



As the holiday season arrives, my family and I just wanted to take a moment to send you a little warmth and a whole lot of good wishes. From our family to yours, we hope your holidays are filled with joy, laughter, and the people who mean the most.

These photos are from a trip we took in early November to Minnesota — we visited family, caught a Ducks vs. Wild game, and even squeezed in a Vikings game. It was cold... but the memories were worth every frozen finger.

Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful Holiday Season and a happy, healthy New Year.

Warmly, The Fernandez Family









MAY@R'S CORNER

s we enter the holiday season in La Habra Heights, I want to extend warm wishes to all our residents. This time of year brings celebration, reflection,

and the joy of gathering with friends and family. It also brings unique seasonal hazards that we should all keep in mind-especially when it comes to the safety of our pets and animals.

Iohn Pespisa

Holiday Safety Reminders

Decorations, lighting, and busy households all increase the chance of accidents. Simple precautions can make a meaningful difference:

- Inspect light strands and cords for damage, and avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- · Keep flammable décor such as trees, wreaths, and garlands away from heat sources.
- Never leave candles unattended—consider using battery-operated LED candles as a safer option.
- If you're traveling for the holidays, secure your home and ask a trusted neighbor to keep an eye out while you're away.

Pet and Animal Safety

Many of our homes—and our equestrian properties—include cherished pets and livestock that may be more vulnerable during the holidays. Increased activity, unfamiliar noises, and new decorations can create stress or hazards. Be aware of these holiday dangers to animals:

- Toxic holiday plants: Poinsettias, mistletoe, holly berries, lilies, and amaryllis can be harmful or poisonous to dogs, cats, and livestock if ingested. Keep these plants well out of reach or consider pet-safe alternatives.
- Food hazards: Chocolate, grapes and raisins, caffeine, alcohol, xylitol (in some sugar-free foods), and rich holiday leftovers can be dangerous for pets.
- Electrical cords and décor: Curious pets may chew on cords or ingest ribbons and ornaments, which can cause serious injury.
- Noise sensitivity: Holiday gatherings or unexpected fireworks can frighten animals. Provide secure, quiet spaces for pets, and ensure horses and other large animals are safely contained.

A bit of extra awareness goes a long way in keeping all members of your household-two- and four-legged-safe and comfortable.

Fire Engine Dedication Ceremony

I'm pleased to share an important milestone for our city. We recently held the dedication ceremony for our new fire engine, made possible through the support of State Senator Bob Archuleta. His commitment, partnership, and patience throughout the lengthy procurement process were instrumental in bringing this life-saving resource to our community. Special thanks go to our great city staff and fire department for making this a memorable event! Please see details and photos on pages 6 and 7.

Closing Thoughts

As we celebrate the holidays, let's take care of one another, our homes, and our animals. With a few proactive steps, we can all enjoy a safe, peaceful, and joyful season.

—John Pespisa



Gil Taylor

PRESIDENT'S

e had the biggest turnout ever for our annual Morning With Santa party at The Park gym on December 6! A gang of excited kids, parents and grandparents were waiting to greet Santa when he arrived in our big, new La Habra Heights fire engine, and he then led them into the gym where he passed out goodies, listened to kids' requests and posed for many photos (see page 8).

LHHIA board member Diana Taylor was chairperson for the event, and a great team of volunteers did the work (below).



LHHIA membership dues

At this time of year, we remind you about joining LHHIA or renewing your membership, and we've included an envelope in this issue to make it easier for you to mail your check. You can also pay online at *lhhia.com*. Either way, we really appreciate your support for our organization that has been serving the people of the Heights for 86 years. See more about membership on page 4. On page 5, we once again recognize our generous Premium Members.

We don't publish *Heights Life* in January, so let me take this opportunity to wish you and yours the happiest of holidays and a great new year. Join us for a full slate of LHHIA activities in 2026!

—Gil Taylor

La Habra Heights Improvement Association Fiscal Year-end Report: 2024-2025

Assets

Advertising	\$ 25,204.00
Membership Dues	44,175.00
Fire Department Donations	21,700.00
Donations	24,273.00
Total Revenue	\$115,352.00
Liabilities	
Heights Life magazine	\$43,080.09
Events	23,210.87
Fire Department Donations	32,885.70
Miscellaneous Expenses	6,897.43
Total Liabilities	\$106,074.09
Net Assets	\$ 9,277.91

Please join LHHIA or renew membership

e cordially invite you to become a member of La Habra Heights Improvement Association or to renew your LHHIA membership—with our sincere thanks.

