

SHERMAN OAKS

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SUNDIAL
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

COMMUNITY

July 4th Fireworks Festival at CBS

Fun-filled family festival featuring exhibits, music, food, fireworks, a children's fun zone, and a business exposition. 4:30-9pm. CBS Studio Center, 4024 Radford Ave., Studio City. Adults \$15, Children \$8. VIP tickets with special fireworks rooftop viewing also available. (818) 655-5916 www.studiocitychamber.com

Annual San Fernando Valley Independence Day Celebration

Featuring music and other live entertainment, food and fireworks. Booths offer information about safety, health, community resources, and more. Take a swim in the 1.5-acre swim lake available for use during the day. July 4 Noon to 10pm. Hansen Dam Recreation Area, 11770 Foothill Blvd., Lake View Terrace 1-888-LA PARKS (527-2757) www.laparks.org

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council

Meets second Mon. of each month. 6:30pm. Next meeting July 10. Sherman Oaks Elementary School Library, 14755 Greenleaf St (818) 503-2399. www.shermanoakscnc.org

Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association Community Meeting

Meets the third Wed. of each month. Next meeting July 19. 6:30pm social, 7:30pm meeting. 14130 Riverside Drive. (818) 377-4590. www.sohainfo.com

Gala Benefit for Congregation Beth Meier

Featuring a silent auction, raffles and refreshments. July 6, 6:30-9:30pm. \$25 in advance or \$35 at the door. Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel, 12825 Ventura Blvd. in Studio City. To reserve tickets, call (818) 769-0515

Sherman Oaks Galleria's Live Summer Entertainment

Cool jazz, Latin fusion and rock 'n' roll bands provide free outdoor ambiance at the Galleria on summer weekends. Through Sept. 2, Fri-Sat nights. 7-10 pm. June 30-July 1: Sam Graham. 15301 Ventura Blvd. (818) 382-4100. www.shermanoaksgalleria.com/live

2006 Body Image Fitness Challenge and Fit Family Expo to Benefit "Childsfree"

The Jaycees (Junior Chamber) are raising money for the annual Childsfree event where low-income children receive a \$100 back-to-school shopping spree at Mervyn's. Help sponsor by participating in fundraisers at Body Image Gym, 5077 Lankershim Blvd. in North Hollywood. Sat. July 15. \$25 minimum sponsorship. www.uchjayceeschildsfree.org

Peace Corps Information Session at Sherman Oaks Library

A presentation on the application process, eligibility requirements, geographic placement, benefits, and the challenges of serving as Peace Corps volunteers. July 15, 2-3:30pm. 14245 Moorpark Street in Sherman Oaks

Container Gardening Course at CSUN

Learn about different potting soils, watering choices and fertilizer with gardeners Jane Triano and Martha Parker from Home Depot. Free. July 15, 9-10:30am. Parking \$4 in lot G3. 18111 Northridge St. in Northridge. To register, call (818) 677-3496

Robert Hansen at NoHo Modern

Selected works, 1957-1987, through July 15. 11225 Magnolia Blvd. in North Hollywood. (818) 505-1297. www.nohomodern.com

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Inside an environmentally friendly house for healthy living

Expert Mary Cordaro gives tips on going Home Green Home

BY CLAIRE WILLENSON

To say that Mary Cordaro's home is clean and tidy is an understatement. It's pristine. Graceful. Spare. Healthy. Restorative.

It is a green home.

Green means environmentally friendly. Reduced toxicity, energy efficient; using mostly organic products with minimal impact to the environment. But green is not just about products. It's a process.

Cordaro is the owner of H3Environmental, a line of green household products and services. Over 16 years, she has created a home ecology sanctuary – a haven without toxins, allergens or pollutants.

Tucked away in Valley Village, her three-bedroom 1950's ranch style home looks at first like any other in the neighborhood. At second glance, it's spectacularly unique.

With support from her husband, screenwriter Scott Davis Jones, Cordaro has transformed her home into a laboratory for healthy living. She built her H3Environmental line around the three prongs of good health – the environment, the home, and the people within.

"If it is not healthy for the person and the home, it is not



Mary Cordaro at home in Valley Village.

good for the planet," she explains.

Cordaro grew up in Los Angeles during its smoggiest days. A former allergy and asthma sufferer, she was, perhaps out of necessity, "always holistic and interested in healthy food."

As she made the connections between her unhealthy environment and her ill health, she was drawn to the study of Bau Biologie, a German discipline taught at a Florida Institute that relates

building materials to human health.

Using her home as a model, Cordaro offers dozens of ideas to make any house "greener." Her designs are inspired by the work of German and Swiss manufacturers, leaders in the green industry.

For many, a few simple green tips – often available at minimal cost – may develop into a long-term lifestyle change.

"Here's a great tip, and it's absolutely free," says Cord-

aro. "Leave your shoes outside. Shoes track in all of the pollutants and contaminants from everywhere you have walked. If you feel uncomfortable being barefoot, change to indoor shoes, or at least don't wear shoes in your bedroom."

