

# Manhattan Beach Sun

The Weekly Newspaper of Manhattan Beach

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## Mira Costa Singers Serenade Neptunian Festivities



The Mira Costa Advanced Woman's Chorale, under the direction of Michael Hayden, performing for the Neptunian Woman's Club Christmas luncheon

## Nonprofit Celebrates Five Years of Work, Success in South Bay

By Cristian Vasquez

In November, the Lot to Spot celebrated alongside Lawndale and other South Bay area residents at Restoration Life Christian Church located on 147<sup>th</sup> Street and Larch Avenue. Directly across the street on Larch Avenue is the site of one of the nonprofit's next projects: an empty lot turned interim dog park that they hope to convert into green space for local residents.

"Community engagement for that will begin in 2014 and I believe the park should be open by late 2015," From Lot to Spot (FLTS) Founder and Executive Director Viviana Franco said. "The new park will be dog-friendly although there is not much demand for that in Lawndale--at least we did not hear that during the design process from the community."

The celebration was a small break from the usual busy schedule that the staff of FLTS encounters on a daily basis. Founded in response to the need for recreational space and the lack of accessible green space in low-income neighborhoods, FLTS aims at improving the quality of life of the residents via these open spaces.

"We have a huge issue that it takes five, six, seven or eight years to get a park in these communities and it's not fair," Franco said. "You come out to

these park-poor communities, you have some amazing engagement workshops and get them [residents] all excited and then have to wait for funding. You ask the kids in the community what they want in a park and when they finally come back, they [kids] are all grown up. That's not okay."

FLTS's unique approach involves absolute community engagement in designing what is best for each particular city's needs. All communities that FLTS works alongside with have their residents contribute ideas in developing healthy spaces. During the last five years, FLTS has worked tediously to convert vacant lots into urban spots. Working with The Trust for Public Land and with the City of Lawndale has led to successful projects in the past and has set up the upcoming project located on Larch Avenue.

"From Lot to Spot and The Trust For Public Land, together, have been working in the South Bay communities for awhile," Franco said. "We informed them [City of Lawndale] that we had a grant coming up and asked if they had a property or something that they wanted to build into a park space, so they did."

Community engagement for the dog park across the street from the church where FLTS celebrated its fifth year of community work will begin in January.

Residents will be given a forum to provide ideas as to what they would like to see in the park space. The first meetings will take place in January, but dates are yet to be set. The goal is to have the park open by 2015. FLTS will not become involved with a project if it is not community designed. The group is committed to having the residents design the space because in the end it is an area they will use. "The City was okay with everything," Franco said. "It has been refreshing to have this support."

For the staff of FLTS, the benefits to these spaces are more than just of a physical nature. "When kids reconnect with nature in an urban environment, it opens their mind and allows for more creativity," Franco said.

Helping create these spaces today and in the future will be crucial for every community that FLTS has worked with and they hope to set a blueprint that can be followed by future generations. "We are creating a process manual for park builders, whether it be the Public Works department or the community, on how to identify these spaces that create networks in the community," Franco said. "It is about the green spaces and urban walking trails. It about learning how to build these spaces in a timely fashion and that they are cost-effective and sustainable." •

## Weekend Forecast

**Friday**  
Mostly Sunny

76°/54°



**Saturday**  
Partly Cloudy

76°/50°



**Sunday**  
Sunny

76°/49°



# Calendar

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

City Council Meeting, 6-11 p.m., City Council Chambers, 1400 Highland Avenue.

## Police Report

**From Officer Stephanie Martin:** Are you leaving town for the Holiday? If so, here are some crime prevention tips:

- Let your Block Captain and neighbors know
- Encourage neighbors to park in your driveway
- Do not stop mail or newspaper delivery
- Use timers on porch light, interior lighting and a radio
- Secure all doors and windows and if you have one, set your alarm system

### DECEMBER 5

500 Block of Rosecrans Ave. (Residential Burglary) Unknown suspect(s) removed a window to enter the residence and stole several electronic items and gift cards.

### DECEMBER 13

1200 Block of N. Sepulveda Blvd. (Vehicle Burglary) Unknown suspect(s) stole the third row seats and a stroller from a locked vehicle. Unknown method of entry.

200 Block of Harkness St. (Mail Theft) Unknown suspect(s) took mail from a resident's mailbox.

### DECEMBER 15

1300 Block of 5th St. (Theft) Unknown suspect(s) entered an unlocked vehicle and stole a jacket, laptop with power cord, thumb drive, sunglasses, and a suitcase.

### DECEMBER 14

700 Block of Larsson St. (Residential Burglary) Unknown suspect(s) entered the residence through an unlocked sliding door and ransacked the master bedroom. The suspect(s) stole jewelry and a purse.

### DECEMBER 16

400 Block of N. Dianthus St. (Vehicle Burglary) Unknown suspect(s) punched the driver's side door lock to enter the vehicle, which was parked on the street. Items stolen included 3 miniature vacuums. 400 Block of Rosecrans Ave.

(Theft) Unknown suspect(s) entered an unlocked vehicle, which was partially parked inside a carport. The suspect(s) stole a purse from the passenger seat floorboard.

