

Temple City | Winter/Spring 2020

# CONNECT



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2019 Photo Contest



# Lunar New Year Celebration

Dragons never go out of style.

**February 1**  
**12:00–4:00 P.M.**  
Temple City Park

Cultural Pageantry  
Family Activities  
Information Booths  
Live Entertainment  
Traditional Cuisine



More info:  
(626) 579-0461





From the City Manager

## Welcome to the Future

If you feel like time is moving faster than ever, you're not alone.

Nearly 20 years have passed since we celebrated a new millennium (or prepared for the utter mayhem of Y2K, depending on your mindset at the time). Instagram will turn 10 next fall (and don't get us started on Facebook and Twitter, which are somehow even older). "Blade Runner," the seminal film about a dystopian "future" Los Angeles, was set in November 2019, while a host of other science-fiction films, from "Mission to Mars" to "Edge of Tomorrow," take place in 2020. The future, it appears, really is now.

Instead of hiding away, hoping time might slow down if only we will it to do so, we're making it our mission to confront 2020 head-on. We're happy to report we've already set some plans in motion to propel us forward over the next decade. You can read about them in this issue's City Buzz section (page 7), in which we deliver updates on a series of highly anticipated projects, including the Eaton Wash pathway and critical library renovations, among others.

Those projects are on longer timelines, but we know putting in the work now will yield powerful results down the line. Such a statement also applies to the efforts of people like Jan Cicco, who recently retired from a decades-long career in homelessness services, most recently for the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments. Data-driven, solutions-focused plans carefully

designed by Cicco and others to tackle homelessness in the region will take shape in 2020 and beyond; Cicco chats with us about them on page 36.

If you're interested in meeting some additional innovators who we're sure will continue pushing boundaries in the new year, turn to page 12 to learn about two local restaurants honored by the Michelin Guide California: Grand Harbor and Dai Ho. Or visit page 18 for an introduction to the 94-year-old Woman's Club of Temple City, which has experienced a rebirth of sorts and is now poised for even more growth going forward.

To get an idea of just how far we've come, check out a selection of award-winning entries from Temple City's First Annual Photo Contest on page 28. These photos, taken from a pool of more than 150 submissions, certainly showcase the Temple City of today—and also a preview of its future.

In 2020, we hope you embrace the optimism and adventure of a new year and a new decade.

Cordially,

Bryan Cook  
City Manager



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A Local Treasure, a Regional Icon

*Temple City Connect* is the City of Temple City's biannual magazine that connects the community to City Hall.

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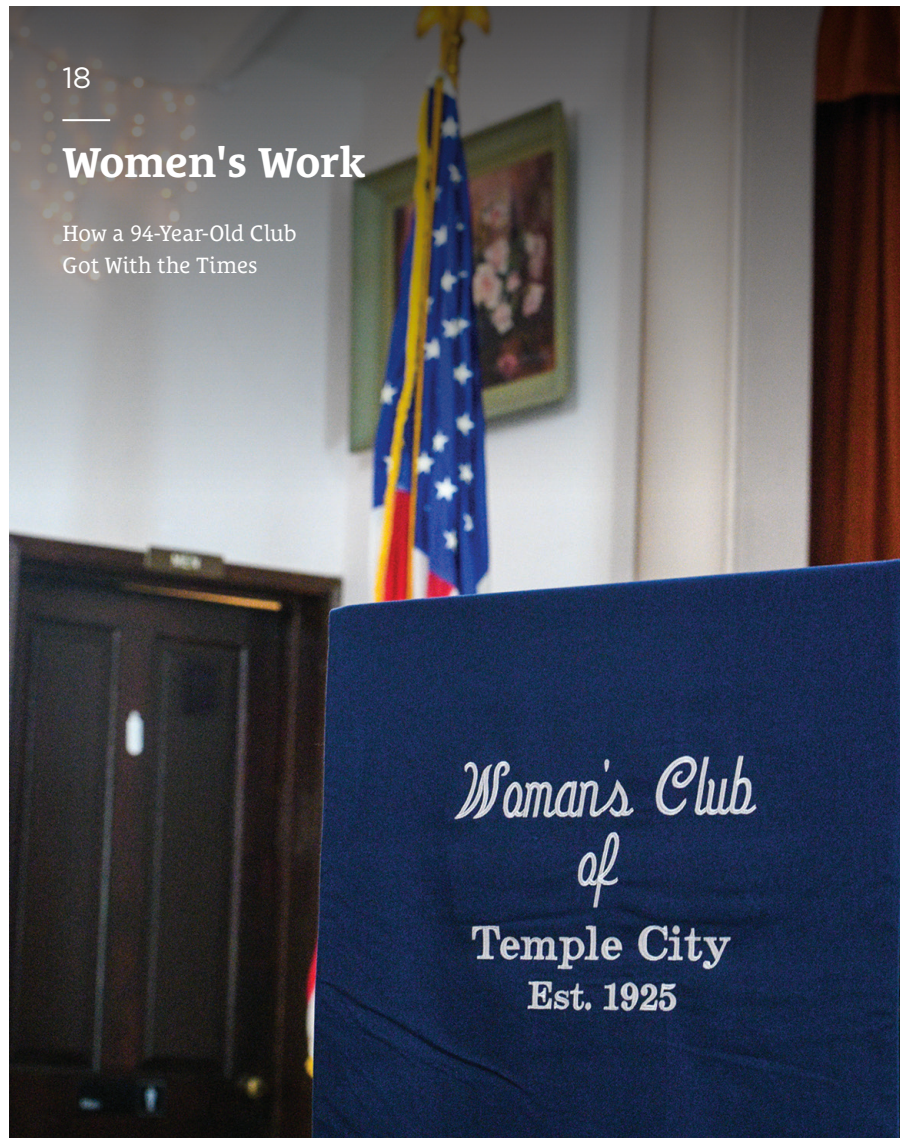
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## City Views

The Best of Temple City's  
2019 Photo Contest



# Out & About in Temple City

by Christine N. Ziemba

## Feb. 8 Bike Ride & Expo

8:00–11:00 A.M.,  
Live Oak Park

Start the day at 8 a.m. with a community bike ride followed by a free, all-ages bike expo from 9–11 a.m. Attendees can learn about riding safety while tackling a guided obstacle course, get their bikes inspected, make sure their helmets fit and learn basic repairs such as changing tires. Participants must bring their own bikes and helmets, and wear closed-toe shoes.

*More info:*  
**(626) 285-2171, ext. 4111**



## Feb. 8 A Royal Coronation

7:00–8:30 P.M.,  
Live Oak Park  
Community Center

Hear ye, hear ye! Temple Citians are invited to witness the introduction of the new queen and king of the 2020 Camellia Festival to their adoring public. This year's royals, who were selected from a crowded field of candidates, will be crowned at the event, marking the start of their reign.

