

# Annual Summer Potluck Dinner and ACT / ADC Meetings



Wednesday, July 7, 6:30 p.m.

At the home of Fred and Jeanne Register 2345 Midlothian Dr., Altadena



Join your ACT and Democratic friends for our traditional Summer Potluck Dinner and the July meeting of ACT and the Arroyo Democratic Club. Enjoy good conversation and great cooking and a special program: Guest Speaker is new Pasadena City Manager Michael Beck. Socializing and the Potluck begin at 6:30 p.m. The meeting follows at about 8 p.m. Note change to Wednesday!

Potluck assignments:

A-H - Main dish I-O - Salad or vegetable P-Z - Fruit or dessert

Please provide enough for about 6 people and bring your own serving utensils. Beverages, plates, cups, napkins and eating utensils will be provided. Everyone is welcome; bring a friend!



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#### WANTED !! - ACT Volunteer Bloggers

Calling all bloggers -- ACT is about to energize our web site. We want to have new content each week, so we're looking for 3 blogger volunteers who would be willing to write a column / blog once a month. That way, we'd have the Phoenix and Political Notes one week, and then a new blog each week thereafter, and then repeat the cycle each month.

Bloggers could write about a specific topic -city politics, development, the schools, the environment, the war in Afghanistan and Iraq -or could vary the topics as your whim dictates.

Anyone interested should call our Executive Director, Jon Fuhrman, at 626 795-5255 or Email to jon fuhrman@charter.net.



## When should our Steering Committee Meet???

All members (at least those who have given us their e-mail addresses) will soon receive an email poll on when they'd prefer us to have monthly Steering Committee meetings.

Steering Committee meetings are open to all members. We make business decisions for the organization and also make political decisions -- whom to endorse, how much to donate to various candidates, and so on. Further, we often have interesting programs -- next month, for example, we have invited the new City Manager, to address the group.

Most recently, we've had our meetings on the first Thursday of each month. Prior to that, we alternated between the first Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday of the month.

We want to know what you would prefer -which dates are best, which are worst. You can let us know by responding to the forthcoming e-mail, or send your thoughts in to jon fuhrman@charter.net, or leave a message on our answer phone (626 795-2798). However you do it, let us know what you think.



#### **New Member Listing for June:**

Ken Chawkins, Pasadena Barbara & Harry Markowitz, L.A.

## Welcome New & Returning ACT Members:

Allen Shay, Pasadena

#### Special Thanks to Our Sustaining Members

Geoffrey Baum & Lisa Gallaway, Pasa. Ken Chawkins, Pasadena Larry Eggers, Pasadena Barbara & Harry Markowitz, L.A. Tom & Elizabeth Polenzani, Pasadena Michael Reagan &

Carolyn Garner-Reagan, Pasadena Shirley & Otis Spencer, Pasadena Steve Thorsett &

Rachel Dewey Thorsett, Santa Cruz

#### **Special Thanks to Our Patrons**

Nancy & Richard Esbenshade, Pasa. Fred & Jeanne Register, Altadena

## And really special thanks to Our Benefactor

Steven Madison, Pasadena

And Thanks to One Member for His Additional Contributions to ACT's Operating Account and to to ACT's Political Account

Larry Eggers, Pasadena

## From 44th District Assemblymember Anthony Portantino



Greetings from Sacramento!

We've reached the halfway mark in the legislative year and I am pleased that the Assembly has approved 22 of my bills. Among those measures are:

- AB1662 will provide tax relief for residents whose property was damaged in the Station Fire and mudslides in Los Angeles and other counties.
- AB 1997 seeks to simplify the process for community college students to apply for federal and state financial aid. Reports have shown that community college students leave some \$500 million in unused aid on the table under the current system.
- AB 1999 is aimed at saving the lives of underage drinkers by allowing teens to call for help when they suspect one of their compatriots has suffered alcohol poisoning. This limited liability will encourage 911 calls and save lives.
- AB 218 establishes goals and accountability standards for public colleges and universities. As a member of the Master Plan for Higher Education Committee, I am pleased that two of our top priorities are transfer and accountability. AB 218 is a reintroduction of former Sen. Jack Scott's work on this subject.