### DECEMBER 17

1000 Block of N. Dianthus St. (Arrest) An MBPD Officer contacted a subject in the area, who was on probation for narcotics. During the investigation, the subject admitted to being in possession of hypodermic needles and a subsequent search of his person revealed black tar heroin. The subject was taken into custody.

### DECEMBER 5

800 N. Highland Ave (Theft) Unknown suspect(s) stole the victim's check from the mailbox and the next day, the check was cashed. The check had been "washed" and the name and amount were changed.

### DECEMBER 10

300 Block of 6th Pl. (Vehicle Burglary) The suspects entered the vehicle, which was parked in the driveway, and ransacked the interior of the car. A television, wallet, iPhone, and flash drive were stolen. The suspects were arrested by Hermosa Beach PD.

4200 Block of Ocean Dr. (Theft) Unknown suspect(s) stole several copper downspouts from the exterior walls of the residence.

### DECEMBER 12

500 Block of N. Manhattan Ave. (Theft) Unknown suspect(s) stole a hybrid charging cord from a vehicle, which was parked in the driveway.

### DECEMBER 13

3100 Block of Highland Ave. (Stolen Vehicle) Unknown suspect(s) stole a white, 2002 Ford E350, which was parked at the location

### DECEMBER 14

3600 Block of N. Sepulveda Blvd. (Robbery) Officers responded to the lower Fry's parking lot in regards to an armed robbery to a person. The victim was sitting in his vehicle when he was approached by a male Hispanic adult, wearing shorts and a grey/camouflage hoodie. The suspect brandished a black handgun and took the victim's wallet and cell phone. The suspect then ran up the hill towards the Mall, entered the passenger side of a black Nissan Sentra, and drove off towards the west part of the Manhattan Village Mall. •

# Looking Up

## Cassini Sees Saturn and Its Moons in Holiday Dress



By Bob Eklund

This holiday season, feast your eyes on images of Saturn and two of its most fascinating moons, Titan and Enceladus, in a care package from NASA's Cassini spacecraft. All three bodies are dressed and dazzling in this special package assembled by Cassini's imaging team. The new images are available online:

- <http://www.nasa.gov/cassini>
- <http://saturn.jpl.nasa.gov>
- <http://ciclops.org>

"During this, our 10th holiday season at Saturn, we hope that these images from Cassini remind everyone the world over of the significance of our discoveries in exploring such a remote and beautiful planetary system," said Carolyn Porco, Cassini imaging team leader, based at the Space Science Institute, Boulder, Colorado. "Happy holidays from all of us on Cassini."

Two views of Enceladus are included in the package and highlight the many fissures, fractures and ridges that decorate the icy moon's surface. Enceladus is a white, glittering snowball of a moon, now famous for the nearly 100 geysers that are spread across its south polar region and spout tiny icy particles into space. Most of these particles fall back to the surface as snow. Some small fraction escapes the gravity of Enceladus and makes its way into orbit around Saturn, forming the planet's extensive and diffuse E ring. Because scientists believe these geysers are directly connected to a subsurface, salty, organic-rich, liquid-water reservoir, Enceladus is home to one of the most accessible extraterrestrial habitable zones in the solar system.

Packaged along with Saturn and Enceladus is a group of natural-color images of Saturn's largest moon Titan, highlighting two of Titan's most outstanding features. Peering through the moon's hazy, orange atmosphere, the Cassini narrow-angle camera spots dark, splotchy fea-

tures in the polar regions of the moon. These features are the lakes and seas of liquid methane and ethane for which the moon is renowned. Titan is the only other place in the solar system that we know has stable liquids on its surface, though in Titan's case, the liquids are ethane and methane rather than water. At Titan's south pole, a swirling high-altitude vortex stands out distinctly against the darkness of the moon's un-illuminated atmosphere. Titan's hazy atmosphere and surface environment are believed to be similar in certain respects to the early atmosphere of Earth.

But the planet that towers over these moons is a celestial wonder itself. The north and south poles of Saturn are highlighted and appear drastically different from each other, as seen in new natural-color views. The globe of Saturn resembles a holiday ornament in a wide-angle image overlooking its north pole, bringing into view the hexagonal jet stream and rapidly spinning polar vortex that reside there. And the planet's south pole, now in winter, looking very different than the springtime north, displays brilliant blue hues, reminiscent of a frosty winter wonderland.

"Until Cassini arrived at Saturn, we didn't know about the hydrocarbon lakes of Titan, the active drama of Enceladus' jets and the intricate patterns at Saturn's poles," said Linda Spilker, the Cassini project scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, California. "Spectacular images like these highlight that Cassini has given us the gift of knowledge, which we have been so excited to share with everyone."

Launched in 1997, Cassini has explored the Saturn system for more than nine years. NASA plans to continue the mission through 2017, with the anticipation of much more groundbreaking science and imagery to come. •



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# Seniors

## Eye Diseases May Go Unnoticed in Individuals with Diabetes



(BPT) - With more than 8 percent of the American population having been diagnosed with diabetes, regular dilated eye exams are critical to prevent vision loss.