*More info:*  
**(626) 285-2171, ext. 4030**



## Dec. 20 Mapping Out Holiday Homes Citywide

Grab the eggnog for a self-guided tour of Temple City's most festively decorated homes. Maps of the decked-out houses will be available beginning Dec. 20 at city facilities and online at [templecity.us](http://templecity.us).

*More info:*  
**(626) 579-0461**

## Jan. 16 Burgers, Beat Cops and the Brass

6:30–8:00 P.M.,  
City Hall  
Community Room

Meet Temple City's finest, from patrol officers to top brass, during a night of "arresting" conversation. Residents are welcome to stop by, ask questions and learn more about policing in the city—all over free burgers and snacks from the Habit Burger truck.

*More info:*  
**(626) 285-2171, ext. 4111**

## Feb. 21–23 Camellia Festival

Hours Vary,  
Temple City Park

The family-friendly Temple City tradition, now in its 76th year, returns with a theme of "Festival Fun for Everyone." The weekend's festivities include a parade down Las Tunas Drive, carnival games and rides, live music and delicious treats, with all proceeds benefiting local youth groups.

*More info:*  
**[camelliafestival.org](http://camelliafestival.org)**

## Feb. 25 State of the City Address

6:00–8:00 P.M.,  
Woman's Club  
of Temple City

Mayor Nanette Fish's State of the City address begins at 7 p.m., celebrating last year's accomplishments, providing a review of the city's current standing and offering a preview of the year ahead. An hors d'oeuvres reception is set to precede the presentation at 6 p.m., allowing attendees to mingle with city council members and other local elected officials.

*More info:*  
**(626) 285-2171, ext. 4111**



## Feb. 1 Lunar New Year Celebration

12:00–4:00 P.M.,  
Temple City Park

Gung hay fat choi! Celebrate the Lunar New Year and usher in the Year of the Rat with cultural pageantry, family activities, live entertainment and traditional cuisine. The event is co-hosted by the Temple City Chinese American Association.

More info:  
(626) 579-0461

## Feb. 5 Dim Sum & Tea

10:30 A.M.–12:00 P.M.,  
Live Oak Park Picnic  
Shelter

The Lunar New Year traditions continue at this food-centric event. Sip various teas and sample treats typically eaten around this important holiday, including barbecue pork buns, dumplings and more. Free samples will be available while supplies last.

More info:  
(626) 579-0461



## March 14 Temple City's Got Talent

6:00–8:00 P.M.,  
Live Oak Park  
Community Center

Discover Temple City's hidden talent as the next generation of stars competes for top honors during an evening of jaw-dropping performances. Admission is \$5, free to kids ages 4 and younger. Doors open at 4:30 p.m.

More info:  
(626) 579-0461

## April 11 Easter Egg Hunt & Pancake Breakfast

8:30–11:00 A.M.,  
Live Oak Park

Hop on down the bunny trail to a family-favorite Easter celebration. The day's free egg-cellent activities—including a petting zoo, crafts and egg hunts for tots and kids—begin at 9:30 a.m. And before the egg hunting begins, fuel up at the pancake breakfast, which opens at 8:30 a.m.

More info:  
(626) 579-0461

## DECEMBER

- 21 Winter begins
- 24 Christmas Eve (City offices closed)
- 25 Christmas Day (City offices closed)
- 31 New Year's Eve

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- 16 Neighborhood Watch Meeting  
Burgers, Beat Cops and the Brass
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(City offices closed)
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Bike Expo
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- 19 Spring begins
- 20 Neighborhood Watch Meeting

## APRIL

- 11 Easter Egg Hunt & Pancake Breakfast
- 17 Neighborhood Watch Meeting

## MAY

- 15 Neighborhood Watch Meeting
- 25 Memorial Day (City offices closed)

More info: (626) 285-2171  
[templecity.us/calendar](https://templecity.us/calendar)

# The 76th Camellia Festival

Festival fun for everyone.

**February 21–23**

Temple City Park

## Carnival

Friday 4:00–10:00 P.M.  
Saturday 11:00 A.M.–11:00 P.M.  
Sunday 12:00–8:00 P.M.

## Parade

Saturday 10:00 A.M.

## Beer Garden

Friday 4:30–9:30 P.M.  
Saturday 4:30–9:30 P.M.  
Sunday 2:00–7:30 P.M.



TEMPLE  
CITY

More info:

(626) 285-2171 , ext. 4030 | [camelliafestival.org](http://camelliafestival.org)







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# City Buzz

The City Hall  
News You  
Need to Know

by Brian Haworth

## Planning Begins on Eaton Wash Pathway

The idea for a joint-use bicycle and walking path along the Eaton Wash was first identified in Los Angeles County's 1975 Plan of Bikeways. Since then, it's been repeatedly emphasized as a critical need in recently adopted city, county and regional master plans.

In 2016, the county received \$2 million in state funds to construct the 1.5-mile greenway, which will run along the west side of Eaton Wash between Longden Avenue and Rosemead Boulevard. The city matched this amount with \$2 million in gas tax funds for enhanced landscaping and other improvements.

Pathway amenities include shade structures, wayfinding signage, pet waste dispensers, bike racks and environmental features like bioswales and drought-tolerant plantings.

Led by the county, the project is currently in the conceptual design phase. Community meetings on the proposed amenities and design, as well as Q&A sessions for residents will be held in early 2020.

To be notified of upcoming meetings, email [eatonwash@templecity.us](mailto:eatonwash@templecity.us).  
To view the conceptual design, visit [templecity.us/eaton](http://templecity.us/eaton).







## Voting Changes Coming to California and TC Elections

As California prepares for its next primary and municipal election on March 3, 2020, get ready for the following changes going into effect under the Voter's Choice Act:

**Choose where you vote:** You won't be voting at your neighborhood polling place anymore. Those are being replaced with voting centers where eligible voters can cast ballots regardless of where they live. Visitors to voting centers can also register to vote, update their existing voter registration or drop off absentee ballots.

**Vote even earlier:** Voting centers will open 10 days before Election Day, allowing visitors to cast their votes in advance. For those registered to vote by mail, ballots will be released 29 days before Election Day.

**The process of voting will look and feel different:** It's important to remember that while the process has gone digital, the end result is still a paper ballot. You'll fill out your ballot on a tablet, and once you're finished, it'll print a paper copy you'll place in a ballot box. If you want to get a head start, you can complete a sample ballot online up to 40 days before election day. Once you're done, it'll generate a QR code for you to scan at the voting center in exchange for a printed copy of the ballot, which you'll then add to the ballot box.

For more information, visit [lavote.net](https://lavote.net).

## TC Gets High Marks for Safety and Sound Fiscal Health

Temple City ranks among the top 10% of all California cities when it comes to safety, according to a list recently released by the leading home security website SafeWise.

