

*TERA Statement of Purpose and Mission:
The mission of this organization is to work for improvement of the quality of life in the Eagle Rock Community in Los Angeles, California, by providing research and education about Eagle Rock, participating in land-use planning activities, and promoting positive community growth and beautification. TERA is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization.*

TERA

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with Salami**



From Where Eagles Soar

..... • *by Keely Myres*

Eagle Rock High School has long been a beacon of hope shining through the LAUSD fog. In the past few years, the high school has really begun to excel – consistently sending students off to prestigious colleges, increasing the graduation rate, and proving itself as a well-rounded educator. The proof is in the numbers:

- Ranked in the top 6% of all public high schools in the nation in 2009 and 2010 by **Newsweek Magazine** (In 2009, it was #393 of the top 1500, and in 2010 it was ranked #650 out of the top 1600). <http://www.newsweek.com/feature/2010/americas-best-high-schools/list.html>

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TERA

NEWSLETTER STAFF

EDITOR

MIKE WOODWARD
editor@tera90041.org

WRITERS

BOB GOTHAM
KEELY MYERS
MIKE WOODWARD

DESIGNER

GEORGINA REYES
DISEÑO GRAPHICS
georgina@disenographics.com

PRINTER

WARREN PRINTING & MAILING
graphics@print-mail.com

ADVERTISING

JOAN MACNEIL
advertising@tera90041.org

eLETTER EDITOR

BOB GOTHAM
e.letter@tera90041.org

WEBMASTER

ARTHUR NAKATA
webmaster@tera90041.org

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

.....• by Bob Gotham, TERA President

As I begin my second year as president of TERA, I want to acknowledge that at the end of any accomplishment of a community activist group like TERA, there is nothing that can be accomplished individually. With that thought, my great appreciation is extended to the members of the 2009 – 2010 board. They worked hard individually and as a team to help further our mission, goals and make Eagle Rock a little better.



Recently a prominent Eagle Rock resident said to me “The thing I like about TERA is that the organization tries to make Eagle Rock the best it can be. It doesn’t try to make Eagle Rock into something it isn’t.” Initially I did not fully appreciate the significance of his comment.

However, as it resonated in my mind I understood and appreciated more the significance of his comment.

When I moved here 22 years ago, the community was already ethnically and economically diverse. Most communities, including Eagle Rock, were experiencing growth as a result of an economy that I wish we had today. Many communities did not recognize that they were reaching a fork in the road, that the development decisions made then would leave a heavy imprint on their community for many years. Strip malls and restaurant chains were proliferating. Zoning guidelines provided little incentive for new business development to take the steps needed to retain the pedestrian friendly small town atmosphere of the past.

The Eagle Rock Association was born over twenty years ago out of the desire to protect a historic structure scheduled for demolition. Keeping this worthwhile structure became one of TERA’s mantras – historic preservation. Recognizing that there is a symbiotic relationship between the business and residential communities was also a guiding factor in TERA’s efforts. We fought against the proliferation of more strip malls. These efforts were perceived by some as anti-business. However, that never was TERA’s mind-set. Time has proven that strip malls diminish rather than enhance the quality of a neighborhood. TERA simply did not buy into the notion that any business is a good business for the neighborhood. Preserving the things that are special about Eagle Rock and encouraging new businesses that have a vested interest in Eagle Rock and fit into the fabric of our neighborhood, was, and is still our goal.

Today Eagle Rock businesses continue to cater to a wide economic and ethnic diversity. For the most part business owners are not sitting in a corporate office in Chicago or New York. They are local and an important part of our community. Eagle Rock residents still get riled up about what is happening here, go to community meetings and come election time, they vote! Happily, Eagle Rock is still a small town in a big city.

An extremely important legacy of TERA’s efforts came to my attention recently as I prepared to review a new development proposal with the TERA Board. TERA, as the preeminent land-use community group, and other community groups, worked closely with the

CD-14 Council Office to support the development of the Colorado Boulevard Specific Plan. The goals of this plan are to:

- Increase diversity in Eagle Rock's business base.
- Place a premium on aesthetics in our business district.
- Make our business district more pedestrian-friendly.
- Attract the businesses Eagle Rock needs.

This plan established guidelines that have enhanced the Colorado Business District over time, and will continue to do so for the indefinite future. A treasure trove of businesses resides on Eagle Rock Boulevard. Perhaps it is time to explore a similar plan for that boulevard.

The Eagle Rock community continues to be recognized as a very special place. TERA, collaborating with and supporting many other community groups, works to make this place the best it can be. Eagle Rock has not lost its identity; it has not morphed into something else. It has remained a place for many languages, many colors and many economic brackets. It has jealously guarded its small town character.

