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July
2018

The monthly guide to
art, culture, and
community in
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What's Inside

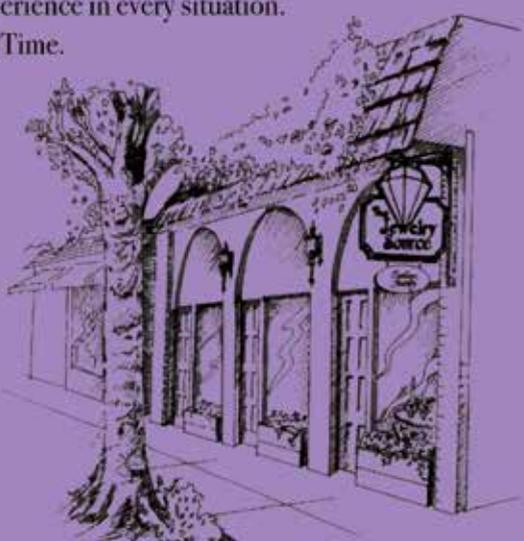


Happy July!
 Please send your organization's El Segundo-based summer and fall events to events@theelsegundoscene.com for inclusion in our guide.
 We'd love to feature your child's artwork in our Young Artists spread! Email images to kids@theelsegundoscene.com.
 Our next issue arrives in early August.



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Ideas Into Action

Meet the busy, ambitious members of the **El Segundo Arts & Culture Advisory Committee**. By Maureen Kingsley

Gather a group of creative, devoted, industrious members of the El Segundo community together once a month, task them with developing an arts and culture vision for the city, and what do you get? The 11-member El Segundo

Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (ESA&CAC), established in late 2016 and already raising the profile of arts and culture in El Segundo.



Left to right: Chairperson Sally Martin, members Neal Von Flue and Dolores McAllister, Vice Chairperson Eva Sweeney.

The team is led by Chairperson Sally Martin (Studio Antiques) and Vice Chairperson Eva Sweeney (ESMoA), and includes members Brian Mitchell, Dolores McAllister, Jeffrey Cason, George Renfro, Neal Von Flue, Kristen Dorsey, Julie Todd, Michael Kreski, and Natalie Strong. Councilmembers Chris Pimentel and Don Brann are the city-government representatives of the committee, and new El Segundo Public Library Director Melissa McColum is the city liaison.

ESA&CAC member Dolores McAllister explains that the committee was presented with an exciting opportunity upon its inception: set goals and a vision for arts and culture within the city of El Segundo. “We essentially had a blank slate” for the formation of the committee’s purpose, McAllister says, and she and Chairperson Sally Martin list the following goals the committee has set, among others:

- Account for and connect artists of all types within the community.
- Foster an environment of inclusivity.
- Attract creatives and artists to the city.
- Support the city’s artists and creatives.
- Help El Segundo residents to really love their city.
- Make El Segundo a catalyst for invention, creativity, sustainability, wellness, prosperity, and peace.

To pursue these goals and others, the committee includes four subcommittees, “where the work is really

done,” Martin says. These are the Projects subcommittee, the Events & Calendar subcommittee, the Percent for the Arts subcommittee (which explores potential revenue streams), and the Grants subcommittee. These groups have been quite active already; their work so far

has helped bring to fruition the DWP water-tank mural by John Van Hamersveld (see the June issue of *The El Segundo Scene*), the in-progress

Centennial Art Project, and a planned basketball-court mural in Rec Park that was proposed by a local citizen and business owner. On the near horizon is programming for Indigenous Peoples Month, spearheaded by the Events & Calendar subcommittee, which will include an exhibit at ESMoA and other events later this year.

Members of ESA&CAC with whom I spoke, namely Martin, McAllister, and Neal Von Flue, invite the El Segundo community to attend their meetings, to simply listen or to make public comments during the prescribed time on the agenda. (Agendas are always made available prior to each meeting on the City of El Segundo’s website.) The committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month, usually at ESMoA but sometimes in alternate locations, which are published within the meeting agendas. Members of the public may attend without giving prior notice. Individuals wishing to present specific ideas to the committee, however, are also welcome, and are advised to contact Recreation Superintendent Arcia Hester first, at ahester@elsegundo.org.