Temple City came in at No. 41 on SafeWise's "California's 50 Safest Cities of 2019," which weighs 2017 Federal Bureau of Investigation crime report statistics and population data from the state's 481 municipalities.

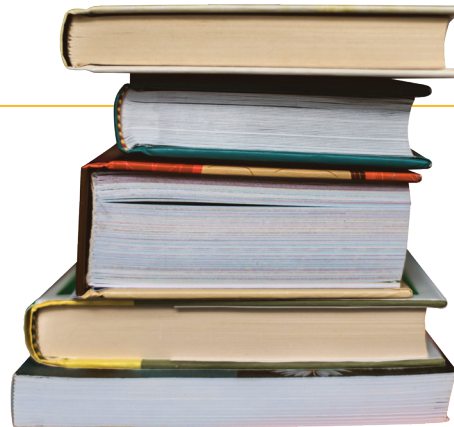
This marks the city's sixth consecutive appearance on the list. Danville, in Northern California, earned the designation as the state's safest city. Only one other San Gabriel Valley city—Diamond Bar, at No. 14—made the list.

Temple City was also named among the best in the state in terms of "financial health," or the fiscal soundness of local government, by the office of the California State Auditor. This designation was based on a set of 10 indicators measuring fiscal condition, financial reserves, revenue trends and the ability to pay for employee retirement benefits.

Coming in at No. 412, Temple City was among those cities ranking above 400, the baseline for the most financially sound cities. Temple City found itself in good company with four other local cities: Diamond Bar (No. 414), Walnut (No. 416), San Dimas (No. 440) and Rosemead (No. 457).

To learn more about these rankings, visit [templecity.us/safestcity](https://templecity.us/safestcity) and [templecity.us/financialhealth](https://templecity.us/financialhealth).





## Las Tunas Drive's Critical Repaving Project

An extensive repaving effort for Las Tunas Drive (including a few residential streets) is scheduled to begin this spring.

Between Rowland and Muscatel avenues, 1.4 miles of Las Tunas Drive will receive a new layer of much-needed asphalt. The road's deteriorating surface was last repaved more than 25 years ago, in 1993, and the new paving is critical maintenance, supporting daily traffic counts of more than 30,000 cars per day.

Additionally, the project will include repaving of the following residential streets:

- Cloverly Avenue  
(Live Oak Avenue to Woodruff Avenue)
- Golden West Avenue  
(Las Tunas Drive to Lower Azusa Road)
- Kauffman Avenue  
(Live Oak Avenue to Garibaldi Avenue)

The \$3.8 million, state-funded project is expected to take up to six months to complete. Work along Las Tunas Drive will be completed in four phases, each tackling a different segment of the road, with construction to be scheduled during non-peak hours and with a lane open in each direction.

*A detailed construction schedule—including details about plans for the four phases—will be available in April 2020. For project and construction-related updates, visit the City's social media sites or call (626) 285-2171.*

## Temple City Library's Major Makeover

Groundbreaking on the \$4 million Temple City Library Renovation and Expansion Project is scheduled to begin early next year.

The project, funded jointly by the city and county, includes a 1,416-square-foot expansion of the library to accommodate new facilities for families and children, along with a state-of-the-art interior renovation of the existing 12,000-square-foot space. Among the features to be added: a 760-square-foot community meeting room for events and educational activities; more shelving for growing collections; and dedicated spaces for teens and adults, each outfitted with seating and updated technology stations. New furniture and fixtures—and possibly, if funds are available, an outdoor reading garden—will round out the refreshed look.

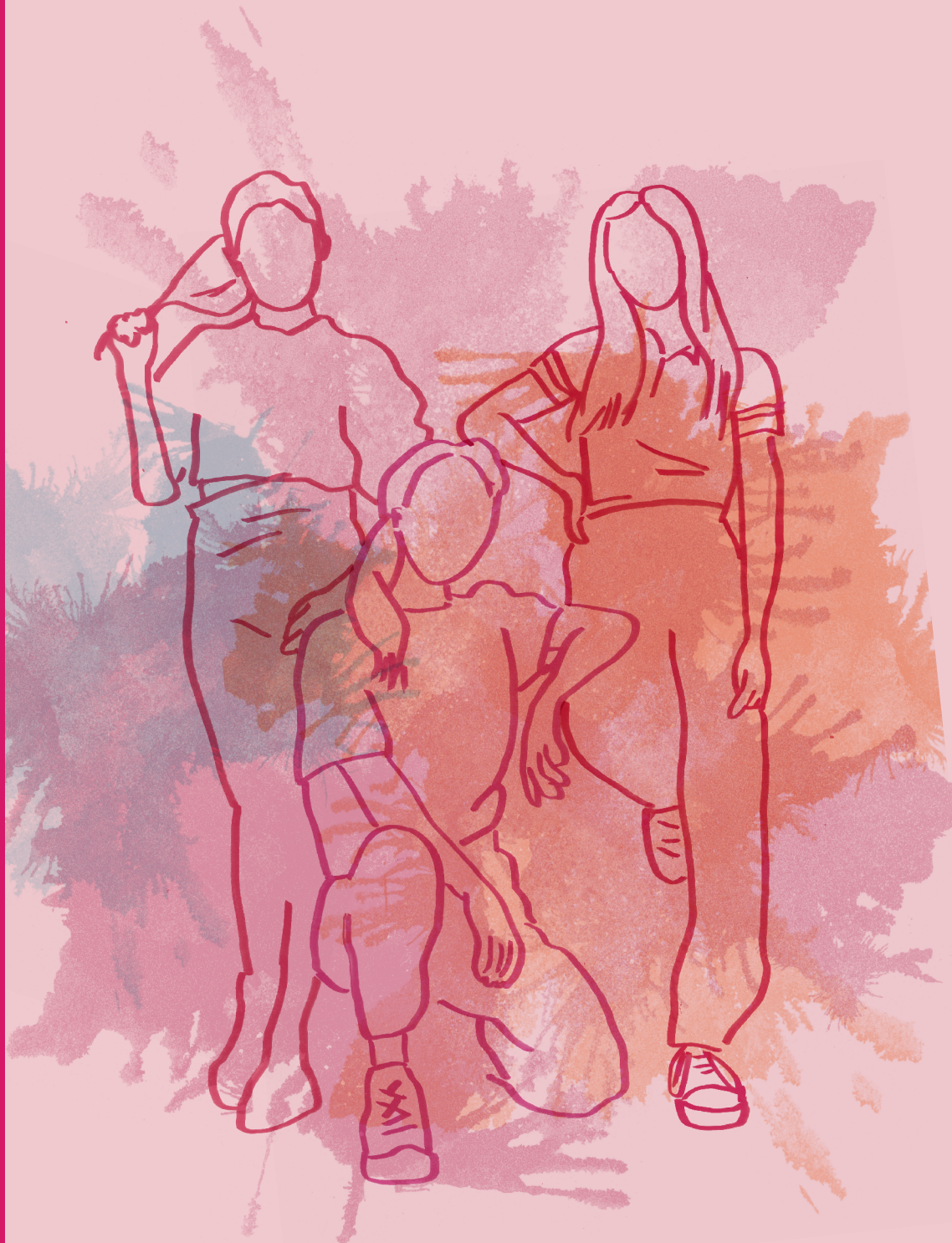
Construction is expected to last 18 months, with an anticipated grand opening in September 2021. The library will be closed during construction, but a temporary branch will operate at 9050 Las Tunas Dr.