Diabetes is a disease that interferes with the body's ability to use and store sugar, which can cause many health problems. Too much sugar in the blood can cause damage throughout the body, including the eyes. Over time, diabetes affects the circulation system of the retina, the light-sensitive lining at the back of the eye.

"Many eye problems show no symptoms until they are in an advanced stage, and that is why we recommend that people with diabetes in particular have an eye examination by a doctor of optometry at least once a year," says Doctor of Optometry Tina MacDonald, a Certified Diabetes Educator and a member of the AOA's Health Promotions Committee. "When the eyes are dilated, an eye doctor is able to examine the retina for signs of diabetic eye disease and prescribe a course of treatment to help preserve an individual's sight."

Only 32 percent of respondents are aware that diabetic eye disease often has no visual signs or symptoms, according to the AOA's 2013 American Eye-Q consumer survey. Additionally, only 39 percent know that diabetes can be detected through a comprehensive eye examination.

People with diabetes are at a significantly higher risk for developing eye diseases including glaucoma, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy, one of the most serious sight-threatening complications of diabetes.

Those with diabetes are 40 percent more likely to suffer from glaucoma than people without. Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases characterized by damage to the optic nerve resulting in gradual peripheral vision loss.

Many people without diabetes will get cataracts, but those with the disease are 60 percent more likely to develop this eye condition. People with diabetes also tend to get cataracts at a younger age and have them progress faster. With cataracts, the eye's clear lens clouds, blocking light and interfering with normal vision.

Diabetic retinopathy is a condition that causes progressive damage to the retina. Damage to the tiny blood vessels that nourish the retina causes swelling of retinal tissue and clouding of vision. If left untreated, diabetic retinopathy may lead to blindness.

Since early warning signs of diabetic eye and vision disorders are often subtle or undetected, the AOA recommends that high-risk individuals look for initial signs and contact a doctor of optometry if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Sudden blurred or double vision
- Trouble reading or focusing on near-work
- Eye pain or pressure
- A noticeable aura or dark ring around lights or illuminated objects
- Visible dark spots in vision or images of flashing lights

In addition to having a yearly, comprehensive eye exam, the AOA offers the following tips to help prevent or slow the development of diabetic eye disease:

- Take prescribed medication as directed
- Keep glycohemoglobin test results consistently under 7 percent
- Stick to a healthy diet that includes omega 3s, fresh fruits and vegetables
- Exercise regularly
- Control high blood pressure
- Avoid alcohol and smoking

For additional information visit [www.aoa.org/diabetic-retinopathy.xml](http://www.aoa.org/diabetic-retinopathy.xml).

*"Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter." - Mark Twain*

# Classifieds

The deadline for Classified Ad submission and payment is Noon on Tuesday to appear in Thursday's paper. Advertisements must be submitted in writing by mail, fax or email. You may pay by cash, check, or credit card (Visa or M/C over the phone).

Errors: Please check your advertisements immediately. Any corrections and/or changes in an ad must be requested prior to the following Tuesday deadline in order to receive a credit. A credit will be issued for only the first time the error appears. Multiple runs will only be credited for the first time the error appears. No credit will be issued for an amount greater than the cost of the advertisement.

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### EMPLOYMENT

**Display Ad Sales Position.** We need an experienced Display Ad Salesperson for Herald Publications. Territories include Torrance, El Segundo and Hawthorne. Full or part-time positions are available. 20% commission on all sales. If interested please email your resume to [management@heraldpublications.com](mailto:management@heraldpublications.com). No phone calls please.

### APARTMENT FOR RENT

**Studio Apt.** ES. Quiet complex, stove, fridge, pool, laundry, covered parking, storage. No smoking/pets. Avail. now. \$900 + \$900 deposit w/copy of credit report. Leave message at (310) 322-8099.

To appear in next month's paper, submit your Classified Ad by Noon on the Tuesday prior.

# Finance

## Why Was Your Credit Card Transaction Denied?

By Jason Alderman

We've all had these moments: You're at a romantic restaurant and the evening went great. But just as you and your date are readying to leave, an embarrassed waiter appears and whispers, "I'm afraid your card has been denied." So much for romance.



so learn your issuer's policy before attempting one.

Other common triggers for credit card denials include:

Outdated or incorrect personal information – for example, when you're asked to enter your zip code at a gas station. Always alert your card issuer whenever you move.

Also, make sure you don't mistype your credit card number, expiration date, security code, address or other identifying information.

Expired card. Always check the card's expiration date. You should receive a replacement card several weeks beforehand. It's often mailed in a plain envelope, so be careful what you toss. If the new card doesn't arrive, contact the issuer to ensure it hasn't been stolen.

You've reached your credit limit. For the sake of your credit score, try to keep your overall and individual card credit utilization ratios (credit available divided by amount used) as low as possible – ideally below 50, or even 30, percent.

A temporary hold has been placed on your card – say for a rental car or hotel reservation – that puts you over your credit limit. Always ask whether a hold will be placed, how much and for how long, and factor that into your remaining balance calculations.

You miss a monthly payment. Card issuers may let this slide once or twice, depending on your history with them, but eventually if you don't make at least the minimum payment due, your card will probably be frozen.