Cordaro suggests starting your organic home makeover by making your bedroom an oasis. "That's where you spend one-third of your life... where you most need to heal

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Millikan students play Broadway L.A. at Pantages Theater

BY LYNN MILLS

They've given up pool parties, baseball playoff games, and hours of sleep — but for the fourteen Millikan Middle School and Performing Arts Magnet students appearing in the children's choir of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (playing at Hollywood's Pantages Theater through July 2), the sacrifices are worth it.

"It's fun," says sixth grader Victoria Schniedewind, "but it's hard work." Classmate Georgia Huston dittos Schniedewind's sentiments, adding, "but it's really rewarding."

Starring Patrick Cassidy in the title role, the Pantages cast is the touring company of Andrew Lloyd Webber's lively musical depicting the Biblical story of Joseph, favorite son of Jacob, who incurs the wrath of

his eleven envious brothers.

Although the company has been performing around the country for nearly a year, the Millikan kids are a new addition to the Los Angeles production. Fortunately, the middle school students found the seasoned performers supportive when they suffered opening night jitters.

"We were all freaking out in the

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Special Home & Garden: Sepulveda Garden ♦ Takeover My Makeover

SOHA

Greuel takes on traffic issues

Impact of new developments discussed

BY RACHEL HELLER

At the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association's (SOHA) June 21 meeting, 2nd district Councilmember Wendy Greuel recalled one morning when it took 20 minutes to cross the Ventura/Sepulveda intersection.

An entire lane closed for 8 a.m. construction was the source of the holdup – just one violation in a string of “common sense” measures Greuel suggested to help improve traffic flow throughout the city.

“Obviously I don’t need to tell you that we have a traffic crisis in the City of Los Angeles,” she told community members. “There’s nothing more frustrating than sitting in traffic and feeling like you have no

control over your life.”

Exponential traffic growth is expected for the city, she said. Experts currently predict 30 percent growth over the next 25 years – the equivalent of attaching the city of Chicago to L.A. County.

Calling traffic “the number one issue in our city,” Greuel stressed her belief that addressing the problem calls for addressing development and planning as well as transportation.

Key solutions to the coming traffic boom are investing in better roadways and public transportation alternatives, Greuel said, including providing more parking for mass transit users and improving the rapid bus system’s speed. “We need to create a seamless sys-

tem in Los Angeles if we expect people to actually take public transportation.”

So far, she noted, the Orange Line has been a success. With 22,000 daily riders, the system has removed 4,400 cars from L.A. roads as a result.

Still, funding for more such projects has not come easily. The fight for infrastructure dollars is sometimes an uphill battle.

“I have to tell you, I think both on a state level and a federal level, Los Angeles has been short-changed,” Greuel stated. She said the current infrastructure bond allots \$20 billion for congestion relief, giving City Council and the Mayor \$4 billion to work with for public transportation.

As Chair of the Council’s Transportation Committee since last year, Greuel discussed methods of traffic flow improvement she deemed “common sense.”

Banning road construction during rush hour is one such measure, she said. With laws already in place to prevent lane closures during peak traffic times, she said she has begun stepping up enforcement with fines and other penalties.

Traffic light synchronization is another measure Greuel touted to prevent congestion. Synchronized lights, sensitive to the number of cars on the road, can cut down commutes considerably. “It’s good for our air, it’s good for our transportation,” she said, noting that the Committee is looking to synchronize a large number of lights across the city.

Other improvements Greuel praised include the doubling of left-hand turn signals throughout the area, including one at Laurel Canyon and Moorpark that was sorely needed. The Mayor’s Tiger Teams have also proven effective, she said, towing illegally parked cars off busy streets such as Wilshire immediately.

Fines are also being doubled for offenders who disobey parking laws during rush hour – a measure that could spell anger for the 200,000 people who get ticketed during peak times across L.A., Greuel admitted.

“But think of the millions of people who get mad when they’re behind that car,” she noted. “They know that what we’re trying to do is actually move traffic.”

Greuel said she and Councilmember Jack Weiss recently introduced a motion to pull traffic planning duties out of the Transportation Department’s hands and leave the matter with Planning – a testament to the strong connection between

the two issues.

“We know that people oppose projects primarily based on the traffic, and what kind of effect it’s going to have on the quality of life,” she said.

Delving into such problem-riddled projects on the local front, Greuel stressed her desire to work with SOHA and developers to solve traffic mitigation issues associated with the Best Buy project planned for Van Nuys Boulevard.

She discussed rumors that the Westfield Fashion Square developer has been exploring options to expand the mall “within its current boundaries.” While she hasn’t seen any plans yet, she said she hopes traffic mitigation will be “agenda item number one.”

Greuel also addressed the Watergardens project, a plan that originally proposed an 84-unit condo complex for the West side of Van Nuys between Milbank and Moorpark. News that the project would demolish the popular in N’ Out Burger raised gasps from the audience. The developer’s master plan is currently under review.

