

# AROUND ALHAMBRA



FEBRUARY 2024 | GATEWAY TO THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

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## Celebrate New Additions at the 2024 Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival

With 2024 marking the Year of the Dragon on the zodiac calendar, Alhambra is set to host one of the most engaging Lunar New Year Festivals in Southern California. Featuring everything from digital projection experiences to culinary demonstrations to giveaways, there is something for everyone.

The Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival, presented by New Century Autos, is in its fourth decade. Having started in 1991 as a local parade and festival, it has grown into a destination for attendees from around Southern California.

"We're sponsoring the Fest because we're grateful for the support of the community and the city. We grew and continue to expand because of it," said Daniel Lin of New Century Autos.

"LNY was always a big deal when I was a child," he remembers. "We would often have family visit from Asia, or my whole family would go to Asia to visit relatives. All of us would line up and recite proverbs and get red envelopes. There was always a ton of food."

Those who have celebrated before should find plenty of nostalgia at this month's festival — however, this year also brings a host of new additions to the popular festival, including Artisan Alley, a Cultural Passport experience, Augmented Reality (AR), a fun Kid's Zone, a partnership with LAist for live radio broadcasts, and an expanded culinary stage. 2024 is also the festival's second year in its expanded Main St location! >> **See New Additions to the 2024 Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival, p 9.**



Brightwood eighth graders Drexel Ngo and Alina Ramos were looking for a way to heal and regain a sense of safety for themselves and others after the January 21, 2023 mass shooting. Over the course of several months, the young coders built an app they hope will save lives.

## Two AUSD 8th Grade Coders Recognized for App that Heals and Honors Lives Lost

Drexel Ngo and Alina Ramos live and go to school in Monterey Park. After the January 21 mass shooting last year on the eve of Lunar New Year, the eighth grade Brightwood students felt anxious, scared, and were looking for a way to heal and regain a sense of safety for themselves and others. The tragedy hit close to home. Drexel's maternal grandparents had always loved to dance at the Star Ballroom Dance Studio where 11 people were killed.

The young coders decided they would create an app to save lives and began to work together several times every week starting

in early June 2023, and then after school, to tackle the daunting task. "We gave up our summer to do this," Drexel said. "It was not easy but it was definitely worth it." The hurdles were huge. They had to figure out how to build an app without the prohibitively expensive software that would allow them to collaborate digitally. At one point, they lost all their data. In between breakthroughs, the months of coding were often exhausting and discouraging. They would not allow themselves to give up.

>> **See Two AUSD 8th Grade Coders Built an App, p 14.**

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# AROUND ALHAMBRA

Published by the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce, *Around Alhambra* is a monthly publication with a circulation of 34,000. *Around Alhambra* is mailed to every business and residence in the City of Alhambra and to all interested local, state, and county officials.

We welcome comments, press releases, and community interest stories and will make every effort to include all appropriate information.

**Articles submitted to and printed in *Around Alhambra* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce or its Board of Directors.**

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## Mayor's Corner

By Mayor Ross J. Maza

Happy Lunar New Year, Alhambra! May your year be filled with abundance, health, and happiness. Are we really in February already?!

As 2024 is now in full swing, work at Alhambra City Hall has not slowed down. There is the typical everyday work happening, which keeps the city running smoothly day in and day out, but there is also a lot of long-term planning and projects taking place simultaneously. The city council will be conducting the annual "Strategic Planning" meeting on March 13, 2024, and I encourage you to attend. During this meeting, the City Council meets to organize and prioritize longer-term activities and projects. The meeting is open to the public, and I encourage you to share your thoughts and opinions about any issue that will enhance our beautiful city.

As Mayor, I had the tremendous privilege of attending the annual US Conference of Mayors. I am proud to say that the **City of Alhambra, in conjunction with the San Gabriel Valley**

**Council of Governments (SGVCOG), was recognized for its recycling efforts by The US Conference of Mayors and the American Beverage Association, and awarded First Place nationally for a medium size city.** The prize for this recognition was a very welcome \$175,000! These funds will be used to enhance our recycling efforts related to Senate Bill 1383. Many of the local cities have pooled resources to maximize and expand recycling operations. Alhambra's/SGVCOG's focus, which led to this recognition, was based primarily on the Regional Food Recovery Program (FRESH SGV), which aims to keep edible food out of landfills. This effort has a number of tremendous benefits. Two of the bigger benefits are the redirection of fresh edible food from landfills to food pantries, which can put it in the hands of those facing food insecurity, and the reduction of methane gases being emitted from our landfills. I was very proud to represent Alhambra as it received this award. A big thanks to the hardworking staff at Alhambra City Hall



Mayor Ross J. Maza

and at SGVCOG. A video highlighting this recycling program is available on the city website, [cityofalhambra.org](http://cityofalhambra.org).

Please know that I am always available to all of our residents to discuss your thoughts and concerns about our beautiful city. I look forward to continuing to connect with many more of you in the upcoming months. Best wishes always.

## Alhambra Events Calendar

February 2024

- FEB 3** **Sustainable Alhambra Granada Park Pop-Up**  
Saturday, February 3, 2024  
9 AM - 12 PM | 2000 W Hellman Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803 (Near the Playground)
- FEB 7** **Organics Recycling Webinar for Alhambra Residents**  
Wednesday, February 7, 2024  
6 PM - 7 PM | Register via Zoom: [cityofalhambra.org/organics](http://cityofalhambra.org/organics)
- FEB 7** **Savant of Alhambra Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Event**  
Wednesday, February 7, 2024  
3PM - 5 PM | 1E Commonwealth Ave, Alhambra
- FEB 4, 11, 18, 25** **Alhambra Farmers Market**  
Sunday, February 4, 11, 18, & 25 2024  
9 AM - 12 PM | 100 South Second Street, Alhambra, CA 91801
- FEB 15** **Sustainable Alhambra Downtown Pop-Up**  
Thursday, February 15, 2024  
3 - 6 PM | The Renaissance Plaza
- FEB 16** **Soroptimist International's 90th Anniversary Luncheon**  
Friday, February 16, 2024  
11:30 AM - Onwards | Almansor Court, Almansor Street, Alhambra
- FEB 18** **Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival**  
Sunday, February 18, 2024  
9 AM - 5 PM | Main Street, Alhambra
- FEB 22** **From Dragons to Dimsum: Exploring Alhambra's Asian History**  
Thursday, February 22, 2024  
7 PM - 8:30 PM | Alhambra Masonic Lodge, 9 West Woodward Ave, Alhambra
- FEB 23** **American Asian Association Lunar New Year Banquet**  
Friday, February 23, 2024  
6 PM - 9:30 PM | NBC Seafood Restaurant, 404 S Atlantic Blvd, Monterey Park
- FEB 25** **Hypnotic Healing Journeys: Releasing the Past**  
Sunday, February 25, 2024  
11 AM - 12 PM | Freedom Martial Arts & Fitness 5607 Huntington Dr. N., Los Angeles





# FAMILY FITNESS

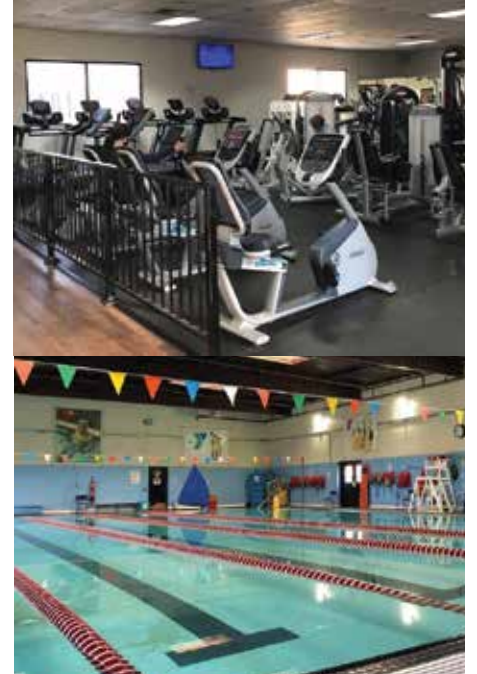
**Extended Hours**  
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**Saturday 7 am to 1 pm**

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  - Watercise
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# NEWS & NOTES



**> Share Your Thoughts on Walk, Bike, Move Alhambra!**

The City of Alhambra has developed Walk, Bike, Move Alhambra!, an active transportation plan that will act as a roadmap to implement active transportation and connectivity. **Provide your input on the plan by Monday, February 5** at this link: [cityofalhambra.org/DocumentCenter/View/5010/Alhambra-Bike-Ped-Plan](http://cityofalhambra.org/DocumentCenter/View/5010/Alhambra-Bike-Ped-Plan).



**> Alhambra Day Nursery Foundation Financial Grants & Scholarships**

The Alhambra Day Nursery Foundation (ADN) will continue its financial grants and scholarship programs after a hiatus due to the COVID-19 epidemic. The two programs were started in 2009, and the Foundation has given over one million dollars since. Approximately \$40,000 in grants and \$15,000 in scholarships will be given this year. Grant and scholarship applications will be due on **March 8, 2024**.

**> Artist Isabel Piczek Honored at Author's Luncheon**

The lifetime achievements of Isabel Piczek, famed artist and physicist, were celebrated during AAUW Alhambra-San Gabriel's annual Author's Luncheon at the First United Methodist Church of San Gabriel on Saturday, January 27. Dr. Gary Scott, editor of the artist's book *The Universe Speaks: The Monumental Sacred Arts of Isabel and Edith Piczek*, presented the life and many artistic achievements of Ms. Piczek and her sister Edith Piczek.



**> Emmaus Lutheran Basketball Teams Play at SoFi Stadium**

On Saturday, January 20, the JV and Varsity Boys & Girls Basketball players from Emmaus Lutheran School had the opportunity to showcase their basketball skills at the iconic SoFi Stadium. The event was a momentous occasion for the students in grades 5-8, offering them the unique experience of playing on the same field where renowned professional athletes compete each week. The boys and girls Varsity and Junior Varsity basketball teams comprising students in grades 5-8 are set to continue their journey, competing against other Lutheran schools throughout the region in February, hoping to secure more victories.



## After Three Decades, Alhambra City Council Adopts New Zoning Code

### *What Does Alhambra's New Zoning Code Mean for the City?*

After more than a year of public hearings, deliberation, revisions, and updates, the Alhambra City Council has finally adopted a new Zoning Code thanks to the hard work of residents, city planners, council members, and the many others who dedicated their time and effort to this massive undertaking.

The new Zoning Code was officially adopted on January 22, when the Alhambra City Council held a second reading, and all voted in favor, ushering in the first comprehensive Zoning Code update in 34 years.

"We ended up with a great version of the Zoning Code," said Mayor Ross Maza. "And we'll be looking at this on a yearly basis and can tweak it as needed."

"We're finally getting to the end of a very long, exhausting process. It's just been a massive amount of work," said Lewis McCammon, a resident who contributed to the updated plan, at the January 22 meeting. "It's amazing it has been done with such amazing accuracy," he added.