The primary cardholder made changes on the account and forgot to tell other authorized users – for example, reporting his or her card stolen, lowering credit limits or removing you from the account.

On last thought: If your card is denied, don't shoot the messenger – he's only following instructions. Rather, call the card issuer and find out what happened. Embarrassment aside, it's nice to know that someone is trying to ensure your card isn't being used fraudulently. •

The same thing can happen at the grocery store, when shopping online or worst of all, when you're traveling and don't have a back-up means of payment. Why do credit card transactions get denied and what can you do to prevent it?

Banks and other credit card issuers have developed complex algorithms that track credit card behavior and highlight unusual usage patterns commonly associated with card theft or fraud.

"Unusual activities" that jump out to card issuers include:

When you ordinarily use your card only rarely, but suddenly make several charges in one day.

Making multiple purchases at the same store (or website) within a few minutes of each other.

An unusually large purchase – say for a major appliance, furniture or jewelry. Alert your card issuer before making large purchases.

One small purchase quickly followed by larger ones. Thieves will test the waters to see if a small purchase is denied; if it's not, they'll quickly run up major charges.

Exceeding daily spending limits. Some cards limit how much you can charge per day, even if you have sufficient remaining credit.

Making large purchases outside your geographic area.

Multiple out-of-town purchases in short succession. (Always tell your card issuer when you'll be traveling.)

International purchases, whether online or while traveling. In fact, some card issuers automatically decline international transactions because of the high potential for fraud,

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# Newspaper Fun!

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...friends will stand the test of time too!



It's time to get the grandfather clock checked and oiled. It's a beautiful way to tell time, but most of the day I use a wristwatch or cell phone.

Sunrises and sunsets are natural ways to mark time.

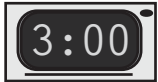
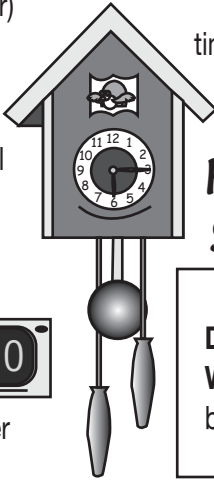


## It's About Time!

When we speak about time we talk about the past, present or the future.

Read the clues to fill in the puzzle:

- one hundred years
- common way to tell time
- shows events in order of when they happened
- tool to keep track of activities, days and months
- fun way to capture a moment in time (item is dug up later)
- Baby \_\_\_\_\_ Year is full of energy to start the year
- there are 24 time \_\_\_\_\_ throughout the world
- \_\_\_\_\_ clock shows what time it is anywhere on the planet – often shown by a series of clocks on a panel
- something that isn't affected by the passage of time
- \_\_\_\_\_ Father Time is tired after working all year; he is often shown with a long beard, sundial and sickle
- the start of each morning, dawn
- time that has yet to pass
- period of time marked by important events
- parts of the year that mark the temperature and weather
- twenty-four hours

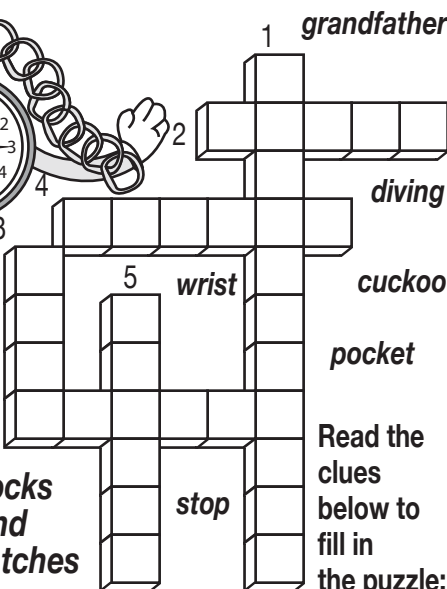


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Clocks and Watches



Many kinds of clocks and watches have been invented through the years. A watch was even made for engineers to help them run the trains on time.

