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The mission of this organization is to work  
for improvement of the quality of life in  
the Eagle Rock Community in  
Los Angeles, California, by providing  
research and education about Eagle Rock,  
participating in land-use planning activities,  
and promoting positive community  
growth and beautification. TERA is a  
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*The only thing missing is the cocktail*

## Owl Talk

• by Bob Gotham

**W**ith no corporate jet or limousines, no swanky executive office suite and limiting the perks for their best customers to a free coffee at Sworks, they are running a business that is more profitable than General Motors or AIG! After interviewing Kathleen and Sharon Kroner, proprietors of Owl Talk, I have no doubt that they could have brought some common sense and sound business logic to those money losing corporations.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

.....• by Maria N. Nazario, TERA President

Spring is in the air, flowers are blooming and my hopes are high for a great rest of the year. This spring TERA's Eagle Rockdale Garden and Art Park will begin hosting community activities and open to all even if you do not have a plot at the garden. The events begin April 1 and end late September.

- Tuesdays, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.: Tai Chi with Claudia Cuevas. Admission – canned food for donation to a local food bank. Learn and help those in need – a great combination.
- Thursdays, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.: Yoga with Edna Albano. Donations welcome.

The park is located on at the Y created by Lanark St. and Rockdale Ave., just south of La Loma. The entrance gate is at the end of Shelby-Lanark Park. For more information contact the garden manager Mike Woodward at [communitygarden@tera90041.org](mailto:communitygarden@tera90041.org). I hope to see you there.

TERA has been busy on many fronts. March 14, we participated in the Mayor's Northeast Los Angeles Day of Service and spruced up the Eagle Rock Library on Caspar. Mary Tokita organized a great day with about 75 volunteers. We painted the sign and railings, trimmed, weeded, planted and mulched the grounds. Plant material that was added is drought tolerant, so that once established we can conserve one of our scarcest resources – water.

Also in March, we held a joint public meeting with the Eagle Rock Community Preservation and Revitalization Corporation (ERCPR) on the attended (valet) parking program request for proposal (RFP). More information will be provided in the e-letter in months to come.

Additionally, the TERA Board approved a request for matching funds from ERCPR for a grant they are seeking to create a city center for Eagle Rock once again. ERCPR's vision is "to develop a comprehensive community plan that creates an overall vision for the Eagle Rock commercial corridor along Colorado Boulevard through a holistic re-imagining of the boulevard into a 'complete street' – one that continues to serve vehicle traffic but is also pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and facilitates and encourages use of public transit." TERA is thrilled to be able to partner with ERCPR in a shared common vision for Eagle Rock.

In February we co-hosted a mayoral candidate's forum with the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council. The forum provided candidates an opportunity to share their vision for the future of Los Angeles. It was refreshing to see so many individuals who really care about our community and want to make a difference.

TERA participated in a public meeting with ERNC on the Occidental Specific Plan. Frank Parrello, chair of TERA's Planning Preservation and Development Committee, along with committee members Michael Tharp, Renate Kofahl and others on the committee have met many times with Oxy representatives to review the specific plan and provide





input to improve and enhance the plan and make it a win-win for Oxy and the community. TERA is extremely fortunate to have a great team to address planning issues with the talent of these individuals. As of the time of this message, TERA had not taken a formal position because we continue to work with Oxy to resolve concerns.

If you've taken the Colorado off ramp from the 134 Fwy, at a reasonable rate of speed of course, you may have noticed that the Wiota Circle Monument is complete and blooming beautifully. What a great job Helen and Dave Gustavson have done to turn a blighted corner into a welcoming site for all entering Eagle Rock. They didn't do it alone because many, many steady volunteers helped, but they certainly were the driving force and the ones out there all the time. Congratulations Helen and Dave and thank you from all of us.

Lastly, one of TERA's most visible projects – Make Art Not Trash – will soon be installed. Pauline Mauro has shepherded the project through every difficult stage and I want to congratulate and thank her for her vision and lasting energy and perseverance. Working with the Arroyo Arts Collective, Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock, Councilmember Huizar's office and many local artists she has been the glue that has held it together.