Finally, I seem unable to write anything for TERA without ending on a plea for membership. One of the benefits of membership is discounts to TERA members offered by local merchants. Many thanks to the merchants listed below for their support of TERA and our members.

- Blue Dot Acai & Yogurt Parfait
- Camilo's California Bistro
- Coffee Table
- Colorado Wine Co
- Four Cafe
- The Loft Hair Lounge
- Spitz
- Swork

If you are not a member, and appreciate TERA's efforts, I urge you to become a member and help support our work on behalf of the community. You may use the enclosed envelope or go to www.tera90041.org and sign up. At our website you may also sign up for the TERA eLetter that is published multiple times per month.

Best regards,



BOB GOTHAM
TERA PRESIDENT

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Editor's Letter

.....• by Michael Woodward

Potpourri

Next year is the Centennial Year for this community. I want to take this space to give some recognition to the planning activities for the coming celebration and mention a few individuals in this effort.

The Eagle Rock Centennial Committee is currently trying to coordinate celebrations for the big year. They have a web site: <http://www.eaglerockcentennial.com>. This Committee is ably chaired by **Valerie Dawson**, and the project is in conjunction with the **Collaborative Eagle Rock Beautiful** (CERB).

Maura Duval Griffin represents TERA on the committee. The Eagle Rock Association has made a promise of a \$500 contribution to the effort. TERA is also exploring the potential of public meetings themed to the celebration.

One of the fund-raising projects is a DVD of pictures of historic Eagle Rock. Photos are solicited from anyone who might have them. The man taking the lead on this project is **Paul Harrison**. He is looking for photos "with heart," by which he means those that have a story to go with them - something that connects with the people of Eagle Rock then or now. If you have such photos contact the Committee through their web site, or directly contact Mr. Harrison at me2paul@aol.com.

Another project the Centennial Committee is considering is an idea put forward by your humble editor. This would involve collecting stories from Eagle Rock residents about the place we all live and recording them.

Shamelessly ripped off from **Public Radio's Story Corps** project, this would be specific to Eagle Rock. We would not be looking only for stories from the "old days," but from anyone who has a good story to tell about our neighborhood. Absent a better name maybe we'll call it Story Core (get it?).

If you have a story or stories to tell, there are several ways to make it known. You can email the committee at the web site, you can email the editor of this publication at editor@tera90041.org, or you can sign the sheet that will be available at the **Eagle Rock Music Festival**.



Do the television weather broadcasts make you crazy? Are you tired of Fritz or Dallas telling that they are going to give you the forecast in the "next" segment? Do websites like "weather.com" or "accuweather" leave you cold?

There is a homegrown alternative. Try <http://hammerandsaw.com>. It's Eagle Rock specific weather. You no longer have to take the Pasadena and Burbank temperatures and try to average them; it turns out someone in our fair village has a thermometer and is willing to share.

The site is straightforward and easy to navigate without the annoying pop-ups that occur on some weather sites. Try it out.

Finally, as the last days of summer die down I look back on the highlight of this season: the Fourth of July celebration at our park. Without pretense, or surcharge, everyone who attended had a great time. There was the happy mayhem of Frisbee games occurring in the middle of soccer games and each of the participants glad to give "a little help."

The atmosphere was low key but festive. I saw many people walking up to the park and others getting off the bus to attend. It was a neighborhood event in the truest sense of the word, and it was Eagle Rock at its best.

If you missed it, come next year. Several of us leaned on our Councilman to continue the event into the future. Not that much arm-twisting was required. Mr. Huizar seemed to be bubbling over with the same joy that infected the rest of the crowd.

Eagle Rock fever: catch it!



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From Where Eagles Soar

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- Received a Silver Medal from US News in their ranking of America's best high schools. <http://www.usnews.com/sections/education/high-schools/>
- Received an API score of 717, which is the second highest score in Local District 4 for both junior and senior high school.
- Graduation rate has improved greatly in the past five years – going from 67% of seniors graduating to 92% for the Class of 2010.
- College-going culture: 95.88% of graduates attend post-secondary educational institutions. Of that 95.88%, 41.68% attend a 4-year college or university and 54.2% attend a 2-year community college.

The college-bound culture's momentum is building and the results are pretty remarkable. The number of top seniors getting into the best schools is increasing and the lower ranks are graduating with the expectation of going to college as well. The Class of 2010 had 482 students: 212 are going to community colleges, 138 are going to California State Universities and 43 are going into the University of California system.

The list of private colleges for the ERHS Class of 2010 is extensive as well: Occidental, USC, Pitzer, Mt. Saint Mary's, University of San Francisco, Woodbury, Azusa Pacific, Harvard, Yale, Brown, Vassar, Boston University, Boston College, NYU, Carleton, Dickinson, Hampshire, Marlboro, and U Penn are all on the list.