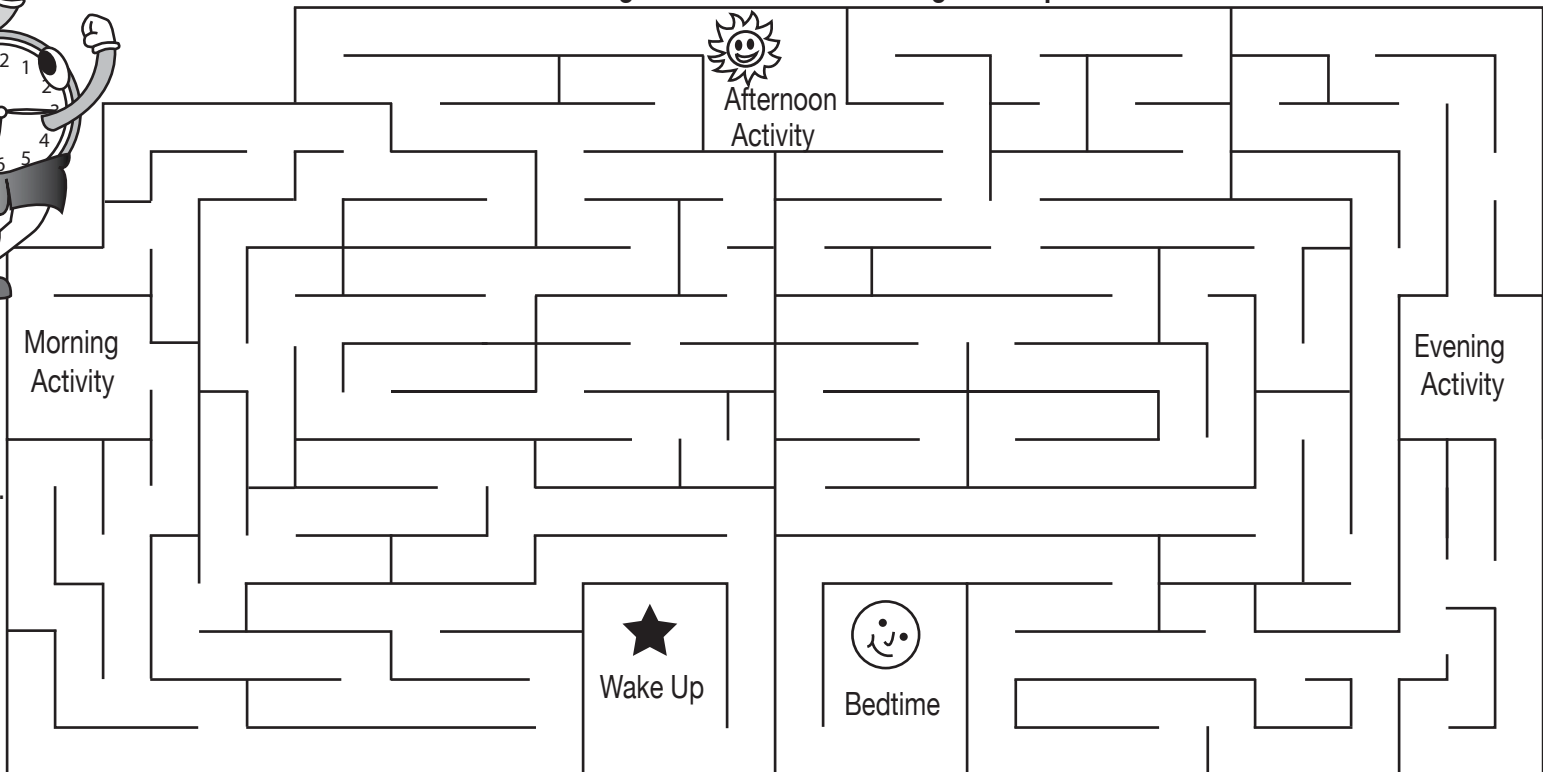
- \_\_\_\_\_ clock, tall standing clock with swinging pendulums
- \_\_\_\_\_ watch, timepiece you can wear to school
- \_\_\_\_\_ watch, great for measuring races
- \_\_\_\_\_ watch, can be underwater without being damaged
- \_\_\_\_\_ clock, hangs on the wall and sings a song every hour
- \_\_\_\_\_ watch, often on a chain and kept in a small pouch on vest



## A Race Against Time!

Every day is packed with chores, activities and fun. Can you find the shortest way through this maze from morning wake-up to bedtime?

- Start at the star ★ wake up to a new day!
- Next, find your way to the *morning activity*.
- Then, go to the *afternoon activity*.
- Travel along to your *evening activity*.
- Finally, end your day at *bedtime*!



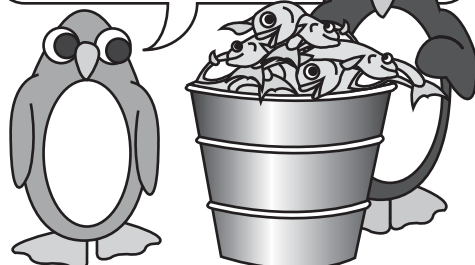
## Time Talk

Match up each saying about time to its meaning:

- A. a race against time
- B. all the time in the world
- C. waste of time
- D. time flies
- E. time out
- F. it's feeding time at the zoo
- G. a stitch in time saves nine

- not worth the effort
- a break in the action
- doing a task well now can save effort later
- group of people eating in a noisy, untidy way
- life moves quickly
- rush to beat a deadline
- plenty of time

Geesh! Please tell me that they aren't talking about us when they say "feeding time at the zoo!" We are so nice and neat.



- A. there's no time to lose
- B. time is up
- C. pressed for time
- D. not given the time of day
- E. give a hard time
- F. time to call it a day
- G. have a whale of a time

- cause someone trouble
- no time left
- stop working on something
- enjoy yourself
- be rushed to do something
- you need every moment
- not getting attention

# Tips to Achieve Wholesome Health in 2014

You're all too familiar with that one, dreaded moment when the festivities end. It hits you every year like a bad hangover. You promise yourself that once the last sip of eggnog has been guzzled and the cookie jar has been emptied, you'll get healthy.