Founded in 1939, LHHIA is a 501(c)(3) independent, all-volunteer charitable organization that is eligible to receive tax-deductible donations in accordance with IRS Section 170.

LHHIA is *not* part of the City of La Habra Heights and receives no city funding. We rely solely on the support of our members and sponsors to help pay for:



• *Heights Life* magazine, which spotlights community events and residents and provides articles pertinent to our rural lifestyle. We rely on your dues to help with publishing and mailing costs (which have risen considerably) so that we can produce 11 issues each year. *Heights Life* has been an integral part of the Heights since 1949.

• Music in The Park summer concerts:

We hold these well-attended concerts on Wednesday evenings during the summer at our beautiful La Habra Heights city park. Thanks to the generosity of our members and sponsors, we provide an entertaining opportunity for our community to gather, listen to good music, dance, picnic and spend quality time together in a lovely rural setting.





• Easter Egg Hunt: Held annually at The Park, this popular event features egg hunts for three different age groups, free pony rides, a petting zoo, face painting, photos with the Easter bunny and prizes for golden egg winners.

• Halloween Haunt: Each October 31, our community volunteers transform the gym at The Park into "La Haunted Heights" so that kids can enjoy a fun, safe Halloween with our trick-or-treat alley, games, events and refreshments. We've been "haunting" since 1980! Bring your children or grandchildren for a *spooktacular* evening!





• Morning With Santa: Every December, we begin celebrating the Christmas season in La Habra Heights with our Morning With Santa event that features photos with Santa Claus and holiday crafts, games, music and goodies. Bring the whole family for a morning of holiday fun!



• Community Yard Sale: This LHHIA event, held periodically at The Park, has proven very popular, with many sales booths offering a wide variety of used goods, as well as crafts. Watch

Heights Life for details about our next Community Yard Sale.

- Special community programs and projects: LHHIA sponsors Welcome Wagon and our annual Photo Contest (we publish the winning shots in *Heights Life*). As our name implies, over the years LHHIA has regularly managed and funded a variety of community improvement projects, including:
- Removing dead trees throughout the Heights and providing new trees and shrubs in a major, multi-year "re-greening" program for which LHHIA received a special commendation from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.
- Building and maintaining the gazebo that serves as a bandstand for Music in The Park and other events.
 - Helping upgrade and maintain the horse arena at The Park.
- Providing and maintaining the original marquee sign on Hacienda Road that publicizes community events.
- Providing picnic tables, benches, railings and pet receptacles to make The Park a pleasant place for community gatherings.
 - Providing numerous flags for City Hall and The Park.
- Extensive painting and repairs at the gym at The Park, including installing new fireproof exterior doors.
- Donations to the LHH Fire Department for and providing new life-saving equipment, as well as kitchen utensils and supplies.
- LHHIA is currently participating in fund-raising efforts to help our Fire Department upgrade its equipment and make much-needed repairs to its facilities. Watch *Heights Life* for details—and please help.

LHHIA membership levels

LHHIA offers the following annual membership levels:

- Regular Membership: \$35 per year
- Bronze Premium Membership: \$75 per year
- Silver Premium Membership: \$100 per year
- Gold Premium Membership: \$250 per year
- Platinum Premium Membership: \$500 per year
- Diamond Premium Membership: \$1,000 or more per year
- Sapphire Premium Membership: \$5,000 or more per year

We're eager to make all our residents aware of the important role that La Habra Heights Improvement Association continues to play in improving the quality of life in our unique rural community. We cordially welcome you to get involved in our LHHIA activities—contact any of our board members, listed on the back of this magazine, or e-mail *MemberLHHIA@gmail.com*.

You'll find an envelope in this magazine. Please use it to mail your check to join or to renew your membership. You can also pay online anytime at *lbbia.org*.



Premium Members

ach year in *Heights Life* we offer this special recognition to those who have purchased our LHHIA Premium Memberships. We sincerely thank all these Premium Members, and we invite you to join them (for details, please see "Become a Member" on page 20).

PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Sapphire—\$5,000+, Diamond—\$1,000+, Platinum—\$500, Gold—\$250, Silver—\$100, Bronze—\$75.

Regular LHHIA membership is \$35.

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KENT & DOROTHY ROBERTS

PLATINUM

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SONDRA & JOHN HEINE
DR. PAUL & CYNTHIA JACOBSEN
DENNIS & PHYLLIS LAHERTY
AMY & TONY PEREZ

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BRONZE

RUTH BIBB ROBERT & TRUDY BOHR BIN & GUO CHEN **CHRIS & SUMMER CONTES** S. CORTEZ RANDALL & CHERIE FERGUSON ROXANE REQUIO & DOUGLAS FRANCIS ARTURO & AMY FRANZ GREG & BARBARA GUNTER LEONARD & PHOENIX HSU Noor Khan KATHY KINGETT FRED KORNOFF MICHAEL & ANGELA LASCARI RAYMOND & DIANNA LEW GEORGE & ARLENE NORSWORTHY RUSSELL & PATTY O'DALY JEFF & EVA ONG-SIONG RANDY & CATHERINE STEELE YVONNE SANCHEZ & DON TILLEY DIANE & RICHARD TOSCANO SPRUSTON TRUST SCOTT WALGREN SHARON YANG Roberto Zamora





he community gathered at The Park on November 8 to dedicate our new Type 1 fire engine and to thank California State Senator Bob Archuleta (District 30) for securing a state grant of more than \$1 million to purchase and outfit the vehicle.

In their speeches during the ceremony, Mayor John Pespisa, City Manager Rafferty Wooldridge and Fire Chief Edward Martin all expressed the gratitude of the City of La Habra Heights to the senator.

During his remarks, Senator Archuleta commended the La Habra Heights Fire Department and described it as "a mini fire academy" that provides valuable training and experience to those who aspire to fire-service careers. He said that such training benefits many California communities.

The senator encouraged Fire Chief Martin "to make a list" for him of other equipment and improvements needed to upgrade the LHH Fire Department.

Our fire department is not the only one to benefit from the senator's efforts. In October, his office announced that he had secured a grant of \$1.5 million to replace an outdated fire station in Whittier, as well as a similar grant for a new brush fire station in Montebello.

After the ceremony, the senator joined those in attendance to watch demonstrations by fire department personnel, including hose-deployment tactics used to fight wildland fires and using the Jaws of Life" to remove a door from a wrecked car, a method for extricating trapped passengers.

Senator Archuleta also enjoyed interacting with "junior firefighters" during target practice with a fire hose.



Our new Pierce Type 1 fire engine is a heavy-duty vehicle used to fight fires in urban, rural and suburban areas. The truck features a powerful pump with a high gallon-per-minute output, large water and hose capacities and long, expandable ladders. Mayor John Pespisa observed: "This new engine strengthens our emergency response capability and represents a significant investment in the safety of La Habra Heights residents."















Ceremony speakers were (from top) Senator Bob Archuleta, LHH Mayor John Pespisa, City Manager Rafferty Wooldridge and Fire Chief Edward Martin.









Photos by Barbara & Dan Stracner.





Morning With Santa













































































he winter solstice (first day of winter), arrives on Sunday, December 21, at 7:30 a.m. Even with longer nights and more of a chill in the air, gardens could use a bit of sprucing up. Decorate your entranceway with poinsettias, which are available in a delightful array of colors. Kids could have fun collecting pine cones and evergreens to make wreaths and decorative swags.

Traditional holiday plants & blooms

In addition to poinsettias, Christmas trees, amaryllis, Christmas cactus, holly, mistletoe and paper whites are popular holiday plants. As soon as you bring a live Christmas tree home, cut a half-inch off the trunk bottom and put the trunk in water. Place the tree and your other holiday plants a safe distance away from fireplaces and heat vents to keep them from drying out.

Most holiday plants do well indoors for awhile, but move them outdoors when the new year arrives. Paper whites (narcissus) have a rather strong fragrance, so you might want to keep them outdoors so they won't overwhelm your guests. Mistletoe is poisonous, so hang it high so pets and children can't reach it. Mistletoe native to the U.S. is not as dangerous as European species, but it can still be harmful if ingested.

