

November 2021

Holiday Magazine



Finishing touches

PAGE 8

Willie Riley puts the final touches on her snow glob ornament.

COURIER photo/Steven Felschundneff

Holiday EVENT calendar

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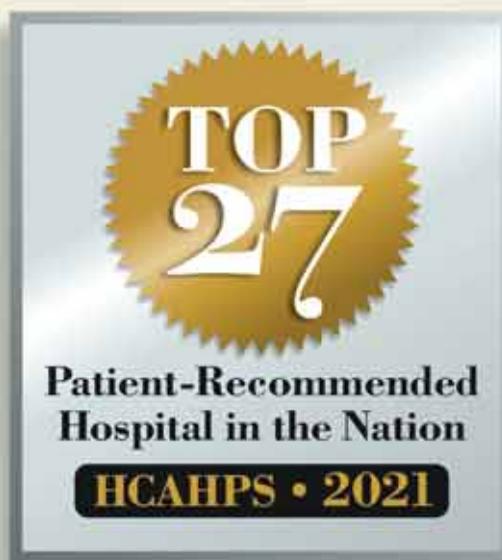
Claremont's cool gifts for under \$25

PAGE 7

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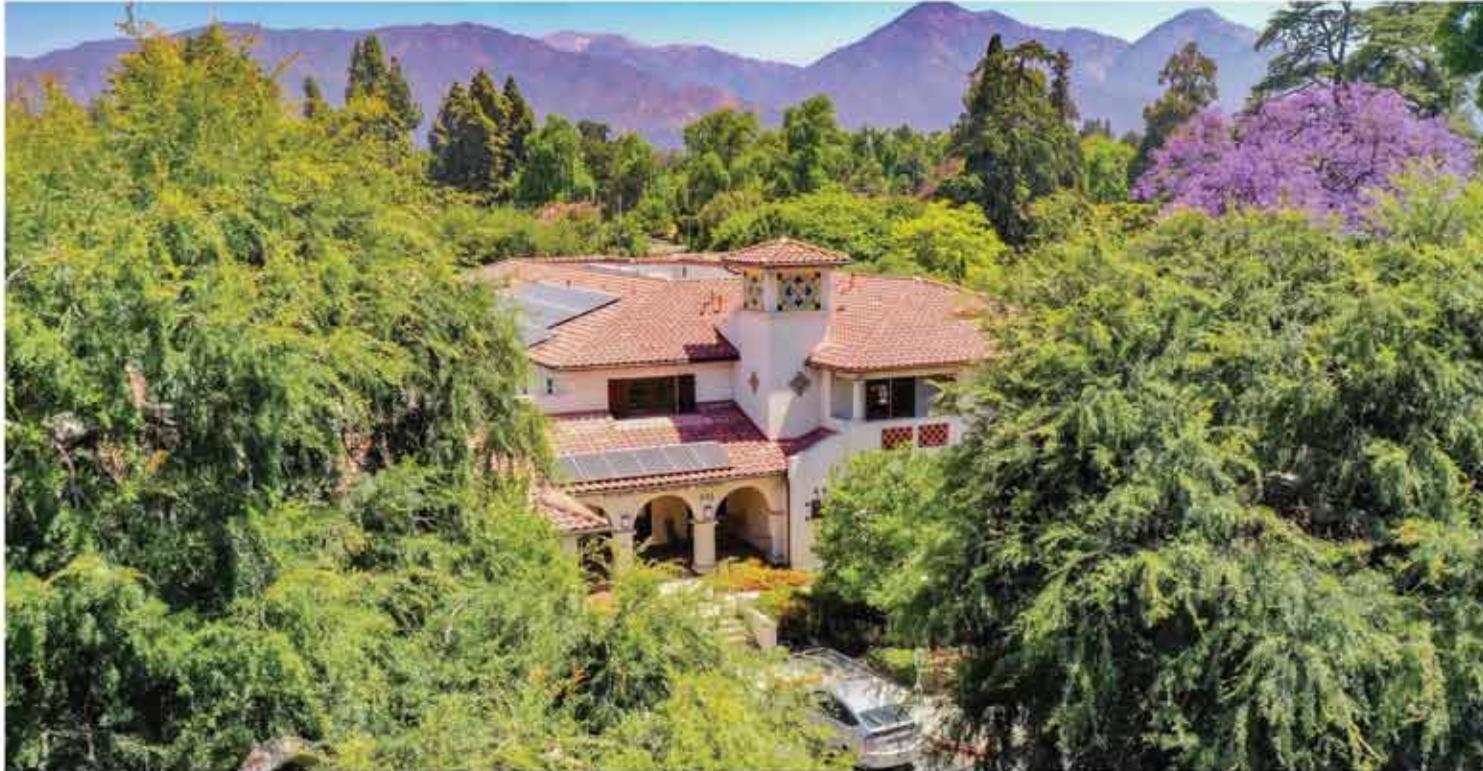


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COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo

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 Ready to reach out this holiday season?
 - Animal shelters
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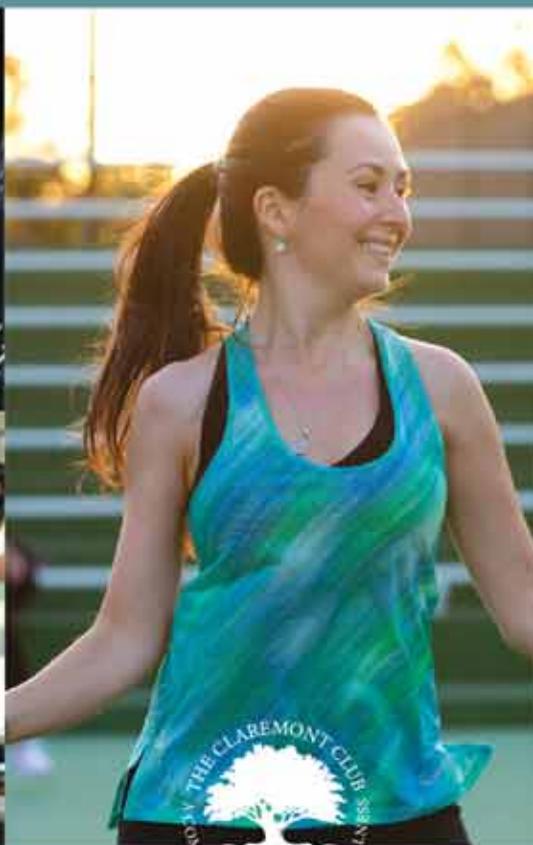
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UNIQUE GIFTS for under \$25

(All found right here in Claremont!)