Beyond the graduation statistics are the real-life success stories of Eagle Rock graduates. Many students go on to do wonderful things for their community. A very small number of examples includes: **Daniel Steiner**, Class of 1995, who is currently the Title I Coordinator for the school; **Jose Loya**, Class of 2006, who graduated from Brown this year and is doing public policy work in D.C.; **Jacob Stevens**, Class of 2004, who graduated from Occidental after getting a full ride scholarship and is currently a member of Representative **Xavier**

Becerra's staff. Additionally, the number of Eagle Rock students who have returned to the high school they graduated from to teach the next generation is amazing (**Richard Martinez, Mark Jovanelly, Philip Christ**, among others). Many people have described Eagle Rock as a small town within the big city and nothing shows that better than all the people who return to their hometown to give back in some way.

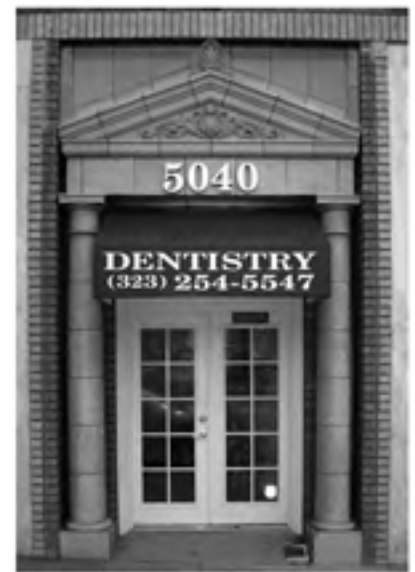
So what is happening at Eagle Rock High School lately that is causing such great success?

Salvador Velasco, the principal at Eagle Rock High School since 2005, has been on a mission to raise the graduation rate. Velasco himself is a product of the public school system – he was an ESL student growing up in Los Angeles. He had a dream of teaching at Eagle Rock High School. Becoming principal at the school was the fulfillment of a long-time goal. When he began his role as principal, Velasco's mission was to instill the expectation that students at ERHS graduate from high school and go on to college. He pushes a rigorous academic curriculum as a way for students to master the skills they really need to pursue their dreams for the future. Velasco is known for being easy to work with and dedicated to doing everything he can to help the students succeed.

According to **Richard Martinez**, teacher, athletic director and magnet coordinator at Eagle Rock, as well as a Class of 1995 graduate, the cause is not necessarily a recent policy change at the school. He explains that in the early 2000s a group of teachers came together who really work well together. Over the past few years this core group has set the bar high for students, making the academics much more rigorous than in the past. There is a friendly competition between the teachers to make their classes more demanding, and even to start higher level classes in areas in which they have expertise, such as Martinez's AP Psychology program (his major at Yale). This has created a wider variety of higher-level classes so that students have more options, resulting in more seniors staying on campus instead

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Ped Power

..... • by Michael Woodward

We have a problem in our city. Our people are out of shape and our air is polluted.

We eat too much junk food and we drive-through to get it. Now our seas are full of the oil that should have been used to power our sloth.

Wouldn't it be nice if there were a simple solution to these problems?

Actually there is: walking.

On behalf of The Eagle Rock Association, I attended a pedestrian symposium sponsored by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. TERA has an interest in calming traffic through our neighborhood not only to prevent tragedies like last year's fatalities on Colorado Boulevard, but also to remove some of that frenetic quality a trip to Trader Joe's now involves. Eagle Rock residents should not have to feel they are taking their lives in their hands when they go out to buy cheese and wine.

Kicking off the daylong seminar and moderating the speakers was **Robin Blair**, the Director of Planning for the MTA, who set the tone saying, "We're spending our resources to make ourselves unhealthy." We burn fossil fuels to get to a fast food joint to buy enough grease to begin our own fossilization, hardening our arteries and shortening our lives.

Many of these things we have all heard before. We eat too much junk; we do not get enough exercise. Yadda, yadda, yadda. And our response is the same as well: "I'm going to start going to the gym." Or "I'm going to start running."

The truth is we don't. We start out with good intentions, but then something comes up. The gym is out of the way. Running under the skies produced by the 134 Freeway makes your lungs hurt. Walking around a track is boring,

What if we made our neighborhoods more friendly to walkers and cyclists?

The next speaker was Fred Kent, President of the Project for Public Spaces, who could have been talking about TERA's vision of Eagle Rock when he said that, "...the idea is to turn a neighborhood from a place you can't wait to get through to one you never want to leave."