In recent days as the Assembly took action on hundreds of bills, I joined my colleagues in supporting Chelsea's Law that would tighten laws governing sex offenders. Governor Schwarzenegger has promised to sign the bill if passed by the legislature.

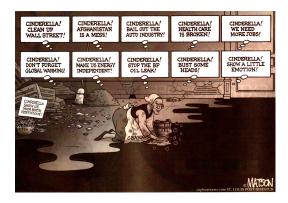
And I was very lucky to attend a press conference called by Congressman Adam Schiff and the National Park Service to formally announce the launch the 'Rim of the Valley Special Resource Study' at Eaton Canyon. The launch of this study was the culmination of Rep. Schiff's nine-year effort to champion a prudent planning process for the preservation and utilization of much of the Angeles National Forest. Great job Adam!

Sofia comes home from her freshman year at UCSB this week and the Bella finishes 2<sup>nd</sup> grade the following week. Could this signal big changes in my house for the summer – an independent college girl and an even more independent-minded (polite for just stubborn) 8-year-old? Stay tuned.

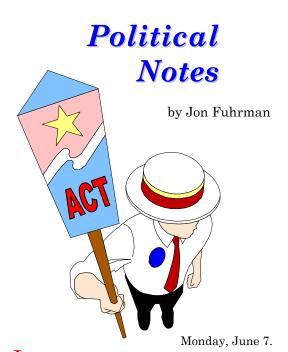
Assemblymember Anthony Portantino represents the 44th Assembly District of California, including La Canada, Pasadena, Altadena, South Pasadena, Eagle Rock, Highland Park, Glassell Park, Temple City, Duarte and parts of Arcadia and Monrovia. He can be reached by Email at:

http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a44/





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t's strange how each Administration ends up with one or two defining events. George Bush had 9/11 and Katrina; Bill Clinton had health care and Monica Lewinsky; George H.W. Bush had the Gulf War and "Read my lips..." None of these were anticipated, nor could the long-term implications have been predicted. Now it seems clear that President Obama has found at least one of his unexpected, defining events -- the Gulf oil spill.

Fortunately, at this writing, British Petroleum seems to be making significant progress in capturing the outflow. But it will take months for oil that has already escaped to dissipate or be sopped up or otherwise sequestered. Realistically, there is little the Administration could have done that it has not already done: the right people were assigned to manage the response, they have demonstrated a real pro-

fessionalism, and they were given all the resources they needed.

Yet it's also clear that voters do not feel the President has handled the crisis well. President Obama needs to learn from former President Clinton. That cool, calm, even intellectual demeanor that is so much Obama's trademark has, in this case, not served him well. The people needed to know someone felt their pain. I have no doubt the President did and does, but the emotional bond that President Clinton could forge so naturally and genuinely just wasn't there.

Beyond the immediate impact, however, are fascinating long-term implications. This event has the potential for fundamentally realigning our national debate on energy, taxes and the environment, all for the better.

One of the first responses has been to question why we need to drill in 5,000 feet of water. Unquestionably, had this well been on land, or even in only 50 feet of water, the leak would have been capped almost immediately. But the technological challenges of operating under 5,000 feet of water, with those enormous pressures and densities, tremendously complicate the repair efforts. Clearly, we have systematically underestimated the risks and challenges of drilling in that environment.

So why not just close those wells? The output from that well provides an infinitesimal proportion of our overall energy use. Unfortunately, the media has not done a particularly good job here in outlining the overall problem. Offshore drilling, just in the Gulf of Mexico, generated 25% of all oil and 14% of all natural gas used by the U.S. in 2007 (the latest year for which I could find figures). A map available on Wikipedia shows the sites of 50,686 bore holes (active and inactive wells) in the Gulf. The economies of Texas, Louisiana, Mississispipi and Alabama are all inextricably

tied to the drilling industry.

So we can't reasonably just swear off offshore drilling, at least not yet. How then do we prevent another similar catastrophe? The Obama Administration is focusing intently on the Minerals Management Service (MMS), the branch of the Interior Department that, among other duties, licenses and inspects offshore wells. Not surprisingly, after 8 years of a Bush-Cheney administration, the regulators and inspectors seem to have an inappropriately tight relationship with those they were licensing and inspecting.

