

Political

from page 5

up during the recent presidential campaign, but I gotta admit I kinda lost focus once Ms. Palin entered the fray. After all, her daughter was pregnant and not married! We had to pay attention to such a riveting story, prisoners and prison camps be damned!

Back to the Prez and his first four months. The guy has put the pedal to the metal, and you know what? He had to. Sitting back waiting for whatever wasn't going to hack it once Mr. Obama took office. Think tanks, commissions, and report-back-to-me stalling tactics weren't going to fly this time. And the Prez has been up to the task.

Maybe every move that he has made wasn't the right move, like *all* the moves the former Prez made, so help me Rush Limbaugh, but sometimes you just gotta step up and say, "What the bleep," as the diminutive actor Tom Cruise said back in the movie *Risky Business*.

Did you vote for Mr. Obama? Did you vote at all? I will tell y'all the truth, as I tend to

do in my columns. Quick aside—I would tell even more of my version of the truth, but my wife and kid have pointed out that they live here too, and may come into contact with the two folks that read my column. So I can't be too bold.

I entered the voting booth last November with the ballot checked for Obama. I voted on everything else on the ballot, then returned to the Presidential section, and chickened out and voted for Mr. McCain. Registered Republican and all. Following the family tradition. Even though McCain had no chance of winning. Guess I thought that my Presidential vote didn't count. Obama had a landslide lead in California, so what the heck... Proud of it? No. But that's the way it unfolded.

And finally, closing the door on Carrie Prejean: Kudos to Miss U.S.A. pageant owner Don Trump, who didn't bow to the PC crowd nincompoops and allowed Miss Cali to keep her runner-up title in the all-important beauty contest. •

Poetry

from front page



Eighth graders who came to Borders to present their Poetry Palooza projects.

an evaluation of the art and the music, and incorporate everything into a poster design. The final step is to present their project in front of the class, which includes performing one of their poems with the selected music. "It's like a collaboration of all sorts of different forms of art," ESMS Counselor Lori Klein said.

This year, 12 Poetry Palooza projects were chosen from the middle school classes and put on display at Borders. And last Thursday, the students of these projects were given the opportunity to read their poetry in the store.

Tiana Austel, 13, was one of these students who read her poem at Borders. Austel picked *Seasonscape* by Vitaly S. Alexius as the artwork to inspire her poetry. The piece depicts two vibrant trees that are divided by the seasons. "I was really inspired by it because of the balance and harmony between the trees and seasons," Austel said. "I was really proud of my project and the time I spent on it."

Another student, Natalie Dease, 14, picked artwork and music from the same year. Edward Hopper's painting *New York Movie* and Glenn Miller's *Moonlight Serenade* were both created in 1939. She likes the unusual nature of the painting. The artwork also calls to her because she likes the 1930s and 1940s eras and movie theaters.

Middle school language arts teachers Kim Berry and Dan Duffy run Poetry Palooza. All eighth graders participate, which came to about 260 students this year. The project is part of the poetry unit of the language arts class and students work on this project for about a month.

Berry is astounded with the batch of student poems this year. "The final result is just awe-inspiring, that these 13 and 14-year-olds can create such amazing poetry," Berry said.

Duffy was amazed by the courage of the students who recited their poems at Borders. "I was so impressed that they would come down here, especially in a public forum like this [bookstore]," Duffy said, "It takes a lot of guts."

The ESMS has worked with Borders for the last two years by displaying the chosen student poetry boards in the store, Klein explained. The expansion to the program this year is having a performance of the chosen students at the store.

Allana Rivera, 14, decided to use an abstract piece as the source of her poetry. *The Kiss* by Edvard Munch shows a bizarre scene of two faceless people kissing. Rivera tried to reflect the abstract quality of the art in her sonnet. She attempted to capture what she believed Munch was trying to get across in the painting.

Rivera had positive comments about being selected to have her project on display. "We have so many artistic people in our grade," Rivera said, "I'm just honored to be a part of it all [and represent] my school."

Vinzon's beautiful words at the beginning of this story about the "Journey" were inspired by *Challenge* by Akiane Kramarik. The painting depicts a lone horse making its way through a forest in a snowy landscape. Vinzon sees this piece as a metaphor for the challenge of life. She thought the painting would be an interesting piece to write as a poem because of the many abstract and practical subjects the artwork presents. *Ember* by Steven Burgess is the background music she chose to go along with her poetry.

Berry, the teacher of some of these poets, has high hopes for the future of her students. "It's just incredibly inspiring that these are our incoming ninth graders for the high school," Berry said.