While most of the single-family home zoning remains as it has been, the new code focuses on introducing flexibility to encourage creative and adaptable development that can respond effectively to changing needs and trends, including the construction of state-mandated housing units. Simultaneously, a focus on user-friendliness aims to make the Zoning Code accessible to all stakeholders, from seasoned developers to residents.

The new plan encompasses several significant initiatives aimed at shaping the urban landscape of Alhambra, including the augmentation of building heights and the promotion of new construction projects. One key aspect of the plan is to increase height restrictions to 75 feet, allowing for the construction of buildings up to 10 stories tall. Additionally, the plan calls for expanding the Downtown Central Business District, stretching its boundaries eastward to include Granada Avenue. This expansion aims to enhance the city's economic and commercial hub.

Additionally, the plan suggests a notable shift in the land-use policy by advocating for residential development on major commercial thoroughfares through-

out Alhambra. This strategic move seeks to create a more dynamic and integrated urban environment, fostering a mix of residential and commercial spaces. The plan aims to promote a diverse and vibrant cityscape by allowing residential development in traditionally commercial areas.

The new Zoning Code will guide Alhambra's growth for the next few decades. Visit [alhambrcodeupdate.com](http://alhambrcodeupdate.com) to see the latest updates.

#### **What is a Zoning Code?**

Zoning codes are legal documents that cities use to determine what type of structures can be constructed and where. A city divides land into "zones," which each have its own set of regulations for new development.

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# Let's Be Patient with Mother Nature

By Mark Paulson, Board of Directors,  
Division I – Alhambra  
San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District

2024 is moving quickly. Apparently, Mother Nature is busy also, as she has not turned all her attention to California and the San Gabriel Valley. At this time last year, Mother Nature was firing on all cylinders as we were receiving deluges of both snow and rain, and our water supplies benefited greatly.

This year is a different story. While we have had some precipitation and our water supplies remain in good shape, we are experiencing lower-than-average precipitation year-to-date. The hoped-for El Niño weather condition has yet to materialize, and both rainfall and the snowpack are less than 15% of average as of mid-January. As a result, the State has only promised our District and other state water contractors 10% of their planned imported water allocation, which is used to replenish local groundwater supplies (which are 80% of the water we use locally). By the time last year's storms were finished, the State increased planned imported water allocations from 0-100%.

Things can change quickly like they did last year, but until they do — and if they don't — we have to use water wisely. Further, it's almost a certainty that drought conditions will return because, in the long term, we use more water than Mother Nature provides. So, if we all increase our conservation "ethic" and make water-saving as natural as wearing a seat belt and other good habits, we can help sustain our improved water conditions.

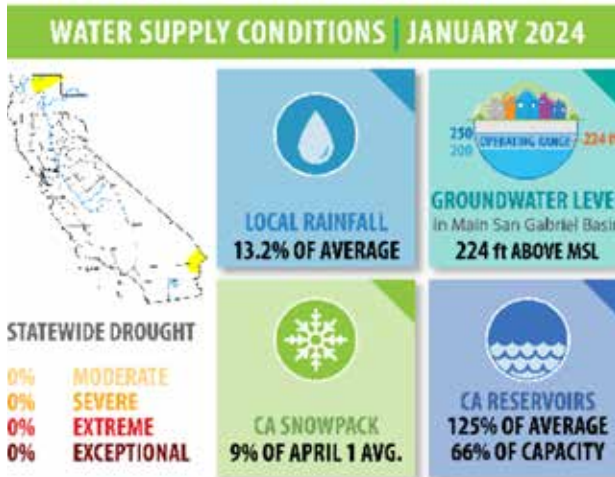
It's proven that we use much more water in the hot and dry months of the year, so you may ask, "What can I do in the winter to save water?"

First, reset your irrigation controllers and systems to water less frequently and in smaller amounts. When it rains, turn off your watering system for a few days.

Second, purchase a rain barrel that



**Mark Paulson**  
San Gabriel Valley  
Municipal Water District  
info@sgvmwd.com



can capture stormwater for reuse around your home. If you purchase a rain barrel, the District will provide you a rebate of up to \$35 (check [sgvmwd.com/water-conservation/#rebates](http://sgvmwd.com/water-conservation/#rebates)).

Third, plant California Native Plants and other drought-resistant vegetation to give your plants and their roots a head start before warmer spring and summer months arrive (check here for plant recommendations customized for Alhambra: [sgvmwd.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/CalScape\\_Alhambra\\_web.pdf](http://sgvmwd.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/CalScape_Alhambra_web.pdf)).

Let's be patient and hopeful that weather conditions improve! Please visit the District's website for more information at [sgvmwd.com](http://sgvmwd.com).

## All Around the Town

# Alhambra's Celebrity Chef Bill Yee

By Glenn Barnett



**Glenn Barnett**

The dictionary defines a Renaissance man as "a person with many talents or areas of knowledge." That definition applies to Alhambra resident and Cordon Bleu-trained chef William "Bill" Yee. He has worked in several high-end venues, including 5-star hotels, private clubs, the Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta, Georgia, and after parties at the Emmys and Academy Awards.

His specialty is the preparation of omelets, a skill he perfected while a chef at the Langham Hotel in Pasadena and as an omelet chef for Wolfgang Puck. He estimates that he has prepared over 70,000 omelets.

Lake Avenue Community Church Sanctuary Choir. He founded the Alhambra Performing Arts Center (APAC) in 2006 as an outreach of Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church on Hellman Ave. Musicians of all genres and styles are invited to perform in his monthly presentation of "A Taste of Music."

Bill's friend Aaron Leung says of

him, "Music is the language of the heart, and Chef Yee is committed to promoting music appreciation that strengthens our local communities with events that connect food with music."

This year, Mr. Yee began a new avenue of community service. With little more than a week's notice, he teamed up with the Methodist Church and a team of cooks and volunteers to prepare Thanksgiving meals for 300 people who needed a hot meal and a place to be with others at that time of year.



*Chef Yee preparing Thanksgiving Dinner for 300 people.*

He also makes use of his kitchen skills to help others. He established the Alhambra Professional Culinary Academy to help beginner cooks hone their cooking techniques and promote their talents. He has taught kitchen skills to homeless veterans and children.

But there is more to Bill Yee than cooking. He will tell you, "Cooking is my profession, but music is my passion." He sings in local choirs, including the

In December, at Alhambra Fire Station #71, he and his volunteer team fed over 300 adults and children at the Spark of Love Toy Drive and pancake breakfast.

He was recently honored by the American Culinary Foundation. His new book, *The International Omelet and Egg Dishes Cookbook*, will be out soon. Through food and music, Bill Yee improves the quality of life in Alhambra and everywhere he goes.

**WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK**

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# Make Your Resolutions More Sustainable

It's the time of year when many of us are making plans and resolving to be better and do better in a variety of ways in the coming months. As you think about your resolutions, consider sustainable changes that reduce waste, save money, build family and community relationships, and have a positive impact on the planet.

**Focus on family fun:** Plan ahead for family time by swapping board games, jigsaw puzzles, magazines, movies, and books with friends and neighbors. That way, everyone has some fresh fun. You might also look for items to borrow from the local library or purchase used items at a secondhand store.

**Invest in rechargeables:** Invest in rechargeable batteries and a charging unit to replace single-use alkaline batteries. You'll spend a little more upfront but have less waste and make fewer trips to the store or online shop for replacements. Remember that spent rechargeable batteries (those that can't be recharged) should never go into curbside carts. Instead, drop them off for recycling at participating retail locations or through the Los Angeles County household hazardous waste program.

**Support local merchants:** Local merchants offer products that you need and want, provide jobs in our community, and support many local events and activities. Plus, when you shop in our community, you don't carry home a lot of boxes and packaging waste that you need to recycle

or dispose of. When it's time to shop, visit local merchants first — whether in their stores or on their websites for curbside pickup.

**Shop smartly online:** It's very easy to make impulse purchases with just a couple of clicks. Instead, shop online as you would at a physical store by setting a shopping time and using a list. Whenever possible, choose the option to “ship items together” to reduce traffic, packaging waste, and vehicle emissions.

**Remember to recycle:** Your empty cardboard shipping and cereal boxes need to be broken down, flattened, and recycled. Manufacturers need more of this material to make new boxes, as well as tissue products like toilet paper. Don't forget to recycle your plastic bottles and jugs, glass bottles and jars, and metal cans, too.

**Donate with care:** As you prepare to get rid of old items, be sure to ask yourself whether anyone else might truly want and use them. Donate the good stuff — items that are working and aren't broken, damaged, or torn. Give away “treasures” and put the “trash” into the garbage cart.

**Shop secondhand:** Don't stop at donating! Shop local secondhand stores for items that you need. This supports the work of local charitable organizations and keeps items in use for as long as possible.

To learn more about local recycling, organics, and waste programs, visit [publicservices.com/municipality/alhambra-ca](https://publicservices.com/municipality/alhambra-ca).

## SIGN UP FOR MEDICARE COVERAGE!



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Medicare Insurance Agent  
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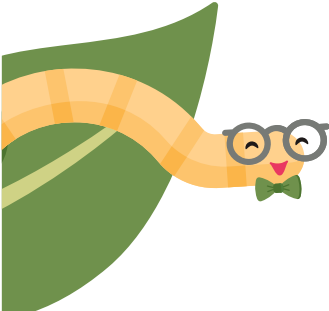
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## ORGANICS RECYCLING WEBINAR FOR ALHAMBRA RESIDENTS



Learn best practices for curbside recycling and get your questions answered!

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH  
6:00-7:00 PM

Register for free via Zoom:




For more information, visit [www.cityofalhambra.org/organics](https://www.cityofalhambra.org/organics)

# AROUND ALHAMBRA

## ACCEPTS SUBMISSIONS!

To submit an article, press release, or tip for consideration, email [AA@alhambrachamber.org](mailto:AA@alhambrachamber.org).







## Alhambra Historical Society Presents "From Dragons to Dim Sum: Exploring Alhambra's Asian History"

Join the Alhambra Historical Society on **Thursday, February 22**, at the Alhambra Masonic Center for a presentation entitled "From Dragons to Dim Sum: Exploring Alhambra's Asian History."

As many in the San Gabriel Valley celebrate the Lunar New Year, the Alhambra Historical Society will present and discuss the influence Asian culture has had in Alhambra over the last 150 years. The presentation will feature Alhambra's current Asian demographics and reveal insights into the amazing panorama of culinary offerings in the San Gabriel Valley today, including the many different Asian dining experiences that can be savored in restaurants throughout Alhambra.

The evening's presenter will be Eugene Moy, Alhambra Historical Society member and past president of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. Mr. Moy was a member of the team that developed historical walking tours of LA's Chinatown. He currently serves as a director of the Chinese American Museum at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument.

Light refreshments will be served, and parking will be available at the Alhambra Masonic Center and on surrounding city streets. The event is free, and all are welcome.

To reserve your spot for this insightful, locally focused presentation, visit [dragonstodimsum.eventbrite.com](http://dragonstodimsum.eventbrite.com).



## Payke Gymnastics Academy Champions Children's Health & Fitness Education

Payke Gymnastics Academy in Alhambra excels in gymnastics education because its instructors see the potential within every child to become a champion.