Last holiday season was quite a bit different with many of us spending time with our family and friends via ZOOM. This year travel is already up and we are **eating and shopping** in Claremont again. Though being able to spend time together in person is itself a gift, **finding that special something** for that special someone is a **wonderful way** to show your love this year.

With that in mind, we've scoured the Village to find a few **special gifts for under \$25**.



Cheese Cave Salt Keeper, \$12

The Hen's Kitchen Shoppe on Yale is a must visit. The shop is wonderfully styled with the products to match. You'll bound to find something here for that family member who loves to cook!



Love this measuring cup tree ornament, \$18.95.



Nourishing Goat Milk Hand or Body Wash, \$20.95.



Anyone for hand-crafted specialty popcorn, birthday confetti or salted caramel popcorn? Prices range from \$6.95 to \$11.95.

The **We Olive and Wine Bar** serves up scrumptious food while having a glass of wine. Perhaps purchase a gift certificate for a tasting?



Cheese knives make a great hostess gift, \$19.95.



How cute are these Gnome bottle toppers, from \$8.95 to \$10.95.

There lots many gems under \$25 at **The Economy Shop** on First Street.

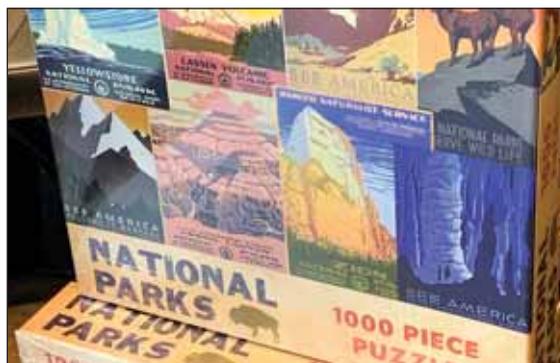


Perfect for the holidays, a stainless silver turkey tray, \$20.

The Outdoor Store on Indian Hill Boulevard has been open only six months. It's got so many great gifts for that hiker or biker with much Claremont logo'd apparel.



A unique tee or hat makes a special gift for the locals, \$26 for a shirt, \$24 for a hat.



This National Park puzzle looks like fun, \$22.

Vom Foss on First Street, known for its delectable olive oils, vinegars and craft whiskies. And check the smaller go-to gifts for the foodie in your family.



The Grill Master Collection, \$17.99, perfect for the grill master!

Scripps students craft special events for seniors

by Steven Felschundneff
 steven@claremont-courier.com

On a recent warm fall afternoon about a dozen women are crowded around circular tables at the Joslyn Senior Center making crafts for the upcoming holiday season.

The women chat sociably but mostly they remain focused on their creations — winter-themed ornaments, a beaded bracelet or a clever gift made from leftover Scrabble letters.



“Start getting ready for the holidays with this one-day gift-making workshop! Create a unique piece of jewelry, a festive ornament, or both! To top it all off, you will be able to gift-wrap your finished product and create a holiday card,” according to the Claremont Senior Program’s November newsletter called “The Clicks.”

The crafting workshop was the creation of three students from a class in clinical geropsychology at Scripps college. The students, all young women, create these types of events at the Joslyn Center as outreach related to their coursework.

Clinical geropsychology is a discipline within psychology focused on understanding and helping older persons and their families to maintain well-being, overcome problems and achieve maximum potential during later life, according to Wikipedia.

Longtime Claremont resident Neda Barnes busily works creating a snow globe ornament with tiny pine cones, red berries and a sprig



COURIER photo/Steven Felschundneff
 Longtime Claremont resident Neda Barnes writes a message on her snow globe ornament during a recent holiday crafting workshop at the Joslyn Senior Center in Claremont. The one-day class is one of several hosted by students from the Claremont Colleges who perform service projects as part of their clinical geropsychology coursework.

of greenery. She carefully writes a personal message on the outside using a thin paint brush, while friend Willie Riley also finishes a similar ornament.

“The writing is impressive,” one

of the students remarks.

The students circulate throughout the room in an effort to be helpful while not interfering with the creative process.

Catherine Brown of Upland is



COURIER photo/Steven Felschundneff
 Scripps College senior Margot Mafra Spencer helps La Verne resident Sheena Caughey with her ornament project recently at the Joslyn Senior Center in Claremont. Mafra Spencer and three other college students conducted the crafting workshop as part of their course in clinical geropsychology.



busy creating Scrabble ornaments with the names of her granddaughter, great-niece and great-nephew. She plans to send them along as gifts for the upcoming holidays.

Across the table, Margot Mafra Spencer is helping La Verne resident Sheena Caughey with a similar ornament.

Caughey said she appreciates the programs at the Joslyn because other senior centers in the area are not yet offering in-person classes and activities.

The people who run the Claremont Senior Program have an ongoing relationship with The Colleges but the close collaboration between Scripps College psychology professor Stacey Wood, her students and the Joslyn Center is new this semester.

Jen Hele, supervisor of the senior program, said the special classes and workshops the Scripps students have designed have been much

appreciated, particularly because they are not yet offering all of the regular pre-pandemic services at Joslyn.

"This was an exciting opportunity for all of us," Hele said. It has also served as a way to offer some new and fun activities for Claremont seniors.

Each class is the unique creation of the three or four students who serve as its hosts, and is the result of brainstorming sessions where everyone proposes ideas for new classes. In the past they have held Zoomba workouts and an introduction to playing Mahjong.

"They all choose an activity that speaks to them and that they want to share with the community," Hele said. She said the collaboration this semester with the Scripps students has been amazing and has given them a chance to get real world experience working with senior population.

"I really hope the relationship will continue," Hele said.

Last week they hosted a game of Jeopardy at Joslyn which covered topics similar to the popular television trivia-based game show including



COURIER photo/Steven Felschundneff
Upland resident Catherine Brown creates a few Scrabble ornaments during a holiday crafting workshop recently at the Joslyn Senior Center. Brown was making the ornaments as gifts for her granddaughter, great-niece and great-nephew.

history, sports and entertainment. Guests were invited to put together their own teams of three or to sign up individually and join a team with other singletons. Prizes were awarded to the top scoring teams.

Plans for a senior fun day on December 1 were still in the works as of last Friday, but some ideas include games such as corn hole and maybe a puzzle table. For reservations or for more information on future classes and workshops, please call (909) 399-5488.



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Happy Holidays!