The temporary branch is expected to open in February with similar operational hours to the main branch; however, the 1,000-square-foot temporary location will offer a smaller collection of books and limited programming.

*For more information and updates, call Temple City Library at (626) 285-2136.*

# #templecity

A recap of  
what's been  
trending  
locally in  
social media



## A Pop, Lock and Hip-Hop Revolution

Revolution Dance Studio recently opened on Las Tunas Drive, helping dancers hone their hip-hop dance moves. Revolution is the only studio in Temple City to focus solely on urban dance styles, from jazz-funk to K-pop moves and old-school breakdancing. There's even a high heels class where dancers learn to move like Queen Bey (that's Beyoncé for the uninitiated). The studio offers packages, but if you suddenly feel the need to dance like the backpack kid or do the electric boogaloo, walk-ins are welcome, too.





**Hi\_Im\_Chewie**  
The Dive SKC - Temple City



**3,446 likes**  
**hi\_im\_chewie** When Food Looks This Good, Don't You Just Wanna DIVE Right In

## Pun-tastic Pup Visits Temple City Eateries

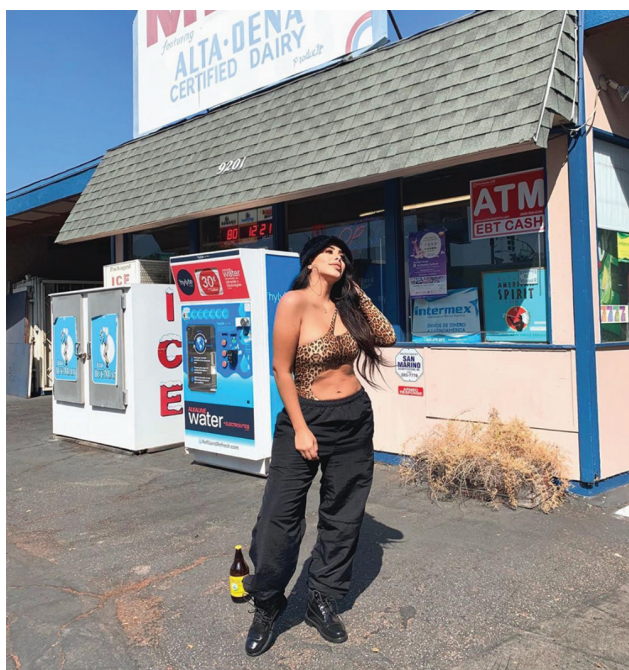
Chewie the Pomeranian may be tiny, but his social media reach is gigantic. The four-legged foodie and travel influencer currently has more than 111,000 followers on Instagram. Exploring the Southern California lifestyle on his account, the pampered pup reviews dog products and posts from eateries, movie studios and even pup-friendly hotels. Chewie has been spotted in Temple City recently, documenting offerings from Cauldron Ice Cream and The Dive with his signature puns and humor (his dad jokes are so good, they deserve a round of app-PAWS).

## Alta Dena Dairy Gets Its 15 Minutes of Fame

The Alta Dena Dairy on Las Tunas Drive earned a little notoriety on Instagram when it was featured on the first season of HBO's hit show "Euphoria." The intense drama stars Zendaya as a troubled teen with substance abuse and body image issues. Her character heads to the Alta Dena for less-than-legal transactions. HBO has already picked up the show for a second season, so stay tuned to see if the location returns to the spotlight.



**lizette.mb**  
Alta-Dena Dairy



**319 likes**  
**lizette.mb** The universe is just out here like giving zero \*\*\*\*\*  
- euphoria



## The Dive's Crafty Cocktails

Don't let the name fool you: The Dive SKC (Steam Kettle Cooking) is far from a dive-y watering hole. The well-lit eatery, which specializes in Cajun, Creole and Southern comfort cuisine, debuted a craft cocktail menu earlier this year. Standouts include the \$70 Deep Sea Mega Mule, a "punchier" variation of a Moscow mule made with Figenza Mediterranean Fig Vodka and mint, and meant to be shared by four people. Several offerings, meanwhile, have Asian twists, such as the Japanese Lychee Dreams, which blends House of Suntory Haku Vodka, lychee, St. Germain and lemon.

Michelin Honors  
Temple City  
Restaurants

*by* Christine N. Ziemba

# Making the







**List**

*Known by locals as the XLB, Grand Harbor's xiao long bao—or Shanghai dumplings—pair a ginger-laced broth with tender pork filling.*



## The Michelin Guide California made its debut in June to much fanfare, as the Golden State became the first state in America to have its own dedicated red book.

In California, 90 restaurants currently boast between one and three stars from Michelin, given to denote those establishments' culinary excellence. One star belongs to Bistro Na's on Las Tunas Drive, which was profiled in the last issue of Connect, but Bistro Na's isn't Temple City's only Michelin-recognized restaurant.

Just before the stars were awarded in June, Michelin revealed its Bib Gourmand list. Since 1997, the company's inspectors have recognized a distinct class of restaurants for their quality and affordability via Bib Gourmand designation. Generally, a Bib Gourmand restaurant will offer two courses and a glass of wine or dessert for \$40 or less.

California's inaugural Bib Gourmand list features 151 restaurants, three of which are in Temple City alone—a remarkable feat considering there are only five in all of Orange County. Earning the designation are Temple City's Chuan's, Dai Ho and Grand Harbor. While Chuan's has recently closed for remodeling, the two other restaurants are basking in the new attention.





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### From Tires to Tare-Tare: A Quick Michelin History

A little backstory on the Michelin Guide's history: Yes, the book is related to Michelin Tires. When brothers Andre and Edouard Michelin started their French tire company in 1889, they developed a trip guide to entice more people to hit the road in cars. By the 1920s, the guide was gaining popularity as a reference manual for where to eat in France. In 1926, the company's restaurant inspectors—also known as mystery diners—began to award single stars to noteworthy establishments. The zero-to-three-star system and criteria then became firmly established by the mid-1930s.