One of the most inspiring speakers of the day was **Mark Fenton**. To call Mr. Fenton a walking advocate would be to grossly understate the degree of his commitment. He is a walking fanatic.



He is also a former race walker who tried out for the Olympics in 1984 and 1988. He is a very dynamic speaker who moved the audience as he prowled the stage making his presentation.

The first thing he did was to ask the audience how many of them had grown up as "free range kids." In other words, how many had walked to school, played pick-up games as opposed to games organized by adults, and had engaged in risky childhood behaviors like tree-climbing. Most of us had.

Then he asked how many allowed their own children to do such things. Far fewer hands went up. A previous speaker had noted that up to one-third of morning traffic is parents taking their children to school. Besides clogging the roads, Mr. Fenton noted, this results in "less peer interaction and much less exercise." It gets worse if you drive

through MickeyD's to get them breakfast on the way.

There has been a lot of talk about the "obesity epidemic" in our society. Mr. Fenton does not use that term. He prefers to call it an inactivity and poor nutrition epidemic. "Inactivity and poor nutrition kill more people in this country than any other cause except tobacco." Since that information came from a study several years old he wondered if tobacco had not been replaced as number one on the hit parade.

Then he cited the most disturbing trend of all, "As a result of the inactivity and poor nutrition the current generation may be the first in our history with a shorter life span than the previous generation."

So, at the risk of sounding like a politician: How do we get the country, or at least Eagle Rock, moving again?

It is not by getting people to join a gym. It is not by having health fairs at which we hand out water bottles. It is not by forcing people or guilting them into exercise programs.

One of the easiest ways to get your recommended amount of exercise is to take the bus. The average bus rider walks about ten or fifteen minutes to reach a stop then another bit to reach their ultimate destination. And there you have it: all the exercise you need without joining a gym or buying equipment and your car will last longer as well.

It is by having local places that are attractive to walk. It is by having convenient public transit. It may even be by having fewer places to park and more places to sit down.

Some of that has already been accomplished. The Eagle Rock Music Festival turns our thoroughway into a village one night a year. The maturing street trees planted by Northeast Trees are changing the ambience of Colorado Boulevard making it a more pleasant place to walk. New restaurants and shops are transforming the once moribund business district into a pedestrian destination.

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Deep Roots and Thin Crust with Salami

• By Michael Woodward

The best single thing about editing this little newsletter is that it gives me an excuse to meet some wonderful people. With this issue of the Newsletter, I got to do it again.

Don Dustine is an old Eagle Rock hand, having lived here much of his life. His wife **Kitty** is a newcomer by Eagle Rock standards, only moving here in the last quarter century.

The original impetus for a Newsletter article was that Don and Kitty are living in a home once occupied by his parents and grandparents, where they gardened organically before there was such a term. People told me that, because of my interest in gardening, we would have a great time together. I was looking forward to seeing a garden that was the result of three generations of composting.

The current garden was put together by **Willie Nakatani**, formerly the Horticulture and Agriculture teacher at Eagle Rock High. For years it was maintained by **Giovanni Davi**, the man with the greenest thumb in Eagle Rock. The day before I got there **Chris Tokita**, who is featured in Ms **Keely Myres'** article on

Eagle Rock High, was there working. As has been noted here before, everything in Eagle Rock is intertwined.

The home was purchased by Don's parents in 1948. It had been a part of the old Schumacher groves of lemons and oranges. Don's grandfather had worked the Roscoe farm in what is now Panorama City. The family later moved down to Cazador Street, just down the hill from Eagle Rock.


As a traditional Italian family they, of course, made their own wine. When they moved to Eagle Rock, they moved quickly to make it a home, which meant digging a wine cave. Over the years that has been improved and now stores the one hundred fifty gallons of wine the family makes each year; that takes a ton of grapes, literally.

Both of the Dustines are now retired, but during their working lives were educators with the Los Angeles School District. For many years Kitty was the assistant principal at Eagle Rock High School. Don was a music teacher, eventually becoming the Director of Performing Arts for the district.

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Deep Roots

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

I was beginning to despair, what about the gardening? Usually when you talk with gardeners, the conversation runs to things like, "Where did you get your manure?" Or, "What do you do about nematodes?" None of that was happening.

Then the conversation turned to food. Then it was the Dustines who blossomed. We talked about great meals we had had. They told of a restaurant outside of Rome where they bring a dozen different types of salami to your table to sample. Don said, "You can't do that sort of thing here, because of the FDA."

Then we took a look around the yard. Fond as they are of their garden, where Kitty claims to get the "fattest earthworms I've ever seen," what really made their eyes light up was the outdoor pizza oven.

Their love of good food and good friends became even more apparent when Don said that, "We spend so much time trying to eat what's good for us, we don't eat what's good." Pizza may not be health food, but it tastes good and sharing it with friends makes it taste even better.