This is my last president's message as my two-year term as president concludes June 30. I want to thank the Board for their assistance every step of the way. I also want to thank ERNC, ERCPR, Eagle Rock Chamber of Commerce, Councilmember Huizar and his staff and Mayor Villaraigosa's staff. I think that through our collaborative efforts we have improved this wonderful community. I leave you in great hands as Bob Gotham takes the reigns as our new president. Please offer him the same warm reception and support you did me. You may contact me, or Bob in the future at [president@tera90041.org](mailto:president@tera90041.org). See you around town.

**MARIA N. NAZARIO**  
TERA PRESIDENT

# All Green Thumbs

.....• by Michael Woodward



**A**s I write this, my first garden column for TERA, it is a cool, clear Spring day. In May, when it is published, it could be the overcast and fog of 'June gloom' or it could be blazing hot. Likely, it will be both at some time during the month.

Gardeners need to be prepared for both eventualities: the cool days when heavier work can be done and the scorches when it is best to sit in the shade and run a hose.

Most vegetable crops should be in the ground by now. If you haven't planted your tomatoes yet, for shame. But, take heart, there is still time to run to your local garden store and grab tomatoes, eggplant, a bunch of zucchinis and shove them in the ground. Remember, planting this late means that there will be less root development and the plants, therefore, will require more diligent watering.

Cool weather crops, like lettuces, tend to seed very easily in summer unless they are in a shaded location. Over the past two summers, the Community Garden has had excellent luck with a variety of salad greens in an area shaded by oaks.

Summer is also a great time to begin planning for next year's garden by visiting some of the local flower shows. Not only do you get to see the wonders produced by devotees of various plants, but the clubs sponsoring these events support themselves by selling their specialties. Careful shoppers will be able to find varieties simply unavailable even at the best nurseries. You might find a daylily called 'Little Fat Dazzler,' an Iris called 'Beverly Sills,' or exotic cacti.

The Daylily Show and Sale is June 6 (one day only, they are daylilies after all) from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Fern Society Show and Sale will be June 13 and 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.. On August 15 and 16th the Inter-City Cactus Show and Sale will be held.

Finally, I would encourage all to take a hike. Go up the Eagle Rock Canyon Trail. See what remains of Spring's very colorful wildflower display. Since there is no irrigation on the trail, this should give everyone an excellent idea of which plants are truly 'drought tolerant.'

# Editor's Letter

## Whats Up with TERA?

.....• by Bob Gotham



"What is TERA doing?" I was asked a couple of months ago during a break at a Neighborhood Council Meeting. The question was asked by a leader of

our community who I am sure was reflecting on the time that TERA was very visible for the positions it took on a development project that would change the appearance of our downtown. Although unspoken, I think what may have been implied was that, without the high visibility of the past, how can our organization be contributing to the community. Shame on me because I did not have a quick response, and I should have. Ask me the question again, I am ready.

TERA is every bit as productive today as it was years ago. How TERA supports the community has been refined to match Eagle Rock's needs. Adopting a more low-key approach, our collaborations and partnerships with other community groups have grown. Check out the President's Message in this edition. Maria provides a great glimpse into the many ways we have been working for our community in the last few months. Our goal is not to get headlines. It is to quietly support change that benefits Eagle Rock. However, we reserve the right to be loud and visible when the situation justifies that stance.

"The sky is falling, the sky is falling" said Chicken Little or was it the New York Times? As many know, the New York Times wrote an article about businesses closing in Eagle Rock. Guess what, they are closing in Glendale, Long Beach, San Diego and even New York. The situation in Eagle Rock is not unique. Without discounting the depth of the current recession, it is true that as economic

cycles, good and bad, are experienced, businesses on the margins of profitability may not survive. It is painful to see a business close. Never the less it is a natural process.

Over the last few months I have been interviewing business owners, and they are all survivors. A few messages come through strong and clear from every one of the merchants.

- Give your customers what they want. Do not try to convince them they need what you think they need.
- Treat each customer as if they are going to come back again and again. Do not consider each transaction to be a one-time event.
- Be available to do business when your customers are able to patronize your business. Sometimes it is difficult to shop in Eagle Rock on Saturdays because merchants have irregular or no Saturday hours.

"What changes would you like to see in Eagle Rock?" is a question I ask all business owners. Slowing down the traffic on Colorado Boulevard, change it to two lanes, and add more cross walks is a comment that comes from every merchant, without exception. Brand Boulevard with two lanes, wide sidewalks and an attractive streetscape is frequently offered as an example of a downtown success that was a result of reducing the traffic flow through the commercial zone. Let me know if you support this type of approach for Colorado Boulevard. Your voices can make a difference.