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Stained glass maker reflects on colorful 50-year career

by Andrew Alonzo
aalonzo@claremont-courier.com

For nearly 50 years, carpenter George Dekterov, founder of Art of Stained Glass, has been hard at work designing and bringing to life hundreds, if not thousands, of dream windows and doorways for Foothill area residents and their homes.

Having taken on countless projects including intricate doorways and glass work in numerous Arts and Crafts-style homes in Claremont; Southern California church windows; and even the wooden framework of a cross that would sit behind a Sam Maloof crucifix on an Ontario church window; the Upland native is now, sadly, closing the narrative on his five-decade long carpentry career.

George explained that he is hanging up his gloves at the end of 2021 simply because he's ready to retire.

"I need to. You know I've put in my time; I should have done it about 10 years ago but I just didn't figure on getting it up so quickly," he said. "I really enjoy the work, and enjoy the people, a lot of the customers, we have actually turned out to be really good friends."

Long before Mr. Dekterov became the go-to man for carpentry among friends and neighbors, it was in



COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo
George Dekterov smiles while surrounded by just a portion of his life's work of stained-glass windows at his Art of Stained Glass store in Upland on a recent Monday.

high school — some 69 years ago — when he got the idea to actually began glass smithing.

"It was a hobby [when] I just started," he said. "I started working in the Montclair Plaza and I was doing some shopping at the department store, The Broadway. They had gift items, furniture, things of that sort. I was looking for a lamp ... and I saw a

stained-glass lamp there. I looked at it and it was 125 dollars for the lamp. That was a lot of money," he said.

He wanted the lamp for his bedroom at the time, but like many teenagers in the early 1950s, he was low on cash, making just "a buck sixty-five an hour" working at the plaza he said. Dekterov instead took a mental image of the lamp and took his money to the local stained glass shop, where he was able to afford supplies such as wood and glass to create his own lamp.

Once home, he took his materials into the garage and said the project "didn't take me too long to make, and it was enjoyable." Unknown to him, that first lamp would be the first step he took into a lifelong career.

Realizing his hobby might be a gift, Dekterov said he started making small items and trinkets, including more lamps, to sell at flea markets around the Foothills area. Throughout the 1950s and early '60s, Griswolds — a popular weekend flea market that once inhabited

the parking lots of today's Buca di Beppo restaurant and Trader Joe's market — became his main stomping grounds for setting up shop and selling his wares.

"That's where I started. I quit the clothing business — I was a store manager — so I quit that and pursued stained-glass windows and doors," he said. "Everything I made, I sold, so that was kind of nice."





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Pictured: Artwork by resident Ardys Hunter

“It was something that I could control, have my own hours, of course it was like eight days a week, 50 hours a week, 50 hours a day,” Dekterov continued, “just a lot of work and time involved but everything I made, I sold.”

As he earned more money, he began selling bigger items such as doors and intricate stained-glass windows. His name and craftsmanship began to catch on with the locals who began to offer him work designing and installing doorways and windows.

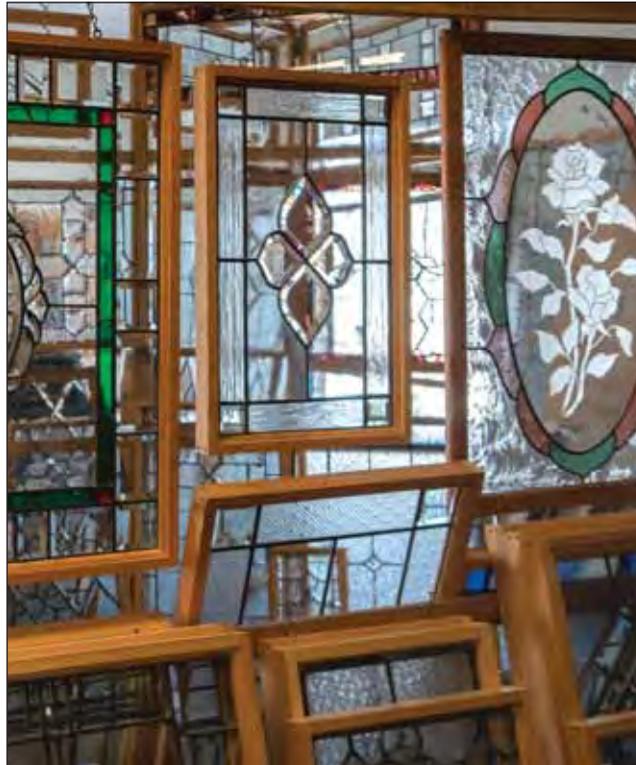
After refining his trade and graduating from college in 1969, he opened his first stained-glass workshop called Art of Stained Glass. His first location, opened in 1974, was in Ontario on B Street, next to what still remains Logan’s Candies.

His storefront was more than just a place customers could buy high quality windows. The store was also an opportunity for customers to meet Dekterov and special order what they needed for their homes and businesses.

While he’s been all over Southern California constructing and installing his work, his Art of Stained Glass stores have also traveled, moving five times in 50 years.

After five years on B Street, he moved one block over toward the Euclid side of B Street, next to the horse buggy known as Drew Carriage. Five years after that shop, however, he made his way back to B Street. He then moved the shop off Arrow Highway in Montclair in 1989, but following a dispute with the city over who owned the property, he moved it to Upland, where the shop has remained for the last 20 years.

He’s enjoyed numerous business successes, one of which involved a contract worth \$35,000 with Oles, a department store similar to Home Depot, for hummingbird door panels about 35 years ago. He’s also had a few lows, one in particular when, at his Mont-



COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo
Stained glass-windows and chiseled window art hang inside George Dekterov’s workshop and storefront, Art of Stained Glass.

clair shop, someone backed up their truck all the way into his showroom, shattering numerous windows in the process.

“It looks really funny because here’s this white car inside this showroom of stained-glass windows all on the floor, and right next to it, on the other part of the shop, it says ‘open,’” he said.

Since his start, Dekterov’s formula for approaching a project has not changed. He draws all of his designs by hand in one of his sketchbooks, taking

note of all the final measurements of cabinet doors, doorways, and windows — anything a client wants him to build. At his Upland shop, high up on a shelf next to his sketching table, Dekterov has boxes upon boxes containing hundreds of past sketches and designs, adding up to thousands of former projects.

“It’s real old school, this is what he would do if you wanted a kitchen or door today,” his wife Debbie said. “He’s not just going to just flip it out off of a computer.”

To say Mr. Dekterov has been busy over the last five decades would be an understatement. He only grants himself Sundays off in addition to Thanksgiving and Christmas. But for the most part, Dekterov has been either in his workshop sculpting glass, or putting said glass in place for a client.