Now I understood what people had been telling me about this couple. They are great entertainers who make everyone feel at home in their home. Kitty brought out biscotti while Don made espresso. Not content with feeding me there they sent me home with a bottle of homemade Cabernet; it was delightful.

They mentioned their regret at not being able to host a dinner for the TERA fundraiser, "**Guess Who's Coming to Dinner.**" They are obligated to an annual dinner for the AEIOU, the **American Educators of Italian Origin, United**, which conflicted this year.

Both Don and Kitty expressed disappointment that the LAUSD no longer

encouraged such organizations. They said that in earlier days, each of the ethnic groups represented by the teachers, as diverse a group as our student population, had its own dinners. They said in unison, "Everybody went to everybody else's dinners. It was a great way of bringing the faculties together." Apparently such celebrations have fallen victim to our more politically correct times and our ever more cautious leaders.

As our time together drew to a close, I could no longer think of it as just an interview; I asked if they had anything they would change about present-day Eagle Rock. Don's response was immediate and forceful, "Colorado Boulevard: the traffic is horrible."

And then he was off, "Why do we have six lanes running through Eagle Rock when there are only four coming from Glendale and four coming from Pasadena?" He knew the answer,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

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Garden Spot

.....• by Michael Woodward

Mulch Madness

It has been said by some, notably my wife, that I am sometimes “over the top,” especially when it comes to gardening. This is, no doubt, true.

There is a new wrinkle in my gardening obsessions; I have an enabler.

The City of Los Angeles offers free mulch and, both personally and as the manager of the Community Garden, I could not be happier.

Before I tell the secrets of the City’s free mulch I would like to sing the praises of this amendment.

The first thing that mulch does is to decrease the amount of water needed in the garden, simply by slowing the evaporation rate. Without mulch the soil in your garden gives up its water, cracking and wrinkling. This not only puts additional stress on plants, but increases the amount of dust both in the air and in your house.

Another benefit of mulch is that it softens and completes the look of the garden unifying the entire space with a single theme, whether that theme is wood chips or alfalfa.

Mulch also enriches the soil as it breaks down because mulch is “digested” by the earth through mushrooms and other fungus. Each kind of mulch brings with it the seeds of its own destruction; each kind of mulch requires a different sort of fungal action to become part of the soil.

A word should be said about the cost of the breaking down process. The price is nitrogen. It takes nitrogen in the soil to produce green growth in plants and it takes nitrogen to facilitate the breakdown of mulch. In order to reap the full

benefits of mulch you must increase the amount of nitrogen you add to your garden.

Mulch helps control annual weeds. A heavy layer of mulch, approximately four to six inches, will prevent the young weed seeds from reaching the sunshine after sprouting. If you have more pernicious weeds, such as Bermuda grass putting newspaper under the layer of mulch will starve that plant of necessary sunlight.

In the Community Garden we are using free mulch delivered by the City of Los Angeles. They bring it to us in increments of fifteen cubic yards. To give you an idea of how much fifteen yards is, a full-sized pick up truck with an eight foot bed will hold about three yards when the bed is full, mounded as high as the top of the cab.

Two caveats obtain here. The first is that you must have an off-street site, like your driveway, available. The second is that you must be able to take at least a half-load of the material, or seven and a half yards; the City cannot deliver smaller loads.

The contact for this mulch is **Matthew Wood**. Send Mr. Wood an email matthew.wood@lacity.org. He or members of his crew will inspect your site and, if it is feasible, they will deliver it.

Be aware that fifteen cubic yards is an overwhelming amount of material for most homeowners. Another way to consider the quantity is to remember that a standard wheelbarrow will hold two cubic feet and there are twenty-seven cubic feet to a cubic yard.

If this seems a little too much mulch for you consider the free mulch and compost available at the City yard at 850 North Mission Road in Boyle Heights,

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TERA 2009 - 2010 FINANCIAL REPORT