Finally and importantly, we have an obligation to patronize our Eagle Rock merchants. Notice the merchants who support our community by advertising in this newsletter. Read and enjoy the business-based articles you find in this publication. Give these merchants your business. When our business community thrives, it is a win win for both residents and merchants in Eagle Rock.

Enjoy the newsletter. Let me know what you like, let TERA hear your voice.

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# Volunteer Project Puts a Shine

On Eagle Rock Library Grounds

.....• by Rich Puz and Mary Tokita



Mary Tokita and Jesus "Jesse" Ronan, Jr. do a little planting.

On your next visit to the library on Caspar Avenue, you will see some changes for the better, courtesy of TERA and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. The grounds are cleaned up, railings and signage freshly painted and there are new textures and colors from drought-tolerant landscaping (also known as 'xeriscape'). These improvements were made on a mild March morning by a hard-working group of community volunteers.

Water-wise plantings are now visible along the entrance walkway and replace once-barren ground. An empty planter on the front stairs brims with aloe, sweet broom, Spanish lavender and a variety of succulents (aeonium, echeveria, euphorbia, and kalanchoe).

New beds of salvia and irises join a mix of water-sipping succulents growing on both sides of the entrance patio. Clusters of large aeonium sprout in front of the bike racks. A host of mature aloes, night-blooming cereus and other larger plants are climbing the wall south of the front door. The longstanding bed of roses has been pruned and new bushes added. Daylilies, bulbine and more succulents are now clustered around a boulder out front, just off the sidewalk.

You'll see more new xerophytic plants on the perimeter of the library parking lot – outside the conference room window, beneath the tree at Caspar and Merton, and among the beds across from the American Legion Hall. Once established, these new plantings will add visual interest and help

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# La Fuente

• by Bob Gotham



*Full bar, ready to serve you*

If you haven't been to La Fuente, the little Mexican restaurant in a strip mall on Colorado across from Bank of America in the last few months, you need to go back. The food is the same great authentic Mexican cuisine. But how the place has changed.

First, I want to tell you about the people of La Fuente. We often reference places when we speak about things that make Eagle Rock special. However, it really is the people associated with the business, especially the proprietors, that make it all possible. The business and personal lives are inextricably interwoven. I met with Humberto Sapien, his son Tito and son-in-law Octavio Ruiz, the men who make it happen.

Humberto the owner of La Fuente, traveled from Mexico to Los Angeles in 1968. He came with little more than his toothbrush and a change of clothes. Humberto's remaining two brothers followed soon after. Networking then was as important as it is today. Humberto's brother Arnold, had already moved to Los Angeles and was employed as a cook's assistant at a restaurant in Pasadena. Through his brother, Humberto was able to get an entry-level job as a dishwasher.

A career break came one day when he was asked to assist the cook in some basic food preparation (rice, burritos, salsa, etc.). You have to have worked in a kitchen as a dishwasher to appreciate the significance of mov-

ing from dishwashing to more skilled tasks. Humberto's career in food service grew as he moved from cook's assistant to being responsible for selected food preparation; and ultimately gained chef status. His brothers were also progressing in the food-service business. It seemed to run in the genes of the Sapien family.

Entrepreneurship also is a family attribute. The Sapien Brothers extended their skills beyond the kitchen and began opening their own restaurants. At the peak, they owned five restaurants located in Eagle Rock, Long Beach, Moreno Valley, Highland Park and East Los Angeles. Their business organization was a blend of active and silent partnership. Today Humberto owns La Fuente – Eagle Rock exclusively and his brother Abel owns La Fuente – Highland Park. The

remaining restaurants were sold.

The original La Fuente – Eagle Rock opened in 1988. It was a small, cozy family restaurant with seating for approximately 64 guests. It was plain but comfortable with friendly service and solid Mexican cuisine. It had a small exterior presence squeezed between a laundry facility and a copy shop. In June 2008, the restaurant closed in order to be reborn as the new, better La Fuente.

Scheduled to run one month, the construction project expanded to almost five months. The process for a full liquor license and meeting the parking requirement were the greatest challenges. Humberto feels that the long-term good relationship with the neighborhood was a big plus in getting approval for the full-service bar. Council-

member Jose Huizar's office was very helpful in facilitating a solution for the parking requirement.