At only about one and a half years old, ESA&CAC is one of the newer city committees, and its members are intent on making things happen. “We take good ideas and work to make them into reality,” member Von Flue shares. Chairperson Martin agrees. “We’re really on a roll now,” she adds.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 23.

Obsessed

El Segundo's Art Walk gets us outside to mingle with neighbors and appreciate local art. By Jenny Gardner

Summertime brings one of my favorite local traditions: the annual El Segundo Art Walk, aka ESAW. On the third Thursday of June, July, and August, businesses and restaurants throughout Downtown and Smoky Hollow host artists or share their own artistic creations with the public on a self-guided tour.

My family has attended almost every ESAW since the event's inception in 2015, when it was jointly put together by community members Holly Socrates, Josette Murphy, Erik Svendsen, Tim Holmes, Michael Schreiber, Dani Brubaker, Michelle Guidi Reyes, and George Renfro. Since then, we've enjoyed myriad creative experiences at Art Walk—paintings,



sculptures, plant art, painted people, live performances such as aerial artists and musicians, and more—and we've had a great time with friends as we've walked among the exhibits. My kids especially loved learning how to use spray paint to create a mural with KidWiseman several



years ago, a unique opportunity afforded to them by the Art Walk and its inventive spirit. Over the years, I've also brought home numerous paintings and prints from artists including Holly Socrates, Damien Fulton, Eric Curry, and Emily Brantley, which provide me with regular reminders of the fun of ESAW.

This year's events feature a headquarters venue that includes live artwork, music, a beer garden, and an information booth, explains George Renfro, an El Segundo-based graphic artist and one of ESAW's original founders.

El Segundo Art Walk
 Thurs., July 19, 5-9pm
 Thurs., August 16, 5-9pm
 Downtown El Segundo + Smoky Hollow District
elsegundoartwalk.com

The first Art Walk this summer, which took place on June 21, offered

beer from El Segundo Brewing Co. and Boulevard Brewing Co., as well as music from Robert Jon & The Wreck and Skeleton Bay. The headquarters, located at the corner of Main Street and Grand Avenue, also featured renowned street artist London Kaye and local artist Dylan Gonzalez co-creating a supersized interactive, multimedia wallet, in a nod to the song "I Left My Wallet in El Segundo" by A Tribe Called Quest.

The July and August Art Walks will showcase artists including Kris Kobzina, who works in special effects and prosthetic makeup, painter Dane Capo, sculptor Marcel Meyer, and encaus-



tic painter Sabrina Armitage, among many others.

Attendees, especially those coming from outside of El Segundo, are encouraged to park for free at the Aloft Hotel at 475 N. Pacific Coast Highway and take a free Swoop shuttle to the Art Walk. These shuttles will also loop through the event, offering easy on-off access between Downtown and Smoky Hollow.

Jenny Gardner is a local resident, mother of two kids in ESUSD, and lover of baked goods, craft beer, red wine, and lattes.

Through the Lens

Locals take a fresh look at summer through their cameras.

Sponsored by:

El Segundo Optometry



It's nice to SEE you!



Clockwise from top left: Eileen Bell (trail and sky, lemons), Lynda Cornfield ("Ebbing Tide Sand Art"), Eileen Bell (rose), Janet Gervers (lifeguard tower), Marisa Nakada (sunset), Janet Gervers (hang glider), Tesse Rasmussen (kids at Art Walk, watching sunset), Marisa Nakada ("I dream of cotton-candy skies").

Hometown Memories

Impressions of a childhood spent in El Segundo: Library Park, 1960s and 1970s

By Mitchell Mahony

Back in the 1960s and 1970s, Library Park had two decorative fountains. One was a multi-level affair close to Main St. and Mariposa Ave. (just east of where the library currently stands). The other was closer to the intersection of Richmond St. and Palm Ave., and is currently a landscaping feature. The latter, when it was a fountain, included a fish- and water-lily-filled pond with one main water sprayer in the center.