"Every day, we are impressed by the dedicated athletes who put in relentless effort," said Coach PJ Payke, who oversees the Alhambra location of Payke Gymnastics Academy. "We also have a deep appreciation for their parents, who make significant sacrifices to afford their children the invaluable opportunity to train and compete seriously."

Offering a comprehensive range of classes in all Olympic gymnastics events, Payke Gymnastics Academy is dedicated to building strength and agility and instilling a sense of self-esteem in boys and girls aged two and older.

Founded by Parvin Peik in March 1994 in South Pasadena, Payke Gymnastics Academy has flourished over the years, expanding to multiple locations and becoming a cornerstone of gymnastics education in the SGV. With a rich history and a commitment to providing top-notch instruction, the Academy has grown to


include another facility in Alhambra with thriving recreational programs.

Parvin Peik, the driving force behind Payke Gymnastics Academy, was an Olympic champion in Iran in 1964 who has dedicated the last two decades to teaching gymnastics in the United States. Her passion for child development led her to graduate with a major in child development from Pacific Oaks University in Pasadena.


Payke Gymnastics Academy offers diverse programs for all skill levels, from beginners to competitive gymnasts. With a focus on developing well-rounded athletes, the Academy's classes cover all Olympic gymnastics events.

Despite its Olympic claim to fame, what sets Payke Gymnastics Academy apart is its strong sense of community and family atmosphere. Over the last two decades, the Academy has cultivated a unique style encouraging young gymnasts to flourish into successful, happy individuals. Payke Gymnastics Academy offers a community where children thrive, families connect, and champions are nurtured.

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Tax Tips



# Tax Tips: Choosing a Reputable Tax Preparer

By Michael Aston EA

Choosing a reputable tax preparer is vital to tax security. As people prepare for tax filing season, they must select tax return preparers with the skills, education, and expertise to prepare tax forms correctly. Taxpayers are ultimately responsible for all the information on their tax return, regardless of who prepares it.

There are many types of tax preparers, including certified public accountants (CPAs), enrolled agents, attorneys, and others. Taxpayers should choose a tax preparer that works best for their needs.

Here are some tips to help people choose a preparer.

**Check the IRS Directory of Preparers**

Taxpayers can find an enrolled agent, CPA, attorney, or Annual Filing Season Program participant with the IRS Directory of Preparers.

**Make a Checklist for Choosing a Tax Pro.** Before hiring a tax preparer, consider the following:

**Check the preparer's history with the Better Business Bureau.** Taxpayers can also verify an enrolled agent's status on IRS.gov.

**Ask about fees.** Taxpayers should avoid tax return preparers who base their fees on a percentage of the refund or offer to deposit all or part of their refund into their financial accounts. Taxpayers should be suspicious of preparers claiming they can get larger refunds than other tax preparers.

**Ask if the preparer plans to use e-file.** The fastest way to get a tax refund is by e-filing and choosing direct deposit.



**Michael Aston, E.A.**  
Alhambra Tax Center  
michael@alhambrataxcenter.com

**Choose a firm or individual with a track record.** Preparers may need to answer questions about the tax return months or even years later.

**Ensure the preparer signs the tax return and includes their Preparer Tax Identification Number.** Paid tax return preparers must have a PTIN and include it on any tax return they prepare.

**Consider the person's credentials.** Only attorneys, CPAs, and enrolled agents can represent taxpayers before the IRS in tax matters. Other tax return preparers who participate in the IRS Annual Filing Season Program have limited practice rights to represent taxpayers during audits of returns they prepared.

**Watch Out for Tax Preparer Scams**

Tax return preparer fraud is a common tax scam. The IRS is committed to investigating paid tax return preparers who act improperly. Taxpayers can file a complaint if they have been financially impacted by a tax return preparer's misconduct or improper tax preparation practices.

*This column is provided to Around Alhambra by Michael Aston, E.A., who is solely responsible for the content. Around Alhambra does not endorse the advice from this author or any other provider.*

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## Your Insurance



# Ways to Help With Teen Driving Safety

By Regina Talbot  
State Farm Insurance Agent,  
Insurance License # 0G05807

Here are some important safe driving tips for teens and their loved ones.

**Ensure compliance with graduated driver licensing (GDL) laws.** Many states have rules that prevent teens from driving at night or with other teens. Know the laws in your state and possibly set stricter standards.

**Restrict night driving.** Close to two-thirds of fatal crashes that happen at night are speed-related and involve 16-year-old drivers.

**Keep a safe following distance.** In normal driving conditions, the general rule is "three seconds plus." When the vehicle in front of you passes a stationary object, begin counting. You should reach that same object no sooner than three seconds after — four seconds, ideally. Increase following distance when visibility is poor or you're in traffic.

**Limit teen passengers.** Research has shown significant reductions in deaths were associated with graduated driving laws, including a restriction on carrying passengers or the number and age of passengers carried. Make sure your teen



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knows how to keep passengers safe.

**Share the car to prevent speeding.** Parents can also set a good example by practicing safe driving themselves.

**Discuss consequences.** Teenage speeding puts lives and licenses on the line. It can also be expensive, and pricey tickets can increase insurance premiums.

**Be involved.** Frequently ride with your teens to be sure they're being safe. And when you're driving, be a good role model. Always travel at a speed appropriate for the road conditions and brush up on what may have changed since you started driving.

For more information, contact Regina Talbot at (626) 357-3401.

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**It is that time of the year again!**

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## Celebrate New Additions at the 2024 Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival

from page 1

Engage in interactive displays and AR-enhanced storytelling that bring the richness of Lunar New Year traditions to life. This fusion of technology and tradition adds a layer of excitement to the festivities. AR will be used for several experiences, such as wayfinding, a virtual scavenger hunt (where participants receive a prize if they find all the zodiac animals), and even to simulate fireworks!



For those new to celebrating the Lunar New Year — as well as those who have deep family LNY traditions — a free cultural passport will be offered to learn about and experience the various aspects of the Lunar New Year as celebrated around the globe. Sponsored by Wells Fargo with support from Starbucks, completed passports can be redeemed for prizes.

Attendees can stroll through Artisan Alley, where local artists will display their creations. In the Kid's Zone, sponsored by the new SkyZone Alhambra, families can play games, make crafts, and participate in other activities.

Food vendors, as well as the restaurants along the street, will provide food throughout the day, and the culinary stage will offer a series of cooking demonstrations and samples. Live cooking demonstrations feature local chefs showcasing



the artistry of their cuisine. From traditional dumplings to modern twists on classic dishes, these demos offer a sensory exploration of flavors and

techniques, inspiring cooks and food enthusiasts alike.

The cultural performances, which range from traditional dances and music to contemporary interpretations of Asian art forms, will resume as usual this year, with guests that include Vez Guitar Academy and AUSD. There will also be a special dragon dance to commemorate the Year of the Dragon.

Whether you come for the dragon dance, the technological marvels of AR, or the culinary delights, the festival promises an unforgettable experience for all!



## 5 Tips For Attending the Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival

- Driving:** Main St. will be blocked off between First and Third Streets to traffic, so please plan your route to avoid this area.
- Parking:** All 3 of Alhambra's downtown parking structures will be open and accessible, but expect them to fill up early. You may have to park a block or two away and walk over.
- Timing:** The festival will take place from 9 am to 5 pm on Sunday, February 18.
- Experiences:** Cooking demos, photo ops, shopping, eating, performances, games, activities for children and adults, AR, and more. There will be *a lot* to see and do.
- What to Bring:** There will be food and drink for sale on site, so just bring yourself, your loved ones, and some comfy footwear.

Visit [alhambralunarnewyear.com](http://alhambralunarnewyear.com) for more information.

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## Johnny Rockets and Hurricane Wings Unveil New Alhambra Location

Johnny Rockets and Hurricane Wings is back in Alhambra!

On January 12, Johnny Rockets and Hurricane Wings celebrated the grand opening of their newest location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The lively event showcased the fusion of iconic flavors as the two brands joined forces at The Shops at The Alhambra.

Operating from 10 am to 11 pm daily, Alhambra's new eatery brings together the best of both worlds — Johnny Rockets' timeless burgers and Hurricane Grill & Wings' extensive selection of flavors. Indulge in a classic Johnny Rockets meal featuring a succulent burger paired

with crispy fries and a decadent shake — vegan versions are also available! For those craving chicken over beef, Hurricane Wings delivers classic bone-in and boneless wings in a spectrum of flavors. From the fiery Firecracker and Mango Habanero to the savory Garlic Parm and Teriyaki, there's a choice sure to satisfy every palate.

The location at The Shops at The Alhambra means Johnny Rockets and Hurricane Wings could be the next culinary go-to for folks looking for a fast, delicious, and affordable meal in the heart of the city. Introduce your taste buds to new possibilities this year!

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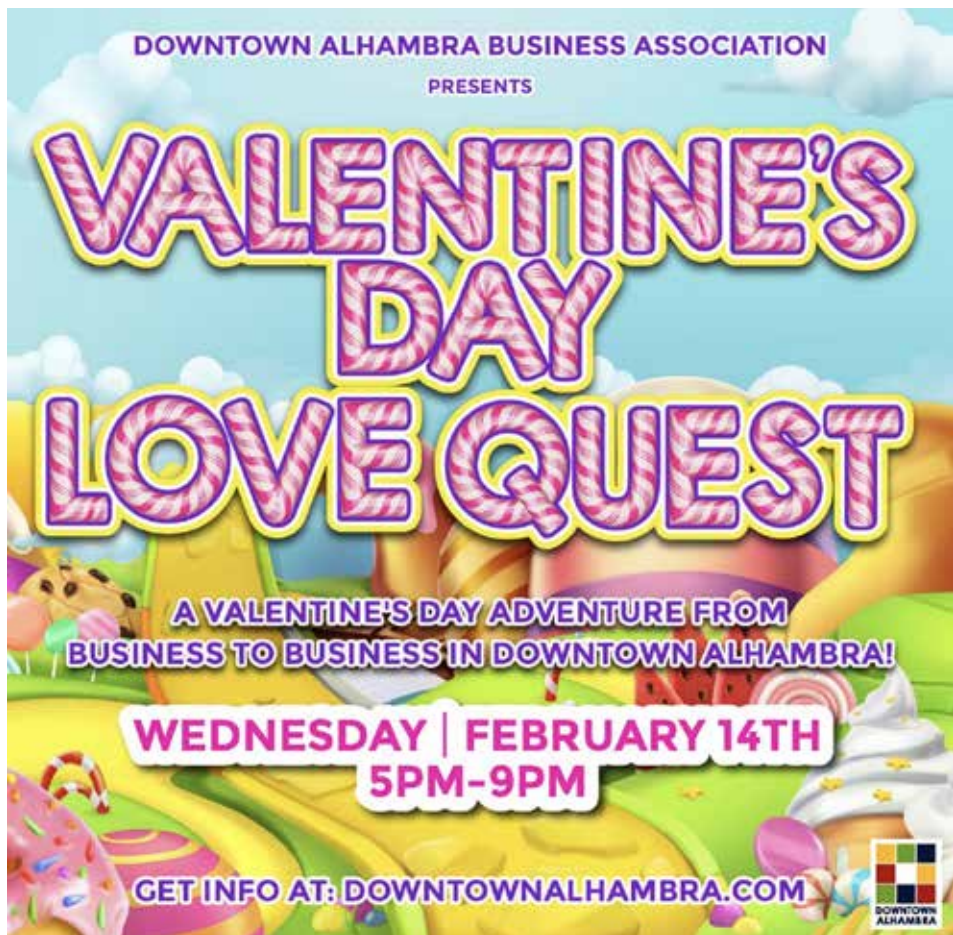


New Century Motorcycles

Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival

Sunday, Feb 18, 2024 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM





## Valentine's Day Love Quest in Downtown Alhambra

Downtown Alhambra presents a fun event for Valentine's Day on **Wednesday, February 14, from 5:00 to 9:00 pm.** Bring your loved ones to the **Love Quest!**

Participants will receive a map of participating businesses when they stop by RA House of CBD on 38 W. Main St. before beginning the passport quest.