“Customer satisfaction to the job, that was very important to me,” he said. “Sometimes you can’t please everybody, which is hard because I do take my time. But 99.99% of the time they’re happy.”

Though he is officially done fulfilling customer requests and building their windows, his current works are still on display in numerous homes, churches, restaurants and structures all across Southern California.

While he has no extravagant plans after retiring, other than relandscaping the yard and traveling, he is still set to be his family’s handyman.

Before his Art of Stained Glass shop officially closes, the community is invited to stop by the shop at 1128 W 9th St., Upland Fridays and Saturdays between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to offer well wishes to George and his wife Debbie Dekterov. Customers can still make an appointment by calling to see George on off days. The community can also help George clear out his inventory of intricate stained-glass windows that line the south end of the store.

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What's happening Claremont?

BY ANDREW ALONZO

calendar@claremont-courier.com

TODAY 11/26

- Beginning Friday, November 26 at St. Ambrose Church, Ophelia's Jump productions will present its interactive adaptation of the Christmas classic, **It's a Wonderful Life**. Tickets are \$2 and performances will run Fridays through Sundays between November 26 and December 19 beginning at 6:30 p.m. More info can be found at www.opheliasjump.org.



- Opening up for the season on Friday is **Frosty's Forest** in Chino, a tree farm that sources Christmas trees from their main farm in Oregon. The tree farm will be open on weekends between 10 a.m. and 9 p.m., and Monday through Friday between 12 and 9 p.m. Frosty's Forest is located at 14861 Ramona Ave. in Chino. For pricing and other info, visit frostysforest.com.

SATURDAY 11/27

- At 10 a.m. on Saturday, November 27, **Chamberlain's Choose and Cut Christmas Tree Farm** in Claremont

will open to the public for the holiday season. The local farm will be open Saturdays and Sundays between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. The Claremont farm is located at 3436 Padua Avenue. For more information, contact (909) 626-0243 or visit their website.

SUNDAY 11/28

- Happy Hanukkah** from the Claremont COURIER!

- This year, experience the interactive attraction that is **The Elf on the Shelf's Magical Holiday Journey** at the Pomona Fairplex. The holiday attraction is fun for the whole family and is currently ongoing until Sunday, January 2. Tickets are available for purchase at <https://elfontheshelfjourney.com/los-angeles> and are based on the time slots for each date.

MONDAY 11/29

- Spread some holiday cheer early this year with some **Claremont Chamber of Commerce gift cards**, available for purchase at 205 Yale Avenue, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Chamber gift cards are available to use at over 140 participating Claremont Chamber businesses. For more information, contact (909) 624-1681.

TUESDAY 11/30

- Tuesday, November 30 is **Giving**

Tuesday and Crossroads Inc. in Claremont is attempting to raise \$10,000 for six women in need, with the money being used to pay for the women's rooms and rent for 75 days. Residents can donate online at www.crossroadswomen.org. Other charities are asking for the community's help to make their Giving Tuesday efforts a success, including the Inland Valley Hope Partners.

WEDNESDAY 12/1

- Want to support furry friends this holiday season by eating chocolate? Well, you can. Help Priceless Pet Rescue this year through their online **See's Candy fundraiser** for which (depending on your purchase) about 15 - 50 percent of proceeds go to support the no-kill shelter. Go online to access the link on the calendar.

THURSDAY 12/2

- On Thursday, December 2, children — including kids at heart — are invited to attend **Musical Bob's** interactive music session at the Montclair Place. The performance begins at 4 p.m. and will take place in the area between Kids Empire and Barnes & Noble. Montclair Place is located at 5060 North Montclair Plaza Lane.

FRIDAY 12/3

- Celebrate the official start of the holiday season in Claremont with the **city's tree lighting** ceremony on Friday,

December 3 at 6 p.m. at the Claremont Depot. Prior to and after the tree lighting, Claremont's annual **Holiday Promenade** event will take place between 5 and 8 p.m. throughout the Village. During the evening, participating Claremont businesses will offer free treats and special deals. For more information, contact Claremont's Human Services Department at (909) 399-5490.

SATURDAY 12/4

- Celebrate and spread Christmas cheer early this year in La Verne. Head over to the city on Saturday, December 4 for the city's annual **Holiday Stroll** through Old Town La Verne, beginning at 4 p.m. The event will include a small tree lighting, storytellers and music. Select Old Town businesses will offer deals and treats.

SUNDAY 12/5

- On Sunday, December 5, the **Claremont Concert Choir** will return to the Garrison Theater for the first time after a 20-month concert hiatus. The choir is a joint effort from the music programs of Claremont McKenna, Harvey Mudd, Pitzer and Scripps College. The indoor concert will begin at 1:30 p.m. and guests may be required to provide proof of vaccination or negative test up to 72 hours prior. The Garrison Theater is located at 231 E 10th Street in Claremont.

MONDAY 12/6

- If you missed Claremont's tree light-

Sweater weather



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ing — or one was not enough — the city of **La Verne** will be holding its **tree lighting** on Monday, December 6. The tree is located in front of La Verne City Hall, 3660 D Street, and the lighting is scheduled to start at 6:30 p.m. The evening will feature a visit from Santa Claus and carolers.

TUESDAY 12/7

• At the Thatcher Music Building, 340 North College Avenue, on Tuesday, December 7, Pomona College students will perform various songs and selections at their **winter student recital**. The program will start at 7 p.m. and doors will open 30 minutes prior.

WEDNESDAY 12/8

• Anxious about the new normal, especially with the holidays in full swing? Sign up for Inter Valley Health Plan's upcoming virtual class, **Safe Holiday Get Togethers**, on Wednesday, December 8. The session begins at 9 a.m. and will share various ways we can stay safe while also enjoying regular holiday festivities. Register or view more information at www.ivhp.com/vitality.

THURSDAY 12/9

• Potential and current caregivers are invited to attend Inter Valley Health Plan's free online class covering a basic **caregiver's guide to nutrition for the elderly**. The class is offered online and is scheduled for Thursday, December 9 at 10 a.m. Register or view more information at www.ivhp.com/vitality.

FRIDAY 12/10

• All are invited to PFlag Claremont's upcoming party, **Snow Place Like Home**, a free queer-friendly winter social happening on Friday, December 10 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Pomona. The social is scheduled to run between 6 and 9 p.m. and will feature games, prizes, food and music. For more information, visit www.pflagclaremont.com.