One day, my mom, Roanne Blake-man Mahony, and our next-door neighbor went out shopping. I, at about three years old, was left with the neighbor's older kids. We kids



Library Park's northwest-corner fountain then (top) and now (below).



all went over to Library Park to enjoy the day, and another sister and a brother joined us. The brother waded into the Richmond-Palm fountain's pond and played with

the sprayer nozzle. I was sitting on the edge of the pond, and as I watched, I slipped and fell in. A bit shocked but unfazed, we two fully soaked boys and the rest of the crew hotfooted it back to the neighbor's house, my clothes went into the washer, and I went into the tub. By the time the ladies arrived back, I was in clean, dry clothes as if nothing had happened. I don't think my mom even knows today about that Library Park fountain escapade.

Next month in Throwback: Part Two of Neal Von Flue's historical "True Tales of the Payroll City," continued from our June issue.



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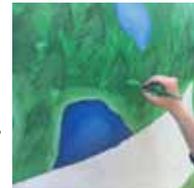
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The Artist's Voice

Arena High School students collaborate, negotiate, and create.

By Natalie Strong



A dozen or so teenagers buzz around an 8-by-ten-foot storage shed like bees around a hive, some reaching high, some crouched down low, all with paintbrushes in their hands. They are the students of Arena High School, and they are busy painting a mural they designed together. Watching them duck and weave, I get the sense that their somewhat organized dance of limbs and brushes did not come easily, but was developed over time spent toiling together. I wonder at their ability to work without messy mishaps despite how many close calls there are between paint and clothes and hair.



The mural is a made up of a collection of seemingly unrelated ideas: planets and plants, bees and a bear, Pickle Rick and the El Segundo water tower, a large red car, and a banner reading, "Don't be afraid of new arenas.—Elon Musk." Of course, if Elon Musk can put a car into space, why not put a bear and a bee in space? The choice to combine space and plants was informed by classes the teens have taken throughout the school year. I am told that the design process took a good deal of negotiation, and even after the design was agreed upon and approved by the board of directors, this mural remains a fluid project.

A tall boy reaches up, painting the white half of what will be a yin-yang symbol on a black outer space background near the top of the shed. As can happen in any artist's project, and as if in slow motion, a long string of white paint escapes his brush and billows onto the shed in what is now an obvious mistake. Movement stops, mouths drop open. Oh

no. I brace for an outburst. But then I realize that I spend most of my time with gradeschoolers, and I don't know much about today's teenagers at all. There is no outburst. After the briefest silence, they get their voices back. To my amazement, they begin to brainstorm what that white line could be, how it could be incorporated into the design as though it were intentional. "A trail of smoke!" "The yin-yang is melting!" "It's a comet's tail!" They laugh and enjoy each other's ideas, and then without any input from adults, they work out that the simplest solution is to paint black over it. No big deal. "Who has the black paint?" The process is enjoyed, handled maturely, and everyone gets back to work.

They are good kids. They are nice to each other. They respect their project. And while it is clear that some are more interested in art than others, they are all tuned in to their group dynamic, and they all have respect for the work of their peers. This is the right project for this group of young people, and they have the right teacher.



The shed mural was the brainchild of Arena High School's art teacher, Adriana Ochoa. When she came on board, she noted that the students were used to working individually, staying in the comfort zone of their own ideas, and sitting indoors. Adriana got them working together and helped them navigate the challenge of fusing their many ideas into one united piece of art. She helped them communicate with each other, and they came up with a group-driven design. They worked together to get the design approved, and then Adriana got the students on their feet and outside in the sunshine.

The mural will be completed in the fall when school resumes, but it is clear that the finished product is not nearly as important as all of the lessons the students have learned about succeeding together. Adriana willingly placed this project in their hands, and they have carried it, gaining self-confidence, ownership of their ideas, communication skills, and a concrete example of the power of perseverance and teamwork.

The Arena mural artists are:

Jacob Brockman, Inez Delude, Elijah Diggs, Jordan Gillette, Alessandra Gutierrez, Afonso Meiasu, Georgia O'Neil, Tylor Capello, Ben Romero, Ben Schar, Rowan Seiter, Austin Sorenson, Allyson Sosa, Ben Stanfield, Niman Sudwal, Mikayla Munson, Paige Adams, Charlotte Kendall, Dorothy Akexanian

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City Guide to Cultural Events

El Segundo's comprehensive monthly calendar of arts, culture, and community events. Submit local events for this guide to events@theelsegundoscene.com.