Cold-season blooms

While we don't see lovely snow-covered trees in the Heights, our fortunate compensation is that we can have blooms all year long—and help provide food for migrating birds and insects. Plant cineraria, cyclamen, dianthus, Iceland poppies, pansies, primrose and viola—all of which can take some frost. Also plant any bulbs (e.g., tulips) left chilling in the refrigerator.

Bare root season

Winter in La Habra Heights is bare root season for planting certain trees, shrubs, vines, berry brambles and even some vegetables. Bare roots are trees and plants harvested during their dormant season and sold without a container. Soil, leaves and buds have been removed, leaving only bare roots, stalks and canes. Roots are packed in wet sawdust, hay or other materials and wrapped in plastic to keep them moist and protect them from freezing. It's more cost-effective for growers to produce bare roots than to put such plants in greenhouses or to keep dormant plants in containers with water that can freeze and kill them. Because bare roots are less costly both to maintain and ship, they're a win-win for growers *and* customers.

Do your research and be sure to purchase only bare roots that will do well with our warm Heights climate, low rainfall and soil conditions (e.g., pH levels). When your bare roots arrive, check the packing and make sure roots are still moist and canes or branches are pliable.

Planting bare roots: Planting techniques vary among trees, shrubs and vines, so follow instructions that come with your bare roots (you can also find good "how-to" videos online).

A general rule for trees is to dig a hole two times the width and twice the depth of the roots. Fill the hole with water and allow it to completely drain into the soil. Soak the bare root ball in water for at least a couple of hours to rehydrate the roots—but not overnight.









bottom): Adobe Stock; Valeria Lu, Hans Braxmeier, Capri23auto & Sabine (all from Pix

Place the root ball in the hole and gently separate the roots into a circular pattern for even anchorage and water distribution. Be sure to plant the root ball so that the top of the hole is at the *original soil level* (you'll be able to see the soil line from when the tree was harvested); placing a cane pole or straight stick across the hole can help. Backfill the hole with soil and amendments to the proper level. Water a couple of times while backfilling, allowing complete drainage each time. This will help compact the soil and improve surrounding hydration.

Depending on the size and sturdiness of the young tree, you may need to install stakes to keep it upright until it can stand on its own (*right*). Drives stakes into the ground outside the root circumference and secure the trunk with wire or twine cushioned with rubber or canvas, leaving room for future growth.



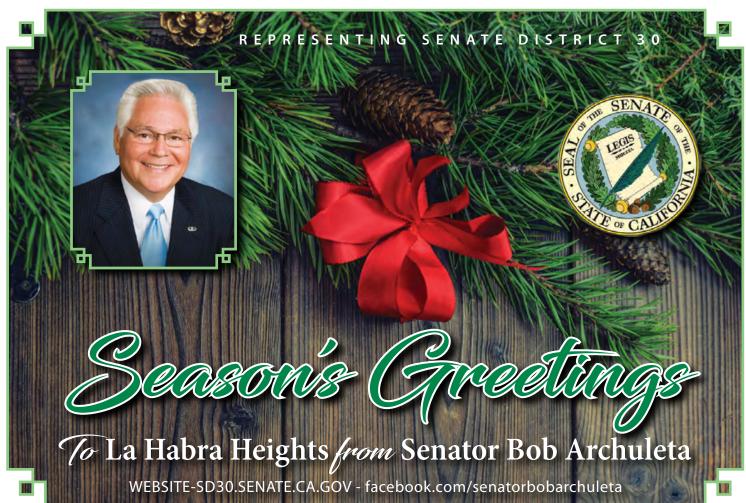




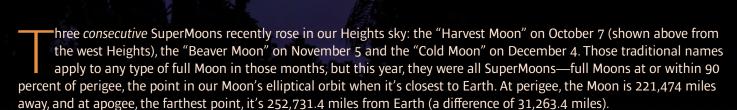








Three SuperMoons—lovely show in our dark skies!



The "Harvest Moon" (sometimes called the "Hunter's Moon") is a full Moon occurring closest to the autumnal equinox, the beginning of autumn when the day and night are equal, which was September 22 this year. This full Moon rises when harvest is underway and hunters are stocking up on game for winter. The "Beaver Moon" refers to the time when native people observed beavers busily preparing for chilly weather. The name "Cold Moon" is self-explanatory—it's wintertime. If you missed these three SuperMoons, you'll have another chance on January 4, 2026—that one (four in a row: a rare event!) will be the "Wolf Moon." The only other SuperMoon in 2026 will occur on Christmas Eve.