SATURDAY 12/11

• Join the **Claremont Chorale** on Saturday, December 11 at the Claremont United Church of Christ's Kingman Chapel for a holiday concert beginning at 4 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased via Chorale members or online at www.claremontchorale.org. The Claremont United Church of Christ is located at 233 Harrison Avenue.



• Saturday, December 11 is the final day to **donate to the Kiwanis Club of Claremont's Adopt-A-Family** drive. For details on how to donate items, visit www.claremontkiwanis.org, then click on 'Adopt A Family' in the upper right corner. Any cash or check donations should be addressed to Claremont Kiwanis Foundation or given to treasurer Raul Rodriguez indicating such.

SUNDAY 12/12

• At 3 p.m. on Sunday, December 12, all are invited to experience the second annual **Celtic Christmas** with bagpipers from the Kevin R. Blandford Memorial Pipe Band. The band will fill up and play holiday classics via bagpipes and drums inside the Claremont United Church of Christ. Ticket information can be found online at www.blandfordbands.org.

MONDAY 12/13

• One lucky shopper will have a **Merry Monday** thanks to the Montclair Place on December 13 as the mall will be giving away a \$200 Sephora gift card. All patrons are eligible for entry, all you have to do is follow the Montclair Place on Instagram and watch their story for event details. The following Monday, December 20, the mall will be giving away an Anthony & Co Jewelers diamond infinity bracelet.

• Monday, December 13 is the last day patrons can schedule to have their furry friends get their picture taken with Santa Claus at the Montclair Place. **Pet photos with Santa** are scheduled between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. and walk-ups are welcome at the mall.

TUESDAY 12/14

• On Tuesday, December 14, the Claremont Chamber of Commerce will host its annual **Holiday Showcase** in conjunction with their monthly Chamber Business Over Breakfast at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Claremont. The event is

scheduled for 7:30 a.m. and the chamber will serve guests a holiday themed breakfast. For vendor information, contact Ta'Mara Stevens at tamara@claremontchamber.org.

WEDNESDAY 12/15

• For seniors who believe their blood sugar or weight is getting hard to manage this holiday season, they are encouraged to sign up for Inter Valley Health Plan's online class, **Diabetes, Weight and the Holidays**. The hourlong session on Wednesday, December 15 will begin at 9 a.m. and will help seniors learn tricks to keeping both factors down during this time of year. Register at www.ivhp.com/vitality.

THURSDAY 12/16

• Kids of all ages are invited to hear a **Christmas tale from Mrs. Claus** at the Montclair Place beginning at 4 p.m. on Thursday, December 16. Story time will take place in the area between Kids Empire and Barnes & Noble.

FRIDAY 12/17

• Age-appropriate patrons (21+) can stop by VomFass Claremont on Friday, December 17 as the business will host a **holiday cocktail demo and tasting** beginning at 7 p.m. VomFass Claremont is located at 101 N. Indian Hill Blvd., Suite C2-100. For more information or to register, visit their Eventbrite page.

continued on next page

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Hibbard Auto Center 191 S. Indian Hill Blvd.

What's happening

Claremont?

BY ANDREW ALONZO

calendar@claremont-courier.com

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SATURDAY 12/18

- Saturday, December 18 is **National Wreaths Across America Day** and at 9 a.m., the Covina Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution will host a special ceremony at the La Verne Cemetery, located at 3201 B Street. The ceremony will honor the country's fallen veterans and is open to all to attend.

SUNDAY 12/19

- Enjoy the Inland Pacific Ballet and their production of **The Nutcracker** on Sunday, December 19 as the group's final performance is scheduled for 2 p.m. All performances will be held at the Fox Performing Arts Theater in Riverside. For tickets or further information, visit www.ipballet.org.



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Toy store owner ready for 2021 shopping rush

by Andrew Alonzo
aalonzo@claremont-courier.com

Shelves are stocked, the toy store owner wears a bright smile, and customers are lined up outside despite freezing temperatures to snag the season's latest gizmos. At least that is usually how movies like "A Christmas Story" (1983) or "Christmas Grace" (2014) tend to portray the annual holiday shopping rush.

In reality, however, last year's holiday shopping season was far from any 1983 classic, 1990s or even 2000s interpretation. In 2020, John Peltekci, owner of Boon Companion Toys in Claremont, still had toys occupying the shelves of the family-owned store. But the grim truth was that Village customers — and the smile on Peltekci's face — were nowhere to be seen.

Locals might believe Boon Companion Toys would be one of those few stores to have a line running out the door during the holidays, especially given the audience they

target. On the contrary, Peltekci explained that 2020 did not just come with a rough holiday season, it capped a hard year.

"Well, 2020 doesn't exist. We pretty much didn't have any business," he said. "I lost employees, I lost inventory. I couldn't get inventory back again. And then there was no business [traffic], nobody wanted to come in the physical store."



COURIER photo/Betsy Weinberger
This year's popular kids' items are all about texture. The Groovy Nee Doh Glob can be stretched and squished in your hands.

Like many businesses in Los Angeles County, the March 17, 2020 orders forced Boon Companion Toys to close until further notice. Peltekci recalled that March Tuesday came with a "very eerie feeling."

"I remember looking outside, closing the back door, and putting the alarm on and going, 'Okay, let's see what's going to happen next,'" he said.

What happened next, according to Peltekci — whose store has to compete



COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo
Behind his store's counter, Boon Companion Toys owner John Peltekci bags up a customer's LEGO set last Wednesday afternoon.

with big name toy retailers like Walmart and Target year-round — were applications for business loans. Peltekci said he acquired an SBA loan, and emphasized that his landlord was very flexible in working with him throughout the pandemic.

Boon Companion Toys eventually got the green light to partially reopen in the summer of 2020 and Peltekci used the opportunity to set up a common business practice used by various Vil-

lage businesses at the time: adding curbside and delivery options to online orders. While the shop was closed on the outside, Peltekci worked behind the scenes on the inside to fulfill online orders that trickled in — though the online traffic was not generating much in sales.

"Curbside was very, very little. You would do two deliveries, three deliveries [per month], and that's not enough to sustain a business," Peltekci said. "I

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continued from previous page

did [deliveries] on my own to be honest with you. If we did curbside we'd be here for a little bit, [but] that didn't work out so well. And then on Instagram we posted that we would do deliveries and that was a little bit better [for traffic]."

The holiday rush that spans between the months of October, November and December is one of the store's biggest times of the year; however, with COVID-19 around in 2020, there was not much of a rush to the iconic toy store nor their online inventory. Over its course, Peltekci said the pandemic brought about numerous challenges and changes that now force him to work "twice as hard."