But what does healthy mean? We're bombarded with visions of steel abdominal muscles and gazelle-like limbs. For most people, however, achieving health can't be reduced to a lower health club membership deal or a dieting pill. Rather, the road to health is a lifelong journey encompassing mind, body and spirit.

That said, there are manageable steps you can take in your daily life to experience and sustain a healthier, balanced lifestyle. 1) Everything in moderation. 2) Walk 3) Floss 4) Eat fruits and veggies 5) Lots of water and 6) whole grains.

Popcorn, low in calories and high in fiber, whole grains and antioxidants, can help. One of the oldest and most beloved snacks for any age, popcorn is also a treat to lift the spirit.

Start your day with this balanced whole-grain toasted berry granola recipe from Jolly Time Pop Corn that is good for both your body and your soul.

## Whole-grain Toasted Berry Granola

Makes about 11 cups



### Ingredients

- 10 cups popped JOLLY TIME Butter Light Microwave Pop Corn made with the Smart Balance unique blend of oils
- 2 cups barley flakes
- 1/4 cup oat bran
- 1/4 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 cup honey
- 3 tablespoons light olive oil
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger or cardamom
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup dried blueberries
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries

### Directions

Preheat oven to 250 F. Line a large-rimmed baking sheet with foil. Mix popcorn (remove any unpopped kernels), barley flakes, oat bran and wheat germ in a large bowl. Mix honey, oil, spices, vanilla and salt in a glass measuring cup until well blended. Pour over popcorn mixture; toss to coat. Pour mixture onto baking sheet in an even layer. Bake about 40 minutes or until crisp, stirring occasionally. Stir in blueberries and cranberries. Cool completely; store in airtight container.

To learn more about healthy, satisfying snacking with popcorn during the holidays, and to access exclusive recipes and features, visit [www.jollytime.com](http://www.jollytime.com).

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# Sports

## To Sit Or Not To Sit

By Adam Serrao

If you're a Los Angeles sports fan like I am, then you must have found it just as painful to watch the two most popular teams in Los Angeles play sports lately. When I say painful, I mean it. The players on both the Los Angeles Lakers and the Los Angeles Dodgers just can't stay healthy lately. The "Boys in Blue" seemed to look more like the "Boys in Black and Blue" over their past two seasons of play and with the Lakers...well, the unthinkable has happened. Kobe Bryant has met his match. No, it's not LeBron James and no, Michael Jordan hasn't resurrected his career again to make a comeback. It is Father Time who has walked right up to Kobe and smacked him in the face. Or the Achilles... Perhaps it is fitting or ironic even that one of the toughest, most durable players to ever set foot on an NBA court is being hampered by a tendon called Achilles. As invulnerable as Kobe has always seemed to those who have watched him play here in L.A., this injury may be the one that slowly does him in. With time no longer on his side, the riveting question has now become do you sit Kobe Bryant out for the rest of this year, or play him as soon as he returns from his latest injury.

Kobe's latest injury is in fact not his Achilles tendon tear. Bryant returned from that injury

rather successfully and was beginning to look a lot better in his sixth game of the season against the Memphis Grizzlies when he suddenly broke a bone in his knee. Initially, Kobe tried to play through it like he always does and actually finished the game without pause. In the following days, however, the pain would not subside. Kobe took an MRI, learned that he had broken a bone and would be back watching from the sidelines for a minimum of six weeks. "You hate it for Kobe," Lakers head coach Mike D'Antoni said. "He's worked so hard to get back." Now, Kobe will have to begin that work once again, but for just how long?

The timetable for Bryant's return is in fact six weeks and knowing Kobe, he'll try to make it back before that amount of time. But maybe, just maybe, the Lakers should think about sitting him out for the rest of the season. Sure, the two-year, \$48.5 million contract that Bryant just signed to make him the wealthiest athlete in the game of basketball certainly does not support that point. But signing Kobe to that contract was more of a symbol than anything else—a reward, if you will, for 17 years of dedication, hard work and five championship rings. Whether Kobe plays this year or not, the Lakers are not going to win a championship let alone get out of

the first round of the playoffs. If Kobe does return in six weeks, it will most likely come right after the All-Star break in a game against his old pal Dwight Howard and the Houston Rockets. That would mean that Bryant will have missed right around 30 games, give or take a couple, and that the Lakers will most likely be well out of playoff contention. Sure, that's speculation, but following Bryant's injury, the Lakers quickly dropped two of their first three without the superstar, losing to Golden State by 19 points and Phoenix by 27. Aside from Jordan Farmar's return from injury, things do not look to be on the up and up for the Lake Show.

The Lakers are, of course, always better to watch when Kobe Bryant is on the court. He is the face of the franchise and the man who brings in the money for the Lakers. For that reason and that reason alone, management would most likely much rather have him competing and out there on the court. He drives ratings and he drives sales. Unfortunately, Bryant cannot do that if he is injured. That's why it will be in the best interest for the Lakers to sideline Bryant for the rest of the season, have him heal his injuries and come back next season when he is able to have a training camp and get himself into basketball condition. As it stands, Bryant cannot train with the injuries

that he currently has. That means that if and when he tries to return from his latest injury, he will need at least another few weeks to get back into the basketball condition that has sustained his career for as long as it is currently tenured. Knowing Bryant, however, he will believe that he is already in that kind of shape, thus injuring himself even further and jeopardizing his entire career.