Visit businesses on the map and purchase a Valentine's Day promotion or package in order to get a stamp on your Love Quest map. When you complete the map, you will receive prizes and gifts at the final destination, which will be Granada

L.A. Participating businesses will be dressed in Valentine's Day decorations and will have romantic music to celebrate the day of love.

DABA is also organizing a special day for all single love birds who want to have a fun night out with their friends on **Tuesday, February 13 at 28 West Bar for Galentine's Day.**

For more information and updates, visit [downtownalhambra.com](http://downtownalhambra.com) and @downtownalhambra on socials.

## Celebrating the Year of the Dragon in 2024

As the lunar calendar ushers in the Year of the Dragon, this legendary creature takes center stage. So, what can you expect in 2024?

The Year of the Dragon is deeply rooted in historical and cultural significance, tracing its origins to ancient Chinese folklore. Unlike the Western perception of dragons as menacing fire-breathing lizards, the Eastern dragon is typically depicted as a benevolent force embodying authority, wisdom, and good fortune. In China, the dragon is associated with the imperial line, signifying divine protection and prosperity.

In Chinese astrology, the Dragon represents strength, luck, and transformation. Individuals born during the Year of the Dragon are believed to inherit the qualities of this majestic creature. Dragons are known for their courage, intelligence, and charisma. Communities worldwide engage in vibrant celebrations to welcome each Year of the Dragon, which occurs only once every dozen years. Festivities include dragon dances, traditional performances, and sharing symbolic foods believed to bring luck and prosperity. Like any Lunar New Year, it's also a time for reflection, renewal, and setting intentions for the year ahead.

In typical Alhambra fashion, businesses around town are participating in this exciting tradition, each in their own way.

We spoke to Ben Long, regional manager for our local Starbucks locations, about their seasonal homage, Dragon Drink. The special beverage is the chain's Dragon Fruit Refresher with a splash of coconut milk and additional flavors like mango and green coffee extract. "The coconut milk creates a brand-new flavor," said Ben.

He explained the significance of the

drink's ingredients, which were carefully chosen to represent the Dragon. "The dragon fruit is red in color on the outside, which is the most auspicious color and represents beauty and fortune."



You can meet Ben and his team at the 2024 Alhambra Lunar New Year Festival when you pick up your cultural passport at the Starbucks booth.

### Are You a Dragon?

If you were born in 2012, 2000, 1988, 1976, 1964, or 1952, then your Chinese zodiac sign is the Dragon. People born in 2024 are Dragons, too!

Famous "Dragons" include Bruce Lee, Shakira, Robin Williams, and Rihanna.

### What's Your Sign?

The 12 zodiac animals are Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. To find your sign, search online for your birth year and "Chinese horoscope"!

## U2 BBQ & Cafe Now Accepting Pre-Orders for 2024 LNY



The Lunar New Year is fast approaching! Don't be caught on February 10 without a meal plan.

U2 Cafe & BBQ is now accepting pre-orders for the Lunar New Year Special Menu & "Good Fortune" Pot (Poon Choi)!

Each order comes with a Complimentary Stainless Steel Hot Pot (with Lid), plus a Lee Kum Kee gift and a U2 Cafe & BBQ Lucky Money Envelope (prizes consist of one of the following items: an Egg Waffle, Soy Sauce Chicken, Steamed Chicken, BBQ Pork, Roasted

Duck, or a discount card) while supplies last. Get them while you can!

The Poon Choi includes abalone, nontoc, dried oysters, prawns, mushrooms, dried scallops, roast duck, roast pork, steamed chicken, pork skin, fish balls, radish, and napa cabbage topped with original abalone sauce.

**Celebrate the Year of Dragon—or any occasion—with U2 Cafe & BBQ. The restaurant can accommodate reservations of any size and offers catering and pickup orders! Order online or call 626-280-0122 or 626-282-1800.**





# Sealed With A Kiss: From Hungary to Hollywood, Here Comes Alhambra's Dora Kiss

By Lonnie Teper

Lonnie Teper sat down with up-and-coming actress and Alhambra resident Dora Kiss. Below is an edited version of their conversation.

**LT: You were born and raised in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. How did you end up moving to Alhambra?**

DK: I used to play professional tennis, and I ended up receiving an athletic scholarship at Cal State LA. I really liked the Alhambra area, so I moved here. I love living here. It's super chill, and people are very nice.

**LT: You were an All-American tennis player at Cal State LA, but your heart was set on acting. How were you able to combine school with athletics?**

DK: I was always very passionate about tennis as well. I really enjoyed being on the Cal State L.A. tennis team and playing against the other schools. But also knew that one day acting was going to become my focus. I was allowed to choose Theatre as my major and, even though it was a little difficult at times to manage the tennis schedule with the theatre's, it always worked out in the end. I am grateful for that.

**LT: Tell us about meeting celebrated actor Tim Robbins, The Actors' Gang, and what you had to go through to become a member of the group.**

DK: The Actors' Gang is a non-profit ensemble-based theatre company. In 2012, I auditioned for the Gang and had to go through a long training process; in the end, only four of us from my class were invited into the company. That's how I met Tim Robbins; he is The Actors' Gang's artistic

director. He and a few of his classmates from UCLA started the company back in 1982.

**LT: You had a big part in "The New Colossus" before the Covid epidemic ended its run. What was the play about?**

DK: Oh, it was a truly special production. In "The New Colossus," twelve actors tell their family stories in twelve different languages and twelve different eras, all woven into a single narrative about escaping an oppressive homeland. It's a play about strength, resilience, and dignity. We co-wrote it with our director, Tim Robbins. I played my grandmother in 1956's Hungary. We ended up taking The New Colossus on a national tour. It was magical.

**LT: "Ubu Roi" premiered in 2022. Your role?**

DK: Yes, in 2022 we celebrated the 40th anniversary of The Actors' Gang. And the very first play the Gang ever did was Ubu Roi or Ubu the King back in 1982. So, it just felt right to bring Ubu back as part of our 40th season. It was directed by Tim Robbins, and I played one of the leads, Ma Ubu. It was a fun role.

**LT: You've been living in Los Angeles for 16 years now. I imagine learning the English language and working on your accent has been quite a challenge.**

DK: Yes, it's been a challenge for sure. I've been working with an accent coach for a couple of years now. But being able to speak with an American accent opened more opportunities for me.

**LT: It's your dream to be a full-time actor, but in the meantime, you must pay the rent. Thus, having side jobs has**

**been a necessity.**

DK: I've been very fortunate as far as side jobs. I worked at the Diner on Main in Alhambra for 12 years until it closed. And now I still pick up shifts at their sister restaurant, Shaker's in South Pasadena. They have been very supportive of my career, and I can always take time off for rehearsals or if I'm going away to shoot.

**LT: What's the main difference between trying to "make it" here compared to Hungary?**

DK: I feel like it's quite a different world. Hungary is a much smaller market. But there are a lot of American productions that go to shoot in Hungary. And it's one of my goals to book a role here that shoots in Budapest. It would be lovely to work there for a bit and be close to my family.

**LT: You had a big supporting role in the movie "Smile," which landed you in New Jersey for a couple of months as well. The movie's success to date must make you smile.**

DK: I auditioned for *Smile* back in 2021, and within a month, I was on my way to Jersey. I'll be forever grateful for that experience. I had a wonderful time on set, and "Mom Cotter" was a very special and beautiful role. The box office success was truly just the cherry on top.

**LT: Any new projects on the horizon?**

DK: We are just coming out of a writers and actors strike, but luckily productions are starting up, so I am excited to see what this year brings. Things can change so fast in this town; you can get a call any time. There is maybe something in the works for me already, but really don't want to say



anything yet.

Also, I have a role in our upcoming production, "Ybor City at The Actors' Gang," an original play written by one of our members, Mariana Da Silva, and performed in Spanish and English.

**LT: It's not easy making it in this town. Have you been frustrated by near misses in pursuing the "Hollywood Dream"?**

DK: Well, I am often told, "It is so hard, there are so many of you in this town...it must be just so difficult." Sure, it is, if you look at it that way. And sure, there are days when it's a little tougher, and I get sad. I've cried some tears on that 405 South freeway. But there is no time for feeling sorry for myself for too long; it just robs me of creativity and growth.

And ultimately, I feel very lucky to be able to pursue this crazy dream of mine. It's a beautiful gift that I get to do what I love, so no, I never take it for granted, and I try my very best to live up to this opportunity I got from life. A day on set or at the theatre rehearsing is my happiest.

Learn more about Dora Kiss and her upcoming stage performances at [theactorsgang.com](http://theactorsgang.com).

FEBRUARY 2024

**ALHAMBRA Restaurant of the Week**  
PRESENTED BY THE ALHAMBRA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Enjoy delicious, local cuisine!**

The Alhambra Restaurant of the Week (ROTW) highlights the unique flavors of our community. Every week, we showcase a diverse culinary offering that represents the best of local dining in the City of Alhambra!