July 2018

4 Backyard BBQ Block Party

Wed. 3-7pm
Brewport (back lot)
Admission free, 310-648-8972

4 El Segundo July 4 Celebration

Wed. 10am-9pm
Rec Park
Wristbands req'd for eve. field access,
310-524-2700

5 "Aloha El Segundo" Farmers' Market

Thurs. 3-7pm
Main St.
Free, 310-524-2700

6 ESMoA "Just Draw" Club (adults)

Fri. 10-11am
ESMoA
Free, esmoa.org

6 R6 Distillery Tour



Fri. 6:30-7:30pm
R6 Distillery
\$15, r6distillery.com

7 ES History Room open

Sat. 1-3pm
ES Public Library
Free, call first 310-364-0117

7 Live music, Ron Tanski

Sat. 7-10pm
Smoky Hollow Tasting + Taproom
Free, r6distillery.com

8 Candle-Making Workshop

Sun. 1-2:30pm
Holly Socrates
\$48, hollysocrates.com

8 Comedy Night

Sun. 8-11pm
Smoky Hollow Tasting + Taproom
\$8, r6distillery.com

8 Concert in the Park No. 2 (swing)

Sun. 4:30pm
Library Park
Free, 310-524-2700

9-13 Photography Camp

for Kids

Mon.-Fri. 9:30am-12:30pm
Holly Socrates
\$240/wk, hollysocrates.com

9-20 Summer Symposium Music Camp

Mon.-Fri. hours vary
ESPAC (at ESHS)
Pricing at sbmusic.org/symposium

10 Teen Library Club

Tues. 3:30-4:30pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2722

11 Kids' Library Club

Wed. 3-4pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2722

12 Chamber Mixer in the Park

Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm
Chevron Park
\$10/\$15, 310-322-1220

12 Cruise-In/Food Truck Rally

Thurs. 6-9pm
Automobile Driving Museum

Free, theadm.org

12 Culture Club: Exploring Asia (kids 8-12)

Thurs. 9:30am-2:30pm
The LOFT
\$40, loftacademy.org

12 "El Segundo Olympics" Farmers' Market

Thurs. 3-7pm
Main St.
Free, 310-524-2700

12 Frocks & Rocks Night of Style

Thurs. 6-9pm
Frocks & Rocks
Free, frocksandrocks.net

12-14 Sharing the Rough Fundraiser + Trunk Show

Thurs. + Fri. 10am-6pm,
Sat. 10am-4pm
The Jewelry Source
Free, 310-322-7110

13 ESMoA "Just Draw" Club (adults)

Fri. 10-11am
ESMoA
Free, esmoa.org

14 The Art of the Classic Ride 2

This month's guide sponsored by



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Sat. 10am-4pm
Automobile Driving
Museum
Free, theadm.org