TERA 2009 - 2010 Financial Report			
Assets (Balances as of Fiscal Year End - June 30, 2010)			
Unrestricted Funds	2010	2009	
Operating Savings Account	\$16,077	\$12,380	
Operating Checking Account	\$2,710	\$2,953	
Total	\$18,787	\$15,333	
Restricted Funds			
Beautification Fund	\$4,521	\$8,116	
ERCPR / DOT Match	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Cenennial Celebration	\$500	\$0	
Community Garden	\$1,328	\$1,752	
TERA Contingency Fund	\$15,000	\$15,000	
Total	\$24,349	\$27,868	
Net Assets	\$43,136	\$43,201	
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES			
Income	2010%	2010	2009
Administration	0.66%	\$152	\$481
Beautification	0.11%	\$25	\$0
Community Garden	7.01%	\$1,630	\$1,240
Donations	1.29%	\$300	\$295
Fundraiser	51.25%	\$11,918	\$359
Insurance	0.00%	\$0	\$81
Membership	36.90%	\$8,580	\$9,391
Outreach	2.39%	\$555	\$1,941
Public Meetings	0.40%	\$93	\$107
Total	100.00%	\$23,253	\$13,895
Expenses	2010%	2010	2009
Administration	14.52%	\$3,386	\$4,002
Beautification	15.74%	\$3,671	\$19,555
Community Garden	9.46%	\$2,207	\$2,987
Donations	5.68%	\$1,325	\$575
Fundraiser	23.54%	\$5,490	\$0
Insurance	4.88%	\$1,139	\$1,570
Membership	4.16%	\$970	\$100
Outreach	17.88%	\$4,169	\$3,525
Public Meetings	4.12%	\$961	\$1,064
	100.00%	\$23,318	\$33,378
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets		(\$65)	

TERA Unrestricted Funds: These funds consist of operating checking and savings accounts. Monies are available to fund TERA's operational activities such as administration, insurance, public meetings, printed newsletter, e-letter, community garden, fundraisers, membership drive, and other activities.

TERA Restricted Funds: These funds are reserved for specific projects or purposes.

The Beautification Fund was established by Council District 14 in 2003, dedicated to fund an Eagle Rock Monument. In this fiscal year, as the Fund Administrator, TERA expended \$3,044 on the Wiota Circle Monument at the base of the Colorado Exit of the 134 Freeway. The Beautification Fund balance of \$3,348 at fiscal year end remains allocated to the Monument for final construction and future maintenance costs.

The mosaic art cans (Eagle Rock **Make Art Not Trash** — ERMANT) were installed in the spring of 2009. TERA expended \$576 in payment of installment wrap-up expenses in this current fiscal year. The balance of \$1,173 is allocated for future maintenance costs.

The ERCPR/DOT Match Fund was reinstated in March of this fiscal year supporting ERCPR's new application with the California Department of Transportation for creation of an overall plan (including parking) for Colorado Boulevard. TERA's Board of Directors voted to pledge \$3,000, to be paid in \$1,000 increments over 3 years, should the grant be funded.

The Eagle Rock Centennial. The TERA Board of Directors voted to allocate \$500 to the Centennial Committee for Eagle Rock's centennial celebration.

The Eagle Rockdale Community Garden and Art Park finances are handled by TERA. The garden is self-sustaining and its account balance as of June 30, 2010 is \$1,328.

Overall Comments

TERA expended approximately \$4,500 in reserved beautification funds in this fiscal year primarily due to the wrap-up expenses of the **ERMANT** project and additional work completed on the Wiota Circle Monument. Newsletter advertising revenue was billed shortly after the close

of this fiscal year and income will be reflected in the new fiscal year.

TERA's successful 2010 **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner** fundraiser netted \$6,428. Kudos to the Fundraiser Committee members and the volunteers for their hard work. A big thank you to all our host families and those who attended or contributed in other ways to its success.

This last year was again a productive year for TERA and Eagle Rock. We could not have accomplished what we did without the support of many in the community. The ERMANT project, coordinated by former board member **Pauline Mauro**, continues to be supported by Eagle Rock businesses who adopted and empty the trash from the cans on a regular basis. The Wiota Circle Monument is shepherded by **Dave and Helen Gustavson** and makes a welcoming setting to those entering Eagle Rock from the freeway exit at Colorado. **The Eagle Rock Community Garden & Art Park** volunteer gardeners led by **Mike Woodward**, Garden

Manager and former board member, enjoy the bounty of their organic vegetables and enjoy the community fellowship in a lovely garden. Individuals and businesses support TERA with their membership dollars and many other volunteers regularly assist in the ongoing work of TERA.

Eagle Rock businesses support the TERA newsletter with their advertising contributions. In addition, a number of businesses are offering discounts to TERA members. Look for information on participating businesses in the e-letter, newsletters and TERA's website.

The financial report does not reflect the invaluable property development monitoring work of TERA. That is because the work has been funded exclusively by volunteer hours. Special thanks is owed to retiring board member **Frank Parrello** who for so many years carefully monitored the many potential and actual projects proposed for our community to ensure that they adhered to the Master Plan.

TERA has historically prepared and filed tax returns on a calendar year basis and prepared its financial reports using a June 30 fiscal year end. This has resulted in excess work for the treasurer in closing the books twice a year. Earlier this year, the TERA board voted to change TERA's fiscal year from June 30 to the calendar year. To transition to the new calendar fiscal year, the Treasurer will prepare and publish a short year (July 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010) fiscal year report early next year. Following that short year report, future financial reports (2011 and following) will be published as soon as convenient at the beginning of each calendar year.