January 29 to February 4	<p><b>Gen Korean BBQ</b> started in 2005 in Los Angeles and has gradually expanded worldwide. The satisfying All-You-Can-Eat (AYCE) KBBQ experience includes fresh meats, seafood, and vegetables. The vibrant atmosphere and fusion recipes make it a go-to spot for food lovers. Be prepared to wait in line!</p> <p><b>Visit them at 68 W Main St, Alhambra</b></p>	
February 5 to February 11	<p><b>Lunasia Chinese Cuisine</b>, established in 2004, is committed to providing authentic gourmet Chinese cuisine at affordable prices. Serving large portions of traditional dishes, live seafood, dim-sum, and more, there is something for all. Banquet facilities are available for special events like birthdays and weddings.</p> <p><b>Visit them at 500 W Main St, Alhambra</b></p>	
February 12 to February 18	<p><b>Pho Saigon Pasteur</b> is a haven for pho enthusiasts, offering a menu featuring the best of Vietnamese cuisine. From the moment you step inside, the inviting ambiance and the fragrant aroma of simmering broth set the stage for a delightful dining experience. Outdoor seating is available. Closed Mondays.</p> <p><b>Visit them at 235 W Main St, Alhambra</b></p>	
February 19 to February 25	<p><b>Xing Fu Tang</b> specializes in handmade brown sugar boba and milk tea. The shop carefully crafts each drink with organic, healthy ingredients, so that its boba can be both tasty and nutritious. Hailing from Taiwan, this cafe features an open kitchen concept where boba pearls are freshly handmade hourly.</p> <p><b>Visit them at 1468 E Valley Blvd, Alhambra</b></p>	
February 26 to March 3	<p><b>Johnny Rockets</b> is your go-to place for classic American burgers, sides, and shakes. The eatery exudes nostalgia with its 1950s-themed decor, complete with checkered floors and retro jukeboxes. It also has a plant-based lineup that features vegan burgers, cheese, and ice cream. New in Alhambra!</p> <p><b>Visit them at 1129 S Fremont Ave, Alhambra</b></p>	

Follow the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce on Facebook and Instagram to learn more about these restaurants or visit [alhambraeats.com](http://alhambraeats.com).





Moors top returning players (from left to right): Nero Navarro, Ethan Ayala, Jackson Akers, Matt Garcia, Marc Hernandez, and Carlos Hernandez.

## Local Sports News from AUSD High Schools

Submitted by Mike Koski,  
President of Alhambra High School Sports Hall of Fame Committee

### 2024 Varsity Baseball

The Alhambra Moors will open the 2024 baseball season against Salesian at Moor Field on February 10. The Moors will return six players who made All Almont League: Carlos Hernandez, Jackson Akers, Ethan Ayala, Matt Garcia, Marc Hernandez, and Nero Navarro. Head Coach Jovan Ramirez hopes his team can repeat last year's 20-win season and a trip to the CIF Playoffs.

The Moors pitching staff will be tough, headed by Ayala and Garcia, while Jaime Macias and Aiden Kim will also be on the mound along with Joseph Arriaga and Jacob Rodriguez. The Moors will also be strong behind the plate with three experienced catchers returning from last year, Isaiah Lerma, Edgar Ponce, and Akers, who is recovering from a broken leg suffered in football last October. At the plate, Navarro — who led the team in batting average last year — hopes to lead the way along with Aiden Alvarez, Akers, Ayala, and the Hernandez brothers.

### 2023-2024 Varsity Basketball

The first half of the Almont League schedule has been completed with Mark Keppel on top of the league with a 5-0 record, including a massive win over last year's Almont League Champ, Schurr. They were 17-5 overall with five games left in the regular season and are expected to receive a favorable seeding in the CIF Southern Section Division 3AA Playoffs.

Senior Center Ethan Ly has led the team all season long with significant contributions from returners Kyle Tam, Alex Benitez, and Chris Contreras. Freshman Point Guard Maddux Hang has been a surprise addition to the team, playing with confidence and skills beyond his years. This team is very coordinated, with strong play from Reese Song, Jimmy Osorio, Brody Velasquez, Dylan Gov, Nathan Young, and Thomas Rodriguez. Head Coach Hung Duong recently won his 400th victory in his 20-plus years at Keppel and hopes to top it off with a good run in the playoffs.



Students enrolled in the Survival Skills course prepared for an overnight backpacking trip with a lesson in fire safety.

## Ramona Convent Secondary School Launches New Enrichment Program

Ramona Convent students were excited to return from Winter Break for a new two-week enrichment program called J-Term, which is short for "January term."

Students took a brief pause from traditional coursework to explore topics that they may never otherwise be introduced to. Some students traveled to the East Coast on a school-led college tour, others visited San Francisco for a government simulation conference run exclusively by undergraduates at Harvard College, some worked an internship or remained on campus to take classes such as Financial Literacy, Hiking,

Cooking, Architecture, Poetry, Dance Conditioning, Podcasting, Robotics, Badminton, and more. The Survival Skills course even culminated with an overnight backpacking trip!

Ramona Faculty and even some alumni shared their enthusiasm and expertise in different areas. Mrs. Halina Szymanski, Associate Principal, said, "It was wonderful that our faculty had a chance to share their passions and interact with the student body in a non-traditional setting. I can't wait to see what courses will be added to next year's catalog."

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### Admissions Events

Kindergarten Information Night February 1 at 6:30 pm

Preschool, Kindergarten & Grades 1-8 Open House February 15 from 6-8 pm

Preschool & Grades K-8 Open House March 10 from 10:30 am - 1:00 pm

If you can't make these events, come and take a private tour!



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## Alhambra Rotary's Adopt-a-Family Program Brings Holiday Gifts To 115 AUSD Children

Thanks to Alhambra USD staff, community partners, and volunteers, Alhambra Rotary's Adopt-A-Family drive-thru gift distribution brought holiday magic to 115 district children from 49 families on December 12.

This year, Baldwin students from Christina Loose's 7th grade class added a charming touch with their irresistible student-crocheted scarves and penguins. One of the highlights of the pick-up is always a visit with Santa Claus!



## Two AUSD 8th Grade Coders Built an App to Heal and Honor Lives Lost

from page 1

Determined to finish the app before the anniversary of the tragedy, they kept at it.

To honor the 11 lives lost at the Star Ballroom, they named their app RED-11. They also wanted to remind people of the California Red Flag laws that prevent firearms sales to those with a history of violence or mental illness. They finished RED-11 in time to submit their app to the 2023 Congressional App Challenge hosted by Congresswoman Judy Chu. Designed to inspire middle school and high school students to develop the skills needed to pursue STEM careers, Rep. Chu says the app competition is one means of ensuring the nation remains at the forefront of technological advancements. Drexel and Alina were the only all middle school team to make it to the Top Five — for the second year running. At the December Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Awards ceremony, Drexel and Alina won Honorable Mention.

The next day, the city of Monterey Park honored the eighth graders for their vision, tenacity, and innovation in building the potentially lifesaving app RED-11. The students told the City Council that the one-touch app is designed to simultaneously give loved ones and law enforcement your exact location in an emergency. “This way, someone in an active shooter emergency can focus all their attention on getting to a safe place and not have to find words to explain everything in a call to 911,” Alina told the City Council.

Their innovation and determination are attracting attention. Journalist Georgia Valdes wrote a story about the two 8th grade coders for *the Pasadena News Star* and *SGV Tribune*. Reporter Vania Patino interviewed Alina and Drexel for

a Spectrum News 1 story called “Healing through Coding.” The students spoke movingly at the January Los Angeles Times interactive community event, “One Year Later: Covering Monterey Park and Community Healing,” an evening that brought together four members of the army of *LA Times* journalists it took to report on the shootings and its aftermath into conversation and connection with the community they covered.

Alina and Drexel are continuing to test their app and recently identified a few bugs and enhancements they are working out. Ashton Potter, director of the AUSD IT department, has advised them. Once the app is optimized and ready, they want to make it free to everyone. “To be able to make the app available for free in the Apple App Store, our next big challenge is financial,” Drexel said. “The annual cost

of the server infrastructure, cloud hosting, security, and operational expenses, compliance audit, post-launch maintenance and updating, and the Apple app store publishing charges is \$12,000. We hope we can somehow find angel donors who would be willing to underwrite those yearly costs so anyone can download our one-touch RED-11 app for free.”

At ages 13 and 14, these two coders are interested in STEM careers. “We want to help others through coding,” Alina says. With app RED-11, it looks like they are on their way to accomplishing that mission. One question everyone asks: Why is there nothing quite like this app already available to the public? It took two eighth grader coders trying to help their community recover from a mass shooting to invent a one-touch app to save lives, an app they want everyone to be able to download for free. To make that hope a reality, they must find the \$12,000 needed annually to cover all the support and publishing costs of app RED-11.



AUSD students loving their first science camp experience in the San Bernardino National Forest.

## AEF Presents \$50,000 Check to AUSD Board to Jumpstart Funding to Send a Thousand 6th Graders to Science Camp This Spring

At the January 16 AUSD board meeting, Alhambra Educational Foundation president Steve Perry presented a \$50,000 check from AEF board members to jumpstart funding for 1,031 AUSD sixth graders to go to science camp this spring.

“Many AUSD students have never spent a night away from home or left San Gabriel Valley or ever seen mountains,” Perry says. “Our 2019 science camp project for every fifth grader showed us that kids thrive in a beautiful forest setting and the outdoors sparked their STEAM learning and curiosity in new ways.” Students talked about the

delicious food and the sense of peace they felt in nature and without technology.

This spring, every AUSD sixth grader will have the chance to go to a two-night, three-day science camp at Camp Pollack in the San Bernardino National Forest. Students can bond and collaborate while they enjoy hiking, canoeing, archery, campfires, watching for deer and wildlife, and learning first hand to respect the environment. It will take \$200,000 to underwrite the project. Science camp is an experience AUSD students will never forget.



AUSD Student Support Services is hosting Family STEAM Night on March 6 at Marguerita School from 5 to 7 pm. The event will offer food, fun, and interactive learning about STEAM jobs — which are higher paying and growing at a higher rate than non-STEAM jobs.

## Family STEAM Night for 3rd-5th Grade Schools Families Offers Fun, Interactive Evening to Explore High Demand Jobs

AUSD Student Support Services is inviting Granada, Marguerita, Northrup, Ramona, and Ynez third to fifth grade families to Family STEAM Night to set up students for success. The March 6 evening held at Marguerita School from 5 to 7 pm will offer food, fun, and interactive learning about STEAM jobs — which are higher paying and growing at a higher rate than non-STEAM jobs.

STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math — and courses in these fields are key to enlarging student career paths for high demand STEAM careers.

At Family STEAM Night, families can visit hands-on STEAM activity booths for the first hour, and then hear from a panel of local STEAM professionals and Q & A for the last hour.

The earlier students are exposed to STEAM learning, the better prepared they are for the expanding field of STEAM jobs, which require critical thinking and problem-solving, communication skills, flexibility, collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

Examples of STEAM careers include video game designer, animator, website and app designer, doctor, dentist, health care professional, fashion designer, pilot, graphic designer, architect, medical illustrator, metalsmith, pastry chef, sound engineer, and urban planner. Some STEAM careers do not require a college degree, such as welder, electrician, and manufacturing technician. Instead, they require an industry certification or two-year degree.

Want your kids to learn more about STEAM? RSVP here: [bit.ly/4aXSazQ](https://bit.ly/4aXSazQ).





## Mark Keppel High School Marching Band & Colorguard Win 5th Place in Southern CA School Band and Orchestra Association Field Championships

After qualifying in early November for the Southern California School Band & Orchestra Association's Field Championships by scoring in the Top 12 among the 35 competing bands, the Mark Keppel High marching band and colorguard competed in mid-November and moved up from 11th place in the preliminaries to 5th place in the championships.

"These kids have worked tremendously hard over the past four months, and I couldn't be more proud," said Justin Lee, MKHS Director of Instrumental Music/ Band Director.

Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo added her congratulations by saying the whole district joins in applauding the MKHS band and colorguard on an amazing season.