On October 10, 2008, La Fuente reopened. It now includes the space of two adjacent stores. Seating capacity expanded to 94. Humberto's daughter Rosa, accepted her largest design project, responsibility for the décor at the new restaurant. "La Fuente", the fountain, is implied by the fountain adjacent to the new full bar. A fireplace in the main dining room and earth-toned walls decorated with brightly colored Mexican pottery ensure a warm dining experience. If you want your burritos with basketball or soccer, sit at the bar in front of the flat screen TV.

The biggest change to the menu is attributed to the new grill and the full bar. Humberto's favorite entree is Fajita Mixta, a combination of shrimp, chicken, steak, and fish, served on a sizzling platter at your table. Tito favors Shrimp Diablo (spicy sauce) and carne asada made with porterhouse steak. Slightly unusual for a Mexican Restaurant, Quail and steaks are also offered. Humberto and Tito stressed that the secret to La Fuente's success is that their food is authentic, not commercialized for mass production. One cooking secret is to marinate meats well, not just the last minute seasoning. The quality is consistent and the service is not only prompt but also friendly.

They make a strong effort to get to know their customers and remember

them on the next visit. I can attest to that. Humberto still closely supervises the kitchen, ensuring that family recipes are faithfully followed. Tito and Octavio began at the restaurant bussing tables many years ago. They are now Humberto's right hand in running the restaurant.

Our conversation eventually turned to the Eagle Rock community. The Sapien family has both business and personal roots in our community. Humberto and his wife raised their four children in Eagle Rock. The entire Sapien family lives here today. The cleanliness and quiet of the community were qualities that initially drew the family here from Highland Park. As the community has grown, they see and embrace a greater ethnic diversity. Their wishes for the future include slowing down Colorado Boulevard, perhaps by changing it to two lanes. They feel Brand Boulevard in Glendale is a good model. More cross walks, especially the flashing kind, are definitely needed. They would like to see owners invest more in maintaining some of the older buildings that suffer from neglect today.

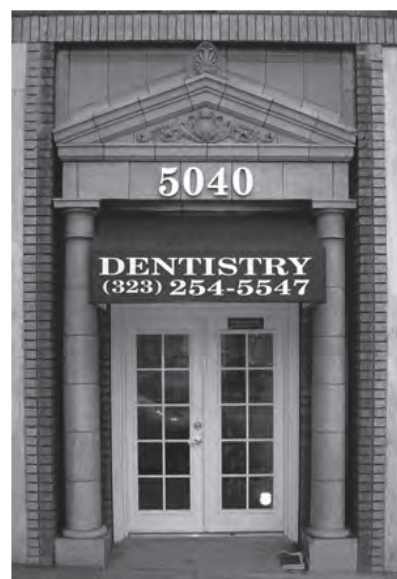
Reacting to the economic slump that is impacting all businesses, La Fuente offers Happy Hour Specials that include both food and drink. Humberto did not get where he is today without great challenges. He has known how to feed us well at a reasonable price for

CONTINUES ON PAGE 11



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# Owl Talk

CONTUNED FROM PAGE 1

Twenty years ago, Kathy lived in Silverlake. Her waking hours were spent serving pasta at Casa Bianca (eight years), attending Glendale Community College, and hanging out at the great parties given on Division Ave. The decision to go to school or to go to the next party on Division was often difficult. For awhile, parties were the winner. Kathy enrolled in classes that would lead to becoming a registered dietitian and volunteered at Glendale Memorial Hospital for over a year. Meanwhile, Sharon, who also worked part time in the food service business, was studying garment design at Glendale College and then at Otis Parsons. Her goal was her own design firm, specializing in lingerie and sports wear.

Occasionally the sisters had talked about their own business but never seriously. In late '93 Sharon "got restructured", otherwise known as unemployed. She decided this was the time to carry through and open a business with Kathy (affectionately called "Kat"). Initially Kat was not interested. However, Sharon was persistent; she just would not quit talking about it. Eventually, with no retail experience and clueless as to what she was facing, Kathy trusted her sister and agreed to move ahead. Their business plan consisted of determination and a vision.

The initial vision was a store in Glendale that would feature clothes they designed and manufactured. They casually mentioned their plan to Robin, the woman who owned Twerps at the time. She insisted they check out a vacant store next to hers. The opening between Twerps and the vacant store next door would form a very symbiotic business relationship. The location was an easy sell. Kat had already fallen in love with Eagle Rock and Sharon was about to.

