

# El Segundo Herald

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## Inside This Issue

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<b>Business &amp; Professional.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Calendar.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CityScape.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Classifieds.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Dear Carol.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Entertainment.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Food &amp; Restaurants.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Frankly Plank.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Open House Directory....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Pets.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Political Penguin.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Sports.....</b>	<b>5 - 8</b>

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## Weekend Weather Forecast

### Friday

Sunny

79°



### Saturday

Partly Cloudy

77°



### Sunday

Partly Cloudy

77°



## Water Polo Team Win's First Ever Summer Varsity Tourney



ESHS Boys Water Polo 2009: Back Row: Head Coach - George Harris, Jeff Allison, Anton Hedayat, Corby Cordobes, Morgan Sommo, Jackson Hogoboom, Stephen Lasky, Chris Cordobes, Matt Ginthe and Assistant Coach - Danny Rajaniemi. Front Row: Grant Hogoboom, Beau Blacksten, Jonathan Combs, Max Reynolds, Ryan Kigawa, Evan Peterson and Oscar Chen.

See Water Polo page 8

## How to Go Solar for a Grand: Local Resident Offers Affordable Program for Homeowners

By Brian Simon

As El Segundo holds its second annual Environmental Expo today and with a number of local eco programs looming on the horizon, the community quest to go green continues to pick up steam. Yet despite the very best intentions, many people run into financial roadblocks when it comes to making certain environmentally friendly moves. Case in point is solar power—a technology that reduces air pollution, offsets greenhouse gases and conserves energy while dramatically cutting electricity bills. So why doesn't everyone in town have it yet? It all comes down to up front fees. Even after a 30 percent federal income tax credit plus a state rebate that amounts to about 20 percent of the original purchase price, the average cost of residential solar paneling installation still ends up in the neighborhood of \$20,000 (and that's down from an initial price tag of \$40,000 to \$50,000). In most cases, it takes seven to 10 years to recoup that investment. Sure it's a great program for someone with plenty of disposable cash, but what about the majority of the world who don't have 20 grand ready to roll? Carie Boyce believes she has found the answer.

An 11-year El Segundo resident who has enjoyed a long and successful career in commercial real estate, Boyce last year connected with Orange County-based solar contractor Verengo Solar Plus, offering an innovative program that makes going solar affordable for just about any homeowner. How affordable? "The average deposit is \$1,000 and that's it," said Boyce. "If your average monthly (Southern California) Edison bill is \$250, it will take you less than two years to make back that thousand dollars and you will continue to save from there. Over 25 years, you'll end up saving over \$176,000 in total electricity costs."

So what's the catch? While homeowners enjoy all the benefits of solar under the program, they won't actually own the panels. Verengo designs and installs the system, which is then purchased and maintained by Bay Area-based home solar service company SunRun. Under the arrangement, SunRun covers any and all repairs or problems that might arise, taking a potential major headache away from the homeowner. "The program is called a power purchase agreement, or PPA, which is basically an 18-year lease during which the customer buys electricity directly from us, so we in effect function as a utility," explained Boyce. "Then we sell you

the electricity you produce on your roof at a lower price than Edison is charging today and we guarantee that the price won't go up for the full 18-year term."

The \$1,000 deposit covers the initial consultation, paperwork, local permits and other start-up matters. The additional costs are just the electricity. "That's how the company is paid back for buying the panels," Boyce continued. "In the case of the family with the \$250 monthly electric bill, going solar knocked their bill down to \$50. Their payment to us is \$160 a month, so the first year they are paying \$210 a month instead of

See Solar, page 8

## El Segundo High School Student Accepted into Prestigious USC Program

By Jesse Blake McCann

Matthew Lim, 17, is a smart kid. He's one of those child prodigies you read about in newspaper articles, who skips grade levels and goes straight to college. The grade Lim is skipping in this newspaper article is his senior year at El Segundo High School. But Lim shifts his accomplishments away from unique and sees himself as ordinary. "I'm not like some super genius that everyone thinks I am," he said. "I'm just some average high school kid."

Still, it's difficult to see him as your everyday student, given his extraordinary accomplishment of getting an early entrance into the University of Southern

California through the Resident Honors Program. The program allows juniors to bypass their senior year of high school and attend USC. Only 33 students across the country were accepted in the program, with Lim being one of them. He will begin the fall of this year.

The program is a chance for students to face the scholarly pursuits of college a little earlier. "RHP is an excellent opportunity for high school juniors who are academically ready for the challenges of college and who are mature enough to get a head start on their college career," director of the program Penelope Von

See Student, page 8