If he is capable, there is no way that Kobe will ever agree to sit on the sideline when he could instead be contributing to his team. That being said, expect to see Bryant back in purple and gold come mid-February. But perhaps the smart, yet unpopular decision would be for Bryant to take it easy this year. Bottom line, this team as it is currently constructed is not a contender for the title. Bryant's legacy will be about championships won—not games played or minutes logged. A lot of things can change in a year, especially with a free agent class and draft class like the ones that will arrive next season. Sitting out the remainder of the season can both enhance the longevity of Bryant's career and help him win that much-coveted sixth championship trophy that he longs oh-so deeply for. At a time like this, it is in the Lakers' and Kobe's best interest to focus on the future. Unfortunately for Kobe, that future is in six weeks. •

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# Real Estate

## Three Astoundingly Simple Solutions for Big Renovation Challenges



(BPT) - Americans are renovating again. In fact, the remodeling market hasn't been this robust since 2004, according to the National Association of Home Builders' Remodeling Market Index. Yet even the most enthusiastic homeowners-turned-renovators may hesitate when faced with certain common challenges - be it adding a bathroom in a problematic location or figuring out how to bring natural light into an interior room.

But virtually every renovation challenge is solvable, and sometimes the answers are surprisingly simple and cost-effective. Here are three common issues you may encounter while renovating, and the astoundingly simple ways to overcome the obstacles:

**The challenge:** Adding a bathroom over concrete flooring or in a tight spot where traditional plumbing doesn't work well.

**The simple solution:** Up-flush plumbing. Bathroom renovations or additions offer a high return on investment - as much as 56 percent of the initial investment when you resell, according to Remodeling Magazine's Cost vs. Value Report. But conventional plumbing can be costly and time-consuming, even in the best circumstances. If you want to add a bathroom in a basement where the floor is concrete or in a smaller space with no room for traditional piping, an up-flush, or macerating, toilet is a simple, cost-effective solution.

Systems like Saniflo's macerating toilet and plumbing technology eliminate the need to cut through a floor to install new drainage. And the systems fit easily into areas as small as a closet or dead space beneath a stairway. A macerating pump reduces waste and paper from the toilet and sends it under high pressure through piping directly into the septic or sewer system. No waste is stored, and the systems are comparatively low-cost compared to traditional plumbing. Visit [www.saniflo.com](http://www.saniflo.com) to learn more.

**The challenge:** Introducing natural light in a room with no space for windows.

**The simple solution:** Skylights. The benefits of natural light are well-documented, from improving mood to reducing dependence on artificial lights. Yet some spaces, such

as interior powder rooms or walk-in closets, don't lend themselves to windows. When you want natural light in a room where a lack of wall space precludes a window, or in which privacy is an issue, a skylight can be a great solution. Tubular skylights even allow you to bring natural light into ground floor rooms.

The cost of installing a skylight is comparable to adding quality windows in a room. Choose energy-efficient skylights and you may also reduce home cooling costs in spring and summer, and lighting costs in winter, too.

**The challenge:** Privacy in a doorway where a swinging door doesn't make sense.

**The simple solution:** Pocket doors. A swinging door may not be right for a space for many reasons. Perhaps you need to close a door in a spot so infrequently that a swinging door isn't needed. Or, maybe the space around the doorway is too tight to accommodate a swinging door, such as in a laundry space tucked into a hallway. Or, perhaps a traditional door will ruin the aesthetic of a space. In all those situations, a pocket door is a great way to achieve privacy without compromise. Because pocket doors tuck away inside the wall, you don't need to worry about having enough space to open or close a traditional door. Plus, when left open, pocket doors are hidden inside the wall so their visual impact on decor is minimal.

While these solutions may be beyond the abilities of most do-it-yourselfers, reputable contractors can accomplish them easily - and help you decide if one of these options is right for your renovation project. •



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"Even though my name is **Miley**, please don't confuse me with the other one. I'm not a twerker, but I will tweak your heartstrings if you give me a chance. My original owner, whose information is on my microchip, gave



Miley

me and my pal Cyrus away. The new owner had us for six months and then surrendered us to an LA County shelter. When the shelter scanned my microchip after I was spayed, they discovered that he wasn't the registered owner. I had to wait another two weeks for them to

contact the previous owner before I was rescued. Although I'm a little chunky--about 15 pounds--for a five-year-old, purebred, female Miniature Schnauzer, I am a real sweetheart and I get along great with other dogs. In fact, I would love to go to a home that already has a doggie pal or two since I've never been an only dog. I just had a dental and now have a great set of pearly white teeth, so please come to our pet adoptions and see what a great smile I have."