### 2024 OPEN HOUSE DATES

SITE	DATE	GRADE	TIME
Baldwin	3/20/24	TK-8th	5:30-7:00 pm
Brightwood	5/1/24	TK-8th	5:30-7:00 pm
Emery Park	3/21/24	TK-8th	5:00-6:30 pm
Fremont	3/20/24	TK-8th	5:00-7:00 pm
Garfield	3/21/24	TK-8th	5:30-7:00 pm
Granada	3/20/24	TK-8th	5:00-6:30 pm
Marguerita	3/21/24	TK-8th	5:00-6:30 pm
Monterey Highlands	3/21/24	TK-8th	5:30-7:00 pm
Northrup	5/8/24	TK-8th	5:30-7:00 pm
Park	4/3/24	TK-8th	5:00-7:00 pm
Ramona	5/15/24	TK-8th	5:00-7:00 pm
Repetto	3/20/24	TK-8th	5:00-7:00 pm
Ynez	3/20/24	TK-8th	5:00-7:00 pm
Moor Field	4/11/24	Preschool	4:30-6:00 pm
LIFT	3/21/24	Adult Transition	4:30-6:00 pm
AHS	3/21/24	9th-12th	5:30-8:00 pm
MKHS	3/21/24	9th-12th	5:30-8:00 pm
SGHS	2/8/24	9th-12th	5:30-8:00 pm

Between February 8 and May 15, Alhambra Unified School District's 18 campuses will welcome families for their annual Open Houses.

## Open House: Alhambra USD Invites Families to Explore and Celebrate Their Child's Educational Journey This School Year

AUSD schools are excited to welcome parents and guardians to upcoming Open House events. Each year, these gatherings are an opportunity for families to connect with their children's teachers, explore the school environment, and gain insights into the educational experiences of the 2023-24 school year.

On **February 8**, San Gabriel High School launches Open House season with other schools scheduled through mid-May. The accompanying graphic lists all Open House dates and times to allow parents and guardians to plan ahead to attend. Teachers and principals will send details home as the date draws closer.

AUSD encourages all families to make every effort to attend Open Houses for many reasons, including:

**Meet and Greet:** Open House is the perfect occasion to meet with your child's dedicated teachers and continue fostering strong partnerships between home and school.

**Classroom Insights:** Parents get a first-hand look into their child's daily learning environment and can explore their major

projects and activities from the year.

**Discover Curriculum Highlights:** Classrooms will be showcases of the engaging and innovative lessons AUSD's amazing teachers have designed to inspire a love of learning in their students.

**Connect with Fellow Parents:** Open House, like all school wide gatherings, builds a bridge of community in the school by connecting families to share experiences, ask questions, and create a network of support.

"Our parents' involvement in their child's education is invaluable, and Open House is an excellent way to strengthen that partnership," Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo said. "We look forward to welcoming parents and guardians to our campuses to share the wonderful learning experiences happening within the Alhambra Unified School District."

Attending Open House is a gift each parent and guardian can give their student to jumpstart school success by connecting with teachers and other parents while discovering curriculum highlights in the classroom.

**CELEBRATING OUR CULTURES**  
**CELEBRANDO NUESTRAS CULTURAS**

We invite all families of the Alhambra Unified School District to our festival  
**Saturday, February 3, 2024**  
from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at  
**San Gabriel High School**

[www.alhambralatinoassociation.com](http://www.alhambralatinoassociation.com)

Alhambra Unified School District (AUSD) is excited to join the Alhambra Latino Association (ALA) for its multicultural festival, Celebrating Our Cultures/Celebrando Nuestras Culturas. This event will feature the talents of AUSD students through cultural stage presentations, visual arts, music, dance, and sports. Contributions from our community's varied backgrounds will be showcased throughout the event, with both food and handcrafted goods for sale.

Head over to San Gabriel High School on **Saturday, February 3 from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm** to join the festival filled with tasty food, student performances, music, and art displays!





Repetto students had a memory-filled day celebrating National Milk Day and learning about the important health benefits of milk and dairy products.

## Repetto Celebrates National Milk Day With Udderly Delightful Festivities

National Milk Day is celebrated each year in commemoration of the first home delivery of milk on January 11, 1878. It is a day to recognize the importance of school meals and celebrate the benefits of milk and dairy products in a healthy diet.

Repetto School students in grades TK-3 had a fun-filled day of dairy-themed activities. From classic games to delightful treats, the celebration was an exciting and educational experience for young learners. A favorite activity was Pin the Tail on the Cow — a playful twist on a traditional game that added a bovine touch to the festivities. Students also had the chance to showcase their bowling skills in Milk Bottle Bowling, and test their accuracy in an entertaining Toss the Ring Around the Milk Carton game. After they finished the game stations, students enjoyed a tasty and nutritious sampling of yogurt parfaits with strawberries and blueberries.

“My students had a blast learning about how milk and dairy help keep them healthy,” explained kindergarten teacher Dorothy Hem. “They learned a lot while having so much fun! They talked about the activities the rest of the day!”

The entire school enjoyed a visit by the Dairy Council of California's Mobile Dairy Classroom. The highlight of the assembly was Bailey the Cow! This interac-

tive experience offered students a firsthand look into the world of dairy farming, promoted awareness about the journey of milk from farm to table, and helped students understand the importance of sustainable farming practices and the integral role of farmers in ensuring a steady supply of nutritious milk. For many students, it was their first time seeing a real cow — and they were captivated by her charming presence while gaining a deeper appreciation for the dairy industry.

Repetto's National Milk Day fostered a sense of fun and community while also instilling valuable lessons about the significance of dairy in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The day was made possible thanks to the hard work and dedication of Alhambra Unified School District's Food and Nutritional Services.

“Events like National Milk Day are some of the highlights of our job,” says Kathy Mach, AUSD Food Service Field Supervisor. “Our team works incredibly hard in our kitchens and cafeterias to ensure our students receive healthy and delicious school meals, but we love getting out and interacting directly with them and planning fun and educational activities.”

Everyone at Repetto agreed — a cow-tastic time was had by all!



Do you know other AUSD employees who should be recognized as a Game Changer? Go to [ausd.us/badges](http://ausd.us/badges) to submit a nomination. It costs nothing, but says a lot!

## Outstanding Employees Recognized as AUSD's Latest Game Changers

Each month, Alhambra Unified School District (AUSD) recognizes two Game Changer employees who have made major impacts on their school community. At the January 16 Board of Education meeting, Kimberly Valentine and Juan Mendez were both celebrated.

Kimberly Valentine is a teacher at Moor Field and was nominated by her fellow teacher Faviola Ulteras. In her nomination, Ulteras pointed out that “Ms. Valentine goes beyond her duty to make sure that the students of Moor Field have experiences that they would not normally have.” She focuses on family involvement and engagement by creating many special activities, including a county fair, sports day, and Valentine's Day activities. Another colleague also mentioned, “She is a well-rounded educator, a leader,

a friend, a mentor, and most importantly, an excellent colleague.”

Elementary campus supervisor Juan Mendez was also recognized for all he does for Monterey Highlands School. He received multiple nominations from parents, who said he goes above and beyond to make sure the students are safe. One parent wrote, “We see [Mr. Mendez] standing by the student drop-off guiding the cars regardless of the weather and chaos... We appreciate the fact that [he is] part of the team that ensures our children are safe and gives us parents peace of mind while we are away from them.”

Kimberly Valentine and Juan Mendez were both recognized by the Board of Education and were awarded a certificate and a \$100 award, courtesy of Schools First Federal Credit Union.



## AUSD Hosts Delegation of Principals From Taiwan in Partnership With the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office

On December 8, Northrup School and San Gabriel High School hosted a delegation of 14 K-12 principals from Taiwan as part of AUSD's fledgling partnership with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office.

At each school, the visiting educators were welcomed with student performances, observed classes, spoke with school leaders, and interacted with their student hosts. The delegation enjoyed a luncheon with AUSD principals from across the district

catered by AUSD's Food and Nutrition Services department.

“This was a wonderful opportunity for principals on both sides of the world to learn more about how their positions and educational systems are similar and different,” Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo told the visiting educators. “We are excited about future opportunities to partner with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office.”





## Mark Keppel's Anthony Lo Opens 2023 Congressional App Challenge Awards

Mark Keppel High School senior Anthony Lo had the honor of opening this year's Congressional App Challenge Awards ceremony by singing the National Anthem at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory on December 19.

Anthony, a member of Mark Keppel's choir, has been singing as part of groups and as a soloist for two years.

Joining Anthony at this event were his parents, MKHS choir teacher Marcelo Martinez, assistant principal Nicolas Nguyen, and members of the Alhambra USD Board and leadership team.

"We thank the office of Congressman Judy Chu for giving Anthony this wonderful opportunity," Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo said.



## The Power of Community Generosity: Spark of Love Toy Drive Brings Joy to AUSD Families in Need

AUSD partners with the Alhambra Fire Department and other community organizations to support local families in the holiday season through the annual Spark of Love Toy Drive. The incredible effort and generosity of all those who make this special giving event possible is something the children never forget. Seeing the excitement and joy in their faces is something the

donors and volunteers never forget either.

"We thank Alhambra Fire Department, Alhambra Teachers Association, Alhambra Educational Foundation, Tzu Chi, Rotary International, Costco, Sprouts, PetSmart, and our AUSD donor families and staff for their open-hearted support." Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo said.



After two decades, Vivien Watts, AUSD executive director of food and nutrition services, is retiring. Her vision and leadership forever changed the district's food service programs.

## Retiring Executive Director of AUSD Food & Nutrition Services Leaves a Legacy of Innovations and Leadership

Vivien Watts, AUSD's executive director of food & nutrition services is known around the state for her innovative leadership, problem-solving grace, and networking superpowers in the daunting logistical work of feeding thousands of TK-12 students two meals a day at 18 school sites. After two decades, Watts is retiring. Her legacy for re-inventing the way the district feeds its children will live on.

Ten years ago, Watts transformed AUSD's food service program by envisioning and designing a new central production kitchen to build a more flexible effective operation with reorganized staffing.

When the pandemic closed schools, she and her team invented a year round system for rain or shine weekly distribution of four million curbside school meals, meals that were a lifeline for many families. News outlets locally and around the world featured their heroic efforts, which included asking bus drivers to bring meals to bus stops for parents who lived too far from school sites. Watts led her team in finding ways to add holiday meal boxes to the distribution during Thanksgiving holidays and winter breaks.

With her team, Watts visited neighboring district kitchens in search of inspiration for special ethnic meals that would appeal to AUSD's diverse student population. Their field trips resulted in a weekly global flavors bar that included pho and ramen in house-made broth — a big hit with students. Local reporters wrote glowing stories about the tasty meals.

Because students who eat breakfast focus and learn more easily, Watts applied for and won grants for grab and go breakfasts to make it easy for children to get the nourishment they need at school. For high schoolers who require more nutrition to succeed at school, she received a grant to provide second chance breakfasts and another grant for refrigeration equipment to store the extra food. She expanded the festive annual Food & Wellness Fairs to include student taste testing and rating of possible new menu items to give students a voice in their meal choices and asked students to participate in creating fun ways to learn about wellness. The California Department of Education Nutrition and the USDA Western Region recognized Watts and her division for this creative outreach.