But at the core of such discussions is community input, Greuel said. “We do feel that it is important for the community to be involved in the ultimate decision-making and how we’re going to deal with those mitigation measures.”

COMMUNITY COMPASS

BY AMY LYONS

To say that **Sherry Lynn** and **Bonnie Hellman** have a way with children is an understatement.

The two women serve as artistic co-directors of the **Children’s Theatre Group of Southern California** (CTGSC), the resident children’s theatre company at the **Eclectic Company Theatre in North Hollywood** that works with children and teenagers ages eight to 18. Lynn and Hellman have worked hard since founding the company in 2002, and both exude energy, passion and understanding of the importance of pure, rigorous, liberating play.

“We really have the same goal and focus in mind,” said Lynn. “We certainly don’t do this for the money.”

So, why do they do it?

Both women are highly skilled professionals, with resumes that have carried them down more than a few attractive avenues. Lynn began acting at the age of 19, landing an NBC contract early in her career. She eventually ended up on the voiceover circuit, after a SAG strike necessitated exploration of other options.

Her vocal abilities proved priceless, as evidenced by her roles in *Shrek II*, *Toy Story I and II*, *Beauty and the Beast* and the hot new Pixar flick, *Cars*. She is also the founder and director of **CAPS (Creative Arts Program in the summer) at Campbell Hall**, a program that has enjoyed enormous success in its eight years of life. CAPS, which recently started its current session, offers over 40 workshops, including drama, wood-working and crocheting.

Having worked as a director for more than 20 years, Hellman is no less

busy and skilled. She has headed shows in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose and Denver, to name a few locations. She has also appeared on both the stage and the screen, most notably as a series regular on the CBS show, *Nurse*.

Lynn and Hellman use their combined wealth of experience to educate and enrich the lives of their young company members at CTGSC. Their most recent show (they mount two shows a year) found the children tackling *Into the Woods Jr.*, an abridged and fully authorized version of Stephen Sondheim’s play in which a handful of Grimm’s fairytales intersect and arrive at various new conclusions.

They also produce annual showcases, where all actors perform in front of a live audience. Company members pay dues, attend Saturday workshops and are expected to develop a sense of commitment to the work of theatre, while maintaining a high GPA at school.

“We don’t put something together in two weeks. They rehearse... they are as professional as any adult company,” said Lynn.

Hellman not only directs some of the CTGSC productions, but she also directs for CAPS. Both women believe their young company members should learn respect and self-expression first and foremost – if a professional acting career is in the cards, that’s just a nice bonus.

“It is mainly about teaching them respect for one another. There are no stars in our productions,” said Lynn. “I want the kids to learn, but I also want them to love theatre,” Hellman added.

For more information on CTGSC, e-mail CTGSC@aol.com.

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wings, and Patrick and Amy Adams (the Narrator) and all those people were really calm,” says Schniedewind. “They were like, yeah, you’re going to have a great time,” recalls Huston.

“So far, I’ve had a lot of fun,” says seventh grader Maddie Dugan. “Patrick Cassidy and all the rest of the people who play the brothers, they’re so nice to us. One of the brothers, Benjamin, his real name is Derek, always high fives us after the show is done or in between acts. They’re just good people.” Cassidy’s two sons, Cole and Jack, are the only non-Millikan children in the chorus.

When *Joseph* goes on tour, it’s up to the local presenter (in this case, the Pantages Theater) to find a choir or conduct a choir challenge among schools, churches, community or show choirs.

Sherman Oaks resident Lorraine O’Brien, head of Center Stage Advertising (advertisers for the Pantages) suggested Millikan’s Performing Arts Magnet from Sherman Oaks. “It’s the opportunity of a lifetime for these kids; it’s priceless,” she says.

The children’s choir is a major component of produc-



Children’s choir of L.A. production of *Joseph*.

tion, and are onstage the entire show – singing, dancing and commenting on the story with reactions and expressions like a classic Greek chorus. Training the students falls into the hands of Bill Newberry, the children’s choir director and veteran of seven *Joseph* tours.

“We get everything from ‘Stepford Children,’ that are so perfect, to kids who have absolutely no experience,” explains Newberry, who then gushes, “The kids here in L.A. are great!”

Millikan’s Performing Arts students take dance in lieu of P.E., singing or drama as an elective, and put on plays throughout the school

year. But for most of them, this is the biggest stage they’ve ever played. Their rehearsal time for the show was limited with only a couple days spent rehearsing with Millikan’s singing teacher, Leo Krubsack, and three days

of practice with Newberry. “These kids worked like horses all weekend, and we were ready for opening night, so that’s a testament to them,” says Newberry, a father of two and a one time music and literature teacher. “L.A.’s going to be one of our best groups... they really are.” More kudos – the students also received a favorable mention in the *Los Angeles Times* review.

Dreams and having faith in oneself are recurring themes throughout *Joseph*, and for the Millikan students who have dreamed of performing in a Broadway show, that message especially hits home.