"I know for a fact that my name is **Gina**. However, my pedigree is somewhat questionable. Based on my coloring, I could be a Schnauzer/Yorkie mix. Then again, since I have a little "smooshie" face, I could also be part Brussels Griffon. Whatever my true heritage is, one thing for certain is that I'm petite at only eight pounds and just a real cutie. I'm a two-year-old female who was rescued from an LA County shelter where I was brought in as a stray. Because I'm a little self-conscious about my "smooshie" face, I'm very camera shy, so my picture really doesn't do justice to the real me! The MSFR folks think I'm very sweet and I have a great time playing with other dogs. You really have to come to our pet adoptions and see just how adorable I am."

"My family named me **Jack** and right now I'm so heartbroken, I don't know what to do. I'm only seven or maybe eight months old, but I had a great life with my first family.



Gina

I loved their toddler and we were the best of buddies. Then my family surrendered me because they were moving. No family, no toddler, no home! Is it any wonder that I'm a bit nervous and shy? I get along well with dogs and kids, but I need to be introduced slowly to new people and situations. I am a very sweet, male Terrier mix. I'm very gentle when handled and only weigh 20 pounds, so it's easy to give me hugs. Since I'm currently residing at a boarding facility, folks can't tell whether or not I'm housebroken, but everyone thinks it's a good possibility that I am. If you would like to be my forever family, I can be seen anytime at Yellow Brick Road Doggie Playcare in El Segundo. Call 310-606-5507.

Hi! My name is **Cyrus** and I was rescued along with my Miley from an LA County shelter. My original owner gave me and my pal Miley,

away. The new owner had us for six months and then surrendered us to the shelter. When the shelter scanned my microchip after neutering me, they discovered that he wasn't the registered owner. I had to wait another two weeks for them to contact the previous owner to see if he wanted to reclaim me before I was eligible for adoption. I'm an 18-pound, purebred, male Miniature Schnauzer with a dazzling smile, thanks to my dental, and a terrific personality. I am about five years old, very playful and get along great with other dog friends. However, I could probably use some training. My play is very enthusiastic and I get easily distracted, but I do try my best. My Christmas wish is to find a forever home with a family with a doggie pal since I've never been by myself. If you check out our pet adoptions, I'll bet I'm just the dog you've been looking for." •



Cyrus

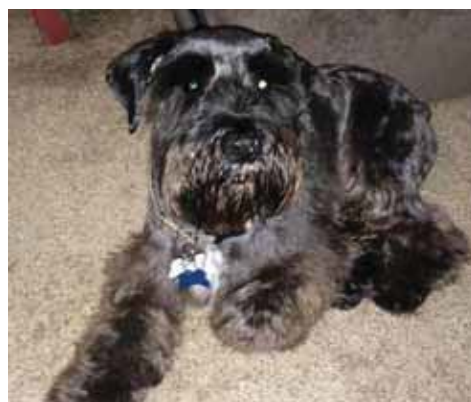


Jack

## Happy Tails

### A "Christmas" Wish Comes True

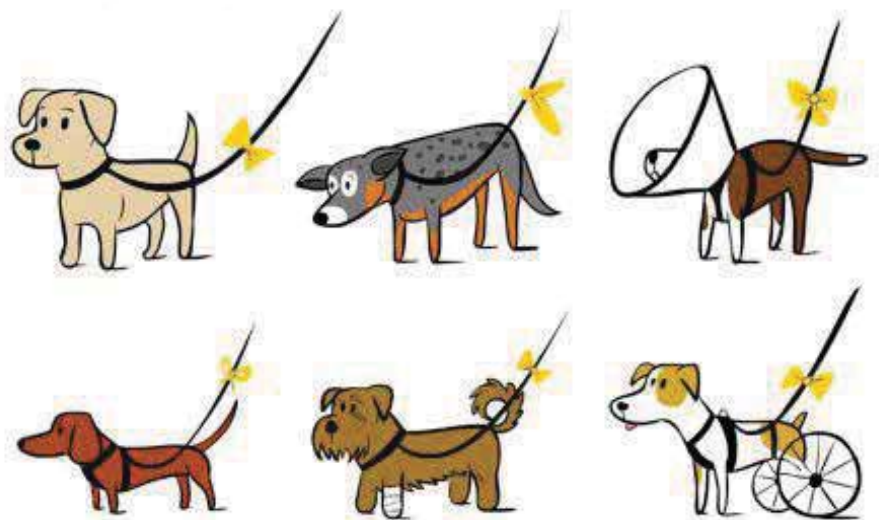
Congratulations to **Justin** and his new forever family. Justin was our Carson shelter rescue who was adopted, but regretfully was returned when his adopter developed health issues. His new family lost their 12-year-old Schnauzer to heart failure and opened their heart to our sweet boy. Justin is now living in Anaheim with two human brothers and two human sisters (one brother and sister are twins). Once again he has been renamed **Charlie** (they decided that before they knew his former name was Charlie). It appears that he is destined to have the name Charlie! •



If you have any questions about a particular dog's availability, you can email us at [info@msfr.org](mailto:info@msfr.org). Please visit all of our Miniature Schnauzers & Friends rescues at the adoptions fair held every Saturday from noon-3:30 p.m. or check out our website, [www.msfr.org](http://www.msfr.org). Our adoption fairs take place at Petco, 537 N. Pacific Coast Highway, Redondo Beach, California. Schnauzers! Bet you can't adopt just one!

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