The success of TERA truly is due to the financial support of its members, the dedication of its volunteers and the support of Eagle Rock community at large.

If you have any questions, please contact me at treasurer@tera90041.org or (323) 799-1190.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan MacNeil, Treasurer

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Thanks, Frank

.....• by Mike Woodward

July first Mr. **Frank Parrello** retired from the TERA board. Some readers may recall that I once compared him to Virgil leading Dante through the seven circles of the Inferno as he tried, very patiently, to explain the vagaries of city planning to me. From what I have learned, Dante had it easy; city planning is extremely complicated.

Mr. Parrello first joined the board in 2004 at the urging of then President, **Michael Tharp**. He came to head a committee now known as **PP&D: Planning, Preservation and Development**.

This is not a position that leads to fame. I would imagine that most TERA members have only a passing acquaintance with the workings of this committee; it was certainly true of me.

A quote attributed to Thomas Jefferson reads, "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." While that is certainly true in foreign affairs, and to keep our elected domestic rascals from overstepping their bounds, the former President's phrase may have reached its real fruition in city planning.

Not to trivialize these events, but most of us will not be killed by terrorist bombs, or spied on by this latest generation of Russian spies, but we will, almost all of us, have little pieces of our lives and lifestyles nibbled away by aggressive developers and literal-minded bureaucrats. They won't do it with explosives or encryption devices; they will do it by knowing the laws better, or at least more explicitly, than does the citizenry.

The problem can be summed up in one of my favorite **Frank Parrello** quotes, "Being pro-active is really boring." Whereas developers have a financial incentive to search out favorable clauses in the laws and ordinances, citizens often only become aware of problems when someone brings in a crane. The time to make a difference is not after construction has begun,

but during the planning and permitting stages.

As an example of the level of minutiae that has to be examined, when Occidental College was beginning to talk about its development plans Frank noticed a little anomaly. One of the clauses would have allowed Occidental to build a hotel on the campus.

Going into competition with the Hiltons was obviously not the intention of the College. And they are making efforts to be responsive to the community. Still, if this were allowed to slide by in 2010, then other planners would have a loophole through which they could have driven a hotel.

Occidental was willing to change the language and potential future

upon and the developer agreed to provide public meeting space, in exchange for a variance in **FAR** (floor area ratio). The developer then permitted a different FAR, the height exceeds what was agreed on and no one has seen those public meeting spaces.

The moral of that story is "get it in writing." This same developer wants to build on the land next to Colorado Terrace and will again come to the community to ask co-operation. We will be counting our fingers.

As Mr. Parrello points out, "these are not really bad guys." They are trying to make a living in a very difficult trade and look to the exact letter of the law to see what they can do. The citizens of the area, where they are plying their trade,



This Project Earned Frank's Approval

problems were averted, because someone of expertise spotted the problem and moved to solve it.

I chose Occidental for this example because they are among the most co-operative of developers. Others are not so kind. As Frank once said to me, "After you shake hands with a developer, count your fingers."

In Eagle Rock, we have had several disappointments when expecting developers to live up to their commitments. What is said at a community meeting may not be what ultimately is built.

Colorado Terrace is an example. The height of the building was agreed

need to be equally exacting in their reading of the law.

So I asked Mr. Parrello what should residents and TERA members look out for. He felt that we should learn to understand what influence is actually possible. As someone else said, "Politics is the art of the possible."

Further, he said that we should understand bargaining. How does a given project fit in with the community and how can it be mitigated; those are the questions we should all be asking.

Lest we all despair, Mr. Parrello is leaving the TERA board, but he is not

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From Where Eagles Soar

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of just taking the four required classes and then leaving for the day.

Teachers are also very involved in campus life, taking on other areas of responsibility, such as Martinez's role as athletic director. Martinez says he makes it a point to at least know by name all the athletes on campus and chase them in the classroom. It lets students know that someone is aware of what's going on with them. **Chris Tokita**, Class of 2010 graduate (who turned down Harvard to attend Yale because he feels that "at Yale they're more interested in creating students who are also citizens and want to make a difference"), was one student who felt that presence. He believes that Eagle Rock's success comes from its supportive staff. "The staff really looks out for the kids, and looks out for their needs, especially during college application time. Mr. Williams was very helpful."

And Tokita is not the only who will mention Mr. Williams as a great resource at the high school. Anyone I have spoken with about the increase in college-bound students has, without hesitation, labeled **Stephen Williams**, the college counselor at ERHS since 1994, as a major driving force. Martinez cites him as a motivating factor when he applied for colleges in Williams' first year at the job, stating that it was Williams who "put it in my brain that I could get into Yale."