A perigee SuperMoon appears about 14 percent larger and 30 percent brighter than a full Moon at apogee. But if you watch a SuperMoon when it just begins to rise over the horizon, it will probably appear much larger due to the so-called "Moon illusion," a powerful optical effect that can be both breathtaking and baffling. The proximity of the Moon's image to buildings, trees and other horizon features makes our brains perceive it as larger than when it's high in the sky. In fact, the Moon on the horizon and the Moon high up are about the same size. The illusion can also occur when the setting Moon is just above the horizon, and the atmosphere can dramatically affect the color, turning the Moon yellow or even orange (the photo on the next page, taken in November, is similar to shots posted online by several Heights residents).

Humans have used phases of the moon to keep time for at least 30,000 years. In fact, the word "month" is derived from Moon, and many ancient civilizations divided the year into 12 lunar months (lunations) lasting 29.5 days each, with a year lasting 354.36707 days. The lunar calendar is still used in most Islamic countries, as well as in China, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, India and Israel. However, different regions use different Moon phases to signal the beginning of new months, and those differences—as well as variances between lunar and solar cycles—require periodic "leap" adjustments.

Those supermoons were beautiful in our dark skies, and a number of residents posted nice photos online of the rising and setting Moon both when it was full and going through its phases. If you want to photograph the Moon, you'll find that when the Moon isn't full, you can often see craters and other surface features better, especially along the shadow edge.

This is a good time to remind you that La Habra Heights has a "dark skies" ordinance that protects our lovely night skyscapes by requiring residents to use only outdoor lighting that is subdued, shielded and directed downward to avoid interfering with our views of stars, planets, comets, galaxies and, of course, the Moon.







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LA HABRA HEIGHTS

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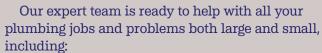


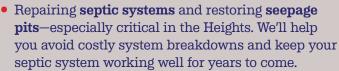


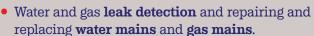




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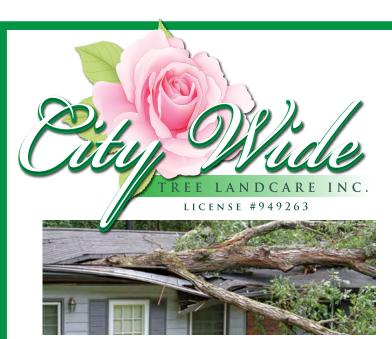


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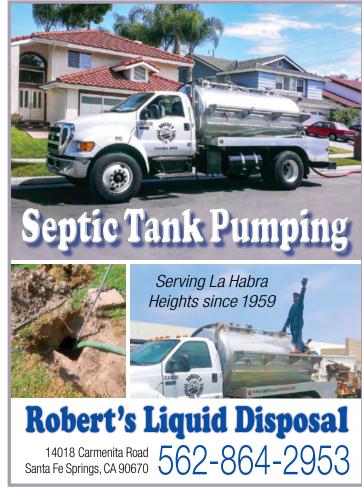
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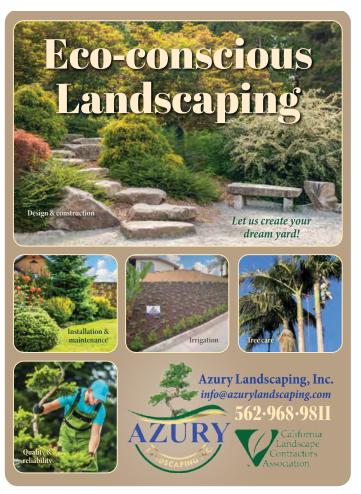
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Community Events

December 8 City Council meeting: 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

December 18 Emergency Preparedness: 6 p.m. at City Hall.

December 23 Planning Commission: 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

December 24 Roads Advisory meeting: 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

December 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! City Hall closed.

January 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! City Hall closed.

January 12 City Council meeting: 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.



