival, Auntie Em's kitchen gets an A+ for unpretentious décor.

It also does a number of other things very well. You've only to see the clump of hungry patrons waiting patiently outside its doors every weekend morning to know that this restaurant has a loyal following. And though the clientele often reflects its proximity to the nearby Occidental College campus, on a couple of recent

mornings the crowd seemed every bit as eclectic as the menu.

Auntie Em's serves breakfasts and lunches with an emphasis on fresh ingredients. The breakfast fare is particularly notable, with a good selection of egg dishes, pancakes and French toast, frequent specials and wonderful offerings of apple smoked bacon, Cajun turkey sausage and, most especially, great cheeses.



**Auntie Em's on Eagle Rock Boulevard**

A crab, corn and scallion scramble was delicious, chock full of corn and fresh crab and fairly priced at \$10.95. Another special, pancakes with berries, was loaded with a medley of blackberries, strawberries and blueberries and was served with real maple syrup, set upon the table in an old coke bottle fitted with an improvised spout.

Open face breakfast sandwiches come on grilled fresh ciabatta bread with Gruyere cheese, and a variety of toppings (grilled turkey breast, roasted asparagus and brie, grilled tomato and avocado, grilled steak) and are priced at \$8.95 and \$9.95.

Lunches are sandwiches, soups, and salads. A huge Cobb salad was served with generous chunks of white meat chicken, terrific blue cheese and bacon, topped with creamy apple cider vinaigrette. Auntie Em's meat

loaf sandwich (my personal favorite) was exceptionally moist and tasty. A negative would be the slight stinginess of the accompanying side garnishes: the tiny cup of sliced dill pickles on my plate was not terribly satisfying.

Coffee – very good coffee – is offered self-serve style from a coffee bar and is sipped from the thick clunky white ceramic cups that are standard issue in college cafeterias.

Auntie Em's is rightly famous for its desserts, particularly its cupcakes and most especially the red velvet cupcake that enjoys a city-wide following. But scones and muffins, pies and cakes – all hand-baked on the premises – all looked tantalizingly good.

Auntie Em's Kitchen also boasts a gourmet shop that specializes in a slightly haphazard collection of wonderful hand-crafted cheeses from artisan dairies (Mount Townsend, Cowgirl Creamery, Rogue River, Hooks and Cypress Grove). There are also some artisan olive oils and a selection of cookbooks.

There's something wonderfully eccentric about Auntie Em's Kitchen. And its eccentricity – along with those great fresh ingredients – makes it a wonderful culinary resource for our neighborhood.

Auntie Em's Kitchen is located at 4616 Eagle Rock Boulevard. They're open Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 7 PM, and on Saturday and Sunday, 8 AM to 4 PM.

<1 ad space>

### Coming up...

- September 10 *ASNC Mount Washington Local Issues Committee meeting* at Mount Washington School. 7 PM.
- September 15 *Mount Washington Association General Meeting* at Self-Realization Fellowship. 6:30 PM.
- September 22 *Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council meeting* at Los Angeles International Charter High School, 625 Coleman Avenue. 7 PM.
- September 27 *Stairs and trail improvements* – help clean the stairs and trail at 330 Mavis. Community members will be joined by a Clean and Green Crew, thanks to coordination provided by Councilmember Huizar's staff. These stairs and trail are a short-cut to the Gold Line station and have become barely passable because they are overgrown and dirt covered. Please drop by if you can. (Late comers welcome.) 8 to 11 AM.
- October 10 *Marmion Way Beautification Team* – meet at Marmion Way and Mount Washington Drive to help clean up this access route to our community. Your volunteer time counts as matching for street trees and other plantings that will be installed later this year. Stop by if you can, even if for only part of the time. 9 to 11 AM.