When I was a senior in 2003-2004, Williams helped me apply (and, I believe, succeed in getting into) to the University of Liverpool in England, something that I had never even realized was a possibility. Williams helps each student take the necessary steps to get where they want to go, making sure they know where they can find information about scholarships and financial aid, what SAT scores are needed for different colleges, and what classes and extracurricular activities they need. Talk about a tremendous resource.

Not only are teachers and staff members looking out for the students, but also the students are looking out for each other. Tokita believes it is not only the school policies that are increasing graduation rates, but also that students become a lot more involved with each other and very close. "If someone was talking about dropping out, everyone would help out. They'd pull them through."

Tokita started his career at Eagle Rock High School in the Magnet Program, which runs from 7th to 9th grade at ERHS. He loved it, explaining that the program has "great students, but well-rounded. There are lots of people who do well in school, but also join clubs and sports, and often become the leaders in class government at the school. It's a small environment within the bigger school, so they are close to each other, and remain close friends." Martinez, the current Magnet Coordinator, wants to try to expand the Magnet into upper grades in the next few years, believing that a magnet high school track would further enhance Eagle Rock's reputation.

Martinez is quick to point out that the success of ERHS is really because the kids are prepared – in his opinion, "teachers only look good because of the students. The students are the ones

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Partner

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Deep Roots

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

"because we're a secondary, alternate highway, but what's the use of that?"

I wanted to enthusiastically agree with him but couldn't since my mouth was full of biscotti.

When you write, and it is as true of fiction as reportage, you have to be prepared to follow the story where it wants to go, not where you think it should go. It requires a certain amount of humility to do this, but the rewards are the people you meet along the way. This time I met the Dustines and I was rewarded.

From Where Eagles Soar

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doing the work and putting in the time.” While that is definitely true, it is no small thing to have a supportive community surrounding the students, not only motivating them to reach higher, but making sure they get help every step of the way.

Sure, Eagle Rock High School is still weighed down by the LAUSD’s reputation. It may not be a prestigious private college-preparatory school, but when people do the research it’s obvious that ERHS is excellent at what it does – providing a well-rounded curriculum where students can get what they need to succeed. The proof is in the numbers. More so, the proof is in the overwhelming number of stories about successful Eagle Rock graduates you will hear simply by mentioning the high school.

Thanks, Frank

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

leaving Eagle Rock. He will continue to be a strong presence in our community, with his sharp eye and great experience he will be a resource for our neighborhood for a long time to come.

Thank you Frank Parrello for the service you have freely given Eagle Rock. We are in your debt.

Ped Power

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

It is also by changing our minds about what streets are for. The main function of Colorado Boulevard is not to have a freeway alternate between Glendale and Pasadena. We are not a conduit in a Cal Trans or LA Department of Transportation master plan; we are a neighborhood.

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Garden Spot

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

just west of Interstate 5. There are people there to help you shovel and load the material into containers and then into your vehicle. The workers there are young men and women who are studying to work in the forestry fire service.

This resource is available Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Gardeners should know that this material comes from the Department of Sanitation. It includes tree trimming debris, "zoo doo" and treated materials. The following web site can give you more information on the material. Note that some of the information on the site is out of date, such as the days of operation and when compost and mulch are distributed. http://www.ci.la.ca.us/san/srpcd/mulch_giveaway.htm

My own experience and that of several friends is that "zoo doo" is wonderful, ah, stuff. We have had good results with it in our own gardens.

If readers are interested in a first hand look at these three different free mulches take a stroll by the Community Garden. In the Garden itself we are using the mulch from Street Maintenance. Along Rockdale Avenue above the Garden I have put down a layer of the "zoo doo" mulch and compost in preparation for a crop of wildflowers and for sweet peas along the fence line.

You can look for yourself at what's available and I hope you will walk by this coming Spring when the sweet peas are in bloom. The Eagle Rock Community Garden stretches along Rockdale Avenue between Figueroa St and Minden Place. Parking is available at the **Lanark-Shelby Park**. (located at, cue drum roll, Lanark and Shelby.) We discourage drive-bys as there is little to see from your vehicle and Rockdale is a short and narrow street. If the gates are open, please feel free to come in and look around.

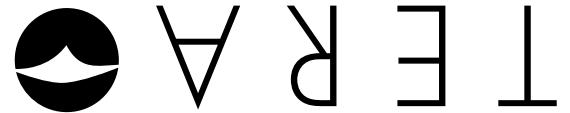
If you have additional questions or comments about mulch or gardening in general, please email me: communitygarden@TERA90041.org.

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