With less than \$2,500 and sheer determination, they forged ahead and signed the lease in May '94. The initial plan of manufacturing garments was put aside as impractical. With so little capital, consignment was the way to go, no cost for inventory. Less than three months later, on July 2, 1994, Owl Talk opened and has been one of the unique elements of the Eagle Rock business community ever since.

Eventually Owl Talk evolved from strictly consignment to a retail/resale store. New garments are mixed with consignments and occasional rare vintage wear. Items that

Interestingly, it is difficult to find quality men's wear in good condition. Sharon explained that men would wear a favorite garment repeatedly, with no consideration if it has been seen before. However, women do not want to be seen in the same dress routinely. Consequently, women's garments are typically less worn when offered for consignment.

Customers are a mix of all ages. Mothers and daughters shop together, one of the goals achieved by the store. Students from St. Dominic's begin dropping in by the 8th grade. Occidental Students are given a courtesy discount and represent a significant portion of the customer base. Prices are moderate. Often a "cute outfit", to use Sharon's words, can be selected for \$20. They have a special affection for customers who have their own style, individuals who don't follow trends but just know "their look". This is typically an emotional transaction. As we all manage our budgets more carefully they hope more Eagle Rock residents will discover the economy and fun of shopping at Owl Talk.

Some basic principles have made this business a survivor. Give the customers what they want, not what you think they should buy, a lesson some merchants never learn. If a customer asks your opinion, be truthful, even it if means losing the sale. Deal with each customer as if you are in a relationship, not a one-time transaction. Sharon and Kat feel their experience in food service gave them priceless people skills that have contributed to the success of Owl Talk. "Wait on tables for a year. It humbles you, it makes you stronger" according to Sharon.

Other practices include being conservative, watching your expenses and investing back into the business when times are good. Understand that there is a roller coaster effect to managing a business. After each incline, comes a decline. Enjoy the good times but plan for the tough times



Kathleen (l) and Sharon

sell most quickly are contemporary styles and the occasional high quality designer or vintage garment. Funky, eclectic, contemporary and cute are words they use to describe their clothes. Kat says, "There is a reason to the madness in our store, it's hit or miss, you gotta be in the mood". A style called "Boho Chic" is back. I can't explain it. You have to go there to see it.

The majority of garments are for women but there is a small selection of men's wear.



is their motto. Kat is responsible for watching the “books”. Sharon is more active in merchandise selection. Responsibility for the store is evenly shared. Their enthusiasm has not waned over the years. However, they are not resting on their laurels. Kat now gives “Building a Boutique” presentations and she hopes for a new venture this year; “my fingers are crossed” she says.

We ended our visit talking about the Eagle Rock Community, where they both live, one block apart. Simply said, “We love Eagle Rock”. The family orientation, the clean streets and the comfortable pace drew Kat, who moved here many years ago for its almost Mayberry feeling. Shopping at Tritch’s and meeting three other people you know reinforces the small town feeling.

They want Eagle Rock to continue to grow and aspire to be the best Eagle Rock it can be. They strongly oppose the notion that Eagle Rock should model itself after any other community. They love the place so much, it was hard getting them to identify areas of improvement; somewhat like criti-

cizing your own child to a stranger. Eventually they suggested places for children to gather after school, where the action is, not remotely. Slow down traffic on Colorado Boulevard, perhaps turn it into two lanes, more cross walks, and for property owners to establish more reasonable rents for commercial spaces are some of the other dreams they have for our community.

It was Glendale’s loss and Eagle Rock’s gain when Kat and Sharon decided to open their store here. They bring something unique to our community. To paraphrase, it’s a little bit funky, it’s a little bit rock and roll, and it’s lots of fun. In many ways, it epitomizes what makes Eagle Rock so special. Even if you don’t intend to shop, stop in to Owl Talk and meet Kat and Sharon. They are certifiably smart and fun women. Who knows, you might even walk out with a new fashion statement, at least new to your wardrobe.

**Owl Talk**

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# Land Use Update

.....by TERA President Maria Nazario

**A**t the February Design Review Board Meeting we learned that the developer of the land above the Eagle Rock ridge had submitted to the City his request for a plan amendment and zone change to allow him to develop the land as commercial use and zoning for a restaurant. Currently the land is zoned as private open space and zoned for minimum density. The developer told city staff that he had been to the TERA PP&D committee and that we supported his plan. This is simply untrue.