"Nothing is easy anymore. You have to work twice as hard to do a half or the same thing. Everything has changed, from logistically to get the product in, to your sales reps, to cost of goods, the cost of shipping, everything has changed," he said, also noting that technology has come to play a bigger role in today's market.

Boon Companion fully reopened for business in April 2021 after getting the go-ahead from L.A. County, although the store, along with the rest of the world, is still experiencing some delays in shipping, according to Peltekci.

"Things are still coming, there's still products that are out there that are coming, it's just it's getting slower. Instead of every one package, or one shipment coming all at once, it's coming in four different, smaller shipments instead of one large one," Peltekci said. "It's definitely affecting [others around], but for me so far, not as much."

Since Boon Companion Toys opened in 1980, the store has comfortably occupied the distinguishable, brown, corner space off Harvard Avenue and Second Street, selling nothing but toys — and bringing joy — to kids of all ages. According to Peltekci, the store sells nearly all types of toys for children, and adults who are kids at heart.

"From Barbies, to Legos, to puzzles, to educational [toys], to books. Wood toys ... to action figures. I'm trying to think," he said before adding, "We have all the remote-control cars, we have them for older kids, younger kids, and everything in between. From collectables, like I said, to science and educational, to books, to games, puzzles ... everything."

The toy store opened under the ownership of Nancy and Reed Johnson four decades ago. Just over 10 years ago, the Johnsons sold the shop to the current owner. Peltekci said he not only has previous experience in the retail industry selling toys, but he's also a Claremonter with family in the neighboring cities of San Dimas and La Verne. Given his CV and family's proximity, Peltekci shared that it was an easy decision to buy the shop.

"Claremont is probably, since I grew up, one of the best communities and it's a great little shop to be in. So, it was a no-brainer [to purchase the business]," he said.

Peltekci clearly enjoys the work that comes with owning the toy shop, but nothing really could have prepared him for the struggles of 2020. Peltekci admitted that he'd never want to go back, relive or experience 2020 again, but shared that Boon Companion Toys would not have made it through the pandemic without customers' support.

Since the store has reopened, Peltekci is nothing short of happy to be back behind the counter talking with customers. He said since reopening, 2021 has been good to him.

"Well, the customers have been great, the community has been great, they support the store," he said. "Now that we're back open everything's been good."

Despite just reopening fully in April, Peltekci said Boon Companion Toys is already on track toward equaling their 2019 profit margins. If all keeps going accordingly and the store does well this year, Peltekci has a feeling he can surpass 2019 and 2020's numbers.

"If you compare [2021] to 2019, we're not there yet number-wise, but we'll see what happens at the end of the year. But we're close."

Asked if he'll have enough toys this year for children to open Christmas morning, Peltekci responded with a hearty "Yes! One hundred percent, no doubt."

Boon Companion Toys is located at 145 North Harvard Avenue, directly across from the Claremont Post Office, on the corner of Harvard and Second. Customers, and tourists, can stop by Peltekci's one-of-a-kind store Monday through Saturday between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. You may call the store at (909) 625-1993.



COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo
Claremont shopper Jennifer Davis looks and plays with a Baby Einstein Piano on last Wednesday afternoon while getting a head start on her holiday shopping at Boon Companion Toys in the Claremont Village.

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COURIER CONNECTS

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500 Humane Way, Pomona
623-9777 • ivhsspc.org
Hours: Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Closed on most major holidays. Kennel opens at 10 a.m.

Since 1949, IVHS has promoted awareness and educated the public about its responsibility for all living creatures. Dedicated to giving shelter and medical care to unwanted, abandoned and injured animals and preventing animal cruelty. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old and are always needed.

ANIMAL RESCUE

PRICELESS PET RESCUE

The Orphanage – Claremont
665 E. Foothill Blvd., Unit E, Claremont
pricelesspetrescue.org info@pricelesspetrescue.org
Open: Tuesday through Friday, 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

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Priceless Pet Rescue is a non-profit, no-kill pet rescue operating out of multiple adoption centers known as “The

Orphanage.” All animals are rescued from surrounding high-kill, high-access shelters, owner surrenders on a case-by-case basis, and other various circumstances.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

ANTHESIS (POMONA VALLEY WORKSHOP)

1063 W. 6th, Ontario
624-3555 • anthesis.us
Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Anthesis provides services to residents of eastern LA County and western San Bernardino County. Anthesis provides traditional and innovative rehabilitation services and works cooperatively with the Department of Rehabilitation and the Regional Centers for the Developmentally Disabled, the Los Angeles and San Bernardino county schools, and private rehabilitation agencies. Volunteers needed.

ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF POMONA VALLEY

693 N. Palomares St., Pomona
(909) 629-6142 • alpv.org
The League operates a center providing services for children whose families cannot afford dental care. The league also sponsors the Operation School Bell program, providing school clothing for children in need and a Christmas program that reaches many fami-



COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo

lies each year. The Assistance League produces Assault Survivor Kits, as well as the Cubs for Kids distribution that gives teddy bears to children experiencing trauma. Volunteers and clothing needed.

CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

PO Box 1210, Claremont • (909) 426-0773
childrensfoundationofamerica.org
Claremont-based nonprofit providing an opportunity for every person to help children heal, learn and thrive. Over 400,000 children each year are unable to live with their families due to abuse,

neglect, or abandonment. These children in foster care, shelters, and underserved communities are often not afforded the same opportunities as their peers. With the support of donors and volunteers like you, the Children's Foundation of America provides children in need with new backpacks, school supplies, graduation and prom attire, holiday and birthday gifts, scholarships, handmade blankets and cards, music lessons, tutoring, new clothes and shoes, and so much more. Get involved with volunteer and fundraising activities throughout the year. Be the difference: Bring hope and joy to the

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CHILDREN'S FUND

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P.O. Box 134, Claremont
Contact: Sherry Hughes 973-6668
westendauxiliary.org

The goal of the Children's Fund is to ensure that children at risk in the community because of abuse or poverty receive adequate food, shelter, clothing and medical care, and are provided equal opportunities for social development. Children's Fund is a nonprofit public/private partnership in San Bernardino County, which pays administrative overhead, leaving 100 percent of donations to children. Children's Fund has activities throughout the year.

CEF—CLAREMONT EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

112 Harvard Ave. Ste. 191
Claremont • 399-1709 •

supportcef.com

CEF is an independent, community-based nonprofit organization, founded in 1991 as Ed Net, to benefit the Clare-

mont Unified School District. Its mission is to promote quality public education in Claremont through community involvement. CEF sponsors fundraising events, solicits corporate donations and receives donations from parents, businesses and community members. Volunteers needed.