14 Live music, Del Guido Trio

Sat. 7-10pm
Smoky Hollow Tasting +
Taproom
Free, r6distillery.com

14 Picasso + Prosecco

Sat. 1-3pm
Holly Socrates
\$40, hollysocrates.com

15 City of Angels Saxo- phone Quartet

Sun. 2:30pm
Old Town Music Hall
\$20, 310-322-2592

15 Soap-Making Work- shop

Sun. noon-1:30pm
Holly Socrates
\$36, hollysocrates.com

17 Teen Library Club

Tues. 3:30-4:30pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2722

17 Mixed-Media Art Class

Enrollment Begins



El Cuervo Gallery
Call Mark Waldman for
pricing, 310-335-9928

18 Kids' Block-Printing Workshop

Wed. 10am-12:30pm
Holly Socrates
\$46, hollysocrates.com

18 Organic Skin Care

Wed. 6-7:30pm
Holly Socrates
\$48, hollysocrates.com

18 Kids' Library Club

Wed. 3-4pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2722

19 Art Walk No. 2

Thurs. 5-9pm
Downtown ES and
Smoky Hollow district
Free, elsegundoartwalk.
com

19 Cruise-In and Food- Truck Rally

Thurs. 6-9pm
Automobile Driving
Museum
Free, theadm.org

19 Culture Club: Exploring Asia (kids 8-12)

Thurs. 9:30am-2:30pm
The LOFT
\$40, loftacademy.org

19 "Under the Big Top" Farmers' Market

Thurs. 3-7pm
Main St.
Free, 310-524-2700

19 Flower Seed Bombs DIY

Thurs. noon-
1pm
ES Public
Library
Free, 310-524-
2728

20 ESMoA "Just Draw" Club (adults)

Fri. 10-11am
ESMoA
Free, esmoa.org

20 R6 Distillery Tour

Fri. 6:30-7:30pm
R6 Distillery
\$15, r6distillery.com

20-22 All-Star Comedy Festival

Fri. 8:15pm, Sat. 2:30pm
+ 8:15pm, Sun. 2:30pm
Old Town Music Hall
\$8-\$10, oldtownmusi-
chall.org

21 Artlife Reception

Sat. 6-9pm
Artlife Gallery
Free, 310-938-2511

21 ESCB "Just for Laughs" music + dining event

Sat. 4pm



ESPACE (at ESHS)
Free, sbmusic.org

City Guide to Cultural Events

21 Live music, Ron Tanski + Co.

Sat. 7-10pm
Smoky Hollow Tasting + Taproom
Free, r6distillery.com

22 Dollface Dames' Speakeasy

Sun. 7:45-10pm
Smoky Hollow Tasting + Taproom
\$20, r6distillery.com

22 Concert in the Park No. 3 (country/folk)

Sun. 4:30pm
Library Park
Free, 310-524-2700

23-27 Hamilton SENSATION camp

Mon.-Fri. 9am-3pm
The LOFT
\$250, loftacademy.org

24 Teen Library Club

Tues. 3:30-4:30pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2728

25 Kids' Mid-Century Furniture Design

Wed. 10am-12:30pm
Holly Socrates
\$46, hollysocrates.com

25 Kids' Library Club

Wed. 3-4pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2722

26 A Book & A Movie Pairing (*The Princess Bride*)

Thurs. 6:30-8:30pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2722

26 Cruise-In/Food Truck Rally

Thurs. 6-9pm
Automobile Driving Museum
Free, theadm.org

26 Food + Wine Pairing Event

Thurs. 6-8pm
Custom Design & Construction
\$10 Habitat for Humanity donation, RSVP 310-658-5583

26 Shibori workshop

Thurs. 5-8pm
Holly Socrates
\$80, hollysocrates.com

26 Sketch Night at Artlife

Thurs. 6-8pm
Artlife Gallery
\$10 suggested donation, 310-938-2511

27 ESMoA Just Draw (adults)

Fri. 10-11am
ESMoA
Free, esmoa.org

28 Mapping Our Way embroidery workshop

Sat. 1-4pm

ESMoA

Free, esmoa.org

28 Summer Swing Night

Sat. 7pm
Automobile Driving Museum
Tix \$20-\$30, theadm.org

29 Macrame Workshop

Sun. 2-5pm
Holly Socrates
\$65, hollysocrates.com

30 Beach Sand Globes DIY



Thurs. noon-1pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2728

31 Teen Library Club

Tues. 3:30-4:30pm
ES Public Library
Free, 310-524-2722

August 2018

4 Movie in the Park (Mary Poppins)

Sat. 4:00pm
Chevron Park
\$5, movieinthepark.info

5 Concert in the Park No. 4 (variety band)

Sun. 4:30pm
Library Park
Free, 310-524-2700

11-12 Family Campout

Sat. 4pm-Sun. noon
Stevenson Field, Rec Park
\$12/person presale, 310-524-2362

16 Art Walk No. 3

Thurs. 5-9pm
Downtown ES and Smoky Hollow district
Free, elsegundoartwalk.com

Want more El Segundo event information?

Visit our online Guide to Cultural Events at theelsegundoscene.com

To submit an El Segundo cultural event, send e-mail to events@theelsegundoscene.com

All event information is as accurate as possible at time of printing. Dates subject to change; contact event organizer to confirm.