The PP&D Committee and the TERA Board has been in opposition of this development since we first heard of it and reaffirmed its opposition to the proposal at their January meeting. We reminded city officials that TERA had expressed its opposition to this project via direct communication to them and in the e-letters and printed newsletter. TERA will not waiver in its opposition of the development of the Eagle Rock ridge and will fight this until we persevere. This is one of the few green spaces in our community and it must be preserved.

## Occidental Specific Plan

TERA is working closely with representatives from Oxy in reviewing their specific plan. Our goal is to work with Oxy to develop a plan that works for them and the community. Some of TERA's concerns are:

- Lack of specificity in the specific plan. The Master Plan is more detailed in addressing development and associated issues. Since Master Plans for private institutions are usually internal documents, it is not clear how the specific plan implements those items that are only addressed in the master plan.
- The opportunity areas (potential buildings) are of concern. We are inquiring as to how the specific provisions stated under the opportunity zones will be implemented. Our focus is on the opportunity areas around the perimeter of the campus which have the greatest impact on the adjacent properties.
- The use designations are much broader than those usually prescribed in a specific plan or zoning code categories. Academic - classrooms to laboratories; Residential - single family to dormitories (and hotels); and Athletic -offices to playing fields. Categories are only limited by very large square footage capacities that could be achieved tomorrow or over 20 years.
- The plan calls for increasing the size of the college by over 500,000 square feet but there is no planned increase in parking. Currently, the surrounding community bears the burden of overflow parking at the perimeter of the campus. We recommend that additional parking be provided on campus under the specific plan and that measures should be taken to limit parking off campus.
- The specific plan states that Oxy intends to preserve historic buildings on campus consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Historic Properties. We have requested that the buildings be identified.
- The plan indicates that Townsend Avenue will be used as the primary access for new residential facilities in the adjacent subarea. Townsend is currently a two-lane substandard hillside connector street that is characterized by excessive grades and blinding curves and should not be considered.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 13



## La Fuente

CONTUNED FROM PAGE 7

many years. Tito and Octavio are committed to keeping the business open and in the family when Humberto decides to "go fishing". Visit the new La Fuente; you will not be disappointed.



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# Volunteer Project Puts a Shine

CONTINUES FROM PAGE 5

mitigate operational costs while needing little water.

TERA's library "makeover" was one of 67 projects completed March 14 by 5,000 community volunteers for the Mayor's Day of Service for Northeast LA. Abigail Ramirez-Marquez, East Area Director Neighborhood and Community Services, Office of Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa, headed up the effort, serving as a liaison for 60 volunteer project groups like TERA while allocating resources and materials with several City agencies and corporate donors.

At the library, TERA worked with more than 50 volunteers, who completed the improvements in just four hours. The group was a diverse mix of families, young professionals, teenagers and 20- to 80-some-things, who not only weeded and planted the grounds, but braved the tangled hedges throughout the property to collect mounds of trash.

TERA President Maria Nazario led a troupe of young women who served as a painting crew, wielding wire brushes on the handrails along the stairs before adding a new coat of rust-proof paint. Other teens focused on brightening the library's concrete monument sign, diligently white-washing every nook and cranny.

While most of the project costs were provided by the Mayor's Office from private fundraising efforts, not City coffers, TERA sprang for items that the City could not deliver, such as decomposed granite and certain unusual plants. TERA members will continue to monitor and maintain the project through its critical first year, coordinating hand-watering efforts for newly planted beds that lack water access with the library groundskeepers at the LA Dept. of Recreation and Parks.

"It's been an incredible experience - every City staffer we've met has been enthusiastic and committed to supporting our efforts," said TERA project captain Mary Tokita, recalling how one Mr. O'Grady of Parks & Recreation made three trips to the Library to remove all the trash volunteers collected. The LA Office of Community Beautification and the LA Conservation Corps donated 17 mature plants. LA's General Services Dept. provided tools, mulch and materials

TERA volunteers on the Day of Service included Dave Gustavson (responsible for



*Volunteers: Hzia Villegas, Beth Gruss, Kevin Corte, Erin Batli, Sam Maksovd, Melanie Sirany, Monica Wazeryan and Savannah Asdoorian*

the new Eagle Rock monument at Wiota Circle), who dug holes, picked up trash and trucked materials from 7 a.m. till nearly noon. Smaller teams formed to tackle each task area, from the 'Tree Canopy' group with Corky Retson and Dave Kofahl who transformed the corner of Caspar and Merton, to 'Rose Patrol' trimmers like Joan MacNeil and Nancy Shannon. Eva Carrillo and her sons, Daniel and Pablo, dug out and replanted a narrow bed alongside the driveway.