ECONOMY SHOP

325 W. First St., Claremont
626-7334

Open Wednesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Closed mid-June until the first Wednesday after Labor Day.

This all-volunteer nonprofit thrift store raises funds through the sale of donated clothing, small household items, books and toys. Profits are granted to local charities.

INLAND VALLEY HOPE PARTNERS

660 N. Mountain Ave., Claremont
in the Joslyn Center annex
(909) 621-2400
inlandvalleyhopepartners.org

Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The mission of the Inland Valley Hope Partners, a collaboration of churches, individuals, businesses and community groups, is to ensure the empowerment of people in need by providing food, shelter and supportive services. Volunteers are needed to provide help with the emergency shelter, with food security program, in the office and as drivers/companions.

KGNH (KEEPING THE GOOD IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD)

2058 N. Mills Ave. Ste. 530,
Claremont • info@KGNH.net

facebook.com/KGNHgood/

KGNH is a neighborhood watch group founded in 2008 that is "committed to vigilant kindness." Its mission is to strengthen the community through a partnership with the Claremont Police Department, LA County Sheriff and

city leaders.

SHOES THAT FIT

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Claremont

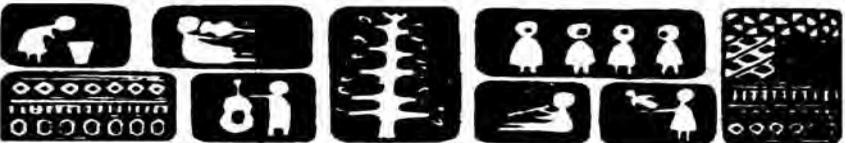
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shoesthatfit.org • info@shoesthatfit.org

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 uncommongood.org
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 Uncommon Good offers one-on-one mentoring, one-on-one tutoring, educational enrichment, social services and college planning to low-income students and their families. It also supports

doctors who serve the poor in community clinics throughout the Southland. In addition, it operates an urban farming program that exceeds organic standards, feeds the hungry, and offers its produce for sale to the public. Community may volunteer as mentors and tutors.

HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

CLAREMONT HERITAGE
 Garner House, Memorial Park
 840 N. Indian Hill Blvd., Claremont
 Mailing: PO Box 742, Claremont
 621-0848 • claremontheritage.org
 info@claremontheritage.org
 Hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Claremont Heritage, Inc. is a non-profit membership organization devoted to preserving the historic character of Claremont through research, education and advocacy. Heritage works with the city to guarantee appropriate design changes to historic structures, neighborhoods, landscapes, sites and monuments. Heritage preserves and displays memorabilia and information relating to the history of Claremont and maintains a local history library and gift shop in the Garner House. Programs include walking tours, a film series, lectures, home tours, newsletters and school presentations. Membership open to everyone. Volunteers welcomed.

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COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo

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205 Yale Ave., Claremont
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The Claremont Chamber of Commerce provides leadership in serving the interest of business, promotes the inter-relationship between business and community, and encourages business participation with civic and educational organizations and programs in Claremont. Events sponsored by the Chamber are: Village Venture, the Education Classic Golf Tournament, annual business awards banquet, monthly networking breakfast meetings, mixers and Ladies Luncheons and economic development committee meetings.

CLAREMONT FACULTY ASSOCIATION

141-B Harvard Ave., Claremont
(951) 966-4417
claremontfacultyassociation.com
The Claremont Faculty Association, a chapter of the California Teachers Association, represents over 300 teachers, counselors, school nurses, psychologists and speech and language pathologists who work in the Claremont Unified School District. CFA works to protect and promote quality public education for students in Claremont.

CLAREMONT FORUM

Bookshop and Gallery
586 W. First St., Claremont

626-3066 • claremontforum.org
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Friday and Saturday, noon to 9 p.m.
The Claremont Forum is a nonprofit organization that enriches lives by promoting social justice, health, art, and literacy. Sponsor of The Prison Library Project with the mission to provide free reading materials to prisoners nationwide based on letters received by the inmates themselves. Also the sponsors of The Claremont Forum Farmer's and Artisan's Market which takes place every Sunday from 8 am to 1 pm on Harvard Avenue rain or shine. The Claremont Forum Bookshop & Gallery is well-stocked with eclectic and lovingly maintained used books. Book donations are always welcome and all proceeds help to sustain our various projects. Call for more information or volunteer opportunities.

CLAREMONT GARDEN CLUB

621-6381 • claremontgardenclub.org
info@claremontgardenclub.org
The Garden Club is free and open to all. It was established to bring together people interested in all types of gardening from edible to ornamental. Talks have included landscape design, composting, native plants for wildlife, plumeria and orchids, drip irrigation, tomatoes and more. Occasional field trips, a monthly newsletter and socializing. We'd love to have you join us.

INTERNATIONAL PLACE OF THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

390 E. Ninth St., Claremont
607-4571 • iplace@cmc.edu
Instagram: @internationalplace
To increase international and multicultural understanding and friendship by bringing together the Claremont community and students from more than 80 countries who are attending the Claremont Colleges. Members host and assist international graduate and undergraduate students; coordinate a variety of social and educational programs; co-sponsor the Spring International Festival and the International Banquet in November; and help fund the programs and services of International Place.

CURTAIN RAISERS OF THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

300 E. Bonita Ave, Claremont
Pomona College Theatre Dept.:
621-8186 • facebook.com/curtain-raisersclaremont/
The Curtain Raisers of The Claremont Colleges was organized in 1963 to support the theatre and dance department of the Colleges, to present entertaining and informative programs for its membership, to award scholarships for theater/dance students at the Claremont Colleges who wish to participate in summer internships and to encourage community participation and support of theater/dance-oriented endeavors at The Claremont Colleges and in the greater community.

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621-6381 • fbbfs.org
email: friends@fbbfs.org
The FBBFS is a nonprofit dedicated to helping preserve the 85-acre Robert J. Bernard Biological Field Station, the college-owned natural area north of Foothill between College and Mills Avenues. FBBFS works to educate the Claremont community about the great value of the Field Station to education and research, as well as to the character and heritage of the city. Newsletters are sent out two or three times a year.

