

COMMUNITY COUNCIL 2017 AWARD WINNERS

Six dedicated Palisadians will be honored at the Pacific Palisades Community Council annual holiday party on December 14 at Gladstones Restaurant.

Bruce Schwartz has been named “**Citizen of the Year,**” continuing a steady stream of dedicated residents honored since 1947. Bruce was instrumental in initiating the “Safety on Sunset” program in 2012, receiving a Golden Sparkplug for his efforts. Bruce has been the Homeless Task Force liaison to the Fire Department and was the driving force behind obtaining and installing signs to prevent trespassing and camping in hazardous hillside areas. He has repeatedly helped former PPCC Citizen of the Year Sharon Kilbride with homeless cleanup efforts in our commercial village and other areas of the Palisades. Bruce is president of PRIDE and has single-handedly planted flowers at forlorn medians and bus stops in the community. He has also supported a variety of other community improvement projects including spearheading the Fire Hazard signs along the bluffs and helping nudge the city to clean-up of dangerous swales with standing water along Palisades Drive. Bruce is a selfless, unsung hero of our community and a most worthy Citizen of the Year.

Matthew Rodman has been an extraordinary advocate for student safety during congested student drop-off periods, personally directing traffic every school morning in front of the school. Matthew also worked with the school district and several bus operators to get more students onto buses, reducing daily car trips by 543 during the current school year, a stunning accomplishment. Mathew also assists from morning to evening with the 4th of July Parade, concert and fireworks and the PPCC is honored to present him with a **Golden Sparkplug Award**.

Marie Steckmest, a community icon, former Citizen of the Year and Golden Sparkplug winner, once again will receive a **Golden Sparkplug Award** for creating a robust garden program at Marquez School and integrating it with each grade level curriculum. Marie’s work creates excitement and awareness for sustainable living and environmental mindfulness, while also teaching the kids to grow, compost and mulch. Yes, Children enjoy pulling weeds and eating the vegetables they have grown in the raised beds on the schoolyard, thanks to “Miss Marie!”

Debbie Warfel woke up one morning to the sounds of low-flying commercial aircraft heading toward LAX over Pacific Palisades. The FAA’s Next-Gen is a gps-guided system that replaces the old radar system. It is supposed to save fuel through more accurate flight patterns, but the result has been many flights “short-cutting” across our community at lower altitudes than past practice. Debbie sprang into action, quickly learning that the FAA had closed comment on the new program and who knew there would be such a dramatic change in flight paths? Nevertheless, Debbie contacted the FAA, LAX Noise Roundtable,

and numerous elected officials including our representatives in Congress. She worked through the Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association to raise the funds to hire an aviation attorney to represent us with the FAA. Just this past week, Senator Feinstein wrote a strongly worded letter of support to the FAA. Debbie's lawyers are working through the federal court in Washington DC to reach an amicable settlement. Debbie is a worthy **Golden Sparkplug Award** honoree.

Tom Creed noticed that when local homeless people accepted services to transition out of homelessness, a massive amount of detritus remained on our hillsides posing a fire hazard to the community. Tom mapped out all the encampments and spent countless days on cleanup duty. He initiated project *CLEANup* to marshal the resources needed to accomplish this major effort. He designed an email account and recruited 30 volunteers to remove all 19 abandoned encampments along Temescal Canyon Rd., filling a 40-yard dumpster. Among the members of the cleanup team were representatives from the City, and a formerly homeless man from the Palisades! For springing into action and making our community cleaner and safer, Tom is well deserving of a **Golden Sparkplug Award**.

Nancy Klopper, a long-time Palisadian has been selected for the **Pride of the Palisades Award**. You may recall that LA Times columnist Steve Lopez wrote a heart wrenching piece about Nancy's work in tracking down the Norwegian parents of a severely mentally ill homeless woman nicknamed "Pretty Blonde." In a way, that was the easy part. In order to complete a family reunion, the parents, who thought their daughter might be dead, had to be flown to LA, reunited and housed while their daughter was treated, pro-bono, at UCLA Hospital and upon completion of treatment, all flown back to Europe with a UCLA caregiver assisting. None of this would have happened without Nancy's connective reach and tireless work. Her efforts were discouraged at first, but she persevered and the homeless woman code named "Pretty Blonde" is now in the care of her family. Nancy also has been a valued behind-the-scenes PAPA volunteer for 4th of July Parade. For her strong community spirit as well as perseverance in the face of challenges dealing with a chronically homeless and mentally ill woman, Nancy is most deserving of the Pride of the Palisades award. This is not an annual award and it takes a special person like Nancy to earn this special recognition.