The Larsens, with two toddlers in tow, Laurel Mogler and her son, joined several other moms, dads and progeny to plant the new 'Family Garden' near the front sidewalk. Two enterprising women visited each team, planting everywhere they could, then borrowed a broom from a local business to sweep up the weeds and pack garbage bags. The single largest group of volunteers came from Glendale's Wilson Middle School, a dozen-plus kids that tackled every assignment with lightning speed.

"Sonja Hannah and the library staff have generously praised our efforts," said Tokita. "But Eagle Rockers are way overdue in giving thanks to a critical community resource. It's been a privilege to do it."

To join the Library Irrigation Brigade, which will hand water plants this

summer, call (323) 344-8426 or write [mareaucontraire@yahoo.com](mailto:mareaucontraire@yahoo.com).



*Maria and Miguel Cabal rake up cuttings.*

# Land Use

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

## DHM Lofts

The developer is out of funding. The destiny of the lot that is now abandoned and unsightly has provoked many discussions. Councilmember Huizar's office continues to pursue all avenues, but it's a lengthy process when the builder has no funding left, even if there is a construction bond. Please report graffiti and other nuisances to Councilmember Huizar's office at (323) 254-5295. There is very little else they can do but monitor compliance with debris clean-up and graffiti abatement. Although we may wish for the city to step in and take over the property, it is private property and process must be followed.

## Onteora Way Development

In February we received the determination from the Planning Commission on the hearing that Frank Parelo testified at in August 2008. The Commission approved the zone change but did not require the specific tract map that would limit the parcel to 9 lots. TERA's PP&D Committee recommended asking Councilmember Huizar to get a clarification tying the zone change to the Tract Map. A letter from the TERA Board has been sent to Councilmember Huizar to link the zone change to the tract map and the limit of 9 lots.

## Green Goddess

The medical marijuana facility on Colorado Blvd. was not granted the hardship exemption and therefore has abandoned the location. There's a for lease sign on the property and hopefully the next tenant will be better suited to the location and Eagle Rock.



**Dave's Chillin-n-Grillin** is officially recognized as the *Best in the City!* This coveted honor was bestowed on Dave's Chillin-n-Grillin by *CitySearch, America's #1 Online Dinning Guide* in the category of sandwich shop - Rating 9.2. Gridskipper.com recently ranked the Smoothies of Los Angeles - ours was rated at 2! Come see what all the hoopla is about! Experts have spoken and they can't be wrong!

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## In-Kind Donations

The following individuals generously contributed cuttings and mature plants from their yards to benefit the Eagle Rock Library.

*Jean & Don Andreesen*

*Linda Johnstone Allen*

*Barbara Kennedy*

*Liz Larner & Tom Chasteen*

*Toby Leaman*

*Mark Sparks & Yolanda Nogueira*

*Sharon Springer*

*Kristen Steffey*

*David Steinman*

*Mary & Vernon Tokita*

*Mark Wenzel*

TERA also gratefully acknowledges Jim Parry for allowing TERA to use his property on Eagle Rock Blvd. as a staging area for the project.



## Who's former nest is this?

While not the original house, this property on Upperton Drive was once home to a pioneer of aviation.

The first individual to correctly name this one time Eagle-Rocker will earn a free TERA membership or membership extension.

Submit your guess to  
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# What Are They Thinking

by Keely Myers

Recently, there was an article in the New York Times about Eagle Rock and the future it faces as a result of the current economic recession. While reading the piece, I couldn't help but wonder how Eagle Rock residents and business owners reacted to the article about their beloved community titled "When the Next Wave Wipes Out." Were they insulted at the label Eagle Rock received as a "glamour girl" now returning to being a "neighborhood whose best qualities are well-preserved homes, old-school pizza and a really good hardware store?" Or did they see the article as representing what the nation is going through and a tale of what could come if the community doesn't band together?