The Art of the Classic Ride 2

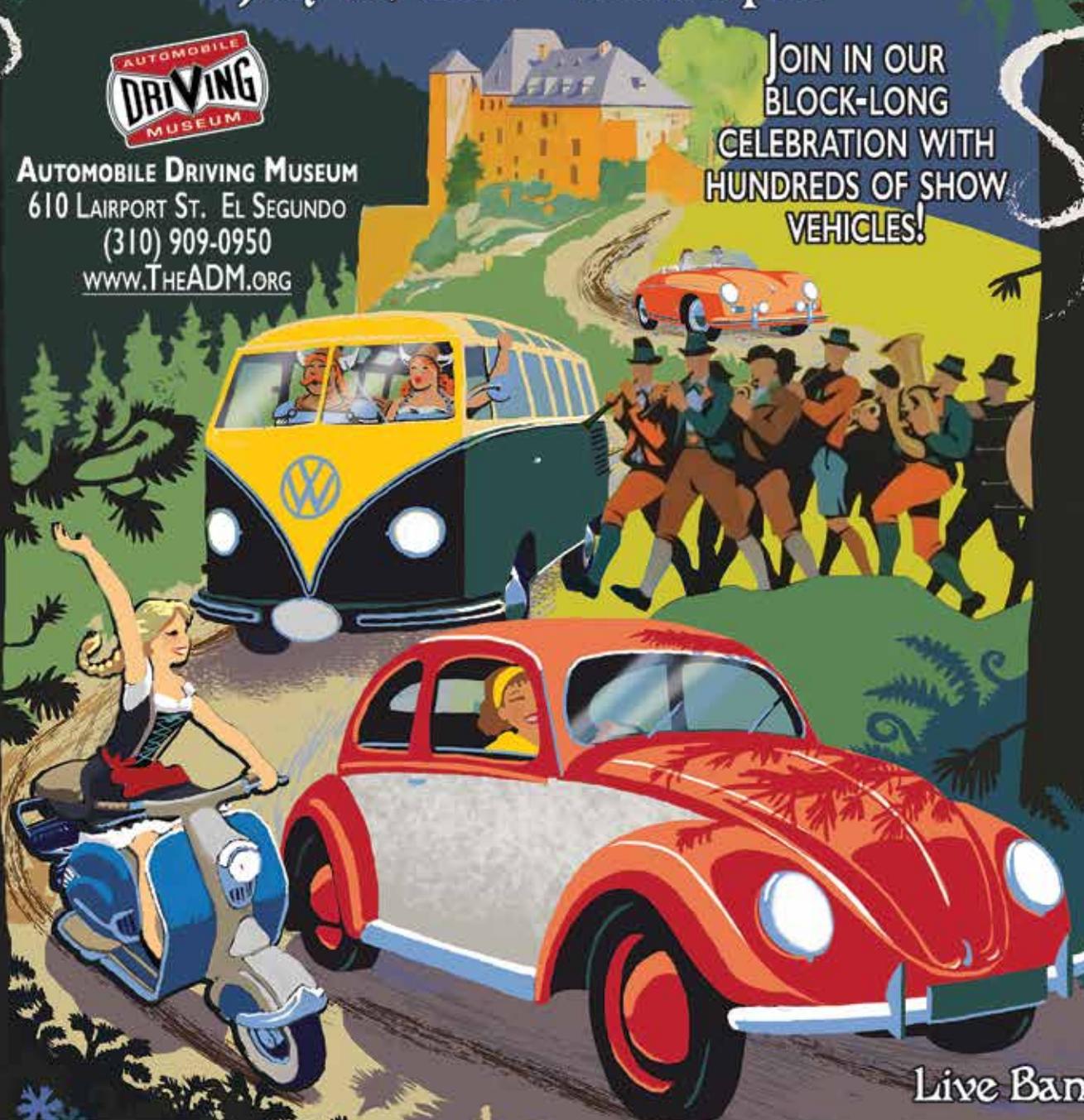
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Young Artists of 90245

El Segundo's youngest artists and writers share their creations with the community.