## Grand Harbor Feasts for Kings and Commoners

Grand Harbor is a sprawling culinary temple to Cantonese cuisine, with a large central dining area flanked by several private rooms. A large mural adorns the far wall, and chandeliers and mirrored ceilings keep the restaurant brightly lit. To some, it may come as a surprise the restaurant made the Bib Gourmand list, considering it first gained notoriety for its \$10,000 tasting menu (for a party of 10, to be fair). The late, great Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Jonathan Gold wrote about the restaurant's opulent options—including a \$600 abalone dish—for the Los Angeles Times, but he, too, chose to indulge in its more moderately priced fare.

Known for its Hong Kong-style seafood, the restaurant serves a la carte lunch and dinner items as well as economical lunch specials. For under \$10 Monday through Friday, patrons can order dishes like mapo tofu or kung pao chicken, accompanied by steamed rice and soup. But Grand Harbor's big draw, particularly on weekends, is its daily dim sum.

Served in steamer baskets or on small plates like Spanish tapas, dim sum dishes are meant to be shared. But before any food ordering commences, a server first takes the table's teapot order. Although the restaurant has beer and wine, tea is traditionally served with dim sum; guests can choose pots of chrysan-

themum tea, shou mei, jasmine, pu-erh and ti kuan yin (for \$1.68 per person).

Instead of bulky steaming carts rounding the tables, Grand Harbor patrons order dim sum items on paper menu slips. Some diners feel the lack of carts takes away from the true dim sum experience, but others are happier about less noise and traffic in the aisles. Plus, ordering through slips ensures piping hot plates come directly from the kitchen to your table.

Dumplings are synonymous with dim sum. At Grand Harbor, among the standouts are the steamed pork and shrimp dumplings, or "shumai." Bursting with flavor, the dumplings' wrappers are stuffed with chopped pork and shrimp in soy sauce, onions and other spices, and left slightly open at the top. The Shanghai dumplings—traditional soup dumplings—are served on three individual dishes in a steamer basket. Because they come filled with pork and hot broth, it's best to pierce them or bite off the top before nibbling. Never pop a whole one into your mouth or you'll be in for a scalding surprise—and don't forget to pair the dumplings with a drizzling of the vinegar sauce they're served with to enhance their flavor.

For eaters who've moved way beyond dumplings at dim sum, Grand Harbor has several variations of chicken feet and tripe dishes, as well as a jellyfish with bean curd roll. Items like the fresh geoduck congee, a rice porridge made with the gigantic clam, are available seasonally.

But for those who aren't ready for quite so adventurous options, the menu abounds with remarkable dishes. The sticky rice wrapped in a lotus leaf contains tender, slightly sweet rice mixed with bits of meat and a small piece of egg yolk. The pan-fried taro cake is a savory treat made with the popular root vegetable and cured pork. And the purple yam buns are a dessert winner: Shaped to look like real yams, their pillowy outsides envelope an ube paste that isn't overly sweet.

Depending on the item, Grand Harbor's dim sum plates cost between \$3.48 and \$7.69. So sharing the meal—and the bill—is a treat for both the taste buds and the budget.

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**Grand Harbor** is located at 5733 Rosemead Blvd. Dim sum is available Monday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., and weekends from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dinner is served nightly from 5:30-10 p.m. on weekdays, and from 5-10 p.m. on weekends.



*A rendition of Taiwan's national dish, Dai Ho's beef noodle soup features bouncy egg noodles, a rich broth and chunks of stewed meat.*





## Dai Ho Noodles Worth the Wait

Located a half mile from Grand Harbor is a completely different Bib Gourmand dining experience. Dai Ho is a small, family-run eatery that specializes in Taiwanese noodles and the kinds of street foods commonly found at night markets. The casual eatery got its start more than 25 years ago when Jim and May Ku opened their first restaurant in Alhambra.

According to their daughter, Tina Ku, that location began with four tables

and a staff of three: Tina's mom and dad and a busboy. After they moved to Temple City in 2000, the restaurant tripled in size to a dozen tables with capacity for 48 eaters.

The restaurant's staff increased in size as well, with Tina Ku taking over the bulk of the operation from her parents. That's not to say Jim and May don't remain very much involved in its inner workings; in fact, Tina and her mother start their kitchen prep by 8 a.m., and Jim, who's semiretired, still helps for a few hours each morning. But Dai Ho's busy weekends call for extra hands, so Tina's husband, Tim Deweese; stepson, Christian Deweese; and sister, Judy Ku, also put in weekend shifts.

For those new to Dai Ho, Tina Ku favors several recommendations from the menu's selection of eight main noodle dishes, considered the "greatest hits" from the Dai Ho's old Alhambra location. Among them are the No. 5 beef stew soup noodles, which feature a rich, dark broth and tender beef; the No. 1 sesame sauce dry noodles, or dan dan mian, which meld the sweetness of sesame sauce with a punch from chili oil; or the No. 2 vegetable cold dry noodles. The latter two dishes are vegetarian, but for carnivores, meats can be added. Made at a commercial kitchen from a Ku family recipe, the noodles are cooked at the restaurant al dente—not too firm and not too soft.

Also not to be missed at Dai Ho are the many cold side dishes parceled out in plastic containers inside or on top of the refrigerated case.

Prepared daily, dishes like shredded tofu and mustard greens with edamame and bean curd can be eaten separately; others, like pickled cabbage, can be added to the noodle dishes based on the eater's preference. Tina Ku recommends a cold, rolled tofu skin "puff" made with cilantro oil and fried and stewed with mushrooms and soy sauce, and sweet-and-sour green pickled papaya with garlic, sesame oil and the restaurant's homemade chili oil.

For diners who want something different, Dai Ho also offers items that aren't on its main menu: stewed pig feet, beef shank and sliced pig ears. The combination plates, which are on the menu, can include pork shank or beef tripe with spicy tofu, Sichuan peppers, sesame oil, chili oil and bean curd.

Dai Ho is a downright bargain for eaters. Most of the menu items, including the aforementioned noodle dishes, run \$10 to \$11. The highest-priced item, one of the combination plates, is \$18. Those prices, paired with consistently good food from the Ku family, prove the restaurant worthy of Bib Gourmand status. Just ask one of the folks standing in line—sometimes even before opening—on any given day.

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**Dai Ho is located at 9148 Las Tunas Dr. The restaurant is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**



WOMANS CLUB *of* TEMPLE CITY  
9704







# Women's Work

by Angela Bao

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How a 94-year-old club for Temple City women bounced back from the brink, got with the times and remade itself for a new generation of members.

**Y**ou can catch them at the summer Concerts in the Park, serving baked potatoes with all the toppings for \$5. Or you might run into them at one of their monthly auxiliary events, which range from dinner and paint nights to tours of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang intervention and rehabilitation organization in Los Angeles.

The Woman's Club of Temple City has been on a roll over the past few years, boosting both membership and visibility with its outreach efforts and events. Yet as recently as 2016, the club's membership had fallen to about 20 people, with just enough funds to remain in operation for a few more years (few people, meanwhile knew it was still operating at all). Today, the club counts well over 100 women—and even a few men—among its ranks, and it continues to grow.