This was especially critical because, if there

was a single root cause of this catastrophe, it was the failure of the "blowout preventer" to activate completely. Blowout preventers have been around for decades -- they were invented in the 1920's, to prevent oil gushers. These BOP's are the ultimate fall-back -- if all else fails, choke off the well at the source. But in the current Gulf spill, the BOP closed only partially, and oil continued to gush from the well.

Was this particular blowout preventer defective? Or is the design itself fundamentally defective, in which case the manufacturer, Cameron Industries, is in for a big fall? Was the device not properly installed, which would be Halliburton's responsibility, or not properly maintained, in which case BP catches the blame, as does MMS, which inspects these installations? (According to recent testimony, the Deepwater Horizon blowout preventer was last inspected by MMS in 2005.)

More importantly, how many other wells rely on blowout preventers, of identical or similar design, as the safety net of last resort? How thorough have the inspections of those wells been? How well maintained are those devices? Sadly, there has been virtually no discussion in the media, so far at least, of the broader implications of the failure of this blowout preventer.

Politically, the spill has put the oil industry and its traditional allies in a box. On virtually every subject, no matter what the Administration does, you can count on hearing criticism from Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, or from House Minority Leader John Boehner. But they have been remarkably silent on the oil spill. Indeed, all the traditional advocates of domestic drilling, on-shore or

off-shore, have been quiet.

Environmentalists so far have been patient, not wanting to move in an unseemly fashion. But already there is growing support on Capitol Hill for eliminating various tax breaks for oil companies, and no push-back from the traditional industry allies. More importantly, this may provide the lever that President Obama needed for the carbon tax bill, which would, in as fundamental a way as health

care reform, change the landscape of how we tax and regulate energy production. Discussion of further drilling in Alaska has dropped off the radar entirely, while recognition of the potential costs of all energy development -- oil, coal, natural gas, and nuclear -- has come to the fore.

The other interesting impact will be the interaction between this environmental disaster and the Tea Party movement. The Tea Party folks are, in a sense, the ultimate rejectionist philosophy -- all government is wasteful and abusive, all regulation is bad, just leave us alone. Yet that vast middle of the country clearly wants government and regulation to



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prevent such catastrophes, and is usefully reminded of that on occasions like these. The broad majority is likely to favor the Obama approach -- tough new regulations and regulators, tough on BP, demanding accountability and prevention -- as opposed to the Tea Party call of less government, less regulation, less intervention. With Tea Party candidates winning numerous Republican primaries, I think they're boxing themselves into a corner supported, ultimately, by only a small fraction of the voters. That could mean far fewer Republican victories in November, particularly in the U.S. Senate. I'm still predicting a net gain of Democratic seats, contrary to virtually all other pundits who predicts net losses of 3 to 7 seats.

-- Jon Fuhrman

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#### From State Senator Carol Liu...



#### Sacramento Update

The State Legislature's April 23d policy committee legislative bill deadline is now behind us. Bills not passed out of policy committee by April 23 are now considered "dead" for this session. Of course there are always exceptions, but, for the most part, if the policy committee didn't pass a measure onto Appropriations Committee or to the "house of origin" floor, it will need to be introduced again in the new session next year. With new members coming to the Senate and Assembly and a new state administration in 2011, our expectations for what kinds of legislation have a chance to become law will change. The state of the econ-

omy will also be a major factor.

My bills that passed out of their policy committees include:

- SB 969 to stabilize the up-and-down student fee increases that have made it more difficult for students and their families to afford a college education.
- SB 1084 to establish an Economic Security Task Force that will identify programs and new policies to create pathways out of poverty.
- SB 1126 to help students earn their Early Childhood Education degrees so they can teach in preschools or other pre-kindergarten programs. Currently, these students are required to retake courses they have already passed when they transfer from community colleges to the State University or University of California to complete their degrees.
- SB 1143 to alter the community college funding formula to create an incentive for the colleges to help students complete their courses, certificates, and degrees.
- SB 1186 to streamline the California public school governance system, for which authority is currently spread among the state Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Governor's Secretary for Education.