This month's young artists sponsored by:



This month's submissions: "Surfin' Bus," Cohen Liberty (5); book review, Ethan Dea (13); green abstract, Hunter Kingsley (9); quilt, Josie Gardner (12); two friends, Ada Valladares (12).



A G-R-R-REAT SUMMER READING BOOK

A review of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey
Ethan Dea

Hello, it is Ethan Dea from El Segundo Middle School. Over the past school year, I had a lot of habits that were annoying but I could not stop doing. My mom advised me to read this book. Reluctantly, I started reading and realized how important this could be with my habits and the ways that I deal with many situations in school.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens has 2 major categories, Private Victories and Public Victories. Private victories are first and it explains how to control yourself and changes the way you look at things or your point of view. For example, there is a habit in the book which is called, "Put First Things First," which really helped me. One time my friends invited me to have a sleepover at their house but I had a lot of homework that weekend, I reflected back to this chapter and decided to stay home and finish my homework and the next weekend we figured out that we could have a sleepover.

I feel this book can help a lot of teenagers because we all need a refresher on our habits on an everyday basis. I believe that if people read this book, they will view situations differently and it might be a big help for those suffering from bad or harmful habits. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* is not like any other book. I guarantee that if you read this book and take in the actions and apply these 7 habits, your life will change.

I beg you to pick up this book and read *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* THIS SUMMER!

Kids, we'd love to publish your work!

All young people aged 2 to 18 who are part of the El Segundo community are encouraged to submit original artwork, poetry, and other creative works for publication in this section.

The editor will make every effort to publish each submitted work.

To submit, e-mail large, high-resolution images of original artwork, or Word docs of original writing, to

kids@theelsegundoscene.com. Please include artist's name and age.



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El Segundo Eats

Far from scary, **Cookie Zombie's** owner-operator **Natasha Nguyen** is friendly and ambitious—and she chooses fresh cookies over fresh brains every time. **By Amy Alberts**

I first spotted the mysterious “Vote for Cookie Zombie” signs during a trip to the beach off of Grand Ave. Three years later, long after I’d become a frequent Cookie Zombie customer, I still knew nothing about its origins or owner. The enigmatic yet successful business doesn’t have a storefront, and its listed address is the location of the liquor store on Main Street, where Cookie Zombie fans can pick up their orders if they don’t want delivery.

It took me a few tries to get ahold of the busy proprietor, 34-year-old Natasha Nguyen, who was born and raised in El Segundo. However, once I reached her, she was more than happy to answer all of my questions.

Nguyen started the business unofficially in 2012 while she was teaching at El Segundo High School and coaching girl’s volleyball. While her friends in their twenties were going out partying in the evenings, she and her boyfriend were home trying new cookie recipes with chocolate chips and peanut M&Ms. “We were already doing it. I just needed to see if we could turn it into a business,” Nguyen explains.

“We started off slowly, delivering one order per night, usually to my friends working at The Tavern,” Nguyen says. A few weekends later she had a group of friends over to help prep orders, a Facebook page was launched, and there was no turning back.

Nguyen cut her teaching hours out but still coached the high school vol-



Cookie Zombie proprietor Natasha Nguyen

leyball team for as long as she could before the baking business demanded more of her time.

She eventually moved out of her personal kitchen and now has a dedicated kitchen space in El Segundo, a growing staff, more than 60 rotating recipes, and never a slow night, sometimes delivering more than 100 dozen cookies an evening.

Nguyen credits the success of her growing business to a grass-roots campaign placing those Vote for Cookie Zombie signs around the South Bay, as well as social-media efforts and strong word of mouth. But it wasn’t a fast take-off. “It was five slow years, but I always had at least one call every night to keep me going,” she says.

When asked if most of her customers are late-night stoners or partiers, Nguyen says with a laugh, “Everyone always thinks that, but it’s really mostly kids, families, people just watching TV late at night by

themselves or even parents who will say, ‘Come by after nine pm when the kids are sleeping, and don’t ring the bell.’”