A large part of the club's resurgence can be attributed to its embrace of the needs of modern women. The club was founded on Dec. 4, 1925, just five years after the 19th Amendment's ratification gave

women the right to vote. Unsurprisingly, this period saw the nationwide women's club movement peak in popularity after starting in Boston and New York in the late 1860s, not long after the women's suffrage movement had begun.

Members used these clubs as spaces to gather and educate themselves on pressing issues, particularly ones affecting women. From the 1870s to 1920s, women's clubs successfully lobbied for greater equality for women nationally and statewide in areas such as higher education, suffrage, labor reform and civil rights.

The clubs weren't limited to big cities, nor were the issues they tackled only big-ticket ones—women in small towns and rural areas also started their own clubs and focused on bettering their communities in smaller but no less effective ways. From providing aid to the impoverished to improving street lighting, women's clubs made indelible positive changes.



*Florine Thompson is credited with the idea of establishing the Woman's Club. As its historian, she was also the driving force behind the Historical Society of Temple City, which was founded in 1987.*

The Woman's Club of Temple City was founded with a similar aim of supporting and improving the community. In what was then known as the Town of Temple, a group of seven dynamic and philanthropic women banded together under the leadership of Florine Thompson, who also played a pivotal role in establishing the Historical Society of Temple City. The women were dissatisfied with merely working in the domestic sphere and sought other outlets for their energies—and thus, a new women's club was born.

Through the club, the women helped shape the Temple City of today. Due to their efforts, the city received telephone service and rural mail delivery; during



World War II, they put together first-aid kits for soldiers and loaned use of their clubhouse to the Red Cross. In 1944, the club's members also started the annual Camellia Festival—then known as Camellia Day—which encourages youth to actively participate in the community. One member, a “Mrs. Ralph Sanders,” even submitted a winning slogan for both the festival and city, “The Home of the Camellias.” Currently, the club provides aid and donations to the Temple City Unified School District, the nonprofit organization Door of Hope, the Historical Society of Temple City, the Santa Anita Convalescent Hospital and Friends of Foster Children. Although the organizations the club supports have changed, its emphases on philanthropic and community service remain integral parts of its mission.

That was all at risk until a few years ago. Membership had dwindled to about 20—roughly 10% of what it was at the club's peak in the 1950s. Like many similar service-oriented clubs, it seemed the Woman's Club had failed to keep up with the times. After the women's suffrage movement, World War II and suburbanization of the 1950s, when women played key roles in community-building, women's clubs had fallen out of favor.



## The Revival

Until 2016, Temple City's women's club was on the same track as others that had seen their memberships plummet in recent years. Despite its indelible footprint on the city's history, people were largely unaware the club still existed. Complicating matters, the club had continued to hold its meetings on Thursday afternoons, meaning most potential members who worked jobs with traditional daytime schedules couldn't attend.

Then, a new member suggested hosting a once-a-month evening auxiliary gathering. It would be purely social and designed to appeal to younger audiences. Members, friends and family could go wine tasting, watch movies and take tours of local landmarks, giving them chances to step outside their routines and connect with one another. Essentially, the club would become... fun.

"When they started having the auxiliary events in the evening, it allowed me the opportunity to participate," says Mary Sneed, who joined the club in 2017. "It was hard when I was teaching to get involved in events that happened during the day, but once they started having evening activities, I started going to a few of those."

Another member since 2017, Theresa Tomaro, says the auxiliary events are one of her favorite things about the club.

"There's a lot to see around town, but you get so busy with life that you won't take time out of your day to do a little sightseeing and tourist stuff that's so close by," she says. "I feel like I've learned a lot more about my community through these events."

The events proved so popular that even some husbands, including Sneed's husband, Gene, wanted to join the club to attend them. To encourage inclusivity, the club's existing members showed little resistance to the idea, and

soon enough, men were becoming full-fledged members, says Dawn Tarin, current club president.

The club also needed to relax its stringent rules, realized Carole Rodenbucher, a former club president. Women were working and accustomed to exercising their own agency; the club's rigidity had become a major deterrent to new members and contributed significantly to its declining membership.

Instead, Rodenbucher emphasized that there were no mandatory meetings, no fees for missing events, and no minimum obligations—each member can decide just how involved they wanted to be, and there's no pressure to do more than what's desired. Members are only expected to pay \$25 in annual dues.

The plan worked, aided by Rodenbucher's outreach efforts. She convinced the club's board to migrate to email and create a website to share monthly news updates. The club established a Facebook page where members post about upcoming events and trade information and photos. Most notably, Rodenbucher masterminded the Woman's Club's potato bar at the city's annual Concerts in the Park, where club members sell \$5 loaded baked potatoes.

"It's not a big moneymaker," Rodenbucher admits. "But it's successful that we're out there in the community. So many people come up to us and say that they didn't even know we existed. We've gotten a lot of exposure, especially from the potato bar."

Since 2016, the Woman's Club has swelled to more than 100 members—an impressive 500% growth in just three years.

## The Next 100

It's only recently that the Woman's Club has gotten proper recognition for its contributions to the city, Rodenbucher believes. Temple City had a number of other service clubs, all of them composed almost entirely, if not wholly, of men, and they often "overshadowed" the Woman's Club. But as the memberships of many of those clubs decline and the Woman's Club's keeps climbing, it's becoming apparent just how important "women's work" is to a community.

Although the fun auxiliary events are what entice many people to join, it's the service aspect that keeps people in. The Woman's Club may have changed considerably since its inception in 1925, but its purpose remains the same: "to promote cultural and philanthropic work among its members and to develop interest in civic, social and educational areas of the community."

Tomaro, a cancer survivor, initially got involved because she saw the work the club was doing with Relay For Life.

"So many of them—probably 50%—volunteer their time to do the walk," she says of

the club's members. "It's a big event for them. Not everyone can do it because life is busy, but the ones who have been touched by cancer have a special connection with that—that drew me to want to be in the club."

The group also works considerably with local schools, donating money and providing scholarships for students. Its annual Christmas party raises funds for several partner charities, including Friends of Foster Children, Door of Hope and the Santa Anita Convalescent Hospital. "They do a lot of charity work, which I didn't realize until I joined," Sneed says. "They support local school libraries and several other charities. They're a lot more involved with all the activities they have."

The public visibility of the club and flexibility of its scheduling, as well as its members' proactive nature, have inspired several women to join. Ivy Mao, for example, had never taken part in such a community-building effort until she joined.

"I got involved because of a friend," Mao says. "But once I was there, it was nice just seeing women getting involved, knowing what's going on and being there supporting each other."

Tomaro shares the sentiment. "The camaraderie is very important," she emphasizes. "It's a sisterhood. Everybody roots for each other."