Emergency & City Numbers

EMERGENCY	911
CITY HALL: lhhcity.org	562-694-6302
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT562-694-5923 o	r 626-330-3322
RANGER SERVICES	562-698-1446
FIRE DEPARTMENT (non-emergency)	562-694-8283
La Habra Heights County Water District	562-697-6769
Los Angeles County Animal Control	562-940-6898
FIDO COME HOME (report lost and found pets)	562-694-8090
Ware Disposal	877-714-9273

La Habra Heights City Council

Brian Bergman562-690-5047Briansbergman@hotmail.com
CAROL ENGELHARDT562-217-0983clengelhardt1@yahoo.com
Јони Резріsa562-694-1371Jmp100@roadrunner.com
Greg Stefflregregstefflre@gmail.com
Norm Zezula562-697-9914normzezulaLhh@gmail.com

Community Service Opportunities

BSA TROOP 1814 • 951-538-8377 or cookmaster251@yahoo.com BSA TROOP 793 (female troop) • Call Carl Diamond at 562-706-8279 or email Carl@cdiamond.org

Сив Scout Раск 817 • 562-267-9022 • lahabrapack817@gmail.com Facebook.com/pack817

Boys and Girls Club • 562-694-1805 • ourchildrensfuture.org Habitat Authority • habitatauthority.org/waystohelp Meals on Wheels • 562-451-9047 • LaHabraMealsonWheels.org VCC: The Gary Center • 562-264-6000 • vccthegarycenter.org



Advanced life-support calls: 22 (16 in LHH, 6 in LA County), Basic life-support calls: 22 (13 in LHH, 9 in LA County), Public assist: 8 (7 in LHH, 1 in LA County), Fire calls: 7 (4 in LHH, 3 in LA County), Traffic collisions: 6 (4 in LHH, 2 in LA County), "LHH Island": 3, Automatic aid into LA County: 21.

Total calls: 68



OCTOBER 2025

Aggravated assault on child: 1, Grand theft: 1, Vehicle burglary: 2, Petty theft: 2, Elder abuse: 1, Persons dead: 2, Mentally ill person: 1, Vehicle impounded: 1, Traffic accidents: 4, Miscellaneous felonies: 1, Miscellaneous misdemeanors: 1.

Total incidents: 17



La Habra Heights Improvement Association

BOARD of DIRECTORS • lhhia.com

Donne of Dinagrams www		
Gil Taylor, President (LHHIAPresident@gmail.com)	562-322-3453	
Lynn Kelley, Vice President, Halloween Haunt & Yard Sale Co-Cha (lynnkelley91@gmail.com)		
Pam McVicar, Secretary & Membership Chairperson (Memberlhhia@gmail.com)	714-504-3415	
Diana Garcia Taylor, Treasurer & Morning With Santa Chairperso (Diana@myjesmar.com)		
Susan Brooks, Easter Egg Hunt Chairperson & Yard Sale Co-Chain (susanbrooks827@gmail.com)		
Angela Owen, Halloween Haunt Co-Chairperson & Yard Sale Co-(arowen3@yahoo.com)		
Carolyn Boehringer, Advertising Co-Chairperson	310-849-4582	
Monica Gunns, Advertising Co-Chairperson	714-412-2667	
Amy Perez, Director (armacvean@yahoo.com)	562-631-1208	
Rita Donato, Director (rwdonato@gmail.com)	626-824-7363	
Heights Life: heightslifeeditor@gmail.com		
Editors: Dan & Barbara Stracner	562-632-0691	
For information about advertising in Heights Life, visit lhhia.org or call:		
Advertising Co-Chairperson: Carolyn Boehringer	310-849-4582	

For information about advertising in <i>Heights Life</i> , visit <i>lhhia.org</i> or call:	
Advertising Co-Chairperson: Carolyn Boehringer310-849-4	582

Welcome Wagon: welcomewagonLHHIA@gmail.com

Chairperson: Vicki Cooke 562-694-4949

= Become a member =

La Habra Heights Improvement Association is a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization (Tax ID# 95-2455456) that receives no funding from the City of La Habra Heights—so we rely on your annual dues and other donations to pay for our many community events and projects. Annual membership dues are:

REGULAR	\$35
BRONZE	\$75
SILVER	\$100
• GOLD	\$250
PLATINUM	\$500
• DIAMOND	\$1,000+
• SAPPHIRE	\$5,000+

Pay online at **www.lhhia.com** or mail your check (made payable to LHHIA) to: LHHIA, P.O. Box 241, La Habra, CA 90631.