Aerospace

from front page

resources, safety and security, corporate communications, and the Aerospace (learning) Institute—all vital aspects of keeping the facilities running smoothly and efficiently. Drennan's Air Force background and increasing levels of responsibility in his leadership positions over the years helped prepare him for such a massive undertaking. "I had three different opportunities where I had all the support activities under my purview," he said, mentioning squadron and group commander roles as prime examples.

Leadership is a matter of collaboration, coordination and communication in Drennan's eyes. "I really am a believer in communicating, communicating and communicating to get the word out," he said. "I don't believe in shooting the messenger. I'm also a very upbeat guy. If you're positive and set that kind of tone, you can make miracles happen."

Drennan's belief in "getting the word out" has helped usher in a transformation for The Aerospace Corporation—an organization that has kept a fairly low profile over its 49-year existence. "We found that over the years when people would ask us who we are and we'd say, 'The Aerospace Corporation,' that a lot of times we'd get the question, 'Which aerospace corporation—Boeing? Northrop?'" Drennan said. "It was obvious people didn't understand who we were. We put out an effort recently to start educating people on what we do, what capabilities we bring, and how we fit in the national defense picture."

So what does The Aerospace Corporation do? According to the company's website, it has operated a federally funded research and development center in support of national-security, civil and commercial space programs since 1960, and applies the leading technologies and the brightest minds in the industry to meet the challenges of space. Those challenges have become very broad in recent years, especially now that space-related applications such as GPS, weather and surveillance technologies have become part of the very fabric of society.

"We mostly provide technical expertise to SMC (Space and Missile Systems Center at Los Angeles Air Force Base) plus other customers," Drennan explained. "If you have a launch vehicle or satellite technical question, we have experts who have been here 20, 30, and 40 years-plus who have been there, done that and can help fill in the blanks." •

Drennan went on to note that SMC essentially owns The Aerospace Corporation's contract and the two organizations work hand in hand on a daily basis. "But we have a lot more customers than just SMC," he said, mentioning the National Reconnaissance Office, NASA and key members of the intelligence community on the East Coast as examples.

Another key component in the organization's "makeover" is the just-completed move to the new A9 headquarters—replacing the structurally outdated 1964 A1 building that will be demolished and converted to a parking site. "We find the new headquarters is providing us with an image of the future," said Drennan. "We have so many wonderful things to be proud of in the past, but we're really excited about the future. This is a projection of the idea that we're here and here to stay. It gives us a new vitality with a modern environment, new communication instruments and hardware. It has really enhanced what we had."

Additional evidence that The Aerospace Corporation is here to stay is the pedestrian bridge project slated for September completion that will link its offices with Los Angeles Air Force Base. The bridge, which spans El Segundo Boulevard, symbolizes the partnership with SMC, according to Drennan. "We have people who live in Air Force Base buildings and the Air Force has people who live in our buildings," he said. "We'll be able to walk right across the street to one another."

Meanwhile Drennan said his personal goal is to provide "the best support possible to the wonderful people of Aerospace" as the organization gets ready to celebrate its 50th anniversary. "I see a very bright future for space and for Aerospace," he said.

So just how does that bright future translate to Drennan himself—the man who has never lived anywhere longer than five years? Might he finally settle down for good in El Segundo? "I'm not sure," he admitted, "but I am here to finish up my working life and will be here a minimum of five years. I love the Midwest and the Rockies so I may eventually move back there. But will I keep a place in El Segundo? Probably so. I love this community, its family environment, the friendliness and that you can go downtown and find family-owned businesses. I can leave work, go home and really *feel* like I'm home." •



CITY OF EL SEGUNDO

Human Resources Department
350 Main St., El Segundo CA 90245
(310) 524-2300 7:30AM - 5:30PM, M-F
(Closed alternating Fridays)

For job information, job brochures & applications call:
CITY 24-HOUR JOB LINE: (310) 524-2378

<p>LATERAL ENTRY POLICE OFFICER*</p> <p>\$4,671 - \$5,677/mo.</p> <p>*Plus Education/Longevity Incentive Pay</p> <p>POLICE OFFICER TRAINEE*</p> <p>\$4,671 - \$5,677/mo.</p> <p>*Plus Education Incentive Pay</p> <p>\$3,736/mo is salary while attending Academy</p>	<p>LATERAL ENTRY DISPATCHER*</p> <p>\$4,070.77 - \$4,959.84/mo.</p> <p>DISPATCHER I/II</p> <p>I - \$3,687 - \$4,493/mo. II - \$4,070.77 - \$4,959.84/mo. (Open Until Filled)</p> <p>PROJECT SPECIALIST</p> <p>(Open Until Filled)</p> <p>\$4,969 - \$6,054/mo.</p>
--	---

For Recreation & Parks Dept openings contact 310-524-2700 for application.

www.elsegundo.org *Continuous Recruitment

"The City of El Segundo is an Equal Opportunity Employer"