The club makes a point to emphasize that no matter the issue, its members are available to help. When a shooting took place at Temple Sheriff's Station and the entire station was on lock-down during







**“It’s a sisterhood.  
Everybody roots  
for each other.”**

— Theresa Tomaro, *member since 2017*





the investigation, club members used some of their funds to buy food for the deputies. If a member experiences a tragedy, their fellow members support them through it. If a member receives an award or other recognition, they're able to share it with the rest of the club on its website, newsletter and social media pages.

"They're able to get together really quickly and do something for the community," Mao says.

With technology and the city's demographics both in flux, the purpose of the Woman's Club has become more important than ever, members say.

"There's really nowhere to socially meet anybody anymore and make friendships like that," Rodenbucher says. "With the Woman's Club, it's nice because you're meeting people in your community. I've had people come to me and say, 'Oh my gosh, I met so-and-so, she lives on my street—I've been here for 40 years and never knew her.'"

Tarin hopes to use the club to cross generational and cultural lines. Temple City has grown increasingly diverse over the years, with people of color comprising over half the city's population. With that diversity come challenges in bridging cultures—something Tarin believes the Woman's Club can help with.

She admits the club currently only represents a portion of the community and needs to grow further to represent the diversity of the whole. Reaching the older Asian community, in particular, has been a bit of hurdle, but one that's

getting easier to clear as the club becomes more diverse.

In the beginning, language and cultural barriers prevented the Woman's Club from connecting with Temple City's immigrant community, but that's slowly changing.

"I don't speak the language, so it's really hard," Rodenbucher says. "[Now] we have a number of women who speak the languages, and that's been the biggest help to us. Even if they don't join, at least they know we're around. We haven't been very successful in breaking down that wall, but with the generation that's in their 40s or so, we've had really good luck."

With 2019 marking the 100-year anniversary of women's suffrage, Tarin hopes to increase the club's relevance, and appeal to younger generations of potential members, by exploring some of the broader problems women face today.

"With regard to our speakers, I'm going to be focusing on the suffrage movement," she says. "I'm trying to do as much as possible to gear speakers toward women's issues, which we don't necessarily do. By gearing them toward women's issues, we can incorporate all different walks of life, ages and nationalities. The Woman's Club provides an avenue for doing that in a safe space—and in a space where it's relevant."

Learn more about membership, meetings and other upcoming events.

Visit  
[womanscluboftemplecity.org](http://womanscluboftemplecity.org)

E-mail  
[womanscluboftemplecity@gmail.com](mailto:womanscluboftemplecity@gmail.com)





# State of the City

Get informed, get involved.

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**February 25**

Woman's Club  
of Temple City

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Presented by  
Mayor Nanette Fish

Reception 6:00 P.M.  
Address 7:00 P.M.

Open to the public



More info:  
(626) 285-2171, ext. 4111



# The Best and the Brightest

by Dan Brown

An award-winning holiday home brings light and joy to Temple City and beyond.



The Cummings residence at 5947 Agnes Ave.

Sitting in her living room with her husband, James, several weeks before Thanksgiving, Terri Cummings has a vision. She doesn't say a word about it to James, but given the time of year, he knows the wheels of creativity have begun to spin. He knows his wife is thinking of ways to outdo the Christmas lights display she put up the previous year. And, as usual, she did.

In 2018, the Cummings home was chosen as one of just 16 Holiday Home Award Winners for Terri's inspired display. It was an honor 28

years in the making, but not one she ever expected, sought or even thought about. From the day she put up her first decorations as a mom, Terri has had a singular goal: to share with her family, friends and community the joy that Christmas brings her. Over the years, she's expanded her decor collection; today, she has no idea how many lights she has, but figures it must be thousands.

Decorating is a labor of love. Terri does everything herself with the exception of what goes on the roof. For that, she gets help from a friend.





"James won't let me get on the roof," she says, a concession she makes as a grandmother. Even so, it's time-consuming. The project can take up to five days, in part because she doesn't want to repeat herself. "I try to mix it up every year," she says. Her efforts don't go undetected. "If there's something different, the kids notice." She loves that, because such a level of observation means the neighborhood kids are engaged. "If a parent can't bring them, the grandparents do,"

Terri says. "The kids want to come every night."

Terri has often heard firsthand just how appreciative her audience is. A few years ago, she received a note in a child's scrawl. "Thank you for decorating," the writer said. "I love coming by your house."

More recently, she received a letter from an elderly woman whose husband was seriously ill. "Thank you for making my Christmas so good," she wrote.

"My husband and I have been coming to your house for many years, and this year he's in the hospital." Terri gets choked up every time she talks about or reads the letter. "Every night before she goes to the hospital," Terri says, "she'll take a picture of my house and go and show it to him."

Other regulars include kids who don't have grandmothers. "They call me Nana," she says. "They've adopted me." To do something special for them

this year, she's having their names put on large decorative candy canes, which she plans to give a place of prominence in this year's display.

Does husband James complain about what Terri spends on decorations, or what their electric bill spikes to during the holidays? "My husband used to say, 'Please don't overdo it this year,'" Terri admits.

What are the odds of that happening?





1ST PLACE WINNER, Age 13-17  
**Super Woman**  
TANIA NG

# CITY

The Best of Temple City's  
2019 Photo Contest





VIEWS







HONORABLE MENTION, Age 13-17

Half-And-Half

SYDNEY LIAO

Engagement

Photo Contest



**There are two kinds of views:  
what we think and what we see.  
Temple City's First Annual  
Photo Contest merged both;  
in other words, the images  
submitted conveyed what  
Temple Citians think embodies  
the spirit of our great city.**

The contest's subject matter was open. Entries could focus on our history, community life, open space, recreation, culture and so on. They could spotlight something major, like the Camellia Festival, or something magical, like a tea pot suspended in midair, spouting water into a fountain. Or they could capture a more fleeting moment—an improbable sunset, for example, or a pole vaulter defying gravity.

We expected a modest number of entries from a handful of photography buffs (after all, this was our very first contest). What we got exceeded our expectations: more than 150 photos from 49 people. Each submission conveyed its own special view and perspective, compelling us not to look away.

The quality of the work was so impressive and the range of subjects so comprehensive that it wasn't easy to choose just 14 winners.

**To see what we mean, check out over  
50 of the contest's best photos at  
[templecity.us/bestphotos](https://templecity.us/bestphotos).**





*Above*

**1ST PLACE WINNER, Age 6–12**

**Exercise**

KATE WANG

*Below*

**3RD PLACE WINNER, Age 13–17**

**TCHS Class of 2019**

MADISON HOIBY





3RD PLACE WINNER, Age 18+

## Flyover

KENNY CHU







*Above*

**HONORABLE MENTION**, Age 13-17

**Cross Country Victory**

MADISON HOIBY

*Below*

**2ND PLACE WINNER**, Age 18+

**Silky, Beautiful Waterfall**

BHAG CHAND JAIN







## Temple City Performing Arts Pavilion

by Dan Brown

**From the air, Temple City Park is a testament to the beauty of geometry.**

Upon a lush green canvas—a perfect square—two straight pathways connect two large circles to a horseshoe-shaped path. An octagon sits inside the curve of the horseshoe, palm fronds exploding like fireworks beside it.