Nguyen credits her boyfriend with coming up with most of the recipes. The couple frequently add new flavors to the menu, like the “Nochella Neon Carnival,” which they debuted in time for Coachella. The most popular cookie is the classic chocolate chip followed by the cookies and cream and the OMFG (double the chocolate chips). And while she says stoners aren’t their core customer base, they do have flavors that may appeal to an eclectic late-night craving, such as cookies stuffed with Fruity Pebbles and Circus Animals.

Nguyen says the name Cookie Zombie conveys the fact that they only do late-night deliveries. When asked if customers are ever bummed the drivers aren’t dressed as zombies, she laughs and says, “No, they actually will sometimes request that they *not* be dressed as zombies... or sometimes clowns, which is weird.”

Clearly customers’ fears of zombies (and apparently clowns) are not deterring them from ordering up batches of fresh-baked cookies nightly. Nguyen says she never gets to slow down anymore and has plans to keep introducing new items, and even hinted at something exciting debuting this summer. But, like everything surrounding Cookie Zombie, it is a bit of a mystery.

Amy Alberts lives in El Segundo and works for Sony Pictures Entertainment.

Cookie Zombie

Thurs.-Sat. 8pm-1am, Sun. 7pm-12am
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Adjacent: Field Trip!

It's summertime! Pick an upcoming Saturday to try some invigorating sea kayaking around Long Beach's picturesque **Naples Canals**. If shark-phobic Seth Kingsley can do it, anyone can.

There comes a time in every man's life when he says, "No more!" That moment came when I was buckling my seat belt and something profound occurred—the buckle rudely pinched my protruding love handle. Instantly, my life flashed before my eyes. Every donut, corn dog, and meat lover's pizza I had consumed led to this epiphany: I needed to lose the gut! But how? Jogging? Nope; my knees hate me with a sadistic passion. Cycling? Negative; no one should ever witness me in Lycra shorts. There was only one course of action—the open sea! Fast-forward to the weekend, my son Hunter and I were following the GPS to Long Beach's "Kayaks On The Water"—a rental spot roughly 40 minutes from El Segundo. When we arrived, we approached a tiki hut on the beach, watched a quick safety video, and then signed a form promising we wouldn't sue if a narwhal impaled us (or something like that; I didn't closely read the fine print). Minutes later, we were strapped into our life jackets and setting out. Ahh, the wind in our hair, the sun on our backs, and a GoPro camera wedged between my man-cleavage. I felt alive, my son was loving it too, and all for just 10 bucks an hour.

That's cool, bro, but why travel to Long Beach? Great question,



reader. I'll tell you why: because a giant shark ate Sam Jackson in *Deep Blue Sea*! Chomped him like a chew toy. So, safe and relaxed Alamitos Bay gives my irrational brain a sense



of security. The water's calmer, there are no big waves, it's easier to paddle, and it's really kid-friendly, but above all: I'm less likely to be devoured by a Great White.

If you say so, but what about the scenery? Another solid question. The bay is beautiful, but the really awesome part is paddling over to the Naples Canals. We followed a circular route taking us alongside some fancy-pants homes. It's great eye-candy. My co-captain, 9-year-old Hunter, particularly enjoyed seeing all the small boats coming and going from private docks and passing by friendly paddle boarders. At one point, when

my shoulders mutinied and declared they needed a brief respite, we followed the provided map to a nearby beach. There we anchored the S.S. Kingsley and took a refreshing dip in the water. Not gonna name names, but one of us may have used this as an aquatic potty break. Re-charged, we navigated

our kayak back to the canals and finished up our scenic lap: soaking our toes, birdwatching, and trying not to accidentally bludgeon each other with the paddles. It was the perfect day, but, alas, land ho! The shore was back in sight. For added gravitas as I paddled, I proclaimed, "From Hell's heart, I stab at thee; For hate's sake, I spit my last breath at thee." Wait, did Ahab die in *Moby Dick*? Hmm. Probably not the best choice of literary references, then. But we did it! Hunter and I conquered the bay. As the sun set, I thought, *Here's to a new healthy lifestyle! ...however, I really could go for a Double Double once we roll back into El Segundo.*



Seth Kingsley lives in El Segundo, is married to The El Segundo Scene's editor, and writes comedy pieces for E! News.



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