"Almost no one knows about or can interpret the complex web of strict federal and state mandates that regulate every step that school districts must follow to feed their students," Watts points out. "Nor are people aware of the tiny amount the US-

DA's federal meal program reimburses districts for every meal served." She explained that out of the \$5.00 reimbursement per served meal, the district must buy, store, menu plan, prepare, deliver, and serve daily breakfasts and lunches, and pay for staff, equipment, and maintenance. That leaves \$1.50 for food. She and her team relied on grants to underwrite special programs and equipment.

She credits her first boss at AUSD, Marilyn Wells, director of food services, for teaching her everything she needed to know about school meal programs, saying, "I learned from the best." Watts adds that she is a big admirer of Superintendent Denise Jaramillo's model of leading with respect and compassion. She says that the support she has received from AUSD Board of Education members has been humbling.

Asked about her proudest accomplishments, Watts will tell you that building meaningful relationships, bringing people together, and fostering career growth opportunities to develop the leadership bench in her team are at the top her list. She served on the California School Nutrition Association Executive Board, and on the board and in multiple leadership roles for the Southern California School Nutrition Association.

A few of her many honors and awards are the 2023 Excellence in Leadership Award from the Dairy Council of California, 2022 Mayor's Certificate of Recognition by City of Arcadia for contribution to children in San Gabriel Valley, 2021 Woman of the Year Congressional Award by Judy Chu, 2020/21 CSNA Director of the Year, and the School Superintendents Association 2018 Breakfast Grant.

An example of her longstanding relationships, Bing Yang, an AUSD vendor who owns the famous orange chicken company he started 20 years ago, paid the cost for her staff to attend her retirement dinner. Today Yang's orange chicken is on school menus across the country and is the #1 seller at Trader Joe's. Another vendor, James Melikian, arranged for Vivien to receive a Resolution Proclamation from Assemblymember Mike Fong.

"Vivien Watts' visionary leadership, the love and energy she brought to feeding our children, and her gift for creating relationships have forever changed district's food service programs," Superintendent Dr. Denise Jaramillo said.

Watts and her husband Tom have two adorable two golden retrievers, Spark and JJ, who are thrilled to learn that Vivien will be now home much more often.



# 2024 SUMMER SCHOOL DATES

## K-8 Summer ACADEMY

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Incoming Grades: K-8th

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*Early Registration will start  
on March 11, 2024.*

## AEF SUPPORTS AUSD'S SCIENCE CAMP WITH A \$50,000 DONATION



*The Alhambra Educational Foundation Board of Directors donates \$50,000 to help support AUSD's 6th Grade Science Camp.*

**Make a Difference  
Donate Today**



[www.AEF4Kids.com](http://www.AEF4Kids.com)



### Help Us Support Our AUSD Students



Ask Dr. Dara, D.D.S.

## How to Choose Between Clear Aligners and Braces

by Dr. Krasnodara Gashparova, DDS  
(also known as Dr. Dara)



**Dr. Dara, D.D.S.**  
Advanced Dentistry Alhambra  
daradds@yahoo.com

Congratulations on your decision to straighten your teeth. This will improve not only your appearance but, most importantly, your oral health. People with straight teeth have fewer cavities and bleeding gums. Proper bite and balanced chewing help your teeth wear less and last you longer.

Here are some criteria to consider when choosing between clear aligners and braces.

### Appearance

**Clear Aligners:** Virtually invisible, making them a discreet option for adults and teens who are self-conscious about their smile.

**Braces:** More noticeable, especially traditional metal braces. However, ceramic or tooth-colored options are less visible.

### Functionality

**Clear Aligners:** Removable, allowing for easier eating, drinking, and brushing.

**Braces:** Fixed in place, requiring dietary restrictions and careful oral hygiene.

### Treatment Time

**Clear Aligners:** Typically require 12-18 months, depending on the severity of the case.

**Braces:** These can take 18-24 months but may be longer for more complicated cases.

### Hygiene

**Clear aligners:** As aligners are removable, maintaining oral hygiene is easy and natural. You can brush and floss as usual, but cleaning your teeth and aligners is essential before placing them back in your mouth.

**Braces:** More difficult because cleaning is required between the wire and the gum. An electric toothbrush helps, and flossing daily using a floss threader to get under the wires and around brackets. Interdental brushes, water flossers, and Waterpiks can clean hard-to-reach areas.

### Cost

Clear Aligners and Braces both generally average from \$3500 to \$6500. The cost depends on the complexity of the case rather than the type of treatment used.

### Comfort

**Clear Aligners:** Generally, more comfortable than braces, with less irritation to the lips and cheeks. Some mild soreness when a new tray is placed.

**Braces:** Can cause some discomfort, especially in the first few days after adjustments.

### Compliance

**Clear Aligners:** Require strict compliance to wear time (20-22 hours per day) for effective results. It will not work if worn less than 16 hours a day.

**Braces:** Cannot be removed, ensuring consistent treatment.

### Suitability

**Clear Aligners:** Best for crowding, spacing, and overbite/deep bite issues.

**Braces:** Can treat more complex cases of severe crowding and underbites.

### Additional Considerations

Consider how busy your schedule is. For braces, you need to visit the dentist once a month. For clear aligners once every 2-3 months.

Consult with a dentist or an orthodontist experienced in both to determine the best option for your specific needs and goals. Get multiple opinions and ask questions.

Ultimately, the decision will be made based on your lifestyle, orthodontic needs, and personal preferences. Regardless of the option chosen, commit to excellent oral hygiene throughout your treatment to avoid cavities and gum disease.

*This column is provided to Around Alhambra by Dr. Krasnodara Gashparova, DDS who is responsible for the content. Around Alhambra does not endorse medical advice or any remedies recommended by this author or any other provider.*

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Disclaimer: We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all your options.



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# Transforming Healthcare Delivery: APC's Innovative Super Centers and AMG Clinics Redefining Patient Experience

Founded by local San Gabriel Valley physicians in 1992, Allied Pacific IPA of California (APC) is a robust team of over 700 primary care physicians and over 1,000 specialists dedicated to serving the local community. Allied has consistently maintained a standard of excellence in healthcare for over 30 years and is passionate about investing in its community. Over the years, Allied has built and now operates a comprehensive set of services to serve its over 350,000 members, including primary care, labs, immediate and urgent care centers, radiology, cardiology, skilled nursing facilities, ambulatory surgical centers, palliative care, chronic disease management, and more.

Two of the most crucial things Allied has invested in for the health of its community members are quality and access. Allied has built, in partnership with its affiliated company Astrana Health (fka Network Medical Management/ApolloMed), advanced healthcare “supercenters,” which function as comprehensive hubs that deliver skilled primary care, multi-specialty care, radiology, laboratory, and pharmacy services — all under one roof.

These supercenters operate urgent care facilities seven days a week, ensuring reliable and accessible medical services. With established centers in Monterey Park, Arcadia, and City of Industry, a fourth center is slated to open soon in Alhambra. The supercenters consolidate diverse healthcare services into a singular, convenient location, streamlining the

patient experience by eliminating the need for multiple appointments and helping navigate the patient through the insurance process. This design creates a comprehensive and integrated healthcare destination for community members seeking quality and access to healthcare delivery.

Allied has also invested heavily in primary care — its primary care group, AMG Medical Group, in partnership with Astrana Health, provides primary care, covering preventative care, acute conditions, chronic condition management, and pediatrics, along with specialty care in allergy and asthma, dermatology, endocrinology, ophthalmology, and rheumatology. With physicians fluent in Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese, Spanish, and English and clinics spread throughout Southern California, AMG Medical Group is dedicated to serving their diverse communities.

Allied's commitment to excellence, innovation, and patient-centric care is evident not only through its extensive range of services but also through its strategic approach to healthcare delivery. As the organization continues to evolve, Allied stands as a beacon of healthcare innovation and a model for integrated, patient-focused care in California.

Upcoming Event for Allied Members:  
**Spring Into Wellness Health Fair: Friday, March 22 at Almansor Court in Alhambra**

Learn more about Allied's Urgent Care Centers below.



## Take steps to a healthier lifestyle.

Join our FREE health fair to receive screenings, learn more about healthy habits, and explore educational booths.

Health Screenings / Health Workshops / Wellness Education / Community Health Connections  
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## Raffle Prizes!

Event is Free, Reservations required. Please call 626-943-6488. Or scan the QR code to RSVP by 03/18/2024.



Event is limited to Medicare members of Allied Pacific IPA, Alpha Care Medical Group, and Accountable Health Care IPA.

## Your Insurance

# How Original Medicare Works

By Katherine Yu Simms

Original Medicare is coverage managed by the federal government. Generally, there's a cost for each service. Below are the general rules for how it works.

**Can I get my health care from any doctor, other health care provider, or hospital?**

In most cases, yes. You can go to any doctor, health care provider, hospital, or facility that is enrolled in Medicare and accepting new Medicare patients.

**Are prescriptions covered in Original Medicare?**

With a few exceptions, most prescriptions aren't covered in Original Medicare. You can add drug coverage by joining a Medicare Drug Plan (Part D).

**Do I need to choose a primary care doctor?**

No, in Original Medicare, you don't need to choose a primary care doctor.

**Do I have to get a referral to see a specialist?**

In most cases, no.

**What else do I need to know about Original Medicare?**

You generally pay a set amount for your health care (deductible) before Medicare pays its share. Then, Medicare pays its share, and you pay your share (coinsurance/co-payment) for covered services and supplies. There's no yearly limit for what you pay out-of-pocket. You usually pay a monthly premium, which in 2024 is \$174.80, which may change each year. You generally don't need to file Medicare claims. The law requires providers and suppliers to file claims for the covered services and supplies they get. Providers include doctors, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and home health agencies.

**What isn't covered by Part A & Part B?**

Medicare doesn't cover everything. If you need services Part A or Part B doesn't cover, you'll have to pay for them yourself



**Katherine Yu Simms**  
Medicare Insurance Agent  
lovemygoldenyears@gmail.com

unless you have other coverage (including Medical) to cover the costs and you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan that covers these services. Medicare Advantage Plans may cover some extra benefits, like fitness programs and vision, hearing, and dental services.

Some of the items and services Medicare doesn't cover include long-term care (also called custodial care), most dental care, eye exams (for prescription glasses), dentures, cosmetic surgery, massage therapy, routine physical exams, hearing aids and exams for fitting them, concierge care (also called concierge medicine, retainer-based medicine, boutique medicine, platinum practice, or direct care), covered items or services you get from an opt-out doctor or other providers (except in the case of an emergency or urgent need).

If you need assistance in evaluating your current plan, please reach out to Katherine Yu Simms for a free consultation to help find the most appropriate plan that fits your needs.

Only some plans are available in your area. Any information provided is limited to plans offered in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all your options.