The octagon is the roof of the park's centerpiece: the Temple City Performing Arts Pavilion. Designed by

Mary Coolman, a local architect who served on the fundraising committee, this elegant 36-foot-tall structure almost didn't happen.

The idea for the pavilion came from Temple Citians who dreamed of a bandstand with high-quality acoustics for concerts and performances. They wanted to create something special: a unique monument, which the city lacked.

Construction received a provisional green light from the city council in 1991. But moving forward depended upon funds being raised by a community organization, and so the 12-member Committee for a Bandstand was created. Fundraising got into full swing in 1993 with the selling of refreshments at the Camellia Festival and summer concert series. Additionally, the committee sponsored a brick campaign, raising nearly \$12,000.

This grassroots effort, coupled with overall community support, persuaded the city council to get on board. In 1995, it committed city funds to ensure the project's completion and site improvements. On Sept. 25, 1996, the Performing Arts Pavilion was officially dedicated.

Since then, the pavilion has provided the soundtrack to Temple City. Thousands of musicians have performed there. Hundreds of thousands of people have shown their moves on its dance floor.

Before it became a reality, the Temple City Performing Arts Pavilion was a dream. The dreamers wanted to create a place that lifted the spirit of the community. For nearly a quarter of a century, the pavilion has done exactly that and, in the process, become an icon recognizable throughout the San Gabriel Valley.



## At Home in the World:

# Jan Cicco

by Tess Eyrich



**As the regional homelessness coordinator for the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, Cicco worked with representatives from 30 cities to identify and develop data-driven solutions to homelessness in the region. During an interview in early October, the same month of her retirement, she shared insights from nearly two decades on the job.**

### **What does your role with the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments entail?**

We work with cities to help them create and implement homeless plans, and coordinate efforts with self-defined city groups. We also liaise with the county and state around homeless issues, representing the cities—their experiences, interests and concerns.

### **How did you get into this type of work?**

I've been in this field for the better part of 20 years. I started working at a nonprofit, then went into my own business where I consulted for nonprofits and small grassroots groups, and later worked with the City of Pomona for about 12 years as their regional homelessness coordinator. I've been with the council for the past two years.

### **Can you give us an idea of the scope of homelessness in the San Gabriel Valley region?**

There are almost 4,500 homeless people in the San Gabriel Valley, and 73% of them are unsheltered. That has a massive impact, because people's health erodes very quickly when they're living on the street.

Homelessness increased by nearly 25% between 2018 and 2019. Countywide, it increased by 12%, so a good deal more here in the San Gabriel Valley. When we talk about these numbers, they come from what we call a point-in-time count—it's a snapshot of one night during the year, taken year after year.

On the particular night the count took place in 2019, there were 30 homeless people in Temple City. Of those, 50% lived on the street—10% in cars, 6% in vans, 7% in RVs or campers and 27% in makeshift shelters. People who stay in vehicles are more likely to have families with children, and they often try to stay off the radar of others, so they may be less visible. That can account for a difference between what the point-in-time count numbers reflect and what local experience tells community members.

### **Tell us a bit about the region's homeless population—are there any demographic trends you can share?**

About 14% are family members—we classify family members as groupings of people where you have at least one adult and one minor child living together. The remaining 86% are single adults or adults living as couples. We have 258 homeless veterans in our region, mainly of the Vietnam War, so they're also often elderly and may be experiencing chronic homelessness.

Twenty-five percent of the homeless population is chronically homeless, which means they are disabled and have been homeless either for 12 months consecutively or four times within three years. They struggle with disabling conditions such as chronic



illness, physical disability or developmental impairment; mental illness and substance abuse are also very prevalent.

The chronically homeless tend to influence how we perceive homeless people in general, although they're not the vast majority. They're who we typically consider the most disruptive or disturbing, but we often fail to see that many people with mental or substance abuse disorders have a symptom called "anosognosia," which means they don't recognize their own illness. Approximately 50% of people with schizophrenia and 40% of people with bipolar disorder have this symptom. So, we might see these people out on the street and think they're choosing this, but the reality is it's not a rational choice. If we could give more thought and consideration to people with mental and substance abuse disorders and not put barriers in the way of them getting help, we could actually relieve stress on society and begin to treat the illnesses that have put a lot of these people in a really denigrated position in life.

**Are there legislative or policy decisions being made to address homelessness that we should know about? And how does Measure H, the sales tax approved by Los Angeles County voters and expected to generate \$355 million annually for homelessness services, play into all this?**

[In September], Los Angeles County Supervisors Kathryn Barger and Hilda Solis brought forth a measure directing the county CEO to submit a framework for allocating \$6 million in Measure H funds to councils of governments to administer to cities for use within those cities. The framework and funding were approved by the County Board of Supervisors, and our region will receive about \$1.5 million. The San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments is currently working with its member cities to develop a strategy for expending these funds. The council anticipates the funding will go toward a regional housing trust fund, homelessness prevention and diversion programs, pilot programs and master leasing.

We also just received notification [in October] that Gov. Newsom signed Senate Bill 751. This was sponsored by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and introduced by Sen. Susan Rubio. The legislation will allow us to set up a San Gabriel Valley Regional Housing Trust Fund that can accept both public and private funds and leverage those to create housing for homeless and extremely low-income people in the region. I think it'll make

a big difference; whether housing is the driver of homelessness or not, it's definitely one of our major challenges. We need more housing, and we need to be flexible about the type of housing we offer. We're currently working with all San Gabriel Valley cities so the trust will be ready to begin operation in January 2020.

**What other big-picture solutions do you think could improve the situation in the region?**

I'd like to see some of the walls break down and more professional practitioners go out into the street; too often we expect people to get up and go into an institution to get help, but the very nature of the issues they're dealing with makes that very difficult. Likewise, our region is spread out, and every community can't have its own continuum of care [or spectrum of services and resources]. It's just not practical because of the costs, but this is where regional and subregional groupings could come into play, and transportation partnerships to make travel more doable for people who need to move from place to place to access services.

**What can Temple Citians do to help address the issue?**

Support your city—if it seeks to identify and implement homeless solutions, please be a positive voice around that. Too often we only show up at city council meetings when we want to make sure something doesn't pass, but we really need more people to advocate for change when it comes to seeking solutions for homelessness.







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ECRWSS

# Temple City Farmers Market

Fresh and regionally sourced produce.

Sundays

8:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Temple City Park



More info:

(626) 422-1419 | [templecity.us/market](http://templecity.us/market)