Now these bills must pass out of Appropriations Committee, which will consider their cost impacts. The Senate floor is the next hurdle and then the process begins again on the Assembly side.

The Senate and Assembly Budget Committees have been holding hearings on the state budget proposed by the Governor in January. As Chair of Senate Budget Subcommittee on Education, I have been delving into the intricacies of K-12 and higher education finance and

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accountability and student access, enrollment, financial aid, and completion rates. We will continue hearings to consider the Governor's May Revise that reflects the disappointing revenue returns from April income tax filings.

Senator Carol Liu represents nearly 850,000 people in the 21st Senate District, which includes Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, La Cañada Flintridge, San Gabriel, Temple City, and several City and County of Los Angeles communities. www.senate.ca.gov/LIU.



#### From Congressman Adam B. Schiff...

WASHINGTON UPDATE

#### Protecting Our Precious Natural Resources

On Friday, June 4, I was joined by representatives from the National Park Service and Assembly Member Anthony Portantino to announce the commencement of the longawaited study of our region's hillsides. It is a locally driven process to develop a plan that balances preservation, recreation and the needs and interests of those living in and around the area so that future generations of Californians can continue to enjoy our precious natural resources. The final recommendations of the Rim of the Valley Corridor Special Resource Study will help to determine what portions of the Rim of the Valley might be eligible to be included in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and to receive Federal assistance or protection. The

Corridor consists of many of the hills and mountains surrounding Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, Altadena and other communities in our area.

## • Connecting with Constituents on Multiple Platforms

Online social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube present an unprecedented opportunity to directly engage with constituents. For this reason, the Majority Leader's office will be hosting a Member Online All-Star Competition from June 7th until June 21st. The top 50 Members at the end of the two weeks will be named Online All-Stars and the top finisher will be named MVP of the contest. Winners will be selected based on the total new Facebook Fans. Twitter Followers. and YouTube Subscribers acquired during the two week contest. Help me win the competition by adding me as a friend on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CongressmanSchiff: following me on Twitter: http://Twitter.com/Rep-AdamSchiff; and subscribing to my YouTube channel: http://www.voutube.com/user/Adam-Schiff.

### • Fighting to Ensure Freedom of the Press

On May 17, I joined the family of slain Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl at a ceremony in the Oval Office, where the President signed the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act into law. The legislation requires the State Department, in its Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, to spotlight governments that violate press freedom, as well as the actions such governments have taken to preserve independent media and prosecute individuals who attack or murder journalists. As co-sponsor of the legislation, I hope it will help the U.S. work with other nations to better protect reporters serving on the frontlines in the fight for greater accountability and transparency.

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President Barack Obama, with family members of murdered journalist Daniel Pearl, Rep. Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., and Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn., signs the Daniel Pearl Freedom of Press Act in the Oval Office, May 17, 2010. The act expands efforts to identify countries where press freedom is being violated. The law is named after Pearl, a Wall Street Journal reporter who was killed by militants in Pakistan in 2002. Watching are Pearl's son Adam and his widow Mariane, third from left.

(Photo by Lawrence Jackson, This official White House photograph is being made available only for publication by news organizations and/or for personal use printing by the subject(s) of the photograph. The photograph may not be manipulated in any way and may not be used in commercial or political materials, advertisements, emails, products, promotions that in any way suggests approval or endorsement of the President, the First Family, or the White House.

#### Supporting Teachers, Students and American Innovation

In 2003, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) found that U.S. students, compared with contemporaries in 49 industrial countries, ranked 19th in science and 24th in mathematics. And according to the National Science Foundation, master's degrees in engineering and computer sciences have been declining since 2004. On Friday, May 28, I voted for H.R. 5116, The America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, which will strengthen U.S. science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) ed-

ucation and ensure a prepared workforce. COMPETES expands, strengthens and aligns STEM education programs at all levels.