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牙齒保住了, 不用拔(只需要一次治療)  
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**趙企安醫生**  
**John Chao, D.D.S.**  
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 Adjunct Asst. Prof., Behavior Science, USC  
 畢業于USC  
 美國紐約州立大學牙週病研究教授(SUNY)



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*From the Desk of Rev. Craig Statton*



**“A Lovely, Lovely Life”**

A couple of years ago, we invited several of our couples at Atherton to tell us their love stories. It was exciting to hear how they fell in love, how they endured the ups and downs of life, and the advice they would give younger couples. One of the men, Paul DeVaughn, who had been married 68 years to his wife, Juanita, said, “If you can keep that feeling alive that you had when you first met, and if you mean what you say when you say it, you will have a lovely, lovely life.”

The season of the Chinese New Year is also the season of Valentine’s Day. When I was in grade school, February was an exciting month because we handed out Valentines. We created a Valentine’s card for our parents and our classmates and added a heart-shaped candy to the envelope.

Dr. William Thomas wrote that the three plagues of aging are “helplessness, loneliness, and boredom.” He believes that as people grow older, many are not able to do as many things as they could when they were younger; they have fewer relationships with others and are not

engaged in as many activities that give them meaning. The challenge for family members, friends, and professionals is to create things that fight these plagues by encouraging people, developing networks, and providing meaningful activities that engage heart, mind, and body.

The desire for intimate relationships never goes away. Seniors may no longer be as interested in the sexual nature of intimacy; however, the desire for meaningful conversations, the gentle touch, and the personal connection of conversations and affection are always important and may be one of the best antidotes to the plague of loneliness.

This is called intimacy and can be sown in everyone’s life. It is the truest sense of romance and the most satisfying of human need. It is sometimes found in young passion but finds its deepest expression in maturity. It is what the Apostle Paul referred to as the greatest of all virtues. It is love, and it is what Mr. DeVaughn had both experienced and was teaching to us.

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## "Coming Soon" listings not on market yet!

- 999 E Valley Blvd, Alhambra, CA 91801 (Please call for Unit #)
- South Pasadena SFR - 2 bed / 2 bath, 1124 sf
- Pasadena condo - 2 bed / 2 bath, 1,124 sf
- Pasadena condo - 355 S Los Robles, Pasadena (Please call for unit #)
- Placentia SFR, ~2500 sf home, +9,000 sf Lot,
- Rowland Heights SFR, 4 bed / 2 bath, 3,000+ sf Home, 11,000+ sf Lot

If you're interested in possibly selling your home off market and want to get on this list, give us a call at **626-696-0115**.

If you're looking to buy in any of these areas, please give us a call at **626-696-0115**.

### Recently Closed Case Study: 904 N Marguerita Ave, Alhambra



- 7/24/21 - Listing expired with previous agent, was listed at \$1,268,000.
- 10/2022 - Met sellers.
- 8/8/23 - Signed listing agreement, listed at \$1,225,000.
- 8/9/23 - Staged home in the morning, photos taken in the afternoon, launched marketing in the evening.
- 8/10/23 - Broker open house early evening with 30+ families.
- 8/12/23 - Open house on Saturday with 35+ families.
- 8/13/23 - Open House on Sunday with 20+ families.
- 8/15/23 - Multiple offers received, 9 total.
- 8/16/23 - Negotiations take place, a lot of communication.
- 8/17/23 - Accepted offer.
- 9/13/23 - Property Sold at \$1,380,000! (\$155,000 over asking)



**CLARENCE YEUNG**

REALTOR \*|SoCal Group|Xp Realty  
Broker Associate calDRE# 01897557  
(626)696-0115



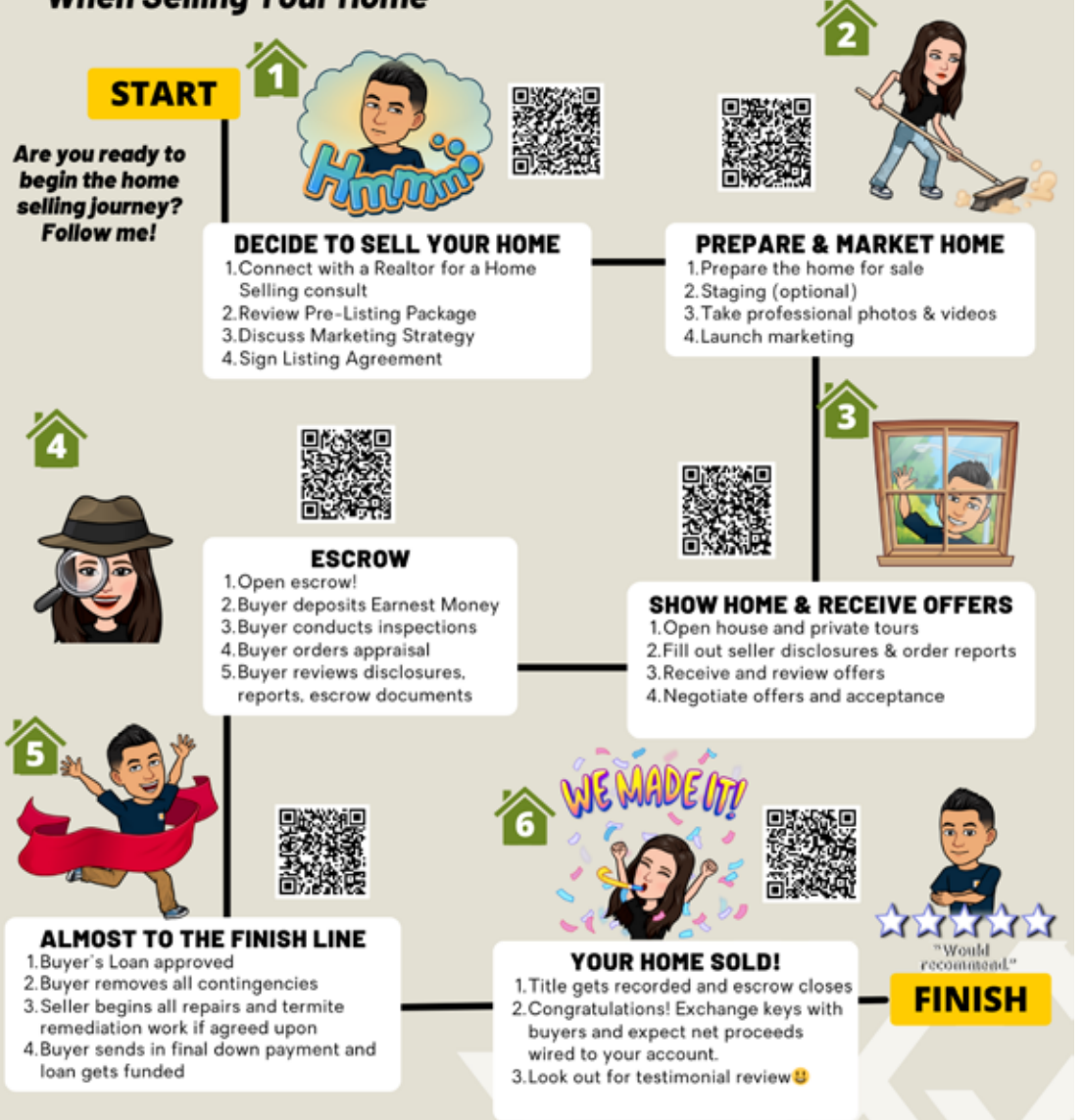
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## Home Selling Roadmap



### General Overview of the Steps Involved When Selling Your Home



#### INVESTOR'S CLUB MEETING!

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Real Estate



# Is Mold Concern in Your Home Something New?

By Gary Frueholz  
Engel & Volkers Real Estate

Historically the phrase “Black Gold” referred to petroleum below the surface of the land waiting to be converted into a whole host of profit-making derivatives such as gasoline, lubricating oils, and natural gas.

“Back Gold” is still a very popular phrase, but it is now used in relation to residential homes and the compensation potential resulting from damages to homeowners caused by mold existing in their residences.

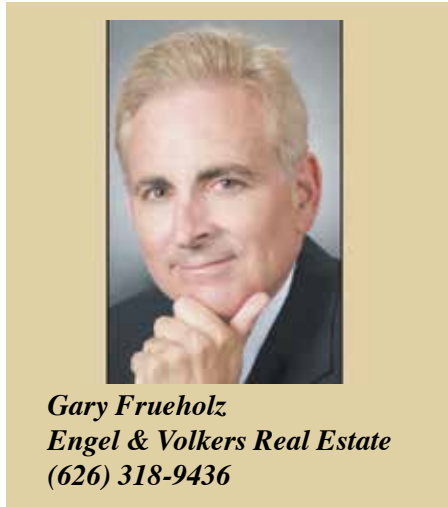
Mold litigation during the twenty-first century has dramatically grown and may even surpass asbestos litigation in the near future. A 2001 landmark legal decision in Texas awarded homeowner Melinda Ballard \$32 million when her family allegedly got sick from mold contamination. Ballard’s home was a mansion, and she initially sued her insurance company, Farmers Insurance Group, for \$100 million. Within the next two years after this decision, annual filings of mold lawsuits in Texas increased by 1,300%.

Mold is a type of fungi found throughout the world. Mold needs moisture to survive and can grow on an array of different materials. There are over 5,000 types of mold — approximately 150 can cause allergies in people, and about 50 are capable of leading to toxic reactions in persons.

The proper understanding of mold issues increasingly shows up in real estate transactions. Realtors like myself will present clients with no less than five documents during the transaction, which either instruct or at least have a section telling the buyer/seller of the potential hazards of mold in the home and reminding buyers of their rights in conducting mold inspections.

Mold generally results from water inundation from plumbing problems, leaky roofs, or flooding. The presence of mold in a home can engage medical and legal professionals, neurotoxicologists, and neuropsychologists. Mold generally grows from moisture, warm temperatures, and a food source.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website gives detailed approaches to eradicating mold from solutions as



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simple as scrubbing to hiring mold remediation companies. The approach depends on what type of mold is present. An important first step is to have a professional analyze if mold is present and, if so, what type it is.

But is mold in a home something new? In reality, residential mold treatment has been a point of concern for thousands of years. The book of Leviticus in the Bible, written in the sixteenth century B.C., dedicates half a chapter to mold identification and treatment. It covers an array of divine laws and addresses the treatment of mildew/mold in homes in chapter 14, verses 35-55.

Currently, some of the things you can do to limit mold in your home are: Eliminate damp areas in your house (i.e. fix leaks and areas where water congregates), keep your basement dry, apply undiluted bleach to areas of mold, avoid damp potting soil in the house, keep damp firewood outside, clean flooring and shower pans/tile frequently, and allow air to circulate with either an air conditioning system or by opening windows. Hiring a licensed mold professional to analyze persistent mold is advisable.

So, the topic of mold in a home is not new. Historically mold has commanded attention for nearly four thousand years. And I am now continuing to read Leviticus for the chapter that covers liquidated damages.

**Gary Frueholz is a realtor with Engel & Volkers Real Estate, a past member of the Alhambra Planning Commission, a Certified Senior Real Estate Specialist, Certified International Property Specialist, and can be reached at 626-318-9436. See his stories at garysstories.com.**

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