With the next issue of the TERA newsletter approaching I decided to send out a questionnaire to locals and see what they really think - about the article's portrayal of Eagle Rock, and about the neighborhood itself. Out of close to one hundred emails sent, ten people responded with their opinions on the matter. Here's what I found out:

## What do you think of the story and its portrayal of Eagle Rock?

This question received a variety of responses. Tracy King (disclosure: Tracy King is the author's mother) simply stated that "Any story about Eagle Rock that appears in the New York Times that isn't about murder or gangs is a good thing." Others believed the article had some truth to it considering the current economy, but that it had been edited to represent the downside of the economy and made Eagle Rock seem like it was unique in its experience.

Pauline Mauro's response represented a lot of these views: "I think it honestly showed what could happen

to Eagle Rock if its community doesn't patronize and support its unique local stores and institutions. I think the article was a blessing in disguise because it's gotten Eagle Rock motivated to make sure our community comes through this unprecedented recession as intact as possible."

## What do you think is positive or negative about Eagle Rock?

This question received more positive responses than negative - it is clear that local residents love their neighborhood and think it has many great qualities, besides cute boutiques. As Ethel Zierten said, "Eagle Rock still has a small town flavor. Many of the residents have lived here for a long time. People know each other and care about their community," and this belief is echoed in most of the respondents' answers.

Stephan Early, a teacher at Eagle Rock High School, was reminded of his early years: "I was born in Brooklyn and brought up in a very old town in New Jersey. Morristown was small, peaceful, polite and had a great mix of people. Eagle Rock reminds me of where I grew up in those respects but it has the great added bonus of being surrounded by a world class city with a vibrant artistic community."

The negatives that people mentioned all revolved around wanting Eagle Rock to be a more pedestrian-friendly community. Jennifer Morgan, co-owner of the Colorado Wine Company, walks about a mile to work every day and thinks it is "tough/dirty/traffic-y to walk in."

This leads to the next question I asked:

## What is the one thing you would change about Eagle Rock?



Keely Myers

Stephan Early described what would make his ideal Eagle Rock: "I would change the speed of the traffic on Colorado Blvd. When I first came to California, in 1964, when pedestrians stepped off the curb, traffic stopped on both sides of the road until they were on the other side of the street. The other night when I was out on the Boulevard I watched a gentleman and his daughter wait for five minutes on the meridian for a lull in the traffic so they could cross. The Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council is working on pedestrian lights and crosswalks perhaps as they have in Glendale to return civility to crossing the street."

Other respondents have a great desire for Eagle Rock to develop to its full potential. Pauline Mauro wished "for people to be more open to constructive commercial and residential development, but still have a dose of skepticism of the developers - to keep them on their toes."

Jennifer Morgan and Joanne Turner agreed on what they would change. Both would love to renew the main business areas to make them more aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian friendly. As Turner described, she would "demolish every badly designed commercial building, replace all with

well designed, pedestrian-friendly structures, and move most stinky, ugly auto-related businesses to a more industrial area where they belong.” Morgan wants to “enliven and rehab the main business corridors in appearance and function.”

John Nugent had two answers for this one: “I’d change the timing of the Farmer’s Market and offer a wider variety of fruits/vegetables – the second part of this answer is that it doesn’t change because of how petty local politics can be in Eagle Rock. Amazing for such a small place.”

**What can be done to maintain the idealism that has boosted Eagle Rock in recent years?**

This question received the most passionate responses. Overall, all ten respondents believed that the most important thing to do to avoid the picture painted in the New York Times article is to get involved in the community. Zierden believes that “the people who live here have to stay involved in the com-

munity, especially the younger people and families who have moved here in recent times. They mustn’t become discouraged because of the recession.”

Joanne Turner, a past-president of TERA stated that “a strong, courageous, and proactive residents association willing to intelligently take on the city and developers was a reason people and businesses wanted to move here several years ago,” and a return to this kind of positive, determined force in the community is the way to take care of the neighborhood.

As Tracy King says, “Continued community activities to bring us together are important. There are already signs of the fun and creativity that is core to the town.” Eagle Rock is known for more than its promise to be “the next Silver Lake or Los Feliz.” As an eclectic neighborhood that has such a wide variety of people show up for its community events, clearly it will take more than an economic recession to change its central identity.

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*The Eagle Rock Association could not exist without the support of its members. Thank you to all those listed below who have either renewed their memberships or have joined for the first time. The list is as of date of printing and renewals/new memberships since then will be acknowledged in subsequent newsletters.*

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