#### Calling on the Forest Service to Consider Repealing Prohibition on Night Time Flights

The Forest Service stopped flying fire fighting helicopters at night after a tragic collision in the 1970s, but there is a need to reexamine this long-standing policy, which has been overtaken by new capabilities. Wednesday, May 26, I testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, and called for a reconsideration and possible repeal of Forest Service policies prohibiting night time flights. As advances are made in aviation technology, we need to ensure that the Forest Ser-

vice's policies keep pace, so we can guarantee Southern Californians the safest, most effective response whenever a fire breaks out.

#### Working to Assure Continued Creation and Distribution of Music, Movies, Software and Books

American entrepreneurs invest their time, money and sweat into creating the next must-have music, film and technology, and justly expect to be compensated by the market. On Wednesday, May 19, the International Anti-Piracy Caucus that I co-chair unveiled the "2010 International Piracy Watch List," in an

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effort to call attention to countries where piracy has reached alarming levels. China, Russia, Canada, Spain, and Mexico make the 2010 Watch List because of the scope and depth of their piracy problems, which cost U.S. copyright industries and millions of Americans who work in these companies billions of dollars, and because piracy in these countries is largely the result of a lack of political will to confront the problem.

#### Preventing New Offshore Drilling on the West Coast

The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico illustrates the serious safety and environmental risks of offshore drilling, even with modern technology. I do not support new drilling off the California coast, which is why I recently co-sponsored the West Coast Ocean Protection Act of 2010, which will stop all new offshore oil drilling on platforms in federal waters on the West Coast. This legislation will restore the long-standing Congressional moratorium that has prevented another disaster along our shores.

I look forward to providing you with another Congressional update in next month's ACT newsletter. Until then, please find more useful information on constituent services and recent news by visiting my Web site at <a href="https://www.schiff.house.gov">www.schiff.house.gov</a>. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office to tell us your thoughts or let us know if there is any way we can be helpful to you: 626-304-2727 or (202) 225-4176.

Congressman Adam Schiff represents the 29th Congressional District of California, including Alhambra, Altadena, Burbank, East Pasadena, East San Gabriel, Glendale, Monterey Park, Pasadena, San Gabriel, South Pasadena, and Temple City.

#### **Death-Defying Institutional Brands**

by: Barry Eisler, truthout | 23 May 2010

I'm increasingly intrigued by the ability of certain brands to outlast the loss of their underlying substance. Facts are stubborn things, John Adams said, but sometimes, it seems, not as stubborn as brands. Let me offer a few examples ...

The GOP as the Party of Small Government. Republicans - not just Republican politicians, but ordinary Americans who are registered and vote Republican - still believe the GOP stands for small government. And, yet, the small government party created an additional \$5 trillion in national debt during its last turn in office. When George W. Bush became president, the national debt was under \$6 trillion; when he left, it was close to \$11 trillion, I guess you could argue that Democrats are even worse, but even if that were true, an accurate description of what Republicans stand for would be something more along the lines of "slightly less big government." But it's not true... To find a notably fiscally responsible Republican president, you have to go back to Eisenhower. So at this point, if fiscal responsibility is an important measure of one's adherence to big or small government, the small government brand ought to attach to Democrats.

True, the national debt has continued to spike under Obama. We could argue about why whether, for example, the economic meltdown that occurred during the Bush administration, for which Bush created the initial \$700 billion TARP program during his last months in office, requires further fiscal stimulus to avert another depression. But even if you think Obama is even worse than Bush, that's a pretty thin basis on which to believe in the Republican small government brand.

Moreover, we're focusing here only on fiscal matters. If a new party entered the fray on a platform of torture, federalization of end-of-life decisions, federalization of marriage, imprisonment of suspects without trial, use of the military for domestic law enforcement,

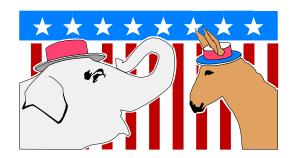
prohibition of drugs and SWAT raids into family homes to catch people smoking pot, empowering the State Department to strip Americans of their citizenship and a trillion-dollar-a-year, million-and-a-half-man, eight-hundred-overseas-bases military, would you naturally feel, "At last! A party of small government!"? Yet, these are all Republican policies. Again, Obama's record so far on war spending and civil liberties is as atrocious as (and in some ways worse than) Bush's, but Obama doesn't purport to be from the party of small government. Republicans do.