KIWANIS CLUB OF CLAREMONT

P.O. Box 1774, Claremont
621-2996 • claremontkiwanis.org
Meetings Thursday at noon.
Kiwanis Club of Claremont is a philanthropic organization of volunteers. The club hosts several annual events, including its Fourth of July and Easter pancake breakfasts, Monday night concert series at Memorial Park, holiday season See's Candy store and September Route 66 Party. Kiwanis Club of Claremont also sponsors CHS and SAHS Key Clubs, a preschool reading program and activities for seniors. Kiwanis annually makes grants to community nonprofits such as CLASP, Best BET, Meals on Wheels, Sustainable Claremont, the Girl Scouts, Project Sister and Shoes that Fit.

ROTARY CLUB OF CLAREMONT

PO Box 357, Claremont, CA 91711

624-3377 • claremontrotary.org

Meetings: Fridays at noon.

The Rotary Club of Claremont sponsors the annual Taste of Claremont fundraising event, among other activities. Rotary club membership represents a cross-section of the community's business and professional men and women. The world's Rotary clubs meet weekly and are nonpolitical, nonreligious, and open to all cultures, races, and creeds. Rotary membership provides the opportunity to become connected to your community; work with others in addressing community needs; interact with other professionals in your community; assist with Rotary's international humanitarian service efforts; establish contacts with an international network of professionals; develop leadership skills; involve family in promoting service efforts. The Rotary motto is Service Above Self.

CLAREMONT SUNRISE ROTARY CLUB

830 W. Bonita Ave., Claremont
 PO Box 373, Claremont, CA 91711
 claremontsunriserotary.org
 info@csmail.org

Meetings: Wednesdays at 7:15 a.m.

Organizes the annual Turkey Trot, which benefits CSR sports scholarships and other charities. The main objective of Rotary is service—in the community, in the workplace, and throughout the world. Rotarians develop community service projects that address many of today's most critical issues, such as children at risk, poverty and hunger, the environment, illiteracy, and violence. They also support programs for youth, educational opportunities and international exchanges for students, teachers and other professionals, and vocational and career development. The Rotary motto is Service Above Self.

SUSTAINABLE CLAREMONT

PO Box 1502, Claremont
 625-8767 Ext. 238
 sustainableclaremont.org
 info@sustainableclaremont.org

Sustainable Claremont is a nonprofit organization that engages people in education and action to create a more environmentally, economically and socially sustainable community. Members work closely with each other and the city on projects such as energy and water conservation, school programs, drought-tolerant landscaping, a garden club and habitat protection. New members are welcome. Follow them on Facebook at facebook.com/sustainableclaremont and Twitter @GreenClaremont.

UNIVERSITY CLUB OF CLAREMONT

PO Box 700, Claremont
 universityclubofclaremont.org
 Meetings: Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m.

To educate, maintain fellowship, give financial assistance and hold open discussions. Serving the community through educational and cultural grants to schools and community organizations, and provides volunteers and community programs.

VILLAGE MARKETING GROUP (VMG)

112 Harvard Ave. #92, Claremont
 claremontvillage.org

The VMG is a group of merchants whose purpose is to market and promote the Village. VMG sponsors events such as Welcome to College for parents and students, First Saturday Art Walk, concerts at the Holiday Promenade, the annual Village Wine Walk and Claremont Blues & Brews. The group also participates in Shop and Dine events.

PARTISAN & NON-PARTISAN POLITICS

ACTIVE CLAREMONT

PO Box 841, Claremont
 activeclaremont.org
 activeclaremont@gmail.com

continued on next page



Ursula Gallegos looks for the perfect holiday gift this year at Happy Moments Gift Boutique. COURIER photo/Andrew Alonzo



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Community connections

Advocates communication and understanding between Claremont citizens and local government, promotes public awareness of and interest in local issues and encourages volunteerism. Active Claremont does not endorse candidates or ballot measures. Participation with Crossroads/Salvation Army, Adopt-a-Roadway and Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta Center.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP 305
644 Rockford Dr., Claremont
aiusa.org
Andy Zanella, 624-0592
Meetings: Second Thursday of each month (third Thursday in November) at 7:30 p.m. in the Brunger Room, Napier Center, Pilgrim Place. Founded in 1961, AI works impartially for the release of all prisoners of conscience, fair and prompt trials for political prisoners and an end to torture and executions. Group 305 is one of many local affiliates of Amnesty International USA, which is the US national section of the worldwide Amnesty International.

DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT
P.O. Box 1201, Claremont
632-1516 • claremontdems.org
claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com
Meetings: Last Monday of the month at 7 p.m. The club's aim is to elect Democrats, to influence their policies, to educate members and the public on policy issues and to provide a satisfying social experience for participants. Monthly: newsletter, luncheon with speaker second Friday, meeting with speaker and club business. Annual holiday party.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
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PO Box 1532, Claremont • 624-9457
lwvmtbaldyarea.org
info@lwvmtbaldyarea.org
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encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

MOUNTAIN VIEW REPUBLICAN CLUB
(909) 305-3717 • mvrcgop@gmail.com
mountainviewrepublicans.com
FB: @mountainviewrepublicanclub
The mission and purpose of the Mountain View Republican Club is to promote and support the Republican Party and its ideals and principles as well as Republican candidates in the San Gabriel Valley. Activities include registering Republican voters, providing assistance, education and information to Republican voters and coordinating and executing local Republican campaigns and fundraising.

**UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION
OF POMONA VALLEY**
una-socal.org/pomona-valley/
Contact: cmartin335@gmail.com
Co-Presidents: Charlene Martin
& Sylvia Whitlock
Advocacy: Mel Boynton
Meetings: Check website for time/place
UNA-PV is a chapter of UNA-USA, a program of the United Nations Foundation. Its purpose is to inform, inspire and mobilize Americans to support the principles and work of the UN.

END

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The Claremont COURIER has been a staple of this community since 1908, a 113-year legacy. The COURIER is and remains a critical asset to the City of Claremont, playing a significant role in contributing to the greater good. We expect this change to a nonprofit ensures a bright future for our community journalism, both online and in print.



“The COURIER does an invaluable service to our community, and as someone who works and volunteers in the city, I can't imagine not having our reliable newspaper to depend on. I am pleased to donate to the "new" nonprofit COURIER and I hope you will consider contributing as well.”
Nona Tirre
State Farm Insurance



“As longtime Claremont residents and COURIER subscribers, we know the COURIER has been a vital piece in the fabric of Claremont for 113 years. We can't imagine our community without the COURIER (the longest running business in town)! As a new nonprofit, we all need to sustain its existence by making a supporting donation to the COURIER.”
Sonja Stump and Bob Fagg
Community and Business advocates



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