



Pacific Palisades Community Council 2023 Awards Honorees

Five dedicated Palisadians and one special Palisades organization will be honored at the PPCC Holiday Dinner and Awards Celebration on December 6, 2023 at The Draycott.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Cindy Kirven

Cindy is an ideal nominee who has given our community not just her time and effort, but visible results. The beautification of our town adds to the legacy of Pacific Palisades -- and Cindy plays a big role in that.

She was Co-President of the Village Green (for the September 2022 to September 2023 fiscal year), and she is now the sole President starting September 2023 until September 2024:

- 1) Creating a special 50th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the Green.
- 2) Creating a succession plan for an organization with a Board that was aging out and retiring. It involved a long-term effort of meeting with community volunteers that might be willing to donate their time to Village Green by joining the Board.

She is Vice Chair of the Palisades Forestry Committee (PFC): Cindy is most proud of her contributions in two projects. Bill Bruns was able to get a difficult and long-pursued approval to plant a memorial tree, at the request of the parents, at Palisades Elementary School for Elle Nedelkovski, an 8-year-old student who passed from pediatric brain cancer (who also has a twin brother, Greyson). David Card and Cindy drove out and acquired a Jacaranda tree from a nursery that donated it for this sweet event. Bruce Schwartz and Cindy dug the hole at the school. The second project was researching and writing the first draft of a position paper relating to restrictions on the types of tree planting to be allowed in the City of Los Angeles being discussed by the City Council. The paper was edited by both the PFC and Resilient Palisades and presented to the PPCC, who passed a motion and sent a letter to our city representatives objecting to the motion in City Council.

She is a volunteer with the Palisades Bocce Club: Cindy is one of a handful of volunteers who makes an enormous difference in running all aspects of the league events, tournaments, and parties during the year. And she always does it with a smile on her face.

Cindy also volunteers at the 6-acre Forestry Station at Rustic Canyon under the direction of Randy Young: By volunteering at the Forestry Station, Cindy has been a significant part of improvements at the six-acre Grove of trees and meadow in the last year. On a weekly basis, Randy Young, Ed Lowe, and Cindy weed-whack the meadow, hand clear beneath the historic cycads, cut down water shoots from the Eucalyptus trees, and cut out dead wood. The Grove is as beautiful today as it has been in years as a result of the volunteer care combined with the rain that hydrated and restored the plantings.

Golden Sparkplugs

Laura Schneider

Laura has been recognized for reviving the Palisades Branch Library so beautifully, as the President of the Pacific Palisades Library Association. Since the COVID Pandemic that shut down the library and drove so many people away from in person gatherings, Laura has spearheaded the return of library programming and the appealing use of the precious library Community Room. From art shows to the Youth Writing Contest, to celebrity talks (Martin Short and Eugene Levy among them) and even PPCC meetings and much, much more . . . Laura has enlivened the library since the return of semi-normalcy post-Pandemic and she deserves recognition for the colossal effort to bring back the heart of our literate community

John Dwight

John is a long-time resident of an apartment complex on Sunset Blvd. (that has been written about due to eviction of long-term tenants and their claims of harassment by landlords). For years, John has taken it upon himself (and continues to do so) to clean up and beautify the bus stop at the Sunset/Bienvenida corner, used by hundreds of people daily. John has added flowers to the planters around the adjoining trees, weeded and cleaned the planters, refreshed them when they die out, all on his own time and at his own expense. He also puts out trash bags, removes the filled ones, and cleans litter from the sidewalks and gutters around the bus stop, since there are no City trash receptacles there, and the stop is heavily used. John is also a retired Revere school teacher, where he was admired by decades of students and fellow faculty members alike. He has lived at the apartment complex for many years, where he was considered the resident sage, social worker and chief morale officer by his neighbors, particularly during the cruel challenges of recent months. He continues to volunteer and assist at many community activities and serve as the self-appointed Sunset/Bienvenida beautification captain, even as he and his wife face ongoing difficulties at their rental premises.

Sara Marti

Sara is the Social Media Lead for Resilient Palisades. Since April of 2021, Sara has been creating engaging content for Resilient Palisades' social media accounts including Instagram, Facebook, Tik Tok, Twitter, Nextdoor and Threads. Through approximately 360 posts and reels to date, Sara has captured the efforts of the Resilient Palisades teams and has also sparked meaningful conversations and interactions within the Palisades community. When Sara took over Resilient Palisades' social media in 2021, the organization had a humble following of less than 50. Since then, the following has grown to more than 2,500 across the various social media platforms. Sara's social media work for Resilient Palisades has helped the organization create a deeper sense of connection and belonging for its own volunteers, inspiring its teams to constantly strive for innovation and progress. She participates in the regular meetings of Resilient Palisades' teams as well as the leadership meetings. It's a big time commitment, but her presence connects the teams and campaigns within the overall mission of the organization. Sara has also collaborated with other local organizations with similar goals. For example, she has joined the Palisades Village Green and is now creating their online presence as well. Sara's efforts facilitate a sense of unity among organizations serving the Pacific Palisades community.

Steve Cron

Steve, a Palisades Highland resident and community leader, has been honored for his tireless work over the course of seven years – above and beyond his duties as PPCC Area 2 Representative – staying on top of the City,

State, County and ultimately the California State Coastal Commission and appearing at the Commission hearing to make sure the deplorable conditions at the restroom at the Temescal Ridge Trailhead in the Highlands were addressed, that the facilities were beautified and that the restroom would be reinstated to full use. Work is now underway to repair and clean the Trailhead restroom. As Steve wrote to the *Palisadian-Post*: “The trash is now gone, as well as the graffiti, and I’ve been assured that they will soon fix the toilets and sinks on the inside.” “We’re not done yet, but it’s a great start.” The property, located at 16701 Via La Costa, has been a topic of discussion—and concern—in the Palisades for years. “In light of the trash and cigarette butts strewn throughout the property, the graffiti on the bathroom walls, the unsanitary condition of the bathrooms, and the proximity of the trailhead to dry, highly flammable native vegetation, we believe that in its present condition the bathroom and parking lot present a health and safety issue to our community,” the Pacific Palisades Community Council wrote to the Coastal Commission in 2018.

PRIDE OF THE PALISADES

Palisades P.R.I.DE.

It is fitting that the Pride of the Palisades Award this year is bestowed on this worthy Palisades organization named *PRIDE!*

- 1) P.R.I.D.E. (also known as “PRIDE”) stands for “**P**rotect and **R**enew our **I**ntity and **E**nvironment.” For many years, PRIDE has been doing just that in and for the Palisades community.
- 2) **PRIDE** does a great deal of work in the community and its hardworking members have filled great shoes on the commercial front – making sure the Palisades has TLC in its common places and being a huge support to the community and PPCC.
- 3) **PRIDE’s** accomplishments are diverse and, in many cases, subtle. “Eyesores” such as garish rooftop signs dating back to the ’40s and ’50s have been all but eliminated. Tacky advertising benches at bus stops in and around town have been swapped for new, more decorative and comfortable benches designed of stone and/or metal slats. Streamlined trash containers have replaced the concrete monstrosities, and in the recent past the Village boasted nearly two dozen new trees and more than a dozen turn-of-the-century antique-style lampposts festooned with colorful hanging flower baskets.
- 4) When you see the many medians that have been planted and maintained, that’s the work of PRIDE.
- 5) Donor bricks on Sunset (the “Sunset Walk of Pride”) are installed and maintained by PRIDE. The fundraising was organized by PRIDE.

PPCC salutes Palisades P.R.I.DE. and all the 2023 Honorees for their invaluable contributions to Pacific Palisades.