I suppose you could argue the Republican small government brand persists because the theory of the GOP is small government, with the problem being the corrupt way successive Republican administrations have implemented that theory. Maybe. But on that argument, shouldn't communism continue to enjoy a solid brand, too? After all, "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs" is a great theory and was simply corrupted by Lenin, Stalin and the various other heads of the Soviet Union. It's still a great idea, no?

That the GOP is still known as being more effective on national security - the "daddy party" to the Democrats' "mommy party" - is also impressive. If a Democrat had been in office on 9/11, or in 2006 when North Korea became a nuclear power, or if a Democrat had bungled Iraq and Afghanistan or let bin Laden escape from Tora Bora the way the Bush administration did, it all would have been perceived as evidence, even proof, of Democratic fecklessness on national security. Instead, all of these events happened on the GOP's watch, with no apparent damage to the GOP's brand.

The GOP's reputation among the rank and file for sexual probity is also impressively resistant to contrary facts. There have been enough closeted Republican homophobes, outed Republican philanderers and thrice-married matrimony traditionalists to form a parade and yet the party still manages to wrap itself in a brand of "family values." And, yes, you can point to Elliot Spitzer and John Edwards as counterexamples, but again, we're talking about brands - particularly the power of certain brands to stay afloat despite being riddled with holes through repeated contact with contrary reality. What makes Republican sexual behavior remarkable - in a way that Democratic sexual behavior isn't - is that Republican behavior is contrary to the party's brand, vet, seems to have little or no effect on it. In other words, Edwards' scandal immolated his personal brand. But it wasn't relevant to the party's brand, because Democrats, unlike Republicans, don't try to sell themselves in "family values" wrapping. Likewise, Mark Sanford's own reputation for integrity was destroyed by revelations of his serial infidelity, but for some reason, even an unending stream of Sanford-like sagas does nothing to diminish the GOP's ability to present itself as the party of family values.

The difference between individual brand vulnerability and institutional brand vulnerability is telling, ...



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## If You Find the Red Check ( ) on Your Address Label on this *Phoenix*, It's a Reminder to Renew Your Membership

ACT and Arroyo Democratic Club membership is by the calendar year – so 2010 membership dues are due now. A red check on your address label on this *Phoenix* means we have not yet received your 2010 check for ACT and/or ADC membership. We sure hope that's an oversight and you are still with us. Please use this membership coupon and send in your 2010 dues right away.



I'd l	ike	to join both groups for one low	price	(Che	ecks payable to ACT/ADC
	\$40 \$25 \$15	Single Each additional member per household Student or limited income			Single Sustaining Double Sustaining Patron Benefactor
I'd like to join ACT (Checks payable to ACT)					
	\$15	Each additional member per household Student or limited income		\$275	Single Sustaining Double Sustaining Patron Benefactor
I'd like to join the Arroyo Democratic Club (Checks payable to ADC)					
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City					ZIP

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#### Calendar

June 18 Friday 8-9 a.m. Friday Morning Progressive Discussion Group at Conrad's Restaurant, NW corner Lake & Walnut, Pasa. Call Inman Moore for info at 626-795-2201.

July 7 **Wednesday** 6:30 p.m. ACT and ADC General Membership Meeting and Pot-Luck dinner at Fred and Jeanne Register's, 2345 Midlothian Dr., Altadena. Guest Speaker is new Pasadena City Manager Michael Beck. All members are welcome and urged to attend. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting

July 2 Friday

Friday Morning Discussion Group. (Details same as 6/18.)

following about 8:00.

July 16 Friday Friday Morning Discussion Group. (Details same as 6/18.)



#### **Phoenix Deadline**

The deadline for the July *Phoenix* will be Sunday, July 11. Send items to Chuck Hains at Hains27@SBCGlobal.net. The July *Phoenix* will be prepared for mailing on Thursday, July 15, 7 p.m. at the Hains household and mailed on the morning of Friday, July 16.



P. O. Box 40074 Pasadena, California 91114-7074